

## HIS1200 – Eldre historie fram til ca. 1800

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### **Alexander the Great and the Making of a New World**

Description: In 334 BCE Alexander, the young king of Macedonia, crossed to Asia with an army of Greeks and Macedonians to wage war against the Persian Empire. In a rapid series of successful battles and campaigns, Alexander soundly defeated the Persian armies and became sovereign of a massive, multilingual, and multicultural empire that went from Greece and Macedonia to Egypt, and eastwards up to the Indus valley and central Asia. Alexander died young in 323 BCE and his empire was split between his generals, but in many ways his conquest created a new world, where Greek language and culture became incredibly widespread and developed broad and ambitious horizons, and where new forms of political organization were created.

In this special subject we will look more closely at the history of Alexander, considering texts written in antiquity, physical items such as coins and inscriptions, and interpretations offered by modern scholars. We will discuss the main primary sources for his life, that already in antiquity were intertwined with fabulous and mythical traditions, and how they developed from accounts written by people who took part to his expedition, the relationships between Alexander, his fellow Macedonians, his Greek and, later, Persian subjects. We will also discuss Alexander's aims: some, already in antiquity, believed that he wanted to unite mankind beyond ethnicities and languages, but many modern scholars question these idealising interpretations. We will analyse the relationship between Alexander the ancient deities, and discuss evidence showing that he might have believed that he was divine.