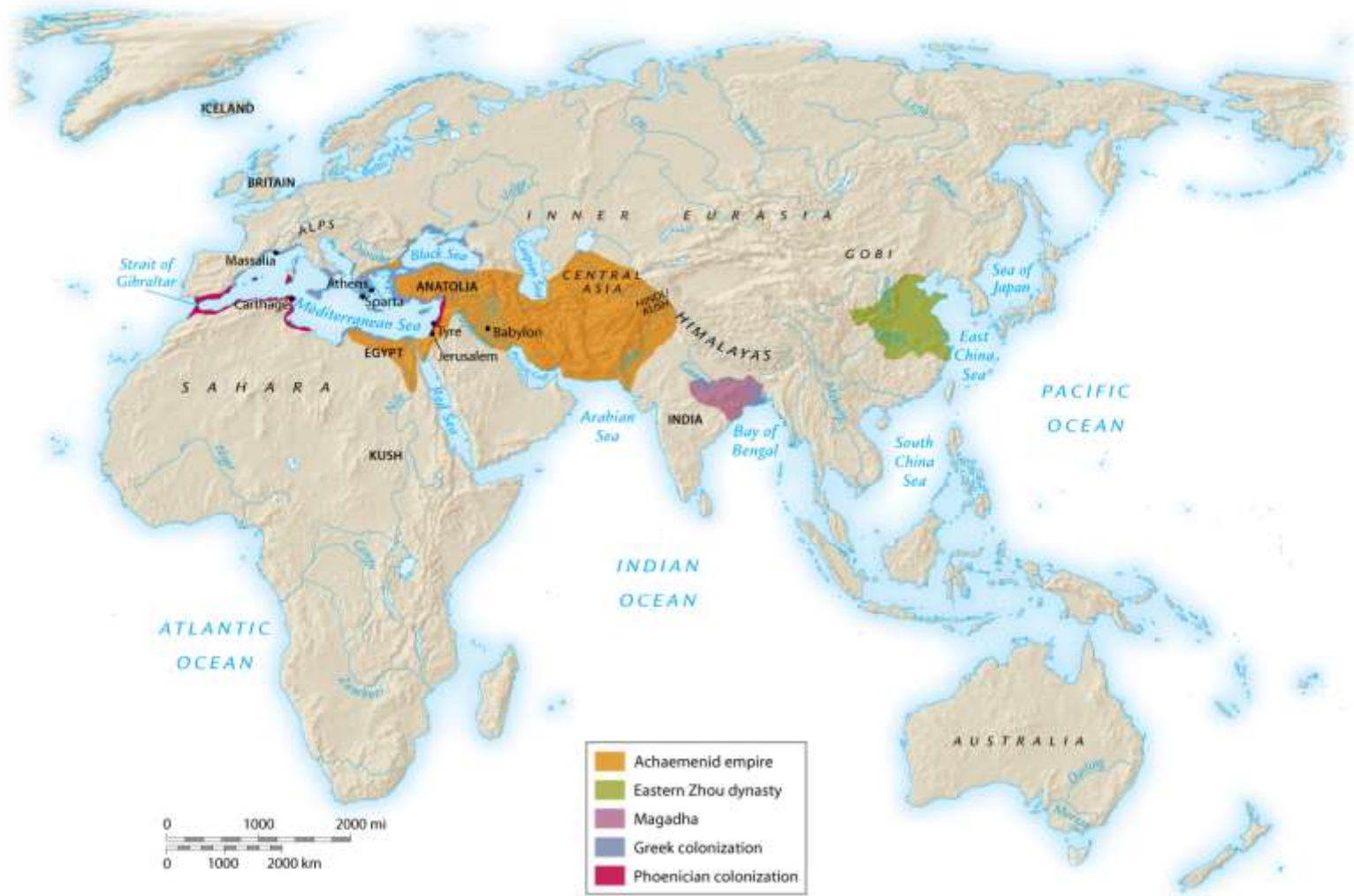**CHAPTER 6**

Empire-Building and Cultural Exchange from India to the Mediterranean

600–200 B.C.E.

Panorama: A History of Humankind, 1/e
Dunn & Mitchell

Chapter Introduction

- Intensifying human communication across Afroeurasia
  - Greek expansion; Megasthenes and Pytheas
  - Two significant regions: Ganges River valley to rim of eastern Mediterranean; northern and central China
- This chapter:
  - Rise of Achaemenid empire of Persia
  - Greek poleis after threat of Persian submission
  - Alexander the Great
  - Maurya dynasty in South Asia
  - Developments of Inner Eurasia

Achaemenid empire
Eastern Zhou dynasty
Magadha
Greek colonization
Phoenician colonization

Persia Ascending

In what ways did the Persian Achaemenid empire of Persia contribute to increasing commercial and cultural exchange in Afroeurasia?

Empire-Building on a New Scale

- ▫ Founding of Persian-centered Achaemenid dynasty in sixth century B.C.E.
- Persian conquests
  - ▫ Defeat of the Medes
  - ▫ Campaigns of Cyrus II
- Battles in the Aegean
  - ▫ Ionian rebellion and mainland Greece
  - ▫ Decades of fighting between Greeks and Persians

Map of the Achaemenid empire, with an inset map of Persian Campaigns into Greece.

Labels on the main map include:
- Achaemenid empire
- Black Sea
- Caspian Sea
- Sr Darya
- MACEDON
- GREECE
- ANATOLIA
- ARMENIA
- LYDIA
- IONIA
- Mediterranean Sea
- Ecbatana
- PERSIA
- HINDU KUSH
- HIMALAYAS
- Babylon
- Susa
- Pasargadae
- Persepolis
- Red Sea
- Persian Gulf
- ARABIAN PENINSULA
- Arabian Sea
- INDIA
- Bay of Bengal
- INDIAN OCEAN

Inset map "Persian Campaigns into Greece" labels:
- MACEDON
- THRACE
- Aegean Sea
- Plataea, 479 b.c.e.
- Marathon, 490 b.c.e.
- Salamis, 480 b.c.e.
- Athens
- Sardis
- PELOPONNESUS
- Sparta
- Sea of Crete

The Achaemenids as "Universal" Rulers

- Declaration of Darius I, king "of this great earth"
- Aristocrats and bureaucratic organization
  - Satrapies
- Capital's many locations
  - Palace center at Persepolis
- Empire's subjects and slaves
- Women's lives

Key terms

universal empire

satrapy

The Persian Empire as Communication Hub

- Communication essential to governing of vast territories
  - Achaemenid extension of existing infrastructure in Southwest Asia
- Command of center of India-to-Mediterranean trade web
  - Maritime expeditions
  - Completion of canal linking Mediterranean to Red Sea
  - Gold and silver coinage
- Cities in Central Asia and Greek city-states as links to commercial hinterlands

The Achaemenids and the Teachings of Zoroaster

- The puzzle of Zoroaster
  - Prophet appointed to preach divine message
  - The *Gathas* compiled in the *Avesta*
- Zoroastrian beliefs
  - One universal God: Ahura Mazda
  - Evil in form of "hostile spirit" Angra Mainyu
  - "Dualism" and its impact on Christianity and Islam
  - Gradual acceptance of beliefs and rituals
  - Emergence centuries later of today's Zoroastrianism

Achaemenid Multiculturalism

- Divine blessing of emperor; commitment to justice for all
- Honoring of local customs and religious practices
  - Ahura Mazda seen as animating all local deities
  - Israelites and the prophet Jeremiah: Yahweh could be worshiped everywhere; creation of the Jewish diaspora
- Ethnic mix of Persian army
- Multiple languages of Achaemenid urban centers
  - Aramaic as medium of imperial administration and diplomacy

Inventive Greeks

What factors contributed to the emergence of Greek city-states as important centers of political and cultural innovation from the sixth century B.C.E.?

Government and Society in Greek City-States

- ▫ Relatively short period: hundreds of self-governing city-states
  - • Typical features of poleis
- ▫ Greek identity based on shared cultural bonds
  - • Common alphabetically written language
- ▫ Varied forms of government in poleis
- • Militaristic Sparta
- ▫ Physical training of boys and girls; harsh military culture
- ▫ Periodic rebellion of *helots*

Key term

oligarchy

Government and Society in Greek City-States

- Athenian democracy: direct and limited
  - *Démokratia*: "rule of the people"
  - Political and legal reforms of Solon, Cleisthenes, Pericles
  - Wives and daughters; women's cults and festivals
  - Slavery and the slave trade
  - Riches of Athens
- Greek military prowess
  - Militia service
  - The phalanx

Key terms

chattel slavery

phalanx

The Flowering of Athens

- ▫ The trireme fleet and reduction of former allies to tribute-paying dependent states
- The Athenian cultural inheritance
- Religion and philosophy
  - ▫ Open-minded religious climate
  - ▫ Concept of natural laws
  - ▫ Ionian tradition of abstract speculation; open debate
  - ▫ Socrates, Plato, Aristotle

Key term

natural philosophy

Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Era

To what extent did societies within the region from northern India to the Eastern Mediterranean embrace Greek-style cultural and political forms between the fourth and second centuries B.C.E.?

Alexander's Short, Brilliant Career

- ▫ The Peloponnesian War; signs of stress in the Achaemenid empire
- ▫ Philip II and a unified Macedonian and Greek federation
- Alexander's campaigns
  - ▫ Charismatic and ruthless son of Philip
  - ▫ Anatolia, Syria, Egypt, Babylonia subdued; battles with Achaemenid armies; occupation of Persian capitals
  - ▫ Hindu Kush; Afghanistan; the Indus valley
- What did Alexander want?
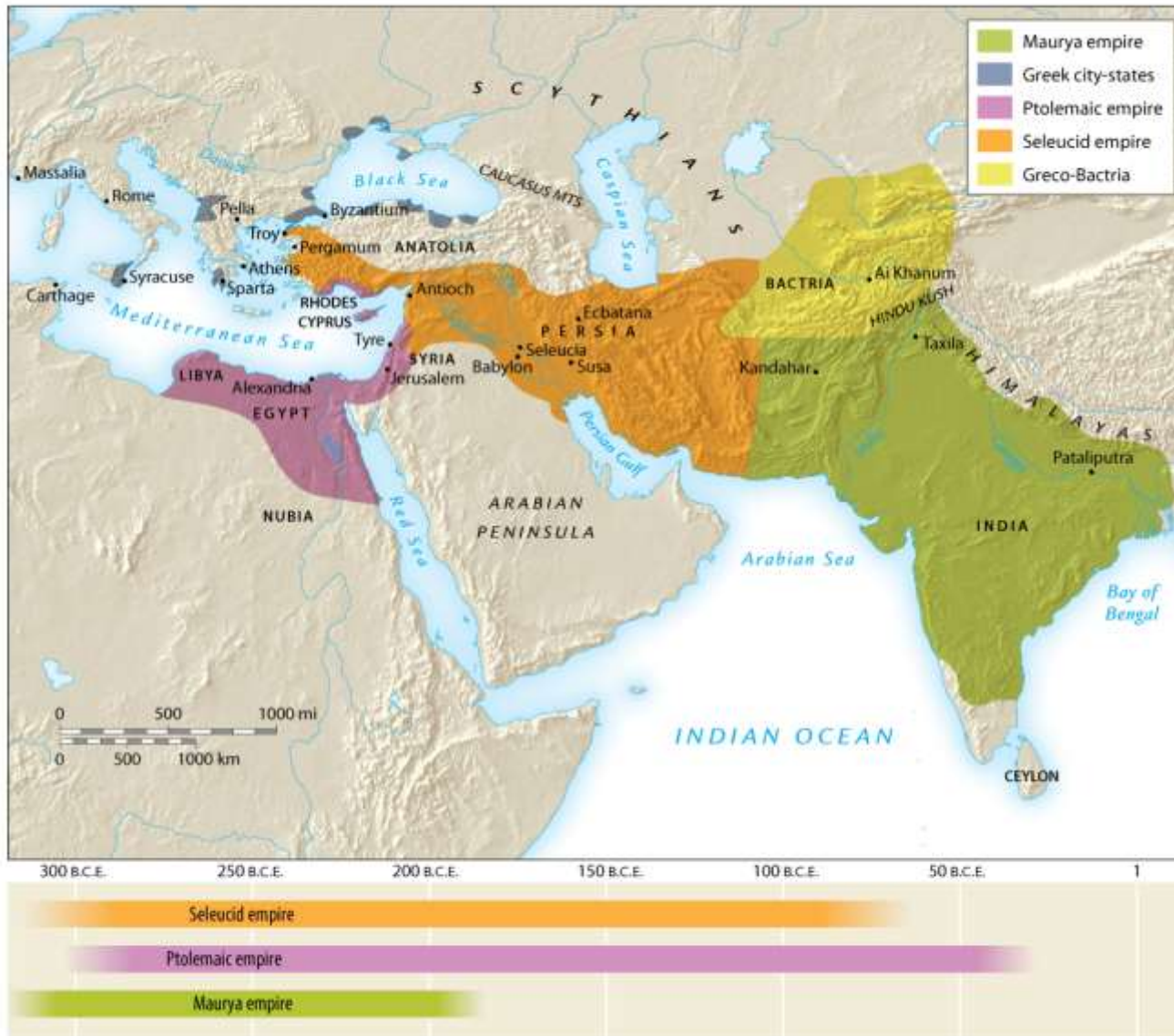
Foundations of the Hellenistic World

- ▫ Division of Alexander's empire
  - Seleucid empire; Ptolemaic dynasty; Antigonid dynasty
  - Greek-speaking ruling groups and the kingdom of Bactria
- Hellenistic governments
  - ▫ Monarchy's absolute authority
  - ▫ Collaboration with local leaders
  - ▫ Centralized economic management of Ptolemaic state
  - ▫ Commercial expeditions

Key term

Hellenistic

Foundations of the Hellenistic World

- Hellenistic society
  - Rise in number of cities
    - Alexandria, Antioch, Seleucia, Pergamum
    - Greek cultural ideals in layout, architecture, ornamentation
  - Varied character of city populations
  - Alexandria transformed into greatest metropolis anywhere in Afroeurasia, third century B.C.E.
  - Patriarchal public life
    - Lives of elite Hellenistic women

Cultural Trends

- Spread of Hellenistic culture following Alexander's campaigns; Koine as a *lingua franca*
- Philosophers and scientists
  - New philosophies: Cynicism, Epicureanism, Stoicism
  - Mathematics, physics, and astronomy
    - Aristarchus; Eratosthenes; Euclid; Archimedes
  - Museum and library at Alexandria
- Cultural cross-currents
  - Mystery religions
  - Spread of Jewish communities

Hellenistic Philosophies

Philosophical School	A Key Idea	Key Thinkers	Quotation	Modern Use of Related Words
Cynicism (Cynics)	Individuals should seek freedom and self-reliance to the point of repudiating material possessions, social ties, and yearnings for pleasure.	Antisthenes (d. 350 B.C.E.) Diogenes of Sinope (d. 323 B.C.E.)	"I would rather go mad than enjoy myself." —Antisthenes	Cynical: distrustful of human motivations, sincerity, or honesty
Epicureanism (Epicureans)	Reality has no ultimate sense or structure, so the individual should strive to avoid pain by pursuing pleasure grounded in tranquility, self-control, and moderation practiced in the company of loyal friends.	Epicurus (d. 271 B.C.E.)	"Pleasure is the beginning and end of a happy life" —Epicurus	Epicurean: an individual fond of sensual enjoyment, especially in eating and drinking
Stoicism (Stoics)	Individuals have a fundamental duty to accept the role nature has assigned them. Neither pleasure nor pain is of any account, only the practice of virtue, which comes naturally by living in accordance with nature.	Zeno of Citium (d. 262 B.C.E.)	"Our individual natures are part of universal nature. Hence the chief good is life according to nature." —Zeno, after Diogenes Laertius (third-century C.E. biographer)	Stoic: an individual who is able to suffer pain or misfortune without complaining or revealing personal feelings

Buddhism and the Maurya Empire in India

In what circumstances did Buddhist beliefs and practices achieve success among growing numbers in South Asia between the fifth and third centuries B.C.E.?

Foundations of Buddhism

- ▫ Brahmins and maintenance of social inequality
- The Buddha's message
  - ▫ Siddhartha Gautama and the Four Noble Truths
    - *Ahimsa*: practice of nonviolence
    - Day-to-day righteousness, not ritual conformity
    - Monasteries and lay people
- Jainism
  - ▫ Mahavira: life of strict self-denial

The Reign of Ashoka Maurya

▫ Buddhist teachings
- Repudiation of repression and cruelty
- Concept of *dhamma*

▫ Appeal to subjects to practice toleration, generosity
- Appointed officials to spread Buddhist teachings

▫ Social conflict and commercialization

▫ Long-term consequences of *dhamma*
- South Asia's communication and transport infrastructure
- Edicts carved into rocks and pillars
- Buddhism greatest religious force in India for several centuries

Cavalry and Caravans in Inner Eurasia

How did dense agrarian societies from the Mediterranean to China change as a result of developments in Inner Eurasia in the 600–200 B.C.E. period?

Nomad Power

- Extended kinship groups on Inner Eurasian steppes
  - Clan and tribal identities
- Political tensions, periodic warfare
- Scythians
  - Commercial links with Greek settlements
  - Pillage from Syria to Iran near end of seventh century B.C.E.
  - Women fighters
- Development of larger, stronger military alliances

Key term

tribe

Early Times on the Silk Roads

- Cluster of small walled cities in Central Asia led to gradual formation of an unbroken chain of trails in Inner Eurasia
- Silk roads as regular channels of human interchange: both material goods and "cultural capital"
- Increased traffic of first millennium B.C.E.
  - Agrarian and urban expansion
  - Population growth
  - Trade both east-west and north-south