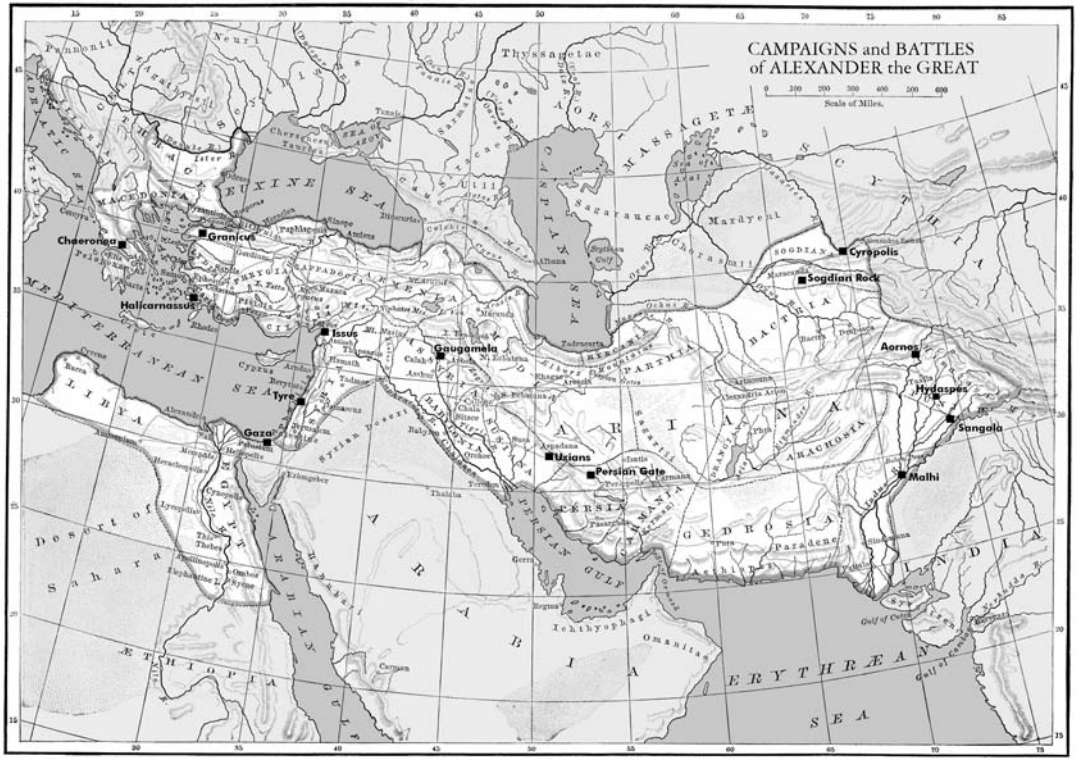
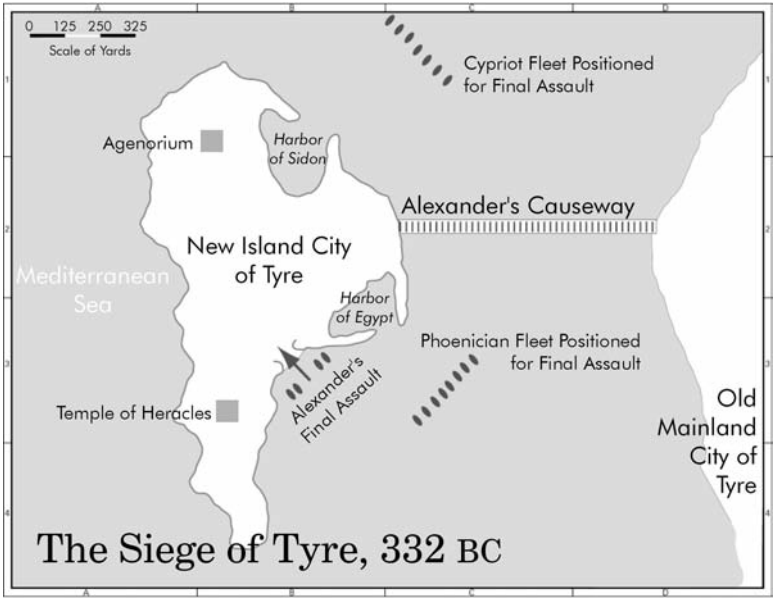
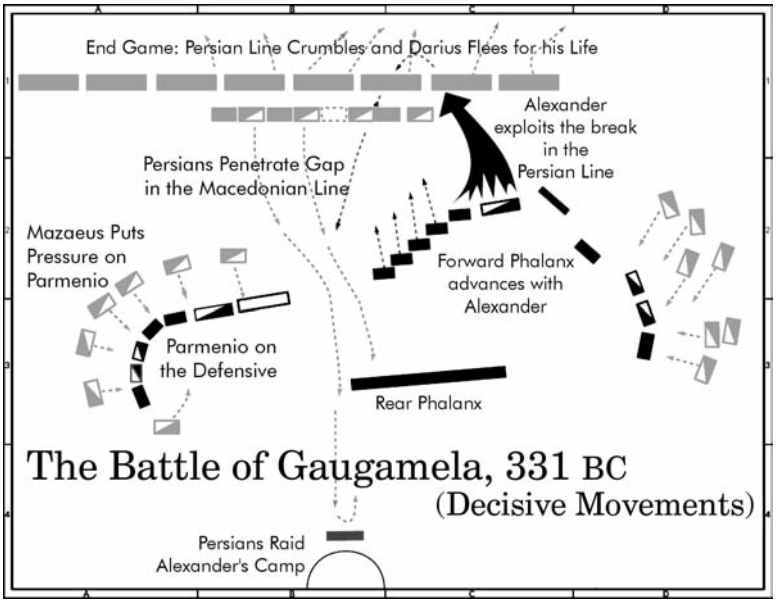
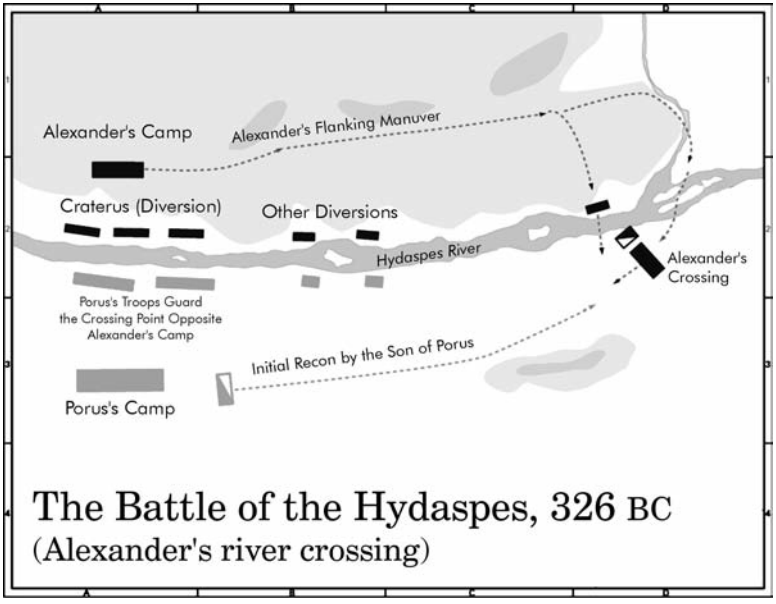

CAMPAIGNS and BATTLES
of ALEXANDER the GREAT
Scale of Miles.
Granicus
Issus
Gaugamela
Tyre
Gaza
Persian Gate
Uxians
Cyropolis
Sogdian Rock
Aornos
Hydaspes
Sangala
Malhi
Halicarnassus
Chaeronea
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
EUXINE SEA
CASPIAN SEA
ERYTHRÆAN SEA
ARABIA
PERSIA
INDIA
SCYTHIA
BACTRIA
PARTHIA
GEDROSIA
ARACHOSIA
LIBYA
ETHIOPIA


The Battle of Issus, 333 BC
(Strategic Overview)
Pyramus River
Persian Route
Amanus Mountains
Pinarus River
Alexander's Route
Issus
Battle Site
Persian Route
Gulf of Issus
Payas River
Syrian Gates
Mallus
Sochi
Alexandretta
(Iskenderun)
Alexander Reverses Direction
Mediterranean Sea


0 125 250 325
Scale of Yards
Cypriot Fleet Positioned
for Final Assault
Agenorium
Harbor
of Sidon
Alexander's Causeway
New Island City
of Tyre
Mediterranean
Sea
Harbor
of Egypt
Phoenician Fleet Positioned
for Final Assault
Alexander's
Final Assault
Temple of Heracles
Old
Mainland
City of
Tyre
The Siege of Tyre, 332 BC


End Game: Persian Line Crumbles and Darius Flees for his Life
Alexander exploits the break in the Persian Line
Persians Penetrate Gap in the Macedonian Line
Mazaeus Puts Pressure on Parmenio
Forward Phalanx advances with Alexander
Parmenio on the Defensive
Rear Phalanx
The Battle of Gaugamela, 331 BC
(Decisive Movements)
Persians Raid Alexander's Camp


Alexander's Camp
Alexander's Flanking Manuver
Craterus (Diversion)
Other Diversions
Hydaspes River
Alexander's Crossing
Porus's Troops Guard the Crossing Point Opposite Alexander's Camp
Initial Recon by the Son of Porus
Porus's Camp
The Battle of the Hydaspes, 326 BC
(Alexander's river crossing)

Prologue

Around midnight on the last day of September in 331 BC, on a mountain somewhere east of the modern Iraqi city of Mosul, a group of Macedonian officers took a walk. They went to the edge of a cliff to look out at the vast encampment of their enemy at a place called Gaugamela. What they saw made their blood run cold.

Writes Lucius Mestrius Plutarchus, better known as Plutarch (ca. AD 46–120), in his *Lives of Noble Greeks and Romans,* "When they saw the plain between the Niphates and the Gordyaean mountains all lighted up with the barbarian fires, while an indistinguishably mingled and tumultuous sound of voices arose from their camp as if from a vast ocean, they were astonished at their multitude and argued with one another that it was a great and grievous task to repel such a tide of war."

Before them lay the enormous army of Darius III, the monarch of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, the greatest empire yet seen in the history of the world. Observers reported, and historians long believed, that the Macedonian officers gazed that night upon the campfires of a million-man army.

Only eleven nights had passed since the Macedonians had looked into the sky and seen the most disturbing of omens. "First the moon lost its usual brightness, and then became suffused with a blood-red color which caused a general dimness in the light it shed," writes the first-century AD historian Curtius (Quintus Curtius Rufus) of this lunar eclipse in his *Historiae Alexandri Magni,* or *History of Alexander*

the Great. "Right on the brink of a decisive battle [at Gaugamela] the men were already in a state of anxiety, and this now struck them with a deep religious awe which precipitated a kind of panic."

The Macedonian officers, though they were victorious veterans of two titanic field battles against the Persian army, thought that their time had run out. It was their belief that they were outnumbered by a factor of about 20 to 1, and that defeat awaited them in the coming battle.

They went to the tent where their commander was relaxing, and nervously proposed that the only viable tactic against such an immense foe would be a surprise attack under cover of darkness.

When their commander had heard them out, the 25-year-old Alexander of Macedonia looked up and replied. According to Plutarch, Alexander told them, "I will not steal my victory."

By this he meant that he wished the coming battle to be decisive and conclusive. Alexander wanted there to be no doubt that Darius had been beaten—fair and square, and in broad daylight for all to see.

That night in the light of his own fire, Alexander calmly projected the confidence of a man who had no doubt of his victory the following day.

Three years earlier, as he was preparing for his unprecedented campaign against the Persian Empire, the priestess at the oracle of Delphi had told him "Thou art invincible, my son!"

She was right. He was never defeated in battle.

He had beaten Darius's army at the Granicus River (now known as Biga Çayi or Kocabas Çayi) in 334 BC, and Darius himself at Issus in 333 BC. At Gaugamela, he would defeat the greatest empire in the history of the world, and bring into being a new one that was even greater.

His empire was almost of the same geographical scale as the Roman Empire, but the Romans had been empire-building for centuries by the time their dominion reached its greatest extent under Trajan. Alexander did it all in a dozen years.

Alexander's influence on the course of cultural and political history was felt in the fusion of Greek, Middle Eastern and Indian civilizations that is characterized as the Hellenistic Age, the period from 323 BC to AD 30, when Greek cultural influence and power were at their peak in Europe and Asia.

So highly regarded were Alexander's accomplishments in his lifetime and thereafter that there was a widely held belief that he was the son, not of a mortal father, but of Zeus, the king of the gods. Even four centuries after his death, his biographer Arrian (Lucius Flavius Arrianus; second century AD), wrote in *Anabasis Alexandri* or *The Campaigns of Alexander,* "it seems to me that a hero totally unlike any other human being could not have been born without the agency of the deity."

He was actually the son of Philip II of Macedonia, or Macedon, the warrior king who was the first ruler to unify Greece. Born in 356 BC, Alexander was educated personally by the great philosopher Aristotle, became a consummate horseman, and heroically commanded a wing of his father's army in the victory over the Thebans and Athenians at the Battle of Chaeronea—all while he was still a teenager.

Alexander's strategic vision is legendary. When he was still a boy, Philip once remarked that Alexander would need a great empire because Macedonia was too small for him. Philip was right. Of course, strategic vision is only one thing. Alexander also had both the skill to realize that vision by creating an empire of unprecedented scale *and* the shrewdness to manage this empire.

Conversely, he has been characterized as a megalomaniac whose delusions of grandeur were fed by his battlefield successes and by his coming to believe the stories that he was the son of Zeus. His great military campaign began with a widely supported mandate to crush the Persian Empire on behalf of Greece. However, he was widely criticized, in his own time and later, for continuing the campaign beyond Persia in order to fulfill his extravagant desire to rule the whole world.

Setting aside the motivations that drove him, Alexander conducted his campaigns with both military discipline and a strategic prescience that complemented his aspirations.

While many strategic visionaries lack tactical dexterity, Alexander had it in abundance. His battlefield victories were the building blocks of his campaigns, just as his campaigns brought him his empire. Repeatedly, we see Alexander's tactical brilliance manifesting itself in his being able to maneuver his way to victory despite being outnumbered by substantial margins.

At Gaugamela, he was almost certainly outnumbered by a narrower margin than 20 to 1, but he still faced an army more than twice

the size of his own. Yet he soundly defeated this army. He did so by audaciously outflanking Darius with cavalry even before the battle began, by doubling his phalanx into two parts to prevent Darius from outflanking *him,* and by personally leading a fearless cavalry charge that caused a panicked Darius to abandon his chariot and flee the battlefield on a purloined horse.

Probably no more than a few days or weeks after Alexander's victory, a scribe in Babylon sat down to record the event in cuneiform on a clay tablet that today rests in a climate-controlled case in the British Museum in London. Having noted that "a heavy defeat was inflicted on the troops of Darius," this ancient historian noted that "on the twenty-fourth of the lunar month [October 1, 331 BC], in the morning, the King of the World erected his flag."

The military leader who exuded confidence in the flickering firelight on the last day of September was Alexander III of Macedonia. The man called the King of the World, who erected his flag on the battlefield about 12 hours later, was Alexander the Great.

INTRODUCTION

Born into a State of War

During the fourth and fifth centuries BC, a cold war was being waged between the Persian Empire and the Greek city-states that defined the political history of what was, to them, the entire known world. Apart from several years of open conflict at the beginning of the fifth century BC and the much-heralded campaigns of 490 and 480–479 BC, this war was characterized by subterfuge and proxy warfare. It was an era of Persian backing of individual city-states in intra-Hellenic conflicts, as they sought to leverage one Greek faction against the other. By the time Alexander of Macedonia was born, this Greco-Persian state of war had been a reality for nearly 150 years.

Before the beginning of the fifth century BC, these two political and cultural poles had evolved separately. Greek, or Hellenic, culture spread from modern Greece throughout the northeastern Mediterranean. Hellenic influence was present from the shores of the Black Sea to present-day Italy and was particularly dominant within the rim of the Aegean Sea, including the west coast of what is now Turkey, then known as Asia Minor.

The Persian Empire grew outward from modern Iran, absorbing the Assyrian Empire to the west in the eighth century BC. The empire reached its greatest extent during the Achaemenid Dynasty, which began with Cyrus the Great in the sixth century BC and lasted for two centuries until it was crushed by Alexander himself.

Under Cyrus, the Persian Empire came to include present Afghanistan, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan. He also brought Hellenic enclaves along the eastern shore of the Aegean, notably Ionia, under Persian rule. In the course of his empire building, Cyrus established a reputation for Persian armies being ruthlessly efficient—and unbeatable.

The Persian dominions were governed by satraps, puppet governors, who might be drawn from local populations but who answered to the Persian monarch. The term itself derives from the Persian word for "protector of the province," and is the equivalent of the later title "viceroy."

When he was killed in battle in 530 BC, Cyrus was succeeded briefly by a series of ineffective relatives, and finally, in 522 by a Zoroastrian Persian who would rule for 36 years as Darius I, or Darius the Great. Under Darius, the Persian Empire expanded northward into modern Ukraine and crossed the Bosporus, extending into Europe. He conquered eastern Thrace, including parts of what is now Bulgaria, and reached the Danube River. Though Hellenic culture still predominated in the regions of the Aegean rim, monolithic Persian rule brought a new political reality to the area.

While the Persians were unified under a single powerful emperor, the Greek city-states were independent political entities. Persian emperors ruled as absolute monarchs, while in Greece Athens was flirting with democracy by the beginning of the fifth century BC.

The clash between Hellenic and Persian civilizations boiled over into open conflict in 499 BC as the Persian-occupied Hellenic states of Asia Minor revolted. With the help of Athens and Eretria on the Greek mainland, the Ionian Revolt succeeded at first, but withered under a Persian counterattack.

Though he recovered the Greek cities that had briefly thrown off Persian rule, Darius saw the rebellion as both an affront and a genuine security threat. He therefore decided that the best defense against the Greeks was a good offense—so he decided to conquer all of Greece.

In 492 BC, Darius launched the first Persian invasion of the heart of Greece. He won early battlefield successes in Thrace, and coerced Macedonia into becoming a Persian vassal state.

In 490 Darius captured a number of Aegean islands and made an unopposed landing near Eretria on the Greek mainland north of Athens. With Eretria captured, the Persians moved south, intending to seize Athens. After a landing at Marathon, they were only about two dozen miles from the city.

Under the veteran commander Miltiades, the Athenians succeeded in bottling up the Persian army on the Plain of Marathon for nearly a week. To break the deadlock, the Persian leader Artaphernes decided on an end run. Since he couldn't get through the Athenian line, he pulled out a sizable force, including his cavalry, and embarked to sail around the Attic peninsula to attack Athens directly.

However, it was Miltiades who broke the stalemate. With the Persian force at Marathon depleted, the Athenian army launched a double envelopment, crushing the Persians from both sides. The battle is recognized as an important turning point in Western history for having saved the flowering of Athenian civilization from being nipped in the bud by Persian occupation.

Not until 480 BC did Persia, under Darius's son and heir, Xerxes I, renew the campaign against the Greeks. In the meantime, the principal Greek city-states, including notably both Athens and Sparta, had met near Corinth at the suggestion of the Athenian leader Themistocles and agreed to form a coalition to present a united front against the Persians.

Rather than repeating his father's 490 amphibious landings in central Greece, Xerxes traveled overland, as had Darius I in 492. His idea was to enter Greece with a force large enough to subdue all of Greece in one campaigning season.

The Greek coalition strategy, advanced by Themistocles, called for intercepting the superior number of Persians at the confined spaces of the pass through the mountains at Thermopylae. By hitting the Persians in a narrow choke-point, rather than on a broad battlefield such as Marathon, the defenders could neutralize the impact of the very large numbers of the Persian army.