

WHY DIDN'T ALEXANDER MARRY  
BEFORE LEAVING MACEDONIA?\*

Observations on Factional Politics at Alexander's  
Court in 336–334 B.C.

According to Diodorus 17.16.2, two of Alexander's most senior ministers, Antipater and Parmenion, urged Alexander to marry and father a child before undertaking such an ambitious

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enterprise as his Persian campaign<sup>1</sup>. Alexander's response was that he could not "afford to sit at home celebrating a marriage and awaiting the birth of children" – which has been taken as evidence for all sorts of hypotheses – from a sign of the king's typical impatience and in this instance, lack of political foresight, to his vulnerability to the control of powerful *ἐταῖροι*. A somewhat extreme explanation of Alexander's apathy may be found in Theophrastus, who alleged that the king was impotent, with a tale of his own to that effect<sup>2</sup>.

The present discussion will comment on the marriage customs of the Argead dynasty in general, before exploring the question as to why Alexander did not take the apparently sound advice of Antipater and Parmenion. In turn, this problem concerns the thorny issues of the status of royal brides and the nature of factional politics at the Macedonian court, as well as the position and plans of Alexander himself. It is true that Alexander's decision not to marry has been noted by many scholars, sometimes in a throw-away line and attention has been given individually to these questions; but what this article attempts is a considered synthesis<sup>3</sup>.

Perhaps taking a cue from Satyrus' arch remark, namely that Philip II "married a new wife with each war he undertook" (Athenaeus 3.557b–e = FHG III 161 F5), the polygamous habits of the Macedonian kings have been the subject of some investigation in recent years<sup>4</sup>. In the fourth century B.C. polygamy was

1) Cf. Plut. Alex. 21.7: according to Aristobulus, Parmenion urged Alexander to form a relationship with Barsine, the widow of Memnon, on account of her lineage and connections. See J. R. Hamilton, *Plutarch. Alexander: A Commentary*, Oxford 1969, 55.

2) Alexander's vulnerability, see E. Badian, *Alexander the Great and the Loneliness of Power*, *AUMLA* 17 (1962) 80–91 (= *Studies in Greek and Roman History*, Oxford 1964, 192–205), also E. Carney, *Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Aristocracy*, Diss. Duke University 1975, but see below, n. 25. Theophrastus, ap. Athen. 435A: Alexander was not well disposed towards intercourse; Olympias and Philip, fearing that Alexander might be a 'womanish man' (γύννυς) hired a courtesan from Thessaly. From the context, the anecdote implies that heavy drinking may have caused Alexander's impotence.

3) For examples of the 'throw-away' line, see R. Fox, *Alexander the Great*, London 1973, 89, Carney (above, n. 2) 83 n. 75, W. Greenwalt, *The Marriageability Age at the Argead Court: 360–317 B.C.*, *CW* 82 (1988–9) 93–94.

4) See in particular, M. Hatzopoulos, *Succession and Regency in Classical Macedonia, Archaia Makedonia*, *Proceedings of the International Symposia on Ancient Macedonia* 4 (1986) 279–292, L. Tronson, *Satyrus the Peripatetic and the Marriages of Philip II*, *JHS* 104 (1986) 116–126, W. Greenwalt, *Polygamy and Succession in Argead Macedonia*, *Arethusa* 22 (1989) 19–43, E. Carney, *The Poli-*

certainly not the social custom of the sophisticated Greek πόλεις of the south, and was probably another reason why the Greeks regarded Macedonia as backward, since marrying more than one wife would be seen as part and parcel of the primitive institution of kingship<sup>5</sup>.

Whilst Philip himself enthusiastically practised polygamy by marrying no fewer than seven wives, it does seem quite clear that the king was no innovator<sup>6</sup>. His father Amyntas III was polygamous, as we hear of two wives in the traditions, Gygaea and Philip's mother Eurydice, and it also seems that Philip's great-uncle Perdiccas II was a polygamist, given the dynastic struggles on his death.

The literary evidence, deriving mostly from Greek sources is not only sparse but obscure and ill-defined, and it is likely that these authors may have had a vague or inaccurate understanding of marriage practices amongst the Macedonian royal family. For instance, Plato in the *Gorgias* (471B) regards Archelaus' succession to Perdiccas II as usurpation since he notes that Archelaus' mother was apparently a concubine, the slave of Perdiccas' brother, Alcetas. The Athenian citizenship laws with their emphasis on Athenian parentage on both sides may have influenced Plato's interpretation of Archelaus as an usurper. It is also possible that the slur on the status of Archelaus' mother may have been the result of propaganda filtering down to the Greek writers. We hear of Philip Arrhidaeus' mother described as a *salatrix* and a *scortum* and he likewise became king and was eventually murdered through the designs of more powerful factions<sup>7</sup>.

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tics of Polygamy: Olympias, Alexander and the Murder of Philip, *Historia* 41 (1992) 169–189.

5) See Eur. Andr. 170–180, Aristot. Pol. 7.14.2, Greenwalt (above, n. 4) n. 16, also p. 22 f. Polygamy may have been practised by noble Attic families in the Archaic period, see N. G. L. Hammond, *The Philaids and the Chersonese*, CQ 6 (1956) 120 n. 3. On Greek views of Macedonian kingship generally, see N. G. L. Hammond, *The Macedonian State*, Oxford 1989, 19 f., F. E. Adcock, *Greek and Macedonian Kingship*, *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39 (1953) 163–180.

6) On the marriage habits of the Temenid kings in general see P. Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, Harmondsworth 1974, 26–27, Hammond 1989 (above, n. 5) 32 f., Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 24 f. The evidence is not conclusive that Amyntas III was married simultaneously to Gygaea and Eurydice, but see Greenwalt's discussion in 'Amyntas III and the Political Stability of Argead Macedonia', *AncW* 18 (1988) 38–44.

7) See Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 23 f. On the story generally, see N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, *History of Macedonia II* [hereafter HM II], Oxford 1979, 135. Philip Arrhidaeus, see Justin 9.8.1, 13.2.11, his death, see Diod.

However, as Archelaus was still able to establish himself as king over his brothers, uncle and cousin and given other, similar struggles in Argead history, suitable candidature for kingship apparently depended on the royal paternal line alone<sup>8</sup>.

Yet it should be noted that Archelaus is credited with moving his royal palace and military centre from Aegae to Pella, which suggests a certain insecurity about his power-base or perhaps a lack of support from some elements of the nobility<sup>9</sup>. Also, in terms of succession, the ranking of the king's women was an important issue, as I shall discuss shortly. It is likely, especially with regard to marriages which were made for political or border reasons, that such liaisons were regarded as legitimate<sup>10</sup>.

A salient question pertaining to Alexander's attitude to marriage in the early years of his reign may be his need to marry at all. As a general observation it would be fair to say that Macedonian kings married to safeguard the unity of their kingdoms and consolidate their borders, as well as produce heirs; the 'safe' frontier aspect was certainly true of Philip's marriage policy for at least six of his wives<sup>11</sup>. It is difficult to determine at what age marriage took place<sup>12</sup>, or what criteria were needed to be the king's first preference amongst his sons; according to Miltiades Hatzopoulos, a son had to be born after his father had actually become king in order to be called an heir – a theory, which although reminiscent of the Achaemenid king Xerxes' claim to the throne, contains a number of problems and as William Greenwalt has pointed out, does not fit the Macedonian history of succession<sup>13</sup>.

Philip II himself was probably about twenty-three or twenty-four when he married the first wife in Satyrus' list, the Illyrian

19.11.4 ff., cf. Aelian, *Var. Hist.* 13.36, E. Carney, *Olympias, Ancient Society* 18 (1987) 35–62, id., *The Career of Adeia-Eurydice*, *Historia* 36 (1987) 496–502, W. Greenwalt, *The Search for Arrhidaeus*, *AncW* 10 (1984) 69–77.

8) See Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 23 f., 35, HM II 153, Hammond 1989 (above, n. 5) 32 f.

9) For evidence, see E. N. Borza, *In the Shadow of Olympus. The Emergence of Macedon*, Princeton 1990, 166 f., also J. R. Ellis, *Philip II and Macedonian Imperialism*, London 1976, 40 f.

10) Borza (above, n. 9) 206 f.

11) See HM II 153.

12) Greenwalt (above, n. 3) 93 f. suggests the early to mid twenties as a customary age for a Macedonian king.

13) Hatzopoulos (above, n. 4) 280 f., on Xerxes 287, but see Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 21, 38 n. 74.

princess Audata, although it has to be said that his age, the time of the wedding and indeed whether Audata was his first bride at all, are far from certain<sup>14</sup>.

At the time of Alexander III's accession at the age of twenty, and during the first two years of his reign, the problem of succession was to become more pressing. In order to consolidate his own position and at the same time avenge his father's assassination, Alexander had himself in the aftermath of his accession eliminated acceptable Argead alternatives in two of the sons of Aeropus. The remaining son, Alexander Lyncestis, survived through his own support of Alexander and the patronage of Antipater<sup>15</sup>. As Ellis has pointed out, the precise chronology of the executions is difficult to determine; the sons of Aeropus, Heromenes and Arrhabaeus, appear to have been executed shortly after Philip's death, and Amyntas, the son of Perdiccas III and another potential rival for the throne, was certainly dead sometime in 335<sup>16</sup>.

As far as Parmenion and Antipater were concerned, if Alexander were to be assassinated or die childless, the result would have meant civil disaster, and Alexander's intended absence carried its own dangers. However, although the advice of the two nobles was based on obviously sound political principles, there was more to the problem.

Diodorus places the Parmenion/Antipater exhortation just prior to Alexander's departure, in 334 B.C., although it does seem possible that they could have pressured the king from the outset. However in the first two years of his reign Alexander was kept busy with a show of military strength across the Danube, followed by the Balkan campaign against the traditional tribal enemies of Macedonia, including the Triballi, the Illyrians, the Paeonians and the Taulantians. The Theban revolt arose at about the same time as the king's convincing defeat of Cleitus and

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14) Scholars have tried to change the order of wives given by Satyrus, see Tronson (above, n. 4) 116 nn. 5–7. See also Borza (above, n. 9) 207.

15) See Diod. 17.2.1, Arrian 1.25.2 f., Curt. 7.1.5–7. On Amyntas, Curt. 6.9.17, 10.24, Justin 11.2.1–3, cf. 12.6.14. See also N. G. L. Hammond, 'Philip's Tomb' in *Historical Context*, GRBS 19 (1978) 331–50, also N. G. L. Hammond and F. W. Walbank, *History of Macedonia III*, Oxford 1988, 4 f.

16) See J. R. Ellis, *The First Months of Alexander's Reign*, in: E. N. Borza and B. Barr-Sharrar (edd.), *Studies in the History of Art*, Washington 1982, 69–73, also *id.*, Amyntas Perdikka, Philip II and Alexander the Great, JHS 91 (1971) 15–24. But see HM III 11.

Glaucias, the respective chiefs of the Illyrians and Taulantians<sup>17</sup>. Yet, unlike his father, Alexander did not seek a marriage-alliance for himself with any of these people. What is significant is that he offered his half-sister Cynna (Arrian, *Anab.* 1.5.4), the daughter of Audata and the recent widow of Amyntas, to Langarus, king of the Agrianians, as a reward for his services. It is true that the timing of the Theban revolt may have meant that Alexander had not the time to negotiate before turning south, but taking into account his sound defeat of the tribes and his action with Cynna, it seems more likely that he preferred to remain in the superior position and only offer concessions when he felt he had obligations. Langarus had shown considerable loyalty to him.

With regard to Alexander's accession, it has long been noted that both Antipater and Parmenion played crucial roles. In a classic paper, 'Alexander the Great and the Loneliness of Power', E. Badian said that Alexander was "a youth raised to power by a clique of nobles who ... expected to rule through him"<sup>18</sup>. Antipater's own standing as one of Philip's most trusted envoys and generals would have carried considerable weight with other *ἐταῖροι* and the assembly of the Macedones; as Alexander was at that time not the only choice for a king, Antipater's decision to support him and get him acclaimed by the army (Pseudo-Callisthenes 1.26) shortly after Philip's assassination was brilliantly and critically timed<sup>19</sup>.

When Philip was assassinated, both Parmenion and Attalus were away in Asia, at the head of the advance force (Diod. 16.91.2) for the proposed Persian campaign. According to Diodorus 17.2.3 f. Alexander feared Attalus' popularity with the army and his potential for intrigue with the Greeks. At the time of the Theban uprising, Demosthenes was busy lobbying Macedonian generals (Diod. 17.3.2, cf. Plut. *Dem.* 23). Such an allegation about Attalus' involvement may not have been far from the truth. In the first two years of the king's reign, not only was the security of his

17) For the Balkan campaign, see Diod. 17.8.1–2, Plut. *Alex.* 11.6, Arrian 1.1.4–6.11; see A. B. Bosworth, *A Historical Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander I*, Oxford 1980, 51 ff.; the Balkan campaign is also extensively covered by Hammond, *HM III*, 32 ff. Theban revolt, Diod. 17.8.4–14, Plut. *Alex.* 11.6–13.5, Arrian 1.7–8, Justin 11.3.6–7.

18) Badian (above, n. 2) 81 n. 27.

19) On Antipater's role, see A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge 1988, 25 f., Hammond 1989 (above, n. 5) 21, E. Baynham, *Antipater: Manager of Kings*, in: Ian Worthington (ed.), *Ventures into Greek History*, Oxford 1994, 362–363.

throne very uncertain<sup>20</sup>, but he ran a high risk of being killed outright in battle. Although Attalus probably could not have become king himself, because of his own lack of royal blood, he did have an Argead relative alive in Cleopatra's child. The number and gender of Cleopatra's children are hotly disputed issues, and if an alleged son by Cleopatra and Philip, possibly Caranus, did exist, he would certainly have given Attalus a convenient claim to a regency<sup>21</sup>. However, if, as seems more likely, the infant was female (Athenaeus 3.557b–e), Attalus would still have had a powerful bargaining asset in any future marriage alliance. Ellis has tried to play down Attalus' treachery by raising the question of propaganda concocted after the event; but if the stories from Satyrus and Plutarch about the vulgar brawl at Philip's wedding feast are true, Alexander could hardly have been friendly to Attalus' clan<sup>22</sup>. Also, given the number of prominent Macedonians who defected to the Persians in the early period of Alexander's reign, his accession had caused fear and opposition for certain elements of the nobility<sup>23</sup>. At the time Attalus had nothing to lose by at least negotiating with the Athenians, but when they failed to carry through their rebellion, at the last moment he tried to save himself by turning Demosthenes' correspondence over to Alexander<sup>24</sup>. He misjudged Alexander or his father-in-law's loyalty badly and was killed by Alexander's agent, Hecataeus. However, I am in agreement with Ellis that Attalus' ward or niece, Cleopatra, was probably liquidated shortly before or after his own death; it is unlikely that he knew of her execution when he sent the letters to Alexander<sup>25</sup>.

As I have inferred, Parmenion's part in this affair cannot be underestimated, for he not only refused to rebel against Alexander, but according to Curtius (7.1.3) was entrusted with the responsibility of removing Attalus<sup>26</sup>. As his own daughter was married to

20) See E. Badian, *Alexander and Philippi*, ZPE 93 (1993) 132.

21) The existence of Caranus is testified by Justin 11.2.3, 12.6.14, cf. Pausanias 8.7.7. See H. Berve, *Das Alexanderreich II*, Munich 1926, no. 411. Caranus' existence was disputed by W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great: Sources and Studies II*, Cambridge 1948, 260–262, see also W. Heckel, *Philip II, Kleopatra and Karanos*, RFIC 107 (1979) 385–393 and W. Greenwalt, *The Introduction of Caranus into the Argead King List*, GRBS 26 (1985) 4–49, but see R. K. Unz, *Alexander's Brothers?*, JHS 105 (1985) 171–4.

22) Plut. Alex. 9.4–11, cf. Athenaeus 3.557b–e. See Ellis (above, n. 16) 71.

23) See Arrian 1.13.2, 1.17.9, Curt. 3.11.18, Plut. Alex. 20, Diod. 17.48.2. See Ellis (above, n. 16) 70.

24) Diod. 17.5.1.

25) Ellis (above, n. 16) 71.

26) See also E. Badian, *The Death of Philip II*, Phoenix 17 (1963) 250.

Attalus, he had clearly decided that Alexander had proved himself more than capable of handling the problems confronting his kingdom and so was prepared to abandon his own son-in-law: in fact, it could well have been on his 'advice' that Attalus decided to throw himself on Alexander's mercy.

Thus, while it is hard to deny that Alexander owed a certain amount of obligation to Parmenion and Antipater, the extent of their control over him has rightly, I think, been challenged<sup>27</sup>.

Since both of these men seemed so keen on Alexander taking a wife, the obvious implication is that each noble had a daughter or daughters, anyone of whom could serve as a suitable bride. Antipater had a large family – Berve attests some seven sons and four daughters. Of the latter, one was married to Alexander Lyncestis at the time of Philip's death and the other three proved useful commodities for marriage alliances during the conflicts of the Diadochoi<sup>28</sup>. However when Alexander became king, it seems highly likely that Antipater could have offered the king his pick of possibly three of his girls. We hear of two of Parmenion's daughters; as noted above one was married to Attalus (Curt. 6.9.17) and the other to Coenus (Curt. 6.9.30). Yet we do not know when either of these marriages took place; presumably Attalus' marriage took place well before Philip's death, as part of Parmenion's alliance with this powerful family, especially in view of Philip's own marriage to Attalus' ward. And with Attalus dead in 335 his widow, Parmenion's daughter, was once again on the marriage market.

On the other hand, the wedding of Parmenion's other daughter to Coenus may have taken place some time after Alexander had refused to marry – so, at the time of Alexander's intended departure, Parmenion likewise could have offered Alexander his choice. According to Berve, Coenus was an aristocratic Macedonian from the region of Elimotis and the subsequent marriage between himself and Parmenion's daughter was either the result of Parmenion's new alignment or Alexander's advice, since we find Coenus well placed in the king's military command structure<sup>29</sup>.

As I observed earlier, the status of the wives of Macedonian kings is a problematic issue. As scholars have noted, many factors could affect a queen's standing at court such as nationality, her

27) Ellis (above, n. 16) 72.

28) See Berve (above, n. 21) 46, and for family trees 440. See also Baynham (above, n. 19) 361.

29) On Coenus see Berve (above, n. 21) no. 439 and Fox (above, n. 3) 89.

political importance in terms of a foreign alliance, her family connections, her ability to produce children, especially sons, and finally, whether the king desired her or not<sup>30</sup>.

This last aspect may not be as sentimental or naive as it sounds; there are some cases where physical attraction (or the lack of it) seems to have been relatively important, and the king's affections would also have been of considerable interest to ancient authors. If one may venture a generalisation, it can be said that any court society is going to be curious (in varying degrees) about the monarch's sexual partners – their identity, their status and the king's motive for choosing them.

Obviously, one expects that a historian like Satyrus would portray the intrigues of Philip's mother, Eurydice, with Ptolemy of Alorus as founded on base lust. In a similar fashion, the stories of Olympias' peculiar sleeping arrangements with large snakes and hence Philip's cooling desire for her are more likely the result of the sources' attempt to reinforce Alexander's divine origins and at the same time cast aspersions about Olympias' personality<sup>31</sup>.

It is true that political motives were fundamentally behind Philip's last marriage to Macedonian born Cleopatra. Philip's forthcoming Persian campaign meant that he needed solidarity on the domestic front and the full co-operation of two of his most capable generals – Attalus and Parmenion. Also, amongst his own progeny he had more daughters than sons, and of his sons only one could be considered mentally fit for succession<sup>32</sup>. Yet the traditions are also quite explicit that the king – aged about 45 at the time – conceived what has been termed a 'grande passion' for the girl. We may also compare Alexander's marriage to Roxane in 327;

30) Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 37. See also Carney (above, n. 4) 171 n. 8.

31) Eurydice, Justin 7.4.7, 5.5–8. On Satyrus as the possible source for this passage see N. G. L. Hammond, *The Sources of Justin*, CQ 41 (1991) 492 ff. For Olympias, Plut. Alex. 2.6, Justin 11.11.3–6, Cic. De Div. 2.135. See Hamilton (above, n. 1) 4. It is perfectly possible that Olympias, given her apparent devotion to Dionysiac ritual, did sleep with snakes. See Carney (above, n. 7) 35–62.

32) Alexander was certainly considered as Philip's heir by the king himself; as Dr. Worthington pointed out to me, Alexander's command at Chaeronea is testimony to his importance and even allowing for a turbulent relationship between the two there is no evidence which suggests Philip himself had an alternative heir in mind; indeed, one could also add the king's choice of Alexander to walk beside him during the celebrations at his daughter's wedding, Justin 9.6.3–4. However, the issue of Alexander's status is problematic and is invariably discussed in articles on Philip's assassination (see below, n. 35). As Alexander was also to accompany the king on the campaign it is not impossible that Philip wanted another son. See Ellis (above, n. 9) 215 f.

again political considerations were of prime importance, but all the sources are emphatic that the king fell in love, whereas we are given no indication at all as to what he thought of Stateira (Barsine) and Parysatis, his two Persian brides<sup>33</sup>.

The Macedones themselves may have well preferred locally born wives<sup>34</sup> as opposed to foreign queens, even though Philip and Alexander each had mothers who were not Macedonian. However, on Alexander's death, there was some opposition to Roxane's child becoming king (Curt. 10.6.10–16); although it has to be said that at this stage the baby was still in utero, its sex was unknown and in any case, if it proved male, it was still going to be the pawn of the general who had himself declared regent.

Yet as Philip discovered and as Alexander, given his own behaviour, understood all too well, marrying a Macedonian woman was clearly hazardous, since it meant inevitably the advancement of certain noble families and the disaffection of others. In Philip's case that disaffection was very likely one factor

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33) Philip and Cleopatra, see Plut. Alex. 9.6–7, Athenaeus 3.557b–e. In view of Philip's active sexual exploits with both men and women, some scholars, e.g. Carney 1975 (above, n. 2) 55, id. 1992 (above, n. 4) 170 f., find the 'simple lust' motive on Philip's part hard to accept, but see Borza (above, n. 9) 208, Tronson (above, n. 4) 125–126, Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 4 n. 89. Roxane, Arrian 4.19.6, Curt. 8.4.24–28, Plut. Alex. 47.7–8, cf. Mor. 338d, Strabo 11.11.4 (p. 517 C.) Metz Epit. 29–31. See Hamilton (above, n. 1) 129, and on Roxane's life in general, see Berve (above, n. 21) no. 688. Stateira and Parysatis, Arrian 7.4.4 f., Plut. Alex. 70.3 f., Diod. 17.107.6, Curt. 10.3.11–12, Justin 12.10.9–10, cf. Plut. Mor. 329e, Athenaeus 12.538b–539a. It should also be noted that some traditions, e.g. Plut. Alex. 2.1 f., Curt. 8.1.26, see the marriage of Olympias and Philip as a love match. See Berve (above, n. 21) no. 581, cf. G. Macurdy, *Hellenistic Queens*, Baltimore 1932, 22–46. The Iranian marriages were undertaken purely as an expression of Alexander's Orientalist policy and the marriages were celebrated according to Persian ritual, cf. Arrian 7.4.7, which may have angered the Macedonians, Arrian 7.6.2. Certainly most of the Macedonian officers appear to have repudiated their Persian wives after Alexander's death; see Arrian, *Opera II*, ed. with an English translation by P. A. Brunt, Cambridge, Mass. 1983, 213 n. 7.

34) 'Local' in this context refers to Lower Macedonia. Philip's mother is traditionally regarded as Illyrian; for example, see E. Badian, Eurydice, in: E. N. Borza and W. L. Adams (edd.), *Philip II, Alexander the Great and the Macedonian Heritage*, Washington 1982, 99–110, esp. 103–104. She may have been from the royal house of Lynceus in Upper Macedonia, see Strabo 7.7.7 (p. 326 C.), HM II, 14 ff., 178 ff., also A. N. Oikonomides, *A New Inscription from Vergina and Eurydice the Mother of Philip II*, *AncW* 7 (1983) 62–64, and Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 39 n. 80. But see K. Mortensen, *The Career of Bardylis*, *AncW* 22,1 (1991) 49–59 who argues against Hammond that Eurydice was Illyrian. On the preferential treatment accorded to royal women from lower Macedonia, see Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 40 f.

which counted in his own assassination, even allowing for a personal grudge on the part of his assassin<sup>35</sup>.

Thus although Alexander was probably subject to the same pressures as his father had been to marry a Macedonian, he did not make the same mistake. During the precarious early years of his reign when the king was facing threats both on the domestic front and abroad<sup>36</sup> and likewise on the eve of his Persian campaign, he could not afford to polarise factions at court by choosing the daughter of one noble and not the other. If Alexander had chosen to marry one daughter each from both the houses of Parmenion and Antipater, the resulting jockeying and intrigue to maintain or advance the status of the women, especially once one or both gave birth, would have been just as dangerous<sup>37</sup>.

Far from indicating a lack of heterosexual interest or a youthful belief that he had plenty of time, Alexander's resolution not to marry showed sound political judgement; although he may have been subject to the influence of Philip's ἑταῖροι, he clearly showed his independence of them<sup>38</sup>. His decision to take one patriarch with him and leave the other behind as regent may have simply been a continuation of Philip's original plan, but without the prospect of pregnant brides or young Argead children behind at home, the potential for domestic intrigue and assassination was likely weakened<sup>39</sup>. In spite of any argument that he should provide for

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35) Philip's assassination has been the subject of considerable discussion in recent years; see Carney (above, n. 4) 169 n. 1 for an up-to-date bibliography. Alexander's reluctance to marry in view of Philip's precedent has been discussed by A. B. Bosworth, *Philip II and Upper Macedonia*, CQ 21 (1971) 104. See also Greenwalt (above, n. 4) 36.

36) See Badian (above, n. 20) 132, also id., *History From 'Square Brackets'*, ZPE 79 (1989) 59–70, in response to N. G. L. Hammond, *Inscriptions Concerning Philippi and Calindoea in the Reign of Alexander the Great*, ZPE 82 (1990) 167–175, and id., *The King and the land in the Macedonian Kingdom*, CQ 38 (1988) 382–91.

37) Marrying two Macedonian women at once was likely to have been unprecedented for a Macedonian king, but we don't know a lot about the brides of earlier kings. Certainly in terms of his Iranian royal marriage policy, Alexander married to ensure the loyalty of both branches of the Achaemenid house (cf. Arrian 7.4.4).

38) See Ellis (above, n. 16) n. 15., also I. Worthington, *The First Flight of Harpalus Reconsidered*, G&R 30–31 (1983–84) 169 n. 14. Worthington notes Alexander's efforts to counter the power structure inherited from his father by promoting those who had been loyal to him such as Harpalus.

39) However, Olympias and Antipater feuded constantly and complained about each other to Alexander; for references see Carney, *Olympias* (above, n. 7) 50 f., Baynham (above, n. 19) 363 f.

the future of his kingdom, any benefits the king would incur through marriage, particularly if he married into a Macedonian house, would have been outweighed by its dangers<sup>40</sup>.

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40) The question about Alexander's need to marry at all, raised earlier in the paper, was noted by Professor Badian. Paradoxically in Alexander's case negative action on his part was far more beneficial.