

God Dreaming

The Origins and Early
Development of Hindu Culture

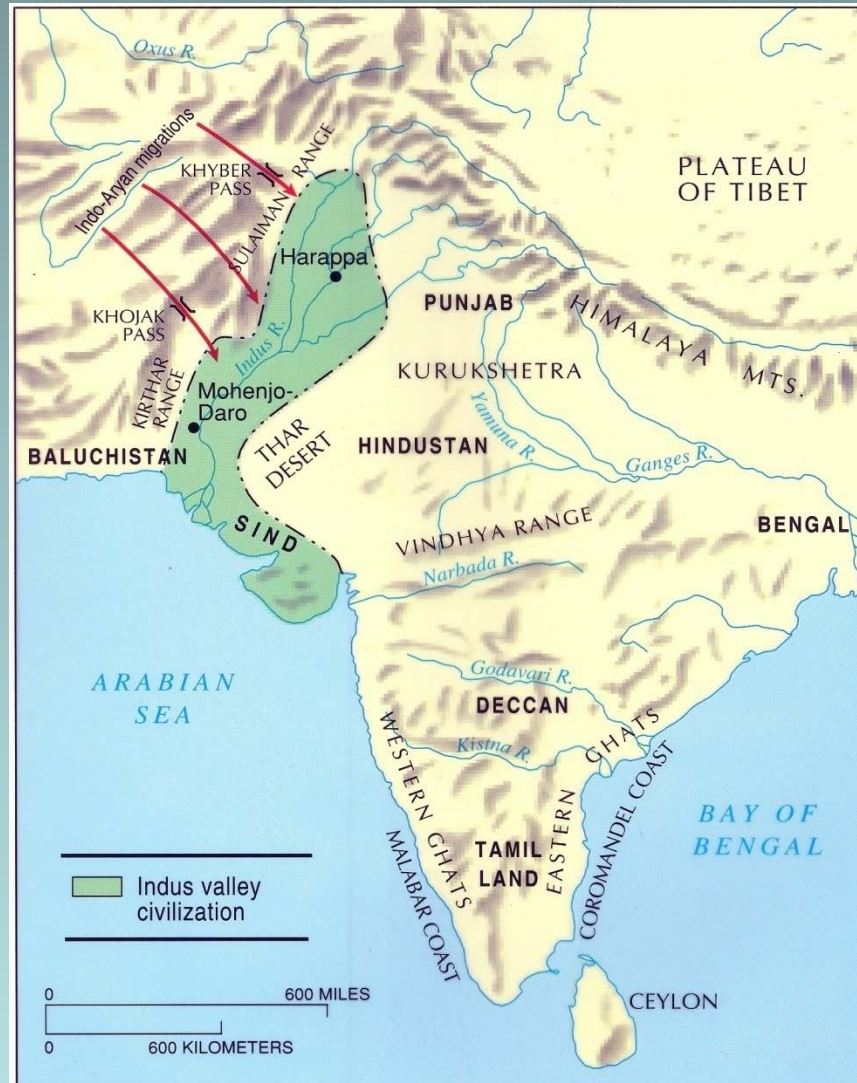
I. The Hindu Synthesis

- A. Harappan (Indus River Valley) Civilization (2500–1800 B.C.)
- B. The *Vedas* (1200–900 B.C.) Brahminism
(The Way of Action or Ritual)
- C. The *Upanishads* (*Vedantas*) (800–200 B.C.): Brahmanism
(The Way of Knowledge)
- D. Hinduism (The Way of Devotion)
- E. Synthesis of Bhaktism, Brahminism, and Brahmanism
(ca. 200 B.C.)

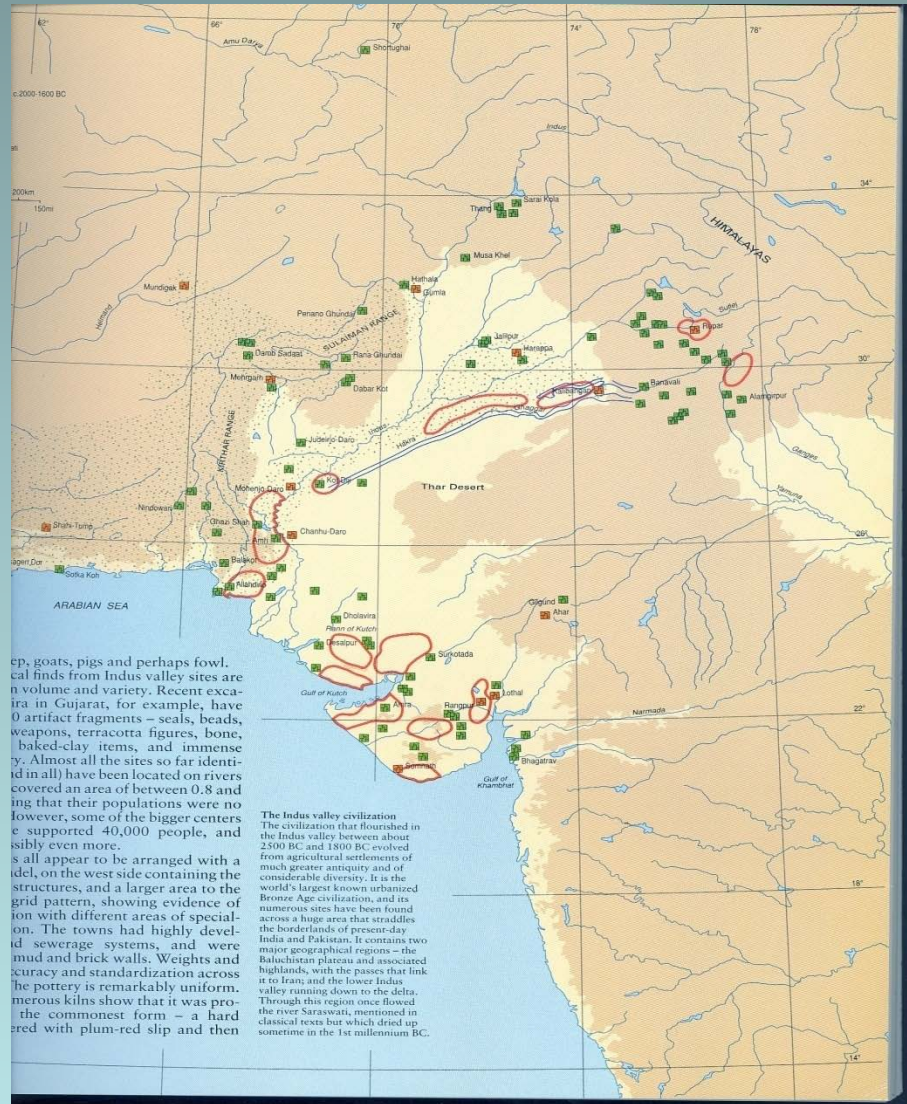
A. Harappan (Indus River Valley) Civilization (2500–1800 B.C.)

1. Cities: Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa

Indus Valley Civilization



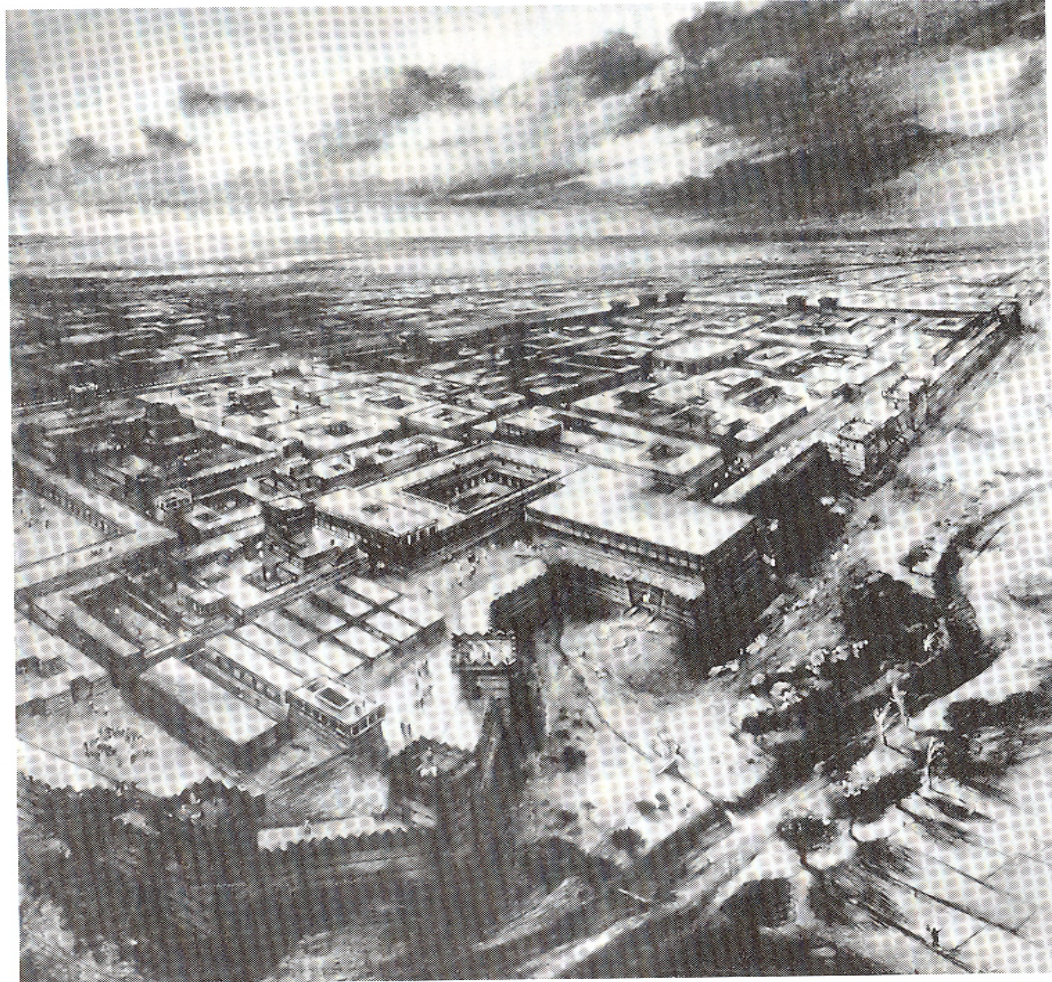
Indus Valley Civilization Sites



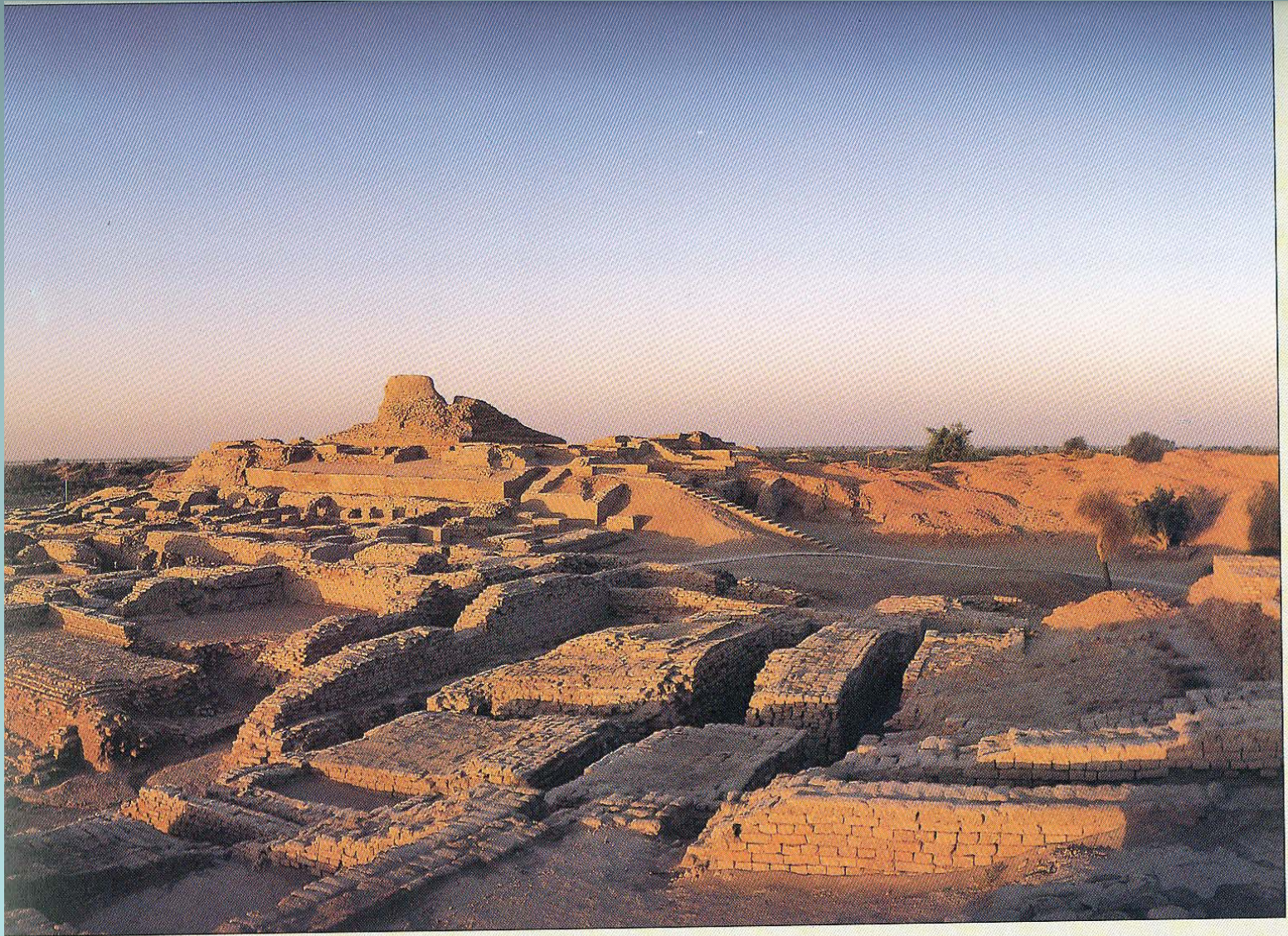
ep, goats, pigs and perhaps fowl. cal finds from Indus valley sites are in volume and variety. Recent excavations in Gujarat, for example, have 0 artifact fragments – seals, beads, weapons, terracotta figures, bone, baked-clay items, and immense y. Almost all the sites so far identified in all) have been located on rivers covered an area of between 0.8 and ing that their populations were no however, some of the bigger centers e supported 40,000 people, and sibly even more. s all appear to be arranged with a idel, on the west side containing the structures, and a larger area to the grid pattern, showing evidence of ion with different areas of special-on. The towns had highly devel-id sewerage systems, and were mud and brick walls. Weights and accuracy and standardization across the pottery is remarkably uniform. merous kilns show that it was pro-the commonest form – a hard red with plum-red slip and then

The Indus valley civilization
The civilization that flourished in the Indus valley between about 2500 BC and 1800 BC evolved from agricultural settlements of much greater antiquity and of considerable diversity. It is the world's largest known urbanized Bronze Age civilization, and its numerous sites have been found across a huge area that straddles the borderlands of present-day India and Pakistan. It contains two major geographical regions – the Baluchistan plateau and associated highlands, with the passes that link it to Iran, and the lower Indus valley running down to the delta. Through this region once flowed the river Saraswati, mentioned in classical texts but which dried up sometime in the 1st millennium BC.

Mohenjo-Daro

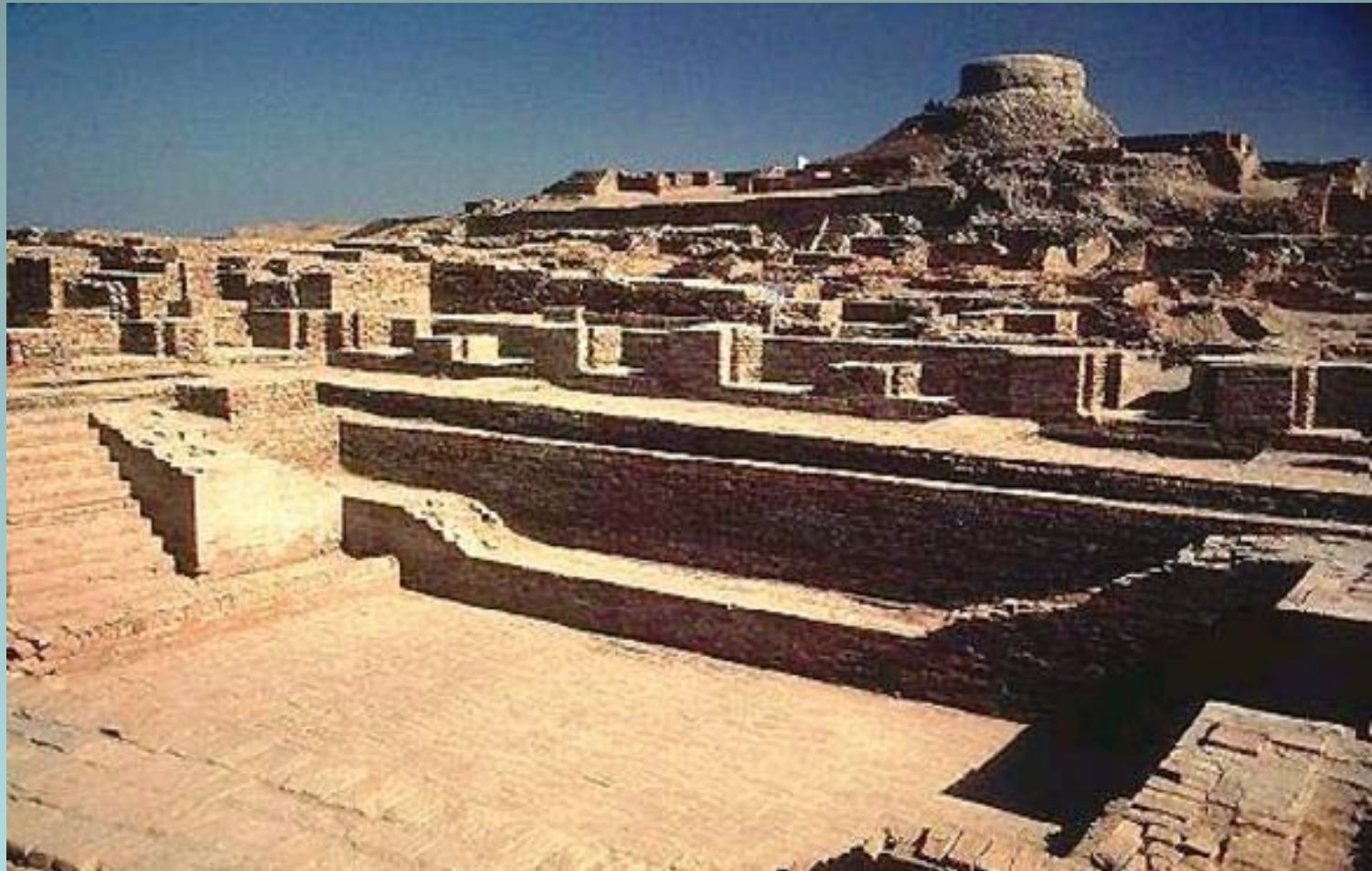


Mohenjo-Daro Citadel



Along This view shows the citadel

Mohenjo-Daro Bath looking toward the Citadel



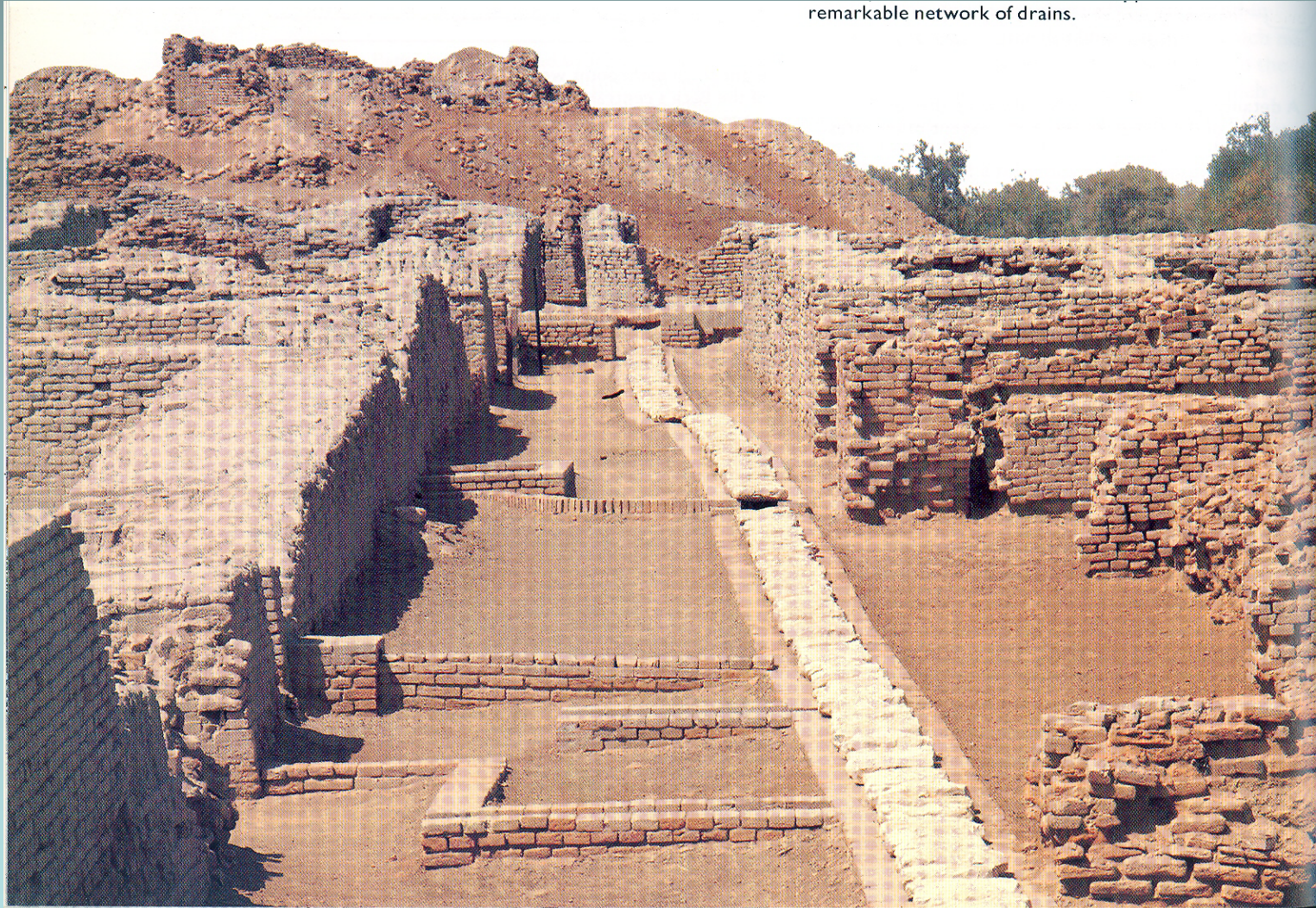
Mohenjo-Daro (view toward Great Bath)



Mohenjo-Daro Great Bath



Mohenjo-Daro (system of drains)

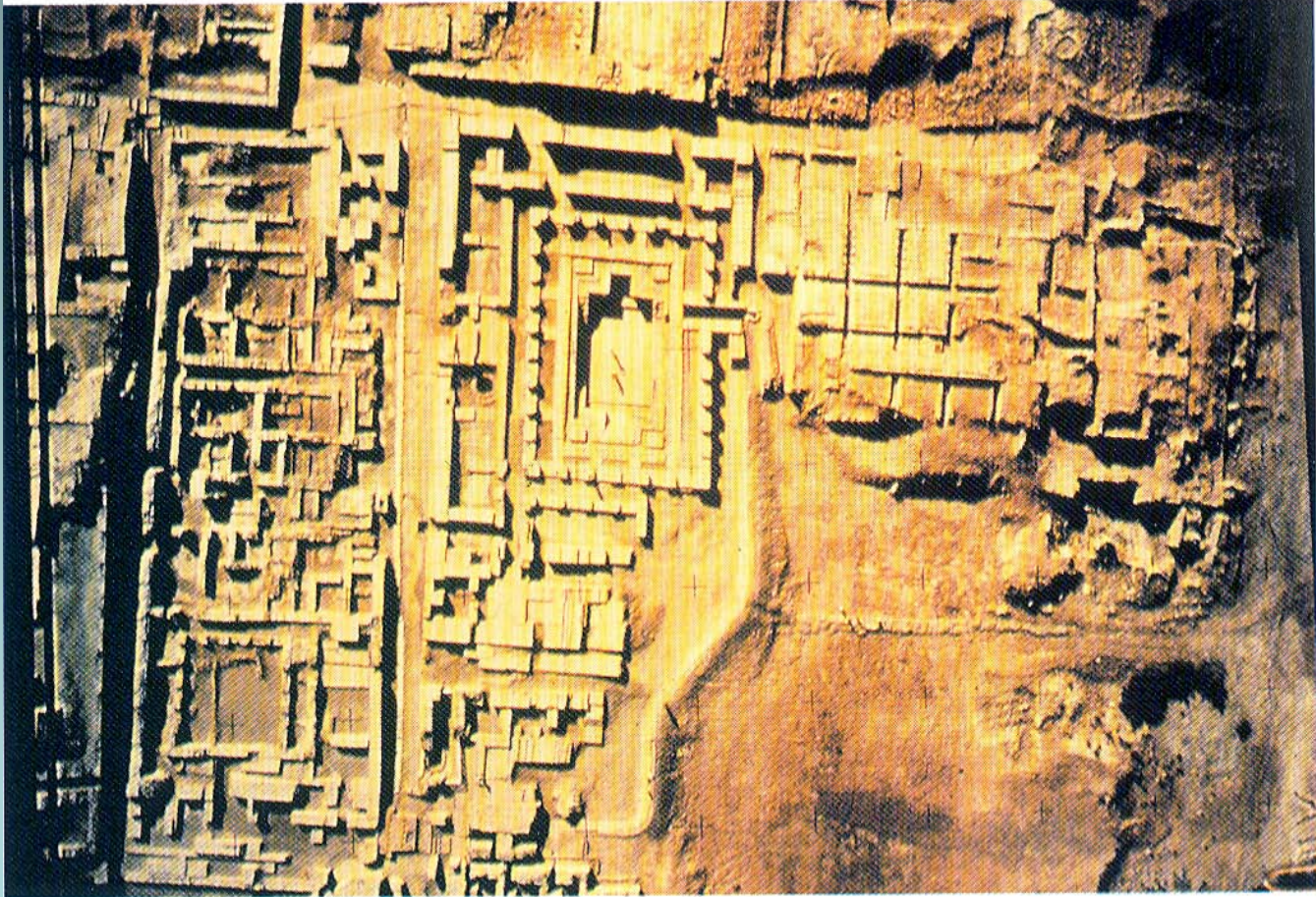


remarkable network of drains.

Mohenjo-Daro (climb to Citadel)



Mohenjo-Daro Citadel (aerial view)



Mohenjo-Daro – bearded man



Harappa – circular platforms



Above The Indus valley site of Harappa

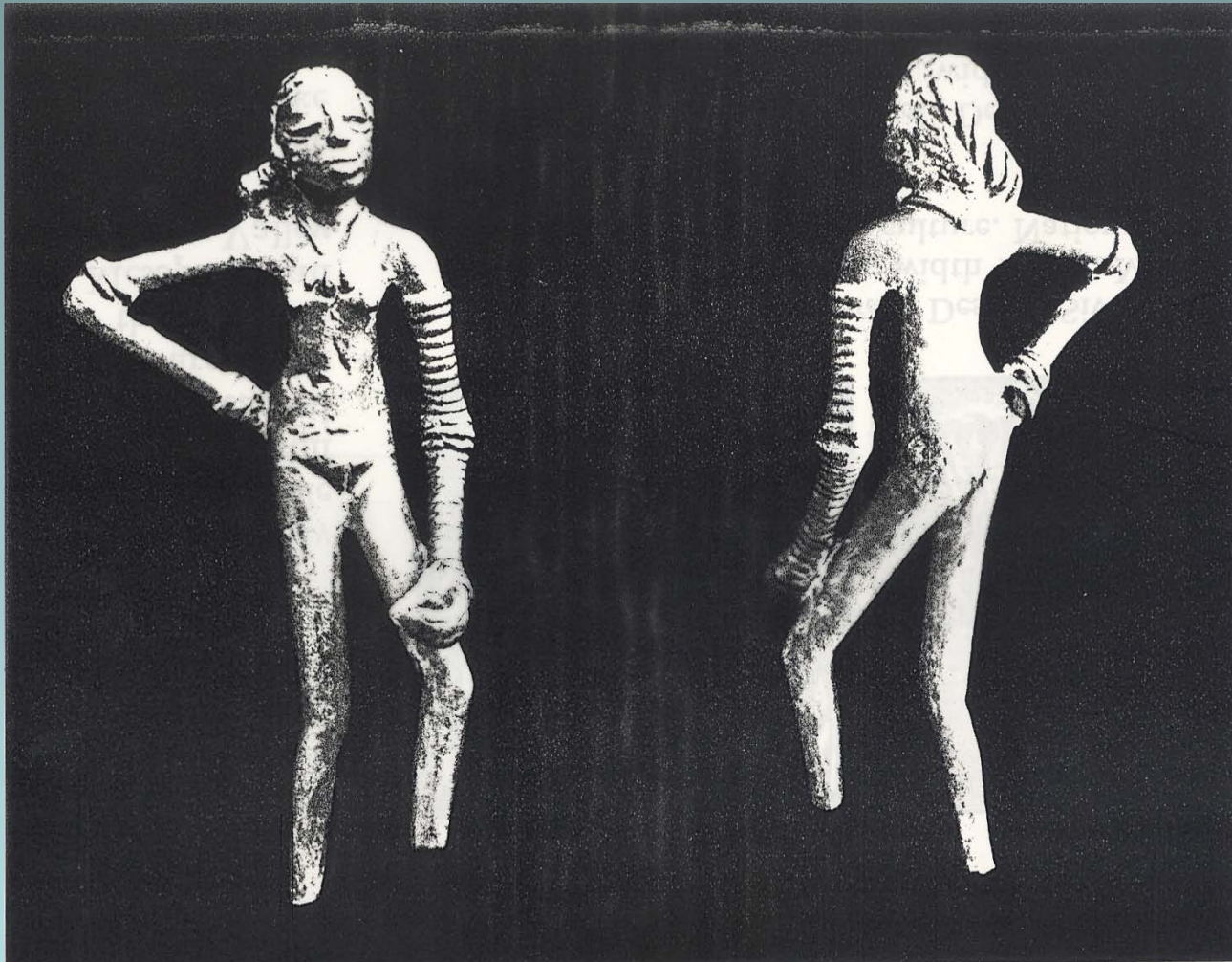
instructions for conducting rituals

Cart from Mohenjo-Daro



Figure 3.2 This wheeled model clay cart, found during the excavation at Mohenjo Daro, tells us a good deal about the main mode of land transport used in south Asia's first civilization. Similar models have been found in almost all Indus valley settlements, and in some respects they resemble the ox-drawn, nearly solid-wheeled carts still used in India today.

Mohenjo-Daro – Dancing girl



Yakshi – Kushan Period (2nd cent. A.D)



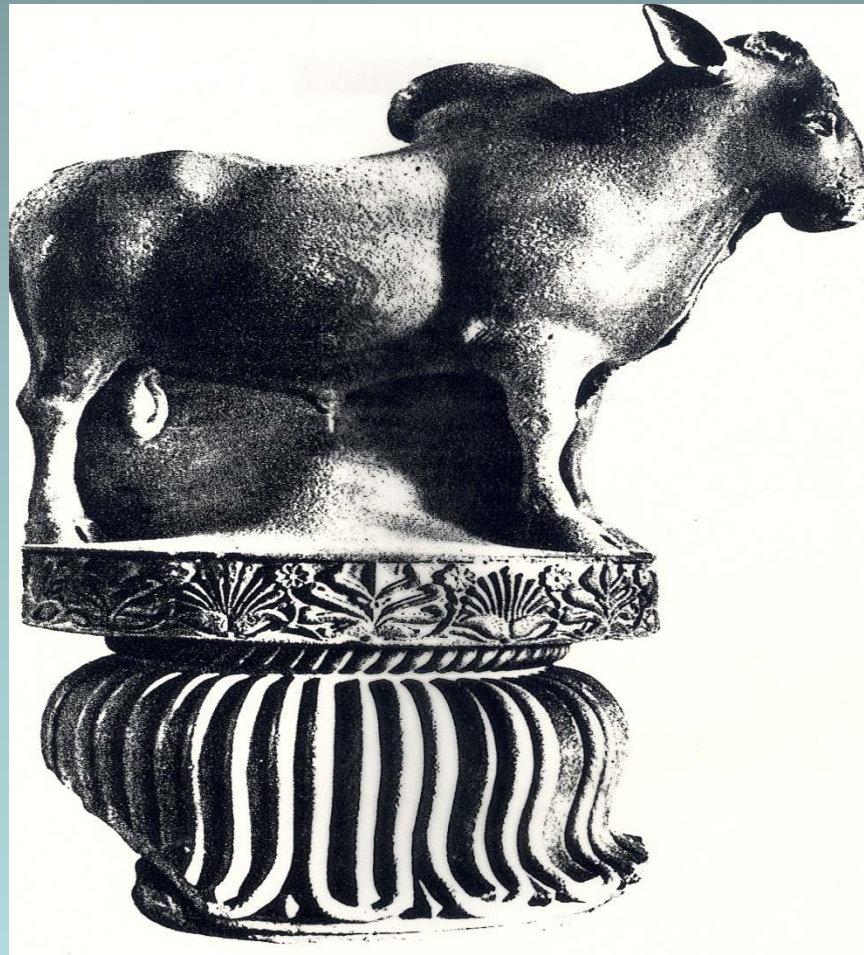
A. Harappan (Indus River Valley)
Civilization (2500–1800 B.C.)

2. “Deciphered” script < Dravidian (Elamite?)

Indus Valley Seal -- Bull



Sandstone Hindu Bull



Indus Valley Seal -- Figure



Figure of Buddha (India)



Harappan (Indus River Valley) Civilization (2500–1800 B.C.)

3. Religion: Lord Śiva and Bhakti yoga (The Way of Devotion or Meditation)

A. Harappan (Indus River Valley) Civilization (2500–1800 B.C.)

4. Types of guesses for its decline
 - a. natural—river floods? weather? earthquakes?
 - b. internal human—civicide?
 - c. external human—Aryan invaders?

(Mortimer Wheeler)

B. The *Vedas* (1200–900 B.C.) Brahminism (The Way of Action or Ritual)

1. The *Rig Veda*
 2. Time that the *Mahābhārata* describes
 3. Four Estates (*Varna*)
 - a. *brahmin*—priests
 - b. *kshatriya*—warriors
 - c. *vaishya*—merchants
 - d. *shudra*—peasants
- (declass —outcast[e]s)

Mahabharata (6th-cent A.D. depiction)



Mahabharata (20th-century reenactment)



C. The *Upanishads* (*Vedantas*) (800–200 B.C.): Brahmanism (The Way of Knowledge)

1. What is your nature?—“Tat tvam asi” = “That you are”
2. Brahman—the Holy Power of the universe
3. Key Concepts
 - a. *samsāra*—“constantly changing,” “flowing together,”
rebirth, suffering
 - b. *Ātman*—the Self; Spirit or *Brahman* within each person
 - c. *sanyasi*—one who renounces
 - d. *māyā*—magic, enchantment
 - e. *karma*—the innerconnectedness of everything to
everything else

D. Hinduism (The Way of Devotion)

1. The Principle Hindu Divinities

a. Brahmā—the Lord of Creation

b. Vishnu—the Preserver and Protector of Creation

c. Shiva—the Destroyer of Creation, Lord of the Dance

D. Hinduism (The Way of Devotion)

2. “330 million gods” (some of them, anyway)
 - a. Kālī—consort of Shiva; provider and taker of life forms; bloodthirsty
 - b. *shakti*—personifications of dynamic, active forces of the universe (feminine)
 - c. Krishna—incarnation (*avatār*) of Vishnu; demon slayer; cowgirl lover

D. Hinduism (The Way of Devotion)

2. “330 million gods” (some of them, anyway)(cont.)

d. Sarasvatī—goddess of wisdom; patron of artists, scholars;
wife of Brahmā

e. Satī—wife of Shiva; immolated herself

f. Rāma—incarnation of Shiva; hero of *Rāmāyana*; masculine
virtue and power

g. Lakshmi—goddess of good fortune, wealth, prosperity; wife
of Vishnu

Concept-Word Check

Brahman – Holy Power of the universe

Brahmā – the Lord of Creation

Brahmin – member of priestly order

Brāmana – a Vedic text of the Brahminic order

E. Synthesis of Bhaktism, Brahminism, and Brahmanism (ca. 200 B.C.)

1. *Kama*—sense gratification, erotic love, desire
2. *Artha*—practical skills of public and private life, acquisition of wealth
3. *Dharma*—duty, righteousness, law, vocation
4. *Moksha*—transcending the sensual world, liberation from suffering and rebirth

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 - a. The *Kama Sutra* of Vatsyayana

E. Synthesis of Bhaktism, Brahminism, and Brahmanism (ca. 200 B.C.)

2. *Artha*—practical skills of public and private life, acquisition of wealth
 - a. The *Atharva Veda*
 - b. The *Arthashastra* of Kautilya

E. Synthesis of Bhaktism, Brahminism, and Brahmanism (ca. 200 B.C.)

3. *Dharma*—duty, righteousness, law, vocation
 - a. The *Bhagavad Gītā* (ca. 200 B.C.)
 - b. The *Rock and Pillar Edicts* of Ashoka
 - c. The *Laws of Manu* (ca. 4th century B.C.)
 - d. The *Ramayana* of Valmiki

Reality (acc. to Krishna)



E. Synthesis of Bhaktism, Brahminism, and Brahmanism (ca. 200 B.C.)

4. *Moksha*—transcending the sensual world, liberation from suffering and rebirth
 - a. *sanyasi* (pl. *sanyasin*)

“330 Million Gods” –*Long Search*

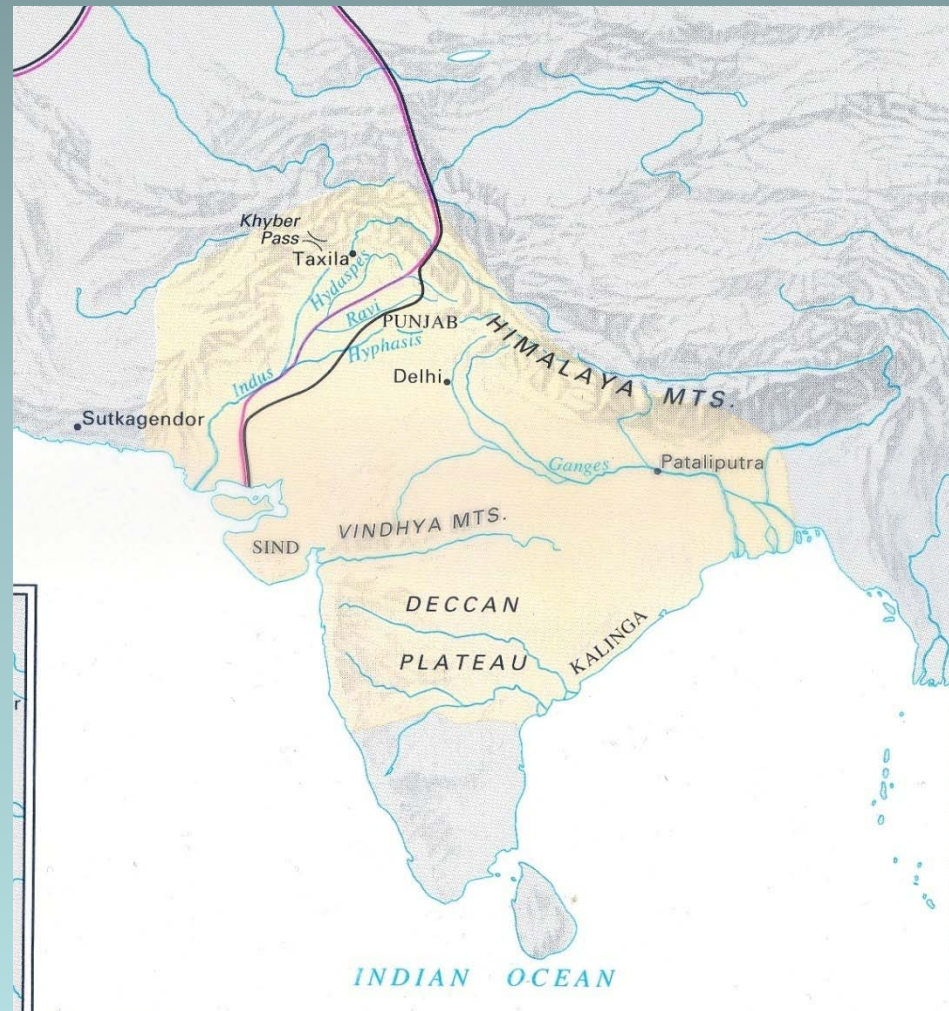
Village of Bithbagwampur

1. *Kama* Shivesh Takur // student
2. *Artha* older brother / householder
3. *Dharma* mother // retiree
4. *Moksha* uncle // *sanyasi*

II. Jainism—Vardhamana Mahavira (ca. 599–ca. 527 B.C.)



Mauryan India



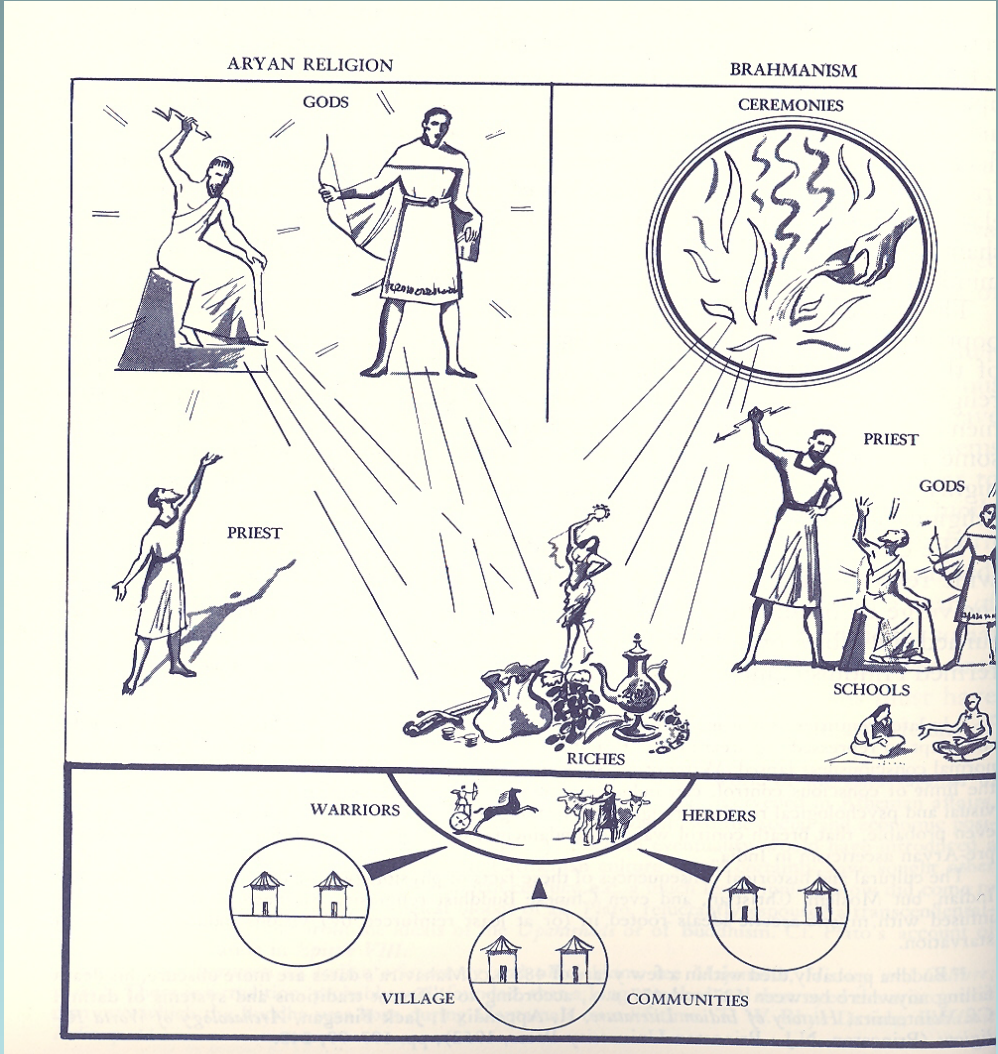
Comparison of Greek and Buddhist Statues



Photo Islay Ly



Aryan Religion and Brahmanism



III. The Buddhist Challenge

A. Buddhism

1. Hinayana (“Lesser Vehicle”) \approx Theravada
2. Mahayana (“Greater Vehicle”)

III. The Buddhist Challenge

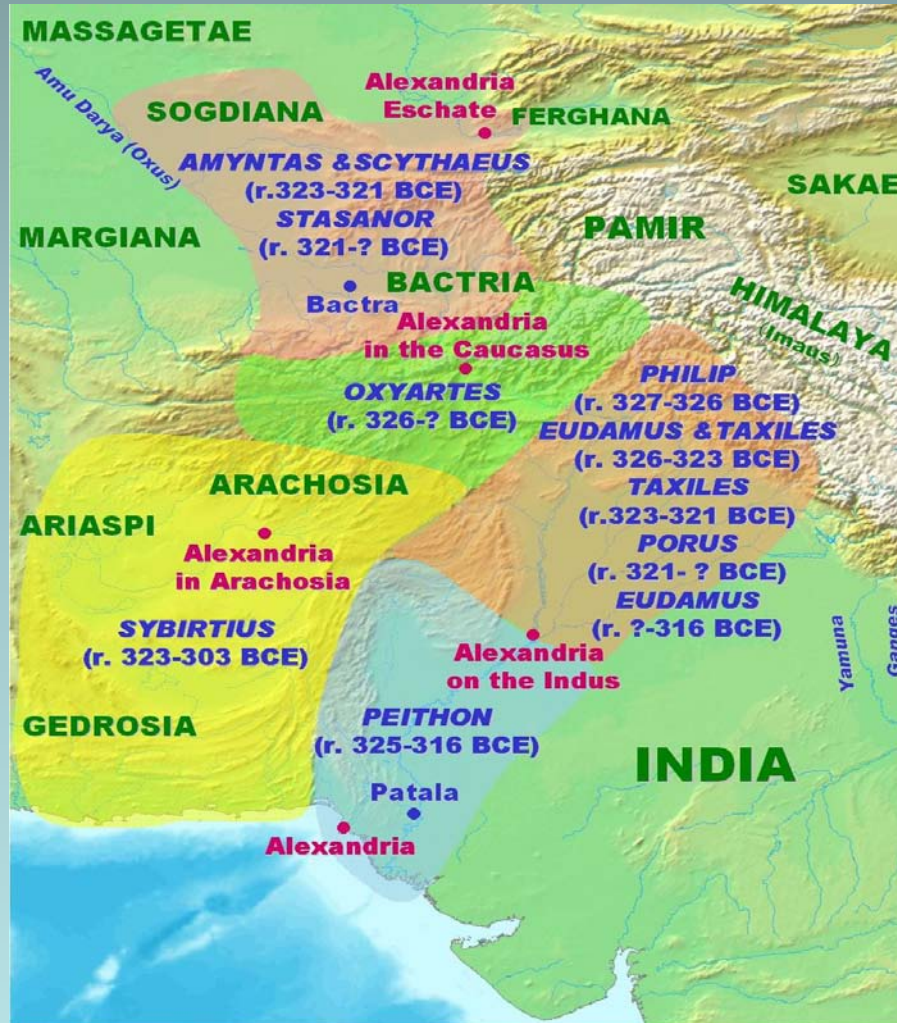
B. Maurya Dynasty

1. Chandragupta (321–297 B.C. [or 317–293 B.C.]
2. Ashoka (269–232 B.C. [or 273–237 B.C.])
 - a. Battle in Kalinga (262 B.C. or 265 B.C.)
 - b. Rock Edict
 - c. The Way of Renunciation

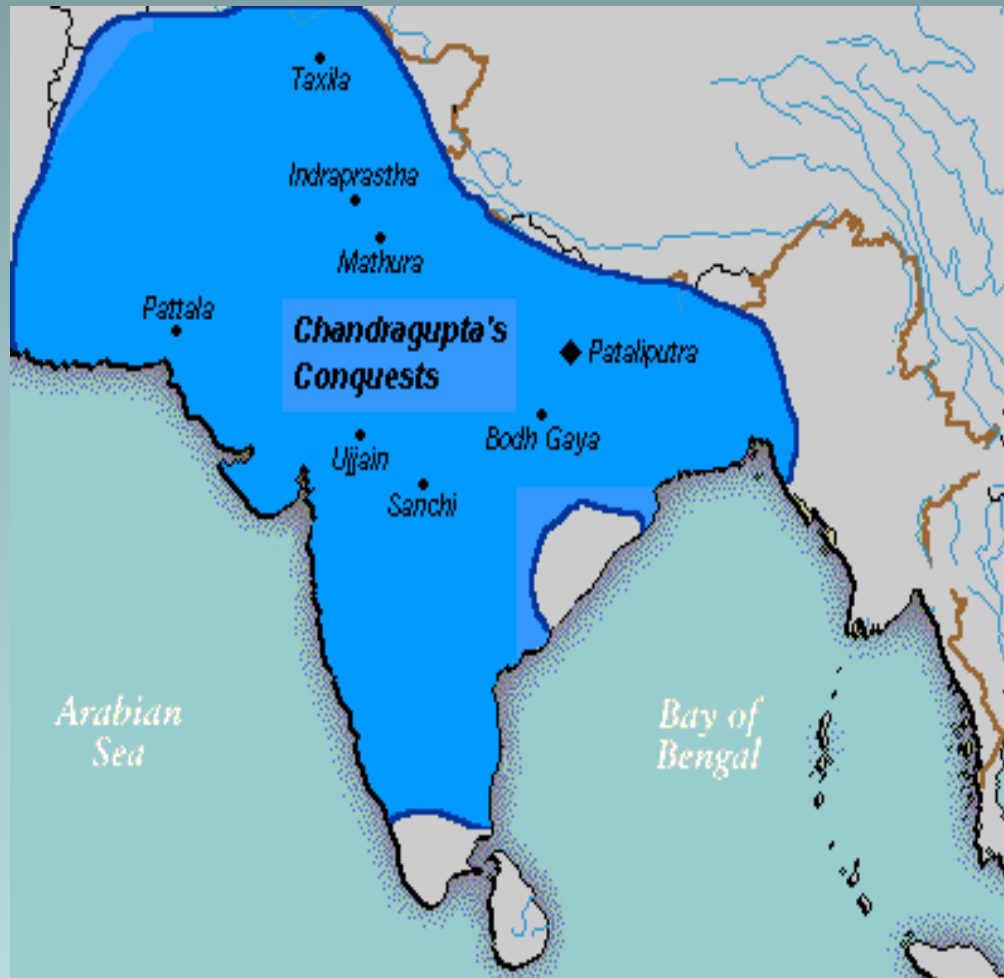
Chandragupta (321–297 B.C. [or 317–293 B.C.] (present-day mural)



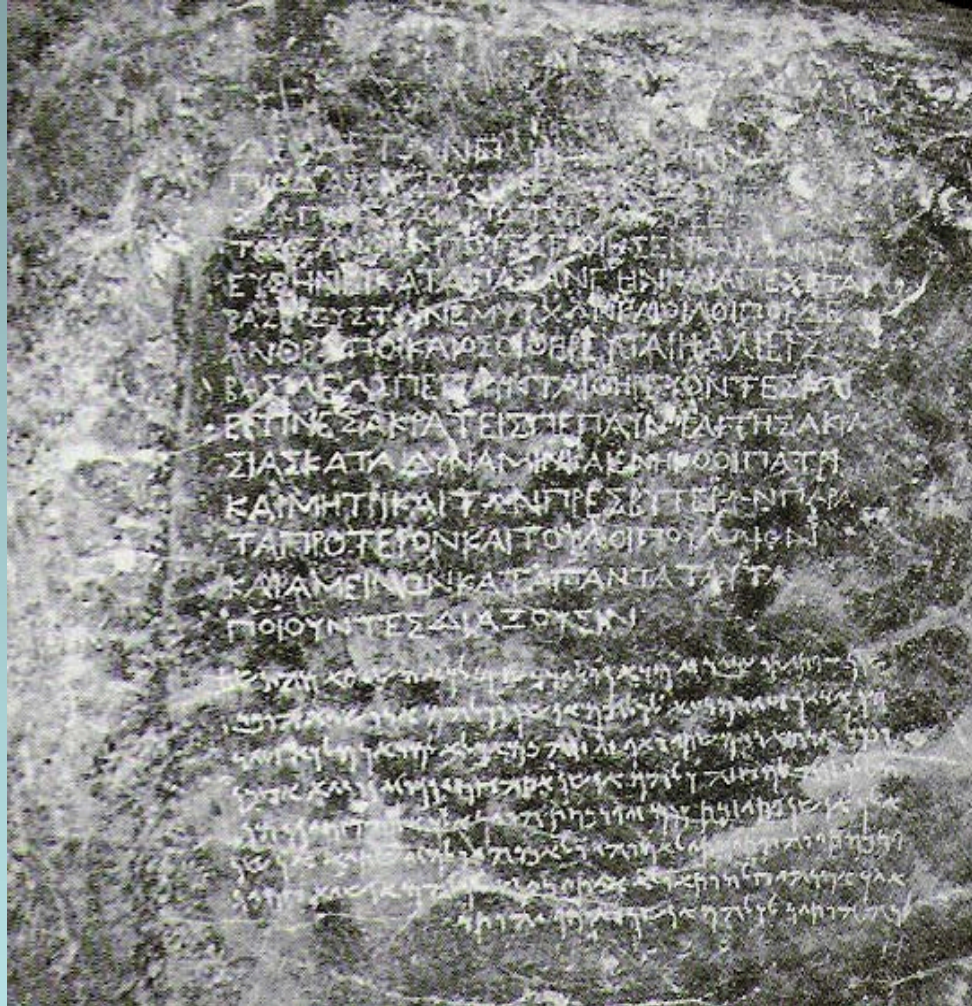
Chandragupta had defeated the remaining Macedonian satrapies in the northwest of the Indian subcontinent by 317 BC.



The Maurya Empire after Chandragupta's southern conquests *circa* 300 BC.



Bilingual (Greek and Aramaic) Inscription by King Ashoka at Kandahar (Shar-i-kuna). (3rd century BC). Kabul Museum.

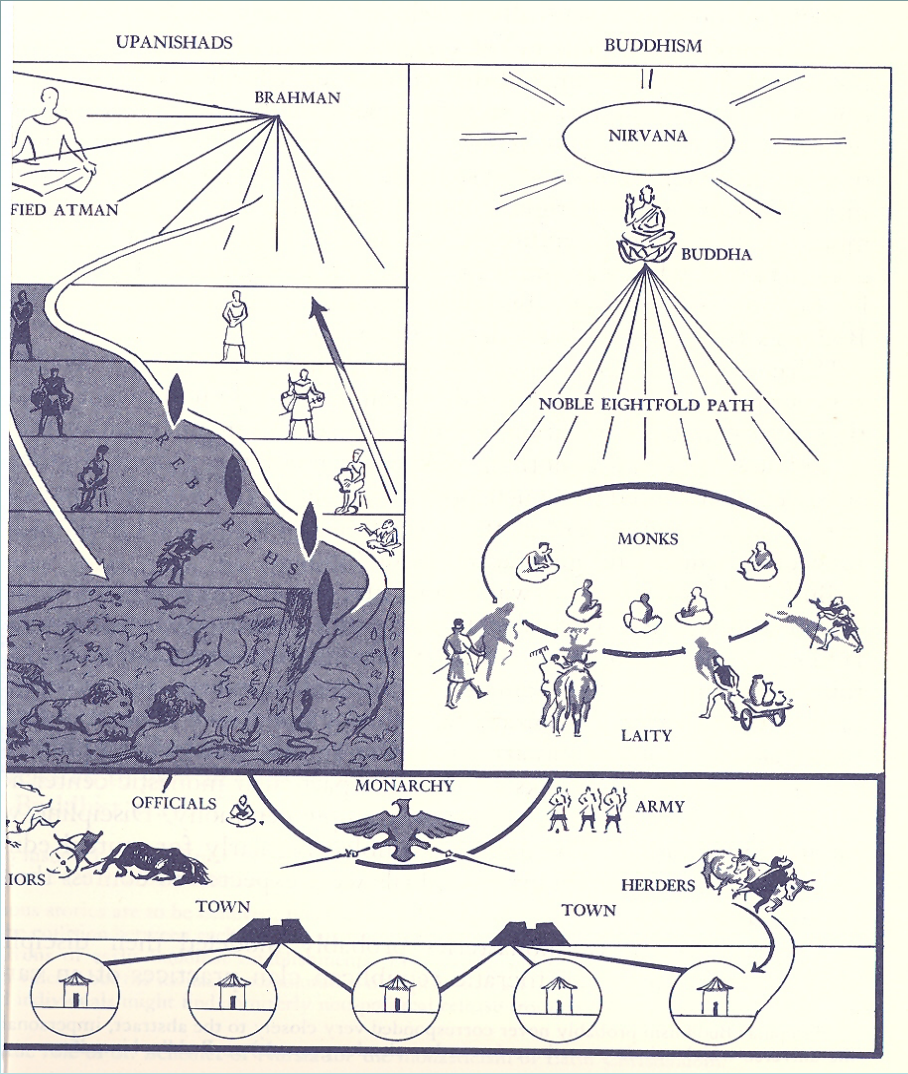


English (translation)

“Ten years (of reign) having been completed, King Piodasses (Ashoka) made known (the doctrine of) Piety (*εὐσέβεια*, Eusebeia) to men; and from this moment he has made

men more pious, and everything thrives throughout the whole world. And the king abstains from (killing) living beings, and other men and those who (are) huntsmen and fishermen of the king have desisted from hunting. And if some (were) intemperate, they have ceased from their intemperance as was in their power; and obedient to their father and mother and to the elders, in opposition to the past also in the future, by so acting on every occasion, they will live better and more happily.” (Trans. by G.P. Carratelli)

Upanishads and Buddhism



Ashoka's India



IV. Brahman Counteroffensive (1st to 3rd centuries A.D.)

In Vedic Sanskrit:-

Brahmā (nominative singular), *brahman* (stem) (neuter gender) means the Great Cosmic Spirit, from root *brha* (growth, development, expansion, swelling).

Brahmānda (nominative singular), from stems *brha* (to expand) + *anda* (egg), means universe as an expansion of a cosmic egg (*Hiranyagarbha*), or the macrocosm. Brahmanda Purana discusses cosmogenesis. Bhagavata Purana also discusses cosmogony and fundamental principles of material nature in detail.

IV. Brahman Counteroffensive (1st to 3rd centuries A.D.)

In later Sanskrit usage:-

Brahmā () (nominative singular), *brahman* (stem) (neuter gender) means the concept of the transcendent and immanent ultimate reality of the One Godhead or Supreme Cosmic Spirit in Hinduism; the concept is central to Hindu philosophy, especially Vedanta. Also note that the word Brahman in this sense is exceptionally treated as masculine. It is called “the Brahman” in English. *Brahm* is another variant of *Brahman*.

IV. Brahman Counteroffensive (1st to 3rd centuries A.D.)

Brahmā () (nominative singular), *Brahman* () (stem) (masculine gender), means the deity or deva Prajāpati Brahmā. He is one of the members of the Hindu trinity and associated with creation, but does not have a cult in present day India. This is because Brahmā, the creator-god, is long-lived but not eternal i.e. Brahmā gets absorbed back into Purusha at the end of an aeon, and is born again at the beginning of a new kalpa.

IV. Brahman Counteroffensive (1st to 3rd centuries A.D.)

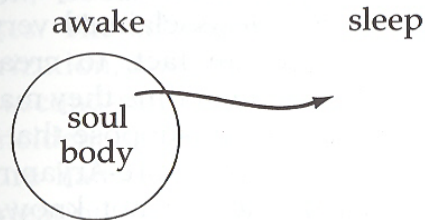
One must not confuse these with:

A *brāhmaṇa* () (masculine, pronounced as /brɑ:h mə Ṇə/ - the N being retroflex), (which literally means “pertaining to prayer”) is a prose commentary on the Vedic mantras—an integral part of the Vedic literature.

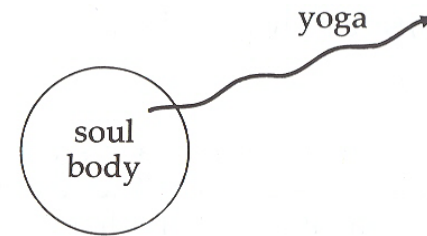
A *brāhmaṇa* () (masculine, same pronunciation as above), means priest; in this usage the word is usually rendered in English as “Brahmin”. This usage is also found in the Atharva Veda. In neuter plural form, *Brahmāṇi*.

Transcendence of the Soul from the Body

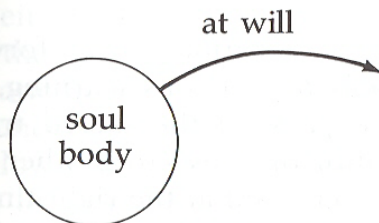
HUMANS



ASCETICS



GODS



Body and Soul in Ancient India These diagrams suggest the way ancient Indians thought about the relationship between body and soul. The first diagram shows how human souls are firmly tied to the body while awake but can wander away in sleep. That explained how a person could see things in dreams far away and long ago while the body stayed behind and slept. The lower diagram shows how gods were supposed to be able to move their souls in or out of a body—often appearing in different bodies at different times—all just as they pleased. The third diagram shows how ascetics, by their special training or yoga, could also, like a god, separate soul from body deliberately by attaining a mystic state of consciousness.