

Lectures of the History Module

Introduction to the Human Sciences
Spring 2023

Why Study History?

Also

What Do We Do When We Study History

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History Module: Lecture 1

Introduction to the Human Sciences

Spring 2023

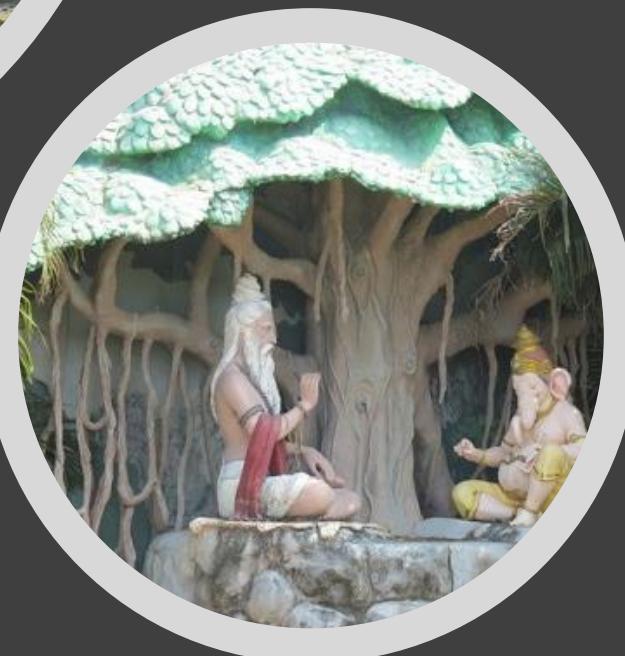
Aims of the History Module

- What does it mean to think historically
 - How do we know what really happened
 - Does learning History help us understand today's world
- Main methods of doing history

Knowledge in the Pre-Modern World

- Was **Revealed** Divinely
- All creation – animate inanimate – was considered emanating from the same divine source; interlinked in a divine plan
- Thus knowledge about the world was interlinked and there could not be a division...
- ...once we **know divine will**, we would know everything there is to know about everything

**WORLD WAS CREATED AND KNOWLEDGE
WAS ABOUT THIS CREATION**



Heliocentric Revolution

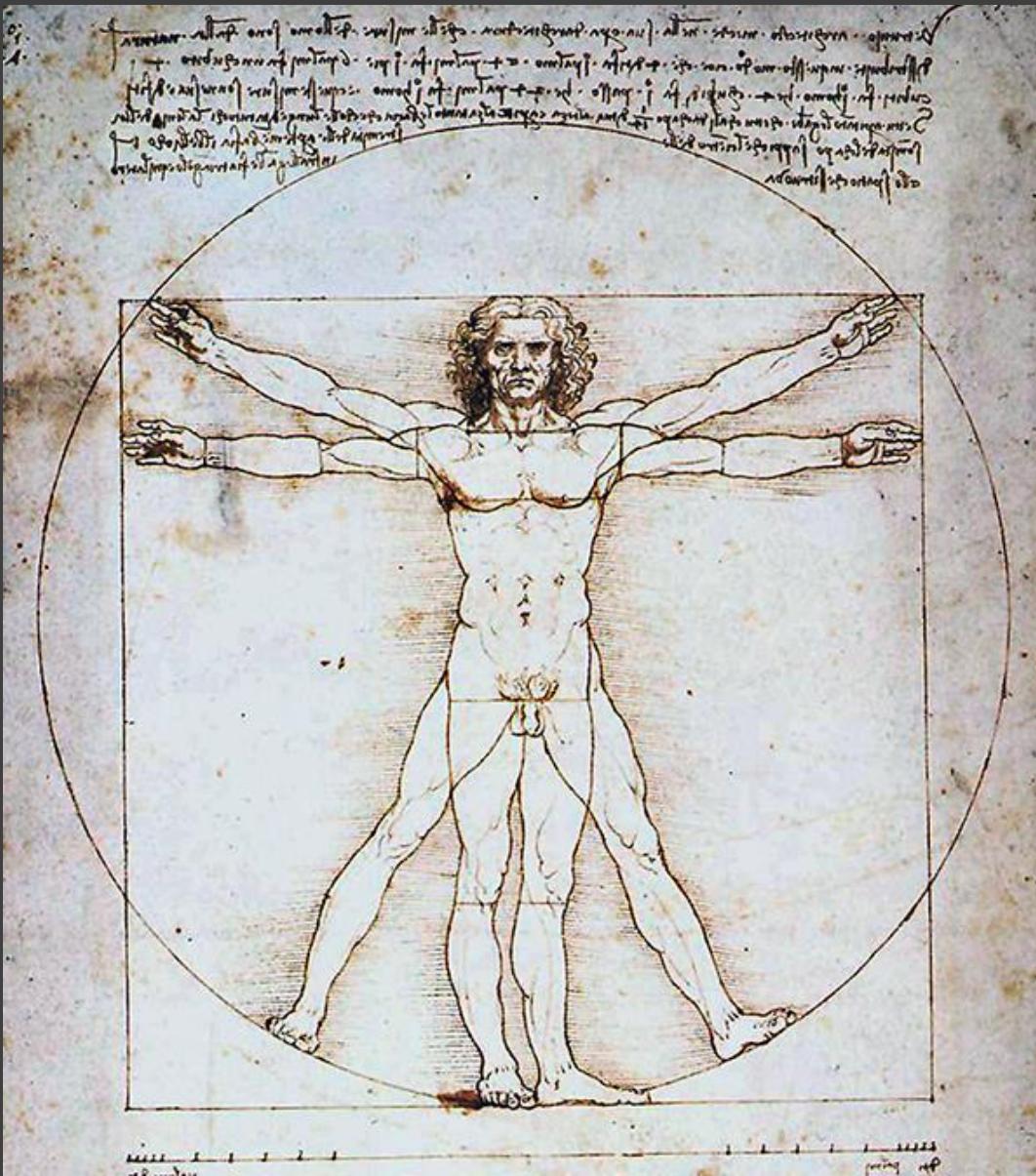
- Archaic knowledge systems:
 - **Earth is the Centre of Creation**
 - The Sun, Moon and Heavens moved around the Earth which was flat

MAJOR SHIFT

- Sun the centre of the solar system
 - Earth merely one among many planets
- **Physical laws** same everywhere; predictive power
- Natural Sciences are **bereft of divine will**
 - Other than **first causes**



DE-CENTRING CREATION :: DIS-ENCHANTMENT OF NATURE



Centring the Human

- In Archaic society
 - Human action expression of Divine Will
 - History was story of God's actions; or **morality**
- MAJOR SHIFT**
- Study (Hu)Man actions **Sui Generis**
 - Not as act of God
 - Emergence of Human Sciences
 - (Popularly called Humanities, Social Sciences)
 - Like Natural Sciences, **bereft of any divine will**

HUMANISM

IDEA THAT “SUBJECT OF KNOWLEDGE” IS HUMAN BEING

What Is History?

- History shifts from God's story to Man's story
- Study Human and Natural Causes of Past Events
- History is about both understanding and explaining...
- Human Actions
 - Find their causes and their consequences
- Theory of change
 - Why do things change

“History is preoccupied with fundamental processes of change.”

~ E. H. Carr, *What is History*

Where is History?

- Everywhere!
- Every Nation, Region, Community, Individual is made up of its Past
 - Every Action is done in time (synonym for history)
- We all work and live with a sense of History
 - What we were and who will we become
- Every Text, Artefact, Image, Sound, Relationship
- We are implicitly aware of History around us
- Make it Explicit!!

Explicit History

- Learn to find History everywhere
- Learn the protocols of doing history
- Learn what history can tell us....
 - ... and what it cannot
- There can be No Objectivity, No Certitude
- Only levels of possibilities, degrees of probabilities

Framing Questions

- Who was involved
- What happened
- When did it happen
- Where did it happen
- How did it happen
- Why did it happen

- Evidence which can be cross checked
- Methods which can be scrutinised
- Universal standards of verifiability and falsifiability

Mi2Lethal

Tragedy of the Historian



**"Those who don't study history are doomed to repeat it.
Yet those who *do* study history are doomed to stand by
helplessly while everyone else repeats it."**

Historical Time

History Module

Lecture 2

Introduction to the Human Sciences

Spring 2023

Outline of Lecture

- What Time Period Does History Inhabit?
- What Are Historical Periods?
- Common Markers of Historical Time.
- How Do We Measure Flow of Time?

Past is (not) History

- **Past:** Refers to Time which has elapsed
 - Everything that has happened prior to the present is Past
 - Amorphous; Hold-All Category
- **History:** Refers to a Story/Narrative About Something in the Past
 - Beginning and End
 - Common Thread or Anchor to the Narrative: “History of...”
- Past Exists, History is Created by Humans from the Past

Time Period of History

- History is the Story of Human Society
- Classical Definition: Story of “Civilisation”
 - Settled Life
 - Writing/Script
 - Cities and States
- Pre-History: Society Before Civilisation
 - Mobile Life
 - Oral Knowledge
 - Rudimentary Arts and Creations
- Broadened Definition of History: Story of Non-Human Subjects

Periods of History

- Historians always divide their Narrative into Periods
 - Pre-History
 - Ancient
 - Medieval
 - Modern
- Based on Christian Periodisation; But Secularised

Common Markers of Historical Time

- B.C. and A.D.
 - Before Christ, Anno Domini
 - 252 B.C. A.D. 252
- Secularised to BCE and CE
 - Before Common Era, Common Era
 - 252 BCE 252 CE
- Circa c.
 - Approximate date (c. 250 CE)
 - In B.C. / BCE years count down
 - In A.D. / CE years count upwards
- Decade = 10 years; Century = 100 years; Millennium = 1,000 years

Historical Eras and Ages

- Pre-Historic Period

- Stone Age
 - Paleolithic (from c. 2,500,000 BCE to c. 3,000 BCE)
 - Mesolithic (from c. 25,000 BCE to c. 2,000 BCE)
 - Neolithic (from c. 10,000 BCE to c. 500 BCE)

- Historic Period

- Chalcolithic Age
 - From c. 3,500 BCE to c. 1,000 : Indus Valley Civilisation and beyond
- Bronze Age
 - From c. 3,000 BCE to c. 800 BCE: Indus Valley and Early Vedic
- Iron Age
 - From c. 1,800 BCE to c. 100 BCE: Late Vedic Age Period / First Empires

Historical Eras and Ages

- Ancient Period

- Indus Valley Civilisation; Vedic (Early and Late) Age; Mahavira and Buddha; Mauryan Empire; Saka and Hun Empires; Gupta Empire; Kushan Empire; Harshvardhan...
- Sangam Period; Cholas, Chera, Pandyas; Satvahanas; Chalukyas...

- Medieval Period

- Another Long List with regional variations

- Modern Period

- 1757: Coming of the British (Battle of Plassey)
- Mughals, Marathas, Mysore

What Decides an Historical Era

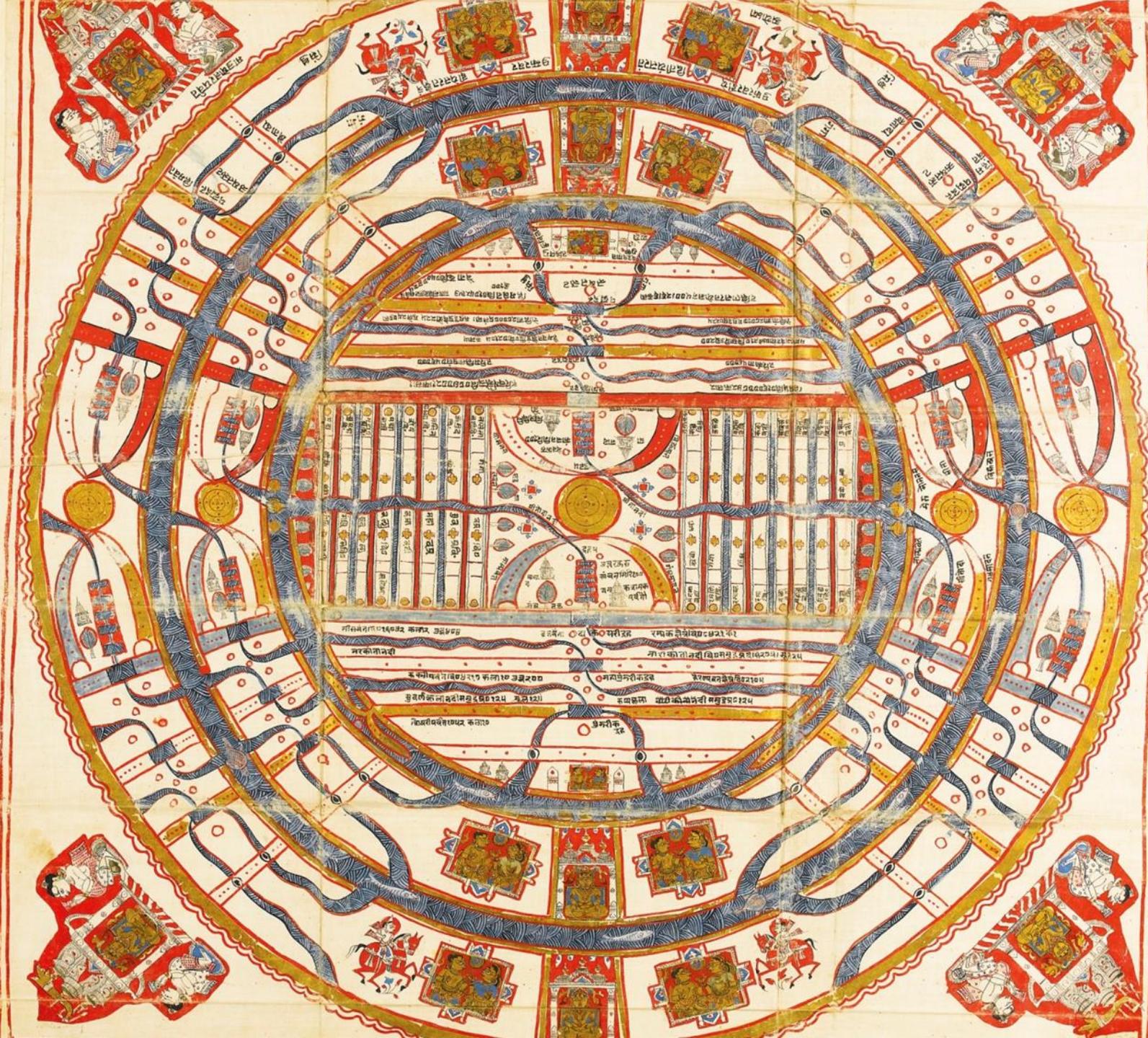
- Technology
- Social Organisation
- Strength and Spread of Empire / State
- Most of these periods broken into “Early” “Middle” “Late”
- Different Regions, sub-regions have varying periods / eras

Problems With Historical Periods

- Universal Categories
 - Ancient – Medieval – Modern
- But History of something specific, something local
 - History is of a Place, Person, Dynasty, Event, Process....
- Problems of Fit
 - “Ancient” of China, India, Rome, France, Britain may not be aligned
 - What about History of USA? Or Pakistan?
- After “Modern” What?!
 - Modern is often seen as a universal period globally

Historical Time

- Historical Time is confusing
 - Beginning and end of Indus Valley Civilisation = Two Millennia
 - Emperor Ashoka is closer to us than the establishment of Harappa / Mohenjodara cities
 - Cleopatra, Queen of Egypt is closer to us than the Pharaohs who made the Pyramids
 - Satvahana Empire lasted from c. 200 BCE to c. 300 CE = 500 years
 - 500 years before today there was no Mughal Empire in India
- Large chunks of time are difficult to imagine
 - Spend time consciously thinking of historical time and periods
- Chronology is the Spine of the Historical Narrative
 - Chronology is placing events in their order of occurrence in time
 - Assumes an arrow of time



island group

000,000
projection
43°N & 38°S



April 2005

*Thirteen of 18 Antarctic claimant nations have made no claims to Antarctic territory. Argentina, Chile, and the United States have reserved the right to do so and they do not recognize the claims of the other nations.

Boundary representation is not necessarily authoritative.



Date:

◀ 2010-2019 ▶

2009	2010	2011	2012
2013	2014	2015	2016
2017	2018	2019	2020

Time:



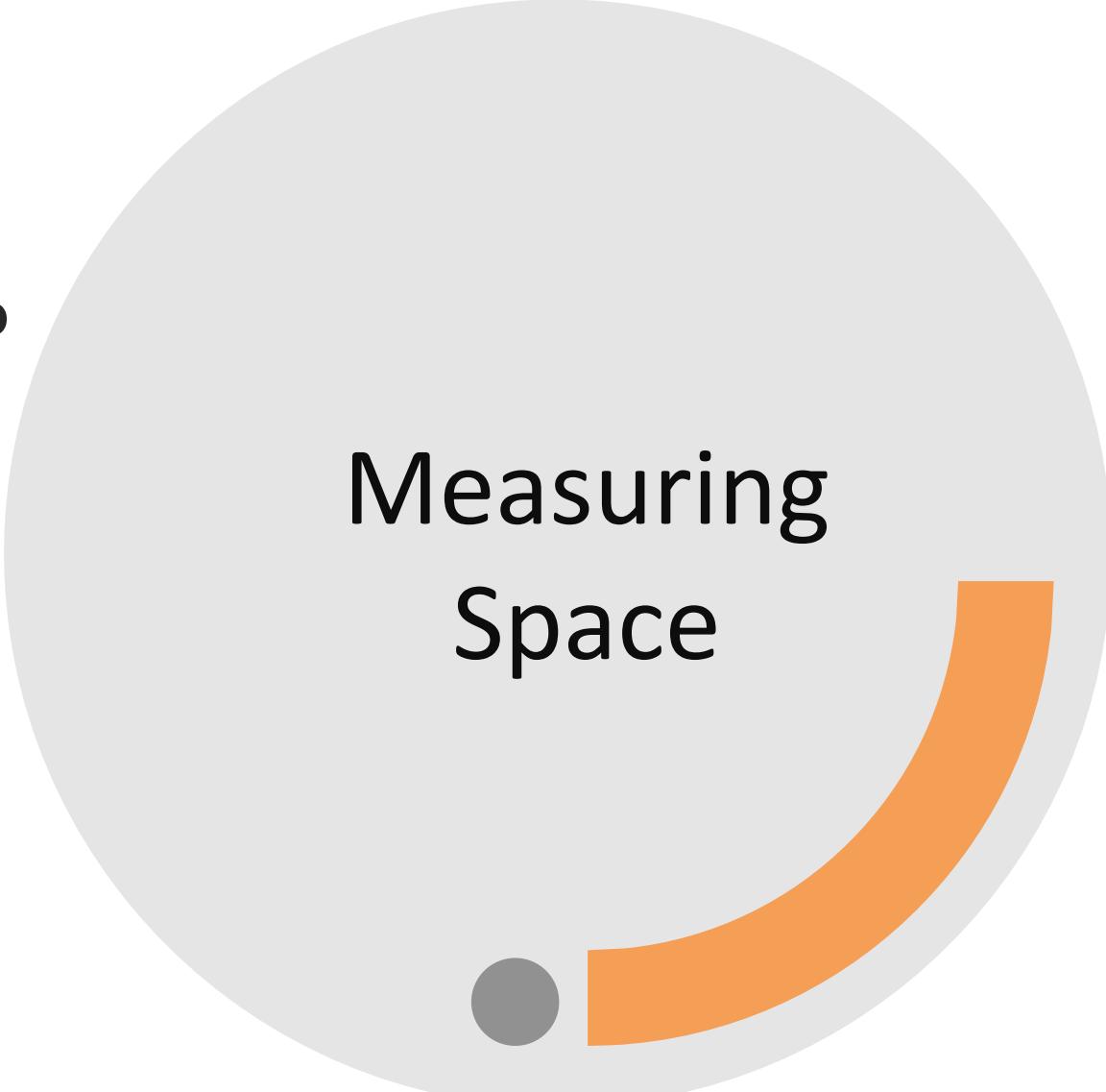
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HISTORY OF TIME AND SPACE

History Module
Lecture 3-4
Introduction to the Human Sciences
Spring 2023

How does one measure space?

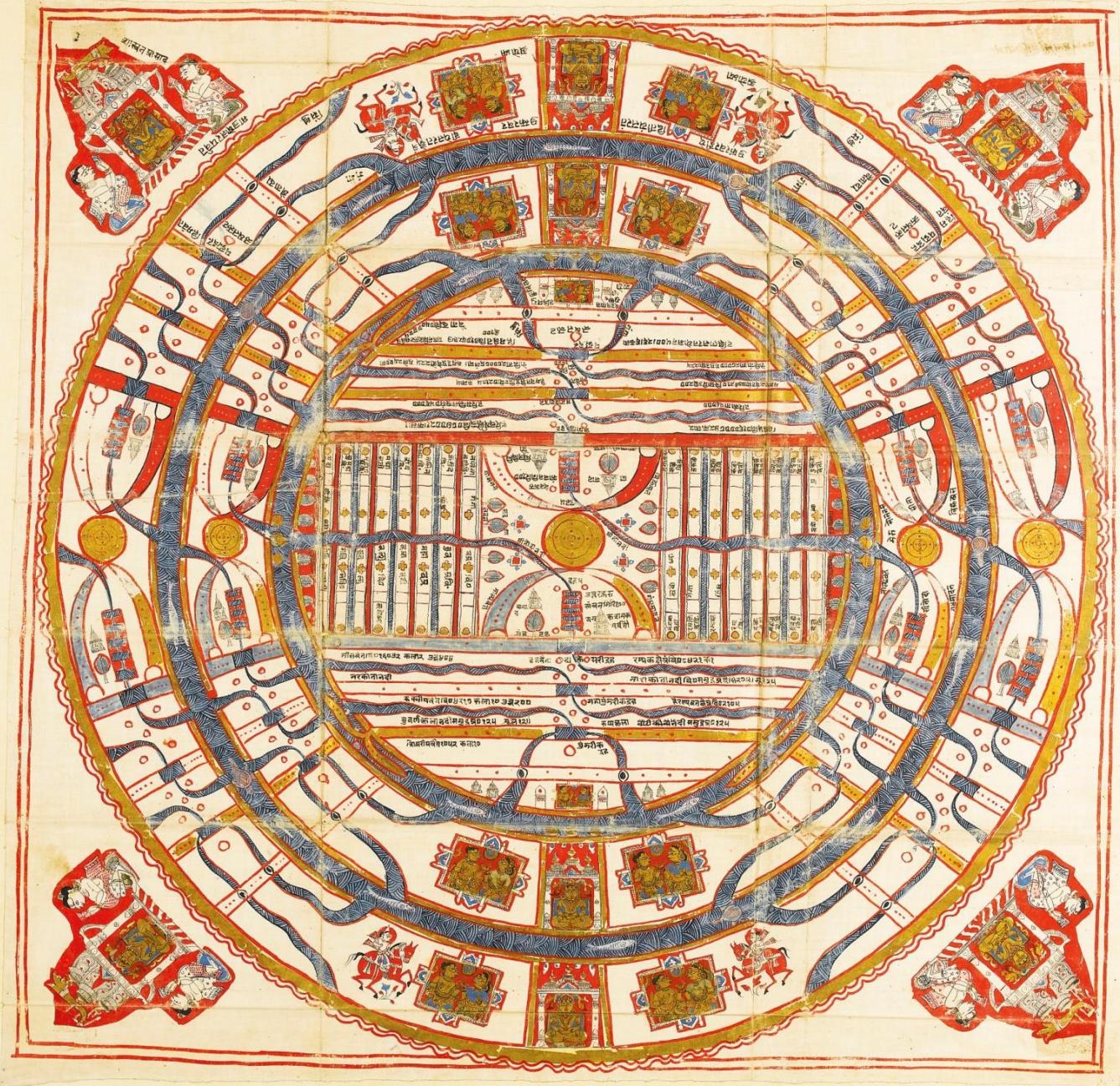
- By abstract measures of distance
 - Miles, Kos, Kilometres
- By time taken to travel
- By difficulties of approach



Measuring
Space

This is how “India” and the world was represented in ancient and medieval maps by “Hindu” scholars

JAMBUDVIPA

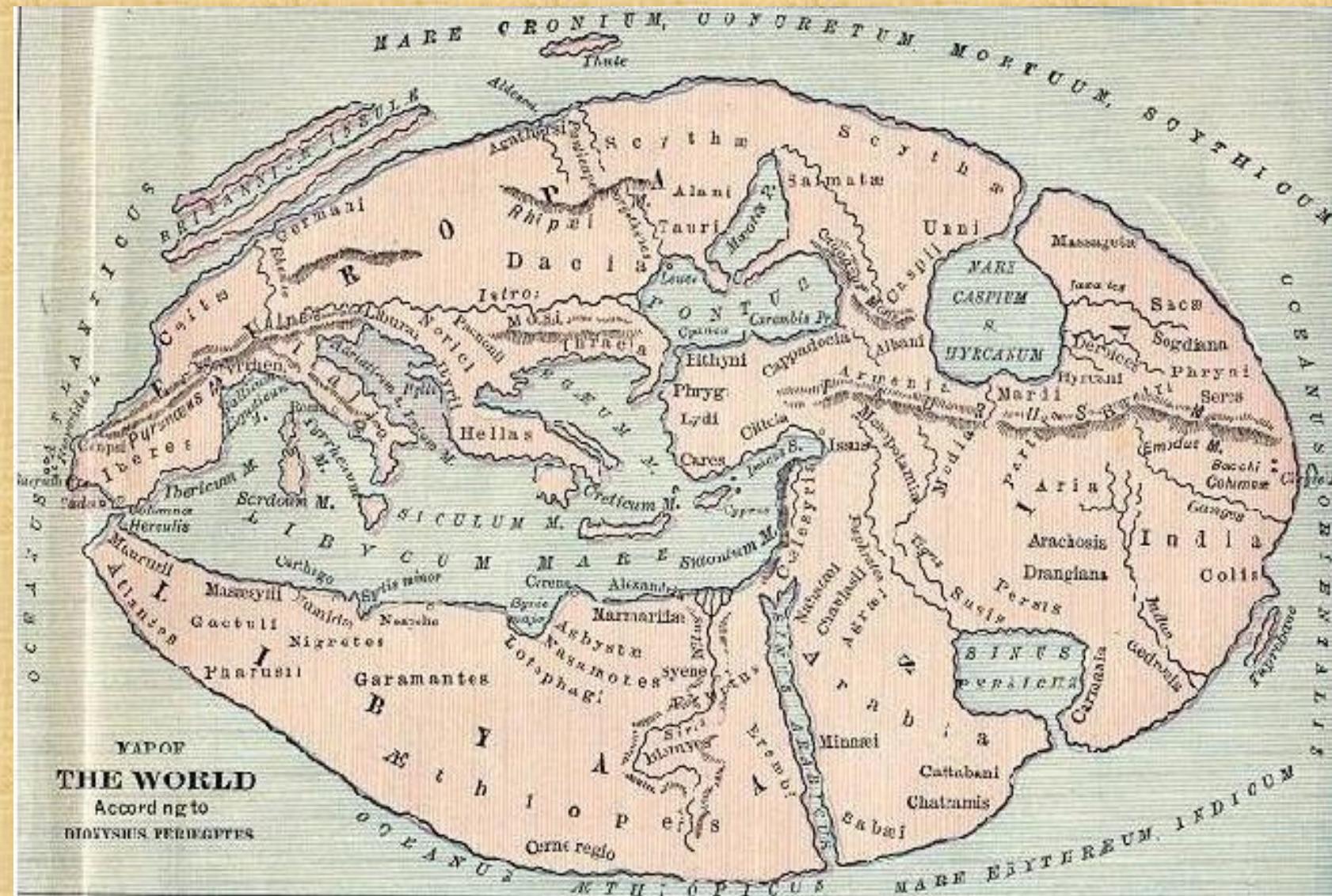


Jaina Cosmological Map

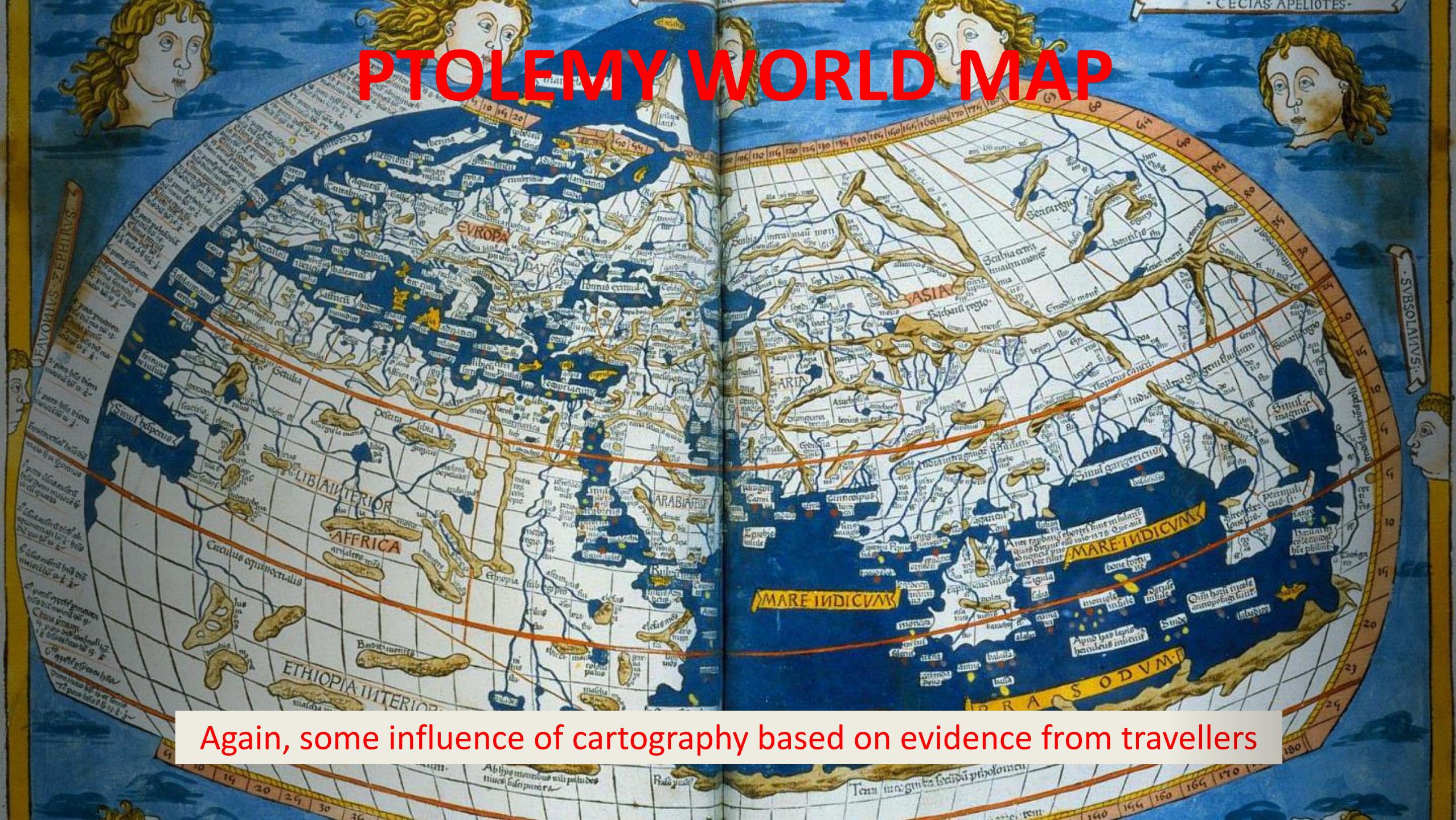


Note the attempt at
cartographical precision
and a map based on
evidence from travellers

GREEK MAP OF THE WORLD 4TH CENTURY BCE



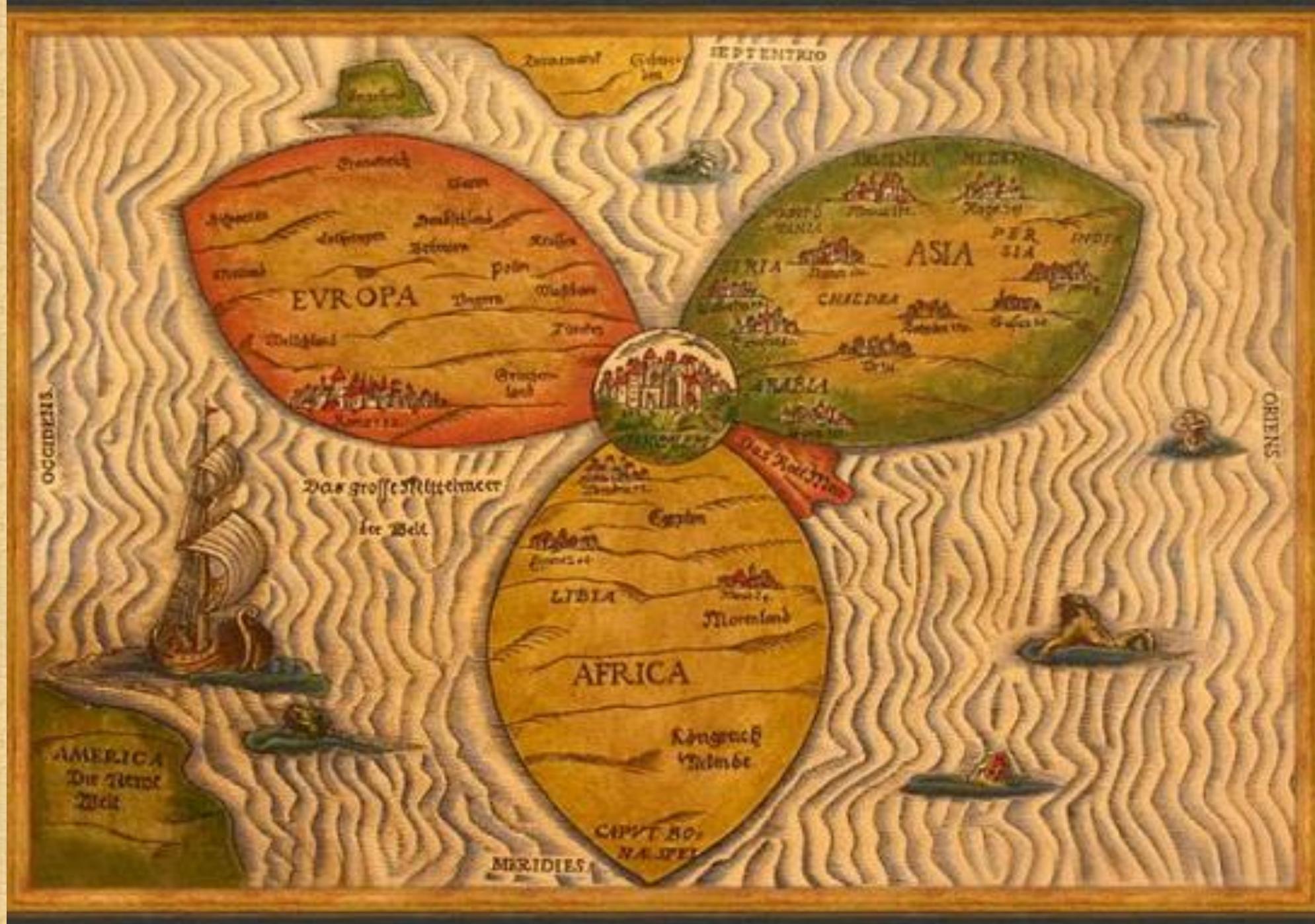
PTOLEMY WORLD MAP



Again, some influence of cartography based on evidence from travellers

MAP OF THE WORLD 15th C EUROPE

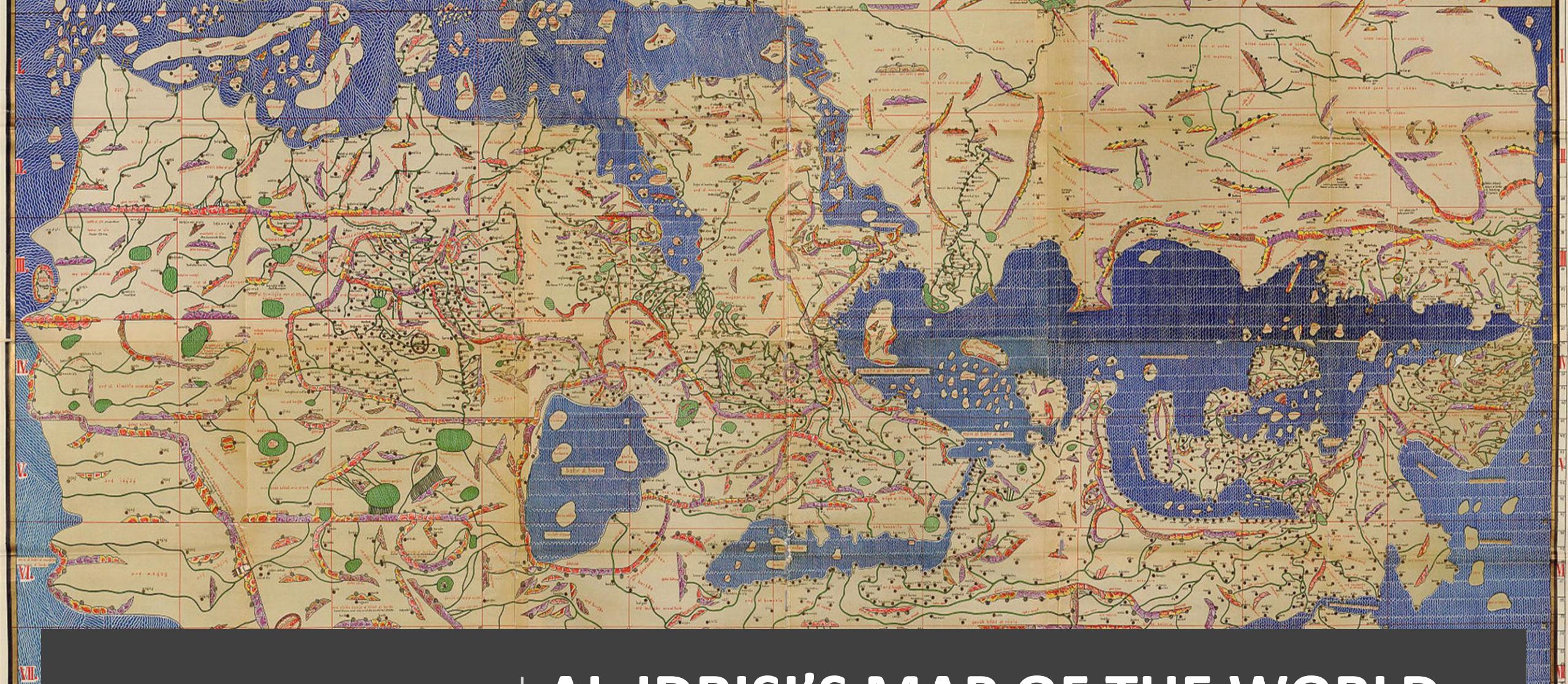
Note the conceptual similarity with Jambudvipa



MEDIEVAL KOREAN WORLD MAP

Again, the same concepts
of cartography as with the
map of Jambudvipa





Drawn for Roger II
King of Sicily

AL-IDRISI'S MAP OF THE WORLD, 1154

INDIA ORIENTALIS

1611

Map Drawn in Amsterdam



P E R S I A
S I V E
S H A H I S T A N



PERSIA
AND INDIA
1747

Map drawn in
London ten years
before the battle
of Plassey

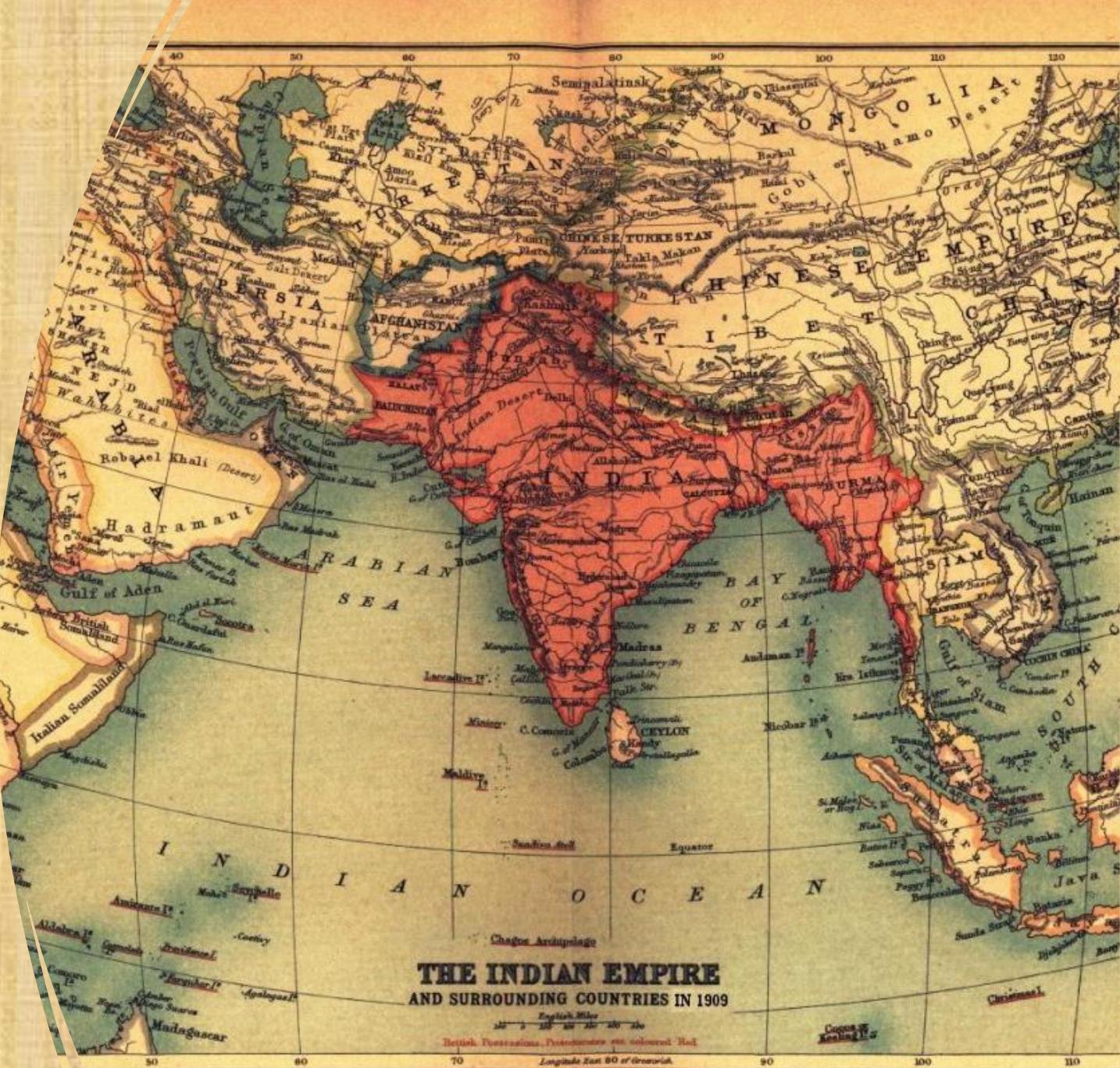
EUROPEAN EMPIRES IN ASIA

Map drawn in
the second half
of 19th Century
(according to Mercator
projection)



MAP OF BRITISH EMPIRE IN INDIA, 1909

- It was only in the late 19th and early 20th centuries that India's cartographic visual look came to be what we recognise today.



COMMENTS?!

There is nothing fixed in our own conceptions of space and territory



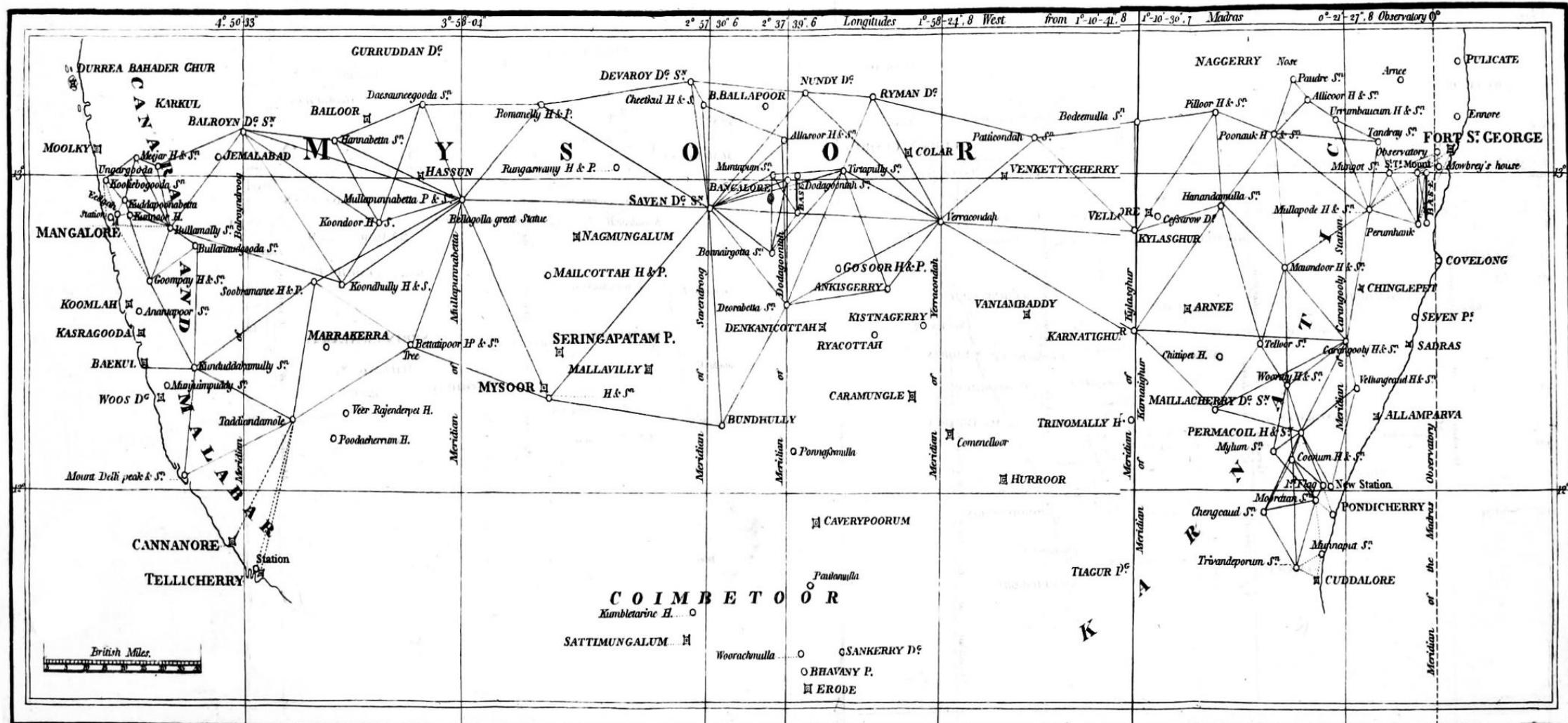
Technology of the New Maps

- Cadastral Maps
 - (Re) Emerged in early modern Europe
 - Clear identification of land among private owners
- Trigonometrical Surveys
 - Mapping entire territory using geometry after identifying a single base length
 - Great Trigonometrical Survey of India (1802-1872)
- Latitude and Longitude
 - Latitude based on scientific calculations of Sun position
 - Longitude is a political decision

First Triangulation

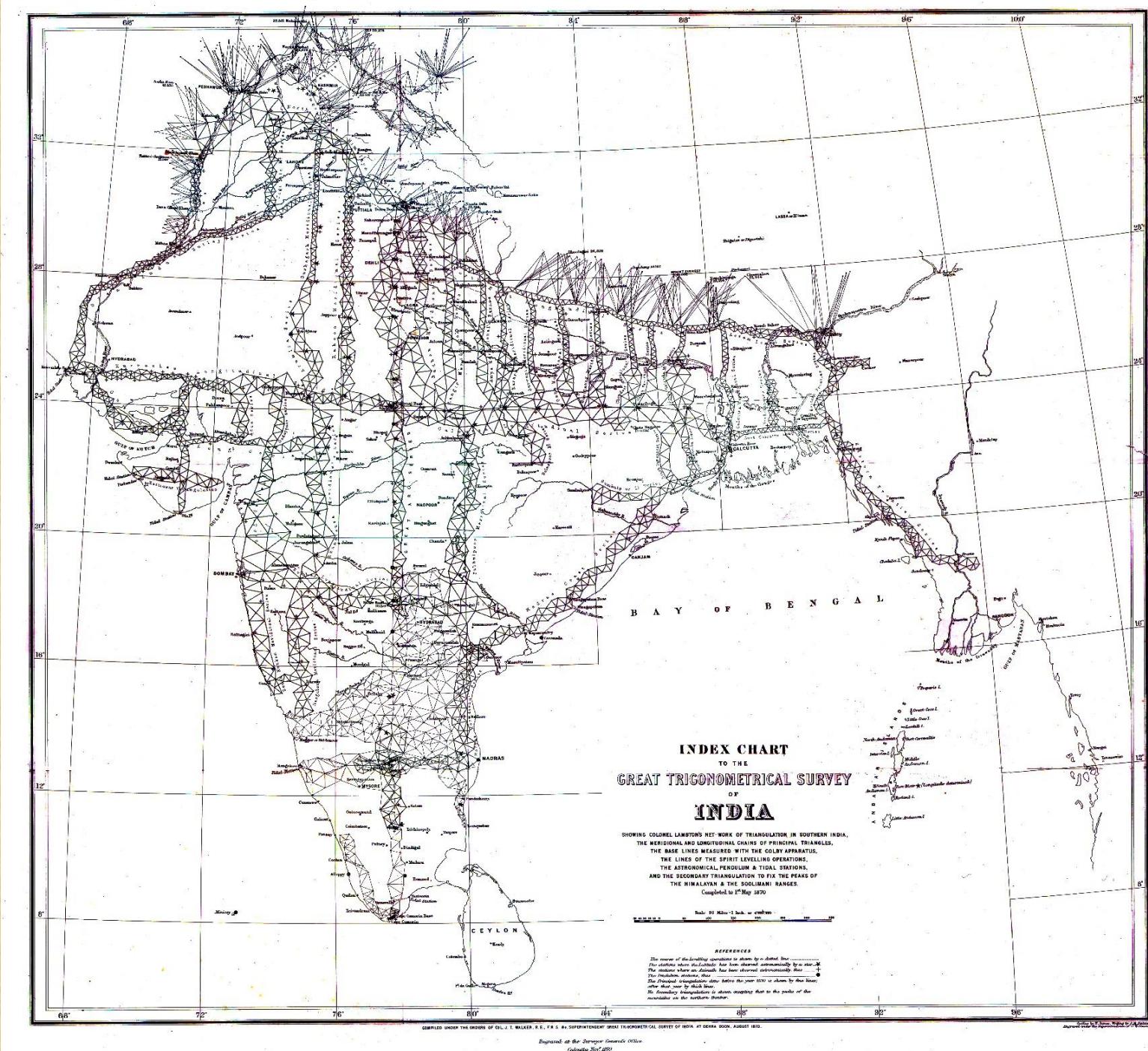
Madras to Mangalore through Mysore

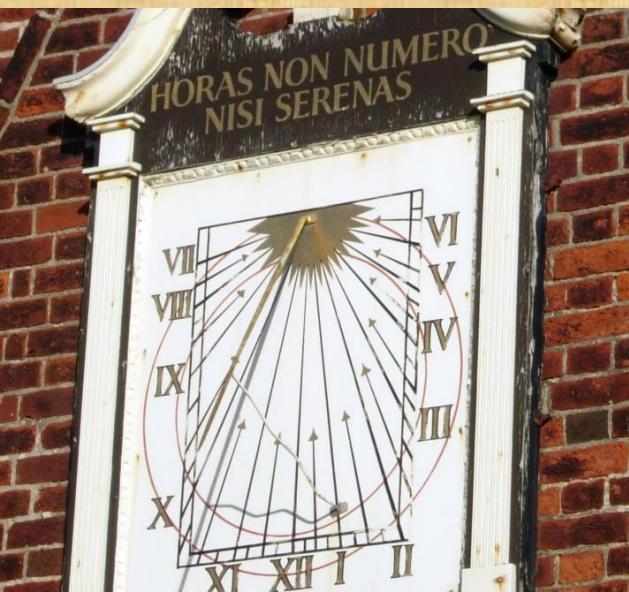
GENERAL PLAN OF THE TRIANGLES.



1802 – 1872

Indian landmass was mapped
in modern terms by the
Great Trigonometrical Survey





Conceptions of Time

- How do we measure time
 - Individually
 - As a polity and society
 - As a civilisation
- Who Controls Time
 - Religion
 - State

Typical Rural Church, Medieval Europe





Church Tower dominates the city



MERCHANT GUILDS' CLOCK TOWER, BERN, SWITZERLAND

- Low tower
- Enclosed space for merchants and guildsmen
- Precision time





PRECISION OF THE CLOCK

Change in Time

Rationalisation of Time

- Fixed hours, even minutes
- Each unit of time same as the other
- “Waste”, “gain”, “lose” time
- “Use” time.... Usury

Secularisation of Time

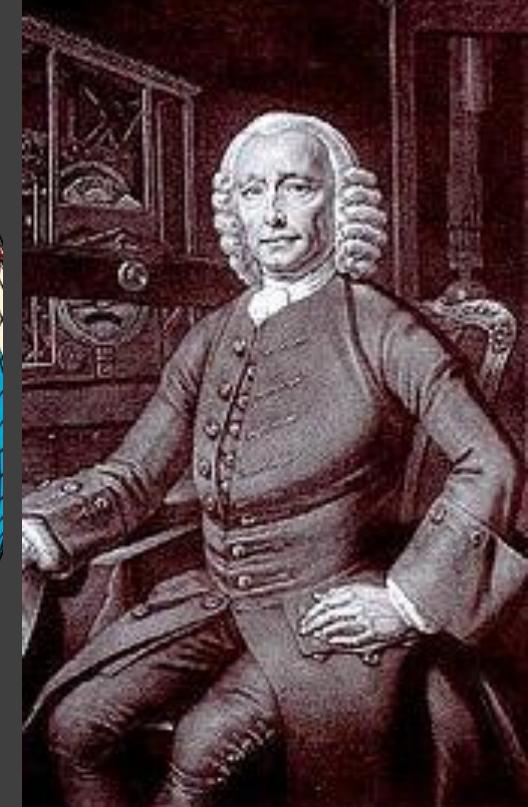
- Not owned by God, but fixed by common consent
- State

TOOK FIVE CENTURIES TO STABILISE IN EUROPE

...and yet is it so?

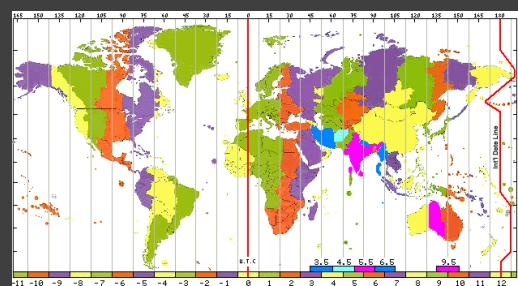
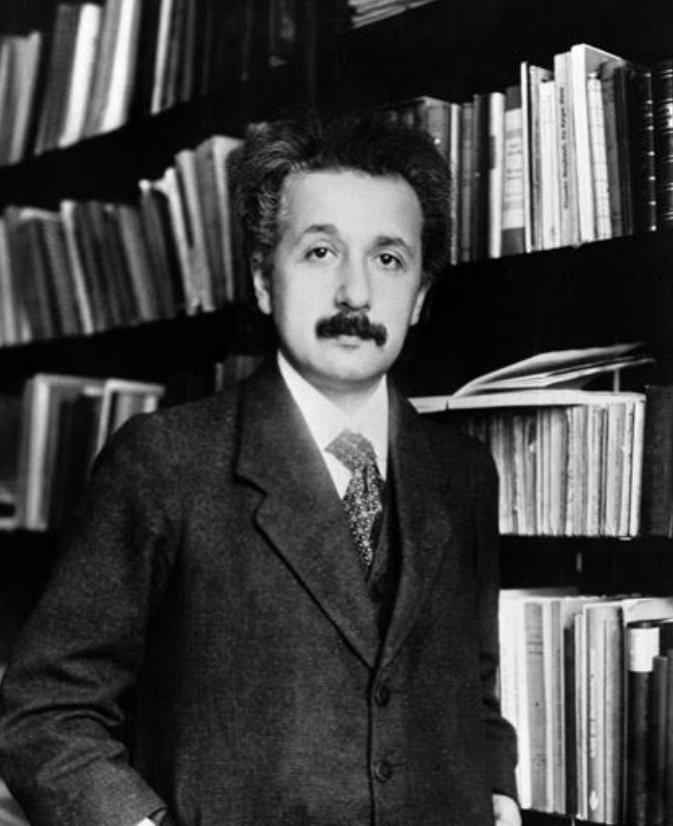
Longitude

- Political Issue
- Where is the prime meridian
- How many degrees will a sphere be divided into?
- How does one calculate Longitude
 - Gallileo's Moons of Jupiter (1612 AD)
 - Lunar calculations and Almanac
 - John Harrison's Marine Chronometer (1761 AD)

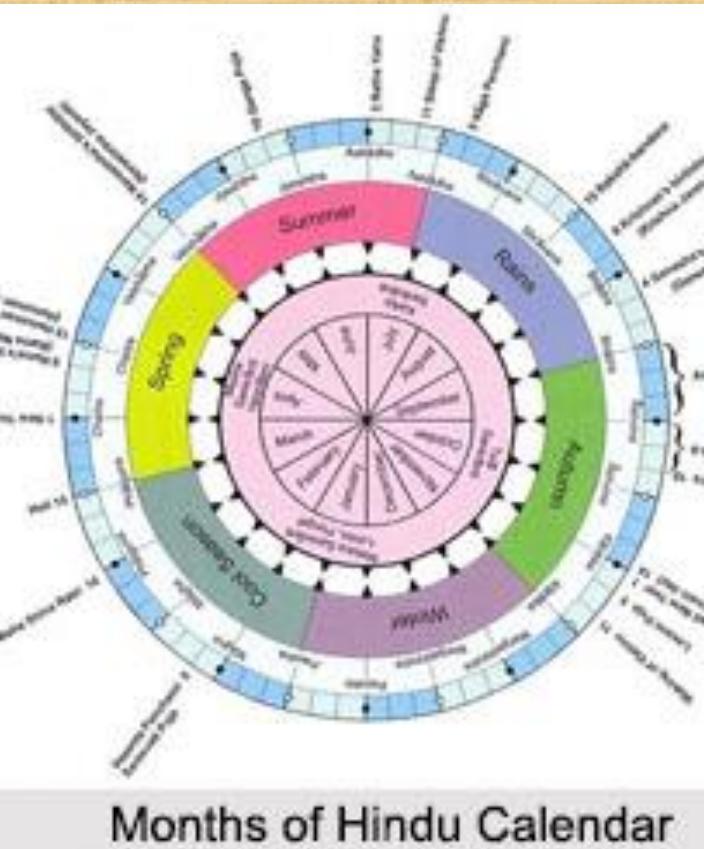


Universal Time

- 1884
 - International Meridian Conference
 - Fixed Greenwich as zero longitude
 - One time for the entire globe
- Travel and Trade rationalised
- “Backward Linkage” (History)
 - Calendar universalised



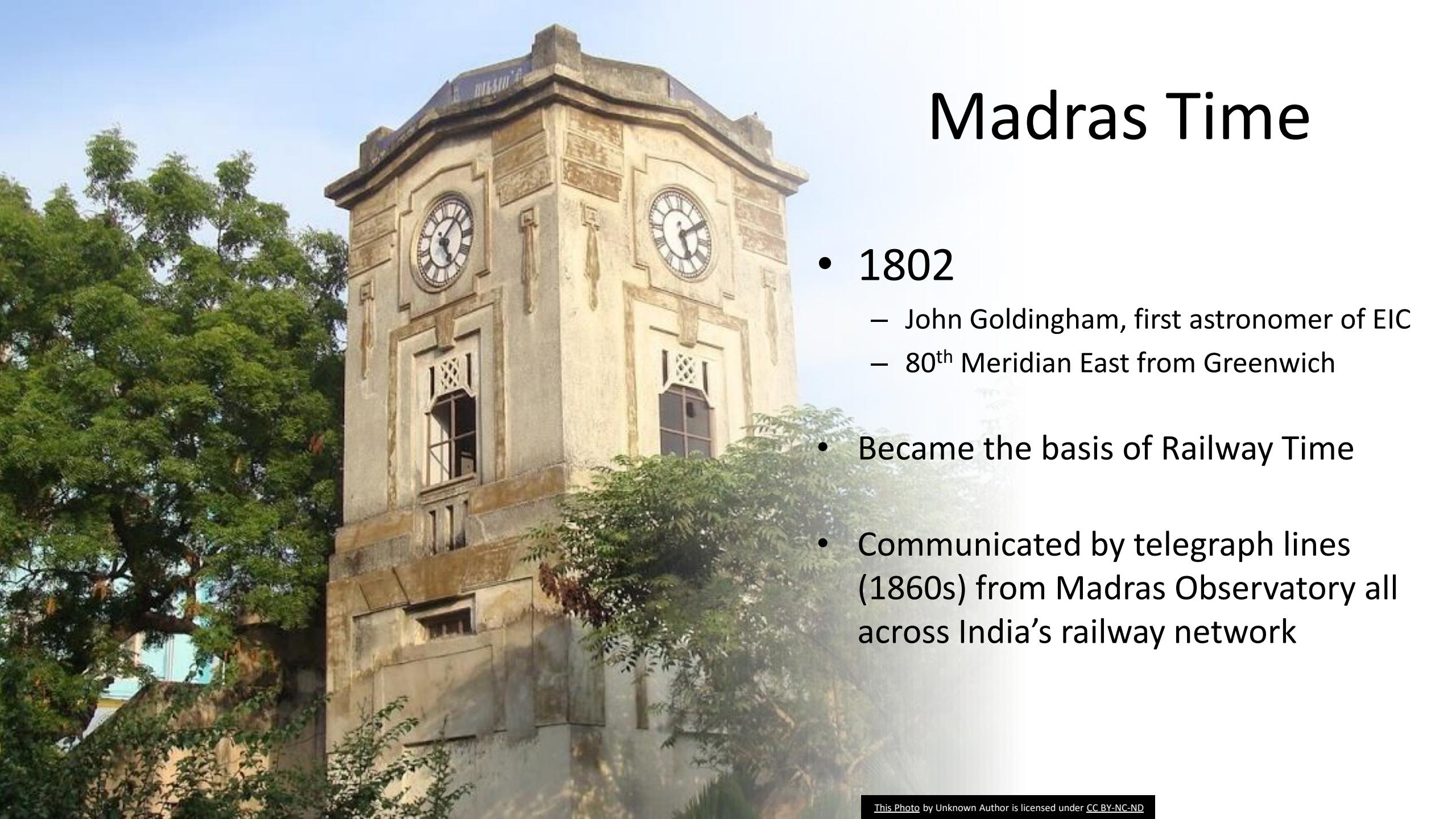
Time in India



- Time divined by religious leaders
- Controlled every action of individual...
 - Name ceremony, marriage, work, travel, etc
- ...and the community
 - Agriculture, war, trade, public works, etc
- Religious, Social, and Political Authority deeply intertwined with Time

Mughal Calendar

- Akbar established Tarikh-e-Ilahi in 1584
 - Began on Rabī‘ II 963 (Feb 13, 1556), date of his accession
 - Years were solar
- Demands of the Mughal revenue system
 - New Calendar merged Surya Siddhant (solar) with Hijri Calendar (lunar)
- Changed time calculation all over Mughal empire
 - Calendar starts new year with spring harvest
 - Influenced calendars all over the sub-continent; and beyond
 - Financial Year of British Commonwealth: 1 April



Madras Time

- 1802
 - John Goldingham, first astronomer of EIC
 - 80th Meridian East from Greenwich
- Became the basis of Railway Time
- Communicated by telegraph lines (1860s) from Madras Observatory all across India's railway network

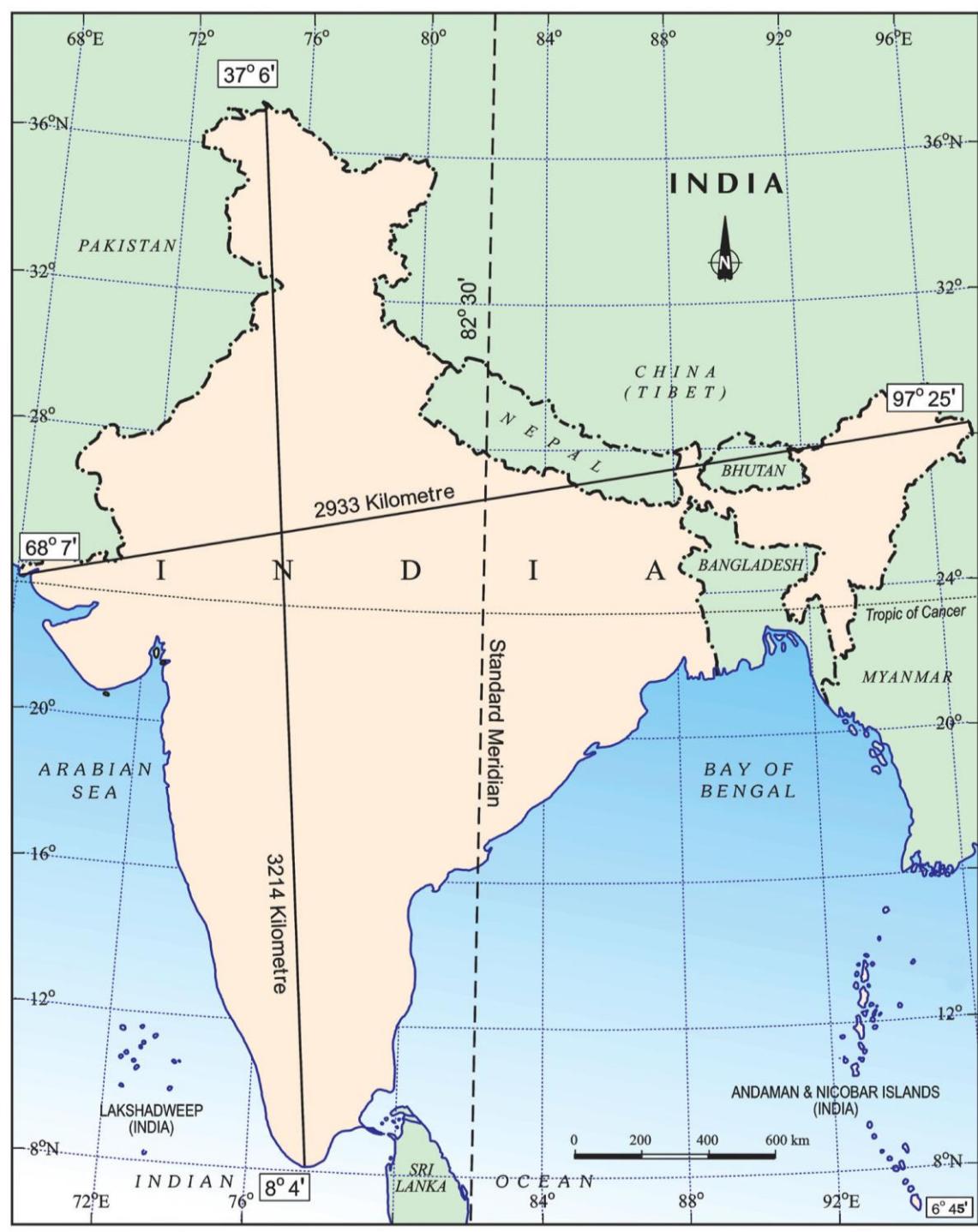
Bombay Time

- Formally established in 1884 at International Meridian Conference
 - Based on 75th Meridian
 - 4 hours 51 mins before GMT
- **Continued till 1955**
 - Balgangadhar Tilak and Pherozshah Mehta opposed shift from Bombay Time to Indian Standard Time in 1906
- Port and Mills worked on this time



Calcutta Time

- Also established at the 1884 International Meridian Conference
 - Based on 90th Meridian
 - 5 hours 54 mins ahead of GMT
- Continued till 1948
 - “Bagan Time” continued till much later; perhaps even now
- Used as standard for scientific measurements all over British India
 - Earthquakes, Eclipses, etc



Indian Standard Time

- Proposed in 1884
 - Established in 1905-06
 - Railway time shifted to IST
- One time for British India
- Massive East-West expanse
 - 29.8 deg (West) Baluchistan
 - 101.1 deg (East) Burma
 - 290 mins (4 hrs 50 mins) of time difference
- Even after Partition 29 deg longitudes between India's western and eastern points
 - 1 hour 56 mins

- There is no Universal Time
- Each Society, each part of society, lives by their own time
- Important for Historians to identify the sources and rhythms of times of the societies they study
- We studied Clock-Time today...
- What about other ways to calculate time?
- Can You Identify the different time rhythms you live by?

Time For Historians