

Impact case study (REF3b)

<p>Institution: University of Oxford</p>
<p>Unit of Assessment: UOA31</p>
<p>Title of case study: Promoting Knowledge of Ancient Macedon</p>
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words)</p> <p>Research by Oxford scholars on ancient Macedon has played a significant role in promoting public knowledge of this important kingdom [text removed for publication]. The beneficiaries of this research on Macedonia are [text removed for publication] members of the public, both in the UK and abroad, who have had their historical knowledge and understanding enriched through contact with research on Macedonia in written form and at museums [text removed for publication]. This impact has been achieved in a number of ways through a major museum exhibition, through public lectures and popular histories, and through accessible scholarly publications. This research has also had a significant economic impact.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words)</p> <p>Robin Lane Fox's research into modes of kingship in ancient Macedonia has focused on Philip II, his son Alexander, and Alexander's successors. He has argued against the attempts by P. Briant to align Alexander's style of kingship with a distinctively Achaemenid Persian model. Particularly notable are the arguments presented in his contributions to <i>Brill's Companion to Ancient Macedon</i>, including the 'Introduction', which incorporates his research into new archaeological investigations of the palace complex of Philip II at Aegae (evidence that is presented for the first time in the <i>Brill's Companion</i>) and his arguments for the dating of the royal tombs at Aegae to the time of Philip II rather than that of Philip III. This research (based on five visits to Vergina between 1996 and 2008) demonstrates the scope of Philip II's centralisation of royal power, and so of Alexander's debt to his father. It suggests that Alexander's success in making Macedon one of the superpowers of the ancient world (stretching from the Adriatic Sea and the Balkan peninsula to the Indus Valley and the Persian Gulf) was the culmination of a much earlier process. Underlying Lane Fox's research into these various areas is the argument that the Macedonian monarchy was Hellenic.</p> <p>Lane Fox's research on the structures and material remains of the Macedonian monarchy and his arguments for its Hellenic status were combined with further new archaeological research in <i>Heracles to Alexander the Great</i>, a major international exhibition at the Ashmolean Museum, 7 April - 29 August 2011, and in the accompanying catalogue. The exhibition's sub-title, <i>Treasures from the Royal Capital of Macedon, a Hellenic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy</i>, laid particular emphasis on the arguments for Macedon's Hellenicity that Lane Fox presented in the exhibition. The exhibition itself was organised in collaboration with Dr Angeliki Kottaridi, Director of the 17th Ephorate of Prehistoric and Classical Antiquities and the Hellenic Ministry of Culture and Tourism, thanks to the initiative of Lane Fox, who arranged for a Visiting Fellowship for Dr Kottaridi at New College. The exhibition displayed, for the first time anywhere, many important objects discovered at Vergina over the last 30 years (including a gold wreath found in 2008). While the archaeological investigations at Vergina were not conducted by Oxford researchers, research for the exhibition itself was carried out between November 2010 to April 2011 collaboratively by three Oxford-based researchers (Walker, Galanakis, Stamatopoulou) and Dr Kottaridi. This research included: sourcing and studying the objects; visiting Vergina (the archaeological site, the museum, the conservation laboratory, and the storerooms); conserving the objects (more than half of the objects were conserved for the very first time because of the Ashmolean exhibition); editing the catalogue; preparing the layout and design of the exhibition; writing the texts (for the catalogue, the exhibition guide, and the labels in the exhibition itself). More than 2,500 objects discovered in the royal tombs and the palace at Aegae - the results of cutting-edge archaeological research across a wide range of subjects connected with the capital and the royal family - went on display; these were grouped in 552 entries in the exhibition catalogue. The research embodied in the exhibition as a whole combined Lane Fox's historical analysis with the results of the detailed investigation of new archaeological evidence by Dr Kottaridi and the Oxford team.</p>

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The key researchers are: Mr Robin Lane Fox, Fellow and Tutor in Ancient History, New College [text removed for publication]; Dr Susan Walker, Keeper of Antiquities, Ashmolean Museum; Dr Yannis Galanakis, Sackler Junior Research Fellow, and Curator for the Aegean Collections and the Sir Arthur Evans Archive (2007-2012); Dr Maria Stamatopoulou, University Lecturer in Classical Art and Archaeology.

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

- A. Kottaridi, S. Walker, Y. Galanakis (eds), *Heracles to Alexander the Great: Treasures from the Royal Capital of Macedon, an Hellenic Kingdom in the Age of Democracy* (Oxford: Ashmolean Museum, 2011). 280 pp; chapters by Y. Galanakis, R. Lane Fox, S. Walker. Can be supplied on request.
- R. Lane Fox (ed.), *Brill's companion to ancient Macedon: studies in the archaeology and history of Macedon, 650 BC-300 AD* (Leiden, 2011), including six chapters by Lane Fox. Review: H. Bowden, *Scripta Classica Israelica* 31 (2012). REF 2 – N02
- R. Lane Fox, 'The first Hellenistic man', in A. Erskine and L. Llewellyn-Jones (eds), *Creating a Hellenistic World* (Swansea: Classical Press of Wales, 2011), 1-29. REF 2 – N03
- R. Lane Fox, 'Alexander the Great: "Last of the Achaemenids"?' in C.J. Tuplin (ed.), *Persian Responses: Political and Cultural Interactions with(in) the Achaemenid Empire* (Swansea: The University of Wales Press, 2007), 267-311. Can be supplied on request. Review: S. Burstein, *BMCR* 2008.07.44: 'Robin Lane Fox successfully deconstructs Pierre Briant's influential thesis that Alexander was the "last of Achaemenids"'.
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4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Lane Fox's research on ancient Macedonia has in numerous ways had great cultural and pedagogical impact in promoting the study of and interest in ancient history as well as continuing economic impact. In 2010, Lane Fox recorded 14 lectures on Alexander for the main publishers of cassette teaching systems in the USA.^[1] In that year, he also talked on Alexander for the BBC TV World version of their international series *Ancient Worlds* (an enlarged version of the original UK series presented by Richard Miles) and for Neil MacGregor's BBC Radio 4 series *History of the World In 100 Objects* (Episode 31: Coin with head of Alexander); his contribution was then adapted and included in MacGregor's best-selling book. In 2011, Lane Fox contributed to the in-house British Museum video for the major exhibition *Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World*, discussing the impact of Alexander and his Successors. He also gave public lectures on Alexander at Indiana University, April 2009 (conference on *Two Conquests of Iran: Alexander and the Arabs*); in Amsterdam, September 2010, for the *Alexander der Groote* exhibition at the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam (he also reviewed the exhibition for the *Financial Times*); and in Sydney, Australia, January 2013, for the exhibition *Alexander the Great: 2000 Years of Treasures* at the Australian Museum.

The most substantial impact of Lane Fox's research on Alexander in particular has been through his role as main adviser to the controversial 2004 Oliver Stone film *Alexander*. Besides its cultural impact (attested in continuing online discussions), the film has had a continuing economic impact through various DVD/Blu-Ray re-releases, including the longer 2007 version *Alexander Revisited*, which has sold more than a million copies). Lane Fox also had a strong impact on the making of a separate historian's disk accompanying a Blu-Ray release of a new version of the film. This film, produced by Gary Leva (Leva FilmWorks), involves interviews with Lane Fox and five other historians in the UK and US, all recruited by Lane Fox.

The Ashmolean exhibition *Heracles to Alexander the Great* offered considerable cultural and pedagogical benefits to its visitors (43,464 people in all) and aided the positive economic impact of the University (tourists who visit Oxford each year spend on average £65 each, supporting 13,700

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jobs).^[1] During the course of the exhibition, 4,050 copies of the exhibition catalogue were sold (it was reprinted twice) and 5,763 copies of the exhibition guide book (it was reprinted three times). The exhibition implemented the vision of the Ashmolean Museum - 'Opening minds to the joy of learning' - with cutting-edge graphics, accessible texts, and dramatic design effects (e.g. the funeral pyre of Queen Eurydice and the lifesize reproduction of the 'hunting frieze' from the tomb of Philip II). By providing a strong visual and material background to the family of Alexander the Great, it helped stir interest in the art, archaeology, and history of regions in the periphery of the Greek world for the period between 1200 to 350 BC, thus opening up new opportunities for study and the dissemination of knowledge (e.g. Art as Power): one Oxfordshire school pupil commented that the exhibition 'gave me a new insight into Hellenistic rulership and fired my interest in the workings of the Classical World'.^[2] This cultural benefit was reinforced by a programme of lectures and tours. Galanakis was responsible for delivering public lectures and around 50 tours. There was also a series of 10 public lectures by Oxford academics and invited speakers (attendance for each lecture was between 80 and 120 people).

The benefits of increased historical knowledge about Macedon and about the process of historical research were promoted by the wide media coverage that the exhibition received.^[iii] Before it opened, it was a recommendation in the local, national, and international press, and called by Dr Kottaridi 'the most important Greek cultural event in many years'. The exhibition itself was widely reviewed in the UK and abroad: rated a 'must see' by Bettany Hughes, one of the 'Five Best Art Shows' by *The Independent* and the 'Show of the Summer' by the *Sunday Telegraph*; it received full page reviews in German papers, and was recommended by the *Wall Street Journal Europe* as possibly 'your only chance to see' the new discoveries. Lane Fox also wrote a major review of the exhibition in the *Financial Times*. The exhibition was also featured in the BBC4 series *Guilty Pleasures: Luxury in the Ancient Greek and Medieval worlds* presented by Michael Scott (June 2011). Throughout, much attention was paid to Lane Fox's reaction to the new archaeological discoveries in the context of his long-standing research expertise on Macedonia. The *Guardian* critic Maeve Kennedy's online article (6/4/11) focused on Lane Fox' speech at the press opening. European TV and press also carried extracts from his speech, and they have been replayed persistently in Greece since.^[iiii] Quotations from his speech were also used in France to promote the Louvre *Macédoine* exhibition, Nov. 2011.

Further cultural and pedagogical benefits arising from the exhibition were the opportunity to promote the financial support for the Ashmolean Museum and to support cultural interactions between Britain and Greece. Owing to the success of the exhibition, Lane Fox was invited to give the main speech at the dinner of Ashmolean donors in November 2011. Lane Fox also gave the main speech to open the exhibition before the Greek Ambassador, the UK Minister of Higher Education, and about 400 other invitees.

The exhibition had a particularly strong cultural and political impact in Greece. In July 2008, when the exhibition was first planned, Lane Fox and Kottaridi were the major contributors to a 60-minute television documentary at Vergina made by Photis Constantinidis that was shown on Greek TV. There was very strong coverage of the Ashmolean exhibition in Greece: e.g. *Kathimerini* (17/4/11).^[v] The Ashmolean exhibition was also the impetus for the conservation of many of the new finds from Vergina. The publicity created by the exhibition has helped to promote the case for a new Museum at Vergina to display the new finds (almost 90% of the objects displayed in the exhibition are now back in storage); as yet this ambition has not been realised owing to the financial crisis in Greece.

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5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

Testimony

[1] Testimony from the Press and Publicity Manager, the Ashmolean

[2] Feedback from a student.

Other evidence sources

[i] *Alexander the Great: The World Conquered* (publisher: Recorded Books).

[ii] Selection of publicity and reviews: *The Art Journal* (January 2011); *Oxford Mail* (5/2/11); *Oxford Times* (10/2/11); *Guardian* (3/2/11); *La Gaceta* (20/2/11); *Financial Times* (7/4/11); *Sunday Times* (10/4/11: Hughes); *Independent* (7/5/11); *Munich Review* (May 2011); *Frankfurter Allgemeine Sonntagszeitung* (1/5/11); *Wall Street Journal Europe* (6/5/11).

[iii] Greek sources linking the exhibition with the Republic of Macedonia question: Newspaper: http://news.kathimerini.gr/4dcgi/w_articles_civ_3_22/10/2011_460077

Blogs: <http://neospalamedes.blogspot.gr/2011/10/la-dichiarazione-mozzafiato-di-robin.html>
<http://ellanodikhs.com/2011/07/>.

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