

# Alexander the great alexander of macedon biography

[People](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Alexander the Great Alexander of Macedon Biography King of Macedonia and Conqueror of the Persian Empire Alexander III the Great, the King of Macedonia and conqueror of the Persian Empire is considered one of the greatest military geniuses of all times. He was inspiration for later conquerors such as Hannibal the Carthaginian, the Romans Pompey and Caesar, and Napoleon. Alexander was born in 356 BC in Pella, the ancient capital of Macedonia. He was son of Philip II, King of Macedonia, and Olympias, the princess of neighboring Epirus. He spent his childhood watching his father transforming Macedonia into a great military power, winning victory after victory on the battlefields throughout the Balkans. When he was 13, Philip hired the Greek philosopher Aristotle to be Alexander's personal tutor. During the next three years Aristotle gave Alexander a training in rhetoric and literature and stimulated his interest in science, medicine, and philosophy, all of which became of importance in Alexander's later life. In 340, when Philip assembled a large Macedonian army and invaded Thrace, he left his 16 years old son with the power to rule Macedonia in his absence as regent, which shows that even at such young age Alexander was recognized as quite capable. But as the Macedonian army advanced deep into Thrace, the Thracian tribe of Maedi bordering north-eastern Macedonia rebelled and posed a danger to the country. Alexander assembled an army, led it against the rebels, and with swift action defeated the Maedi, captured their stronghold, and renamed it after himself to Alexandropolis. Two years later in 338 BC, Philip gave his son a commanding post among the senior generals as the Macedonian army invaded Greece. At the Battle of Chaeronea the Greeks were defeated and

Alexander displayed his bravery by destroying the elite Greek force, the Theban Sacred Band. Some ancient historians recorded that the Macedonians won the battle thanks to his bravery. The Family Split and the Assassination of Philip II But not too long after the defeat of the Greeks at Chaeronea, the royal family split apart when Philip married Cleopatra, a Macedonian girl of high nobility. At the wedding banquet, Cleopatra's uncle, general Attalus, made a remark about Philip fathering a 'legitimate' heir, i. e., one that was of pure Macedonian blood. Alexander threw his cup at the man, blasting him for calling him 'bastard child'. Philip stood up, drew his sword, and charged at Alexander, only to trip and fall on his face in his drunken stupor at which Alexander shouted: "Here is the man who was making ready to cross from Europe to Asia, and who cannot even cross from one table to another without losing his balance." He then took his mother and fled the country to Epirus. Although allowed to return later, Alexander remained isolated and insecure at the Macedonian court. In the spring of 336 BC, with Philip's Persian invasion already set in motion, the king was assassinated by a young Macedonian noble Pausanias, during the wedding ceremony in Aegae, the old capital of Macedonia. Why Pausanias killed the Macedonian king is a question that puzzled both ancient and modern historians. There is a claim that Pausanias was driven into committing the murder because he was denied justice by the king when he sought his support in punishing the Cleopatra's uncle Attalus for earlier mistreatment. But there are also reports that that both Olympias and Alexander were responsible for the assassination, by driving the young men into committing the act. That might explain why Pausanias was instantly put to death by Alexander's close

friends as he attempted to flee the scene, instead of being captured alive and tried before the Macedonian assembly. Philip, the great Macedonian conqueror was dead, the men who liberated his own country and brought it from the edge of the abyss into a world power. His dream of conquering the Persian Empire now lays on his successor, his son king Alexander III.

**Suppression of the Thracian, Illyrian, and Greek Rebellions** Once he ascended on the Macedonian throne, Alexander quickly disposed of all of his domestic enemies by ordering their execution. But soon he had to act outside Macedonia. Philip's death caused series of rebellions among the conquered nations and the Illyrians, Thracians, and Greeks saw a chance for independence. Alexander acted swiftly. He forced his way into Greece despite the roads leading to the country being blocked by the Thessalians. As soon as he restored Macedonian rule in northern Greece, he marched into southern Greece. His speed surprised the Greeks and by the end of the summer 336 BC they had no other choice but to acknowledge his authority. Believing the Greece would remain calm, Alexander returned to Macedonia, marched east into Thrace, and campaigned as far as the Danube river. He defeated the Thracians and Tribalians in series of battles and drove the rebels beyond the river. Then he marched back across Macedonia and on his return crushed in a single week the threatening Illyrians, before they could receive additional reinforcements. But now in Greece, upon rumors of his death, a major revolt broke out that engulfed the whole nation. Enraged, Alexander marched south covering 240 miles in two weeks appearing before the walls of Thebes with large Macedonian army. He let the Greeks know that it was not too late for them to change their minds, but the Thebans

confident in their position called for all the Greeks who wished to set Greece free to join them against the Macedonians. They were not aware that the Athenians and the Peloponnesians, stunned by the speed of the Macedonian king, quickly reconsidered their options and were now awaiting the outcome of the battle before they make their next move. Alexander's general Perdiccas attacked the gates, broke into the city, and Alexander moved with the rest of the army behind him to prevent the Thebans from cutting him off. The Macedonians stormed the city, killing everyone in sight, women and children included. 6,000 Theban citizens died and 30,000 more were sold as slaves. The city where Alexander's father was kept as hostage for three years, was plundered, sacked, burned, and razed to the ground, just like Philip acted with Methone, Olynthus, and the rest of the Greek cities in Chalcidice. Only the temples and the house of the poet Pindar were spared from destruction. This was an example to the rest of Greece and Athens and the other Greek city-states quickly rethought their quest for freedom. Greece remained under Macedonian rule. The Battle of Granicus

With the conquered territories firmly in Macedonian control, Alexander completed the final preparations for the invasion of Asia. The 22-year-old king appointed Philip's experienced general Antipater as regent in his absence to preside over the affairs of Macedonia and Greece, left him a significant force of 13,500 Macedonian soldiers to watch Greece, Thrace, Illyria, and protect Macedonia, and set out for the Hellespont (modern Dardanelles) in the spring of 334 BC. As his ship approached the Asia Minor's coast, he threw his spear from abroad and stuck it in the ground. He stepped onto the shore, pulled the weapon from the soil, and declared that

the whole of Asia would be won by the Macedonian spear. In the army there were 25, 000 Macedonians, 7, 600 Greeks, and 7, 000 Thracians and Illyrians, but the chief officers were all Macedonians, and Macedonians also commanded the foreign troops. Alexander's second in command was Philip's general Parmenio, the other important commanders being Perdiccas, Craterus, Coenus, Meleager, Antigonus, and Parmenio's son Philotas. The army soon encountered the forces of King Darius III. There were 40, 000 Persians and Greeks (20, 000 each) waiting for them at the crossing of the river Granicus, near the ancient city of Troy. These Greeks had joined the Persians in the years following the defeat of the Greek army by Philip II at Chaeronea. It is important to note the number of Greeks on the both sides. The Greeks in the Macedonian train were mobilized by the Macedonians, and historians Peter Green and Ulrich Wilcken speak of them as hostages that would ensure the good behavior of their countrymen left behind in Greece under the watch of Antipater's Macedonian garrisons. Not surprisingly, the Greeks in Alexander's army played insignificant role in the upcoming battles, only to be discharged when convenient. But far greater number of Greeks joined the Persians brushing away the memory of the Persian invasion of Greece some 150 years ago. The ancient Greek historian Arrian cited the "old racial rivalry between the Greeks and Macedonians" that led to this hatred on both sides. The Macedonians defeated the Persians and put them to flight and although the Greeks held their ground and fiercely fought, the battle ended in Macedonian victory. Almost the entire Greek force was annihilated. 18, 000 Greeks perished on the banks of Granicus and the 2, 000 survivors were sent to forced labor in Macedonia. The Macedonians lost

only 120 men according to tradition. The Campaigns in Asia Minor Alexander then led the army south across Asia Minor. Ironically, it is not the Persians but the Greek coastal cities which gave the greatest resistance to the Macedonians. The Greek commander Memnon and his men considerably slow down the advance of Alexander and many Macedonians died during the long and difficult sieges of the Greek cities of Halicarnassus, Miletus, Mylasa. But at the end the Macedonian army defeated the enemy and conquered the coast of Asia Minor. Alexander then turned northward to central Asia Minor, to the city of Gordium. Gordium was a home of the famous so-called Gordian Knot. Alexander knew the legend that said that the man who could untie the ancient knot was destined to rule the entire world. To that date nobody had succeeded in unraveling the knot. But the young Macedonian king simply slashed it with his sword and unraveling its ends. The Battle of Issus In the autumn of 333 BC, the Macedonian army's encountered the Persian forces under the command of King Darius III himself at a mountain pass at Issus in northwestern Syria. 30, 000 Greeks again formed a sizable addition to the Darius' army as elite fighters and were positioned directly against the Macedonian phalanx. Describing the atmosphere before a battle, the Roman historian Curtius explained how Alexander raised the morale of the Macedonians, Greeks, Illyrians, and Thracians in his army, one at the time: "Riding to the front line he (Alexander the Great) named the soldiers and they responded from spot to spot where they were lined up. The Macedonians, who had won so many battles in Europe and set off to invade Asia ... got encouragement from him - he reminded them of their permanent values. They were the world's liberators and one day they would pass the frontiers

set by Hercules and Father Liber. They would subdue all races on Earth. Bactria and India would become Macedonian provinces. Getting closer to the Greeks, he reminded them that those were the people (the Persians on the other side) who provoked war with Greece, ... those were the people that burned their temples and cities ... As the Illyrians and Thracians lived mainly from plunder, he told them to look at the enemy line glittering in gold ..." (Q. Curtius Rufus 3. 10. 4-10) Darius's army greatly outnumbered the Macedonians, but the Battle of Issus ended in a big victory for Alexander. Ten's of thousands of Persians, Greeks, and other Asiatic soldiers were killed and king Darius fled in panic before the Macedonian phalanx, abandoning his mother, wife, and children behind. Alexander treated them with the respect out of consideration for their royalty. The Sieges of Tyre and Gaza The victory at Issus opened the road for Syria and Phoenicia. In early 332, Alexander sent general Parmenio to occupy the Syrian cities and himself marched down the Phoenician coast where he received the surrender of all major cities except the island city of Tyre which refused to grant him access to sacrifice at the temple of the native Phoenician god Melcart. A very difficult seven-month siege of the city followed. In an enormous effort, the Macedonians begun building a mole that would connect the island-city with the coast. Tons of rocks and wood were poured into the water strip separating the island from the coast but its construction and the attacks from the city walls cost Alexander many of his bravest Macedonians. Although seriously tempted to lift the siege and continue marching on Egypt, Alexander did not abandon the project and continued the siege, surrounding the island with ships and blasting the city walls with catapults. When the



walls finally gave in, the Macedonians poured their anger over the city defenders - 7, 000 people were killed, 30, 000 were sold as slaves.

Alexander entered the temple of Melcart, and had his sacrifice. During the seven-month siege of Tyre, Alexander received a letter from Darius offering a truce with a gift of several western provinces of the Persian Empire, but he refused to make peace unless he could have the whole empire. He continued marching south toward Egypt but was again held up by resistance at Gaza. The Macedonians put the city under a siege which lasted two months, after which the scenario of Tyre was repeated. With the fall of Gaza, the whole Eastern Mediterranean coast was now secured and firmly in the hands of the Macedonians. The mainland Greeks had hoped that the Persian navy and the Greek commander Memnon would land in Greece and help them launch a rebellion against Antipater's Macedonians, transfer the war into Macedonia itself, and cut off Alexander in Asia, but the sealing of the coast prevented this from happening. Memnon fell sick and died while attempting to regain the lost Greek city of Miletus on the Asia Minor coast, and the Persian plan to transfer the war into Europe well apart. Alexander in Egypt Alexander entered Egypt in the beginning of 331 BC. The Persian satrap surrendered and the Macedonians were welcomed by the Egyptians as liberators for they had despised living under Persian rule for almost two centuries. Here Alexander ordered that a city be designed and founded in his name at the mouth of river Nile, as trading and military Macedonian outpost, the first of many to come. He never lived to see it built, but Alexandria will become a major economic and cultural center in the Mediterranean world not only during the Macedonian rule in Egypt but

centuries after. In the spring of 331 Alexander made a pilgrimage to the great temple and oracle of Amon-Ra, the Egyptian god of the sun, whom the Greeks and Macedonians identified with Zeus Ammon. The earlier Egyptian pharaohs were believed to be sons of Amon-Ra and Alexander as new ruler of Egypt wanted the god to acknowledge him as his son. He decided to make the dangerous trip across the desert to visit the oracle at the temple of the god. According to the legend, on the way he was blessed with abundant rain, and guided across the desert by ravens. At the temple, he was welcomed by the priests and spoke to the oracle. The priest told him that he was a son of Zeus Ammon, destined to rule the world, and this must have confirmed in him his belief of divine origin. Alexander remained in Egypt until the middle of 331, and then returned to Tyre before facing Darius. The Battle of Gaugamela At Tyre, Alexander received reinforcements from Europe, reorganized his forces, and started for Babylon. He conquered the lands between rivers Tigris and Euphrates and found the Persian army at the plains of Gaugamela, near modern Irbil in Iraq, which according to the exaggerated accounts of antiquity was said to number a million men. The Macedonians spotted the lights from the Persian campfires and encouraged Alexander to lead his attack under cover of darkness. But he refused to take advantage of the situation because he wanted to defeat Darius in an equally matched battle so that the Persian king would never again dare to raise an army against him. The two armies met on the battlefield the next morning, October 1, 331 BC. On the Persian side were numerous Asiatic nations - Bactrians, Indians, Medians, Sogdians, even Albanians from the Caucasus, the ancestors of the modern Albanians who many centuries later migrated to

Europe and are now northern neighbors to the modern Greeks and western neighbors to the modern Macedonians. The survivors of the 50,000 Greeks which Darius had on his side at the beginning of the war were also among the Persian ranks. At the beginning of the battle the Persian forces split and separated the two Macedonian wings. The wing of general Parmenio appeared to be backing down, but Alexander's cavalry rode straight after Darius and forced again his flight like he did at Issus. Darius fled to Ecbatana in Media, and Alexander occupied Babylon, the imperial capital Susa, and the Persian capital Persepolis, and was henceforth proclaimed king of Asia. Four months later, the Macedonians burned the royal palace in Persepolis, completing the end of the ancient Persian Empire. Suppression of the Greek Rebellion, Discharge of the Greeks, and the Death of Darius Meanwhile in Greece, the Greeks under the leadership of Sparta rose to a rebellion against the Macedonian occupation. Antipater was in Thrace at the time and the Greeks took the opportunity to push back the Macedonian forces. But their initial victory did not last for long as Antipater returned with a large army, defeated the rebels, and regained Greece. 5,300 Greeks, including the Spartan king Agis were killed, while the Macedonians lost 3,500 men. In Asia, the news of the beginning of the Greek rebellion had Alexander so deeply worried, that he immediately sent money to Antipater to counter it. And when he learned that the Greeks were defeated, he proclaimed the end of the "Hellenic Crusade" and discharged all-Greek forces in his army. He no longer needed these hostages and potential troublemakers. Alexander continued his pursuit of Darius for hundreds of miles from Persepolis. When he finally caught up to him, he found the Persian king dead in his coach. He

was assassinated by Bessus, the satrap of Bactria which now proclaimed himself " King of the Kings", assuming the title of the Persian kings. Alexander gave Darius a royal funeral and set out for Bactria after his murderer. The Trial of Philotas and the Murder of Parmenio To win the support of the Persian aristocracy Alexander appointed many Persians as provincial governors in his new empire. He adopted the Persian dress for ceremonies, gave orders for Persians to be enlisted in the army, and encouraged the Macedonians to marry Persian women. But the Macedonians were unhappy with Alexander's Orientalization for they were proud of their Macedonian customs, culture, and language. His increasingly Oriental behavior eventually led to conflict with the Macedonian nobles and some Greeks in the train. In 330 BC series of allegations were brought up against some of Alexander's officers concerning a plot to murder him. Alexander tortured and executed the accused leader of the conspiracy, Parmenio's son Philotas, the commander of the cavalry. Several other officers were also executed according to Macedonian law, in order to eliminate the alleged attempt on Alexander's life. During the trial of Philotas Alexander raised the question of the use of the ancient Macedonian language. He spoke: "The Macedonians are about to pass judgment upon you; I wish to know whether you will use their native tongue in addressing them." Philotas replied: 'Besides the Macedonians there are many present who, I think, will more easily understand what I shall say if I use the same language which you have employed.' Then said the king: 'Do you not see how Philotas loathes even the language of his fatherland? For he alone disdains to learn it. But let him by all means speak in whatever way he

desires, provided that you remember that he holds out customs in as much abhorrence as our language.'" (Quintus Curtius Rufus 6. 9. 34-36) The trial of Philotas took place in Asia before a multiethnic public, which has accepted Greek as their common language. Alexander spoke Macedonian with his conationals, but used Greek in addressing the Greeks and the Asians, as Greek was widely taken as international language in ancient times. Like Carthaginian, Illyrian, and Thracian, ancient Macedonian was not recorded in writing. However, on the bases of about hundred glosses, Macedonian words noted and explained by Greek writers, some place names from Macedonia, and names of individuals, most scholars believe that ancient Macedonian was a separate Indo-European language. Evidence from phonology indicates that the ancient Macedonian language was distinct from ancient Greek and closer to the Thracian and Illyrian languages. Some modern writers have erroneously concluded that the Macedonians spoke Greek based on few Greek inscriptions discovered in Macedonia, but that is by no means a proof that the Macedonian was not a distinct language. Greek inscriptions were also found in Thrace and Illyria, the Thracians even inscribed their coins and vessels in Greek, and we know that both the Illyrians and the Thracians were not Greeks who had distinct languages. After Philotas was executed according to the Macedonian custom, Alexander ordered next the execution of Philotas' father, general Parmenio. But the death of the old general did not sit well with every Macedonian in the army. Parmenio was a veteran, proven soldier of Philip's guard, a man who played a major part in leading the Macedonian armies and rising the country to a world power. In fact Philip II had often remarked how proud he was to have Parmenio as his general.

The Murder of Cleitus and the execution of Callisthenes Alexander next killed Cleitus, another Macedonian noble, in a drunken brawl. Heavy drinking was a cherished tradition at the Macedonian court and that day Cleitus publicly denounced the king before the present for the murders of Parmenio and Philotas. He went further by ridiculing Alexander for claiming to be "son of Ammon" and for denouncing his own father Philip II. Alexander lost his temper, snatched the spear from the bodyguard standing near, and ran Cleitus through with it. Although he mourned his friend excessively and nearly committed suicide when he realized what he had done, all of Alexander's associates thereafter feared his paranoia and dangerous temper. He next demanded that Europeans, just like the Asians, follow the Oriental etiquette of prostrating themselves before the king - which he knew was regarded as an act of worship by the Greeks. But resistance put by Macedonian officers and by the Greek historian Callisthenes, the nephew of Aristotle who had joined the expedition, defeated the attempt. Callisthenes was soon executed on a charge of conspiracy, and we can only imagine how Aristotle received the news of his death. The two were already estranged for a long time before Callisthenes' execution, as Alexander's letters to his former tutor carried unfriendly contents. The Macedonians spent two hard years in Bactria fighting a guerilla war against the followers of Bessus and the Sogdian ruler Spitamenes. Finally, Bessus was caught and executed for the murder of his king Darius III, and Spitamenes was killed by his own wife which was tired of running away. Bactria and Sogdiana, the most eastern provinces of the Persian Empire came under Macedonian control. It is here that Alexander fell in love with and married the beautiful Sogdian princess

Roxane. The March on India In the spring of 327 BC, Alexander and his army marched into India invading Punjab. The greatest of Alexander's battles in India was at the river Hydaspes, against king Porus, one of the most powerful Indian rulers. In the summer of 326 BC, Alexander's army crossed the heavily defended river during a violent thunderstorm to meet Porus' forces. The Indians were defeated in a fierce battle, even though they fought with elephants, which the Macedonians had never seen before. Porus was captured and like the other local rulers he had defeated, Alexander allowed him to continue to govern his territory. In this battle Alexander's horse Bucephalus was wounded and died. Alexander had ridden Bucephalus into every one of his battles in Europe and Asia, so when it died he was grief-stricken. He founded a city which he named Buckephalia, in his horse's name. The army continued advancing as far as the river Hydaspes but at this point the Macedonians refused to go farther as reports were coming of far more larger and dangerous armies ahead equipped with many elephants and chariots. General Coenus spoke on army's behalf to the king. Reluctantly, Alexander agreed to stop here. Not too long afterwards Coenus died and the army buried him with the highest honors. It was agreed that the army travel down south the rivers Hydaspes and Indus so that they might reach the Ocean on the southern edge of the world and from there head westward toward Persia. 1, 000 ships were constructed and while the navy sailed the rivers, the army rode down along the rivers banks, stopping to attack and subdue the Indian villages along the way. One of the villages in which the army stopped belonged to the Malli, who were said to be one of the most warlike of the Indian tribes. Alexander was severally wounded in this attack

when an arrow pierced his breastplate and his ribcage. The Macedonians rescued him in a narrow escape from the village. Still the Malli surrendered as Alexander became to recover from the grave wound. The travel down the river resumed and the Macedonian army reached the mouth of the Indus in the summer of 325 BC. Then it turned westward to Persia. But the return was a disaster. The army was marching through the notorious Gerdosian desert during the middle of the summer. By the time Alexander reached Susa thousands had died of heat and exhaustion. Alexander's Death In the spring of 324, Alexander held a great victory celebration at Susa. He and 80 of his close associates married Persian noblewomen. In addition, he legitimized previous so-called marriages between soldiers and native women and gave them rich wedding gifts, no doubt to encourage such unions. Little later, at Opis he proclaimed the discharge of 10, 000 Macedonian veterans to be sent home to Macedonia with general Craterus. Craterus' orders were to replace Antipater and Antipater's to bring new reinforcements in Asia. But the army mutinied hearing this. Enraged Alexander pointed the main ringleaders to his bodyguards to be punished and then gave his famous speech where he reminded the Macedonians that without him and his father Philip, they would have still been leaving in fear of the nations surrounding Macedonia, instead of ruling the world. After this the Macedonians were reconciled with their king and 10, 000 of them set out for Europe, leaving their children of Asian women with Alexander. In the same time 30, 000 Persian youth already trained in Macedonian manner were recruited in the army. Alexander prayed for unity between Macedonians and Persians and by breeding a new army of mixed blood he hoped to create a core of a new



royal army which would be attached only to him. But Alexander will never see this happen. Shortly before beginning of the planned Arabian campaign, he contracted a high fever after attending a private party at his friend's Medius of Larisa. As soon as he drank from the cup he "shrieked aloud as if smitten by a violent blow". The fever became stronger with each following day to the point that he was unable to move and speak. The Macedonians were allowed to file past their leader for the last time before he finally succumbed to the illness on June 7, 323 BC in the Macedonian month of Daesius. Alexander the Great, the Macedonian king and the great conqueror of Persian Empire, died at the age of 33 without designating a successor to the Macedonian Empire. After Alexander After his death, nearly all the noble Susa marriages dissolved, which shows that the Macedonians despised the idea. There never came to unity between Macedonians and Persians and there wasn't even a unity among the Macedonians.

Alexander's death opened the anarchic age of the Successors and a bloody Macedonian civil war for power followed. As soon as the news of Alexander's death were known, the Greeks rebelled yet again and so begun the Lamian War. The Macedonians were defeated and expelled from Greece, but then Antipater received reinforcements from Craterus who brought to Macedonia the 10, 000 veterans discharged at Opis. Antipater and Craterus jointly marched into Greece, defeated the Greek army at Crannon in Thessaly and brought the war to an end. Greece will remain under Macedonian rule for the next one and a half century. In Asia the Macedonian commanders who served Alexander fought each other for power. Perdiccas and Meleager were murdered, Antigonus rose to control

most of Asia, but his growth of power brought the other Macedonian generals in coalition against him. He was killed in battle and the Macedonian Empire split into four main kingdoms - the one of Seleucus (Asia), Ptolemy (Egypt), Lysimachus (Thrace), and Antipater's son Cassander (Macedonia, including Greece). The rise of Rome put an end to Macedonian kingdoms. Macedonia and Greece were conquered in 167/145 BC, Seleucid Asia by 65 BC, and Cleopatra VII, the last Macedonian descendent of Ptolemy committed suicide in 30 BC, after which Egypt was added to the Roman Empire. With the split of the Roman Empire into Western and Eastern (Byzantium), the Macedonians came to play a major role in Byzantium. The period of rule of the Macedonian dynasty which ruled the Eastern Roman Empire from 867 to 1056 is known as the "Golden Age" of the Empire. The Eastern Roman Empire fell in the 15th century and Macedonia, Greece, and the whole southern Balkans came under the rule of the Turkish Empire. Greece gained its independence at the beginning of the 19th century with the help of the Western European powers, while Macedonia which continued to be occupied by foreign powers, gained independence in 1991, but only over 37% of its historical ethnic territory. With the Balkan Wars of 1912/13 Macedonia was occupied by the armies of its neighbors - 51% of its territory came under, and still is under the rule of Greece, while the remaining 12% are still occupied by Bulgaria. Both Greece and Bulgaria had been condemned numerous times for the oppression of their large Macedonian minorities which they had stripped off basic human rights, ever since the partition of the country.