

The European Policy of Unity and Alexander's policy of Omonoia

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It is undoubtedly easy to conclude Alexander's superiority and greatness compared to Philip II: Alexander conquered the largest empire of the known world and expanded it even more, whereas Philip had managed to create Macedonia and only initiate the expedition against Persia. However, nowadays we are more inclined to recognize Philip's superior military and political intellect and a number of works have managed to make justice for Philip's achievements.¹ It is, however, one thing to accept Philip's superior intellect and another to acknowledge a most instructive fact: it was Philip, who only provided Alexander with the first model of integrated society as a basis for the unity of the empire.² Moreover, Alexander was definitely influenced by the integration policies of Darius the Great (Dārayava(h)uš; 550–486 BC), who had laid the foundations for the rule of vast, socially heterogeneous kingdoms, such as his own empire. Setting aside common methodological problems, such as the subjectivity and originality of ancient sources, I will refer to these sources as a reliable and constructive corpus of valid information and compare Alexander's famous policy of Omonoia or universalism to that of contemporary policies concerning Europe. The methodological merits of this approach were stressed by Wight, who also proposed that we should view organizations such as Alexander's Empire or even the modern European Union, as comprised of *nations*, i.e. independent political bodies (unitary or federal), which recognize no one else as superior to them and acknowledge the same rights to independence only to other states that belong in the same system.³

The vision of an empire where the conquerors would not feel like conquerors and the conquered would not feel like conquered was the challenge Alexander strived to resolve throughout his short life. The problem was graphically captured in Plutarch's description of an alleged meeting of Alexander with a Brahman wise-man, Kalanos: using a dried goat-skin, he called Alexander to step on each of its corners, showing him that every time he put his foot on one side, the other side would raise in the air.⁴ Alexander had to come up with

¹ For such works one could turn easily to Nicholas Hammond, *The Miracle that was Macedonia*, Singwick and Jackson, London, and Nicholas Hammond, *Philip of Macedon*, Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1995.

² Indeed, Philip had proven the efficiency of many policies that Alexander adopted later. First of all, political marriages; then, use of local upper classes of subdued areas, who cooperated with him, ensuring stable local administration and provision of their armies to the army of Philip. Cf. A. Bosworth, *Coquest and Empire, the Reign of Alexander the Great*, Cambridge University Press, 1988 [here utilized the translation in Greek by K. Μακρή, *Κατακτήσεις και Αυτοκρατορία του Μεγάλου Αλεξάνδρου*, εκδ. Οδυσσέας, 1998, p. 33].

³ M. Wight (with introduction by M. Bull), *Systems of States*, Leicester, Leicester University Press, 1977, for essays on the Graec-Persian and the European system of administration. Quoted by Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society. A comparative historical analysis*, Taylor and Francis Book L.t.d., 2006 [Here utilized the translation in Greek: *Η εξέλιξη της διεθνούς κοινωνίας. Μια συγκριτική ιστορική ανάλυση*, μτφ. Λ. Στροϊκού, επιμ. Χ. Παπασωτηρίου – Π. Ήφαιστος, εκδ. Ποιότητα, Αθήνα 2006], p. 21.

⁴ Plutarch, *Parallel Lives, Alexander-Caesar*, 66. I have argued aspects of this realization in the information of Alexander's policies in Σ. Συρόπουλος, *Το Δέρμα του Τράγου*, Ηρόδοτος, Θεσσαλονίκη 2003.

innovative ways to establish political cohesion, if his empire was to stand a chance of longevity. In order to achieve this, he had three basic problems to solve: a) the establishment of strong central government for his new empire, b) the establishment of functional and stable local administrations and c) the unity of his empire.

The establishment of secure central government

In the 6th paragraph of the so-called stone or stēlē of Behistun⁵, Darius claims the legacy of his sovereignty as deriving straight from Ahura-Mazda.⁶ Divine origin and protection had been the characteristic of all Egyptian and Persian rulers.

Most of our ancient sources agree that what Alexander really wanted from his visit to Ammun was confirmation of his divine patronage and his right to rule the world.⁷ It is the story recorded by Curtius Rufus, who describes the famous linguistic slip of the priest of Ammun, who greeted Alexander as *son of Zeus*, simply by changing the final “n” of the vocative case into an “s”, thus turning it into a genitive, translated as ‘Hail, son of Zeus!’ instead of ‘Hail, young man!’. Curtius Rufus concludes his anecdote by informing us that Alexander not only allowed everyone to address him as Son of Zeus, but he also gave orders that this should be carried out.⁸ Plutarch states that “nothing happened to Alexander, nor was he drunk; he was merely using the fame of his divinity only to subdue others”.⁹ Curtius also agrees that by doing this, Alexander simply wanted to boast the glory of his achievements.¹⁰ Why did he do this?

If Alexander wanted to legalize his ascendancy to the throne of Persia as a legal heir of the Achaemenid line of Kings, he had to demonstrate to his local subjects his divine origin, just like their previous rulers. Of course this led to great conflicts with his Macedonian associates, who, according to Curtius, “turned their back to their king, who was persistently talking about his immortality, making them feel awkward”.¹¹ It is true, that the only irresolute problem for Alexander was the making of his associates see eye-to-eye his visionary concept of a progressive joint administration of their new empire.

⁵ The text of the stēlē was first published by L. W. King & R. C. Thompson, *The Sculptures and Inscriptions of Darius the Great on the Rock of Behistoun in Persia*, 1907.

⁶ A. T. Olmstead, *History of the Persian Empire*, University of Chicago 1948 [here utilized the translation in Greek by E. Πέππα, *Ιστορία της Περσικής Αυτοκρατορίας*, εκδ. Οδυσσέας, Αθήνα 2002] 216.

⁷ Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 27; Diodorus, XVII, 51,3; Curtius IV, 7, 28; Justin XI, 11, 10. Only Arrian does not refer to any details with regards to the visit of Alexander to the temple and claims that the only thing Alexander wanted to know was about the future (Arrian, III, 3.2).

⁸ Curtius, XI, 11, 10.

⁹ Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 28.

¹⁰ Curtius, IV, 7, 30.

¹¹ Curtius, IV, 7, 31.

The satrapy as basis for effective local administration

The system of integration was not as totalitarian as it seemed. Despite the fact that Alexander did not treat the peoples and nations who comprised his newly founded empire as subjects, but as equal members of this empire, there had never been the pretence of equal participation of all in the upper echelons of the administration and defense mechanism; obviously Alexander believed in the cultural superiority of two nations: the Macedonians and the Persians. Offices of grave importance for the administration of the empire were reserved only for Greeks and Persians.¹² The need for a common army comprised by Greeks and Persians, however, was realistic, since Alexander realized that he would not have been able to master the control of his vast empire only with the limited number of troops he had brought from Macedonia.¹³ By the end of 328 he had taken advantage of the superb Iranian cavalry and he had formed units of Bactrian and Sogdian riders. In 327 he had also recruited 30,000 young Iranians, for whom he had arranged their instruction in Greek language and learning of the superior Macedonian military tactics. Paul Cartledge sees in these the realization of a policy of integration. However, it was a policy that, just like the forced mass weddings at Susa, died out with Alexander.¹⁴

The question of equal participation of every member of this empire or commonwealth in the administration of this organization is raised here. It is safe to deduce that Alexander never meant for every culture of his new empire to participate equally in the central government. It was principally the Macedonian rule with Persian aid, especially from the upper classes, that would ensure the longevity of the new empire. “The Greek and Macedonian fans of hegemony, just like the Persians, demanded three things from the communities, the external relations of which they regulated. The three requirements were: a contribution to the imperial treasury; a military or naval force that they would provide when asked, and the presence of an imperial commissioner or satrap and a military commander. The rhetoric and the regularization was definitely different and preserved Greek and Macedonian first imperial alliances somewhat closer to the end of the multiple

¹² Perhaps this is how we should interpret the famous speech of *omonoia*, which Alexander delivered after the mutiny of the army at Opis, where he stately wished for *omonoian* between Persians and Greeks specifically (Arrian VII, 11, 8). His effort to take the local upper classes on his side is evident also in the case of Mazaios, leader of the Persian cavalry, who was defeated by Alexander and fled to Babylon, only to turn to Alexander when he was approaching the city. Alexander not only forgave him, but also made him satrap of Babylon. ¹² Paul Cartledge, *Alexander the Great. The Hunt for a New Past*, 2004 [here utilized the translation in Greek by Ρένα Καρακατσάνη, *Μέγας Αλέξανδρος. Η Αναζήτηση ενός Νέου Παρελθόντος*, Λιβάνη 2005, p. 187.

¹³ For the need to incorporate local troops in the Macedonian units, not only for practical reasons but also for political, see. J. F. Fuller, *The Generalship of Alexander the Great*, Wordsworth Editions [here utilized the translation in Greek by Κ. Κολιόπουλος, *Η ιδιοφυής στρατηγική του Μεγάλου Αλεξάνδρου*, εκδ. Ποιότητα, 2004, p. 509-510].

¹⁴ Paul Cartledge, op. cit. p. 254-255.

dependencies of our range. ... An alliance of member-customers around a strong state that makes an attempt for hegemony also differs from a counter-hegemonic alliance.¹⁵

Another issue that Alexander tackled was the issue of people's trust to central government. A number of satraps who did not perform their duties as expected were simply executed: during the winter of 325/4, Astaspes of Carmania, Orxines of Persis, Avoulites and Oxathres at Susiana and Paraceten were charged with impotence and bad management.¹⁶ Higgins had suggested that punishments like these probably served other expedience and helped Alexander get rid of potentially subversive elements in administration.¹⁷ Even so, they reinforced his subjects' faith in the fair system of administration and subsequently reinforced their faith to Alexander; especially so in the case of punishment not of Iranian satraps, like the aforementioned, but of Macedonians. It was in Medēa where Cleander, Sitalkes (and possibly Agathon) were brought to trial charged by their subjects with sacrilege and oppression and they were condemned to death immediately.¹⁸ The system of a trustworthy administration where no one is above the law was stressed by Ronald Heifetz in an interview to a Greek journal recently: "Restoring confidence is important because without it, the leadership cannot mobilize the collective intelligence and create prosperity. To restore the course requires a number of changes mainly in the justice system and especially to stop the impunity of politicians. Two or three token gestures are not enough to restore the credibility and trust within society".¹⁹

Three factors of Unity

Alexander could not but have acknowledged that his great predecessor on the throne of Persia, not Darius the III but Dārayava(h)uš the Great, had indeed acted on extremely progressive policies: religious tolerance, respect for local traditions, freedom of languages and fair taxation.²⁰ Preserving a functional peace by respecting the cultural otherness of his subjects, however, he failed to create a homogenous social foundation for his

¹⁵ For a meticulous study of the evolution of common alliances to a hegemony of multiple dependencies with a central governing state, see Adam Watson (2006) esp. 95-146 for the transition from a Persian to a Macedonian and Hellenistic system of administrating the empire.

¹⁶ Bosworth, op.cit., 399. Cf. E. Badian, "Harpalus", *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 81 (1961) 16-43.

¹⁷ W. E. Higgins, "Aspects of Alexander's imperial administration: some modern methods and views reviewed", *Athenaeum* 58 (1980) 129-152.

¹⁸ Arrian VI.27.4; Curtius X.I.1-9. Both of these sources agree that there was mismanagement although those rulers they were not the only ones responsible for this. It is more likely that they had proved disobedient to central administration (Curtius, X.1.7). They had been involved in the execution of Parmenio and the army, faithful to Parmenio, welcomed their punishment. It is worth noting that the Iranian co-satrap of Medea maintained his post, as he had proved his devotion to Alexander by turning against his compatriots.

¹⁹ Ronald Heifetz, interview to Απόστολος Μαγγηριάδης, «Πώς να γίνεις ηγέτης» (How to become a leader), in *BHM-Agazino* No. 662, 26 September 2012, pp. 44-49, 47. Ronald Heifetz is King Hussein bin Talal Senior Lecturer in Public Leadership at JFK School of Government, Harvard.

²⁰ Σ. Δ. Συρόπουλος, «Δαρείος ο Α' ο Μέγας. Ο εμπνευσμένος διαμορφωτής της Περσικής αυτοκρατορίας», *Ιστορικά Θέματα* 27 (Μάρτιος 2004) 38-59; A. T. Olmstead, op. cit., 205-226.

empire. The feeling of hostility towards Persian government, no matter how enlightened or tolerant it was, was evident in the numerous cases where Alexander did not need to fight, but was welcomed as a liberator from the Persians (like in Egypt). If Alexander was to avoid mistakes of the past, he should solve this problem. If he would try to achieve homogeneity, he should act as no one had done before. There was no point in trying to violently uproot cultural distinctiveness. History had already proven – and would certainly do so in the future – that in cases like this, people tend to defend with more zeal whatever constitutes their cultural otherness. So, without depriving his subjects of their individual cultures, Alexander should offer them common points of reference.

Common currency

From what we know about the Persian Empire it depended on a system of drawing heavy taxes in kind from its subjects. From an economical point of view, we know that there had not been uniformity in the economical growth of the subject areas, since production was somewhat primitive, trade was mainly with luxurious items and wealth was accumulated in the hands of few. Especially Iranian areas and the remote east satrapies were considered especially poor in comparison to the big administration centers.²¹ One way to develop economy was the extensive use of coinage.

Monetary uniformity was served also by coercion and there is no denying that Alexander imposed the common currency – used widely even during the first years of the Roman expansion – because it also served as a means of propaganda.²² Bosworth has no doubt that the primary goals of Alexander were political, striving after the minting of a currency that would advertize his sovereignty throughout his empire.²³ Even Aristotle, in his *Oeconomicus* observed that the circulation of new coins is the first expression of royal economy, which is totally distinguished from satrap administration.²⁴ Of course, the extensive use of coinage would replace traditional trade economy, it would make wealth circulation and monetary control easier and it would boost trade and prosperity for his subjects. But it also served as a most effective means of spreading Alexander's image to the outmost peripheries of his empire.

In his influential book *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson offered an interesting definition of a nation: "it is an imagined political community – and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. It is

²¹ B. Gafurof and D. Tsimpoukidis, *Αλέξανδρος ο Μακεδών και η Ανατολή*, transl. by Γ. Στεργίου, εκδ. Παπαδήμας, Αθήνα 1982, p. 194.

²² "Coins were by far the best propaganda weapon available for advertising Greek, Roman or any other civilization in the days before mechanical printing was invented." 85-86, Glyn Davies, *A history of money from ancient times to the present day*, 3rd ed. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2002, pp. 85-86.

²³ Bosworth, op. cit., 407.

²⁴ Aristotle, *Oeconomicus* 1345b20 ff.

imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion".²⁵ Apply this notion to Alexander's empire and the appreciation of the propagandistic power of his coinage is obvious: comprised of a mosaic of nations and cultures, Alexander's newly founded empire would always lack homogeneity. To put it simply, just like in the days of the Persian predominance, Persians would be Persians, while Phrygians would be Phrygians, Babylonians would be Babylonians, Egyptians would be Egyptians, and so forth. The only thing that those people had in common was their king. A king whom probably most of them would never set eyes upon; however, every time that the subject from the most remote corner of this empire would pay his taxes, or buy food, or drink, any time he would use a coin, he would be reminded that the person minted on this coin is not only his master, but also the one thing common between him and the rest of the peoples who comprised this empire.

Contemporary numismatic policies in Europe were definitely based on the same principles. When the EU was founded in 1958 as European Economic Community it had one goal: the creation of a common agricultural market. It evolved into a broader and united economic market which had been almost complete by 1993. The numismatic unity of Europe was about united numismatic policies and common currency, the Euro. The establishment of common currency at Maastricht, Holland, in December 1991, the benefits of numismatic integration in EU and every nation independently, would result in growth, internal productivity and economic stamina, that would subsequently lead to the boost of growth and the creation of new work-posts in the EU.

This common currency could not have survived or proved functional had Alexander not secured a stable political system based on unity. In a recent post, Ian Traynor, the Editor of *Europe*, observed the common realization by David Cameron and George Osborne that the "remorseless logic" of sharing a currency is based on the notion of political unity in Europe. In his article he suggested that "the leaders may even run out of time, exhausting the reserves of brinkmanship and last-minute calls that have characterized the "crisis management" of the past 30 months. But they hope that by unveiling a medium-term strategy for a fiscal and political union in the eurozone they will convince the financial markets of their resolve to save the euro, that the currency is irreversible, and that the heat will be off. The impact of "the project" will be immense, if it takes off".²⁶

²⁵ B. Anderson, *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, London, NY, 2006 (revised edition).

²⁶ Ian Traynor, "Eurozone crisis: United States of Europe may be the only way to save euro", *The Guardian*, Monday 4 June 2012 19.22 BST (<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2012/jun/04/eurozone-crisis-united-states-europe>).

a) Common language

In *Imaginary Communities* Anderson had also argued that all national identities form around a common tongue. Given the diversity of languages in Europe and the absence of a common language, is there a chance of creating a common identity that would lead to a united Europe? The question was answered by Leonard Orban, the former European Commissioner of Multilingualism,²⁷ who commented that “I think yes, it is possible. I don’t think that the variety of languages in Europe creates division. The divisions are sometimes created by different stakeholders trying to promote their own agenda; an agenda which is not similar to the agenda of the European Union. I do think it’s important to consolidate a kind of European citizenship, but let’s be very clear (and this was also my main message when I was a Commissioner): only by respecting the diversity of languages in Europe can we ensure a feeling of common identity. It looks a little strange that, on the one hand we are supporting diversity but on the other we want to create such a feeling of European citizenship, but by defending the language of different people living in the European Union, we may offer this feeling of being really a European”. In the same response, Orban rejected the idea of establishing an “Esperanto” or any other artificial language and he admitted that English “English is an excellent language, and it helps one have a direct dialogue with people from different member-states”.²⁸

It seems that the issue of language as a culturally unifying factor in a multicultural organization had already been acknowledged by Alexander. It had to be a language easy in its use, functional and perhaps spoken by many people already. It is interesting to observe that against all notions of modern imperialism Alexander did not impose the use of the Macedonian dialect, but he opted for the Attic dialect, perhaps because it was already a dialect spread throughout the Mediterranean world because of trade.²⁹ It is a fact that especially towards the end of the Hellenistic era the Hellenistic Common was the language of the middle and upper classes and certainly the language of administration. This is verified by the numerous dialectic epigraphs, with purely localized purpose, which were more and more invaded by the Hellenistic Common.³⁰

²⁷ Leonard Orban is the Romanian Minister of European Affairs and former European Commissioner for Multilingualism. His response on the question of common European identity is found at <http://www.debatingeurope.eu/2011/12/19/is-a-european-identity-possible/>.

²⁸ Leonard Orban, Op.cit. English is spoken by more than 50% of Europeans today either as first or second language. Interestingly enough, the report *Europeans and their Languages*, published in *Special Eurobarometer* 386 in June 2012, states that: a) at a national level English is the most widely spoken foreign language in 19 of the 25 Member States where it is not an official language (i.e. excluding the UK and Ireland). (p. 12), and b) German is the most widely spoken, with 16% of Europeans saying it is their first language, followed by Italian and English (13% each), French (12%), then Spanish and Polish (8% each) (p.12), c) Two thirds of Europeans (67%) think that English is one of the two most useful languages. It is much more likely to be considered useful for personal development than any other language. Less than one in five Europeans mention German (17%), French (16%) and Spanish (14%), p. 71. The whole text can be obtained from http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_386_en.pdf.

²⁹ Geoffrey Horrocks, “From Classical Greek to Koine” («Από την Κλασική Ελληνική στην Κοινή», μτφ. Ι. Βλαχόπουλος, in Α. Φ. Χριστίδης (ed.) *Ιστορία της Ελληνικής Γλώσσας. Από τις Αρχές έως την Ύστερη Αρχαιότητα*, Κέντρο Ελληνικής Γλώσσας, Ινστιτούτο Νεοελληνικών Σπουδών (Ίδρυμα Μανώλη Τριανταφυλλίδη), Αθήνα 2001, 457-467, 457.

³⁰ Horrocks, op. cit. 458.

b) Common traditions

Tradition is a strong cultural link and Alexander could not have failed to observe its unifying potential. Religion was a strong means for establishing new traditions. Alexander's visit to the temple of Ammun, after the battle of Granicus, not only legalized his royal status amongst the indigenous populations, but established perhaps the first case of official religious syncretism that would characterize the Hellenistic era.³¹ During Alexander's occupation, Ammun was identified by the Greeks as a form of Zeus and as such he continued being the principal local deity of Thebes.³²

Far more interesting is the case of Sarapis (or Serapis).³³ Most scholars agree that Sarapis was part of the official Ptolemaic policy towards an integrated society, perhaps Ptolemy Lagos being the first ruler who made the cult of Sarapis official.³⁴ C. Welles went further than this, suggesting that it was indeed Alexander who established this cult, commonly revered by western and eastern cultures.³⁵ If this was the case, then we can safely speak about a most visionary policy that would eradicate religious differences, so often a source of social and political trouble in the East.

We should definitely not exaggerate the role of religious syncretism as a notion of cultural fusion. As Gehrke pointed out, there has never been a mystery-cult in Egypt common for the Egyptians and the Greeks; Greeks could be initiated in the mystery cults of the East but they could never enroll in the clergy, which continued being exclusively Egyptian.³⁶ However, the failure of such a policy does not rule out intention on the part of either the Ptolemies, or Alexander. Religion is a strong cultural factor and Alexander and his successors could not ignore it.³⁷ Later, the Roman and the Byzantine Empire would rely on the unifying factor of religion with variable degrees of success.³⁸

³¹ Gehrke (2000) 270-275.

³² [Pausanias](#), *Description of Greece* iii.18 § 2

³³ The Greeks fused this Egyptian deity with a number of Hellenistic deities, including Zeus, Helios, Dionysus, Hades and Asklepius to form Serapis or Sarapis. Eventually, these Hellenistic deities would predominate the god's final form. He then emerged as a supreme god of divine majesty and the sun (Zeus and Helios), fertility (Dionysus) the underworld and afterlife, as well as healing (Hades and Asklepius). For his association with the Sun cf. Macrobius *Saturnalia* 1.20.13. In the same passage Macrobius states that "'In the city on the borders of Egypt which boasts Alexander of Macedon as its founder, Sarapis and Isis are worshiped with a reverence that is almost fanatical". For Sarapis, see R. H. Wilkinson, *Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt*, Thames & Hudson LTD, 2003.

³⁴ T. A. Brady, *The Reception of the Egyptian Cults by the Greeks (130-30 B.C.)*, Columbia, Mass. 1935. For opposing views cf. P. Fraser, "Two Studies on the Cult of Sarapis in the Hellenistic World", *Oath* 3 (1960) 23ff.

³⁵ C. B. Welles, "The Discovery of Sarapis and the Foundation of Alexandria", *Historia* 11 (1962) 271 ff.

³⁶ Gehrke (2000) 268.

³⁷ For the respect of Ptolemies and their policy of blending local cults with aspects of Greek religion, see L. Koenen, "The Ptolemaic King a Religious Figure", A. Bulloch, E. S. Gruen, A.A. Long & A. Stewart (edd.), *Images and Ideologies: Self-Definition in the Hellenistic World*, Berkeley 1993, 25-115.

³⁸ Betz, amongst others, argued for the Hellenistic foundations of Christian religion, or at least the interpretation of certain Hellenistic religion aspects under the light of Christianity. H. D. Betz, "The Birth of Christianity as a Hellenistic Religion: Three Theories of Origin", *Journal of Religion* 74 (1994) 1-25.

The creation of common points of reference in culture and traditions were probably one of the things that Alexander had in his mind when he initiated the mass weddings at Susa. 10,000 of his men were married to Persian women. The opposite never occurred. If Alexander wanted to create a new elite of people who would have the best of both cultural backgrounds, but with the culture of the father being dominant, then he should mix Greek men with local women, and not vice-versa.

Conclusions

From the above it becomes obvious that Alexander's most progressive idea was the realization of the need for social and national integration of the numerous cultures he ruled. "Alexander's idea of cooperation between peoples became the basis of the Euthydemian kingdom in Bactria and India and, on the philosophical side, was picked up by Zeno and St. Paul to constitute a standing challenge to all posterity".³⁹ We can safely say that this posterity included the great Empires of Rome, United States of America and Europe – in this specific order. All three of them applied extensive policies on creating common cultural points of reference for the culturally heterogeneous nations they ruled, and all of them used common language, common currency and common traditions, in order to unite their peoples, without uprooting the individual characteristics of each one of them. The variable results of such policies today are due to the most unpredicted factor of all, the one that even Alexander had not managed to harness: human nature.⁴⁰

From what we have seen, the main points of this argument can be summarized as following:

- a) The model for Alexander's administration of his vast empire was based on Philip's political experimentations in northern Greece, and in its turn this was inspired by the Persian system of administration, which Philip had perfect knowledge of and so did Alexander.
- b) The principles for the administration of Alexander's empire focused on the development of strong poles of cultural integration with the sole purpose of gradually eliminating the awareness of cultural otherness, namely: common language, common currency and common traditions.

³⁹ C. A. Robinson Jr., "The extraordinary ideas of Alexander the Great", *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 62, No. 2 (Jan., 1957), pp. 326-344, 344.

⁴⁰ Also worth quoting Mason Hammond who said that "the problem which ancient imperialism poses to the modern world is not that of creating a world state; the Persians and Alexander showed that this could be done, while Augustus founded one whose endurance still challenges the imagination of mankind. Rather, the problem is to combine the surrender of sovereignty to a world state with the preservation of responsibility to the will not merely of the people, but of many peoples, each eager to protect its own economic, social, political, and cultural integrity"; M. Hammond, "Ancient Imperialism: Contemporary Justifications", *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology*, Vol. 58/59 (1948), pp. 105-161, 124-125.

- c) Previous systems of administrating culturally heterogeneous cultures had failed (Delian League, Persian Empire) and the problems of such delicate unions can be seen even in recent European history (breakdown of Yugoslavia).
- d) The conscious effort for the unity of contemporary Europe draws many of its principles on the system modeled by Alexander the Great.

Hans Morgenthau had observed that during the times when large trans-national and trans-state empires predominated, less powerful collective entities never ceased striving after collective freedom and political supremacy. Most of these empires shared another characteristic: they hardly outlived their founder.⁴¹ Alexander's policies indicated the recognition of such difficulties and the first systematic attempt to resolve them. At the end of the day, it is not the failure or success of such policies that constitute someone as Great, but the adoption of such policies, successfully or not, by all major collective political bodies of posterity. Alexander's political thought was the link between the past and – not the present, but – the future. In Mary Butts' words, the great lost English Modernist, *there are people who epitomize an era and there are people who start another. Alexander did both.*⁴²

⁴¹ H. J. Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: the Struggle for Power and Peace*, Alfred Knopf, NY, 1948, p. 63.

⁴² Mary Butts, *The Macedonian*, 1931. Reprinted with a foreword by Thomas McEvilley, as *The Classical Novels. Mary Butts, The Macedonian. Scenes from the Life of Cleopatra*, McPherson & Company, Kingston, NY, 1994.