

ANONYMOUS AUTHOR of the 4th century A.D.
Excerpts from “Itinerarium Alexandri”
Translated by Iolo Davies, 1998

Alexander’s campaigns

...Alexander boasted that he had won his victories for himself alone, and became the more cruel to his friends as his success increased...

...Alexander went straight on to found the Macedonian empire, by his kingly skills, bringing the whole Peloponnese under his rule.

...Accordingly Alexander first settled the affairs of the whole kingdom of the Persians, giving it his own laws and appointing its administrators...

[Alexander] founded for himself a city (not unequal in size to the other cities names after him), Alexandria. He did this as a practical precaution in case he ever had to campaign in that region again. [Some} continued to intrigue against Alexander, however, calling him the oppressor of the world...

...Alexander’s behaviour and extravagant life-style... were causing intense disgust among large numbers of his men... They took offense at his luxuries at table, his expensive attire, his vanity in assuming the royal Persian head-dress... This cast a shadow over all the former glorious achievements of his spirit...

...the fault in him grew worse: he now wanted himself worshipped as a god and would have none of being saluted in the manner of mortals.

ARRIAN

Soldier, governor, and philosopher

Excerpts from "The Anabasis of Alexander," A.D. 171

[Alexander] was ... very [famous] for rousing the courage of his soldiers, filling them with hopes of success and dispelling their fear in the midst of danger by his own freedom from fear ...

For I myself believe that there was at that time no race of mankind, no city, no individual [to whom] the name of Alexander had not reached. And so not I can suppose that a man quite beyond all other men was born without some divine influence.

He was ... very heroic in courage, ... He was very clever in recognising what was necessary to be done, when others were still in a state of uncertainty; ... In ... ruling an army, he was exceedingly skillful; and very renowned for rousing the courage of his soldiers, filling them with hopes of success, and dispelling their fear in the midst of danger by his own freedom from fear. He was likewise very [dedicated to] keeping the agreements and settlements which he made.

His adoption of the Persian [way] of dressing also seems to me to have been a political device in regard to the foreigners, that the king might not appear altogether alien to them.

...what a height of human success he attained, becoming without any dispute king of both continents," and reaching every place by his fame.

DIODORUS

Greek historian, 1st century BCE

Excerpts from his writings "World History," Translated by M.M. Austen

The Destruction of Persepolis

As for Persepolis, the capital of the Persian kingdom, Alexander described it to the Macedonians as their worst enemy among the cities of Asia, and he gave it over to the soldiers to plunder, with the exception of the royal palace.

It was the wealthiest city under the sun and the private houses had been filled for a long time with riches of every kind. The Macedonians rushed into it, killing all the men and plundering the houses, which were numerous and full of furniture and precious objects of every kind. Here much silver was carried off and no little gold, and many expensive dresses, embroidered with purple or with gold, fell as prizes to the victors.

But the great royal palace, famed throughout the inhabited world, had been condemned to ... total destruction. The Macedonians spent the whole day in pillage but still could not satisfy their inexhaustible greed. [...] As for the women, they dragged them away forcibly with their jewels, treating as slaves the whole group of captives. As Persepolis had surpassed all other cities in prosperity, so she now exceeded them in misfortune.

Alexander went up to the citadel and took possession of the treasures stored there. They were full of gold and silver, with the accumulation of revenue from Cyrus, the first king of the Persians, down to that time... Alexander wanted to take part of the money with him, for the expenses of war and to deposit the rest at Susa under close guard. From Babylon, Mesopotamia and Susa, he sent for a crowd of mules, ... as well as 3,000 pack camels, and with these he had all the treasure conveyed to the chosen places. He was very hostile to the local people and did not trust them, and wished to destroy Persepolis utterly...

DIODORUS (continued)

The Olympic Games of 324 BCE

Not long before his death Alexander decided to bring back all the exiles in the Greek cities, partly to increase his own glory and partly to have in each city many personal supporters to counteract the risk of revolution and revolt among the Greeks. ... Consequently, as the celebration of the Olympic Games [approached] he [sent] Nicanor of Stagira to Greece with a letter...; his instructions were to have it read out loud to the assembled crowds. Nicanor carried out the order, and ... read out the following letter.

'King Alexander to the exiles from the Greek cities. We were not the cause of your exile, but we shall be responsible for bringing about your return to your native cities, ...'

This proclamation was greeted with loud approval by the crowds; ...those at the [Olympic games] joyfully welcomed the king's favor and repaid his generosity with shouts of praise. All the exiles had gathered together at the [Olympic games], being more than 20,000 in number. The majority of Greeks welcomed the return of the exiles as a good thing.

PLUTARCH

Historian, Ancient Greece

Excerpt from writings, A.D. 90, Translated by John Dryden

... For when any of his friends were sick, he would often prescribe them their course of diet, and medicines proper to their disease... He was naturally a great lover of all kinds of learning and reading; ...

... While Philip [Alexander's father] went on his expedition against the Byzantines, he left Alexander, then sixteen years old, [in charge] in Macedonia, ... not to sit idle, [he] reduced the rebellious ..., drove out the barbarous inhabitants, and plant[ed] a colony of several nations ..., [He] called the place after his own name, Alexandropolis.

...When he came to Thebes, ... the city ... was sacked and razed. Alexander's hope being that so severe an example might terrify the rest of Greece into obedience, ... thirty thousand, were publicly sold for slaves; and it is computed that upwards of six thousand were put to the sword.

Alexander, by founding more than seventy cities among the barbarian tribes, ... suppressed their savage and uncivilized customs ... Those whom Alexander conquered were more fortunate than those who escaped ... [He desired to give] all the races in the world ... one rule and one form of government, making all mankind a single people.

...And that the Grecians might participate in the honour of his victory he sent a portion of the spoils home to them particularly to the Athenians ... , and [with] all the rest he ordered this [message] to be sent: "Alexander the son of Philip, and the Grecians, ... won these from the barbarians who inhabit Asia. All the plate and purple garments, and other things of the same kind that he took from the Persians, except a very small quantity, which he reserved for himself, he sent as a present to his mother.

PLUTARCH (continued)

...For when his affairs called upon him, he would not be detained, ... either by wine, or sleep, spectacles, or any other diversion whatsoever...

...and Alexander, who was now proclaimed King of Asia, returned ... and rewarded his friends and followers with great sums of money, and places, and governments of provinces. Eager to gain honour with the Grecians, he wrote to them that he would have all [cruel governments] abolished, that they might live free according to their own laws... He sent also part of the spoils into Italy, ... to honour the zeal and courage of their citizen[s].

...Meantime, on the smallest occasions that called for a show of kindness to his friends, there was every indication on his part of tenderness and respect.

Provided by the Internet Classics Archive.
Available online at <http://classics.mit.edu/Plutarc/alexadnr.html>

ALAN M. FILDES

Egyptologist and author

Excerpts of article “Alexander in Egypt”

... In the two months he resided as 'living god' in the royal palace at Memphis, studying Egyptian laws and customs ..., he gave orders for the restoration of the Egyptians' religious centers, including the great southern temples of Luxor and Karnak, ...[He is seen] wearing traditional Egyptian [symbols of royalty] including the rams horns of Amun as worn by [the pharaohs before him]. Alexander's image was replicated all over Egypt in ... monumental [statues] ... his Greek name translated into hieroglyphs enclosed by the royal cartouche [read]:

"... the strong ruler, he who seizes the lands of the foreigners, beloved of Amun and the chosen one of Ra - meryamun setepenra Aleksandros [Alexander]."

Article found at www.egyptvoyager.com

Michael Wood

Archaeologist and Historian

Excerpts from "In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great." 1997

"There are over 200 different Alexander epics and poems in medieval European languages alone, surviving in literally thousands of manuscripts; for example, in Russian, Polish, Old French, Czech and Serbian. In Jewish tradition, Alexander is nothing short of a folk hero. There is a medieval German Alexander epic, an Icelandic Alexander saga, and an Ethiopian Alexander romance. By the mid-fourteenth century, the tale had even reached Mongolia, where Alexander appears as an almost supernatural predecessor of Genghis Kahn. You can find him depicted as one of the four kings on the standard French pack of playing cards; you will find the map of his empire on every Greek school map, and every [restaurant] wall; he's on Sicilian carnival carts, Ethiopian bridal cloths, Byzantine church murals, and on paintings from Moghul India."

"During his conquest, Alexander founded nearly 30 cities names Alexandria in his honor... Alexandria, Egypt, one of the many towns that Alexander founded and named after himself, became a world - [famous] center of learning, and was the home of ... great scientists and mathematicians."

"The exact cause of Alexander's death has never been determined. He, of course, suffered greatly during his campaigns, enduring at least 21 wounds that, at one point, left his so [hurt] he could not speak above a whisper. In the last stretch of his campaign, his lung was punctured by what some say was a poisoned arrow."

Reprinted with permission from "In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great: A Journey from Greece to Asia", Michael Wood, University of California Press, c. 1997.

Document C

Source: Peter Green, *Alexander of Macedon*, University of California Press, 1991.

Note: During Alexander's march down the Mediterranean coast, many cities surrendered without a fight. Some were happy to have the Persians removed. Alexander treated these cities rather kindly. Tyre ("tīre") was another matter. Its citizens refused to surrender. They believed their city was unconquerable because it was built on an island and protected by high walls. Alexander proceeded to build a causeway, or land bridge, of timber and rubble so his soldiers could cross from the mainland to the island. The city held out for seven months and Tyrian counterattacks caused Alexander to lose many men. In the end, however, the causeway was completed and Alexander's army smashed into the city.

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When the last organized resistance was broken, Alexander's [soldiers] ranged through the city on a ferocious manhunt. . . . Alexander had ordered that all [except] those who sought sanctuary [safety in the temple] were to be slain, and his commands were executed with savage relish. The air grew thick with smoke from burning buildings. Seven thousand Tyrians died . . . and the number would have been far higher had it not been for the men of Sidon, who entered the city alongside Alexander's troops. Even though Tyre had been Sidon's rival for centuries, these neighbors of the victims, horrified by what they now witnessed, managed to smuggle some 15,000 of them to safety.

The great city . . . was now utterly destroyed. Her king, Azimilik, and various other notables, including envoys from Carthage, had taken refuge in the temple of Melkart, and Alexander spared their lives. The remaining survivors, some 30,000 in number, he sold into slavery. Two thousand men of military age were crucified.

Document Analysis

1. How did Alexander feel about Tyre's ability to hold him off for seven months? How do you know?
2. How might you explain Alexander's decision not to kill anyone who took sanctuary in the temple?
3. What do you learn about Alexander from his decision to crucify 2,000 men?
4. Can you think of military reasons for the severe treatment of Tyrian survivors?
5. How can you use this document to argue that Alexander was great?
6. How can you use this document to argue that Alexander was not great?

Document F

Source: Kasi Khushnawaz, a native of northern Pakistan, as quoted in *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great* by Michael Wood, University of California Press, 1997.

Long ago, before the days of Islam, Sikaner e Aazem came to India. The Two Horned one whom you British people call Alexander the Great. He conquered the world, and was a very great man, brave and dauntless and generous to his followers. When he left to go back to Greece, some of his men did not wish to go with him but preferred to stay here. [Some officers] and men came to these valleys and they settled here and took local women, and here they stayed. We . . . of the Hindu Kush, are the descendents of their children. Still some of our [Kalish] words are the same as theirs, our music and our dances too; we worship the same gods. This is why we believe the Greeks are our first ancestors.

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Document Analysis

1. Who is the speaker in this document and when is he speaking?
2. Where does he live?
3. Who was Sikaner e Aazem?
4. What is the connection between Alexander and Greek words in the Kalish language today?
5. How can this document be used to argue that Alexander was great?
6. Can this document be used to argue that Alexander was not great? Explain.

Document E

Source: Chart compiled from various sources.

Note: "Hellenes" is what ancient Greeks called themselves. The term "Hellenistic" was first used in the 19th century by historians to describe the period following Alexander when Greek ideas and culture spread.

Alexander's Legacy (selected items)	
Size of Alexander's empire at his death (sq. miles)	2,000,000
Size of Roman Empire at its greatest (sq. miles)	2,200,000
Years that it took Alexander to build his empire	11
Years that Alexander's empire held together after his death	10
Length of Hellenistic period in Middle East and western Asia (years)	300
Number of cities founded by Alexander	70
Estimated enemy soldiers and civilians killed in four major battles	100,000
Religion most directly influenced by Greek art and ritual	Buddhism in India
Number of years after Alexander that Roman Emperor Marcus Macrinus had images of Alexander sewn into his clothing	540
Number of years after Alexander that Greek literature and theater remained strong cultural influences in the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East	About 900
Number of years Greek remained official language of Jordan	1,000

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Document Analysis

1. What is the meaning of the term "Hellenistic Age"?
2. When we ask, "What was Alexander's legacy?," what are we asking?
3. How can this document be used to argue that Alexander's legacy extended from Italy to India? Explain, using two specific examples.
4. How can you use this document to argue that Alexander was great?
5. How can you use this document to argue that Alexander was not great?