

Greece & Persia

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)

Ancient Iran & the Rise of the Greeks

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)



Persia, Greece, & the Hellenistic Synthesis

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)

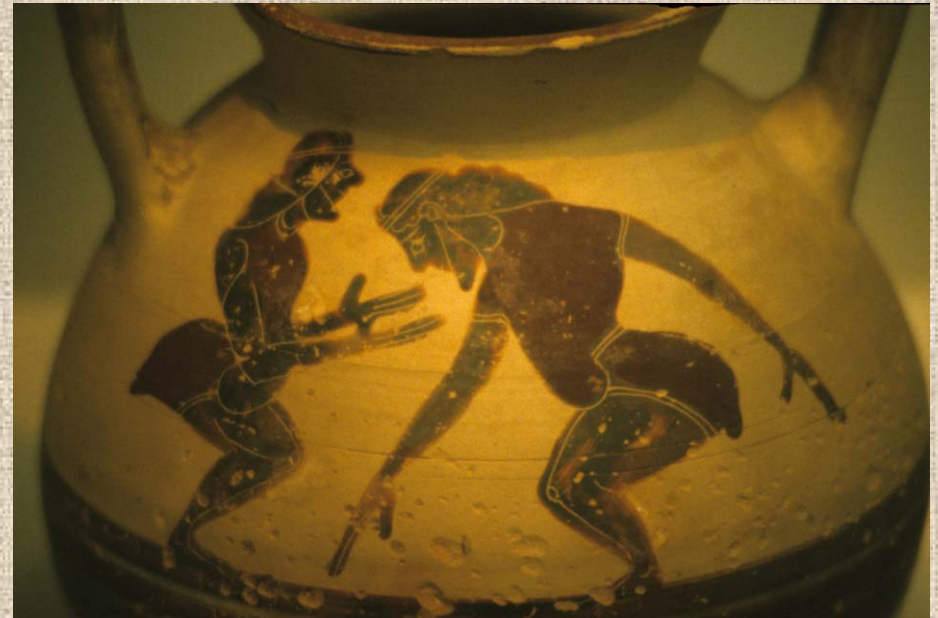


Instructions . . .

- There are two PowerPoint lessons within this one large file. It is your job to read and take note of what you deem important from this file. Since you are doing this, you are NOT required to read these sections from the textbook. However, feel free to do so if you wish.
- As you read over the slides you will notice there is a video section at the end. Please watch this not so much for specific information to take notes on, but rather as a video summary of the concepts from the PowerPoint.

Ancient Iran & the Rise of the Greeks

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)





- The people of ancient Iran / Persia were hindered by geography (high mountains, salt desert) and were unable to sustain large populations like early river valley civilizations.

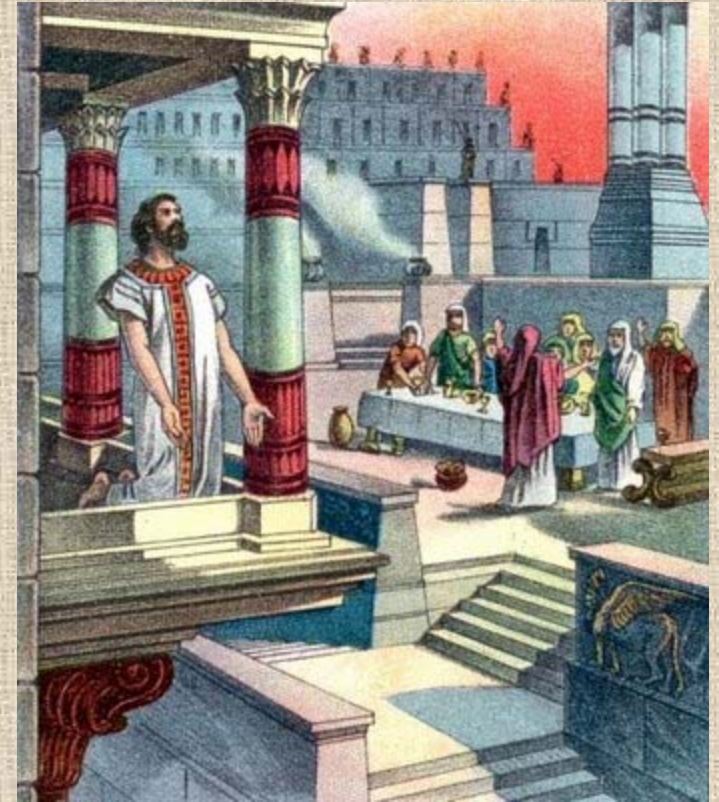
- The first group of Iranians to achieve a complex level of political organization was the Medes, who also played a role in the destruction of the Assyrians.



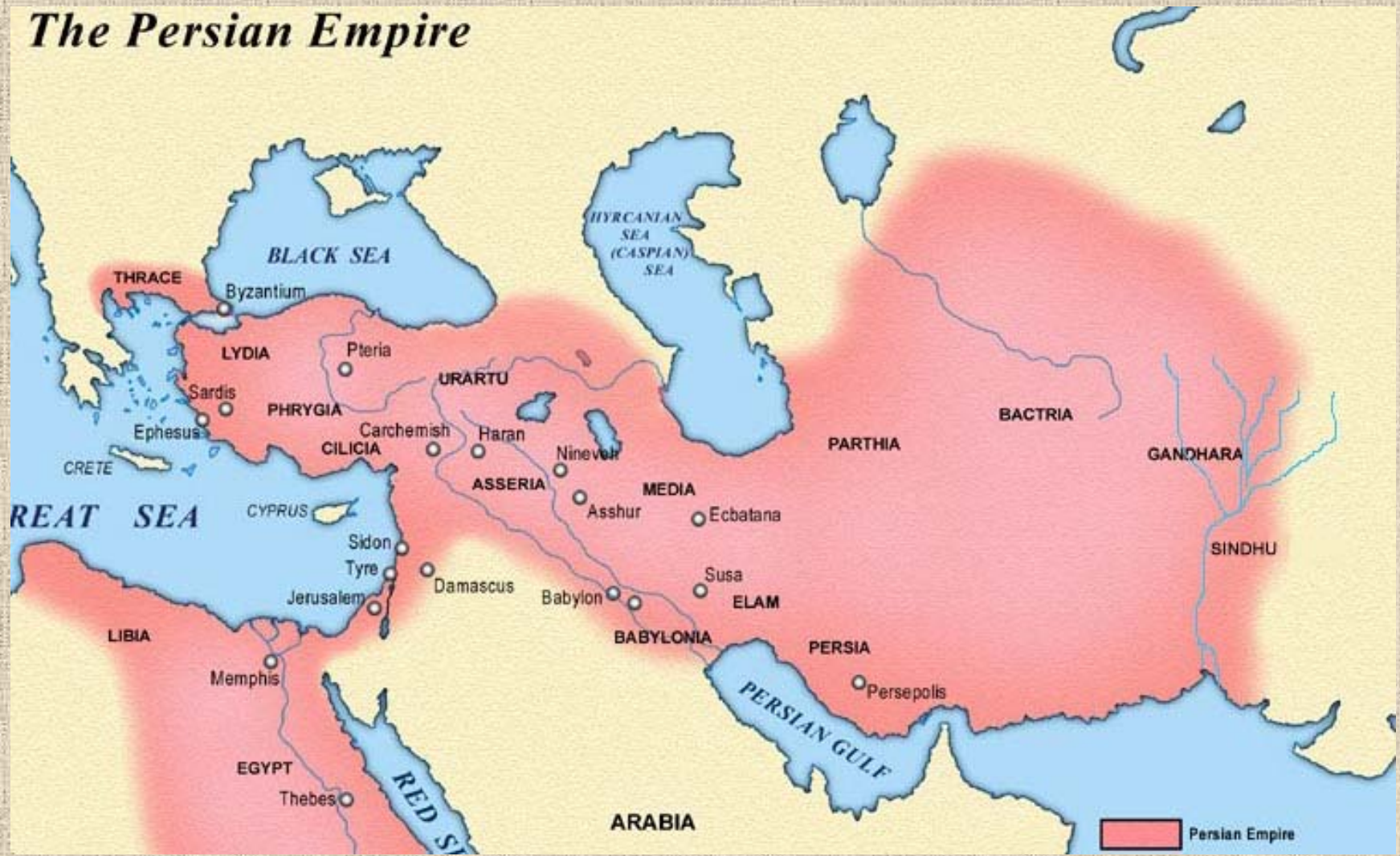
- Persian clans (a different group of Iranians, but not that much different than the Medes; ex: dialect, dress) united under Cyrus and eventually overthrew the Medes.
- Persian society was organized into classes: warriors, priests, and peasants (farmers & shepherds).
- Families were patriarchal, the male head of the household had nearly absolute authority over family members.



- Between (550 – 530 B.C.E.) Cyrus expanded Persian lands by utilizing military and diplomatic tools forming an empire (In contrast to the Assyrians, the Persians ruled their subjects with more tolerance).
- This empire was further expanded under the rule of Darius I, who divided the empire into 20 provinces (this was practically a necessity considering the diverse segments of people living within Persia).



The Persian Empire





- While life in Persia may have been more preferable to Assyria; prisoners of war were used on construction & irrigation projects, government propaganda (sculpture depicting people yielding to the king) was used, and the royal court lived extravagantly with a large entourage while many citizens remained as peasants.
- Slavery itself was almost nonexistent.

- It is believed that early Persian rulers practiced Zoroastrianism, a monotheistic faith that held humans to a high ethical standard, and promised salvation (similarities with Judaism & Christianity).



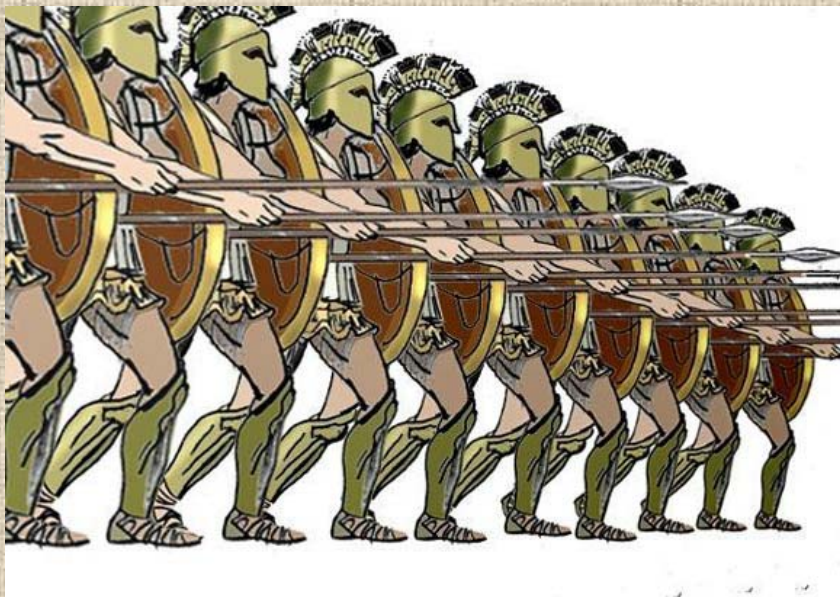
- Similar to the Persians, Greeks were also affected by their environment and geography.
- Limited arable land and a dependence of rain for farming, made agriculture difficult, thus the Greeks turned to the sea for livelihood and trade (plus it was cheaper and easier than overland travel).



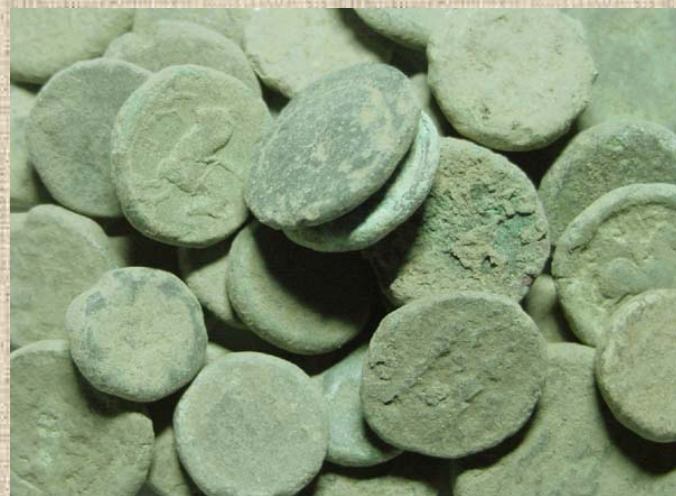
- After the collapse of Mycenaean, Greece entered a “Dark Age” where various Greek territories remained isolated from one another causing hundreds of independent city-states (polis) to form (the arrival of the Phoenicians revitalized communication).



- Each polis became suspicious of one another, causing the Greeks to develop the use of hoplites (armored infantrymen who fought in close formation).



- The importation of food allowed the Greek population to grow (perhaps fivefold). This caused the rise of urban centers and the expansion of Greek colonies.
- The use of coins came about (this is significant because it allowed for more rapid exchange of items).
- Most city-states were ruled by tyrants, which eventually gave way to oligarchy (rule by a few elites) or democracy.



- Greek religion was polytheistic, and the Greeks sought advice and predictions about the future from oracles (sacred sites where they believed the gods communicated with humans).
- Nevertheless, there was a movement toward rationalism, pre-Socratic philosophers rejected traditional religious explanations about the world.



- Another intellectual development was the birth of the study history.
- Herodotus, the father of history (said he became a historian because he sought the *causes* of historical events).



- The two preeminent Greek city-states:
- SPARTA
 - Military state, compulsory military service
 - Took virtually no value in the arts or the political renaissance occurring elsewhere in Greece
- ATHENS
 - Limited democracy
 - Emphasis on education



Persia, Greece, & the Hellenistic Synthesis

REORGANIZING HUMAN SOCIETIES (600 B.C.E. – 600 C.E.)



- The (simultaneous? 1000 – 500 B.C.E.) rise of Persia and the Greek city-states eventually led to two powerful areas with competing interests.

- The confrontation probably mattered more to Greece than it did to the Persians who were likely more concerned about their eastern frontier.



Map 4-2
Ways of the World, First Edition
 © 2009 Bedford/St.Martin's



Map 4-1
Ways of the World, First Edition
 © 2009 Bedford/St.Martin's

- The Ionian Revolt (Ionia, Greek island controlled by Persia) took place on the Western edge of the Persian Empire, triggering a conflict between the two rising powers (the uprising took place because the people did not wish to be subjects of the Persians any longer).



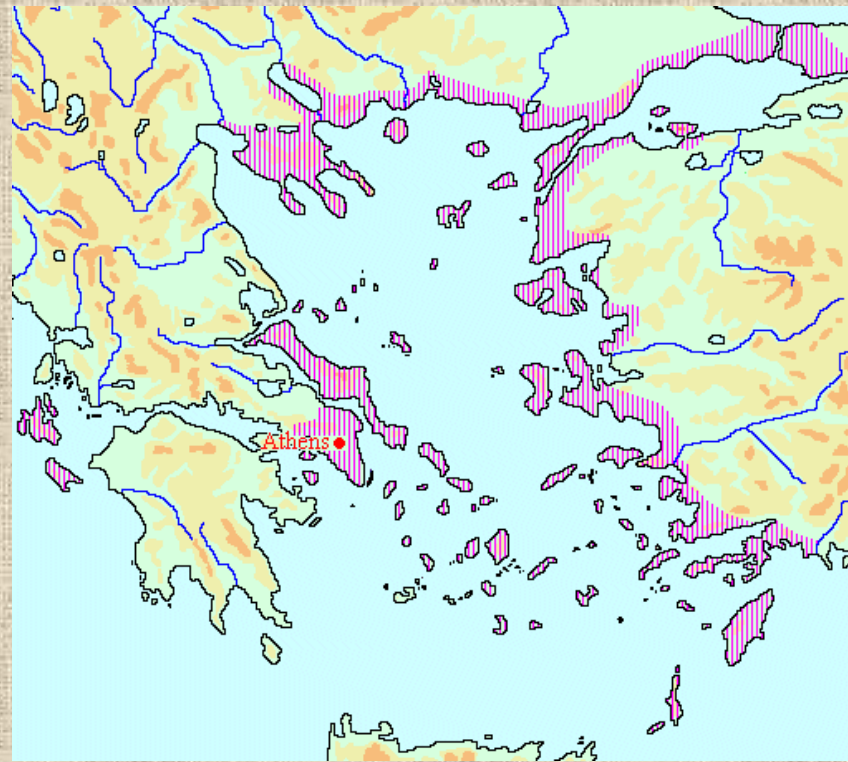
- Although the revolt failed (the Greek city-states Athens & Eretria aided the rebels, but the Persians infused the area with troops – took 5 years to put the rebellion down) Persia attacked Greece in revenge initiating the Persian Wars (499 – 449 B.C.E.)
- Early in the war, Athenian hoplites defeated a small Persian army at Marathon.



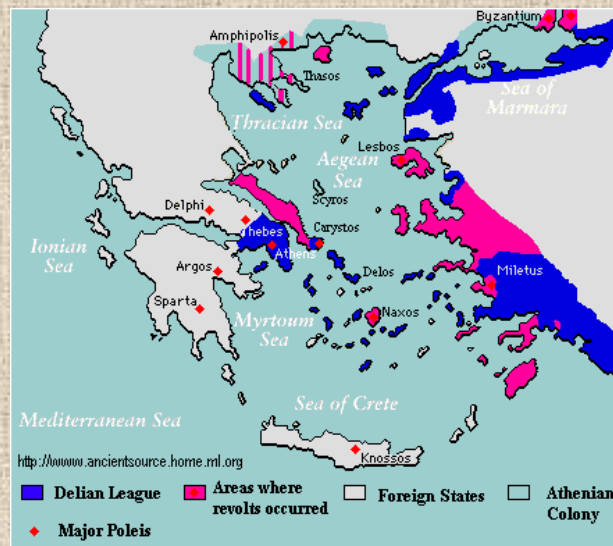
- In 480 B.C.E. the Persian King Xerxes launched a massive invasion force into southern and central Greece.
- The Spartans temporarily held off the Persians at Thermopylae, but eventually Athens was destroyed.



- The Athenian navy ultimately put an end to the Persian onslaught.
- Athens used its navy to liberate Greek city-states under Persian control gaining it respect in the region.



- The Delian League (*voluntarily alliance of Greek city-states*) was formed and led by Athens.
- Athens exploited their situation as leader and began to see allies as “subordinate” to them. Likewise, allies became complacent as they depended upon an Athenian military.
- *Is this similar to America’s relationship with Europe in NATO following WWII?*



- The Athenian navy using the “trireme” vessel with rowers, was employed by lower class males. Thus the backbone of Athenian might was the lower class.
- As a result these males could insist on “full rights,” therefore democracy became more widespread.



- Athens entered a “golden age” (448 – 404 B.C.E.) under the ruler Pericles.
- 3 goals:
 - Glorify Athens (build stuff)
 - Strengthen democracy
 - Strengthen the empire
- Furthermore, an increase in wealth allowed the arts (festivals, plays) to be subsidized.



- Athens did not hesitate to use military and political power to promote its commercial interests (sometimes causing resentment).
- The Peloponnesian War took place between Athenian (naval power) and Spartan alliances (land power). Persia bankrolled Sparta a navy.



- The brightest thinkers had been attracted to Athens during the golden age, but now soul-searching following the war led to the rise of philosophers.
- Socrates: used method of “question & answer,” ultimately sentenced to death.
- Plato: founded the Academy, wrote *the Republic*.
- Aristotle: wrote about politics, astronomy, zoology.



- Inequality existed in Greece.
- Democracy was limited, only about 10-15% of the population could vote in Athens.
- The average Athenian family owned at least one slave (who was required to do anything that was asked).
- Athenian marriages were unequal affairs, wives had little rights. (Wives were treated like daughters, and often had closer relationships with their slave attendants than their own husband). Spartan women had more freedom.

- The upheaval caused by the Peloponnesian War caused a shuffle in the balance of power with Greek city-states.
- Macedonia (to the north) had been considered backward by other Greek city-states (no art), but now led by King Phillip II had become a regional power.



- Alexander the Great (Phillip's son) at an early age began a massive military campaign conquering much of the Persian Empire over a period of 11 years (he maintained a Persian framework of administration, although he also established a series of Greek style city-states).





Macedonia

Greece

Egypt

Black Sea

Mediterranean Sea

Granicus

Halicarnassus

Issus

Nile

Red Sea

Euphrates

Babylon

Gougamela

Tigris

Caspian Sea

Aral Sea

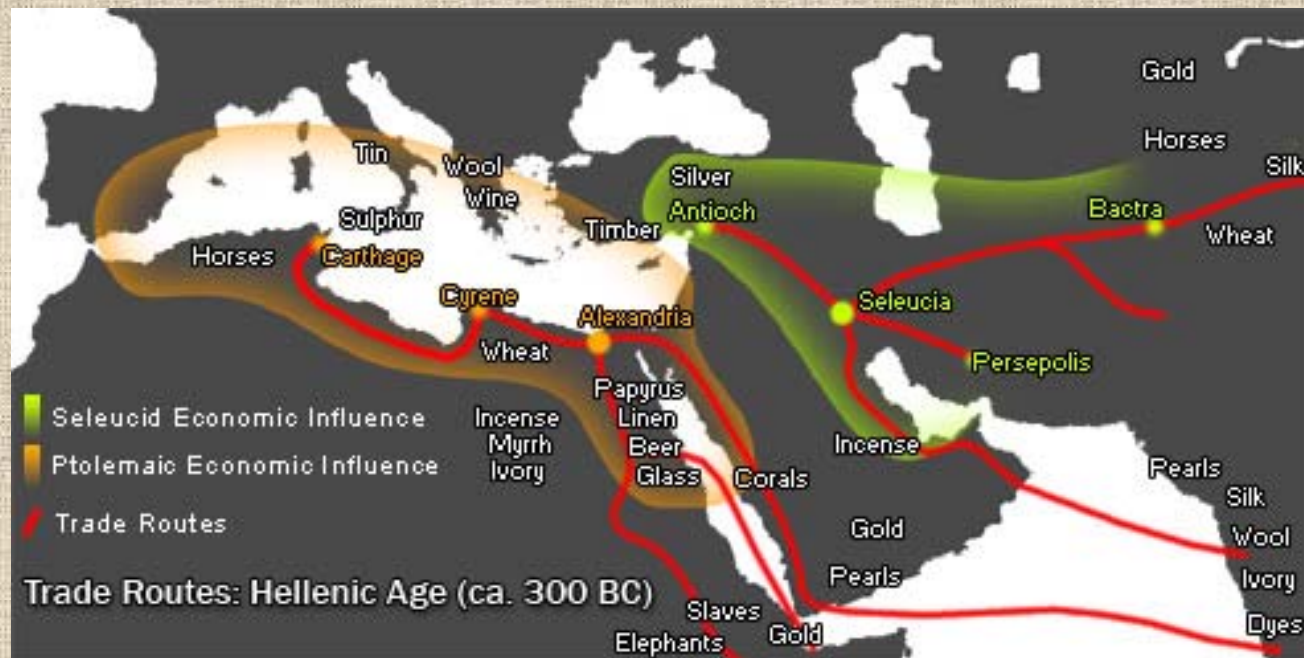
Arabian Sea

- Alexander soon died and left his lands to be divided up by his generals.
- These successor states maintained a balance of power in what was going to be a unified empire.



Map 4-3
 Ways of the World, First Edition
 © 2009 Bedford/St. Martin's

- The consequence of Alexander's conquest was the "Hellenization" of the conquered areas – that is they were influenced by Greek culture.
- The hybrid of culture (Greek & native) that formed is known as Hellenistic Culture.



- The city of Alexandria was the “greatest” of cities this time. It had a population of nearly half a million, two active harbors, a lighthouse, a library / museum, diverse population, public works, and an aristocratic government.



Quick Video



The Persians & Greeks: Crash Course World History #5

- Below is a short video on both ancient Greece and Persia. It was created by the *Crash Course* folks – if you have ever seen their videos before you should know that they are entertaining, informative, but also cheesy. *Don't say I didn't warn you!*
- <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q-mkVSasZIM>

If the hyperlink does not work you may have to copy past it into your URL.