

Chapter 8: The Greek Adventure: 8-8b Greeks and Easterners in the Hellenistic Kingdoms

Book Title: World Civilizations

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8-8b Greeks and Easterners in the Hellenistic Kingdoms

The civil wars after Alexander's death resulted in the formation of three major successor kingdoms, each ruled by a former Greek general who had fought his way into that position (see [Map 8.2](#)):

1. The [Ptolemaic \(tah-leh-MAY-ihk\) Kingdom of Egypt \(\(tah-leh-MAY-ihk\) Egyptian state created by Ptolemy, one of Alexander the Great's generals, in the Hellenistic era.\)](#). A general named Ptolemy (TAH-leh-mee) succeeded in capturing Egypt, the richest of all the provinces of Alexander's empire. There he ruled as a divine king, just as the pharaohs once had. By the 100s B.C.E., the many immigrant Greeks and the Egyptian upper class had intermixed sufficiently to make Egypt a hybrid society. Many Greeks adopted the Egyptian way of life, which they found pleasant. Meanwhile, ordinary Egyptians remained exploited peasants or slaves.
2. The [Seleucid \(seh-LOO-sihd\) Kingdom of Persia \(\(seh-LOO-sihd\) One of the three Hellenistic Kingdoms. The successor state to the empire of Alexander the Great in most of the Middle East.\)](#) and Central Asia, which was the successor to most of the once-mighty empire of Darius III, reached from India's borders to the shores of the Mediterranean Sea. It was founded by a former general named Seleucus (seh-LOO-kus), and like Ptolemaic Egypt it lasted until the Roman assault in the first century B.C.E. Many tens of thousands of Greek immigrants came here as officials, soldiers, or craftsmen, and the contact between the locals and Greeks was extensive in the western parts of the kingdom, especially Syria and Turkey. The kingdom was too large to govern effectively, however, and it began to lose pieces to rebels and petty kings on its borders as early as the 200s. By the time the Romans were invading the western areas, most of the east was already lost.
3. The [Antigonid \(an-TIH-guh-nihd\) Kingdom \(\(an-TIH-guh-nihd\) One of the Hellenistic successor kingdoms to Alexander the Great's empire; included most of Greece and Asia Minor.\)](#). This kingdom was also founded by a general who claimed the old Macedonian homeland and ruled part of what had been Greece as well. The rest of Greece was divided among several leagues of city-states, which vied with each other for political and economic supremacy until both they and the Macedonians fell to the Romans in the middle 100s B.C.E.

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