



Alexander The Great

By Ella O'Connell



Who Was He?

- Alexander The Great was the king of Macedonia who conquered an empire that stretched from the Balkans to modern-day Pakistan.
- Alexander was born approximately around the 20th of July 356 B.C. in Pella, which was known as the administrative capital of Macedonia at the time. Although he was away fighting revolts and conquering neighbouring territories a lot of the time when Alexander was growing up, King Phillip II remains one of Alexander's most influential role models, according to the source Abernethy.
- Alexander was the son of Philip II and Olympias, (who was one of Philip's seven or eight wives). Alexander was brought up with the belief that he was special and was of divine birth. "From his earliest days, Olympias had encouraged him to believe that he was a descendent of heroes and gods. Nothing he had accomplished would have discouraged this belief," stated Wellesley College classics professor.
- Alexander the great was given one of the highest quality educations that could be imagined as he was tutored by Aristotle himself, where his education was " infused with a love of knowledge, logic, music, philosophy and culture. The teachings of Aristotle would later aid him in the treatment of his new subjects in the empires that he invaded and conquered, allowing him to admire and maintain these disparate cultures. "
- Alexander looked up to his father immensely and watched him each year campaigning, and winning victory after victory. Philip re-modelled the Macedonian army from citizen warriors to a professional organization. Philip suffered serious wounds in battle such as the loss of an eye, a broken shoulder and a crippled leg. But he just kept on fighting, something Alexander would do as commander in later years.

Grasping an opportunity



- Alexander the Great had hidden behind his father's shadow for years and years, so finally when his father had to go away on campaign, Alexander the Great took this opportunity to defeat the Thracian people called the Maedi, as well as naming a city after himself " Alexanderdroupolis"
- Sources say that Alexander felt the need to do this so that he could prove to his father that he was worthy and could challenge his father's authority and superiority if he needed to, this was the stepping stone into what would become years of the relationship between Alexander and his father, slowly drifting apart.
- Ancient records do indicate that Alexander and Philip did not have a good relationship during Alexander's teenage years, and it is said that Philip exiled Alexander's mother to Epirus which would have caused an even deeper rift between the two. Philip's many marriages, resulting in children being born would have also caused jealousy for Alexander as this would create a bigger threat to his right to the throne after Philip had died.
- Alexander went to Ilyria shortly after his mother exiled his mother to Epirus, however returned shortly afterwards and reconciled with his father, however his position as the heir to the throne was now jeopardized.

The Assassination of Philip II

- Unfortunately Phillip II was assassinated in 336 BC whilst celebrating his wedding of his daughter, Cleopatra (not the famous pharaoh of Egypt), what makes this extremely interesting is the fact that he was stabbed to death by who was considered to be one of his former male lovers, named Pausanias. Many sources speculated that Pausanias might have been a part of larger plot to kill the king, Alexander as well as his mother.
- This was because Pausanias felt that neglecting to revenge him of the affront he had received from Attalus, so Pausanias felt the need to therefore kill Philip because he resented him for doing this deed.
- After this, Alexander the Great immediately seized power.
- At the time of his death, Philip was contemplating invading Persia. The dream was passed onto Alexander, partly via his mother Olympias, according to Abernethy. "She fostered in him a burning dynastic ambition and told him it was his destiny to invade Persia."
- Upon his father's death, Alexander moved quickly to consolidate power. He gained the support of the Macedonian army and intimidated the Greek city states that Philip had conquered into accepting his rule. After campaigns in the Balkans and Thrace, Alexander moved against Thebes, a city in Greece that had risen up in rebellion, conquering it in 335 B.C., and had it destroyed.
- With Greece and the Balkans pacified, he was ready to launch a campaign against the Persian Empire, a campaign his father had planned but, because of his death, would be one that Alexander would lead.



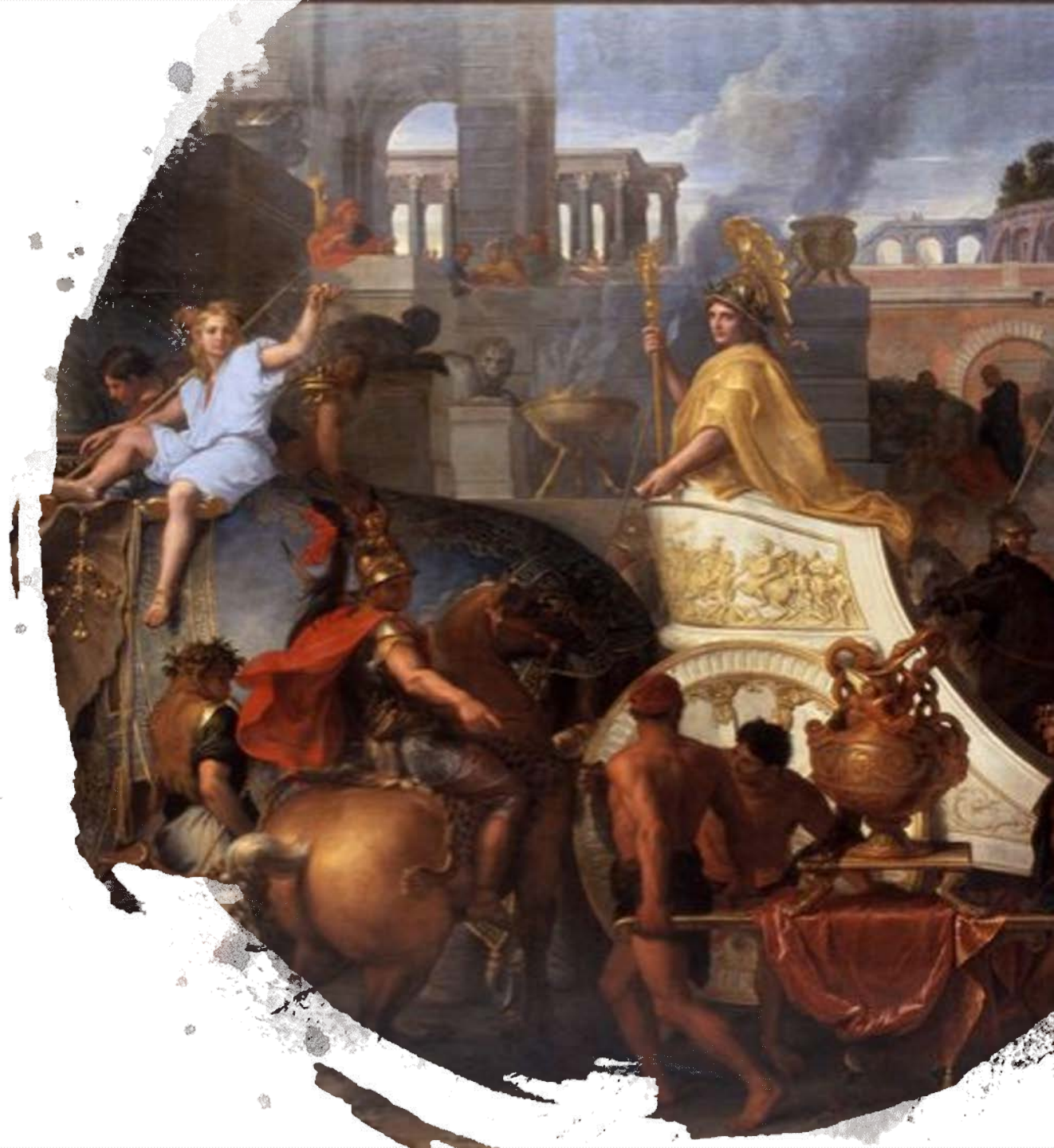
The war with Persia and Alexander's accomplishments

- Ancient accounts say that when Alexander was at war against the Persians and their king Darius III, he often used the Persian invasions of Greece in the 5th century B.C. as an excuse for his actions. Yet, Alexander often fought Greek mercenaries while campaigning against Darius III. Even more ironically, Sparta, a city that had famously lost its king and 300 warriors in the Battle of Thermopylae during a Persian invasion attempt, also opposed Alexander, going so far as to seek Persian help in their efforts to overthrow him.
- Yet, despite the opposition from the Spartans,(who built fortifications and a larger harbor at Phalasarna) Alexander was successful against Persia. The first major battle he won was the "Battle of Granicus," fought in 334 B.C. in modern-day western Turkey, which was not far from the ancient city of Troy. During the battle, Arrian wrote that Alexander defeated a force of 20,000 Persian horsemen and an equal number of foot soldiers. He then bravely advanced down the coast of west Turkey, taking cities and trying to deprive the Persian navy of bases. Alexander was beginning to grow in confidence as his success rate started to rise.
- The second key battle he won, and perhaps the most important, was the Battle of Issus, fought in 333 B.C. near the ancient town of Issus in southern Turkey, close to modern-day Syria. In that battle, the Persians were led by Darius III himself. Arrian estimates that Darius had a force of 600,000 troops and positioned himself initially on a great plain where he could mass them all effectively against Alexander, who hesitated to give battle.
- Overall, Alexander the Great won many, many battles such as: The Battle of Granicus (May 334 BC), The Great at the Granicus (334 BC), The Battle of Issus (5th of November 333 BC), The Battle of Guagamela (1st of October 331 BC), and The Battle of the Persian Gate (20th January 330 BC).
- As well as this He also managed to conquer Anatolia, Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, Gaza, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia and Bactria. Alexander also extended the boundaries of his own empire as far as Taxila., in India (which is now known as Pakistan.)
- All of these victories and successes laid the foundations of the hellenistic (period from Alexander The Great To the start of the Roman Empire) world of territorial kingdoms, meaning that if it weren't for Alexander, the persian empire would still exist. Alexander sadly died on the 13th of June 323 BC, after approximately 13 years of ruling Ancient Greece.



A diverse Character

- Although it is not known for sure, as there are many different viewpoints, Alexander the Great's sexuality was always questioned, to an extent that according to Atheneus, Philip and Olympias were always worried that he would not be able to produce an heir because he did not enjoy the company of women as much as men. As a result of this, Olympias was always encouraging Alexander to spend more time in the company of women, with apparently no success.
- However, Alexander the Great did marry three times, Roxana of Bactria, Stateira and Parysatis, and was father to his one child who was called Alexander IV of Macedon, mother to Roxana and born shortly after Alexander's death.
- Hephaestion was born at approximately the same time as Alexander, and was the son of Amyntor, a noble of Macedonia. Hephaestion was considered as one of Alexander's closest friends, as well as a companion, and a general in his army. He had a very close bond with the king and was thought to know all of his secrets. This friendship was considered to be very unique but some sources suggest that they had a sexual relationship and were more than just friends.
- As well as this, the two men had grown up with each other and had experienced many triumphs together so when Hephaestion died in 324 BC, Alexander's life completely collapsed, suddenly, he couldn't seem to trust anyone with confidential information (he did not trust his mother) and was said to have experienced extreme loneliness, suggesting that they could have been more than just friends.
- However, it seemed to be that if anything, Alexander having relationships with men was seen in those days as to make bonds between soldiers much stronger, foster stronger masculine and martial bravery, and to even improve performances on the battle field, (according to the Spartans), therefore it does not seem as if Alexander's sexuality would have affected how society saw him, and how capable he was of being able to do his job, and I believe that this diversity may have actually made Alexander seem a stronger character who was in charge of his own destiny.
- Although I am also sure Alexander's homosexuality would have been a new concept for the ancient Greeks to accept so many of them may have thought that this was very strange and looked down upon it, therefore I feel that Alexander may be more accepted in today's society because the concept of homosexuality has been explored more and there is more information about it, therefore I feel that Alexander would feel more happier in today's society.



A role model

- I feel that Alexander was a fantastic role model and one that we can all strive to live up to, as he was loyal and ambitious, following through on his father's plan to invade Persia, and did so successfully, showing qualities of strong leadership, and a great strategist.
- Alexander The Great reshaped Ancient Greece permanently for the better, and had the ambition to do for the country what needed to be done, doing so with courage, and achieving his goals, showing the country that you can do anything if you put your mind to it!
- Something that I found very surprising whilst doing my research on Alexander the Great, was that he named more than 70 cities after himself as well as one after his horse! Near the site of the battle of the river Hydaspes which was the costliest victory of his Indian campaign Alexander founded the city of Bucephala, named for his favorite horse, which was mortally wounded in the battle, which suggests that he cared for animals, in particular his horse a lot!



Cleopatra VII

By Ella O'Connell

Biography

- Cleopatra VII Thea Philopator was born in 70\69 BCE and was destined to become the last macedonian queen of the dynasty between the death of Alexander the Great in 323 and the forming of the Roman empire in 27BC.
- Cleopatra ruled with her father as a co-regent, then with her two younger brothers and finally with her son for over three decades.
- Well educated and clever, cleopatra could speak various languages and served as the dominant ruler in all three of her co-regencies. Her romantic liaisons and military alliances with the Roman leaders Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, as well as her supposed exotic beauty and powers of seduction, earned her a lasting place in history and popular myth.
- Her mother was believed to be Cleopatra V Tryphaena and her father was called Ptolemy XII (Auletes), a descendant of Ptolemy I Soter, one of Alexander the great's generals, and upon the natural death of Auletes, the throne was passed down to 18 year old Cleopatra and her 10 year old brother, Ptolemy XIII

Important events

- Soon after the siblings' ascension to the throne, Ptolemy's advisers acted against Cleopatra, who was forced to flee Egypt for Syria in 49 B.C. She raised an army of mercenaries and returned the following year to face her brother's forces in a civil war at Pelusium, on Egypt's eastern border.
- Meanwhile, after allowing the Roman general Pompey to be murdered, Ptolemy XIII welcomed the arrival of Pompey's rival, Julius Caesar, to Alexandria. In order to help her cause, Cleopatra looked for Caesar's support, and smuggled herself into the royal palace to plead her case with him.
- Cleopatra also grew close to Julius Caesar and was reported to have had a son in 47BC, called Ptolemy Caesar. He also helped to restore the throne to Cleopatra and her younger brother, in Alexandria.
- Sometime in 46-45 B.C., Cleopatra traveled with Ptolemy XIV and Caesarion to Rome to visit Caesar, who had returned earlier. After Caesar was murdered in March 44 B.C., Cleopatra went back to Egypt. Ptolemy XIV was killed soon after (presumably by Cleopatra's agents) and the three-year-old Caesarion was named co-regent with his mother, as Ptolemy XV. By this point, Cleopatra had strongly identified herself with the goddess Isis, the sister-wife of Osiris and mother of Horus. (This meant that she could reinforce herself as a divine ruler and could get back to her duties, being more accepted by society now). She spoke as many as a dozen languages and was renowned for her "irresistible charm," according to Plutarch.
- The major events that occurred in Cleopatra's lifetime are as follows:
- **41:** Antony meets Cleopatra at Tarsus; he confirms her position and joins her in Egypt for a vacation
- **40:** In spring, Antony returns to Rome, Cleopatra gives birth to Alexander Helios and Cleopatra Selene. Marc Antony's wife Fulvia dies. and Antony marries Octavia. The S partitions the Mediterranean:
- **Octavian** commands the western provinces - (Spain, Sardinia, Sicily, Transalpine Gaul, Narbonne)
- **Antony** commands the eastern provinces (Macedonia, Asia, Bithynia, Cilicia, Syria)
- **Lepidus** commands Africa (Tunisia and Algeria)
- **37:** Marc Antony establishes headquarters at Antioch and sends for Cleopatra who brings their three-year-old twins. Antony begins to make major territorial distributions to her, which meet with public disfavor in Rome.
- **36:** Parthian campaign of Mark Anthony, Cleopatra travels with it, makes a tour of new possessions and visits Hero and has a fourth child, Ptolemy Philadelphos. When the Parthian expedition fails, Antony returns to Alexandria with Cleopatra. In Rome, Lepidus is eliminated, Octavian controls Africa and becomes the effective ruler of Rome
- **35:** Antagonism between Antony and Octavian intensifies and Antony ceases campaigning for the year with no significant accomplishments.
- **34:** Parthian campaign is renewed; the disloyal king of Armenia is captured. Cleopatra and Antony celebrate by holding the Donations of Alexandria ceremony, codifying her territories and making her children rulers of various areas. Octavian and the citizens of Rome are outraged.
- **33:** Triumvirate collapses, the result of a propaganda war between Antony and Octavian.
- **32:** Senators and consuls loyal to Antony join in the east. Cleopatra and Antony move to Ephesus and begin to consolidate their forces there and in Samos and Athens. Antony divorces Octavian's sister Octavia, and Octavian declares war on Cleopatra.





Sad ending

- However, sadly, the Battle of Actium (September 2) results in the victory of Octavian, Cleopatra returns to Egypt to hand over the kingdom to Caesarion but is thwarted by Malchos. Octavian moves to Rhodes and negotiations begin.
- But then, the negotiations failed and Octavian decides to invade Egypt, then Cleopatra is so distraught that she sends a note to Anthony that she is going to commit suicide, he then stabs himself and a few months later Cleopatra commits suicide, and although her son Caesarion becomes king, Octavian has him killed, bringing the Ptolemaic dynasty to an end and Egypt becomes a Roman province on the 29th August.

Diverse character

- Cleopatra's diversity in the world was that she was a woman who ruled Egypt before Christ was born in a society that was mostly dominated by men.
- I feel that she did definitely face difficulties during her rule as she had to even flee to Syria away from her throne, because her brother had forced her too. As well as this many of the men did not trust her because she was so young (18 years old when she took the throne), therefore she may not have been experienced enough at the job for them.
- However she overcame these obstacles by staying strong and proving that she was had the right to the throne when people doubted her, however, I definitely think that she would be more accepted in today's society, where her strong tactics and fearlessness that make her a fantastic role model that everyone should live up to, would be truly appreciated and she would flourish, not coming to the sad and painful ending that she did.



Interesting fact

- An interesting fact that I found out about Cleopatra whilst I was doing my research was that Cleopatra was not actually Egyptian and although she lived in Egypt, she traced her family origins to Macedonian Greece and Ptolemy I Soter, one of Alexander the Great's generals. Ptolemy took the reigns of Egypt after Alexander's death in 323 B.C, and he launched a dynasty of Greek-speaking rulers that lasted for nearly three centuries. Despite not being ethnically Egyptian, Cleopatra embraced many of her country's ancient customs and was the first member of the Ptolemaic line to learn the Egyptian language!





THE END!