

COURSE CONTENT

 This course examines the History of the Greek World in the Hellenistic period. The Hellenistic Kingdoms were the states that emerged after the death of Alexander the Great and the gradual division of his empire among his chief officials and generals in Greece, the Black Sea, Egypt, and the Near East. Alexander's successors fought continuous wars against each other and became the main focus of political power in the Eastern Mediterranean. They governed and taxed several different ethnicities, which interacted with each other in various ways.



TEXBOOKS AND SOURCEBOOK

TEXTBOOKS

- A. Erskine (ed.), *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*, Oxford 2003, chapters 1-12, 15, 20, 25.
- A. Chaniotis, Age of Conquests. The Greek World from Alexander to Hadrian, London 2018.

SOURCEBOOK

• M. M. Austin, The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest. A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation, Cambridge 2006.

LINK

https://eclass.uoa.gr/courses/BAAG178/

FURTHER SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Allen R. E. (1983) The Attalid Kingdom: A Constitutional History. Oxford.
- Aperghis J. J. (2004) The Seleucid Royal Economy: the Finances and Financial Administration of the Seleucid Empire. Cambridge.
- Dmitriev, S. (2005) City government in Hellenistic and Roman Asia Minor, New York.
- Eckstein, A. M. (2008). Rome enters the Greek East. Oxford.
- Grainger J. D. (2010) The Syrian Wars. Leiden, Boston.
- Green P. (1990) Alexander to Actium. The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age. Berkeley.
- Gruen, E. (1984). The Hellenistic World and the Coming of Rome. Berkeley.
- Hansen E. V. (1971) The Attalids of Pergamon. Ithaca, London.
- Jones, A. H. M. (1940) The Greek City from Alexander to Justinian. Oxford 1940.
- Kallet-Marx, R. (1995). Hegemony to Empire: The Development of the Roman Imperium in the East from 148 to 62 B.C. Berkeley.
- Ma J. (1999) Antiochos III and the Cities of Western Asia Minor. Oxford.
- Manning J. G. (2010) The Last Pharaohs. Egypt under the Ptolemies. Princeton.
- Sherwin-White S. M., and Kuhrt A. (1993) From Samarkhand to Sardis: a new approach to the Seleucid Empire. Berkeley.
- Shipley Gr. (2000) The Greek World after Alexander, 323-30 B.C. London.
- The Cambridge Ancient History (second edition), volumes VII-IX.
- Walbank, F. (1992) The Hellenistic World. Cambridge.
- Will E. (1979) Histoire politique du monde hellénistique. Nancy.

Obligations and entertainment

1) Presence & active participation

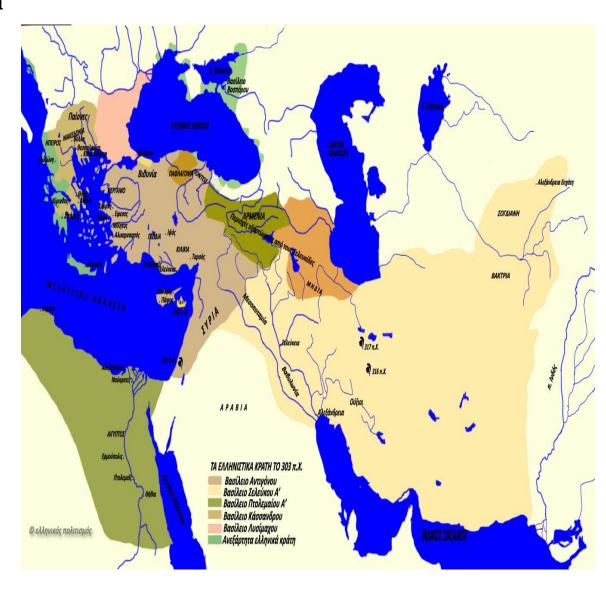
- 2) Two assignments
- 4.000 words max.
- Deadline: Sunday 16/11
- 30% of the total grade (15 + 15)

Main features of the Hellenistic Period

- The Hellenistic Period is defined chronologically by political events:
- ✓323 BC: death of Alexander
- ✓ 30 BC: Roman conquest of Ptolemaic
 Egypt (the whole of the Eastern
 Mediterranean politically unified under
 Roman rule)

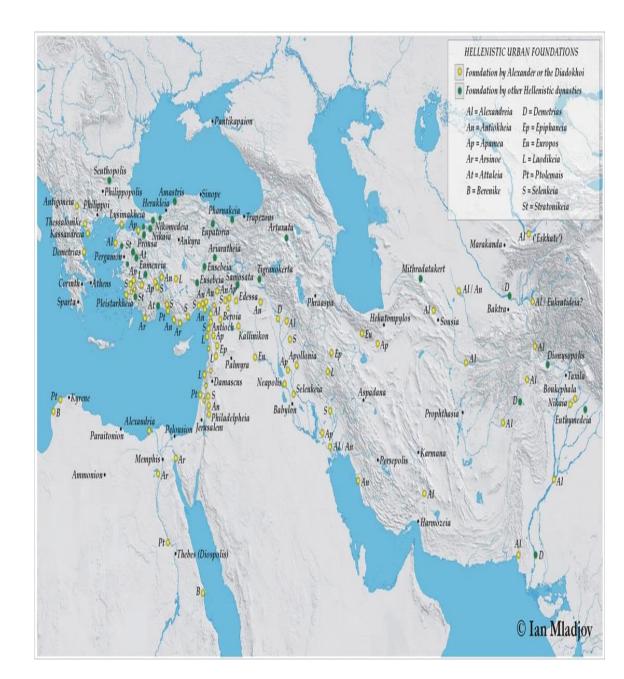
The Eastern Mediterranean in the Hellenistic Period as a world system

- A world in itself based on the interdependence and interaction between its various states, communities, groups and regions.
- ➤ From a Greek
 perspective new loci
 of power emerge
 (Egypt, Syria, Rome)
 and a new form of
 political power:
 Hellenistic Kings and
 later Roman emperors



The Eastern
Mediterranean in the
Hellenistic Period as a
world system

- Spread of Greek poleis and Greek culture as a unifying element
- Cultural interaction between different 'ethnic' groups



THE GREEK *POLIS* IN THE HELLENISTIC PERIOD

- The polis (city-state) becomes part of Empires
- The *polis* preserves its traditional political apparatus
- > Assembly of citizens, popular assembly (citizenship) (demos) people
- ➤ Council (boule, synedrion)
- ➤ Annual boards of magistrates
- The *polis* is not an exclusively Greek phenomenon:
- Greek city states, Phoenician city-states, Italian city-states (Rome)

HISTORIANS CONTEMPORARY TO ALEXANDER THE GREAT

The works of these historians, who narrated Alexander's campaign (334-323 BC) are only preserved in fragments

Cleitarchus wrote around 310 BC, collected first-hand information from participants in the campaign and compiled an account that achieved great popularity

Aristobulus probably followed Alexander as an engineer and compiled his own work perhaps two decades after Alexander's death.

Ptolemy was a general of Alexander and later became king in Egypt and the founder of the Ptolemaic dynasty. His History was probably compiled in Egypt some decades after the death of Alexander. Ptolemy drew on Alexander's official *Ephemerides* ('Diaries') and provides a lot of factual details.

Callisthenes, a nephew of Aristotle, also followed Alexander, compiling an account of his deeds, but this stops suddenly in 327, the year of Callisthenes' imprisonment by the king. Ceremony of *proskenesis*

Finally, **Nearchus**, an admiral of Alexander, compiled a description of India and an account of his own mission from the river Indus to The Persian Gulf.

ARRIAN (86-160 CE)

- * A Greek born in Nicomedia of Bithynia
- He occupied high administrative and military posts in the Roman provincial administration (governor of the province of Cappadocia)
- Well-known as a philosopher
- Compiled a history of Alexander's Campaign entitled Anabasis
- The *Anabasis* survives intact and constitutes the most important source for Alexander's deeds
- The sources Arrian chose was Ptolemy and Aristobulus, eye-witnesses and participants in the events.
- Concern for stylistic excellence
- * A rather reliable source; his work is not deprived of errors and misunderstandings. His account is sober and measured

THE ROMAN SENATOR CURTIUS RUFUS (1ST CENT. CE)

- History of Alexander based on Cleitarchus
- ❖ More dramatic account than Arrian's; emphasis on Alexander's gradual 'moral deterioration' under the influence of 'Asian luxury and despotism'.
- * Ethnographic digressions:
 Rufus displays a tendency to portray cultural differences between West and East, while Arrian is more focused on recording data and discussing military tactics.



Lost Historians of the Hellenistic Period

- Douris of Samos: history of Macedonia from 370 to 281
- Hieronymos of Cardia: events from 323 to 272 (death of Pyrrhos). A high quality historian associated with Eumenes of Cardia and the early Antigonids
- Phylarchos: events from 272 to 220/19. Criticized by Polybios

Polybios of Megalopolis

- Born circa 200 and died after 118
- An active politician in the Achaian League, deported to Italy after 168
- Attached to the Scipiones
- His History covers the period from 220 to 146 B.C. (Books 1-5 intact, others in fragments, sometimes quite extensive)
- *Symploke* of Roman and Greek History and Worlds

Other Historians

- Poseidonios of Apameia: 146 to circa 80 (lost)
- Diodoros of Sicily: universal history to the 6o's (Pompey's settlement in the East) Books 18-20 cover extensively the period from 323 to 302 B.C.
- Pompeius Trogus (epitomized by Justin): universal history down to Augustus' age
- Titus Livius (Livy): *Ab urbe condita*: history of Rome to Augustus. Draws on Polybios for the East
- Appian: History of peoples conquered by Rome (*Makedonike*, *Illyrike*, *Syriake* e.tc.)

Geography and Biography

- Strabo of Amaseia: *Geography* of the world. It contains historical information
- Pausanias: Description of Greece. Historical and mythological information, local traditions
- Plutarch: *Lives*. Biographies of Demetrios the Besieger, Eumenes of Cardia, Aratos, Philopoemen, Agis and Cleomenes, Flamininus, Aemilius Paulus, Sulla, Pompey.





Inscriptions

- Civic laws and decrees
- Royal letters and diagrammata/prostagmata
- Letters of Roman emperors and governors
- Honorific inscriptions
- Dedications
- Funerary inscriptions
- They reveal the concerns of the contemporaries
- They offer insights into institutional and social realities



Papyri

- Orders addressed by administrative officials to their subordinates, tax records.
- Petitions addressed by the subjects to the authorities
- Private letters, deeds of sale, wills, marriage contracts
- They illuminate administration routine and daily/private life.

A Jewish view on the Hellenistic Age (I Maccabees 1.1–9)

Alexander the Macedonian, son of Philip, marched out from the land of Kittim, defeated Darius king of Persia and Media and became king in his place; he was already king of Greece. He waged many wars, conquered strongholds, and slaughtered kings in the land. He marched to the ends of the earth, and seized plunder from a mass of peoples. The earth fell silent before him, he was exalted, and his heart was filled with pride. He gathered a mighty army and ruled over territories, peoples, and despots, and they paid tribute to him. After that he fell ill on his bed and realised that his death was near. He summoned the most distinguished of his followers, men who had been brought up with him from his youth, and divided his kingdom between them while he was still alive. He reigned for twelve years and then died. His followers assumed power, each in his own province, and they all put on the diadem after his death; they were succeeded by their own children over a period of many years. The earth was filled with miseries.

Perspectives offered by the sources

- State and polis perspective, mainly Greek/Roman
- Greek writers, inscriptions, papyri
- Indigenous perspectives
- ➤ Old Testament
- Hieroglyphic inscriptions in Egyptian temples
- > Papyri
- ➤ Babylonian bilingual administrative texts in Greek/Aramaic
- Babylonian literature (chronicles, astrological texts, legal texts)