Hellenistic Civilization
324 - 100 BC
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In 359 BC, Philip II became king, and he turned Macedonia into the chief power in the Greek world.
Philip was a great admirer of Greek culture, and he wanted to unite all of Greece under Macedonian rule.
Fearing Philip, Athens allied with a number of other Greek city-states to fight the Macedonians.
In 338, the Macedonians crushed the Greeks.
After quickly gaining control over most of the Greek city-states, Philip turned to Sparta.

He sent them a message, "You are advised to submit without further delay, for if I bring my army into your land, I will destroy your farms, slay your people, and raze your city."

Their reply was "if", both Philip and his son, Alexander, would leave the Spartans alone.

By 336 BC, Philip was preparing to invade the Persian Empire when he was assassinated.

The murder occurred during the celebration of his daughter’s marriage, while the king was entering the theater, he was killed by the captain his bodyguards.
Alexander the Great

- Alexander III was born in 356 BC.
- When Alexander was 13, his father Philip chose Aristotle as his tutor, and in return for teaching Alexander, Philip agreed to rebuild Aristotle's hometown which Philip had razed.
- At age 16, Alexander's education under Aristotle ended, and Philip began taking Alexander on his military campaigns to prepare him for military leadership.
- When Philip was assassinated, Alexander became king at the age of 20, and he quickly consolidated power by eliminating rivals.
Young Alexander
News of Philip's death roused many Greek city-states into revolt, including Athens and Thebes.

Thebes decided to fight, but the Theban resistance was ineffective, and Alexander razed the city to the ground and enslaved its inhabitants.

After advancing further south into Greece with his army, Athens sued for peace and Alexander pardoned the rebels.

In 334 BC, Alexander invaded the Persian Empire with 37,000 Macedonian and Greek troops, with the cavalry playing a crucial role, and quickly took control of Syria, Palestine, and Egypt.
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Alexander Mosaic
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Alexander chased Darius III throughout the Persian Empire before he was stabbed by his own men.

Alexander recovered Darius' body, and had him buried next to his predecessors in a regal funeral.
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The Hellenization of Asia

- Major Greek cities founded before 336 B.C.
- Greek cities founded 336 B.C. – 1 B.C.
During his conquest of the Persian Empire, Alexander founded several more cities named Alexandria, 20 in total.

He married a Persian wife, had his soldiers take Persian wives, and kept local rulers in place in order to unite and control his empire.

Alexander considered non-Greeks as equals.

Alexander spread Greek culture to non-Greek lands, and this fusion of cultures created what is called the Hellenistic Civilization.

Hellenistic means “to imitate Greeks”.

Even with his accomplishments, Alexander was not content and continued moving East, crossing the Indus River into India.
After defeating the armies of India with their terrifying war elephants, Alexander’s troops refused to go any further.

Alexander relented and returned home, making the disastrous decision to lead his troops through the desert in southern Iran.

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Alexander returned to Babylon and planned more campaigns, but in 332 BC, he died from wounds, fever, and too much alcohol at 32.

Alexander earned the epithet "the Great" due to his unparalleled military success, having never lost a battle, despite typically being outnumbered.
Hellenistic Kingdoms

Soon after Alexander’s death, his generals engaged in a struggle for power that divided Alexander’s empire into military monarchies.

Eventually four Hellenistic kingdoms emerged; the Antigonid dynasty in Macedonia and central Greece, the Ptolemaic dynasty in Egypt based at Alexandria; the Seleucid dynasty in Syria and Mesopotamia based at Antioch; and the Attalid dynasty in Anatolia based at Pergamum.

Many of the Greek city-states, such as Athens, regained their independence, until the Romans arrived.
Alexander had intended to fuse Macedonians, Greeks, Persians, and others together, but the monarchs that succeeded him formed a new ruling class of only Macedonians and Greeks.

Hellenistic rulers encouraged Greek colonists to settle in Southwest Asia, which provided army recruits, administrators, and workers.

Architects, engineers, and artists were in high demand in new Greek cities, and helped spread Greek culture during the **Hellenistic Era**.

The city of Alexandria, Egypt, became the largest city in the Mediterranean and remained Egypt's capital for nearly a thousand years.
The **Lighthouse of Alexandria** was a tower built between 280 and 247 BC on the island of Pharos to guide seamen into port.

It was one of the original **Seven Wonders of the Ancient World**, and was for many centuries among the tallest man-made structures on Earth.
Plan of Alexandria c. 30 BCE
according to Otto Puchstein (c. 1890)
Scale 1:100,000

1. Palace harbor
2. Antirrhodus I.
3. Timonium
4. Harbor of Cibotus
5. Ancient mouth of the Nile canal
6. Present Nile canal
7. Serapeum and Pompey’s Pillar
8. Temple of Neptune
9. Nile canal

Portus Eunostus (Old Port)
Gate of the moon

Great Harbor
Lochias
Regia
Jewish Quarter
Gate of the Sun (Canopia Gate)
Brachium
Dromos
RHAKOTIS
Museum

Myrmex
Pharos lighthouse
Theodastadium
Theatre

Lake Mareotis
Lighthouse of Alexandria
Seven Wonders of the Ancient World

- Great Pyramid of Giza (2584 BC - 226 BC)
- Hanging Gardens of Babylon (c.600 BC - after 1 AD)
- Temple of Artemis at Ephesus (c.550 BC - 262 AD)
- Statue of Zeus at Olympia (435 BC - c.450 AD)
- Mausoleum at Halicarnassus (351 BC - from 1150 AD until 1494 AD)
- Colossus of Rhodes (292 BC - 654 AD)
- Lighthouse of Alexandria (280 BC - from 1303 AD until 1480 AD)
Colossus of Rhodes
Hanging Gardens of Babylon
Statue of Zeus at Olympia
Mausoleum at Halicarnassus
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The Ancient Library of Alexandria was the largest and most significant library of the ancient world, containing knowledge from all over the known world.
Bibliotheca Alexandrina
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The Hellenistic world would eventually be conquered piece by piece by the Romans.
Hellenistic Philosophy

- There were also contributions to art, science, and philosophy during the Hellenistic Era.
- During the Hellenistic Era, two philosophical thoughts emerged, Epicureanism and Stoicism.
- Epicureans believed that humans are free to follow self-interest as a basic motivating force.
- They believed to be free from emotional turmoil, people had to free themselves from public activity, except concerning friendship.
- Stoics believed happiness could be achieved only when people gained inner peace by living in harmony with God, and that public service was noble. A real Stoic was a good citizen.
The most famous scientist of the Hellenistic Era was Archimedes, who contributed to geometry with his work with spheres and cylinders, and established the value of the mathematical constant pi.

He supposedly discovered specific gravity by observing the water he displaced in a bathtub.

He became so excited by his realization that he jumped out of the bathtub and ran home naked shouting “Eureka!” which means I have found it.
Hellenistic Art

- During the Hellenistic time period, kings were willing to spend their own money to beautify their cities.
- Kings and wealthy citizens patronized sculptors.
- Literally thousands of statues were erected in towns and cities all over the Hellenistic world.
- Hellenistic sculptors maintained the technical skill of the classical period, but they moved away from the idealism of the classical period to an art form that was emotional and realistic.
Braganza Brooch
Incense Burner
3rd Century BC
Winged Victory of Samothrace
Venus de Milo
Marble Head of a Veiled Woman
Old Woman
Drunken Old Woman
Veiled and Masked Dancer
Sleeping Eros
Dancing Youth
The Youth From Antikythera
Jockey of Artemision
The End