

Islamic India

Part 2 of Medieval India

Piero Scaruffi

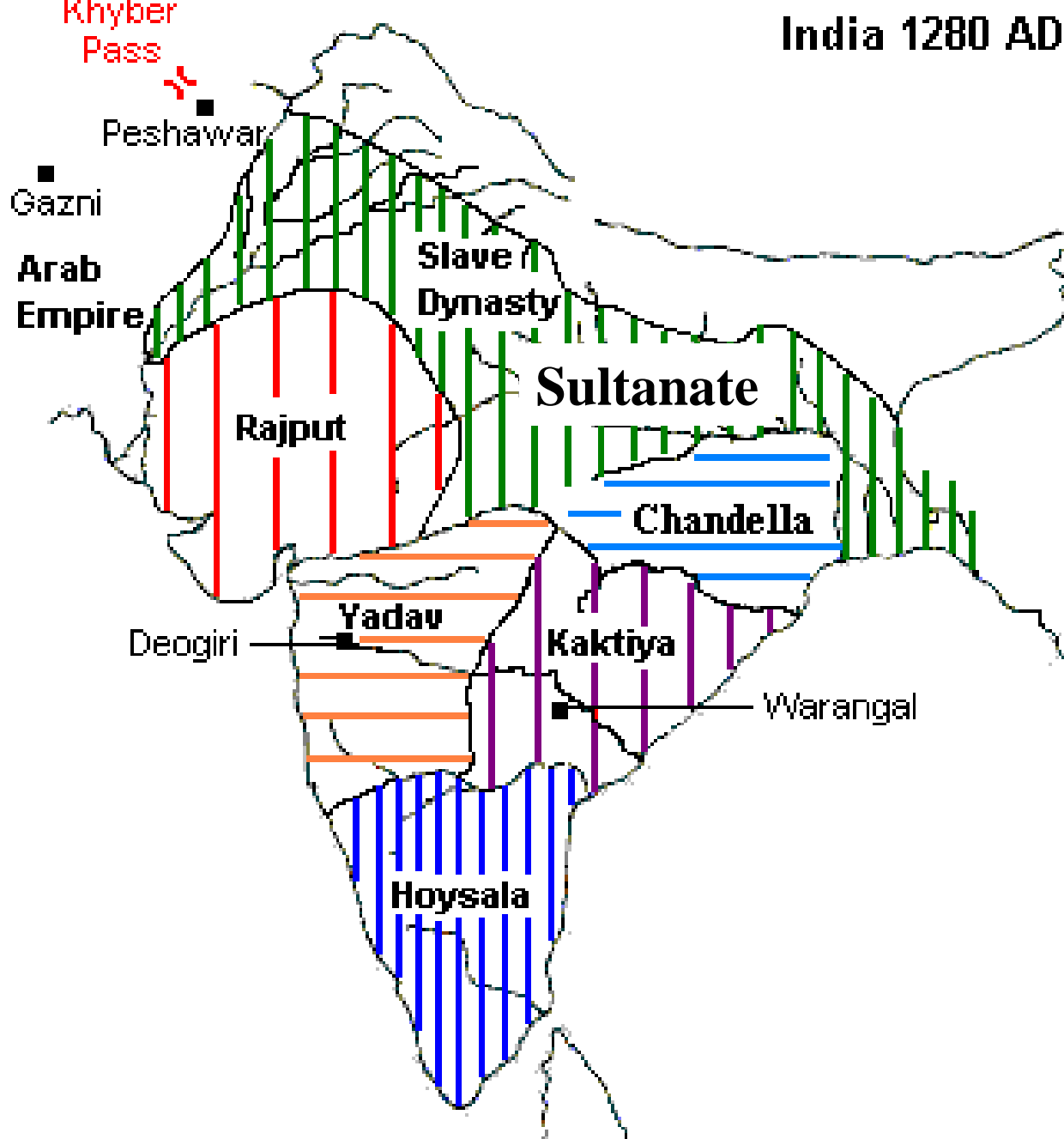
Copyright 2018

<http://www.scaruffi.com/know>

Konark, Orissa (1240 AD)



India 1280 AD



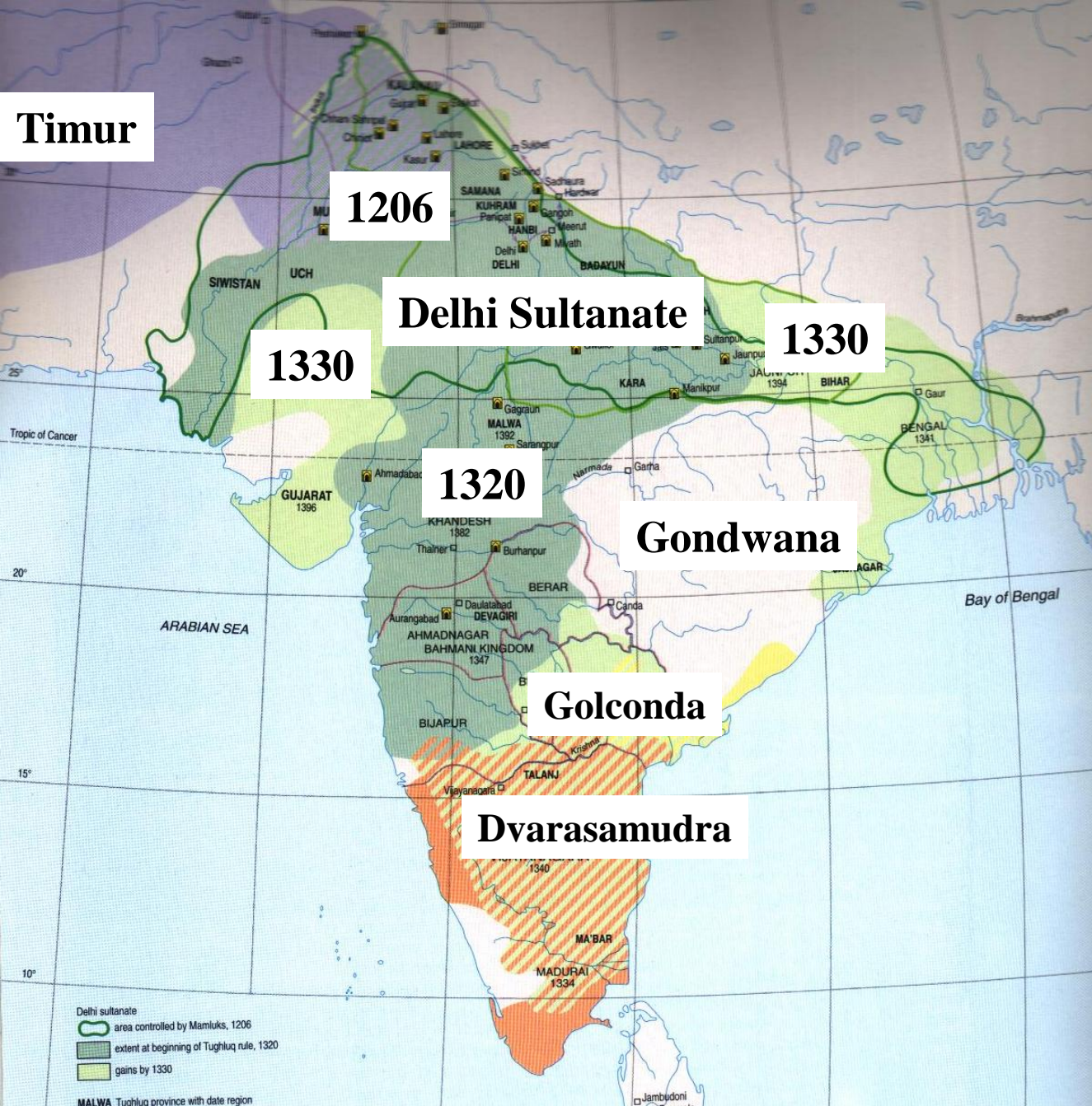
What the Indians knew

- Sanskrit poetry (11th - 13th c):
 - Somadeva (Sanskrit, 1035): "Katha Sarit Sagara/ The Ocean of Streams of Story" (1081)
 - Jayadeva Goswami (Sanskrit, 11##): "Gita Govinda" (11##)
 - Jnaneshwar/ Jnanadev (Marathi, 12##): "Bhavartha Dipika" (129#)

What the Indians knew

- **Islamic India (1200-1800)**

Delhi Sultanate, 1200-1400

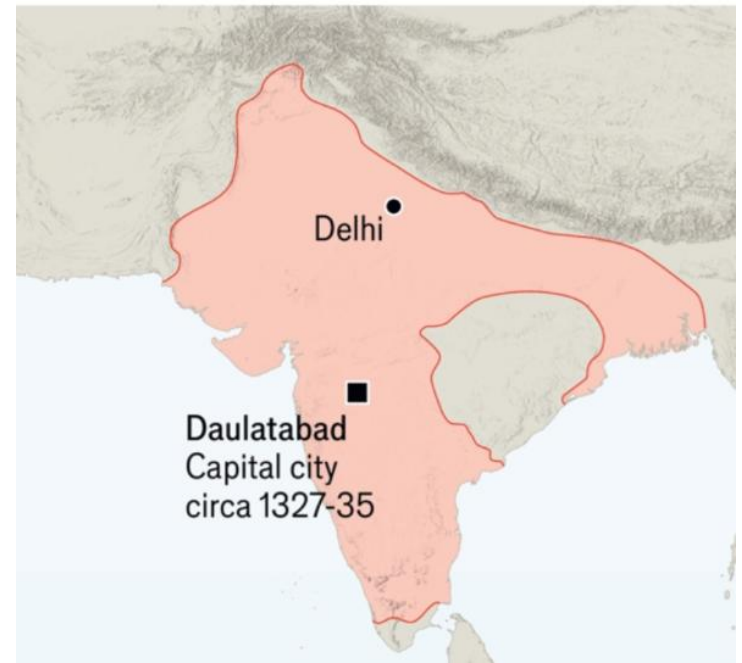


India

- Muslim invasions:
 - 1192-1526: Delhi sultanate
 - Muhammad bin Tughluq (1325-51) conquers almost all of India
 - 1526-1707: Moghul



Circa 1335
Maximum extent of Tughlaq dynasty

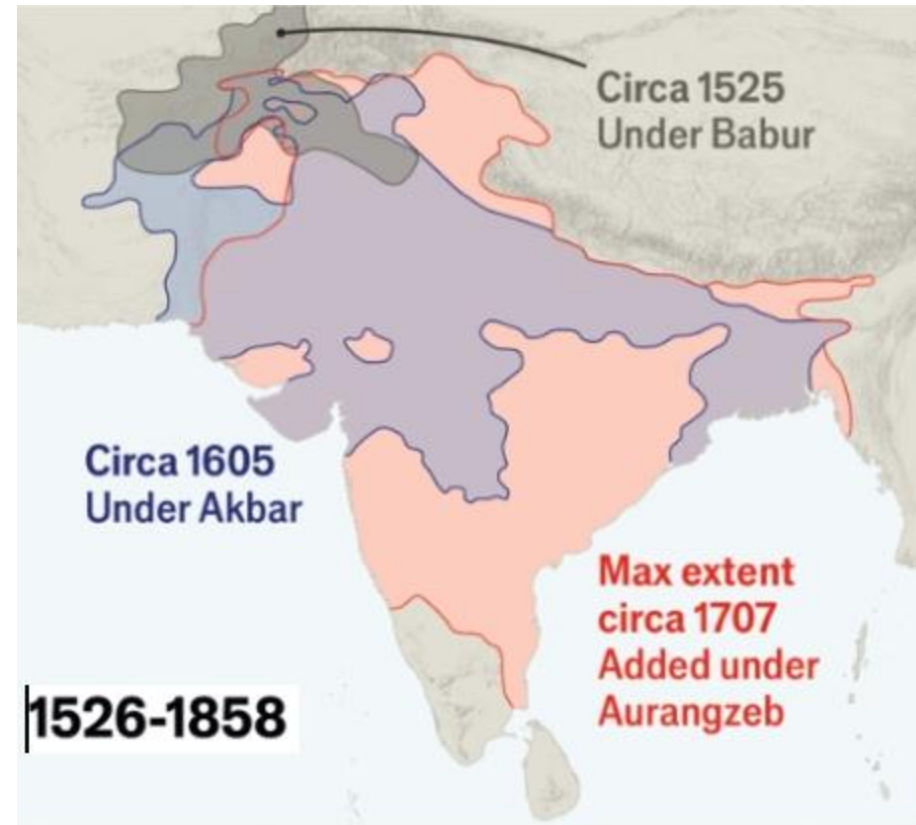


India

- 1526: the Mogul empire (Babur) destroys the Dehli Sultanate and unifies northern and parts of southern India
- 1550: Jain complex at Palitana
- 1627: Shivaji (Sivaji) founds the Maratha kingdom
- 1631: Sultan Shah Jahan builds the Taj Mahal
- 1639: Britain acquires Madras
- 1665: Britian acquires Bombay from Portugal
- 1688: the Moguls complete the conquest of India
- 1690: Britain acquires Calcutta
- 1707: Sultan Aurangjeb dies, destabilizing the Mogul Empire

India

- Mogul Empire



Sources: "The Times atlas of world history", R. Overy;

What the Indians knew

- Palaces and temples of Vijayanagar (1336-1649)
- Madurai temple (16th c - 19th c)

Kanchipuram: Devarajaswami



Shrirangam:
Ranganatha (13th-
17th c)

Kanchipuram:
Ekambareshvara
(1506)

Madurai: Thirumalai Naick palace (1636)

What the Indians knew

- Vallabhacharya (b 1479)
 - Cult of Krishnabhakti

What the Indians knew

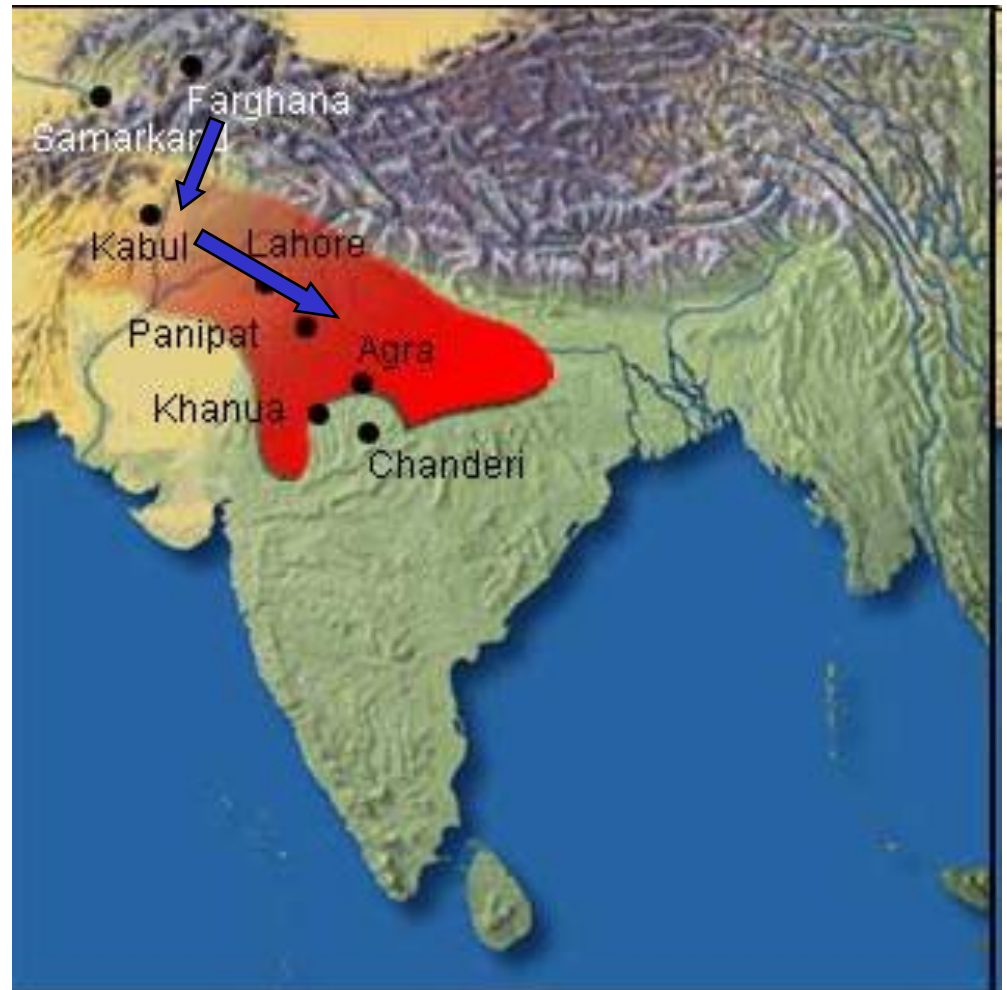
- Guru Nanak (1499)
 - "Rehat Maryada": the Sikh code of conduct
 - Equality of humankind, universal brotherhood
 - One supreme god (Ik Onkar)
 - Nine more gurus after Nanak
 - 5 Ks: Kesh, hair; Kara, steel bangle; Kirpan, small sword; Kashera, underpants; Kanga, comb under turban
 - Mostly in Punjab

What the Indians knew

- Mughal/Mogul
 - 1500: Most of India is ruled by Muslims (whether foreign or native)
 - 1500: All regions of India linked in a global economy
 - 1500: Almost no adoption of firearms
 - 1498: Europeans (Portugal)
 - 1504: Babur (a Timurid from Uzbekistan) conquers Kabul
 - 1526: Babur captures Delhi using cannons
 - Note: Both Safavids and Mughals were founded by teenagers (Ismail and Babur)

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **Babur**



What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **An Islamic Persian-speaking state in a Hindu country**
 - **Melting pot of races, languages and religions**
 - **Turkish, Afghan, Persian, Uzbek commanders**
 - **Islam turns east Bengal into a sedentary agricultural society**

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **India and the Balkans are the only regions of Islam in which Muslims remain a minority**
 - **Most converts are from the lower castes**
 - **Sufi-like approach to Islam (truth can be found in every religion) that appeals to Hindus too**
 - **Hierarchy of Sufi masters from the Qutb down to ordinary shrine caretakers**
 - **Sufis speak Hindi and turn it in to Urdu**
 - **Hindus venerate Muslim saints, and Muslims celebrate Hindu festivals and worship at Hindu shrines**

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **Chisti order of Sufism: purely spiritual with no ties to politics, al-Arabi philosophy, acceptance of Hindu spirituality, Sufis adopt Hindu devotional practices like yoga**
 - **Akbar considers himself the master of a new Sufi order that protects both Muslims and Hindus**
 - **The ulama are simply state bureaucrats**
 - **Kashmir and Golkonda are Shiite**
 - **The Brahmin religious elite retains local power**
 - **The caste system survives under Muslim rule**

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **Booming economy**
 - **Exporting cotton and spices to East Africa, Middle East and Southeast Asia**
 - **Importing horses from Central Asia, slaves from Africa, and precious metals**
 - **Agriculture of the Indo-Gangetic plain**
 - **Karkhanas (royal factories)**

Afghan/Indian architecture

Herat, Afghanistan
(1300)



Tumb of Hamayun, Delhi, 1564



Hyderabad (1589)

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Akbar (1556)**
 - Marriage with daughters of Rajputs of Rajasthan (Hindu warlords) to cement alliances (first Hindu nobles of the Mogul empire)
 - A modern centralized gunpowder empire
 - Persian administrative tradition
 - Mongol organizational tradition



What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Akbar**
 - **Each province has political (governor), financial (diwan), military (bakhshi) and religious/judiciary (sadr) heads reporting to the imperial court**
 - **Aristocracy of warriors (amirs) whose courts/armies rely on kinsmen to run sophisticated cavalry, infantry and artillery and whose salaries**
 - **Amirs are paid with taxes from lands (jagirs) that they do NOT administer (fiscal revenue without land ownership)**
 - **Amirs are Persians, Rajputs, Afghans, Arabs, Uzbeks, Indians (mostly Sunnis but also Shiites and Hindus)**

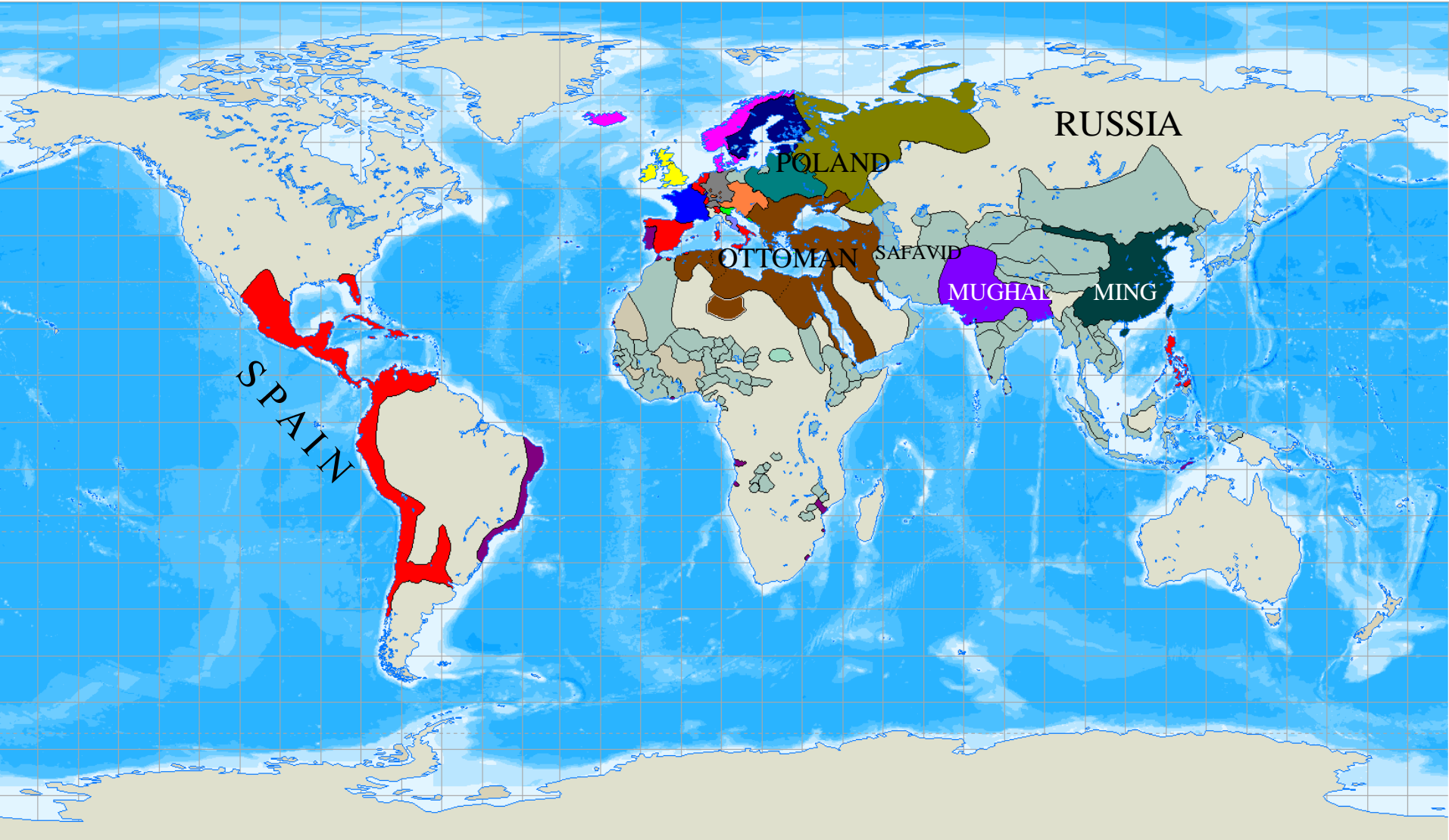
What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Akbar**
 - **Decentralized fiscal system**
 - **Wazir (imperial finance minister) employs a cadre of Hindu experts**
 - **Zabt system of agrarian reform in North Indian plains to improve rural to urban transfer of produce**

What the Indians knew

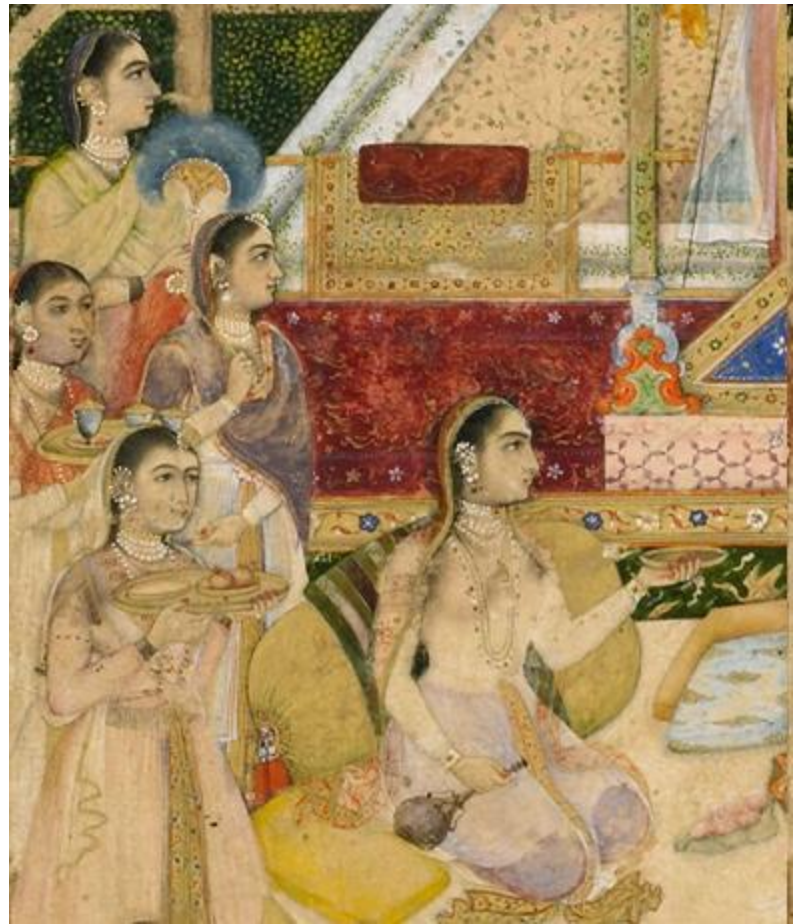
- **Mughal/Mogul: Akbar**
 - **Sufi piety and tolerance for Hindus**
 - **Poetry (Faizi wrote in Persian), painting (political statements), calligraphy, architecture**

The World in 1600



What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **Queen Nur Jahan, chief wife of emperor Jahangir from 1611**

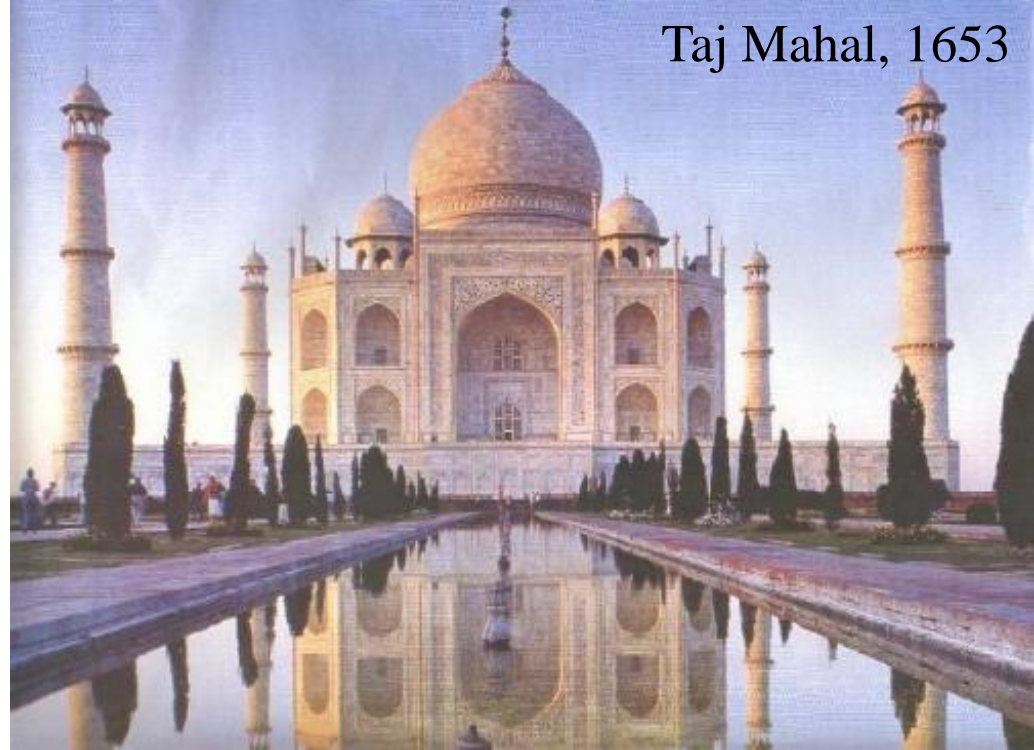


What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Shah Jahan (1617)**
 - **Shahjahanabad (new capital) and Taj Mahal**
 - **Rising power of Muslim scholars**
 - **Nobility: 126 Persians, 103 Turanis (Central Asia), 26 Afghans, 65 Indian Muslims, 73 Hindu Rajputs, 10 Hindu Marathas**



Taj Mahal, 1653

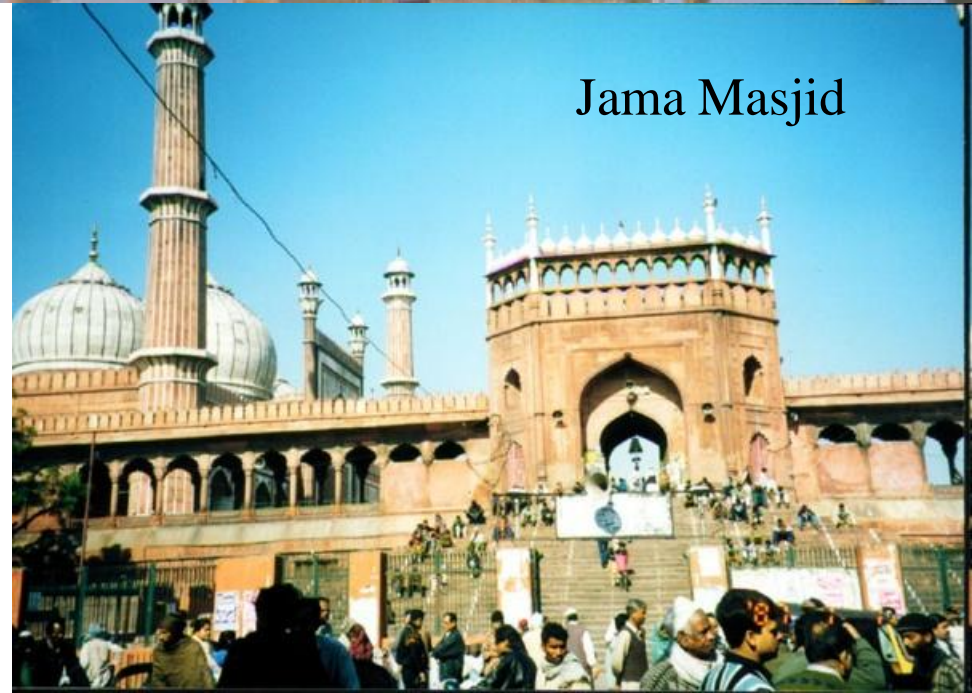


- **Mughal/Mogul: Shah Jahan**
 - **Shahjahanabad (new capital)**
 - **Taj Mahal**

Red Fort



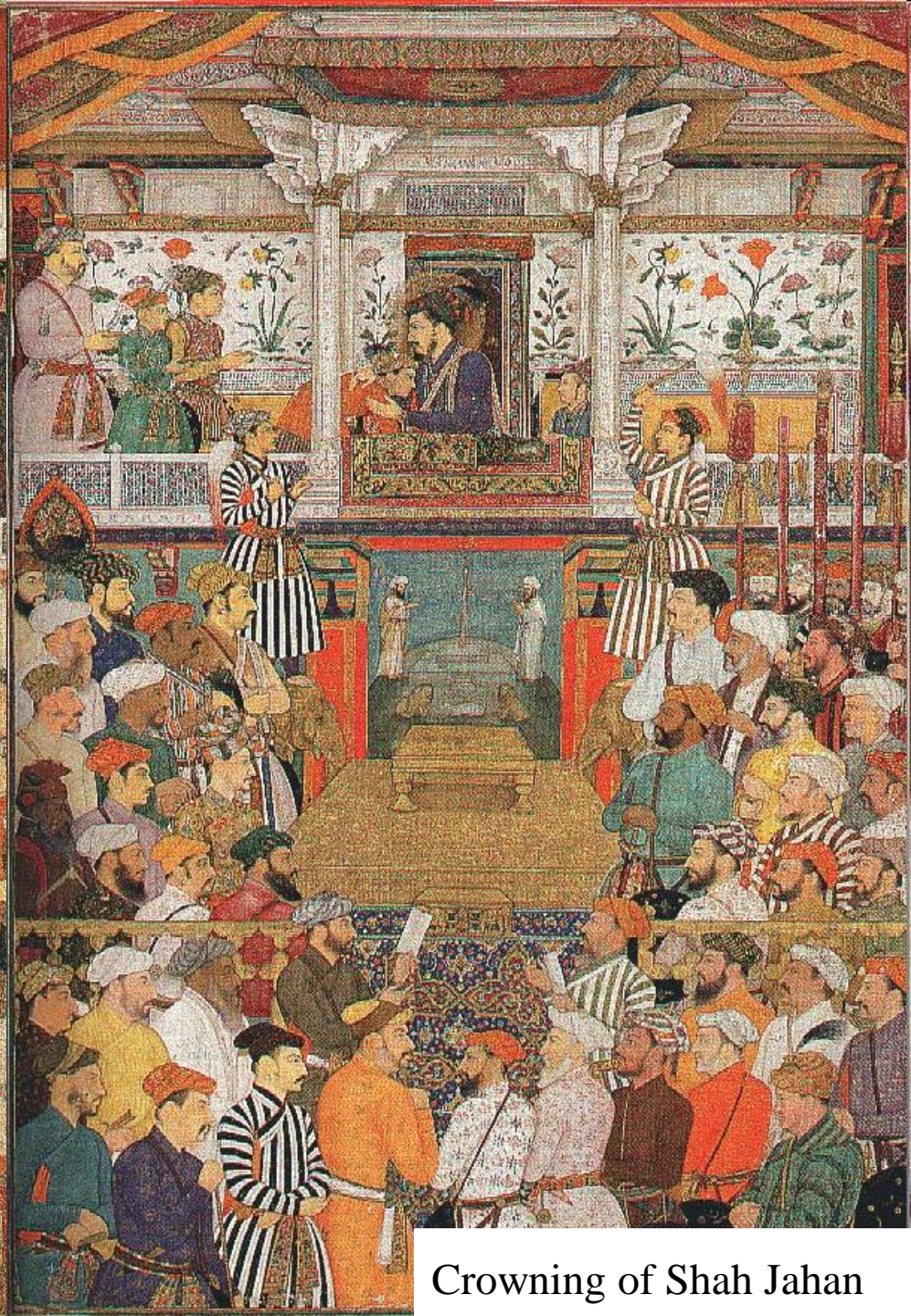
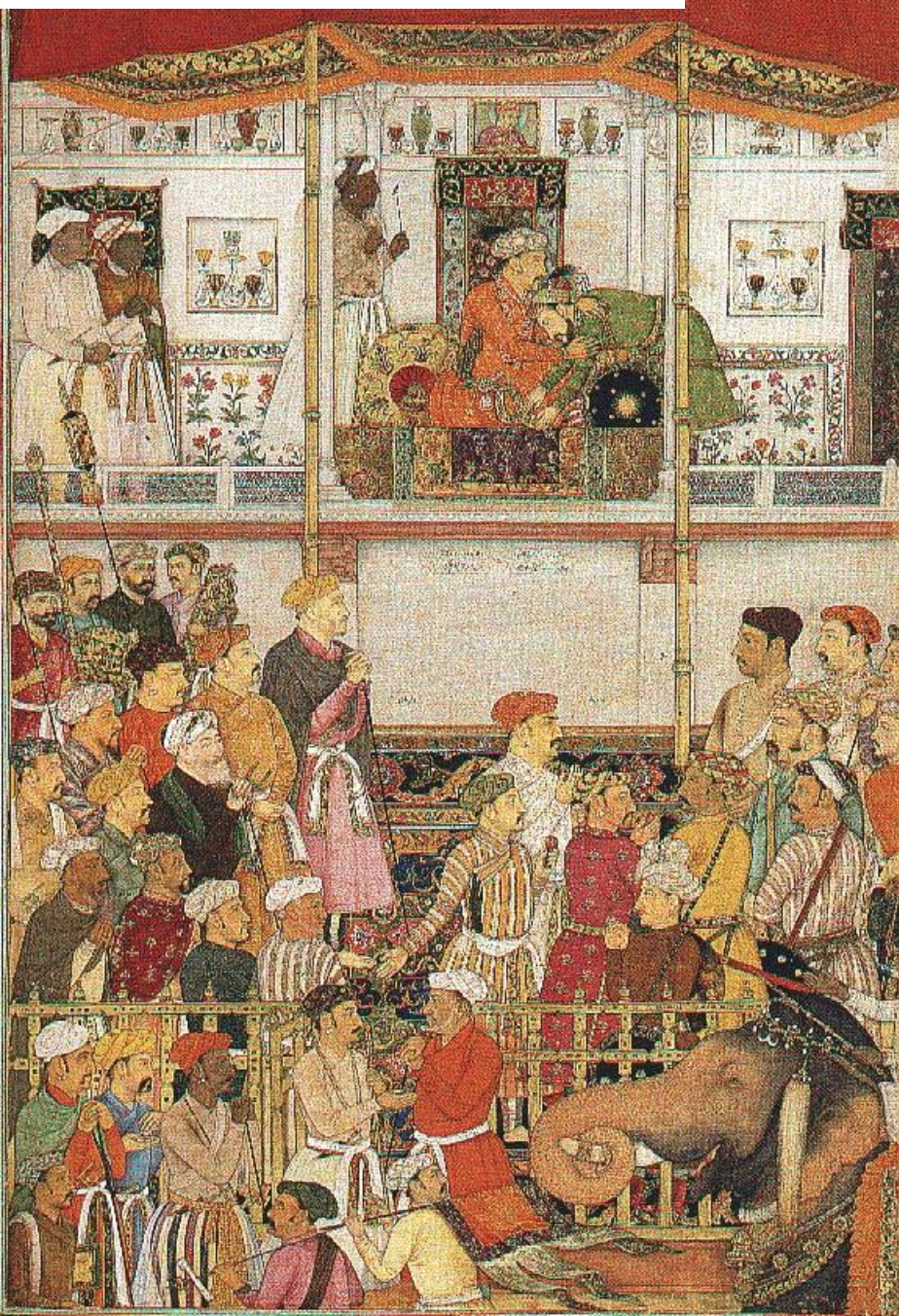
Jama Masjid



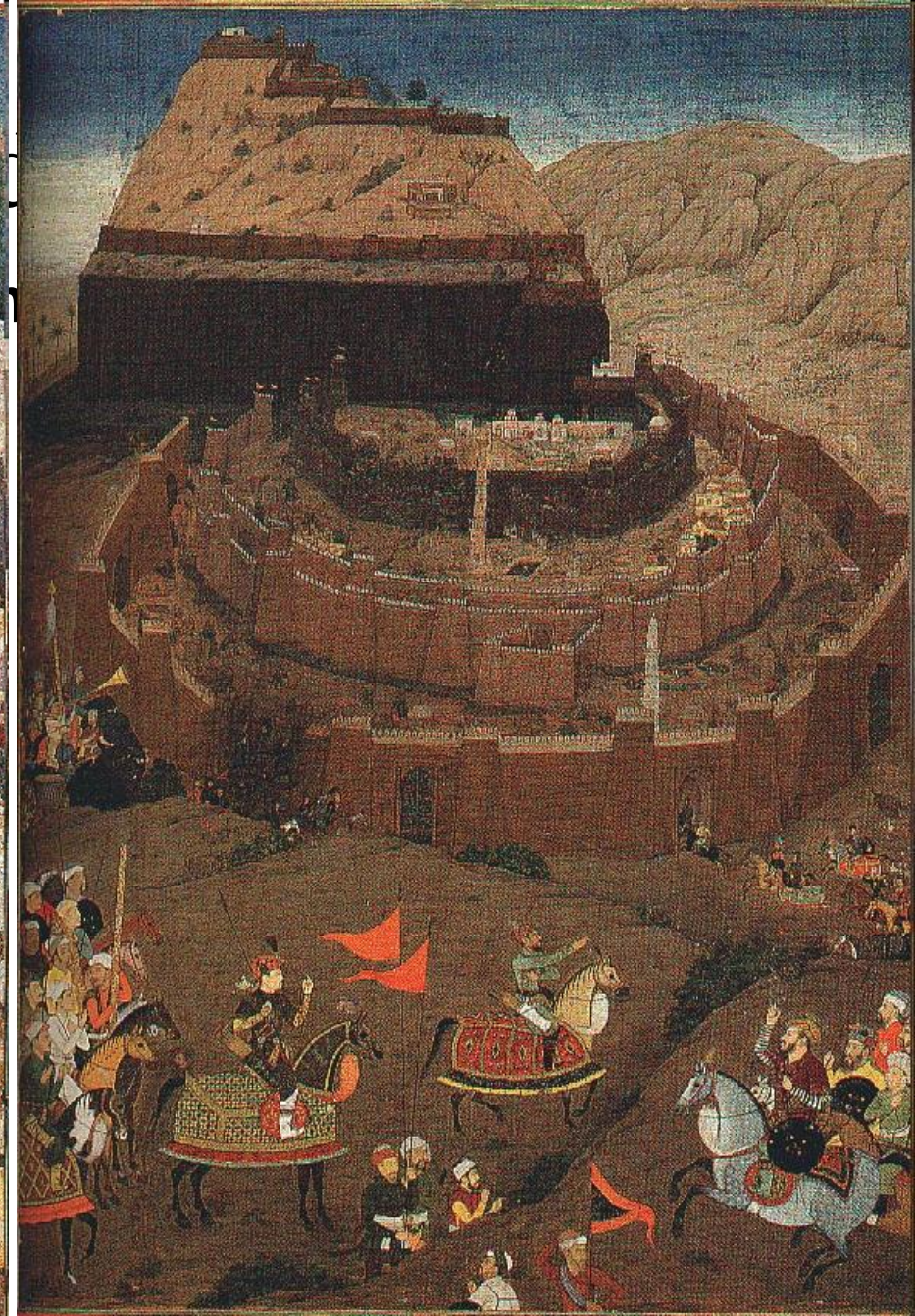
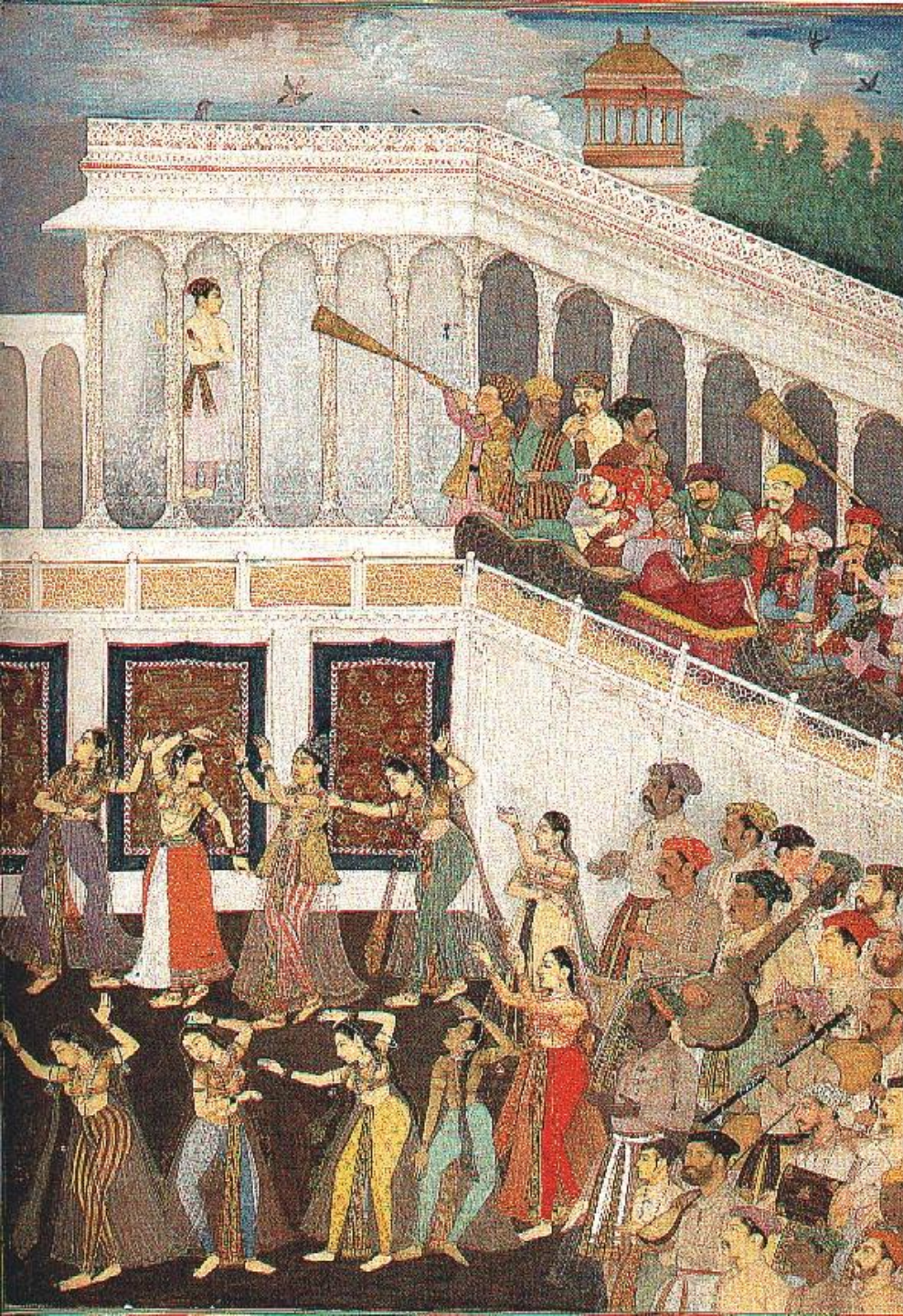
What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Shah Jahan**
 - ***The Padshahnama* (Chronicle of the King of the World): official chronicle of the reign Shah-Jahan with 44 illustrations**

Jahangir receives Prince Khurram



Crowning of Shah Jahan



The siege of Daulatabad

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Shah Jahan**
 - **Hindustani music**

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Aurangzeb (1658)**
 - **Islamic orthodoxy and austerity**
 - **Sharia, tax on non-Muslims, ban of un-Islamic ceremonies, abolition of Persian (solar) year, ban of opium and alcohol, demolition of Hindu temples**
 - **Missionary aim to convert all non-Muslims**
 - **Textbook of Islamic jurisprudence “Fatawa-I Alamgiri”**
 - **Rising status of the ulema**
 - **Muhtasib (censor) to crack down on “blasphemy”**

What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul: Aurangzeb (1658)**
 - **Islamic orthodoxy and austerity**
 - **The first ruler since Akbar to expand the empire (east Bengal, Rajasthan, Deccan)**
 - **Hindu and Sikh revolts**
 - **Court musicians and painters move to the courts of Rajasthan**



What the Indians knew

- **Mughal/Mogul**
 - **Limits of the empire**
 - **West/ Persia: Safavids have better gun technology (poor cast-iron technology of India, Mogul artillery manned by Ottoman and European hired hands)**
 - **Northwest/ Central Asia: Uzbeks dominate sparsely populated and impoverished lands**
 - **North/ Himalayas: unpopulated and remote passes force troops to carry their own provisions**
 - **Northeast: inferior fleet on the Brahmaputra against Ahom kingdom**
 - **South: Hindu kingdoms with tiny minorities of Muslims**

What the Indians knew

- **Islamic integralism in India**
 - **Shaikh Ahmad Sirhindi/Sarhindi (Punjab, 16xx): Strict adherence to Shariah, criticism of Sufism (shift from the heart to the body of Indian Islam)**
 - **Shah Wali Ullah (Delhi, 1703): The decline of the Mogul empire is due to ignorance of the Quran**

What the Indians knew

- **Islamic tolerance in India**
 - **Dara Shukoh, son of emperor Shah Jahan (1655)**
 - **Qadiri order of Sufism**
 - **Wrote in Persian**
 - **The Upanishad are the original source of all monotheism**
 - **Sufism = Hinduism (e.g., the Sufi soul is the atman, the Sufi love is the maya)**

What the Indians knew

- **The surviving caste system**
 - **Sikhs abolish the caste system by providing common surnames to abolish caste identities. However many families do not marry among different castes.**
 - **Dalit occupations are ritually impure (leatherwork, butchering, cleaning streets, latrines, sewers). This “polluting” activities are considered contagious (“untouchable”). Dalits are segregated, banned from participation in Hindu social life, and frequently exterminated.**
 - **Christian communities in South India still follow the caste system**

What the Indians knew

- **Kolam (first documented in 16th c)**
 - **Drawn every day by millions of women in south India**

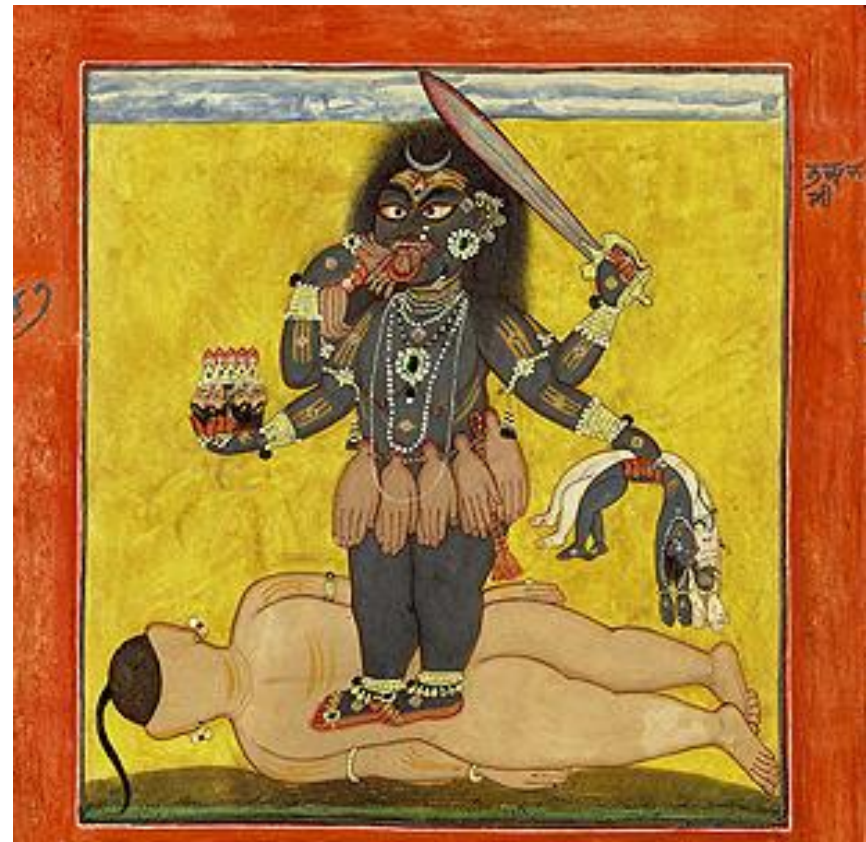


What the Indians knew

- **Shakti movement (peaked in 17th century)**
 - **Shakti theology (the “Devi Gita” of the “Devi-Bhagavata Purana”)**
 - **Female mythology mutates into female metaphysics**
 - **A single great goddess, who includes within her self other forms of the goddess**
 - **Subsuming the roles of creator, maintainer and destroyer, normally associated with Brahma, Vishnu and Shiva respectively**
 - **The feminine power (shakti) as the energy which empowers the deity**
 - **Mahavidyas goddesses that represent different aspects of Devi**

What the Indians knew

- **Painting**
 - **Anonymous (Punjab, 166x): “Devi” (Tantric influence)**





83



कृष्ण
ली



Marathas 1794



What the Indians knew

- **India before the British**
 - **An industrial superpower**

What the Indians knew

- Earliest accounts of life in India: Ralph Fitch (16th century) and Peter Mundy (17th century)

What the Indians knew

- **Fiction**

- Mullah Wajhi (Urdu, 15##): "Sabras/ Sab Ras" (16##) +

- **Poetry**

- Mahapurusha Srimanta Sankaradeva/ Shankara Deva (Assamese, 1449): "Kirtan" (14##)

- Malik Jayasi (Hindi, 1493): "Padmavat" (154#) Meera Bai (Hindi, 1499): "Poems" (1547)

- Tulsi Das (Hindi, 1532): "Ramacharitamanasa" (15##)

- Eknath Swami (Marathi, 1548): "Ekanathi Bhagavata" (15##)

- Abdur Rahim Khankhana (Hindi, 1556): "Poems" (16##)

What the Indians knew

- **Poetry**

- **Premananda Bhatta (Gujarati, 1636): "Poems" (1734)**
- **Vali Mohammed/ Vali Dakhni (Urdu, 1667): "Diwan" (1707)**
- **Abdul Latif (Sindhi, 1689): "Sassi Punnu" (17##)**
- **Nazir Akbarabadi (Urdu, 17##): "Poems" (1830)**
- **Mir Hasan (Urdu, 1727): "Sihr-ul-Bayan" (17##)**
- **Waris Shah (Punjabi, 1738): "Heer Ranjha" (17##)**
- **Asadullah Khan Ghalib (Urdu, 1797): "Poems" (1869)**

What the Tibetans knew

- **Oracles**
- **Bon (shamanism)**
- **Mandala (a profound representation of the nature of the universe)**
- **Gesar: bridging the nomadic culture and Buddhist ideals**
- **Guru Rinpoche/ Padmasambhava (750AD): conversion to Buddhism, Samye monastery**
- **Monastic life**
- **Lamas (1578AD)**

What South-east Asia knew

- **Chinese and Indian influence mostly by maritime trade, not military invasion**
- **Shortage of manpower, abundance of land**
- **Men rather than land were the cause of conflict**
- **Conflict was not about kill men: men were the goal of the conflict**

What South-east Asia knew

- **Female autonomy**
- **Daughters are valuable (manpower)**
- **Opposite of dowry: the groom pays for the bride**
- **Monogamy, but**
 - **Premarital sex widespread (experienced wives preferred over virgins)**
 - **Divorce commonplace**
 - **Prostitution rare**

What South-east Asia knew

- **The body as the first medium of art (e.g., tattoos)**
- **Spices for European consumption**

Summary

- **Vedas: The belief of the Aryans, Multiple gods, deeds cause karma which causes good/evil, Castes**
- **Upanishads: Atman, Brahman, Maya, Moksha, three gunas**
- **Buddhism: No atman, no Brahman, life is suffering, suffering is caused by ignorance, all beings are equal**
- **Jainism: Perfect knowledge (kevala) is the goal**
- **Six darshana**
- **Samkhy: The evolution of the world is due to the interaction between purusha and prakriti**
- **Vedanta: All souls share in the absolute consciousness**
- **Bhagavad-Gita: karma yoga, jnana yoga, bhakti yoga**
- **Theravada vs Mahayana**
- **Nagarjuna: The essential nature of reality is Sunyata**

Summary

- **Vasubandhu (350AD): Only consciousness exists, Consciousness is inter-subjective**
- **Tantra**
- **Carvaka (600AD): Materialism**
- **Shankara (b 788AD): Unifying view of the Hindu religion**
- **Abhinavagupta (1000AD): God is pure consciousness**
- **Ramanuja (1150): Brahman and Atman are not the same**

Piero Scaruffi
Copyright 2018

<http://www.scaruffi.com/know>