



# Ancient Persia and Greece



AP World History: Unit 0

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# THE PERSIANS & GREEKS

# The Persians

# Development of States and Empires

As the early states and empires grew in number, size, and population, they frequently competed for resources and came into conflict with one another. In quest of land, wealth, and security, some empires expanded dramatically. In doing so, they built powerful military machines and **administrative institutions** that were capable of organizing human activities over long distances, and they created new groups of military and **political elites** to manage their affairs. As these empires expanded their boundaries, they also faced the need to develop policies and procedures to govern their relationships with ethnically and culturally diverse populations: sometimes to integrate them within an imperial society and sometimes to exclude them. In some cases, the successes of these empires created further problems. By expanding their boundaries too far, they created political, cultural, and administrative difficulties that they could not manage. They also experienced environmental, social, and economic problems when they over-utilized their lands and subjects and when disproportionate wealth became concentrated in the hands of privileged classes.

# Development of States and Empires

**Empires and states developed new techniques of imperial administration based, in part, on the success of earlier political forms.**

In order to organize their subjects, in many regions the rulers created administrative institutions, including centralized governments as well as elaborate legal systems and bureaucracies. (*Ex. of new administrative institutions: China, Persia, Rome, South Asia*)

Imperial governments promoted trade and projected military power over larger areas using a variety of techniques, including issuing currencies; diplomacy; developing supply lines; building fortifications, defensive walls, and roads; and drawing new groups of military officers and soldiers from the local populations or conquered populations.

# Development of States and Empires

**The Roman, Han, Persian, Mauryan, and Gupta empires created political, cultural, and administrative difficulties that they could not manage, which eventually led to their decline, collapse, and transformation into successor empires or states.**

Through excessive mobilization of resources, erosion of established political institutions, and economic changes, imperial governments generated social tensions and created economic difficulties by concentrating too much wealth in the hands of elites.

# Questions to Consider

- What **specific** methods did the Persians utilize for managing their vast, diverse empire?
- What **specific administrative institutions** did the Persians utilize in order to manage their empire?
- Did the Persians integrate diverse populations or exclude them?
- What environmental, social, and economic problems did the Persians experience?



## Persian Empire, 500 B.C.

	Persian Empire under Cyrus, 530 B.C.
	Persian Empire under Cambyses, 522 B.C.
	Persian Empire under Darius, 500 B.C.
	Former Assyrian Empire
	The Royal Road



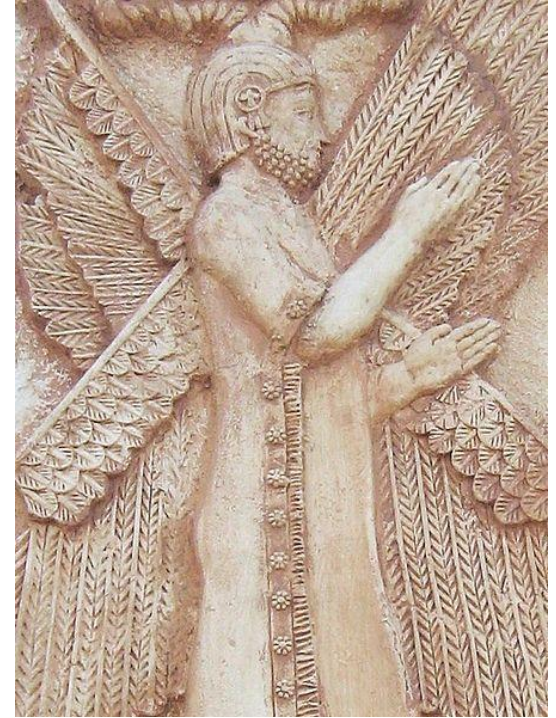
### GEOGRAPHY SKILLBUILDER: Interpreting Maps

- 1. Region** What part of the ancient world did Cambyses add to the Persian Empire?
- 2. Region** Compare the map of the Persian Empire with that of the Assyrian Empire on page 96. What areas did the Persians rule that the Assyrians did not?



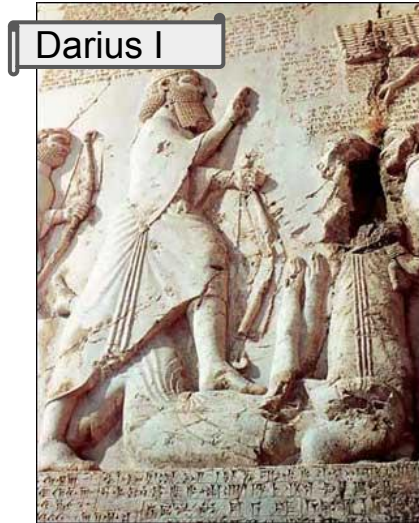
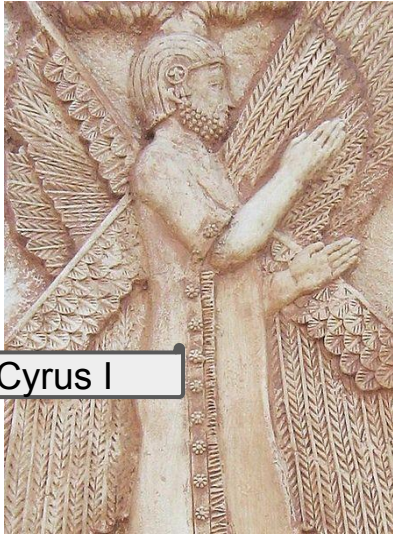
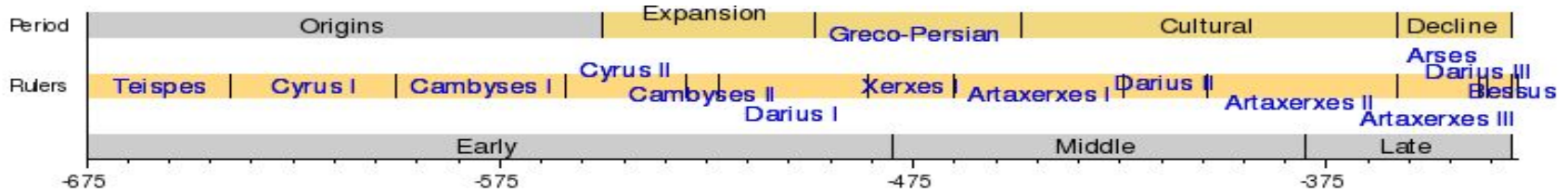
# Persia

- 500 BCE = largest & most impressive of world's empires
- located on Iranian plateau north of Persian Gulf
- Imperial system inspired by Babylonian & Assyrian empires - but surpassed them in size & splendor
- Cyrus (reigned 557-530 BCE) and Darius (reigned 522-486 BCE) = conquests reached from Egypt to India
- Empire contained 35-50 million people
  - very diverse
  - many languages and cultural traditions



Cyrus

# Timeline of Rulers: Ancient Persia



# Persia - Political

- cult of kingship
  - monarch could only be approached through elaborate ritual
- Ruled by the will of great Persian god **Ahura Mazda**
- kings = **absolute monarchs**; crushed rebellions and rebellious officials
- 23 provinces
- Conquest & royal decree held empire together along with ***satraps***  
***(SAY-traps)***
  - satraps = Persian governors who ruled in the provinces
  - lower-level officials were drawn from local authorities
- “eyes and ears of the King” = spies that were an imperial presence in the far reaches of the empire

Why did the Persians utilize both Persian  
governors AND local authorities?



- policy of respect for non-Persian cultural traditions cemented authority and reduced rebellions
  - Persian kings upheld local religious cults in an effort to gain the support of their followers and officials
- 539 BCE - Cyrus allowed the Jews exiled in Babylon to return to their homeland and rebuild their temple (after its destruction by the Assyrians)

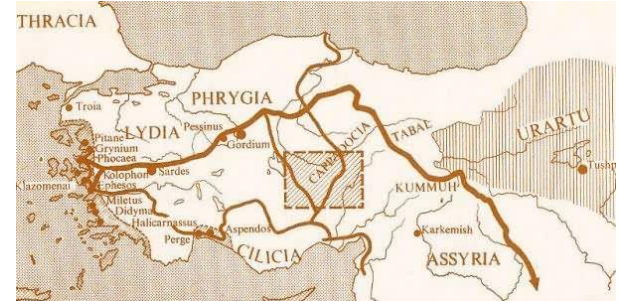
*What was said to them by  
me, night and day, it was  
done.*

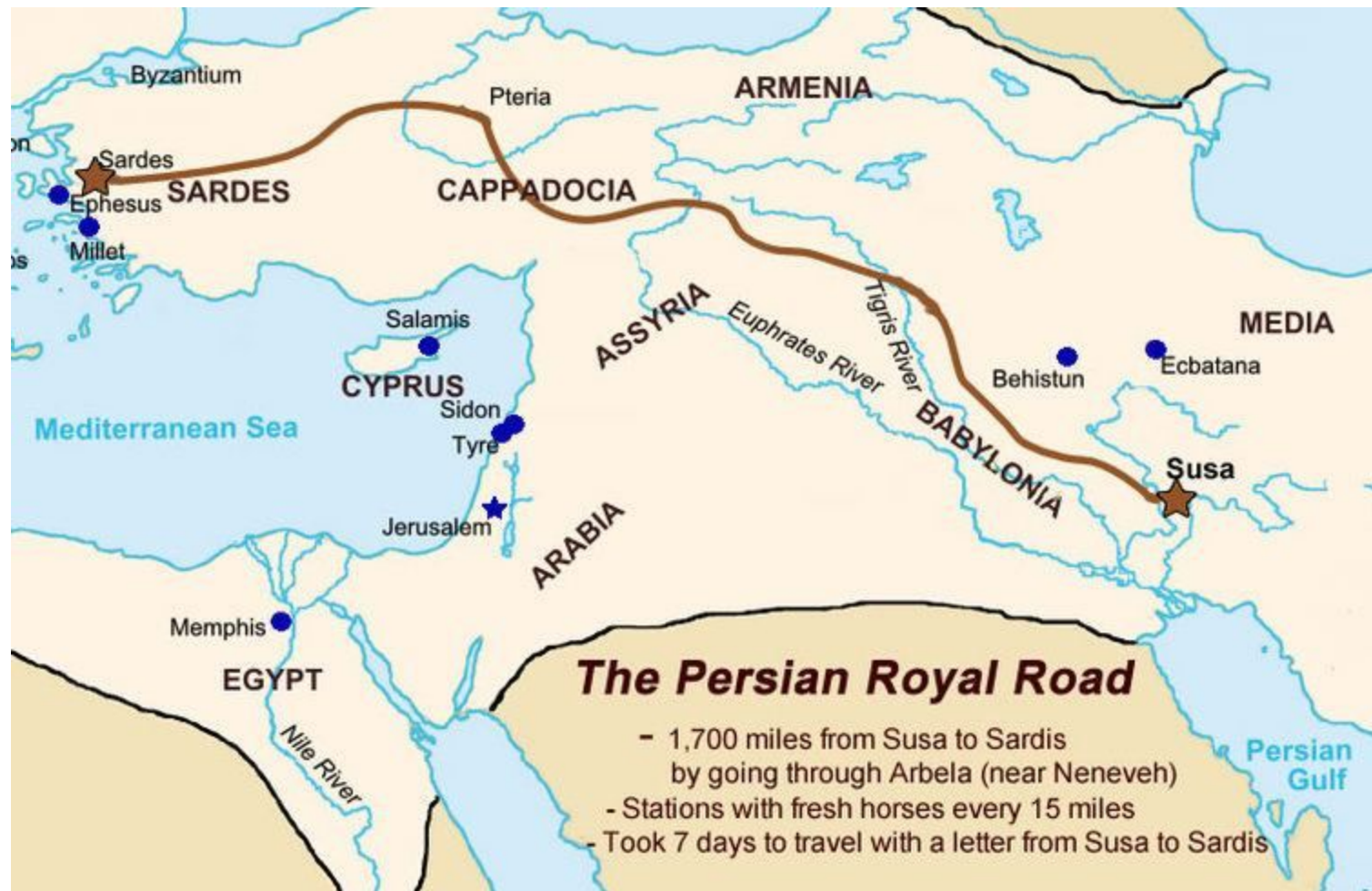
- Darius



# Persia - Infrastructure

- standardized coinage
- predictable taxes levied on each province
- dug canal linking Nile River to the Red Sea
  - expanded commerce & enriched Egypt
- constructed a “royal road” - 1,700 miles in length
  - facilitated communication & commerce across vast empire
  - Could carry a message in one week
  - Caravans could cross in three months
- constructed elaborate imperial centers: Susa, Persepolis







A graphic illustration for Zoroastrianism. In the center is a golden Fravashi, a winged guardian spirit, depicted with a crown, a long beard, and a circular halo. The wings are spread wide, and the figure holds a ring in its right hand. To the right is a tall, brick tower with a lattice-like upper section. The background is a purple and blue sky with clouds. The word 'ZOROASTRIANISM' is written in large, bold, white capital letters at the bottom.

# ZOROASTRIANISM

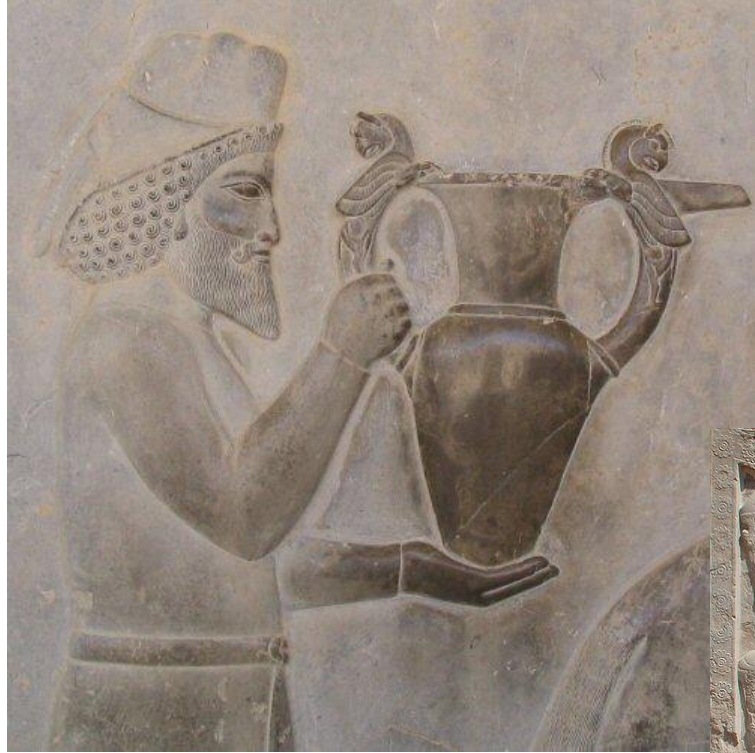
# Persian Religion - Zoroastrianism

- challenged polytheism of earlier times
- Zarathustra (Zoroaster to the Greeks) - 6th or 7th century BCE
- Zoroaster's ideas took hold & received state support during the Achaemenid dynasty (558-330 BCE)
- Had single unique god: **Ahura Mazda**
  - ruled world and was source of all truth, light, and goodness
  - engaged in cosmic struggle with the forces of evil - embodied in an equivalent supernatural figure, **Angra Mainyu**
- at judgement day, those who aligned w/ Ahura Mazda would be granted new resurrected bodies & rewarded with eternal life in Paradise
- emphasis on free will of humankind & necessity for each person to choose between good and evil



Persepolis  
Persian City





The bull and lion are Zoroastrian symbols - the bull representing the moon and the lion representing the sun.

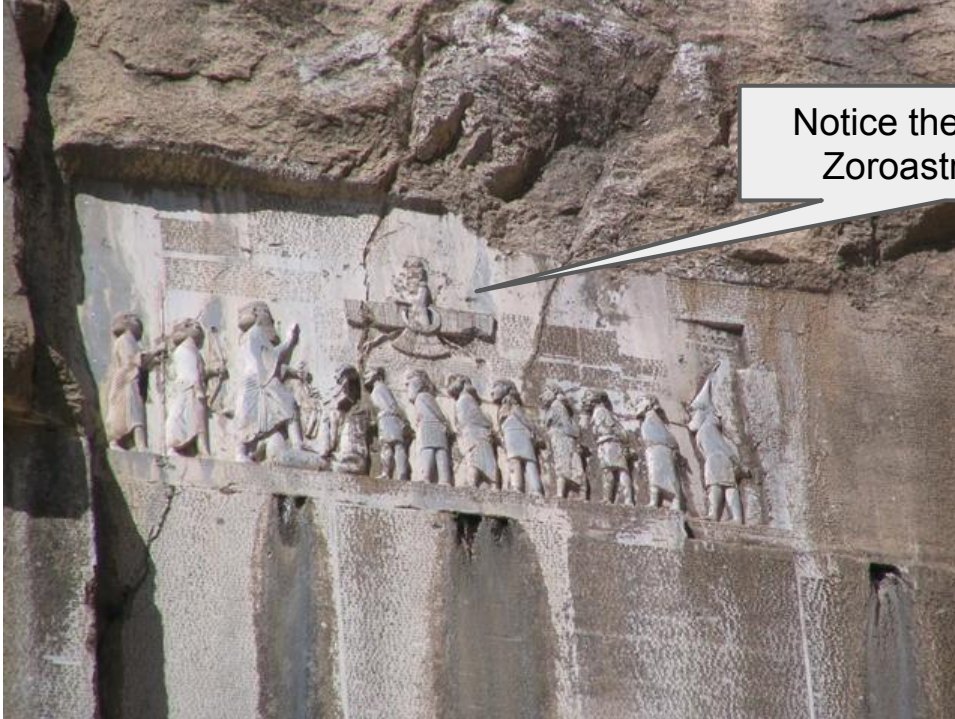


# Tachara - Palace of Darius I in Persepolis (486 BCE)





# Darius I

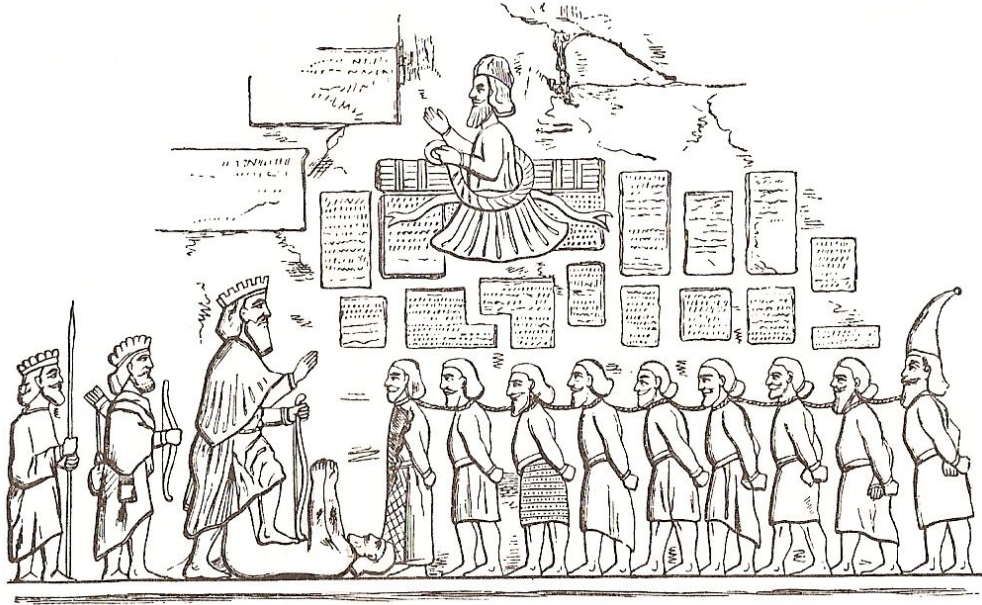


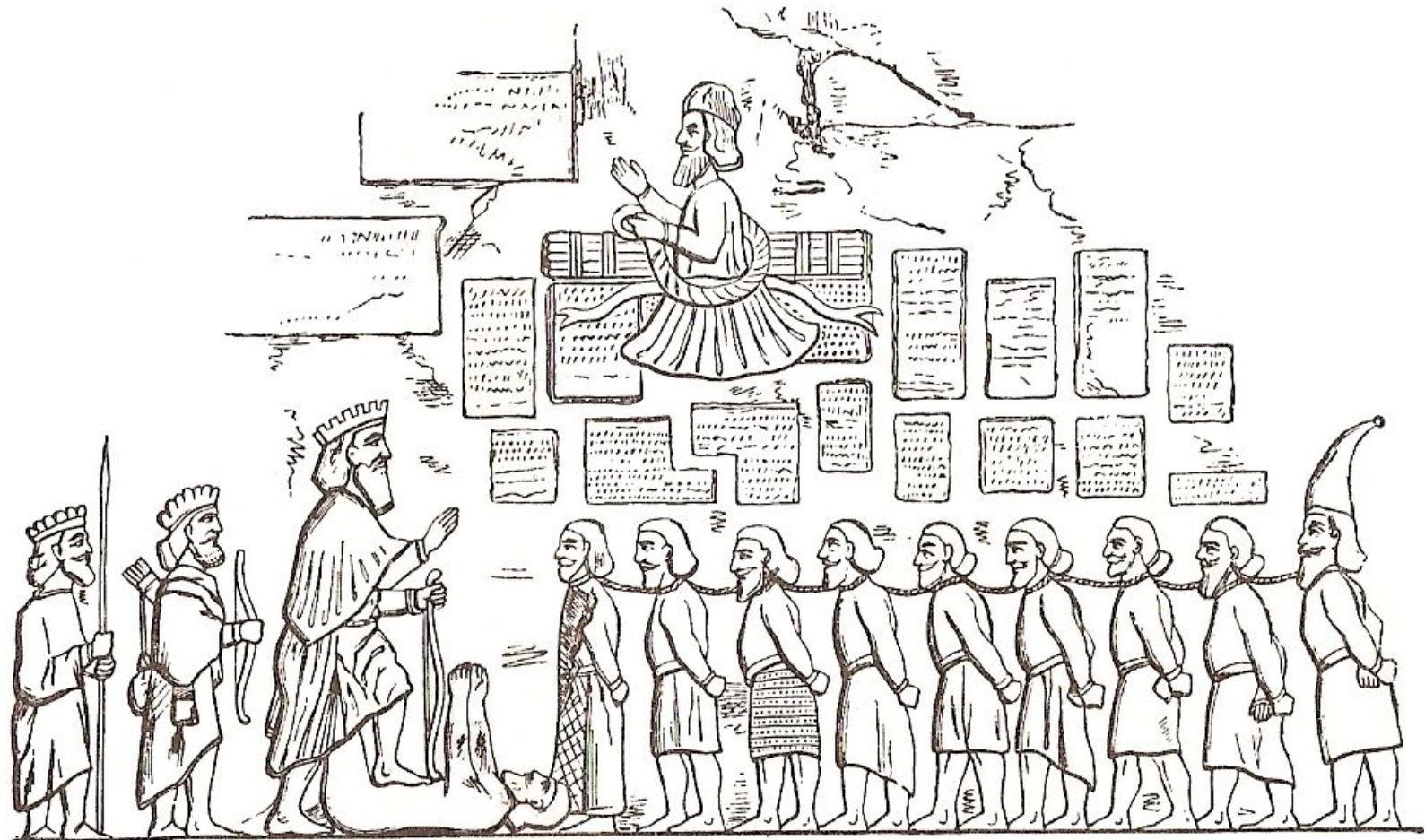
Notice the Faravahar, a Zoroastrian symbol!





# Beshitun Inscription - Darius the Great





# Analyzing Primary Sources

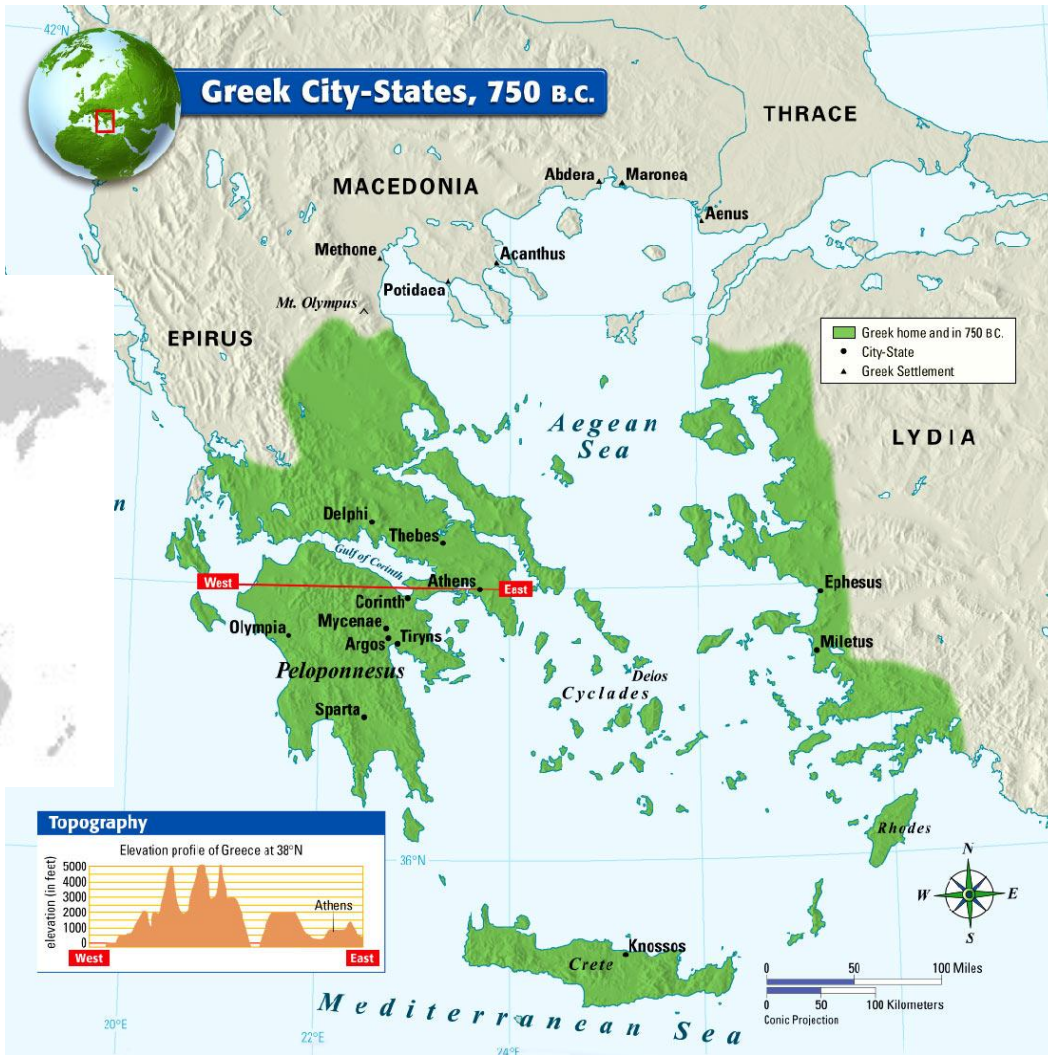
- What message did Darius seek to convey in commissioning this work?
- How does it present the source of political authority in the Persian Empire?
- What role does the Faravahar play in this image?
- How might Athenian Greeks respond to this representation of political authority?

# Development of States and Empires

As the early states and empires grew in number, size, and population, they frequently competed for resources and came into conflict with one another. In quest of land, wealth, and security, some empires expanded dramatically. In doing so, they built powerful military machines and administrative institutions that were capable of organizing human activities over long distances, and they created new groups of military and political elites to manage their affairs. As these empires expanded their boundaries, they also faced the need to develop policies and procedures to govern their relationships with ethnically and culturally diverse populations: sometimes to integrate them within an imperial society and sometimes to exclude them. In some cases, the successes of these empires created further problems. By expanding their boundaries too far, they created political, cultural, and administrative difficulties that they could not manage. They also experienced environmental, social, and economic problems when they over-utilized their lands and subjects and when disproportionate wealth became concentrated in the hands of privileged classes.

# Questions to Consider

- How do the Greeks compare to the Persians?
- What **specific** methods did the Greeks utilize for managing their city-states?
- What **specific administrative institutions** did the Greeks utilize in order to maintain political power?
- Did the Greeks integrate diverse populations or exclude them?
- What environmental, social, and economic problems did the Greeks experience?



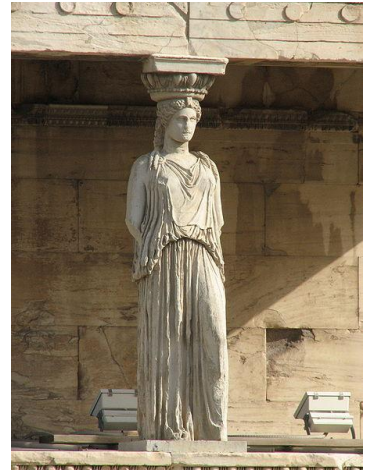
# Greek Geography

How do you think Greece's geography contributed to the political shape of their civilization?



# Ancient Greece

- emerged around 750 BCE
- comprised of small, competing city-states
- allowed varying degrees of popular participation in political life
- much smaller population than Persia
- **city-states** (polis) divided by mountains and valleys
  - city-states were fiercely independent
  - but spoke same language & worshipped same gods
  - rivalries in the larger city-states: Athens, Sparta, Thebes, Corinth
- expansion was in the form of settlement, no conquest
- growing population = people looking for land and resources - emigration around the Mediterranean





## Types of Greek Political Systems

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graph TD; A[Types of Greek Political Systems] --- B[Monarchy - ruled by a king]; A --- C[Aristocracy - ruled by noble land-owning elites]; A --- D[Oligarchy - ruled by a few wealthy landowners and merchants]; A --- E[Democracy - citizens participated (but not everyone was considered a citizen)];
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**Monarchy** - ruled by a king

**Aristocracy** - ruled by noble land-owning elites

**Oligarchy** - ruled by a few wealthy landowners and merchants

**Democracy** - citizens participated (but not everyone was considered a citizen)

# Ancient Greece: Political Characteristics

- idea of “citizenship” present in some city-states
  - free people running the affairs of the state
  - equality of all citizens before the law
- extent of participation and the role of “citizens” varied - over time & from city to city
  - foreigners, slaves, and women were excluded
- Early = only wealthy & wellborn had rights of full citizenship
  - rights = speaking & voting in the assembly, holding public office, fighting in the army
- Gradually, middle and lower-class men (mostly farmers) also obtained these rights





# Ancient Greece: Athens & Democracy

- in Athens, debt slavery was abolished
- access to public office was opened to a wider group of men
- all citizens allowed to take part in the Assembly
- by 450 BCE all holders of public office were chosen by lot & were paid - even the poorest could serve
- Assembly became center of political life
- Athenian democracy different from modern democracy: direct rather than representative
- women, slaves, and foreigners (more than half the population) = excluded from political participation



## SPARTA

- 2 kings
- focused on military training
- all males were soldiers
- women had more freedom
- school: 7-20 years old
- harsh treatment
- people could not travel
- killed weak babies
- metal bars for money

## BOTH

- in Greece
- city-states
- religion
- myths
- language
- slaves
- city-councils

## ATHENS

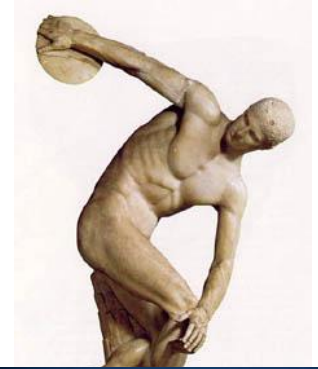
- focused on education
- taught public speaking
- men had different jobs
- women stayed home
- Parthenon- a temple with a 30 foot statue of Athena
- school finished at 18 years old
- encouraged travel
- coin money

# Greeks vs. Persians

- Greek immigration & expansion upset the Persians
- twice in ten years (490 & 480 BCE) the Persians launched major military expeditions to punish the Greeks
- Greeks defeated Persians on both land & sea
- little effect on the Persians, but gave enormous pride to Greeks, especially Athenians
- Greeks felt they won because of their freedoms - motivated men to fight harder to defend what was theirs
- Persia represented despotism, Greeks signified Europe & freedom - thus was born the notion of an East / West divide which has shaped European & American thinking about the world into the 21st century

# Greek Golden Age 479-429 BCE

- Greek victory radicalized Athenian democracy
- men in the poorer classes fought and they could insist on full citizenship
- 50 years after the Greco-Persian Wars were the high point of Athenian democracy & Golden Age of Greek culture
- Parthenon (dedicated to Athena) was built
- theater was born from work of Aeschylus, Sophocles, & Euripides
- Socrates was beginning his career as a philosopher in Athens
- Athens tried to dominate the rest of the Greek city-states = resentment = Peloponnesian War
- Athens was defeated = increased distrust
- eventually dominated by Macedonia
- Greek glory days ended, but Greek culture continued to spread





**H**  
HISTORY





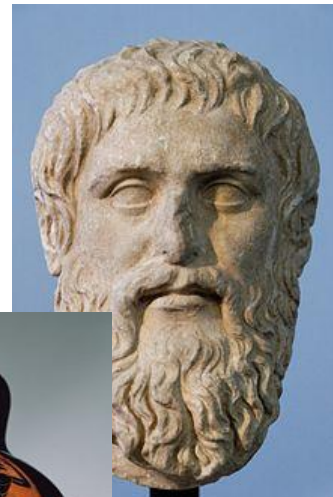
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# Khan Academy: Parthenon

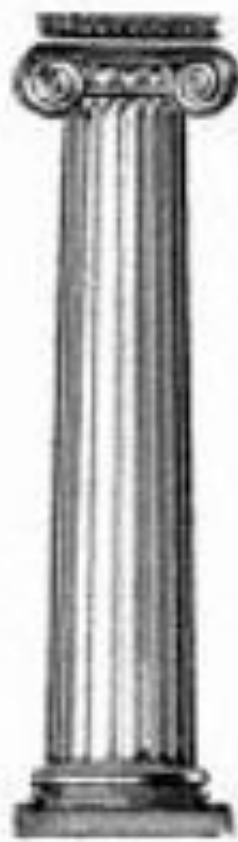


# Greek Art & Architecture

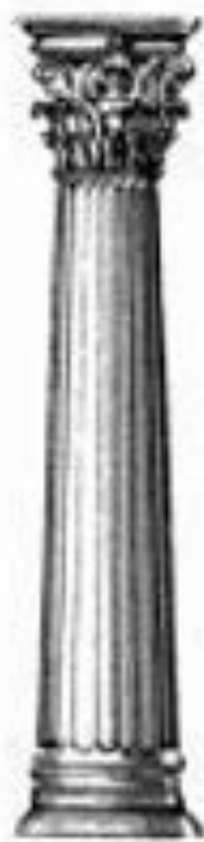




Doric



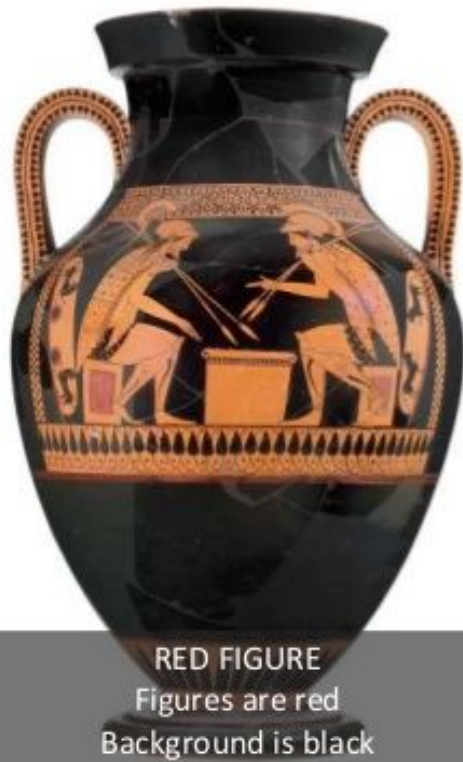
Ionic



Corinthian



**BLACK FIGURE**  
Figures are black  
Background is red

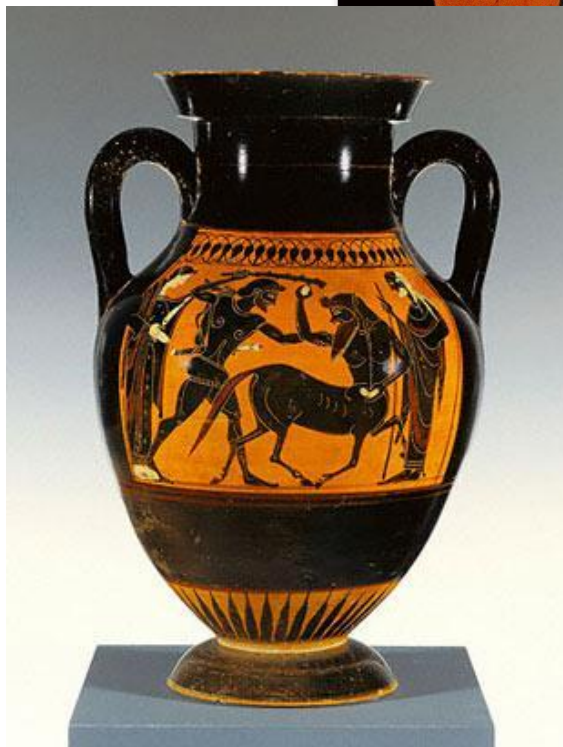


**RED FIGURE**  
Figures are red  
Background is black





# Common Shapes and Comparative Sizes











## Alexander & Hellenistic Era (338 - 323 BCE)



- Macedonian takeover of Greece = led by Philip II - politically unified Greece (finally)
- city-states lost independence
- Philip II's son = Alexander the Great who wanted vengeance against the Persians
- led ten year expedition (333-323 BCE) that created Greek empire from Egypt & Anatolia in the west to Afghanistan & India in the east
- Persian Empire was defeated
  - capital of Persepolis was looted & burned
- Alexander died w/out returning to Greece (323 BCE)
- empire divided into 3 kingdoms ruled by Macedonian generals
- great legacy was widespread dissemination of Greek culture - called Hellenistic era (Greeks referred to themselves as *Hellenes*)

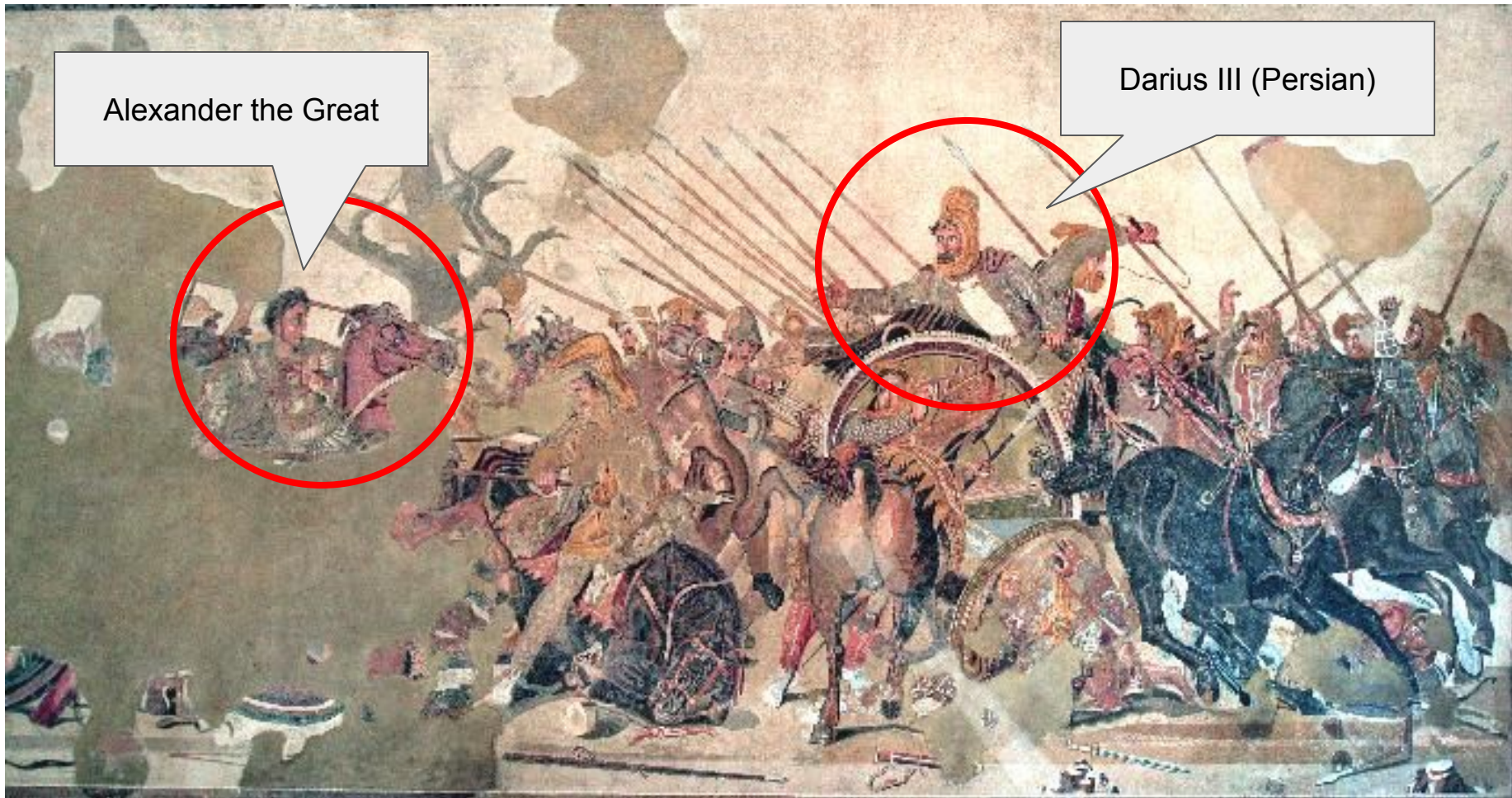
# Alexander's Empire



Alexander the Great



Darius III (Persian)





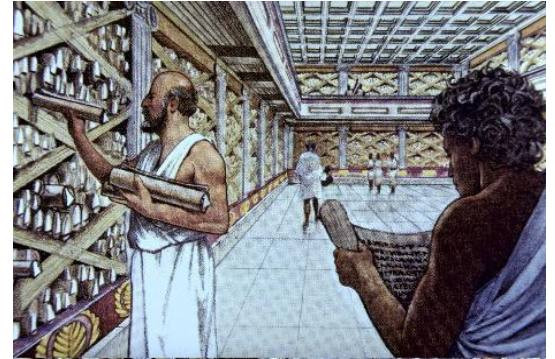


# ALEXANDER THE GREAT

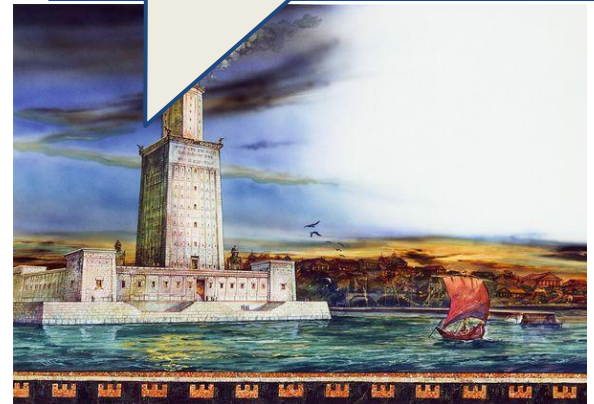


# Disseminating Greek Culture

- major avenue of spread came from cities founded by Alexander the Great & later rulers
- What spread?
  - Greek monuments & sculpture
  - Greek theaters & markets
  - Greek councils & assemblies
  - language (simplified version of Greek was spoken from Mediterranean to India)
- Alexandria in Egypt = largest of cities with ½ million people
  - Egyptians, Greeks, Jews, Babylonians, Assyrians, Persians all lived together
  - large library (700,000 volumes)
  - huge harbor increased trade
  - museum sponsored scholars & writers
- Cities were not the independent city-states of old - they were conquest states ruled by Greeks
- In Egypt there was different legal system for for Greeks & native Egyptians = separation between Greeks and native populations



Alexandria's lighthouse was said to be one of the Seven Wonders of the ancient world!



**The convergence of Greco-Roman culture and Buddhist beliefs affected the development of unique sculptural developments. Buddha was depicted in human form for the first time!**





**Compare and contrast these two sculptures.**

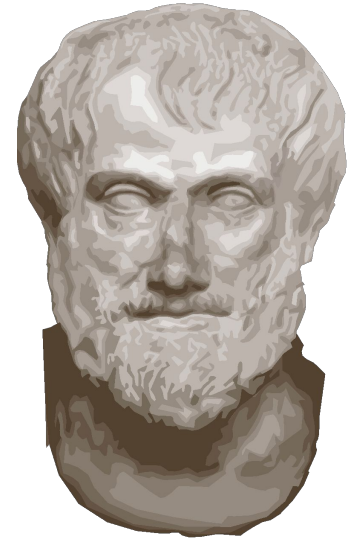
- **How are they similar?**
- **How are they different?**

# The Development and Codification of Religious and Cultural Traditions

Greco-Roman religious and philosophical traditions offered diverse perspectives on the study of the natural world, the connection to the divine, and the nature of political power and hierarchy. Some of these perspectives emphasized **logic**, **empirical observation**, and **scientific investigation**.

# Greek Rationalism

- Emerged 600 – 300 B.C.E.
- Emphasis on argument, logic, and relentless questioning of received wisdom
- **Secular** – little reference to the gods
- Commitment to a rational and non religious explanation for the material world
- Key Players:
  - Socrates (496-399 B.C.E.)
  - Plato (429-348 B.C.E.)
  - Aristotle (384-322 B.C.E.)



# Socrates (496-399 B.C.E.)

- Walked about the city engaging others in conversation about the good life
- Wrote nothing
- The “gadfly” of Athens – stinging its citizens into awareness
- Preferred questioning of the assumptions of logic and his students’ thinking
- Challenged conventional ideas about importance of wealth and power
- Critical of Athenian democracy which brought him into conflict with city authorities
- Was sentenced to death for corrupting the youth of Athens
- “**The Apology**” – Socrates’ defense of himself before a jury of 501 Athenians in 399 B.C.E. – recorded by **Plato** (his student and disciple)



*Socrates*

<b>ARISTOTLE</b>	<b>PLATO</b>
A man unable to join a polis plunges into a passion for war	A good and wise life is the wealth that brings happiness
Following reason is difficult for the rich and the poor, but the middle class is the most obedient to reason	Access to power must be given to men who are not in love with power
Rich men commit deeds of violence on large scales due to pride	All goes wrong when starved for lack of anything good in their lives, men turn to public affairs
Man is a being meant for political association	Philosophers should be forced to watch over and care for other citizens
Democracies last longer than oligarchies, because the middle class is larger and safer	Government is best when the rulers don't want to be in office





How was Greek rationalism a departure from earlier beliefs and practices?

What specifically about Athens, Greece allowed these developments to occur?

An illustration of three prisoners in Plato's Cave. They are depicted as simple, rounded figures with large, wide eyes and long, shaggy beards. They are suspended by chains from their wrists and ankles, hanging from a dark horizontal bar at the top. The background is a solid blue color. The title 'PLATO'S CAVE' is written in large, white, block letters at the bottom. A red circular logo with the text 'TEDEd' is in the top right corner.

TEDEd

# PLATO'S CAVE

Compare and contrast methods of imperial administration.

Persians

Greeks

