

Alexander

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Paris Art Studies - The Kingdom of
Alexander the Great – Ancient Macedonia

Historical Chronology

808-778

BC– First known king of Macedonia is Caranus founder of the Argead dynasty whose origins are in Argos Orestikon in SW Macedonia the ancient region of Orestis.

498-454 – First important expansion of the kingdom under Alexander I who allied himself with Persians in the Greek/Persian wars.

460 – The historian Herodotus travels in Macedonia and writes about the Macedonian view of the Greek/Persian wars.

453-413 – Perdicas II succeeds his father Alexander I. Allies himself alternately with Sparta and Athens in the Peloponnesian war, careful to keep Macedonia’s autonomy and safeguard her interests.

413-399 – Under King Archelaus Macedonia becomes a significant economic power. He expands the road network, builds new forts and reorganizes the army. He also moved the capital from Aigae to Pella and founded the Macedonian Olympic games in Dion, the sacred city of the Macedonians. The Greeks had forbidden “barbarians” to

participate in their own Olympic games.

408 – The great Athenian playwright Euripides moves to the court of king Archelaus where he writes his last play the “Bacchae” inspired by the Macedonian cult of Dionysius. He died in Macedonia in 406. The Athenians give Archelaus the title of proxenos and euergetes (benefactor).

393-369 – Reign of Amyntas III. His aggressive policies against Greece weaken the Greek city states. He was succeeded by his two sons Alexander II and Perdicas III who reigned only briefly. Alexander II invaded Thessaly (province to the south of Macedonia) leaving garrisons there and provoking a war with the Thebans, then the most powerful Greek state who take Alexander’s younger brother Philip as hostage. Alexander II was succeeded by his brother Amyntas who was killed in a battle against the Illyrians. The youngest brother Philip becomes king.

359-336 – Philip II turned out to be the most powerful of Macedonian monarchs. He defeated all of Macedonians neighbors, Illyrians, Thracians and Greeks and turned Macedonia into the greatest power of the Balkans. His brutality against resisting Greek cities became legendary: he razed Olynthus and Stageira (the birthplace of Aristotle). An alliance of Greek city states was crushed at Chaeronea in 338. Philip declared himself hegemon (lord) of Greece and Greeks had no choice but sign the Macedonian peace and accepts Macedonian garrisons in Corinth, Thebes, Chalcis and Ambracia. Philip was assassinated by one of his bodyguards during the wedding celebrations of his daughter

Cleopatra in
336.

336-323 – Reign of Alexander III the Great who succeeds his famous father at the age of 20. As an adolescent he had been educated by the great philosopher Aristotle. Alexander immediately put down rebellions by all of Macedonia’s neighbors razing in Greece its most powerful city, Thebes, but sparing Athens. He then proceeded to invade the greatest empire of the time, Persia, defeating its King Darius in a sequence of spectacular battles, Granicus, Issus and Gaugamela taking his armies as far south as Egypt and as far east as India. Alexander died in Bablylon in 323. A

period of war
followed during which his empire was carved up by his generals.

300 – The following dynasties were established: that of Antigonus I (“One

276-239 – ruler of Macedonia and Greece, Ptolemy I – Egypt, and Seleucus I – Asia.

276-239 – Reign of Antigonos II

Gonatas grandson of Antigonos I. Macedonia achieves stability and continues to control Greece.

222-179 – Reign of Philip V who clashes with Rome

the new western power now expanding eastwards. After the battle of Cynoscephalae the Macedonians lose Greece and are forbidden to venture beyond their historic borders.

179-168 – Reign of last Macedonian king, Perseus, defeated in Third

Macedonian war, captured at Pydna and held prisoner by Romans in Italy.

146 – Dissolution of Macedonian kingdom which becomes a Roman province.

Building of the Via Egnatia linking the Adriatic port of Dyrrachium to Thessalonica and the Bosphorus straits at Byzantium (later Constantinople).

65 – Conquest by the Romans of the Macedonian Seleucid kingdom in Asia

ruled by Antiochus VII.

30 – Defeat of the last Macedonian dynasty, that of the Ptolemies, with the

death of Queen Cleopatra in Egypt.

51 AD – The Apostle Paul arrives in Macedonia

preaching in the towns of Philippi, Thessalonica and Beroea.

395 – Division of the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern halves respectively ruled by Rome and Constantinople (founded by Emperor Constantine in 330). Macedonia is now part of the Eastern, later called Byzantine, Empire until its conquest by the Ottoman Turks in the 15th century.

