THE DEATH OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT: RUMOUR AND PROPAGANDA

I

PROPAGANDA and history are often inseparable. Most governments are in a position to control the dissemination of evidence, and if an event is embarrassing or damaging, the relevant evidence is certain to be distorted or withheld. Moreover the writers of history, however innocent their motives, cannot disregard the official apologia of their rulers. One notes with interest that the learned authors of the official Soviet history of the world portray the invasion of eastern Poland on 17 September 1939 as a crusade of liberation.[1] Of course it might be true that the people liberated by the Red Army were glad to be rid of 'the arbitrary despotism of the Polish Pans' and that in the subsequent elections there was absolute freedom of choice and overwhelming support for union with the Ukraine, but the fact remains that it was impossible for members of the Moscow Academy to contradict their government's justification of the invasion.

Few ancient writers were proof against this type of pressure, at least when they wrote contemporary history. Even non-contemporary history had its perils. *Antiquis scriptoribus rarus obtrectator* is by no means universally true, as Livy found to his cost when faced with the unwelcome and unanimous source tradition that a military tribune won the *spolia opima* at Fidenae. He had no choice but to accept the counter-evidence of the corselet of Cossus, obligingly supplied by Augustus.[2] Indeed in the case of Augustus one sees the supreme instance of a smooth, impenetrable façade deliberately constructed to mislead posterity. Throughout his long reign he could effectively suppress recalcitrant pamphleteers like T. Labienus,[3] and his successors were disinclined to blacken the memory of the founder of their dynasty. After Actium the stream of hostile memoirs was dammed and the historical record channelled to uniformity.

Fortunately few men have been in the enviable position of imposing their will on historical tradition. Propaganda usually has two sides. Rivals for empire broadcast conflicting slanders, and not every monarch has an interest in preserving the immaculate purity of his predecessor's reputation. This was particularly the case in the decade after the death of Alexander, when the Hellenistic world was split between warring coalitions variously aiming for satrapal independence or for the assertion of centralized royal authority. Each side appealed to the intentions and dispositions of the dead king, and the suspicious circumstances of his death became a weapon of party invective. Literature was necessarily affected, and traces of the propaganda war can easily be detected, notably in the accusations of poisoning directed against Antipater and his family. But propaganda is not always clearly labelled, and it can be difficult to detect, particularly when politically biased interpretations

[1] *Weltgeschichte* x (Berlin, 1968 = Moscow, 1965), pp. 94–5.

[2] Livy, 4. 20. 5–11. On this intriguing passage see Ogilvie's commentary ad loc., and, most recently, E. Mensching, *Museum Helveticum* xxiv (1967), 12 ff.

[3] Seneca, *Contr.* 10, praef. 4 ff.; cf. Peter, *HRR*, ii. c–ci.

are swallowed as factual by secondary sources. Now it must be emphasized that the earliest consecutive account of the death of Alexander and its sequel is given by Diodorus Siculus, who wrote as long after the events as 45 B.C., and the probability of our extant sources being fouled by propaganda is very high. This paper is an attempt to strip away some of the layers of fabrication from our confused record of the transmission of power at Babylon; only then can one begin to disentangle the complicated web of intrigue that surrounded the death of Alexander.

Alexander died in Babylon on 10 June 323[1] after an illness of some ten days. Rumours immediately burgeoned, destined to be ignored or relegated to footnotes by ancient and modern historians of Alexander. Droysen merely mentions what he calls 'senseless conjectures', and his abrupt dismissal set the pattern.[2] However, the rumours of poison played an important part in the subsequent dynastic conflict and were consistently used to harass the family of Antipater. In 317 Alexander's mother, Olympias, returned from exile in Epirus. Immediately she purged Macedon of a large number of her political enemies, among whom was Nicanor, younger son of Antipater, and her justification was that she was avenging the death of Alexander *μετερχομένη, καθάπερ ἔφησε, τὸν Ἀλεξάνδρου θάνατον*. Iolaus, who had been cup-bearer to Alexander, was expelled from his grave and his ashes cast to the winds—again a son of Antipater. The source is Diodorus,[3] at this point universally agreed to be excerpting Hieronymus of Cardia, a contemporary of the events described. This is solid evidence that Antipater's family was suspected very early of having contrived Alexander's death and that the suspicion was fostered by politically interested parties. Olympias was not the first to make capital out of the rumours. According to the *Lives of Orators* attributed to Plutarch, Hypereides moved a decree ironically proposing honours for Iolaus, the supposed poisoner of Alexander (*Mor.* 849 F). Whether or not the actual wording of the decree mentioned poison cannot be determined from our text of the *Lives*, but it is clear enough that Antipater was extremely sensitive to the implications. After the Lamian War Hypereides was treated with exceptional savagery; the weight of evidence is that his tongue was cut out before execution and his body refused burial at Athens.[4] Antipater bore him a personal grudge, which should surely be based on allegations implicit or explicit that he had murdered his king. This is of course no proof that Alexander *was* murdered; Antipater's extreme sensitivity shows that the rumours were damaging, not that they were true. What we can say is that the rumours reached mainland Greece very quickly. The Lamian War ended by July 322,[5] and with it ended the possibility of Athenian statesmen making capital out of the rumours.

[1] For the date see A. J. Sachs, *Late Babylonian Astronomical and Related Texts* (Rhode Island, 1955), nr. 209, cited by A. E. Samuel, *Historia* xiv (1965), 8.

[2] Droysen, i³. 465, n. 1; Beloch, iv². 1. 62 and Berve, *Alexanderreich* ii. 184, also dismissed the rumours very abruptly. Grote at least gave the matter serious thought: 'It is quite natural that fever and intemperance ... should not be regarded as causes sufficiently marked and impressive to explain a decease at once so unexpected and so momentous.' (xii. 78, n. 2.)

[3] Diodorus 19. 11. 8; Plut. *Al.* 77. 1.

[4] [Plut.] *Vit. Or.* 849 B. Hermippus alleged that Hypereides' tongue was cut out in Macedonia, others said at Cleonae. The story that he bit off his tongue to avoid divulging secrets of Athens seems romantic embroidery. It is difficult to see what secrets of Athens would have been important to Antipater after the city surrendered. Cf. Plut. *Demosth.* 28.

[5] The battle of Crannon is dated by Plutarch to 7 Metageitnion (late July)—*Camill.* 19. 5.

Within a year of Alexander's death there were allegations in mainland Greece that he had been poisoned.

The sources give a whole compendium of stories, more or less scandalous. Plutarch, Arrian, Curtius, and Justin are, however, unanimous over the main lines of the story. Cassander brought the poison to court (in a mule's hoof!), to be administered by Iolaus at a banquet held at the house of Medius of Larissa.[1] That is the basis for subsequent variants. Plutarch mentions rumours that it was Aristotle who advised Antipater to commit the murder, and that he made the poison in person from ice-cold water gathered at the stream of Nonacris.[2] The story is attributed to a certain Hagnothemis, who in turn had picked it up from Antigonus. Antigonus, it may be added, would have welcomed the propaganda to further his intrigues against Cassander. Not only Cassander. Slanders against Aristotle would also damage the famous Peripatetic statesman, Demetrius of Phalerum, who governed Athens in close cooperation with Cassander. In 307/6 he was expelled from Athens by Demetrius Poliorcetes and escaped to Egypt from fear of Antigonus.[3] This story of the philosopher playing tyrannicide is amusing indeed, but nevertheless an elaboration upon a myth, the myth of enmity between Aristotle and his former pupil.[4] The Aristotle stories moreover are detachable from the corpus of rumours, a secondary layer worked up from the known friendship between the philosopher and the family of Antipater.[5] The earliest rumour (corroborated by the Hypereides decree) is that the plot was hatched by Antipater, transmitted by Cassander, and executed by Iolaus. What truth, if any, is in it?

The main sources do not encourage the suspicion of poison. Arrian expresses extreme scepticism, while Plutarch claims that most writers considered the stories fabricated.[6] However, he adduces as proof the alleged fact that Alexander's body stayed fresh and fragrant several days after death—hardly very compelling evidence. We find different causes of death alleged very early. Ephippus of Olynthus held that at Medius' celebrated banquet Alexander took to drinking the company's health in a twelve-pint cup.[7] The effort was too much for him, and as a result he fell ill and died, 'thanks to the wrath of Dionysus on account of the sack of his homeland Thebes'. The bias is hostile to Alexander and the reference to Thebes reminiscent of Cassander's restoration of the city in 316. Cassander would have welcomed insinuations that Alexander died from drink, and Ephippus may consciously have served his interests. The story is elaborated in the sensational tract produced by some writer unknown masquerading under the name of Nicobule.[8] Here it was maintained that Alexander managed to pledge the whole company of twenty

[1] Plut. *Al.* 77, Arr. 7. 27, Curt. 10. 10. 9–20, Justin 12. 14.

[2] Plut. 77. 3, Arr. 7. 27. 1.

[3] Diod. 20. 45. 3, Dion. Hal. *De Dinarch.* 3 (= *FGrH* 328 F 66), Diog. Laert. 5. 78: cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* ii D. 642 ff.

[4] The rift between Aristotle and Alexander is a speculative construction, based primarily on the relationship between the philosopher and Callisthenes (cf. Berve ii. 72 ff., Jaeger, *Aristotle*, pp. 318 f.). It is clear, however, that too much stress has been laid on the family connection, and there is no adequate evidence that Callisthenes' fall had repercussions for Aristotle. Cf. my article to be published shortly in *Historia*.

[5] Pausanias 6. 4. 8 attests Aristotle's influence with Antipater, which is corroborated by an apothegm of Alexander (Plut. *Al.* 74. 5). Antipater is further mentioned as executor in Aristotle's will (Diog. Laert. 5. 12 f.).

[6] Arr. 7. 27. 3, Plut. *Al.* 77. 5.

[7] Athenaeus 10. 434 A–B = *FGrH* 126 F 3.

[8] *FGrH* 127 F 1. A general discussion of the fragments of Ephippus and Nicobule is to be found in L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great*, pp. 61–8.

guests at Medius' banquet. This tradition must have gained very wide circulation, for we find the notoriously apologetic Aristobulus reacting against it. Alexander, he maintained, only drank heavily at Medius' banquet because he *already* had a fever, and his potations were only to quench the thirst it generated.[1] But elsewhere Aristobulus took pains to gloss over Alexander's wildly intemperate drinking habits,[2] and like Tarn he would have found displeasing the allegation that his hero drank himself to death. Most probably he reversed the original causal sequence, and placed the fever deliberately before the symposium. It is interesting moreover that even where Alexander's death is put down to intemperance, the centre of the drama is the banquet of Medius. Something must have happened there, either the marathon drinking or the alleged crime. Diodorus' narrative is especially intriguing. Though he himself is sceptical, he mentions the reports of some writers that Alexander drank a draught of poison. In his earlier report of the banquet he makes Alexander drain a large cup and cry aloud as though struck a violent blow.[3] I suspect that his source (Cleitarchus?) gave a stock report of the banquet and then followed it up with the poisoning stories. In that case the violent shock after drinking comes from a non-tendentious source. Moreover it is a standard motif, recurring in Plutarch, Justin, and Arrian (a rumour);[4] it might even be fact.

At this point I come to a most peculiar document—a tract on Alexander's death with an elaborate testament forming an appendix. It occurs in several versions of the Alexander Romance and also as a continuation of the Metz Epitome.[5] I follow Merkelbach in treating it as an independent pamphlet and I shall refer to it as the *Liber de Morte*. In the various versions of the pamphlet there are divergences of detail, but the core of the story is identical, a full and lurid exposé of an assassination plot by Antipater and his family. Sensational though the details are, there are elements which must be very early. The story places extraordinary emphasis on the person of Perdiccas, who is represented as the foremost of the marshals, and even in one version given Egypt in preference to Ptolemy.[6] This propaganda is only relevant to 321 B.C., when Perdiccas invaded Egypt and opened hostilities with Antipater.[7] In the pamphlet the poisoning rumours are given in full in their most damaging form, and clearly Perdiccas was using the same techniques as Hypereides in attempting to alienate Antipater from his Macedonian following. There are, however, extensive interpolations. Merkelbach convincingly proves that there are considerable additions in the interests of Rhodes, inserted some time after 305.[8] However, he goes too far in postulating only one set of interpolations. Much of the poisoning story and the testament is inappropriate to the propaganda war of 321. In particular, if the pamphlet was produced by the Perdiccan faction, the favourable treatment Ptolemy enjoys throughout is

[1] Plut. *Al.* 75 = *FGrH* 139 F 59.

[2] Arr. 7. 29. 4 (F 62); Plut. *Al.* 23. 1; cf. Schwartz, *RE* ii. 917 f. = *Griechische Geschichtsschreiber* (Leipzig, 1959), p. 129.

[3] Diod. 17. 117. 5 ff. for the poisoning stories, 117. 2 for the shock motif.

[4] Plut. *Al.* 75. 5, Justin 12. 13. 8–9, Arr. 7. 27. 2.

[5] The parallel texts of this document are most conveniently given by R. Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des griechischen Alexanderromans* (*Zetemata*, ix [Munich, 1954]), pp. 220–1.

[6] Ps.-Call. 3. 33. 15, cf. Metz Epitome, 117.

[7] Fully argued by Merkelbach, op. cit. pp. 124 ff., building on the conclusions reached by Ausfeld, *Rh. Mus.* l (1895), 357 ff. and lvi (1901), 517 ff.

[8] Merkelbach, pp. 145 ff. Diod. 20. 81. 3 knows of a testament of Alexander allegedly deposited in Rhodes.

inexplicable.[1] There must be several layers of interpolation, deriving from the various stages of the propaganda war against Cassander. But originally the allegations of poisoning came from the Perdiccan faction, slandering Antipater and claiming that Perdiccas' pre-eminence was sanctioned by Alexander.

In the Latin version of the pamphlet there is a remarkable statement that it is proper to the narrative to include the names of persons who were passed over by Onesicritus to avoid arousing powerful enmities.[2] The writer then gives a list of guests at Medius' banquet and explicitly exculpates six of them from the charge of poisoning; these are Perdiccas, Eumenes, Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Asander, and the enigmatic Holcias,[3] who in this source alone appears as an intimate of Alexander. The names as they appear in our texts cannot, *pace* Merkelbach, be propaganda of the Perdiccan faction. Peithon, for instance, is alleged to have been privy to the conspiracy, but he was in the forces of Perdiccas until the very end, spearheading his assassination in Egypt.[4] His previous behaviour may have been suspect, but he was still an adherent and it would have been madness to alienate him with accusations of regicide. What matters for our purposes is that Onesicritus must have hinted that Alexander was poisoned, otherwise there would have been no motive for the tract-writer's claim to superior knowledge. Now Onesicritus was a first-hand authority, the head-steersman of Nearchus' fleet[5] and presumably present with him in Babylon. Admittedly he had the reputation of a trader in sensationalism,[6] but one can safely assume that this was scandal which he transmitted rather than scandal of his own invention. If it is true that his work was produced shortly after Alexander's death,[7] we have further positive evidence that rumours were abroad very early in both Europe and Asia that the king was poisoned.

[1] In our extant texts Ptolemy has prominence equivalent to that of Perdiccas—cf. Metz Epitome, 111; only the variant that Perdiccas was to hold Egypt, Ptolemy Libya, (Ps.-Call. 3. 33. 15) hints at an earlier version.

[2] Metz Epitome, 97–8 = *FGrH* 134 F 37.

[3] Cf. Berve ii, nr. 580. Merkelbach, p. 128 n. 3, may be correct in suggesting that Holcias was the original author of the tract.

[4] Diod. 18. 36. 5; cf. Merkelbach, p. 129. It is also relevant to the argument that Medius is accused of complicity in the poisoning (Metz Epitome, 97). Now Medius was a lieutenant in Perdiccas' forces, commanding the mercenary troops for the Cyprus expedition in early 321 (Arr. *Succ.* F 24. 6 = *FGrH* 156 F 10. 6). Again Perdiccas seems to be accusing one of his own adherents. Merkelbach, p. 130, suggests that Medius promptly turned his coat (he reappears in 314 as an admiral of Antigonus—Diod. 19. 69. 3, etc.), but there is a difficulty. Asander, satrap of Caria, is exculpated explicitly from the murder (Metz Epitome, 98, Ps.-Call. 3. 31. 9). Now Asander deserted to Antigonus in the vanguard of the invasion of Asia Minor, again in early 321 (Arr. *Succ.* F 25. 1–2). If all the list of poisoners is Perdiccan propaganda, it can only have been written if Medius changed his allegiance before the defection of Asander; otherwise Perdiccas would be incriminating an adherent and exculpating a traitor. Unfortunately our only source for these incidents is the Vatican palimpsest, universally assigned to Arrian's history of the Successors, and we have no absolute chronological placings. However Asander must have deserted at the very opening of the campaign in Asia, and Medius was still commanding Perdiccan forces at the beginning of the campaigning season. It seems unlikely that he deserted (if he did desert) before Perdiccas' defeat in Egypt, and almost impossible that his desertion came before Asander's.

[5] *FGrH* 134 T 5.

[6] Strab. 15. 1. 28 (698) = *FGrH* 134 T 10 *ὃν οὐκ Ἀλεξάνδρου μᾶλλον ἢ τῶν παραδόξων ἀρχικυβερνήτην προσείποι τις ἄν.*

[7] So Strasburger, *RE* xviii. 465, T. S. Brown, *Onesicritus*, pp. 5 ff.

II

If the rumours were widespread and originated close to Alexander's death, it is at first sight puzzling why modern historians have ignored or dismissed them so confidently. But the unanimity stems from reliance on a document known as the Royal Ephemerides which is cited by both Arrian and Plutarch.[1] When they come to record the death of Alexander both authors refer to a day-by-day account of the progression of the illness to be found in the Royal Ephemerides; Plutarch indeed claims to give an almost verbatim copy (*τὰ πλεῖστα κατὰ λέξιν*). In our extant literature there are five other references to these Ephemerides. According to Athenaeus they were composed by Eumenes of Cardia and Diodotus of Erythrae, while in a textually corrupt passage Aelian appears to repeat the attribution to Eumenes.[2] Now before promotion to a cavalry hipparchy Eumenes had been chief secretary to Alexander, during the Indian campaign at least,[3] and it was primarily the weight of his name which gave rise to the hypothesis that the document attributed to him was an official day-to-day diary of Alexander's activities, compiled from official records of the same type as the *hypomnematismoi* of functionaries in Roman Egypt.[4] This daybook, it was held, was used extensively by Ptolemy, whose writings were therefore surrounded with a unique aura of authenticity.[5]

This hypothesis was long canonical, but there have always been difficulties. Most important is the problem why both Plutarch and Arrian present the document as an unambiguously reliable record of Alexander's death, but elsewhere ignore it, Arrian completely and Plutarch almost so.[6] The standard explanation, most fully developed by Kornemann,[7] is that the Ephemerides were used only by Ptolemy and our citations come at second hand. Now Arrian concludes his extract with the words *οὐ πόρρω δὲ τούτων οὔτε Πτολεμαίῳ οὔτε Ἀριστοβούλῳ ἀναγέγραπται*. This phrase can be interpreted in two ways, either 'nothing was recorded beyond this point' or 'their accounts were no different from this'.[8] If one accepts the first interpretation, there is no inconsistency in the hypothesis that Arrian took his account from Ptolemy. But then the problem remains why Plutarch should have used Ptolemy as an intermediary source. An intermediary source is indeed likely, despite Plutarch's claim to be quoting verbatim. His library at Chaeronea he admits was limited (*Demosth.* 3. 1), and it may well not have contained a work as obscure as Eumenes' Ephemerides. However, if Plutarch drew on an intermediary, it is unlikely to have been Ptolemy; there is no evidence that Plutarch consulted his work directly.[9] Athenaeus too refers to the Ephemerides[10] and there is no

[1] Arr. 7. 25–6, Plut. *Al.* 76. The extant fragments of the Ephemerides are conveniently printed by Jacoby, *FGrH* 117.

[2] Athenaeus 10. 434 B, Aelian *VH* 3. 23.

[3] Plut. *Eum.* 1, Nepos *Eum.* 1. 4–6.

[4] The foundation article was produced by Wilcken, *Philologus* 53 (1894), 81. His discussion of the technical meaning of *Ἐφημερίδες* has been expanded by A. E. Samuel, *Historia* xiv (1965), 1–3.

[5] For one of many statements of this view see Berve i. 50 f.

[6] In his *Life of Alexander* Plutarch refers to the Ephemerides once more for the trivial detail that Alexander often disported himself hunting foxes and birds (*Al.* 23. 5).

[7] E. Kornemann, *Die Alexandergeschichte des Königs Ptolemaios I*, p. 37.

[8] Arr. 7. 26. 3; cf. L. Pearson, *Historia* iii (1955), 437 f. (now *Alexander the Great, the main problems*, ed. G. T. Griffith [Cambridge, 1966], pp. 9–10).

[9] In the whole corpus of Plutarch's writings there are only two references to Ptolemy, both in lists of authorities (*FGrH* 138 F 4, 28a). There is no evidence that he was ever used directly.

[10] Athenaeus 10. 434 B = *FGrH* 117 F 2b.

sign that he had ever read Ptolemy. If the hypothesis of Ptolemy's privileged access is to hold, one has to postulate that Athenaeus got his material at third hand from an unnamed source, who in turn was derived from Ptolemy. That is too much to swallow; it is far simpler to deny the privileged access. Plutarch and Arrian will have obtained their material either from the original or by different transmissions. In that case why are the Ephemerides so rarely cited?

It is best to grasp the nettle and concede that the document only existed as a record of the last few months of Alexander's life. Most recently A. E. Samuel suggested that the document is a posthumous compilation from Babylonian public records, which certainly did give mundane details of the daily life of kings resident in the city.[1] Moreover the records relevant to Alexander would have covered only the last few months of his life. Now it is true enough that the language would have presented no obstacle to Eumenes, for he could concoct a fake letter in *Syria grammata* during the campaign of 317/16,[2] and his staff was certainly in a position to raid the archives of Babylon. It is, however, an enigma why they should have done so. Eumenes would surely not have considered these records any more reliable than his own memory and possibly his own memoirs. Moreover, if the city archives were used to give a spurious air of authenticity, it is inexplicable that no source mentions this ground for the document's reliability. I conclude that the Babylonian records are as superfluous an entity as Occam's razor has ever pared away. The jejune entries Samuel cites are vague and general references to royal illnesses; there is nothing like the precise description of the progression of the illness that we find in the Ephemerides. Moreover it is inexplicable how Babylonian records should have come to mention a consultation of *Sarapis* unless Alexander actually founded a temple in Babylon, which is unlikely to the last degree.[3]

At first sight Pearson's solution is more attractive: 'a literary production, composed in later times and based in part on the works of historians like Ptolemy, Aristobulus and their contemporaries'.[4] He even identifies the forger, a certain Strattis of Olynthus, who according to a desperately corrupt entry in the *Suda* composed five books of Ephemerides or about Ephemerides; the manuscripts permit either reading.[5] This is a superfluous hypothesis. If the

[1] *Historia* xiv (1965), 10–12.

[2] Diod. 19. 23. 3, Polyaen. 4. 8. 3. Arrian (6. 30. 3) implies that Peucestas was the only Macedonian dignitary to learn the Persian language, but this is clearly exaggerated. He himself notes that Laomedon, brother of Erigyius of Mytilene, was bilingual (3. 6. 6 *διγλωσσος . . . ἐς τὰ βαρβαρικὰ γράμματα*). Members of Alexander's staff at all levels would have been competent to read Aramaic script.

[3] Arr. 7. 26. 2, Plut. *Al.* 76. 9. There is another embarrassment: Aelian mentions entries in the Ephemerides from the Macedonian month of Dios (Oct./Nov.). There is no evidence that Alexander reached Babylon until the Cossaean campaign of winter 324/3 was finished (Arr. 7. 15. 4). In that case either Aelian's text is corrupt (the reference being to some month other than Dios), or the record is of Alexander's earlier stay at Babylon after Gaugamela (Oct./Nov. 331). In the latter case what was the motive in conflating two brief extracts from the Babylonian archives, some $7\frac{1}{2}$ years apart?

[4] *Historia* iii (1955), 439; *Lost Histories . . .*, p. 260.

[5] *FGrH* 118 T 1. Even if this mysterious Strattis entitled his work *'Εφημερίδες* he may not have been unique in this. The *Suda* has an entry about Aeschrion of Mytilene, an epic poet friendly with Aristotle and in the train of Alexander. Tzetzes and the scholiast to Lycophron cite romantic details from a work by him called the *'Εφημερίδες* (*ἐν ζ* †*'Εφεσίδων Σ.* Lyc. *Al.* 688). Strattis' work may have been more like Aeschrion's fantasy

Ephemerides are a late fabrication, fathered on Eumenes and Diodorus for the sake of corroborative verisimilitude, the name of the author is of no great moment. However, the hypothesis of a purely literary forgery seems to me unconvincing. Pearson's major argument centres on the celebrated crux of the temple of Sarapis, which we find mentioned in the excerpts of Plutarch and Arrian as the place visited by senior Macedonian officers on the eve of Alexander's death.[1] Now the cult of Sarapis is usually assumed to have been founded in Egypt by Ptolemy Soter, probably some time before 312,[2] and the reference to a pre-existing temple in Babylon looks like a glaring anachronism. But another problem immediately arises. Why should a late forger have invented a temple to an Egyptian god in Babylon? There is no conceivable motive, unless with Kornemann[3] one suggests that Ptolemy somehow doctored the archives at Babylon with propaganda for his new god. We are faced with a dilemma: either the Ephemerides are a late fabrication and a motiveless fabrication, or Ptolemy interpolated the record in his own interests, in which case the fabrication is early. It might be possible to slip between the horns and argue that it was Alexander who established the cult of Sarapis and with it a temple in Babylon. But no evidence before the Alexander Romance links the Ptolemaic cult with Alexander,[4] and there is no record of any major building activity by the king in Babylon beyond the reconstruction of the great state temple of E-sagila. The picture was not changed by the discovery of an inscription by the south-east corner of the Caspian Sea dealing with the manumission of a slave and his dedication to Sarapis.[5] It is dated to the reign of Antiochus I (281–61), and the surprisingly early provenance in such a distant part of the Seleucid empire led C. B. Welles to the hypothesis that the cult of Sarapis was founded and promulgated by Alexander. The arguments are inconclusive; recently Fraser[6] suggested that the foundation in Hyrcania was the work of a settlement of Egyptian soldiers. Nor can we postulate consistent hostility between the two empires inhibiting the spread of the cult of Sarapis. We know that it was being disseminated in the period 305–1,[7] the

than the dry record of Plutarch and Arrian. Cf. *FGrH* iii B (Text), p. 742.

[1] Arr. 7. 26. 2, Plut. *Al.* 76. 4, Pearson, pp. 438 f.

[2] Macrob. *Sat.* 1. 20. 16. Even if the oracle here given is a relatively late fabrication (M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion*, ii. 148, n. 6), there must have been some connection between Nicocreon of Cyprus and the Ptolemaic cult of Sarapis. A bogus oracle could be added to a genuine historical context, whereas it is very unlikely that a forger would have chosen a person as obscure as Nicocreon to receive an invented oracle.

[3] Kornemann, *Ptolemaios* . . . , p. 37; Wilcken, *UPZ* i. 82.

[4] The literary evidence is amassed by C. B. Welles, *Historia* xi (1962), 272–89, and discounted by P. M. Fraser, *Opuscula Atheniensia* (Acta Instituti Atheniensis Regni Sueciae, Series in 4°) vii (1967), 32–4 (especially n. 49).

[5] First published by L. Robert, *Hellenica* xi (1960), 85 ff. (photograph, plate V).

[6] Welles, op. cit., pp. 290–2, Fraser, op. cit., pp. 30–1.

[7] Even if the Halicarnassus inscription (*OGIS* 16) is to be placed after 270 (N. Greipl, *Philologus* 85 (1930), 159 ff.), the cult of Sarapis must have been widely promulgated in Egypt in the last decade of the fourth century. The fragment, certainly of Menander, calling Sarapis a σεμνὸς θεός (F 139, Körte; Fraser, n. 78) implies that the cult was accepted all over the Greek world by the time of Menander's death, around 293/2 (*IG* xiv. 1184—the chronological data on the stone are inconsistent, but the limits for his death are 293 and 290 B.C. Cf. Körte, *Menander*, p. 1 = T 3). Demetrius of Phalerum allegedly wrote paeans celebrating the restoration of his sight by Sarapis (Diog. Laert. 5. 76), but this proves nothing. They could have been written at any time between his arrival in Egypt about 307 and his death in disgrace under Philadelphus.

time of the great alliance against Antigonus; then Seleucus might well have favoured the establishment of shrines to Sarapis, the deity so honoured by his ally.

But what of the temple of Sarapis mentioned by the Ephemerides? Wilcken's researches have made it almost certain that the cult of Sarapis under the Ptolemies originated in the late Pharaonic worship of the Memphis underworld god, Osiris-Apis (Wśr-ḥp), whose name is used in Ptolemaic bilingual inscriptions as a transliteration of Sarapis.[1] Now this underworld god had been worshipped and approached by the Greeks of Memphis before the Macedonian conquest,[2] and the Macedonian troops resident there over the winter 332/1 must have been familiar with his great sanctuary. Arrian[3] mentions a sacrifice to the Apis bull, the earthly incarnation of Osiris, and there is no good reason to deny that the Macedonians were acquainted with the worship of the deceased Apis in the form of the underworld god, Oserapis. Moreover the sacrifice to Apis was a necessary act of conciliation after the sacrileges of the Persian reconquest of Egypt ten years before,[4] and Alexander must have paid due respect to all the major deities of Memphis. In that case there must have been a striking resemblance between Oserapis and Bel-Marduk, the bull god of Babylon; indeed the Macedonians could well have regarded them as twin manifestations of the same deity, just as the Greek Zeus and the Libyan Ammon had been regarded as identical since the fifth century.[5] In that case the temple of Bel-Marduk in Babylon might have been described as belonging either to *Belus* or to *Oserapis*, and a reference to Oserapis would inevitably have been altered by later writers to the more familiar form Sarapis. Now, if this interpretation is correct, it would follow that the reference to a temple of Sarapis at Babylon must be early. After Ptolemy's reshaping of the Memphis cult with the addition of elements from Greek religion[6] the identification of Bel-Marduk with (O)serapis would no longer be feasible; the representations of the Ptolemaic Sarapis with the modius-crowned head of Zeus would have borne no resemblance to the bull god of Babylon. The reference to Sarapis in the Ephemerides, far from proving the document a late fabrication, is inexplicable unless it was made before the reconstitution and broadcasting of the Memphis underworld cult by Ptolemy Soter.

There is another peculiarity: the versions of the Ephemerides given by Plutarch and Arrian contain discrepancies. In particular Arrian[7] mentions repeated briefing sessions for the forthcoming Arabian expedition, whereas Plutarch knows nothing of them. The only comparable conference he mentions is with Nearchus to discuss his recent voyage in the Indian Ocean; in Arrian

[1] Wilcken, *UPZ* i. 79–82.

[2] A prayer to Oserapis by the Hellenomemphite woman, Artemisia, dates from the mid fourth century B.C.: Wilcken, *UPZ* i. 97–104.

[3] Arr. 3. 1. 4.

[4] The Persians are said to have perpetrated every kind of sacrilege in the invasion (Diod. 16. 51. 2), and Ochus is said to have committed the supreme desecration of killing the Apis bull (Ael. *VH* 4. 8, 6. 8, Plut. *de Is. et Serap.* 11 (355 C). Cambyses may not have anticipated the atrocity (Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, 89 f.), but Alexander would have read his Herodotus and taken note.

[5] The equation of Zeus and Ammon had been made by the fifth century. Despite Tarn's indignant disclaimer (ii. 349) Herodotus 2. 55 is conclusive corroboration, if corroboration is needed, of Pindar (*Pyth.* 4. 16, F 36 (Snell)). An amazing example of syncretism is found in a late inscription from Cius in Bithynia (*CIG* 3724): 'I hail Osiris . . . he is Zeus Cronides, he is the mighty Ammon, the deathless king, and highly honoured as Sarapis.'

[6] Cf. Roeder, *RE* IA. 2418 ff.

[7] Arr. 7. 25. 2–6.

this turns into another briefing.[1] Plutarch also has a meeting to discuss army appointments,[2] which is either ignored by Arrian or unknown to him. Lastly the officers whom Plutarch makes consult Sarapis/Marduk are Seleucus and an otherwise unknown Python. In Arrian Python is replaced by the more celebrated Peithon and four more names are added. Further the plain visit in Plutarch becomes a (non-Babylonian) incubation, and the response of the god is slightly different.[3] Some of these divergences are radical, and the texts used by our two authors must have been different. If Arrian, as is likely, got his version from Ptolemy, the king either added his own embellishments or used a fuller text. Now this phenomenon of progressive elaboration is very reminiscent of the *Liber de Morte*, in which we can detect several layers of propaganda. The initial references to Perdiccas' salutation as regent[4] and his assignment to Egypt[5] have been extruded in later versions and replaced by variants. Moreover there are manifest later interpolations in favour of Ptolemy and Rhodes. Similarly, if the Ephemerides were used as propaganda, they would have been progressively altered as the political climate changed. In Arrian's version two of the names added to the list of officers consulting Sarapis are men branded as poisoners in the Alexander Romance, Peithon and Peucestas.[6] It is at least possible that here we have a counterblast to detailed accusations of poisoning. The accused, so the propagandist maintains, did all they could to ensure Alexander's recovery and were in no way to blame for his death. Similarly Arrian's repeated briefings for the Arabian expedition could be designed to show Alexander active during his illness, so as to discount stories of poisoning at Medius' banquet.

III

Now if the Ephemerides were an original propaganda document some very interesting conclusions emerge. Apart from the extracts about the last illness, the quotations surviving from the Ephemerides refer almost exclusively to Alexander's excessive drinking. The most substantial extract, from Aelian, gives a day-to-day account of the king's drinking during the month of Dios, some seven months before his death.[7] What results is a continuous record of carousing with the frequent story that the king slept solidly for one or even two days after his excesses. This last detail is taken up by Athenaeus and Plutarch[8] (in the *Quaestiones Conviviales*), who speak of frequent entries "*τήνδε*

[1] Plut. *Al.* 76. 3 *καὶ κατακείμενος ἐν τῷ λουτρῶνι τοῖς περὶ Νέαρχον ἐσχόλαζεν, ἀκροώμενος τὰ περὶ τὸν πλοῦν καὶ τὴν μεγάλην θάλατταν*; Arr. 7. 25. 4 *λούσασθαι καὶ λουσάμενον θῦσαι. Νεάρχῳ δὲ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις ἡγεμόσι παραγγεῖλαι τὰ ἀμφὶ τὸν πλοῦν, ὅπως ἔσται ἐς τρίτην ἡμέραν.*

[2] Plut. *Al.* 76. 5.

[3] Arr. 7. 26. 2, Plut. *Al.* 76. 9.

[4] The archipresbyter Leo preserves a unique passage in which Alexander on his death-bed commends his empire and wife to Perdiccas, the unanimous choice of his generals. The Metz Epitome (100) and Ps.-Callisthenes (3. 32. 3) replace the incident with a lame doublet, an obvious piece of surgery to excise a passage embarrassingly favourable to Perdiccas. Cf. Merkelbach, *Die Quellen des . . . Alexanderromans*, pp. 131 ff., 230 f.

[5] The donation of Egypt to Perdiccas occurs only in Ps.-Callisthenes (3. 33. 15). Here Ptolemy is confined to Libya, while Perdiccas has Egypt. The Metz Epitome (117) excises the donation to Perdiccas. Ps.-Callisthenes must represent the earliest version; after 321 such propaganda would have been pointless (Merkelbach, pp. 142 ff.).

[6] Ps.-Call. 3. 31. 8. The parallel list in the Metz Epitome (97) is extremely corrupt, but clearly there are variants. The list of poisoners may have varied with the political climate.

[7] Ael. *VH* 3. 23 = *FGrH* 117 F 2a.

[8] Athen. 10. 434 B, Plut. *Q.C.* 1. 6 (623 E) = *FGrH* 117 F 2 b and c.

τὴν ἡμέραν ἐκ τοῦ πότου καθεύδων", *ἔστι δ'ὅτε*, "*καὶ τὴν ἐφεξῆς*". Aelian even says that from the extracts he gives one can judge the tone of the whole work.[1] So either the testimonia are to be rejected out of hand or we must face the conclusion that the Ephemerides recorded a drinking marathon unique in history, in which the king spent his life alternately drinking himself to insensibility and sleeping off the results. Clearly this is the story of Ephippus and Nicobule, who attributed Alexander's death to his excesses at Medius' banquet. In the Ephemerides the final illness seems anticipated by a string of comparable debauches,[2] and the impression to be fostered is no doubt that Alexander ruined his constitution by his drinking and so succumbed easily to the illness thereby induced.

Tarn, who believed with Aristobulus that Alexander sat up to talk, not to carouse, claimed that the king drank to quench the thirst he had from a fever developed *before* Medius' banquet, and he held that the Ephemerides support this assertion.[3] But, needless to say, Arrian's version (Plutarch's begins later) states that after a carouse lasting well into the night Alexander bathed and slept in the bathroom *ὅτι ἤδη ἐπύρεσσεν*;[4] this is as clear a statement as one could wish for that the fever came on after the drinking. As in the *Liber de Morte* the crucial time is the feast of Medius, but the Ephemerides make him develop a fever, not the symptoms of poisoning, and that fever is eminently well anticipated by a long record of similar potations. No doubt the author hoped to eliminate all suspicion of foul play. The picture given of Alexander may not have appealed to Aristobulus and Tarn, but Antipater would have been very appreciative.

Athenaeus and Aelian attribute the composition to Eumenes of Cardia, and indeed the name of the ex-secretary of Alexander would make the ideal heading to a purported piece of archival material if one wished to give it an authentic appearance. But the Ephemerides are an early production, and it is not improbable that Eumenes *was* the author. In that case the original document can be given a very precise date of composition. The work exculpates Antipater, and such a work could hardly be composed in 321, when Eumenes commanded the Perdiccan forces in Asia Minor against the invading army of Antipater and Craterus. Nor could it have been written in the years of Eumenes' exile at Nora, condemned to death *in absentia* thanks to Antipater and Antigonus. The years in which he was a royal general in Asia, down to his death in 316, are likewise excluded, for the arch-enemies of the regime he supported were the sons of Antipater.[5] The only possible period would be the eighteen months of coexistence between the death of Alexander and the opening of hostilities between Antipater and Perdiccas in the winter of 322/1. Rumours of poisoning spread from Asia immediately after Alexander's death, and at first it was in the interests of all the generals to scotch them. Eumenes would have been the first choice to produce a quasi-official document giving a day-to-day account of Alexander's illness and implicitly ruling out poison as a cause of death.[6] This document will have been a standard propaganda

[1] *ἔξεστι δὲ ἐκ τούτων ἐννοεῖν καὶ τοῦ λοιποῦ χρόνου τὰ ὅμοια αὐτοὺς λέγοντας.*

[2] If we accept Aelian's apparent dating to the month of Dios, the record of drinking went back at least seven months. Gessner's emendation of the MS. reading *δι' οὗ μηνός* to *Δίου μηνός* seems inescapable.

[3] Tarn, *Alexander* ii. 41; cf. Aristobulus, *FGrH* 139 F 62.

[4] Arr. 7. 25. 1.

[5] For the career of Eumenes cf. Kaerst, *RE* vi. 1083 ff., H. D. Westlake, *Bull. John Rylands Library* 37 (1954), 309 ff.

[6] Berve ii, p. 184 refers to 'den ein-

weapon in Antipater's arsenal and modified as circumstances required. It must have been widely circulated, for it came by different routes to be used by Plutarch and Arrian. Moreover Plutarch makes it clear that the account of the Ephemerides was widely accepted,[1] and the authority of the name of Eumenes must have been as high in antiquity as it has been in recent years. Curtius Rufus, however, was sceptical, pointing out that Antipater controlled Macedonia and therefore Macedonian opinion, and he sums up in a phrase worthy of Tacitus himself: '*haec, utcumque sunt, credita eorum quos rumor asperserat mox potentia exstinxit*'.[2] This writer of the early principate could judge the value of official apologetic better than most of his successors.

Analysis of the sources for Alexander's last illness leads to an impasse. The king died in early June after a protracted illness, but the causes of the illness are unknown. The Ephemerides build up a moving and edifying picture, culminating in the army's ceremonial parade past the bedside of their dying king. On the other hand persistent rumours, fostered by Perdiccas and Antigonus for their own purposes, hinted at collusion by a group of generals to poison Alexander. The question how Alexander died will probably remain for ever insoluble, inextricably confused by conflicting propaganda. Other problems, however, are less intractable. We can examine the situation before and after the king's death, and see whether the result of his sudden demise was to introduce new dangers or to resolve existing ones. The behaviour of the senior generals at Babylon is also open to probing for evidence of collusion. Was Alexander's death a wholly unexpected thunderbolt, or were there already plans to meet the succession crisis? Questions such as these should yield the evidence to judge which of the rival stories is the more credible.

IV

The year before Alexander's death was a time of crisis. The king's return from India had brought with it a spate of executions in which nearly a dozen officials, satraps and military commanders, lost their posts and their heads.[3] The motives for the purge were complex. The recent disaster in Gedrosia

wandfreien Krankenbericht der Ephemeriden, der eine Vergiftung als Todesursache ausschliesst'. That hits the nail squarely on the head!

[1] Plut. *Al.* 77. 5 οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι τὸν λόγον ὅλως οἴονται πέπλασθαι τὸν περὶ φαρμακείας.

[2] Curtius 10. 10. 18. Diod. 17. 118. 2 and Justin 12. 13. 10 make the same obvious point that Cassander was in a position to stifle broadcasting of the rumours in Macedonia.

[3] E. Badian, *JHS* lxxxi (1961), 17 ff. (= Griffith, pp. 207 ff.), gives full details, but probably exaggerates the extent of the terror. In particular he seems to lay excessive stress on the arrivals of satraps at court, inferring that a summons to court meant danger for the man invited. The details hardly support the hypothesis. Stasanor we know arrived at court in Carmania with the doomed army commanders of Media (Arr. 6. 27. 3). However, Arrian says quite explicitly that Stasanor was sent back to his province before the departure for Pasargadae (6. 29. 1); if suspected, he was soon acquitted. According to the *Liber de Morte* he was one of the guests at Medius' banquet (Ps.-Call. 3. 31. 8, Metz Epitome 97), but this list of poisoners is patent propaganda and is certainly not reliable evidence for the actual composition of the banquet. Even if he was at Babylon in June 323, it might have been for a routine report or even to deliver a batch of *ἐπίγονοι*, as Berve suggests (ii. 362). The arrival of Peucestas, Philoxenus, and Menander was only a month or two before the king's death (Arr. 7. 23. 1). They were bringing a large and important consignment of reinforcements, and there is no evidence that Alexander intended to replace them as satraps. The fact that they were still at Babylon when Alexander died is hardly significant.

necessitated finding a scapegoat, and the incumbents of Susiana and Paraetacene were obvious victims.[1] But the terror went further than the provinces adjacent to Gedrosia, and the motives were more profound. When Alexander moved into India most of mankind must have thought him gone for ever,[2] and many satraps will have taken the opportunity of carving out for themselves quasi-independent baronies. In Media Cleander, son of Polemocrates, and Harpalus, son of Machatas, controlled between them the holding forces and the central treasury of the empire. Both came from the Macedonian mountain province of Elimiotis,[3] and in all probability they had co-operated to exercise virtual control over the central satrapies, the heartland of the empire, thanks to the absence of any effectual supervision. The army commanders of Media dutifully escorted reinforcements to Carmania, and on their arrival were accused of misgovernment. Curtius[4] gives a vivid picture of Alexander listening to accusations of the most lurid atrocities, substantially repeated in Arrian, and finally adding his own verdict; 'ab accusatoribus unum et id maximum crimen esse praeteritum, desperationem salutis suae; nunquam talia ausuros, qui ipsum ex India sospitem aut optassent reverti aut credidissent reversurum' (10. 1. 7). This rings true; arbitrary behaviour from subordinates would be feared and resented by a Macedonian monarch, well aware of the dangers of an uncontrolled nobility.[5] Above all by Alexander, whose very existence had been threatened by the family of Attalus.[6] The man who had so carefully exterminated Parmenion's family was not likely to tolerate another group's attaining comparable eminence in any sector of the army or the administration. Harpalus had certainly adopted regal airs, if one can place any reliance on the extracts preserved by Athenaeus from Theopompus' letters to Alexander.[7] In these symbouleutic treatises he accused Harpalus of allowing his mistress,

[1] Plut. *Al.* 68. 7, Arr. 7. 4. 2. Despite Badian's arguments (*CQ* N.S. viii [1958], 147 f.) I do not think Apollophanes was in this category. In a list of appointments at the Gedrosian capital of Pura Arrian says (6. 27. 1) that Apollophanes was deposed for neglect. However, Apollophanes was killed in a battle against the Oreitae and his death unimpeachably attested by Nearchus (Arr. *Ind.* 23. 5). Badian believes that he was to have been the first scapegoat for the Gedrosian disaster, and that he was deposed before news of his death reached Pura (cf. Curt. 9. 10. 19). Then Alexander turned against other satraps of the area. However, Apollophanes can never have made a satisfactory scapegoat. Arrian (6. 22. 2) says that he was left midway on the desert journey and told to work in conjunction with Leonnatus. If there were recriminations to be made in that sector, one would expect Leonnatus to have been implicated too. However, the high honours accorded him prove that he was not (Arr. *Ind.* 42. 9). On the other hand the obvious scapegoat for the disaster was Astaspes, satrap of Carmania, who certainly *was* deposed and executed at this point (Curt. 9. 10. 21–9). Now Arrian is completely unaware of Astaspes' fate, and it seems highly probable that Ptolemy made a slip and conflated Apollophanes and Astaspes (so Berve ii. 57, nr. 105), misled by the close proximity of the death of the one and the deposition of the other.

[2] Arr. 7. 4. 2, Plut. *Al.* 68. 3.

[3] Cf. Berve ii. 215, Badian, *JHS* lxxxi (1961), 22.

[4] Curt. 10. 1. 1–8, Arr. 6. 27. 4.

[5] The use of *πεζέταιροι* as a title for the *phalanx* (Anaximenes, *FGrH* 72 F 4) implies that at some point the Macedonian foot was built up as a counterweight to the noble *ἑταῖροι*, a central core of the army loyal to the royal house. Similarly Philip's institution of a corps of royal pages bears far more resemblance to a permanent pool of hostages than to an officer training school (Arr. 4. 13. 1). The institution was developed by Alexander, who instituted a permanent corps of Asians. These 30,000 *Epigonoi* are succinctly described by Curtius as '*obsides simul . . . et milites*' (8. 5. 1).

[6] Plut. *Al.* 9, Justin 9. 7. 3 ff., Satyrus *ap.* Athen. 13. 557.

[7] Athen. 13. 586 C, 595 A–E = *FGrH* 115 F 253–4.

Glycera, to stay in the royal palace of Tarsus and to bear the title of *βασίλισσα*. Whether or not the charges are true,[1] they must represent popular rumour and shed some light on the pretensions and aspirations of Harpalus. Alexander's reactions must have been predictable to his treasurer, who was wise to flee—especially after the clear signal given by the execution of Cleander.

In Macedonia too Antipater and his family had consolidated their influence throughout the ten years of the king's absence, and the laurels won at Megalopolis were as yet untarnished. Any action against dangerously independent satraps must have included him, and indeed Curtius claims that his supposed regal pretensions were denounced by Alexander.[2] After the purge in Carmania it can hardly have caused surprise that in summer 324 Craterus was sent with 10,000 veterans of Opis to take over the regency of Macedonia, Thrace, and Thessaly, and—a pleasant euphemism—to champion the liberty of Greece.[3] It is possible to argue that Antipater would have surrendered his command and conducted the new Macedonian levies to Asia without breaking the peace,[4] but the objections are to my mind insuperable. In June 323 Craterus was no further west than Cilicia,[5] and in Cilicia he remained until mid 322. Moreover it was Leonnatus who first moved to Greece to help Antipater in the crisis of the Lamian War despite his orders from Babylon to assist Eumenes in the recovery of Cappadocia.[6] Craterus had ignored an earlier appeal by Antipater for help,[7] and his behaviour gives the impression that he was waiting for an opportunity to intervene decisively and to dictate his terms to Antipater.[8] This is all the more surprising when one reflects that the troops under his command had mutinied at Opis because of their intense yearning for home.[9] Craterus had a mandate from his king to return them to Macedonia, and it is inexplicable that they were inactive so long unless they were confident that Antipater would fight to retain his command. We need a very solid deterrent, much more than the moral quarantine suggested by G. T. Griffith;[10] orders to delay until Antipater's reinforcements had left for Asia would not have impressed the veterans of Opis.

There are too statements in the sources which imply a considerable rift between Antipater and Alexander. Admittedly Arrian is sceptical, but his wording is cautious and repays examination. After a very sober statement of Craterus' mission he continues, *λόγος δέ τις οὗτος ἐφοίτα ἀφανὴς παρὰ τοῖς τὰ βασιλικὰ πράγματα, ὅσῳ ἐπικρύπτεται, τοσῷδε φίλοτιμότερον ἐξηγουμένοις*.[11] This is not a typical *legomenon* of Arrian, that is, an extract from a late subsidiary

[1] Berve (ii, nr. 365) and Jacoby (*FGrH* ii D. 390) go too far in representing Theopompus as an official agent of Alexander in Chios, who sent regular reports to Asia. These letters are surely modelled on the sundry exhortations of Isocrates, interspersed with the vindictiveness to individuals so typical of Theopompus' writing. There is no reason to think that the denunciations of Harpalus were written before his flight.

[2] Curt. 10. 10. 14, *saepe certe audita est vox Alexandri, Antipatrum regium affectare fastigium maioremque esse praefecti opibus ac titulo Spartanae victoriae inflatum, omnia a se data asserentem sibi.* cf. Justin 12. 14. 3.

[3] Arr. 7. 12. 4.

[4] So Berve ii. 50–1, G. T. Griffith, *PACA* viii (1965), 12 ff.

[5] Diod. 18. 4. 1, Badian, *JHS* lxxxi (1961), 35–6.

[6] Diod. 18. 14. 4–5, cf. Plut. *Eum.* 3.

[7] Diod. 18. 12. 1.

[8] He did not move until mid 322 after the death of Leonnatus, and when Antipater's fortunes were at their nadir (Diod. 18. 16. 4).

[9] Arr. 7. 8. 3; 9. 1, Curt. 10. 2. 12–19. Interestingly Craterus' troops were whittled down to 6,000 by the time he left for Europe (Diod. 18. 16. 4); it can only have been through desertions.

[10] See above, n. 4.

[11] Arr. 7. 12. 5.

source. What it is is a factual report from a major narrative source (possibly Aristobulus) that there were rumours of alienation between Alexander and his general in Europe. The rumours are historical, and Arrian's emphatic disapproval is no argument against their authenticity. The correspondence with Olympias, who consistently attacked and slandered Antipater, is irrelevant to the situation in 324. If Arrian is right, Alexander chafed at the price Olympias demanded for his ten-month lodging,[1] and the battle had been won by Antipater as early as 330, when the queen mother retired to nurse her grievances in Epirus.[2] Her complaints may have been renewed effectively six years later, but, if so, some additional factor must have come into play. It is interesting that the *Liber de Morte* begins with a statement that Alexander was instigated to remove Antipater by letters from Olympias.[3] If there was a rift between Alexander and Antipater, the correspondence of Olympias would naturally have been adduced as its cause, but it is unlikely that a rift would have been inferred from the correspondence and the mission of Craterus alone. Indeed the fact that the poisoning stories sprang up so early is confirmation that Antipater had most to gain from the death of Alexander.

The only remaining evidence against the hypothesis of hostility between the king and his regent is the mission of Cassander.[4] Would Antipater deliberately send his eldest son to court as a hostage to fortune? One cannot say how soon Antipater realized his position was threatened. The obvious move on learning of the executions in Carmania was to send a representative to explain his own behaviour, and who better than his eldest son?[5] When it became known that Craterus was to control Macedonia and Alexander's ferocious reception of Cassander had confirmed the initial suspicions, he could only take defensive moves.[6] Antipater's replacement fits precisely into the pattern of moves against satraps of key areas, and the summons to court must have looked sinister given the political context. Perhaps he was not marked for liquidation, as was rumoured,[7] but he was to be stripped of *potestas* and *auctoritas*. The gulf between the regency of Macedonia and leading levies to an uncertain future is too great for him to have submitted tamely. Craterus had his suspicions, surely justified.

The imminent peril of Antipater was not the only cloud on the horizon. Alexander had been showing disturbing signs of megalomania,[8] and there were ominous hints that he had hard and indefinite fighting planned for the immediate future. Greece was in a state of acute unrest thanks to the imminent influx of exiles from the disbanded satrapal armies in Asia.[9] Athens and Aetolia were determined to resist attempts to restore exiles to Samos and Oeniadae,

[1] Arr. 7. 12. 6, cf. Plut. *Al.* 39. 11.

[2] According to Livy 8. 24. 17 Olympias and her daughter Cleopatra received the bones of Alexander the Molossian, which had been sent to Epirus via Metapontum. The date of his death is roughly fixed by Aeschines (*Ctes.* 242), who mentions (in mid 330) a recent embassy to Cleopatra, consoling her on the death of her husband.

[3] Ps.-Call. 3. 31. 1, Metz Epitome, 87. cf. Diod. 17. 118. 1, Justin 12. 14. 1–3.

[4] Plut. *Al.* 74, Berve ii, nr. 414.

[5] Phrataphernes, satrap of Hyrcania, sent a son to Carmania (Arr. 6. 27. 3), presumably to give a detailed report. Both his sons were selected for the élite mixed hipparchy (Arr. 7. 6. 5), maybe as hostages for their father's good behaviour.

[6] Cassander's arrival at court cannot be dated precisely. Shortly before Alexander's death Plutarch speaks of him as newly arrived (*ἀφῖκτο μὲν νεωστί*); this is consistent with departure from Macedonia before Craterus' mission was published.

[7] Curt. 10. 10. 15.

[8] Cf. J. R. Hamilton, *CQ* N.S. iii (1953), 156–7.

[9] Cf. Badian, *JHS* lxxxi (1961), 29 ff.

and Alexander was equally determined to crush resistance.[1] Justin claims that Alexander had plans to crush Athens,[2] and according to the tendentious account of Ephippus a certain Gorgus of Iasus promised weapons and ammunition on a fantastic scale for the siege of Athens.[3] The proposal was made at Ecbatana in late 324, so hostilities were envisaged nearly a year before Alexander's death. Probably few Macedonians would have objected to a war limited to Athens, but there was a far more ominous shadow. It seems certain that Alexander had hatched grandiose schemes of conquest in the west. Even the sober Aristobulus admitted that the king was insatiable of conquest, and Arrian endorsed his verdict.[4] It would have caused no surprise when Perdiccas produced *ὑπομνήματα* by his dead master, advocating conquest of the south Mediterranean to the Atlantic.[5] Senior officers must have discussed these plans with their king, and given the army's morale at Opis they would have had their apprehensions about the troops' reaction. Certainly Perdiccas knew what he was about when he selected the provisions for the army to decide upon![6]

In 323 then there was the immediate prospect of localized war in Greece and the high probability of a large-scale war of expansion in the west. In addition Alexander's staff faced the perpetual hazard of an unbalanced king, neurotically suspicious of independent achievement. The future was black, and Alexander's sudden death in June 323, at the early age of 33, must have been nothing less than providential. That is no proof that he was murdered; his welcome demise could have been coincidence, the happy result of endemic malaria.[7] Before inferring foul play we must examine the settlement at Babylon for evidence that the king's death was anticipated and the necessary arrangements made in advance.

V

The succession crisis of 323 was unique. Not only was the extent of Macedonian power infinitely greater than in 336, but there was no successor to the throne. Alexander's initial security measures had ensured that the Argead

[1] Note the apophthegm in Plutarch (*Al.* 49. 15): *οὐκ Οἰνιαδῶν ἔφη παῖδας ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἐπιθήσειν δίκην Αἰτωλοῖς.*

[2] Justin 13. 5. 1–8; cf. Curt. 10. 2. 2.

[3] Athen. 12. 538 B = *FGrH* 126 F 5. Whatever the value of the rest of the information, the proposal by Gorgus is eminently reasonable. He was a friend of the Samians and honoured by them in a decree passed after the restoration, a decree which incidentally confirms his crowning of Alexander at Ecbatana (*SIG*[3] 312).

[4] Arr. 7. 19. 6 *τὸ δ' ἀληθές, ὡς γέ μοι δοκεῖ, ἄπληστος ἦν τοῦ κτᾶσθαί τι ἀεὶ Ἀλέξανδρος.* Despite Arrian's qualification the verdict was Aristobulus'. Strabo repeats the judgement in a passage explicitly taken from Aristobulus 16. 1. 11 (741), *τὸ δ' ἀληθὲς ὀρεγόμενον πάντων εἶναι κύριον*); cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* 139 F 56.

[5] Diod. 18. 4. 4. The authenticity of these *ὑπομνήματα* has often been impugned, the most recent doubter being M. J. Fontana, *Le Lotte per la Successione di Alessandro Magno dal 323 al 315* (Palermo, 1960), p. 280. However, it seems certain that the relevant passage of Diodorus is from the same source as the rest of the opening chapters of book 18—Hieronymus of Cardia (cf. Schachermeyr, *JÖAI* lxi (1954), 120–4 (= Griffith, pp. 324 ff.), Badian, *Harvard Studies* lxxii (1967), 184–9), and there is no valid reason to rule out as late fabrication any of the provisions quoted by Diodorus. Certainly Alexander's schemes of western conquest are credible enough. Justin 12. 1. 5 claims that he was jealous of his uncle, Alexander of Epirus, and if the latter's remark is historical that his nephew in Asia had merely raided a harem (Gell. *NA* 17. 21. 33, Curt. 8. 1. 37), it is quite possible that Alexander intended to overshadow his uncle's successes.

[6] Cf. Badian, *Harvard Studies* lxxii (1967), 200 ff.

[7] So Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse*, n. 290.

house was virtually extinct. One descendant of Philip survived, his son by Philinna of Larissa, possibly illegitimate and certainly a half-wit;[1] his behaviour in Curtius is no positive argument to the contrary, for Curtius here embroiders his source material with motifs from early imperial history.[2] Alexander's wife, Rhoxane, was pregnant, but there was no guarantee of the sex of her child, and, even if she bore a son, the Macedonians cannot have been expected to welcome a king who was half Bactrian.[3] In such a situation there were clear historical parallels; when Archelaus was murdered in 400/399 there followed a decade of usurpation and civil war,[4] and even Amyntas despite his sons did not avert succession intrigues. All through Alexander's reign the danger was acute that he himself would be killed and his kingdom dismembered by conflicting pretenders. Parmenion's advice to produce an heir before exposing himself to danger proves how acutely the lack of a legitimate successor was felt.[5] When Alexander in fact died, the extraordinary thing is that no serious disputes are recorded in the period immediately following. Admittedly the only source to give a detailed account of the succession debate is Curtius, who patently contaminates his work with motifs from Roman imperial history. In particular Perdiccas' reluctance to assume the ring of Alexander is extremely evocative of the behaviour of Augustus and Tiberius before the senate.[6] The fact that Perdiccas received Alexander's ring, attested by all sources but Arrian,[7] is embroidered for dramatic effect; hesitation to shoulder the *moles imperii* would be a gambit familiar enough to a Roman audience. Similarly the preliminary negotiations between the generals are staged before the whole army, not in private conclave, as is overwhelmingly probable.[8] However, despite the rhetorical overlay basic facts can be extracted.

It seems that the generals had worked out a plan whereby the unborn child of Alexander should succeed, and, if the Curtian narrative is not fiction at this point, that the empire should be governed by a junta of regents.[9] This peculiar arrangement not unnaturally was vehemently opposed by the phalanx regiments, who, instigated by Meleager, opted for the mentally

[1] Satyrus, *ap.* Athen. 13. 557 D, Plut. *Al.* 77. 7, Diod. 18. 2. 2.

[2] Cf. G. V. Sumner, *AUMLA* xv (1961), 30 f., endorsed by Badian, *Studies in Greek and Roman History*, p. 263.

[3] Curtius 10. 6. 13 makes Ptolemy indignantly inveigh against an Asian king: '*Roxanes vel Barsinae filius, cuius nomen quoque Europam dicere pigebit*'.

[4] Cf. Momigliano, *Filippo il Macedone*, p. 29.

[5] Diod. 17. 16. 2 (advice before the crossing into Asia), Plut. *Al.* 21. 7 = *FGrH* 139 F 11 (advice to marry Barsine).

[6] Curt. 10. 6. 18 *haerebat inter cupiditatem pudoremque et, quo modestius, quod expectabat, appeteret, pervicacius oblaturos esse credebat.*

[7] Diod. 17. 117. 4; 18. 2. 4, Curt. 10. 5. 4, Justin 12. 15. 2, also the *Liber de Morte* (Metz Epitome, 112). The omission in Arrian's *Anabasis* is not significant; Ptolemy would not have wished to broadcast the fact that his rival had virtually been designated Alexander's successor.

[8] Curt. 10. 6. 24–7. 1. 10. 6. 2 is clear evidence that originally the debate was private; the disagreement before the army is superimposed (10. 6. 4 ff.). Compare Meleager's dramatic appeal to the infantry in Curtius (10. 7. 1 ff.) with the more sober account of Diodorus 18. 2. 3 and Justin 13. 3. 2, who make Meleager join a delegation to confront the troops and then side with the men he was intended to placate.

[9] This was Perdiccas' proposal (Curt. 10. 6. 9), reinforced by Aristonous (10. 6. 16–18) and contested by Meleager (6. 21 ff.). Peithon drafted the final compromise that Perdiccas and Leonnatus should be tutors of the future king, Craterus and Antipater jointly administer Europe. There may be some Perdiccan propaganda here, but one can hardly doubt that the initial proposal was for the succession of Alexander's unborn child. Justin gives a different account of the debate but the same conclusion (13. 2. 14). For discussion see Fontana, *Le Lotte . . .*, pp. 112 f.

deficient Arrhidaeus and secured his proclamation as king.[1] Now the interesting thing is not that there was opposition but that it was led by a man as insignificant as Meleager. He commanded a battalion of the phalanx and was the obvious person to foment discontent in that quarter,[2] but he was certainly not the equal of the great marshals, Perdiccas, Leonnatus, and Ptolemy. Moreover the cavalry stood firm behind their leaders. Arrian lists eight commanders of the utmost distinction backed by the cavalry, whereas Meleager alone is mentioned as supporting the infantry in their demands.[3] He was clearly an opportunist taking advantage of the discontent of his own troops to reinforce his position. His action provoked no split in the cavalry leadership, which though prepared to accept Arrhidaeus as king would not tolerate either mutiny in the phalanx or supremacy for Meleager. The food supplies were requisitioned, and a reconciliation took place with understandable promptness.[4] The ringleaders of the conspiracy in the phalanx were liquidated and Meleager himself disappeared soon afterwards.[5]

Meleager's bid for power was soon crushed, within a week of the king's death,[6] and the only result of the phalanx agitation was that Arrhidaeus as well as Alexander's unborn child achieved regal status. This was immaterial; Arrhidaeus' mental condition necessitated a protector as much as the infancy of Alexander's son-to-be.[7] The crucial question was who was to be regent; the kings were figureheads, and their actual status was puzzling even to contemporaries. Generally documents were dated by the regnal years of Arrhidaeus,[8] but the custom took time to solidify. The Thersippus decree, passed by the island league in 321, regards the kings as equal for dating purposes. It is quite certain that the young Alexander bore the title of *βασιλεύς*; our sources refer frequently to 'the kings'[9] and their testimony is now confirmed by a recently discovered dedication at Samothrace.[10] The legality of the situation is irrelevant; the Macedonians had no written constitution. What was far from irrelevant was the regentship, for the regent manipulated the kings.

Now it has become one of the most vexed questions of Hellenistic scholarship whether Perdiccas or Craterus was appointed regent at Babylon.[11] The discussion centres on source criticism, and here modern scholars have been perfectly unscrupulous in their methods. There are three roughly contemporary writers definitely known to have dealt with the period of the succession. Hieronymus of Cardia was the lieutenant of Eumenes, and is highly respected as a historian.[12]

[1] Curt. 10. 7. 2 ff., Arr. *Succ.* 1. 1, Diod. 18. 2. 2, Justin 13. 3.

[2] Cf. Berve ii, nr. 494. He had been a *taxis* leader throughout Alexander's reign ('niemals mit einem grösseren Kommando betraut'). Justin 13. 3. 2 makes his fellow officer Attalus an accomplice in the agitation; his importance, however, is much less.

[3] Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 2.

[4] Curt. 10. 8. 8–23, Diod. 18. 2. 3–4, Arr. *Succ.* 1. 3.

[5] Curt. 10. 9. 10–21, Arr. *Succ.* 1. 4, Diod. 18. 4. 7, Justin 13. 4. 8–9.

[6] Curt. 10. 10. 9.

[7] Cogently argued by Badian, *Studies* . . . , pp. 263 f.

[8] *SIG*[3] 311, p. 530, *OGIS* 8; cf. Schwahn, *Klio* xxiv (1931), 312 f.

[9] Diod. 18. 23. 2; 29. 1; 55. 1.

[10] *Hesperia* xxxvii (1968), 222 (cf. plate 66) *Βασιλε/ῖς Φίλιππος κ/[αὶ Ἀ]λ[εξαν]/-δ[ρος]*. Another Samothracian inscription from the reign of Lysimachus mentions a dedication of sacred land by *οἱ βασιλεῖς Φί/[λιππος] καὶ Ἀλέξανδρος* (*Hesperia* vol. cit. 220 f.). This is unlikely to indicate a dedication by Philip II confirmed by Alexander.

[11] A summing-up of earlier literature in Bengtson, *Die Strategie in der hellenistischen Zeit*, i. 64 f.; cf. Fontana, *Le Lotte* . . . , p. 145, Badian, *Studies* . . . , pp. 264 ff.

[12] Schubert, *Quellen zur Geschichte der Diadochenzeit*, pp. 6 ff.

On the other hand we have Duris of Samos, one of Schwartz's 'tragic historians',[1] execrated by writers ancient and modern, and the enigmatic Diyllus of Athens, of whose works three fragments survive.[2] Now by ingenious manipulations the diametrically opposed conclusions of, say, Fontana and Schwahn have been made to emanate from Hieronymus and any variants from Duris and Diyllus. One finds strange assumptions: Beloch[3] for instance enunciates the admirable principle that one must base one's conclusions on the best source, but he goes on to state that the best source is Arrian, failing to add that our knowledge of Arrian's work on the Successors is based on Photius' summary, which reduces five books of Arrian to three pages of Teubner text.[4] One desperately needs a sure basis for criticism, and the only source amenable is Diodorus. It is as certain as any result in this field can be that Hieronymus is the direct source of large parts of Diodorus 18–20,[5] and the most likely hypothesis is that the preamble of book 18 is Hieronyman material, drastically abridged in Diodorus' characteristic manner.[6] One can then isolate what was probably the earliest version and contrast it with the variants elsewhere.

Diodorus' account is straightforward. After the reconciliation by the chief officers[7] Arrhidaeus was made king and Perdiccas *epimeletes* of the kingdom. All satraps appointed were to obey the king and Perdiccas. Next comes the distribution of satrapies, with Macedonia assigned to Antipater alone,[8] and after the distribution there is a reference to Craterus in Cilicia with 10,000 veterans (Diod. 18. 4. 1). Now Diodorus later mentions Antipater's appeal to Craterus in the crisis of the Lamian War and adds in parenthesis a recapitulation of the instructions of Alexander.[9] It is often argued that the first passage is a doublet from another source, but wrongly; this passage is an important pivot in the narrative. Diodorus' satrapy list had one notable omission: Craterus, one of Alexander's most powerful generals, was left without a post, and Hieronymus will have explained the reason. When the king died, Craterus was stranded in Cilicia and his interests were not represented at Babylon. He was cut off from office and left to be eliminated at the earliest opportunity. Craterus, however, had orders from Alexander to displace Antipater, and Diodorus in the celebrated *ὑπομνήματα* excursus explains that Perdiccas took elaborate pains to quash all Alexander's last plans, in particular the instructions to Craterus.[10] Antipater was the chief beneficiary—his deposition was now revoked—and the fact that Perdiccas took such pains to help him is a clear hint of collusion. The general picture in Diodorus is clear. Perdiccas becomes regent, Antipater retains his sphere of influence, while Craterus is discarded and left to fend for himself.

This picture, however, is not uniform, and the only source to reproduce it

[1] *FGrH* 76 T 8; cf. Schwartz, *RE* v. 1853 ff. (= *GG*, pp. 27 ff.).

[2] *FGrH* 73.

[3] *GG* iv². 2. 308.

[4] The discovery of the Vatican palimpsest (Arr. *Succ.* F 24–5 = *FGrH* 156 F 10) proved that Photius totally omitted large portions of the original.

[5] Jacoby, *RE* viii. 1548; Fontana, *Le Lotte* . . . , pp. 273 ff.

[6] The counter-arguments are basically those of Tarn, *JHS* xli (1921), 1 ff., which I find far from cogent. The basic props are the omission of Perdiccas' chiliarchy and the alleged Craterus doublet.

[7] *οἱ χαριέστατοι τῶν ἀνδρῶν* (Diod. 18. 2. 4). This is a pretty certain reference to Eumenes (cf. Plut. *Eum.* 3), so the favourable bias in Diodorus is a fair indication of Hieronyman authorship.

[8] Diod. 18. 3. 2.

[9] Diod. 18. 12. 1.

[10] Diod. 18. 4. 1 ff.; cf. Badian, *Harvard Studies* lxxii (1967), 202–3.

fully is the Heidelberg Epitome of the history of the Successors, which because of its brevity is useless as a control source.[1] Elsewhere, though there is unanimity on the position of Antipater, there is considerable divergence about Perdiccas and still more about Craterus. The main discrepancy is in Photius/Arrian,[2] where one learns that the terms of the reconciliation between infantry and cavalry were that Antipater should be general in Europe, Craterus should be champion of Arrhidaeus' kingdom (*προστάτης τῆς Ἀρριδαίου βασιλείας*), Perdiccas should have the chiliarchy which Hephaestion had held, which involved the administration of the entire empire (*τὸ δὲ ἦν ἐπιτροπὴ τῆς ξυμπάσης βασιλείας*). Substantially the same story recurs in Dexippus, a writer of the third century A.D., whose narrative according to Photius was largely derived from Arrian.[3] According to Photius' summary[4] he gave Craterus *κηδεμονία καὶ προστασία τῆς ἀρχῆς* (which is glossed as the most important position among the Macedonians), and Perdiccas had the chiliarchy of Hephaestion. This concurrence is at first sight impressive, but there are inconsistencies within the accounts of both authors. In Arrian's version of the satrapy list[5] Craterus is made to share the government of Macedonia with Antipater, while at the beginning of the extract from Dexippus[6] there is a statement that the government devolved upon the kings and Perdiccas, who by the vote of the Macedonians administered the empire for them. Now Dexippus' variant can easily be explained away by supposing that the government administration and the regentship were distinct and separate offices.[7] However, the joint command in Arrian is recalcitrant, and has to be explained away as an intrusive gloss.[8] This is a desperate expedient, and it neglects the rest of the tradition that a joint command in Macedonia was intended by the generals at Babylon.[9] Indeed why should one emend away apparent variants in Arrian? The recording of variants was part of his historical technique and cannot have been confined to the *Anabasis*. Moreover his treatment of the events at Babylon was very ample[10] and would have incorporated divergent traditions as a matter of course. It need cause no anxiety that Photius' summary leaves the divergences unlabelled. What matters is the statement that Craterus was to become *προστάτης τῆς βασιλείας*, and on this the argument must rest.

Arrian and Dexippus both maintain that Perdiccas was given the chiliarchy of Hephaestion, which Arrian glosses as the administration of the empire. Now under the Achaemenids the commander of the élite battalion of the

[1] *FGrH* 155 F 1, 1–2; cf. Jacoby, *FGrH* ii D. 548 ff.

[2] Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 3.

[3] *FGrH* 100 F 8. 8 *καὶ τὰ ἄλλα διέξεισι ἐν πολλοῖς, ὡς κἂν τούτοις, Ἀρριάνῳ κατὰ τὸ πλεῖστον σύμφωνα γράφων.*

[4] *FGrH* 100 F 8. 4.

[5] Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 1 *τὰ δὲ ἐπέκεινα τῆς Θρᾴκης ὡς ἐπὶ Ἰλλυρίους καὶ Τριβαλλοὺς καὶ αὐτὴ Μακεδονία καὶ ἡ Ἤπειρος ὡς ἐπὶ τὰ ὄρη τὰ Κεραύνια ἀνήκουσα καὶ οἱ Ἕλληνες σύμπαντες Κρατέρῳ καὶ Ἀντιπάτρῳ ἐνεμήθη.*

[6] *FGrH* 100 F 8. 1 *ἡ τῶν Μακεδόνων ἀρχὴ περιέστη . . . καὶ ἐς τοὺς ἀμφὶ Περδίκκαν, οἳ κρίσει τῶν Μακεδόνων ἐπετρόπευον αὐτοῖς τὴν ἀρχήν.*

[7] Fontana, pp. 144 f., even supposes two distinct regentships; Perdiccas had 'la tutela del nascituro', while Arrhidaeus with surprising far-sightedness demanded a guardian antagonistic to Perdiccas, so that Craterus was appointed; 'scelto a rappresentare e proteggere la parte più tradizionalista e conservatrice del suo popolo e, in questo senso, il regno di Arrideo'.

[8] Jacoby, *FGrH* ii D. 558, explains away *Κρατέρῳ* as a marginal note absorbed into the text by scribal error.

[9] Curt. 10. 7. 9—the abortive proposal of Peithon; the fictitious will of Alexander (Ps.-Call. 3. 33. 13) also appointed Craterus directly to Macedonia.

[10] Photius' summary of the first five books ends with the defeat of Ariathes in late 322 (Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 12).

Persian army, the 10,000 Immortals, was known as the chiliarch.[1] He was second only to the king,[2] and beside his military functions he had a major role at court. There are several ceremonial duties attested, such as ushering embassies[3] or even supervising executions.[4] The chiliarch was an important but to us shadowy figure. Only once does any of them achieve prominence in our sources. In 395 Artaxerxes II commissioned Tithraustes, his chiliarch,[5] to execute the delicate diplomatic task of liquidating Tissaphernes in Caria. Tithraustes performed his mission efficiently, paid off the arrears due to Conon's sadly neglected fleet, and returned to court after a short stay at Sardes.[6] The chiliarch then could be entrusted with confidential state business, and this was no doubt due to his close proximity to the king at court as well as to the distinction of his military command. There is no evidence of any specific administrative role; the chiliarch was a confidential agent who might be used in emergencies. Together with other Persian paraphernalia this office was absorbed into Alexander's court, and it reappears in 319, when Antipater made his son Cassander chiliarch under the regentship of Polyperchon.[7] Now under Alexander the chiliarchy fell to Hephaestion, commander of the first cavalry hipparchy, and Chares' description of the *proskynesis* scene in Bactria probably shows him performing his office's ceremonial functions.[8] After Hephaestion's death Perdiccas succeeded to the chiliarchy. Plutarch states categorically that after Hephaestion's death Perdiccas took over his hipparchy and Eumenes moved into the vacant place.[9] The objections to this firm statement of fact are based on Arrian, who claims that after Hephaestion died Alexander appointed nobody to his chiliarchy so that his name would not disappear 7. 14. 10). But it is to the last degree implausible that a major cavalry unit was left without a commander; Arrian goes on to say that the battalion continued to bear Hephaestion's name and badge, and no doubt this is behind his statement that no commander was appointed. We need not doubt that Perdiccas was chiliarch in Alexander's lifetime; Ptolemy's hostility is sufficient reason for the omission of his promotion in Arrian.[10]

A further difficulty is that in Diodorus' account *Seleucus* is appointed chiliarch in Babylon, and the same statement recurs in Appian's brief sketch of Syrian history under the Successors (*γίγνεται δ' εὐθὺς Ἀλεξάνδρου μεταστάντος ἡγεμὼν τῆς ἵππου τῆς ἑταιρικῆς, ἧς δὴ καὶ Ἡφαιστίων ἠγήσατο Ἀλεξάνδρῳ καὶ ἐπὶ Ἡφαιστίωνι Περδίκκας*),[11] and Appian's source for this period, whether directly

[1] Artabanus, murderer of Xerxes, is called both chiliarch (Plut. *Them.* 27. 2) and *ἀφηγούμενος τῶν δορυφόρων* (Diod. 11. 69. 1).

[2] Nepos, *Conon* 3, Diod. 11. 69. 1.

[3] Diod. 16. 47. 3, Hesych. s.v. *ἀζαραπατεῖς· οἱ παρὰ Περσαῖς εἰσαγγελεῖς*. Cf. Marquardt, *Philologus* lv (1896), 227 f., P. J. Junge, *Klio* xxxiii (1940), 12 ff., esp. 32 ff. Junge's hypothesis (pp. 24–8) that the chiliarch (hazarapatiš) was head of the treasury and therefore of the royal chancellery is pure speculation and totally unconvincing.

[4] Hdt. 3. 34. 30.

[5] The only evidence that Tithraustes was chiliarch is given by Nepos (*Con.* 3. 2), who erroneously attributes the fall of Tissaphernes to Conon's initiative (Barbieri, *Conone* [Rome, 1955], pp. 128 f.), but there is no reason to doubt that Tithraustes was Artaxerxes' chiliarch: the office can hardly be an invention.

[6] *Hell. Ox.* 19. 3 (Bartoletti) *περιμείνας ὀλίγον χρόνον ἐν ταῖς Σάρδεσιν ἀνέβαινεν ὡς βασιλέα.*

[7] Diod. 18. 48. 5.

[8] Plut. *Al.* 54 = *FGrH* 125 F 14a.

[9] Plut. *Eum.* 1, *τὴν Περδίκκου παράλαβεῖν* (sc. *Εὐμένης*) *ἱππαρχίαν ὅτε Περδίκκας ἀποθανόντος Ἡφαιστίωνος εἰς τὴν ἐκείνου προῆλθε τάξιν*: cf. Appian, *Syr.* 57. 292.

[10] Strasburger, *Ptolemaios und Alexander*, p. 47, Kornemann, *Ptolemaios*, p. 195.

[11] Diod. 18. 3. 4; App. *Syr.* 57. 292.

or indirectly used, was Hieronymus.[1] Now, if one accepts that Seleucus was appointed at Babylon, the chiliarchy of Perdiccas becomes very nebulous indeed. Bengtson[2] goes so far as to postulate a split in the functions of the chiliarchy, Seleucus dealing with the military side and Perdiccas administering the empire. This means conflating inconsistent source data, a method always suspect; no source mentions chiliarchies held by *both* Perdiccas and Seleucus. Moreover, if my argument is right, the chiliarchy was never primarily an administrative post, and Perdiccas was definitely not reduced to a non-military court superintendent. Justin and Curtius regard him as the most powerful man in Asia, and Justin[3] explicitly gives him overriding military command. He must have been regent; Plutarch too clearly implies it—*ἦν γὰρ ἐκεῖνος εὐθὺς ἐν δυνάμει μεγίστῃ τόν Ἀρριδαῖον ὥσπερ δορυφόρημα τῆς βασιλείας ἐφελκόμενος* (*Al.* 77. 7).

Craterus' standing is even more perplexing. If he was *προστάτης*, his forces of 10,000 men, no matter how battle-hardened, were no match for Perdiccas or for the man he had orders to depose. The 'champion of the royal house' was in a desperate position, and it passes belief that he and not Perdiccas was appointed guardian of the kings in Babylon. Hieronymus' version that he was passed over is by far the most convincing. The variant in Arrian that he and Antipater were to share Macedonia has won some acceptance.[4] Craterus, however, never makes any move to claim this inheritance from Alexander. His attitude to Antipater is consistently deferential, even though he brought vital reinforcements, postponed until the last minute. There are no signs that he was entitled to a joint command, and Antipater easily dispensed with him after the Lamian War. Even before the breach with Perdiccas we find him marrying Antipater's eldest daughter, Phila, and preparing for his return into Asia.[5] It seems to have been recognized that Craterus was to seek his future in Asia; Alexander's *acta* had been annulled and with them any claims he might have on Macedonia. Now Craterus' allocation to Macedonia recurs in the testament of Alexander given in the *Liber de Morte*,[6] where Craterus is appointed to Macedonia and Antipater given a vague overriding command in the territory west of the Halys.[7] Such provisions fit in beautifully with Perdiccan propaganda in 321, when Alexander's last orders could be resuscitated and used against Antipater. There is no difficulty in the propaganda having reached Arrian; we do not know that he believed it. The *prostasia* of Craterus belongs to the same world of propaganda and with it the spurious chiliarchy of Perdiccas and the omission of Seleucus. When Perdiccas insinuated that Antipater's tenure of Macedonia was illegitimate, the obvious counter was to query the basis of Perdiccas' own position. Accordingly he was portrayed as a usurper, the subordinate of Craterus who appropriated the regentship by

[1] In the *Mithridates* (8. 25) there is one of the very few citations of Hieronymus by name (*FGrH* 154 F 3), and elsewhere there is a close correlation between his narrative and that of Diodorus.

[2] Bengtson, *Strategie*, i. 66. 94 f.

[3] Justin 13. 4. 5, castrorum et rerum (regum?) cura Meleagro et Perdiccae adsignatur.

[4] Schwahn, *Klio* xxiv (1931), 324 f., endorsed by Badian, *Studies*, p. 266.

[5] Diod. 18. 18. 7, *ὁ δ' Ἀντίπατρος . . . τὴν εἰς τὴν Ἀσίαν ἐπάνοδον συγκατεσκεύασεν.*

[6] Ps.-Call. 3. 33. 12–15, Metz Epitome, 117, cf. Merkelbach, p. 141.

[7] The succession debate in Curtius may be tinged with Perdiccan propaganda. Peithon's motion proposes that Craterus and Antipater together administer Europe (10. 7. 9); Ptolemy is given a speech favouring satrapal independence and government by common consent (10. 6. 13–15).

force of arms. Such propaganda might well have been effective among the many combatants who had not participated in the Babylon distribution, and after 321 Antipater and Ptolemy could with impunity foster the myth of the Perdiccan usurpation. Perdiccas was accordingly demoted to chiliarch at Babylon, and Ptolemy studiously avoided all reference to his promotion after Hephaestion's death. Partisan or uncritical writers will have transmitted the fictions for Arrian to collect in his great work on the Successors. We can only regret that Photius' summary was not more extensive.

VI

I conclude that Perdiccas was made regent at Babylon, so becoming *de facto* head of the Macedonian empire and representing the king himself. Macedonia had known regents before, and the precedents were ominous; there was a natural tendency for the protector to push aside his ward and assume the throne himself. The examples of Ptolemy Alorites and Philip, son of Amyntas, would have been fresh in men's minds, and few would have believed that Perdiccas could be restrained from displacing the mentally deficient Arrhidaeus. Perdiccas had been the choice of the officers at Babylon, but Antipater had not been represented, and he might well have felt that the regentship should be his. There were no objections from Macedonia, no doubt because Antipater was enmeshed in the Lamian War and in no position to press home any claims. He may, however, have come to some agreement with Perdiccas in the last months of Alexander's life, confirming tenure for himself and conceding the regentship. Perdiccas would then have honoured his agreement by negotiating the cancellation of Alexander's last plans, thereby isolating Craterus.

In winter 332/1 Antipater was forced to break off his invasion of Aetolia by the startling news that Perdiccas was about to seize the kingship and displace him from Macedonia.[1] The first part of Perdiccas' plan could have been foreseen, but under existing circumstances, if he had made himself king, it would have been as husband to Antipater's daughter, Nicaea. In late 322 Iolaus and Archias had arrived in Asia with Perdiccas' bride-to-be,[2] and the coalition seemed at least firm. But Perdiccas had been intriguing with Cleopatra, daughter of Philip and sister of Alexander, and by the winter he had decided to discard Nicaea and, with her, Antipater.[3] Now it was brutally clear that Perdiccas' *subsidia imperii* were to be not Antipater and his house but Cleopatra and the charisma of Alexander. The regent had made his bid to succeed Alexander, and immediately broke the pre-existing coalition.

It is then probable that an agreement between Perdiccas and Antipater antedated the king's death, and Cassander could have executed the diplomatic negotiations during his stay at court. There is one passage of Diodorus which gives this hypothesis more than probability. The context is Perdiccas' marital

[1] Diod. 18. 25. 3, cf. Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 26.

[2] Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 21 dated after the subjugation of Cappadocia by Diodorus 18. 23. 1: cf. J. Seibert, *Historische Beiträge zu den dynastischen Verbindungen, Historia Einzelschriften* x (1967), 13 ff.

[3] Diod. 18. 23. 3, Arr. *Succ.* F 1. 21 and 26, Justin 13. 6. 4–6. A dialogue on papyrus (*P. Berl.* 13045) contains a purported speech by Deinarchus claiming that Nicaea was betrothed by Alexander. This may be Antipater's reply to claims in hostile propaganda that Rhoxane was bequeathed to Perdiccas (Ps.-Call. 3. 33. 15, Metz Epitome, 118).

intrigues, and Diodorus gives an introductory *mise en scène*.[1] 'Perdiccas had previously decided upon co-operation with Antipater, and for this reason he had pressed his suit when his position was not yet firmly supported; but when he had achieved control of the royal forces and the guardianship of the kings, he altered his calculations.' This passage has always caused difficulties. Schwahn, who found it particularly troublesome, shrugged it off on to the shoulders of Diyllus of Athens[2] and discarded it with an easy conscience. The problem is that Diodorus, here as usual following Hieronymus, talks of a period of *κοινοπραγία*, which Perdiccas terminated after having gained custody of the kings. Accordingly scholars who believe in the chiliarchy of Perdiccas and the *prostasia* of Craterus find here confirmation of a Perdiccan *usurpation* of the regent's powers and functions, this causing the civil war of 321.[3] It is, however, perfectly clear that what Hieronymus and Diodorus thought led to war was the abandonment of Antipater's family for Alexander's; this is explicitly separated from his obtaining the regent's powers. Moreover on no sensible interpretation of the evidence can one talk of a 'non-military grand viziership of Perdiccas'. When Diodorus speaks of assuming the royal powers and the championship of the kings, he must mean the Babylon settlement of June 323.[4] The consequence is that the *κοινοπραγία* can only have been before the settlement and therefore before Alexander's death. Then Perdiccas' affairs could be described as not yet firmly supported, and co-operation with Antipater would have been cemented through Cassander. One would dearly like to have the original of Hieronymus and see what exactly lies behind Diodorus' phraseology, but it seems unavoidable that he knew of an agreement between Perdiccas and Antipater shortly before Alexander's death. If so, it is certain that his informant was Eumenes of Cardia, chief lieutenant of Perdiccas himself.

There may be another hint by Hieronymus of a conspiracy in the last days of Alexander. In 316, when Seleucus was about to break with Antigonus, he was dunned by the new regent for accounts of his administration, and replied that he was not bound to submit accounts for Babylonia, which the Macedonians had given him for his services during the lifetime of Alexander.[5] Whatever the legality of Antigonus' demands, Seleucus is claiming that his services in the reign of Alexander put him above interference by the present regime. Now Seleucus had not been especially outstanding under Alexander,[6]

[1] Diod. 18. 23. 2, *ὁ δὲ Περδίκκας πρότερον μὲν ἦν κεκρικὼς κοινοπραγίαν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο τὴν μνηστείαν ἐπεποίητο μήπω τῶν κατ' αὐτὸν πραγμάτων βεβαίως ἐστερεωμένων. ὡς δὲ παρέλαβε τάς τε βασιλικὰς δυνάμεις καὶ τὴν τῶν βασιλέων προστασίαν, μετέπεσε τοῖς λογισμοῖς.*

[2] Schwahn, *Klio* xxiv (1931), 329: 'Der Satz steht in einem längeren Abschnitt aus Diyllos über den Lamischen Krieg und die daran anschliessenden Ereignisse.' In fact the passage comes directly after the subjugation of Cappadocia in a self-contained excursus on the rival machinations of Perdiccas and Antigonus.

[3] So Bengtson, *Strategie*, i. 73: 'Dieses Verhältnis zwischen den beiden Machthabern musste sich natürlich nach der Usurpation der *προστασία τῶν βασιλέων* durch Perdiccas verschieben'; Fontana, p. 153.

[4] Badian, *Studies*, p. 265, argues that his control over the royal forces was not secure until Craterus' attitude was assured. The point of security is allegedly given in Diod. 18. 4, but on this interpretation there is an amazingly short interval between the wooing of Antipater and the *volte face*. It may also be observed that Diodorus says nothing of *firm* control of the royal forces. For him Perdiccas' position is secure when he becomes guardian of the kings.

[5] Diod. 19. 55. 3 *ἦν Μακεδόνες δεδώκασι διὰ τὰς γεγενημένας ἐξ αὐτοῦ χρείας Ἀλεξάνδρου ζῶντος.*

[6] Note Berve's summary (ii, nr. 700); 'unter Al. durch nichts hervorragend'.

and the donation of Babylonia at Triparadeisus can only have been the reward for his behaviour in the war of 321; his claim to Antigonus is therefore somewhat startling. It is, however, conceivable that he played a leading part in the coalition which engineered Alexander's death, and the rejoinder put in his mouth by Diodorus would then have been very pointed irony. Seleucus' great services were to remove Alexander from the land of the living!

The hypothesis built up is that Antipater, threatened with replacement and perhaps extinction, took the counter-offensive through his son, Cassander, at court. There the chiefs of staff formed a coalition and parcelled out the empire between themselves. In due course Alexander was removed, and the empire he had conquered passed with the minimum of fuss into the hands of his successors. The equilibrium subsisted for a year and was abruptly shattered by Perdiccas' bid for supremacy. Complete proof is impossible, but the probability is that Alexander was murdered. Given the fact that propaganda is at the root of all accounts of his death, one can only assess the prevailing situation. That is that a despot died at a providential moment, that despite the lack of a designated successor the throne passed over without rifts among the successors, and that there is evidence of a junta being formed before Alexander's death. All this points to a successful *coup d'état*, cleanly and ruthlessly executed. It may be a less romantic and uplifting picture than the traditional view of an Alexander worn out by fatigue and wounds dying among grieving friends, but I think it truer to the evidence. Paradoxically the Alexander Romance is nearer to the truth than the Royal Ephemerides.

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