

The growth of the Persian empire, 6th century BC

No emperor in the whole of recorded history had seemed as great as Cyrus. Most of the Greeks were deeply impressed, although some of them came into conflict with Persia immediately, and the Spartans sent Cyrus solemn warning. The Persian conquests would not have been possible if the Near East had not already been partitioned between four great empires.

-  Persian homeland under Cyrus before 550
-  kingdom of Medes - annexed 550
-  kingdom of Lydians - annexed c. 547
-  kingdom of Babylonians - annexed 539
-  kingdom of Egyptians - annexed 525
-  final annexations of Darius and Xerxes
-  Persian royal road
-  zone of Ionian revolt 499-493