Alexander’s Heirs
THE AGE OF THE SUCCESSORS
EDWARD M. ANSON

Alexander the Great is one of the most mercurial and transformational figures in world history. His empire was vast, stretching across the ancient world from Greece and Egypt to India. In the wake of his death, his generals – the Diadochi – once tenuously united, turned on one another, each in pursuit of what he believed was his rightful role as ruler.

In this narrative history, Edward M. Anson explores the period of time known as the Age of the Successors – the approximately forty years following the death of Alexander the Great. It is a story of ambition, power, and war, but at its core it is a story of transition – of how one man’s empire ultimately became the Hellenistic world.

“Alexander’s Heirs is a concise but thoroughly documented study of the formative years (323–281 BCE) of the Hellenistic age by an insightful and highly respected scholar. Students, teachers, and researchers will find it an indispensable and infallible guide to one of the most complex and exciting periods of ancient history.”

Waldemar Heckel, University of Calgary
Alexander’s Heirs
In Memoriam
Edward M. Anson III

In Dedicatio
Lucy Dorothy Meyer Anson
## Contents

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Abbreviations</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronology</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preface</td>
<td>xvii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maps</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regions of Macedonia</td>
<td>xix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greece and Asia Minor</td>
<td>xx</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Hellenistic world</td>
<td>xxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 The Death of a Conqueror</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 The Funeral Games Begin</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 The End of a Dynasty</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chronology from Spring 318 to Spring 315</em></td>
<td>116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 “War, both the King and Father of All”</td>
<td>125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chronology from 314 to 306</em></td>
<td>157</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 The End of the Diadochi</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Chronology from 306 to 281</em></td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Epilogue: The New World</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bibliography</td>
<td>197</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Index</td>
<td>215</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Abbreviations

Ael. Aelian, Varia Historia (VH)
Aeschin. Aeschines, 2 (On the Embassy); 3 (Against Ctesiphon)
App. Appian, Mithridatic Wars (Mith.); Syrian Wars (Syr.)
Arist. Aristotle, Rhetoric (Rhet.)
Aristid. Aristasides, Orations (Or.)
Arr. Arrian, Anabasis Alexandri (Anab.); Indica (Ind.); Successors (Succ.)


Athen. Athenaeus, The Banqueteers
BCHP Babylonian Chronicles of the Hellenistic Period
BM British Museum
Curt. Curtius, The History of Alexander the Great of Macedon
Dem. Demosthenes, 15 (On the Liberty of the Rhodians); 17 (On the Accession of Alexander); 18 (On the Crown); 19 (On the False Embassy)

Din. Dinarchus, 1 (Against Demosthenes)
Diod. Diodorus, Library of History
Ditt. Syll. Wilhelm Dittenberger, Sylloge Inscriptionum Graecarum
Euseb. Eusebius [Porphyry], Chronica (Chron.)
FGrH Jacoby, Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker
Hdts. Herodotus, Histories
Hom. Homer, Iliad (Il.)
Hyp. Hyperides, 4 (In Defense of Euxenippus); 5 (Against Demosthenes); 6 (Funeral Oration)

IG Inscriptiones Graecae
Isoc. Isocrates, 4 (Panegyricus); 15 (Antidosis)
Joseph. Josephus, Jewish Antiquities (Ji)
Just. Justin, Epitome of the Philippic History of Pompeius Trogus
Liv. Livy, From the Founding of the City
LM Liber de Morte
Abbreviations

Memn. Memnon of Heracleia’s History of Heracleia Pontica (FGrH 434 F-5.7)

Nep. Nepos, Life of Eumenes (Eum.); Life of Phocion (Phoc.)

OGIS Orientis Graeci Inscriptiones Selectae

Paus. Pausanias, Description of Greece

Phot. Photius, Bibliotheca (Bibl.)

Pliny Natural History (NH)

Plut. Plutarch, Life of Agesilaus (Ages.); Life of Alexander (Alex.); Life of Antony (Ant.); Life of Camillus (Cam.); Comparison of the Lives of Eumenes and Sertorius (Comp. Eum. et Sert.); Life of Demetrius (Demetr.); Life of Dion (Dion); Life of Eumenes (Eum.); Life of Lucullus (Luc.); Life of Lysander (Lys.); Moralia (Mor.); Life of Phocion (Phoc.); Life of Pyrrhus (Pyrrh.); Life of Sertorius (Ser.)

Polyaen. Polyaenus, Stratagems

Polyb. Polybius, Histories

P. Oxy. Oxyrhynchus Papyri


Str. Strabo, Geography

Suda Antipater, Basileia, Craterus, Leonnatus, Deinarchus, Demetrius, Ophellas


Tac. Tacitus, Annals (Ann.)

Thuc. Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War

Trog. Trogus, Prologues (Prol.)

Val. Max. Valerius Maximus, Memorable Words and Deeds

Vitr. Vitruvius, De architectura

Xen. Xenophon, Anabasis (Anab.); Constitution of the Spartans (Resp. Lac.)
Chronology

323
June 11  Death of Alexander the Great
Summer  Philip III and Alexander IV proclaimed kings; revolt of the Greeks in the upper satrapies
Fall    Start of the Lamian War; Thibron attacks Cyrene

323/22
Fall/Winter  Battle of Abydus; crossing of Leonnatus to Europe; death of Leonnatus

322
Late Spring  Craterus crosses to Europe
June        Battle of Amorgus
July        Perdiccas and Eumenes arrive in Cappadocia; defeat Ariarathes in two battles
Late July/August  Battle of Crannon; Antipater arranges affairs in Peloponnesus and Athens
Late Summer/Fall  Eumenes organizes Cappadocia; Perdiccas moves to Cilicia; Neoptolemus moves to Armenia; annexation of Cyrene by Ptolemy

322/21
Late Fall/Winter  Eumenes sent to Armenia; Perdiccas winters in Cilicia; return of Antipater and Craterus to Macedonia; Craterus marries Phila

321
Spring  Perdiccas campaigns in Pisidia; calls for Antigonus to answer charges; arrival of Nicaea and Cleopatra with marriage proposals; marriage of Perdiccas and Nicaea; marriage of Ptolemy and Eurydice; invasion of Aetolia by Antipater and Craterus
Summer  Cynnane arrives in Asia and is murdered; marriage of Adea (Eurydice) and Philip III; Perdiccas determines to seize the monarchy; Alexander the Great's body begins its journey west
Chronology

321/20
Late Fall/Winter  Antigonus flees to Macedonia; end of Aetolian campaign; diversion of Alexander's body to Egypt

320
Spring  First Diadoch War begins. Perdiccas marches to Egypt; Eumenes to the Hellespont; desertion of Cleitus and the fleet to Antipater; crossing of Antipater and Craterus to Asia; Antigonus attempts to intercept Eumenes, then to Cyprus
Late Spring  Eumenes defeats Neoptolemus; later Neoptolemus and Craterus; deaths of Neoptolemus and Craterus
Early Summer  Death of Perdiccas; condemnation of Perdiccans by royal army; Pithon and Arrhidaeus new regents for the kings
Late Summer  Triparadeisus; Antipater regent; marriage of Demetrius and Phila
Fall/Winter  Alcetas defeats Asander; Eumenes winters in Celaenae; failed negotiations among the surviving Perdiccan leaders

319
Winter  Antipater crosses back to Europe with the kings
Spring  Eumenes defeated by Antigonus and enters Nora
Summer  Antigonus defeats Alcetas; death of Alcetas
Late Summer  Death of Antipater; Polyperchon new regent, Cassander chiliarch
Fall  Nicanor made garrison commander in Munychia

319/18
Winter  Flight of Cassander to Antigonus; Polyperchon's “Freedom of the Greeks” decree

318
Late Winter/ Early Spring  Arrhidaeus’ attack on Cyzicus; Eumenes released from Nora and allies with Antigonus; Antigonus takes Ephesus and Cleitus flees
Spring  Nicanor seizes Piraeus; Ptolemy occupies Phoenicia and Syria; Alexander, the son of Polyperchon, arrives in Athens, followed later by Polyperchon
May  Death of Phocion; Cassander arrives in Piraeus
Summer  Antigonus captures all of Lydia; Eumenes allies with Polyperchon; Polyperchon invades Peloponnesus, besieges Megalopolis; Eumenes moves into Cilicia, joined by argyraspids; Menander occupies Cappadocia; Eumenes creates “Alexander Tent”
Fall  Polyperchon returns to Macedonia, orders Cleitus to the Hellespont
Fall/Winter  Eumenes moves into Phoenicia
317
Summer Sea battles in the Hellespont; defeat of Cleitus
July Demetrios of Phalerum in charge of Athens
Late Summer Death of Nicanor; Cassander's first invasion of Macedonia
September Eumenes leaves Phoenicia for the east
Fall Eurydice claims the regency; Olympias returns to Macedonia
Fall/Winter Philip III Arrhidaeus and Eurydice murdered; Eumenes in Babylonia; revolt of citadel commander in Babylon; Eumenes moves into winter quarters in the “Carian villages”; Antigonus winters in Mesopotamia

316
Spring Eumenes joins with the forces of the satraps of the upper provinces
Summer Cassander successfully invades Macedonia; siege of Pydna begins; deposition and exile of Aeacides
July Eumenes and Antigonus battle on Coprates
August Antigonus retreats into Media
Late October/ Battle of Paraetacene
Early November
December Battle of Gabene

315
January Death of Eumenes; Antigonus winters in Media; death of Pithon
“Approach End of siege of Pydna of Spring”
Spring Death of Olympias; imprisonment of Roxane and Alexander IV; Cassander marries Thessalonice
Spring/Early Peucetias replaced as satrap of Persis; flight of Seleucus Summer from Babylon; Cassander founds Cassandreia and Thessalonica
Summer Cassander refounds Thebes, invades Peloponnesus; Cassander’s army invades Asia Minor; [alliance between Asander and Cassander?]
November Antigonus at Mallus

314
Spring Ultimatum to Antigonus; start of the Third Diadoch War; Agesilaus to Cyprus; Polemaeus to Cappadocia; Aristodemus to Greece, forms an alliance with Polyperchon; siege of Tyre begins
Late Spring Antigonus' capture of Joppa and Gaza
Summer Polemaeus relieves siege of Erythrae; Cassander moves into Peloponnesus
**Chronology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>313</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Miletus falls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Cassander invades Messenia; Acrotatus in northwest Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Siege of Tyre ends; creation of the “League of the Islanders”;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassander presides over Nemean Games (August), then returns to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Macedonia; Aristodemos in Aetolia; Ptolemy sends Menelaus to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Summer/Fall</td>
<td>Alexander deserts Antigon and allies with Cassander, then is slain;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cassander campaigns in Aetolia and Illyria; Polemaeus invades Caria;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Seleucus and the Athenian admiral Aristote unsuccessfully attack</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Winter</td>
<td>Cassander sends an army to Caria; Antigon leaves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 313/12</td>
<td>Antigon in Celaenae; Asander briefly allies with Antigon; revolt of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pontic cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>312</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>Antigon gains control of Carian cities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Spring/</td>
<td>Telesphorus to Greece</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early Summer</td>
<td>Polemaeus sent to Greece; revolt of Cyrene</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer</td>
<td>Polemaeus’ operations in Greece; Cassander in Epirus and Euboea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer/Fall</td>
<td>Ptolemy to Cyprus: Telesphorus deserts Antigonid cause and attacks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Elis; Elis freed and Telesphorus returns to allegiance; Battle of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaza; Ptolemy occupies Phoenicia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 312/11</td>
<td>Demetrius defeats Cilles; Antigon in Syria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>311</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>Seleucus retakes Babylon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring/Summer</td>
<td>Demetrius’ Nabataean campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall</td>
<td>Seleucus occupies Media and Susiane; Demetrius’ raid on Babylonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 311/10</td>
<td>Peace between Antigon, Cassander, Ptolemy, and Lysimachus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>310</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring</td>
<td>Murders of Roxane and Alexander IV</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Late Spring/Summer</td>
<td>Antigon invades Babylonia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
309
Late Spring/ Early Summer Polemaeus revolts from Antigonus; Ptolemy’s operations in Cilicia; death of Polemaeus
Summer Death of Heracles, son of Alexander the Great
Fall/Winter Founding of Lysimacheia

308
Spring Ptolemy’s operations in Lycia; his acquisition of Sicyon and Corinth
Summer Ophellas’ campaign in North Africa; return of Antigonus from the east; murder of Cleopatra, sister of Alexander the Great; Seleucus occupies upper satrapies, makes treaty with Chandragupta

307
Spring Ptolemy’s operations in the Aegean and Greece; Demetrius “frees” Athens
Fall Pyrrhus becomes king of Epirus

306
Spring Demetrius’ operations in Cyprus begin; founding of Antigoneia-on-the-Orontes
June Battle of Salamis; Antigonus and Demetrius proclaimed kings
Summer Surrender of Cyprus to Demetrius; death of Philip, son of Antigonus
November Antigonus and Demetrius’ failed invasion of Egypt

305
Spring Demetrius launches attack on Rhodes

304
Spring Cassander captures island of Salamis, besieging Athens; Demetrius abandons siege of Rhodes, and returns to Athens; other Diadochs proclaim themselves kings
Summer Demetrius’ advance into Boeotia and Euboea

303
Spring Demetrius invades the Peloponnesus, captures Sicyon and Corinth; new Hellenic league
Summer Cleonymus captures Corcyra
Late Summer/Fall Demetrius secures Achaea, all of Arcadia, except Mantinea, and Argos; marries Deidameia and forms as alliance with Epirus
Winter 303/2 Failed attempt by Cassander to make peace with Antigonus

302
Winter Alliance of Cassander, Lysimachus, Ptolemy, and Seleucus against Antigonus
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>302/1</td>
<td>Demetrius recalled from Greece; Ptolemy seizes Phoenicia and returns to Egypt; Corcyra independent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>301</td>
<td>Battle of Ipsi; death of Antigonus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300</td>
<td>New alliance between Ptolemy, Cassander, and Lysimachus; alliance between Seleucus and Demetrius; Demetrius takes possession of Cilicia; Lachares takes control of Athens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>298?</td>
<td>Demetrius’ failed attempt to “liberate” Athens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>298/7</td>
<td>Death of Cassander, succeeded by son Philip (IV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>297</td>
<td>Death of Philip IV, ruler of Macedonia; Macedonia divided among Cassander’s surviving sons, Alexander and Antipater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>295</td>
<td>Demetrius in Peloponnesus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>294</td>
<td>Demetrius begins siege of Athens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>293</td>
<td>Marriage of Antiochus and Stratonice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>291</td>
<td>Demetrius marries Lanassa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Chronology**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 288  | Spring: With Demetrius preparing to invade Asia Minor, new coalition of Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, and Pyrrhus is formed against him  
      Fall: Lysimachus and Pyrrhus invade Macedonia; Macedonia divided between Lysimachus and Pyrrhus; Demetrius flees to Cassandreia; death of Phila  
      Winter: Murder of Antipater |
| 287  | Spring: Reestablishment of Athenian democracy; Ptolemy new patron of Nesiotic League  
      Summer: Ptolemy repudiates Eurydice and Ceraunus; Ptolemy regains Cyprus; Demetrius returns to Asia |
| 286  | Demetrius campaigning in Asia Minor |
| 285  | Spring: Seleucus captures Demetrius; Lysimachus subverts Pyrrhus’ army and becomes sole king of Macedonia |
| 284  | Summer?: Ptolemy Philadelphus made co-ruler of Egypt |
| 283  | Winter 283/2: Lysimachus murders his son Agathocles |
| 282  | February?: Death of Demetrius  
      Spring?: Death of Ptolemy I; Ptolemy (II) Philadelphus, sole ruler of Egypt |
| 282/81 | Winter: Seleucus invades Lysimachus’ possessions in Asia Minor |
| 281  | February/March: Battle of Corrupedium; death of Lysimachus  
      Summer: Seleucus crosses to Macedonia; Seleucus murdered by Ceraunus (September); Ceraunus, king of Macedonia |
| 280  | Death of Ceraunus |
| 276  | Antigonus Gonatas king of Macedonia |
Preface

This work is not a history of the Hellenistic Age, only those slightly more than forty years that followed Alexander the Great’s death. Its purpose is to look critically at the events which, and the personalities who, set the path upon which the Hellenistic world would proceed, not to examine the resulting journey. It is designed both for scholars and also for the general reader. While presenting a narrative of events, this narrative will be interspersed with the more important scholarly debates that affect so completely this history of the events that occurred more than twenty-three centuries ago. Many of these debates on some of the finer points have been either ignored or relegated to footnotes, so as not to disrupt the flow of the narrative. However, the more important ones will be set forth in their appropriate place in the narrative. Only in the case of certain chronological controversies will the debates appear in a separate section at the end of particular chapters. The ultimate goal is to present a readable and reasoned account of Alexander’s Successors, the Diadochi.

As with all my works, I wish to thank my wife Jeanne for putting up with me in general, and more particularly I am most grateful for her aid in reading and commenting on what I have written. I also wish to thank my colleagues in the field of Alexander and Hellenistic studies, and especially those affectionately known as the “Alexander Group.” To them all goes my appreciation for their support and insights over these many years. I would also like to thank the editors at Wiley Blackwell, Haze Humbert for suggesting the project and working with the prospectus, Allison Kostka for shepherding it to completion, and Janet Moth for proofing the final manuscript. For all of their assistance I am very grateful.
Map 1  Regions of Macedonia
Map 2  Greece and Asia Minor
Map 3  The Hellenistic world
1

Introduction

Any history of the Diadochi, the Successors, the generals who inherited the empire of Alexander the Great, will of necessity be an adventure story of larger-than-life characters pursuing glory and empire. This was an age that arose directly out of the conquests of one of the most mercurial figures in world history. It is only by comparison to the great Conqueror himself that these individuals’ exploits pale. After all, they were fighting over an empire, stretching from Greece to Egypt to India, that he had created, and that ultimately none of them singularly could hold. Yet it is in their struggles with each other over what might be called Alexander’s estate that the Hellenistic world was created. This estate over which they contended was both material and mythical. On the one hand, there was the physical, territorial, empire, but on the other was the legend of Alexander himself. This myth that grew with each passing year was often the exemplar by which supporters of the various Diadochi would measure their generals and rulers. Alexander, however, himself was but a catalyst in the creation of this new age (Anson 2013b: 181–8). He set the stage; he conquered the old Persian nemesis that had haunted Greek affairs since the sixth century BC, but then he left that stage. In his leaving, he is supposed to have said, when asked to whom he left his empire, “to the strongest.” He certainly had done little to ensure the empire’s survival. In the words of Ernst Badian (1964a: 203), “Alexander was, essentially, not interested in a future without himself.” He left a legacy of tremendous potential, but also one of administrative ambiguity and a world wedded to warfare as the means to virtually every end.

At his death, Alexander’s potential heirs were a child, Heracles, by a mistress; a half-brother of dubious competence, and an as yet unborn son by his Bactrian or Sogdian wife Roxane (Heckel 2006: 187, 241). In short, there was to be no smooth transition in power, and, in the final analysis, Alexander’s family, the Argeads, would not long survive the great king’s death.

While his Successors contended in a world in which few parameters had been set, some of these were to resound until the fall of the various Hellenistic states to Rome, and in some cases to transcend even this conquest. These qualities were especially important given the personal nature of Alexander’s empire and his