



Middle East Ethnicities, Part 2

1- The Persians



THE IRANIANS

The Persians

- Who are the Persians?
- What is Zoroastrianism?



Who are the Persians?

- The Persians' origin was a **nomadic Indo-European people** who embarked on a historical journey from **Central Asia** and **southern Russia** around 1200 - 1000 BCE.
- The name **Persia** derives from **Parsua**, the name of the Indo-European nomadic people who migrated to southern Iran.
- The **Ancient Greeks** called the whole land **Persia**.



Persians / Aryans / Iranians

Who are the Persians?

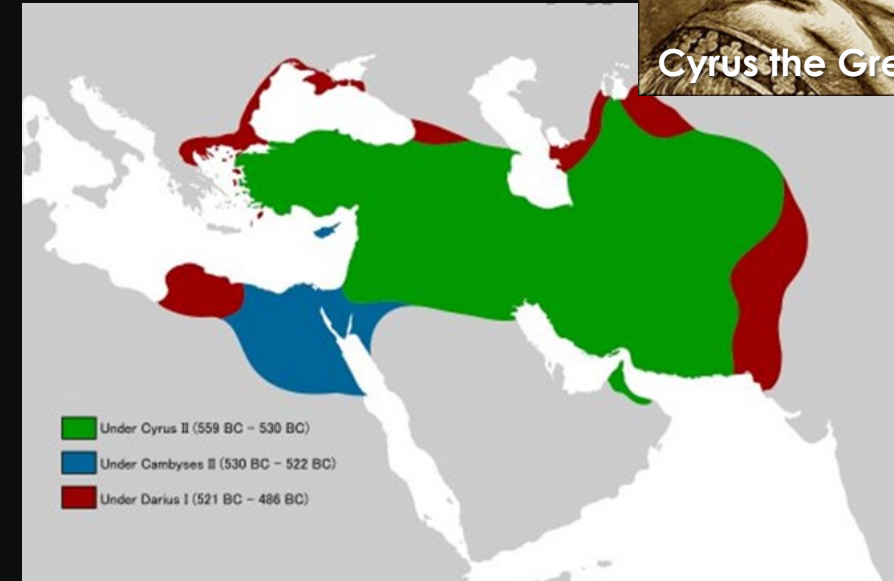
- The country of Persia became known as **Iran in 1935**.
- The native name of the country, **Iran**, holds a significant cultural meaning as it translates to '**Land of the Aryans**.'
- Iran is home to about **82 million** people, most of whom speak **Farsi** and are **Shi'a (Shiite) Muslims**.



Persians / Aryans / Iranians

The Persian (Achaemenid) Empire 550-330 BCE

- ▶ It was the first Persian Empire in Western Asia.
- ▶ The Empire's vast territory stretched **3000 miles** from **the Balkan** peninsula west to the Indus River valley in Northern India.
- ▶ It was founded by **Cyrus the Great** (559–530 B.C.E.)
- ▶ He **freed** the **Jews** & returned them to Jerusalem.
- ▶ He was **tolerant** of all **cultures & religions**.
- ▶ **Alexander the Great** destroyed the Persian Empire in 330 BCE.



THE PERSIAN EMPIRE (CA. 538-332 B.C.E.)



MACEDONIA

LYDIA

CAPPADOCIA

CILICIA

ASSYRIA

MEDIA

PARTHIA

SOGDIANA

BACTRIA

ARACHOSIA

ELAM

PARSIA

EGYPT

Athens

Damascus

Samaria

Jerusalem

Memphis

Elephantine

Babylon

Susa

Persepolis

Black Sea

Caspian Sea

Mediterranean Sea

Persian Gulf

Red Sea

REGION NAME

• City Name



ROMANIA

KAZAKHSTAN

SKUDRA

BLACK SEA

SCYTHIANS

IONIA

OZBEKISTAN

CHORASMIA

LYDIA

CAPPADOCIA

ARMENIA

SOGDIANA

TAJIKSTAN

CARIA

TURKEY

ARMENIA

TURKMENISTAN

BACTRIA

CASPIAN SEA

GANDARA

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

ASSYRIA

MEDIA

PARTHIA

AREIA

SIND

SYRIA

IRAQ

ECBATANA

AFGHANISTAN

LIBYA

LIBYA

ARABAYA

BABYLON

SUSA

IRAN

DRANGIANA

ARACHOSIA

PAKISTAN

EGYPT

PASARGADAE

PERSEPOLIS

PERSIA

EGYPT

RED SEA

SAUDI ARABIA

PERSIAN GULF

Crucial Change in Iranian History

Arab Islamic Conquest and Early Caliphates (651 CE - 1258 CE)

- ▶ The Sasanian Empire fell to the Muslim Arab conquest, and Iran became part of the Islamic Caliphates in 651 CE.
- ▶ Over time, most of the population converted to Islam, and Persian culture deeply influenced the Islamic Golden Age.



Crucial Change in Iranian History

Safavid Empire (1501 CE - 1736 CE)

- ▶ Established by Shah Ismail I, **the Safavid dynasty made Shi'a Islam** the state religion, shaping Iran's religious identity.





Black Sea

Uzbek Dynasty

Aydar Käl

Caspian Sea

Ottoman Empire

Van Gölü (Lake Van)

Safavid Empire

Dead Sea

Strait of Hormuz

Persian Gulf (Arabian Gulf)

Gulf of Oman

Red

Bosphorus

Sea of Marmara

The Persian Religion before Islam



Faravahar



Prophet Zoroaster

Zoroastrianism

- Dualism/ Monotheism
 - Ahura Mazda (Wise Lord) – Forces of Good
 - Ahriman (Destructive Spirit)– Forces of Evil
 - Light vs Dark
 - Asha vs Druj (Order vs Chaos)
 - Faravahar: the Threefold Path of **Asha**
 - Good Thoughts
 - Good Words
 - Good Deeds
 - Bad Thoughts
 - Bad words
 - Bad Deeds



Zoroaster



The Zoroastrian Religion

- They believe in following only the good god and performing all the rituals.
- They believe in the existence of Evil—Ahriman, the adversary of Ahura Mazda.
- The Zoroastrian faith is centered on a **dualistic cosmology of good and evil**.
- Humans are **responsible** for their choices and bear the **consequences**.
- Zoroastrians believe in **angels**.
- They believe in **Judgment Day** and **paradise & hell**.
- They believe in the value of humans and life.



Zoroaster



Faravahar

Zoroastrianism

□ Ahura Mazda is:

- All-Knowing
- All-powerful
- Is everywhere (Omnipresent)
- Impossible for humans to conceive
- Unchanging
- The Creator of life
- The Source of all goodness and happiness.

□ Sacred Fire

- Fire is the Zoroastrian symbol; it represents God's **light** or **wisdom**
- Fire is fed **five times** a day
- **Prayers** are **five times** a day.
- Zoroastrian books of the Holy Scriptures are written in the **Avestan** language.



Zoroastrian fire-temple



Zoroastrian Temple in CA-USA

[https://www.3cmediasolutions.org/lti/coursemedia/play?id=23204
&cid=33d7b1c2759e803456edd760be61f88c3183e8f9](https://www.3cmediasolutions.org/lti/coursemedia/play?id=23204&cid=33d7b1c2759e803456edd760be61f88c3183e8f9)

PALESTINE 1946:

Districts and District Centers during the Mandate period

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2- The Palestinians

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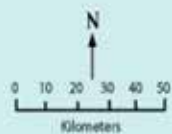
- ▶ Who lived in Palestine before Israel?
- ▶ What are the Ancient Kingdoms in the Levant (Middle East?)
- ▶ Was there ever a country of Palestine?
- ▶ When Did Palestinian Nationalism emerge?



PALESTINE 1946:

Districts and District Centers during the Mandate period

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Who lived in Palestine before Israel?

Before the Kingdom of Israel 3000 – 1100 BCE.

□ Canaanites:

- ▶ The region's earliest known inhabitants were the Canaanites, a Semitic-speaking people who settled in the land around 3000 BCE.
- ▶ Canaanite culture influenced many aspects of the region's development, including its language, religion, and social structures.



Before the Kingdom of Israel 3000 – 1100 BCE.

□ Canaanite City-States:

- ▶ **Ugarit:** An important Canaanite city-state located in modern-day Syria, known for its significant contributions to early alphabetic writing.
- ▶ **Hazor, Megiddo, and Byblos:** Other prominent Canaanite city-states that played vital roles in trade and politics.



Before the Kingdom of Israel 3000 – 1100 BCE.

Philistines:

- ▶ The Philistines, who arrived in the region around the 12th century BCE, are believed to have originated from the Aegean or Anatolian regions.
- ▶ They established several city-states along the southern coast of Palestine, including **Gaza**, **Ashkelon**, and **Ashdod**.



**What are the Ancient Kingdoms
in the Levant (Middle East?)**

What are the Ancient Kingdoms in the Levant (Middle East?)

- Phoenicians States
- Philistine States
- Kingdom of Aram Damascus
- Kingdom of Ammon
- Kingdom of Moab
- Kingdom of Edom



During the Kingdom of Israel and Judah

Kingdom of Israel (c. 930–720 BCE):

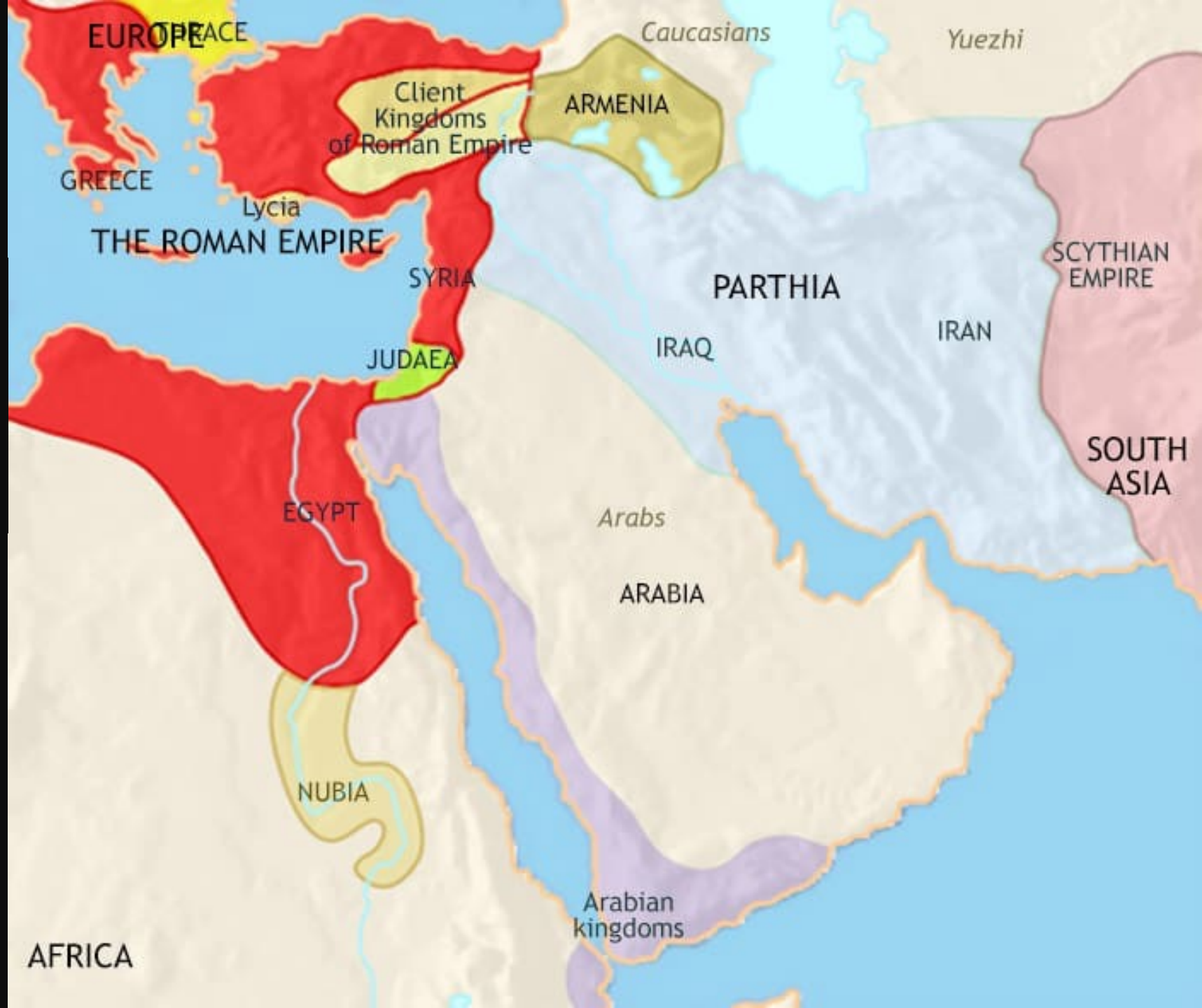
- ▶ Located in the northern part of the region, it was established after the United Monarchy of Israel and Judah split. Its capital was Samaria.

Kingdom of Judah (c. 930–586 BCE):

- ▶ Located in the southern part of the region, it continued from the southern part of the united monarchy with its capital in Jerusalem.

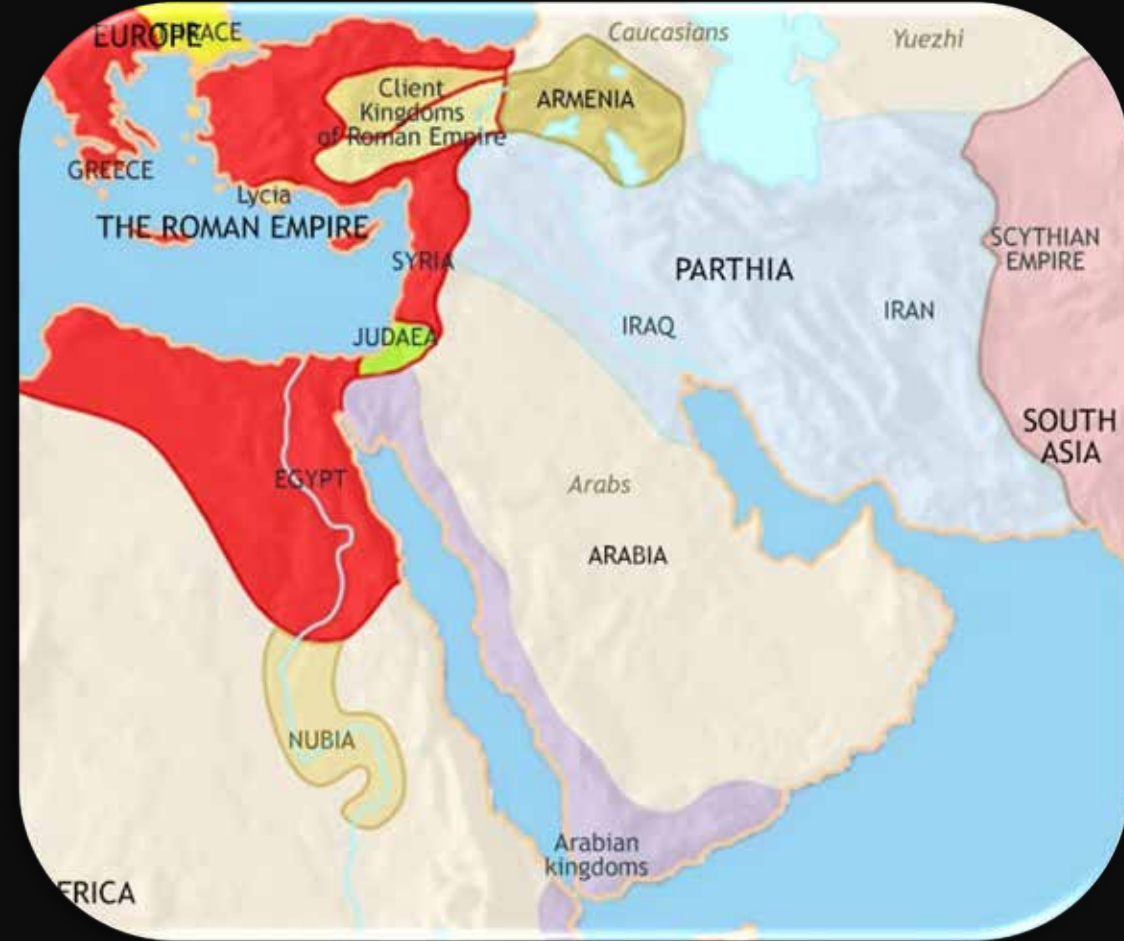


The Middle East under The Roman Empire in 30 BCE



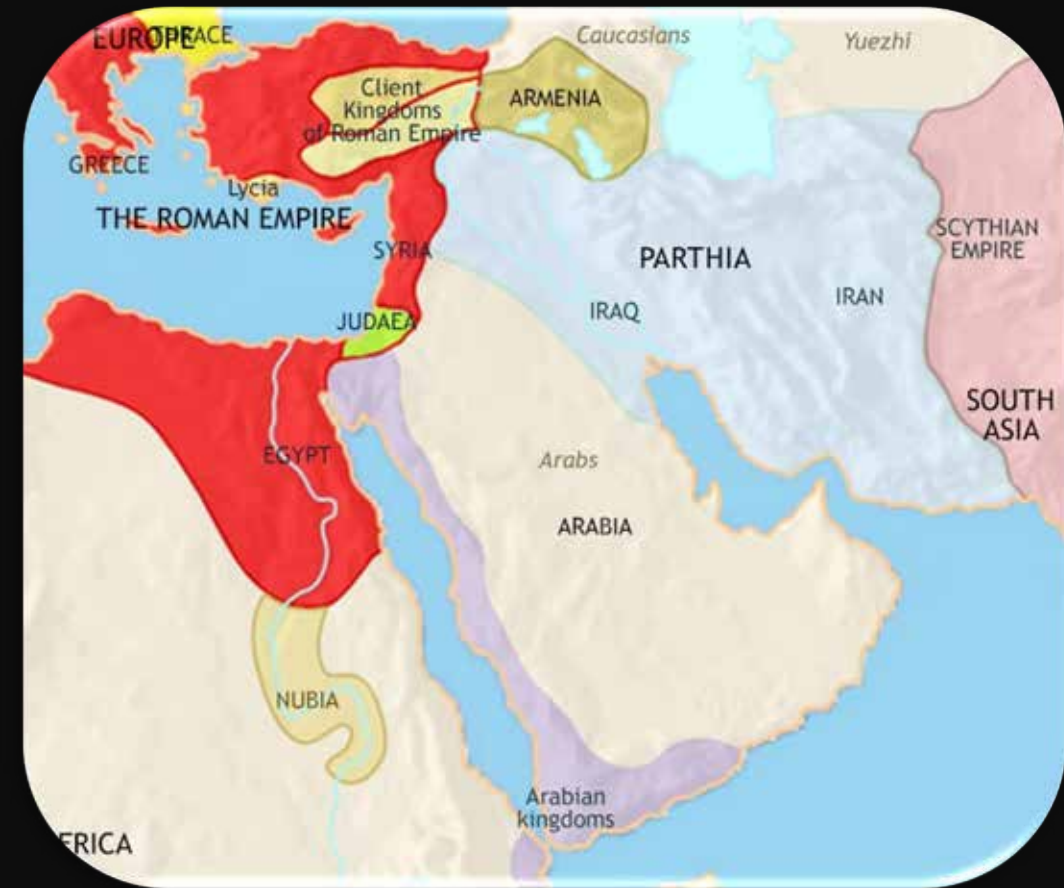
Palestine/ Israel During Classical and Medieval Periods

- ▶ **Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods:**
- ▶ The region was controlled by various empires, including the Persians, Greeks, and Romans.
- ▶ During these periods, the area saw **significant cultural and demographic changes**, including the spread of Hellenistic and later Roman influences.



Palestine/ Israel During Classical and Medieval Periods

- ▶ After the Emperor Hadrian ordered the explosion of the Jews once and for all in 134 AD. Hadrian changed the name of Judea, and the whole land became called **Syria-Palaestina**, a name derived from the ancient Philistines, traditional enemies of the Israelites.
- ▶ He destroyed Jerusalem and replaced it with a Roman city called **Aelia Capitolina**, dedicating it to the **Roman Capitoline Triad** (Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva).



Palestine/ Israel During Classical and Medieval Periods

▶ Byzantine Period:

- ▶ Following the Roman period, Palestine became part of the Byzantine Empire.
- ▶ Christianity spread throughout the region, and several important Christian sites were established.

Byzantine Empire, A.D. 565





In the 7th century CE, the Islamic Caliphate conquered the region and became known as Jund Filastin (Military District of Palestine).

Palestine/ Israel after Islamic Conquest Periods



The region underwent Arabization and Islamization, with many local inhabitants converting to Islam and adopting Arab culture.

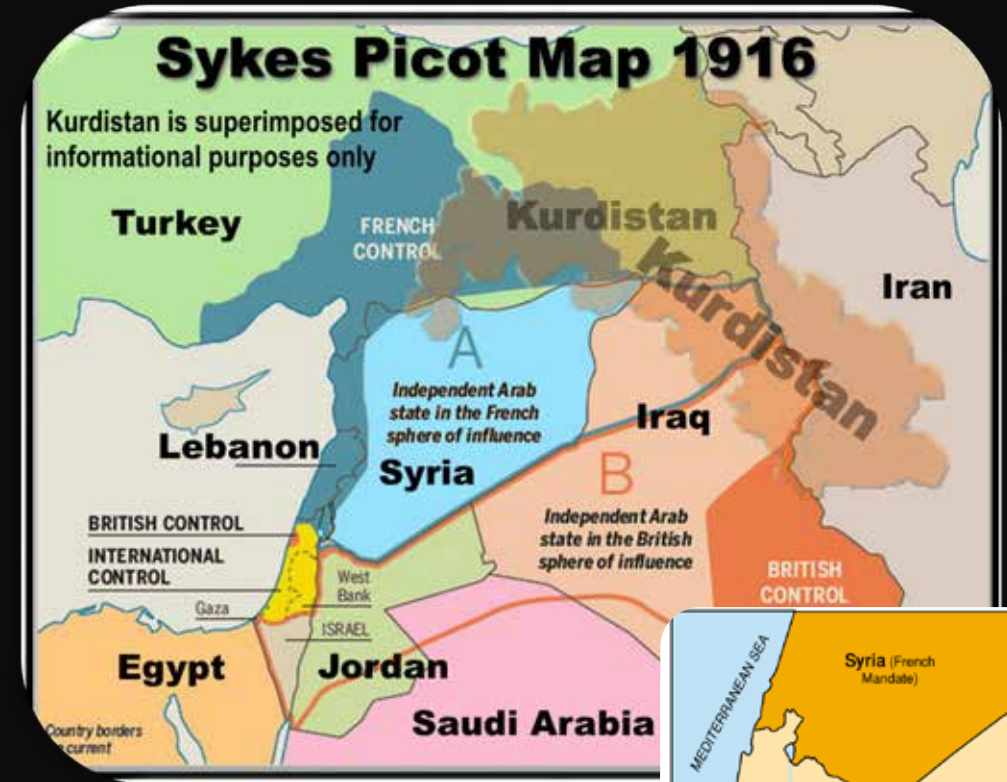
Palestine/ Israel after Islamic Conquest Periods

nd al. 2005; NASA Earth Observatory Image. Design: C. Kohlmeier-Ali. Ipo 2011.

Palestine/ Israel During Modern Periods

□ British Mandate:

- ▶ After **World War I**, the **League of Nations** granted Britain a mandate over Palestine, which included present-day Israel, the West Bank, and Gaza.
- ▶ The modern Palestinian identity began to take shape during this period, influenced by **rising Arab nationalism**, resistance to British rule, and increasing Jewish immigration.



Palestine After 6 Days War 1967

- ▶ During the six days of fighting, Israel achieved a swift and decisive victory over the combined forces of Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. The war resulted in Israel capturing significant territories:
- ▶ **West Bank (including East Jerusalem):** Taken from **Jordan**.
- ▶ **Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula:** Taken from **Egypt**.
- ▶ **Golan Heights:** Taken from **Syria**.
- ▶ Consequences for Palestine



Palestinians' Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- ▶ Palestinians today are a diverse group with a rich cultural heritage, including influences from ancient **Canaanite, Philistine, Israelite, Arab, and Ottoman** cultures.
- ▶ They identify primarily as Arab and speak Arabic, with **Islam** being the predominant religion, although there are also **Palestinian Christians** and other smaller religious minorities.

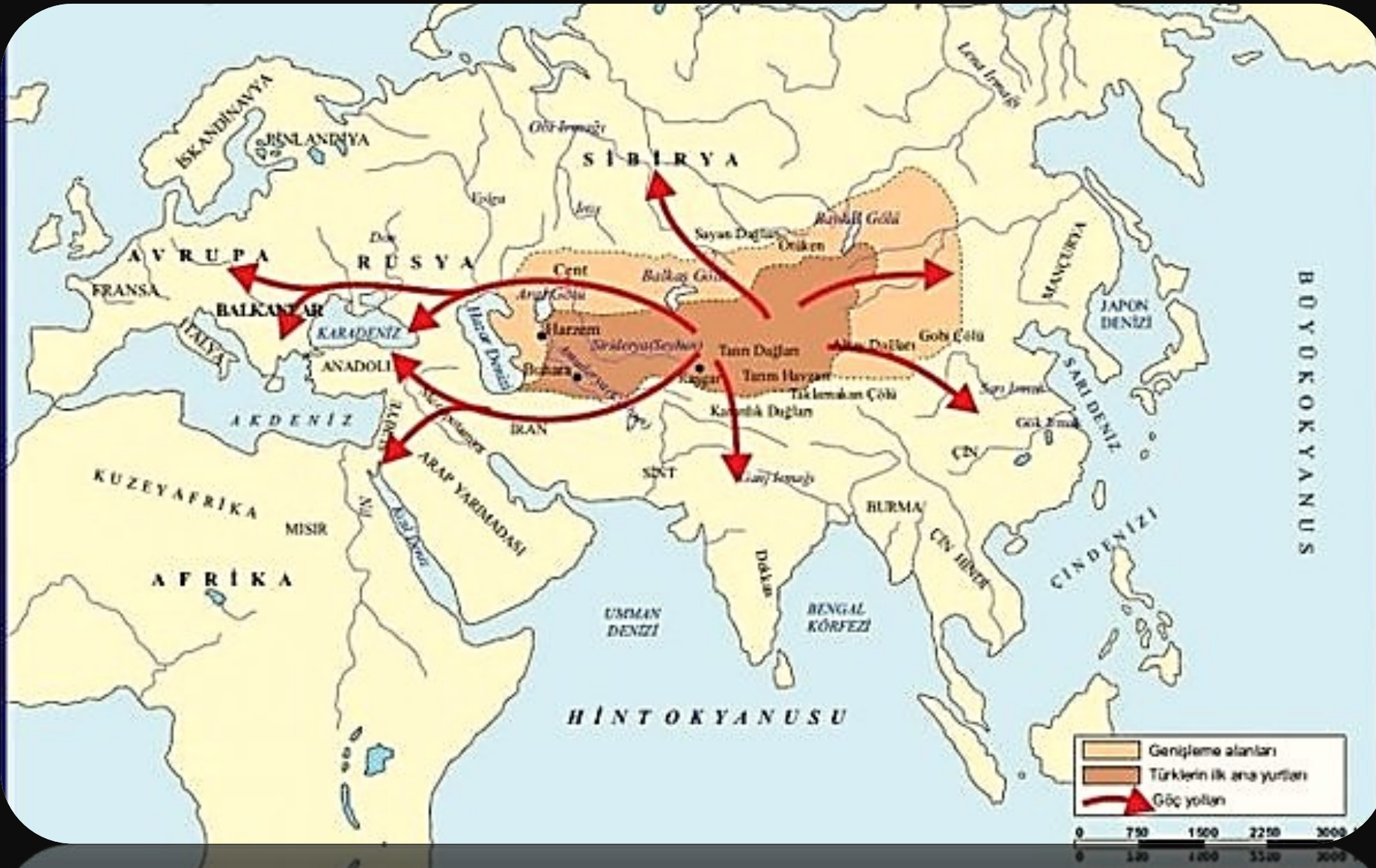


Palestinians' Cultural and Ethnic Identity

- ▶ The origins of the Palestinians are thus a complex tapestry woven from the many peoples and cultures that have inhabited the region over millennia, contributing to the unique identity and history of the Palestinian people.

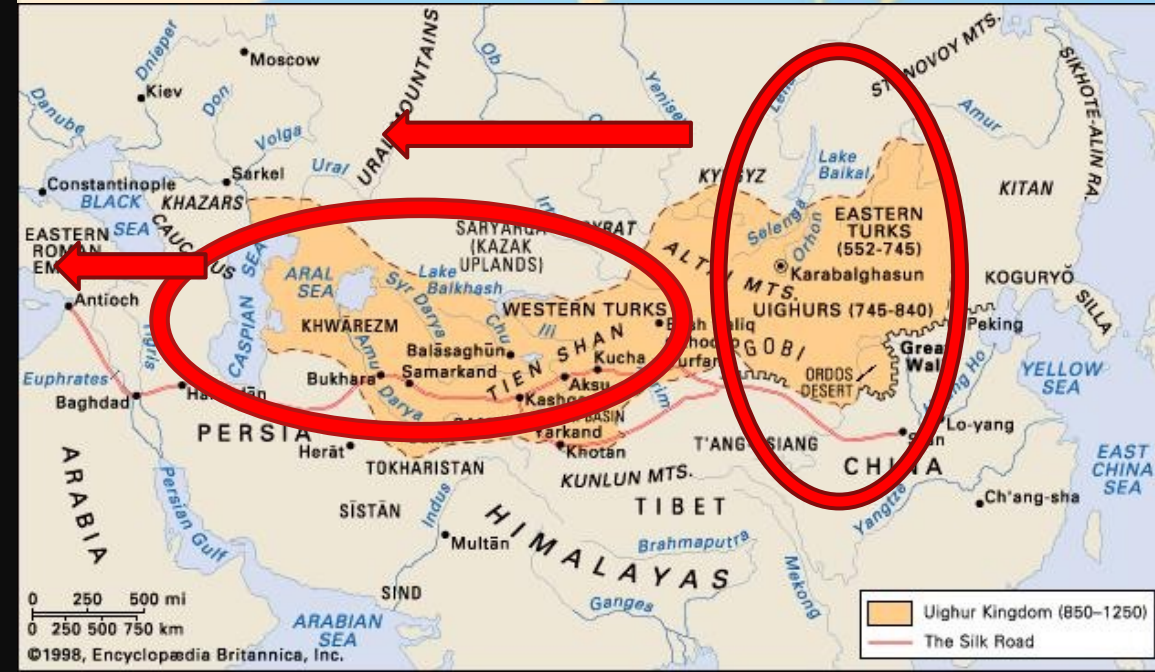


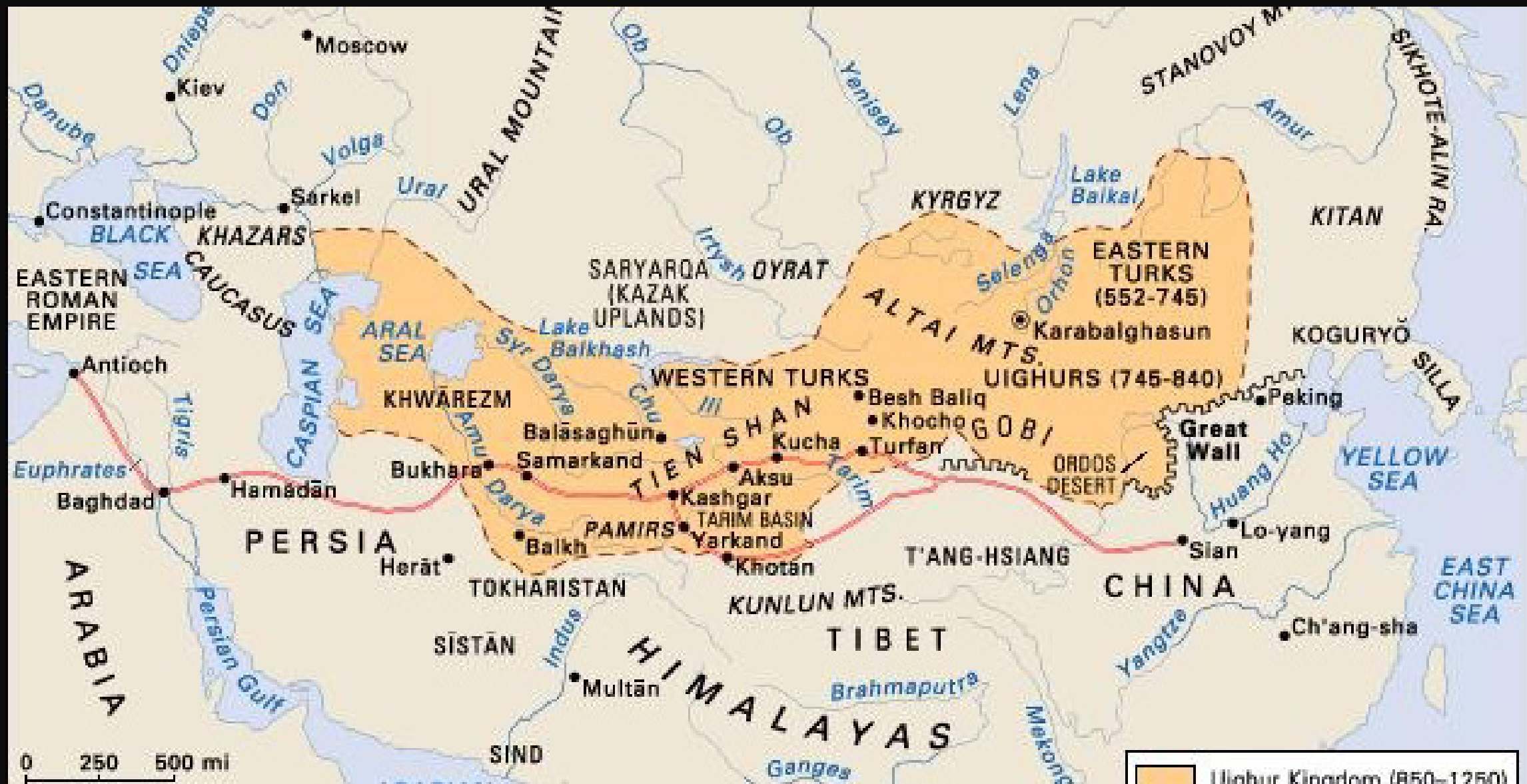
3. The Turks / Turkish



Who are the Turks?

- The first Turkish tribe that is mentioned in history is **the Huns**.
- The earliest written records about the **Huns** date back to the **8th century B.C.**
- By **1250 A.D.**, the **Turks** had established an **empire** that dominated the region from **Eastern Silk Road** cities of **Central Asia** through **western China** to the **Caspian Sea** in western Asia.



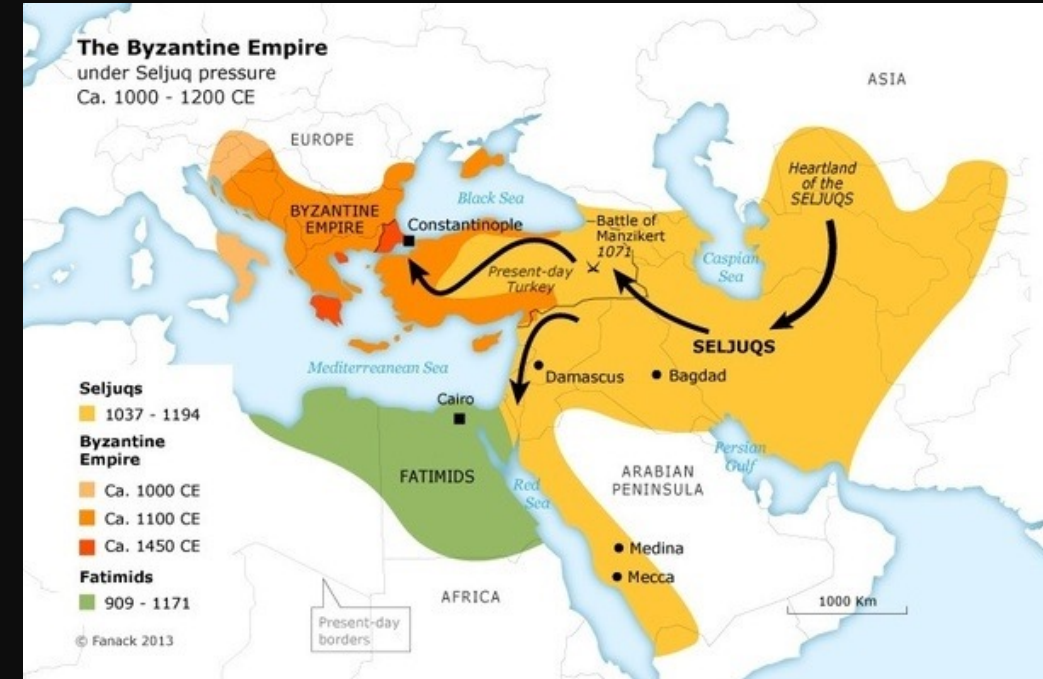


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Uighur Kingdom (850-1250)

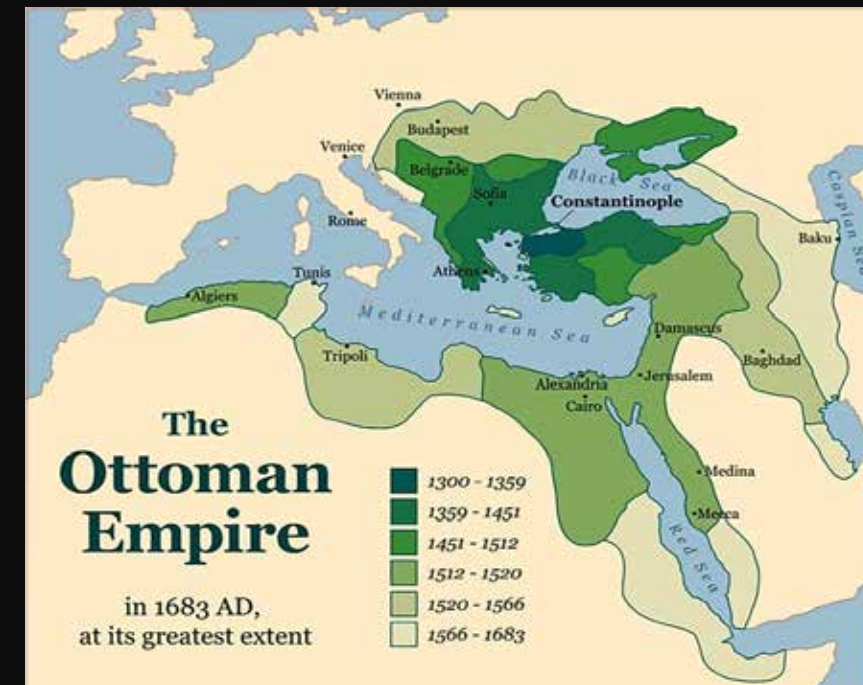
The Era Of Turkish Predominance, 550–1900s CE

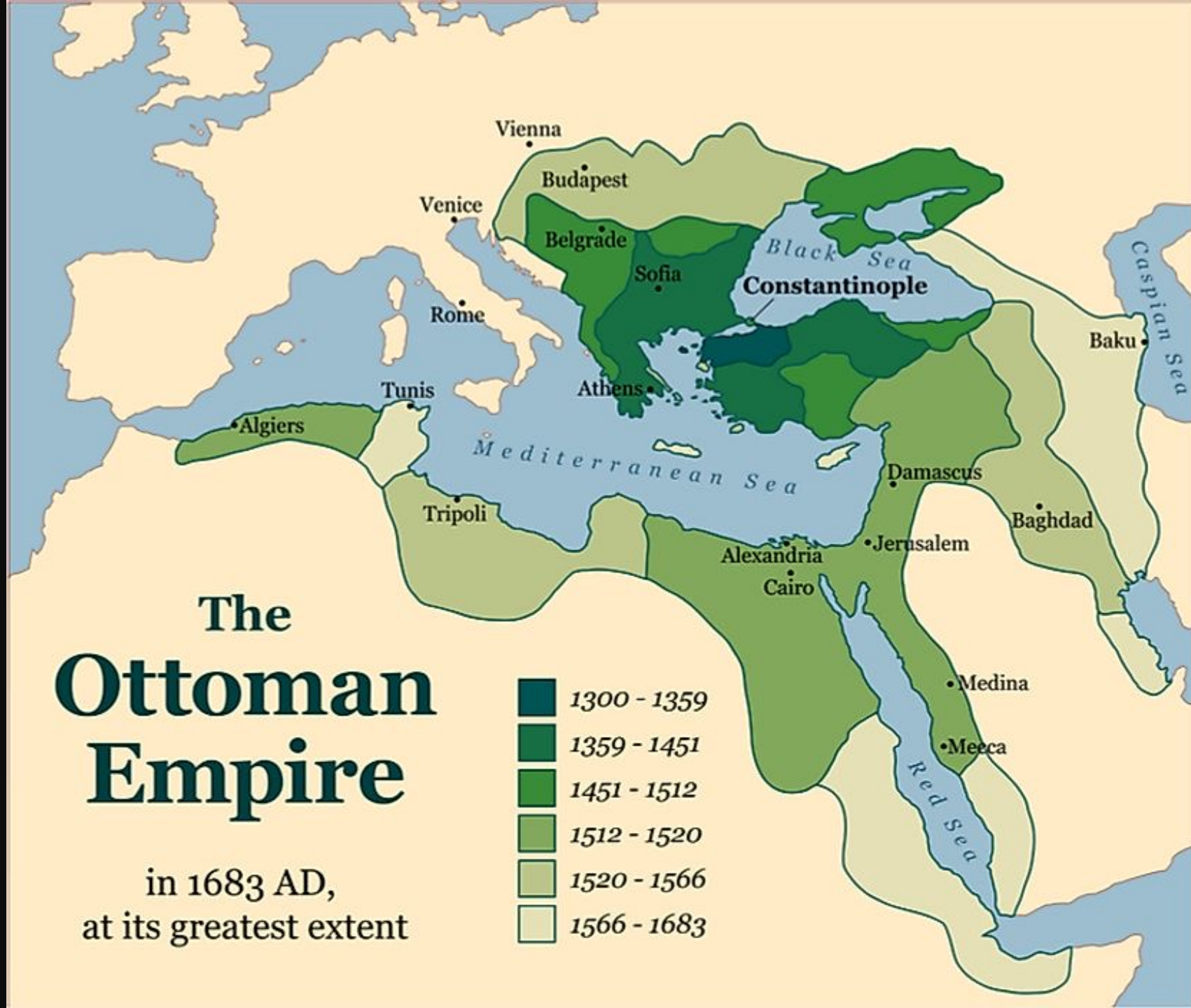
- ▶ In the 11th c. A.D., the Turks had gained the upper hand in the Islamic Caliphate.
- ▶ **Seljuk Turks** defeated the **Byzantines** and extended their power into **Asia Minor**, **Syria**, **Palestine**, and **Egypt**.
- ▶ Meanwhile, **other Turkish tribes** invaded **Afghanistan** and then advanced into **India**.
- ▶ Initially, the **Seljuk Turks** wrote in **Farsi**, but they later developed into their own writing language.



The Era Of Turkish Predominance, 550–1900s CE

- ▶ The region underwent a profound transformation, transitioning from a **predominantly Greek Christian** society to a **Turkish Muslim** one, marking a significant shift in its cultural and religious landscape.
- ▶ **The Ottoman Empire** came to rule much of **the Balkans, the Caucasus, the Middle East** (excluding Iran), and **North Africa** over the course of 5
- ▶ The empire lasted until the end of the **First World War**, when the **Allies defeated** it and **partitioned** it.





Thank you

