

Save Ancient Studies Alliance

Summer 2021 Texts-in-Translation Reading Group

Arrian's 'Anabasis'
The Campaigns of Alexander the Great



About this Group:

With statues depicting his likeness located across the world, from Edinburgh to Skopje, many have heard the name 'Alexander the Great' in one way or another. But how much do we know about the man behind the legend?

Alexander the Great has generated perhaps more scholarly discussion than any other individual from history. Even in ancient times Alexander was a popular figure, the focus of many biographies and histories and essays. However many of these known works are lost today or exist only in fragments. The ones that do survive are not contemporaneous to Alexander's lifetime, having been written several centuries after his death. These have been subject to scholarly criticism, and many consider the extant ancient literary tradition to be problematic at best, contradictory at worst.

The 'Anabasis Alexandri' written by Arrian of Nicomedia in the second century CE is often considered by scholars to be the most reliable and most detailed of all the surviving ancient histories of Alexander. Through seven books, and an additional work consisting of a detailed short history of one mission in Alexander's vast campaign, Arrian details the extraordinary life and conquests of history's most dynamic yet enigmatic King. Through his story of Alexander's campaigns Arrian presents his commentary on themes that can be relevant even today: one's relationship with their parentage, their homelands, the desire for exploration and education, and the consuming destructive powers of alcohol and anger.

By reading Arrian's Anabasis, tackling one book per week, one can study in great detail one of the most intriguing yet illusive periods of history and develop a deeper understanding of the life and times of one of history's most impressive and yet terrible men.

Your SASA Educational Ambassador:

Meg Finlayson (they/them)

MLitt Classics (University of St Andrews, 2019-2020)

MSc Classics (University of Edinburgh, 2018-2019)

BA (Hons) Classical Studies (University of Winchester, 2015-2018)

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Meg Finlayson graduated with a BA (Hons) degree in Classical Studies from the University of Winchester in 2018, an Msc in Classics from the University of Edinburgh in 2019, and an MLitt in Classics at the University of St. Andrews in 2020. Previous research projects include dissertations considering the use of artifice in Arrian and Plutarch's literary portraits of Alexander the Great, the appropriation of heroic imagery in early Hellenistic royal portraiture, and a

reconsideration of the so-called 'Alexander Sarcophagus' which they presented as a paper at the Annual Meeting of Postgraduates in Ancient History (AMPAH) 2020. Research interests include: Macedonian kingship, presentations of power in art and literature, and the reception of Alexander the Great.

Dates (8 weeks): July 27th - September 14th
Tuesdays @ 1pm EDT

- Session 1: July 27th
- Session 2: August 3rd
- Session 3: August 10th
- Session 4: August 17th Postponed
- Session 5: August 24th Missed
- Session 6: August 31st
- Session 7: September 7th
- Session 8: September 14th
- Makeup Session: September 21st
- Makeup Session: September 28th

Location:(Provided by SASA)

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85811791216?pwd=QXhDWTEra1JvMGFJYW1Qa1ZPcDJxZz09>

Zoom Meeting ID:

858 1179 1216

Zoom Meeting Passcode:

099553

Week 1: Alexander's Early Reign and Start of the Persian Campaign

- Arrian's Anabasis Book One (pages 3 - 38 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- (it may also be useful to read the introduction (pages xi to xxxix for further context and background on both Alexander and Arrian as an author)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftg5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 2: The Gordian Knot to the Siege of Gaza

- Arrian's Anabasis Book Two (pages 39 - 68 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftg5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 3: Alexander in Egypt to the Capture of Bessus

- Arrian's Anabasis Book Three (pages 69 - 101 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftq5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 4: Alexander Crushes a Revolt to Alexander on the Indus River

- Arrian's Anabasis Book Four (pages 102 - 136 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftq5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 5: Alexander in India to the Munity at Hyphasis

- Arrian's Anabasis Book Five (pages 137 - 165 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftq5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 6: Alexander and the Mallians to his Return to Persepolis

- Arrian's Anabasis Book Six (pages 166 - 194 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftq5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 7: The Mutiny at Opis to Alexander's Final Plans and Death

- Arrian's Anabasis Book Seven (pages 195 - 225 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftq5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>

Week 8: Nearchus in India: A Short History

- Arrian's Indica (pages 227 - 265 in the Oxford World Classics 2013 edition)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1goREFmO8cDG0M2Ftq5uLDhIM0OFbM-2r/view?usp=sharing>