

B. G. Gafurov - D. I. Cibukidis, *Aleksandr Makedonskij i Vostok* (= Alexander of Macedonia and the East), Moscow (Nauka) 1980, pp. 456.

Historians' interest in Alexander's life and activities has remained undiminished for 24 centuries, and now, as in antiquity, there seem to be two basic attitudes towards his achievements — they tend to be presented in a spirit of either justification or criticism. Both attitudes originate in the writings of the Macedonian field-marshal's fellow fighters (Ptolemy, Aristobolus, Nearchus, Callisthenes etc.), who either extolled or censured his activities. As time went by, however, these came to be evaluated in a more sober spirit, with the result that these attitudes stabilised.

Although countless books have been written about Alexander, very few examine in detail the socio-economic changes which took place in Macedonia, Greece and the East during his time. The present work, "Alexander of Macedonia and the East", is the first catholic study to be produced in the post-war period and is one of the best productions in the field of historical science. Against a broad social background the authors analyse the basic socio-economic reasons for the Greek Macedonians' assault on the East. The study of this subject has a two-fold historical significance: first, generally, it concerns the problems connected with the development of Hellenistic culture; and secondly and more specifically, and in connection with this first point, it studies the history of the countries of the East.

It is a fact that Greece and Rome had a higher level of "historical development" than the other peoples of the ancient world, and it is quite rightly emphasised in the book that the acme of Greece's internal prosperity coincided with the age of Pericles and that the acme of external prosperity was reached in the age of Alexander.

Last century the German historian I. Dreusen accurately observed that the name Alexander indicates the end of one period and the beginning of another — the Hellenistic period, which lasted three centuries and united the West and the East. This unity was disturbed by Rome's attempt to conquer the Eastern Mediterranean.

Until the middle of the XVIIIth century researchers had paid little attention to the Hellenistic period, though the same cannot be said of Alexander, who has always occupied the attention of historians. His achievements, irrespective of the diversity of opinions concerning them, and his success in war amazed researchers, as did his talent and his singular visions.

The present work is based on information taken from the ancient sources, inscriptions, numismatology and archaeology, and this has permitted the authors to penetrate to the essence of the problems of the beginning of the Hellenistic period, which coincided with the campaign in the East. The authors have made full use of the sources, which has enabled them to look at facts in a new light and to formulate a whole series of correct opinions and judgments. One's attention is caught not only by their evaluation of Alexander's personality, his Eastern policy and his conquests, but also by their analysis of the development of his plans during the Eastern campaign. They emphasise that Alexander developed the idea of a universal state gradually. His progressive penetration into the East brought about changes in his plans. One particular problem becomes immediately obvious — that is, the difficulty of preserving the interests of Macedonia, Greece and the East at one and the same time. This dilemma induced Alexander to turn towards the East without denying the Greek and Macedonian traditions.

Events are dealt with in chronological order, but the book is not merely a dry account of military and political history. On the contrary, the problems of the age are analysed against

a broad social background: the modification of Alexander's plans in the East, the strengthening of opposition within the army, resistance on the part of the subjugated peoples, the building of new towns etc. As each problem is examined the authors also evaluate the most recent works by Soviet, Greek and Western European scholars.

The book comprises an Introduction and ten chapters, linked by an account of the successive stages of the campaign's preparation, realisation and completion and of its objective consequences.

The authors' aim in writing this book is essentially to portray the socio-economic and political changes which accompanied Alexander's activities, the system of organisation in the occupied territories, the town-planning which was fundamental to the system of government in the East and which not only gave military and strategic protection but also created economic and administrative centres.

Alexander's activities in the East (self-deification, acceptance of Asiatic customs, prayer, mixed marriages between Greeks and Macedonians and Persians etc.) disprove certain historians' theories about the "brotherhood" of nations. On the contrary, these measures indicate Alexander's desire for sovereignty over the East and for universal dominion to the ends of the then inhabitable earth. And he could not achieve this without going some way towards "Asianising" his own people.

Alexander's desires are one thing, and the objective consequences of his conquests quite another. The book stresses that the Macedonian field-marshal's Eastern policy played an enormous part historically in the encounter between East and West.

The book defines the role of the army, recounts its refusal to accept Alexander's eastward orientation, the development of the opposition's strength, the resistance of the subjugated peoples in Greece and in the East. The reader's attention is drawn to the Greek and Macedonian army's excellent military and political organisation and its superb strategical, tactical and combative technique, which played such an important part in the besieging of well-fortified towns. The role of the Greek and Macedonian cavalry is also analysed, particularly the part played by the Macedonian phalanx in the crushing of the Persian army.

Unquestionably the book deals with controversial matters which could be interpreted in a completely different way. But one must note the accurate and cogent arguments the authors employ to express their own attitudes.

Together with a positive evaluation of this integral work, certain omissions nevertheless have to be pointed out: 1) the analysis of the ancient sources could have been more complete and could have explained more clearly the directions in which they tend; it must be said, however, that this is a very difficult task as the sources are inconsistent. 2) Although it is explained that the book has an "eastern orientation" (i.e. it examines more closely the events which took place in the East), nevertheless the authors should have devoted more attention to the social movements in Greece and in the north of the Balkan peninsula (Illyria, Thrace), particularly the anti-Macedonian movement led by Axi the Third. But these omissions in no way lessen the value of the work, which makes an important contribution to the study of the first Hellenistic period. The authors write clearly and simply about many complex problems, and consequently their monograph is of interest not only to historians but also to a wider readership of those who are interested in ancient history and in the historical role of Hellenism.

I myself was able to follow the progress of the work as it was written and I also wrote the Foreword. I should like to observe that the co-operation between these two scholars (the Soviet academic B. Gafurov and the Greek historian D. Cibukidis) made a positive contribu-

tion to the writing of such a book, despite the difficulty of harmonising differing opinions.

The book is well-researched and richly illustrated and contains maps, battle plans, a bibliography and tables of proper and geographical names.

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Cyril Mango, *Byzantium, The Empire of New Rome*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980. Pp. VII and 334, illustrations.

Robert Browning, *The Byzantine Empire*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980. Pp. 224, numerous illustrations.

Mango's book is a general survey of the history of the Byzantine empire, covering the period roughly from the end of the third century to the end of the empire in 1453. Two factors had conditioned its development and were in one way or another to affect its evolution: the foundation of Constantinople in 324 and the triumph of Christianity in the course of the fourth century. Conditions already in existence, as for instance, the ethnic composition of its various lands also contributed to this evolution. It is this evolution that Mango has tried to survey. The resulting book is a cultural history. It consists of three parts. The first, called "Aspects of Byzantine Life", includes such matters as peoples and languages, society and economy, the disappearance and revival of cities, dissenters, monasticism, education. The content of the second part is much more theoretical in nature. Under the general title, "The Conceptual World of Byzantium", the chapters deal with: the invisible world of good and evil, the physical universe, the inhabitants of the earth, the past of mankind, the future of mankind, the ideal life. The third part is no doubt the most original contribution made by Mango himself. Mango is a well-known authority on Byzantine literature and art and it is with these two topics that this part deals.

"Peoples and Languages" is certainly one of the most important, if not the most important chapter, of the entire book. This is at least the opinion of this reviewer. The views expressed are not original with the author. They had often been expressed by this reviewer in a series of studies devoted to them. But they are here very well and very accurately summarized by Mango. Except in the last few years of its existence, when it could hardly be called an empire at all, the Byzantine empire in its long history, had never achieved ethnic homogeneity. This fact has not always been pointed out. It is one of the merits of Mango's book that it emphasizes it.

Mango's *Byzantium, The Empire of New Rome* is an excellent book. Knowing his general anti-Greek sentiments, I opened his book with reservations. I was pleasantly surprised. Both in its statements of fact and interpretation, the work is free from error. In this respect it differs radically from that of R. Jenkins' *Byzantium, The Imperial Centuries*, which, despite its brilliance of style, is grossly off in the interpretation and in the statement of the facts it offers. Mango's book might perhaps have been more detailed in its exposition of the social life of the empire; nevertheless, as a survey, it serves a useful purpose and makes a worthwhile contribution.

Browning is a distinguished scholar, distinguished particularly in the history of Byzantine