



Responses to Oliver Stone's Alexander: Film, History, and Cultural Studies (Wisconsin Studies in Classics)

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The charismatic Alexander the Great of Macedon (356–323 B.C.E.) was one of the most successful military commanders in history, conquering Asia Minor, Egypt, Persia, central Asia, and the lands beyond as far as Pakistan and India. Alexander has been, over the course of two millennia since his death at the age of thirty-two, the central figure in histories, legends, songs, novels, biographies, and, most recently, films. In 2004 director Oliver Stone's epic film *Alexander* generated a renewed interest in Alexander the Great and his companions, surroundings, and accomplishments, but the critical response to the film offers a fascinating lesson in the contentious dialogue between historiography and modern entertainment.

This volume brings together an intriguing mix of leading scholars in Macedonian and Greek history, Persian culture, film studies, classical literature, and archaeology—including some who were advisors for the film—and includes an afterword by Oliver Stone discussing the challenges he faced in putting Alexander's life on the big screen. The contributors scrutinize Stone's project from its inception and design to its production and reception, considering such questions as: Can a film about Alexander (and similar figures from history) be both entertaining and historically sound? How do the goals of screenwriters and directors differ from those of historians? How do Alexander's personal relationships—with his mother Olympias, his wife Roxane, his lover Hephaestion, and others—affect modern perceptions of Alexander? Several of the contributors also explore reasons behind the film's tepid response at the box office and subsequent controversies.

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