

THE CAMPAIGN AND THE WORK OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

ON THE TIMELINE

5th century BC

- 490 BC – Battle of Marathon
- 479 BC – The Persians abandon Greek territory
- 478 BC – First Athenian League
- 445 BC – Thirty Years' Peace: Peace between Athens and Sparta. Age of Pericles in Athens
- 431 BC – Beginning of the Peloponnesian War
- 404 BC – End of the Peloponnesian War: Spartan hegemony

4th century BC

- 395 BC – Boeotian–Corinthian War (ends in 386 BC)
 - 386 BC – King's Peace (Peace of Antalcidas). Persian intervention in Greece
 - 380 BC – Isocrates, in his *Panegyricus*, speaks of the Panhellenic idea
 - 371 BC – Battle of Leuctra. Theban Hegemony
 - 362 BC – Battle of Mantinea. Fall of Theban Hegemony
 - 359 BC – Philip II becomes king of Macedonia
 - 338 BC – Battle of Chaeronea
 - 337 BC – Congress of Corinth. Unification of the Greeks under Philip
 - 336 BC – Assassination of Philip. Alexander becomes leader of the Macedonians and the Greeks
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THE CAMPAIGN OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT (334–325 BC)

- Starting point: **Pella (334 BC)**
- Duration: **9 years**

Initial objective:

- Confronting the Persian threat (the Persians controlled the Greek cities of Asia Minor)

Final outcome:

1. The destruction of the Persian Empire
2. The creation of a vast empire reaching as far as the Indus River

Before the campaign, Alexander had secured control over the **Balkans** (Getae, Illyrians, Thebes).

PHASES OF THE CAMPAIGN

1. Asia Minor – Near East – Egypt
 2. Destruction of the Persian Empire
 3. Indian Campaign
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ASIA MINOR – NEAR EAST – EGYPT (334–331 BC)

1. Liberation of Asia Minor from the Persians

- Victories against the Persians:
 - Battle of the Granicus River (334 BC)
 - Battle of Issus (333 BC)

2. Conquest of Phoenicia and Palestine (333–332 BC)

3. Conquest of Egypt

- The Egyptians welcome Alexander as a liberator and proclaim him Pharaoh
 - **331 BC**: He founds **Alexandria in Egypt**, which later develops into a major economic and intellectual center of antiquity
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DESTRUCTION OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE (331–327 BC)

1. Mesopotamia

- Victory over the Persians (Darius III) at the **Battle of Gaugamela (331 BC)**
- Conquest of major Persian cities:
Susa, Babylon, Persepolis, Pasargadae, Ecbatana (330 BC)

2. Eastern Satrapies (330 BC)

- Alexander conquers: Parthia, Hyrcania, Aria, Arachosia, Bactria, Sogdiana
 - Captures **Bessus** (murderer of Darius)
 - Founds **Alexandria Eschate** (“Alexandria the Farthest”) at the edge of the empire
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THE INDIAN CAMPAIGN (327–325 BC)

- Campaign in the Indian subcontinent
(goal: to reach the ends of the known world)
- Victory at the **Hydaspes River** (tributary of the Indus) against **King Porus**
- Limit of the campaign: **Hyphasis River (326 BC)**
- He did not advance toward the Ganges (the army resisted)

Return:

- Through the **Gedrosian Desert**

Nearchus' Voyage:

- During the same period, **Nearchus** (Alexander's friend) sails along the Asian coasts to the mouths of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers
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THE RETURN: 325 BC

DEATH OF ALEXANDER: 323 BC

- 323 BC, in **Babylon**
 - Alexander dies while preparing the circumnavigation of the Arabian Peninsula
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THE WORK OF ALEXANDER THE GREAT

GENERAL SIGNIFICANCE

- Hellenism spreads to the ends of the known world
- Conditions are created for the **universal expansion of Greek culture**
- This achievement is accomplished within a very short period of time

FIELDS:

- Military
 - Political
 - Economic
 - Cultural
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MILITARY FIELD

- Alexander is a visionary general with genius-level thinking

Why?

1. Conquest of territories (objective result)
 2. Appropriate planning to confront the enemy (strategy)
 - In frontal battles
 - In city sieges
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POLITICAL FIELD

What did his actions aim at?

Greek World + Asian World = Interaction and Unity under a **strong administration**

How did he achieve this?

- He accepts:
 - Local customs
 - Local traditions
 - Each people's way of exercising power
- He preserves the institution of **satrapies**
- He entrusts administration to **Greek or Persian leaders**

In this way, he attempts to create a **new administrative tradition**.

ECONOMIC FIELD

- Promotes the **monetary economy system**
- Abandons the idea of an imperial treasury

How?

- Until then, satraps collected taxes and managed public money

What Alexander does:

- Creates **tax regions** (including multiple satrapies)
 - Accumulated treasures are **converted into gold coinage**
 - Thus, a **unified monetary system** is created throughout the empire
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CULTURAL FIELD

- The campaign takes on the dimension of **armed exploration**

Key outcomes:

- Spread of the Greek language and Greek culture
 - Adoption of cultural elements from Eastern traditions
 - Founding of new cities (commercial and intellectual centers)
 - Exploration of regions
 - Desire for research
(philosophers and scholars also participated in the campaign)
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THE LEGACY

- Alexander ruled for only **13 years (336–323 BC)**
- He died at just **33 years of age**

Nevertheless:

- He remained alive in the memory of peoples
- His work left indelible marks — a turning point in the historical course of the peoples of the East and the Mediterranean
- His actions, through popular imagination, created the legend of a **mythical hero** among many peoples