

# **India, China and the West**

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# India, China and the West

piero scaruffi, 25 march 2007

Logos 11: 2007

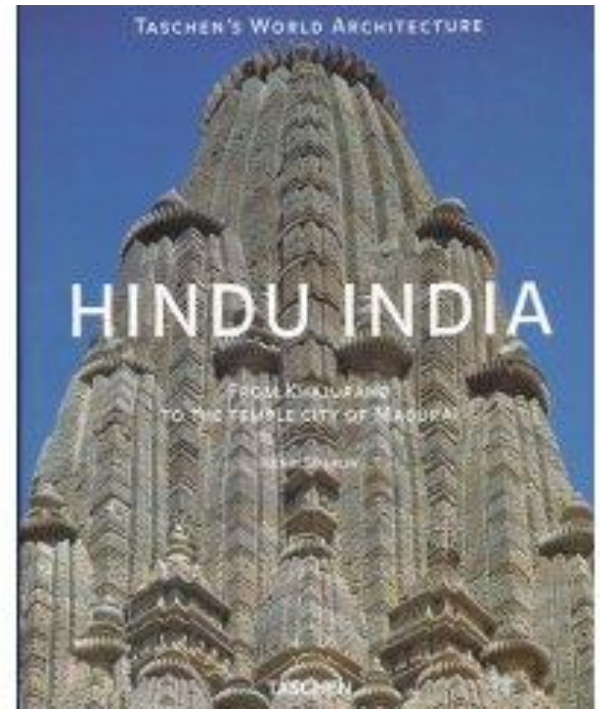
***“I think it would be a good idea”***

**(Mahatma Gandhi, when asked what he thought of Western civilization)**

**On seeing a locomotive for the first time, a peasant in India asked what makes it move. British engineers explained in detail its workings (the steam, the pistons, the wheels, etc). The peasant asked “yes, I understand, but what is it that makes it move”?**

# Bibliography

- **Jadunath Sinha: “History Of Indian Philosophy” (1956)**
- **Haridas Bhattacharyya: “The Cultural Heritage Of India” (1937)**
- **Hermann Goetz: The Art of India (1959)**
- **Hugh-George Rawlinson: A Cultural History of India (1937)**
- **Henri Stierlin: Hindu India (2002)**



# Theorem

- **Worst Western misconception about India and China (and Japan etc): that they are all “Eastern” (Eastern philosophy, Eastern religion, Eastern art, etc)**
- **China and India have as much in common as France and Indonesia (different arts, different languages, different institutions, different traditions, different landscape, different economies...)**
- **“The central aim of Eastern mysticism is to experience all phenomena in the world as manifestations of the same ultimate reality” (Fritjof Capra)**



# Theorem

- **Dravidian India is the remnant of the third great cradle of world civilization, having survived the Indo-European and Muslim invasions**
- **Three different minds: West, India, China, the Indian mind being best represented today in South Dravidian India**

# India's identity

- **A continent, not a country (including Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan) no native name for the whole subcontinent**
- **A battleground for all the major religions (Greek, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, Buddhism, Christianity, Islam)**
- **Two main families of languages: Indo-European (e.g. Hindi) in the north and Dravidian (e.g. Tamil, Kannada, Telugu) in the south**

# India's identity

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



# Cradles of Civilization



(Courtesy Rafael Olivas)

# **Indus Valley civilization**

- **3000 BC: Dravidian speaking people develop the civilization of the Indus Valley**
- **2000 BC: Indus Valley is the largest bronze-age civilization in the world**
- **1800 BC: the civilization of the Indus Valley declines**
- **Mohenjo-Daro: Continuously occupied for 4,000 years**
- **Independent discovery of writing?**

# Indus Valley civilization

- **Steatite seals**
  - **No horses!**



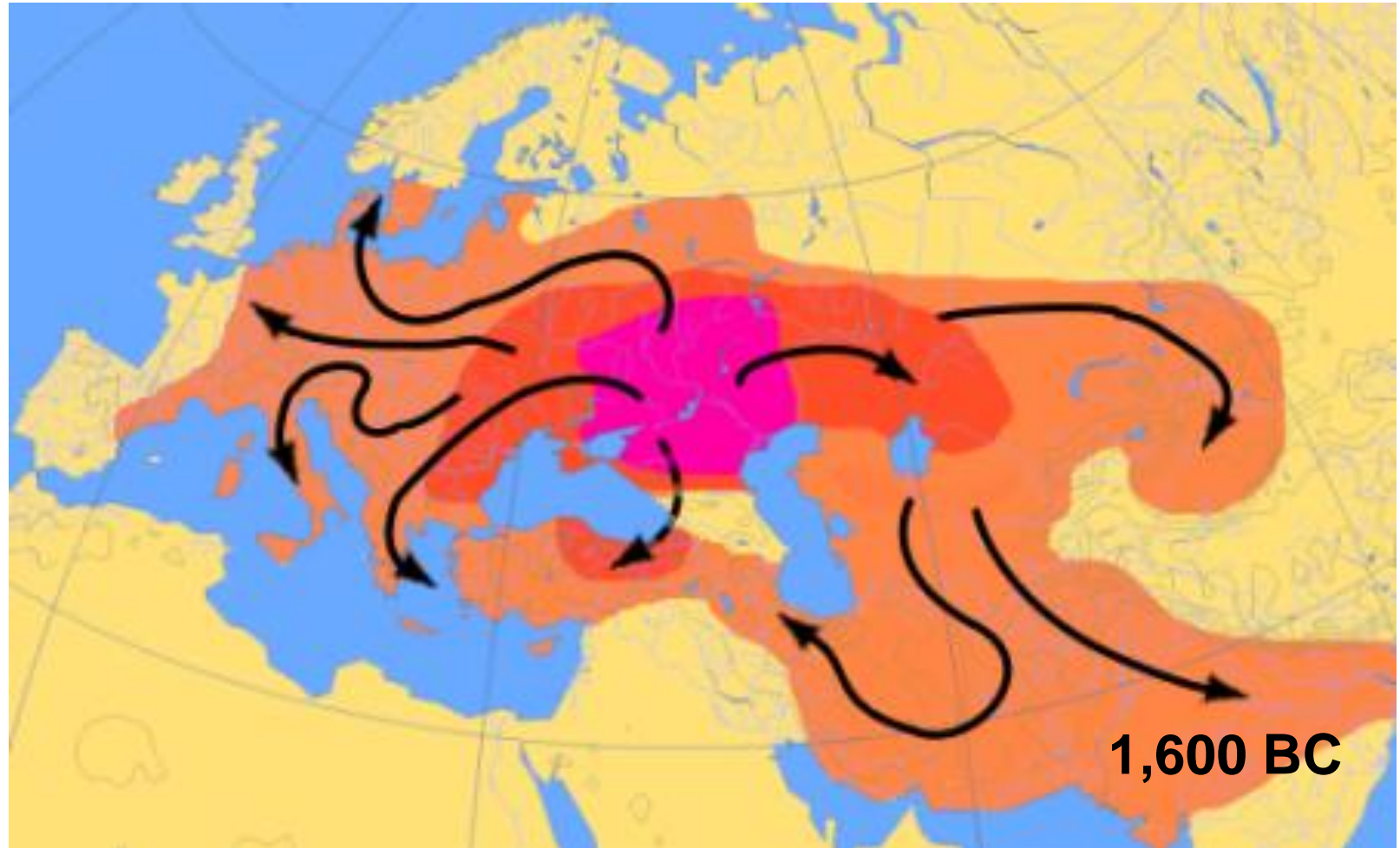
Metropolitan Museum, New York





# Indo-European culture

- **Indo-European migrations**



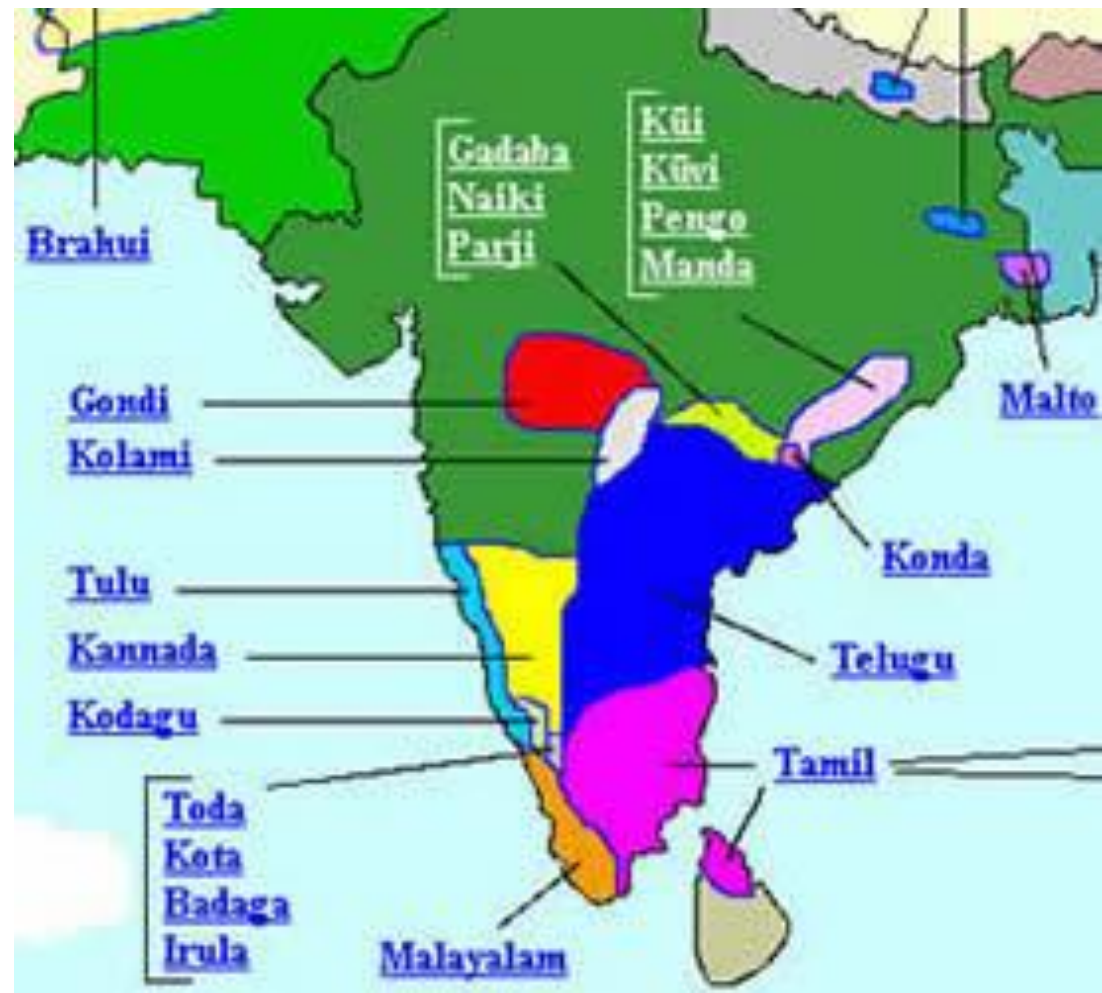
# Indo-European culture

- **The Indo-Europeans in India**
  - **Fragmented into small kingdoms along the Ganges**
  - **Domestication: sheep, goat, cow, dog**
  - **Horse-driven chariot**
  - **Main entertainment: music (India's most ancient art)**
  - **Tripartite society (castes): priests, warriors, farmers**
  - **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)**



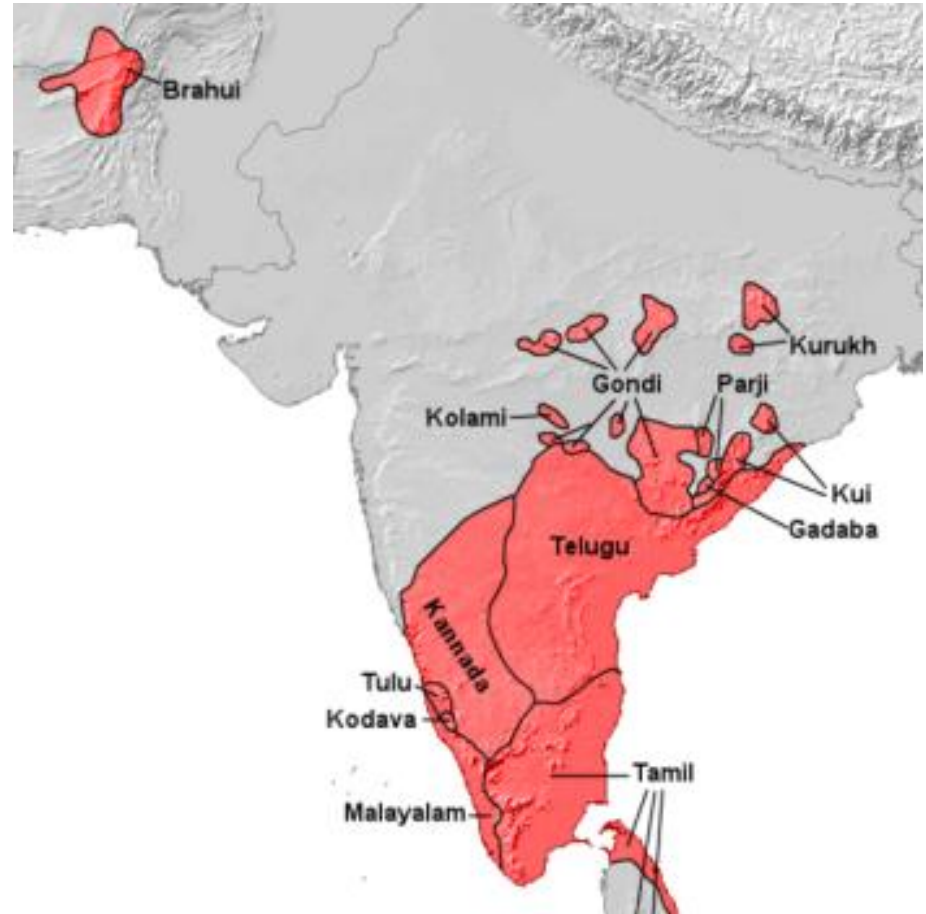
# Indian Languages

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



# Indian Languages

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



# Indian Languages

- **Today:**

- **Mandarin: 1051 millions**
- **English 510**
- **Hindi 490**
- **Spanish 425**
- **Arabic 255**
- **Russian 254**
- **Portuguese 218**
- **Bengali 215**
- **Malay 175**
- **French 130**

**Japanese 127**

**German 123**

**Farsi 110**

**Urdu 104**

**Punjabi 103**

**Vietnamese 86**

**Tamil 78**

# The Dravidian Wall

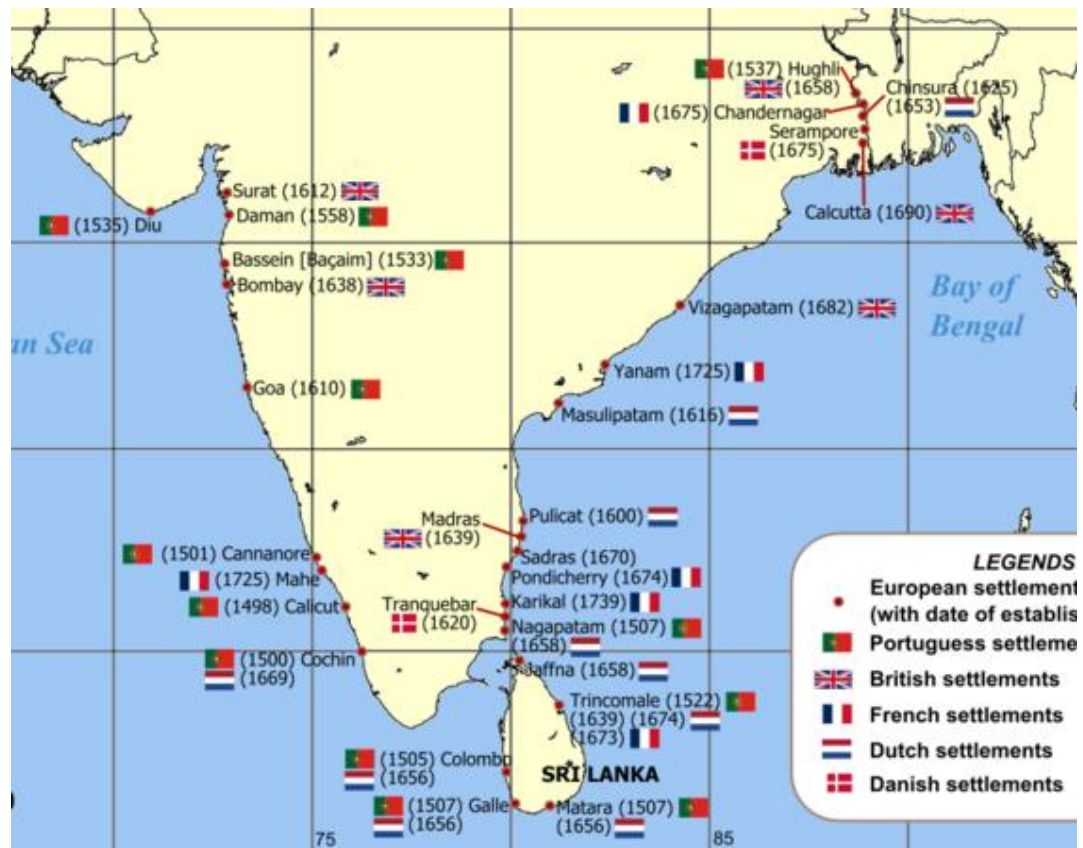
- **China's "walls": seas, mountains and steppes (and the Great Wall)**
- **India's "walls": seas, mountains, deserts... and the Dravidian people**
- **Main cultural invasion: Persia**
- **First major invasion from Persia: Indo-Europeans**
- **Second major invasion from Afghanistan: Islam**
- **Neither completely conquered the Dravidian people, who moved to the south**

# The Dravidian Wall

- **Dravidian dynasties created their own kingdoms in the south**
- **Their influence and domains extended as far as Indonesia**
- **Evidence that these southern kingdoms traded with the Roman empire**
- **The Dravidians maintained an identity that the invaders were trying to erase**

# The Dravidian Wall

- The European powers (the first powers capable of invading from the sea) tore down the Dravidian wall
- The European powers were the first invaders that did not come from northwest



# Dravidian Art

- The essence of Dravidian art: **manic density of detail**
- Highly metaphorical
- Dravidian art is an **endless process of decoding/interpretation**
- Overwhelmingly Hindu (not Islamic or Buddhist)
- Every corner of a temple filled with sculptures
- A total experience
- Sensory overload

# Indo-European India

- **Rig-veda (1500 BC) in Vedic (Indo-European language)**
  - **Most popular deities**
    - **Gods of heaven: Varuna (god of the cosmic order) is the supreme god, Surya (sun god), etc**
    - **Gods of the air: Indra (god of war, most popular god of the Rig Vedas), Rudra, etc**
    - **Gods of earth: Agni (the fire god), etc**
  - **Three goals of human life: artha (material success), dharma (righteous social behavior), and kama (sensual pleasures)**
  - **All Vedas were reserved for male priests of the upper (Brahmin) caste**



# Indo-European India

- **Vedism till 6th century BC**
  - **Monopoly of the Brahmins**
  - **Salvation can be attained only by secret rituals known only to the Brahmins**

# Indo-European India

- **Upanishad (600 BC) in Sanskrit (Indo-European language)**
  - **The metaphysical counterpart of the Veda**
  - **Pessimistic vision of the human condition: life is evil/sorrow**
  - **Salvation is liberation (moksha) from the illusory world (maya)**
  - **Moksha is achieved when the individual soul (atman) becomes one with the universal soul (brahman)**
  - **Reaction of the Ksatriyas against the Brahmins: the Upanishads are not exclusive to the Brahmins**
  - **End of the monopoly of the Brahmins over religion**

# Indo-European India

- **527 BC: Siddhartha Gautama is enlightened**
- **500 BC: the ascetic prince Mahavira founds Jainism**

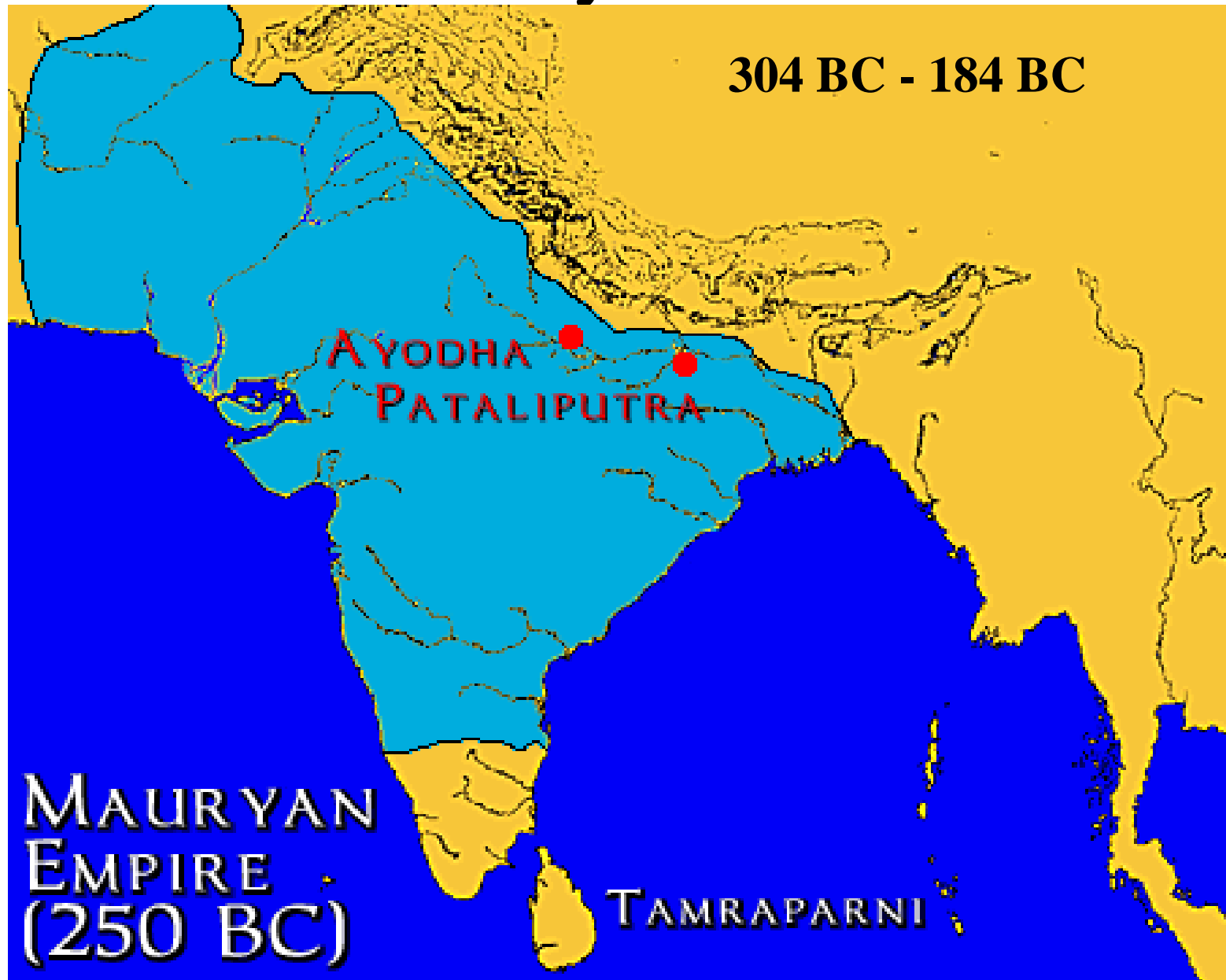
# Indo-European India

- **Six darshana (schools) of philosophy**
  - **Samkhya (5th c BC BC)**
  - **Vedanta (5th c BC)**
  - **Royal Yoga (2nc c BC)**
  - **Nyaya**
  - **Vaisesika**
  - **Purva-mimamsa**

# Indo-European India

- **327 BC: Alexander invades the Indus Valley**
- **304 BC: Chandragupta Maurya gets the Indus Valley**
- **300 BC: the “Ramayana” is composed**
- **259 BC: Mauryan king Ashoka converts to Buddhism**
- **200 BC: the “Mahabharata” is composed**
- **Vedism has become Hinduism**

# History of India



# History of India

- **A false start: Buddhist and Jain art, not Hindu art**
- **Mauryans protected both Buddhists and Jains**
- **Buddhist ability to create wealthy corporate institutions**
- **Buddhism prevalent over Hinduism in the visual arts till the 5th c AD**

# History of India

- **Fundamental difference between Hinduism and Buddhism**
  - **No atman: no enduring consciousness, consciousness is a substance not a being**
  - **Salvation lies in escape from the illusion of the self: nirvana**
  - **"Only suffering exists, but no sufferer is to be found" (from the Visuddhimagga)**
  - **No brahman**
  - **Very difficult to do the right thing (requires meditation and practice)**
  - **Monasteries and universities**
  - **Anti-Brahminical**



# History of India

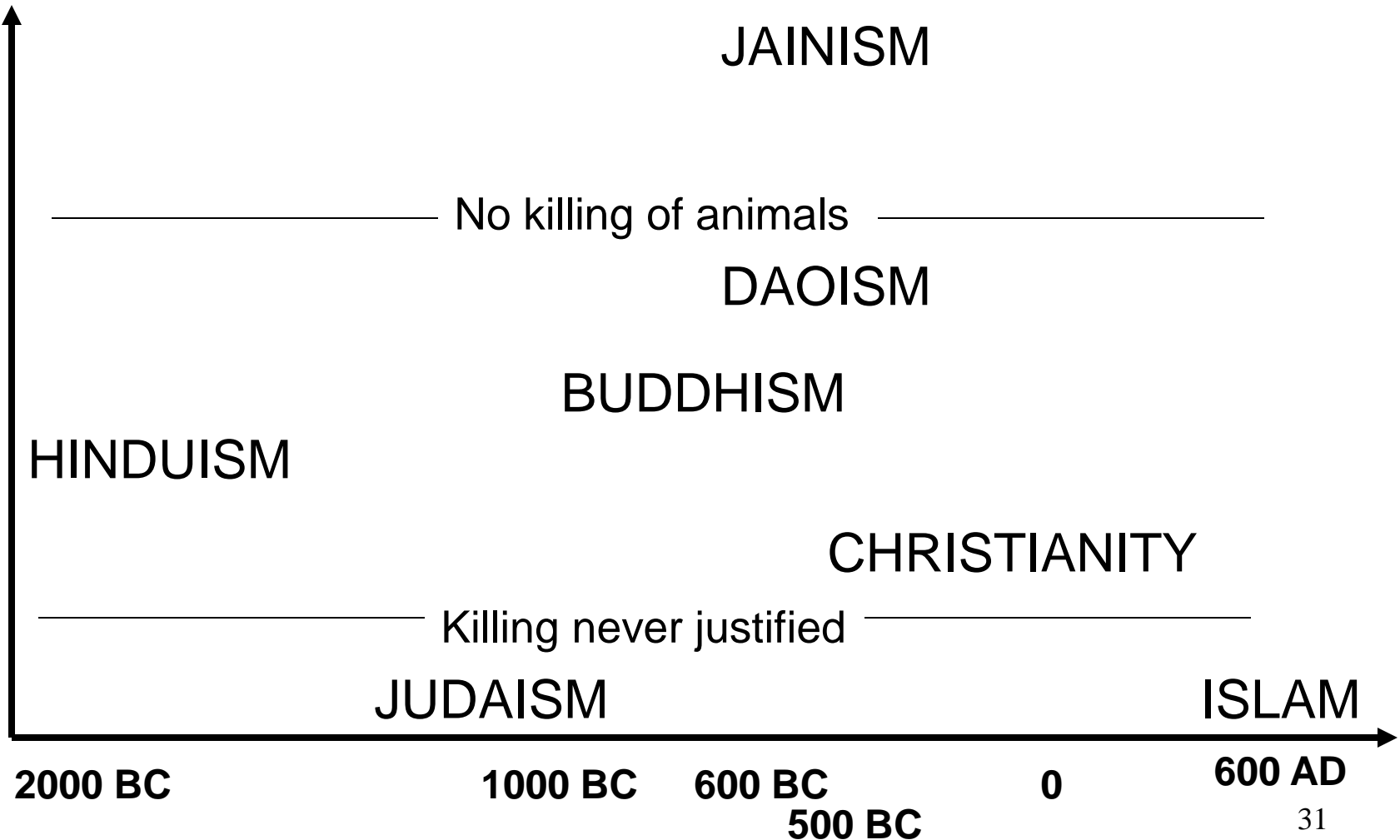
- **Jainism**
  - **Buddha: the soul of the individual does not exist**
  - **Mahavira: everything has a soul (humans, animals, plants, objects)**
  - **Ultimate goal: purification, not nirvana, so that no more karma can attach to the soul**
  - **Purification leads to perfect knowledge (kevala, similar to moksha)**
  - **Also anti-Brahminical**

- Jain art



# World Religions

- **Respect for life**



# World Religions

- **Respect for unbelievers**

<b>TICKET</b>		<b>BUDDHISM</b>
<b>NO TICKET</b>	<b>HINDU ISLAM</b>	<b>CHRISTIAN. JAIN (but no photo)</b>
	<b>FAITHFUL ONLY</b>	<b>OPEN TO EVERYBODY</b>

# Ancient Indian Art

- **Mostly religious architecture**
- **Ancient secular Indian architecture (palaces) were destroyed**
- **The famous palaces of India are either Muslim or British**

# Sri Lankan Art

- Sri Lanka:
  - Theravada Buddhism ("Doctrine of the Elders")
  - Oldest continuously Buddhist country
  - Tripitaka/Tipitaka assembled in Sri Lanka (1st c AD), written in Pali (Indo-European language)



# Sri Lankan Art

- **Theravada/Hinayana**
  - The Buddha as a supremely enlightened human
  - Only one Buddha
  - Very difficult to achieve salvation
  - Arhat only saves himself
  - Atheistic
- **Mahayana**
  - The Buddha as a manifestation of a divine being
  - Many Buddhas
  - Easier to achieve salvation
  - Bodhisattva can save others
  - Monotheistic

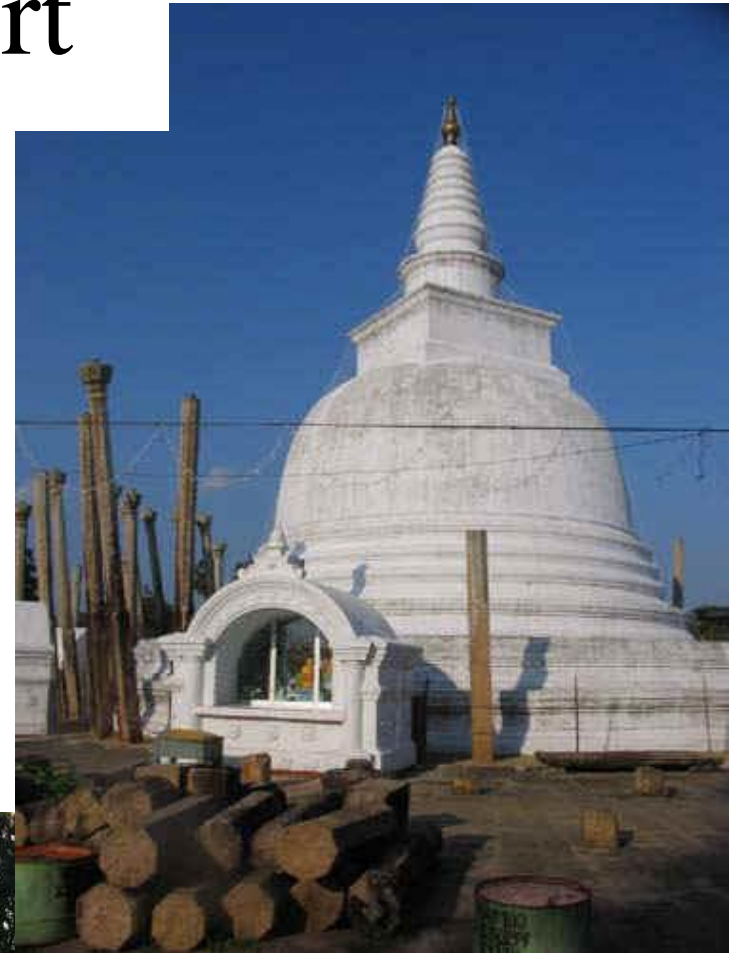
# Sri Lankan Art

- **Sri Lanka:**
  - **Rock-cut temples (“caves”)**
  - **Free-standing architecture**
    - **The stupa: funereal tumulus that developed into a cosmic building, both a memorial to a saint and a diagram of the spiritual universe**
    - **Balance of round and square shapes**
    - **First stupas in India: 5th c BC**



# Sri Lankan Art

- Anuradhapura (3rd c BC - 3rd c AD)



# Sri Lankan Art

- Anuradhapura (3rd c BC - 3rd c AD)







# Sri Lankan Art

- Dambula caves (1st c BC - 18th c)



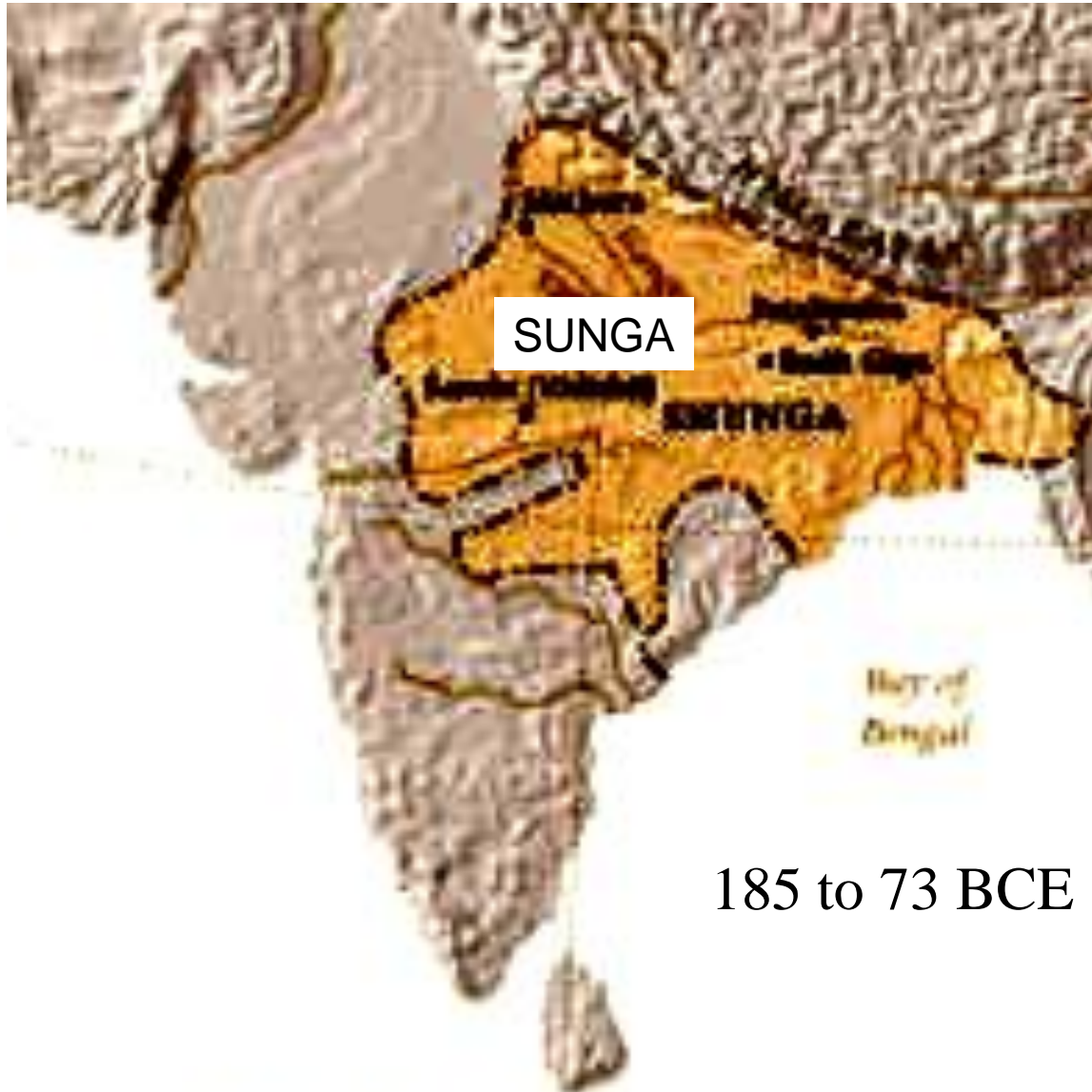
Cave 2







# Sunga/Satavahan Art

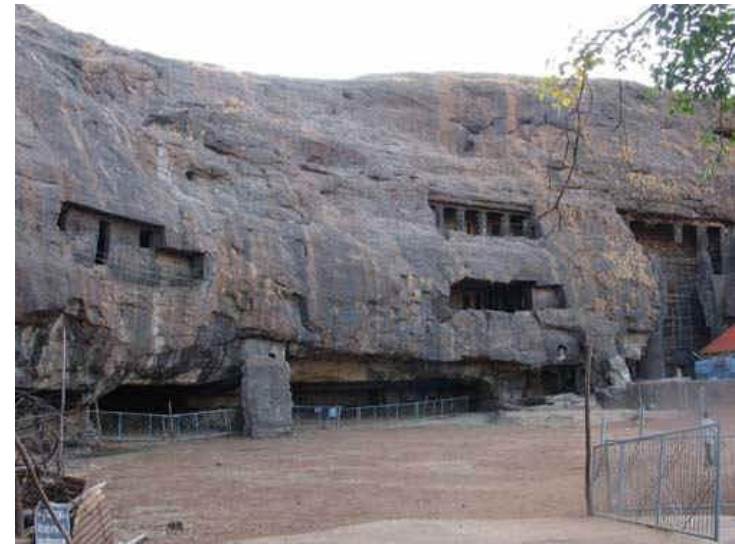
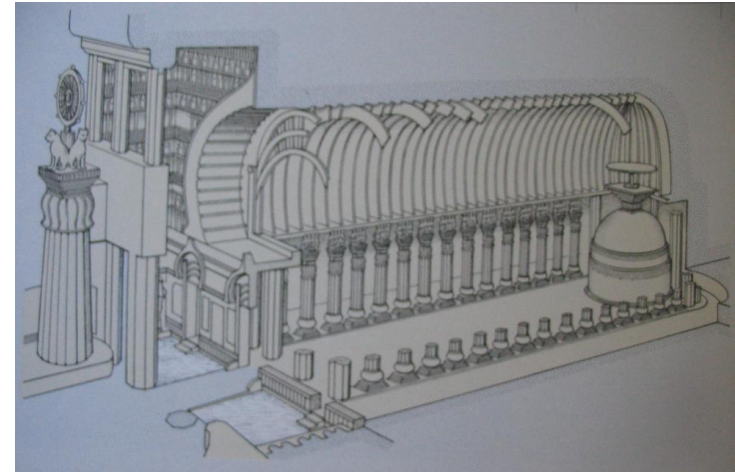


185 to 73 BCE



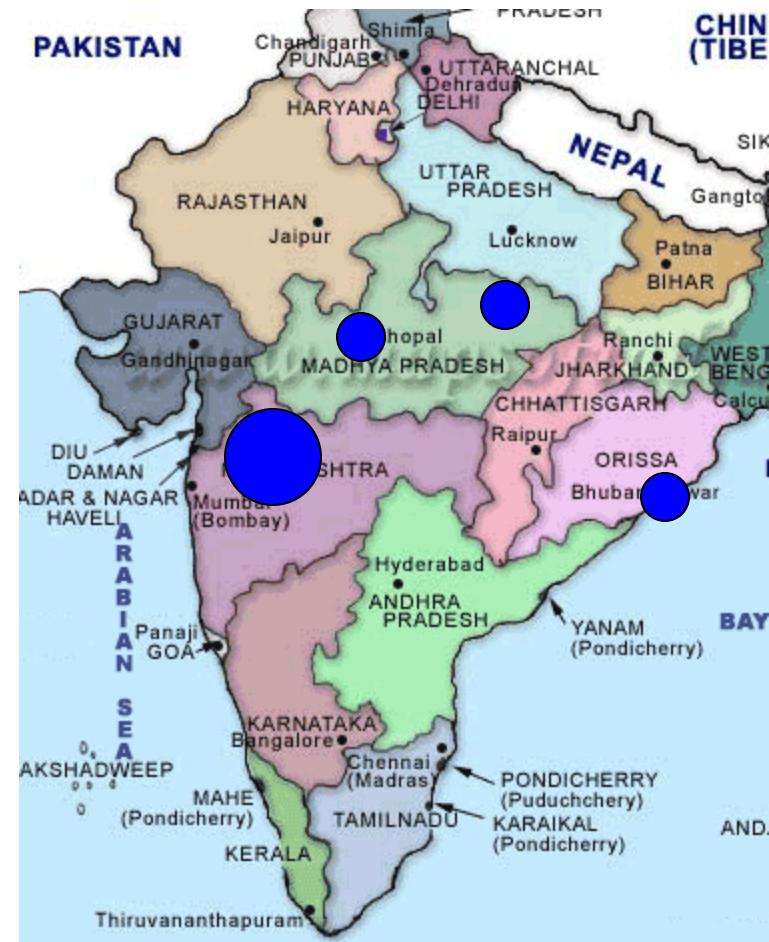
# Sunga Art

- **Buddhist**
- **The chaitya hall: carving of chambers into living stone to accommodate stupas**
  - **Colonnaded aisles**
  - **Arched vaults**
  - **Curving ribs**
- **Vihara/monastery, originally series of rock-cut cells**
- **Preference for rock-cut “buildings” over free-standing buildings**



# Sunga Art

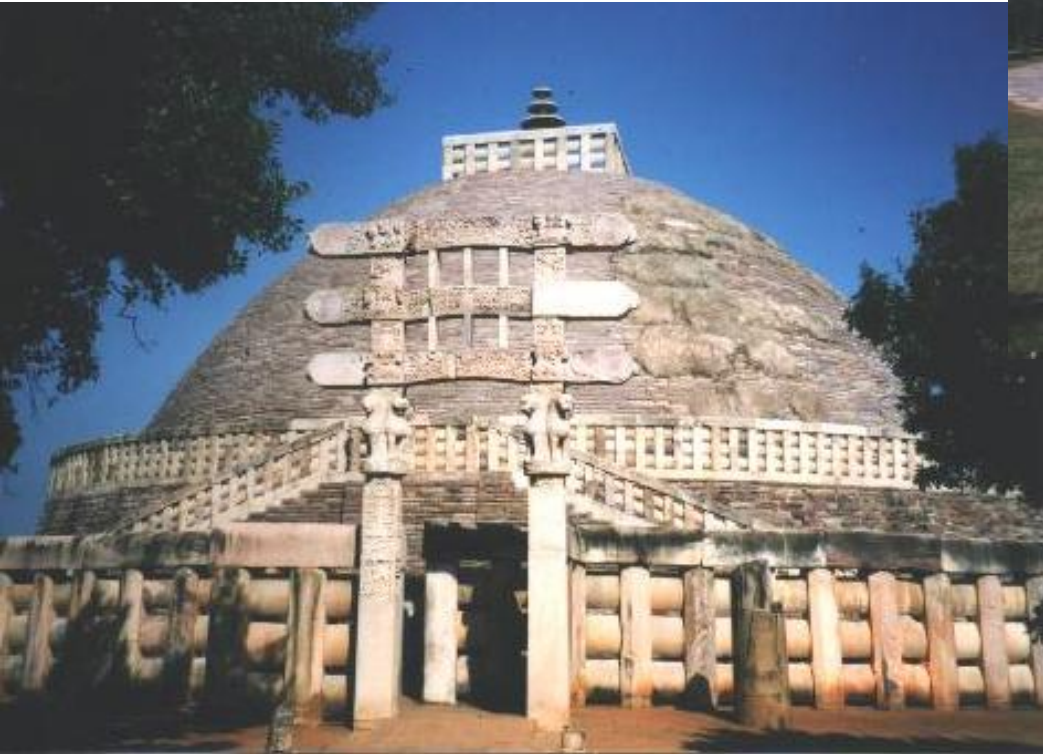
- Sanchi
- Bharhut
- Caves
  - Bhaja caves (1st c BC)
  - Karla caves (1st c BC)
  - Ajanta caves (1st c BC)
  - Udaigiri caves (Jain!)





# Sunga Art

- Sanchi



Stupa 1, Sanchi (2nd c BC,  
oldest stone structure in India)



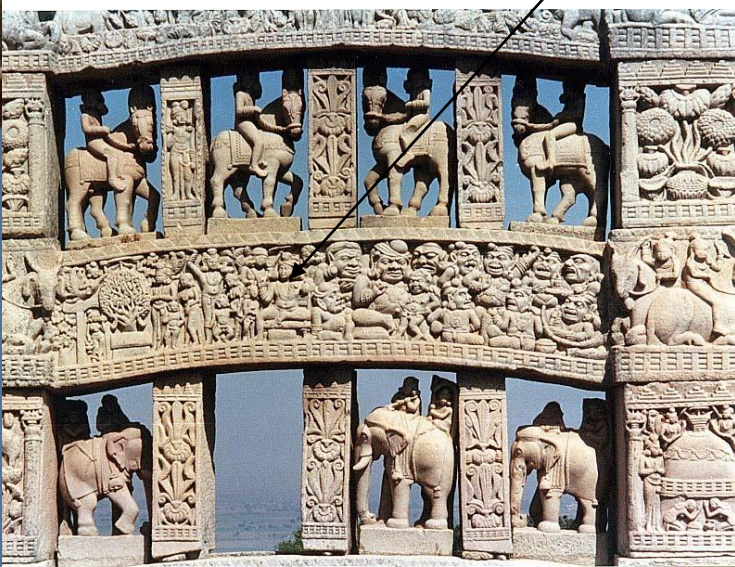
Stupa2, Sanchi



Stupa3, Sanchi (2nd c BC)



Eastern gate



North gate





# Sunga Art

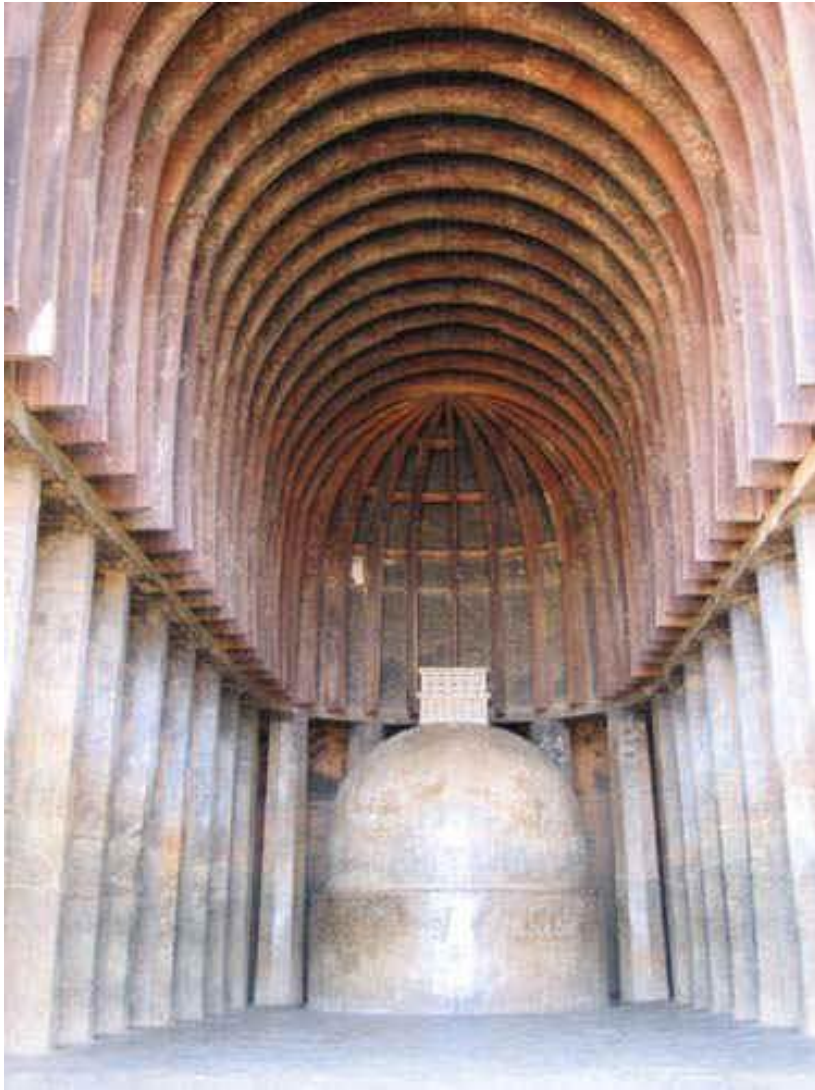
- **Bharhut ((now at Kolkata's Indian Museum)**





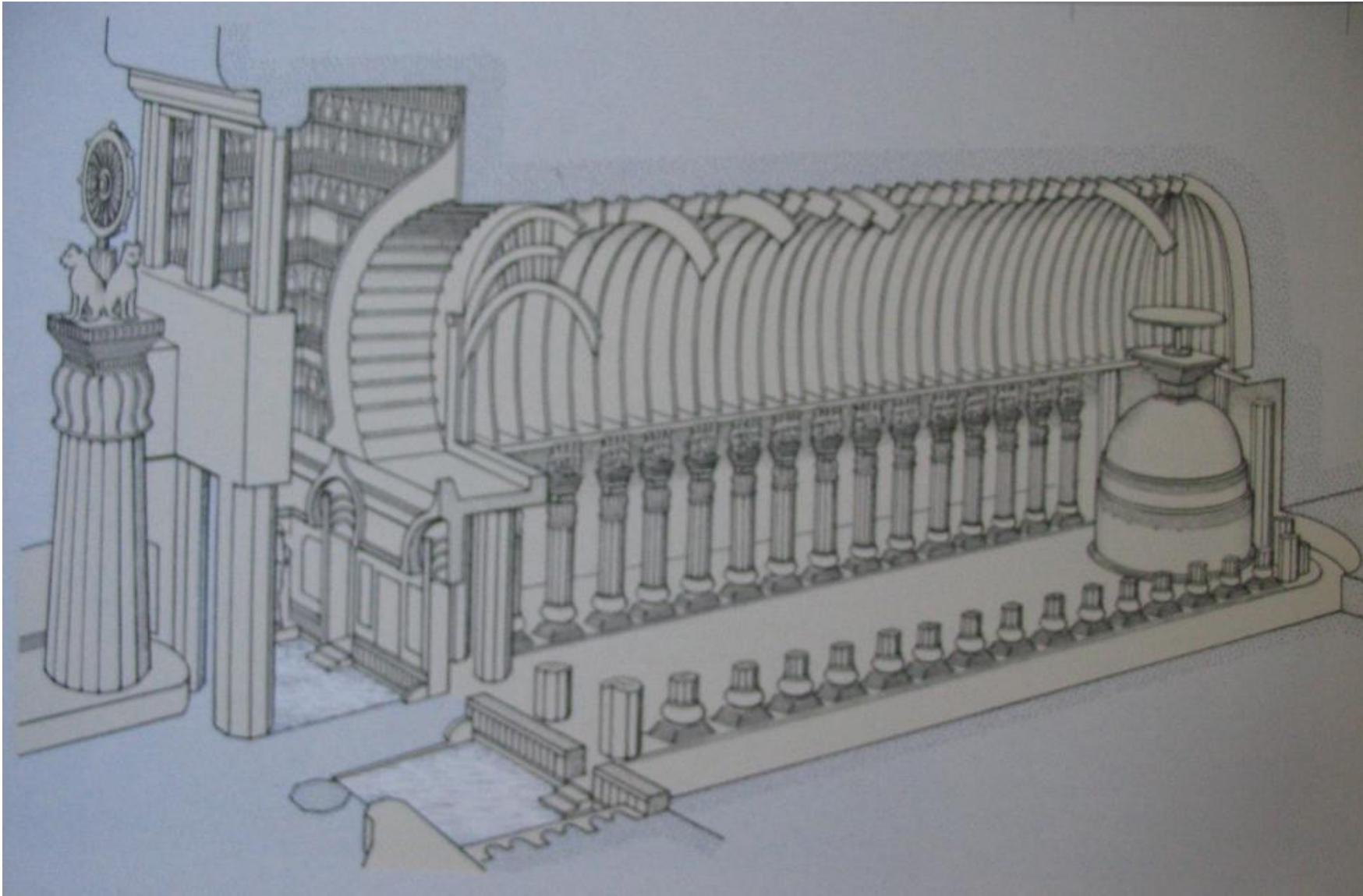
# Sunga Art

- **Bhaja caves**



# Sunga Art

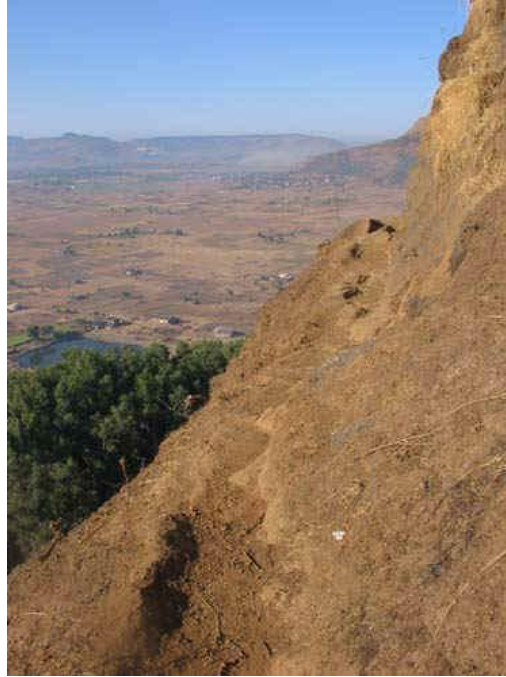
- **Karla caves**





# Sunga Art

- Karla caves





# Sunga Art

– Ajanta caves

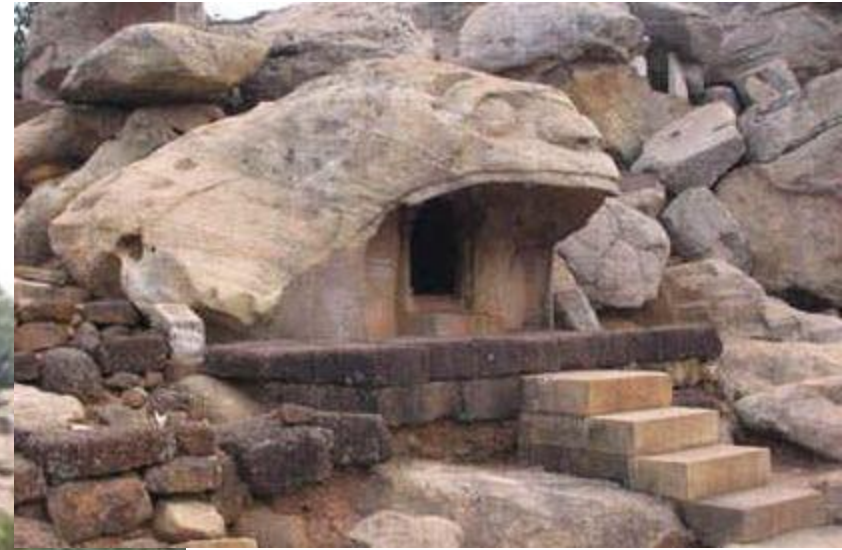


Cave 10



# Sunga Art

## – Udayagiri caves

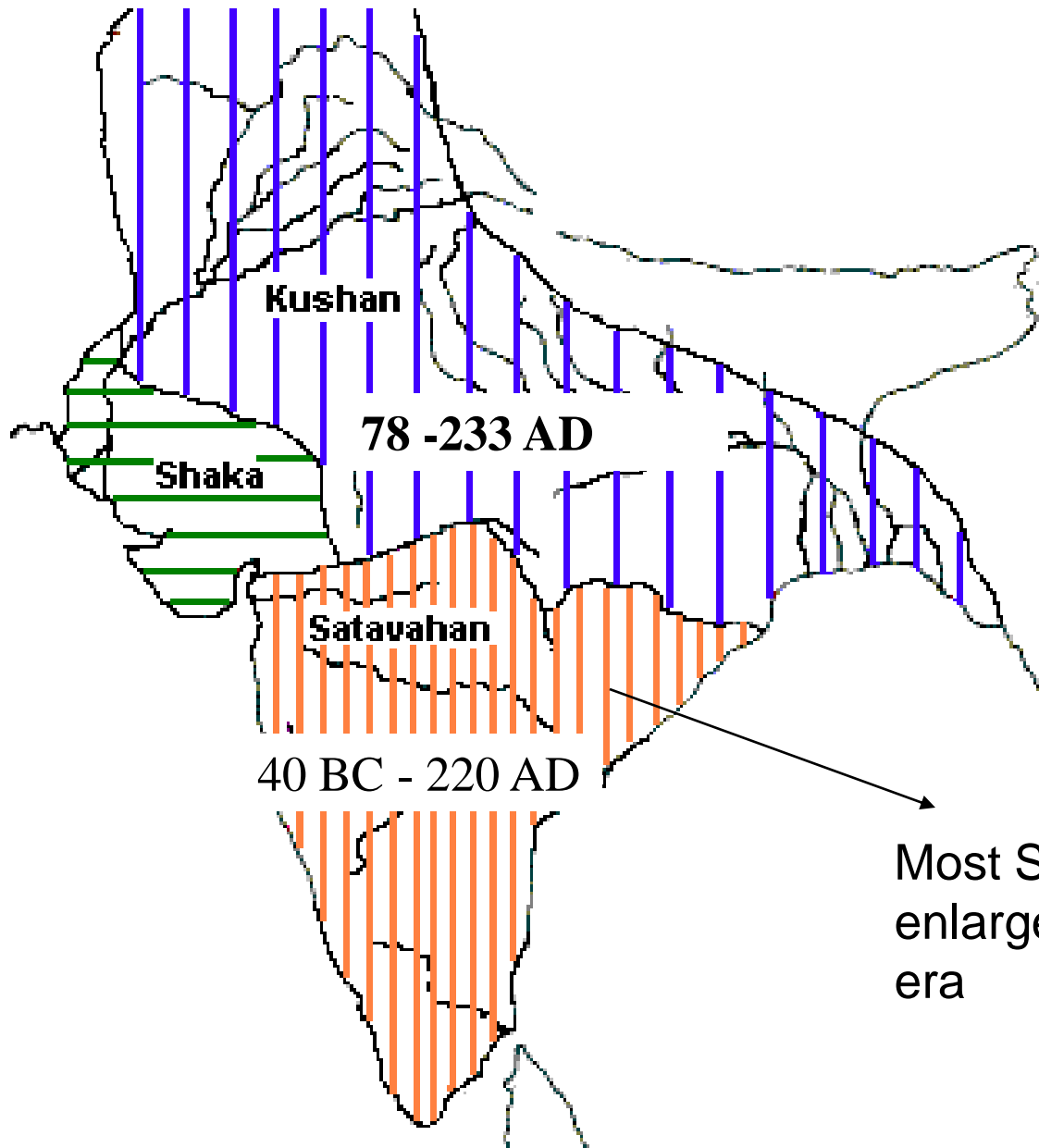




# Sunga/ Satavahan Art

- **Buddhist and Jain**
- **Very spiritual**

# Kushan Art



Most Sunga art continued and enlarged during the Satavahan era

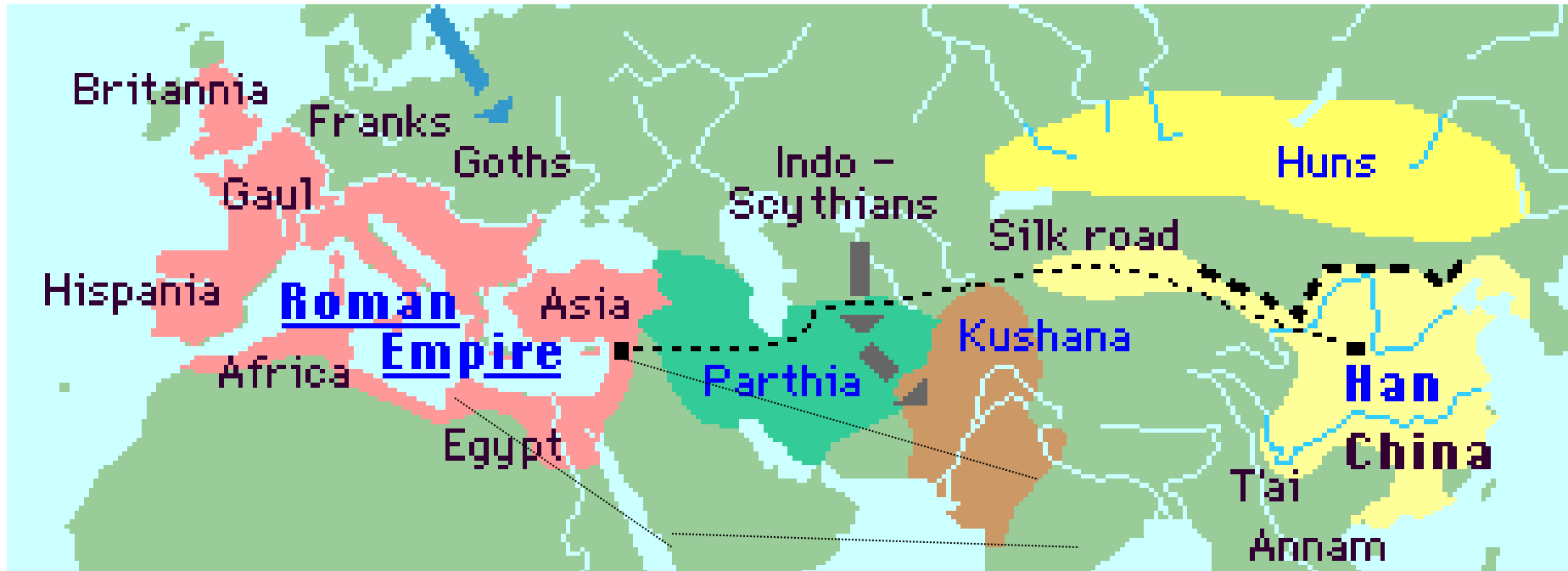
# Kushan Art

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



# Kushan Art

- The spice road



# Kushan Art

- **Buddhist architecture**
  - **Kanishka's stupa at Peshawar (3rd c AD), about 200m tall**

# Kushan Art

- **Gandhara school**
  - **Gandhara/Chandahara (northwestern Pakistan and Afghanistan), former Bactrian (Greek) colony**
  - **Kushan adopted Buddhism as official religion of the region (1st c AD)**
  - **Kushan king Kanishka (2nd c AD) convenes the Buddhist council that marks the schism of Mahayana and Hinayana Buddhism**
  - **Gandhara statues of the Kushan period (1st-2nd c AD): first anthropomorphic representation of Buddha**
  - **Buddha image derived from Roman imperial statues and Roman religious faces**

# Kushan Art

- **Gandhara school**



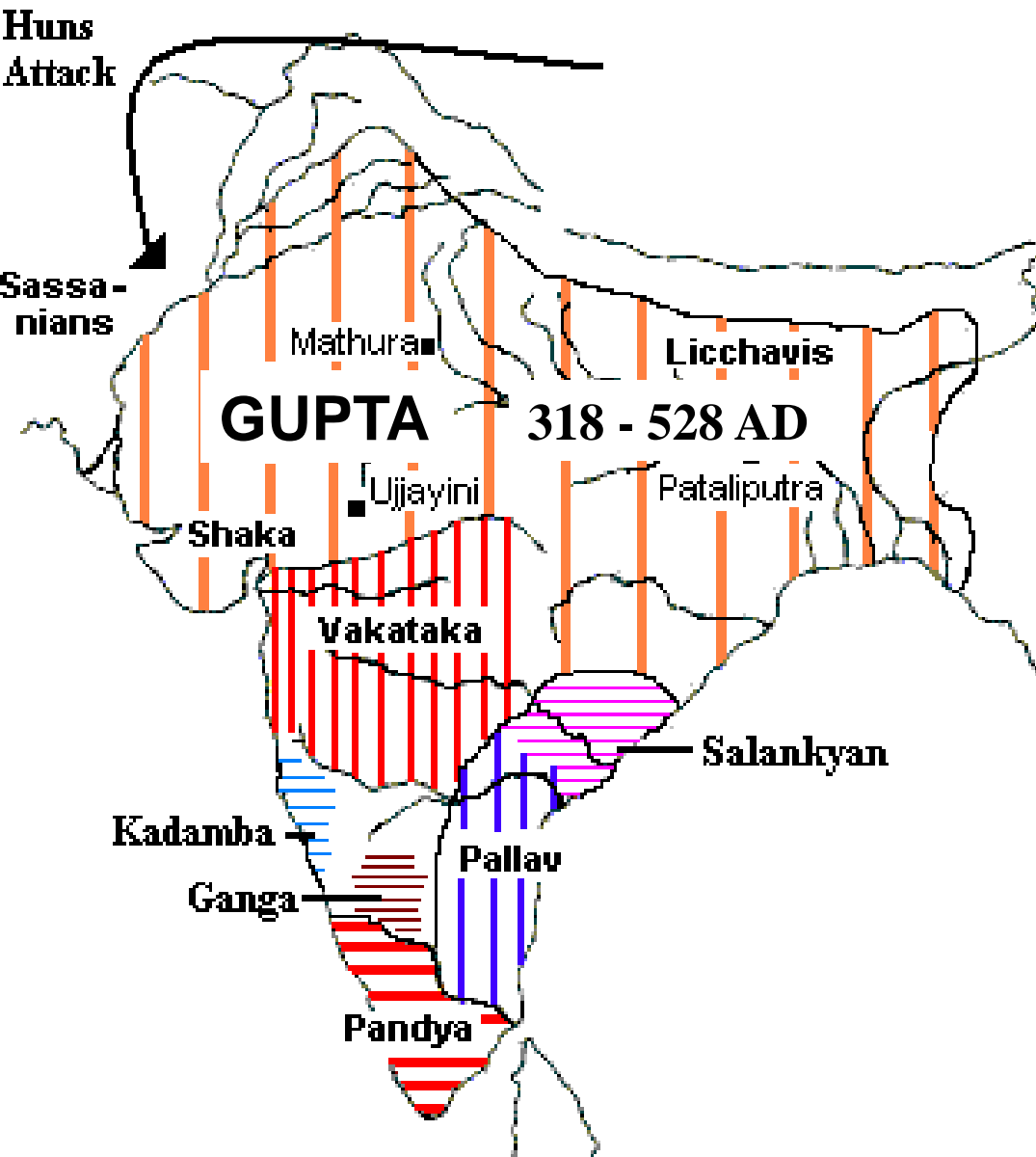
Four scenes of the life of Buddha from Gandhara 100-300  
San Francisco Asian Art Museum

# Kushan Art

- **Nagarjuna (2nd century AD), first great Indian philosopher, Buddhist**



# Gupta Art



# Gupta Art

- **Decline of Buddhism, rise of Hinduism**
- **Reduced contacts with the West, following Persian-Roman wars**
- **Resurgence of the Brahmin priests**
- **Emphasis on priestly rites, not on metaphysics**
- **Old gods (e.g., Indra) abandoned in favor of the “trimurti”: Brahma, Vishnu, Shiva (creation, preservation, destruction)**

# Gupta Art

- **Vishnu the Sustainer (benevolent) and Shiva the Destroyer (terrible)**
- **Vishnu and Shiva both of Dravidian origin**
- **Vishnu has many incarnations (avatar): Rama, Krishna...**
- **Shiva's phallus (linga) is the central shrine of temples and the personal shrine of households**
- **Shiva performs a cosmic dance while the world is being destroyed**
- **The Nandi bull is the vahana (vehicle) of Shiva (a Nandi faces the main shrine of every Shiva temple)**

# Gupta Art

- **New cults:**
  - **Shiva's son Skanda (the war god) and elephant-headed Ganesh (5th c AD)**
  - **Surya, the sun god**
  - **Goddesses (each god is complemented by a female power): Laksmi (Vishnu's wife), Durga (Shiva's wife), and, in general, Shakti (Lakshmi is Vishnu's shakti and Parvati is Shiva's shakti, and she is also Kali and Durga)**

# Gupta Art

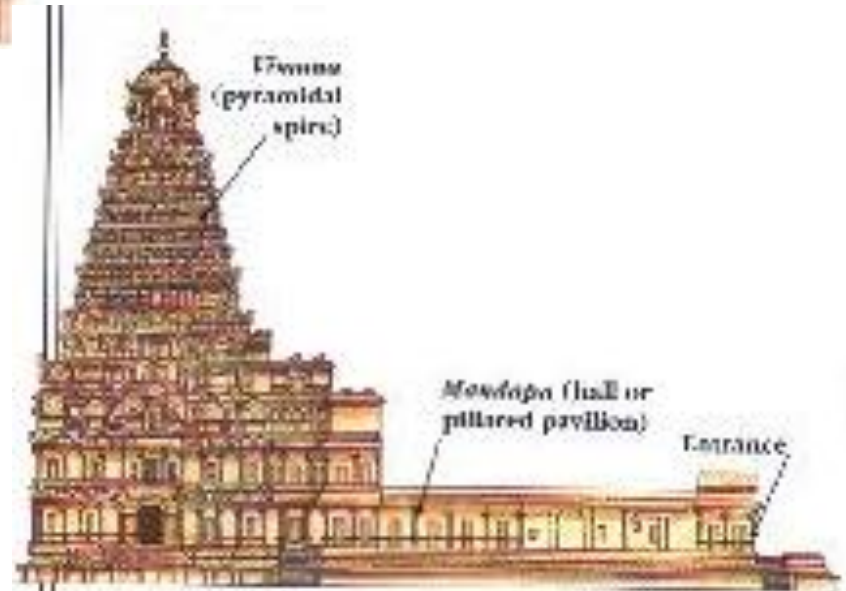
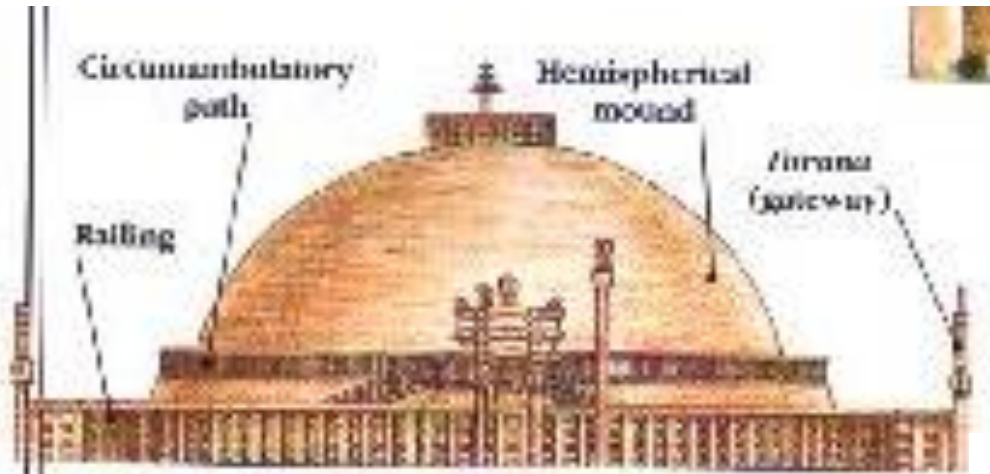
- **India's classical age**
  - **First books (earliest extant: 350 AD)**
  - **Revival of Sanskrit**
  - **University of Nalanda (students from China, Japan, Korea, Mongolia, Tibet, Nepal, Sri Lanka)**
  - **Literature (**Kalidasa**, poet and playwright in Sanskrit)**
  - **Drama (Nataka, derived from dance)**
  - **Six darshana (schools) of philosophy**

# Gupta Art

- **Hindu temple architecture**
  - **Derived from Buddhist/Jain architecture**
  - **Brick and stone temples**
  - **Hindu temple: a small cella (central chamber), a shikhara (spire), representing a cave inside Meru**
  - **Cave temples evolving into free-standing temples**
  - **Architecture = sculpture**
  - **Body language of dancing transferred to sculpture and painting, introducing rhythm in the visual arts (“Vishnudharmottaram”, earliest manual on art: painting and sculpture derive from dance which derives from music)**

# Gupta Art

- Hindu temple vs Buddhist stupa

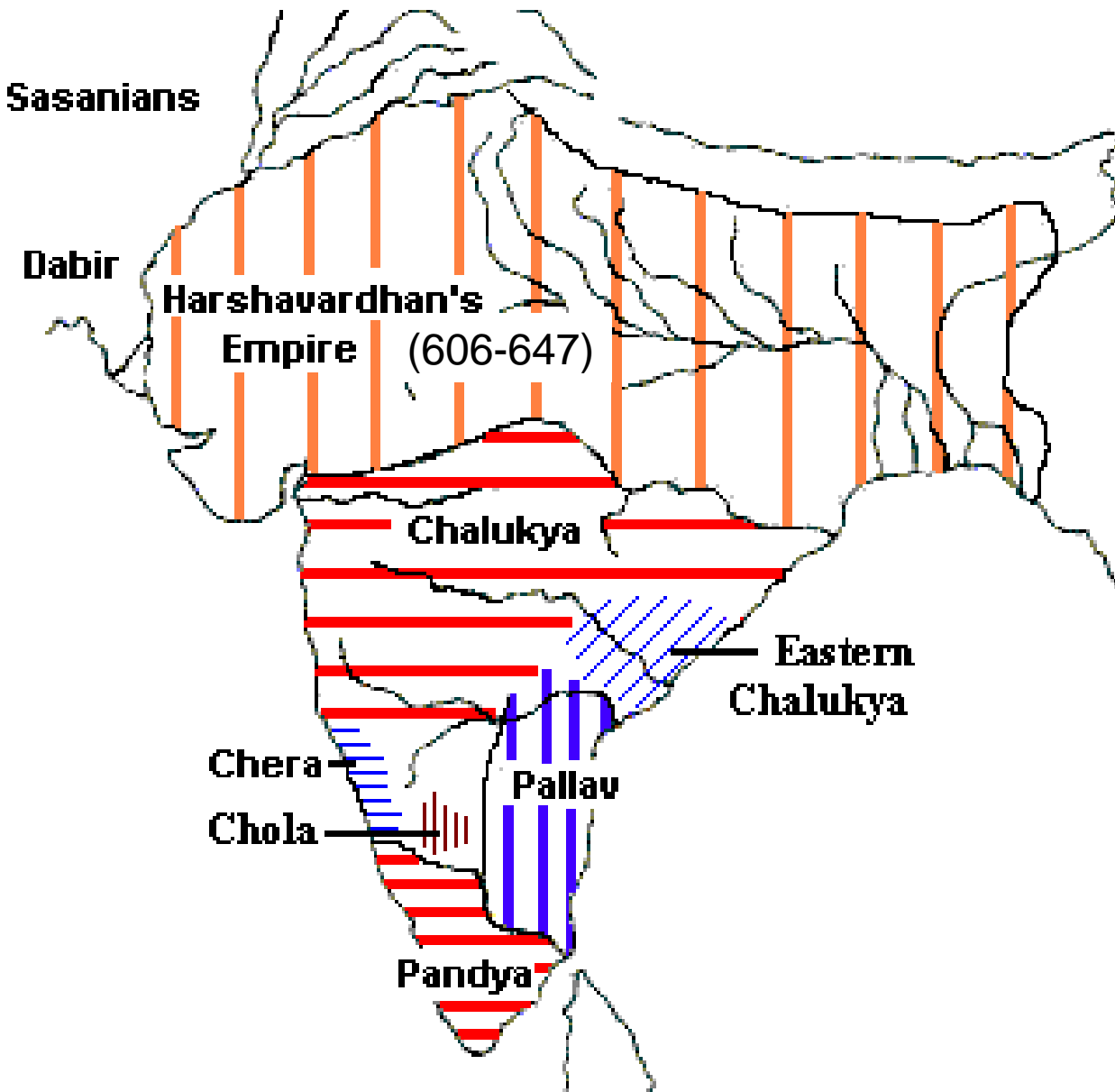


# Gupta Art

- **Hindu temple architecture**
  - **First international style in Asia, spreading to China, Japan, Central Asia, Southeast Asia**



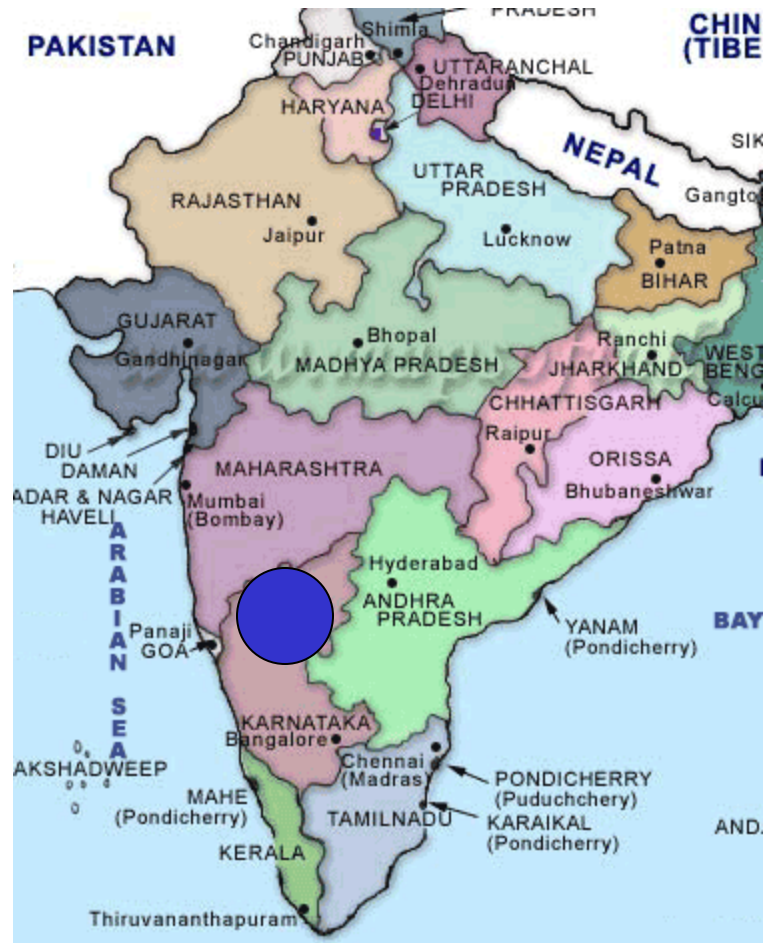
# Enters Dravidian India



- **Chalukya (6th to 12th c)**
- **Pallava (4th to 9th c)**

# Chalukya Art

- Badami
- Aihole
- Pattadakal



# Chalukya Art

- Badami 1 (Shiva)





# Chalukya Art

- Badami 2 & 3

Vishnu



- **Aihole**





# Chalukya Art

- **Pattadakal**

Mallikarjuna temple (745)



Virupaksha temple (725 AD)



- **Pattadakal**

Virupaksha temple



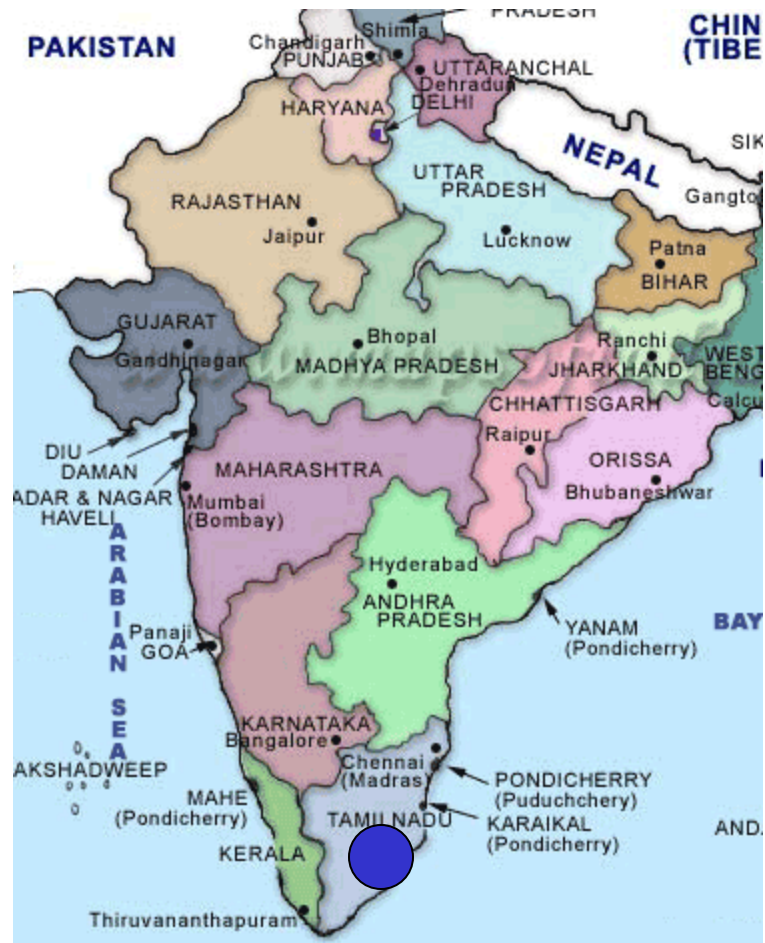
Mallikarjuna temple





# Pallava Art

- Mamallapuram
- Kanchipuram





# Pallava Art

- **Mamallapuram**

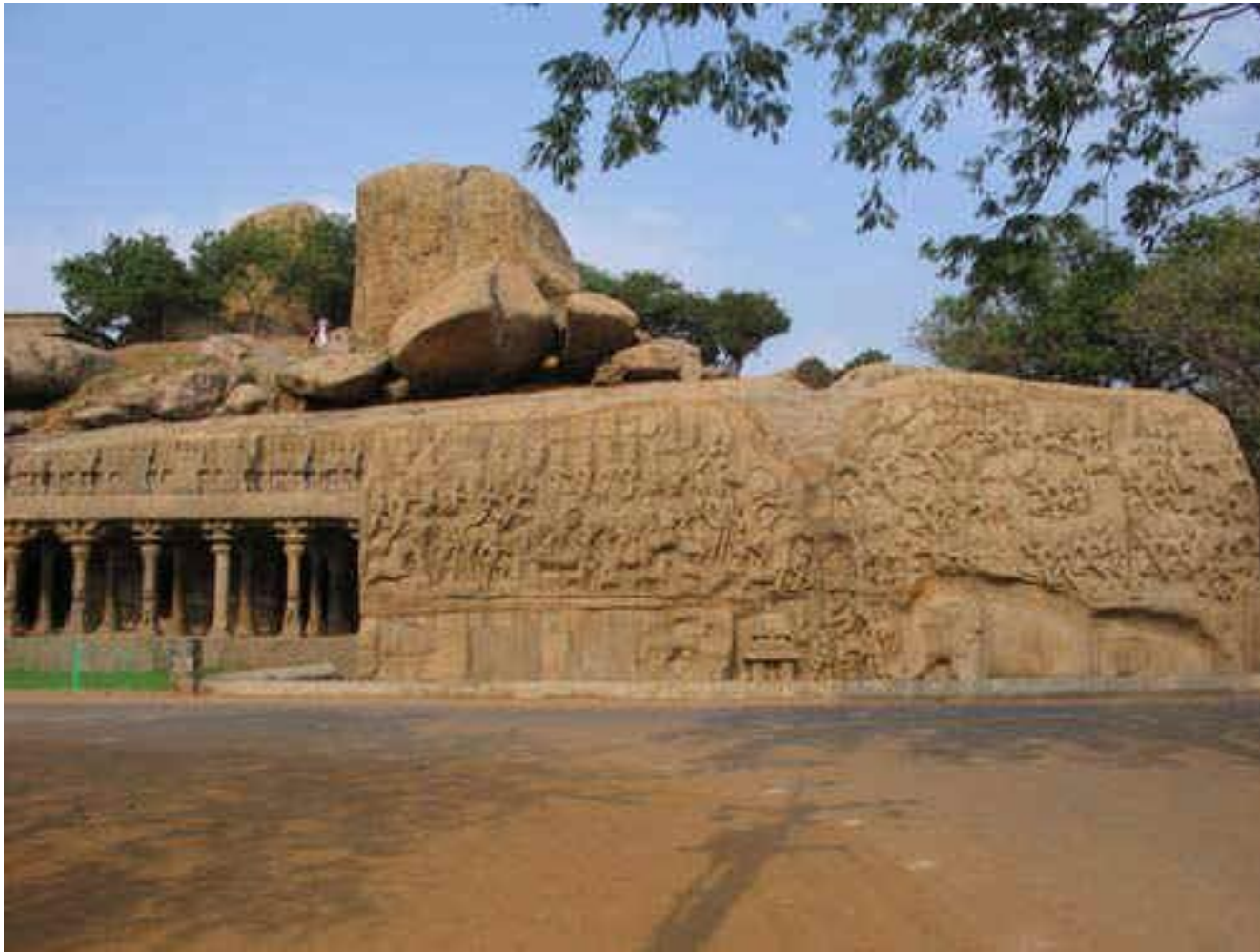
Relief of Arjuna's Penance (7th c)



# Pallava Art

- **Mamallapuram**

Relief of Krishna Mandapa (7th c)





# Pallava Art

- **Mamallapuram**

## Relief of Krishna Mandapa (7th c)



# Pallava Art

- **Mamallapuram: temples carved in the living rock**



Panch Rathas (630 AD)







# Panch Rathas (630 AD)



# Pallava Art

- **Mamallapuram: a free-standing temple**

Shore/Arjuna temple (700 AD)





# Sailodbhava Art

- Bhubaneswar

Parashurameshvara temple (65#AD)









# Pallava Art

- **Kanchipuram**

Kailasanatha temple (720 AD)

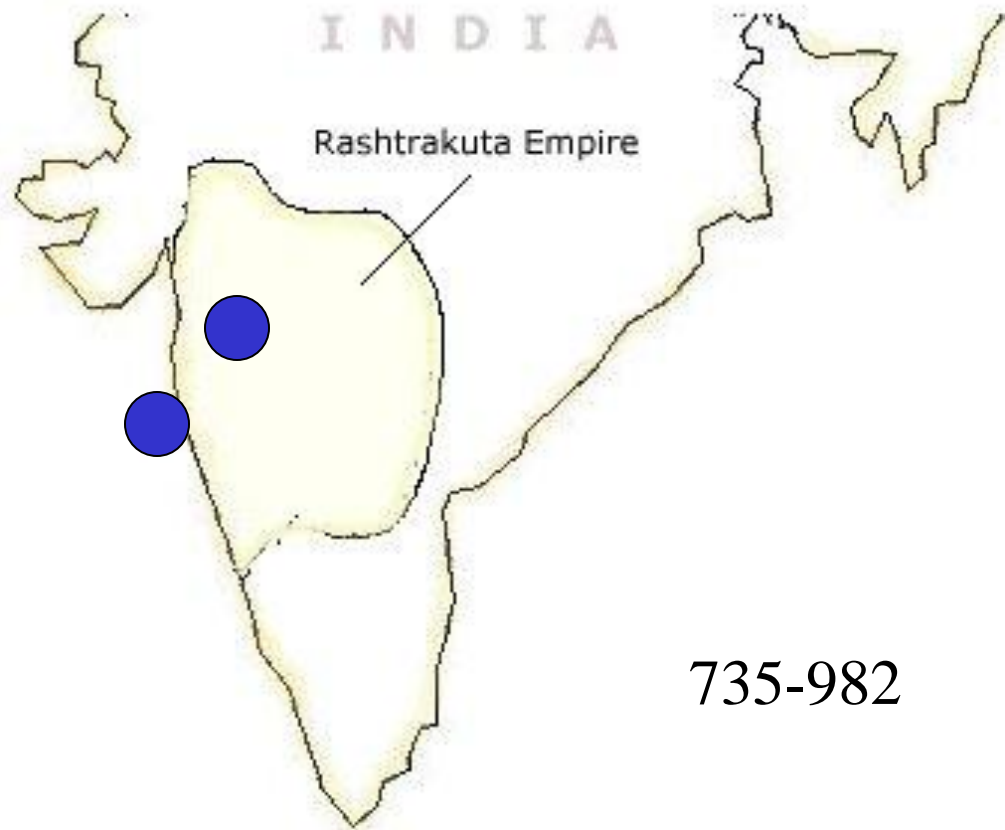






# Rastrakuta Art

- **Ellora: Buddhist, Jain and Hindu rock-cut temples**
- **Elephanta: Hindu caves**





# Rastrakuta Art

- **Elephanta caves**



# Rastrakuta Art

- **Ellora: Kailasa**



# Indian Philosophy

- **Adi Shankara (Kerala, 788AD), first great Hindu philosopher (Vedanta school)**

# Bhakti

- **South-Indian bhakti (8th-11th c AD)**
  - **Hymns in Tamil by two groups of poets, Nayanars (worshippers of Shiva) and Alvars (Vishnu)**
  - **Singing in the language of ordinary people (not sanskrit) and passionately (almost erotically) intense**
  - **Sense of unrestrained joy, expressed in music and dance**
  - **The god's dancing girls (devadasis, sometimes also prostitutes)**
  - **Bhakti poets (writing in vernacular, not sanskrit) belong to any class (not only brahmin)**



# Bhakti

- **South-Indian bhakti (8th-11th c AD)**
  - **Popular deities for bhakti**
    - **Vishnu**
    - **Shiva**
    - **Devi/ Durga/ Parvati/ Lakshmi/ Saraswati**
    - **Ganesha**
    - **Surya**
    - **Subrahmanya**

# Bhakti

- **South-Indian bhakti (8th-11th c AD)**
  - **Great walled temple complexes of South India: small cities containing several shrines, bathing tanks, administrative offices, residences of the temple employees, workshops, bazaars, schools, banks, etc.**

# Bhakti

- **South-Indian bhakti (8th-11th c AD)**
  - **Vimana (pyramidal instead North India's shikhara/ curved tower)**
  - **Mandapa (pillared hall)**
  - **Gopura (multi-storey tower-gate)**

# History of India

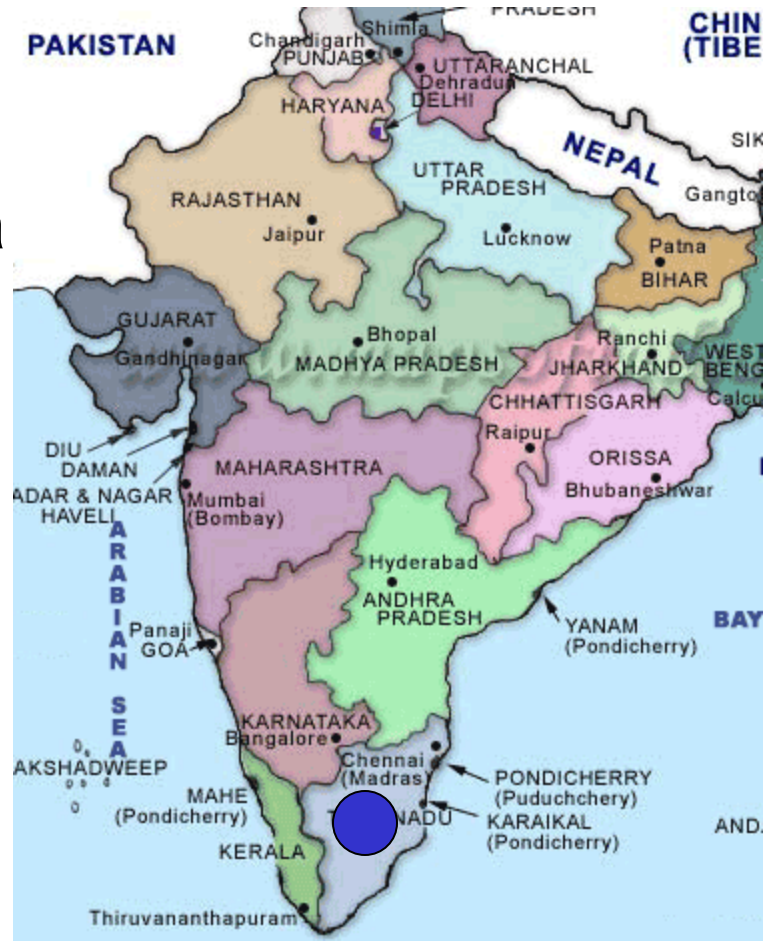
- Pandyan (southern India and Sri Lanka, 0 to 15th c)
- Chola (southern India and Indonesia, 0 to 13th c)



Chola Empire at the height of its power

# Chola Art

- Chidambaram: Nataraja temple (9th century)
- Thanjavur: Brihadiswara temple (11th century)





# Chola Art

Shiva as ether

- Chidambaram









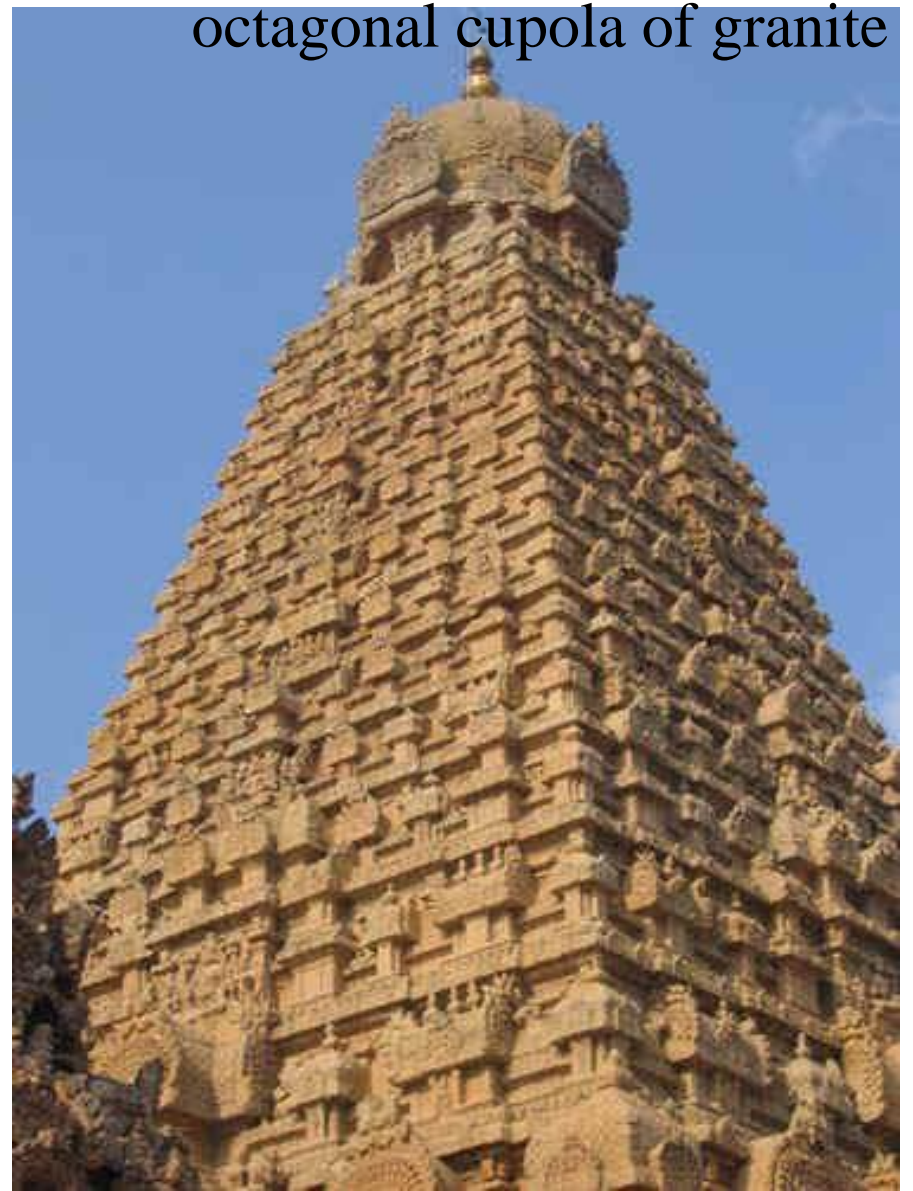


108 poses of the cosmic dance

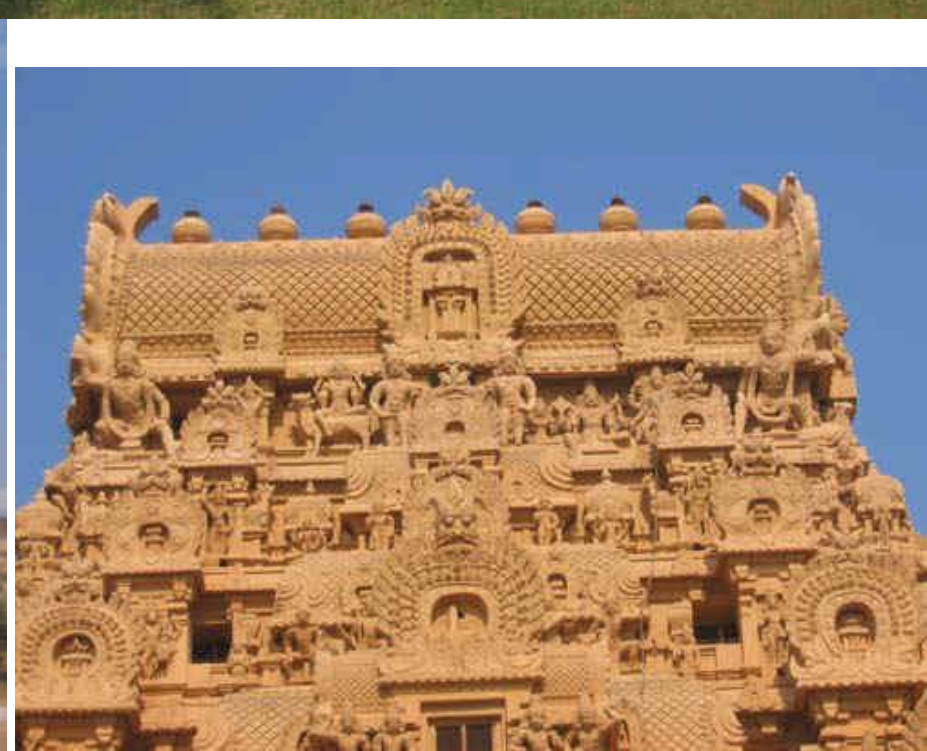


# Chola Art

- **Thanjavur**











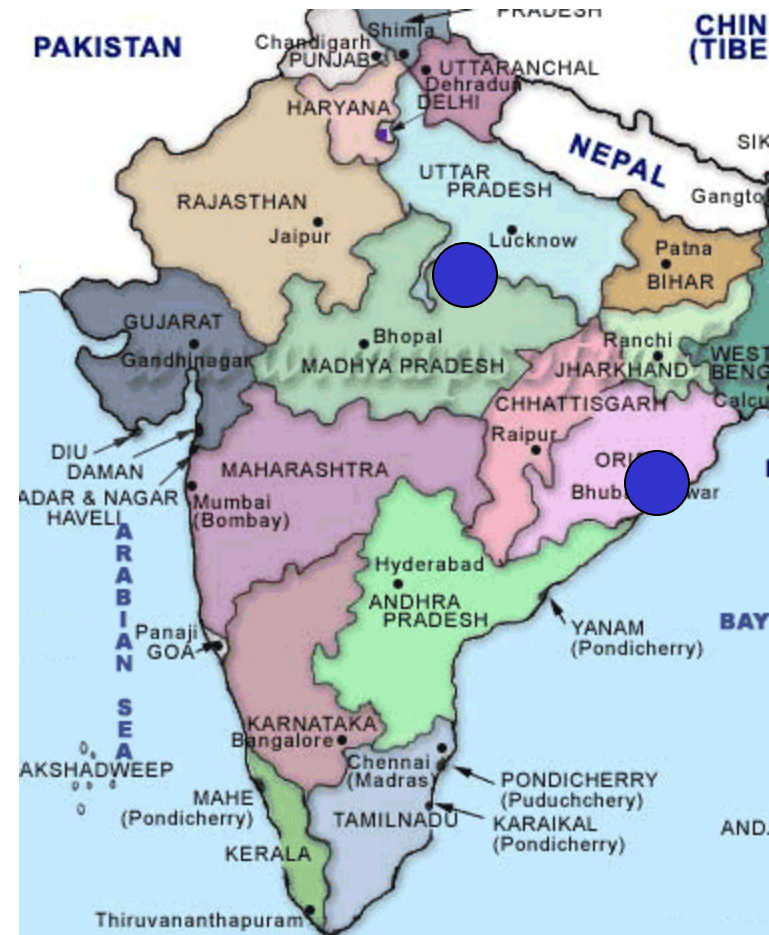




four-mter tall.linga

# Bhakti Art

- Regional variations:
  - Khajuraho (Chandela dynasty)
  - Orissa (e.g., Ganga dynasty)





# Chandela Art

- **Khajuraho (10th-11th century)**

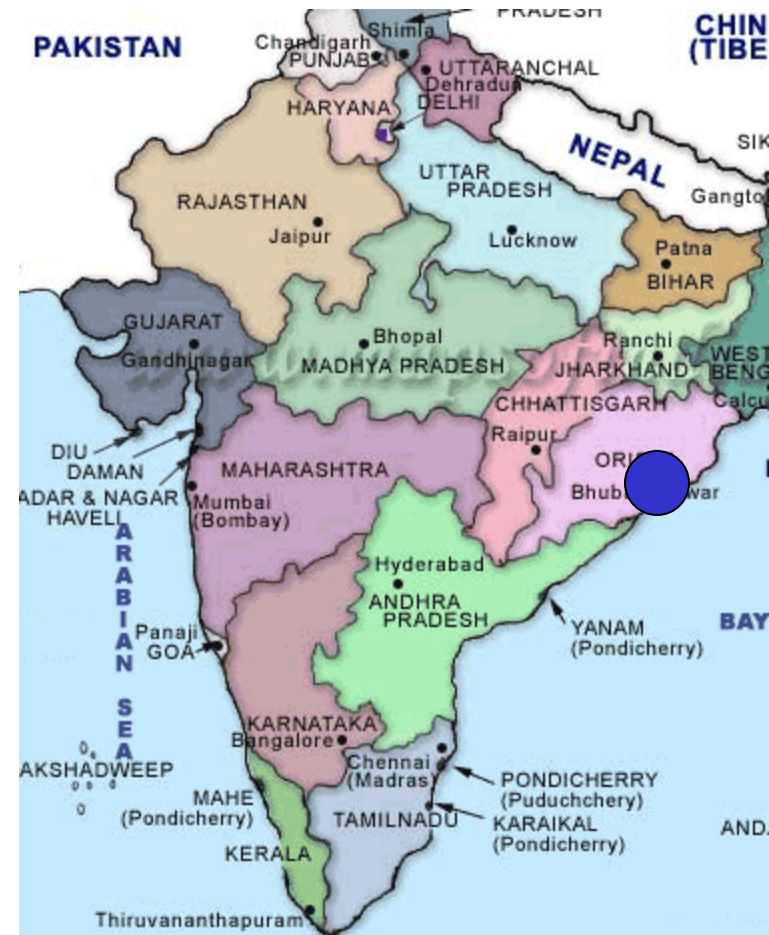


Kandarya Mahadeva



# Ganga Art

- **Eastern Gangas (1038-1568):**
  - Bhubaneswar (11th century)
  - Konark (13th century)





# Ganga Art

- **Bhubaneswar**

**Brahmeshvara**



**Mukteshvara**



**Rajarani**





# Ganga Art

- **Bhubaneswar: Rajarani**









- Konark



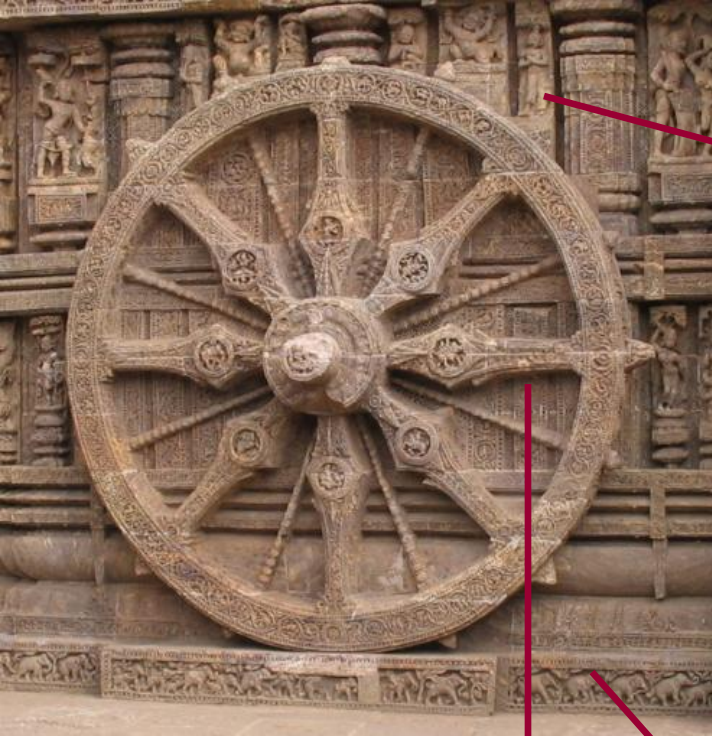




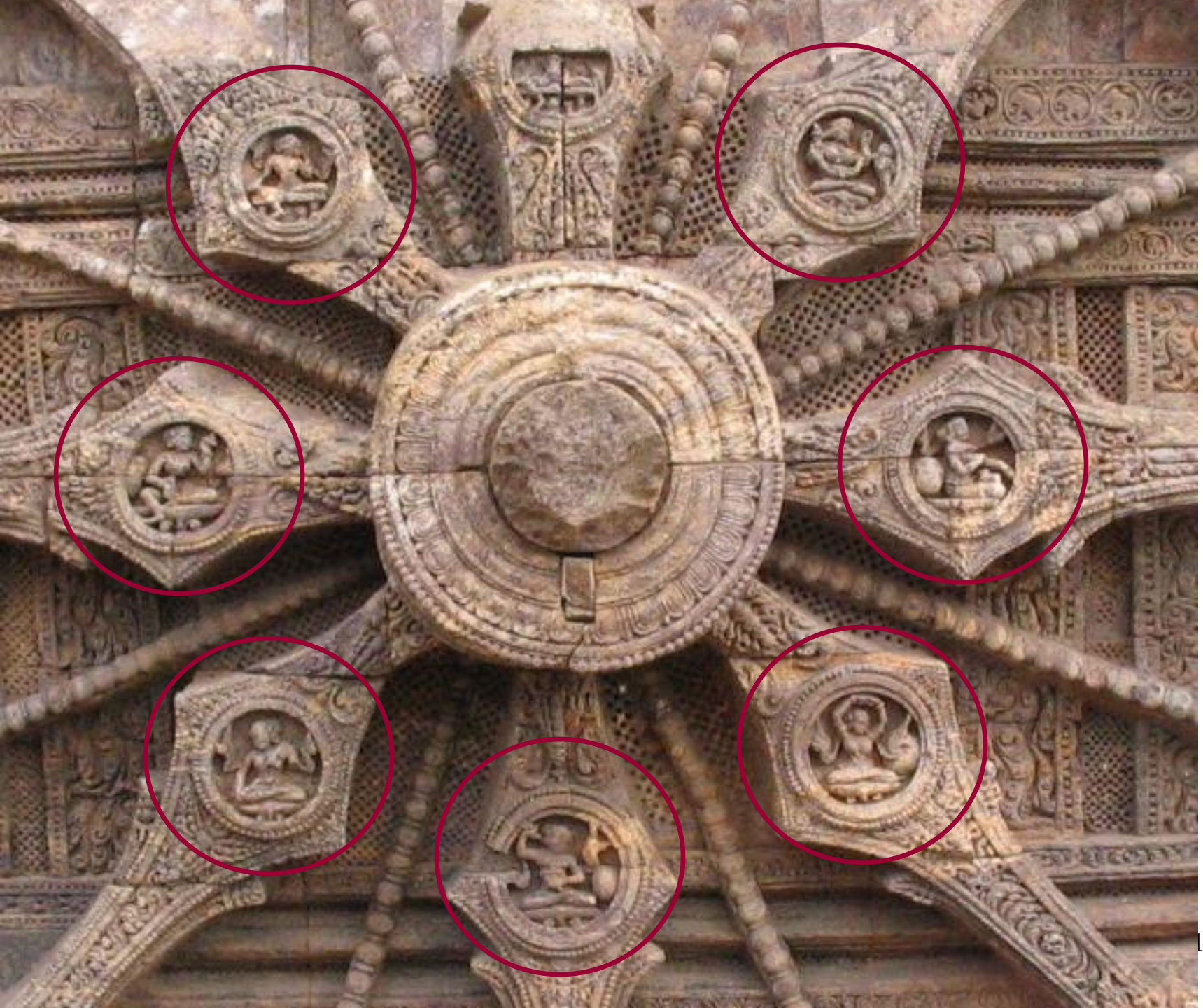


















# Jain Art

- Mt Abu (11th-13th century)





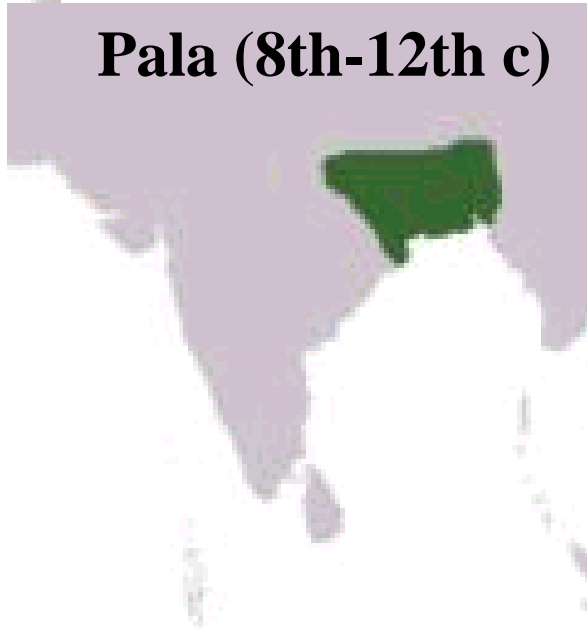
# History of India

- **Medieval maps**

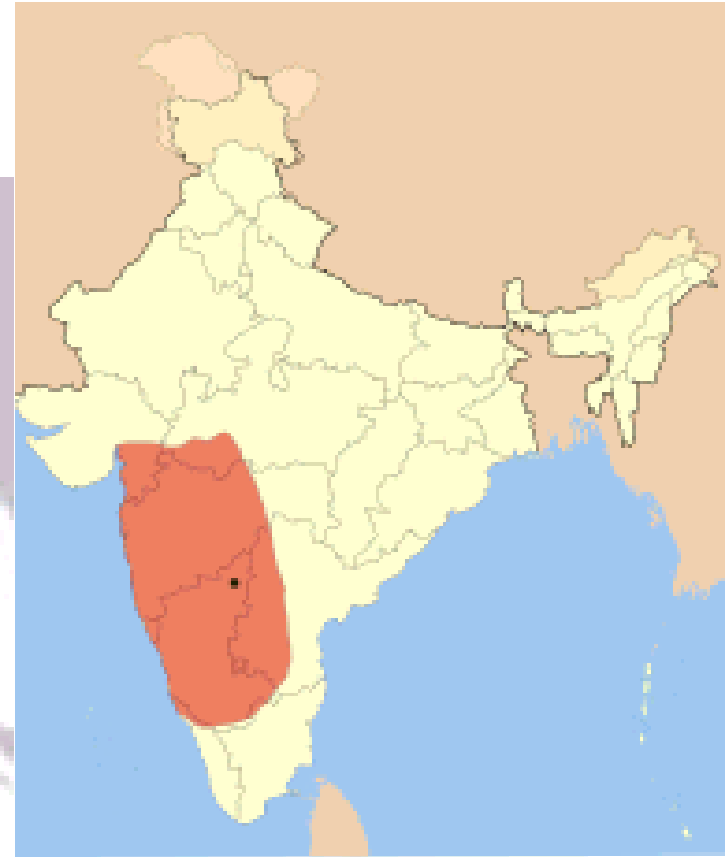
**Pratihara (6th-11th c)**



**Pala (8th-12th c)**

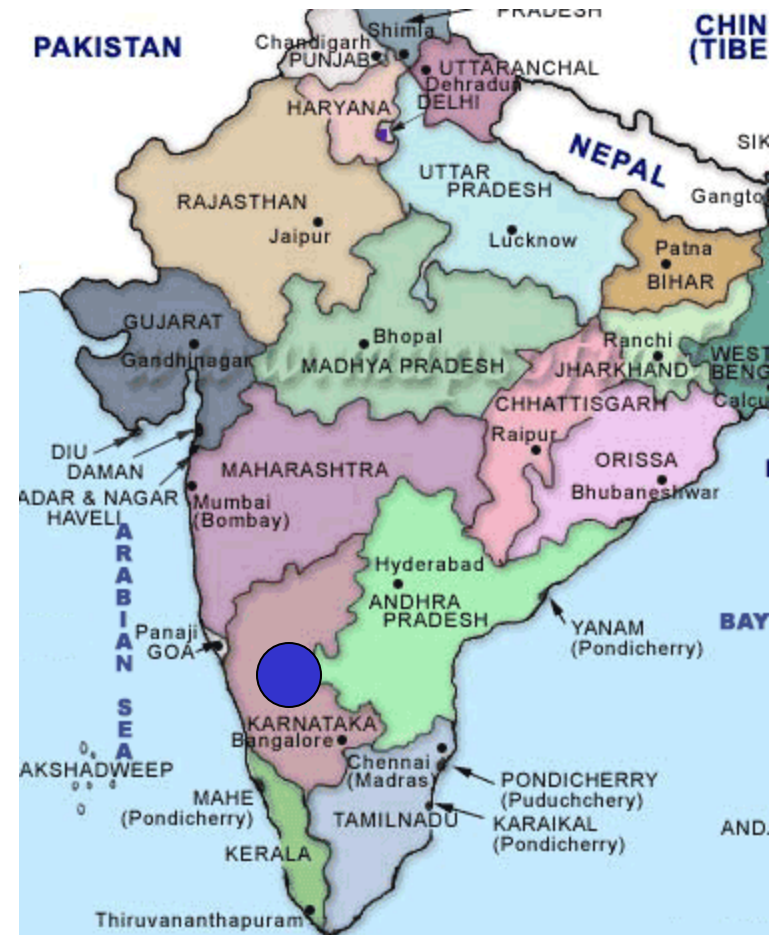


**Hoysala (1020-1342)**



# Hoysala Art

- Hoysala temples: star-shaped on jagged platforms and topped by a shikhara
- Completely covered with sculptures
- Belur: Chennakeshava temple (1117)
- Halebid: Hoysaleswara temple (1150)
- Somnathpur: Keshava temple (1268 AD)



- **Belur**
  - asymmetric layout
  - interior





















- Halebid



twin temples





- Halebid









- **Somnatpur**
  - dedicated to Vishnu



**three star-shaped pyramids and a hall on top of one platform**



- Somnatpur







# Hindu Art

- Hindu
- Little spirituality in Hindu temples (as opposed to Buddhist and Jain temples)
- Nothing in Hindu temple makes you think about maya/moksha (in fact, almost the opposite: Hindu art looks like a baroque tribute to what should be maya)
- What is missing in Hindu temples (but pervasive in Christian and Muslim and Buddhist ones) is sorrow.
- The point of a Hindu temple seems to be to celebrate, not to mourn.
- Consistent with the Ramayana and the Mahabharata (that expressed a much more positive/optimistic outlook than the Upanishads) and with the bhakti movement
- Joyful devotion

# Indian Literature

- **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#)**



# Sri Lankan Art

- Polonnaruwa: Vatanage stupa (12th century)



Buddhist  
Very spiritual



# Sri Lankan Art

- Buddhist sorrow and spirituality: Polonnaruva

# Sri Lankan Art

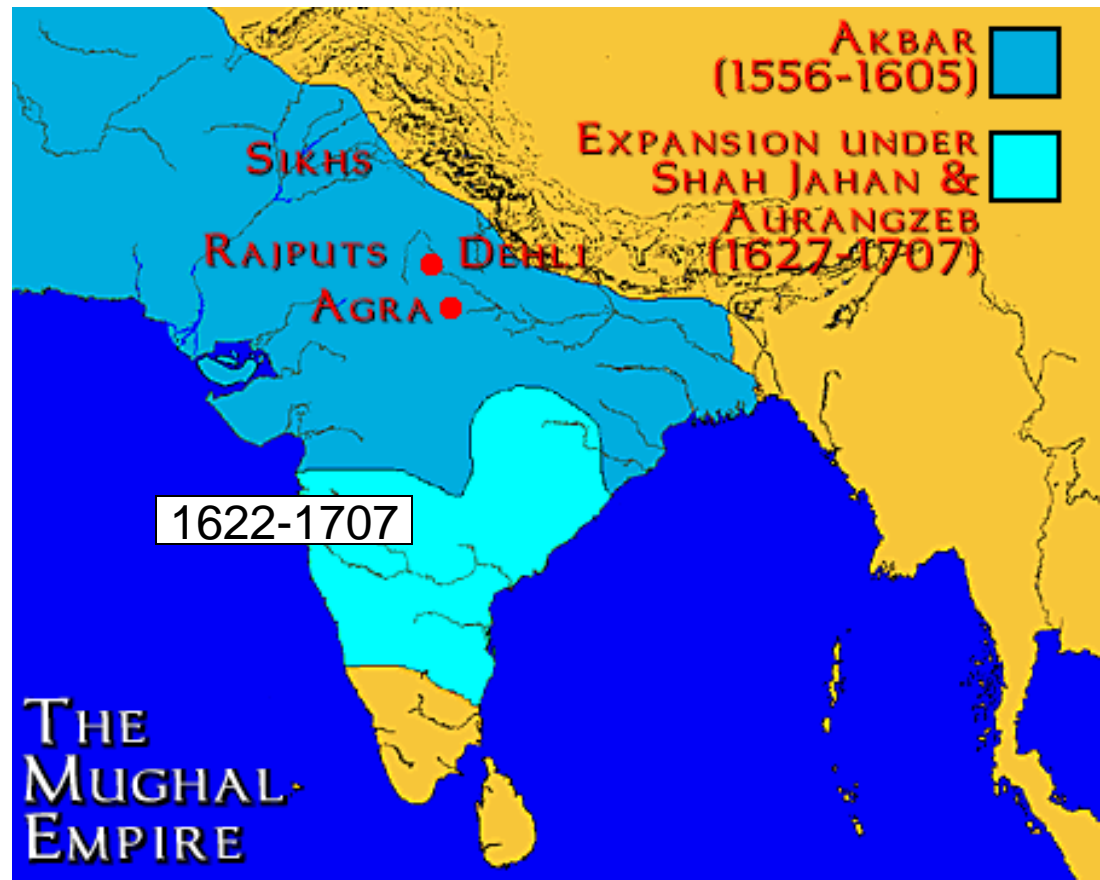
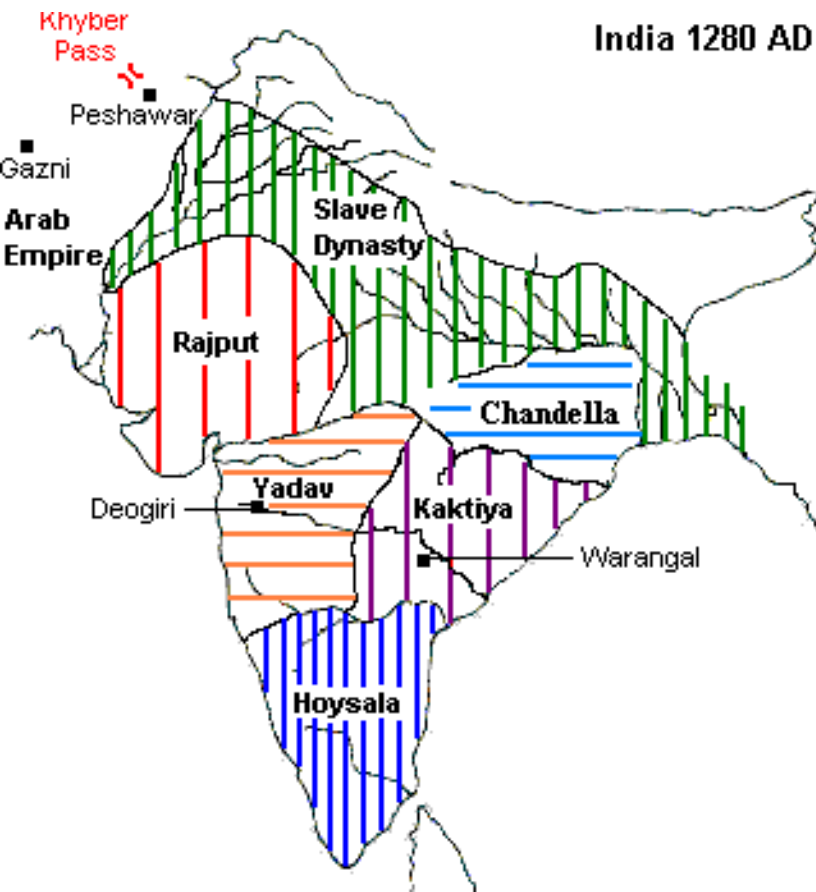
- Polonnaruva: Gol Vihara





# History of India

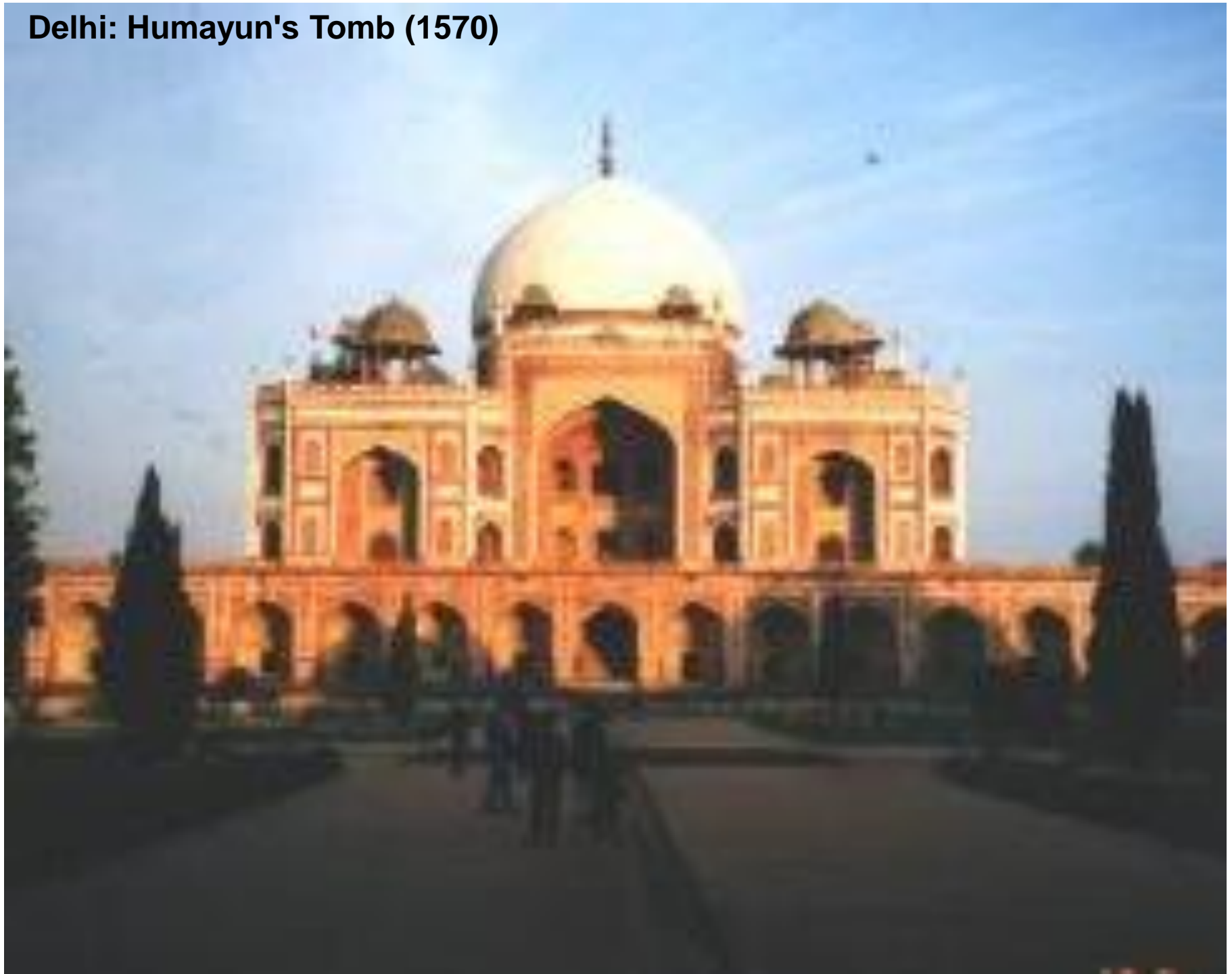
- **Muslim invasions:**
  - 1192-1526: Delhi sultanate
  - 1526-1707: Moghul



# Islamic Sorrow and Spirituality

- **Delhi**
- **Bijapur**
- **Agra**

**Delhi: Humayun's Tomb (1570)**

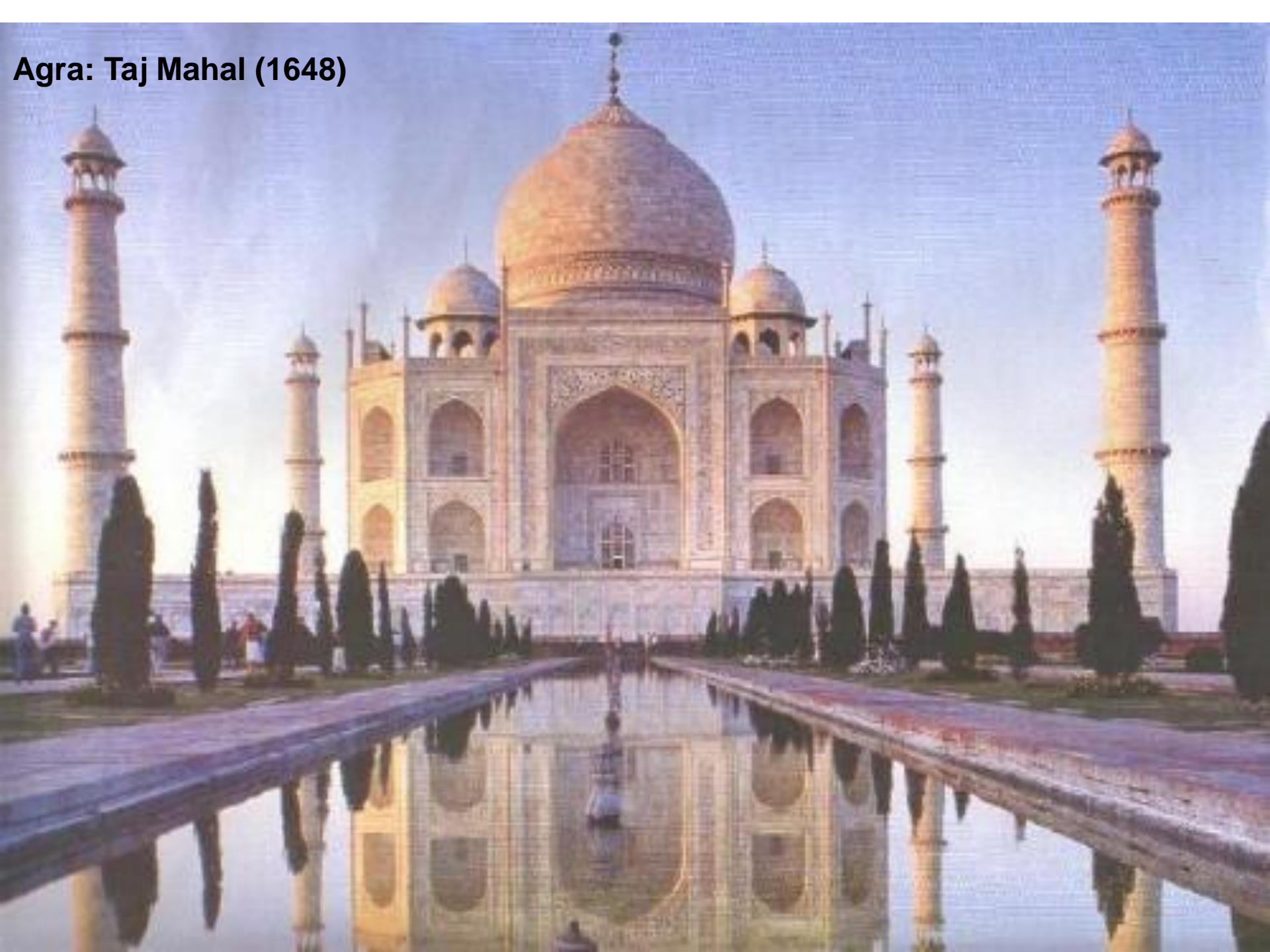




**Bijapur: Ibrahim Roza (1620)**



**Agra: Taj Mahal (1648)**





**Bijapur: Gol Gumbaz (1656)**





# Muslim Invasion

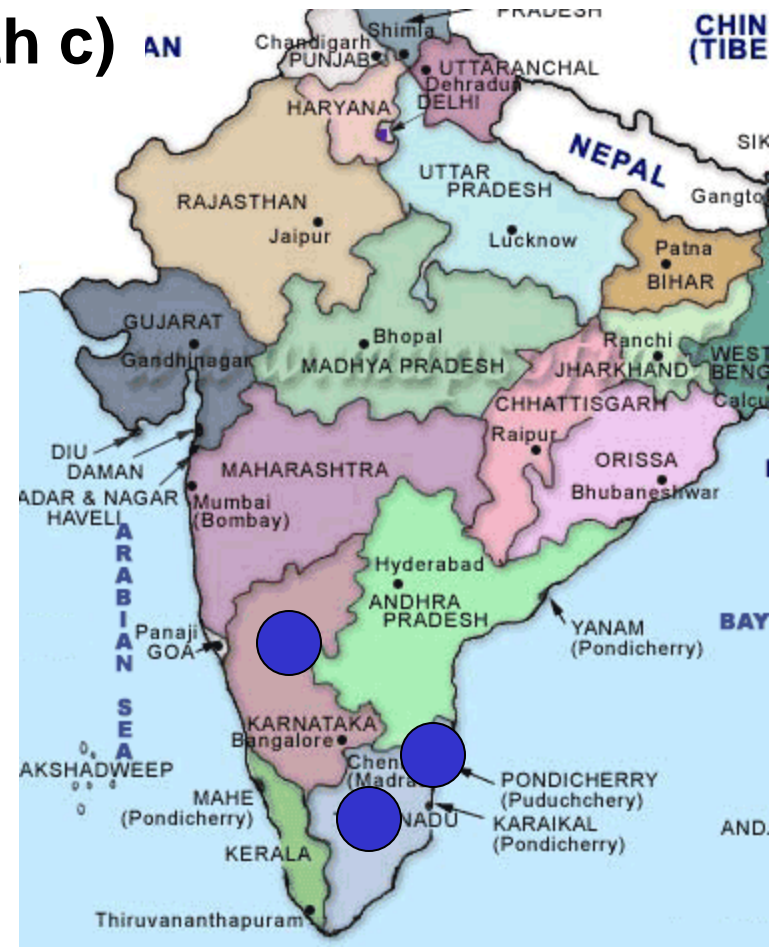
- **Muslims change the identity of North India**
- **Muslims destroy many Hindu and Jain temples**
- **South India, that had already resisted the Indo-European penetration, maintains the true “Hindu” identity**

# History of India



# Vijayanagar Art

- Shrirangam: Ranganatha (13th-17th c)
- Kanchipuram: Ekambareswara (1506)
- Kanchipuram: Devarajaswami (16th c)
- Hampi: ruins of ancient capital (16th c)
- Madurai: Minakshi Sundareswara (Nayak, 1659)





# Vijayanagar Art

- **Shrirangam**
  - **biggest functioning Hindu temple in the world**
  - **dedicated to Vishnu**
  - **21 gopuras**
  - **a low building with a gold-plated roof instead of the vimana**

- Shrirangam





- **Kanchipuram: Ekambareshvara (1506)**





# Vijayanagar Art

- **Kanchipuram: Devarajaswami (16th century)**



- Hampi







Garuda shrine



# Vijayanagar Art

- **Madurai: Minakshi Sundaresvara (1659)**
  - dedicated to Parvati and Shiva







**12 gopuras**

















1,000 column hall with sculptures



# The Hindu Temple

- The Hindu temple is also a place for social gathering
- Hindu religion does not prescribe how often the faithful have to visit the temple
- Families have a “god-room” to do "puja" at home
- Hindu temples are never silent/quiet
- The difference between home, town square and temple is more blurred than in other religions
- Hinduism encompasses every aspect of life, including sex.
- There are gods for everything.

# Jain Art

- **Palitana: Shatrunjaya sanctuary (16th c)**



- **Palitana: Shatrunjaya sanctuary (16th c)**





















North Ridge



















# Indian Literature

- **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##)
  - Premananda Bhatta (Gujarati, 1636): "Poems" (1734)
  - Vali Mohammed/ Vali Dakhni (Urdu, 1667): "Diwan"<sup>169</sup> (1707)

# Theorem

- **Worst Western misconception about India and China (and Japan etc): that they are all “Eastern” (Eastern philosophy, Eastern religion, Eastern art, etc)**
- **China and India have as much in common as France and Indonesia (different arts, different languages, different institutions, different traditions, different landscape, different economies...)**
- **“The central aim of Eastern mysticism is to experience all phenomena in the world as manifestations of the same ultimate reality” (Fritjof Capra)**

# Theorem

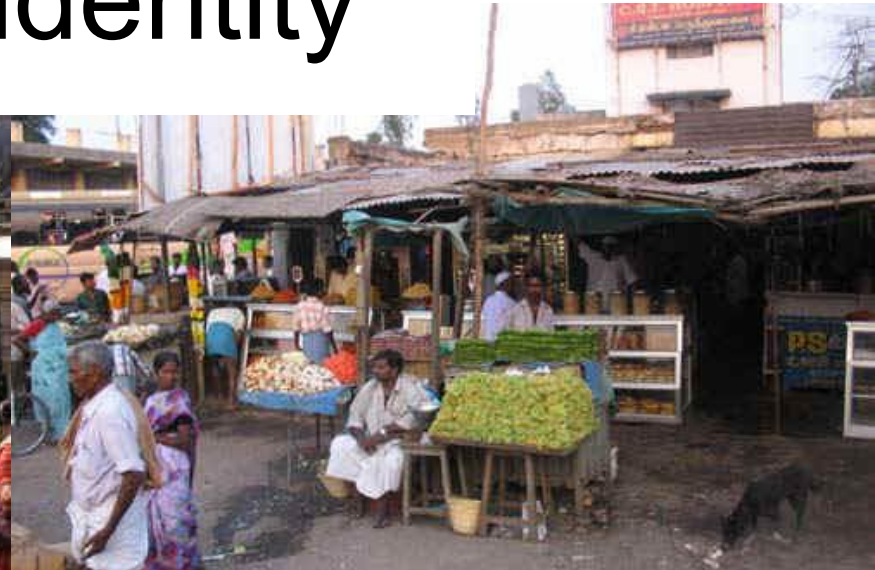
- **Dravidian India is the remnant of the third great cradle of world civilization, having survived the Indo-European and Muslim invasions**
- **Three different minds: West, India, China, the Indian mind being best represented today in South Dravidian India**



# India's Identity

- **Sensory overload**

# India's identity



















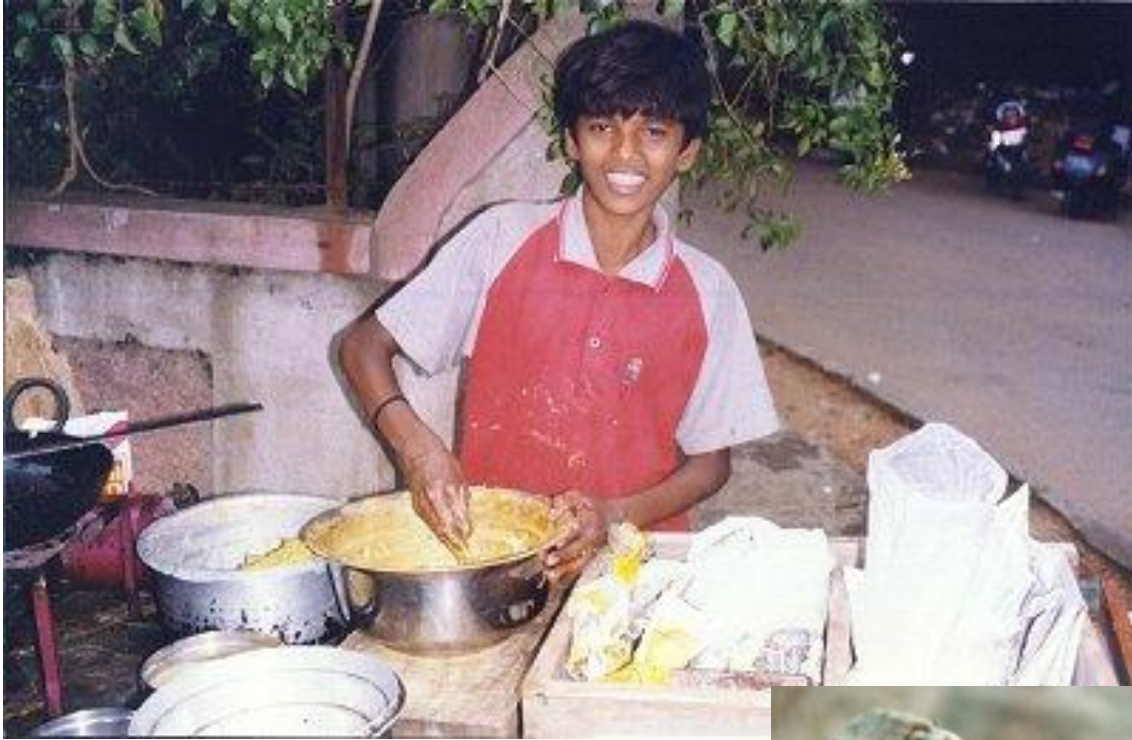




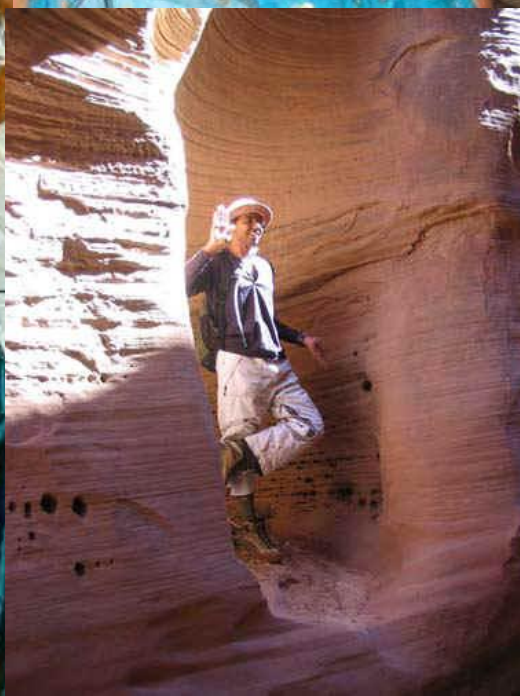
















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# India's identity

- **Distant relatives:**
  - **Persia (cultural deficit: more imports than exports)**
  - **Afghanistan (import: Islam, export: Buddhism)**
  - **China (one-way cultural trade, cultural surplus)**
  - **Indochina/Indonesia (ditto)**
  - **Christian Europe (cultural deficit)**
  - **USA (ditto... so far)**



# India's identity

- **Humanities**
  - **Vedas**
  - **Upanishads**
  - **Buddhist scriptures**
  - **Narrative poems**
  - **Classical Music: improvisation**
  - **Architecture (temples, religious)**
  - **Sculpture (temples, religious)**
  - **Painting (caves, religious)**

# India's identity

- **Humanities**
  - **Philosophy: six darshana + Buddhism**
    - **Samkhya: Atheism, World is real (due to two substances, prakriti and purusha)**
    - **Yoga: Theism (Isvara), World is real (prakriti/purusha)**
    - **Vedanta: Theism (Brahman), World is not real (only one substance, spirit)**



# India's identity

- **Sciences**
  - **Invention of the “Arabic” numerals**
  - **First treatise on algebra (Aryabhata, 499)**
  - **But way behind in Geometry and Astronomy**
  - **Nyaya, Vaishesika: Logic**
  - **Chess (6th c AD)**
  - **...**
  - **Modern physicists: Satyendra Bose,  
Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman,  
Subramaniam Chandrasekar, Amitaba Sen,  
Abhay Ashtekar**

# India's identity

- **20th century**
  - **Democracy**
  - **Melting Pot**
  - **First time in its history that it is divided along linguistic borders**
  - **Emigration (not as British slaves)**



# India's identity

- **The modern country of India:**
  - **Size: 3,287,590 sq km (seventh largest in the world)**
  - **Population: 1,095,351,995 (second or first in the world)**
  - **Fourth largest economy in the world (purchasing-power parity)**
  - **Median age: 24.9 (USA: 35.3)**
  - **Population growth rate: 1.38% (USA: 0.91%)**
  - **Life expectancy at birth: 64.71 (USA: 77.6)**

# India's identity

- **The modern country of India:**
  - **Religions:**
    - **Hindu 80.5%**
    - **Muslim 13.4%**
    - **Christian 2.3%**
    - **Sikh 1.9%**
    - **Buddhist 0.5% (California: 1.6%)**
    - **Jains 0.4%**
- **Fourth largest Muslim community:**
  - 1. Indonesia 88% of 245M = 215M**
  - 2. Pakistan = 166**
  - 3. Bangladesh = 148**
  - 4. India 13.4% of 1.1B = 147**

# India's identity

- **Religions of the world:**
  - **Christians 33.03% (of which Roman Catholics 17.33%, Protestants 5.8%, Orthodox 3.42%, Anglicans 1.23%)**
  - **Muslims 20.12%**
  - **Hindus 13.34%**
  - **Buddhists 5.89%**
  - **Sikhs 0.39%**
  - **Jews 0.23%**

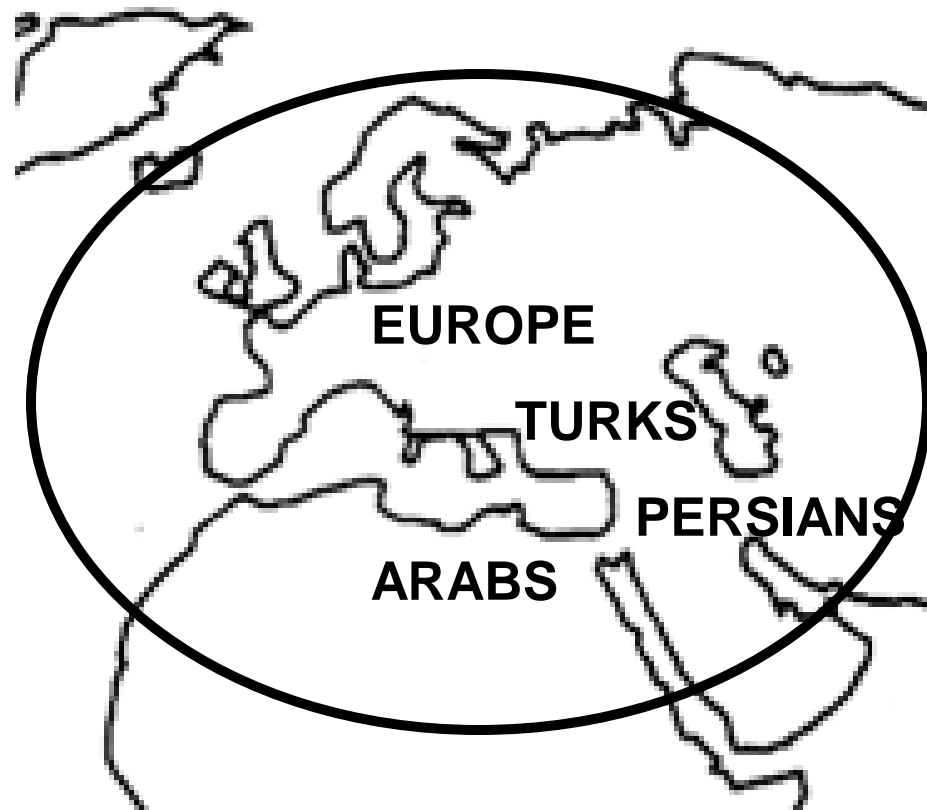


# India's identity

- **Impact on the USA**
  - **British, Jews, Europeans, Chinese (colonizers and emigrants): science, warfare, family, political institutions, art/literature, spiritual life**
  - **Africans (slaves, not emigrants), Hispanic (conquistadores, not colonizers): party, sports, sexual revolution, gangs, music/dance, material life**
  - **Indians: ?**

# India vs China and the West

- **The Western world: Persia, Jews, Christian world, Islamic world**
- **(Warning: in the 21st century the entire world is rapidly becoming westernized)**



# **India vs China and the West**

- **Worst Western misconception about India and China (and Japan etc): that they are all “Eastern” (Eastern philosophy, Eastern religion, etc)**
- **China and India have as much in common as France and Indonesia (different arts, different languages, different institutions, different traditions, different landscape, different economies...)**



# **India vs China and the West**

- **“The central aim of Eastern mysticism is to experience all phenomena in the world as manifestations of the same ultimate reality” (Fritjof Capra)**
- **This is common to all kinds of mysticism all over the world, from Herakleites (6th c BC) and Parmenides (5th c BC) to the Sufis to the Gnostics (1st c BC) to the Neo-Platonists (3rd c AD) to the Kabbalah (12th c) to the Pantheists (Spinoza, 17th c)**
- **The Upanishads are roughly contemporary with Herakleites and Daoism**
- **Pantheism is one of the most ubiquitous views of the world, in all ages in all parts of the world**
- **Neither Buddhism nor Confucianism nor Shintoism are Pantheistic, nor is China’s folk religion**

# India vs China and the West

- **West:** a continent (in fact, more than one) that was never one nation
- **China:** one nation, not a continent
- **India:** a continent that was at times one nation



# India vs China and the West

- **West:** writing for accounting
- **China:** writing for divination
- **India:** writing for?





# **India vs China and the West**

- **West: multi-ethnic, lots of competition/warfare**
- **China: homogeneous most of the time**
- **India: multi-ethnic but little competition/warfare**

# **India vs China and the West**

- **West: emphasis on war (both science and finance are driven by war)**
  - **China: emphasis on social/political (outer) peace (meritocracy, massive public works)**
  - **India: emphasis on inner peace**
- 
- **West: violent chaos**
  - **China: peaceful order**
  - **India: peaceful chaos**

# India vs China and the West

- **West: evil is ubiquitous**
- **China: evil does not exist, only inferior races and wrong behavior**
- **India: you “are” your own evil (bad karma)**



# India vs China and the West

- **West: monotheist**
- **China: atheist (how to build an efficient society, how to live in harmony with nature)**
- **India: polytheist**

# India vs China and the West

- **West: linear time (there is a beginning and there is an end to everything)**
- **China: static time (China always was and always will be the same)**
- **India: cyclic time (Brahma recreates the universe)**
- **West: emphasis on innovation/progress/knowledge**
- **China: emphasis on tradition**
- **India: emphasis on ultimate reality (self-knowledge)**



# India vs China and the West

- **Western religion: creation myth at odds with Physics**
- **Chinese religion (Confucius, Daoism, Buddhism): no creation myth**
- **Hindu religion: creation myth surprisingly consistent with Physics**



# India vs China and the West

- West: prophets, oracles, etc (announce the **future**)
- China: sages (revere the **past**)
- India: gurus/ spiritual teachers (advise the **present**)

# **India vs China and the West**

- **West: exploration (exploring the world adds knowledge, and there are other places worth knowing)**
  - **China: there are no other places worth knowing (exploring the world does not add to knowledge)**
  - **India: no exploration (exploring the OUTER world does not add to knowledge)**
- 
- **West: a land of emigrants, explorers and colonizers**
  - **China: a land of emigrants**
  - **India: not a land of emigrants, explorers or colonizers**

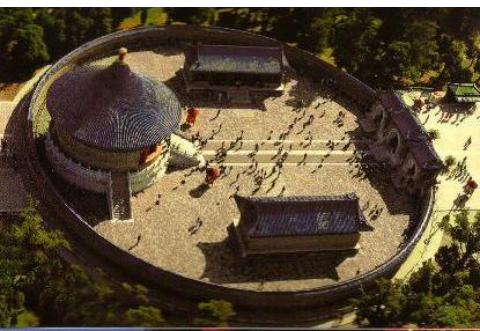
# **India vs China and the West**

- **West: we are all equal**
- **China: we “must” be all equal (optimizes society)**
- **India: we are all different**
  
- **West: democracy because of Christianity (we are all equal) and communism as well (we are all equal)**
- **China: democracy an alien concept (because freedom weakens society), but communism a natural concept**
- **India: democracy a natural concept because of many cultures on equal footing**



# India vs China and the West

- **West:** architecture is grandeur (the king is great, the state is great, god is great)
- **China:** architecture is harmony (harmony with nature, mandate from heaven)
- **India:** architecture is joy

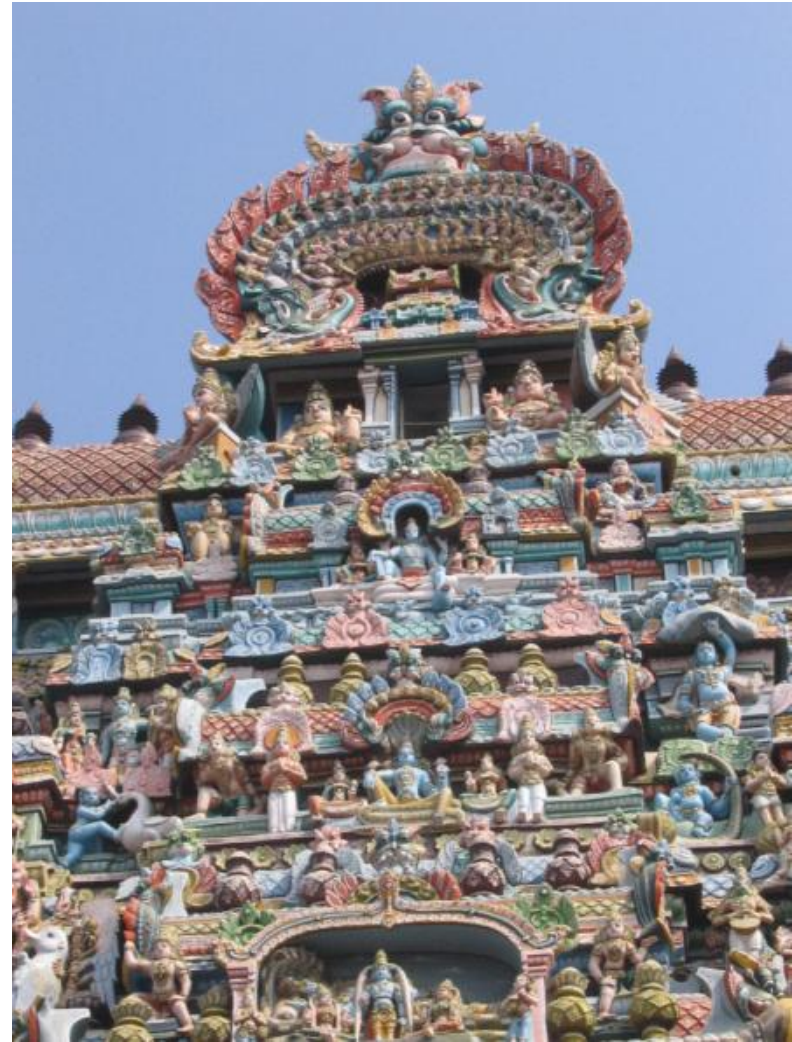


# India vs China and the West

- **West: emotional storytelling**
- **China: telling, not storytelling**
- **India: exemplary/didactic story telling**

# India vs China and the West

- **West: The individual**
- **China: Society**
- **India: The legend/story**





# India vs China and the West

- **West: sex is evil**
- **China: sex is natural (“decency”)**
- **India: sex is a performing art**

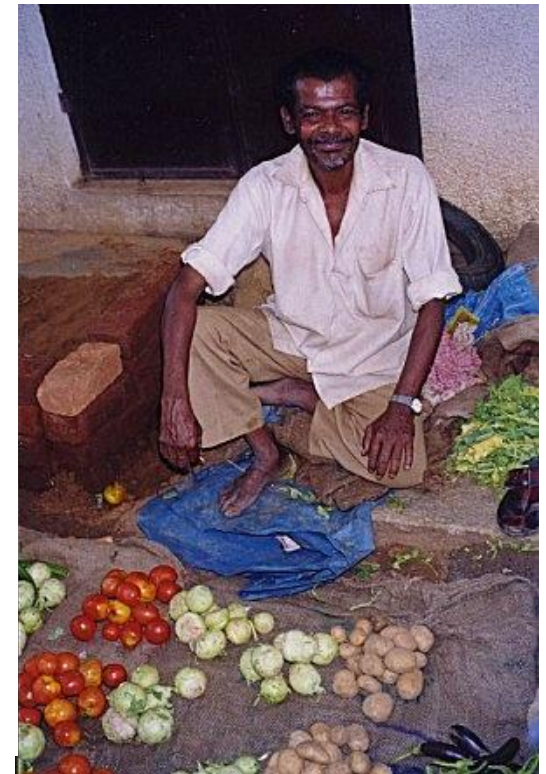
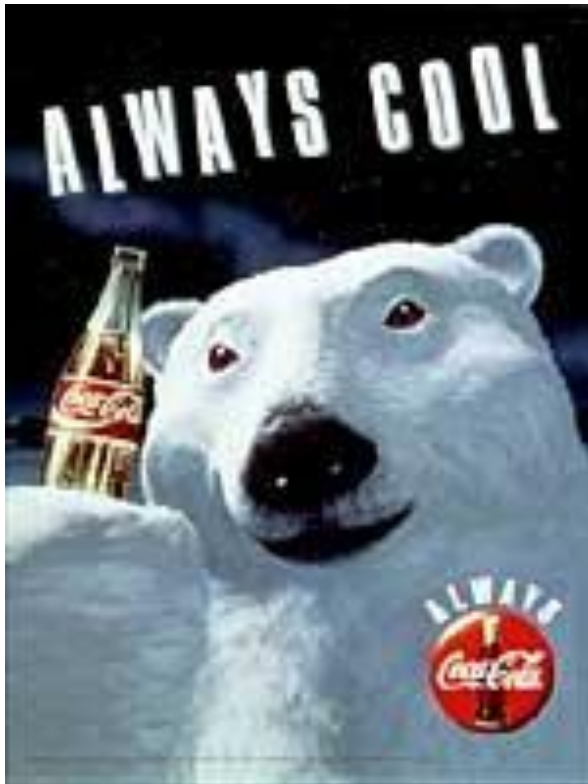


# India vs China and the West

- **West: death is bad**
- **China: death is natural**
- **India: death is birth**

# India vs China and the West

- West: i'll make you want what i sell
- China: I'll sell you what you want
- India: i'll sell you what i have





# India vs China and the West

- **West: only Western sports matter (win all gold medals in western sports)**
- **China: all sports matter (win all gold medals)**
- **India: only cricket matters (win zero gold medals)**

# India vs China and the West

- **Peaks of human civilization**

- **Indian sculpture**
- **Chinese painting**
- **Western architecture**

- **Indian philosophy**
- **Chinese politics**
- **Western science**

- **Indian dance**
- **Chinese ?**
- **Western music**

# India vs China and the West

- **West: Individual bullshit**





# India vs China and the West

- **China: Government bullshit**



# India vs China and the West

- **India: Cowshit**



# India

You must be the change you wish to see in the world (Mahatma Gandhi)