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978-0-521-40679-6 - Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great

A. B. Bosworth

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CONQUEST AND EMPIRE

The reign of Alexander the Great

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Preface

The reign of Alexander the Great has always engrossed the interest of countless readers, and, not surprisingly, the interest has stimulated a flood of biographies. In 1976 it could be said that books on Alexander were appearing at the rate of more than one a year, and the last decade has not witnessed any slackening of publication. A new monograph therefore requires apology and justification. That may in part be provided by the circumstances of writing. Originally this work was conceived as a contribution to Volume VI of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, designed to give a survey of the period for the informed reader, with reference to the most recent literature. What emerged exceeded all reasonable bounds for a general history, and the Cambridge University Press generously undertook to publish a revised version as a book in its own right. My work is a synthesis of recent research and at the same time represents a distillation of my own thinking. It forms part of a tetralogy. My two-volume *Commentary on Arrian's History of Alexander* (part II not yet published) provides the detailed exposition of evidence and technical discussion of historical and textual cruxes. The general historiographical principles of research on Alexander are expounded in my new monograph, *From Arrian to Alexander: Studies in Historical Interpretation* (Oxford, 1988). In the present work I draw explicitly on my more specialist studies to provide a composite narrative history of the period. Its justification is primarily comprehensiveness and its basis in recent research. I do not claim exhaustive bibliographical coverage (that would be a herculean and unproductive endeavour), but it is my hope that the reader will be directed immediately to what is new or pertinent.

This book is in no sense intended as a biography of Alexander, which I consider undesirable to attempt and impossible to achieve. Instead I focus on the impact of Alexander in its widest sense, the effect of his conquests upon Macedon, the Greek world and what was formerly the Persian Empire. It is impossible, even if one wished to do so, to avoid the person of Alexander. For better or worse the evidence of the sources is stubbornly centred upon him and he is the ineluctable reference point. The nucleus of the book is necessarily the

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campaign narrative, the large chapter entitled 'The gaining of empire'. This charts the progress of Alexander, the process of conquest, and deals in passing with events elsewhere. The rest of the book is more synoptic, drawing together general themes: the history of mainland Greece under Macedonian suzerainty, the organisation and control of the newly acquired territory, the evolution of the instrument of conquest, the Macedonian army, and finally the origins of ruler worship. The narrative chapters cover the theme of conquest, the thematic ones that of empire. Both parts of the book are connected by a large number of cross-references, and I hope that my work will be not only read sequentially but also, as it were, horizontally. The two parts are intended to be complementary and the effect should be a cumulative picture, the details expounded in the campaign narrative being recapitulated in the general synthesis of the thematic studies. That, I hope, does some justice to the richness and complexity of the period.

My obligations are few and many. Like Sir William Tarn before me (*si parva licet componere magnis*) I have been forced to work in geographical isolation, and my physical contacts with other scholars have been confined to brief periods of leave. That means that my writing is perhaps more personally oriented than it might have been, and I cannot make acknowledgements of direct assistance. On the other hand, I am deeply indebted to all scholars working in the field, who have kept my interest alive and, by and large, treated my heresies with courtesy and understanding. I am glad yet again to pay tribute to the teaching and example of Peter Brunt, whose methodological principles I hope I have not violated too grossly, and to the stimulus of the published writings and personal friendship of Ernst Badian, who has had the greatest impact (for good) on Alexander studies throughout the last three decades. I should also acknowledge the influence of Fritz Schachermeyr, who has created the most galvanic and evocative Alexander of all time. These are the masters. *Nobis in arto et inglorius labor.*

This book could not have been written without the support of my university and in particular its library facilities. I am particularly grateful for a CTEC Special Research Grant which gave me a term's teaching relief for my writing. Once more I must express my gratitude to Carol Freele, Kay Sanders and Susan O'Connor for their efficiency and cheerfulness in the face of a burdensome manuscript. Finally my especial thanks to my wife who has read much of the book and put up with it all.

The maps were drawn by David Cox of Cox Cartographic Ltd.

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Abbreviations

Listed below are the most frequently used abbreviations. Otherwise references to literary and epigraphical evidence follow standard conventions, and the citations of journal titles in general conform to the format of *L'Année Philologique*.

<i>FGrH</i>	F. Jacoby, <i>Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker</i> . Berlin and Leiden, 1923– (see below, p. 296). The ancient authors are there listed by number (i.e. <i>FGrH</i> 124 F 7 refers to fragment 7 of the author (Callisthenes) who is numbered 124 by Jacoby)
Head, <i>HN</i> ²	B. V. Head, <i>Historia Numorum</i> . 2nd ed. Oxford, 1911
<i>IG</i>	<i>Inscriptiones graecae</i> . 1st ed. Berlin, 1873– ; 2nd ed. Berlin, 1913–
Moretti, <i>ISE</i>	L. Moretti, <i>Iscrizioni Storiche Ellenistiche</i> . Florence, 1967, 1976
<i>OGIS</i>	<i>Orientalis graecae inscriptiones selectae</i> , ed. W. Dittenberger. 2 vols. Leipzig, 1903–5
<i>SEG</i>	<i>Supplementum epigraphicum graecum</i> . Leiden, 1923–
<i>SIG</i> ³	<i>Sylloge inscriptionum graecarum</i> , ed. W. Dittenberger. 3rd ed. Leipzig, 1915–24
Tod, <i>GHI</i>	M. N. Tod, <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions</i> . 2: <i>From 403 to 323 B.C.</i> Oxford, 1948