Alexander and Hellenistic Greece
Key Terms to Remember

- Cynics
- Epicureans
- Gordian Knot
- Hellenistic
- Imperium
- Skeptics
- Stoics
Hellenistic Greece: Overview

• The Rise of Macedonia
  – Macedonia: Not a Greek *polis*, but King Philip greatly admires Greek culture
  – Philip steps into chaotic situation to conquer Greece
  – Plans to launch an invasion of Persia

• Alexander Conquers the World
  – Alexander seeks to spread Greek culture, *imperium* throughout Persian Empire
  – Greeks sweep through Persia and Egypt, invade India before turning back around

• The Hellenistic Empire
  – Mixture of Greek and Middle Eastern cultures
  – Assimilation of non-Greeks into Greek Empire

• The End of the Adventure
  – Death of Alexander
  – Inheritances; division of Empire; legacies
The Greek Situation, ca. 340 BCE
Alexander of Macedon

- Studied with Aristotle
- Greatly admired Greek culture
- Ascended throne of Macedon/Greece after father’s assassination
- Like father: wants to conquer Persia
- Unlike father: wants more

Greek coin with likeness of Alexander I; the odd horns would later cause him to be called a demon in the Qu’ran
A Good Start...

The Battle of the Granicus, 334 BCE

Pella: Macedonian Greek capital city

The Battle of the Granicus, 334 BCE
330 B.C.E.: Takes Persepolis, defeats Persians
329 B.C.E.: Invades Hindu Kush, land of Indians
327 B.C.E.: Conquers Bactria, marries Roxane
326 B.C.E.: Forward march halted by troop mutiny
Building Greek Cities in the East

The Hellenization of Asia
- Major Greek cities founded before 336 B.C.
- Greek cities founded 336 B.C. – 1 B.C.

Map showing the location of Greek cities in the East.
Marrying Greek and Eastern cultures... literally

- Alexander set precedent for intermarrying with conquered peoples with 327 B.C.E. marriage to Roxane (at left)
- February 324 B.C.E.: Mass wedding of 91 Greek officers, 9,000 soldiers to local women
Alexandria, Egypt

• Center of all Hellenistic culture.
  – Thriving commerce
  – Mixture of eastern/western cultures melded
Hellenistic Culture in Alexandria

- Hellenism
  - A new Hellenistic culture emerged over time
    - Added Egyptian, Persian, and Indian influences
- Alexandria was the Hellenistic capital
  - International trade flourished there
  - Magnificent monuments dominated the city
    - Museum of Alexandria
    - Alexandrian Library
# Hellenistic Systems of Thought

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Skeptics</th>
<th>Epicureans</th>
<th>Stoics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What to do?</td>
<td>Accept it, don’t try to change things.</td>
<td>Enjoy yourself — drink, sex, food, entertainment.</td>
<td>Accept it, but never stop trying to achieve harmony.</td>
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Hellenistic Philosophy

Skeptics or Cynics (Diogenes)
– ignore social conventions & avoid luxuries
– citizens of the world
– live a humble, simple life

Stoicism (Zeno)
– Live virtuously in harmony
– Human desires, power, $$$ = dangerous!

Epicureanism (Epicurus)
– Main goal of humans is to achieve harmony of body/mind
– You don’t have to give up worldly pleasures—enjoy them in moderation!
– Eat, drink & be merry!
Hellenistic Science & Tech

• Astronomy: Aristarchus v. Ptolemy
  – Aristarchus = earth is 300x larger than Earth & heliocentric theory
  – Ptolemy = geocentric theory

– Eratosthenes = circumference of earth is between 28-29,000 mi. Actual circumference is 24,860!
Hellenistic Mathematics

• Geometry: Euclid
  – *The Elements*

• Physics: Archimedes
  – 3.14……. Importance?
  – Law of the lever
  – Compound pulley
Hellenistic Art

- Qualities: Emotion & motion

vs.

[Images of Hellenistic sculptures]
Hellenistic Art

vs.

[Image of Hellenistic art statues]
The Death of Alexander

- Alexander died in 323 B.C.E., just as he was getting ready to invade Arabia and then Carthage.
- Causes are unclear – poison? Malaria? Alcoholism?
- Probably at least indirectly result of campaigning for thirteen straight years.
The Carving-up of Alexander’s Empire

Antigonus

Ptolemy

Seleucus

India
Legacies of Hellenistic Empire; Summary

- Alexander’s empire the next inheritor of ancient Middle Eastern empires
- But fuses Greek and Eastern influences to create a unique culture
- Dream of conquering “known world” taken up by Romans
- Divided Hellenistic successor kingdoms not strong enough to resist Roman advance
The “Known” World – 3c B.C.E.