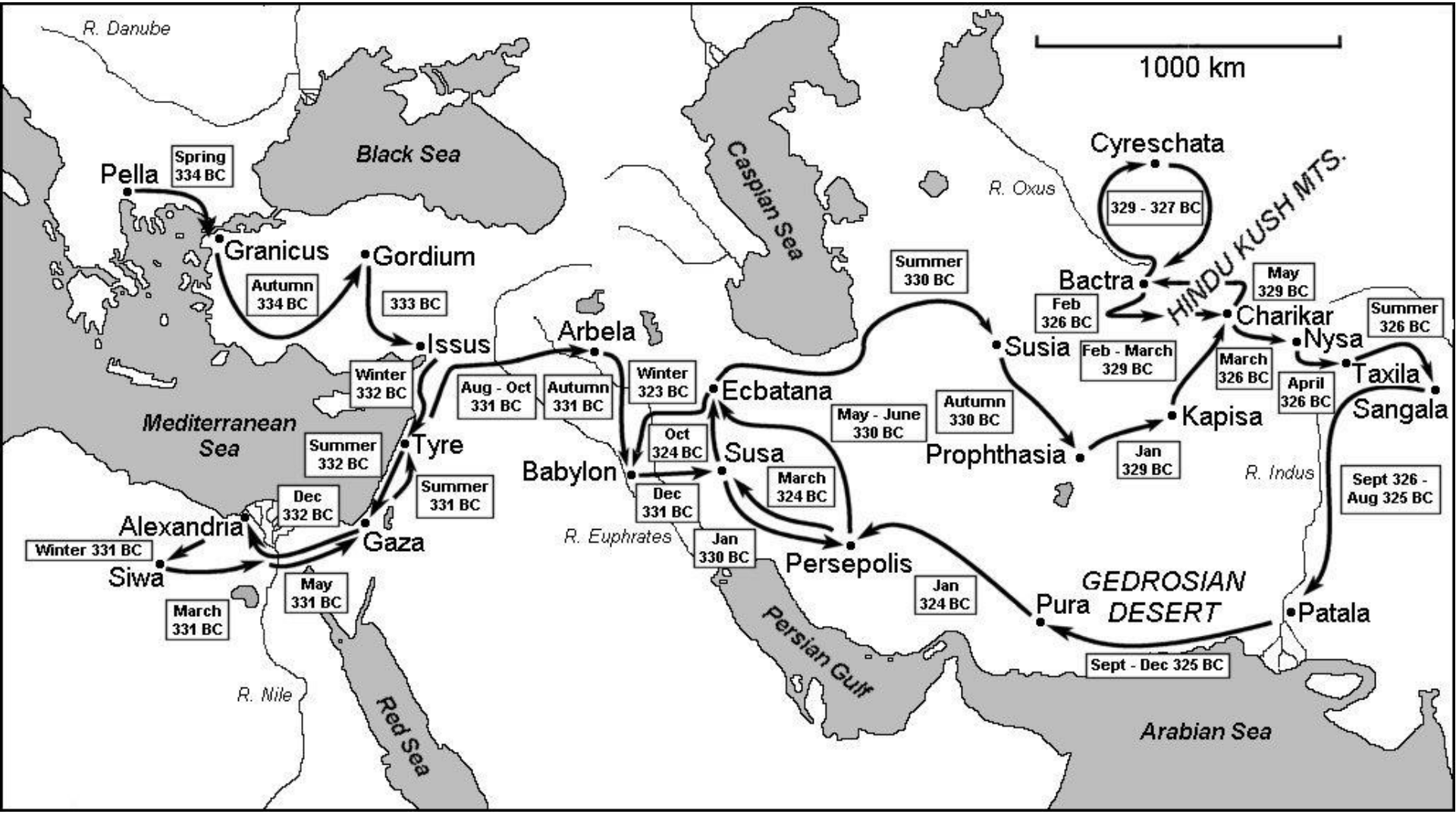
ALEXANDER THE GREAT AND THE HELLENISTIC WORLD

Lecture 19: From Granicus to Egypt

Aftermath of Granicus

- Access to Asia Minor
- Propaganda victory
- Where to next?

Map of Alexander's Campaigns



Phrygia and the league

- Calas → replaces the Persian satrap of Phyrgia
- Alexander of Lyncestis is put in charge of all league troops (except the Argives)
- Alexander is put in charge of securing Phrygia under the command of Calas

Memnon and the Persians

- Retreat to Miletus
- Control of the sea

Sardis

Capital of Lydian Satrapy:

- Recovering his forces, Alexander led them down through Lydia and took over the city of the Sardians with its citadels and, what is more, the treasures stored therein, for Mithrines the satrap surrendered them without resistance.

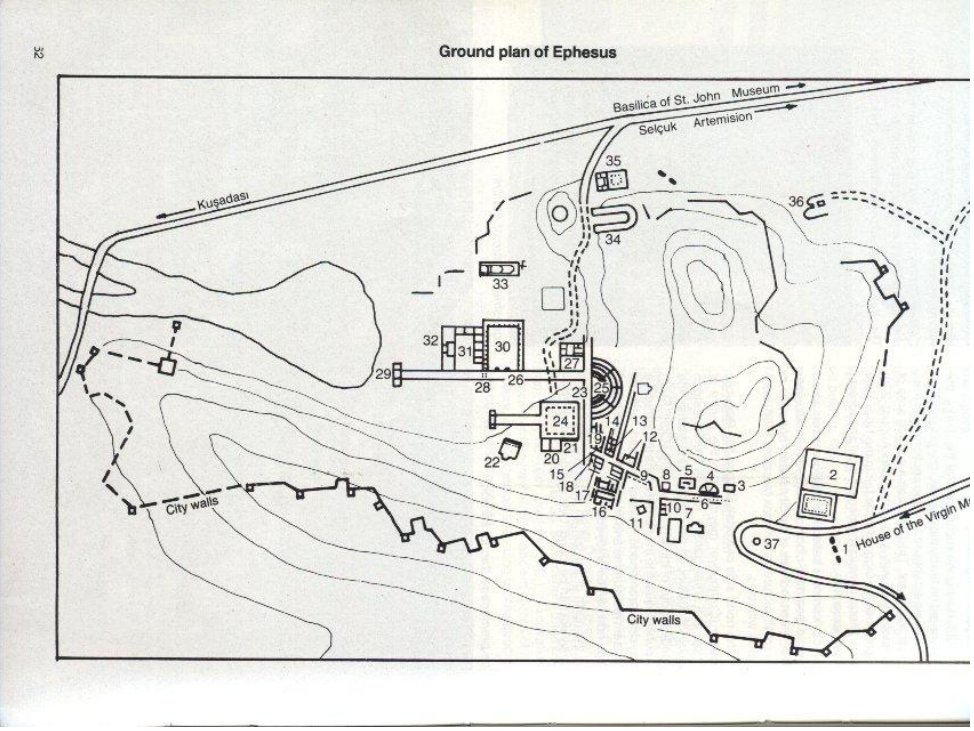
Diodorus 17.21.7

Re-arranging satrapies

- Persian satrap (Spithridates) → Asander, brother of Parmenio
- Commander of the fortress (at Sardis), Pausanias, one of his companions
- Argives are the garrison
- New department to collect taxes, chief financial office is Nicias (a Macedonian)

Ephesus

- 336 Parmenio took Ephesus and there was a statue of Philip in the temple of Artemis.
- 334ish back in Persian control
- Siege, city goes to Alexander
- Refuses to let Alexander pay for the restoration of the temple



Alexander and Apelles

- Agrees to let Apelles paint his portrait
- Apelles paints a portrait of Alexander on Bucephalas
- Alexander hates it
- Attempt 2:
- Alexander as Zeus

Fate of Asia Minor

- Parmenio is to go accept the surrender of the cities of Ionia, Lydia, and Aeolis.
- Oligarchies/Tyrannies are to be replaced with "democracies"
- Local laws and customs to remain the same
- Tribute to Persians to be removed
- Cities to join the league and pay contributions to the campaign

Liberation of Priene?

- Priene refuses to be liberated?
- Garrison
- *Syntaxeis*
- Dedication of a temple to Athena Polias

Miletos

The Persians had about 400 ships, but Parmenio, in spite of their numerical superiority, urged Alexander to engage. He did, undoubtedly, believe that a sea-fight would go in favour of the Greeks, but the real reason for his confidence was a sign from heaven – an eagle which had been seen on the beach just astern of Alexander's ships….

Alexander replied that Parmenio was mistaken, and that he had wrongly interpreted the omen. In the first place, it was absurd to rush blindly into a naval engagement against greatly superior forces….

…the appearance of the eagle was, without a doubt, a favourable sign; but the fact that it had been seen on shore surely indicated that it was his army, not his navy, which would render the Persian fleet powerless- he would, as it were, win his sea battle from the land

Arrian 1.18-19

Arrian 1.20

Alexander now decided to disband his fleet. He had not, at the moment, the money for maintaining it; he knew that it was no match for the Persian navy, and he had no wish to subject any part of his strength, in ships or men, to the risk of disaster. Moreover, now that his army was master of the continent, he was well aware that a fleet was no longer of any use to him: by seizing the coastal towns he could reduce the Persian navy to impotence, for they would then have no port on the Asian coast which they could use, and no source of replacement for their crews.

Fleet

- Disbanded after siege of Miletus
  - Cost – 100 talents a month
  - Macedonians would fight better without the possibility of retreat
  - New strategy
    - Capture all of the ports from the landward side
  - Distrust of Greek allies?

Miletus to Gordium

- Persian fleet withdraws to Halicarnassus
- Alexander gains an alliance with Queen Ada (older sister of Pixodarus) to restore her in Halicarnassus (she adopts him as her son)
- Successful but destructive siege
- Ada now satrap of Caria

Miletus to Gordium

- Alexander goes through Lycia, Pamphylia and Pisidia
- Some minor resistance particularly from mountain tribes

Ruler of the world?

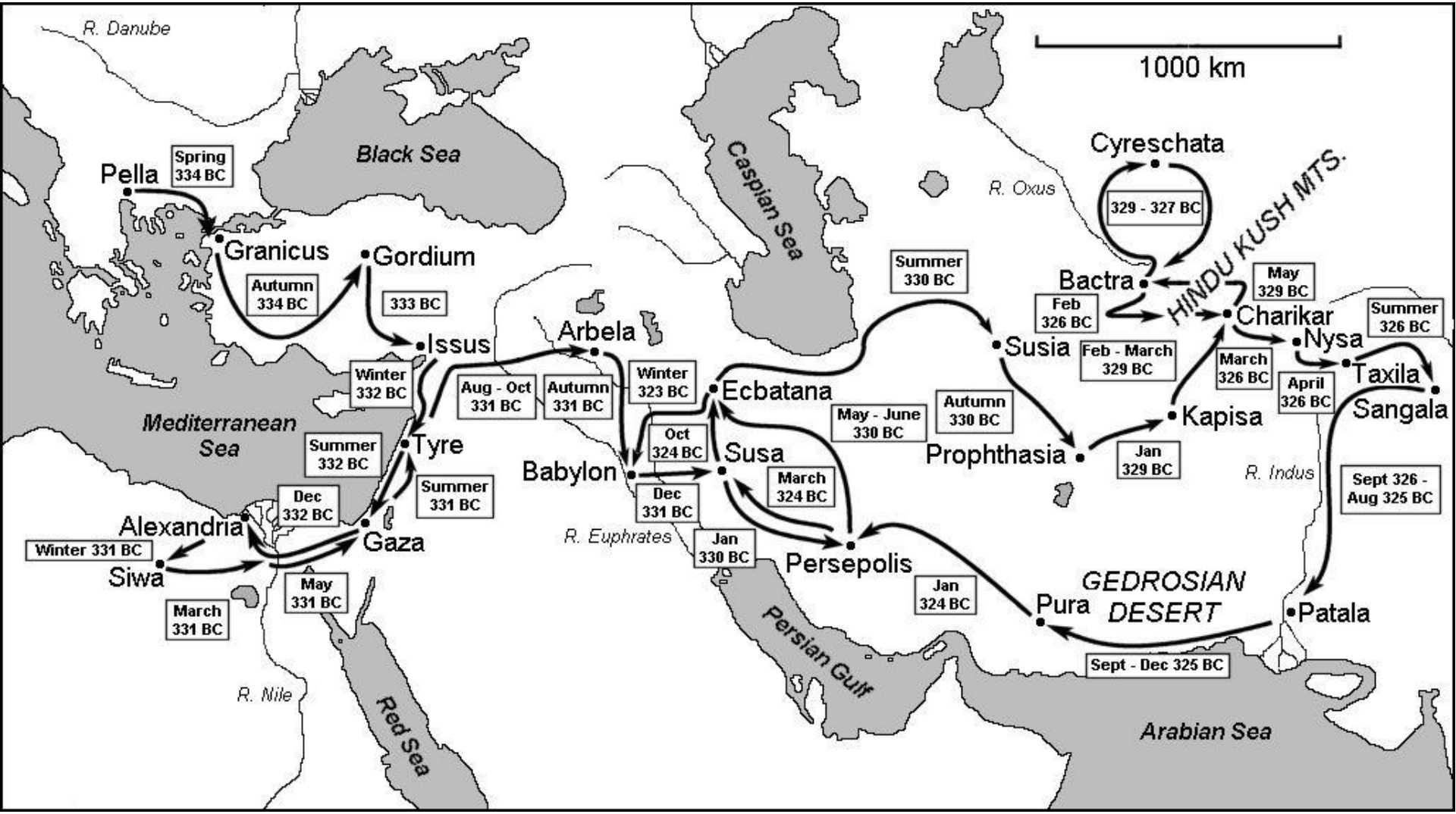
When he captured Gordium, which is reputed to have been the home of the ancient king Midas, he saw the celebrated chariot which was fastened to its yoke by the bark of the cornel-tree, and heard the legend which was believed by all the barbarians, that the fates had decreed that the man who untied the knot was destined to become the ruler of the whole world. According to most writers the fastenings were so elaborately intertwined and coiled upon one another that their ends were hidden: in consequence Alexander did not know what to do, and in the end loosened the knot by cutting through it with his sword, whereupon the many ends sprang into view. But according to Aristobulus he unfastened it quite easily by removing the pin which secured the yoke to the pole of the chariot, and then pulling out the yoke itself.

Plutarch, *Life of Alexander 18*

Gordium to Issus

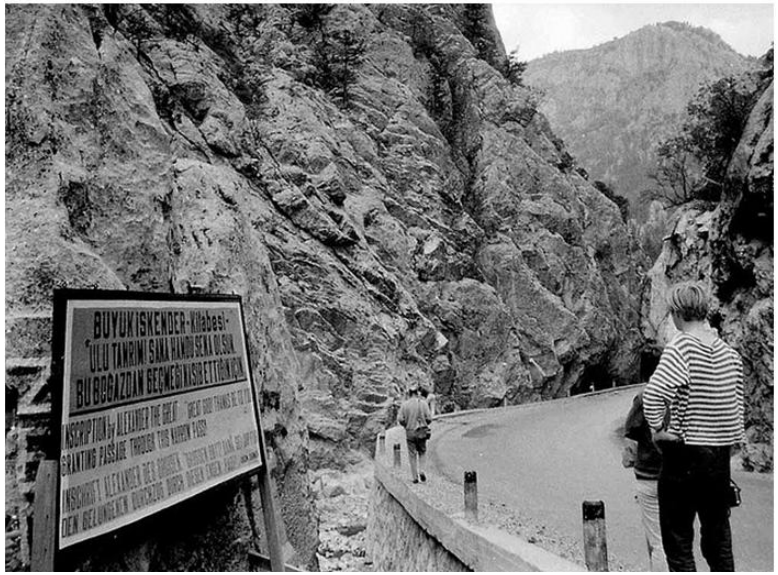
- Gordium to Ankara (Ancyra)
  - Paphlagonians offer to submit if he does not invade
    - Nominally under the satrap of Phyrgia
  - Cappadocia surrenders west of the Halys and some ways east
    - Local baron remains in power
  - Locals offer vague promises while he is there, rebel when he is gone
- Memnon dies!

Map of Alexander's Campaigns



Darius v Alexander: Round 1

- Darius gathers troops in Babylon
- Alexander is in Cappadocia in August
- Alexander must pass through the Cilician Gates
- Before the highway, barely wide enough for 2 camels to pass each other



Cilician Gates

- Arsames does not put all his forces across the gates
- Leaves a small force and then devastates the land behind the gates
- Wrong lessons learned from Granicus
- Alexander marches through the gates largely unopposed

River Cydnus

- Cilician plain in August is hot! (Avg. temp in 30s)
- Alexander reaches the river jumps in
- Gets sick

Early signs of a conspiracy?

All his doctors but one despaired of his life; but Philip of Acarnania, who attended him and was not only a trusted physician but a good soldier as well, proposed to give him a purgative. Alexander consented to take it, and just as Philip was preparing the draught, Alexander was handed a note from Parmenio. 'Beware of Philip,' the note read; 'I am informed that he has been bribed by Darius to poison you.' Alexander read the warning, and with the paper still in his hand took the cup of medicine and then passed the note to Philip. Philip read it, and while he was reading Alexander swallowed the dose.

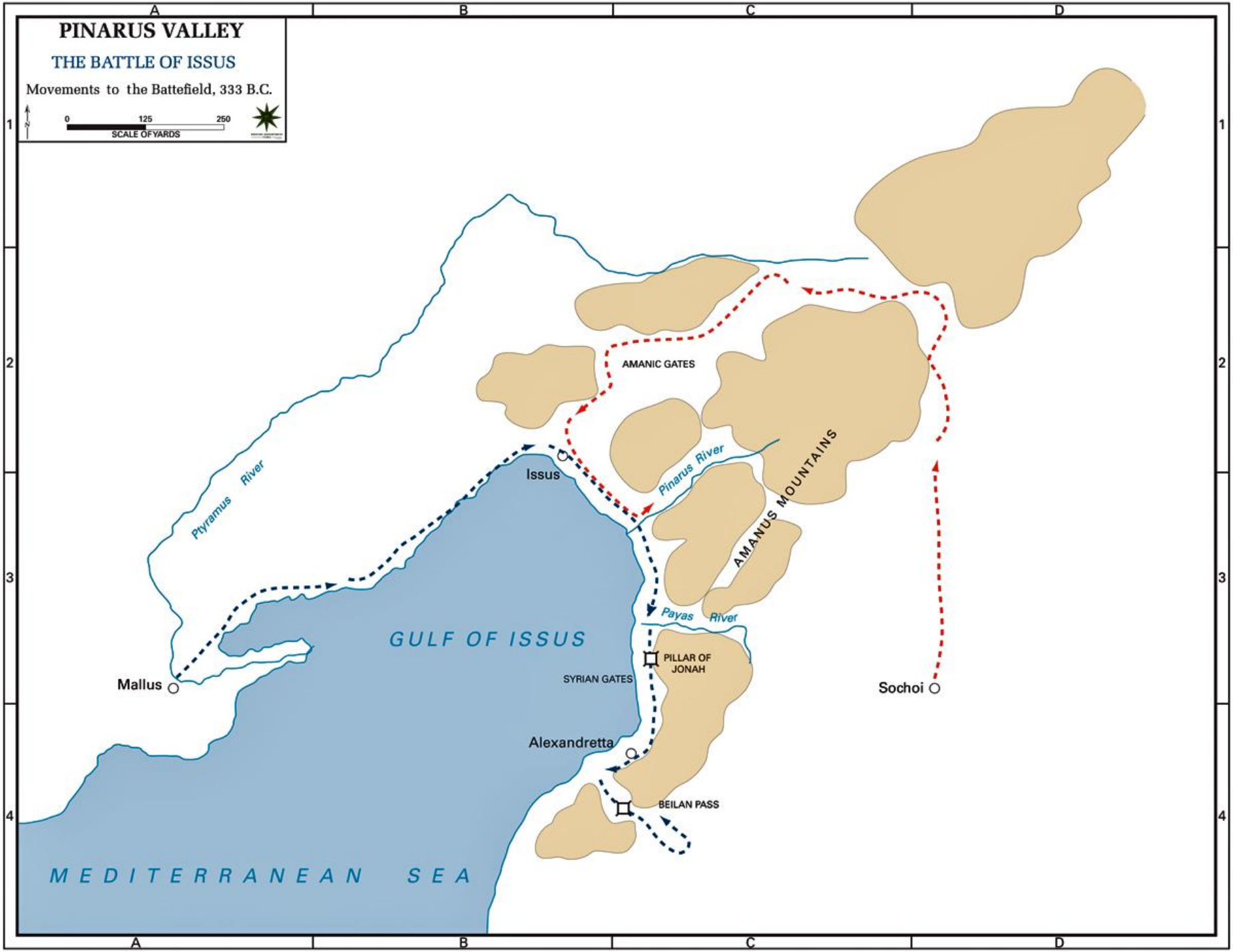
Arrian *Anabasis* 2.4

Tarsus and Issus

- Alexander recovers slowly
- Parmenio to reconnoitre both passes into Cilicia
- Alexander as conqueror
- Takes mint at Tarsus and begins to issue his own coinage
- Alexander and Parmenio make a base at Issus

Darius arrives

- Darius makes camp at Sochi
- East of the Syrian Gates
- Large plain
- Should Alexander wait at Issus or attack?

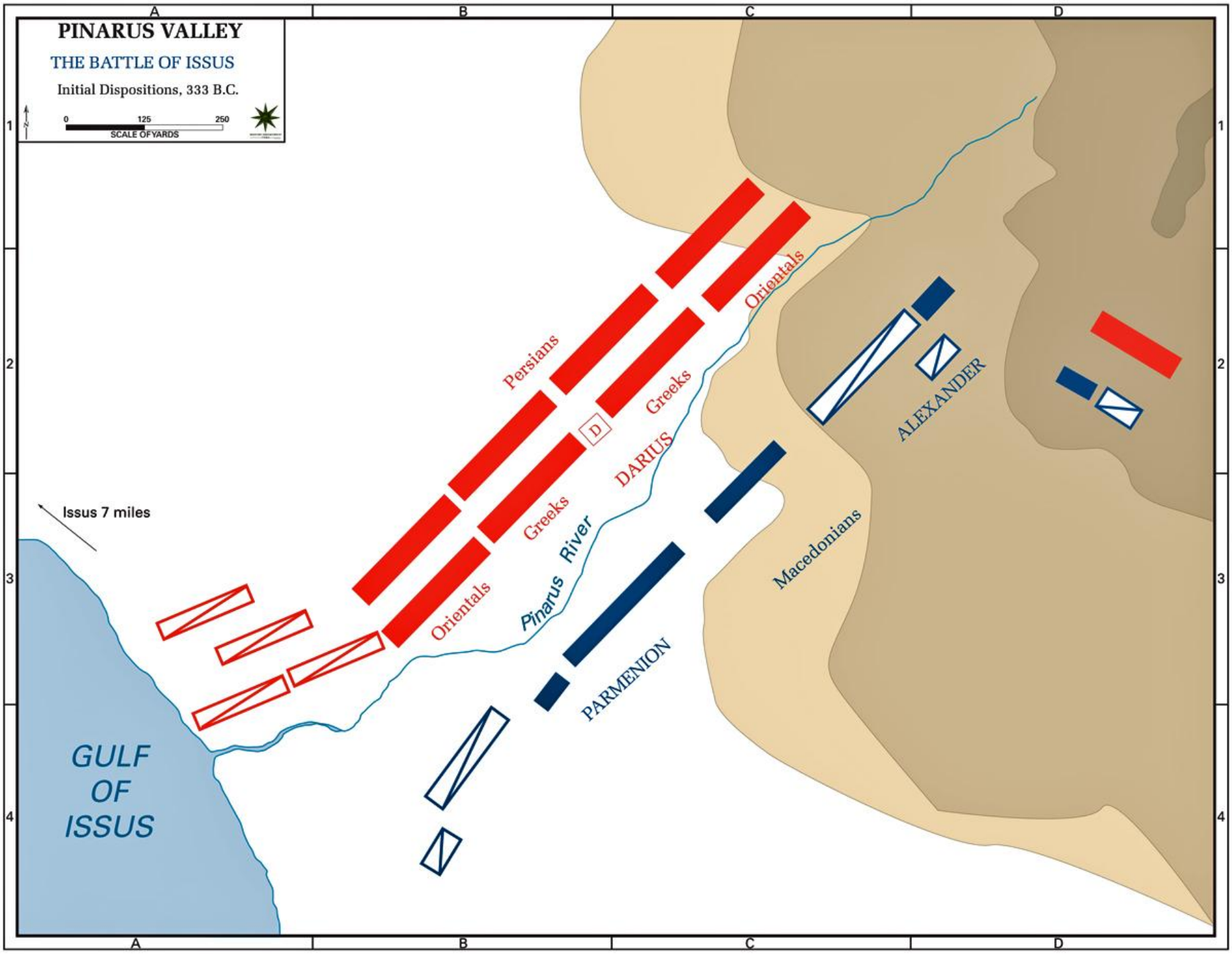

PINARUS VALLEY
THE BATTLE OF ISSUS
Movements to the Battefield, 333 B.C.
0
125
250
SCALE OF YARDS
AMANIC GATES
Pinarus River
AMANUS MOUNTAINS
Issus
Ptyramus River
Payas River
GULF OF ISSUS
PILLAR OF JONAH
SYRIAN GATES
Mallus
Sochoi
Alexandretta
BEILAN PASS
MEDITERRANEAN SEA

Alexander moves south

- Alexander moves through the Pillar of Jonah to Myriandrus
- Darius moves through the Amanic gates
- Darius captures Alexander's wounded that he left at Issus
- Alexander is caught in a trap

Battle of Issus

- Darius takes a defensive position on the north bank of the Pinarus river
- Alexander has to win: a draw is as good as a loss
- Alexander marches the 12 miles to Issus


PINARUS VALLEY
THE BATTLE OF ISSUS
Initial Dispositions, 333 B.C.
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SCALE OF YARDS
Persians
Orientals
Greeks
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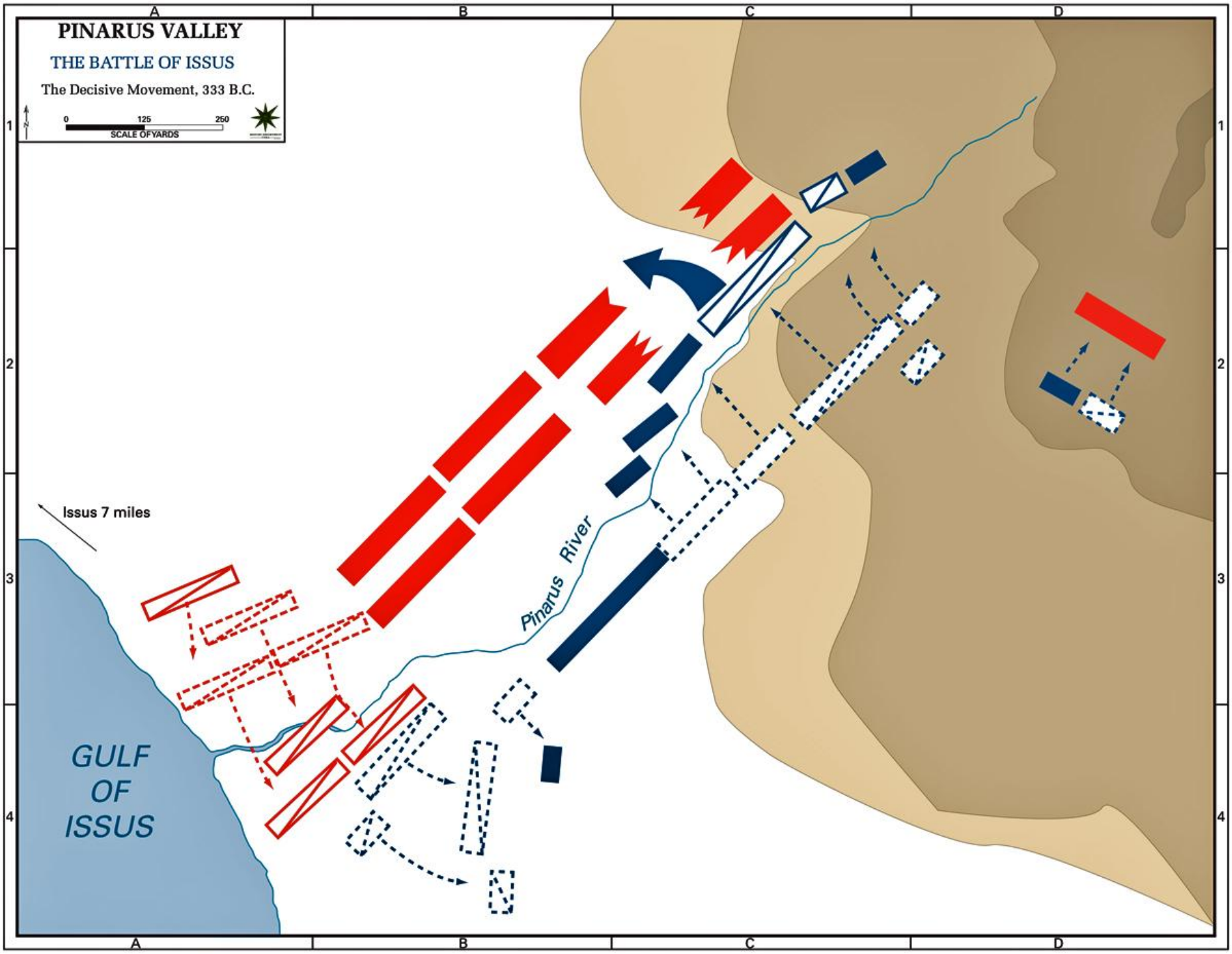
DARIUS
Greeks
Orientals
Pinarus River
Issus 7 miles
GULF OF ISSUS
PARMENION
Macedonians
ALEXANDER


PINARUS VALLEY
THE BATTLE OF ISSUS
The Decisive Movement, 333 B.C.
0
125
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SCALE OF YARDS
Issus 7 miles
Pinarus River
GULF OF ISSUS

Darius escapes

- Alexander breaks through arches on the right flank
- Battle in centre goes well for Persians
- Alexander goes towards Darius, who flees
- Alexander turns to pursue, but receives message that the Phalanx needs help
- Alexander turns his cavalry into the flank of the mercenaries
- Chaos ensues

Battle of Issus

Darius' Camp

- 3,000 talents
- Persian women
- Royal Persian women
- Royal pavilion

"let us wash off the sweat of battle in Darius's bath" "No, in Alexander's bath, now," remarked one of his companions. 'The conqueror takes over the possessions of the conquered and they should be called his.'

Plutarch *Life of Alexander* 20

Pursuit?

- Darius flees to Babylon to attempt to regroup
- Alexander moves south
- Syria and Palestine surrender

Darius' Letter (Spurious?)

- Philip and Arataxerxes were on terms of friendship and aliiance; but upon the accession of Artaxerxes' son arses, Philip was guilty of unprovoked aggression against him. Now since Darius' reign began, Alexander has sent no representative to his court to confirm the former friendship and alliance between the two kingdoms; on the contrary, he has crossed into Asia with his armed forces and done much damage to the Persians. For this reason Darius took the field in defence of his country and of his ancestral throne. The issue of battle was as some god willed; and now Darius the King ask Alexander to restore from captivity his wife, his mother, and his children, and is willing to make friends with him and be his ally. For this cause he urges Alexander to send to him, in company with Meniscus and Arsimas who have brought this request, representatives of his own in order that proper guarantees may be exchanged.

Arrian 2.14

Did Alexander suppress the real letter?

- Alexander summoned his Friends to a council and concealed the real letter. Forging another more in accord with his interests he introduced it to his advisers and sent the envoys away empty handed.

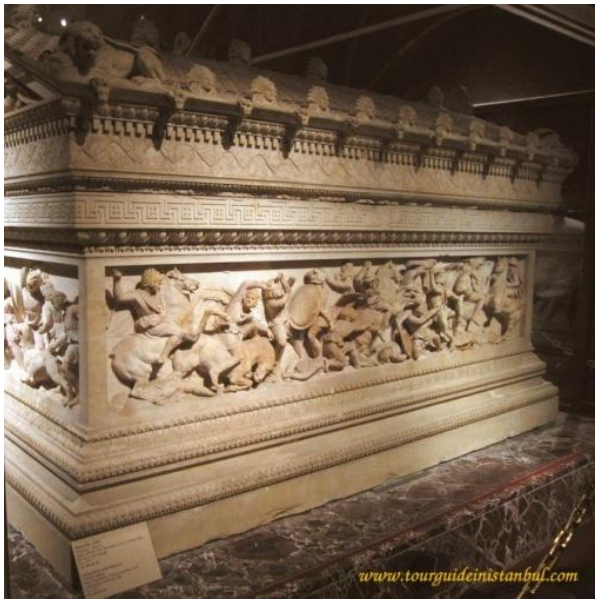
Diodorus 17.39.2

Darius plans

- Control Aegean
- Give money and ships to King Agis in Sparta
- Retake the Hellespont
- Support revolts in Cappadocia and Paphlagonia

Sidon

- Alexander continues south
- Parmenio takes Damascus and its large treasury
- In Sidon, the locals had killed their prince and offered Alexander to chose a replacement
- He lets Hephaestion choose, he picks a royal gardener (still a member of the royal house) Abdalonymus



Tyre

- Asks Tyre to surrender
- They kill his heralds
- Alexander needs the city so that it can no longer be a base for the Persian fleet
- Alexander decides to build a mole to attack the island

Tyre

- Alexander had no difficulty in persuading his officers that the attempt on Tyre must be made. He himself had further encouragement by a sign from heaven, for that very night he dreamed that as he was approaching the walls of the town Heracles greeted him and invited him to enter. The dream was interpreted by Aristander as signifying that Tyre would be taken, but with much labour, because labour was characteristic of all that Heracles had himself accomplished.

Arrian *Anabasis* 2.18

Alexander needs a fleet

- Sidon
  - 10 triremes from Rhodes
  - 10 from Lycia
  - 3 from Soli
  - 80 from Sidon
  - 120 warships from the kings of Cyrpus

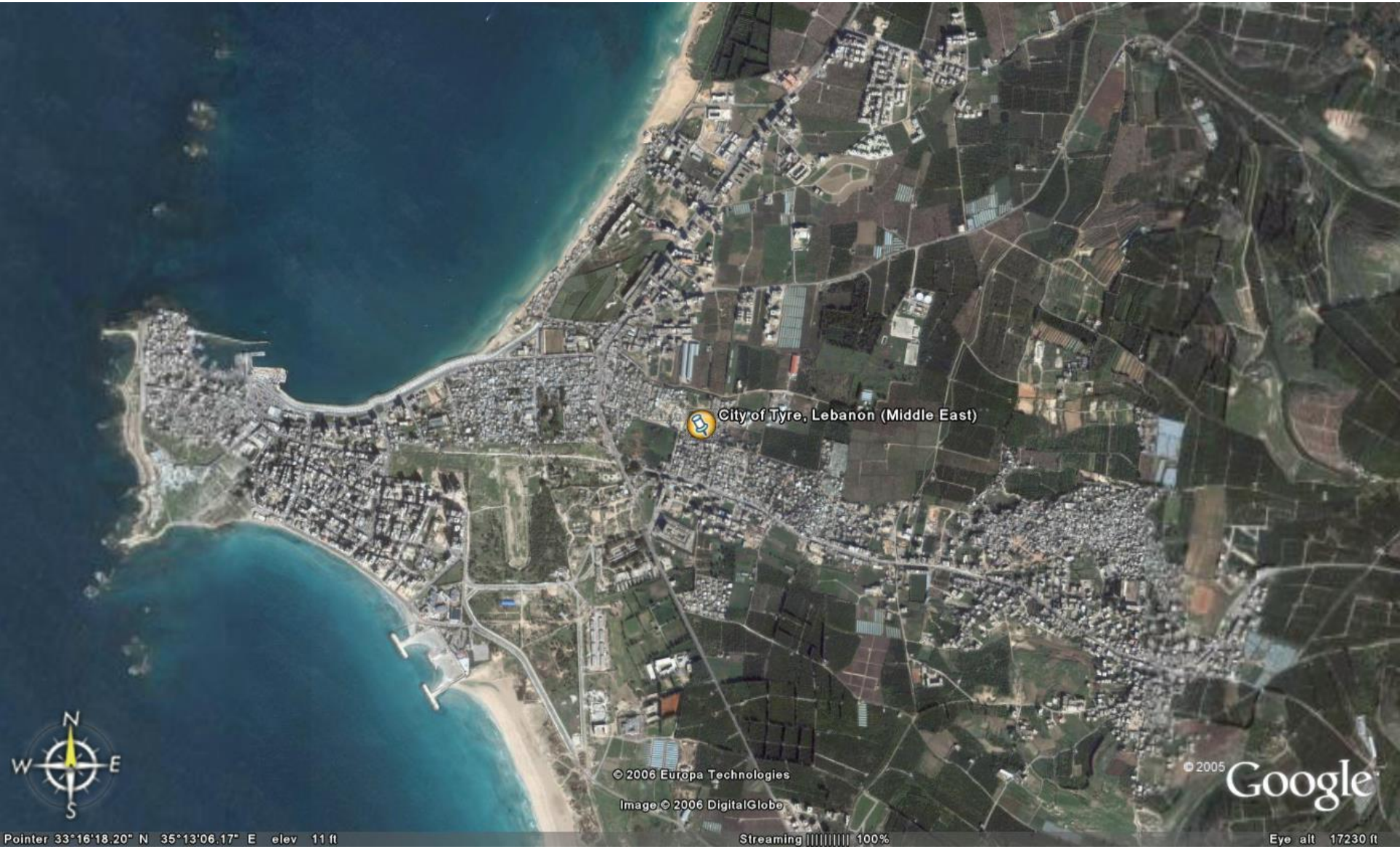
Tyre

- Alexander nearly catches the Tyrian fleet
- Now can blockade Tyre
- Can finish the mole protected
- Tyrians devise increasing numbers of weapons against Alexander's attacks

Tyre

- City is eventually taken
- Siege lasts over 6 months
- Destructive violence once walls are breached
- 30,000 survivors sold into slavery
- 2,000 men of military age crucified

Tyre: Island to Peninsula



Darius' Letter

- 10,000 talents for Darius' family
- All territory west of the Euphrates to the Aegean
- Marriage to Darius' daughter

"These proposals were made known at a meeting of Alexander's personal advisers, and Parmenio, according to all reports, declared that were he Alexander he would be happy to end the war on such terms and be done with any further adventures. 'That,' replied Alexander, 'is what I should do were I Parmenio; but since I am Alexander, I shall send Darius a different answer.'

Arrian 2.26

Surrender of Phoenicia

- Every city south of Tyre to Egypt surrender
- Except Gaza
- Siege Gaza (2 months)
- Slaughter defenders

Gaza to Egypt

- Gaza to Pelusium in a week (130 miles)
- Alexander greeted as liberator
- Must not offend local religious sensibilities
- Coronation in Memphis?
  - Alexander romance
  - Alexander connections with Nectanebo (last Pharaoh)
  - Olympias and the snake
- Restoration of Karnak and Luxor

Alexandria

While the king was enjoying the symmetry of the design, suddenly a huge flock of birds appeared from the river and the lagoon, descended upon the site and devoured every grain of the barley. Alexander was greatly disturbed by this omen, but the diviners urged him to take heart and interpreted the occurrence as a sign that the city would not only have abundant resources of its own but would be the nurse of men of innumerable nations, and so he ordered those in charge of the work to proceed while he himself set out to visit the temple of Ammon.

Plutarch *Life of Alexander* 26

‘O paidion’ or ‘o pai Dios

Alexander’s first question was to ask whether any of his father’s murders had escaped punishment. At this the high priest commanded him to speak more guardedly, since his father was not a mortal. Alexander therefore changed the form of his question and asked whether the murderers of Philip had all been punished, and he added another inquiry concerning his own empire, and asked whether he was destined to rule over all mankind. This, the god replied, would be granted to him, and he also assured him that Philip’s death had been completely avenged, whereupon Alexander dedicated some magnificent offerings to the god and presented large sums of money to his priests.

Plutarch *Life of Alexander* 27

Follow-up Reading

- Fredricksmeyer, E.A. 1991. "Alexander, Zeus Ammon, and the Conquest of Asia" *Transactions of the American Philological Association*, vol. 121, pp. 191-214.
- Fredricksmeyer, E.A. 1961. "Alexander, Midas, and the Oracle at Gordium" *Classical Philology*, vol. 56, no. 3, pp. 160-168.