

XXI. The Death of Parmenio

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No aspect of the career of Alexander the Great should be more important and constructive to the historian than the series of executions and assassinations by which he partly crushed and partly anticipated the opposition of Macedonian nobles to his person and policy. Yet no aspect has, on the whole, been less studied in modern times. Tarn, by acceptance of the favorable and rejection of the unfavorable sources,¹ came to the conclusion that Alexander committed two murders, but only two. Of these two, one (that of Clitus) can be regarded as manslaughter under some provocation, while the other (that of Parmenio) can at least be mitigated by various legal, social and political considerations.² This procedure is part of an attitude towards Alexander the Great of which Tarn was the most distinguished (though by no means the only) exponent, an attitude which has made the serious study of Alexander's reign from the point of view of political history not only impossible, but (to many students) almost inconceivable. Yet there is no plausible reason why the autocracy of Alexander the Great should not be as susceptible of political analysis as that of Augustus or Napoleon, for the grim and bloody struggle for power that went on almost unremittingly at his court is amply documented even in our inadequate sources. This is not, of course, to assert that there is nothing else to be studied, any more than one would claim that the study of Hitler should be confined to the unraveling of the intrigues among the party leaders. But it is not the business of the historian to envelop a successful military leader in an aureole of romantic idealisation, nor is it sacrilege to dispel it. Serious study is made difficult enough by the inadequacy of the sources. Yet, if the right questions are asked, some answers will begin to appear. It is in this spirit that this paper attempts to direct attention to an acknowledged turning-point in

¹ See my remarks in *CQ* 8, n.s. (1958) 156.

² Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (Cambridge 1948) [henceforth cited as **Tarn**] 2.262, 270 f.

the reign, the execution of Alexander's friend Philotas and the assassination of Philotas' father Parmenio.³

Alexander's reign had opened with a reign of terror; whatever be the truth about the death of Philip II—and this can hardly be established with certainty, since it paid no one to speak or write the truth after the event⁴—officially a father's death had to be avenged by the successor. We need not dwell on this initial massacre; it is enough to recall that ultimately no male heir of the royal blood survived Alexander except for the imbecile Arrhidaeus. This terror, however, had affected only those who, directly or indirectly, might make a bid for the throne. With the new king firmly established, the remaining nobles (except for those who preferred to escape to Asia and join the King of Persia) appeared to have no grounds for anxiety. The case of Alexander son of Aëropus of Lyncestis, not long after the invasion of Asia, will, on balance, have seemed reassuring rather than alarming.⁵ This man, prompted by his father-in-law Antipater (who had engineered Alexander's immediate recognition as king), had been one of the first to do homage to his namesake. He had consequently escaped the fate of the rest of his family and, in fact, had been entrusted with positions of responsibility. But he was of too high a lineage to be left unmolested for long. At some time before the battle of Issus (the details are not clear) he was relieved of his command on suspicion of aiming at the throne with Persian help, and in due course he was put under guard and made to accompany the expedition as a prisoner. It is unlikely that anyone (except perhaps Antipater) cared very much. This was, in a way, only the logical conclusion of the initial massacre; and the very fact that he was not executed, in spite of his high birth and the charge of treason, would seem evidence that the terror of the first days was over. We, who have seen similar happenings in our own day, can easily understand how relief might predominate over alarm among those not immediately concerned: men need no longer fear death for political reasons. That they did not fear it is

³ I should like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Andreotti's stimulating articles in *Historia* 7 (1956) 257–302 and *Saeculum* 8 (1957) 120–66, even though I shall have no occasion for detailed references to them.

⁴ Though the traditional "cui bono?" can be asked and pursued to some effect.

⁵ References and excellent discussion in Berve, *Alexanderreich* (Munich 1926) 2 [this volume henceforth cited as **Berve**], s.v. 'Ἀλέξανδρος 37.

clear. When Alexander's old friend Harpalus, in mysterious circumstances, was relieved of his post and decided to leave the king, he settled at Megara, clearly in no fear for his personal safety; and before long he secured his recall on his own terms.⁶

All this must be borne in mind when we come to examine the so-called "conspiracy of Philotas,"⁷ which led to the death of Parmenio. Lulled into false security and convinced that the spirit of the régime had changed, the victims had no chance of escape when the thunderbolt struck them.⁸

The story of the "conspiracy" is well known and can be briefly summarized.⁹ Philotas had made no secret of his disapproval of the king's oriental affectations ever since the visit to Ammon and had consequently been suspected and disliked for years. His enemy Craterus had worked against him at court, and his mistress Antigone had been suborned to spy on him, so that evidence of disloyalty might be collected. Plutarch, in fact, very justly speaks of a conspiracy *against* Philotas. It was realized that an attempt to remove Philotas would lead to a major trial of strength, not to be undertaken unless the loyalty of the army was secure. For this, a charge of treason was the obvious weapon, provided that enough evidence could be produced to build up a *prima facie* case. This seems to have proved difficult. But by 330 a time was approaching when Alexander could not afford to wait any longer. The Hellenic crusade, kept up—more and more perfunctorily—as a propaganda *motif* as long as Greece had to be conciliated, had been officially abandoned after Agis' defeat (Arr. 3.19.5 f.); Alexander had declared himself the lawful successor to the Achaemenids; but since he failed to capture Darius alive, he now had to assert his claim against the pretender Bessus, who called

⁶ On this odd episode, see *Historia* 9 (1960) 245 f.

⁷ This is what the textbooks are accustomed to call it, following the ancient apologists. Plutarch knew better (*Alex.* 49.1): the only conspiracy he mentions concerning Philotas is one *against* Philotas.

⁸ The sources for the "conspiracy" are conveniently collected in Berve, s.v. *Φιλότας* 802 (with good summary of the case against Philotas and proof of its inadequacy). Arrian's account (3.26, from Ptolemy and Aristobulus) of a matter uncongenial both to himself and to his sources is so brief as to be almost useless. That of Curtius (6.7–11) is rhetorically elaborated, but based on a source that had a great deal of precise information. Diodorus (17.79–80) abbreviates the same source and has no independent value; Plutarch (*Alex.* 48 f.) also seems to be mainly based on it.

⁹ For the events here summarized, see the standard works.

himself Artaxerxes (Arr. 3.25.3). The war was bound to be difficult, and to the Macedonians it would seem unnecessary. The men wanted to go home, especially when they saw the Greek allies dismissed (Curt. 6.2.15 f.); and both they and the nobles disliked the *Persici apparatus* that were the symbol of Alexander's new status and the corollary of his intention to make his rule over Iran permanent (see, e.g., Curt. 6.6). It was precisely in Parthia, just before the "conspiracy of Philotas," that Alexander first dressed and behaved undisguisedly as Great King (Curt. *loc. cit.*; Diod. 17.77.4; cf. Plut. *Alex.* 45). Of the attitude of Philotas and his father Parmenio there could be no doubt; typical of the proud Macedonian nobility, they were of those who equally despised Greeks and Orientals. The show-down was bound to come soon. With the men behind them, these nobles could feel confident of their power to enforce their views. To understand this confidence, we must go far back into the past.

Parmenio,¹⁰ firmly entrenched at Philip's court, seems to have had connections with both the factions contending for the succession in the last years of the reign. Towards the end, swimming with the tide, he turned towards that of Attalus and Cleopatra, who appeared to be overcoming the faction of Olympias and her son Alexander. Attalus married one of Parmenio's daughters and accompanied him when he took charge of the invasion of Asia before Philip's death. Philotas, known as a friend of Alexander, tried to reconcile him to Philip after the mysterious affair of the negotiations with Pixodarus (Plut. *Alex.* 10). It is significant that he did not (like Harpalus and other friends of Alexander) go into exile¹¹; he clearly placed good relations with the king above excessive loyalty to a discredited crown prince. As we have seen, the mystery of Philip's death cannot be penetrated; but in any case the faction of Olympias and Alexander profited by it. The rival faction of Cleopatra was exterminated. Parmenio adapted himself to the changed conditions and helped to eliminate his own son-in-law Attalus (Curt. 7.1.3). At Alexander's crossing into Asia, Philotas is found in command of

¹⁰ Sources collected in Berve, s.v. *Παρμενίων*; *Φιλώτας* 802. Cf. Beloch, *Griech. Gesch.* 4².1 (Berlin and Leipzig 1925) 20 f.

¹¹ Arr. 3.6.5, Plut. *Alex.* 10.2. Plutarch supplies more detail and seems more accurate.

the Macedonian cavalry (the *hetaeri*)¹²; but even earlier he appears as a cavalry commander, and there is no real reason to doubt that he commanded the whole of that force from the beginning. Nicanor, another son of Parmenio, had the corresponding infantry command (the hypaspists); and again there is good reason to date it further back. Parmenio's brother Asander probably commanded the light cavalry and certainly received the key satrapy of Sardis as soon as it was conquered. Parmenio's clients and noble adherents—men like the brothers Coenus and Cleander, and the four sons of Andromenes¹³—were firmly entrenched in positions of importance; while Parmenio himself, in nominal command of the whole infantry, in fact served as Alexander's chief of staff and second-in-command.¹⁴ It is clear that Parmenio had not lost by sacrificing Attalus.

The next few years saw the decline of his influence and the increase in Alexander's own stature in the army's eyes. Not *all* our stories of the occasions on which Alexander successfully ignored Parmenio's advice will be true. But some go back to good sources (Ptolemy or even Callisthenes) and show that this kind of interpretation was *meant* to be spread; Alexander wanted his genius recognized as superior to the trained prudence of the general. The facts bear out this interpretation: in the battles, Parmenio was assigned the defensive part, while Alexander reserved the decisive advance for himself: success belonged to the king. Finally, at Gaugamela, Parmenio found himself left in an almost impossible position: the king, engaged in pursuit, did not bother to maintain contact with him, until Parmenio sent an urgent messenger to recall him from his dangerous advance. This could be construed as an appeal for help, which prevented the king from completing his victory—and thus we find it in some of our sources, even though Parmenio in fact dealt with the

¹² No one has ever advanced a convincing reason for rejecting the carefully detailed account in Diodorus 17.17 (though one or two of the figures are corrupt).

¹³ On some of these men, see below, 329, 334 f.; and cf. Beloch, *loc. cit.* (above, note 10).

¹⁴ See, e.g., Berve, s.v. *Παρμενίων*. Nominal positions and actual responsibilities did not always coincide in Alexander's army (any more than they necessarily do in modern armies); cf. the well-known *sômatophylakes* (who were staff officers) and the hipparchs after the final army organization (who were probably marshals of the empire). Failure to recognize this simple but pervasive phenomenon has led to much unnecessary discussion.

greatly superior forces opposing him without Alexander's help.¹⁵ Parmenio was even more unfortunate in another way. His youngest son Hector, destined for high command, died in Egypt. In Aria another son, Nicanor (the commander of the hypaspists), died. This proved disastrous.

By this time Alexander, in addition to undermining Parmenio's reputation, had also made considerable progress in extricating himself from the stranglehold of Parmenio's family and adherents. His brother Asander, put in charge of the satrapy of Sardis after the battle of the Granicus, had justified the king's confidence by a great victory. Yet after Issus he was superseded by Menander and sent on a harmless mission to collect reinforcements (which he later brought to Alexander at Bactra). Adherents could be won over by persuasion and success: loyalty was not the outstanding virtue of Macedonian nobles. Just as Parmenio had betrayed Attalus, his own son-in-law Coenus turned out to be one of Alexander's chief assistants in his action against Philotas; while Coenus' brother Cleander, Parmenio's second-in-command at Ecbatana, later managed the murder of the general himself. Clearly, these attested changes of allegiance will have been neither unprepared nor unique. Finally Parmenio himself was removed from front-line service; he was left behind at Ecbatana to guard the imperial treasure and communications.¹⁶ It was at this time

¹⁵ See Berve, *loc. cit.* (above, note 14), with bibliography. Tarn (1.50 f.), in his account of the battle of Gaugamela, disguises the fact that Alexander was making substantially the same blunder that Demetrius made at Ipsus (unless, indeed, he was hoping for a messenger from the cautious Parmenio) and writes that Parmenio was "outgeneralled" by Mazaeus and "lost his nerve." Yet he later admits that Alexander's help, when it came, "was no longer needed." Beloch (*op. cit.* [above, note 10] 4².2.290 f.), over-reacting against the common Alexandrolatry, denies Alexander any great military genius and ascribes all the victories to Parmenio. While his stress on Parmenio's essential contribution is welcome, there is no reason to believe that he deliberately sacrificed himself to give the king greater glory: this, surely, was Alexander's own idea. Alexander's own mind clearly appears in his military as in his political tactics. L. Pearson (*The Lost Histories of Alexander* [1960] 47) thinks that Callisthenes' attitude to Parmenio was not necessarily unfavorable. Like most readers of Plut. *Alex.* 32-33, I cannot agree with this. On the traditions on Gaugamela, see C. B. Welles' note on Diod. 17.60, *fin.* (Loeb edition). It is noteworthy that those most hostile to Parmenio appear to be traceable to Ptolemy and to Callisthenes.

¹⁶ Sources and discussion on Asander in Berve, s.v. Ἀσανδρος 165. For Coenus and Cleander—fellow-countrymen of Harpalus, who may himself have had something to do with the whole affair—see my forthcoming article in *JHS* 81 (1961). Asander and Parmenio were not, of course, actually demoted: one type of employment was not in itself inferior to another. This is not a matter of standing; the loss of *power*, in each case, is quite clear.

that fortune took a hand with Nicanor's death—as we have seen, precisely when Alexander had reached a point in the development of his policy, where an open clash with his Macedonian opponents could not be postponed much longer. The king seems to have taken advantage of the opportunity offered; this speed of decision was always the secret of his success. Philotas was left behind to see to his brother's funeral (Curt. 6.6.19). For the moment, Parmenio and his family were out of the way.

It seems to have been during this time that the plot against Philotas was hatched. We are not told precisely when he rejoined the court, but the sequence of events strongly suggests that it was not long before the plot.¹⁷ The king, known to be marching towards the capital of Drangiana, was temporarily deflected from his route by the revolt of Satibarzanes. This was quickly dealt with (it appears to have been a matter of days rather than months) by swift marching and campaigning that kept the royal party constantly on the move in unknown country. During this time Philotas (unlike, e.g., Craterus) is not mentioned. It is most unlikely that he caught up with the king or even attempted to. Even if the funeral could be arranged quickly enough to make it possible, we must never forget that communications between the front line and the rear were not as good in antiquity as in a respectable modern army. Rather than wander about the unknown countryside, a man trying to rejoin the royal party would surely make for the next fixed point along its proposed route (and indeed, it is usually during his stay in one of the obvious resting-places that Alexander is thus joined by various men and forces). We may take it that Philotas only rejoined the king in the capital of Drangiana. And it was eight days after the royal party arrived there that the conspiracy came

¹⁷ Curtius is the only source that mentions Philotas' absence. The conspiracy comes a few sections later (6.7.1 f.). For the speed of the intervening movements (not precisely timed for us anywhere), cf. Arr. 3.25.6 (two days for the move against Artacoana). From Artacoana the king moved against Drangiana, whose capital surrendered at once (*ibid.* 25.8). Alexander halted there, and the conspiracy is dated by Curtius (6.7.1) to the ninth day of his stay. Diodorus (17.78.4) has rather confused matters. He appears to tell us that Alexander occupied the whole of "Hyrcania" in thirty days and then left for Drangiana. To judge by the movements as Diodorus describes them, he has included Parthia and Aria in his "Hyrcania," and the thirty days are probably meant to include the occupation of all three. But the passage is too confused to be of real use in establishing a chronology. See C. B. Welles' note *ad. loc.* in the Loeb edition of Diodorus.

to a head. It is not unreasonable to suggest that something had been hatched during Philotas' absence.

On the "conspiracy of Philotas" itself, as it was now "discovered," no words need be wasted. Fortunately, scarcely any scholar in recent times has taken it seriously,¹⁸ naturally enough, since even Alexander (and Ptolemy) did not succeed in proving Philotas' guilt. The facts can therefore be stated quite briefly. An obscure Macedonian probably called Dimnus¹⁹ was the lover of a boy Nicomachus. This boy now suddenly confided to his brother Cebalinus that Dimnus, with the support of some others, was plotting against the life of Alexander. Cebalinus reported this to Philotas, who showed little interest. Finally, after some cloak-and-dagger scenes lovingly described by Curtius—with Cebalinus, for no very clear reason, hiding in a cupboard while the king was bathing—the whole story was reported to Alexander, and after careful preparations he ordered the arrest of Philotas and some others. Dimnus conveniently killed himself (or was killed while resisting arrest), and the others were put on trial for their lives before the army. Alexander himself demanded the death penalty for Philotas. Philotas admitted that he had heard of the plot but claimed that he had simply not taken it seriously.²⁰ Since Dimnus is nowhere assigned a motive for his plot, nor was any evidence (except for his favorite's word) advanced against him or anyone else, we need not hesitate to agree with Philotas in this estimate. Against Philotas himself, not a scrap of evidence suggesting complicity could be produced. Even the prolonged espionage by his mistress seems to have been ineffective. Alexander merely proved (what was admitted and explained) that he had failed to pass on information about the plot.²¹ Speakers had

¹⁸ See, e.g., Berve and Beloch, cited above; F. Schachermeyr, *Alex. der Grosse* (Graz, Salzburg, Wien 1949) 266 f.; F. Jacoby, *RE* 11 (1921) 644, s.v. "Kleitarchos."

¹⁹ On the name, see Berve, s.v. *Δίμνος* (with an outline of the affair, as far as Dimnus is concerned in it).

²⁰ Curt. 6.7.33 f. The other sources do not mention details of his defense (though Arrian says that he did defend himself).

²¹ Tarn states, on the authority of Ptolemy (which, on a matter of this sort, would not be worth much) that "the proofs of his treason were perfectly clear" (1.63). In fact Arrian (citing Ptolemy) says that Philotas was convicted *ἄλλοις τε ἐλέγχοις οὐκ ἀφανέσι καὶ μάλιστα δὴ* [his failure to report the information received]. The phrase (a well-known Greek idiom) clearly shows that no other worth-while evidence could be found (perhaps Philotas' remarks to his mistress were quoted); and this does not prove much by itself.

been briefed to support the demand for a death sentence, and the army, seeing that Alexander made it a question of confidence as between himself and Philotas, agreed. It has been claimed²² that the army gave a fair trial according to its lights. This, up to a point, may be true. But if it is taken to imply that, because the army voted the death penalty, Philotas deserved it, this is surely putting too much trust in the perspicacity of these simple soldiers in what must have been an utterly bewildering situation.

Philotas was tortured before his execution, in the hope that evidence could be obtained against other men, notably his father Parmenio.²³ It is unlikely that any was in fact obtained. We cannot be certain, since the sources that mention the incident, for their various purposes, elaborate it far beyond credibility.²⁴ Curtius (6.11.22 f.) has a story of a plot between Parmenio and Hegelochus (then dead), which Philotas is said to have divulged under torture. Since no charge was in fact brought against Parmenio, it is almost certain that none could be: the plot with Hegelochus must be an effort of later *apologia*.²⁵

In fact, the judicial murder of Philotas was at once followed by the undisguised assassination of Parmenio himself.²⁶ Tarn (1.62 f.) has tried to present the act as one of regrettable necessity, sanctioned by Macedonian usage. This view is widely held; but Tarn's presentation of it is so characteristic of the technique of Alexander-worship and *apologia* that it deserves detailed study. Having introduced the story of the "conspiracy of Philotas" (which he is almost the only reputable recent scholar to believe) by stating that to kill and be killed was all in the day's work for a Macedonian noble ("They lived hard and took their chances"), he now says: "That a great general could be relieved of his command and retire quietly into private life would probably have seemed impossible to every Macedonian. There were only two known alternatives: he must rebel or die." Now, whatever may

²² Tarn, *loc. cit.* (above, note 21).

²³ The case of the pages' conspiracy and Callisthenes confirms that torture was used to extort confessions.

²⁴ Curtius has prolonged, rhetorically composed dialogues, and Plutarch actually shows us Alexander hiding behind a curtain to hear what Philotas would say.

²⁵ Like that other story of the Macedonian "law" ordering the execution of a traitor's relatives (Tarn 2.270 f. adequately disposing of C. A. Robinson's attempt to salvage it).

²⁶ Sources in Berve, s.v. *Παρμενίων*.

be said against the Macedonian monarchy under Philip and Alexander (and Tarn is not given to excessive condemnation of it), it is simply not true that it was still governed by the law of the jungle. We have seen that, after the initial phase, Alexander had abjured murder as a political weapon, and no one expected its revival. In particular, we must remember the case of his Lyncestian namesake. Suspected of high treason, he had been relieved of his command and put under guard; indeed, at this very time he was still being dragged about from place to place with the army.²⁷ Parmenio, whatever his prestige, could never (like the Lyncestian) aspire to the throne itself.

We have, in fact, already incidentally noticed that Alexander's officers were perfectly accustomed to being moved around from one command or commission to another, often with periods of inactivity intervening. Many more examples will be found on almost every page of our sources; and many men disappear from our view entirely, even though in some cases we know that they remained alive and survived Alexander himself. There was nothing in Macedonian custom, or indeed in Alexander's own, that called for the murder of Parmenio as the "only known alternative" to letting him rebel. Moreover, since Philotas' "treason" was a transparent fabrication, the assassination of his father was not a panic-stricken reaction to an unforeseen emergency; it must be regarded as an integral part of the same scheme, and indeed, in view of Parmenio's position, as its culmination. The careful preparation, the detailed planning (so well exemplified in Curtius' account of Philotas' arrest—the crucial and most dangerous step), finally the quick and decisive blow when fortune offered the chance—these will be recognized at once as the hallmarks of Alexander's genius, both military and political. He was to use the same technique in the reign of terror after his return from India, and then against the very men who had helped him strike down Parmenio.²⁸ Political assassination—with or, if necessary, without observation of legal forms—was as much a normal weapon in his arsenal as the calculated military aggression in which he was so conspicuously successful. It is due entirely to a peculiarity of our own tradition—one that future historians may

²⁷ See above, 325. Tarn knew this well enough (1.20 f.; 64).

²⁸ On this, see my forthcoming article in *JHS* 81 (1961).

find as incomprehensible as we ourselves find the ancients' acceptance of slavery—that our historians, while willing to admire successful aggression, have shied away from its equivalent in internal policy.²⁹ In fact, it has sometimes been regarded as nothing short of sacrilege to notice it. Yet the historian must not shut his eyes to the facts for the sake of an idealized image.

The death of Parmenio was not quite the end of the matter. For one thing, his brother Asander was still collecting reinforcements for Alexander. He brought them to the king at Bactra in the following year, and he is never heard of again. Other men, great and less great, had been involved in the affair. Such is the inadequacy of our sources that we do not know anything about the background of most of them, nor even what happened to them.³⁰ As so often in the story of Alexander, an abundance of sources, brilliantly studied by modern scholars, yet fails to give us the material for serious history. It is no wonder that romantic idealization has sometimes taken its place. But the mere number of important men involved in Parmenio's fall at least helps to underline the extent of the faction and the pervasiveness of Parmenio's influence even at the time of Alexander's *coup*. One of these men, Demetrius (otherwise quite unknown to us), was a Bodyguard, one of the highest nobles in the realm. He indignantly denied complicity in the "conspiracy of Philotas," and Alexander did not insist on his conviction. A little later, when the fuss had died down, he was quietly eliminated and Ptolemy (the later king and historian) was appointed in his place (Arr. 3.27.5). Amyntas son of Andromenes, also named by the informer, was put on trial together with his three brothers. His case was made immeasurably worse by the fact that Polemo (one of the brothers) attempted flight before the trial. Yet Amyntas defended himself and his brothers, and after a touching scene of

²⁹ With notable exceptions like Beloch. He, however, was led by the revulsion he felt for Alexander's *character* to underestimate his *ability* (see above, note 15): in his pages, Alexander's success all but becomes a paradox. Even so, it is less of a paradox than Tarn's portrait of the high-minded philosopher who set the world aflame with war.

³⁰ Berve, s.v. *Δίμνος*, gives a list of those implicated by Nicomachus. Curtius (6.11.38) says that all of them were executed. But Curtius is demonstrably inaccurate in matters of detail: we know that Demetrius and Amyntas, at least, escaped (see below). Arrian unfortunately does not tell us who else was found guilty. On Amyntas and Demetrius, see Berve, s. vv. *Ἀμύντας* 57 and 64 (I cannot understand why he refuses to identify them); *Δημήτριος* 260.

reconciliation they were all acquitted (Arr. 3.27.1 f.; Curt. 7.1.10 f.). Amyntas died in action soon after, and two of his brothers are never heard of again under Alexander, even though at least one of them survived the king (Berve, s.v. *Πολέμων* 644). The third, Attalus, in due course rose to a high position in the army, clearly owing to a marriage connection with Perdikkas. Though we cannot date the connection, it is tempting to conjecture that it already existed at the time of the trial and that it was, in fact, Perdikkas who helped to secure the acquittal of Attalus and his brothers in 330. Perdikkas' own loyalty was known to Alexander and proved by the part he played in the arrest of Philotas (Curt. 6.8.17), so that he himself had nothing to fear.

Tarn uses the acquittal of these men as evidence of the fairness of *all* the trials; yet Alexander could not afford (and had hardly intended) to engage in wholesale slaughter of the Macedonian nobility. The extreme caution used in the arrest of Philotas (Curt. *loc. cit.*) and, even more clearly, the case of Demetrius the Bodyguard, show that he had to tread warily and not try the army's loyalty too far. It is known—not that we need have doubted it—that Parmenio's own army did not take kindly to the murder of their commander. Dissatisfaction became so obvious that it had to be suppressed by forming the offenders into a special regiment of the "disorderly."³¹ Years later, in the reign of terror after the return from India, the destruction of Parmenio's murderers was greeted with joy (Curt. 10.1.1 f.). Although, after careful preparation, Alexander had been able to use the army against Philotas (not, as we have seen, against Parmenio himself), it had been a close thing. As a great general, Alexander was satisfied with the attainment of his objective (the destruction of Parmenio and his family) and knew where to call a halt, just as he knew where to call off pursuit after victory. Both in politics and in warfare the mind of Alexander followed the same unmistakable lines.

However, there was one man against whom the army could now be used without fear. Alexander son of Aëropus, the last

³¹ *Ἀτακτοὶ* (Diod. 17.80, *fin.*). The term sounds authentic, and Diodorus' presentation is factual and free from invective against Alexander, so that we need not suspect malicious invention. Curtius, in a less reliable account (7.2.35), tells us that their commander's name was Leonidas (see Berve, s.v. *Λεωνίδας* 470). We cannot tell whether the story about the censoring of the soldiers' mail is true.

survivor of the Lyncestian dynasty, had (as we have seen) been under guard for several years and, since he had taken no part in the great victories, had won no affectionate loyalty. He already had his bad name: he had been suspected of treason, and treason of a sort—collaboration with the Persians—that the army could understand as such and would not condone. The king now decided that this was his chance of ridding himself of his embarrassing prisoner. Accused of the treason for which he had been arrested years before—not, of course, of a part in the “conspiracy of Philotas,” during which he had been under guard—he was now condemned by the army and at once executed (Curt. 7.1.5 f.). Nothing shows better than this cold-blooded execution of a harmless man how little point there is in attempts to find a moral justification for Alexander’s acts of political terrorism.

It had been a close thing. But the king, possessed of the initiative and laying careful plans against unsuspecting victims, had won. He had not eliminated *all* of Parmenio’s supporters: on the contrary, nobles and army now had to be conciliated by a display of forgiveness towards those members of the wide-spread faction who could (at least for the moment) safely be deemed innocent. The practical effects of forgiveness varied from complete reinstatement (as in the case of Attalus son of Andromenes) to a mere slight postponement of vengeance (as in the case of Demetrius the Bodyguard). One further measure of political conciliation followed at once. Having rid himself of Philotas, the king would not entrust anyone, not even his dearest friend, with the command of the whole of the *hetaeri*. The command was divided between Hephaestion and Clitus (Arr. 3.27.4). Hephaestion had been active in the plot against Philotas and thus earned his first important post. He was to rise, partly by the same methods, until he became the first of the king’s subjects. Clitus was a man of entirely different stamp; second to none in bravery, he was also second to none in the frankness with which he criticized the king’s oriental affectations (Berve, s.v. *Κλέϊτος* 427). His elevation was an interesting concession, another measure of conciliation, to neutralize the elevation of the unpopular Hephaestion and show Alexander’s attachment to dour Macedonians. In fact, Clitus’ own hour had almost struck. But that is a different story, and one that was still in the future.

More lasting than the promotion of Clitus were the rewards of

those who had cooperated with the king against the family of Parmenio. Craterus had always hated Philotas. It was he who had initiated the plan to spy on Philotas through the services of his mistress, and he had been prominent in the final stages of the affair: with Hephaestion, Coenus, Erigyus, Perdiccas and Leonnatus he had arranged the decisive step, the arrest of Philotas (Curt. 6.8.17).³² One of these six men, Erigyus (of Mytilene, it seems), was a Greek who could hardly expect to rise to the very highest rank in the army. Yet he was given independent commands of increasing importance³³ and at the time of his premature death ranks *inter claros duces* (Curt. 8.2.40). This term could not have been applied to any other Greek in the army (except, later, Nearchus). Another of the six, Leonnatus, seems to have incurred the king's displeasure by contributing to the ridicule that killed the attempt to introduce *proskynêsis* among the Macedonians.³⁴ This must have retarded his advancement. When he rehabilitated himself by outstanding courage and loyalty, his rise was rapid, culminating in the great honor he received at Susa.³⁵

These two are special cases. The other four enjoyed uninterrupted advancement. Finally, in the great army reform, they—Hephaestion, Perdiccas, Craterus and Coenus—were raised to the four chief hipparchies. We may call them, in the full sense, the marshals of the empire.³⁶ The fact that those who assisted Alexander at this crucial moment later became the greatest men in the empire is far from mere coincidence: they had shown themselves "Alexander's men" in the decisive test. After

³² Berve gives the sources for the detailed careers of these six men. Three of them are again mentioned (Curt. 6.11.11) in connection with the torture of Philotas.

³³ Thus it was he who finally crushed the revolt of Satibarzanes (Arr. 3.28.2 f. *et al.*).

³⁴ Arr. 4.12.2. Identified with the Bodyguard in *RE* 12 (1925) 2035, s.v. "Leonnatos 1"—rightly, despite Berve, s.v. *Λεωννάτος* 467. Arrian's phrase *ἐνα τῶν ἑταίρων* is precisely repeated from 2.12.5, where it undoubtedly refers to this man; it is probably Arrian's own reminiscence. The other Leonnatus (Berve, *loc. cit.*) appears only as trierarch on the Hydaspes—a very mixed company—and his standing, particularly so many years earlier, is quite uncertain.

³⁵ "Kurz, aber glänzend ist die Rolle, welche L. unter Al. spielt, und sie stellt ihn in die Reihe der ersten Heerführer seiner Zeit" (Berve, s.v. *Λεωννάτος* 466, page 235).

³⁶ On the army reform much has been written (see, e.g., Tarn 2.164 f.: the fifth hipparchy was inferior in rank to the first four). See also Schachermeyr, *op. cit.* (above, note 18) 403 f. The details are irrelevant to our purpose, and the outstanding position of these four men is uncontested.

the death of Hephaestion and of Coenus,³⁷ Perdikkas and Craterus survived the king himself, to become (whatever their exact rank and functions) the chief men among the Successors after his death (Arr. *Succ.* 3; cf. Dexippus [*FGrHist* 100] 8.4). It is a fitting climax to the story that begins with the plot against the house of Parmenio.

³⁷ On the fate of Coenus and his brother Cleander there is much more to be said. See my forthcoming article in *JHS* 81 (1961).