The Death of Clitus

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AT THE END of a long drunken quarrel, Alexander, king of Macedonia, murdered Clitus, co-commander of the aristocratic Companion cavalry. The dispute took place at a banquet in Maracanda, in Sogdiana, late in 328 B.C.[1] There has been a tendency to treat this event briefly, and not to explore at any length the motivation of the two combatants. Because the killing of Clitus was clearly an unpremeditated act, it has suffered neglect, probably because of comparison with the elimination of Parmenio and Philotas in 333, an act of policy, calculated and judicially justified. While Clitus' killing was not an act of policy, it was both more personal and more political than has previously been seen.

Of Clitus' career before the quarrel in Maracanda little is known, and much of what is known can be interpreted in several ways. Clitus, son of Dropidas, was the brother of Lanice, Alexander's beloved nurse (Arr. 4.9.3; Curt. 8.1.21; Just. 12.6.10). Clitus served with distinction under Philip (Curt. 8.1.20). He commanded the Royal Squadron, the elite unit of the Companion cavalry, from the beginning of Alexander's reign, and possibly earlier (Arr. 3.11.8). His territorial origin is unknown, but we do have some more information about his family, or at least that of his sister. We shall return to his sister's family below, but here it is enough to say that, including Clitus, at least three members of the clan were on nearly familial terms with the young king. Clitus' early prominence undoubtedly reflects the importance of this royal friendship.

Because several accounts of the quarrel blame it, in part, on tension between the older Macedonians, represented by Clitus, and the young ones, led by Alexander, it would be helpful to know Clitus' age. The evidence, however, is too vague.[2] Clitus' previous

[1] Maracanda may not be equivalent to modern Samarkand. See D. W. Engels, *Alexander the Great and the Logistics of the Macedonian Army* (Berkeley 1978) 99 n.1 and 103 n.16. There are difficulties about the date. Despite W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* I (Cambridge 1948) 73, T. S. Brown, "Callisthenes and Alexander," *AJP* 70 (1949) 236, and J. R. Hamilton, *Alexander the Great* (London 1973) 103, favor autumn 328, and H. BERVE, *Das Alexanderreich* II (Munich 1926: hereafter 'Berve') 207, put the date as late as midwinter 328/7.

[2] Justin (12.6.3) calls Clitus an old man, but Seneca (*De ira* 3.17.1) says that Clitus grew

service under Philip and his high command early in Alexander's reign suggest that he was older than the king, but not how much older. As events were to demonstrate, Clitus identified strongly with Philip (and possibly Parmenio and Philotas). Yet he need not have been an old man to do so, but only politically sympathetic.

In Asia, Clitus fought at both Granicus and Gaugamela, in command of the Royal Squadron (Arr. 3.11.8; Diod. 17.57.1; Curt. 4.13.26). While stationed on Alexander's immediate right during the battle at Granicus, Clitus saved the king's life by killing a Persian who attacked Alexander from the rear.[3] Clitus became ill while at Susa and, after his recovery, met Alexander in Parthia, bringing with him, as ordered, troops left behind in Ecbatana (Arr. 3.19.8). As a consequence of the Philotas affair, Alexander divided the former command of Philotas, the Companion cavalry, assigning half to his friend Hephaestion and half to Clitus. Arrian (3.27.4) tells us that the king did not want any one person to have so prestigious and powerful a position again.[4]

This promotion signified that Clitus had become an even more powerful and important officer. Because Hephaestion had been deeply implicated in the destruction of Parmenio and Philotas and was part of Alexander's inner circle, while Clitus, whatever his age, belonged to a more veteran group, the choice of Clitus has often been considered a measure of conciliation, meant to neutralize and appease whatever group Clitus represented and Hephaestion did not, and to ease the panic of the army immediately after the deaths of Parmenio and Philotas. It is quite possible, as Badian has suggested, that Clitus was in a sense paid off to gain his acceptance of the new state of affairs.[5]

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up with Alexander. Berve II 206 suggests a birth date of 365, but G. T. Griffith, *OCD*² *s.v.* "Cleitus (1)," says *ca* 380. Neither gives arguments. R. Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (New York 1974) 309, asserts that Clitus was in late middle age because his sister was old enough to be Alexander's nurse; this need not be so.

[3] Arr. 1.15.8; Curt. 8.1.20; Diod. 17.20.7; Plut. *Alex.* 16.5. Berve II 206 makes the suggestion that a portrait Clitus commissioned of himself (Pliny *HN* 35.93) may have commemorated this incident.

[4] It is usually thought that Alexander divided the cavalry into eight sections after the death of Clitus, probably for mainly political reasons (P. A. Brunt, "Alexander's Macedonian Cavalry," *JHS* 83 [1963] 31), but F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse* (SitzWien 285 [1973]) 358–61, 363 n.437, suggests that the reform predated the death of Clitus and was occasioned by military exigencies. To accept this earlier date, one must believe that all our sources fail to mention that Clitus had recently been demoted at the time of the quarrel.

[5] E. Badian, "The Death of Parmenio," *TAPA* 91 (1960) 336, and Schachermeyr (*supra* n.4) 363, who believes that Clitus' command must have meant that Alexander had, at least temporarily, secured his acquiescence to the deaths of Parmenio and Philotas. Lane Fox (*supra* n.2) 291 goes further and says that Clitus' cooperation was vital because of the 6000

While the execution of Philotas and the murder of Parmenio must have disturbed and disaffected some individuals and groups within the army, and while Clitus' new position may indeed have been meant as a conciliatory gesture to such groups, their identity, make-up, and character remain obscure. The assumption that the gesture was directed toward the older members of the Macedonian establishment rests primarily on hindsight from what Plutarch and Curtius give as the cause of the quarrel between Alexander and Clitus. It is just as likely that Clitus' new command was the result of the king's determination to play his leading officers off against one another, thus preventing them from uniting against him.

From the time of his promotion in 330 until the last days of his life at Maracanda, our sources do not mention Clitus. He may have become too old for active service, but this seems unlikely. His disappearance from the center stage may parallel Alexander's later dealings with other generals: having granted Clitus the honor of his position, Alexander may then have prevented him from acquiring much glory through it. Certainly the appointment did not require that the king treat his two cavalry commanders with equal affection or honor.

Curtius provides a unique item of information, if it is true. He claims (8.1.19) that just before the fatal banquet, the king had appointed Clitus satrap of Sogdiana and Bactria, but that Clitus had not yet taken up his duties when he was killed. Some have doubted the reliability of Curtius' information, but their doubts are not convincing.[6] The problem is that even if one accepts the satrapal appointment as genuine, its significance remains uncertain. Nomination to a satrapy did not necessarily signal royal favor or automatically confer great power. Many satrapies went to insignificant men, certainly not royal intimates. Relegation to a

men under his command (Arr. 3.19.7), a force which could have given Parmenio a greater number of troops than Alexander, had Clitus sided with him.

[6] E. Badian, "The Administration of the Empire," *G&R* 12 (1965) 177 n.3, suggests that Curtius' interest in rhetorical effect led him to elevate Clitus' position so as to make his downfall more dramatic; E. I. McQueen, "Quintus Curtius Rufus," in *Latin Biography* (London 1967) 29, believes that the appointment is an invention contrived to build continuity between the retirement of Artabazus and the Clitus episode. Neither suggestion convinces: the rank of co-commander of the Companion cavalry would provide height enough for any downfall, and McQueen's examples of other points where Curtius supposedly sacrificed truth to continuity are less than persuasive and not necessarily parallel (none seems to involve outright invention). Berve II 206, F. Cauer, "Philotas, Kleitos, Kallisthenes," *JahrbClPhil* Suppl. 20 (1894) 57, Schachermeyr (*supra* n.4) 363 n.437, all accept Curtius' information as valid. Schachermeyr connects the appointment to the supposed cavalry reorganization.

remote and troublesome satrapy might easily function as a kind of respectable demotion, ominously similar to Parmenio's relegation to the baggage train. Yet satraps often acquired great wealth and controlled large numbers of troops, though they moved off center stage. Quite possibly one might trust an experienced man like Clitus with a military and administrative post of some responsibility without wishing that he remain part of the court and be capable of making awkward remarks in person.[7]

Thus the appointment, if genuine, provides only ambiguous information about relations between Clitus and the king just before the banquet. It is not proof that Clitus was on good terms with the king at the time or even that he and the king had not previously quarreled on the subject of relations with orientals. Neither is it a certain sign of royal disfavor or anger. It does suggest that Alexander did not find Clitus' presence essential. The number of satraps removed by Alexander upon his return from India[8] suggests that he gave many satrapies to persons whom he did not trust, or that he trusted no one and had to give the satrapies to someone.

Since the significance of the most recent (alleged) event in Clitus' own career proves problematic, it becomes particularly useful to consider the careers of the rest of his family, in so far as they are known, before proceeding to an analysis of the murder itself. As we have seen, Clitus' sister Lanice was nurse to Alexander. Two sons of Lanice died in battle before the death of Clitus (Arr. 4.9.4; Curt. 8.2.8, who says they died at Miletus). Lanice had another son, a certain Proteas (Ath. 129A; Ael. *VH* 12.26), who, long after his uncle's death, was a boon companion of Alexander's and may have been present at Alexander's final drinking party (Ath. 434A). It is probably the same Proteas, called the son of Andronicus, who was active in the naval effort against the Persian fleet in 334/3 (Arr. 2.2.4–5, 20.2).[9] There may have been yet another son of Lanice.[10]

[7] Schachermeyr (*supra* n.4) 364 points out that the next satrap of Sogdiana and Bactria was a man never mentioned previously and apparently without any experience of major commands. One need not conclude that satrapal appointments were all unimportant, but clearly such positions had limitations. It seems likely that if the appointment was genuine, it was a disappointment for Clitus, though not necessarily a major one. See *contra* Lane Fox (*supra* n.2) 310–13, who believes that the once-mentioned satrapal appointment was the primary reason for the quarrel between Alexander and Clitus.

[8] See E. Badian, "Harpalus," *JHS* 81 (1961) 16ff.

[9] Berve does not on balance make this identification (II 328–29). He gives the friend and drinking crony of Alexander one number (665) and another (664) to the naval commander, but concedes that possibly the two men were one and the same and that Proteas, like Hegelochus, transferred from the naval to land forces.

[10] A certain Theodorus, who had a brother named Proteas: Berve II 176. Plutarch (*Mor.*

Lanice's husband is never named directly, but if, as I have suggested, Proteas the son of Andronicus is indeed Lanice's son, then her husband was named Andronicus. Despite Berve's argument to the contrary,[11] of the two men on the expedition named Andronicus it is almost certainly the son of Agerrus who was Lanice's husband.[12] The other Andronicus was not active until the time of the Successors. The son of Agerrus, as would suit the husband of Lanice, brother-in-law of Clitus, and father of several sons old enough to fight early in the expedition, was himself active in the campaign.

Andronicus son of Agerrus first appears as commander of a group of mercenaries formerly under service to Darius, who had switched their loyalties to Alexander (Arr. 3.24.5). The son of Agerrus is last mentioned as the leader of a mercenary unit in a force under the command of Erigyius which went against Satibarzanes, a Persian rebel who in 330 led the Areians in revolt.[13] We know that Erigyius' expedition was successful, but the sources do not mention Andronicus son of Agerrus again. Of his possible fate more will be said below.

Of the banquet at Maracanda in 328 four major accounts survive: Plutarch *Alex.* 50–52.4; Arrian 4.8.1–9.9; Curtius 8.1.19–2.13; Justin 12.6.1–18.[14] As Aymard has observed,[15] there are

760C) mentions a Theodorus to whom Alexander wrote offering 10,000 talents for a girl musician, on the condition that Proteas did not love her. If true, this story would indicate that both brothers were intimates of the king. Berve suggests that Theodorus held office already under Philip (*Syll.*[3] 243D.31).

[11] J. G. Droysen, *Geschichte des Hellenismus* I.1[2] (Gotha 1877) 384 n.2 first suggested that the son of Agerrus was Lanice's husband. Berve II 39 apparently wished to refute him, as his n.3 suggests, but unfortunately a typographical error on the same page has him appear to say, in contradiction to the note, that the son of Agerrus was indeed the father of Lanice's son: in the section on the son of Agerrus, his son is numbered 665, the number of Lanice's son—clearly a mistake for 664.

[12] It is difficult to believe that Andronicus the Olynthian was the father of Lanice's son because of his very late prominence. More difficult is the problem, mentioned above, whether there were two men named Proteas or only one.

[13] Arrian (3.28.2) does not mention him by name as Curtius (7.3.3) does, but Berve II 39 argues that Curtius is correct.

[14] Diodorus' version is lost. Two brief references to the Clitus episode are found in Seneca, *Ep.* 83.19; *De ira* 3.17.1. One asserts that Alexander killed his dear friend Clitus while drunk; the other attributes the murder to Clitus' refusal to flatter Alexander and give up free speech for Persian servility.

[15] "Sur quelques vers d'Euripide qui poussèrent Alexandre au meurtre," *Mélanges Henri Gregoire* I (Paris 1949) 48f, esp. n.3. See also P. Green, *Alexander of Macedon* (Harmondsworth 1974) 550, who argues that it is dangerous to depend on Plutarch alone in this incident. Lane Fox (*supra* n.2) 311, 501–02, prefers a combination of Curtius and Justin to the Greek sources because he favors their emphasis on personal motivation for the quarrel.

unbelievable elements in the narratives of all extant sources, and thus no reason to follow one to the exclusion of others.

Plutarch's version is certainly not without weaknesses, most particularly in regard to events immediately before and after the crime, but his account of the quarrel itself surpasses the others in the complexity of its motivation and in its knowledge of the inner forces at work in the court of Alexander. One must, of course, concede that some of these qualities may be the result of Plutarch's excellence as a writer.

Comparison with the other three sources increases one's respect for Plutarch's version. Justin barely mentions what is really the central event of the episode. What little he does say is given in more detail by Curtius. Arrian includes long and not very perceptive remarks about the ethics of the situation. He implies that a quarrel between Clitus and the king had been going on for some time, but the terms of the quarrel are not very clear. Arrian's assertion that Clitus was an angry individual with a personal obsession, rather than a representiatve of more general grievances shared by many Macedonians, denies any political significance to an act which, on his own telling, arose from an assortment of political tensions (Alexander's Persianizing, his growing absolutism, his scorn for Philip).

Curtius' account has some value—particularly in the background material he provides and the names of the men who tried to prevent Alexander from killing Clitus—but his main narrative is so incoherent as to be nearly useless. The narratives of both Curtius and Plutarch display knowledge of court politics (especially those of the king's inner circle), tensions within the court, and also tend to attribute the crime to these tensions. It is this sort of knowledge, especially when contrasted with Arrian's frequent dependence on an apologetic source (probably Ptolemy), that gives these two sources such authority and plausibility.

Differences in the surviving accounts, however, should not obscure the essential similarity of all these explanations of the motivation of the quarrel and killing. Whether they attribute the incident to a struggle between the older and more traditional elements at court and the younger and more innovative, to resentment of Alexander's claim of divine sonship, to strife between supporters of Philip and those of Alexander, or to hatred of the new Persian ceremonial, the sources are agreed that the quarrel arose because

of the changes Alexander was trying to make in Macedonian kingship, particularly in his relations with the Macedonian nobility.[16]

Yet reasons other than Clitus' well-known political differences, or his possible irritation because of the supposed satrapal appointment, may have motivated Clitus' anger. Plutarch (*Alex.* 50.4–5) blames the start of the fatal argument on satirical verses about a recent defeat suffered by some of Alexander's generals. According to Plutarch the older guests at the banquet objected to the verses, but Clitus was particularly incensed by the humiliation of Macedonians in front of "barbarians and enemies." Alexander's circle, on the other hand, approved the verses.

Naturally one wants to know why the verses provoked the factional response (especially that of Clitus) which Plutarch describes. The military diaster mocked in this fashion must have been a controversial event, witness both the intensity of the reactions of the Macedonian audience and the very fact that the Greek authors of the satire expected at least some elements of the Macedonian court to receive such insulting material with approval. Despite some opinion to the contrary,[17] it is usually conceded that the defeat mentioned refers to a massacre suffered the year before on the same spot, Maracanda. This defeat, probably the worst Alexander's troops suffered,[18] was still unavenged. The disaster was a controversial event: there were questions of culpability, and the sources suggest that it was in part the result of tensions between Macedonian and oriental officials. Moreover, as I shall argue, it is quite possible that a member of Clitus' family was involved in the defeat.

Curtius (7.6.24, 7.31–39) and Arrian (4.3.7, 4.5.2–6.2) tell quite different stories about the disaster of 329; because of its romantic and unrealistic nature, however, Curtius' version is usu-

[16] See J. R. Hamilton, *Plutarch, Alexander* (Oxford 1969) 90, 120, 127f, 132ff, for references to Alexander's increasingly oriental kingship and Macedonian resentment of it.

[17] R. D. Milns, *Alexander the Great* (London 1968) 190, assumes that the defeat must have involved Clitus, and so concludes that the verses cannot have referred to the Spitamenes affair. Green (*supra* n.15) 362 assumes that Clitus must have been one of the officers involved because of his anger and because of Alexander's remark that Clitus was defending himself when he called 'cowardice' only 'misfortune' (Plut. *Alex.* 50.6). Yet though our sources would almost certainly mention a recent military misfortune of Clitus, as obvious explanation for the behavior of Alexander and Clitus, they do not. Hamilton (*supra* n.16) 141 and Schachermeyr (*supra* n.4) 365f give the standard view.

[18] Engels (*supra* n.1) 104 and Hamilton (*supra* n.1) 99 both call it the army's most severe loss.

ally rejected.[19] Arrian gives two versions of the event: in the first (usually attributed to Ptolemy) disaster is the result of lack of communication between Macedonian officers, but in the second, which Arrian attributes to Aristobulus, Alexander would seem to be ultimately responsible, because of his failure to clarify the chain of command between an oriental officer, Pharnuches, and the Macedonians.[20]

Especially if it is correct to prefer Aristobulus' version (although the other also makes one wonder who was supposed to be in charge), and even if it is not, the incident must have been notorious despite Alexander's attempt to hush it up (Curt. 7.7.39). Why did reaction to the verses break down into factions in the manner Plutarch describes, and why were the verses aired in the Macedonian court at all?

The oddity of their very recitation at a Macedonian social occasion is usually ignored, but ought not to be. Why would jesting about a Macedonian defeat, particularly one so terrible, be acceptable at court (if only to Alexander's inner circle)? Such verses would not ordinarily have been heard with pleasure by a commander who cared about his men, men who had, after all, fallen in battle. Alexander and his coterie must have had no sympathy for the men involved and this must have been well known. It would seem the defeat at Maracanda was as much a political as a military event. Schachermeyr astutely surmised that the royal circle approved the mockery simply because the generals, not the king, were blamed.[21]

Yet the reactions of the older men in general and Clitus in particular are in a way even more puzzling. As already noted, nothing suggests that the three officers named in connection with the ex-

[19] On the problems with Curtius' account see Berve II 256; F. Jacoby *ad FGrHist* 139F27 (p.516); L. Pearson, *The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great* (New York 1960) 168. Arrian's first version ascribed to Ptolemy: Berve II 381, Jacoby p.515, Pearson 167. Arrian names Menedemus (unknown before this appearance), Caranus, leader of the mercenary cavalry (see Berve II 200–01: he appeared late in 330 as a cavalry leader against Satibarzanes), and Andromachus (Berve II 38: first mentioned at Gaugamela commanding mounted troops, in 330 in Media he commanded mounted foreign troops). Pharnuches is unknown before this incident. The relatively modest and late appearance of these officers does not suggest that they were older men.

[20] See discussion in Jacoby, *loc.cit.*—ἐπιτάσσει in 4.3.7 can mean either 'put in command over' or 'appoint in addition to'. Despite Pearson's denial (*supra* n.19) 167, Ptolemy's version is clearly apologetic. See R. M. Errington, "Bias in Ptolemy's History of Alexander," *CQ* N.S. 19 (1969) 233ff, for an examination of Ptolemy's habits of suppression.

[21] Schachermeyr (*supra* n.4) 366. Green (*supra* n.15) 362 and Milns (*supra* n.17) 192 believe that Alexander purposely provoked the quarrel in order to gauge the depth of dissension. Such intentional provocation seems implausibly dangerous.

pedition were of the older generation, nor is this necessarily implied by the fact that the older men defended them. The generation of Philip (or, to be precise, his veterans) may have disliked the implication that failure was the fault of individuals, whereas, success was co-opted by the king. Later items in Plutarch's and Curtius' narratives tend to suggest this.[22]

Clitus' political objections to Alexander's more absolute and Persian kingship—with which, in Plutarch, he connects the royal attitude toward the defeated officers—are well known. It is possible, however, that there was a special reason for his anger and his readiness to come to the defense of those insulted: his brother-in-law Andronicus may have been one of the generals involved in the defeat and may well have died in the massacre.

The evidence is scant but suggestive. As we have seen, Andronicus son of Agerrus was very probably the husband of Lanice. He is last mentioned as leader of a mercenary unit in a force which, under the command of Erigyius, went against Satibarzanes, the Persian who led Areia in revolt in 330 (Curt. 7.3.3; Arr. 3.28.2). Caranus and Artabazus were fellow officers on this expedition. We know that the expedition was successful, but the sources do not mention Andronicus again.

I suggest that he may have led part of the 1500 mercenary foot which went on the fateful expedition against Spitamenes, just as Caranus led again his mercenary cavalry.[23] Like the more important officers, he probably died at Maracanda. Andronicus is not named by Arrian or Curtius, but then Arrian omitted his name from the force sent against Satibarzanes and Curtius names only the commander of the force and none of the other officers. The column sent against Spitamenes was part of the same sort of effort, with some of the same elements of the army that were sent against Satibarzanes. If Andronicus was a member of the massacred column, his disappearance from the sources in 329 and Clitus' anger become more intelligible.

If this hypothesis is correct, then Clitus' anger at the king—the precipitant in most versions of the quarrel—was *both* political and personal; indeed the two motives are intertwined. The king's

[22] Plutarch (51.5) has Clitus quote the first line from a passage of Euripides' *Andromache* (693–96) which implies this. Curtius (8.1.27–29) indirectly cites the whole passage. See Aymard (*supra* n.15) 45, Hamilton (*supra* n.16) 144, H. U. Instinsky, "Alexander, Pindar, Euripides," *Historia* 10 (1961) 253, for discussion of the function of the quotation. On the age of the officers see *supra* n.19.

[23] *Cf.* Berve II 200; Caranus' force was probably reinforced from six to eight hundred.

contempt for a dead family member will have seemed a vivid example of the growing absolutism to which, we are told, Clitus objected. No clear distinction may be made between personal and political aspects of life in the Macedonian court. The scene which formed the prelude for the death of Clitus, a long and drunken banquet, is typical of the society in which such distinctions are impossible. In earlier years the violent and sometimes disastrous results of Macedonian drinking habits had already been demonstrated: Philip nearly killed Alexander at such an affair (Plut. *Alex.* 9.5); it would be hard to say whether Philip's attempt was more political or personal in nature. Alexander set Persepolis afire on another such occasion (Plut. *Alex.* 38; Curt. 5.7.1–7; Diod. 17.72. 1–6); again both political and personal motives are plausible.

Let us turn from the motivation of Alexander's crime to its consequences. The killing of Clitus would have had considerable moral impact on his contemporaries. Macedonian aristocrats had always had a remarkable freedom of speech. Clitus was an important man in his world; the daring with which he spoke to the king demonstrates this. In murdering Clitus, moreover, Alexander violated old Macedonian usage, which probably expected a trial in the presence of the army before execution (Curt. 6.8.25).[24] Worse yet, Alexander broke Zeus' law of hospitality by killing a guest at his table, and this guest a man who had saved Alexander's life and served the royal family with distinction. In a world where 'Homeric' standards were still very much alive, violation of the laws of hospitality was no negligible crime. And yet, the crime itself, and Alexander's violent repentance, are also 'Homeric'—and comparable to Philip's attempt on Alexander's life at the wedding banquet (Plut. *Alex.* 9.5).

If determining the moral impact of Alexander's act on his contemporaries is difficult, the political impact ought to be more obvious. The death of Clitus had political repercussions, both short term and long; only our ignorance of factional ties makes it possible, though not plausible, to deny this. Whether or not the army actually begged Alexander to give up his 'mourning' as Justin (12.6.15–17) and Curtius (8.2.11) say, it was certainly compelled to realize how necessary Alexander was to its continued survival in remote enemy territory. Badian rightly concludes that the Mace-

[24] See R. Lock, "The Macedonian Army Assembly in the Time of Alexander the Great," *CP* 72 (1977) 95–97, and R. M. Errington, "The Nature of the Macedonian State under the Monarchy," *Chiron* 8 (1978) 86ff, for discussion of the accuracy of Curtius' statement.

donians had to pardon or at least ignore Alexander's crime because they could not survive without him.[25] It is less certain that they forgot it. Only a few months later there are further deaths after yet another banquet-table confrontation: the *proskynesis* affair and its aftermath, the plot of Hermolaus. When the army mutinied on the Hyphasis and Alexander a second time tried the methods that had worked so well after the death of Clitus (isolated in sorrow, Achilles-like, in his quarters), they failed to have their earlier effect. In the short term the army accepted Alexander's despotic action: in the long term, it would seem, it did not.

Perhaps the most interesting political repercussions of the murder of Clitus concern relations between the king and his circle of intimates. Alexander demonstrated to even those most trusted men that they too were expendable (the threat, implied or stated, is especially clear in Curtius, but Plutarch and even Arrian also suggest it) when he announced that they had betrayed him just as Bessus had Darius, and then tried to summon the army against them.[26] His denunciation of the trusted inner circle in this moment of stress may in part lie behind later failures to support the king by members of this circle or those close to it.[27] And of course the king had seen his top officers refuse to obey his orders, and then seen their refusal supported by the common soldiers.

Although unpremeditated, the murder of Clitus is part of the pattern of aristocratic opposition and royal suppression which characterized Alexander's reign. The Philotas affair forced opposition to Alexander's new policies underground, but, with drink and provocation, it surfaced again with Clitus. Whether Clitus had any connection to a specific faction (Parmenio, Attalus, and Philip), as Curtius would have us believe (8.1.52), cannot be ascertained.

[25] E. Badian, "Alexander the Great and the Loneliness of Power," *Studies in Greek and Roman History* (Oxford 1964) 198. Curtius (8.2.12) actually says that the Macedonians decreed that Alexander, in killing Clitus, acted *iure*. Errington (*supra* n.24) 108 assumes that the leading Macedonians actually made this decision, and thereby limited what was a "potentially damaging affair," and in a sense turned it into a successful test of the king's prestige.

[26] See Curt. 8.1.45–49, 8.2.4; Plut. *Alex.* 51.3–4; Arr. 4.8.7–8. All these passages seem to suggest that Alexander was about to call the *hypaspists* against the *somatophylakes*; see Hamilton (*supra* n.16) 143 and Schachermeyr (*supra* n.4) 368 n.44 *contra* Berve I 123, II 69.

[27] Coenus' opposition to Alexander in the Hyphasis mutiny (Curt. 9.2.1–3.19; more generally suggested by Plut. *Alex.* 62 and Arr. 5.15.1–29.1); Craterus' curious failure to obey Alexander and relieve Antipater (Arr. 7.12.3–4; Diod. 18.4.1, 12.1; Justin 12.12.8–10); Leonnatus' supposed mockery of *proskynesis* (Arr. 4.12.2), if this is not a doublet for similar stories about Polyperchon (Curt. 8.5.22–6.1) and Cassander (Plut. *Alex.* 74).

It is easy to see why Alexander wished to transform the nature of the relatively easy-going Macedonian monarchy and to limit the power of the nobility. He wanted to solve the problem of fitting the monarchy for world rule by changing the basic structure of Macedonian society and by replacing the familial relations between kings and their nobles with a more Persian and subservient relationship. As Welles observed,[28] "he was no longer merely one of themselves." Nobles independent of his power were gradually replaced with those who had power largely through him.

What is ironic about the murder of Clitus is that the very vehemence of Alexander's desire to free himself from the limitations of the domestic Macedonian court caused him to commit an act which could only prove how Macedonian it remained. The murder of Clitus was the sort of thing his father might have done, a Macedonian domestic tragedy. In the end it was an argument about power, how much the king should have and how much a man like Clitus and his family should have, an argument which precipitated a very political murder.

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[28] C. B. Welles, *Alexander and the Hellenistic World* (Toronto 1970) 40.