

History

Iran at the Crossroad of Civilizations

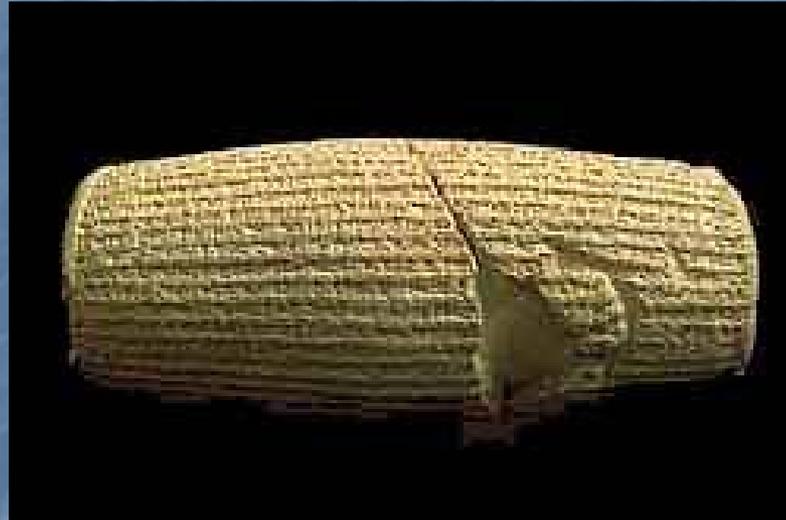


- **Iran** has been inhabited by humans since **pre-historic** times.
- Ancient Iranian culture existed centuries before the earliest civilizations arose in nearby **Mesopotamia**.
- The written history of **Persia** (Iran) begins in about 3200 BC with the **Proto-Elamite** civilization, and followed by the **Elamites**.
- The arrival of the **Aryans (Indo-Iranians)**, and the establishing of the **Median dynasty**, culminated in the first **Persian Empire**, the **Achaemenid Empire**.

Cyrus the Great founded the Persian Empire in **550 BC** by conquering the Median Empire.



Cyrus the Great created the **Cyrus Cylinder**, considered to be the first declaration of human rights.



Discovered in **1879** in the Marduk temple of Babylon, and today is kept in the **British Museum**.

- Cyrus' seminal ideas greatly influenced later human civilizations; as shown in a documentary movie clip named "*In Search of Cyrus the Great*".
- Based on this documentary, Cyrus' principles of ruling - advocating "**Love**" rather than "**Fear**" - has influenced the current **U.S. constitution**.

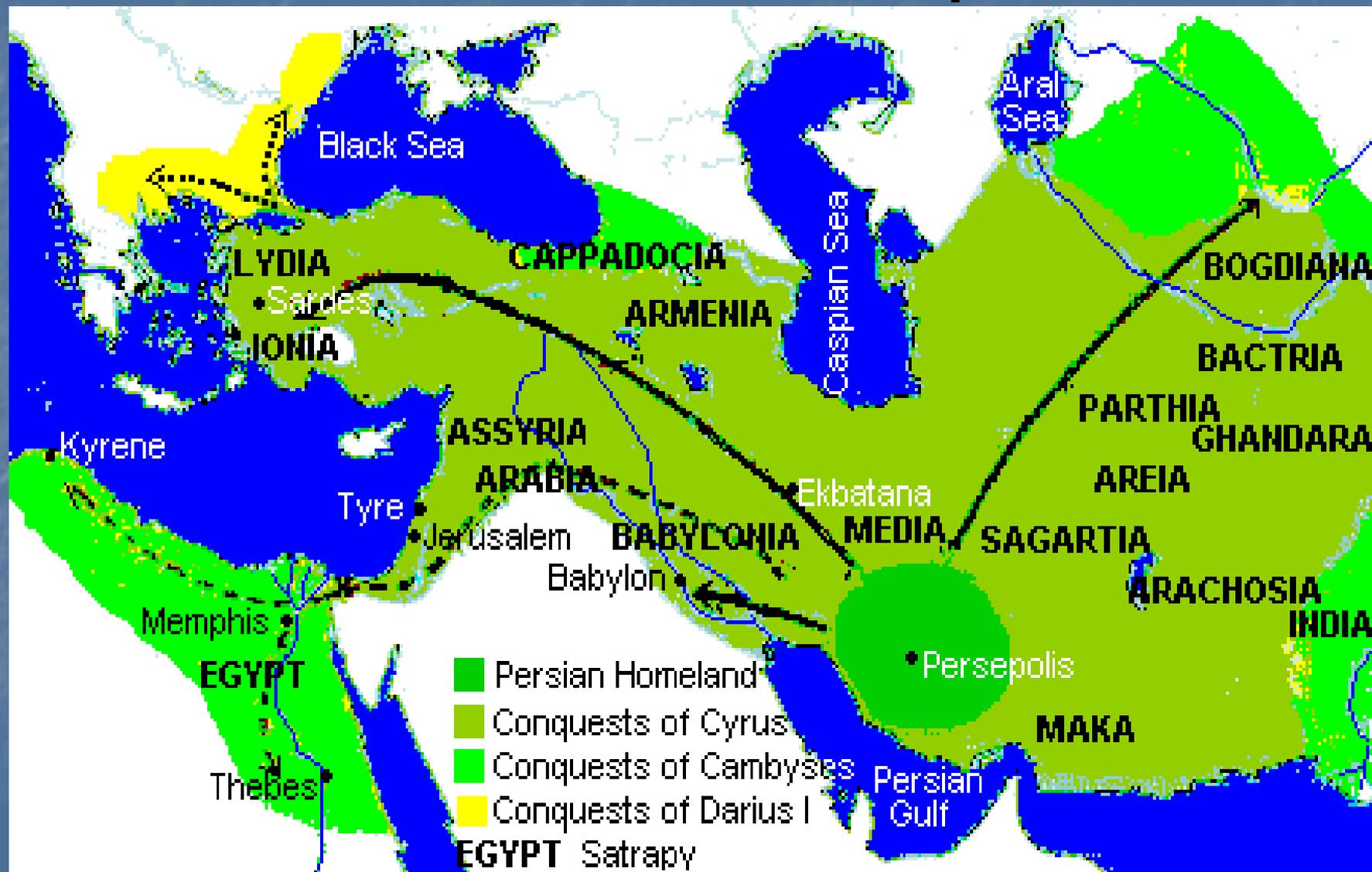
Cyrus' Mausoleum

(near Shiraz – Iran)

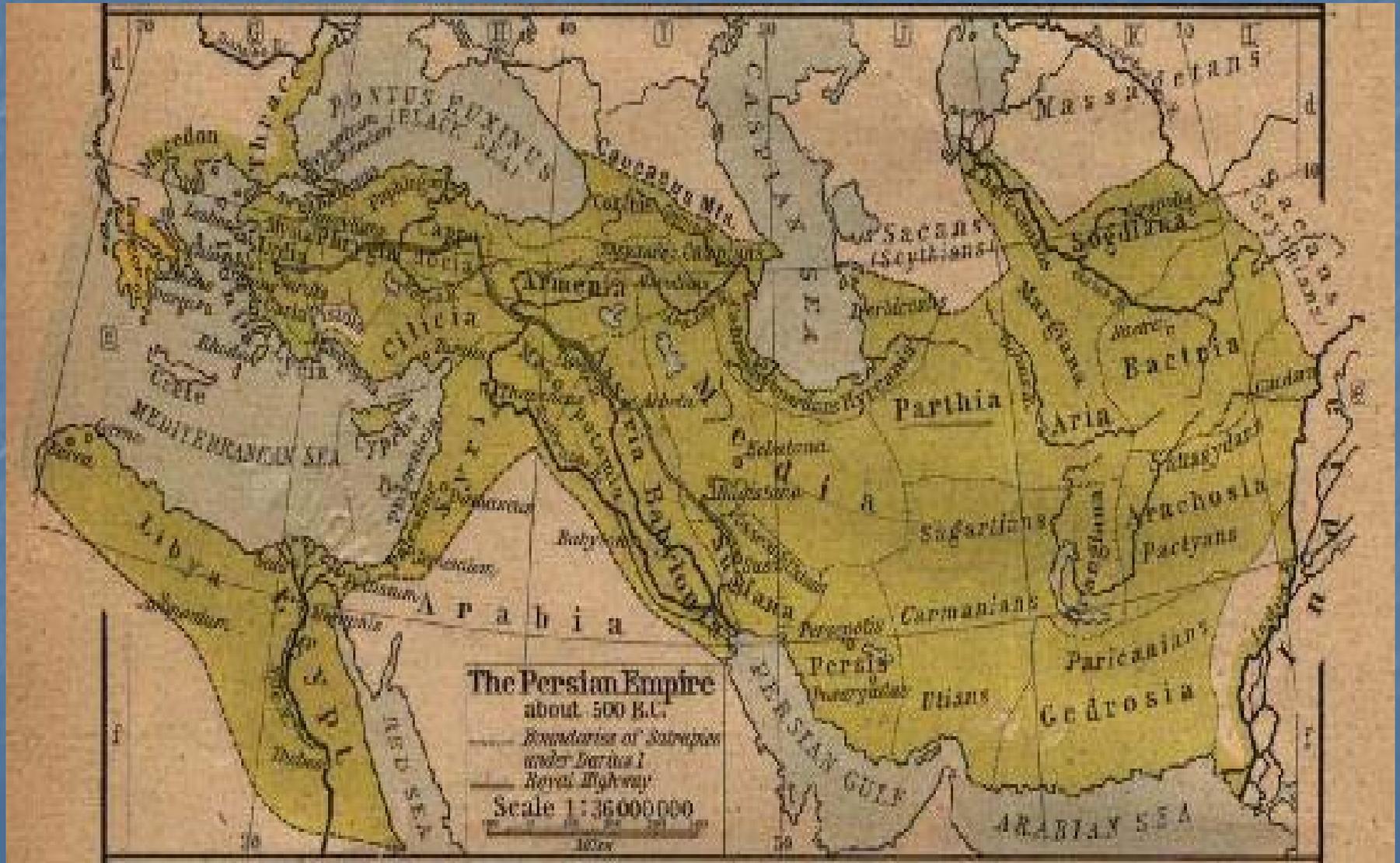


- After Cyrus' death in 530 BC, his son **Cambyses** ruled for eight years (530-522 BC) and continued his father's work of conquest, making significant gains in **Egypt**.
- After Cambyses' death, **Darius** was declared king (ruled 522-486 BC). He was to be arguably the **greatest** of the ancient Persian rulers.

Achaemenid Empire



Achaemenid Empire



Darius started the building programme at
Persepolis





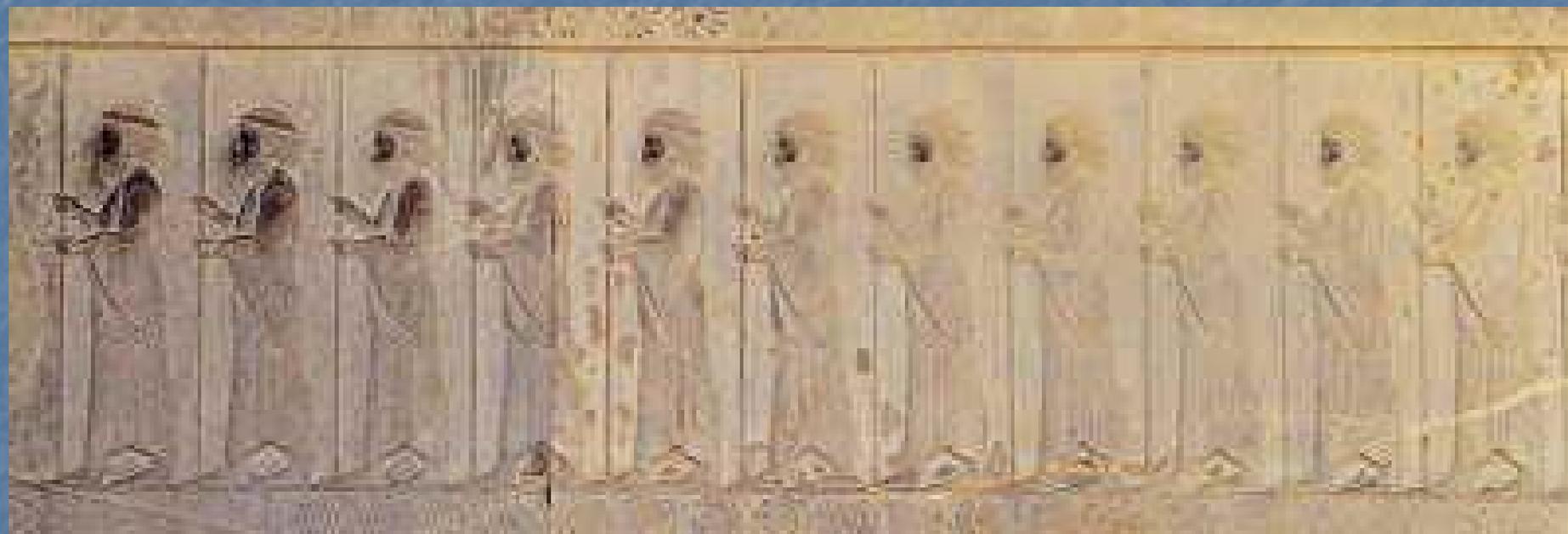










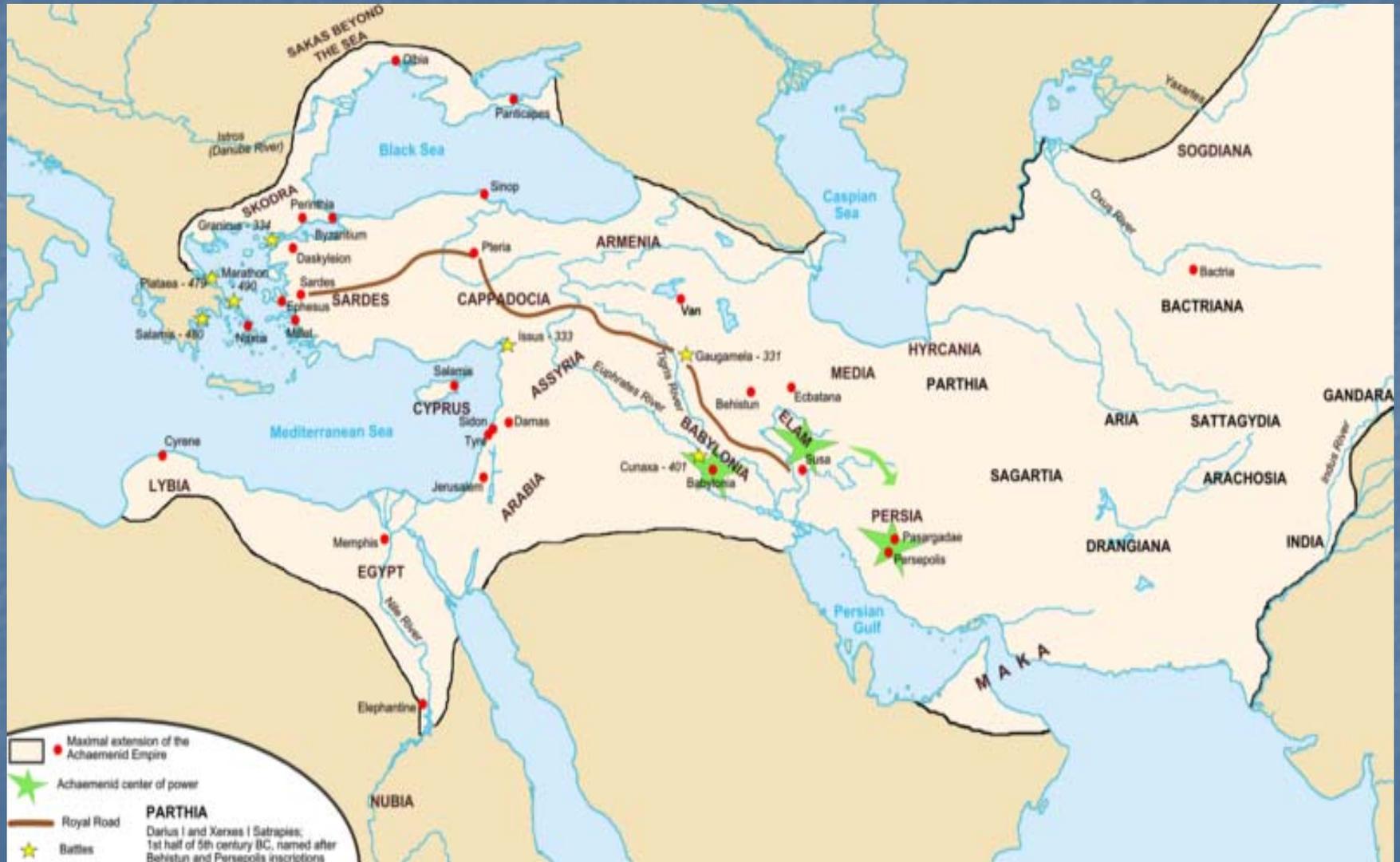




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- Darius built a canal between the **Nile** and the **Red Sea**, a forerunner of the modern **Suez Canal**.
- He improved the extensive road system, and it is during his reign that mention is first made of the **Royal Road**, a great highway stretching all the way from **Susa** to **Sardis** with posting stations at regular intervals.

Royal Road



- The **first credible claim** for the development of a real **postal system** comes from **Persia**.
- The best documented claim (**Xenophon**) attributes the invention to **Cyrus the Great**, while other writers credit his successor **Darius I**.
- The Persian system worked on **stations**, where the message carrier would ride till the next post, where upon he would **swap his horse with a fresh one**, for maximum performance and delivery speed.

- **Herodotus** described the system in this way: "It is said that as many days as there are in the whole journey, so many are the **men and horses** that stand along the road, each horse and man at the interval of a day's journey; and these are stayed neither by **snow** nor **rain** nor **heat** nor **darkness** from accomplishing their appointed course with all speed."

- Iran was in the heart of the **Silk Road**, with a length of more than **8000 km**, connecting **Persia** to **China**.
- It was significant not only for the development and flowering of the great civilizations of **China**, **ancient Egypt**, **Mesopotamia**, **Persia**, **India** and **Rome**, but also helped to lay the foundations of our modern world.

Silk Road



- The **Greco-Persian Wars** were a series of conflicts between several **Greek** city-states and the **Persian Empire** that started about **500 BC** and lasted until **448 BC**.
- There were two Persian invasions of the Greek mainland in **490 BC** and in **480 BC**.
- The **Acropolis of Athens** was razed to the ground and burnt by **Persians** in **480 BC**.

Acropolis of Athens



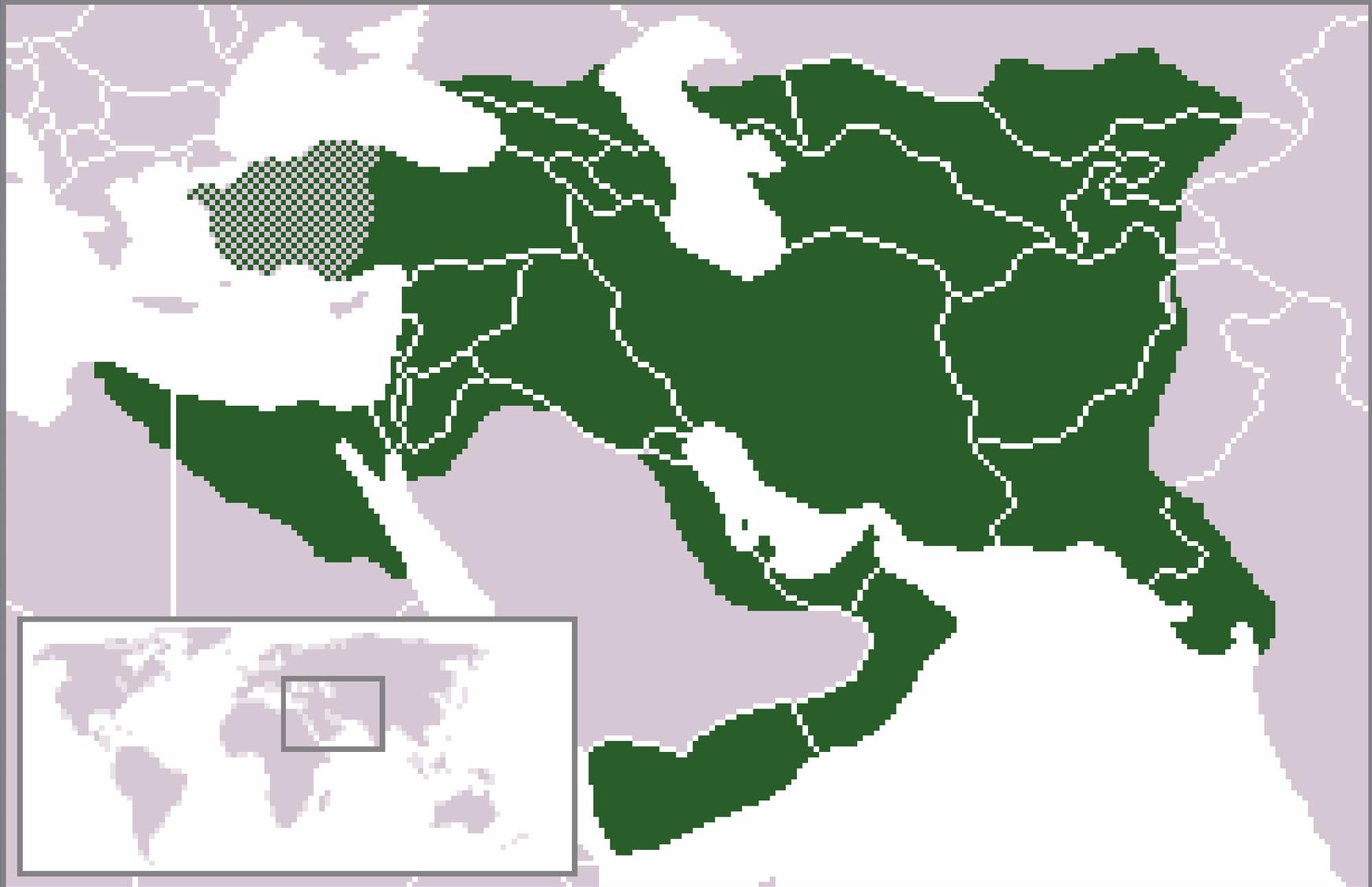
- **Athens** was defeated in Egypt around 448 BC and signed the **Peace of Callias** with **Persia**.
- The **Greeks** and the **Persians** continued to meddle in each other's affairs until Persia was conquered by **Alexander the Great**.
- **Alexander the Great**, conquered Persia in **333 BC** and in retaliation, razed to the ground and burnt **Persepolis**.

Alexander the Great Fighting Darius III



- The fall of **Achaemenid Empire** was followed shortly by two more vast and unified Persian empires that shaped the **pre-Islamic** identity of **Iran** and **Central Asia**:
 1. The **Parthian** dynasty (250 BC – 226 AD),
 2. The **Sassanid** dynasty (226 AD – 650 AD).
- These two dynasties defeated the **Roman Empire** at the height of its power on several occasions.

Sasanid Empire Boudaries



- Iran was conquered by **Arab (Muslim)** Army in **650 AD**.
- **Islam** became the religion of most Iranians.
- Iran was ruled by **Arab (Muslim) Caliphates** from **650** to **934**.
- Major **Iranian uprisings** finally brought down the Caliphates, but Islam **remained** in Iran.

- **Persian Language** was revived by **Ferdowsi** (935 - 1020).
- His masterpiece, the ***Shāhnāma*** (**The Book of Kings**), is the most popular and influential of the Iranian **national epics**.
- The ***Shāhnāma***, consists of the translation of old Pahlavi (**Middle Persian**) works.
- It tells the history of old Persia before the Arab conquest of the region from **7000 years** ago, all in **poem**.

Ferdowsi (935 AD – 1020 AD)



Persian Poet

Ferdowsi's Mosoleum Mashhad - Iran



- Tahirid dynasty (821-873)
- Saffarid dynasty (861-1003)
- Samanid dynasty (875-999)
- Ziyarid dynasty (928-1043)
- Buwayhid dynasty (934-1055)
- Ghaznavid **Empire** (963-1187)
- Seljukid **Empire** (1037-1187)
- Khwarezmid **Empire** (1077-1231)

Invasion of Iran by Genghis Khan (Mongol) Army in 1220



Iran was ruled by Mongol **Ilkhanate** from **1256** to **1353**

- **Timurid Empire** was created by **Timur (Tamerlane)** in **1370** and lasted until **1506**.
- **Iran** was conquered by **Timur's Army** in **1385**.

Timurid Dominion

The Mongol Dominions, 1300—1405.

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C.V. & K.

Statue of Tamerlane (Timur) in Uzbekistan



- **Iran** was freed from foreign invaders by **Safavid dynasty** again.
- Safavid dynasty ruled Iran from **1501 to 1736**.
- Iran reached its climax in **Arts, Architecture, Science and Trade**.

Shah Ismail I, the founder of Safavid Dynasty



- The **Battle of Chaldoran** occurred in **1514** and ended with a decisive victory for the **Ottoman Empire** over the **Safavids**.
- As a result the Ottomans gained control over the eastern half of **Anatolia**.
- The Ottomans had a **larger, better equipped** army numbering **200,000**, while the Iranians numbered some **50,000-80,000**.
- The Battle of Chaldoran demonstrated that **firearms** were a decisive factor in warfare.
- The outcome at Chaldoran established the border between the two empires, which remains the **border between Turkey and Iran today**.

Map of Iran in 1808



Last Changes Before Today's Status

- **Afsharid** dynasty (1736-1802)
 - **India** was conquered **twice**
- **Zand** dynasty (1750–1794)
- **Qajar** dynasty (1781-1925)
 - Major defeats in **2 wars** against **Russia** and **1 war** against **Britain**
 - **Constitutional Revolution**

- Under the **Treaty of Golestan** in **1813**, Iran recognized **Russia's annexation** of **Georgia** and the north **Caucasus region**.
- In **1828** Iran signed the **Treaty of Turkmanchai** accepting **Russian sovereignty** over the entire area north of the **Aras River** (territory comprising **Armenia** and **Republic of Azerbaijan**).
- By **1881**, **Russia** had completed its **conquest** of present-day **Turkmenistan** and **Uzbekistan**.

In **1856**, **Britain** prevented Iran from reasserting control over **Herat** (**Afghanistan**), which was part of Iran in **Safavid** times but had been under non-Iranian rule since the mid-18th century.

Iran's boundaries since 1881



- **Constitutional Revolution** took place in **January 1906**.
- In October 1906 an elected assembly convened and drew up a **constitution**.
- It provided strict **limitations on royal power**, an **elected parliament**, or Majles, with wide powers to represent the people, and a government with a **cabinet** subject to **confirmation** by the Majles.

- The constitution was signed on **December 30, 1906**.
- The Constitutional Revolution marked the **end** of the **medieval period** in Iran.

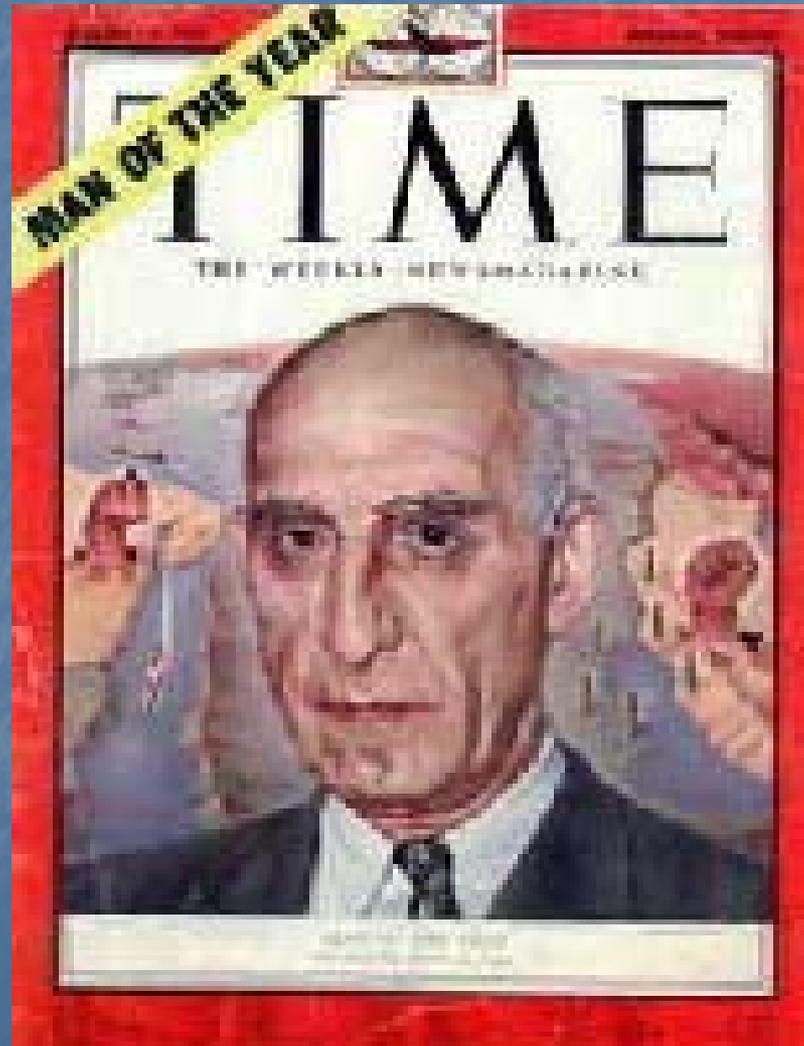
- **Pahlavi** dynasty (1925-1979)
 - **Last** Iranian Monarchy.
 - Despite her **neutral stance** during **WWII**, Iran was occupied by **Allied Forces** in 1941 to support **Soviet Union** against **Nazi Germany's** invasion.
 - **Iran** was declared **The Bridge of Victory**.

Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill in Tehran – November 1943



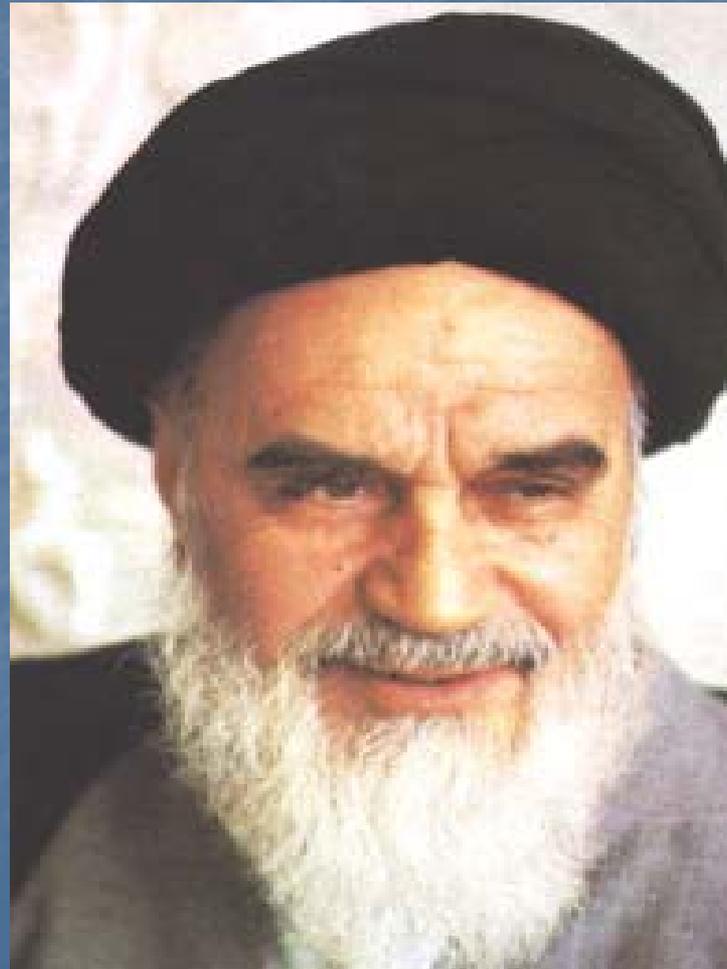
- On **March 15, 1951** the Iranian parliament voted to **nationalize Iran's oil** industry and seize control of the **British-owned** and operated Oil Company.
- The Iranian Prime Minister, **Dr. Mohammad Mossadegh**, enforced the Oil Nationalization Act in **May 1951**.

Mosadegh's action encouraged **Egypt** to
Nationalize The Suez Canal



Dr. Mossadeqh's
government was
overthrown by an
American-British coup
in **August 1953**.

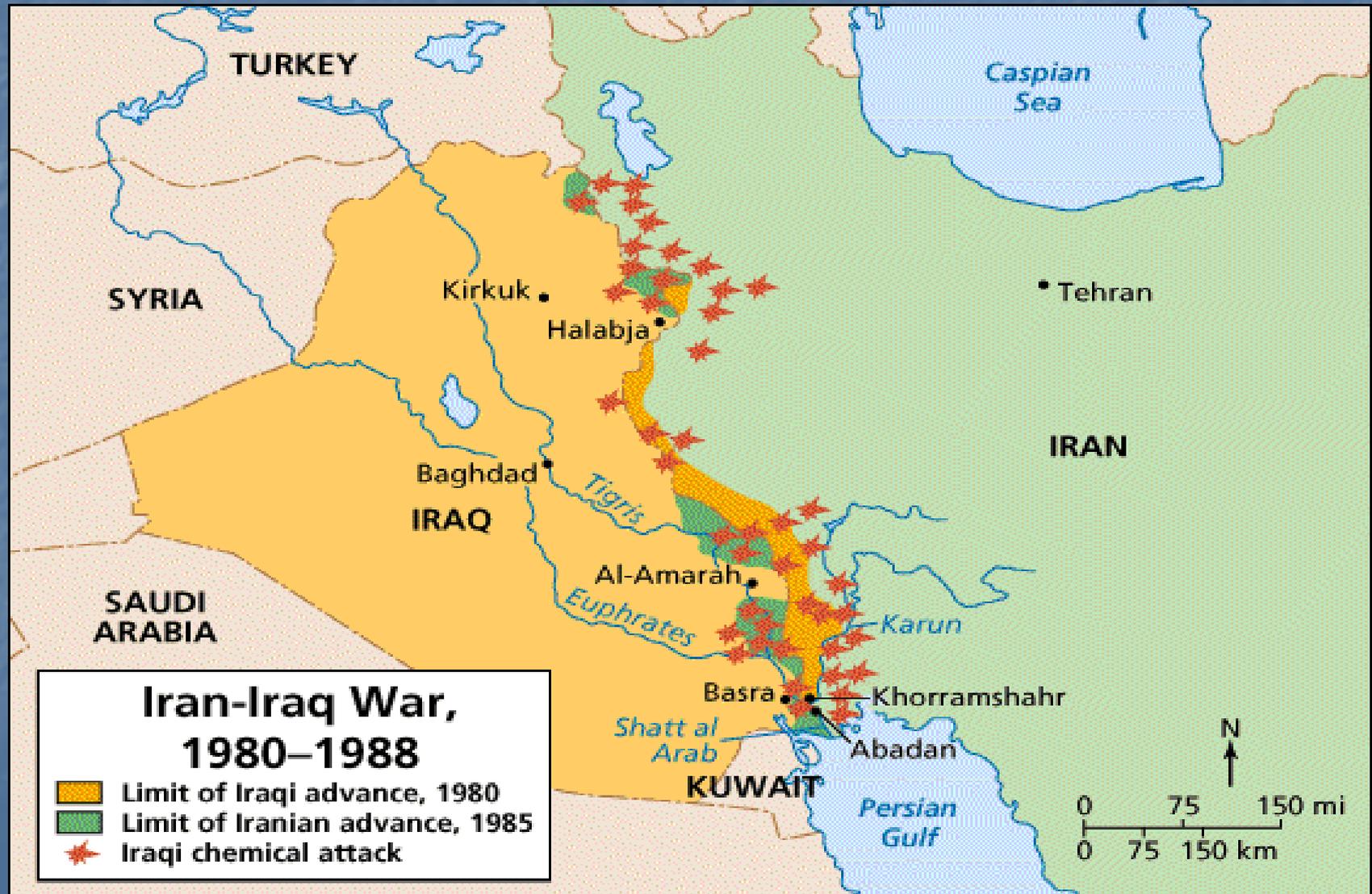
Islamic Revolution, lead by **Ayatollah Khomeini**,
ended the monarchy in **1979** and established
Islamic Republic of Iran.



Iran was invaded by **Iraq** in **1980**



Iraqi Advances and Chemical Attacks









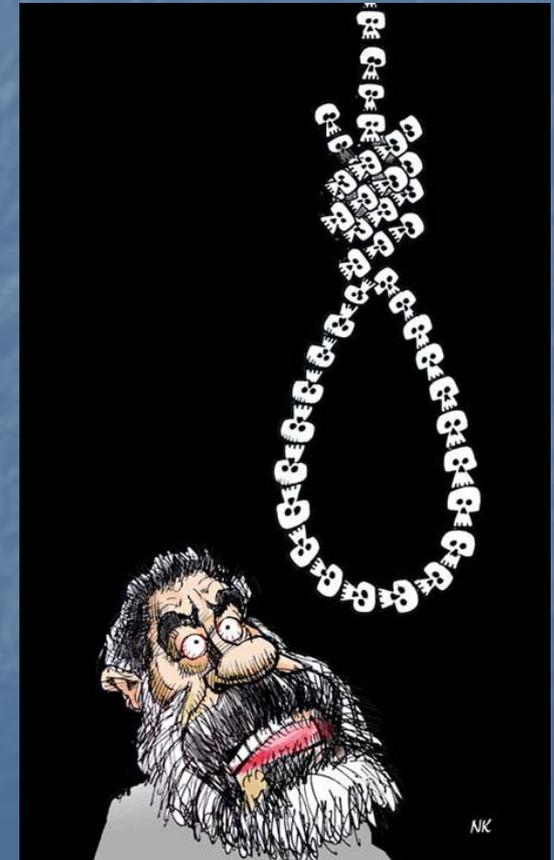
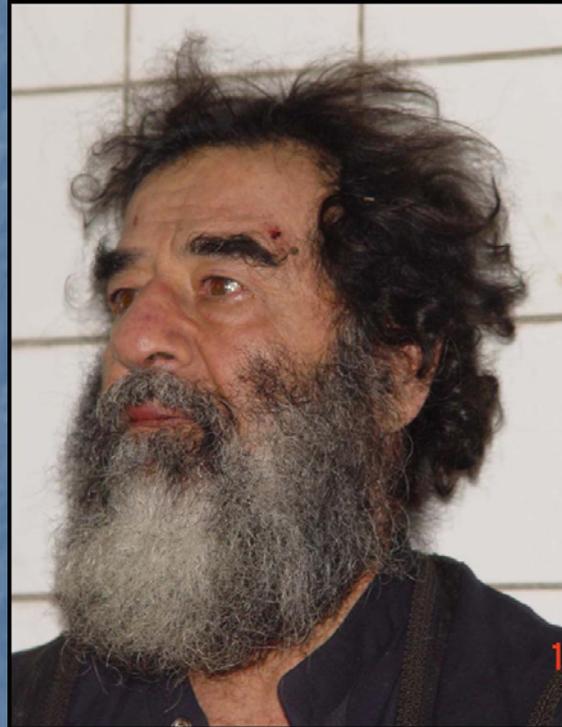
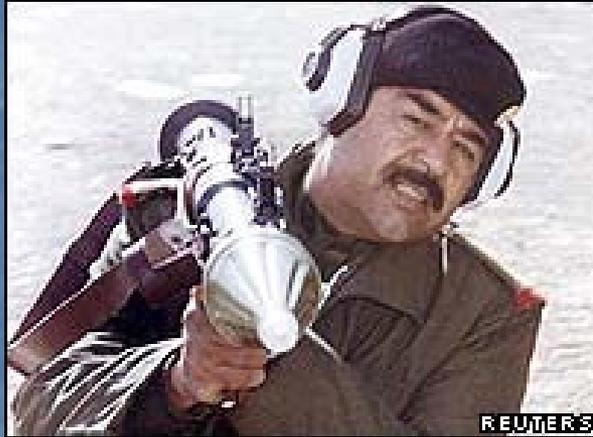








Saddam Hussein: Then and Now.



Some of the Major
Iranian Contributors
to Human Civilization
in the History

Khwārizmī (780 AD – 850 AD)



Mathematics, Astronomy, Astrology and Geography.

- Author of the book: *al-jabr wa-l-muqābala*.
- The first book on the systematic solution of **linear** and **quadratic** equations.
- He is considered to be the father of **algebra**.
- The words **algorithm** stem from *Algoritmi*, the **Latinization** of his name.
- His name is also the origin of the **Spanish** word *guarismo*, meaning **digit**.

Razi (864 AD – 930 AD)



Medicine, Mathematics, Astronomy, Chemistry,
Philosophy and Music.

- well versed in the ancient Greek, Persian and Indian **systems of medicine** and other subjects.
- Some of his works in medicine e.g. *Kitab al- Mansoori*, *Al-Hawi*, *Kitab al-Mulooki* and *Kitab al-Judari wa al-Hasabah* earned everlasting fame.
- His book *Kitab al-Mansoori*, which was translated into **Latin** in the 15th century A.D., comprised **ten volumes** and dealt exhaustively with Greco-Arab medicine.
- His book *Al-Hawi* was the **largest medical encyclopaedia** composed by then.
- As a **chemist**, he was the first to produce **sulfuric acid** together with some other acids, and he also prepared **alcohol** by fermenting sweet products.

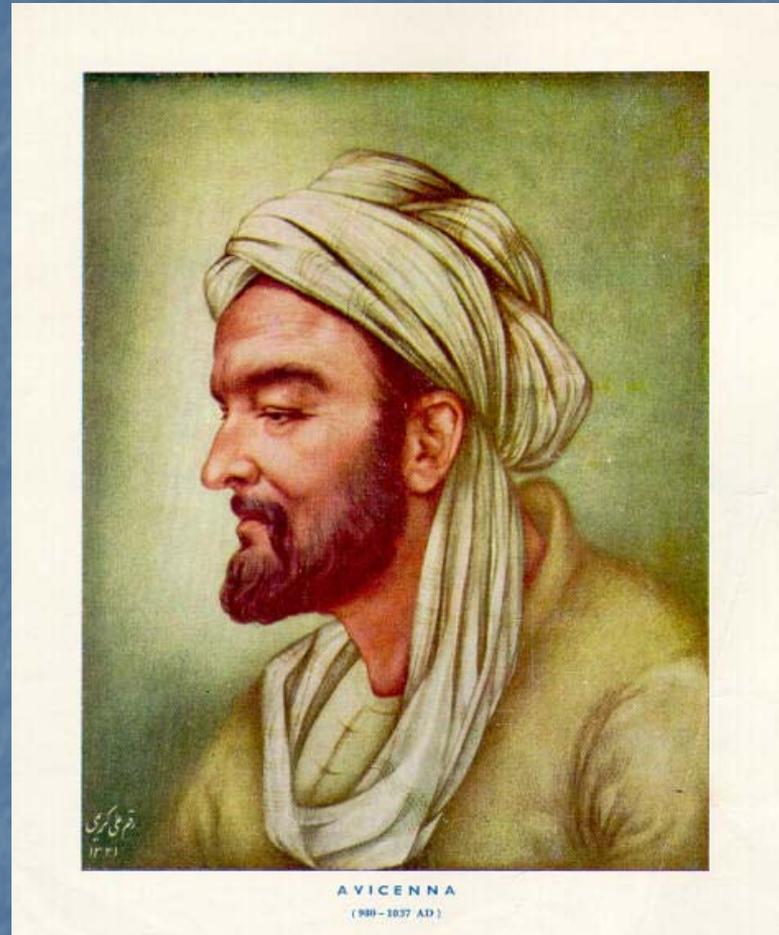
Farabi (870 AD – 950 AD)



Medicine, Mathematics, Philosophy and Music.

- As a philosopher and **Neo-Platonist**, he wrote rich commentary on **Aristotle's** work.
- He is also credited for categorizing **logic** into **two** separate groups, the first being "**idea**" and the second being "**proof.**"
- Farabi wrote books on **sociology** and a notable book on **music** titled *Kitab al-Musiqa* (**The Book of Music**).
- He **played** and **invented** a varied number of **musical instruments** and his pure Arabian tone system is still used in Arab music .
- Farabi is famous for his demonstration of the existence of **void** in **physics**.

Avicenna (980 AD – 1037 AD)



Medicine, Philosophy and Science.

- He was the author of **450 books** on a wide range of subjects.
- Many of his work concentrated on **philosophy** and **medicine**.
- From the **12th** to the **17th century** Ibn Sina (Avicenna) was the guide of medical study in **European universities**.
- **George Sarton** (the Belgian-American historian of science) called Ibn Sina “**The most famous scientist of Islam and one of the most famous of all races, places, and times**”.

Avicenna's Mosoleum Hamedan - Iran



Omar Khayyam (1048 AD – 1131 AD)



Persian poetry, Mathematics and Astronomy.

- Khayyám very accurately (correct to 6 decimal places) measured the **length of the solar year** as 365.24219858156 days.
- His system has **1 day** error in every **5,000 years** while the **Gregorian Calendar** used today, has a **1 day** error in every **3,330 years**.
- He demonstrated that **earth revolves** on its axis. He also elaborated that **stars** are **stationary objects** in space. **Facts** which were discovered **centuries later** in **Eorupe**.
- Khayyam invented **Khayyam-Pascal Triangle**, a very useful mathematical concept and tool.
- English-speaking world best knows him for his **poetry**, "***The Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám***", translated by **Edward Fitzgerald** (1809-1883).

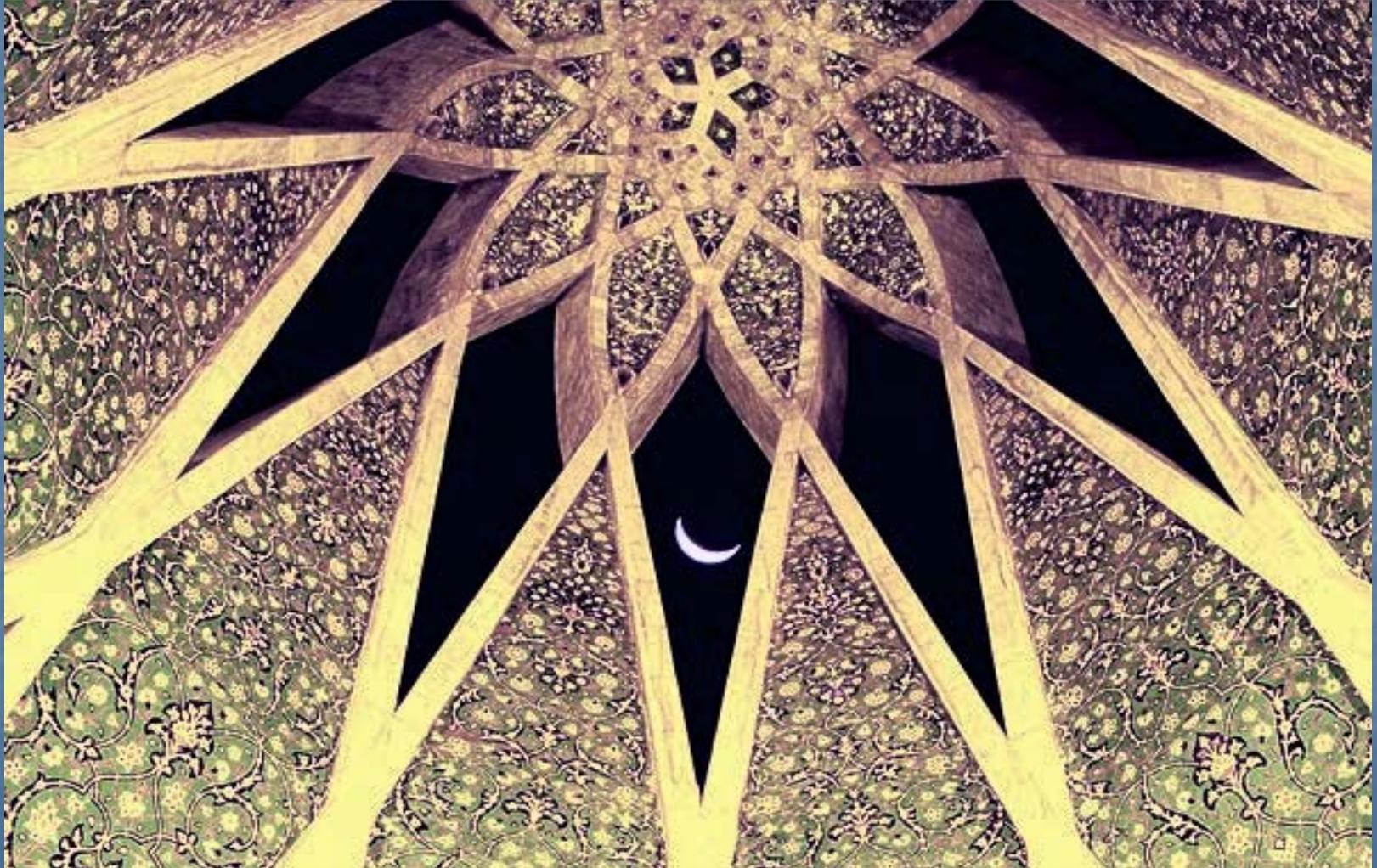
Cornel Wilde & Debra Paget
in Paramount's "Omar Khayyam" (1957)



Khayyam's Mosoleum Neyshabour - Iran



Khayyam's Mosoleum Neyshabour - Iran



Iran

The Birthplace of

Zoroastrian Religion

Atashkadeh (Fire Hose) Yazd - Iran











Jewish & Christian
Communities
in Iran

Esther & Mordekhai's Tombs Hamedan - Iran























