

## ALEXANDER'S CAMPAIGN IN ILLYRIA

THE campaigns of Alexander in Asia have been extensively studied, but no one has given a detailed account of his campaign in Illyria. The reason is that for many years the interior of Albania has been less accessible than any part of Alexander's route in Asia. It was my own interest in Epirus and Macedonia and my travels in parts of south-eastern Albania which first led me to speculate on the location of Alexander's battle against Cleitus and Glaucias. I came then to the conclusion that the city of Pelion and the battle near it were to be placed by the upper Devoll in the plain of Poloskë.<sup>1</sup> This conclusion was based on a study of the ancient literary evidence and generally on a second-hand knowledge of the terrain; for I had made only one trip and that by car from Florina to Bilisht in the plain of Poloskë and thence to Korçë (Koritsa). In September 1972 I was able to visit this plain through the kindness of the Albanian Government and of my Albanian colleagues. In Section A of this paper I describe the geographical features and the ancient remains in the relevant part of south-eastern Albania, and in Section B I try to reconstruct the campaign of Alexander in this region.<sup>2</sup>

### A

At the end of the International Conference which was held at Tirana in September 1972 the foreign delegates were offered one of three itineraries, and I chose the itinerary which led into the fertile tracts of land which lie south of Lake Ochrid (see FIG. 1). We entered the area at Pogradec on the south-western shore of the lake. From there we drove over some steep hills of flysch formation with a yellowish soil, which were at first planted with fruit trees and later were covered with low scrub. On the other side of the hills we descended less steeply and entered an undulating plain, which led us in turn into the extensive plain of Malik. We proceeded along the western side of the plain to the town called Malik. Here we crossed the river Devoll, which issues from the plain and flows westward into the wild and mountainous country of Gramsh. To the east of Malik there is no sign of the large lake which once occupied a part of the plain but has been drained dry since the war. Continuing southwards we entered the even more extensive plain of Korçë (Koritsa) and came to the town of that name. It stands some 850 m above sea level.

The eastern side of the plain is formed by the range of Mt Moravë; one of its peaks by Korçë is 1808 m high. We followed this side of the plain to Pliassa, which is a centre of communications (see FIG. 2).<sup>3</sup> One road crosses the Devoll. It divides into two branches near Zvezdë. One of these branches goes to Ochrid town via the eastern side of the plain and the eastern side of Lake Ochrid. The other climbs to a high saddle of the lofty range called That, which separates the Devoll basin from Lake Prespa; it then descends to the side of the lake and keeps close to the lake on its way to Resen. Another road turns eastwards from Pliassa and enters a pass which is called the Tsangon Pass after a village of that name. It leads into the plain of Poloskë. Proceeding through this plain we crossed the

<sup>1</sup> N. G. L. Hammond, *A History of Macedonia I* (Oxford, 1972) 100-2. There are unfortunately three errors in these pages, 'Kastoria' being printed instead of 'Koritsa' on the middle of p. 100 and twice on the upper half of p. 102. I refer to this book hereafter as *Macedonia*.

<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Mr G. T. Griffith, Mr E. I. McQueen and Professor P. A. Brunt for commenting on the first draft of this article. Professor Brunt

helped me particularly in the chronology of the campaign. The maps which accompany this article are based on the British Staff Maps of 1945 entitled 'Albania: 1 : 5,000, Sheets Bilishti and Poyani'. In giving the detail of the Gryke e Ujku I have used the notes which I made on the spot in 1972 and a sketch-map in *Iliria I* (1971) 48, Tab. 1.

<sup>3</sup> For a tumulus near here see p. 76 below.

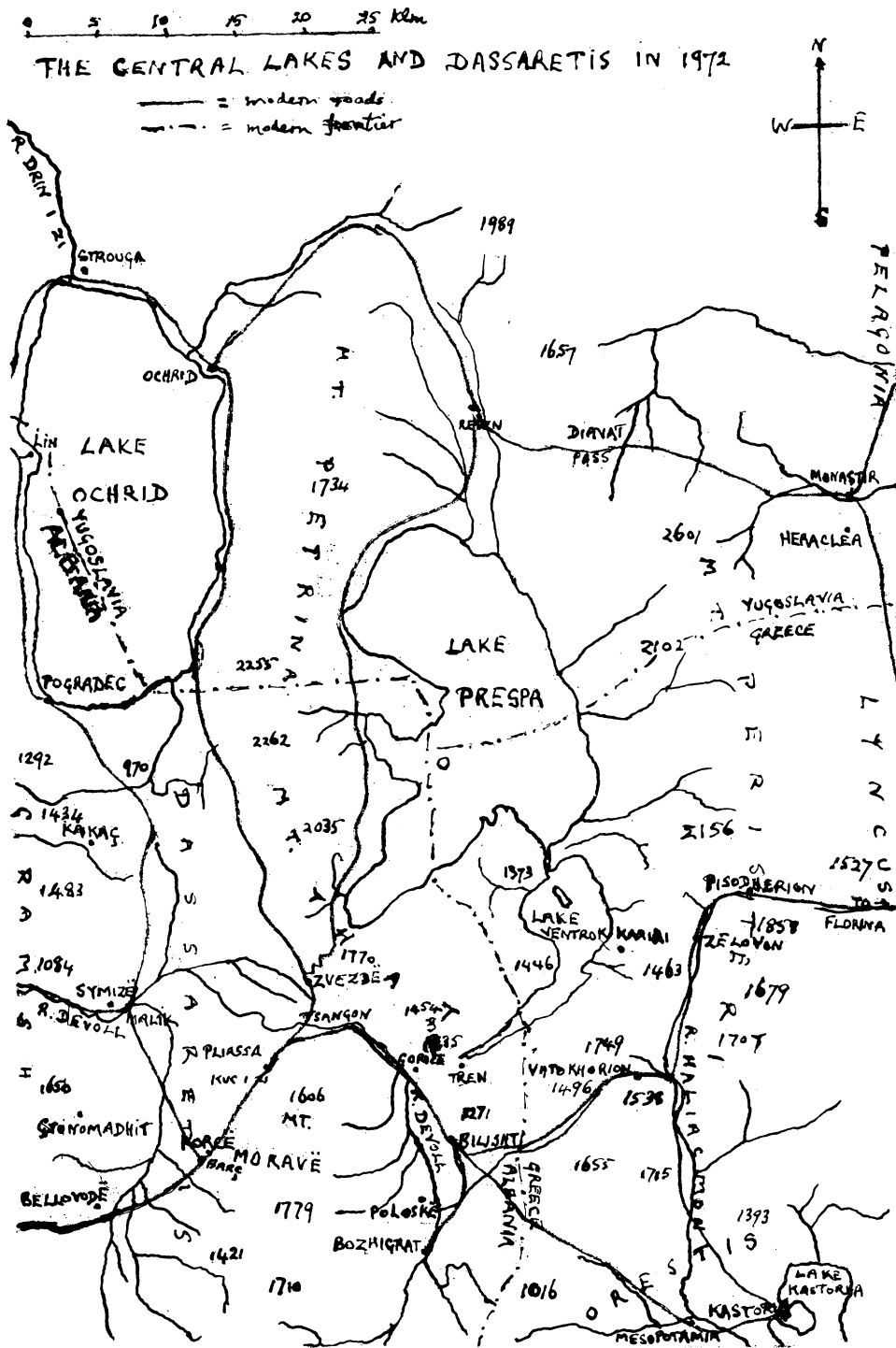


FIG. I. THE CENTRAL LAKES AND DASSARETIS

FIG. 1.—The central lakes and Dassaretis



Devoll a few kilometres before Bilisht, and from this point some of us were taken northwards to see the district of Tren. This district is remarkable for the Gryke e Ujkut, a narrow passage between two high limestone mountains, which gives access to the lake known to the Albanians as Lake Ventrok and to the Greeks as Lake Little Prespa. The frontier between Albania and Greece is close at hand: it divides the waters of the lake some ten kilometres eastwards of the narrow passage.

The main road runs on to Bilisht. This town is a centre of communications (see FIG. 1). One road from it stays within Albania. It follows the valley of the Devoll to Bozhigrat. Another road turns to the north-east, crosses the frontier into Greece and climbs up to the pass of Vatokhorion. From here it descends to the side of the river Haliacmon and follows the river's course northwards for some kilometres to Zelovon. It then crosses the range of Mt Peristeri by the pass of Pisodherion and descends to Florina. Yet another road runs eastwards from Bilisht. It crosses the frontier at the top of the ridge which forms the watershed between the Devoll and the Haliacmon, and it then descends via Mesopotamia to the river Haliacmon near Kastoria. Of the two roads which cross the frontier the former is nowadays the more important, despite the fact that it is the more arduous, because it comes down into the plain of Florina from which there is easy access to the plain of Central Macedonia. The other road via Mesopotamia leads into the upper Haliacmon valley, which is relatively remote from Central Macedonia but leads more readily into Thessaly via Servia and the Volustana Pass.<sup>4</sup>

The ancient sites within these areas have been identified by the Albanian archaeologists, and particularly by Gjerak Karaiskaj and Professor Frano Prendi, and during our journey I learnt from them where they are. The pattern is very interesting.

The route westwards from Malik down the valley of the Devoll is flanked on either side by a fortified site, one being called Symizë. They belong to the period which extends from the Late Bronze Age to the Early Iron Age. On the hills on the western side of the plains of Malik and Korçë there are three other fortified sites: Kalaja e Kakaçit, Kalaja e Gjonomadhit and Kalaja e Bellovodës. The last is of the Early Iron Age, and the dates of the other two are uncertain. The range of Mt Moravë on the south-eastern side of the plain has no such sites. On the other hand the pass above Zvezdë, known as the Qaf' e Zvezdës, is fortified by a single wall which runs for some 500 m between the slopes of Mt That (1909 m) on the west and the slopes of Mt Ivan (1766 m) on the east.

The district of Tren has an extraordinarily large number of fortifications (see FIG. 3). They are as follows.

(1) Kalaja e Ventrokut. The River Tren which once flowed from Lake Ventrok into the Devoll (see p. 74 below) has been replaced by the Ventrok Channel, which is a part of the modern system of irrigation (see PLATE XI*b*). On the north side of this Channel and a short distance before one comes to the narrow passage which is known as the Gryke e Ujkut, there is a considerable limestone hill, an offshoot of Mt Spilë. The western side of the hill falls very steeply to the plain, and on the top of this western side there is a fortification wall of rough stones which is canted on the outer face only. The wall runs for some 280 m along the top and at two high points behind it there are two artificial tumuli. The side of the hill which faces the Gryke e Ujkut is less steep; between it and the Gryke e Ujkut there is a level space alongside the Ventrok Channel.

(2) Kalaja e Shpelles. On the south side of the Ventrok Channel there is a limestone bluff which is partly alongside the narrow passage. Some of its cliffs overhang the passage, and at the foot of one of them, near the narrowest part of the passage, is situated the cave of Tren,<sup>5</sup> which has been excavated (C on FIG. 2 and see PLATE X). It was occupied first in the Balkan Eneolithic period. It and the adjacent area were an 'important centre of

<sup>4</sup> See *Macedonia* I. 117 for this pass.

1971. I. 134 f.; *Iliria* I (1971) 31-47 and Plates

<sup>5</sup> For this cave see *Studia Albanica* 1967. I. 142-5 and i-xvii; cf. *Macedonia* I. 242 and index.

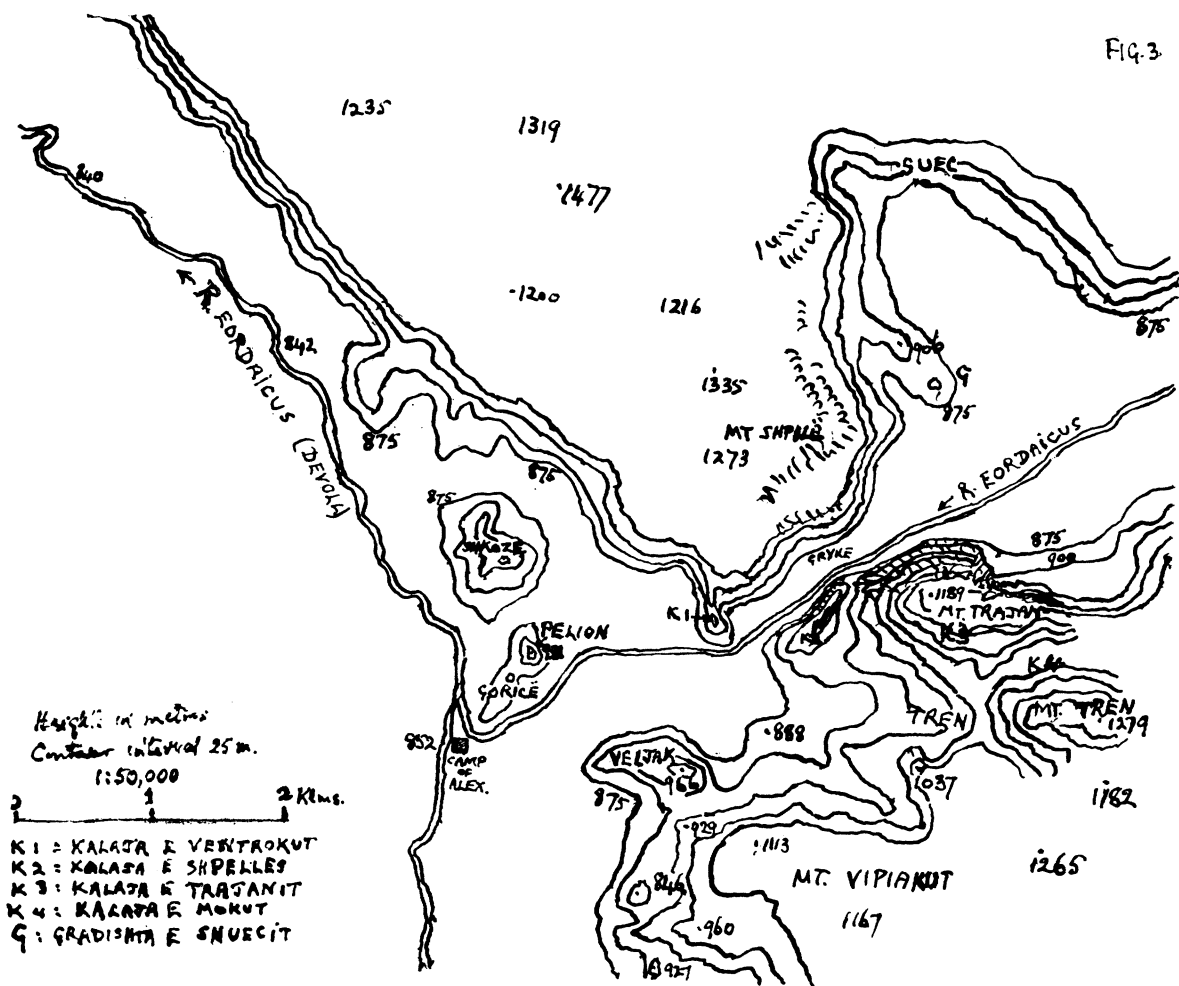


FIG. 3.—Pelion in Dassaretis, in 335 B.C.

habitation' in the Late Bronze Age with evidence of agriculture, pastoralism, fishing and hunting. It was occupied again late in the Hellenistic period and in the early medieval period. There is a view of the opening of this cave and of the cliff above the cave, which is taken from the other side of the narrow passage, in *Sqiperia Arkeologjike*, fig. 26. It is reproduced in PLATE X. There is another picture of the cave, the cliffs and the track on the east side of the passage in *Studia Albanica*, 1971, 1, fig. 3. On the east side of the bluff the ground falls steeply to a trough and then rises steeply up the side of Mt Trajan. Half-way or so up this east side of the bluff there is a wall which runs parallel to the top of the bluff for a distance of some 90 m; this at least is as far as the wall had been cleared by excavation when we were there. The wall, made of rough stones, some small and others up to a metre long, is some three metres wide. Many sherds of painted pottery, dated to the Early Iron Age, probably to the ninth and eighth centuries, lay on the ground inside the wall, showing that it had been an inhabited and fortified site.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> This wall has been reported in *Studia Albanica* 1971, I. 135, and it was remarked there that the bluff is very steep and rocky so that there was no need of fortification elsewhere. Pieces of bronze pendants were found, as at Kuç i Zi (see n. 3 above); also flat-

topped thumb-rests springing from the wall of a pot, as in *Macedonia* Fig. 16f and s, and sherds from imported Greek Geometric pottery, one piece each 'being from Argos, Corinth and Delphi'. There was also some Late Bronze Age pottery.

(3) Kalaja e Trajanit. Mt Trajan is a bare limestone mass with a few scrubs of garigue. The wide top part of the mountain shelves towards the plain so that it presents an inclined surface to one's view as one stands on Kalaja e Shpelles. On this surface we were able to see a series of five fortification walls, each running roughly at right-angles to the line of cliffs which overhang the narrow passage; the eastern ends of these walls are linked by a single wall. There is a small area at the highest point which is enclosed by a wall. The total length of this system of walls is some three kilometres; it provides defence in depth.

(4) Kalaja e Mokut. To the south-east of Mt Trajan and above the village of Tren there is a single wall of fortification which runs up the steep hillside and crosses over the ridge. The wall is some 500 m long. It served as a defence against attack from the south or the east. This wall too is clearly seen from the plain below.

(5) Gradishta e Shuecit. Beyond the narrow passage and on the north side of Lake Ventrok some rising ground is fortified with an *agger*. This *agger* and the settlement it encloses are of the Early Iron Age. Two tumuli which date probably to the same period are visible on the flat ground near the *agger*.<sup>7</sup>

(6) Goricë. In the plain of Poloskë, on the north-east side of the junction of the Devoll and the Ventrok Channel (or its predecessor the Tren River), there is an isolated hill with yellowish soil. The northern end is higher than the southern part and is steep-sided. Many sherds of the Hellenistic and Roman periods have been picked up on the site, and the outline of the hill suggests that it has been fortified with a circuit-wall. Such a site would be most appropriate for a walled city in Epirus.

Farther up the valley of the Devoll there is a fortified site of the Early Iron Age in the vicinity of Bilisht (see FIG. 1). Like the site at Goricë, it is on an isolated hill. It seems to have been first occupied somewhat earlier than Kalaja e Shpelles.

The great area of plain which extends from the foothills south of Pogradec to the hills south and east of Bilisht is more than 800 m above sea level. It is extremely fertile and very healthy both for men and animals. It has a long tradition of good agriculture; indeed it is said to be nowadays the best cultivated area in Albania. When stock-raising predominated over agriculture there was excellent pasture in the plain and there is still on the surrounding mountain ranges. In the Greco-Roman period this was the heartland of the Dassaretii.

The fortifications which I have listed were made at various times in order to defend the inhabitants of the plain against their neighbours. They were therefore set at the main points of entry which were defensible. On the west the fortifications by Kakaç, Symizë, Gjonmadh and Bellovodë block the ways which lead into the plain from the broken and mountainous countryside known as Gramsh. The lack of fortifications on Mt Moravë is due to the fact that this mountain lies within the area of the great plain. The fortification at Bilisht in the south of the plain is at the point where two routes from the Haliacmon valley meet. The absence of sites among the hills at the north end of the plain is striking; it indicates that the basin of Ochrid with its own plain formed a continuum with the Malik-Korcë plain. On the other hand the wall on the high saddle above Zvezdë was evidently built as a defence against invaders from the basin which contains Lake Prespa and at its northern end the town of Resen.

The most surprising thing is the concentration of fortifications which guard the Gryke e Ujkut in the district of Tren (see FIG. 3). Nowadays the Gryke e Ujkut leads nowhere; for the marshes and the waters of Lake Ventrok are a barrier to movement. It is a *cul de sac* which no one would fortify. But in the past, when the fortifications were made, the Gryke e Ujkut was the entry into the Malik-Korcë-Poloskë plain which was most in need of defence. Consequently a main route of passage ran through what is now a marshy

<sup>7</sup> I was told that this is the only *agger* yet known in Albania but such *aggeres* are known in Bosnia at this period. The tumuli indicate that there was an important route here.

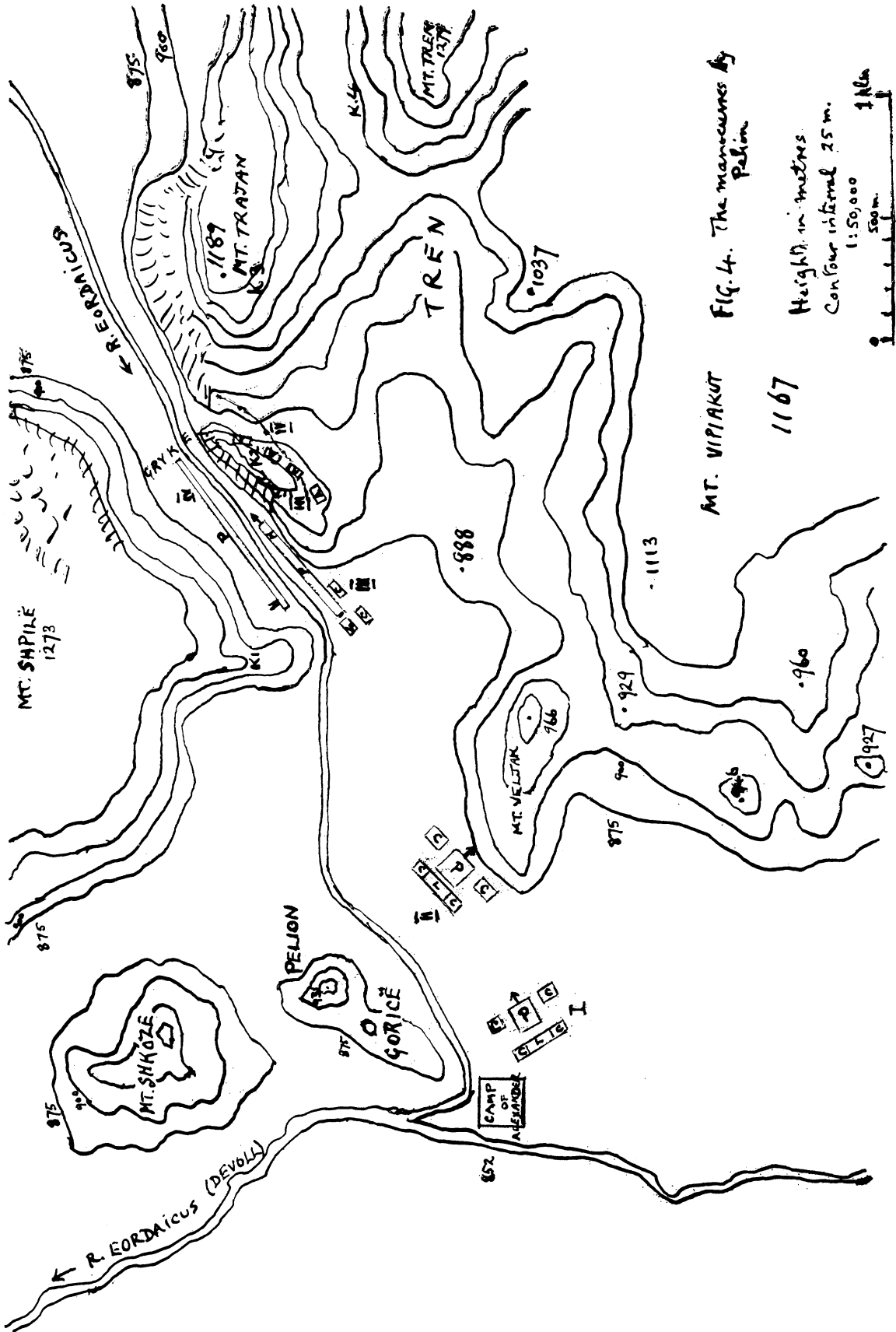
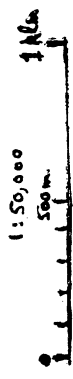


Fig. 4. The mountains of Pelion

Height in metres  
Contour interval 25 m.



*cul de sac*. If the lake existed at all at that time, it was much smaller and there was firm ground beside it for important routes. One route then was on the east side of the Ventrok basin to Kariai and thence via Zelovon to Florina; it was far superior to the modern route via Bilisht which has to cross two mountain ridges. Another route led from the Ventrok basin through a low trough into the Lake Prespa basin and so to Resen; if one was going from Korcë to Monastir, this route was far superior to that via Ochrid in that there was no pass to surmount until the pass of Diavat above Monastir. It was also superior to the route via Zvezdë to Resen. Thus the inhabitants of the Malik-Korcë-Poloskë plain were right in putting their chief defences at the Gryke e Ujku. Beyond it were the main routes and at the same time the easiest routes into Macedonia, and it was the Macedonians who were their most dangerous neighbours.

It is necessary now to consider the implications of my inference that the lake in the Ventrok basin was considerably smaller in antiquity than it is today, if it existed at all. As the lake today is linked to Lake Prespa by a narrow channel in the trough between the two basins, we must consider that lake also. Indeed the whole system of lakes which run from Ochrid to Ostrovo and Kastoria has common characteristics. In the Balkan Eneolithic period there were settlements on piles at the north end of Lake Ochrid by the outflow; at the east end of Lake Malik by the outflow; on one side of Lake Prespa; on the east side of Lake Kastoria; and on one side of Lake Rudnik (Khimadhitis).<sup>8</sup> The later settlements at Malik were not on piles; the level of that lake was lower throughout the Bronze Age. When Polybius wrote the account which was used by Strabo 7.327, there were near the Mt Candavia sector of the Via Egnatia 'the lakes near Lychnidus with their own self-supporting factories for pickling fish'. The two lakes which satisfy this description are Lake Ochrid and Lake Prespa. This is what we should expect because the two lakes are connected by underground channels in the limestone. In Lake Prespa, which is higher than Lake Ochrid, the underwater openings of these tunnels are called *katavothres* or swallets; the waters which issue from them in great strength on the southern side of Lake Ochrid and flow into it are called *kephalovrysia* or headsprings.<sup>9</sup> It is likely that they are age-old. The level of Lake Prespa depends on whether the tunnels are clear or partly blocked.

<sup>8</sup> See *Macedonia* I. 230.

<sup>9</sup> We visited the headsprings at Izvor on the Albanian side of the border. I was told by Professor M. D. Petruševski that these headsprings are the

sources of the ancient Drilon (Byzantine Drymon, modern Drin i Zi); its waters can be seen running through Lake Ochrid to Strouga, if one flies above the lake.

FIG. 4.—The manoeuvres by Pelion

KEY

K 1 Kalaja e Ventrokut

K 2 Kalaja e Shpelles

K 3 Kalaja e Trajanit

K 4 Kalaja e Mokut

C Cavalry

H Hypaspists

P Phalanx

L Light-armed troops

A Alexander's force in III

I The army on parade

II The army about to attack

III Phalanx advances while Alexander holds K 2 with his force 'A'.

IV Phalanx in formation after crossing the river. The arc indicates the field of fire at 300 metres from the river bank.

*Note:* In I and II the phalanx has a front of 100 men and a depth of 120 men.

In III the phalanx has a front of 20 men and a depth of 600 men.

In IV the phalanx has a front of 1000 men and a depth of 12 men.



In Hellenistic and Roman times the surface of Lake Ostrovo was considerably lower than it is today, even though a modern artificial tunnel draws water off. This is deduced from ancient remains on small islets in the lake and on the sides of the lake.<sup>10</sup> There are two similar islets in Lake Prespa which have ancient remains and the ruins of medieval churches, and we may conclude that its level then was considerably lower than it is today.<sup>11</sup> In that case there was then no interflow between Lake Prespa and Lake Ventrok. To be precise, the Ventrok basin had its own independent system of drainage. When that was the case, the water of the Ventrok basin flowed out through the Gryke e Ujkut as a river and joined the Devoll near Goricë. On September 8, 1805, W. M. Leake rode from Kastoria by a direct route over an easy pass to Bilisht and noted that the whole area northwards to just short of Lake Ochrid was called 'Devol'. On the 9th he set off from a khan below Bilisht towards the pass of Tsangon. 'In three-quarters of an hour a narrow glen opens on our right' (i.e. the Gryke e Ujkut) 'from which issues a small river, said to originate in a lake in the district of Prespa, called Ventrok. At the mouth of the glen is a narrow level, on which stands the village of Tren. . . . We cross at 7 the River Devol, which, not having yet received that of Tren, is still very small.'<sup>12</sup> The river from Ventrok has left its mark in the plain by Goricë, where marshy ground, a spring and a stream are shown on a modern map (see FIG. 2). We may be sure that a river issued through the Gryke e Ujkut in ancient times too. There was one difference between then and recently, namely that the lake itself, if it existed, was smaller.

The British Staff Map 1 : 100,000 shows Lake Ventrok full to the brim, that was up to the Gryke e Ujkut, before 1939. By that time, as now, the river-outlet had become blocked; only an overflow spilled out through the narrow passage. In a later Greek Staff Map 1 : 200,000 the area of water was smaller. The Albanian government has put in a short underground tunnel, like that in Lake Ostrovo, and has reduced the level of Lake Ventrok by drawing water off into the so-called Ventrok Channel, visible in PLATE XIb; but the lake is still substantial and the sides are marshy (see PLATE XIa). A river-outlet and probably a cover of forest on the hills<sup>13</sup> were evidently needed to provide firm ground for main routes to run through the Ventrok basin. Such a river then existed in antiquity. I have shown its likely course in FIG. 3.

In order to strengthen my argument and because it is interesting in itself, I should mention a remarkable painting of horsemen hunting deer which was reported by M. Korkuti in *Studime Historike* ii (1969) 127 f. It is high up on a sheer rock-face of Mt Spilë. From it one looks out through a cleft and sees below one the marshy plain of Ventrok on the inner, northeastern side of the Gryke e Ujkut. The painting and the view are shown in *Studia Albanica*, 1971, 1, fig. 4 and *Sqiperia Arkeologjike*, figs. 28 and 29. They are reproduced here as PLATE IXa and b. It was reported as a painting of the Early Iron Age, but at the International Conference at Tirana it was convincingly argued that the horsemen with their very long, pennanted lances were medieval knights. Similar pictures on tapestries and in illuminated manuscripts were shown to us. But what were Frankish artists doing in a place which is so remote today?

In 1096 when the Byzantine Emperor Alexis was defeated by the Franks near Dyrrachium, he fled by the Via Egnatia route to Ochrid 'resting a little in the secluded valley called Babagora' (Anna Comnena 4.8), evidently the modern Babië.<sup>14</sup> From there he went south

<sup>10</sup> See *Macedonia* I. 52 f. and Map 7.

<sup>11</sup> For the two lakes see *Megale Hellenike Encyclopaedia* s.v. *Prespa*. Lake Prespa is the largest lake in the Balkans, but its greatest depth is only 50 m. Lake Little Prespa (Lake Ventrok) is shallower. Both are very rich in fish.

<sup>12</sup> W. M. Leake, *Travels in Northern Greece* I (1835) 332 f.

<sup>13</sup> *Arr. An.* 1.5.6 and 12 describes as 'wooded' two areas, which, if I am correct in my identifications, are now barren or have only sparse bushes of garigue. The blocking of the river-outlet was probably due to deforestation, erosion and perhaps an avalanche or cliff-fall.

<sup>14</sup> For this place on the Via Egnatia route see *Macedonia* I. 32 f.

to 'Diabolis' (5.1) evidently the name from which derives Devoll, to reconstitute his forces. Defeated subsequently near Ioannina in Epirus, he fled again to Ochrid and recalled the survivors to the colours there (5.4). His main base was evidently Ochrid and his lines of communication ran from there to Monastir. The Franks preferred to use the southern route which went from North Epirus via Korcë to Kastoria, and their lines of communication ran westwards to Aulon (near Valona). Under the command of Bohemund they went 'in vallem de Andronopoli', that is into the Drin valley near Argyrokastro, and from there they crossed over from town to town until they reached 'Castoria'. There they seized all the livestock. They had marched from the Drin valley via Korcë and the Tsangon pass, and had then taken the route, as followed by Leake in 1805 but in reverse, to Kastoria.

If they had advanced from Kastoria southwards to Servia and Verria or eastwards to Ostrovo and Edessa, they would have exposed their lines of communication via the Tsangon pass to attack. Therefore they turned north in order to drive Alexis back from Ochrid and deepen their own defences. For this purpose they entered 'Palagonia' and there they burnt a settlement of heretics 'in quodam lacu, in quo aedificatum fuerat'.<sup>15</sup> The ancient name Pelagonia, which was in antiquity proper to north-west Macedonia, was used in the form 'Palagonia' by the Franks to include the area of Ochrid as well as that of 'Butella' (Bitola = Monastir). Thus the Franks going north from Kastoria entered Pelagonia.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the lakes which have islands today are not Lake Ochrid but Lake Ventrok and Lake Prespa. Thus the Franks passed through the Gryke e Ujkut to carry out their work of destruction. The unfortunate settlement which they burnt down may have been that which venerated the relics of Saint Achilleiou, conveyed there by the Bulgarian Samuel (977-1014). The island of Saint Achilleiou is situated at the northern end of Lake Ventrok. It was on this or some subsequent campaign that sentries at the look-out post on Mt Shpilë may have painted their picture of knights in pursuit of deer.<sup>17</sup>

Lastly we must consider the fortified city at Goricë. It is unique in the Malik-Korcë-Poloskë plain, and it was the counterpart of the modern capital of the region, Korcë.

The site was selected presumably because it commanded the approach to the Gryke e Ujkut. It was a very suitable commercial centre also at times when the plains of Malik-Korcë-Poloskë and Prespa-Ventrok were under one political control. This was probably so during the early decades of the fourth century B.C., when Bardylis I was at the height of his power and his empire included these plains.<sup>18</sup> But in 358 B.C. Bardylis was defeated by Philip II and lost the southern part of his realm. The frontier of Macedon was then advanced by Philip so as to include Resen and the area of Prespa-Ventrok. On the other hand the plain of Malik-Korcë-Poloskë, which formed part of the territory of the Dassaretii, was probably autonomous and not dependent upon Macedon. In the geographical terminology of the period it was a part of Illyris. It is possible that the single-wall fortifications above Zvezdë, on Mt Trajan and above Tren were built by the Dassaretii at this time, as a measure of defence against the Macedonians.

<sup>15</sup> *Anonymi Gesta Francorum* (ed. Hagenmeyer) 4. 3-5 and Tudebodus Sivracensis *Historia de Hierosolymitano itinere*, 16.

<sup>16</sup> The suggestion of Hagenmeyer that the Crusaders committed this atrocity because they confused the place-name 'Palagonia' with the fifth-century theologian Pelagius seems to be far-fetched; surely 'Diabolis' should have been plundered even more brutally! We need in the vicinity a wealthy and renowned community, which was a centre of Christianity but not of Catholic Christianity. Hagenmeyer suggests that the Crusaders went from Kastoria northwards but eastwards to Florina, Ostrovo (where he assumes that there was then but not now a con-

siderable island in the lake), and Thessalonica. But Anna Comnena 5.5.1 mentions expeditions by the Crusaders to Achris (Ochrid), Scopia (Skopje) which is on the Vardar, and 'the two Poloboi' (perhaps the two Prespas); it is only after these expeditions that the Crusaders marched from Ochrid to 'Ostrobos' (Ostrovo) and thence by 'Soskos' to Servia and Beroea (Verria).

<sup>17</sup> The technique of the painting is reminiscent of the chalk figures on the Wiltshire Downs; for the silhouetted figures are filled with chalky lime ('de la chaux qui remplit toute la silhouette', *Studia Albanica* 1971. I. 136).

<sup>18</sup> See *Macedonia* I. 96.

The chief source for the ancient topography of this area is Livy's account of the Roman campaign in the course of the Second Macedonian War, which is based upon a lost book of Polybius. When the Roman consul had pierced the outer ring of Macedonia's defences, he entered Pelagonia, marched through Lyncus, Eordaea and Elimiotis, and turning back up the Haliacmon valley reached Celetrum in Orestis. 'Ab Celetro in Dassaretios processit urbemque Pelion vi cepit' (Livy 31.40.4). In crossing from Celetrum (Kastoria) the consul followed probably the route which Leake used, and he descended to Bilisht in Dassaretis. Here he captured the fortified city of Pelion. He ejected the population and 'restored' the city to the Dassaretii; but he took the precaution of placing a strong garrison in it, because 'it was a city favourably situated for making attacks into Macedonia' ('nam et sita opportune urbs erat ad impetus in Macedoniam faciendos'). This is an excellent description of the position of Goricë. From it one can pass through the Gryke e Ujkut and proceed either northwards to Resen and over the pass of Diavat to Monastir (Heraclea Lyncestis being nearby)<sup>19</sup> or eastwards over the pass of Pisodherion to Florina; and one can also proceed either by the pass of Vatokhorion or more directly to Kastoria in the upper Haliacmon valley. Goricë is thus the site of the ancient Pelion.

As Livy indicated, the Malik-Korcë-Poloskë plain was part of Dassaretis and Pelion was a Dassaretian city. In wider terminology Pelion was in Illyris and not in Macedonia; as Stephanus Byzantius records, it was 'a city of Illyria', and it figured later among the fortified places of Epirus Nova (Procop. *Aed.* 4.4, p. 75).<sup>20</sup> The river Devoll changes its name to Semeni in its lower course. Similarly in antiquity the upper part of the river was called Eordaicus, and the lower course in the coastal plain was called Apsus. The name Eordaicus is from the same root as the name of the Eordetae, who were credited with three cities by Ptolemy 3.13.6; there were some Eordi who were called also Amyri, associated perhaps with Mt Amyron (St. Byz. s.v. *Amyros*), that is in western Dassaretis. If there was an area from which the River Eordaicus took its name, it was probably that of its origin, namely the lacustrine basin of Ventrok. I suggest that it was then called Eordaea;<sup>21</sup> for there was a lake, 'Begorritis', in the canton of Macedonia which was called Eordaea.

Finally there are some tumuli in this area which indicate the lines of the main routes; for the builders of tumuli placed them always beside an important road. At Barç just east of Korcë there is a very large tumulus, 41 m in diameter, within which 112 graves have been excavated. The burials have been dated mainly by imported Greek pottery of the L.H. III C period and of the Protogeometric period. They extend from the twelfth century to the ninth century B.C. The tumulus was evidently the burial-place of the royal dynasty while ruled the Korcë plain throughout those centuries.<sup>22</sup> Another tumulus, which is 29 m in diameter, is at Kuç i zi on the lefthand side of the road as one goes from Korcë to Pliassa. This tumulus has been partly excavated. The burials have been dated to the period 800-700 B.C. Their contents include bronze pendants of the Illyrian type which are well known at Glasinac.<sup>23</sup> It seems likely that this tumulus was the burial place of a different

<sup>19</sup> For this pass see *Macedonia* I. 42.

<sup>20</sup> W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (Cambridge, 1948) I. 6 is mistaken in putting Pelion inside Macedonia. The fact that Cleitus 'occupied' Pelion (Arr. *An.* I.5.5), means that the town was not Dardanian; but it does not follow that it was Macedonian. Diodorus Siculus 17.8.1 'Having subjugated the Thracian tribes Alexander went on to Paeonia and Illyris and the lands co-terminous with these, reduced many of the barbarian inhabitants who had revolted, made all the neighbouring barbarians subject to his rule . . . and returned to Macedonia', the jibe of Demosthenes when Alexander 'was among Illyrians and Triballians' (Plu. *Alex.* II.3), and

Athens' congratulations to Alexander on his safe return 'from the Illyrians and Triballians' (Arr. I.10.3) also indicate that the campaign was in Illyris and not in Macedonia. So too Curt. 3.10.6 and 5.1.1.

<sup>21</sup> For the occurrence of this name in various forms see *Macedonia* I. 415, where it is noted that 'a common feature of the districts in which the name survived is the proximity of a lake'.

<sup>22</sup> A preliminary report is in *Buletin Arkeologjik* 1971. 31f. I saw some of the material in the exhibition cases at Tirana in 1972.

<sup>23</sup> See *Buletin Arkeologjik* 1969. 27-36; *Studia Albanica* 1971. 1.151f.; and *Iliria I* (1971) 350.

dynasty which succeeded that at Barç and controlled the plain during the eighth century B.C. The tumuli at Barç and at Kuç i zi are alongside the main road in the plain, which runs towards the Tsangon pass.

The two tumuli at Kalaja e Ventrokut are on the higher part of the inhabited, fortified area which overlooks the entry into the Gryke e Ujku from the west. The two tumuli beside Gradishta e Shuecit are alongside the entry into the Gryke e Ujku from the east. The positions of these two pairs of tumuli show that an important route ran through the Gryke e Ujku. The tumuli have not been excavated, but they are probably to be attributed to the Early Iron Age.

## B. THE CAMPAIGN OF ALEXANDER AGAINST CLEITUS AND GLAUCIAS

Alexander set off from Amphipolis 'with the spring' of 335 B.C. (Arr. 1.1.4). As he intended to make a full sweep of the Balkan area, we may assume that he took the field army of the Macedonians with him, leaving the defence of Macedonia to a part of the Macedonian cavalry and to the older age-groups of the Macedonian infantry. The only extended account of the campaign which survives is in Arrian's *Anabasis*. That it derives from an eye-witness is clear from the inclusion of many graphic details (e.g. 1.2.6; 1.4.1; and 1.5.12). Arrian prefaced his account of this and other campaigns by saying that he used the narratives which had been compiled by Ptolemy and Aristobulus, who had themselves served with Alexander (*I init.*). We are thus led on to suppose that Arrian used their narratives for the Balkan campaign which begins at 1.1.4.

Arrian cited Ptolemy for the losses which the Macedonians incurred in the battle against the Triballi (1.2.7), and Strabo 7.301 cited Ptolemy as his source for an anecdote about Alexander and the Celts which is found independently in Arrian 1.4.8. Thus the indications are clear that Ptolemy was used by Arrian for this campaign. Professor L. Pearson, *The lost histories of Alexander the Great* (1960) 205 f., is more definite still on this point: 'his (Ptolemy's) unmistakable style of reporting is to be found even in Arrian's account of the campaigns in the North with which his first books opens'.

That Aristobulus described this campaign may perhaps be inferred from the use of the word *ὑπερος* in the rare meaning of a club or cleaver. When fighting against the Malli, Alexander was struck on the neck with this weapon according to Plu. *Alex.* 63.9 and Plu. *Mor.* 341c, the latter passage having a lacuna in which Jacoby and others have restored the word; the source of the two passages is Aristobulus (*FGrH* 129 F 46). Now the same word and a similar phrase are used of Alexander in the Illyrian campaign in Plu. *Mor.* 327a: *ὑπερω δὲ τὸν τράχηλον ἠλοήθην*.

It seems almost certain that Plutarch's source here also was Aristobulus. If then Aristobulus was on the campaign and if Arrian meant what he said in the preface, we may conclude that Arrian used both the account of Ptolemy and the account of Aristobulus for this campaign.

There is no doubt that one account which Arrian used had a day-by-day diary of events. Arrian sometimes draws a dating by days from this diary (e.g. 1.1.6; 1.2.1; 1.3.1), but at other times he loses the sequence of days completely. This is because he has abbreviated the material which he was using, and he has abbreviated it drastically at times. Yet what he has recorded is worthy of trust. In particular he has reported the orders issued by Alexander on a number of occasions during this campaign. It is most likely that these

The excavator, Zhaneta Andrea, showed me some of the material which was exhibited at Tirana and in the museum at Korçë in 1972. There were bronze pendants and beads as in *Macedonia* I. Fig. 19b,

Fig. 17m, y and cc and Fig. 18k, two gold-leaf mouth-pieces with their strings intact as *ibid.* 1.352, and painted pottery of the 'north-western Geometric style' as *ibid.* I. 281 f. but with plastic nipples.

orders were recorded by Alexander, either himself or through an amanuensis, in his own day-by-day diary;<sup>24</sup> that the orders in the diary were incorporated by Ptolemy and perhaps by Aristobulus in their accounts; and that Arrian, who was particularly interested in orders and cites examples (*Tact.* 32, ed. Roos), took some of these orders into his own shorter narrative.

When Alexander set off from Amphipolis, he already knew that the Triballi and the Illyrians were planning to revolt (1.1.4). Heading first for the Triballi, he fought his way through a pass (probably the Shipka pass), defeated the Triballi near the River Lyginus, crossed the Danube near its mouth,<sup>25</sup> defeated the Getae and received various deputations. He then advanced 'towards the lands of the Agrianes and the Paeones' (1.5.1), that is towards the upper Strymon valley and the country between that valley and the upper Vardar (Axios) valley.<sup>26</sup> He was no doubt heading for the Illyrians. While he was on the way the report reached him that Cleitus the son of Bardylis was in revolt, that Glaucias the king of the Taulantii had joined his cause, and that the Autariatae intended to attack Alexander 'on his march'.

Alexander decided to move at speed. No doubt he suspected that Cleitus and Glaucias were on the way to western Macedonia which lay open to ravaging and destruction; for these were the traditional tactics of the Illyrians, 'rpto vivere assueti' (Curt. 3.10.9). In order to check the Autariatae, he accepted the offer of Langarus, the king of the Agrianes, to invade Autariatan territory, which lay to the north of Albania. While this was being done, Alexander was marching alongside the River Erigon and heading for the city Pelion ('*Ἀλέξανδρος δὲ παρὰ τὸν Ἐριγόνα ποταμὸν πορευόμενος ἐς Πήλιον πόλιν ἐστέλλετο*). For this was the city which Cleitus had occupied as the strongest city in the area (*ὡς ὀχυρωτάτην τῆς χώρας*).

It is evident that Arrian has abbreviated the account of Alexander's march from the Danube to the Erigon. For instance, when the Autariatae were reported to be planning to attack Alexander 'on his march', they cannot have known the route he subsequently took. I imagine they expected him to proceed via Niš and the Preševo pass into the upper Vardar valley. While Langarus went in that direction and invaded Autariatan territory,<sup>27</sup> Alexander took the quickest route to western Macedonia via Sofia, Kjustendil (ancient Pataulia), Kratovo (Tranupara) and Štip (Astibus),<sup>28</sup> and then from the upper Vardar valley via Gradsko and Prilep into Pelagonia and Lyncus, the two cantons in which the River Erigon (the Cerna Reka) gathers its headwaters.<sup>29</sup> From Lyncus the most direct route to Pelion was via Florina, Pisodherion, Kariai and the Gryke e Ujku (see FIG. 1). It is possible that Alexander took this route; but it is more likely that he marched via Vatokhorion and Bilisht in order to cover the routes of entry into Orestis, because he could not have known whether Cleitus and Glaucias were ahead of him on their way into Macedonia. In any case 'when Alexander came to it (Pelion), he camped by the River Eordaicus and decided to attack its wall on the next day. Yet the troops of Cleitus being in occupation of the mountains round the city, which were very high and wooded (*ὑπερδέξιά τε ὄντα καὶ δασέα*), were in a position to attack the Macedonians from all sides if they made an assault on the city'.

As it was the custom of the Macedonians to choose a fortifiable site for a camp, Alexander

<sup>24</sup> For this diary (the *Ephemerides*) see U. Wilcken, 'Hypomnematismoi', *Philologus* 53 (1894) 112 f.; he infers that the diary included the campaigns in Europe.

<sup>25</sup> See Strabo 7. 301 and 305 for the position of the island of Peuce in the Danube.

<sup>26</sup> For the location of these peoples see *Macedonia* I. 78 and 202.

<sup>27</sup> Their territory at this time was probably in the

Metohija, a canton of Yugoslavia, and farther west and north. See *BSA* LXI (1966) 249 f. and *Macedonia* I. 81 f.

<sup>28</sup> See *Macedonia* I Map 17.

<sup>29</sup> Str. 7. 327. Alexander marched 'near the Erigon' (Arr. 1.5.5), not 'up the Erigon' in the words of J. F. C. Fuller, *The Generalship of Alexander* (London, 1958) 224, since the river is impassable in the Morihovo.

presumably chose to camp beside the River Devoll because it gave some protection and it provided water for men and horses. As we see from 1.5.8, he was not very close to Pelion. We may place him by the junction of the Devoll with the old river of Ventrok (see FIG. 3). The latter was probably the Eordaicus (see p. 76 above). With his camp in this position Alexander had access to the plain of Poloskë for the pasturing of his horses (see FIG. 2). Moreover, his lines of communication with Macedonia were free (see FIG. 1).

Cleitus was evidently the son of Bardylis II, the grandson of the very old Bardylis, who had fallen in battle against Philip II in 358 B.C., and his people were probably the Dardanians, who lay in the Kossovo area, north of the upper Vardar valley.<sup>30</sup> He had come south probably via Tetovo and Kitševo to the head of Lake Ochrid and had then marched along one or other side of the lake to the Tsangon pass and Pelion. He had seized and garrisoned Pelion as a base of operations for invading Macedonia. His troops were now stationed to the north, east and south-east of the city on the ring of hills called Shkozë, Shpilë (with its advanced spur on which Kalaja e Ventrokut stands), Trajan (with the advanced bluff on which Kalaja e Shpelles stands), Tren and Veljak. For these hills see FIG. 3. It is, however, an exaggeration to say that Alexander's army would expose itself to attack from *all* sides if it made an attack on the city; for Alexander had to keep free access to his camp on one side, and it is clear from the later narrative that he was operating in a plain of considerable extent.

On the next day Alexander led his army towards the city. The enemy sacrificed three boys, three girls and three black rams and rushed forward to engage the Macedonians at close quarters. But after a clash the enemy left even the strong positions they had occupied, and in consequence the sacrificial victims were found where they had fallen.

Alexander was now able to isolate those of the enemy who were in the town or had taken refuge in it. He took position close to the walls of the town and planned to build a wall of circumvallation round it.<sup>31</sup> But next day Glaucias, the king of the Taulantians (situated in the western part of Central Albania), appeared with a large force. Alexander realised that he could not take the city with his present forces; a large number of good troops had taken refuge in it, and the large army of Glaucias would fall upon him if he made an assault upon the walls (1.5.7-8). We must assume then that the Taulantians of Glaucias and such Dardanians as were outside the city were occupying the positions from which Alexander had dislodged the Dardanians the previous day. As Glaucias' lines of communication went through the Tsangon pass (see FIG. 2), his men probably occupied the hills to the north of the Ventrok Channel; and the Dardanians, who could use the Gryke e Ujkut and the route to Resen, if they had to withdraw homewards, occupied some at least of the hills to the south of the Ventrok Channel (see FIG. 3).

The next move which Alexander made was prompted by his need for supplies. We must therefore pause to consider how many troops he had with him. I have already assumed that for so great a campaign in the Balkans Alexander is likely to have taken the Macedonian field army; for there is little exaggeration in the statement by Justin that if the Balkan peoples joined together in a general rising they could not be held (XI. i.6, 'qui omnes populi si pariter deficient sisti nullo modo posse'). Moreover, there are mentions of most of the specialist units of the field army during this campaign: *agema*, *somatophylakes*, *hypaspists*, *phalanx*, *archers*, *slingers*, *Agrianes*, *cavalry of Upper Macedonia*, *cavalry of Bottiaea and Amphipolis*, *Alexander's own cavalry and catapultists*. When he crossed the Danube with a part only of the army, he had 1,500 cavalry and 4,000 infantry of the phalanx with him. We shall not be far out if we assume a cavalry force of 3,000; a phalanx, including

<sup>30</sup> See *BSA* LXI (1966) 243 f.; Cleitus was not the son of Bardylis I, as Fuller *op. cit.* 223 n. 2, has suggested.

<sup>31</sup> It seems likely that Alexander kept his main camp

as at Arr. 1.5.5. 'by the river Eordaicus' and moved only his assault force into a position near Pelion at Arr. 1.5.8.

the hypaspists, of 12,000; and specialists of other kinds up to 8,000 (e.g. at 1.6.6. it is not clear whether the archers alone numbered 2,000 or whether the figure referred to both the Agrianians and the archers). Nor have we any reason to suppose that Alexander took only a portion of his army when he marched from the Danube to the defence of Macedonia against Cleitus and Glaucias. Mention is made also of the siege-train catapults (1.6.8) and of the transport of the commissariat. We may estimate his total force outside Pelion at not less than 25,000 men and 5,000 horses.

As a clue to the speed of Alexander's march we have the statement at 1.1.5 that he reached the Haemus pass (probably the Shipka pass) in ten days from Amphipolis. The impression which Arrian creates is that Alexander carried out a whirlwind campaign in the Balkans. This is partly because Arrian concentrates on graphic military episodes, as we see when we compare 1.1.1-5 with 1.1.6-13 and notice the change from reported speech to vivid narrative at 1.1.6. Indeed Arrian is primarily responsible for the tendency to record Alexander as a military genius and little else. In fact Alexander spent four months in the Balkans. He set out from Amphipolis 'with the spring', i.e. in early April; his army marched through a deep cornfield on the left bank of the Danube, i.e. in June or so (1.4.1); and the fall of Thebes was at the time of the Great Mysteries, i.e. in October (1.10.2). It is likely that he came to Pelion late in July or early in August when the harvest was already in and the plains were brown. At this time of the year the sheep were in the highland pastures, and the rivers were low.

The problem of finding food for 25,000 men or more must have been severe. We can gauge its importance by the action which Alexander now took. Despite the dangerous position in which he lay between the forces within Pelion and those on the surrounding hills, Alexander now sent off a force of cavalry under the command of Philotas and the horse-drawn waggons from the camp to find food and pasture (1.5.9). If he had come via Vatokhorion and Bilisht to Pelion, as I have argued, he would have commandeered all moveable supplies of food in the course of his march. In particular he would have scoured the adjacent part of the plain. We may therefore conclude that the force under Philotas did not go into the upper part of the plain of Poloskë. Nor had they any chance of passing into the Ventrok basin through the narrow passage of the Gryke e Ujku, as the enemy held the approaches to it. Where then did they go? The ensuing narrative gives some clues.

When Glaucias learnt of the departure of the force under Philotas he set off in pursuit and occupied the mountainsides around the plain from which Philotas' men intended to obtain food. When it was reported to Alexander that the cavalry and the transport-animals would be at hazard if nightfall should overtake them, he went in person and at speed to their help. He took the Hypaspists, the Archers, the Agrianians, and Cavalry to the number of four hundred; but he left the rest of the army by the city to prevent those in the city from running across and joining hands with the troops of Glaucias, as they would do if the whole of his army moved away. Then indeed when Glaucias realised that Alexander was bringing up his force he abandoned the mountains, and those with Philotas got through safely to the camp (1.5.9-11).

It is evident that Glaucias took only a part of his troops in pursuit of Philotas and that the main forces of the enemy remained where they were, i.e. on the mountainsides overlooking Pelion; it was these main forces which might be joined by the garrison of Pelion. The plain from which Philotas intended to obtain food and pasture was thus not the plain beside Pelion; indeed it was a considerable way off, because the position of Philotas' force was a matter of report to Alexander and not of observation and the risk of its being overtaken by nightfall suggests a return-journey of some distance. The obvious plain to choose was the richest in the vicinity, that of Korçë, well-watered and marshy in antiquity, and we may conclude that Philotas went through the Tsangon pass into that plain which is some

eight kilometres distant from Pelion (see FIG. 2). The mountains surrounding the plain are then not the rather remote mountains which enclose the plain of Poloskë but the group of mountains which surround the Tsangon pass, a group small enough for the detachment under Glaucias to have occupied. What Alexander set out to do was to clear the pass; he therefore took the particular mixture of infantry which he used on this and other campaigns to clear the enemy from the mountainsides (*cf.* 1.1.11-12, 1.6.6, and 2.9.4 for their use on rough ground). In fact Glaucias gave way and the foraging party of Philotas got through in safety. If Alexander had not acted, it seems that Glaucias would have held up Philotas at the western end of the Tsangon pass long enough for night to fall and then for his men to get in among the horses and kill them.

It was now obvious that Alexander was in an untenable position, because he could not obtain further supplies of food. The question was where to go and how to move his army. Arrian's account is again so much abbreviated that it is understood only with difficulty. He assumes the answer to the question 'where' in the passage which I now translate.<sup>32</sup>

The forces of Cleitus and Glaucias seemed still to have caught Alexander on difficult ground; for they held the commanding heights with a large number of cavalry, a large number of javelin-men and slingers, and no small number of hoplites as well, and those who were engaged in defending the city were likely to fall upon the Macedonians as they made off. Moreover, the places through which Alexander's course ran (*δι' ὧν ἡ πάροδος ἦν*) appeared to be narrow and wooded—narrow because it was confined on the one hand by the river and there was on the other hand a very high mountain and cliffs on the side of the mountain (*κρημνοὶ πρὸς τοῦ ὄρους*) so that there would not have been passage for the army even at four abreast (1.5.11-12).

Before my visit to this area in September 1972 I thought that this narrow place was to be located at the Tsangon pass (see FIG. 2). Leake had described it as follows. 'The Pass is not as strong as it is narrow' since 'the river occupies all the space . . . the hills which border it on either side [are] not very abrupt, but they soon become steep and lofty, and the great rocky summit to the north . . . is a suitable link to the chain formed by the great summits.' But when I visited it, I saw that it did not fit the description of Arrian. The pass is a piece of flat plain, at its narrowest point at least 100 m wide, and the Devoll flows along it in a wide and shallow bed (see PLATE XIc). As Arrian was describing the space between the river and one side of the passage, the width of the Tsangon pass does not in itself disqualify it. The decisive point is the lack of cliffs on the side of the very high mountain. For to the north of the pass there is a group of low and steepish hills of yellow soil (they are of flysch formation, which produces steep slopes but not cliffs), then a dip in the ground, and then at some distance from the pass the very high mass of Mt That. No sign of cliffs (*κρημνοὶ*). If we turn to the south side, the hills are of limestone and steepish but again there are no striking cliffs. On the other hand this pass was appropriate for Glaucias to defend against Philotas; for his men could hold the steep slopes, put obstacles on the track and hurl missiles at the cavalry and the waggon-animals, if they should try to go through the pass. When Alexander came up, he had his Hypaspists, Agrianians and Archers to clear the enemy from the hills, and his additional force of 400 cavalry could operate in the plain within and outside the pass.

On the other hand the Gryke e Ujkt fits Arrian's description exactly (see FIG. 4). It is narrow for a long distance (Arrian's *χωρὶα στενά*). At its western end it is some 50 metres wide between rocky, steep sides. On the southeastern side, where the precipitous wall of Mt Trajan rises up, there are cliffs under which lies the cave of Tren (see p. 69 above). As I have argued, there was a river, the Eordaicus, flowing through the Gryke e Ujkt,

<sup>32</sup> The Loeb translation of Arrian 1.5 and 6 contains many errors.



where there is now the Ventrok Channel. We can well imagine that the passage between the cliffs and the river was not wide enough for even four men to march abreast.

We must also consider what Alexander hoped to gain by going through this particular passage (see FIG. 1). If he went through the Tsangon pass, he would go deeper into enemy country; he would be able to find food and pasture for a time in the rich plain of Korcë, but then he would have to fight his way out either over the northern passes into Pelagonia, or over the Zvezdë pass and the Diavat pass to reach Monastir (Heraclea Lyncestis being nearby), or back through the Tsangon pass and then over other passes into Lyncus or Orestis. On the other hand if he went through the Gryke e Ujkut, he would enter Macedonian territory at once and he would have open lines of communication into the Prespa basin and into Lyncus. Indeed he would turn the tables on his enemies, because he would be able to hold the Gryke e Ujkut against them.

The problem, then, was how to move his army into and through this narrow passage in the face of the enemy's positions and with the garrison of Pelion probably on his heels. It is to Alexander's solution of this problem that Arrian devoted the fullest part of his narrative. As I translate it, I shall append some comments.

On this occasion then Alexander drew up the army with the phalanx in a formation 120 men deep in each file and with a squadron of 200 cavalry on each flank. He ordered them to keep silence so that they could pick up the words of command smartly. The first order he issued was to the infantry to raise their pikes upright, then to bring them to the ready at the word of command, and to swing now to the right and now to the left the serried points of the pikes in close formation. He also moved the phalanx smartly forward and then changed direction now to one flank and now to the other. In this way he went through many manoeuvres and changes of formation within a short space of time (1.6.1-3).

This is a splendid example of parade-ground drill by a large army in the face of an enemy. The Dardanians and the Taulantians had a grandstand view from the battlements of Pelion and from the surrounding hills of Veljak, Tren, Trajan, Shpilë and Shkozë (see FIG. 4). They were unable to tell where a blow was about to be aimed or even whether a blow was to be delivered at all. The manoeuvres of Epaminondas, often the precursor of the Macedonian commanders, in the plain south of Mantinea had had a similar effect in 362 B.C. On that occasion Epaminondas had struck suddenly with a massed left, which resembled the bow of a ship. So now Alexander.

Making as it were a spearhead of the phalanx on the left Alexander led it on against the enemy. They had for long been amazed by the sight of the smartness and orderliness of the drill, and now that those around Alexander were bearing down upon them they did not wait but abandoned the first hills. Then he ordered the Macedonians to raise the battle-cry and also to clash their pikes against their shields; whereupon the Taulantii were alarmed still more by the din and withdrew their army back towards the city at speed (1.6.3-4).

The parade-ground drill of so large an army—the phalanx alone having a front of 100 men and depth of 120 men, if the phalangites numbered 12,000—was possible only on a wide area of level ground. The only area close to the camp and the city was the plain, which lies between Goricë, that is Pelion, and Mt Veljak and to the south-west of that line (see FIG. 4 and PLATE XI*b*). Thus, when Alexander moved the phalanx forward and then to the left, he seemed to be threatening the enemy in Pelion and its vicinity; when he moved it forward and then to the right, he seemed to be threatening the enemy on the slopes of Mt Veljak, which were the nearest to the parade-ground and in this sense 'the first hills'.

As I interpret the text of Arrian, he has described two separate movements of the phalanx

in an abbreviated and confusing manner. The first was marked by the use of the spearhead formation, which aroused the interest of Arrian as a tactician (*cf.* Arr. *Tact.* 16.6), and resulted in a withdrawal by the enemy from 'the first hills', that is from Mt Veljak, on to the higher ground of Mt Vipiakut (see FIG. 4, phase II). The phalanx then turned about and executed the second movement. This began with the concerted battle-cry and clash of arms in response to Alexander's word of command, and it resulted in a speedy withdrawal by the enemy towards the city of Pelion, that is Goricë. It is, moreover, significant that the enemy on the southern side are unnamed but those on the northern side are named 'the Taulantii'. No doubt the source named the enemy on the southern side too. Arrian has omitted the detail, but we can supply the Dardanians as the missing name; for we have already argued on other grounds that the Taulantii were on the northern hills and the Dardanians (apart from those inside Pelion) were on the southern hills. I take it then that, while Alexander was sweeping Mt Veljak clear of the Dardanians, the Taulantians rushed down from the northern hills (including the slopes of Goricë) and attacked or were about to attack the rear of Alexander's army. At that moment Alexander executed a smart about-turn. The battle-cry and the clash of arms, made by the full phalanx with cavalry squadrons in support, were enough to send the Taulantians scampering back to higher ground by and beyond Goricë. Alexander had now cleared both flanks of his intended but unrevealed line of advance to his chief objective, the Gryke e Ujkut, which was almost two kilometres away.

Alexander saw some of the enemy—not many—in possession of a hill beside which his passage lay, and so he ordered the Bodyguards and his personal cavalry Companions to mount their chargers and take their shields on horseback and charge towards the hill; and if the enemy did not withdraw from the position on their arrival, to attack with half their number on horseback and with the other half dismounted and fighting on foot among the cavalrymen. When the enemy saw the onset of Alexander they abandoned the hill and withdrew to the mountains on either side (*ἐφ' ἑκάτερα τῶν ὄρων*, 1.6.6).

The object of Alexander's attack was the Kalaja e Shpelles (see p. 69 above and FIG. 4, K2); it overhangs the entry of the Gryke e Ujkut (see PLATE X) and is the 'hill beside which his passage lay'. In order to capture the key to the entry Alexander acted immediately. He sent ahead the best men he had. The charge by this body of heavy-armed cavalry alone was enough to cause the withdrawal of the enemy, some to Mt Trajan and others to Mt Shpilë, these being 'the mountains on either side', which flank the Gryke e Ujkut. Meanwhile the phalanx was coming up at speed.

Then indeed Alexander occupied the hill, sending for the Agrianians and the Archers up to 2,000 to join the Companions. Then he ordered the Hypaspists to cross the river and after them the regiments of the Macedonians (i.e. of the phalanx), and immediately on crossing to extend to their left, so that the phalanx should appear thick-set as the men went into close formation immediately on getting across. He himself being in an advanced covering position (*ἐν προφυλακῇ ὄν*) was watching from the hill the movement of the enemy. On seeing the force crossing, the enemy came down the mountains to oppose them (*κατὰ τὰ ὄρη ἀντεπήσαν*) with the intention of setting upon the troops with Alexander as they withdrew last.

Alexander reinforced his élite body of cavalry, namely the Bodyguards and his personal Companions, with the Agrianians and the Archers. While he held the Kalaja e Shpelles with this force, the rest of his army could advance in safety to the southern bank of the river (see FIG. 4, phase III). The leading infantry unit (the Hypaspists) and the regiments of the phalanx crossed the river, one after the other, and moved left on to the level ground between the entry of the Gryke e Ujkut and Kalaja e Ventrokut (see p. 69 above and

FIG. 4, phase IV); in so doing they maintained close formation and faced the enemy who were on the slopes of Mt Shpilë and Kalaja e Ventrokut. When the infantry had crossed the river, the force under Alexander's immediate command became the rear-guard. The enemy closed in upon it from Mt Trajan and from Tren. How was Alexander to extricate it?

When the enemy were already close, he and those with him delivered a sudden attack (*ἐκθεῖ*), and the phalanx raised the battle-cry as being about to come through the river to the attack. Now that everyone was charging towards them the enemy gave way and fled. At this moment Alexander led forward the Agrianians and the Archers at the double towards the river. He himself got over first, and on seeing the enemy pressing upon those who were last he mounted his engines on the bank and ordered all the missiles to be fired from them at extreme range, and he ordered the Archers to go into the river and fire from midstream, them too. And the troops of Glaucias did not venture to come within range. The Macedonians meanwhile crossed the river in safety, and not a single one of them was killed in the course of the withdrawal (1.6.7-8).

The main danger of attack came from those of the enemy on Mt Trajan and Mt Tren who had descended the slopes (see FIG. 4). However, they still had to cross a trough before they could assault Kalaja e Shpelles (see p. 70 above). Alexander delivered his sudden attack upon them when they were close at hand, i.e. in this trough (*πελαζόντων ἤδη*); he perhaps used his élite force partly as cavalrymen and partly as men on foot as he had planned to do earlier. At the same time that part of the phalanx which had crossed last and was most upstream made as if to re-cross the river and threaten the northern part of the trough. The rest of the phalanx and the Hypaspists faced the enemy on the slopes of Mt Shpilë and Kalaja e Ventrokut. During the lull which followed this attack Alexander took the Agrianians and the Archers across the river. The élite force of cavalry Companions and Bodyguards remained. In order that they could withdraw without being overwhelmed, Alexander organised the covering fire. The Archers re-entered the river and fired over the Kalaja e Shpelles, and the catapults on the river bank fired over the heads of the Archers. Meanwhile the Taulantians under Glaucias, who were (as we have argued) mainly on the northern side, that is on Kalaja e Ventrokut and Mt Shpilë, did not venture to come within range and attack the phalanx.

Alexander now held the vestibule of the entry into the Gryke e Ujkut on its wider (northern) side<sup>33</sup> and could withdraw his force safely into the basin of what we call Lake Ventrok. Moreover, the enemy could not follow him; for the Macedonian infantry could hold the narrow passage, and the heavy cavalry could patrol the plain of the Prespa basin. He was now able to draw supplies from the Ventrok and Prespa basins, and his lines of communication to Lyncus were open. Moreover, he could withdraw into Lyncus, if he wished to do so (see FIG. 1).

The brilliance of the withdrawal should not obscure a fact which Arrian does not mention. The transport of the commissariat was left behind in the Macedonian camp. It did not put in an appearance during the parade-ground performance; if it had done, the enemy would have realised the intention of Alexander. Nor was it present during the crossing of the river. The speed of manoeuvre and the change of front by the whole phalanx in phase III and by a part of the phalanx in phase IV would not have been possible if a baggage train had been following at the back of the phalanx. The catapults and their

<sup>33</sup> As we have seen, Alexander's army did not use during the operation the narrowest part of the entry, namely that lying between the river and Mt Trajan. It was to this part that Arrian referred in saying that there would not have been passage for the army even at four abreast (*οὐδὲ ἐπὶ τεσσάρων ἀσπίδων ἂν τῷ στρατεύματι ἢ πάροδος ἐγένετο*, I.5.12). The fact

that Arrian, perhaps copying his source verbatim, says not that there was no passage but that there would not have been passage, seems to me to imply that the army did not use that particular passage when the action developed. In other words someone who knew the ground made this comment after the event.

missiles are the only supplies mentioned in Arrian's account, and they were presumably transported alongside or within the phalanx. It is possible that Alexander may have had in mind at this time the sentiment which was incorporated in a famous saying attributed to him during the battle of Gaugamela. 'Defeated we no longer have need of baggage-animals; victorious we shall have both ours and the enemy's' (Polyaen. IV 3.6; Plu. *Alex.* 32.7; Curt. 4.15.7). For Alexander had no intention of withdrawing into Lynceus. His mind was set on victory.

On the third day after this Alexander learnt that the forces of Cleitus and Glaucias were badly placed in their bivouac with no guardposts on the lookout in their line and with no provision of a palisade or a ditch in front of them—such carelessness was to be expected as they thought that Alexander had gone away in a panic—and that their line was extended to an inappropriate length. So while it was still night he crossed the river unobserved, taking with him the Hypaspists, the Agrianians, the Archers, and the Regiment of infantry commanded by Perdicas and Coenus. He had also ordered the rest of the army to follow, but when he saw an opportunity for attack he did not wait for all his troops to concentrate but sent the Archers and the Agrianians forward. Their attack was unexpected and they struck the enemy line at one end, where their own attack in deep formation at its strongest was likely to hit the weakest point of the enemy. They killed some still in their bedding, captured others easily in flight, and in consequence many were caught and captured on the spot and many suffered the same fate in the disorderly and panicky withdrawal which ensued. No small number were taken alive. The pursuit of the Taulantii by Alexander's Own Cavalry was carried up to the mountains,<sup>34</sup> and all who did escape threw away their weapons to save themselves. Cleitus fled at first to the city; later he fired the city and fled to Glaucias and his Taulantians (I.6.9–11).

The Taulantians and the Dardanians had evidently stayed where they were, near the city of Pelion, whereas Alexander's army had disengaged and withdrawn to some distance. We may make this inference because the enemy thought he had gone in a panic and because Alexander had to be informed by others of the enemy's position. I take it then that Alexander had disappeared into the northern part of the Ventrok basin and the enemy thought he was already on his way into Upper Macedonia. In fact, however, he came back during the night and crossed the river in darkness. His troops naturally used the wider side of the Gryke e Ujkuť and so crossed from the right bank to the left bank of the river (see FIG. 4). Thus Alexander evidently attacked the eastern end of the enemy line which, we may infer, was in the plain south and west of the Gryke e Ujkuť. It seems that the Taulantians and the Dardanians bivouacked at night in the battle order which they maintained during the day, with the Taulantians on the left and the Dardanians on the right

<sup>34</sup> If we take the pursuit to have gone 'as far as the mountains of the Taulantians', which were north of Elbasan (see *BSA LXI* (1966) 247), Alexander and his companions rode for 90 or 100 kilometres and passed through some mountainous country in the latter part of the pursuit. The route is not in doubt: Goricē—Tsangon Pass—Korcē plain—Malik—Gramsh—Shtërmen—Elbasan (see *Macedonia I*, 98, map 10 and 236, map 20). The total distance is about 100 km and includes rough going and scrub-covered country in Gramsh. An alternative has been suggested to me by G. T. Griffith. This is that the words τῶν Ταυλαντίων should be taken not with τὰ ὄρη but with ἡ δὲξις. If this is done, then 'the pursuit of the Taulantians' went only as far as the mountains on the southern side of the Korcē plain,

a distance of some 25 kilometres, and one would assume that the name of these mountains was in the original source but was omitted by Arrian. This suggestion reduces Alexander's pursuit to reasonable proportions. But it seems doubtful whether Arrian would have written μέχρι πρὸς τὰ ὄρη τῶν Ταυλαντίων if he had wished to avoid the obvious misunderstanding inherent in his word-order. Moreover ἡ δὲξις used absolutely is a regular feature in Arrian's descriptions of Alexander's battles (see Arr. 1.16.2; 2.11.7; 3.15.5–6), and the pursuit was sometimes carried to a great distance, e.g. at 3.15.5 for 600 stades = 120 km. I have therefore adopted the former interpretation in my text. I am grateful to Mr B. Bosworth of the University of Western Australia for his advice on this matter.

facing the Gryke e Ujkt. Now Alexander took them by surprise. He broke through the end of the Dardanian line and swung right to roll up the line, thus driving Cleitus back on to Pelion. The Taulantians did not wait to be attacked; they fled. Alexander's pursuit was carried through the plain of Poloskë and through the plain of Korcë, and probably as far as Elbasan. On his return Alexander was in possession of all that he had left in his camp, and he had also much captured material at hand. He might have laid siege to Pelion next. But news now came in that Thebes was in revolt. Alexander departed at speed. Cleitus burnt Pelion; for the city was not his and it would now be at the mercy of the Macedonians. Then he set off to join Glaucias in the region of Tirana.

When Arrian says that 'the forces of Cleitus and Glaucias seemed still to have caught Alexander on difficult ground' (1.5.11), he is inviting some appreciation of Alexander's generalship. At the outset the speed of Alexander's march certainly enabled him to catch Cleitus alone. Yet he failed to bring Cleitus to battle at once while Cleitus was unaided. It is surprising to read that Alexander then intended to proceed against Pelion 'by circumvallation' (1.5.8, *περιτειχισμῶ*); for he must have known that Glaucias was on his way to join Cleitus, and that their combined forces would cut off his supplies during the long process of circumvallation. For his lines of communication and supply ran either through the Gryke e Ujkt which the enemy could threaten or over the mountain ridges which form the watershed between the Devoll and the Haliacmon. Once his draught-animals left the plain of Poloskë and entered mountainous country, they would be set upon by the light-armed Illyrian and Dardanian troops. It would have been much more in character for Alexander to have stormed the city (as the Roman consul did on a subsequent occasion).

The arrival next day of Glaucias' troops showed that there was no future in circumvallation. Indeed it became obvious that as far as supply was concerned Alexander had got his army into trouble. It was not the case, as Tarn has maintained, that Alexander could not fight 'on two fronts'. He would probably have welcomed a battle, but the enemy had no intention of giving him battle on his own ground. They knew that he had to move or starve, and they intended to catch him at a disadvantage when he was on the move. Moreover, they reckoned that when Alexander moved away he would lose the fortuitous advantage which had accrued to him, namely that his presence had isolated the best of Cleitus' troops within the city of Pelion.

In Alexander's situation a lesser general might have looked only to the problem of disengaging successfully and of heading for a centre of supplies in Macedonia. It would have been tempting to withdraw across the plain of Poloskë, where the heavy cavalry would keep the enemy away, and then to head for Celetrum (Kastoria). But this would have been short-sighted; for when the army entered the narrow valley and the rough hillsides of the range east of Bilisht, the heavy cavalry would be ineffective and the enemy would have an excellent chance of harassing the Macedonian army by day and by night. In such a situation the Illyrians and Dardanians were at their best; for, as Thucydides made Brasidas remark (4.126.6), 'when their enemies are on the run, they are quick to show courage in pursuit, feeling themselves to be safe'. Alexander preferred a course of action which seemed at first sight the most hazardous of all: to abandon his transport and his commissariat, to run the gauntlet of his enemies' chosen positions, and to force his way through an extremely narrow passage.

Alexander knew that he had one priceless advantage: as Anna Comnena was to say later of the Frankish knights-in-armour, the first shock of the Macedonian heavy-armed cavalry was irresistible (5.4, *τὴν πρώτην κατὰ τῶν ἐναντίων ἵππασίαν τῶν Κελτῶν ἀνύποιστον*). Also the infantry of the phalanx was superior to any force of Illyrian and Dardanian hoplites but only in the plain. On the other hand, the light-armed infantry and cavalry of the enemy were vastly more numerous than his small specialised units, and they were first-class troops by any standard; thus if he went far into the hills, he would be at a disadvantage. In the

present situation his enemies were scattered in relatively small packets and his army was concentrated. If he could maintain this advantage, delude his enemies about his intentions, and then suddenly capture the vital hill, the Kalaja e Shpelles,<sup>35</sup> he might gain control of the Gryke e Ujkut and extricate himself from his present predicament.

The plan was brilliantly executed. The drill really was drill, and the sight of the transport-animals and the stores inside the camp lulled the suspicions of the enemy. The success of the plan was due in no small part to a personal *tour de force* by Alexander. Mounted on his charger and in the forefront of his army, he gave every order by word of mouth, except that he summoned the Agrianians and the Archers 'up to 2,000' either by messenger or, more probably, by pre-arranged signal. He personally led the attack on 'the first hills' (1.6.3); then the attack on the Kalaja e Shpelles, at the head of his personal cavalry Companions and the Somatophylakes (1.6.5-6); then the sudden attack launched from the Kalaja e Shpelles, at the head of his élite force (1.6.7); and then the crossing of the river, himself at the head of the Agrianians and the Archers (1.6.8, *πρῶτος μὲν αὐτὸς φθάσας διαβαίνει*).<sup>36</sup> All this on his charger in full sight of the enemy. It was evidently on this campaign *ἐν Ἰλλυριοῖς* that Alexander was struck on the head by a stone and on the neck by a cleaver (Plut. *de Alexandri fortuna* 327a). No wonder that the Persians made a dead set at him in the battle of the Granicus river.

The night attack was equally brilliant in execution. The abandonment of the transport-animals and the delay of a couple of days had deluded the enemy into supposing that Alexander had withdrawn in a panic (1.6.9). During the night attack Alexander was with the advance-force (1.6.10), and in the long pursuit he rode at the head of his own cavalry Companions. He had gained everything he could have wished for. At little or no cost in Macedonian lives he had inflicted crushing losses upon the Taulantians and considerable losses on the Dardanians, and he had demonstrated the complete superiority of the Macedonian army over its neighbours in the Balkans. As Diodorus Siculus expressed it (17.8.1), 'he reduced all the neighbouring barbarians to his rule'.<sup>37</sup> His soldiers knew they could trust him in any circumstances.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> It seems likely that Alexander had already been through the Gryke e Ujkut, so that he knew the ground well enough to make his plan in advance. If so he had either come that way to find Cleitus at Pelion, or he had been there either with his father on a campaign against the Illyrians or during the period of estrangement, when he was 'among the Illyrians'.

<sup>36</sup> Arrian's concentration on Alexander leaves some points obscure. For example, we are not told what the cavalry as a whole did during the withdrawal into the Gryke e Ujkut. We may surmise that they formed the rear-guard and so prevented the enemy in Pelion from sallying out across the plain to attack the Macedonians or join their friends. Again the Somatophylakes were named only once, at 1.6.5, where they were mounted and acted together with Alexander's personal Companion cavalry, *τοῖς ἀμφ' αὐτὸν ἑταίροις*; the Somatophylakes and these Companions were resumed in the single phrase *σὺν τοῖς ἑταίροις* at 1.6.6. The Hypaspists were different; being infantrymen, they led the way across the river at the head of the column and when it moved to the left, they came to face the Kalaja e Ventrokut. The phrases *τοῖς μετ' Ἀλεξάνδρου* and

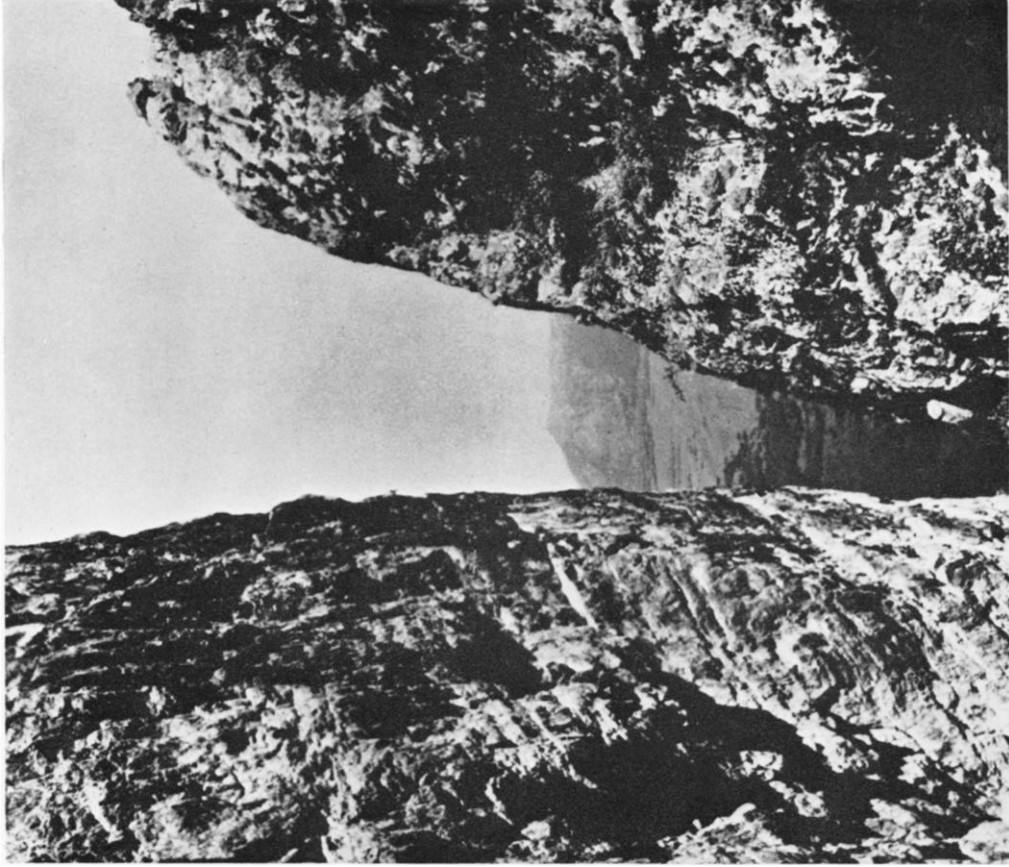
*τοῖς ἀμφι Ἀλεξάνδρου* seem to be variant phrases for 'the troops with Alexander' at 1.6.7 and 1.6.11; so too we have *τοῖς ἀμφι Φιλώταν* and *οἱ ἐξὸν Φιλώτα* at 1.5.9, and *οἱ ἀμφι Γλανκίαν* and *τοῖς ἀμφι Κλεῖτον καὶ Γλανκίαν* *vel sim.* in a general sense at 1.5.6, 1.5.10, 1.5.11 and 1.6.9. When Alexander planned his surprise attack at night, he did not use cavalry, because it was difficult to move horses silently. He took the Hypaspists, the Agrianians, the Archers and 'the regiment of Perdikkas and Coenus', and in the event the Agrianians and the Archers led the attack. It is generally held that Arrian meant the regiments commanded respectively by Perdikkas and Coenus.

<sup>37</sup> He left Glaucias on the throne (Glaucias had dealings later with Cassander and he adopted Pyrrhus; see *BSA* LXI (1966) 246), and Illyrian soldiers fought under Alexander's command in Asia.

<sup>38</sup> *Additional Note.* After writing this article I read in the report of excavations on the island of Saint Achilleiou that the destruction of the great basilica has been dated by coins and other evidence to "before the beginning of the twelfth century, most probably within the last quarter of the eleventh century" (*PAE* 1967.68 and 1969.39; *Ergon* 1967.40). This is when the Franks were in the vicinity.

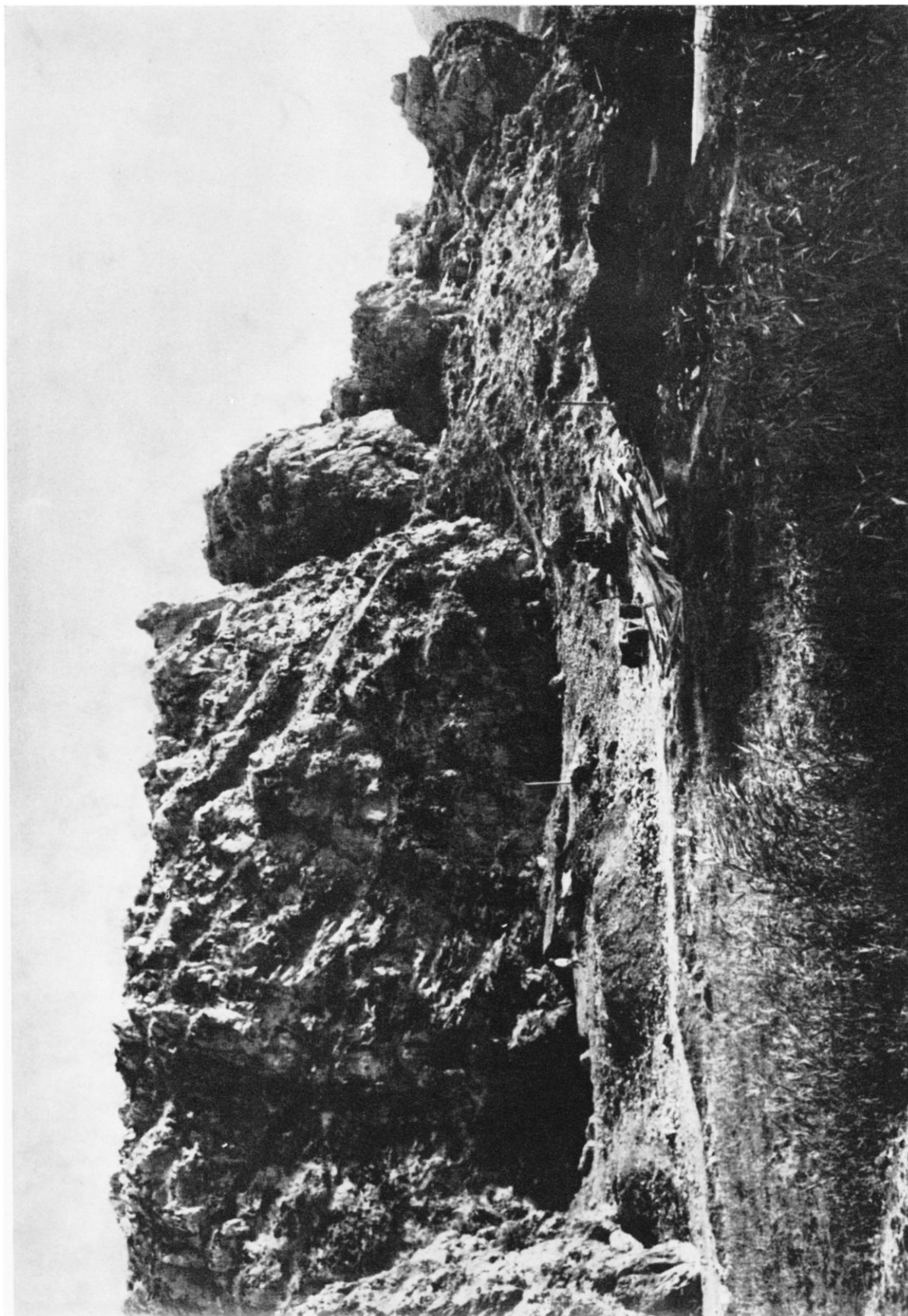


(a) The rock-painting on Mt. Shpilë (see p. 70, fig. 3)



(b) The view from beside the rock-painting; one is looking east to the marsh and the waters of Lake Ventrok

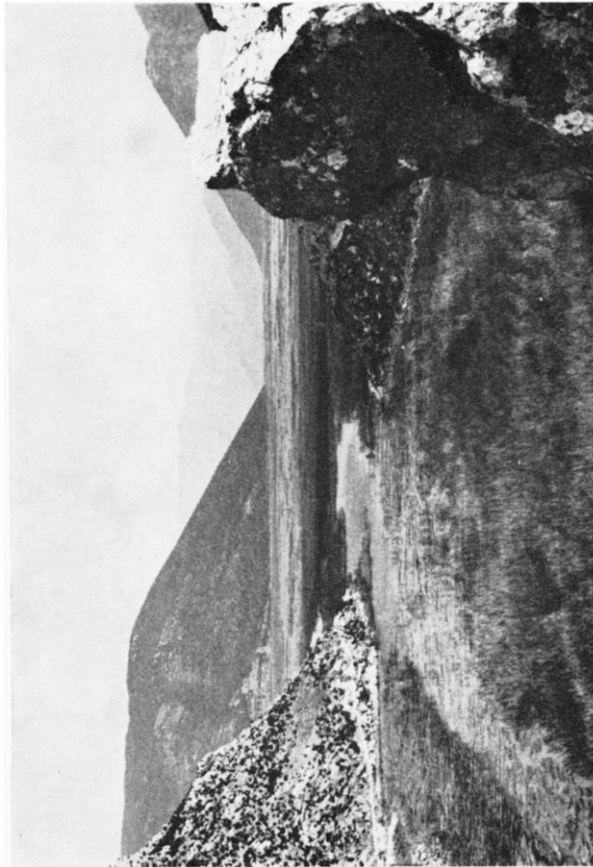
ALEXANDER'S CAMPAIGN IN ILLYRIA



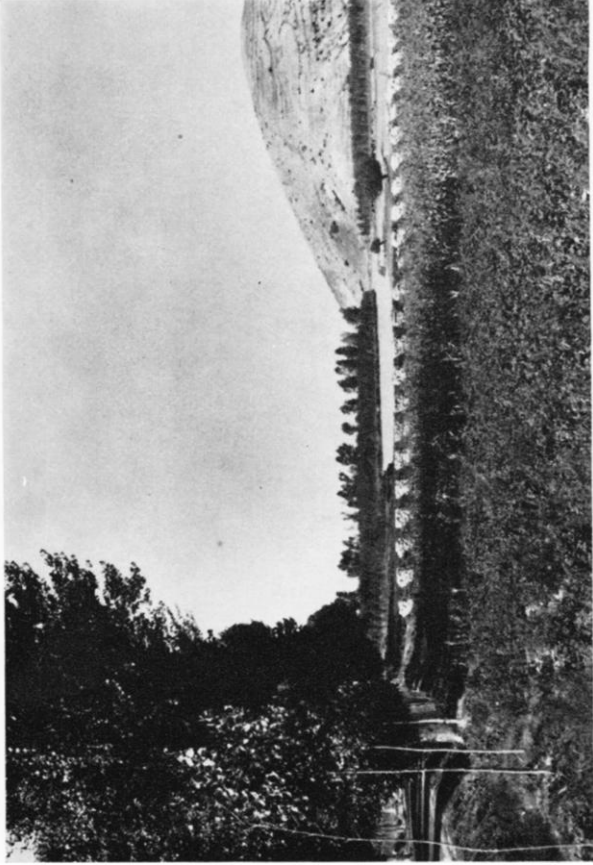
The cliffs of Kalaja e Shpelles on the east side of the Grykë e Ujkut. The entrance of the Cave of Tren can be seen to the left of the man. Lake Ventrok is some way to the left, and the hill on the right of the picture is Kalaja e Ventrokut (K 1 on Fig. 4: see p. 71).

ALEXANDER'S CAMPAIGN IN ILLYRIA

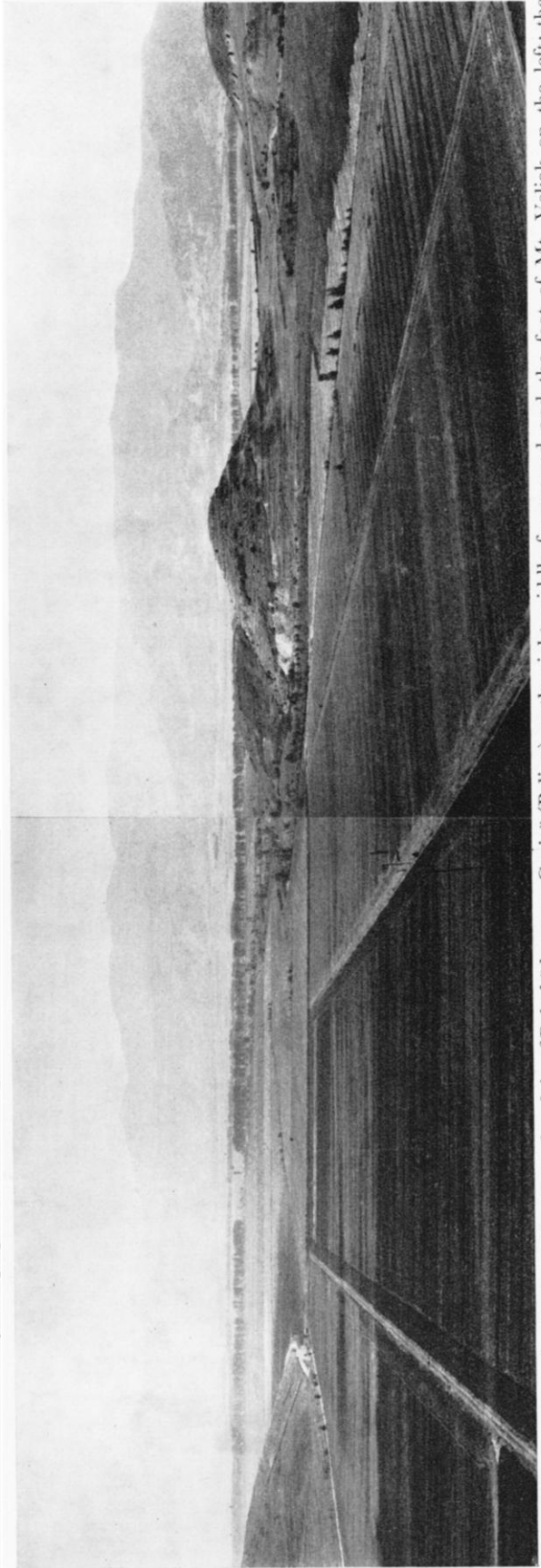




(a) Looking east from the south side of the Gryke e Ujikut into the basin of Ventrok.  
(Photograph by A. Harding.)



(c) The narrows of the Tsangon Pass, seen from the east. (Photograph by Professor R. A. Crossland.)



(b) Looking west from the Gryke e Ujikut into the plain of Poloskë between Goričë (Pelion) on the right middle foreground and the foot of Mt. Veľjak on the left; the Ventrok channel is seen in the right foreground. (Photograph by A. Harding.)