

## Prologue

### ***A fantastic plan***

Once upon a time, there was a Greek king. Well, actually he wasn't a real Greek. He ruled a kingdom a bit north of the Greek cities, and his people spoke their own tongue and had their own customs. In the eyes of the Greeks they were savage and primitive, but the nobles of the little kingdom had managed to learn the Greek language and tried to imitate at least some aspects of the Greek culture, which as we know was very sophisticated.

The sad thing about the Greeks was their lack of unity. Each city was its own tiny state and the cities were always at loggerheads. Not even when the Persian Empire had attacked Greece (the Persian invasions took place between c. 490-480 BCE), and threatened to devour all of the cities, did the Greeks manage to unite more than temporarily – and grudgingly – and after their famous victory against the Persians, the cities returned to their internal quarrels again. Athens became the leader during the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, but Athens was defeated by Sparta in the Peloponnesian war (431-404 BCE). Shortly after, Sparta was defeated by Thebes, but in the end the incessant wars weakened all of the cities.

Our king was a very ambitious man with mighty plans for his small kingdom. If anybody should be able to unite the Greek states, this man had to be an outsider, an outsider with the power to suppress those cities who would no doubt oppose the union. Our king had a forceful army, so why not him? And once the Greeks had been united under his banner, who knows what could be achieved? The shadow of the Persian Empire still loomed over the Greeks, a dark menace in the east, even though its kings were exhausted by civil wars and other setbacks. A massive campaign against the Persians might well succeed, for the Greek warfare was state of art in the ancient world. Perhaps the king could reach even India, if only he managed to unite the Greek cities?

Unfortunately, the king never got as far as to sort things up in his own kingdom, for when he was about to lead the great games in honour of the Oracle of Delphi, he was murdered by some of his own noblemen for the sake of some old grudge. It was now up to his son, Alexander, to fulfil the fantastic plan and become the Great King of an enormous empire, the like of which the world had never seen. Was it really possible?

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Actually, no.

Alexander was murdered by his own wife around 359 BCE, after a reign fraught with cruelty, and never managed to realise the ambitions of his father Jason (c.380-370 BCE). Their kingdom in Thessaly to the north of Greece soon disappeared with them. Enough about them, and enough trick questions!<sup>1</sup> Now for the real Tabasco!

### ***A fantastic plan part II***

However; not far north of Thessaly there was another kingdom, by the name of Macedonia, a kingdom so similar to Thessaly that the entire description in the previous paragraph could be said to be valid for Macedonia as well (read it again, if you wish). Long a loose federation of semi-tribal petty states, Macedonia had only recently been united by a king named Philip II (359-336 BCE), a man who was just as ambitious as Jason. Philip II then became the man who realised the first part of Jason's plan and managed to unite the Greek cities as well, using a well-balanced mixture of force and cunning. Even Athens and Sparta were defeated and had to acknowledge Macedonian suzerainty.

After this, Philip prepared the second phase, the great campaign against the Persians. The conditions looked promising indeed: the Persian king Artaxerxes IV was a weak ruler who could barely control his vassals, and Philip II had developed the Macedonian army into an unprecedented war-machine. Building upon the massive phalanx, a dense formation of heavy infantry carrying long spears in perfect marching order, he had added a powerful cavallery and light, swift auxiliary infantry. The Macedonians were ready to strike.

However, Philip II never managed to conquer the Persian Empire – as you certainly know. In the year 336 BCE he was murdered as well, just as he was about to announce his plan to the delegates of the Greek cities. The assassin was a young officer by the name of Pausanias, a former amorous liaison of Philip, but the suspected mastermind behind the plot was the king's ex-wife Olympias, who had suffered a deadly insult when Philip – obviously a man of a great and manifold sexual appetite – had cast her off in favour of a younger Macedonian woman by the name of Cleopatra. The personal insult aside, Olympias also feared that Philip would disown her son – who was also named Alexander, by the way – as heir to the throne and replace her with a child of Cleopatra.

However, after the murder Alexander succeeded his father as king. Alexander was a promising young man who had been tutored by the philosopher Aristotle and thought very highly of himself. After having placed the reliable officer Antipater as chancellor in Macedonia, young Alexander left for Persia to fulfil the fantastic plan at last.

# 1. The heirs of Alexander

## *The greatest of all kings*



*Ill: The conquests of Alexander (darker yellow). (Wikipedia)*

Thirteen years later, in 323 BCE, Alexander lay on his deathbed in Babylon. His career had indeed been brilliant. Soon after his accession to the Macedonian throne, he had attacked the western part of the Persian Empire, its dominions in Asia Minor (the Turkish peninsula) and Syria. The campaign was a massive success. None of the armies gathered by Darius III, the last Persian king, had been able to check the Macedonian advances, and in the aftermaths of his great victory of Issos in 333 BCE, Alexander took a detour to the Persian province of Egypt and crowned himself as son of the Sun-god, cheered to the echo by the demotics. He also founded the first of the many Alexandrias which were to be raised all throughout his empire.

Having done so, he headed east for the Persian heartland. In the great battle of Gaugamela in 331 BCE the main Persian army suffered a terrible defeat, and Darius III himself fled and was killed by treason shortly thereafter. Alexander could enter the Persian capital of Persepolis in Iran, and during the drunken celebration party the city was burnt to the ground, allegedly a suggestion of the courtesan Thais, the most beautiful woman of the era. This was a revenge for the Persian destruction of Athens – one and a half century before, indeed – but better late than ever, Alexander seems to have thought.

### Jens Jakobsson Alexander's Heirs (sample)

He desperately wanted to see himself as Greek and champion of Greek interests, even though he in fact belonged to a people who had subjugated the Greeks. After the arson, Alexander marched further east towards the vast outlands of the Persian Empire in what is now Afghanistan; after long and desperate wars he managed to subdue its inhabitants and headed for India. There he defeated a king named Porus and was given war elephants as a tribute.

It was by the banks of the Indus that he was struck by the worst setback of his life; the Macedonian soldiers who had followed him across half the world refused to cross the river, and thus Alexander's great plan to conquer the entire world was foiled. And good riddance, one must say. He returned to Persia in a dejected mood, and well there he married off his soldiers to native women – he wedded a Bactrian princess named Roxane for his own part – thus preparing a fusion between the Greek/Macedonian population and the Persians to one giant empire. This plan was even more ambitious than the military conquest that once had been planned by Jason of Thessaly, for the Greeks and the Persians were utterly different.

To name but a single difference: the Persian king allowed himself to be worshipped as a god by his subjects, but to a Greek this was *hubris*, presumption, the worst sin a mortal man could commit. When Alexander demanded divine worship he was met with scepticism in his own quarters. As he wandered back west he continued to found cities and reform his vast state, but he felt disappointed and empty: the conquests had been the purpose of his life and now they were finished for the time being. As a boy he had cried at the thought of the stars, which were too distant for him to conquer.

The successes of Alexander were fabulous. They were of course facilitated by the political situation of his age, but nobody except a genius could have accomplished what he did. His soldiers loved him, even though they were not willing to follow him to India. This is not a book about Alexander – there are so many of them already written – but nevertheless I shall quote a single anecdote, which to me shows what an extraordinary leader he was.



*Ill: Alexander the Great as young Heracles, wearing a lion skin / Zeus with eagle. Tetradrachm from Babylonia, struck by Seleukos. Courtesy of CNGcoins.com auction 235, Lot: 233.*

On their march home from Indus the army marched through the Iranian deserts, and since the terrain was unknown to them, the supplies of water ran out. Alexander sent out scouts to see if there were any reserves, and finally one of them returned with a single helmet, which he had managed to fill with water, and offered it to the king. Alexander took the helmet, only to pour out its contents into the sand. *'That is too little for so many to share.'*<sup>2</sup>

The troops managed to return home safely, but Alexander was soon struck by a fever and his condition worsened steadily. Towards the end his veterans were brought in to bid him farewell; he was so weak that he could hardly speak anymore. His last action was to transfer his signet ring to the general Perdiccas, and when Perdiccas asked him for whom it was meant Alexander whispered: *'The worthiest'*. He was 32 years old.

### ***The confusion***

For the Macedonian and Greek<sup>3</sup> soldiers the death of their king was a blow as if the sun had been blotted out from the sky. Alexander was indispensable, and the discord and confusion was noticeable already during the first councils after his death.

Perdiccas could have taken Alexander's signet ring for all he wanted – even if he was accepted as head of the council he was not accepted as the king's successor. There were two candidates for that post and none of them was any good. The first was Philip III, also called Arrhidaeus, who was Alexander's half-brother and a grown-up, but he was generally seen as a weak and feeble man, and the other possible candidate was still resting in the womb of the princess Roxane. Philip III was the candidate of the common foot-soldiers, but their attempt to rebel was crushed, along with their leaders – under the feet of the war-elephants. With great effort, the Macedonians managed to avoid a full-scale civil war, and unity was restored by means of a truly barbaric ritual – a dog was cut in half and buried to symbolize the end of the schism. An agreement was reached: the throne would be shared, should Roxane bear a son – which she indeed did a few months later. The boy was christened Alexander IV<sup>4</sup>. Neither he nor Philip III would ever become more than puppet rulers in the hands of various generals, but for some years the illusion of concord was kept alive in the empire, and the Macedonians maintained the military hegemony.

Who, then, were the leading generals, those who were called the *Diadochs*, the successors? Perdiccas has already been introduced; he was chief commander of the main army and wanted the status of regent, though he was rarely obeyed. Antipater was still governor back in Macedonia, where Alexander's mother Olympias and the king Philip III lived, and his advanced age and good reputation earned him the status of a steward of sorts. Neither had Antigonus *Monophthalmos*, the One-eyed, fought in the main army; he was the governor of southern Asia Minor, controlling the lines of supply between Persia

and the Macedonia. The general Ptolemy, called Lagus after his father, was appointed *satrap* in Egypt (satraps were the governors of the Persian Empire). Another general was Lysimachus, who became satrap in Thrace (current Bulgaria) and northern Asia Minor. The general Eumenes of Cardia was unusual in that he was an ethnic Greek, and a self-made man to that – his father had been a chariot-driver (the other generals belonged to the Macedonian strata of warrior nobles). Eumenes was one of the most loyal followers of Perdiccas.

Of somewhat less importance for the time being was Seleucus, son of an Antiochus who had been a general of Philip II, and a woman called Laodice. Seleucus had distinguished himself as a leader for the crack regiment called *the Silver Shields* but was headhunted by Perdiccas for the office of *chiliarch*, one of his closest henchmen. Seleucus had been in India and fought bravely when Alexander's army for the first time had encountered war-elephants. He had also been among those officers who had allegedly waked in the temple of Serapis during those frightful hours before Alexander's death<sup>5</sup>.

Civil wars broke out almost immediately. Perdiccas granted Eumenes the Greek the provinces of Cappadocia and Armenia, which today are a part of eastern Turkey. However, Alexander had never conquered these provinces from Persia, and they were still in the hands of Persian satraps. Perdiccas ordered Antigonus the One-eyed to conquer the areas, but Antigonus bluntly refused and they remained in Persian hands.

In similar fashion, a province of northern Media used the Macedonian discord to head for independence. A Persian, the Greek version of whose name was Atropates, created a kingdom called Media Atropatene, and thus made himself immortal in the geography books: the region's name has now mutated into Azerbajdzjan. Several small states emerged in western Asia Minor as well, and the cities of Greece made an effort to throw off the Macedonian yoke and regain their old independence. Their feeble military resources were however no match for the Macedonians and they were soon defeated by Antipater. One of the leaders behind the insurrection was the well-renowned Athenian orator Demosthenes, who always had been a staunch defendant of Greek freedom from Macedonia; after the defeat he was forced to commit suicide. This was the last effort ever by Athens to regain its position as Greek leader, a position which had been lost in the Peloponnesian War against Sparta some eighty years earlier, but the time was long gone when Greek cities could act as great powers. Athens would become an academic small-town, honoured for its philosophers and beautiful architecture but without any political influence.

By and large, Alexander's empire was kept together. The Persian military organisation had been centralised, and no rebel had the capability to muster troops strong enough to stand up against the Macedonian army. Most satraps had been replaced by Alexander's men, who now controlled the different fractions of the vast empire and its resources.

### ***Alexander's funeral games***

While Alexander's life ranks amongst the most well known periods of history – among historians and laymen alike – the time after the king's death is an obscure one. Few authors have found the endless struggle between the generals worthy of description, and even fewer have found the time to describe them in anything but negative terms. Swedish historian Alf Henrikson even describes the period as '*the history-less time*'<sup>6</sup> and states that the chronicles are blood-curdling, yet uninteresting: it was just a question of which bandit would end up on top.

There may be some substance to this. While traditionally conflicts are rooted in frictions between neighbouring people – or at least neighbouring states – the Diadoch wars seem to exist in a vacuum, independent of boundaries, having little to do with the ordinary life of the many countries they afflicted. As we soon will see, one general assembles a 'Greek' army in India, while a second attacks a third in Egypt, and a fourth ravages the Mediterranean ocean. The civil population suffered from the wars like they always do – but was it really any of their business who lost and who won?

The lacklustre descriptions are partly the fault of the ancient historians – as Henrikson fairly concedes. Most authors lived during Roman times, when the Hellenistic period was frowned upon, in much the same way as the Middle Ages have been denigrated. The Diadoch wars were fascinating conflicts that shaped the world for centuries to come, but this book will only give a brief glimpse of them. Its main topic is the Seleucid Empire, which emerged only during the later part of the chaotic time after Alexander's death<sup>7</sup>.

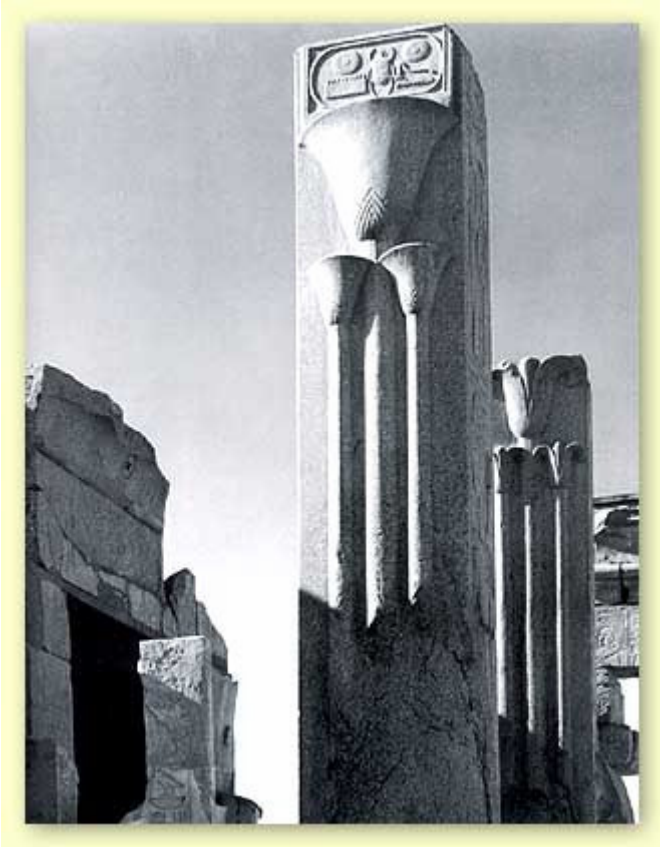
Ptolemy was the first to jump ship. He made himself independent in Egypt, the wealthiest of all the provinces. Egypt was a most old-fashioned country, where the traditional Egyptian religion had always been a vehicle to promote the legitimacy of the country's rulers, a fact that Ptolemy played on by portraying himself as the new Pharaoh, the protector of the great Nile river. He took care of Alexander's mummy as well, building it a mausoleum in Alexandria, where the dead king was worshipped as a god, in a fashion that was considered both blasphemous and vulgar by the more enlightened among the Greeks. Needless to say, Perdiccas would have none of this. He left Eumenes the Greek to control whatever areas were still subject to him in Asia Minor, and headed for Egypt with the main army. As he tried to cross the Nile everything went wrong: thousands of soldiers drowned in the effort. The night after the fiasco, Perdiccas was murdered in his tent by a gathering of his own officers, among them Seleucus, who became one of the leading Diadochs by means of this dishonest deed.



*Ill: This gold pentadrachm from Alexandria features the head-strong and exaggerated features of Ptolemy I, in a style typical for Alexander's generals. Reverse of eagle. Courtesy of CNGcoins.com, CNG 75, Lot:457.*

The formal leadership was now passed to the old Antipater, and during a conference in the Syrian city of Triparadeisus in 321 BCE satrapies were distributed among the adversaries of Perdiccas – Eumenes wisely stayed away. Seleucus was given Babylonia as his share, one of the most important regions. When it came to martial resources, he was however still a second rate power, and when the soldiers of Eumenes, who now claimed that he was the representative of the infant king Alexander IV, marched by Babylon, Seleucus could do little but to let them pass eastwards.

319 BCE saw the death of old Antipater, who was the last uniting force. With him ended even the illusion of unity and the grabbing and stabbing began in earnest, the period that ironically is called Alexander's funeral games. Alexander's mother Olympias made a bid for power, but her bloody purges of Antipater's friends turned public opinion against her and she was forced to flee temporarily to Epirus (in current Albania), to whose royal house she belonged.



*Ill: Eclecticism in Egypt. The top of the pillar was made for the Pharaoh Tuthmosis III, but by its base there is a monument, built by Ptolemy, dedicated to the poor Philip III. After the death of Alexander the Great, things quickly went downhill for his dynasty. (Jimmy Dunn, [www.touregypt.net](http://www.touregypt.net)).*

After some further rounds of bloodshed and intrigue, Antipater's position was inherited by his son Cassander, who took control over the feeble Philip III. Cassander was soon at loggerheads with the headstrong Olympias, who in the capacity of Alexander's mother held a singularly strong position for a woman in the patriarchal Macedonian society. She would be the first of many strong females in the Hellenistic courts, but her methods were ruthless. She murdered Alexander's widow, the poor princess Roxane, as well as Cynane, the daughter of Philip II, to name but two of her victims. In 316 BCE she considered Philip III a spent force. Assisted by Epirote troops she marched into Macedonia and killed the poor weak-willed king, along with his queen and several of Cassander's friends. These murders did however soon bring her own doom upon her. She was dethroned and captured by Cassander, and when the Macedonian soldiers were reluctant to kill the woman who had borne Alexander, Cassander called for the relatives of her many victims. They were more than willing.

Antigonus the One-eyed was now given the task to annihilate Eumenes, which led to a series of bloody wars, because Eumenes was a skilled *strategos* and an even more skilled propaganda-maker. On one occasion, shady characters infiltrated Eumenes' camp and gave his soldiers leaflets (figuratively speaking, they were rather inscribed pot-shards)

promising a nice sum of gold for the head of Eumenes – preferably delivered to Antigonus without the body attached. Eumenes countered this by rallying all his soldiers: then he complimented them that none of them had yielded to the temptation of exchanging a noble cause for blood money. It was he himself who had distributed the leaflets to test the fidelity of the soldiers – at least that was what he said – and he was delighted to find that they were all trustworthy.

As Eumenes was of Greek origin, he was constantly questioned and threatened by the chauvinistic Macedonians in his army. One trick that he resorted to was to always borrow money from his officers – in that way he effectively neutralised their intention to have him assassinated! During an especially turbulent period, Eumenes restored his authority by claiming that he had had a dream about Alexander, and let the council be held as if the dead king still held the chair, with his regalia lying on the empty throne. This appeased the superstitious Macedonians, who could not imagine that a man could fake such serious matters.

The last battle between Eumenes and Antigonus the One-eyed was set in Persia in 316 BCE. Eumenes' trump card was the Silver shields, Alexander's aging veterans who had now spent decades in the field, and they crushed their opponents. On the other side of the battle field, Eumenes' army was defeated and Antigonus managed to plunder his camp. When the Silver Shields returned and heard about this they were devastated: their spoils (and wives) were their only reward for all their hardships, and they soon surrendered their Greek commander to Antigonus to get it back. Antigonus did not only kill Eumenes on the spot; he also dispersed the Silver Shields to remote frontier provinces and told their commanders to have them killed in dangerous expeditions. The Silver Shields had spent their lives fighting for the Macedonian cause, and this ungrateful treatment was a particularly nasty episode even in the dog-eat-dog world of the Diadochs. Antigonus was probably right not to take any chances, though: the Silver Shields had already betrayed their commander once.

With Eumenes dead, Antigonus the One-eyed was able to found a massive state in Asia Minor and Syria. Along with his son Demetrius *Poliorketes*, the Besieger, he became the most important general. Demetrius consequently belonged to the second generation of rulers, who sometimes go by the name of *epigones*, followers, a name that is now a derogative term for unoriginal copycats. The peculiar thing about Demetrius was his unwavering loyalty to his father, a most unusual feat among the Macedonians who were notorious for blood-curdling family tragedies. He was also known for his ceaseless energy, whether it came to battle or pleasures. His many affairs were notorious, and once when he lodged in Athens he stocked his harem in the Parthenon, a rather unsuitable move given that the temple was devoted to Athena, the goddess of chastity. Demetrius was however one of the first Hellenistic rulers to claim personal divinity, and as his god of choice was rather befittingly the wine-god Dionysius – who, just like Athena, was the child of Zeus – he claimed that as he was virtually living with his sister, he was in his right to do as he pleased<sup>8</sup>.

Demetrius' nickname referred to his skill in the art of sieges, which was developed to new standards by him and his engineers, and he was the master of the eastern Mediterranean for several years. The only city that he failed to conquer was Rhodes, where his siege-engines hammered in vain on the city walls for more than half a year. In celebration of this, the Rhodians built a thirty-meter high statue of the sun god, the Colossus of Rhodes, standing by the harbour, a torch ablaze in its raised hand. It probably looked a bit like a male version of the Statue of Liberty.



*Ill: Tetradrachm of the sea-king Demetrius Poliorcetes, horned as a symbol of his divine status, and with the ocean-god Poseidon on the reverse. Courtesy of CNGcoins.com. Auction 22: lot 78.*

After the death of Eumenes, several wars were waged between Antigonus the One-eyed, the leading general and the only one wishing to keep the empire united, and a coalition of other generals: Ptolemy, Lysimachus, Cassander and Seleucus. In 315 BCE, Seleucus was driven away from Babylonia when Antigonus started a major thrust eastwards. After a perilous flight through enemy territory, Seleucus reached Egypt, accompanied by his guard and carrying parts of the Babylonian treasury. Ptolemy gave him shelter, and soon Seleucus became his admiral and helped the Egyptian fleet to major successes. In 312, Ptolemy scored a victory against Antigonus at Gaza, and after this Seleucus rallied his guard and headed for Babylonia again accompanied by a hand-picked force. The struggles would continue around the Mediterranean, but we shall leave them to study a matter of much more interest: the birth of an empire.

### ***The building of the Seleucid Empire***

Though Seleucus had been driven away from Babylonia, his influence there had far from vanished. During the first years as a satrap he had shown his talents as an administrator – for if Alexander was the great conqueror Seleucus was indeed the great administrator – by building what today would be called a *network* comprehending Greeks as well as domestics. By a steady distribution of land and favours he granted himself a system of clients, who saw him as their benefactor and would support his return to Babylonia.

Seleucus main problem was his inferiority in men. He had only managed to rally slightly more than a thousand troops – the armies loyal to Antigonus were considerable larger – but his men were veterans, hardened by the campaigns of Alexander himself, and when the overwhelming odds made them hesitate, the historian Diodorus Siculus<sup>9</sup> claims that

### Jens Jakobsson Alexander's Heirs (sample)

Seleucus managed to shatter their doubts with a speech, yet another one of these decisive speeches which ancient historians loved to create for historical characters. Accordingly, Seleucus told his soldiers first that superiority in numbers was less important than superiority in skill and experience, and second that the soldiers should consider what the Gods and oracles said: on numerous occasions these had favoured Seleucus' cause. Among other things, an oracle had greeted him as '*King Seleucus*' and he himself had dreamt that Alexander had appointed him as his successor.

Whether it was due to the effects of this extraordinary speech, some stratagem, or the armed support of the local population remains uncertain, but it is a fact that Seleucus managed to take back the city of Babylon in 311 BCE and was able to gather a proper army. The next move was to neutralise the satrapies east of Babylonia, lest he would have had to fight a two-front war if Antigonos returned, as he surely would.

For Antigonos had purged even the eastern parts of the empire, even though his actual amount of power over the local commanders is unclear. The satraps Stasanor in Bactria (Afghanistan) and Tlepolemus in Carmania (central Iran) were for instance allowed to remain in their positions, since they had ruled well and the population favoured them – once more according to Diodorus Siculus. In fact Antigonos may not have had the resources to overthrow them, but instead settled for a pledge of allegiance to him. Anyway, the satrap in Media (western Iran) was one of Antigonos' henchmen by the name of Nicanor, but he did not have time to react before Seleucus crossed the river Tigris and launched a surprise attack on his army, still in its camp. The remainder of the troops, including Nicanor's Persian guards, had little choice but to side with Seleucus.

While Seleucus was gone Demetrius Poliorcetes marched eastwards with his army to recapture Babylonia. The Seleucid officer in charge was Patrocles, who was a skilled engineer, and he conjured up a desperate plan to stop his opponent: he flooded the irrigation canals and managed to delay Demetrius for some time, until he was recalled to the west by his father. New wars would follow, but Seleucus had now gathered enough fighting forces to meet Antigonos. The only source to describe the turn of events is a Babylonian calendar; the fighting seems to have been very intense and Antigonos' soldiers pillaged and burned the land as if it had been enemy territory, a circumstance which supports the theory that Seleucus indeed had a huge support in Babylonia. In a battle in 308 BCE Antigonos was finally defeated and pushed westwards<sup>10</sup>.

The year before, 309 BCE, saw the final blow to the illusion of a united empire when the thirteen-year-old Alexander IV was murdered in Macedonia by Cassander, who feared the king would grow to be a real ruler. The time was up for Alexander's family, the helpless victim of their own triumphs. Cleopatra, the sister of Alexander the Great, was murdered as well, and so was the king's natural son Heracles who never had taken part in the politics before but very briefly was crowned as king in Damascus. The only one left was Thessalonica, daughter of Philip II and the queen of Cassander, who had the city Thessalonica (today's Saloniki) named in her honour.

The death of the young king made the generals, who until now had pretended to rule their dominions as satraps, declare themselves kings. Seleucus crowned himself as Seleucus I Nicator, the Victorious, in Babylon in 305 or 304 BCE – his successors would use his reign as the start of a new chronology, the Seleucid era, which was to be used in chronicles and astronomical calendars for centuries. The Syrian church did not abandon it until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the era started in 312 BCE already, referring to the year when Seleucus took back Babylon<sup>11</sup>, and the time of his coronation was antedated seven years as well, in order to make his kingdom seem older – and thus worthier – than those of the other Diadochs.

The control of Babylonia gave Seleucus a key position. Even though all Greek satraps had done their utmost to gain support from the respective native populations, the base of their power was still Greeks and Macedonians. Many Greek-speakers had migrated to the new cities that had been built all throughout the Diadoch states, creating a powerful elite, which made up the backbone of all armies<sup>12</sup>. The central position of Seleucus kingdom gave him the power over all trade and transport routes between east and west. Every general east of him faced the uncomfortable choice between allegiance to Seleucus and to risk being cut off entirely from their homeland.

### ***Seleucus in India***

Seleucus spent the following years to restore central authority in the eastern parts of the Persian Empire. Some satraps were replaced; others remained in the power after they had acknowledged the suzerainty of Seleucus. To the northeast, several vast provinces made up the outback of the empire. Sogdiana and Ferghana were the remotest – they extended northwards over a large chunk of the Asian steppes and eastwards perhaps as far as the Tarim Basin in what is now western China, but they were barely maintained outposts. Bactria in northern Afghanistan was a far more fertile territory of huge economic importance – Bactria was referred to as the land of a thousand cities, though several villages were probably included to make up such a high figure. The lands south and east of Bactria were however less ‘civilised’, and Alexander had encountered severe difficulties in Afghanistan: many of its inhabitants were fierce, semi-nomadic tribes who had only been vaguely associated with the Persian Empire and resisted him for years in the difficult terrain.

Seleucus took the task of protection against nomad raids very seriously, and built a number of fortresses and walled cities. It is peculiar that the Greek population in fact seems to have been numerous in Bactria, whereas Persia and Babylonia only held the occasional Greek-speaking cities. (Most Greeks who left their homeland after Alexander's conquests kept to the well-known shores of the Mediterranean – most Hellenistic settlements were situated in Asia Minor, Syria and Egypt.) And the Bactrian colony was made up ethnic Greeks, not Macedonians.

A possible background is that Alexander had left a force of ten thousand (ethnically) Greek soldiers behind in this remote corner of the Persian Empire, because he did not trust them as much as his Macedonian soldiers – after all, Philip II had conquered Greece

and there was still much resentment between the two ethnic groups. The stranded soldiers had made several attempts to march home again, but the Macedonian generals had prevented this by force, and the remainders eventually settled for good in Bactria. But since these cannot have been more numerous than five or six thousand, this may not have been the only explanation. One hypothesis is that the Persian kings, whose Greek subjects (in Asia Minor) often caused difficulties, used to deport Greeks to the other far end of their empire – sort of an ancient Siberia, though with a far more enjoyable climate<sup>13</sup>. There are unfortunately few remaining sources to support this extraordinary theory.

As for Seleucus, he managed to restore the borders in the northeast, after which he turned south. There were the satrapies Arachosia and Gedrosia in today's southern Afghanistan and Pakistan, and also the Indian<sup>14</sup> provinces, which had not belonged to the Persian Empire but had been independent small kingdoms, some of which Alexander had conquered. The limit of Alexander's empire was at the eastern tributary of Indus, so the better part of Punjab belonged to the Greeks. However, our knowledge of their doings here is all but non-existent, which is quite typical: the farther east, the scarcer the sources become. Most of the ancient authors did, as mentioned in the prologue, live west of the Seleucid Empire. Due to this, our understanding of the Hellenistic age has a certain Mediterranean bias. Seemingly all the wars were waged mainly in the west, where all the important persons lived as well. In reality, the vast provinces that once made up the eastern part of the Persian Empire were crucial to Seleucid power.

There are signs that indicate a flourishing Greek culture as far east Punjab at this time, even though Greek political influence there was fading fast. Alexander's wars in India had been fraught with massacres and atrocities, and his commandants could probably count on little local support. The last of Alexander's officers to maintain himself in the Indian territories may have been a certain Eudamus, whose resources were such that he was able to assist Eumenes of Cardia with 125 elephants, but when Eumenes lost, Eudamus perished as well: he was killed by Antigonos the One-eyed in 316 BCE<sup>15</sup>. A sovereign named Sophytes was probably later than Eudamus: he struck coins with Greek legends in Afghanistan or Punjab, but the sources unfortunately make no mention of him at all.

Sophytes may well have been one of the more important Diadochs, and obviously there were people fluent in Greek among those who used his coins. Greek inscriptions were also made by those who may have ousted Sophytes, for at the time when Seleucus arrived in the Punjab – possibly in 306 BCE – a new great power was in charge there.



*Ill: Tetradrachm with head of Sophytes / cock. Courtesy of CNGcoins.com. CNG 72:1015.*

A king by the name of Chandragupta had united the Indian petty kingdoms and founded the Maurya Empire. The reign of the Mauryan kings was a heyday for northern India: the kings enjoy a good reputation as fair and peaceful regents among Indian historians, though they had of course gained their position by war and wielded absolute powers over their subjects. The Roman historian Justin gives Chandragupta a less flattering epitaph; he claims that the Indian king exploited the yearning for freedom among the Indians to gain power, only to become a tyrant himself<sup>16</sup>. Be that as it may, Chandragupta held sway over the Kabul valley, Pakistan and Punjab when Seleucus arrived. Seleucus' original plan seems to have been to reconquer the lost provinces, but after some clashes of arms – of which nothing is known – the two kings signed a peace treaty. Seleucus obviously apprehended the new situation in India, realized the futility of reconquest, and wisely gave up the areas held by Chandragupta, with the exception of parts of Arachosia.

Opinions differ as for how to interpret this concession as a defeat or victory for Seleucus, for as compensation he was given war-elephants – no less than five hundred, according to the historian and geographer Strabo<sup>17</sup>, though five hundred was an even number that the old historians often came up with when they meant 'many' but did not know how many. Very likely there were far fewer, but nevertheless the beasts were a terrifying weapon which Seleucus well needed to defend his realms in the west. Antigonus the One-eyed was on the war path again and Seleucus returned to Babylonia.

### ***The final disintegration***

At this point Seleucus was in his fifties and his children with his queen Apamea, daughter of a Persian named Spitamnes who had been leader of the last Persian resistance in the east, had come of age. The oldest son was called Antiochus – named after the father of Seleucus – he was born around 324 BCE and was already in charge of important affairs. We have no certain information about other children. A man named Achaeus was one of Seleucus' most important followers and is believed to have been his relative, though we do not know in what way: he may have been a son, a younger brother or a cousin<sup>18</sup>.

Antigonus the One-eyed, now nearly an octogenarian, had reached the zenith of his power. After a magnificent naval victory at Cyprus in 306 BCE, Demetrius Poliorcetes had seized the initiative in the eastern Mediterranean from Ptolemy in Egypt, and father and son now threatened in earnest to get rid of their competitors once and for all. In reaction, the coalition of Lysimachus, Cassander, Ptolemy and Seleucus gathered their forces for a showdown. Lysimachus, the king of Thrace, was given the most difficult task of tying down the armies of Antigonus in Asia Minor. Meanwhile, Seleucus rallied his forces from all over the eastern Persian Empire – which in itself was a major operation worthy of his administrative skills. The decisive battle was fought at Ipsus in western Asia Minor. Antigonus and Demetrius had the largest army: in essence it was still the Macedonian main army, which now had been in action for more than thirty years –

though of course few of the veterans from Alexander's days remained. The number of the lesser army of Seleucus, Lysimachus and Cassander is known: they commanded around 60 000 soldiers, though thanks to Seleucus, they had a lead in elephants.

What we know of this battle comes from the biography that Plutarch wrote on Demetrius, who was in charge of the heavy cavallery on the right wing, while Antigonus lead the heavy infantry in the centre, that Macedonian phalanx which had been developed by Philip II. Demetrius made a successful chock on his side, but his cavallery continued their charge to triumphantly pursue their adversaries, and one way or another Demetrius became separated from his father by the enemy war-elephants, which one can assume were lead by Seleucus himself. It is unknown whether this course of events was a stratagem thought up by Seleucus, or merely a lucky coincidence.

In the centre the phalanx of Antigonus forcefully attacked the centre of the coalition, but the flank on which Demetrius and his cavallery had been was now unguarded, and light-armoured troops began to attack the phalanx from the side. The phalanx moved forth in numerous rows with charged lances, creating a wall of spears that no force could oppose. Its weakness was its immobility, especially in rough terrain, and since the thrust of the spears was directed forwards, the phalanx could do little to prevent the more easily manoeuvred coalition soldiers on its side from throwing javelins or shoot arrows. This was precisely what happened. The phalanx was showered with projectiles, and when the losses increased the soldiers of Antigonus began to panic and leave their ranks. Antigonus himself did his utmost to keep his forces together and waited until the very last moment for Demetrius to return with his cavallery. At last the old king fell, pierced by several javelins. With the death of Antigonus the phalanx fell completely to pieces and the entire infantry was either cut down on the spot or taken captive, though the undefeated Demetrius managed to escape.

Now the empire was split up for good. Lysimachus took the major part of Asia Minor, while Seleucus took Mesopotamia, northern Syria and southern Cappadocia. Cassander was not allowed to share the booty, but Ptolemy – who hadn't arrived at the battle – advanced into southern Syria and took control there before anyone had the time to react. Among others, the provinces where the Jews lived came under his suzerainty, and many of them also migrated to his capital Alexandria. Demetrius Poliorcetes continued to rule the ocean from his base on Cyprus, and fought tooth and nails to maintain any stronghold he could.

Seleucus was now by far the mightiest of the Diadochs, and he spent the following years consolidating his vast kingdom. This policy included founding even more cities, among them a Seleucia on the Tigris, a short distance from ancient Babylon, which it replaced in many aspects. Largest of all Seleucid cities, this Seleucia also became the second capital for the peripatetic court. The area around the Euphrates and the Tigris was very fertile, supported by an advanced irrigation system; it was to become a central area of the empire. Two twin cities were founded on the banks of the southern Euphrates: Seleucia and Apamea, as a symbol of the Seleucus' marriage with the Iranian woman Apamea and thus of the unity between Greeks and Persians. North of Mesopotamia were the Armenian

highlands, and it is assumed that at least the southern parts of Armenia were annexed to the empire, at least as vassal kingdoms<sup>19</sup>. South of Mesopotamia lived Arab tribes, some of which also were vassals at times.

The most famous of all the cities Seleucus founded would be a settlement in northern Syria, properly referred to as Antiochia on the Orontes (today's Antikyra in Turkey). However, this city would soon earn enough fame to be known plainly as Antioch, just as we have dropped the 'on the Nile' when we talk about *the* Alexandria. Antioch would become the first Seleucid capital, and after that a major city in the Roman Empire, as well as one of the five patriarchates of the Christian world. It would belong to the Arab caliphate and become the capital of a crusader kingdom, until eventually, under Turk dominion, its importance waned. In ancient times, Antioch was known as the capital of pleasure. The city was founded not far from to the city of Antigonía, which had been built by Antigonos the One-eyed and abandoned by Seleucus, who transferred its inhabitants to his own city. The port of Antioch was Apamea, the site of the elephant stables.

### ***The death of a renaissance man***

For a few years after Ipsus Demetrius Poliorcetes had been little more than a pirate who raided the realms of the other kings, but he had fought with relentless energy to stay in the game, and his troops were loyal to him, as they knew that they could always count on good spoils. The coalition against Antigonos also disintegrated quickly – Ptolemy and Seleucus were quarrelling over southern Syria – and none of its participants could afford to think any worse of him. The Diadochs were warlords and formed alliances based on crass profits, and soon Demetrius had become respectable enough to marry off his daughter Stratonice to Seleucus.

At this point Seleucus was a widower in his middle sixties, and the bride a young woman. The historian Appian tells the following anecdote of their marriage<sup>20</sup>: Antiochus, the son, was taken ill soon after his father's wedding, and the famous physician Erasistratus was called for. Upon examining the prince, the physician made a peculiar observation: each time the young queen Stratonice entered the room, the pulse of the prince rose! Erasistratus now had a private audience with Seleucus, to tell him that his son was in love with his wife. The stage was set for a good Greek tragedy, but the sensible Seleucus did not become jealous: he gave Stratonice as wife to Antiochus instead.

The more prosaic reality behind this fancy story may have been that Antiochus became co-regent in the eastern parts of the empire during this period, and that he married Stratonice at his coronation. Hence her children would become the heirs of Antiochus instead of his half-brothers and competitors. Conflicts between different queens and their respective children would become a recurring theme in the history of the Hellenistic kingdoms and to no little extent contribute to their demise. Seleucus managed to avoid falling into that trap unlike his colleague Ptolemy I in Egypt, who had re-married and subsequently disowned his oldest son Ptolemy *Ceraunus*, Thunderbolt. Ceraunus escaped to Lysimachus – who was remarried as well, to a daughter of Ptolemy I by the name of Arsinoe! As for Ptolemy I, he settled for a younger son, Ptolemy II, as successor.



*Ill: Bronze bust of Seleucus I, Roman copy of Greek original, likely a fantasy portrait. Seleucus did not strike his own image on coins. National Museum of Archaeology, Naples.*

Antiochus, on the other hand, seems to have been loved and respected by his father. He was already as seasoned warrior who had been a cavallery general in the battle of Ipsus (where his detachments – perhaps as part of a feint – had retreated before Demetrius' charge), and under his competent leadership the eastern provinces were attached more closely to the empire. The general Demodamas carried out an important expedition during this period, by repulsing a nomad invasion of the province Margiana in what today is Uzbekistan. The nomad host had razed the important oasis city Alexandria Margiana, but it was rebuilt and renamed Antioch Margiana instead. In modern time, Soviet archaeologists have revealed much important information when they explored its remnants. Of further interest is the possibility that the defeated nomads may have been identical with the Parthians – this might be their first emergence in historical records. Eventually, they would cause the Seleucids massive grievances indeed.

Cassander died in Macedonia in 297 BCE, the throne being occupied by three of his sons during three subsequent years. Their names were Philip IV, Antipater II and Alexander V, and as far as I know, they were the last royal descendants of the dynasty of Alexander the Great, their mother being Alexander's sister. In the year 294 BC the last of them was dethroned and soon after Demetrius Poliorcetes made himself the new Macedonian king.

He lasted barely six years under constant fighting with his neighbours Lysimachus and the kings of Epirus: the Macedonians were a proud people whose kings were not autocrats like in the rest of the Diadoch world, and in 288 BCE they deposed Demetrius, infuriated by his arrogant grandeur – apparently he had not divided the spoils from his campaign properly.

Lysimachus took the Macedonian throne and Demetrius was left with only a few scattered bases; Ptolemy I now held his former prize Cyprus and he had also fallen out with his son-in-law Seleucus, who had taken his strongholds in Cilicia and Phoenicia. Demetrius opted for a war against Lysimachus in Asia Minor, but even though he scored several successes he had no kingdom anymore and when his troops were worn down he was forced to flee eastwards. In 286 BCE he arrived in Cilicia, and though Seleucus initially provided him with provisions, he was scared that the unpredictable and desperate Demetrius would attack him. Carefully Seleucus tightened his defences around his enemy's dwindling army, but Demetrius bit back and even defeated the Seleucid troops in a small battle where his veterans made short shrift of the clumsy scythed chariots – an oriental fighting vehicle – that were sent against him.

And then Seleucus' fears were realised: Demetrius crossed a mountain pass into northern Syria and headed for the Greek cities there to gain support among their veterans. Seleucus rallied his army – several times stronger – to intercept him, but Demetrius decided to risk all in a nightly raid. Only in the last minute did deserters from Demetrius' troops warn Seleucus, and the plan was aborted. Seleucus pursued his enemy to the city of Cyrrhus where he was able to force a pitched battle, but Demetrius had chosen the terrain wisely: in the hills around the city Seleucus' horsemen were unable to charge properly, and when Demetrius led his veterans in a desperate charge they were able to repulse Seleucus' troops on the right flank. On the other side the Seleucid forces pushed forwards, but Demetrius quickly transferred men from his advancing flank; the battle was even and the Seleucids were unable to break through. Seleucus now risked a dangerous manoeuvre as he led a detachment of his guard, with some elephants thrown in for good measure, through the difficult terrain until he managed to appear on the back side of Demetrius' battle array. The old king took off his helmet and spoke directly to his enemy's troops. Tall and impressive, he told them to abandon Demetrius' lost cause:

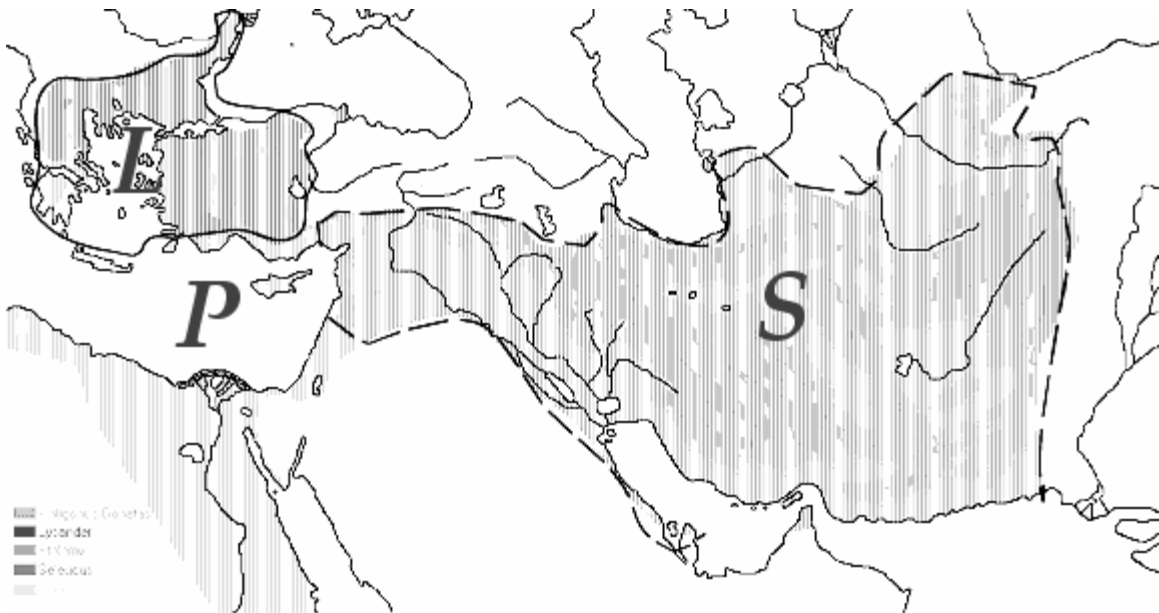
*'How long will your madness continue, staying with a famished pirate chief, when you could earn your pay with a rich king, and have a share in a kingdom which is a reality, not a dream?'* (Polyaenus, *Stratagemmata*, 4.9)

This was brave, but Seleucus knew what he was doing. Demetrius' troops were weary and disillusioned, outnumbered and exposed on the battlefield; soon men began to break ranks, and within minutes the army had melted away. Demetrius headed for the coast with a few companions, but before he could reach the Syrian harbours and escape to his fleet he was captured. Lysimachus offered Seleucus 2000 talents for his head, but Seleucus declined. In fact, he treated his father-in-law with all due respect, but of course never allowed him his freedom again. Being an adventurer and a gambler, and realising his career had come to an end, Demetrius soon tired of life completely and drank himself

### Jens Jakobsson Alexander's Heirs (sample)

to death. Few persons embody the Diadoch era like he did – his love for arts and philosophy, his inventiveness and ceaseless energy, his orgies and court-life splendour, his claims to divinity and his utter ruthlessness. He was a renaissance man<sup>21</sup>.

And then there were only three: Seleucus, Ptolemy and Lysimachus, who had now become the second most powerful of the Diadochs, as an octogenarian still a vigorous man who ruled Macedonia, Thrace and considerable fractions of Asia Minor. He was however a rather unpopular ruler, known to his subjects by the derogative name *Gazophylax*, the Treasurer<sup>22</sup>, because of the heavy taxes he extorted. He also had offspring in several marriages, and his new – and of course much younger – queen Arsinoe, the daughter of Ptolemy I, persuaded him that his oldest son and heir Agathocles was plotting to kill him. It is not the task of the author to moralise, but the case of Lysimachus point – in no uncertain terms – to the perils awaiting an old king who marries younger women, especially intelligent women with ambitions of their own. Arsinoe's ambition was of course to have her own offspring inherit the throne, and in the defence of the plotting woman one must admit that she ran a real risk: if Agathocles became king there was a considerable risk that he would get rid of his half-siblings and their mother for his own safety.



Ill: The Diadoch kingdoms in 281 BCE. Ptolemies (P), kingdom of Lysimachus (L), Seleucid Empire (S).

What possibly made matters even worse was that Agathocles was married to another daughter of Ptolemy I, by the name of Lysandra, a woman who thus was Arsinoe's half-sister. The love-struck old fool Lysimachus believed what his wife told him in their bedroom and put his oldest son to death.

### ***The end of the Diadoch wars***

Agathocles was popular as governor of Asia Minor, and his brutal murder – which also caused people to believe the old king had begun to lose his senses – led to a general insurrection against Lysimachus. Eventually, his subjects appealed to Seleucus for help against the old tyrant, and he came willingly to what would become the final round of all the Diadoch wars.

In 281 BCE the two armies clashed at Courepeidion in Asia Minor. Seleucus as well as Lysimachus were personally in charge of their troops, but Seleucus won the day and Lysimachus was slain on the battlefield, deserted by everybody except his dog, who according to legend did not stray in his loyalty to his dead master but stayed at his side when everybody else had deserted him<sup>23</sup>. Seleucus now seized his opponent's dominions in Asia Minor, before crossing over to the Hellespont to Europe, which he had last seen when he left Macedonia with Alexander as a young man. More than fifty years had passed since.

Ancient chroniclers speak in a sentimental fashion of the old man's longing for his home land, but Seleucus may have opted for more than mere memories: by conquering Macedonia he would accomplish the all but reunion of Alexander's empire under his own sceptre. The Ptolemies did of course still rule Egypt: in 282 BCE the old Ptolemy I had died peacefully, succeeded by his son Ptolemy II.

His half-brother, the exiled Ptolemy Ceraunus, had found sanctuary with Seleucus and his army, having been forced to flee from the instable Lysimachus as well. Ceraunus had sworn that he would one day become a king even though his father had ostracised him, and fearing the ambitious plans of his old host he became desperate. If Seleucus planned to become king of all Greek lands, what was left for Ceraunus? There seems – for reasons not quite clear – to have been some kind of mutiny in the Seleucid army, and Ptolemy Ceraunus himself killed Seleucus the Victor, in what could only be described as a cowardly assassination, as the old man paid his allegiance to a sanctuary in Thrace.

The character of Seleucus is difficult to explore. He was often frowned upon by the other generals, but that was of course by and large due to the fact that Seleucus was a late riser in the Diadoch wars, a second rate warlord until long after Alexander's death. He was a tall man and a fearless soldier, but he was neither a warmonger nor a chauvinist. More than most of his country-men, Seleucus realised that the rule of the Macedonians had to rely on the support of the people of the Persian Empire, not only on their fear.

By and large Seleucus seems to have been a decent and moderate fellow, one whose rise to power was rarely stained with more blood than was necessary. He makes for a rather dull character compared to Alexander, whose short life was fraught with drama and intense passions. Still, the accomplishments of Seleucus could to some extent be said to be more durable than those of the young warrior-king. Let us give Plutarch the last word on Seleucus' personality:

'Seleucus, they used to tell us, constantly repeated that if people in general knew what a task it was merely to read and write so many letters, they would not even pick up a crown that had been thrown away.'<sup>24</sup>

Unlike Alexander, who died young, many of the Diadochs became very old, but all of them, except Ptolemy I, were killed by the wars with which they had afflicted the world for more than forty years.



Ill: The Seleucid empire at its apogee.

## Notes

<sup>1</sup> Jason of Pherai (as his kingdom was officially called) allegedly planned a Persian campaign, but this is clearly very speculative. Accounts of Jason's and Alexander's careers are found in Xenophon, *Hellenica*, and Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, 15. It is also likely that more Thessalians than Macedonians spoke Greek, but otherwise the little hoax is historically correct!

<sup>2</sup> Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*.

<sup>3</sup> Henceforth, the terms *Greek* and *Macedonian* will be used more or less as synonyms for the Greek-speaking citizens of Alexander's empire, with the exception of such cases where the difference between *ethnic* Greeks and Macedonians is stressed. This use was custom already among ancient historians. There were clearly tensions between the subjugated but culturally superior Greeks and the Macedonians even outside their homelands, but in the conquered territories they were usually united against the 'barbarians'.

<sup>4</sup> The dynasty of Alexander the Great, the Argeads, had ruled parts of Macedonia for centuries, so the great king was formally Alexander III. Number I and II had been insignificant petty kings, as had Philip I.

<sup>5</sup> Arrian, *Anabasis*, 7.24-27

<sup>6</sup> Henrikson, *Antikens Historier (Ancient Histories)*

<sup>7</sup> A fully referenced account of the classical sources for the Diadoch wars is *Alexander's successors: the Diadochi*, available on the online research portal of historian Jona Lendering, [www.livius.org](http://www.livius.org). But for the sake of completion I give the most important chroniclers:

# Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History* for the revolts after Alexander's death (book 18), the end of Alexander's dynasty, the Babylonian wars (book 19), the siege of Rhodes (20) and the battle of Ipsus (21).

# Arrian (in an excerpt by Photius) on the years 323-320 BCE;

# Plutarch's *Parallel lives* contain biographies for *Eumenes* and *Demetrius Poliorcetes*, son of Antigonos the One-eyed whose life is of course also included there.

# Pausanias, *Description of Greece*, 1.9, for the career of Lysimachus.

# Appian, *Syriake* 52-62, for Syrian and eastern history, down to the death of Seleucus.

<sup>8</sup> Plutarch, *Life of Demetrius Poliorcetes*, 2 & 23

<sup>9</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, 19.

<sup>10</sup> Lendering, *Babylonian Chronicle 10: Part 2: The Babylonian war*, on [www.livius.org](http://www.livius.org). Polyaeus, *Stratagems*, 4.9.1.

<sup>11</sup> Babylonia was as mentioned taken in July 311, but this event took place in a *Macedonian Year* that started in the autumn of 312, and that year became the starting point for the Seleucid court. For the Babylonians, who had a different date for the new year than the Macedonians, the era really began in 311 BCE, so technically there were two versions of the Seleucid era.

<sup>12</sup> For a discussion on the creation of the Seleucid Empire, see for instance Kuhrt & Sherwin-White, *From Samarkhand to Sardis*.

<sup>13</sup> See Narain, *The Indo-Greeks* (ch 8). The actual events this far east are the subject of much controversy.

<sup>14</sup> In antiquity, the name India was used in a rather vague manner for any areas to the east of the Persian Empire.

<sup>15</sup> Diodorus Siculus, *Library of History*, 19.

<sup>16</sup> Justin, *Epitome*, 15.4.

<sup>17</sup> Strabo, *Geography*, 15.2.1

<sup>18</sup> The achievements of Achaeus himself are unknown except for a few references to the lands he owned in Asia Minor (see Grainger, *A Seleucid Prosography and Gazetteer*), but as we will see, his descendants were clearly of almost royal status.

<sup>19</sup> Perhaps even Georgia? Medieval Georgian chronicles, vague though they are on such ancient events, mention a period of Hellenistic suzerainty. (Kavtaradze, G.L. *The Georgian Chronicles and the Raison d'Etre of the Iberian Kingdom*)

<sup>20</sup> Appian, *Syriake*, 10:59-61.

<sup>21</sup> See Bosworth, *The Legacy of Alexander :Politics, Warfare, and Propaganda under the Successors*, for an analysis of Demetrius' behaviour in the light of the expectations on Diadoch kingship. Roberts and Benneth, *Successors of Alexander the Great*, gives a good account of Demetrius' last war against Seleucus.

<sup>22</sup> A far worse insult now than then, given that a gazophylax was the *eunuch* in charge of the royal treasury.

<sup>23</sup> Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 1.9

<sup>24</sup> Plutarch, *Moralia*, 790