

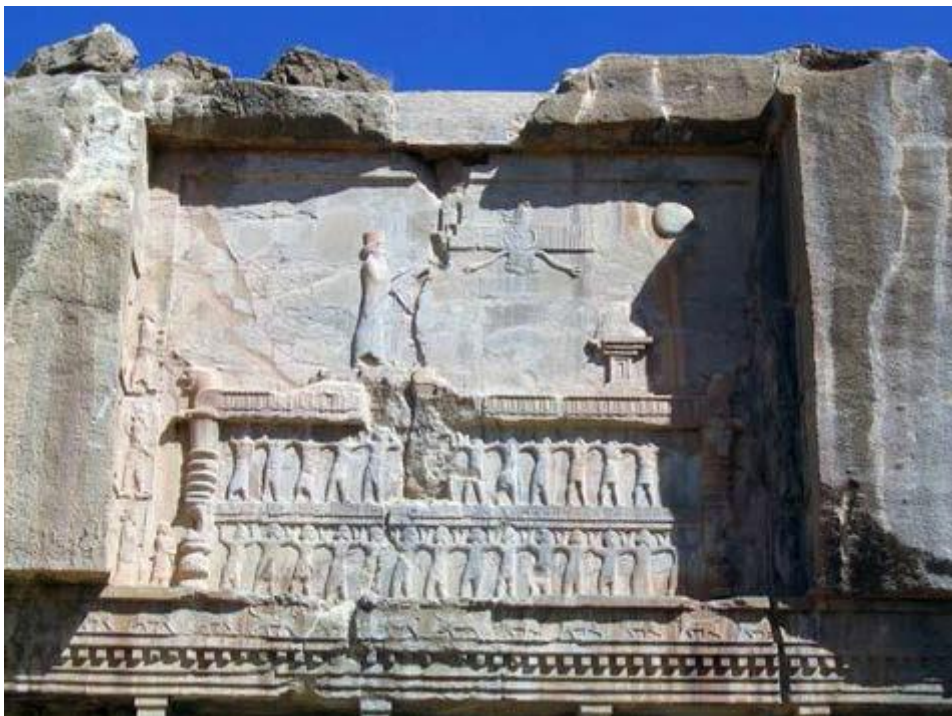


Activity 3 – The Tombs of the Persian Kings

Introduction

From Darius I onwards, all of the Persians kings were buried in identical tombs and each tomb was decorated with the same relief. The relief shows the king standing on top of a platform, with his hand raised in a greeting that is directed towards Ahuramazda, the most important Persian god. Underneath the platform, a number of the peoples of the empire are represented. Consequently, these reliefs were another way in which important messages about the nature of the empire were communicated by the Persian kings.

Evidence



Activity

- 1) What are the key messages in this relief? You should think about:
 - The relationship between the king and his subjects (think about what the subjects are doing and what this says about their relationship with the king).
 - The relationship between the various subject groups shown underneath the platform
- 2) How do the themes expressed in this image compare to those expressed by the Persepolis Tribute Frieze (which you explored in Activity 2)?
- 3) Why do you think the Persians chose to present their empire in this way?
 - The advantages of this style of presentation
 - The possible audiences that the kings may have been trying to communicate with
 - The nature of the Empire – what made the Persian Empire different from other (earlier) Empires which had chosen to emphasise rule by force?



To help you out, there is an annotated copy of the image on the next page, which highlights some of the key parts of the picture.

