



# The Sands of Ammon

*Valerio Massimo Manfredi , Iain Halliday (Translator)*

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. THE BESTSELLING EPIC OF THE GLORY AND THE GRANDEUR INTRIGUES AND PASSIONS OF ANCIENT GREECE...AND THE WARRIOR KING WHOSE CONQUESTS BUILT AN ETERNAL LEGEND. ALEXANDER "Volume II: " THE SANDS OF AMMON

A thousand years after Agamemnon fought the Trojan War. Alexander, the king of Macedonia and descendant of Achilles, follows in the footsteps of Greek legend . He has gathered a mighty force to liberate the Greek cities of Asia -- from legendary Sardis and Miletus to Halicarnassus. But vengeance is just one of Alexander's ambitions.

Great oracles and loyal followers claim Alexander is more than mortal -- a powerful warrior, and insatiable scholar, a political genius. Yet, in battle after battle, one man blocks his way. Memnon of Rhodes, a Greek-born mercenary chosen by the Persian Great King to lead his vast army, is a cunning strategist who challenged Alexander's claim to the title of Lord of Asia. In Memnon, Alexander confronts an enemy who inspires his admiration. And in Memnon's wife, Barsine, he finds a woman who captures his heart. But neither bravery nor love can stem the tide of Alexander's destiny. For with Persia defeated, Alexander's thoughts turn to Egypt and beyond....

## The Sands of Ammon Details

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## Graham says

A tremendous story. After the slightly slow-paced introduction to his trilogy, *ALEXANDER: CHILD OF A DREAM*, Valerio Massimo Manfredi does away with all that wishy-washy supernatural stuff to focus on what a story about Alexander the Great should be about: the warfare.

*THE SANDS OF AMMON* is an absolutely tremendous book that depicts epic, world-changing events on a regular basis. It's an episodic journey narrative, revealing Alexander's travels as he takes both his companions and his armies around the world, capturing everything he finds along the way.

Obviously, it's when the cities resist his occupation that things get really interesting and the many depictions of siege warfare are violent, gritty and tremendously exciting. Manfredi has a knack of taking complex, confused situations and depicting them in simple, easily understandable terms that pays off dividends.

Things do threaten to slow down with some rather extraneous sub-plots that are plonked in, such as Aristotle's investigation of King Philip's assassination, but thankfully things always quickly return to what Manfredi does best, the battles. And this is an excellent read because of that.

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## M.L. Sparrow says

For more reviews, or to see my favourite quotes from this book, check out my blog at <http://mlsparrow.wix.com/mlsparrow>

This book is seriously packed with action! It was a really enjoyable and interesting book to read and it seamlessly follows the first book interest little confusion. However... the one thing I found was that, though I loved reading it, I often found that I had trouble recalling what had actually happened in previous chapters, just because so much is going on in this book. There are so many characters, places and things going on that I constantly found myself flicking back to figure out what was going on.

The authors writing style makes you feel like you're actually reading an ancient epic and I loved that there are other POV's involved, not just Alexander's. For example, I loved the character of Memnon and I like that, although he is Alexander's enemy, he isn't portrayed as a villain... he's just a man, he has a wife and kids and he is defending his country. \*SPOILER ALERT\* His death, and his mens devotion, was the most emotion scene in this book for me.

Alexander is also a very interesting and complex character; he's headstrong, often reckless, but an amazing leader, both in war tactics and the love he has for his men. However, I personally, can't fully think of him as the hero, for the simple reason that he's conquering lands and making war. It was different time and the history lover in me can see the excitement and the glory in his actions and is desperate to know more but then another part of me thinks that parts of this story really happened and sympathises with people who were conquered, though admittedly Alexander is painted as a better King than the Persian King whose lands he is taking... That little rhyme that Alexander and his friends would chant at their old teacher when they were children, about the 'silly' soldier that goes to war and dies, pretty much sums up my feelings about Alexander's campaign and his fathers before him - they seem to be making war for no real reason other than

glory, risking the lives of their men and razing cities while supposedly trying to until the countries and make peace...

Still, I'm looking forward to the final instalment of this trilogy and I'm sure I'll grab a few non-fiction books about Alexander the Great afterwards too! If anyone has any suggestions that would be great. :-)

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### Mohamed Shoaib says

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### Juan Carlos Santillán says

*Esta segunda parte no está a la altura de la primera. Se entiende que debe resultar difícil escribir una novela manteniendo cierta fidelidad histórica sin perder el valor literario, máxime cuando casi toda ella transcurre entre batallas. Pero la flojedad se nota cuando esboza personajes muy interesantes, como la maquiavélica Reina Ada y el cerebral Comandante Memnón, para luego dejarlos diluirse en finales sosos, insulsos. Otros personajes de mayor presencia, que se supondrían más elaborados, son chatos, anodinos: Barsine y Aristandro son los peores ejemplos. Curiosamente, un personaje marginal, casi cómico, como Eumolpo, resulta mucho más rico en su desenvolvimiento.*

*A diferencia de otras trilogías, en la literatura y el cine, este capítulo medio no es el meollo de la trama sino, por el contrario, sólo el paso obligado del inicio al final, lo que ocurre en medio. Con todo, la novela logra mantener la expectativa. Es dinámica e interesante. Y, claro, está escrita pensando en una continuación.*

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### Denise says

The middle part of Manfredi's trilogy about Alexander the Great follows his story from the moment of his army's crossing into Asia until his foray into Egypt and visit to the oracle of Siwa. While this was a fairly quick read and I enjoyed it for the most part, it did get a bit longwinded in places and I would like to see less superficial characterisations.

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## Reid says

Manfredi continues to shine, strongly depicting Alexander in his rise as a somewhat conflicted young man well on his way to conquering the known world. The details concerning Memnon, the commander of the Persian army, were quite nice and really fleshed things out for me. I particularly liked the way the author dealt with the issue of the Gordian knot, showing Alexander's lack of patience for which he was quite well-known. This trilogy doesn't really stand out that much, as Manfredi is not taking a lot of liberties, but I suppose that's a good thing. Additionally, his balance of the events is admirable, as we do not feel particularly bogged down when the events slow (Alexander's convalescence before Issus, the winter in central Anatolia, the siege of Tyre). Additionally, in reading these books fairly intensively over the past week, I've dreamt of Alexander and his companions every night, which is certainly one of the goals of good historical fiction: to draw in the reader such that his/her unconscious mind is focused on the epoch the narrative takes place in. I was leaning towards four stars but this simple fact made me bump it up to five. Only Aztec, by Gary Jennings, and some Mary Renault novels have had this effect on me. In sum: well-balanced, anecdotal, sticking straight to the sources and vivid enough to make this reader's dreams come alive with the 4th century BC.

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## Tariq Alferis says

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## Merve Tokmakç?o?lu says

Manfredi'nin Büyük ?skender'in hayat?n? kaleme ald??? bu üçlü seriye ba?larken beklentim hayli büyüktü ancak benim için tam bir dü?k?r?kl??? oldu. ?skender'in hayat?n?n kurgulanarak bir romana dönü?türüldü?ü bu seride tarihsel gerçeklerle yazar?n hayal dünyas? tam bir çeli?ki içinde; Manfredi biyografideki bo?luklar? kendi hayal gücüyle doldurmu?, bu durum da gerçekçi bir ?skender portresi çizmekten çok uzakta bir metin veriyor okuyucuya. Üslup ve biçim de bizde de pek okunan sultan romanlar? gibi...

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## Nigel says

Book 2 in Manfredi's historical series on the life of Alexander the Great shows Alexander in the role that he

is most famous for, that of conqueror. We see him move from one battle to another, each presenting a different challenge and often we see his solutions being anything but predictable. From a simplistic point of view it is hard to get too far from the view that it is this unpredictability that makes him so successful. One aspect of his personality that comes through in Manfredi's tale is his mercy. Comparing his actions on conquering a city with another historical giant Genghis Khan and they couldn't be more different. Time and again Khan would eradicate a conquered city leaving no one alive and the infrastructure nothing but a pile of rubble. Alexander on the other hand tries to leave avoid wanton slaughter and often left people who had ruled before in charge. If he did destroy parts of the city it would be for a specific purpose like destroying houses to build a cause way across to Tyre.

We leave Alexander after he has defeated Darius for the first time and having just visited the Oracle of Ammon. What lies in store for the remainder of his life? Only time will tell.

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The Sands of Ammon narrates of the Macedonian king's quest to conquer Asia. He and his men storm and conquer Persian towns and harbours; even the legendary town of Halicarnassus is defeated. Alexander's army marches on to the snow-covered Anatolia, where it records yet another few victories. Despite defeating the king Darius III, the city of Tyre and the Towers of Gaza prove to be formidable enemies, although they ultimately have to surrender to Alexander. The Macedonian army then heads south towards the mysterious and epic land of Egypt; and it's here, in the sands of the endless Libyan Desert, that the Oracle of Ammon lies. And what the divine Oracle will reveal to Alexander will change his life forever. First Publication date 1998.

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## Mehdi Azzeddine says

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## Blablaba Aleatório says

No segundo volume da trilogia sobre a vida de um dos maiores conquistadores do mundo antigo, reencontramos Alexandre em pleno território asiático e começamos a acompanhar suas primeiras batalhas contra os persas e a “libertação” das cidades gregas no Oriente. Do lado macedônio reencontramos todos os personagens importantes na vida do conquistador, o general Parmênio, a turma do Alexandre, seu cavalo Bucéfalo e até mesmo seu cão Péritas que assim como o dono não consegue se manter em um só lugar. No lado persa conhecemos outros personagens que terão grande importância nos acontecimentos retratados no segundo livro, entre eles principalmente o mercenário grego Mêmnon e sua esposa persa Barsine.

Mas, mesmo estando no território persa, Manfredi não se esquece daqueles que estão no território grego. Aristóteles mais uma vez marca presença ao prosseguir com suas investigações para descobrir o verdadeiro assassino do rei Filipe e Olympias ainda continua a tramar situações para ajudar seu filho.

Com um volume repleto de batalhas, Manfredi nos presenteia com descrições bélicas mais pormenorizadas



quando comparadas às do primeiro volume, o que não posso negar que me deixou mais alegre. É possível sentir o calor da batalha, a ansiedade pela luta e a dor pelas perdas. Mas, como a característica do autor não é se focar apenas na frente de batalha, também tomamos conhecimento sobre os bastidores destas: o trabalho dos espiões e como eles podem acabar definindo o resultado das disputas, os planos feitos à revelia pelos homens de Alexandre e os próprios estudos do rei. Afinal, Alexandre sempre se mostrou um estudioso de batalhas seculares/mitológicas, através das quais tirava ensinamentos e inspirações para empreender suas próprias guerras. Foi assim com Xenofonte na Pérsia e com Filisto na Fenícia.

Leia mais em: <http://feanari.wordpress.com/2011/08/...>

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## Daenerys says

Ugh. This book was even worse than the first in the trilogy, but I've waited so long to read this series that I decided to plod along now that I've read two books out of three.

The first word that comes to my mind when I think about this novel is "juvenile". Every thing about *The Sands of Ammon* is juvenile, from the dialogue to the descriptions. The history lessons ended with the first book and what we get instead is more, more, more veneration for Alexander.

He's the greatest warrior that ever walked the earth. No army can defeat him. No one can equal him in battle, even when wounded. He's handsome and awe-inspiring even covered in blood and slime. Women fall at his feet without being coerced (consecrated temple attendants? The widows of his enemies? Sure, why not).

Don't worry though, the great king also has a dark side. You can tell because one of his blue eyes is much darker than the other, and becomes even darker when he gets angry (?!). He throws terrible temper tantrums when cities refuse to surrender immediately and occasionally succumbs to battle fever, only to feel bad afterwards and sulk for days for betraying the rational and noble side of his nature.

In spite of the fact that Alexander travels through the whole of Turkey and the Levant, description is once again disappointingly sparse. Mostly it's about decadently luxurious Persian palaces (and concubines), and occasionally about a few ancient cities, but it's sort of just thrown in there for the heck of it. Egypt and the famous oracle of the Siwa oasis, to which the title refers, are only reached at the end and occupy exactly 14 of the 319 pages of this novel, which means Alexander has to travel to Mesopotamia, defeat Darius, make his way through the rest of central Asia, get to the border of modern-day India and die, all in the space of another 300-page novel. I'm really not looking forward to that. I will start looking for an actual historical biography of Alexander the Great as soon as I'm done with this trilogy and hope that can help me get over how bad these books are.

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## Aljoharah Alobaikan says

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Manfredi no deja de sorprender.. tremenda descripción de la campaña! Te mete en el corazón de Alejandro.. un hombre en busca de una noble ambición, inspirado en Homero y educado por Aristóteles, genera una fusión única que combina valentía, coraje e ingenio con prudencia, amor y sabiduría que con particular inquietud busca trascender dejando todo de sí.. no se guarda nada. La magnanimidad de Alejandro no radica en las tierras conquistadas sino más bien en su determinación para alcanzar su sueño y su misericordia.