

A History of Knowledge

Oldest Knowledge

What the Sumerians knew

What the Babylonians knew

What the Hittites knew

What the Persians knew

What the Egyptians knew

What the Indians knew

What the Chinese knew

What the Greeks knew

What the Phoenicians knew

What the Romans knew

What the Barbarians knew

What the Jews knew

What the Christians knew

Tang & Sung China

Medieval India

What the Japanese knew

What the Muslims knew

The Middle Ages

Ming & Manchu China

The Renaissance

The Industrial Age

The Victorian Age

The Modern World

What the Indians knew

Piero Scaruffi

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What the Indians knew

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 - Hermann Goetz: The Art of India (1959)
 - Jadunath Sinha: “History Of Indian Philosophy” (1956)
 - Haridas Bhattacharyya: “The Cultural Heritage Of India” (1937)
 - Alberto Siliotti: The Dwellings of Eternity (2000)
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 - Sherman Lee: A History of Far Eastern Art (1973)
 - John Keay: India - A History (2001)

Cradles of Civilization



(Courtesy Rafael Olivas)

TIBET/CHINA

PERSIA

I
N
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U
S

KARAKORUM

HIMALAYA

THAR
DESERT

GANGES
PLAINS

DELTA

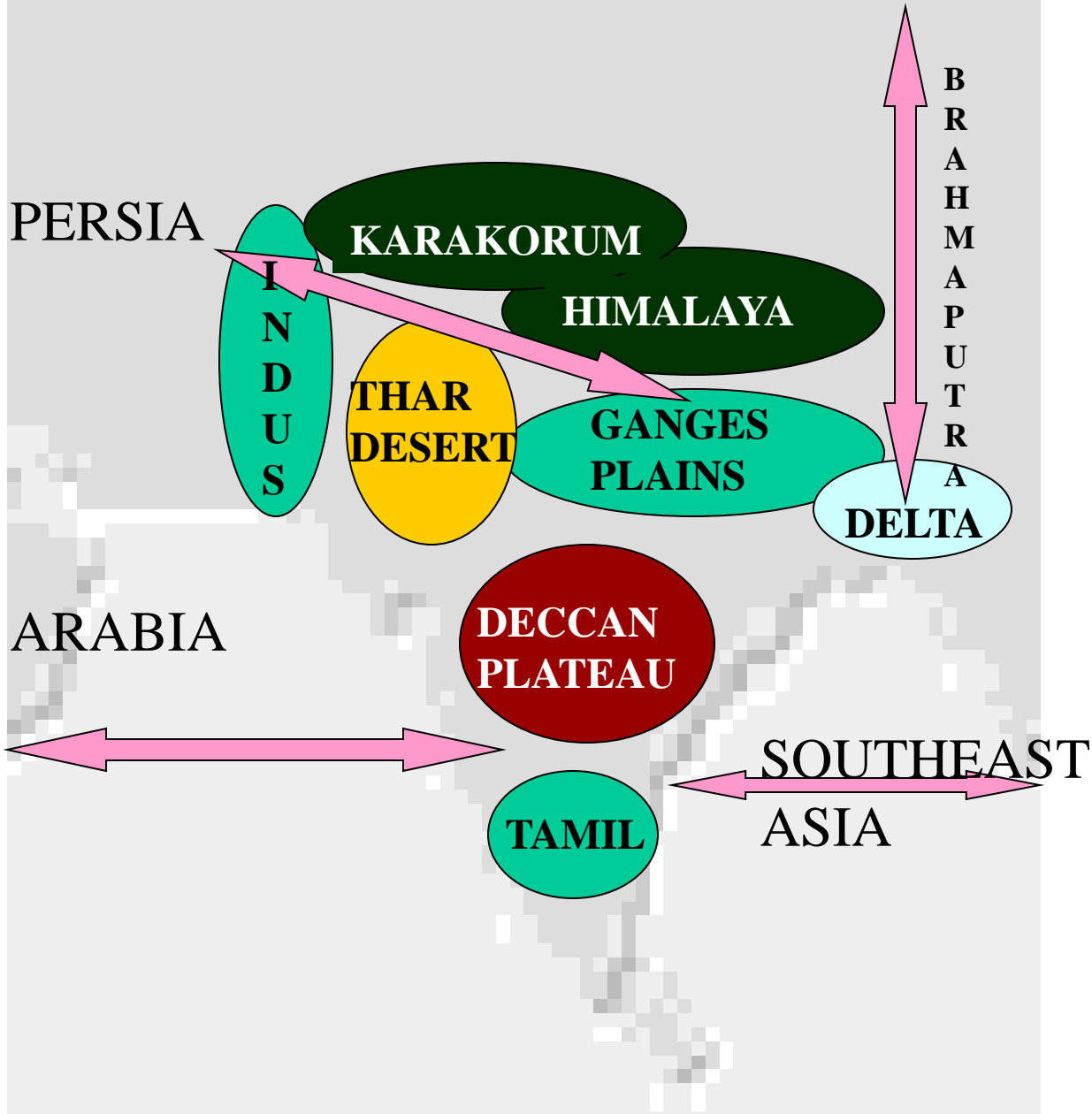
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ARABIA

DECCAN
PLATEAU

SOUTHEAST
ASIA

TAMIL



India

30000 BC: Earliest wall paintings

7000 BC: Earliest settled societies (Mehrgarh)

3000 BC: Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro in the Indus Valley of Punjab
(600 kms apart)

2000 BC: Indus Valley is the largest bronze-age civilization

1800 BC: the civilization of the Indus Valley declines

1500 BC: Indo-Aryan tribes speaking Sanskrit invade India and settle
in the Ganges valley

1100 BC: Aryans use iron

1000 BC: the Rig-Veda are composed in Vedic

900 BC: the Aryans are divided in four social classes

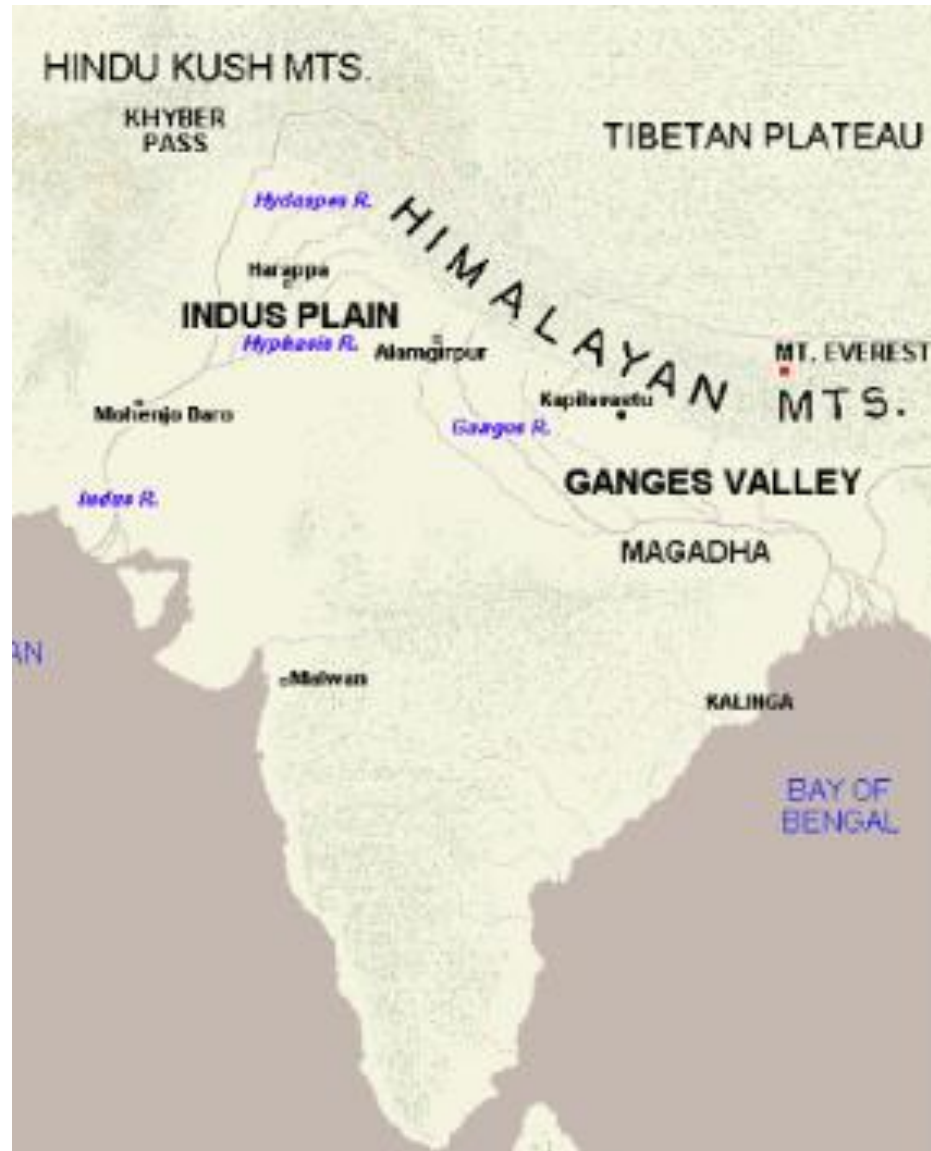
800 BC: end of Aryan migrations

India

Wall paintings of Bhimbetka (30,000 BC)

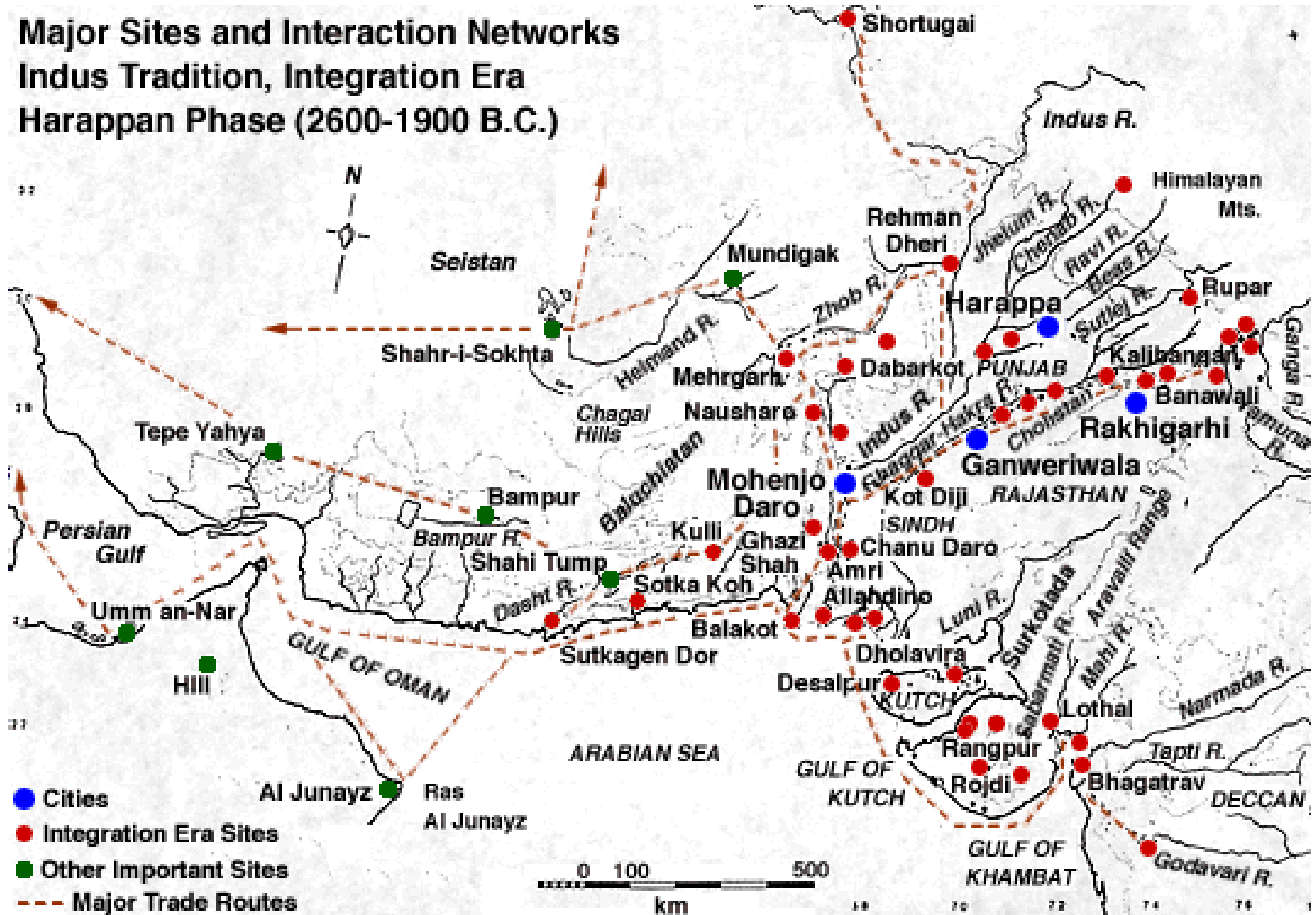


Indus Valley civilization



Indus Valley civilization

Major Sites and Interaction Networks
Indus Tradition, Integration Era
Harappan Phase (2600-1900 B.C.)



Mohenjo-Daro

- **Continuously occupied for 4,000 years**
- **50,000 people**
- **Possibly related to the Sumerians**
- **“Dasyu” (“slaves) of the Vedas?**

Mohenjo-Daro

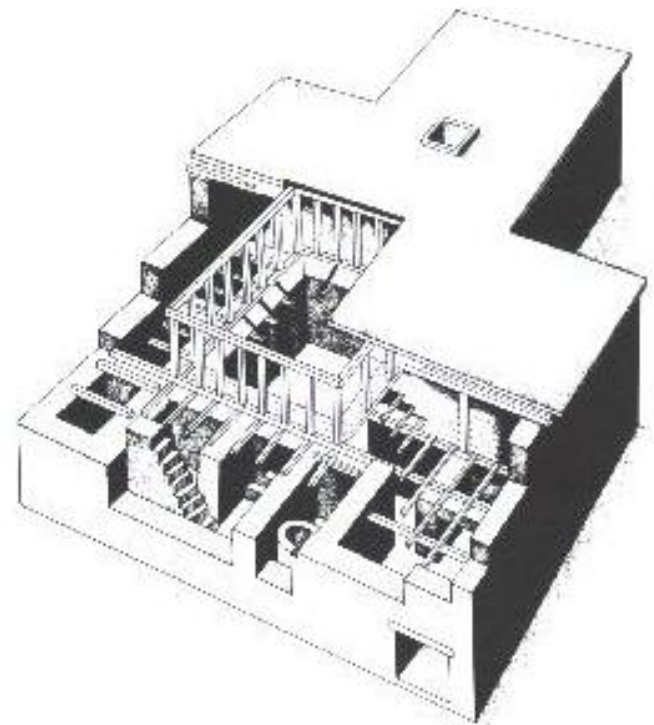
- Built on gigantic mud-brick platforms
- 200mx400m citadel on high mound (administration?religion?) + grid-like residential area
- No palace or temple
- Houses with bathrooms
- Sophisticated organization: drainage, irrigation, sewerage, fortification
- Gold, silver, copper, bronze
- Cremation
- Mother Goddess
- Writing appears in 2200 BC



(Penguin Encyclopedia)



(Metropolitan Museum)



Mohenjo-Daro

- **Steatite Bust, Mohenjo-daro (2600-1900 BC)**
- **Copper Statuette of a Dancer, Mohenjo-daro (3000-1500 B.C.)**

National Museum, New Delhi



Female figurines



Female figurines from
Kulli, Baluchistan

Mohenjo-Daro

- **Steatite seals**
 - Dravidian language?
 - No Horses!



Metropolitan Museum, New York



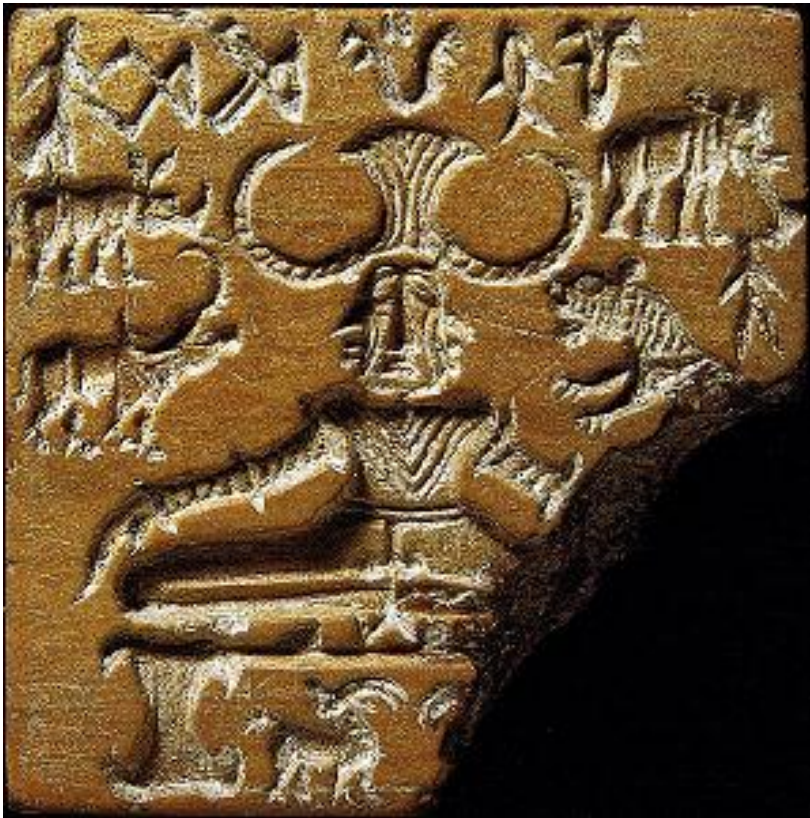
Mohenjo-Daro

- **Steatite seals**
 - **Oldest writing in the world?**



Mohenjo-Daro

- **Steatite seals**
 - **Shira? A meditating yogi?**



India

600 BC: the Upanishads are composed in Sanskrit

527 BC: Siddhartha Gautama is enlightened (the Buddha)

500 BC: the ascetic prince Mahavira founds Jainism

Magadha and Kosal dominate the eastern Ganges

380 BC: Nanda Empire



The 16 Mahajanapadas that rose to power @600BC.

Courses of the rivers are as of today.
Map not to scale

India

327 BC: Alexander of Macedonia invades the Indus valley

323 BC: at the death of Alexander, Seleucus obtains India

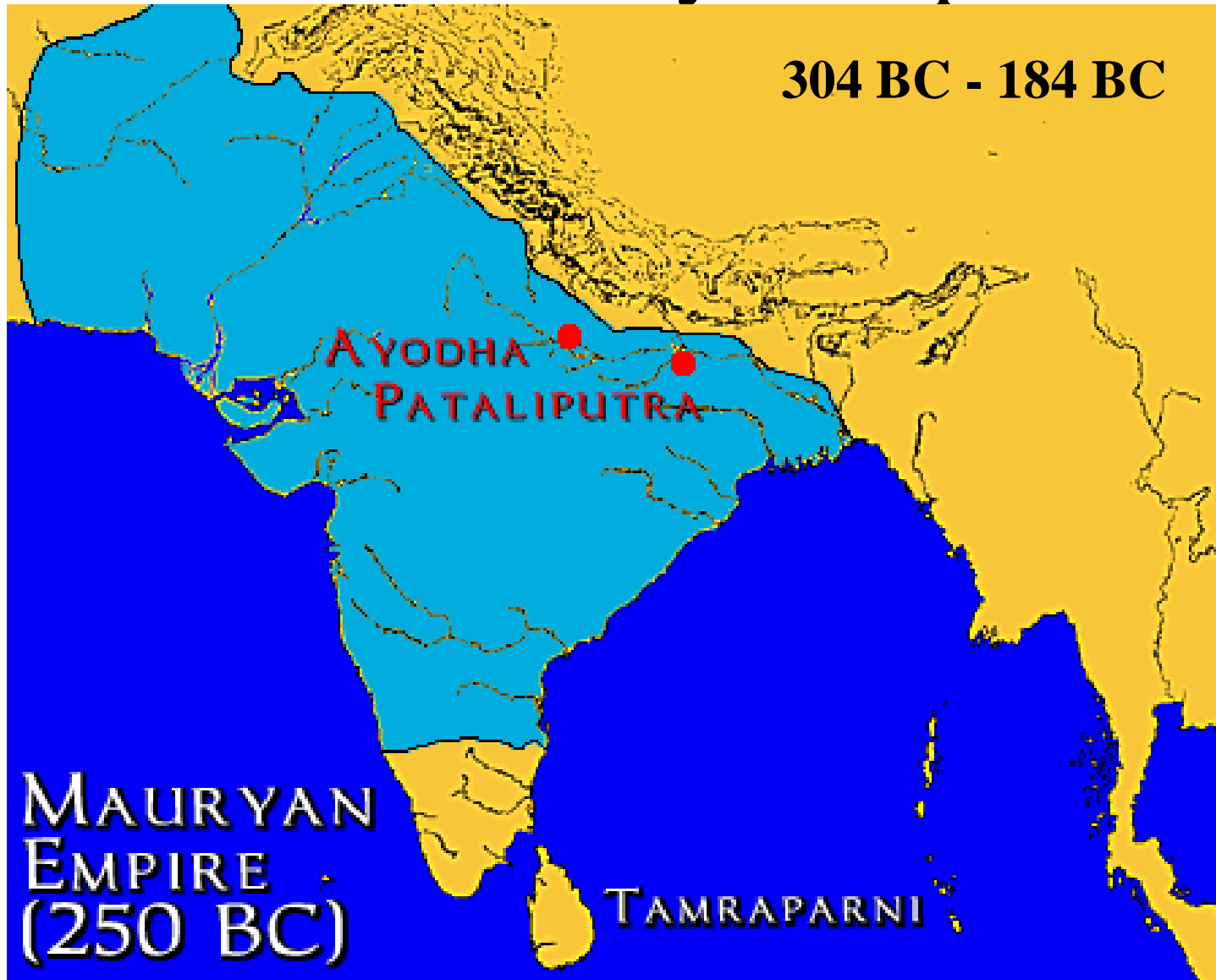
304 BC: Chandragupta Maurya buys the Indus valley for 500 elephants

300 BC: the Ramayama is composed

259 BC: the Mauryan king Ashoka, grandson of Chandragupta, converts to Buddhism and sends out Buddhist missionaries to nearby states

220 BC: the Maurya dynasty under Ashoka's son Bindusara expands to almost all of India

The Maurya Empire



India

200 BC: the “Mahabarata” is composed

150 BC: Patanjali publishes the "Yoga Sutras”

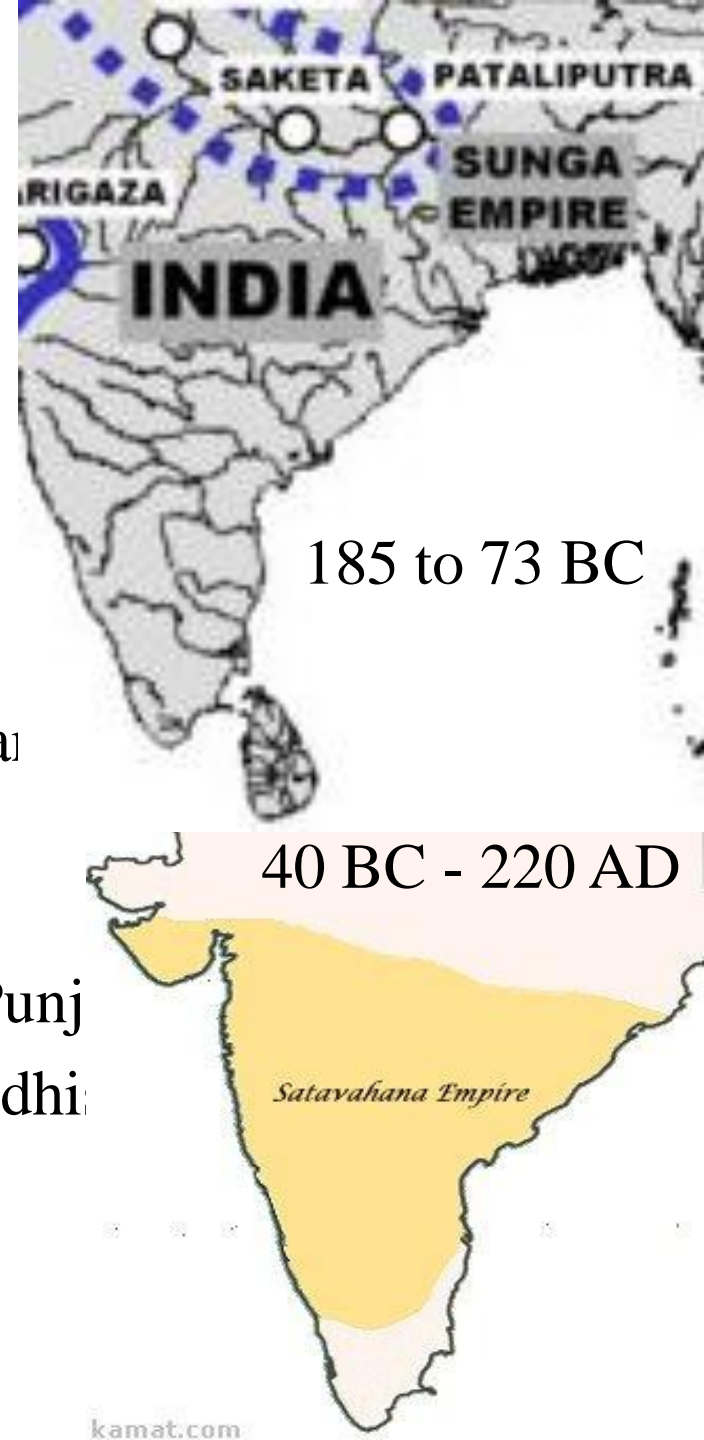
150 BC: the “Kama Sutra” is composed

100 BC: India is mainly divided into Bactria
(northwest), Andhras/Satavahanas (center) and
Shungas/Sungas (north-east)

100 BC: Buddhist sanctuary at Sanchi

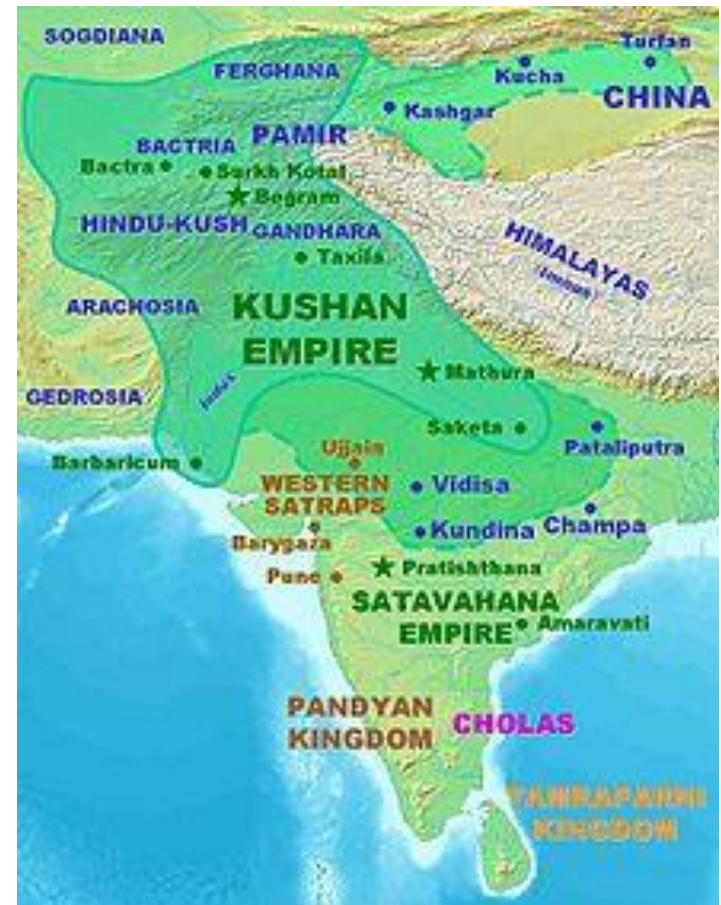
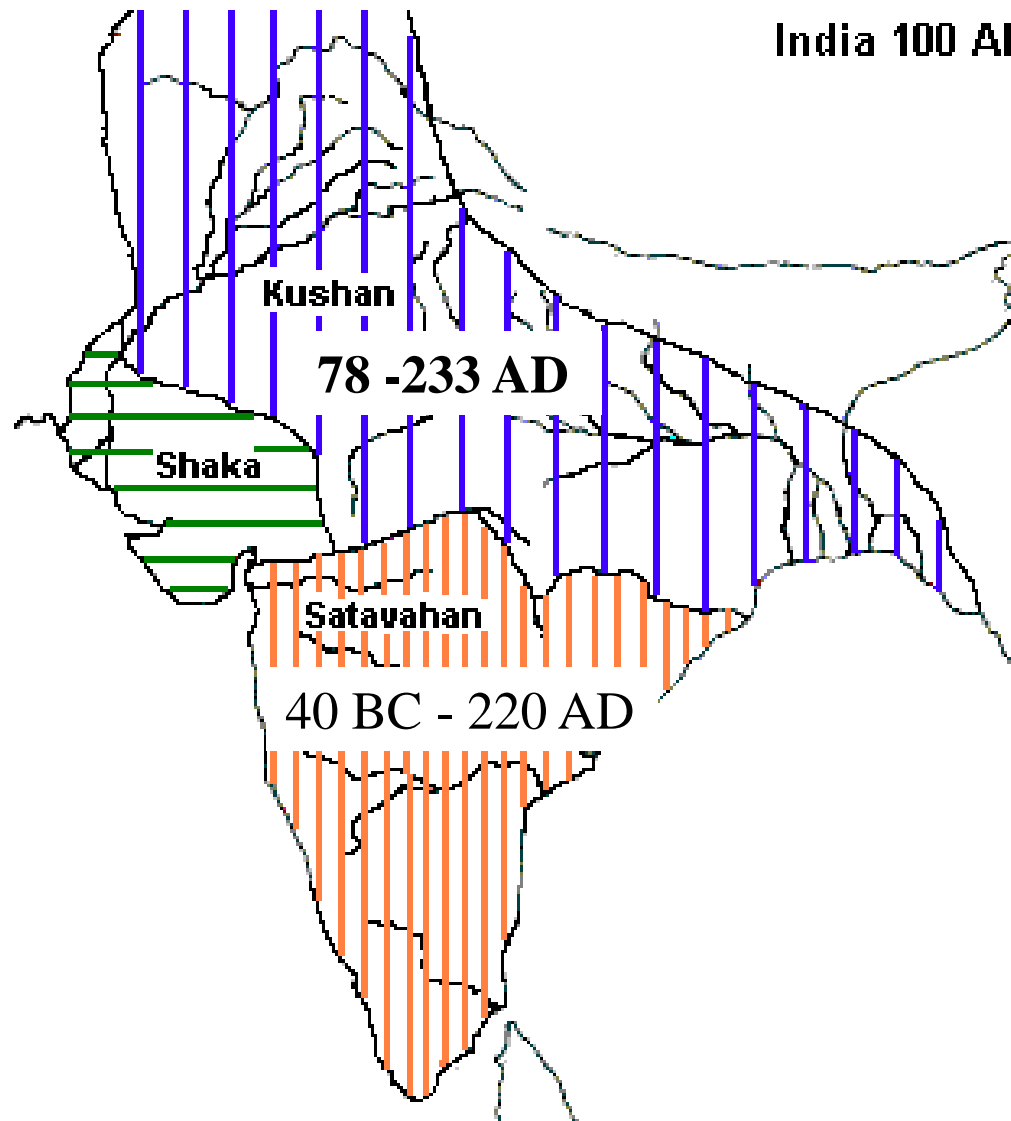
78 BC: the Kushan expand into Kashmir and Punjab

127 AD: Kushan king Kanishka promotes Buddhism



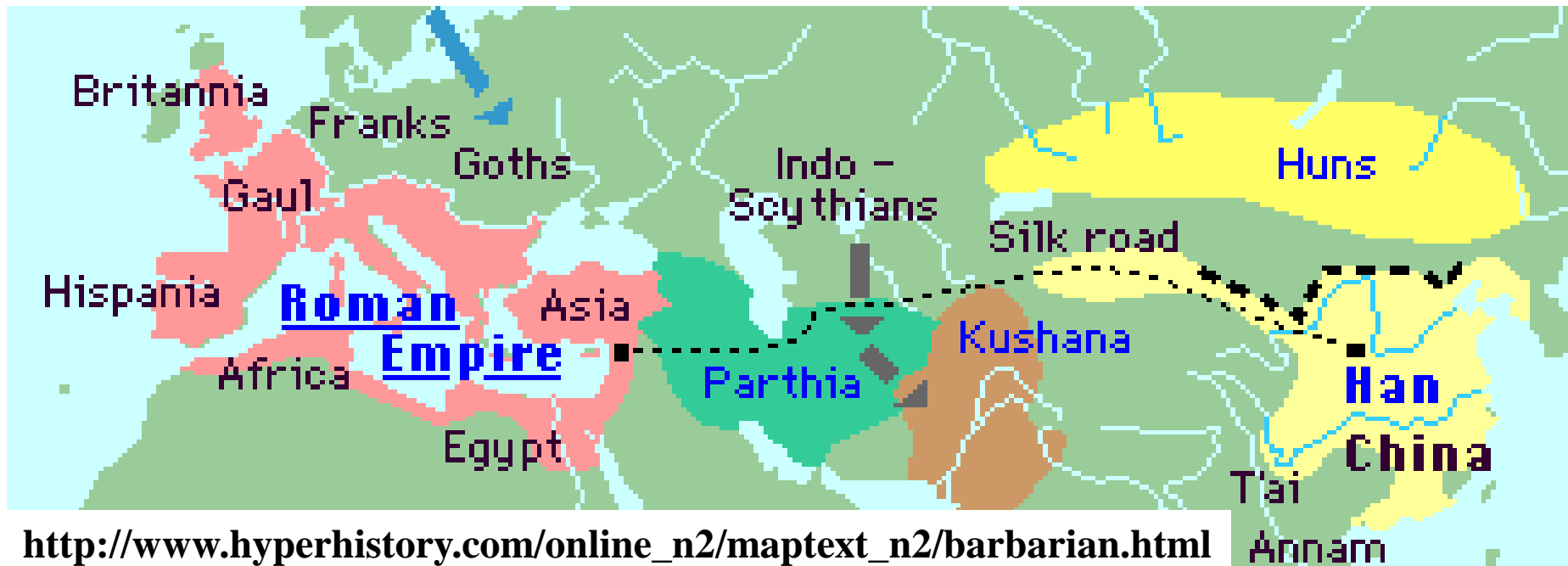
India 100 AD

India 100 AD



India

- 0-300 AD four empires in Eurasia:
 - Han (Buddhist and Taoist)
 - Roman (Christian)
 - Parthian (Zoroastrian)
 - Kushan (Buddhist)



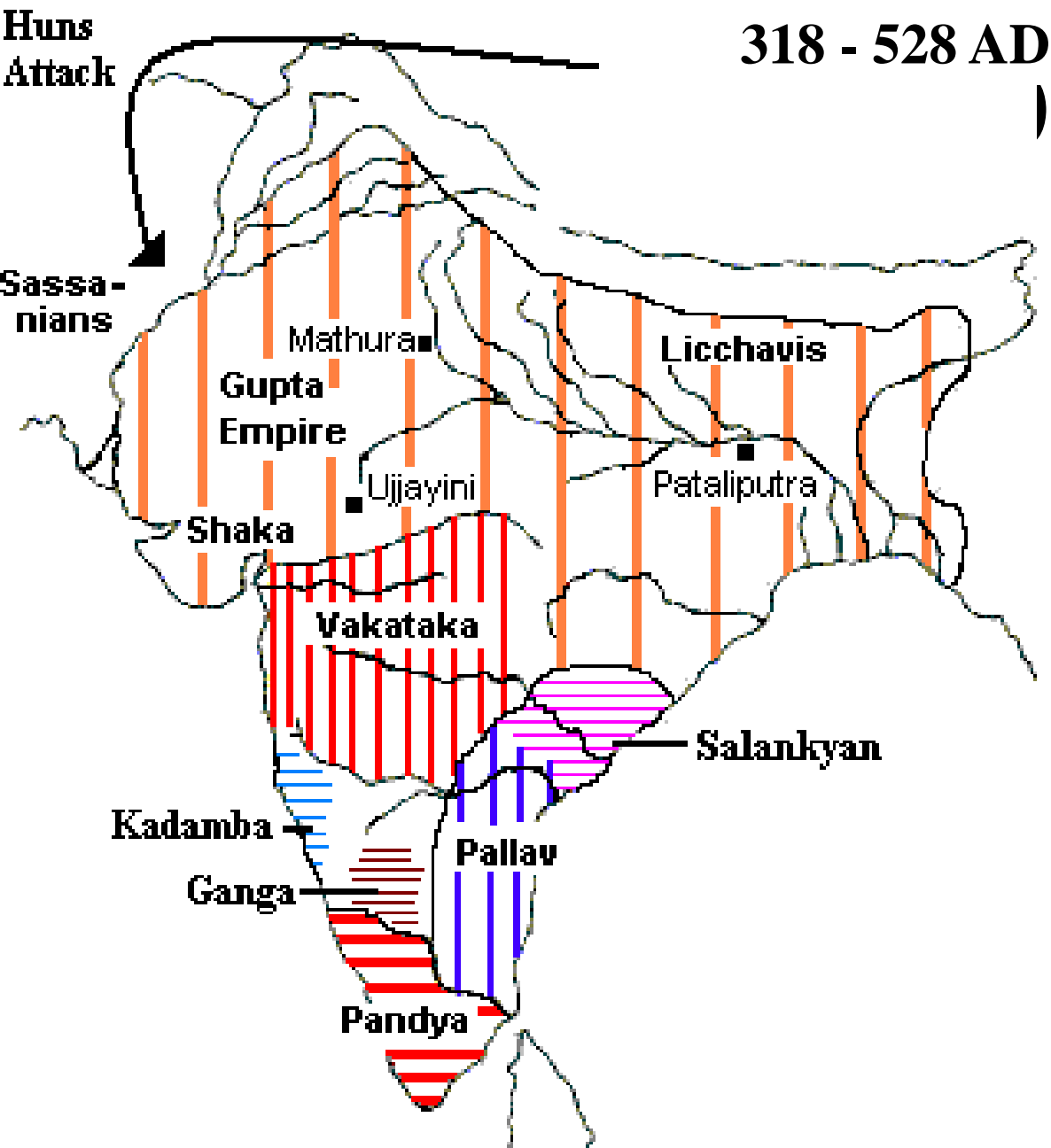
India

- The spice road



India

- 170: Sumati Bhargava's "Manu code" prescribes the rules of everyday life and divides people into four castes (Brahmins, warriors, farmers/traders, non-Aryans)
- 233: The Sassanid (Persia) conquer the Kushan empire
- 318: Chandra Gupta founds the Gupta kingdom in Magadha and extends its domains throughout northern India with capital at Patna



India

- **350: the Puranas are composed (a compendium of Hindu mythology)**
- **380: Buddhist monks carve two giant Buddha statues in the rock at Bamiya, Bactria (Afghanistan)**
- **465: the Ajanta caves**

India

- **499: the Hindu mathematician Aryabhata writes the "Aryabhatiya", the first book on Algebra**
- **510: Huns led by Mihiragula conquer Punjab, Gujarat and Malwa from the Gupta**
- **528: the Gupta empire collapses under continuous barbaric invasions**
- **600: shakti cult (mother-goddess)**
- **650: Ellora caves**

India

- **304 BC - 184 BC: Maurya**
- **184 BC - 78 BC: Sunga (Bengal to Central India)**
- **78 AD -233: Kushan**
- **318 - 528: Gupta**
- **550 - 1190 : Chalukya**
- **1192-1526: Delhi sultanate**
- **1526-1707: Moghul**
- **1707-1802: Maratha**

India

- **India was the Greek name of the region of the Indus river and Punjab. "India" means "land of the Indus river" (the Greeks misspelled Sindhu, the native name of that river and called it Indos).**
- **The Romans turned Indos into Indus and called "India" the entire continent (out of geographical ignorance).**
- **Today we call "India" only the country of India, not Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka. Ironically, today "India" does not include the Indus river anymore.**
- **In the Veda there is no name for the whole of India. Bharata refers only to the north of India (presumably, the Aryan part of India).**

Indo-European Languages

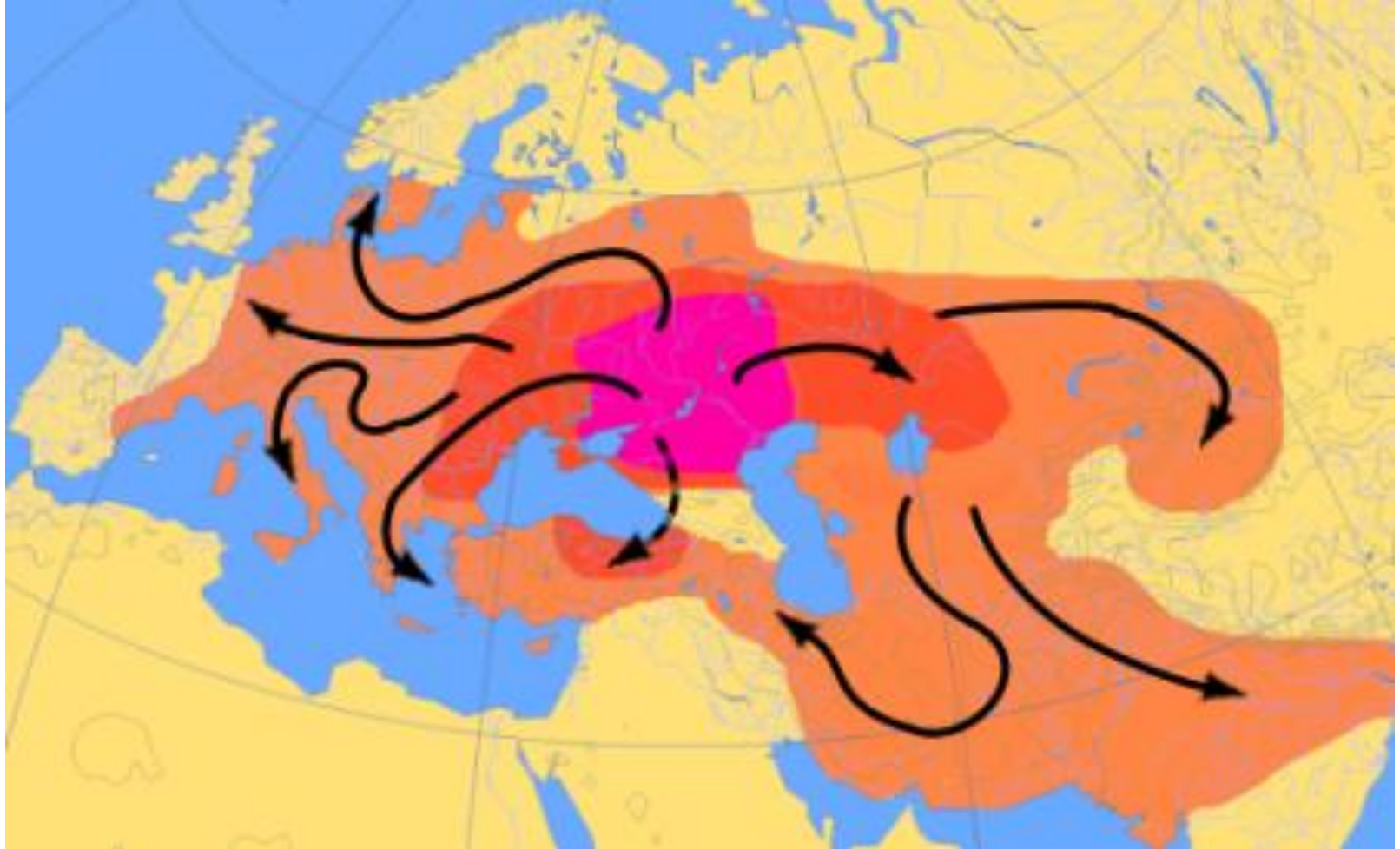
- **Climate and landscape**
 - **Himalayas in the north**
 - **Deserts and steppes in the west**
 - **Rain forest in the east**
 - **Indus, Ganges and Brahmaputra valleys and river deltas**
 - **Arab Sea and Gulf of Bengal**
 - **Main migration route: from the eastern steppes towards the southern seas**

Indo-European Languages

- **Indo-European or “Aryan” languages: Indo-Iranian, Italic, Slavic, Germanic, Greek, Baltic, Celtic, Albanian, Armenian**
 - **5000 BC: the Kurgan (“tumuli”) culture in the steppes west of the Ural Mountains (Indo-Europeans)**
 - **3000 BC: Dravidian speaking people develop the civilization of the Indus Valley**
 - **3000 BC: the proto-indo-european language develops in Central Asia**
 - **2000 BC: the Kurgan culture spreads to eastern Europe and northern Iran**

Indo-European Languages

- **Indo-European migrations**



Indo-European Languages

- **1700 BC: Indo-Europeans migrate eastward, away from the other Indo-European peoples, and settle in Iran**
- **1600 BC: Indo-Europeans invade India from the west and expel the Dravidians**
- **1500 BC: Religious texts are written in Vedic, an Indo-European language**
- **400 BC: Panini's grammar formalizes Sanskrit, an evolution of Vedic**

Indo-European Languages

- **Indo-European warfare**
 - **Domestication of the horse**
 - **2,500 BC: Horse first domesticated in the Eurasian Steppes**
 - **2,000 BC: horses buried with chariots**
 - **1,000 BC: domestication spread through Europe, Asia and North Africa**
 - **Horse-driven chariot**
 - **Leather armor**
 - **Bronze swords**
 - **Tripartite society: priests, warriors, farmers**

Indo-European Languages

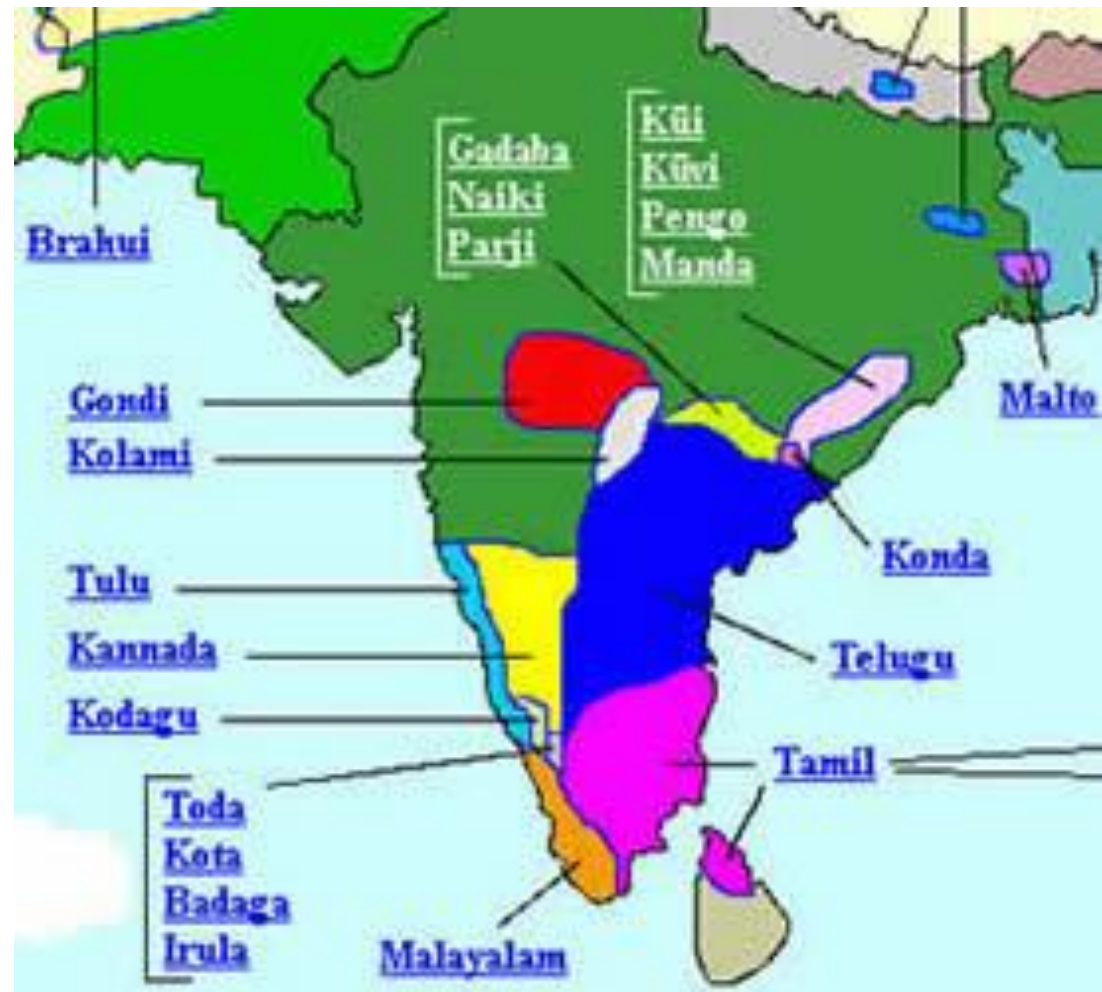
- **The Indo-European migrations**
 - **2200 BC: Mycenae (Greece)**
 - **2100 BC: the Hurrians in northern Mesopotamia**
 - **1720 BC: the Hittites in Turkey**
 - **1700 BC: Indo-Iranians**
 - **1600 BC: Indo-Europeans in the Indus valley**
 - **1480 BC: the Mitannis in Mesopotamia**

Indo-European Languages

- **The Indo-European in India**
 - **Fragmented into small kingdoms along the Ganges**
 - **Domestication: sheep, goat, cow, dog**
 - **Horses only for the aristocracy**
 - **Main sport: chariot-racing**
 - **Main entertainment: music (India's most ancient art)**
 - **Iron unknown till 1100 BC**
 - **Castes (varna)**
 - **Worship of the Devas ("celestial beings", mostly representing natural phenomena)**
 - **Dyaus chief deity, who lives in the sky**
 - **Greatest glory: death in battle (cfr Homer)**

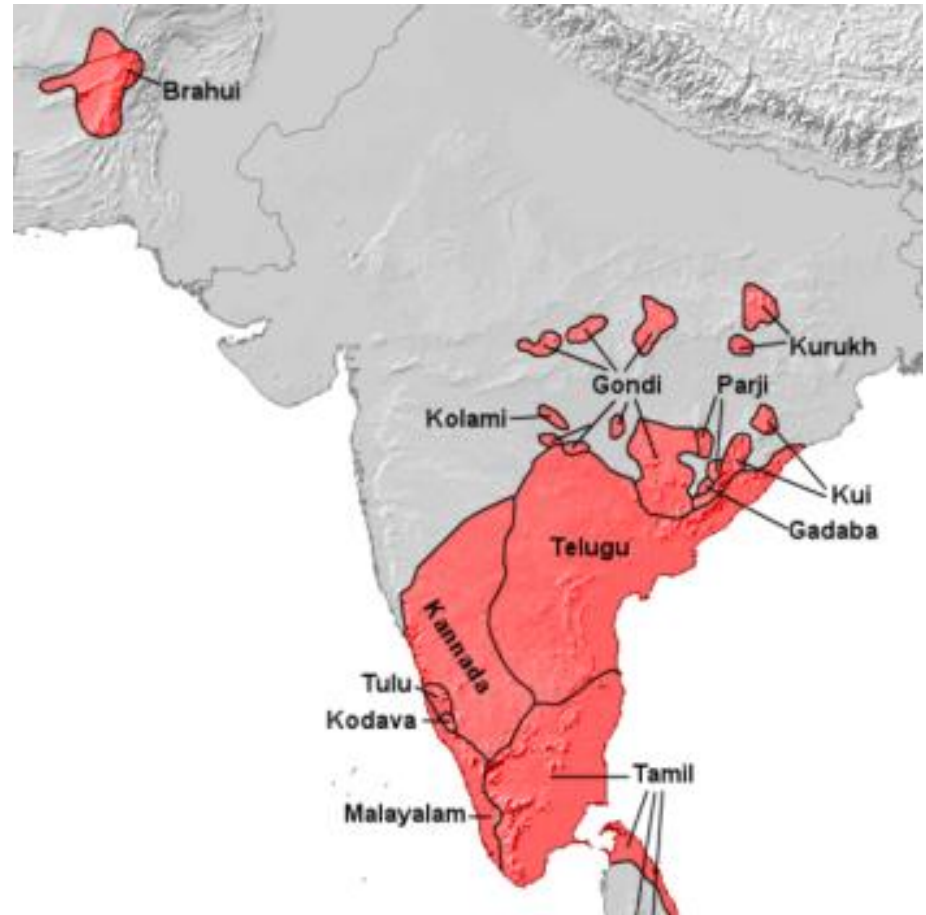
Indo-European Languages

- Today:
 - India has 112 mother tongues with at least 10,000 speakers



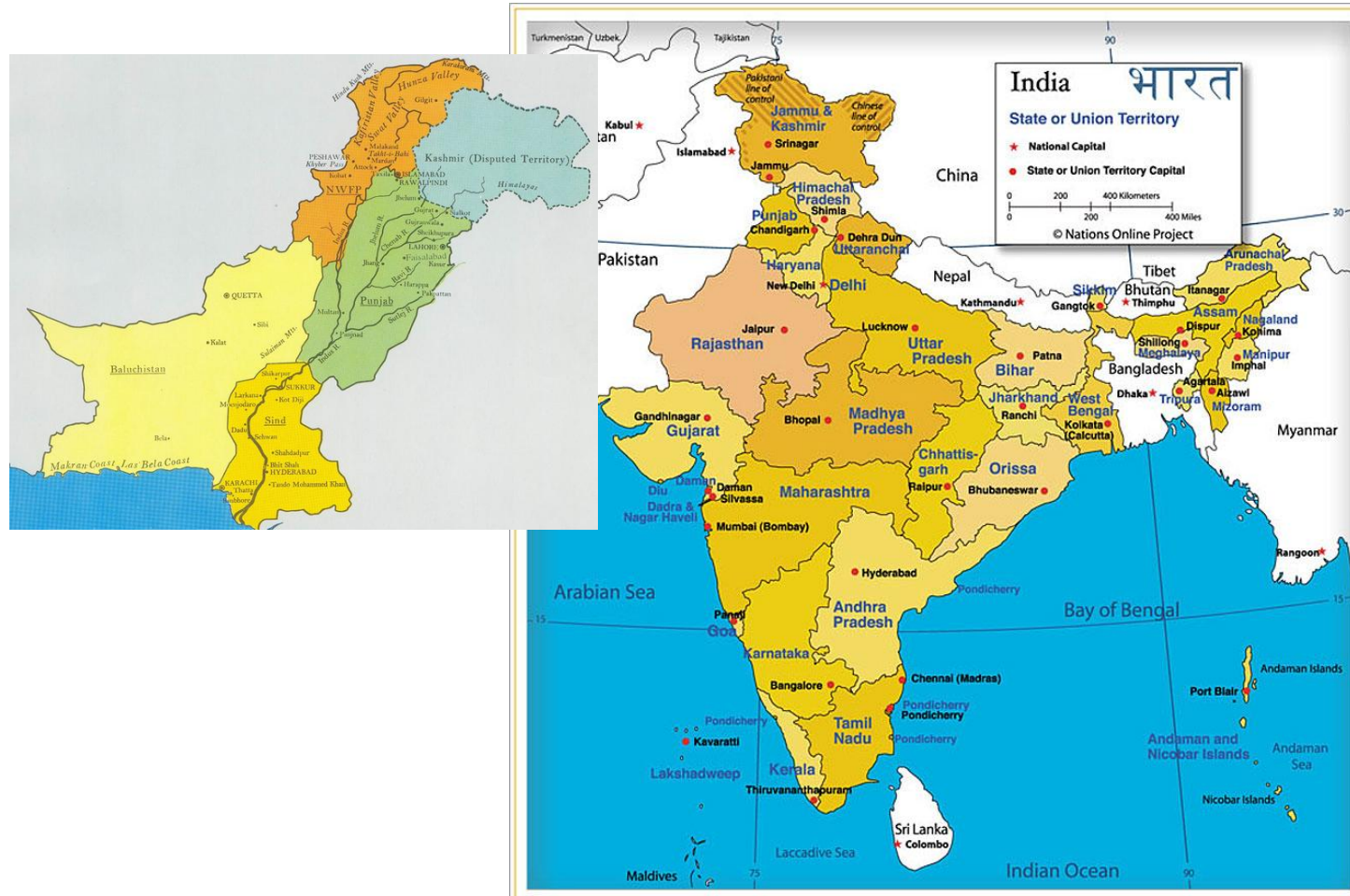
Indo-European Languages

- Today:
 - 23 Dravidian are spoken by 180 million people, mainly in the south (Tamil in Tamil Nadu, Telugu in Andhra Pradesh, Kannada in Mysore, Malayalam in Kerala)



Indo-European Languages

- Today:
 - More diverse than Europe



What the Indians knew

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- **Continues on Part II**