MACEDONIANS AND MUTINY: DISCIPLINE AND INDISCIPLINE IN THE ARMY OF PHILIP AND ALEXANDER

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SOMETIMES WHAT WE LABEL something profoundly affects our understanding of it. Historians commonly refer to two events in the reign of Alexander the Great as mutinies.[1] In the summer or early fall of 326, camped on the banks of the Beas or Hyphasis River after an arduous but victorious campaign in India, Alexander wanted to proceed further east. His troops, exhausted from years of fighting, troubled by unfamiliar terrain and climate, and anxious about the future, did not want to continue. In the end, the troops got at least some of what they wanted: the army turned south and the king's original intention was thwarted.[2] At Opis, about two years later, Alexander's dismissal of many Macedonian troops triggered a second confrontation. The outcome of this second confrontation was in many respects the reverse of the earlier trouble: this time the army entirely failed in its goals and the king succeeded.[3]

Were these two incidents mutinies and is it appropriate for us to apply such terminology to them? Scholarship about the incidents on the Hyphasis and at Opis has been shaped by modern expectations and ideals (not necessarily reality) about the behavior of armies and their generals, and especially by the concept of mutiny in modern military history. It is suggestive that scholars have been uncertain about what term to apply to the Beas incident; some have admitted their uneasiness with calling the incident a mutiny and others have rejected this terminology outright.[4] While those who doubt that events on the Beas constituted a mutiny are wise, their discussions seem somewhat misdirected. Similar problems surround scholarship on the

1. The term "mutiny" has not usually been applied to Philip's occasional disciplinary problems, perhaps because the descriptions of them are so brief and vague, so they are not discussed at length here. At the beginning of his reign at the time of the great Illyrian defeat which caused his brother's death, there was panic that Philip had to quell (Diod. 16.2.5, 3.1) and panic again after Philip's defeat by Onomarchus (Diod. 16.35.2). Polyaenus (*Strat.* 4.2.6) recounts an incident in which Philip's troops began to shout for back pay and Philip essentially joked them out of their upset.

2. Diod. 17.93.2–95.2; Just. 12.8.10–17; Plut. *Alex.* 62; Curt. 9.2.1–3.19; Arr. 5.25.1–29.1; Strab. 15.1.27, 32.

3. Arr. 7.8.1–12.4; Diod. 17.108.3, 109.1–3; Plut. *Alex.* 71.1–5; Just. 12.11.5–12.10; Curt. 10.2.8–4.2.

4. Faure 1982, 155 argues that the Macedonians at the Beas did not revolt, but rather went on strike. Holt 1982, 33 concludes that events on the Beas or Hyphasis were "mutinous never mutiny." Bosworth 1988a, 160 says of the Opis affair, "This protest can hardly be dignified with the term mutiny that is universally applied to it." Errington 1978, 110, 112 rejects as overdramatic Tarn's characterization of events at the Hyphasis as mutiny (Tarn 1949, 1:98–99) and also distances himself from those who apply the term to the troubles at Opis. Adams 1986, 49–50 rejects "mutiny" for Hyphasis, but accepts it for Opis.

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troubles at Opis. The application of anachronistic military ideology has obscured the nature and significance of the incidents on the Beas and at Opis.

In order to provide an interpretation of the significance of the events on the Beas and at Opis based on the appropriate historical context, I will begin by discussing discipline in Hellenic armies in general and then, more specifically, discipline in the Macedonian army of Philip and Alexander. Once I have described the overall nature of discipline in the Macedonian army, I will turn to the problem of whether the concept of mutiny is applicable to the Macedonian army. Finally, I will apply my conclusions to the two incidents in Alexander's reign frequently considered mutinies. I shall argue that while the incidents cannot be labeled mutinies, they did, indeed, constitute serious problems for Alexander's control of the Macedonian army.

I. DISCIPLINE IN HELLENIC ARMIES

The subject of discipline in the Roman army has often been discussed, but relatively little has been said about Greek military discipline,[5] and even less about Macedonian.[6] This discrepancy reflects the judgment of military historians: the Romans were simply more disciplined than the Greeks.[7] In fact, Greek armies did not so much lack discipline as operate on the basis of a discipline very different from that of modern armies, whereas Roman military discipline bore a much greater resemblance to that of modern armies. We should not assume that maintenance of discipline was always focused primarily on obedience to orders, as it is in modern military systems.

This is an important point because the concept of mutiny assumes that military discipline is centered on obedience to commands; that is why disobedience to a specific command is seen as so grave an action. Mutiny has an absolute quality: there is the sense that, at a certain point—usually specific refusal of direct orders—soldiers pass a legal point of no return. The concept of mutiny appears to be an early modern phenomenon.[8] It has been little studied, but probably relates to the decay of the feudal bond and the warrior ethos, the growth of the nation state, development of the ideal of separation of political and military worlds, improved communications, and the growth of specific military codes.[9]

5. So Pritchett 1974, 2:232, at the beginning of his nearly unique discussion of Greek military discipline, 232–45.

6. Specific discussions of Macedonian military discipline in Argead times: Berve 1923, 1:198–220 and Faure 1982, 81–88. Berve's analysis, helpful on the psychology of discipline, is dated in some respects and lacks any context in the continuum of Hellenic military discipline. A number of discussions of associated issues are, however, relevant. See, for instance, Ellis 1976, 54–56. On discipline for the Hellenistic period, see Bar-Kochva 1976, 94–102.

7. See, for instance, Kromayer and Veith 1928, 1. The amount of evidence available for each is also a factor.

8. McNeill 1982, 107 observes, "Mutinies achieved conventional definition in the Italian Wars of the 1520's . . ." "Mutiny" did not appear in the English language until the late sixteenth century; Parliament began to pass mutiny acts about a century later (*The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary*). Modern usage tends to refer explicitly to military rebellion. For instance, *The Oxford American Dictionary* defines mutiny as "open rebellion against authority, especially by members of the armed forces against their officers."

9. There is popular work like Fuller 1953, especially ix–xiii, who believes the concept to have been virtually timeless and not just military. My suggestions are derived from reading discussions of individual mutinies rather than from any general examination of the subject. See Morrill 1972, 34–48, Parker 1973, 38–52, Horn 1969, and esp. Messer 1920, 158–75.

In suggesting that Greek military discipline did not depend on obedience to specific orders as much as modern military discipline does, I do not mean to imply that Greek military discipline did not involve the expectation that troops would do what they were commanded to do (of course it did), but rather that granted the nature of Greek warfare in the classical period, this may not have been so central an element in the discipline of a Greek army as in that of a modern army. Therefore, for the purpose of this discussion, I shall define discipline as control gained by enforcing order of some sort. This control may be primarily attained by the issuing of specific orders, but it may also be created largely by the maintenance of a common standard of conduct.[10]

Since Macedonian society and institutions have usually been perceived as more Homeric than those of southern Greece, let us begin our examination of Greek discipline with Homer.[11] At the center of the *Iliad* is Achilles' refusal to continue to obey Agamemnon.[12] While the focus of the *Iliad* is certainly not on strict obedience to orders (indeed, discipline is twice associated with disobedience to orders[13]) discipline of a different sort is nevertheless maintained through cultural notions like concern for ἀνδρεία (manliness, bravery) and ἀρετή (competitive excellence; e.g., *Od.* 11.408–10). The fundamentally agonistic nature of Homeric culture continued to affect the behavior of historic armies.[14]

The values of Homer did not disappear but simply formed part of a more complex whole. With the growth of the πόλις and hoplite warfare in the sixth and fifth centuries, warfare became a brief and terrible clash between two forces that simply slammed into each other. A commander could make few choices once battle commenced since little communication between the commander and his troops was possible once battle began.[15]

Scholars usually connect the supposedly undisciplined nature of Greek armies to the political culture that produced them, the πόλις. A Greek soldier was protected by his citizen status and the discipline expected of him

10. A somewhat simplified version of *Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language Unabridged,* 15th ed., s.v. "discipline," suggests, along with several definitions focusing on obedience, "systematic, willing and purposeful attention to the performance of assigned tasks: orderly conduct" or "an orderly or regular pattern of behavior." Garlan 1975, 177 implies an understanding of military discipline similar to my own. Rodger 1986, 206–7, discussing the non-existence of "discipline" on a modern standard in the early eighteenth-century British navy, takes much the same view. See contra Bar-Kochva 1976, 96 who defines discipline as, "basically, compliance with instructions" and Faure 1982, 81–88, who does much the same.

11. On the generally Homeric nature of many Macedonian values and institutions, see Edson 1970, 17–44. See Fredricksmeyer 1990, 304–15 and Carney 1992, p. 177, n. 24 for perpetuation of the agonistic values of Homer at court. Alexander, supposedly descended from Achilles (Eur. *Andr.* 1239–49; Paus. 1.11.2; Pind. *Nem.* 4.51, 7.35–40), was devoted to the *Iliad* (Plut. *Alex.* 8.2, 15.4–5; Strab. 13.1.17; Athen. 12.537d).

12. *Il.* 1.289, 296. Achilles specifically refuses to obey Agamemnon because of his treatment of Achilles and because of his bad character. Elsewhere (9.370) he encourages others to disobey Agamemnon, for similar reasons.

13. 2.73–339; 14.65–134. Odysseus maintains discipline by enforcing what would, in other military cultures, be insubordination, and he does so by holding his fellow Greeks to generally established standards of behavior.

14. Pritchett 1974, 245. An incident at the siege of Halicarnassus (Arr. 1.21.–3; Diod. 17.25.5) demonstrates the retention of Homeric values among the Macedonians.

15. This is the conventional interpretation of the nature of hoplite warfare; see Hanson 1989, 24, 28–29, 107, 172–77 and Anderson 1970, 70–80. Cawkwell 1978, 150–53 and 1989, 375–89 and Krentz 1985 have challenged this interpretation. Their views would allow more possibility for transmitting orders in the course of an engagement.

was not perceived to be different from the kind of discipline expected of citizens in general. Generals were usually officials elected by the men they commanded, men who could prosecute them at the end of a campaign. Granted that popular assemblies typically played an important role in the structure of the πόλις and in democracies the central one, events we might term mutiny, like any normal decision reached by the whole civic body, never entirely lacked legitimacy.[16]

Greek hoplites were motivated more by concern for the good opinion of their fellow hoplites and their hoplite general than by fear of punishment.[17] The comparatively few reported examples of punishment or the threat of it for military infractions deal primarily with cowardice and/or treason.[18] Events which have been interpreted in modern times as punishable because someone disobeyed orders often prove not to revolve around disobedience but around the presumption that those who disobeyed commands did so because of cowardice, the more important offense.[19] Limited communication during battle helps to explain this presumption: once battle commenced, the fundamental yet probably not reiterated command was, simply, to fight and not retreat; bravery was obedience.[20]

The greater complexity of warfare in the fourth century inevitably affected discipline. Xenophon is notably more concerned with εὐταξία (good order, discipline) than his predecessors and more likely to connect it to obedience.[21] Nonetheless, Greek soldiers continued to be free-spoken and not terribly focused on respectful obedience to commands.[22]

Whatever the ethnicity of the ancient Macedonians, they operated within an increasingly Hellenic military and political context[23] and any discussion

16. So Garlan 1975, 178. Spartans, whose commanders were often kings or members of the royal family, did act somewhat differently, reflecting the more passive nature of Spartan citizenship (Herod. 7.22; Thuc. 5.9.9; see Pritchett 1974, 235). But Spartans did not always impose punishment, even for cowardice, or equate obedience with bravery (Plut. *Ages.* 30.2–4; Herod. 9.53–57; Thuc. 4.38.3; 5.34–35).

17. Hanson 1989, 26, 107, 118. A stern disciplinarian's regime could backfire: Xen. *Anab.* 26.7–12; *Hell.* 6.2.18–19.

18. See Pritchett 1974, 238–43. Pritchett 1974, 234, on the basis of Lys. 14, deduces that an Athenian law stated that there were three sorts of military crimes: refusal of service, desertion, and cowardice; obviously, the first two tend to be associated with cowardice too. Of Pritchett's twenty-one testimonia on punishment, ten clearly refer to cowardice and three to treason. Many of the passages do not specify the reason for punishment, but two mention sleeping on guard duty and three seem to imply concern for obedience to orders.

19. E.g., Thuc. 5.72.1, where two men who have refused a direct command are exiled not because they disobeyed a direct command but because they acted like cowards (μαλακισθῆναι). Xen. *Hell.* 6.2.34 seems similar: Iphicrates threatens punishment to those leaders who do not follow him into battle. See also Dem. *Poly.* 51.

20. E.g., when Socrates (*Ap.* 28C–E) explains that, as a hoplite, he remained where he had been commanded to be and risked death; he equates his action to that of Achilles in deciding to kill Hector. Granted that no one other than himself had ordered Achilles to do so, the parallel here is clearly not to obedience but willingness to risk death.

21. Not all of this can be attributed to his fondness for Sparta. See Pritchett 1974, 236 on his use of εὐταξία.

22. E.g., Plut. *Phoc.* 25; Diod. 18.17.1. See Pritchett 1974, 243–45; Anderson 1970, 71: generals still remained with the forces and had little ability to communicate once battle started.

23. On the disputed ethnicity of the Macedonians, see Borza, 1990, 90–97 for discussion and references. Philip's familiarity with Theban tactics and his military reforms speak to the increasingly Hellenic context of Macedonian military culture. The influence of Homer is clearly something shared by Macedonians and Greeks.

of their military discipline should, therefore, be seen as part of the continuum of discipline within the Hellenic world. The Macedonian political system was, of course, dramatically different from that of the πόλις and therefore offered a different perception of the relationship between individual and state.

Macedonians had a monarchy, hereditary in the Argead clan, that was in essence absolute, although in practice often limited by the personality and abilities of an individual king, the threat of intervention and/or invasion by various foreign powers, and by the machinations of the Macedonian elite and rivalries within the royal dynasty. In matters both civil and military, Macedonians had the habit of speaking freely, even bluntly, to their king-commanders.[24] Rapid and fundamental change in Macedonia's basic institutions occurred in the reigns of Philip and his son. The Macedonian army was in good part the product of this quickly evolving society.[25]

Paucity of evidence makes comparative judgments difficult, but the Macedonian army was probably more focused on obedience to orders than were Greek armies, possibly substantially more so. A scattering of general statements in extant sources seems to suggest this conclusion, as does Macedonian emphasis on drill, whose effectiveness is often associated with obedience to commands.[26] The existence of a permanent and hereditary king-commander as opposed to a changing elective or appointive general as well as the less urban and more hierarchical nature of Macedonian society are likely to have made this so. Curtius (3.3.27) says that the Macedonian army was "ready to stand and follow, . . . intent not only on the signal of the leader, but even his nod." By the time of Philip and Alexander, battle plans were more complex, communications more elaborate, and delegation of command more common than in the hoplite armies of the sixth and fifth centuries.[27]

Given the poor quality of our evidence, especially about ordinary soldiers, it is difficult to determine how considerable this distinction between Greek and Macedonian emphasis on obedience really was. Specific incidents in which a soldier or officer is punished for disobedience are scarce

24. See Adams 1986, 43–52 for evidence about the Macedonian habit of blunt speech and the expectation of the accessibility of their kings.

25. See Borza 1990, 231–52 for a general discussion of Macedonian political institutions, including the nature of "constitution" and the possible existence of an army assembly. I support the views of Errington, Lock, Anson, and Borza, who reject the existence or constitutional relevance of such an assembly.

26. Diod. 17.65.4, speaking of reforms Alexander made in his army after the beginning of the Asian expedition, mentions improvements in their obedience to commands (τὰ παραγγελλόμενα πειθαρχοῦσαν). Arrian 3.9.8 refers to a speech of Alexander to his troops before the battle of Gaugamela in which he supposedly urges them to pay attention to their battle position, keep silent, to shout or even howl at appropriate moments, to heed commands sharply (ὀξέως κατακούοιεν τῶν [τε] παραγγελλομένων) and to pass them along. (The speech is relevant not because it is likely Alexander said anything like it, but because it speaks to Arrian's understanding of Macedonian discipline.) Curtius 3.2.13–16 contains a supposed speech of Charidemus to Darius in which Charidemus refers not only to the good order of the Macedonian troops, but to their compliance to orders (" . . . quod imperatur omnes exaudiunt.") (The speech is, of course, fiction.) Thus both Arrian and Curtius place Macedonian obedience to orders in the context of general speed and experience in drill.

27. See Griffith 1979, 405–49 and Milns 1975, 87–136 for general descriptions of the army under Philip and Alexander.

and susceptible to varying interpretations.[28] On the other hand, an argument from silence in this context may or may not be significant. The threat of punishment by the king or at his order—fear in short—may have made Macedonians much more focused on obedience, especially in the reign of Alexander. Then again, there is no evidence for any codification of military discipline in this period or for the mentality that produced it, as there is for the later Antigonid period and for the Romans.[29] The custom of Macedonian outspokenness, as we shall see, did not always lead to immediate compliance with orders. Moreover, one must recognize that this comparative judgment that Macedonians focused more attention on obedience to commands than many Greeks is necessarily contaminated to an unknown and unknowable degree by the fact that extant sources all date from Roman times and were inevitably affected by Roman military experience and understanding of the nature of discipline.[30] By modern standards, obedience to direct commands seems to have played a comparatively modest role in Macedonian notions of military discipline, but by the standards of the Hellenic world, this role may have seemed large.

II. Discipline in the Army of Philip II and Alexander

Let us now turn more specifically to a consideration of discipline in the Macedonian army of Philip II and his son. While Macedonian soldiers may well have sworn an oath to their king-commanders, any such oath focused on the general allegiance of troops to their commanders rather than on obedience to specific orders.[31] If oaths do not seem to have been an important aspect of the Macedonian army's discipline, drill and training certainly were. Philip demanded a degree of training unprecedented in the

28. Plutarch (*Alex.* 57.2) gives two examples of his generalization that Alexander was a severe chastiser: Menander, a Ἑταῖρος and the commander of a garrison, was put to death when he failed to remain at his station (as usual, it is difficult to tell if this is a punishment for disobedience or for cowardice) and Orsodates, a Persian, was killed because he revolted. Orsodates was clearly punished for political rather than military reasons; Menander's case (he is otherwise unknown) may also be political. See p. 27, for the point that Alexander was generally more severe about political rather than military crimes.

29. There are surviving fragments of Macedonian military codes from the Hellenistic period, e.g., one from Amphipolis from the reign of Philip V (Moretti 2:114; Austin 1981, 136–38.) It would be unwise to assume that these documents reflect conditions more than a century earlier; in that century Macedonia experienced traumatic change, including a change in dynasty (see Walbank 1940, 289–94 for a discussion of the Macedonian army under Philip V and its differences from the Argead army). Antigonid monarchy was inevitably different from Argead. The codes focus on fines for an elaborately detailed list of fairly minor errors and on the maintenance of stores by officers. Welles 1938, 246 and de Sanctis 1924, 515–21 suggest that these were new measures instituted by Philip after Cynoscephalae, under Roman influence. Bar-Kochva 1976, 97 does not disagree, but concludes that, despite Roman influence, the king could not have gone far from traditional standards. Perhaps, but although the individual punishments do not seem terribly different from those of Alexander and Philip, the mentality involved in collecting and recording them does. Pritchett 1974, 244–45 contrasts the regularization and codification of Roman military discipline to the absence of such a mentality in a classical Greek context.

30. Justin and Curtius, our two Latin sources, for instance, contain a number of references to "*disciplina militaris*" (Just. 12.11.9; Curt. 5.1.36, 2.6, 6.6.11–17, 10.2.12). One wonders if such an abstract notion is appropriate in reference to Greek or Macedonian institutions. Curtius, in particular, seems inclined to impose Roman military practice on Macedonian in matters both superficial (i.e., 3.8.23 refers to Roman rather than Greek divisions of the night) and fundamental (9.4.22–23 generalizes about the changeable behavior of troops, apparently on the basis of personal experience, suggesting that Curtius' understanding of Macedonian discipline is colored by his own Roman experience).

31. Although there is no clear evidence for any oath prior to the death of Alexander (Plut. *Eum.* 12.2), Hammond 1989, 65–67 believes that oaths were customary earlier.

Greek world (Diod. 16.3.1–3),[32] a feature of Macedonian military affairs perpetuated by Alexander. Philip required his men to carry a thirty-day ration of flour on their backs, to train by forced marches carrying full rations and equipment. He also forbade wheeled transport and drastically limited the number of support people allotted both infantry and cavalry.[33] This strict drill and training stood in stark contrast to contemporary Greek habits, as well as to those of tribal peoples north of Macedonia (Arr. 1.6.2–3). It is not chance that one of the first things Alexander did after the murder of Philip was to drill and exercise (i.e., reestablish discipline in the army, Diod. 17.2.3). The constant reassertion of this standard had more than a practical side; it tended to have the psychological effect of creating continuity in the ever-changing world of the expedition, a kind of psychic home away from home, a practice tending to maintain the original standard.[34]

In addition to drill and some concern for obedience to commands, Philip and Alexander employed a system of rewards and punishment; generally there was much more of the former than of the latter. Their troops retained booty, sometimes at the king's order and sometimes without.[35] The king also gave gifts of land and cash, often graduated by rank or other distinction, after victories and sometimes when troops were being sent home.[36] Alexander offered cash bonuses for particularly difficult tasks, in order to mute criticism of his Persianizing, and as an incentive for dismissed troops to stay on as mercenaries or to keep following him.[37]

Benefactions other than outright gifts were also frequently used. Not surprisingly, promotions follow bravery in battle (Curt. 5.2.3–5). We also hear of honors—gold crowns (Arr. 7.8.3) or the right to sit in the front at the theater (Plut. *Alex.* 71.2). At one point or another Alexander also handed out a variety of "perks": marital leave for the newly married (Arr. 1.24.1–2), a monthly ration for wives and children traveling with the army (Diod. 17.94.4), and payment of debts (Arr. 7.5.1). There were also death benefits, however irregularly proffered: magnificent military funerals, remission of taxes and other obligations for survivors of the dead, a pension for orphans, and even commemorative statues.[38] The newly acquired wealth of Philip and Alexander certainly made it more possible to provide such material benefits. Less tangible, but important for morale and discipline, was the honor of having the king single a man out for praise, be it before, during, or after a battle.[39]

32. Pritchett 1974, 229. Polyaenus (*Strat.* 4.2.7) says that at Chaeroneia Philip used the greater skill and training of the Macedonians (compared to the Athenians) to his advantage.

33. Front. *Strat.* 4.1.6, 2.4, Polyaenus *Strat.* 4.2.7, 10, 4.3.10, and Curt. 3.3.26–28 refer to similar practices by Alexander.

34. On the psychological effects of drill and its efficacy in discipline, see McNeill 1982, 130–33.

35. Plut. *Alex.* 24.1; Diod. 17.35.1, 70.1–6, 94.3, 104.1; Curt. 5.6.4.

36. Diod. 16.34.5; Plut. *Alex.* 34.1; Diod. 16.3.3, 53.3, 17.64.6; Plut. *Alex.* 34.1, 39.1–6; Arr. 1.12.1; Curt. 7.5.27; Arr. 7.5.4.

37. Curt. 7.11.11; Arr. 2.18.4, 4.18.6–7; Diod. 17.78.1; Diod. 17.74.3; Arr. 3.19.5; Plut. *Alex.* 42; Curt. 9.1.2–3.

38. Diod. 17.21.6, 46.6; Arr. 1.12.1; Arr. 1.16.5; Plut. *Alex.* 71.5; Curt. 5.2.5; Arr. 1.16.4.

39. Arr. 2.10.2; Curt. 3.10.4; Arr. 4.29.7, 7.12.1; Plut. *Alex.* 58.2.

Another important facet of discipline under Philip and Alexander was its relaxation, typically after a difficult piece of campaigning. Just as Alexander's demands on his men might be extreme, so could be the relaxation he offered. Aside from simply resting his troops after a battle or stressful period, there might be a sacrifice to the gods (thus a feast for the human beings), perhaps to some especially appropriate deity, followed by contests: athletic, literary, dramatic, musical, equestrian, and dancing; well-known artists might be imported from Greece for very splendid performances.[40] Allowing for some exaggeration in our sources, there were clearly Dionysiac κῶμοι, involving sometimes only the Companions, sometimes the army in general. For the elite, there were also συμπόσια; the popularity of Dionysus and of heavy drinking in Macedonia is well-known.[41]

Anecdotal material suggests that relaxation might take the additional form of forgiveness for infractions of ordinary standards of behavior. A dishonest but brave soldier might be pardoned, so might a man in love; starving soldiers might be forgiven theft of food meant for all.[42] Curtius (6.9.20) claims that Alexander relented on the more or less customary punishment of relatives of traitors. Making exceptions for cause in a sense reinforces the standards of behavior; whether one regards such exceptions as signs of inconsistency or flexibility, they tend to emphasize the power of the king over his troops and thus confirm the need to please him.

According to stories preserved in some of the sources, Alexander also sponsored (or at least accepted) rougher forms of relaxation: a battle between courtesans jokingly named "Alexander" and "Darius" (Plut. *Alex.* 31.1); Alexander's public embrace of the eunuch Bagoas at the encouragement of his soldiers (Plut. *Alex.* 67); a fight between a Greek and a Macedonian athlete that, although probably intended to reduce ethnic tensions, in fact increased them (Diod. 17.101.1–6).

Occasionally we hear of a more sinister relaxation of the rules: tacit or overt permission for slaughter, most often because of desire for vengeance.[43] It is unclear what kind of limits Alexander usually placed on atrocity and violence after victory; he himself was not often personally inclined to indulge in such behavior, but evidence suggests that he put few limits on his troops.[44] Some acts of brutality by his troops were a conse-

40. Plut. *Alex.* 37.1; Diod. 17.86.3, 6; Arr. 2.5.8, 2.24.6; Diod. 17.46.6; Diod. 17.16.3; Plut. *Alex.* 29; Arr. 2.24.6; Plut. *Alex.* 29. Whereas many Greeks saw athletic competition as good training for war and Philip II was certainly personally enthusiastic about Olympic competition, Alexander was not, and is said to have preferred more aesthetic ἀγῶνες (Plut. *Alex.* 4.5–6). Thus, at least in the army of Alexander, athletic competition, like other public contests Alexander offered, seems to have functioned simply as entertainment rather than training. See further Brown 1977, 76–88.

41. Plut. *Alex.* 70.1; Arr. 5.1.6; Curt. 8.10.11–18, 9.10.24–29; Diod. 17.106. Bosworth 1988a, 147, accepting the historicity of the Dionysiac revels after the terrible desert march, observes that they were "fundamentally a matter of therapy." This is not to deny the more serious aspects of religion for both Alexander and his troops, or the importance of the religious role of the king (p. 28 below).

42. Plut. *Moral.* 339C and *Alex.* 70.3–4; Plut. *Moral.* 181A, 339C–D; Arr. 6.23.4–5, 25.1.

43. Arr. 4.23.4, 6.11.1.

44. Curt. 4.11.21, 5.6.4–8; Diod. 17.94.3. Exceptions about Alexander are known: e.g., his terrible treatment of the commandant of Gaza (Curt. 4.6.25–29; *FGrH* 142 F 5).

quence of his policy (Diod. 17.104.6–8).[45] The story of Timoclea of Thebes, whom Alexander pardoned and even rewarded for killing her rapist (Plut. *Alex.* 12) is the exception, not the rule: the brutal treatment of the women of the Persian elite (Diod. 17.35.4–36.1) is probably more typical.

Philip and Alexander did punish their men, although capital punishment is rarely mentioned by our sources other than in the case of the notorious political/military confrontations of Alexander's reign: Philotas and Parmenio, Callisthenes, Alexander of Lyncestis.[46] On all these occasions the king's life, at least allegedly, was in danger. Alexander's punishment of satraps for dereliction of duty also falls into a quasi-political category. Of course, all these people were officers, usually quite important ones. Plutarch (*Alex.* 57.2) says that Alexander was feared by his troops because he was such an inexorable punisher of wrongdoers. Aside from dubious anecdotal material,[47] the ordinary soldiers we hear of Alexander executing are those he considered ring-leaders at Opis.[48] But the fear of execution, primarily for revolt or actions perceived to threaten the life of the king, did constitute a weapon in the king's armory. It might lead to the revelation of a plot or to desertion of troops.[49] A king might compel his men to fight by removing any hope of safe return except victory (Polyaenus, *Strat.* 4.2.15).

Lesser measures were more common. Whether or not Philip really did demote an officer for bathing in hot water (Polyaenus, *Strat.* 4.2.1), demotion was certainly sometimes used as a disciplinary tool, along with relegation to positions away from the main expedition, and perhaps even exile (Polyaenus, *Strat.* 4.2.3). The king's disapproval—whether of ordinary soldiers (Arr. 4.29.7) or of famous ones like Craterus and Hephaestion (Plut. *Alex.* 47.6–7)—could be a potent weapon, both because of the importance of retaining the king's good opinion and the threat disapproval conveyed.

In connection with the removal of the faction of Parmenio and Philotas, we hear of Alexander's censorship of letters sent home and the formation of a contingent of those believed to support the fallen clan,[50] what Diodorus (17.80.4) terms an ἀτάκτων τάγμα (an undisciplined, or perhaps, unassigned unit). While these last measures appear to be unique, the growing climate of political fear in the course of Alexander's reign naturally disciplined the aristocrats and in some degree the ordinary soldiers too—one thinks, for instance, of the silence that greets Alexander's request at the Beas to hear his troops' complaints.[51] Arrian (4.13.2–4) and Curtius (8.6.7–8) report that Alexander had Hermolaus flogged and that this flogging was the trigger for

45. The sacking of Persepolis, for instance: Diod. 17.70.1–6; Curt. 5.6.1–8; Plut. *Alex.* 37.3–5. Scholars have generally interpreted it as an act of policy, although they differ about which policy: Badian 1967, 186–92; Borza 1972, 233–45; Balcer 1977, 119–33; Bosworth 1988a, 92 and Sancisi-Weerdenburg 1993, 184–85; Badian 1994, 258–92. Bosworth 1988a, 108–109 makes a similar argument for the destruction of the Branchidae.

46. On these incidents, see discussion and references in Bosworth 1988a, 101–103, 118–19, 50–51.

47. Plut. *Alex.* 22.2–3; Arr. 7.22.4.

48. Arr. 7.8.3; Curt. 10.2.30; Just. 2.11.8; Diod. 17.109.3.

49. Curt. 8.6.21; Curt. 7.1.13; Arr. 3.27.2.

50. Curt. 7.2.35–38; Just. 5.4–8.

51. Curt. 9.2.31, 3.1–2; Arr. 5.27.1.

Hermolaus' conspiracy against the king; Curtius (8.8.3–4) even has Alexander assert that flogging was a traditional royal punishment, only to be administered by the king (Curt. 8.6.5). If Curtius' assertion is true, Hermolaus' punishment had rather extreme consequences; it seems likely that however traditional, in practice flogging was rarely imposed.[52]

While drill and the application of both carrots and sticks had an important role in Macedonian discipline, the role of the leader, his relationship to the troops, would seem to be more central. Diodorus (16.35.1–3), describing Philip's adept handling of the very uncertain situation he encountered at the beginning of his reign, offers a kind of model for the combination of measures that made up discipline in the Macedonian army: undeterred by the various internal and external threats, Philip inspired confidence in his troops by a series of speeches and thus increased their ἀνδρεία, improved organization and weapons, drilled his men and involved them in competitive drill, was friendly and courteous and tried to win loyalty by gifts and promises.

Macedonian kings often showed almost paternal concern for their troops, whether motivated by practical reasons or the emotional factors the sources so often ascribe to kings, or both. Alexander regularly visited the wounded after battle, even when wounded himself.[53] Greenwalt argues that because of Alexander's willingness to use the more magical elements of ancient medicine for his own ends, he created a kind of sacred kingship which also reinforced his leadership.[54] Although Alexander often made tremendous demands on his troops—forced marches, night marches, near suicidal assaults, risky river-crossings (e.g., Arr. 4.4.8–9)—he could be sensitive, at least at times, to which troops were able to bear such exertions and which were not.[55] The army's physical comfort or safety at times determined the course of his march, or its timing.[56] The Gedrosian disaster was the exception, not the rule. Generally periods of rest, relaxation and looser discipline followed periods in which Alexander made superhuman demands.

The leadership of Philip and Alexander was extremely personal.[57] Alexander in particular is often shown to inspire or soothe his troops by acts of personal heroism, even foolhardiness.[58] Both Philip and Alexander used oratory to control their troops. Philip, first in the panic and confusion after his brother's death in battle (Diod. 16.2.5, 3.1) and later after an unexpected

52. So Carney 1981a, 230. See also Hammond 1990, 262.

53. Arr. 1.16.5; 2.12.1.

54. Greenwalt 1986, 213–22.

55. Arr. 3.9.1, 21.2–10; Plut. *Alex.* 25.1.

56. Arr. 3.7.3; Diod. 17.68.3.

57. Greek generals personally participated in battle, often at considerable physical risk, because it was perceived to be an important part of generalship (see Hanson 1989, 107–18); if anything, expectations were even greater for Macedonian kings: Philip's elder brother, Perdiccas, died in battle and Philip and Alexander received many battle wounds.

58. Bosworth 1988a, 43 argues that Alexander's perpetual self-endangerment and frequent wounds, rather than reinforcing his control over the army, jeopardized it. Alexander's obsessive risk-taking did, however, tend to exaggerate the already marked traditional emphasis on the personality of the king as central to maintenance of discipline.

defeat (Diod. 16.35.2), used his oratorical skills to calm and discipline his men. Alexander also used oratory to reestablish discipline, whether before battle or in moments of hysteria and upset (Polyaenus, *Strat.* 4.3.9). We need not believe a word of any of the speeches included in our surviving sources —and probably we should not—to recognize that oratorical suasion by Macedonian monarchs could be a powerful factor in holding the army together and getting it to act as the king desired.

Given the comparatively limited distance between king and commoner in Macedonian society, the ability of the king to share in the common lot of the army could also be an effective disciplinary tool. Many of the stories about Alexander's willingness to share suffering with his men are highly sentimental and individually suspect.[59] The pattern they sketch, however, much like the stories of the king's personal heroism, is believable enough. The army found it difficult, at least for a long time, not to do what Alexander was himself willing to do. Alexander's increasing distance from his Macedonian army because of his Persianizing did, however, tend to undercut this personal relationship, making him seem alien or fonder of alien ways.[60]

Michael Crawford has argued that the "only way in which Rome could symbolize her leadership . . . was by placing the troops of the confederacy under the consuls. And then . . . what else but war and conquest?"[61] In a sense, Philip's constant campaigns, followed by Alexander's, had a similar effect on the Macedonians. Griffith observed of Philip that "no doubt it was through the army most of all that he came to know the people, and the people to know him."[62] The union of king and people could lead to greater discipline and success in battle, even in the later periods of Alexander's reign when Macedonians constituted a comparatively small, but critical part of his army.

The high value placed on warfare in Greek culture and ethics, particularly intense for the old-fashioned and Homeric Macedonians, obviously contributed to the discipline of the army; concern for ἀνδρεία tended to generate good discipline. Applause could greet a display of skill in battle (Diod. 17.25.1) and there was real love of battle and enthusiasm for it.[63] Concern for κλέος (fame) or δόξα (reputation) could be collective (Arr. 2.26.6), but was often individual and could take the form of Homeric style boasting. While such concern for individual repute could generate situations that seem by modern standards divisive and dangerous to the maintenance of discipline, there is little indication that a similar perception existed in Macedonia.[64]

59. Plut. *Alex.* 24.6–8, 40.1–4, 41.1, 42, 58.1–2; Arr. 6.26.1–3; Curt. 7.3.17, 5.12–17, 8.4.5–11.
60. e.g., Diod. 17.77.7–78.1, 107.3.
61. Crawford 1978, 53.
62. Griffith 1979, 392.
63. Arr. 2.10.2–6, 6.3.3.
64. Plutarch (*Alex.* 50.4) reports that verses sung at a banquet making fun of generals recently defeated triggered the brawl that led to the death of Cleitus. For another example, see n. 14 above for the incident at Halicarnassus.

Macedonian military discipline achieved great success. One thinks not only of Alexander's unending conquests, but also of the willingness of his army to follow him into truly appalling situations. Problems with Macedonian discipline were often the mirror image of successes. Both Philip and Alexander had problems with strife between groups and individuals in the army. Greeks and Macedonians often quarreled and dangerous tensions often arose.[65] At least one of the events usually termed a mutiny can be tied to hostility to Persians (whom Alexander had been adding to the army) by Macedonians and Greeks. Other uneasy moments were related to these tensions.[66]

Most of the developing difficulties with discipline in Alexander's Macedonian army, however, were related to the central role in discipline of the king and his personality. As the army became increasingly less Macedonian—perhaps only a sixth of the entire force[67] —and more mercenary, loyalty to the person of the commander became its only unifying factor.[68] And problems did develop, as we shall see, in Alexander's relationship with the army. In a way Alexander required his troops to take on his personal characteristics; as the campaign dragged on, his troops could no longer maintain his level of energy, his discipline and resolve in the face of endless hardships and demands in an alien land.

Granted that there was no real division between personal and political in Macedonian society, as Alexander's political troubles increased, they began to spill over into the military. For instance, the elimination of the Parmenio faction had military consequences, as did Alexander's interest in Ammon, his killing of Cleitus, and his interest in προσκύνησις.[69]

F. L. Holt has recently illuminated the troubles of Alexander's administration of Bactria and particularly the unhappiness of the garrisons Alexander left behind him there.[70] In addition to the factors he enumerates, I would suggest that in an army where discipline was increasingly defined by the person of the commander, permanent separation from the commander tended to generate break-down in discipline, partly because of feelings of rejection. In just this way Alexander's dismissal of the veterans at Opis produced indiscipline.

One thinks, too, of all those incidents in which his troops panicked when they feared for one reason or another that they would lose Alexander—after the murder of Cleitus,[71] Alexander's near fatal wound among the Malli (Arr. 6.12.3),[72] his rumored death and the revolt of his garrison troops

65. Curt. 8.1.23–25, 9.7.16–26; Diod. 17.100.1–101.6.

66. E.g., the departure of the Greek allies: Curt. 6.2.15–16; Diod. 18.74.3; Just. 12.3.2–3; Plut. *Alex.* 47.1–3.

67. So Hammond 1980, 214.

68. Bosworth 1988a, 277 suggests that Alexander consciously intensified this circumstance. See Keegan 1988, 13–91.

69. See Bosworth 1988a, 101–104, 71–74, 282–83, 114–15, 117–19, 284–87 for references and discussion of these incidents.

70. Holt 1988, 70–85.

71. See Carney 1981b, 149–60 for discussion and references.

72. See further Lammert 1953, 1–7.

(Diod. 17.99.5), his anger at his troops at Opis. When Alexander really did die, the generals who survived him had reason to appreciate the dangers of so personal a form of discipline (Curt. 10.5.7). A remark variously attributed to Demades or Leosthenes compares the Macedonian army after Alexander's demise to the Cyclops after his eye had been put out.[73] Thus, we have learned that Macedonian discipline, although maintained by drill and the application of both punishment and reward, focused on the relationship of the king-commander to his troops.

III. MUTINY AND THE MACEDONIAN ARMY

Applying the concept of "mutiny" with its modern associations to the Greek and Macedonian world creates any number of difficulties. The idea of mutiny assumes two things lacking in Macedonian military matters: very considerable and consistent emphasis on unquestioning obedience to orders, even in non-combat situations, and a clear distinction between the rights and behavior of the Macedonian subject and the Macedonian soldier.[74]

Our sources do not employ a term we can reasonably translate "mutiny." Both Curtius and Justin use the term *seditio*.[75] They depict Alexander trying to wheedle, chastise, inspire, or flatter his troops out of this state; it does not appear to constitute a point of no return, as mutiny tends to.[76] Curtius (6.2.4) also uses the term "*secessio militum*" to describe what is clearly not a mutiny in the modern sense but chronic problems with indiscipline; *secessio* seems to denote indiscipline rather than the more specific concept of rebellion.

Nor does there seem to be a single word Greek sources use which we can reasonably translate as mutiny. None of them even utilize ἀταξία, a term signifying military disorder, though not necessarily revolt.[77] No Graeco-Macedonian concept of an absolute state of rebellion, a kind of crossing of a judicial Rubicon involving disobedience of a direct order, seems to exist,

73. Plut. *Mor.* 181F; Plut. *Galb.* 1; *Mor.* 336. Granted that traditional discipline had focused on the person of the current Argead king, it is not surprising that after Alexander's death when there were no competent Argead commanders available, his generals experienced serious problems with discipline, most notably in the first days after the king's death (Curt. 10.5.1–10.20) and also before the accord at Triparadeisus (Arr. *FGrH.* 156 F 1.32–2; Diod. 18.39.3–4; Polyaenus *Strat.* 4.6.4). While these later disciplinary problems may well have had connections to those in the reign of Alexander (some of the same troops were certainly involved), the circumstance is fundamentally different because of the absence of a king. None of the "regents" could assert the authority of a king over the army. For this reason, my study stops with the death of Alexander.

74. Even Roman military revolt often went unpunished and in any event tended to be treated as practical problems to be solved rather than as well-defined crimes with absolutely certain punishment to follow. See Messer 1920, 159–61; Garlan 1975, 178.

75. Like mutiny, it can apply to both civil and military revolt: *OLD* s.v., 1726. Adams 1986, 50 assumes that *seditio* is synonymous with mutiny.

76. For instance, Justin, referring to Alexander's second confrontation with the army, has Alexander reproach his troops with gentle words and threaten that their glory will be tarnished by *seditio* (12.11.8). The implication, although they had already refused an order, is that they had not yet been guilty of *seditio* but would be if they persisted. See also Curtius 9.4.22, 4.10.4.

77. Pritchett, in his discussion of εὐταξία and ἀταξία (1974, 236–45), seems to favor translating εὐταξία not as "good order, discipline" (so *LSJ*) but something more like "obedience" and ἀταξία as equivalent to insubordination rather than disorder. His evidence, other than for the specific case of Xenophon, does not convince.

but rather there is a tendency to see incidents as points on a continuum of indiscipline.[78] While no term has the precise significance of "mutiny" in English, a number indicate general disturbance and upset. This disparity accounts for scholarly uneasiness about the application of the concept of mutiny to Macedonian events.

Greek usage of πείθω and its derivatives speaks to an understanding of discipline and obedience very different from our own; one does what a person has ordered because one has been persuaded, not necessarily because one has been ordered. A person we might describe as obedient is literally one who has been persuaded. Thus the play on words Arrian puts into the mouth of Alexander at the Hyphasis (5.25.3) employing πείθω: they will be persuaded to go forward or he will be persuaded to go back.[79]

Greek authors apply the language of personal relationships to these two incidents, referring to the dialogue and disagreement between the men and the king (e.g., Diod. 17.108.3) and to their emotion. The troops suffer from ἀθυμία (despondency) and δυσθυμία (lack of heart). The men are pained by the king's actions and feel that Alexander is less ἐπιεικής (kindly) to them than he once was.[80] This diction is appropriate to the personal nature of discipline in the Macedonian army.

The diction of the extant sources does not necessarily echo the terminology of the lost first-hand accounts, but it does reflect later authors' understanding (however colored by their own expectations) of earlier accounts they had read. Since all five extant authors wrote in Roman times and may have been affected by Roman disciplinary expectations, they may have introduced a greater element of rigidity into descriptions of the soldiers' behavior than was present in the lost primary sources.

Examination of the diction of the surviving authors demonstrates more than the simple semantic point that no one term can reasonably be equated with mutiny, or even the more important conclusion that the use of such terminology is anachronistic because it assumes structures and values not present. The language of the sources also implies that they saw such confrontations not as mutinies but as arguments, quarrels between the commander and his men, moments when the blunt discourse between Macedonian king and people became heated and dangerous, much as in Alexander's quarrel with Cleitus. Alexander employed many of the same techniques in resolving the two military crises which he had used to good effect after the death of Cleitus.

There has been a tendency to conclude that if these events were not mutinies, then they signified no serious difficulties with discipline.[81] Yet

78. E.g., Arrian's usage of ταραχή (trouble, disorder, confusion) to describe the situation of the Hyphasis: he tells us Alexander fears it will get worse (5.25.2). Arrian uses the verb ταράσσω to describe the ringleaders at Opis (7.8.3), although he clearly considers it a graver situation. One does not worry about whether or not something is a ταραχή, but one does about whether it is a mutiny, because of the greater precision of the latter term.

79. In describing Philip's ultimate success in calming his army, Diodorus (16.35.2), calls the army εὐπειθεῖς, just as he later describes the army at Opis as ἀπειθούντων (Diod. 17.109.2). These terms are usually translated "obedient" and "disobedient."

80. Diod. 16.35.2; Arr. 5.25.2, 7.8.2–3; Plut. Alex. 71.1.

81. E.g., Hammond 1980, 25.

such a conclusion says very little about their significance to the discipline of the army and leaves important questions about the non-mutinies unanswered. How then are we to explain the events on the Beas or at Opis, if we are to avoid imposing a modern construct on them? We must ask whether the discipline of the Macedonian army, shaped by Philip and sustained by Alexander, was injured. Was Alexander's position as king and commander threatened, or at least weakened, by either or both events? It is these questions which I shall now try to address in connection with events on the Hyphasis and at Opis.

IV. UNPLEASANTNESS ON THE HYPHASIS

There are five major accounts of Alexander's troubles with his men on the Hyphasis in 326.[82] In Justin (12.8.10–17) the troops, about to confront a large Indian cavalry army, beg Alexander to turn toward home because of their exhaustion and Alexander immediately yields.

According to Diodorus (17.93.2–95.2), Alexander, undiscouraged by intelligence about a very large army waiting further east but aware that his troops' morale was low, offered them a series of benefits and delivered a speech that failed to persuade the men to continue to the east. Accordingly, the king gave up his plan. However, a subsequent reference to this same incident (17.108.3) makes it sound more confrontational and puts it in the broader context of the continuing unruliness of the army, its resentment of Alexander's claims about Ammon, and the king's consequent determination to form the 'Επίγονοι.[83]

Plutarch's account (*Alex.* 62) clearly describes a confrontation: dulled by the difficult campaign with Porus just completed, the men violently oppose Alexander's attempt to force them to march east. Out of despair and anger (ὑπὸ δυσθυμίας καὶ ὀργῆς) the king sulks, considering what the men want worse than a retreat, until, ἐπικλασθείς,[84] he yields to his friends' advice and the soldiers' complaints. Plutarch's reference to the king's friends is the first suggestion that the officers, and perhaps the king's inner circle, supported the men.

Scholars have generally preferred one or both of the longer and somewhat similar accounts of Curtius and Arrian.[85] Both authors, however, include speeches attributed to Alexander and to Coenus; like most speeches preserved in ancient historical writers, these deserve little credence.[86]

According to Curtius (9.2.1–3.19), Alexander, aware that the morale of his troops is poor, delivers a speech intended to persuade them to his point of

82. See discussions in Bosworth 1988a, 132–33, Green 1991, 404–406, Robinson 1993, 84–99 on how much further Alexander planned to go.

83. In 327, upon his departure from Bactria, Alexander ordered thirty thousand Asian youths to be recruited and trained in Macedonian arms and methods. They were termed 'Επίγονοι (Successors), the implication being that they would succeed to the position of the Macedonian phalanx. See further discussion and references in Bosworth 1988a, 272–73. See pp. 38–40 below for the impact of their reappearance in 324 at Susa.

84. Liddell and Scott note that the word can signify either being broken in spirit or turned to pity.

85. For instance, Holt 1982, 48 and Adams 1986, 49.

86. While not everyone shares my minimalist approach to speeches preserved in ancient historical writers, see Brunt 1983, 2:528, Bosworth 1988b, 96–134, and Adams 1986, 50 for similar views.

view.[87] Alexander's increasingly emotional pleas are met with sullen silence. Curtius says that the men were waiting for their officers to speak on their behalf, but that the officers feared to do so until Coenus dared to. At this point the other officers, especially the older ones, come to Coenus' support and Alexander, at a loss, withdraws but no one comes to visit. After two days of anger he yields and a few days later Coenus dies. Coenus' role in Curtius conveys the general impression that the incident involves a serious loss of face for Alexander.[88]

In Arrian (5.23.1–29.1), Alexander is ignorant of morale problems until some of the men threaten not to obey his order to march. Finally aware of their feelings, he gives a speech to the officers.[89] Again there is silence until Coenus comes forward. Coenus' speech meets with approval and even tears from the other officers, but Alexander, irritated by Coenus' aggressiveness and by the lack of it in the other officers, dismisses them and reconvenes the next day just long enough to announce that he will go on but will not force others. Alexander sulks, excluding even the Companions. After three days of the troops' silence and resentment, he finds the sacrifices unfavorable and, having first called together the oldest of the Ἑταῖροι and particularly those friendliest to him, he announces to the whole army that he will turn back. Only then do the men show affection to Alexander and give him thanks since, says Arrian, he had yielded to defeat only in confrontation with them (πρὸς σφῶν μόνων νικηθῆναι ἠνέσχετο, 5.29.1). Arrian notes (6.2.1) that Coenus soon after died of disease.

The narrative of Arrian distinguishes itself from that of Curtius in a significant respect. While the officers are not the center of opposition to Alexander's plans but rather the appropriate spokesmen for the army as a whole in Curtius, in Arrian, the Companions appear to be the focus of resistance. Alexander speaks first to them; he excludes them, and he feels compelled to include them when he announces his defeat. Arrian, typically the king's apologist, here offers the least flattering and most troubling version of the affair. Yet, since Ptolemy has often been considered his source, his has usually been judged the most trustworthy account.[90]

The differences in the accounts of the Hyphasis incident in the major narratives are less substantial than is often realized. Many may be apparent rather than real, the consequence of variation in narrative length. Diodorus'

87. Berve 1923, 2:218, concludes that Curtius made the speeches up and Andreotti 1957, 136 concurs. Schachermeyr 1973, p. 436, n. 530, however, seems to accept the speeches as genuine, as does Kornemann 1935, 148. Both do so because they believe that the speeches preserved in Curtius derive from Ptolemy. Tarn 1949, 2:94, insists that Curtius composed the speech, but later (289–90) attributes part of it to Ptolemy, although he believes that the Ptolemaic section is a doublet of the speech Alexander gave at Opis.

88. Tarn's attempt (1949, 2:287) to deny the role attributed to Coenus by Curtius (and Arrian, as we shall see) has deservedly met with little acceptance.

89. It is commonly thought that the speeches in both Curtius and Arrian derived from Ptolemy and that Ptolemy is the primary source for Arrian's general narrative of events on the Hyphasis (Jacoby 1962, 2BD:506; Holt 1982, 41–47 [who considers Ptolemy the source for the speech of Alexander, but is less confident that Ptolemy is the source for Coenus' speech]; Schachermeyr 1973, 436). Brunt 1983, 2:532–33 argues that Aristobulus is more likely the source of the speeches. Bosworth 1988b, 123–34 suggests that they include some material from Ptolemy and much embroidery.

90. See varying views of bias in Ptolemy in Bosworth 1975, 32–33 and Errington 1969, 233–42. In the affair on the Hyphasis, where Ptolemy apparently did not support Alexander, he had the difficult task of justifying his own actions without making the king look terrible. If Ptolemy lies behind Arrian and Curtius, his self-interest could explain the comparatively even-handed account found in those sources.

supplement to his initial narrative may be typical of the kind of detail and interpretation left out in the shorter versions of the incident, yet known and not necessarily considered untrue by the terser writers. All sources agree that there was a difference of opinion between Alexander and his army about whether they should proceed further east and that the army, motivated not by political concerns but by the rigors of a long campaign, succeeded in getting much of what it wanted and Alexander did not.[91]

This minimal description of the scene on the Hyphasis is enough, in itself, to make untenable the view that Alexander intentionally staged this event to avoid going further east. Voluntarily risking his prestige—yielding, that thing no Greek hero wants to do—would have been unimaginable because it made it appear that the army rather than the king was in charge. That, rather than the specific issue of disobedience, was the problem: indeed, it is not clear, because of the differences and vagueness of source material, whether any direct refusal of a command by Alexander ever occurred. None may have occurred. The sources generally treat the troops sympathetically and do not imply that they acted out of cowardice.[92]

Nor does it seem reasonable to interpret the scene at the Hyphasis as a mass example of the Macedonian right to petition the king.[93] Only the account of Justin suggests that the Macedonians sought the king out and told him about their feelings; in all the others, he seeks them out and only with great hesitation do they speak of what bothers them.

If we focus on the generally more respected accounts of Curtius and Arrian, we see that while the dissatisfaction of the troops that precipitated the scene on the Hyphasis was not political and did not arise from the army's resentment of Alexander's changes in the nature of Macedonian kingship, Alexander's treatment of their dissatisfaction transformed the situation into one in which these issues were indeed involved, into a situation whose long-term impact would affect not only political tensions but the discipline of the army.

Although these events had not arisen out of any Macedonian sense of entitlement to political power or decision-making but out of the desperation of the troops, that they happened and that the troops got what they wanted because of their spontaneous action must have contributed to the events at Opis (as well as to the generally more troubled nature of the army in the subsequent period) and may have generated a sense of entitlement previously lacking. In this sense, the troubles at the Hyphasis may have acted to create a new, yet ultimately illusionary self-definition for the army, particularly the Macedonian part of it. Success in thwarting the will of Alexander may have radicalized the army and thus contributed to the more rancorous

91. Most of the sources also preserve descriptions of the construction of a false giant-sized camp with larger than life belongings left behind to impress posterity and of altars dedicated to the twelve Olympians: Plut. *Alex.* 62.4; Arr. 5.29.1–2; Curt. 9.3.19; Diod. 17.95.1–2; Just. 12.8.16; Strab. 3.5.5 (171); Pliny *N.H.* 6.62; Philostr. *VA* 2.43. Hamilton 1969, 174 notes that no scholar takes the camp story seriously.

92. Plutarch *Alex.* 62.3 could imply cowardice and he does refer to the behavior of the troops "at the Indus" as cowardice at 13.3.

93. So Adams 1986, 49–50. While Adams makes a good case for the power of the tradition of free speech and the accessibility of Macedonian kings, it is another matter to consider either free speech or petitioning "rights," and yet another to believe, if such "rights" existed, that either was exercised here.

and political confrontation at Opis.[94] It is more difficult to say whether we should also associate the troubles experienced by Alexander's successors after his death in maintaining control over their armies with these events since the disappearance of royal (i.e., Argead) authority could easily be explanation enough.[95]

The Hyphasis affair had a negative effect on military discipline as well. Both Curtius and Arrian make it clear that Alexander's officers, including those closest to him personally, actively, or passively supported the army rather than the king. (Plutarch's narrative hints at the same point.) Coenus' role, as described in these authors, is not necessarily sinister but it is significant. Coenus was no simple and plain-spoken soldier but rather an able and ruthless opportunist who had risen to his high rank through Alexander's patronage; when such an individual embraced an opinion he knew was anathema to the king, Alexander was in trouble. He clearly had no support among the officer corps for continued campaigning to the east.[96]

Alexander's Achilles-like sulk and its emotional finale speak to the very personal nature of the event; there was now a troubled personal relationship between the king and his men and that relationship was critical to military discipline, as we have seen. Curtius (9.4.16–23) reports that, at the beginning of his campaign against the Malli, his troops began to speak out angrily against his plans and Alexander had once more to persuade them to go on. All accounts of the tremendous risks he took in the attack on the Malli citadel suggest that his troubles with discipline had worsened and that Alexander took the risks he did in an attempt to regain his domination over the soldiery.[97] He was "lucky" to suffer a nearly fatal wound and

94. Ober's discussion and analysis (1993, especially 224–28) of a spontaneous mass action by the Athenians that played a critical role in the revolution of 508/7 suggests some limited parallels to the Hyphasis event. While his application of J. L. Austin's speech theory to the Athenian event (a confrontation between rival "speech acts" presenting two different understandings of authority and sovereignty) offers little of relevance to the Macedonian situation (Alexander's difficulties with his army on the Hyphasis do not relate to sovereignty or even authority in a direct way) Ober's use of the work of Thompson, Davis, and Desan (see Ober 1993, 227 for discussion and references) on the tendency of spontaneous riots to function as acts of "collective self-definition" is suggestive and seems quite applicable to the situation on the Hyphasis.

95. So troubled was the army by the absence of Argead authority that a significant portion of it forced leadership to accept the Argead Arrhidaeus as king despite his lack of competency (Curt. 10.6.20–8.23), forced Perdiccas and his associates to allow Arrhidaeus to marry Adea, an Argead herself, because he and his brother had murdered Adea's Argead mother (Arr. *FGrH* 156 F 9.22–23), and nearly killed Antipater because of their fondness for young Adea, now called Eurydice (Diod. 18.39.1–4; Arr. *FGrH* 156 F 9.30–33). Any Argead, even the mentally incompetent or female, threatened the authority of non-Argead commanders.

96. On the career of Coenus, see Berve 1923, 2:215–18, Heckel 1992, 58–64. Coenus, although married to a daughter of Parmenio, played a critical role in the elimination of Parmenio and his son Philotas. Badian's speculations on the political motivation of Coenus' speech, the suspiciousness of his death, and his role in possible factions opposed to Alexander (1961, 21–23), although plausible, are unprovable (Holt 1982, 48 finds Badian's arguments implausible as well). Badian's characterization of Coenus as an opportunist, however, rests on a firm evidentiary basis. It seems reasonable to conclude that Coenus judged it more opportune than not to speak for the army and the rest of those close to Alexander did not find it opportune to speak up for the king's view. Griffith 1979, 2:392 observes that, since Alexander's main communication with the army would have been through the officer corps, the opposition of Coenus at a meeting between the king and officers (as in Arrian) is critical.

97. So Badian 1961, 20–21. Arrian 6.7.6 reports an earlier incident in which Alexander had to shame the other Macedonians into following him up and over a wall of another Malli citadel. As Hamilton 1969, 176–77 implies, this earlier incident helps to explain why Alexander wrongly believed that the Macedonians were malingering when he once more felt the need to lead the way up a wall (Arr. 6.9.3).

thus reassert some of his control over the army, but subsequent events demonstrate that he was only partially successful. Diodorus says that disciplinary troubles continued (17.108.3).

To return to the two questions I have suggested should be posed about the two incidents often termed mutinies, it is clear that military discipline was compromised by the events on the Hyphasis and that Alexander's position as king-commander was weakened. There may not have been a mutiny on the Hyphasis, but there was trouble for Alexander. Arrian said it: Alexander let himself be defeated by his own army. Alexander had lost the control he had once exercised in his relationship with his soldiers.[98] The army, apparently with the agreement and probably with the lead of the officers, arrogated to itself the power to relax the incredible demands Alexander had so long imposed. Neither the king nor his men would be able to forget this. What happened on the Hyphasis was an argument and Alexander lost it. Even after the argument was over the bad feelings it had generated, as so often happens, endured. That Alexander then made the best of a bad bargain or that he did not totally yield to the troops' demands does not mitigate the severity of his discomfiture at the Hyphasis. Badian is right—this truly was Alexander's first major defeat.[99]

V. CONFRONTATION AT OPIS

Analysis of the Opis "mutiny" proves to be a more demanding task than consideration of the events on the Hyphasis. The sources were unanimous in explaining the reason for the troops' dissatisfaction at the Hyphasis; not so for Opis. None of the sources offers a really coherent description of the motivation of the troops at Opis. The sources agree on little more than the fact that the dismissal of the veterans was the precipitant. Some aspects of the Opis quarrel defy rational analysis, but posing the same two questions already applied to the earlier event should provide some answers of significance for our understanding of Macedonian military discipline.

Let us begin with Arrian's account (7.8.1–12.4). Arrian says that the incident began when Alexander calls the Macedonians together at Opis[100] to announce the discharge of those too old or too disabled for further service. Although Alexander does this to please the Macedonians, hurt (because they believed the king considered them useless) and angry (because of Alexander's continuing drive to Asianize both his monarchy and his army) they demand that all of them be released from further service and refer unflatteringly

98. Errington 1978, 110 concludes that Alexander had staked his influence with the army on winning his way and then lost. Berve 1923, 1:213–17 suggests that Alexander's growing spiritual estrangement from the Macedonians, as demonstrated at Hyphasis and later Opis, broke down the identification of king and people, which he believed was essential to Macedonian military discipline. Schachermeyr 1973, 437–42 saw Alexander as torn between his goals for world rule and the practical demands of that world.

99. Badian 1961, 20 contra Hammond 1980, 213–15, who asserts that Alexander "emerged unscathed," and Holt 1982, 47–49, who characterizes the incident as essentially a compromise. Hammond, of course, believes that Alexander would have been prevented by the Macedonian constitution from proceeding further without the permission of the "army assembly."

100. Arrian's location of the confrontation at Opis, rather than Susa as the other sources imply or state, has won general acceptance: Hamilton 1969, 197; Fox 1974, 544; Badian 1965, 160; Wust 1953/54a, 420.

to his claims about Ammon. The king, now used to Asian subordination, sharper-tempered and less sympathetic to the Macedonians, jumps down from the platform along with some of his officers and commands the ὑπασπισταί to arrest the ringleaders, pointing out thirteen men who are summarily executed. Alexander delivers a speech to his men, who have been stunned into silence, in which he says that they can go home if they wish. The king retreats and refuses to see Ἑταῖροι other than those close to him and his bodyguard (the implication is that the others are somehow part of this opposition to him, as subsequent events do suggest). On the third day Alexander assigns chosen Persians commands and introduces Asians into various ranks, giving some Macedonian army names. When the Macedonians hear about this they shout and beg Alexander to let them in and promise to give him the leaders of the disturbance.

An emotional but puzzling reconciliation (the Macedonians say they acted because they were hurt and jealous about this most recent Persianizing, but, of course, they had already disagreed with the king when that happened), sacrifices and feast follow. Ten thousand disabled or elderly veterans depart with pay and a bounty of a talent each, but without their half-Asian children.

Arrian's account lacks any plausible motivation for the Macedonians' reactions. Many of the grievances mentioned were longstanding. It is not clear whether the men want to go or to stay. If rejection bothers them, why do they not ask to stay rather than to go? Anger at the idea of departure is surprising since they had wanted to go home for some years. Arrian's list of their grievances seems to duplicate those he had already mentioned when the Ἐπίγονοι arrived at Susa (7.6.2ff.).[101] The speeches deserve little credence.[102]

Whereas in Arrian, the affair seems to come out of nowhere, Diodorus (17.108.3–109.3) states that the Ἐπίγονοι were created by Alexander as a solution to disciplinary problems that had first surfaced in India (shouting in assembly and mockery of Alexander's supposed connection to Ammon) but continued thereafter. The king's selection of the older and disabled ten thousand to return home causes an outburst.

In Diodorus it is those who were to remain with Alexander who are angry: they begin to be disobedient (ἀπειθούντων) and shout in assembly. Alexander accuses them, jumps down, and seizes the most blameworthy, turning them over to attendants for unspecified punishment. Only when Alexander gives select Persians high rank do the Macedonians change their minds; the king is reconciled to them only with difficulty. Diodorus knows that the dismissal of the veterans triggered a confrontation, but is unclear about why it did, although he does imply that the primary desire of all Macedonians was to go home.

Plutarch's version of events (*Alex.* 71.1–5) makes the arrival of the Ἐπίγονοι central: the Macedonians feel rejected and this leads them to interpret his dismissal of the physically unfit as an insult, abandonment, and

101. Badian 1965, 160.
102. See Brunt 1983, 2:532–33 and Bosworth 1988b, 112, 134.

hubris to those who had served him well. They all demand to be sent home and Alexander in anger drives them away and makes Persians his bodyguards and attendants; the sight of Persians in their places makes the Macedonians humble. They conclude that they have acted out of anger and jealousy and tearfully beseech the king. Only on the third day does he relent and honor the departing men. Plutarch's account reads more like a misunderstanding that is ultimately resolved than any sort of confrontation; there are no arrests and no clear indication that he has replaced Macedonian with Persian military leadership.

In Justin (12.11.5–12.10) the catalyst is again the dismissal of veterans, but the reason for the troops' anger is different: they want Alexander to base dismissal not on the age but the years of service of soldiers. They grow more abusive, particularly about Ammon (which they put in the context of his rejection of them) and Alexander arrests thirteen and sends them off for punishment. Justin then mentions an assembly of Persian troops in which Alexander makes it clear they are to be included with Macedonians in many positions of responsibility and to be integrated into Macedonian brigades. There is then a reconciliation between the king and the Macedonians because of his plans for the Persians, and the veterans depart. Justin's version differs substantially from the others: the troops are angry not because they are being dismissed but because they are not all being dismissed; their reasons for agreeing to reconciliation are quite unclear, granted that their initial reaction to the inclusion of Persians was hostile.

Curtius' account (10.2.8–4.2) is broken off and has lacunae as well. The news that Alexander is sending only some of the Macedonians home (the older ones) makes the Macedonians frantic because they interpret the news as signifying that Asia would be his permanent base. Military discipline breaks up, there is rebellious talk and all the men demand their departure, undismayed by the efforts of their officers or respect for the king. They interrupt the king and say they will only obey an order to go home. Alexander's response is a speech[103] reproaching them and listing his accomplishments and those of his father. He tells the men to leave and see how they do without him, but then he leaps down and arrests thirteen of the most antagonistic and turns them over to his bodyguards (they seem to be executed, but there is a lacuna). The news of the deaths of the prominent dissidents makes the Macedonians regretful and when only Asian soldiers can gain access to the king, the Macedonians beg him to relent. As in Justin, Alexander has an assembly of foreign troops, instead of heeding the requests of the Macedonians and appreciating their remorse. A subsequent lacuna ends with the supposed speech of a dissident about to be led away to execution in which he condemns Alexander's Asianizing. The army, however, is completely cowed by the king's unyielding disregard of their feelings.

103. The speech attributed to Alexander by Curtius is similar to that in Arrian in detail and theme—see Tarn 1949, 1:296, Wust 1953/54a, 424.

Curtius' truncated account is, even more clearly than Justin's, influenced by Roman military experience, and resembles the modern concept of a mutiny: the army threatens direct disobedience of orders and capital punishment for the worst offenders follows. His version emphasizes the changing nature of Alexander's monarchy; it is not the Ἐπίγονοι or the departure of some veterans that bothers the Macedonians, but rather the implication of their departure: Alexander is becoming an Asian ruler. It is therefore the most political interpretation of the event.

On the Hyphasis, both ordinary soldiers and officers and even those closest to Alexander opposed his policy; here the situation is more obscure. In Arrian, some officers help Alexander arrest the ringleaders; Arrian's terminology (7.8.3) seems to suggest squadron leaders rather than more important leaders. Two other passages in Arrian (7.11.1.3) offer information. In the first, Arrian reports that Alexander refused to see any of his Ἑταῖροι for two days and in the second he notes that after his speech he was followed only by Ἑταῖροι close to him and by his elite bodyguards. Here Arrian seems to make a distinction between the general group of Ἑταῖροι and a small group of stalwarts.[104]

Another piece of information suggests that some elements in the elite and leadership of the army were involved in confrontation. In most of the accounts, the Macedonians are upset because Alexander is allotting various commands, positions in the Ἑταῖροι cavalry and the ἄγημα, to Asians. Only members of the elite, if minor ones, had held these positions previously. It seems reasonable to conclude that, contrary to the situation on the Hyphasis, at Opis Alexander maintained a firm control over his inner circle and important commanders, but that there was considerable resistance to his leadership within the lower ranks of the officer corps.

It is difficult to weigh the gravity of the disciplinary problem here because our sources are so confused about the motivation of the troops. Plutarch and Arrian seem to say jealousy and feelings of rejection led to their actions (emotional problems relatively easy to deal with) and Arrian says that they all wanted to go home; Diodorus does not know; Justin believes that all the men wanted to go home, essentially for personal reasons, whereas Curtius also believes they all wanted to go, for political reasons. The explanations of Arrian and Plutarch would make sense if the soldiers had wanted to stay, but not if they all wanted to go home. The combined verdict of Justin and Curtius, that they all wanted to go and take their king with them makes more sense.[105] If one adds that the Macedonian reaction to Alexander's Asianizing increased the more he did it and that the recent shock of the appearance of the Ἐπίγονοι made this general reaction more vivid, then we may be as close to a logical explanation of the actions of the Macedonian troops as it is possible to be.[106]

104. These two passages are neither contradictory nor doublets (contra Wust 1953/54a, 422) but references to two different moments, the one during the initial confrontation, the other days after.

105. Wust 1953/54a, 419 accepts this as the whole explanation.

106. Bosworth 1988a, 159 calls their protest "understandable if illogical."

Let us return to our two original questions: did the events at Opis pose a problem for Alexander's continuing maintenance of discipline over his remaining Macedonian troops? Yes. The troops tried the tactics that had succeeded on the Hyphasis a second time, but this time they rather than the king had to relent. Moreover, this time, the king punished, apparently severely, his most prominent opponents. Clearly he was the victor, but his problems with discipline can hardly have disappeared, although the brief period remaining in his reign makes it impossible to judge. If, however, one remembers that those Macedonians who stayed were the most angry with the king and that many of his Asian troops were untried, one must conclude that, particularly if he had to confront Macedonian enemies, he cannot have counted on the discipline of his troops. Despite the tremendous differences in the various accounts, virtually all describe a relationship between commander and army which had deteriorated dramatically since the first confrontation.[107] On the other hand, the king's ability to get his way so quickly and entirely certainly meant that for the moment he had more control over the army than he had two years before.[108]

However mixed the verdict for the disciplinary significance of this second confrontation, its political consequence for Alexander as king was obviously more negative. On the Hyphasis, the unhappiness of the army arose from situational factors, whereas the events at Opis seem to have arisen primarily for political reasons, in reaction to Alexander's increasing changes in the nature of his kingship and his relationship to the Macedonians in the army. As I have suggested, the comparative success of his troops at the Hyphasis in achieving their goals may have emboldened them to try again at Opis. Indeed, the earlier incident may have given them the feeling that they were entitled to oppose the king, even though their circumstances were not desperate, as they had been before, but simply frustrating and infuriating. The primary precipitant of this second large-scale problem in military discipline was, however, the changed political policy of Alexander, not any possible alteration in the army's perception of its power.

The troops and Alexander seemed much angrier at each other the second time. Whereas none of those who opposed the king's policy on the Hyphasis were punished, most of the accounts of the affair at Opis claim that Alexander severely punished his most visible opponents there. Does this punishment indicate that the king considered events at Opis graver offenses than those on the Hyphasis? Probably. The second case involved the threat of direct disobedience and more apparent disorder than the first. Alexander may have been incensed not only by the defiance of the troops but also by their sense that they were entitled to demonstrate it. He may have concluded that the scene on the Hyphasis had set what proved to be an ominous precedent and that he had to react in a way which would counteract

107. Berve 1923, 1:217 sees the end of the old Macedonian military discipline in the settlement at Opis and the beginning of an entirely new military organization with a new ethos.

108. Badian's suggestion (1965, 160) that Alexander deliberately provoked the incident inflaming Macedonian spirits is implausible.

the apparent precedent.[109] But, I would suggest, the difference in the king's reaction derives not only from perceived distinctions in the gravity of the offense of his opposition, but also, and probably more importantly, from the difference in the context of each event.[110]

In fact, the comparative defiance of the troops at Hyphasis, particularly given the great unity of this opposition, caused Alexander much more trouble than the scene at Opis because he had no alternatives; he had to give up what he planned to do and do instead part of what they wanted. At Opis he had alternatives, used them, and was not thwarted. His treatment of those who opposed him was more severe mainly because it could be. Otherwise, Alexander reacted in much the same way to opposition: seclusion and emotional blackmail.[111]

VI. CONCLUSION

Having stripped away some of our anachronistic presuppositions about the dynamics of power in the Macedonian army, it is now possible to see the incidents on the Hyphasis and at Opis more clearly. These two events caused Alexander problems as both king and commander not because they were mutinies or because orders had been disobeyed, but because they were quarrels that poisoned the relationship between the king/commander and his troops—a relationship at the heart of Macedonian military discipline—and thus threatened to compromise future control of the army.

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109. Adams 1986, 51 again raises the idea of the "right of petition" in the context of these events and refers to the sense of entitlement the soldiers demonstrate in Arrian's narrative in airing their grievances and their surprise that the king arrests the ring-leaders. He points out that Arrian attributes the king's severe reaction to his growing fondness for Asian subservience (7.8.3). While Adams' argument seems more convincing here than for the events at Hyphasis, Alexander does not seem very persuaded of his troops' right to petition and the greater anger of the men at the king may explain the harshness of their language more than their sense of entitlement. Schachermeyr 1973, 493–94 sees the incident as a challenge to the existence of the army assembly, something he saw as a basic peasant right. Austin's speech act theory (see Ober 1993, 224–28) seems more relevant to Opis than the Hyphasis affair. At Opis there is a confrontation between the speech acts of the king and of the troops.

110. Errington 1978, 112 observes that Alexander "chose to interpret" what was essentially a spontaneous political action as a "mutiny." He is right to suggest that Alexander made a conscious decision to regard an event not very different from that on the Hyphasis as something much more serious.

111. This was the third occasion (the death of Cleitus and the Hyphasis affair are the others) in which Alexander resorted to an Achilles-like sulk which ultimately led his troops to supplicate him outside his door, like love-lorn poets beseeching their beloved. These tactics, bizarre by modern standards, worked, probably because they were part of the personal relationship between king and troops which was so central to Macedonian discipline. In a curious way, his sulking seclusion was part of the discipline he enforced. The implicit reference to Achilles, made by his supposed descendant, may have helped.

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