FEZANA Age-Appropriate Lesson Plan

Subject Category (circle one): Religion/Ceremony   Celebration   <mark>History</mark>   Prayer
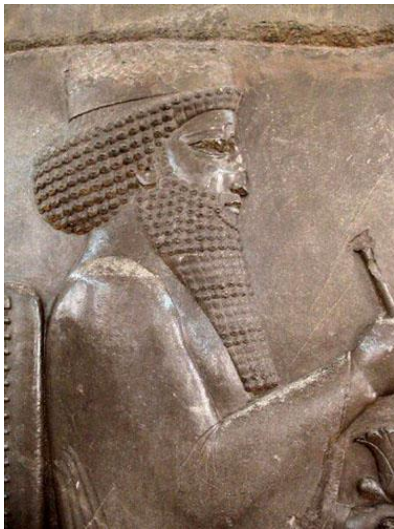Gathas   Comparative Religion   Shahnameh

Age Group (circle one): PreK-K   Grades 1-3   Grades 4-5   Grades 6-8   <mark>Grades 9-12</mark>

Lesson # (if applicable): Lesson 4 Part 1

Subject of the Lesson: The Achaemenids- Darius I Part 1 of 2

Background knowledge for teacher:

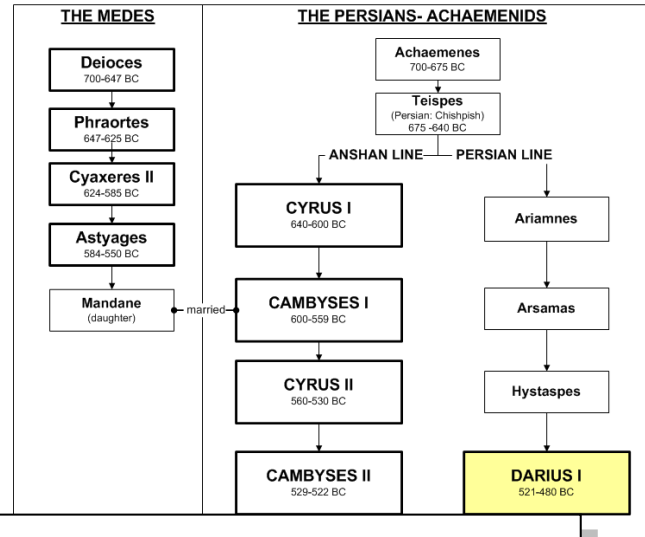**Darius the Great- 521-485 B.C.**

Darius I (*Darayavaush*), also known as Darius the Great, held the Achaemenid Empire at its peak, encompassing between 35-50 million people, representing ~70 distinct ethnic groups, stretching 2,600 miles from the Indus River in the east and the Aegean Sea in the west, and 2,300 miles from Armenia in the north to the south of Egypt.

Within the first year of Darius' reign, there were many rebellions throughout his kingdom and he quelled them all. He is credited with bringing "unity" and order to the Empire Cyrus had amassed.

Darius organized the Empire by dividing it into provinces and placing satraps to govern it. He organized a new uniform

monetary system, along with making [Aramaic](#) the official language of the empire.

Darius also worked on construction projects throughout the empire, focusing on [Susa](#), [Pasargadae](#), [Persepolis](#), [Babylon](#), and [Egypt](#). Darius devised a codification of laws for [Egypt](#). He also had the cliff-face [Behistun Inscription](#) carved, an autobiography of great modern [linguistic](#) significance. Darius also started many massive engineering and [architectural projects](#), including magnificent palaces in [Persepolis](#) and [Susa](#).

THE MEDES	THE PERSIANS- ACHAEMENIDS	
	Achaemenes 700-675 BC	
Deioces 700-647 BC	**Teispes** (Persian: Chishpish) 675 -640 BC	
Phraortes 647-625 BC	ANSHAN LINE — PERSIAN LINE	
Cyaxeres II 624-585 BC	**CYRUS I** 640-600 BC	**Ariamnes**
Astyages 584-550 BC		
Mandane (daughter) ← married →	**CAMBYSES I** 600-559 BC	**Arsamas**
	CYRUS II 560-530 BC	**Hystaspes**
	CAMBYSES II 529-522 BC	**DARIUS I** 521-480 BC

What was a Satrap?

Satraps originated during the Median Empire but were first used on a large scale by Cyrus the Great. Before satraps, emperors ruled the conquered lands, through [client kings](#) and governors, who functioned with great autonomy. The twenty satraps established by Cyrus were never kings, but viceroys ruling in the king's name.

[Darius the Great](#) gave the satrapies a definitive organization/structure. The satrap was in charge of the land that he owned as an administrator, collected taxes, controlled the local officials and was the supreme judge of every civil and criminal case. He was responsible for the safety of the roads.

The Satrap's court (council or cabinet staff) was filled with Persians loyal to the king

Ascension to the Throne

Darius, son of Hystaspes, belonged to a younger branch of the royal family of the Achaemenids. Darius had served as a warrior for Cambyses II. After the death of [Cambyses](#), Darius, "with the help of Ahuramazda," and six other Persian noble families overthrew the alleged usurper, [Bardiya](#) (some say it was Gaumata who pretended to be Cambyses II's brother, [Bardiya](#)).

Darius justifies his ascension to the throne through his lineage to [Achaemenes](#), even though he was distantly related. To establish and maintain his legitimacy, Darius married [Atossa](#), daughter of [Cyrus](#), with whom he had four sons, [Xerxes](#), [Achaimenes](#), [Masistes](#) and Hystaspes. He also

married [Artystone](#), another daughter of Cyrus, and [Parmys](#), the daughter of Bardiya, and other women of the nobility.

Military Campaigns

After [Bardiya](#) (or his pretender) was murdered, widespread revolts occurred throughout [the empire](#), especially to the east.

Darius asserted his position as emperor by force, taking his armies throughout the empire, suppressing each revolt individually. He had major campaigns in Babylon, Scythia, Egypt and Ionia.

Once order was restored within the empire Darius looked to expand the empire into "Greece".

THE PERSIAN EMPIRE UNDER DARIUS (490 B.C.)
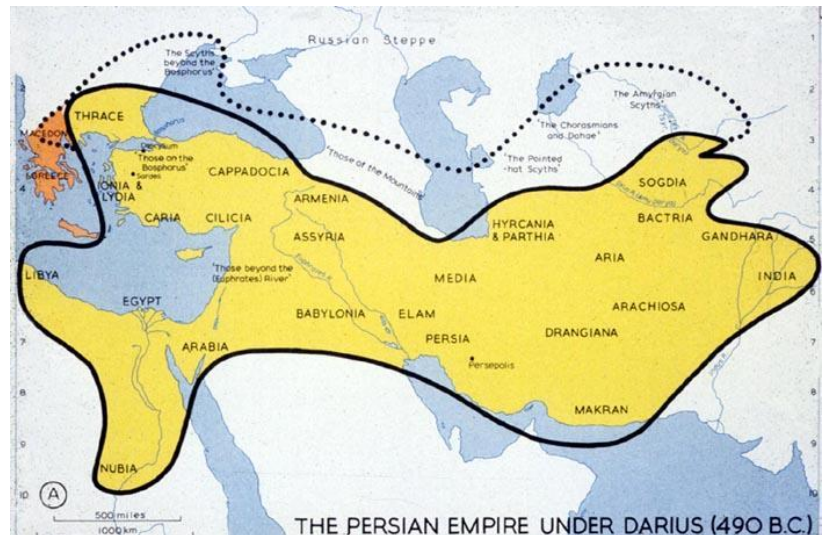
Persian Invasion of Greece

After gaining control of the rebellious Ionian Greeks in 495 BC, Darius realized that they would be a perpetual bother as long as they could gain help and encouragement from the Greek mainland, so he determined to conquer Greece proper, secure his western frontier and lay the groundwork for Persia's expansion into Europe. He was also outraged that during the Ionian rebellion, an obscure city-state (Athens) from mainland Greece had burned and assisted in the expulsion of the Persians from Sardis, the capital of the Ionian Greek city-states. His anger was such that he vowed to punish them and every night at dinner he had a servant repeat to him "Lord, don't forget the Athenians"

Darius had two routes to invade Greece, one by land and one by sea. He chose them both and in 492 BC began his expedition. However, his first attempt failed because a terrible storm destroyed his fleet.

During the following two years, Darius sent heralds, official messengers/diplomatic representatives, to the Greek city-states. The heralds, as was the Persian custom, asked for "earth and water" as a token of submission (in other words, those surrendering had to hand

over everything to the Persian authority). Many of the Greek city-states acquiesced but many did not, including the two most important, Sparta and Athens. The Athenians threw the heralds off the Acropolis and the Spartans threw them down a well where there was plenty of "earth and water". The Athenians even executed the unfortunate translator of the Persian demand for defiling the Greek language. War was now certain.

Two years later he launched his second attempt, again by sea but with a more southern route.

The Persian fleet conveying a force of infantry and calvary sailed across the Aegean Sea in late August or early September of 490 BC.


Ceremony of Presenting Earth and Water.

Most of the islands along their route submitted but Eretria did not and was under siege for six days until some of its citizens helped the Persians enter its walls. The city was sacked, its buildings destroyed and its inhabitants who survived the massacre that followed were taken prisoners. This was in retaliation for the part that Eretria played in assisting Athens in the destruction of Sardis in the Ionian rebellion. This was a clear indication to the Athenians that theirs would be the same fate.

The Battle of Marathon (429 BC)

The Persian army, led by General Datis, sailed from Eretria to the Marathon Bay and landed there, about twenty-five and a half miles from Athens.

The Athenians had sent a runner to Sparta for help but Sparta was slow to respond, eventually arriving after the battle was over.

When the ~9000 Athenians arrived at Marathon they were joined by a force of 1000 Plataians (their entire army) to fight against the common enemy. This was the first time the Greeks had stood up against the Persians.

BATTLE OF MARATHON
Greek Double Envelopment, 490 B.C.

SCALE OF MILES
0   1/4   1/2   3/4   1
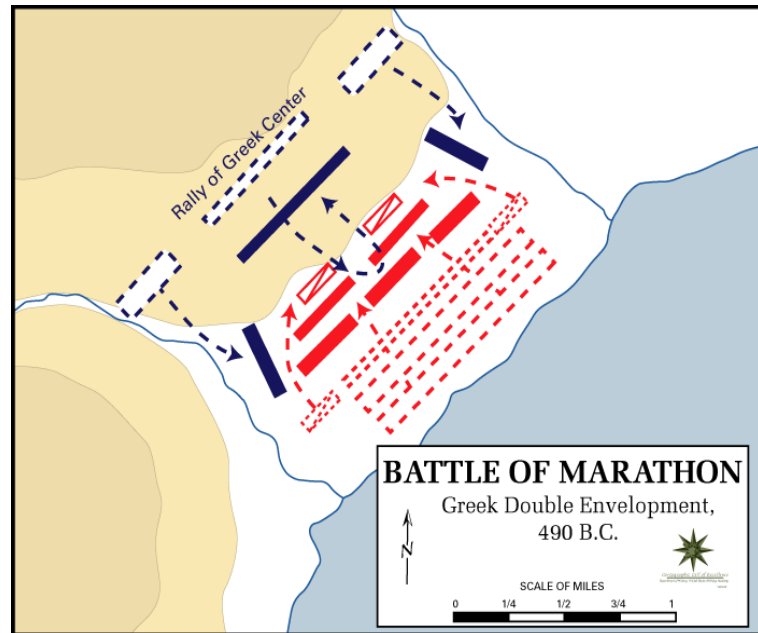
The Athenian army took up its position in the Valley of Vrana, outnumbered three to one. The battle lines were about one mile apart and the Athenians did not have enough troops to cover the entire valley.

For five days the armies squared off with little movement. For the Greeks, this inactivity was largely due to a fear of being attacked by the Persian cavalry as they crossed the plain. Finally, the Greek commander, Miltiades, elected to attack after receiving favorable omens. Some sources also indicate that Militiades had learned from Persian deserters that the cavalry was away from the field.
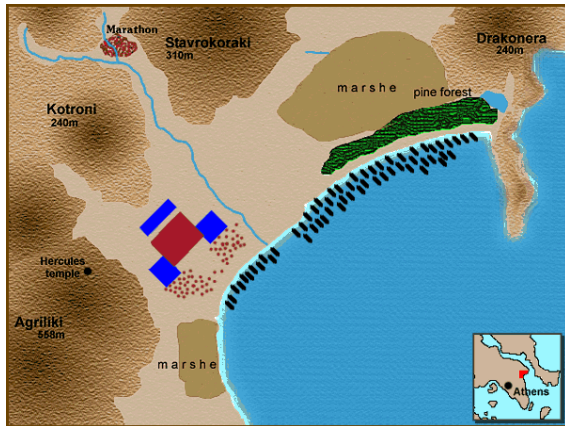
Forming his men, Militiades reinforced his wings by weakening his center. This may have been due to the Persian's tendency to place inferior troops on their flanks. Miltiades attacked at dawn. The Athenians charged at a run. The Persians waited, not believing that anyone could run that far and still fight well. They routed the Greek weak center and charged up the valley. The Greeks retreated, pulling the Persians forward and extending their lines.

Then the Greek wings fell upon the Persian flanks while the center suddenly stood firm. The Persians broke ranks and began to retreat. As the Greeks pressed, the retreat became a rout. The Greeks harried them to the beach and followed them into the water, swimming out after the boats and capturing seven Persian ships. Datis retreated his forces.

The Athenians had won at Marathon but they certainly had not destroyed the Persian army. They had made plans before the battle that if they won, they would return to Athens as soon as possible because they knew that the Persian fleet was sure to sail around Attica and attempt to take the city while it was undefended. The citizens were to man the walls and make it appear that Athens was strongly defended.

The Persians did indeed sail around Attica hoping to find the city helpless but when they met with resistance, they hesitated. Not long after, the Greek army arrived. The Persians decided they had enough of these Greeks and sailed home.

The Battle of Marathon is perhaps the single most important battle in Greek history. Had the Athenians lost, Greece would have eventually come under the control of the Persians and all the subsequent culture and accomplishments of the Greeks would probably not have taken the form they did. However, the Persians were not done. In 481 BC, Darius I's son, Xerxes, gathered together an army of some one hundred fifty thousand men and a navy of six hundred ships. He was determined that the whole of Greece would be conquered by Persia.

Darius began preparations for a second force which he would command, instead of his generals; however, before the preparations were complete, Darius died, thus leaving the task to his son Xerxes.

Comparison of Persian & Greek Forces

Comparison of Persian and Greek Forces

Greek Army – Primarily Infantry Main weapons: long, heavy spear, heavy armament (helmet, shield, breastplate, greaves) and their battle formation, the phalanx. Their tactics favored close combat. The Greeks used neither bow nor cavalry at this time.

The Persian army consisted of infantry and excellent cavalry. Their tactics favored long-range assaults with arrows and quick assaults with cavalry. Main weapon was the bow. Their usual tactic was to wait for the enemy to come close and then to "bury" him under a barrage of arrows.

Comparison of Persian and Greek Forces

Athenian Hoplite was more heavily armored than his Persian counterpart

Persian Calvary – The Greeks had not Counterpart for the Persian Cavalry

Lesson for students:

Lesson Objectives / Learning Targets:

At the end of the lesson, students should understand the following…

- Darius was NOT a direct descendant of Cyrus I or Cambyses. He was a distant relative. He, along with other Persian Nobles, overthrew Gaumâta/ Bardiya
- Darius brought 'unity' to the large Empire Cyrus had amassed
- After he stopped the Ionia Revolt in the west, he mounted numerous campaigns against the "Greeks". After significant successes, the Persians lost at Marathon and returned to Persia.

Lesson Slides: Use slides 1-13 to teach the class part 1 of the Darius the Great lesson.

Materials Needed:
- Darius the Great Slides Part 1 of 2
- Darius Cartoon Handout (make copies for students)

Vocabulary:
- Satrap/Satrapy
- Greek city-state

Activity for Students:

Essential Questions: Use the questions for class discussion.
- What was Darius' relationship to Cyrus and Cambyses?

    - How did Darius become king among the other nobles? What was the story of the horses?
    - How did Darius solidify his legitimacy?
    - Why did Darius support the story of Cambyses' imposter rather than his brother?
- What was the Behistun Rock and where is it?
    - Why did Darius build it? Maintain his legacy
    - How did it change our understanding of language and history?
    - Is there evidence that Darius was a devout Zoroastrian? How about Cambyses and Cyrus?

- What was the Ionian Revolt?
  - Greek city-states
  - What was Darius' Response? "Remember the Athenians"
  - How does "mainstream" history describe Darius' invasion?

- Why did Darius mount numerous campaigns against the Greeks?
  - Was Darius successful with these campaigns?
  - What was the outcome of the Battle at Marathon?
  - What was the impact of this on Persian affairs?

Darius Cartoon: Have students read and view pages 265-270.

- Ask students to share any new information they learned from the *Cartoon* about Darius that was not mentioned in the lesson.
- Optional: Encourage students to re-create one box from the *Cartoon* using their own images and dialogue. Ensure that the re-created box still flows with the entirety of the cartoon scene.

Sources:

1. https://blog.summitlearning.org/2019/08/essentialquestions/
2. Material provided by Mr. Xerxes Kotval

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