



Alexander the Great

By Paul Cartledge

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Alexander the Great By Paul Cartledge

There is really no need for any special justification, let alone apology for a new history of Alexander; he is one of those very few iconic figures who remade the world and constantly inspire us to remake our own worlds. Born in 356BCE in Macedonia, present day Thessaloniki, Alexander led the army of his father, King Philip, conquering mainland Greece at the age of eighteen. Two years later, he was himself crowned king. Within the next twelve years Alexander conquered almost the entire known world, pushing the limits of Greek and Macedonian power to astonishing levels. Under his leadership, the Greeks defeated the Persians three times, including the world-shattering battle of Gaugamela at which 1 million Persians took to the field against his army. At the age of only 26 Alexander had made himself master of the once mighty Persian Empire and by the time of his death in 323 he was being worshipped as a god by the Greeks, both at Babylon, where he died, and further west, among the Greek cities of the Asiatic seaboard. Meticulously researched, vividly written and bringing to bear a lifetime's scholarship, this is an outstanding biography of one of the most remarkable rulers in history.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Alexander the Great's brilliant military campaigns in the fourth century B.C. spread not only his reputation as a heroic and ingenious leader but also the culture of ancient Greece throughout the known world. With his usual riveting storytelling, Cartledge (*The Spartans*), chair of Cambridge University's classics faculty, narrates Alexander's life and rise to power. Cartledge takes issue with those who contend that Alexander's greatest contribution was to spread Hellenism. He argues instead that Alexander, while sincerely attached to Hellenism, was more concerned with the glory his conquests brought him. Cartledge provides detailed chronicles of Alexander's battles with the Persians, the Tyrians and the Babylonians as he demonstrates the young king's military genius and hunger for success in war. According to Cartledge, Alexander's love of hunting game offers the key to his life and reign. It led him, for example, to successfully adapt for military battles many hunting strategies, such as the surprise attack, a uniquely Alexandrine contribution. A number of appendixes, including a glossary and an extensive bibliography, enhance the book. Cartledge's knack for bringing history to life makes for an absorbing new biography of the legendary Greek leader. 37 b&w illus., 4 maps, 6 battle plans.

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Review

"Absorbing ... Cartledge's crystalline prose, his vivacious storytelling, and his lucid insights combine here to provide a first-rate history of the Spartans."

About the Author

Paul Cartledge, Professor of Greek History at the University of Cambridge, has written and edited many articles and books, including *Spartan Reflections* and *The Spartans*, just out in Pan paperback. He has acted as academic consultant on *The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization* for the BBC and *The Spartans* for Channel 4.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Brandy Greenawalt:

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Amanda Moberly:

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Craig Harrison:

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