

Alexander the Great and the Legacy of Hellenism

Evidence

I. Archaeological Evidence

II. Textual Evidence

A. Non-extant Sources

B. Extant Sources

Textual Evidence: A. Non-Extant Sources

1. Journals and Diaries

- a. King's Journals (Diaries)
- b. Records of specialist Greek officers on Alexander's staff

Textual Evidence: A. Non-extant Sources

2. Histories of Eyewitnesses

- a. Ptolemy, one of Alexander's generals, wrote a history (285–283 BC)
- b. Callisthenes, accompanied Alexander until 327 BC), nephew of Aristotle
- c. Aristobulus, Greek engineer, wrote memoirs ca. 305–290 BC
- d. Nearchus, wrote about the journey from the Indus to the Persian Gulf
- e. Onesircritus, wrote about India
- f. Chares of Mitylene, wrote about life at court
- g. more than 400 fragments from nearly 30 lost authors

Textual Evidence: A. Non-extant Sources

3. Histories and Comments of Non-Eyewitnesses

- a. Cleitarchus, wrote his history ca. 323–290 BC (12 books)
- b. Marsyas of Pella (d. 307 BC)
- c. Eratosthenes (ca. 200 BC) quoted in Strabo's *Geography* (1st cent BC)

Textual Evidence: B. Extant Secondary Sources (used as “primary” sources by modern historians)

1. Eratosthenes (ca. 200 BC) fragments quoted in Strabo’s *Geography* (1st cent BC)
2. Diodorus (Sicilian Greek of mid-1st century AD)
3. Quintus Curtius, *History of Alexander* (1st cent. AD)
4. Plutarch, *Lives* and *Moralia* (2nd cent.)
5. Justin (2nd cent. AD epitome of earlier general history by Pompeius Trogus)
6. Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander* (2nd cent. AD)

Macedonian Conquests to the Death of Philip II (336 B.C.)



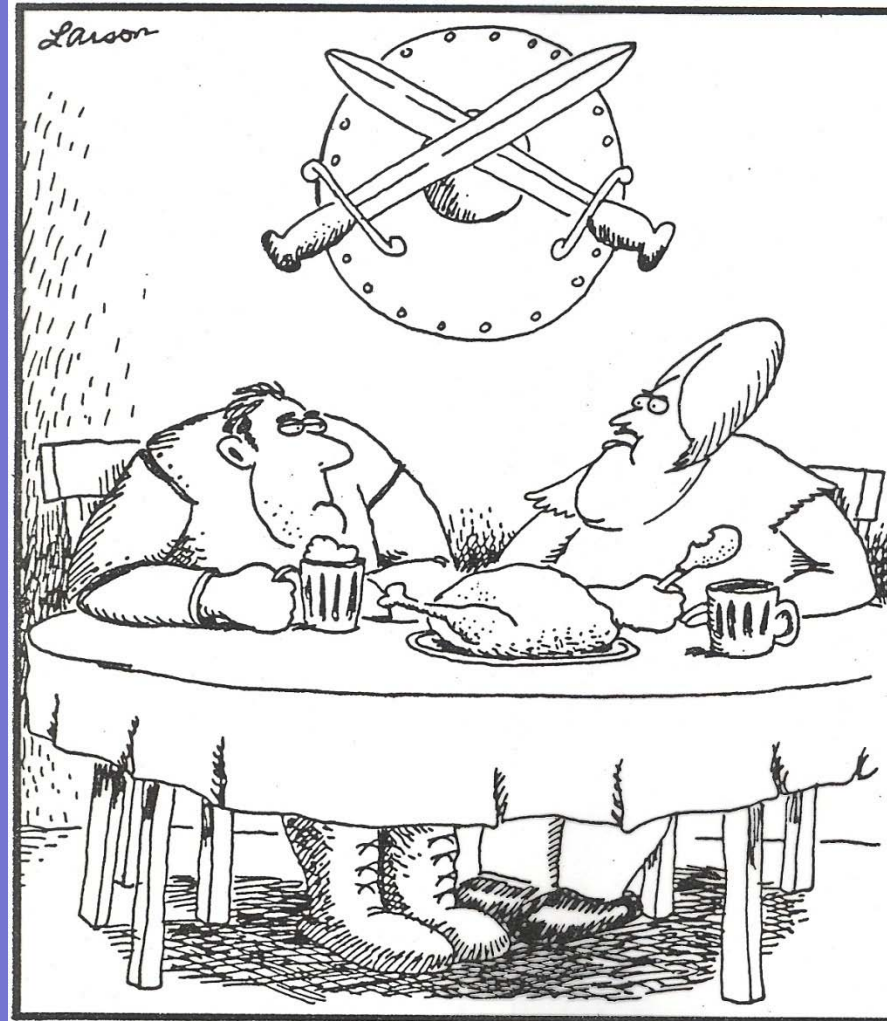
Alexander and Bucephalus



Alexander and Diogenes



Little-Known Evidence



“And another thing ... I want you to be more assertive! I’m tired of everyone calling you Alexander the Pretty-Good!”

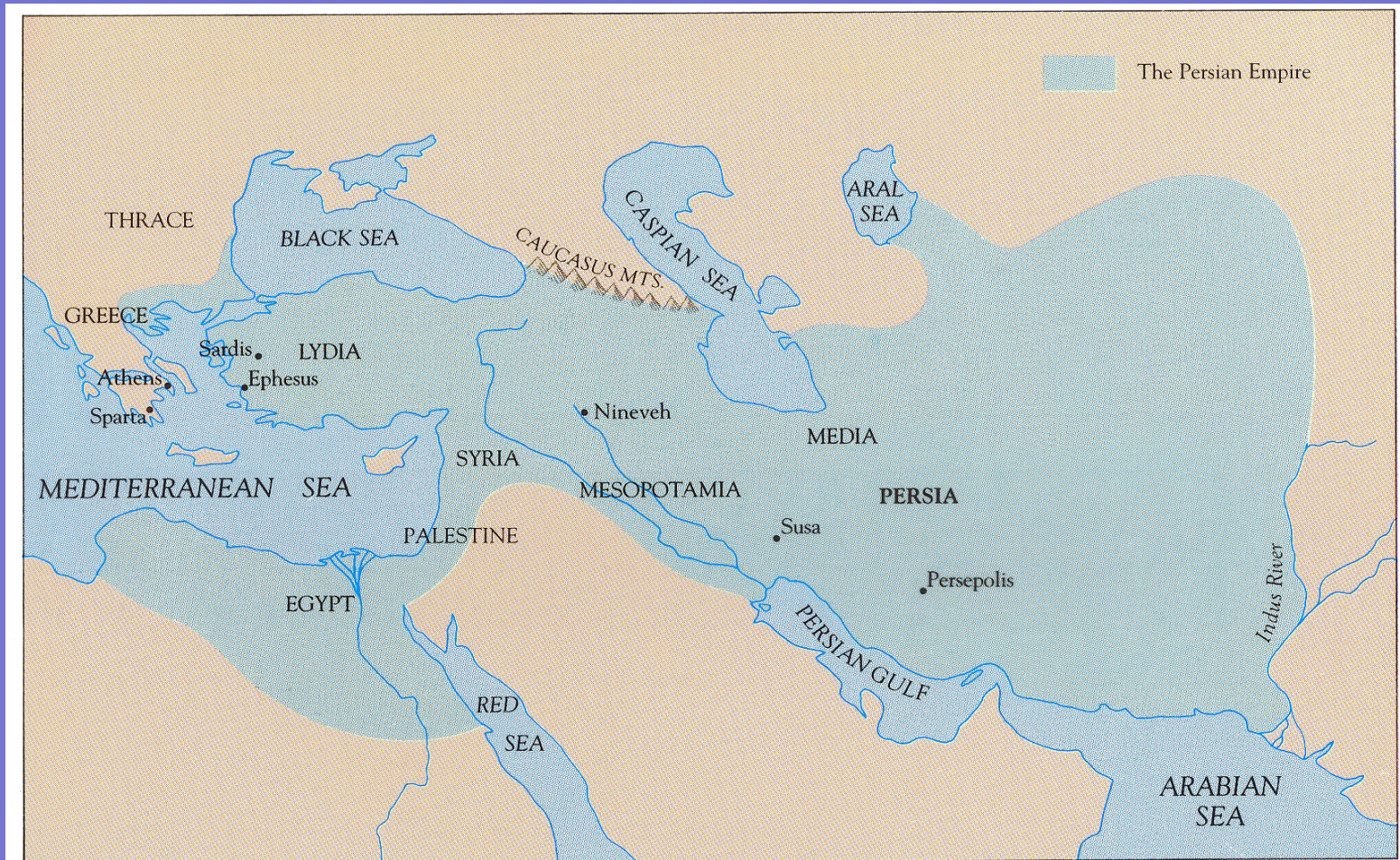
Some Methodological Questions

- A. Battle of Granicus (334 BC)
- B. Who Was Barsine?
- C. Of what did Alexander die?
- D. Dream of One World or Cruel Conqueror?
- E. Role in Spread of Hellenism — Mingling of Eastern and Western Cultures?

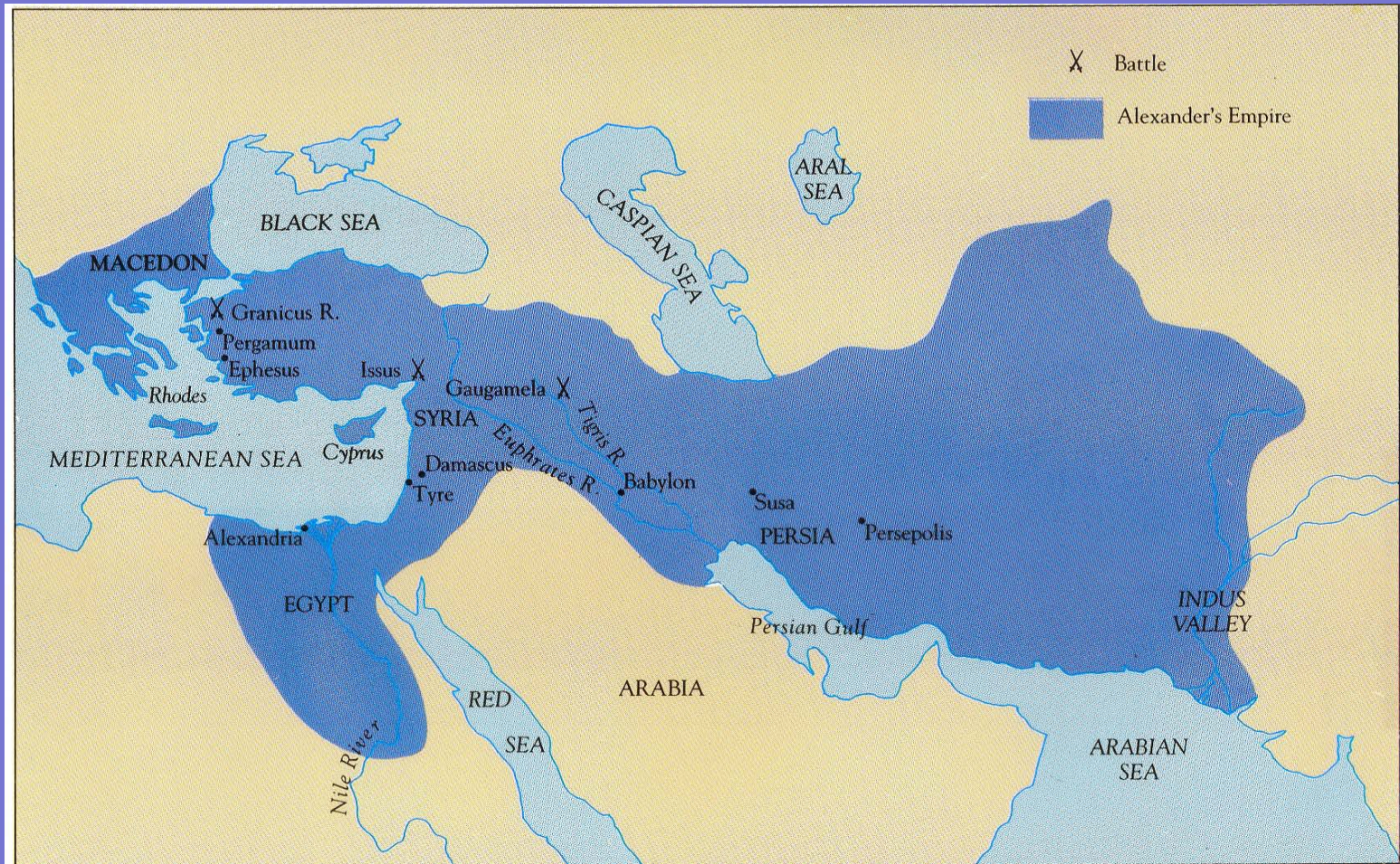
Marriage of Alexander (Ares) to Barsine (Aphrodite) from a Pompeii Mural



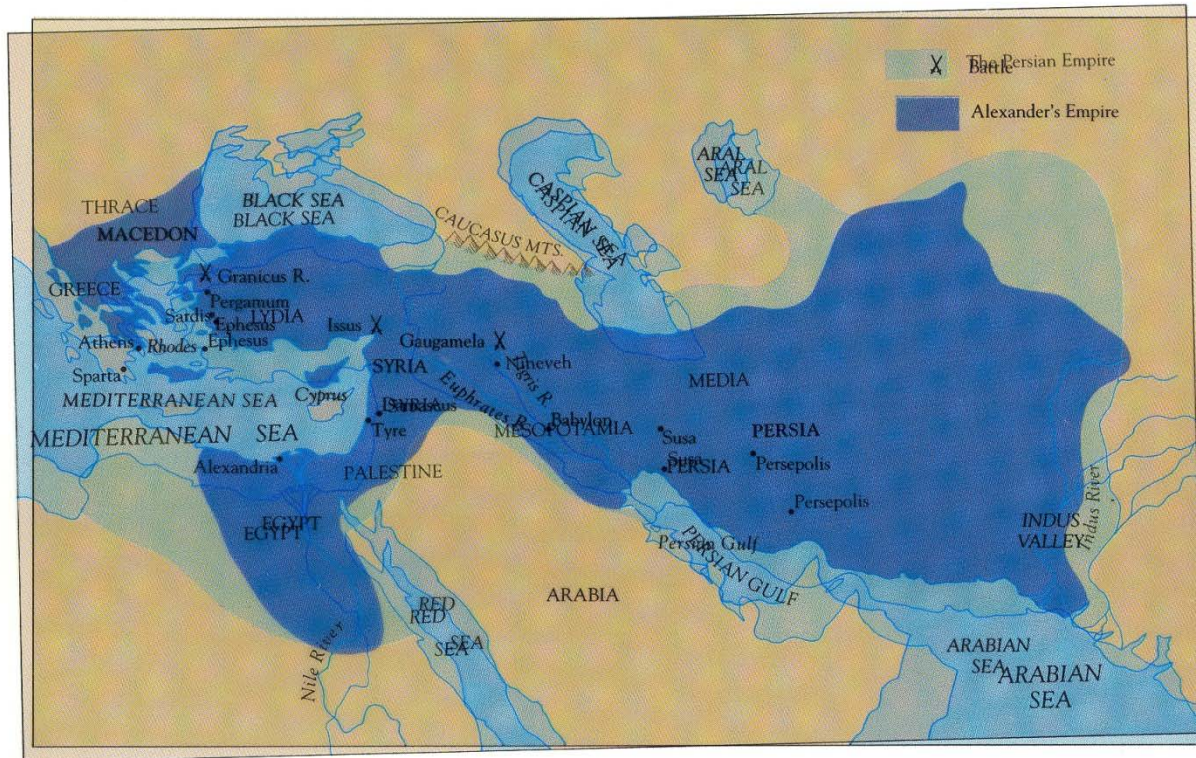
Persian Empire



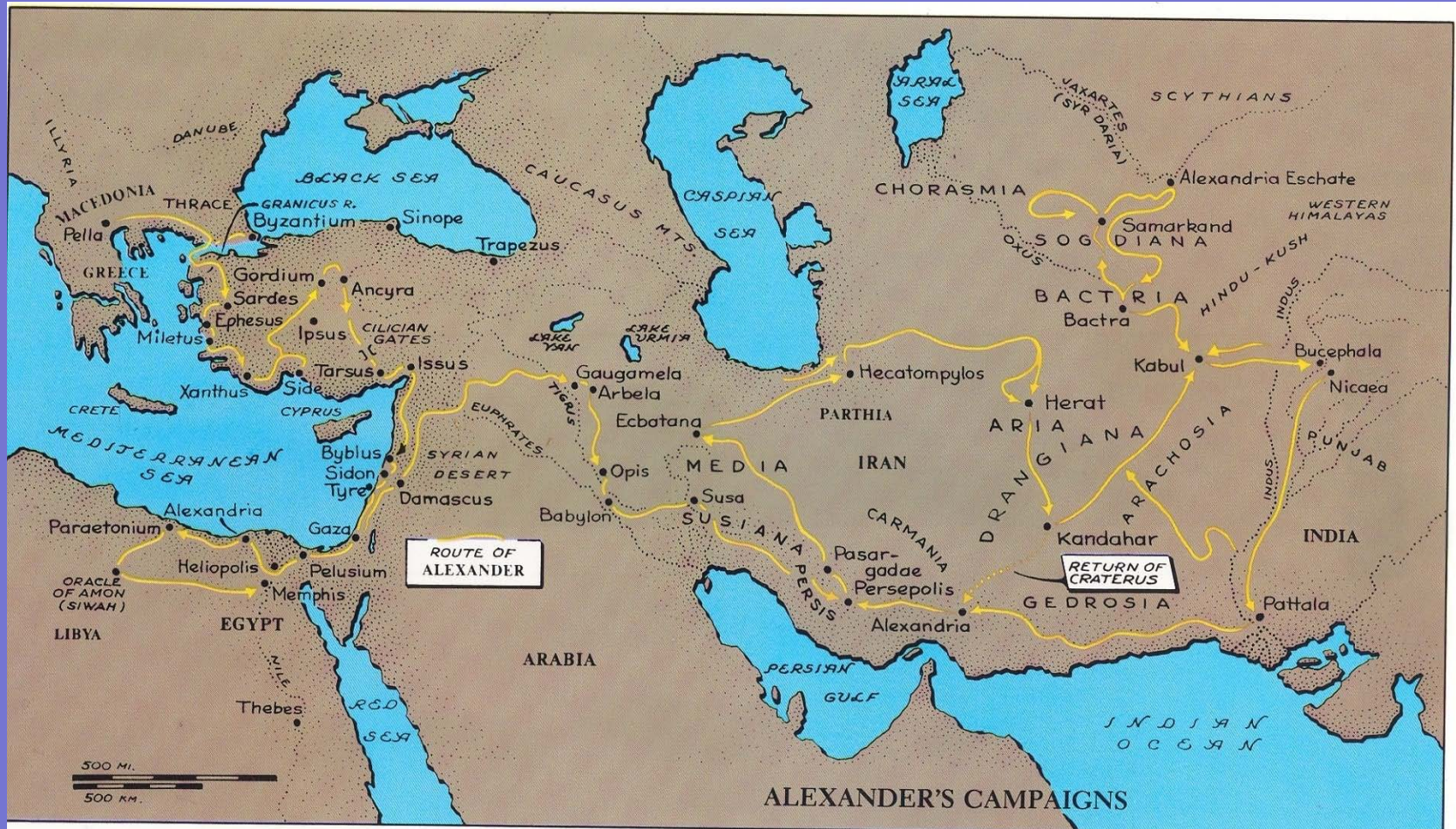
Alexander's Empire



Comparison of Empires



Alexander's Campaigns



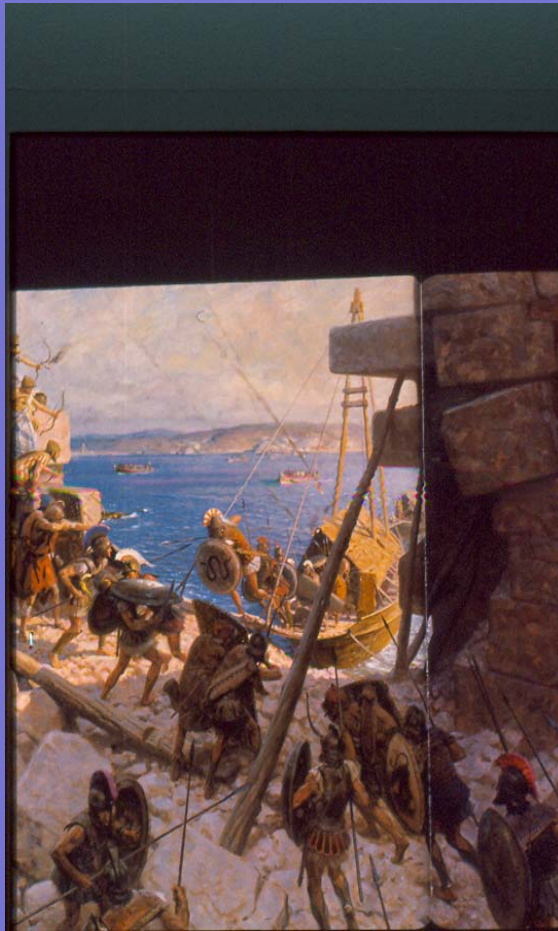
Alexander Throws His Spear into Asia



Alexander and the Gordion Knot



The Siege of Tyre



“Battle of Issus” (from House of the Faun,
Pompeii)



The Burning of Persepolis



Alexander's Invasion of India



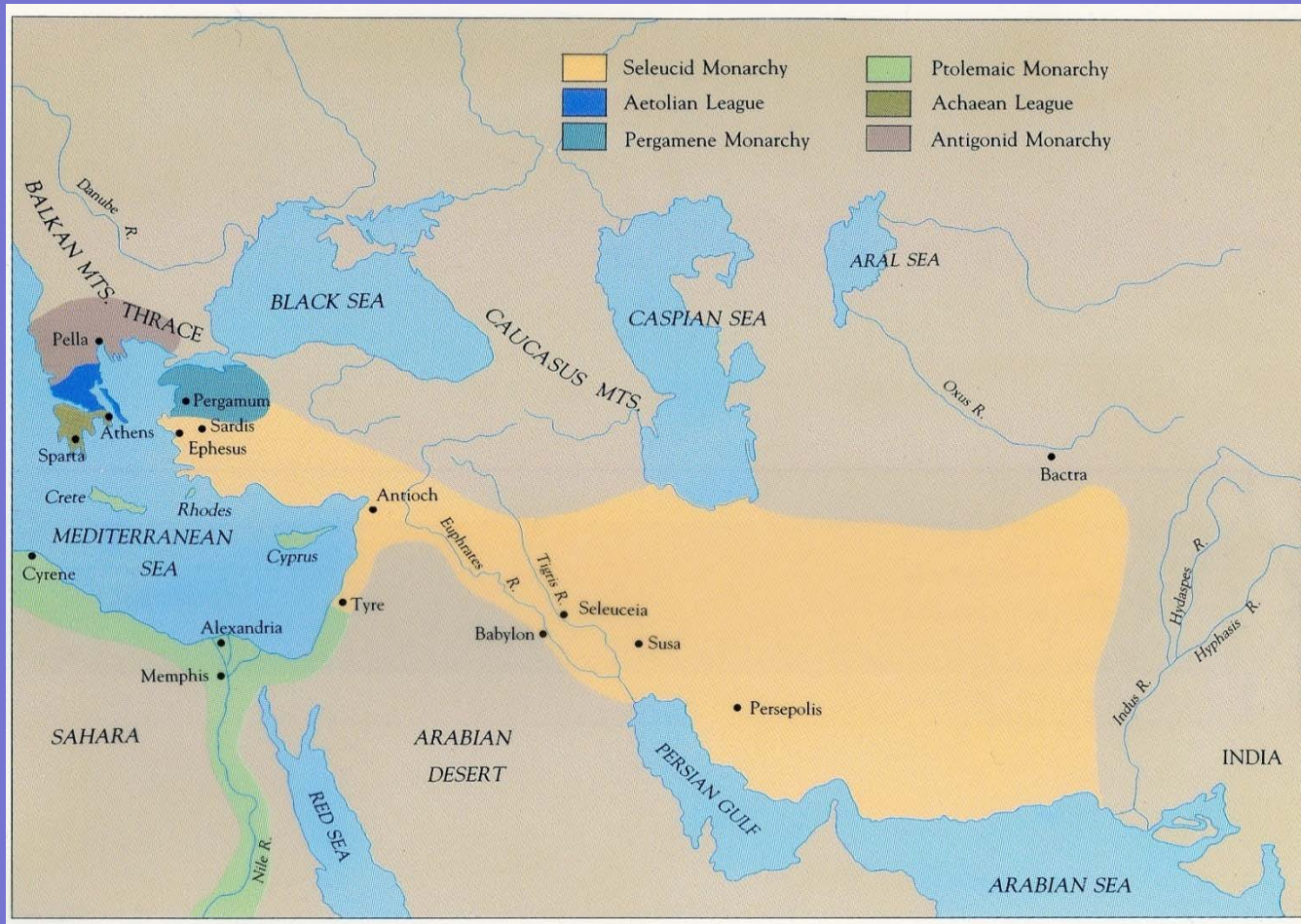
The Greeks Invade India



The Trip Back through the Gedrosian Desert



Hellenistic Monarchies



Three Views on Alexander the Great

I. Stoics

II. Peripatetics

III. Apologists

Three Views: I. Stoics

A. Flawed from the start

1. *hubris* (ἕβρις)— pride, *insolentia*
2. *tufos* (τυφος)— “all that one dislikes in those with whom one disagrees”

B. Main Source: Justin (a 3rd-cent. AD epitome of Pompeius Trogus *Philippic Histories*)

Three Views: I. Stoics

C. Modern Historians

1. Ernst Badian [numerous articles]
2. R. D. Milns, *Alexander the Great* (1969)
3. A. B. Bosworth, *Conquest and Empire: The Reign of Alexander the Great* (1988)

Three Views: II. Peripatetics

- A. Aristotle turned out a perfectly good pupil, but he was ruined by his own fortune (τυχή) // didn't know how to make good use of it

- B. Main Source: Quintus Curtius Rufus, *The History of Alexander* (1st cent. AD)

Three Views: II. Peripatetics

C. Modern Historians

1. Peter Green, *Alexander of Macedon 356-323 B.C.* (rev. ed. 1974)
2. John Maxwell O'Brien, *Alexander the Great: The Invisible Enemy* (1992)
3. F. Schachermeyr, *Alexander der Grosse. Ingenium und Macht* (1949)

Three Views: III. Apologists

A. Sustained positive assessment

B. Main Sources

1. Plutarch, *Lives* (beginning of 2nd cent. ad)
2. Arrian, *The Campaigns of Alexander* (mid-2nd cent. ad)
– *pothos* (desire)

Three Views: III. Apologists

C. Modern Historians

1. Johann Gustav Droysen, *Geschichte Alexanders der Grossen* (1833)
2. Ulrich Wilken, *Alexander der Grosse* (1931)
3. W. W. Tarn, *Alexander the Great* (1949)
4. Robin Lane Fox, *Alexander the Great* (1974)
5. N. G. L. Hammond, *Alexander the Great: King, Commander and Statesman* (1980)