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978-0-521-03653-5 - Three Historians of Alexander the Great: The So-Called  
Vulgate Authors, Diodorus, Justin and Curtius

N. G. L. Hammond

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THREE HISTORIANS OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

Our knowledge of Alexander the Great is derived from the widely varying accounts of five authors who wrote three and more centuries after his death. The value of each account can be determined in detail only by discovering the source from which it drew, section by section, whether from a contemporary document, a memoir by a companion of Alexander, a hostile critique or a romanticising narrative. In this book the three earliest accounts are for the first time studied in depth, and it becomes apparent that each author used more than one source, and that only occasionally did any two of them or all three use the same source for an incident or a series of incidents. This evaluation enables the historian to winnow the grains of historical truth from the chaff of eulogistic, condemnatory and romantic writing. It lays a foundation for the understanding of what Alexander was and what he achieved.

This book will be valuable to ancient historians and of interest also to those studying Alexander the Great.

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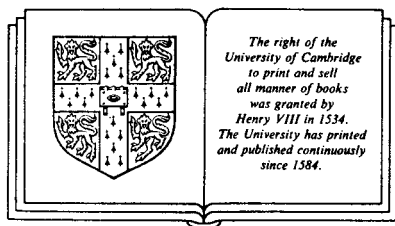
THREE HISTORIANS OF ALEXANDER  
THE GREAT

The so-called Vulgate authors, Diodorus, Justin  
and Curtius

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N. G. L. HAMMOND, C.B.E., D.S.O., F.B.A.

*Honorary Fellow of Clare College, Cambridge*



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## PREFACE

This book fulfils an ambition of long standing. When I was writing my *History of Greece* in the 1950s, I was fascinated, as any historian must be who writes from the original sources, by the differences in outlook and in information of the Alexander-historians. The opportunity to pursue this interest came in the writing of my book on Alexander, published in 1980, and it was then that much of the work which underlies this book was accomplished. For one respect in which I differed from my very numerous predecessors was in drawing the reader's attention to the differences in the sources at each major event in Alexander's career. Since then I have been able to attack the main problem – the so-called Vulgate – in a manner which has not previously been attempted.

During my work on Diodorus I was greatly helped by my colleagues, Mr G. T. Griffith and Professor F. W. Walbank, who made criticisms of my draft and offered suggestions. It is a pleasure to dedicate this book to them, not least because they have collaborated so generously with me in *A History of Macedonia* II and (forthcoming) III. Professor R. K. Sinclair helped me in the same way over Diodorus, and Dr M. Hatzopoulos of the National Research Foundation in Athens encouraged me in my work on Justin and stimulated in me the idea that Satyrus' work might be relevant to Justin's account of Philip's death. Finally I am most grateful to the Editors of this series for their comments on the typescript and for their part in the publication; and to Susan Moore of the Cambridge University Press for her assistance.

The typescript was completed at the end of 1981, and a few pages were added in 1982.

*Swarthmore College, Pennsylvania*  
*April 1983*

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## ABBREVIATIONS

Atkinson	J. E. Atkinson, <i>A Commentary on Q. Curtius Rufus' Historiae Alexandri Magni Books 3 and 4</i> (Amsterdam, 1980).
Berve	H. Berve, <i>Das Alexanderreich auf prosopographischer Grundlage</i> (Munich, 1926).
Borza	E. N. Borza, 'Cleitarchus and Diodorus' account of Alexander', <i>Proceedings of the African Classical Associations</i> 11 (1968) 25ff.
Bosworth C	A. B. Bosworth, <i>A Historical Commentary of Arrian's History of Alexander I, on Books I-III</i> (Oxford, 1980).
Brunt	P. A. Brunt in the Loeb edition of Arrian vol. I (Harvard, 1976).
EH	<i>Entretiens Hardt [Fondation Hardt Entretiens]</i> 22 (1975).
FGrH	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> (Berlin, 1923-).
FHG	C. Müller, <i>Fragmenta Historicorum Graecorum</i> (Paris, 1841-70).
Fränkel	A. Fränkel, <i>Die Quellen d. Alexanderhistorikers</i> (Aalen, 1969).
Goukowsky	P. Goukowsky, in the Budé edition of Diodorus Siculus 17 (Paris, 1976).
Hamilton	J. R. Hamilton, <i>Plutarch, Alexander: A Commentary</i> (Oxford, 1969).
Hammond, Alex.	N. G. L. Hammond, <i>Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman</i> (New Jersey, 1980; London, 1981).
Hammond and Griffith	N. G. L. Hammond and G. T. Griffith, <i>A History of Macedonia II</i> (Oxford, 1979).
Pearson	L. Pearson, <i>The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great</i> (New York, 1960).
OCD	<i>The Oxford Classical Dictionary</i> , 2nd ed. (Oxford, 1970).
Schubert	R. Schubert, <i>Die Quellen zur Geschichte der Diadochenzeit</i> (Leipzig, 1914).
Seibert	J. Seibert, <i>Alexander der Grosse. Erträge der Forschung</i> , 10 (Darmstadt, 1972).



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|----------|--|
| Sinclair | R. K. Sinclair, 'Diodorus Siculus and the writing of History', <i>Proceedings of the African Classical Associations</i> 6 (1963) 38ff. |
| Tarn     | W. W. Tarn, <i>Alexander the Great II: Sources and Studies</i> (Cambridge, 1948, reissued 1979).                                       |
| Welles   | C. Bradford Welles in the Loeb edition of Diodorus Siculus vol. VIII, books 16.66–95 and 17 (London, 1963).                            |