

HIST 356: A History of Ancient Macedon to the Death of Alexander the Great Spring Semester

**Course Instructor:
John Karavas**

Course Description/ Objectives

Through the study of the available primary evidence – literary, epigraphic and archaeological – this course seeks to familiarize students with particular aspects of the history, culture and civilization of Ancient Macedon up to the age of Alexander the Great. Following a detailed examination of the main social, political and economic conditions and institutions that developed in Ancient Macedon during the Archaic and Classical periods, it then attempts to explore the main factors that led to the emergence of the Macedon State as the undisputed leader in Greek affairs by the 4th century BC. Special emphasis will be placed on the careers of Alexander I and of Philip II and their profound impact on the consolidation of Macedon power over Greece.

The second part of the course will deal exclusively with the reign of Alexander the Great. Through the use of primary sources, the course will closely follow Alexander's campaigns in the East, with a detailed reference to certain aspects of his multi-faceted personality and to an assessment of his achievement and long lasting legacy. Special emphasis is given to topics that are central to modern political and intellectual debate.

The CYA field trip to Northern Greece will substantially enhance the in class component, as it will primarily focus on the investigation of the main sites associated with the emergence and subsequent development of the Kingdom of Macedonia through the Classical and early Hellenistic periods. Visits will include the site of Vergina (Aigai), the capitol of Macedonia until 399 BCE and burial place of the Macedonian ruling dynasty throughout and the site of Pella, the capitol of Ancient Macedonia after 399 BCE and birthplace of Philip II and Alexander III, where the primary emphasis will be on establishing the purpose and function of the principal political, economic, social and cultural institutions and norms in Ancient Macedonia before the accession of Alexander the Great; the site of Dion, the main sanctuary of the Ancient Macedonians, where aspects of Macedonian religious life and ritual will be further highlighted; the tombs at Lefkadia, that will provide an additional insight on the distinct change and evolution of Macedonian funerary architecture and burial customs in the aftermath of Alexander's Persian campaigns; and, last, but not least, a visit to the purported school of Aristotle at the site of Mieza, where Alexander and many of his companions were tutored by the great master himself, to discuss aspects of intellectual and educational life in Ancient Macedonia at large. In addition, one day will be devoted to the visit of the major highlights of Ancient Thessaloniki, to explore its long standing history and tradition through the ages as one of the most important centers in Ancient Macedonia.

Essays – Assessment – Grades

Essays

Students will be expected to write one essay, of not more than 3,000 words, on subjects relevant to this course. Individual titles will have to be agreed after consultation with the instructor. Papers must be properly documented and should include an appended bibliography. Credit will be given for originality, i.e. illustrations, maps etc., personal observation and evidence of independent reading-research.

The deadline for the submission of the final essay is Friday, May 19.

Title proposals must be handed in at least one month before the respective deadline. No extensions will be granted.

Grades

The mid-term grade will be calculated on the basis of the mid-term exam (70%) and with regard to student's attendance of and participation in classes (30%).

The final grade will be an average of the grade assigned for the final essay (30%), the grade assigned for both mid-term and final exams (50%) and of that assigned for class participation and attendance over the semester (20%).

Students are required to read and bring into class all relevant material pertaining to ancient sources, in particular Arrian, Diodorus, Curtius Rufus as well as any accompanying epigraphic or text evidence. The above material can be found in the electronic handouts that you will all receive at the beginning of the semester.

Class Attendance – Absences

Student attendance is mandatory. All absences must be excused by the administration and not the instructor. One unexcused absence may be allowed; each subsequent unexcused absence will result in a lowered participation grade.

Main Bibliography

Borza, Eugene N. *In the shadow of Olympus the emergence of Macedon*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 1992.

Hammond, Nicholas. *Alexander the Great: king, commander, and statesman*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1980.

Hammond, N. G. L. *A history of Greece to 322 B.C.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986.

Hammond, Nicholas. *The Macedonian state: origins, institutions, and history*. Oxford etc.: Clarendon Press, 1989.

Sealey, Raphael. *History of the Greek City States, 700-338 B.C.* Berkeley: University Of California Press, 1976.

The Cambridge ancient history. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994. (abbrv. CAH)

Course Schedule

Monday, January 30

General Introduction

A brief overview of the history of Ancient Macedon. Establishing the basic chronological brackets and objectives of this course. The nature of the available evidence and the problems usually associated in its interpretation.

Wednesday, February 1

Macedonia, The Land

The general geography and the topographical realities of Ancient Macedon; its impact on the formation of the Macedon State. A brief History of Macedon from the Neolithic to the Archaic Age.

Monday, February 6

Macedonia, the People

The origins of the Macedonian people and the question of their ethnic identity; the Macedonian "language"; their early system of government; the economy; social and cultural norms and customs.

Wednesday, February 8

Ancient Macedon from the Archaic to the early Classical period

The age of Macedonian expansion explored through prevailing political, social, economic and cultural conditions and institutions. The problems/struggles associated with the emergence of the early Macedon State.

Hammond (1989), 1-42;

E. Borza, Ch. 1-3;

E-material: 15.

This bibliography accounts for classes 2-4.

Monday, February 13

"A Prince among barbarians and a barbarian among princes"

The age of Alexander I. Macedon during the Persian and Peloponnesian wars. The development of opposing cultural perceptions between Macedonia and the city states of Southern Greece.

E-material: 14-15.

Wednesday, February 15

Greece in the 4th century BC

The aftermath of the Peloponnesian Wars and the age of shifting hegemonies.

The rise of Sparta; the rise of Thebes. Ancient Macedon at the brink of collapse.

Sealey, 386-396, 404-410, 423-437;

E-material: 11-13.

Monday, February 20

The rise of Macedonia

The accession of Philip II. The early years of his reign (359-357 BC).

Hammond (1986), 533-541;

CAH, 723-736;

E-material 16.

Wednesday, February 22

The expansion of Macedon under Philip (357-346 BC)

The Social war, the third sacred war, the Olynthian war.

Hammond (1986), 542-551;

CAH, 736-751;

E-material 17.

Wednesday, March 1

The peace of Philocrates (346-338 BC)

The ever changing nature of the diplomatic and political relations between Macedon and the city states of Southern Greece.

Hammond (1986), 551-563;

CAH, 751-777;

Sealey, 469-494.

Friday, March 3

The battle of Chaeronia and its immediate aftermath

Hammond (1986), 563-570;

CAH, 777-789; E-material 18, 19.

Monday, March 6

The establishment of Macedonian rule/supremacy over Greece

Hammond (1986), 570-576;

E-material, 23-25.

March 7-11

Field trip to the Peloponnese (itinerary: Appendix I)

Monday, March 13

MID-TERM EXAM

Wednesday, March 15

The Accession of Alexander

The prevailing political and economic conditions in Macedon and Greece at the time of his accession. The elimination of all internal political opposition.

Greek perceptions towards the new king of Macedon. Sources for the reign of Alexander: an evaluation.

Hammond (1986), 598-601;

Hammond (1980), 1-18.

March 17-18

Field trip to Delphi (itinerary at Appendix II)

Monday, March 20

Challenges from the North: Alexander's campaigns in the Lower Danube area.

The submission of the Triballi, Getae and the Illyrian tribal confederations; the expansion of the Macedonian state.

Hammond (1980), 45-57;

CYA Syllabus

E-material 26.

Wednesday, March 22

Alexander and Greece

The Greek "uprising" of 335 BC. The formation of an anti-Macedon alliance. The major players. Alexander's lightning campaign in Greece. The destruction of Thebes and its immediate aftermath.

Hammond (1980), 58-65;

CAH, 794-797.

Monday, March 27

The war preparations for the expedition against Persia

Facts, numbers and objectives.

Class handouts.

March 28 – April 1

Field trip to Northern Greece (itinerary: Appendix III)

Monday, April 3

Alexander in the East; The Conquest of Asia Minor (Part I)

Alexander crosses into Asia Minor. The strategic objectives. The battle of the Granicus River. The seizure of the Greek city states in Asia Minor and the shifting of the balance of power in Alexander's favor.

Hammond (1980), 66-82;

Hammond (1986), 601-611;

E-Material 29.

Wednesday, April 5

The Conquest of Asia minor (Part II)

The battle of Issus and its aftermath. The conquest of Anatolia and the establishment of Macedonian rule.

Hammond (1980), 92-122;

E-Material 29

Wednesday, April 19

The King of Egypt - The Son of Ammon

The conquest of Egypt. The journeys of Alexander in the Egyptian heartland. Meeting Divinity: His visit to the Oracle of Ammon at Siwah.

Hammond (1986), 611-614; Hammond (1980), 123-132.

Monday, April 24

"Persia Capta"

Alexander in Mesopotamia. The battle at Gaugamela. The dissolution of the Persian empire and Alexander's proclamation as "King of Asia".

Hammond (1986), 611-620;

Hammond (1980), 132-150;

CAH 805-818.

Wednesday, April 26

CYA Syllabus

The Journey Continues

Alexander's offensives in Afghanistan. The conquest of Bactria. The crossing of the Indus river and the attempted conquest of India.

Hammond (1986), 621-34;

Hammond, (1980), 190-220;

D.B. Nagle, The Cultural Context of Alexander's Speech at Opis, TAPA 126 (1996), p. 151-172.

Wednesday, May 3

The Final chapter

The last years of Alexander's reign. The conquest of Southern Asia and the long journey home.

Hammond (1980), 221-245.

Monday, May 8

Alexander the Great: A fitting Epitaph

The achievement of Alexander: An assessment (Discussion in Class).

Hammond (1980), 246-273;

Hammond (1986), 634-642;

E-Material 30

Wednesday, May 10

Class Review.

Final Exam: TBA

Appendix I

Peloponnese

- Mycenae – Tuesday, March 7
- Pallamidi Castle (Nauplio) - Tuesday, March 7
- Ancient Nemea (site and museum) – Wednesday, March 8
- Epidaurus (site and museum) - Wednesday, March 8
- Mystras – Thursday, March 9
- Ancient Messene – Friday, March 10
- Olympia (site and museum) – Saturday, March 11

Appendix II

Delphi

- Ossios Loukas Monastery – Friday, March 17
- Delphi (site and museum) – Saturday, March 18

Appendix III

Northern Greece

- Ambelakia Village, Schwartz Mansion – Tuesday, March 28

CYA Syllabus

- Roman & Byzantine Thessaloniki (The Galerius Complex, the Ancient Agora, Aghia Sofia church, Acheiropoiitos church, Agios Demetrios church) – Wednesday, March 29
- Pella (site and museum), Lefkadia Tombs, Mieza – Thursday, March 30
- Dion (site and museum) – Friday, March 31
- Vergina (Aigai & Tombs) – Saturday, April 1
- Thermopylae – Saturday, April 1