

## Three Views on Alexander the Great

### I. Stoics

#### A. Flawed from the start

1. *hubris* (ὕβρις)— pride, *insolentia*
2. *tufos* (τῦφος)— “all that one dislikes in those with whom one disagrees”

#### B. Main Source: Justin (a 3rd-cent. CE epitome of Pompeius Trogus *Philippic Histories*)

#### C. Modern Historians

1. Ernst Badian [numerous articles]
2. R. D. Milns, *Alexander the Great* (1969)
3. A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great* (1988)

### II. Peripatetics

#### A. Aristotle turned out a perfectly good pupil, but he was ruined by his own fortune (τυχή) // didn't know how to make good use of it

#### B. Main Source: Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander* (1st cent. CE)

#### C. Modern Historians

1. Peter Green, *Alexander of Macedon 356-323 B.C.* (rev. ed. 1974)
2. John Maxwell O'Brien, *Alexander the Great: The Invisible Enemy* (1992)
3. F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse. Ingenium und Macht* (1949)

### III. Apologists

#### A. Sustained positive assessment

#### B. Main Sources

1. Plutarch, *Lives* (beginning of 2nd cent. CE)
2. Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander* (mid-2nd cent. CE)  
– *pothos* (desire)

#### C. Modern Historians

1. Johann Gustav Droysen, *Geschichte Alexanders der Grossen* (1833)
2. Ulrich Wilken, *Alexander der Grosse* (1931)
3. W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (1949)
4. Robin Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (1974)
5. N. G. L. Hammond, *Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman* (1980)

## Antecedents for Alexander the Great

### I. Trojan War

- A. Iliad
- B. Achilles over Hector

### II. Greek Religion

- A. Zeus – Ammon
- B. Heracles
- C. Dionysius

### III. Greek-Persian conflicts

- A. Xerxes invasion of Greece (480 BCE)
- B. Xenophan, *Cyropaedeia*
  - 1. supported Cyrus the Younger
  - 2. lost at Battle of Cunaxa (401 BCE)
  - 3. retreat described in *Anabasis*
- C. Cyrus the Great (d. 529 BCE)

### IV. Greek Culture

- A. Aristotle (384–322 BCE)
- B. Euripides (480–406 BCE)

## Primary and Secondary Sources

### I. Archaeological Evidence

### II. Textual Evidence

#### A. Non-extant Sources used by the Ancient Historians

##### 1. Journals and Diaries

- a. King's Journals (Diaries)
- b. Records of specialist Greek officers on Alexander's staff

##### 2. Histories of Eyewitnesses

- a. Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, wrote a history (285–283 BCE)
- b. Callisthenes, accompanied Alexander until 327 BCE, nephew of Aristotle
- c. Aristobulus, Greek engineer, wrote memoirs ca. 305–290 BCE
- d. Nearchus, wrote about the journey from the Indus to the Persian Gulf
- e. Onesicritus, wrote about India
- f. Chares of Mitylene, wrote about life at court
- g. more than 400 fragments from nearly 30 lost authors

##### 3. Histories and Comments of Non-Eyewitnesses

- a. Cleitarchus, wrote his history ca. 323–290 BCE (12 books)
- b. Marsyas of Pella (d. 307 BCE)
- c. Eratosthenes (ca. 200 BCE) quoted in Strabo's *Geography* (1st cent BCE)

#### B. Extant Secondary Sources (used as “primary” sources by modern historians)

1. Diodorus (Sicilian Greek of mid-1st century)
2. Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander* (1st cent. CE)
3. Plutarch, *Lives and Moralia* (2nd cent. CE)
4. Justin (2nd cent. CE epitome of earlier general history by Pompeius Trogus)
5. Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander* (2nd cent. CE)

### III. Some Methodological Questions

- A. Battle of Granicus (334 BCE)
- B. Who Was Barsine?
- C. Of what did Alexander die?
- D. Dream of One World or Cruel Conqueror?

#### IV. Films

A. *Alexander den Stone* (1917); dir. Mauritz Stiller

B. *Alexander the Great* (1956)

1. Robert Rossen (1908–1966), director, writer, producer
  - a. joined Communist Party 1937; left CPUSA 1947
  - b. refused to name names before HUAC in 1951; named names 1953
  - c. Alan Casty, *The Films of Robert Rossen* (New York, 1969).
2. Richard Burton (1925–1984)

C. *Megaleksandros* (1980); dir. Theo Angelopoulos

D. *In the Footsteps of Alexander* (1997); writer: Michael Wood