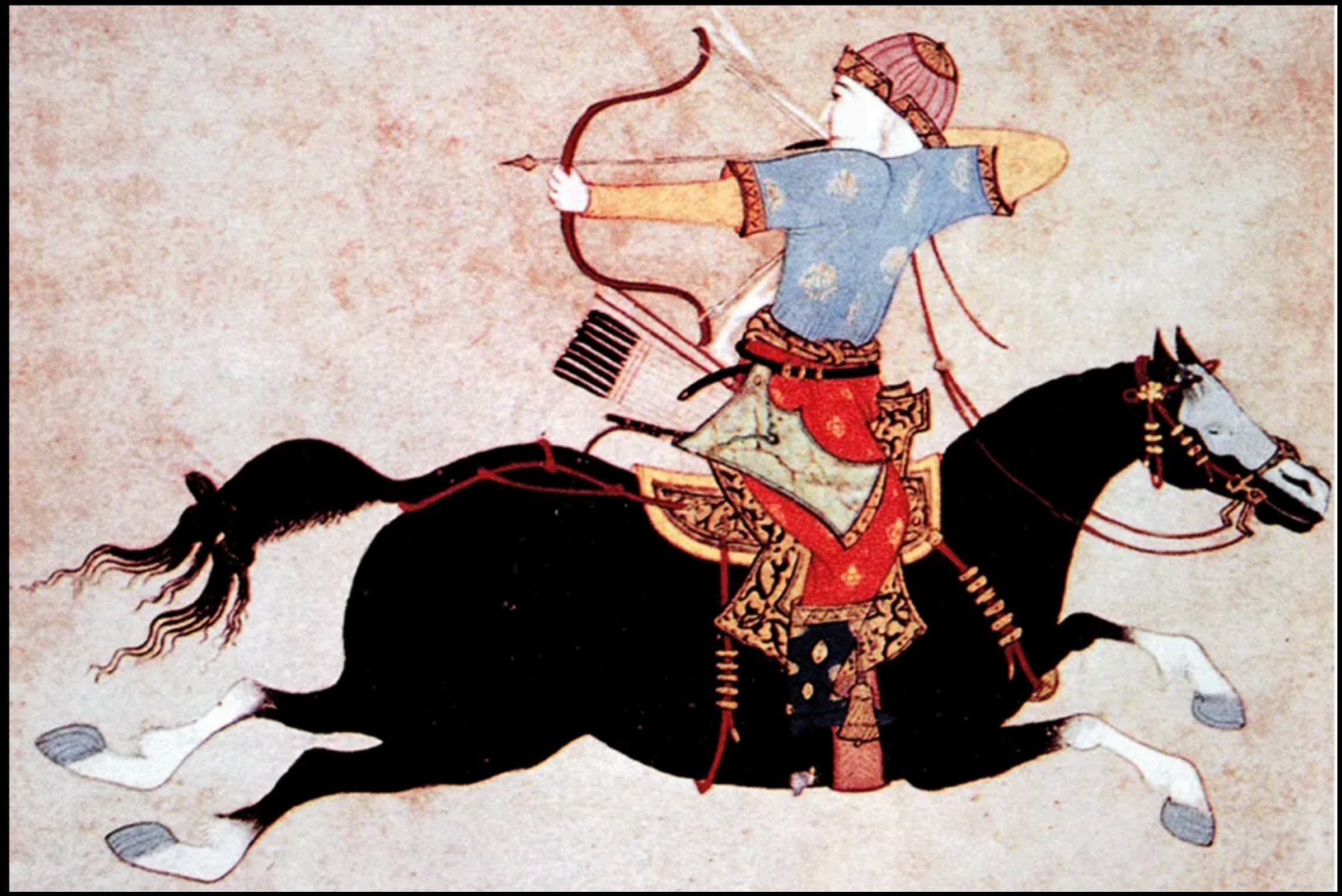
The “Other” — The Steppe “Barbarian”



https://spectator.com/article/how-the-barbarians-of-the-steppes-shaped-civilisation/?edition=us

Cain v. Abel?





Qabil Carries the Body of Habil

C. P. Kavafy

“Waiting for the Barbarians”

(1904)



https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/51294/waiting-for-the-barbarians

Classical / Medieval Definitions of "Barbarians"

Egyptian: "The Egyptians call anyone who does not speak their language *barbarians*." — Herodotus

Greek: those who speak no Greek, whose language sounded infantile: *bar - bar - bar;* those who are ignorant of viticulture or drink unmixed wine; those who live far enough from the sea as not to know the function of an oar

Roman: anyone non-Roman (except the Greeks), especially Germanic and Hunnic invaders ['infant' < Latin *infans*, unable to speak];

Chinese: [based on culture and power, not race] foreign ethnic groups; those living beyond the borders of Chinese kingdoms; prisoner, slave, captive

Romans and Chinese: pygmies live between the two empires

Mongol: "mannerless Japanese barbarians"

Japanese: merchants from Portugal and Holland

— Many of these cultures shared the concept of 'the noble savage.'

Ibn Khaldûn's *The Muqaddimah* (1377 CE)

"They [the Bedoins, i.e. nomads] are the most savage human beings that exist."

"[The nomads] are among human beings what beasts of prey are among dumb animals. The Bedoins, the Kurds, and the Turkomens are such."

"They do not stop at the borders of their horizon. They swarm across distant zones and achieve superiority over faraway nations."

“While the [nomads] need the cities for their necessities of life, the urban population needs the Bedouins for conveniences and luxuries.”

[noble savages?]

“As compared with those of sedentary people, their evil ways and blameworthy qualities are much less numerous. They are closer to the first natural state and more remote from the evil habits […] of sedentary people.”

Ibn Khaldūn, *The Muqaddimah: An Introduction to History*. F. Rosenthal, tr. (1967)

The Not-So-Noble “Savages”?

“The wines of a happier climate are the most grateful or the most valuable commodity that can be offered to the Tartars: and the only example of their industry seems to consist in the art of extracting from mare’s milk a fermented liquor which possesses a very strong power of intoxication.

“Like animals of prey, the savages […] experience the alternate vicissitudes of famine and plenty and their stomach is inured to sustain, without much inconvenience, the opposite extremes of hunger and intemperance.”

Edward Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (1776 - 1788)

Origin Story of the Türks

- Ashina tribe wiped out in battle
- One boy survives, hands and feet cut off
- The celestial blue she-wolf finds him, nurses him, bears him ten sons, half human / half wolf
- The sons become founders of Türkic clans
- The wolf is a sacred symbol for the Türkic peoples

In Roman mythology, the twin brothers Romulus and Remus are abandoned as infants, cast into the Tiber River, and subsequently discovered and suckled by a she-wolf (lupa) in a cave (the Lupercal) before being raised by a shepherd.

In Turkic mythology (such as the Asena legend or the Türeyiş and Ergenekon epics), a young boy is the sole survivor of a massacre, and a blue-gray she-wolf (Asena or Kök-Börü) finds him, nurses him in a cave, and later gives birth to or spawns the lineage that founds the Turkic peoples.

Totemic Ancestry: Both cultures share a deep ancient totemism where the wolf is revered as a sacred progenitor, protector, and symbol of martial strength and resilience in the wild.

Birth of a Dynasty/State: In both traditions, the offspring or descendants nursed by the wolf go on to establish a great civilization or empire (Rome for the twins; the Turkic khaganates/tribes for the wolf's progeny).

Chinese Xenophobia *and* Sexism

"Ever since … the Western barbarians kicked up smoke and dust, the rank stink of fleece, felt, and mutton has pervaded Luoyang. Our women have become barbarians' wives and learned to apply their makeup, while singing girls offer barbarian tunes and focus on barbarian music."

— 8th-century poet and government official Yuan Zhen

https://humanprogress.org/centers-of-progress-pt-10/

The Barbarian Invasions

A Genealogy of the History of Art



Eric Michaud



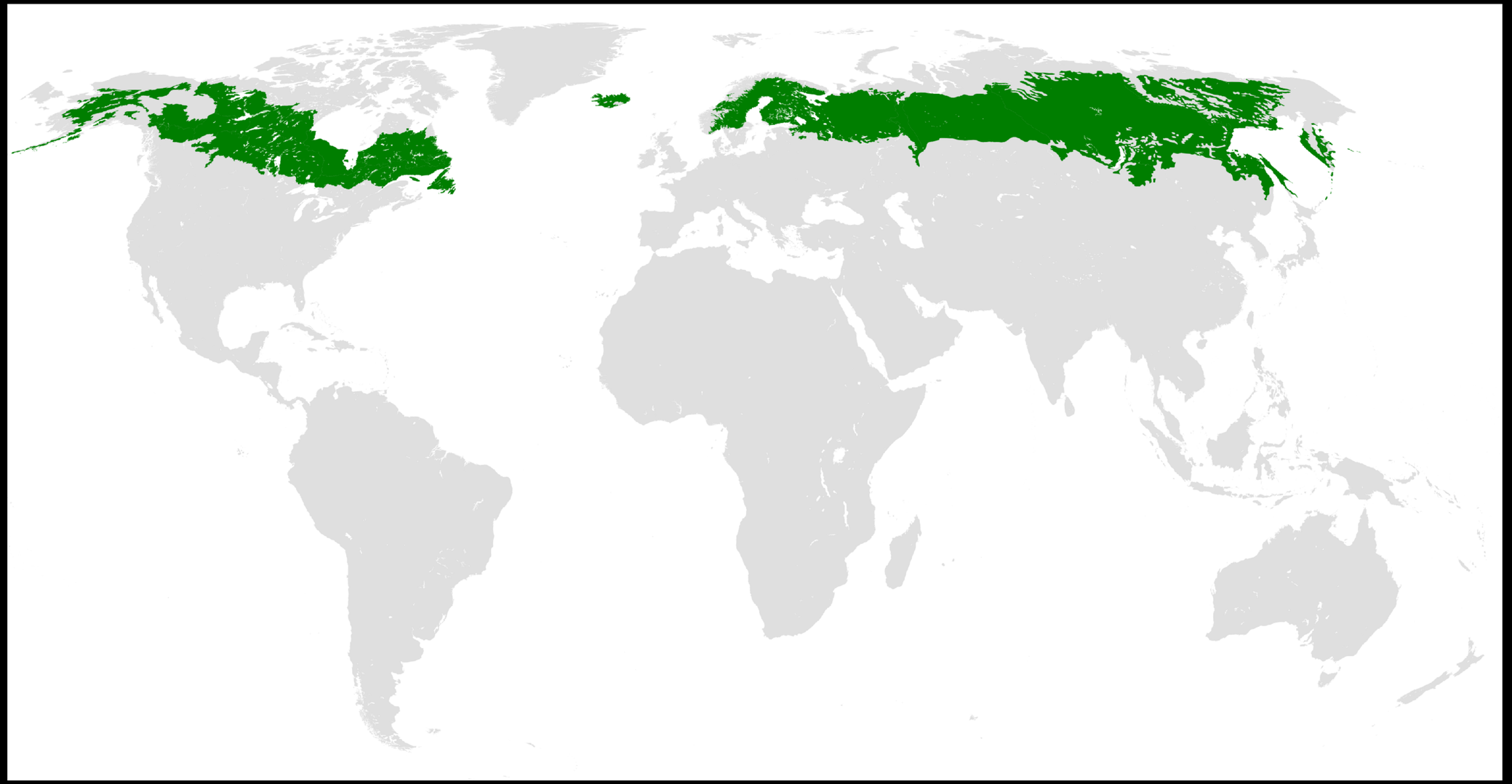
Max Ernst, “The Barbarians”

https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/489976

< https://mitpress.mit.edu/9780262043151/the-barbarian-invasions/

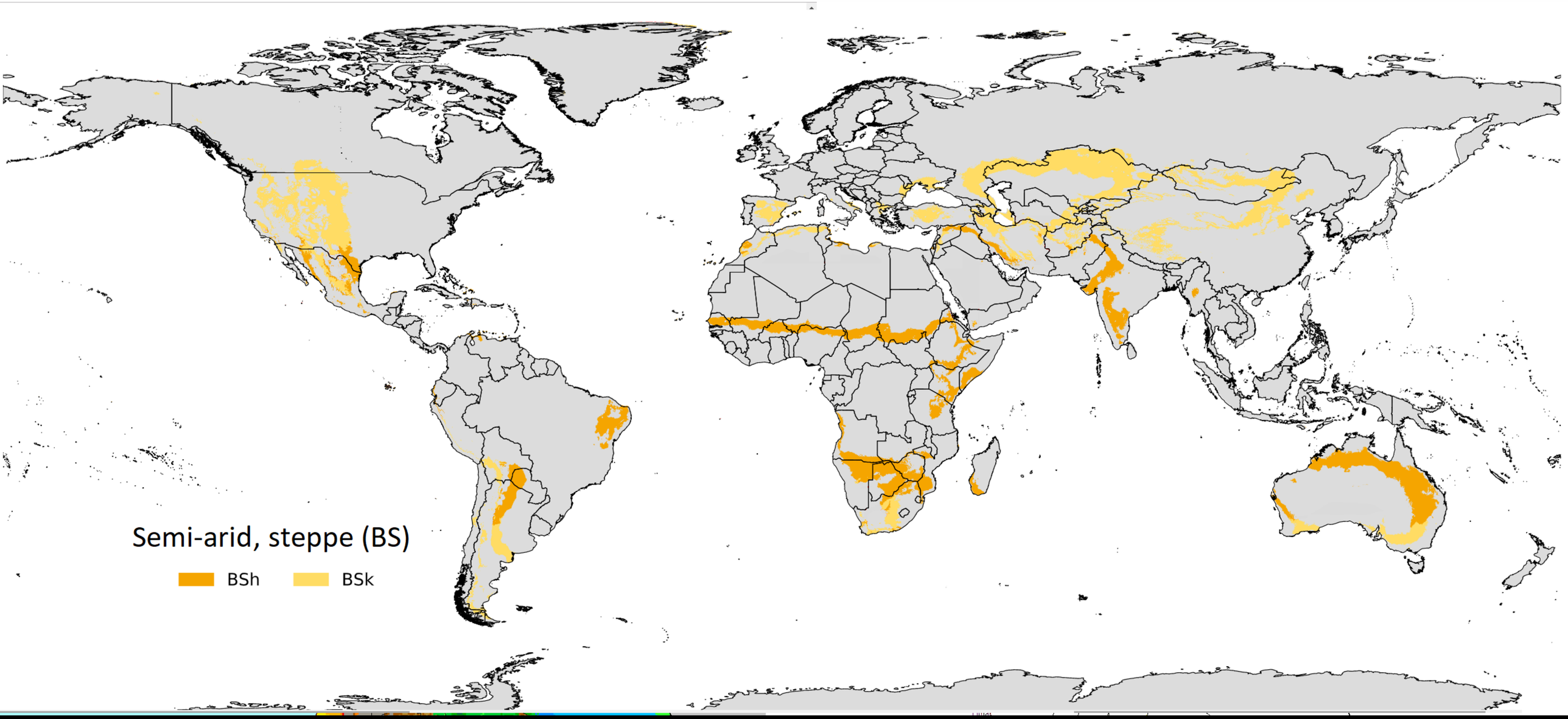
Taiga: “The Fur Road”

The world’s largest terrestrial biome



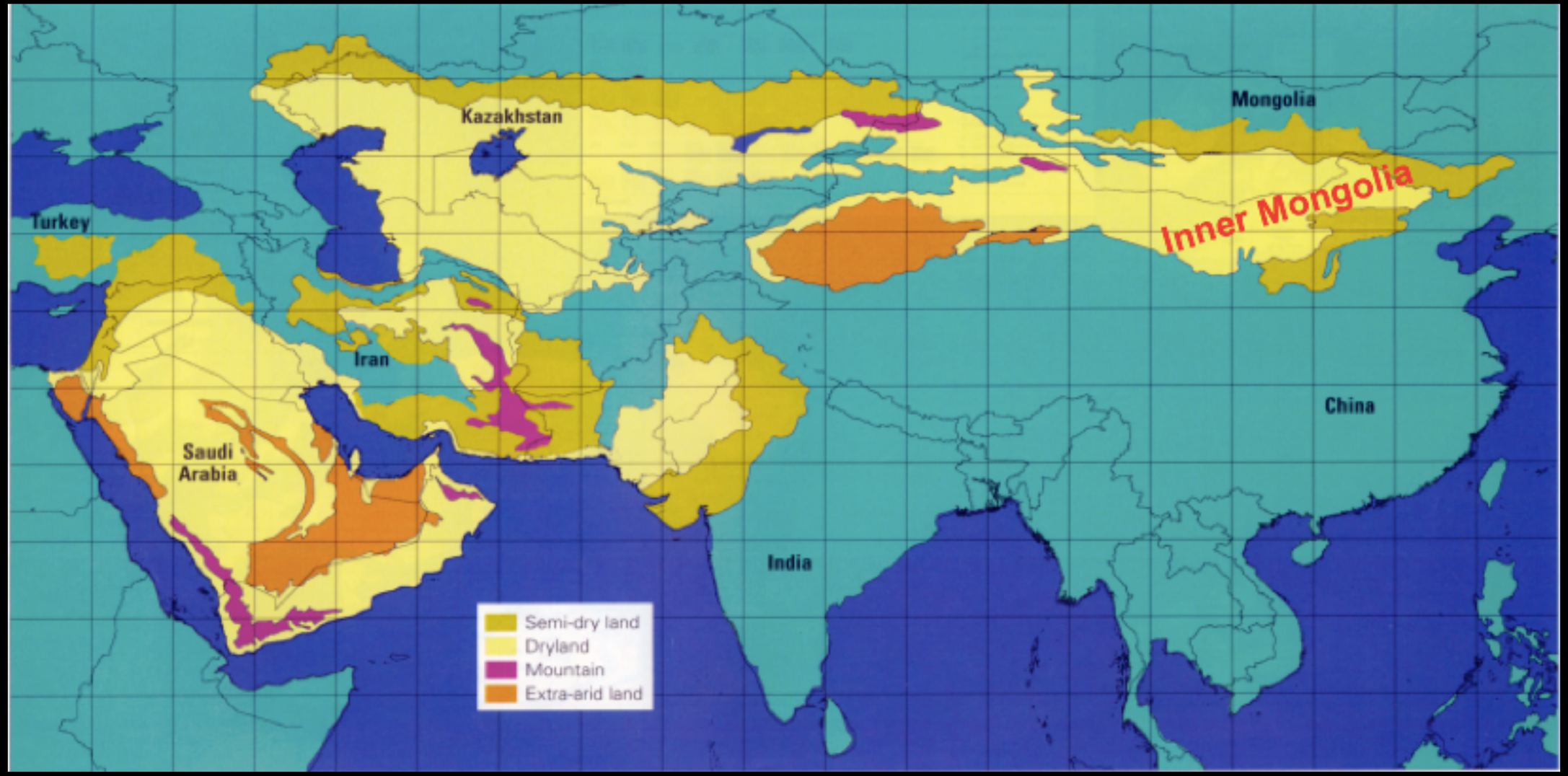
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiga#/media/File:Taiga_ecoregion.png

Steppe: Grazing, Mobility



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steppe#/media/File:BS_climate.png

Asia holds the largest concentration of non-polar deserts on Earth.



https://highwire.princeton.edu/2016/02/01/a-precarious-puzzle-of-expanding-deserts-how-arid-asia-has-varied-over-time-and-the-confusion-over-recent-desertification/

https://www.worldatlas.com/deserts/the-deserts-of-asia.html

Mountain Dividing Lines: Farmers / Nomads

Caucasus

Tianshan

Altai





https://www.britannica.com/place/the-Steppe

степь (steppe) meant ‘wasteland’ in agriculturalist Russia.

Let’s Explore Our Biases:

- Our dwellings
- Our occupations
- Our government
- Our religions
- Our education
- Our food supply
- Our travel destinations
- Our languages
- Our relationships with animals
- Our sports and entertainment

Classical Roman ‘Civilization’

“Widely-used tactics of mass violence ‘off the battlefield’: mass killing, mass enslavement, and the destruction (and looting) of cities in Roman warfare. Their ruthless use seems to have been vital to Roman military operations. Commanders in the field with full deliberation used mass violence and brutal strategies upon civilian populations to achieve their military objectives and political goals as a matter of routine. Atrocity and massacre were fundamental modalities of military practice, alongside pitched battles and sieges. The soldiers on campaign and in combat participated in different ways, but at the end violence resulted in remarkable military success in foreign affairs, with important effects, too, on Rome and its society.

“Urban destruction, mass enslavement and mass killing required labor, organization, resources and forethought on the part of Roman armies and the generals.”

https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2022/2022.01.23/

“Violence, murder, mass executions, rape of women and children, phenomena of ‘genocide’, enslavement and deportation and/ or forced migrations, flight, plunder and looting, acts of cultural and religious destruction, of economic structures and livelihoods – all **‘routines of war’**: warfare in the ancient world was extremely brutal, **it was ‘total’**.”

— Oliver Stoll, Universität Passau

https://bmcr.brynmawr.edu/2022/2022.01.23/

Qin Dynasty ‘Civilization’

Emperor Qin Shi Huang burned the books and murdered the scholars who preceded his dynasty; works tens of thousands to death building the Great Wall and creating his tomb with its terracotta army.

Would we consider 20th-century Europe “barbaric”?



Was 20th-century America “barbaric”?



Periodization: Nomadic v. Agrarian State Formation

300 BCE - 600 CE: Rise and Fall of Macedonian, Han, Roman, Kushan, and Sasanian empires

600 - 1200: Expansion of Muslim Caliphates —

Dar al-Islam ('House of Submission, Peace') v. *Dar al-Harb* ("House of War");

Tang dynasty in China

Türkic / Sogdian control of major trade routes

1200 - 1500: Mongol, Timurid, and Türkic imperialism

How about our society today?



Silk Road Chronology

Prior to 1000 BC

Circa 3200 BC	The horse is domesticated on the south Russian steppe.
Circa 3000 BC	Silk cloth is produced in China.
Circa 3000 BC	Sumerians develop a writing system.

https://silk-road.com/artl/chrono.shtml

After meeting me at a conference in Stuttgart, Dr. Roberts added this sentence to the fourth chapter of his *magnum opus*:

“The history of the central Asian peoples quickly takes the non-specialist out of his depth.”

J. M. Roberts, *History of the World* (1993), p. 256.

Pas de Deux / Trois / Quatre; Rave

Pastoral Nomads in Contact With Agrarian States and Pastoral Confederacies in Asia (c. 200 BCE — c.1300 CE)

Sarmatians < > Scythians, Romans, Goths, Huns

Saca < > Achaemenid empire, Seleucid empire, Yuezhi, Han dynasty

Yuezhi < > Xiongnu, Greco-Bactrian kingdom, Sasanid empire

Xiongnu < > Yuezhi, Han dynasty

Hephthalite < > Sasanid empire, Gupta empire, Soghdia, Western Turks

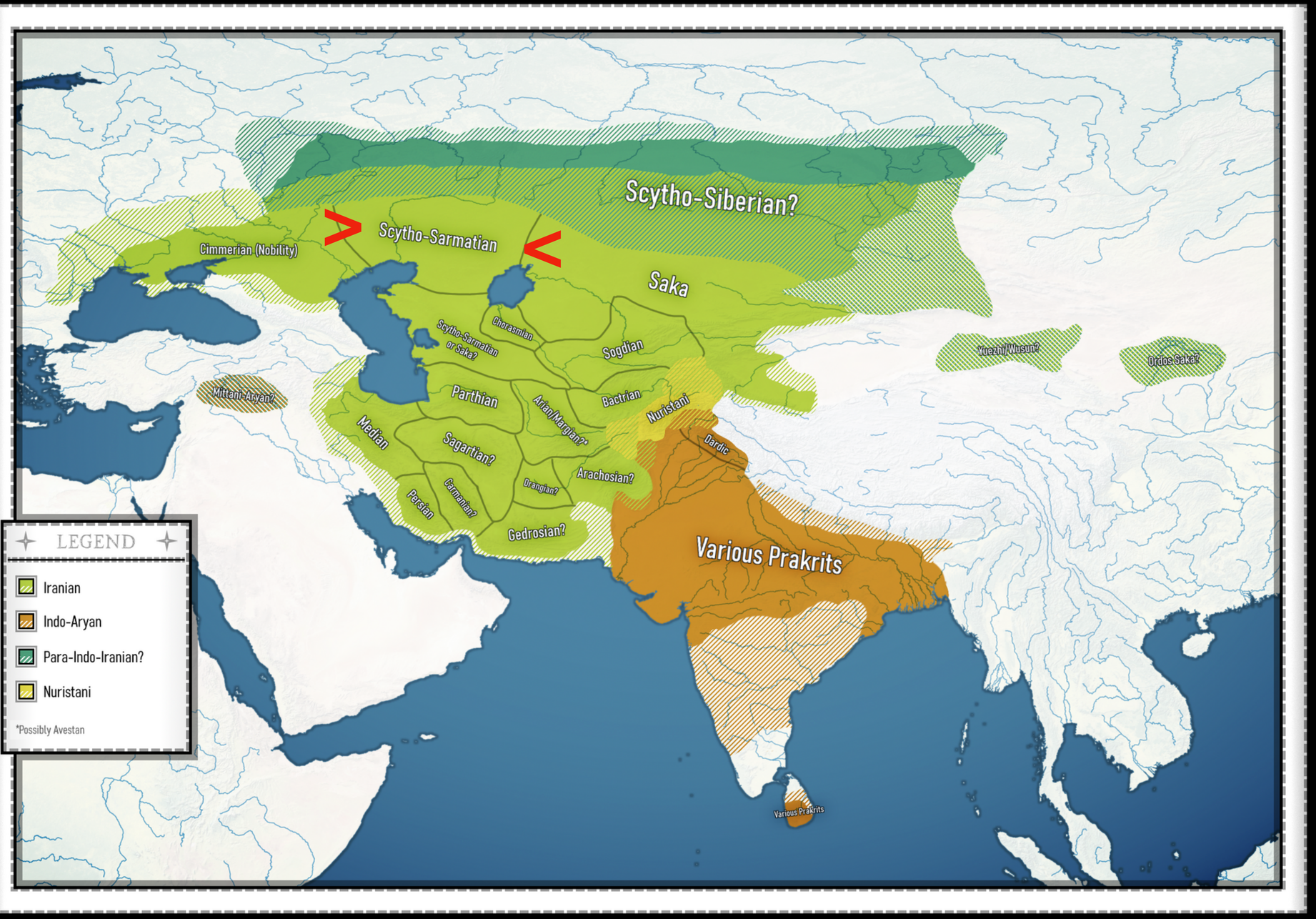
Juan-Juan < > Hephthalite, Wei dynasty

Uighur < > Xiongnu, Han and Tang dynasties, Tibetan Empire

Qara-Khitai < > Liao dynasty, Seljuk empire

Mongols < > Jurchens, Tanguts, Abbasid caliphate, Mamluk sultanate, Japanese shogunate, almost everyone else between the Volga and the Pacific

Seljuks < > Abbasid caliphate, Byzantine empire, Mongols



Iron Age Iranic Peoples

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eurasian_nomads#/media/File:Map_of_Attested_and_Hypothetical_Old_Indo-Iranian_Dialects.png



Scythian Art



https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/introducing-scythians

Scythians with horses under a tree. Gold belt plaque.

Siberia, 4th–3rd century BC.



https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/introducing-scythians

Horse headgear



https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/introducing-scythians

They liked getting drunk and high!



https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/introducing-scythians

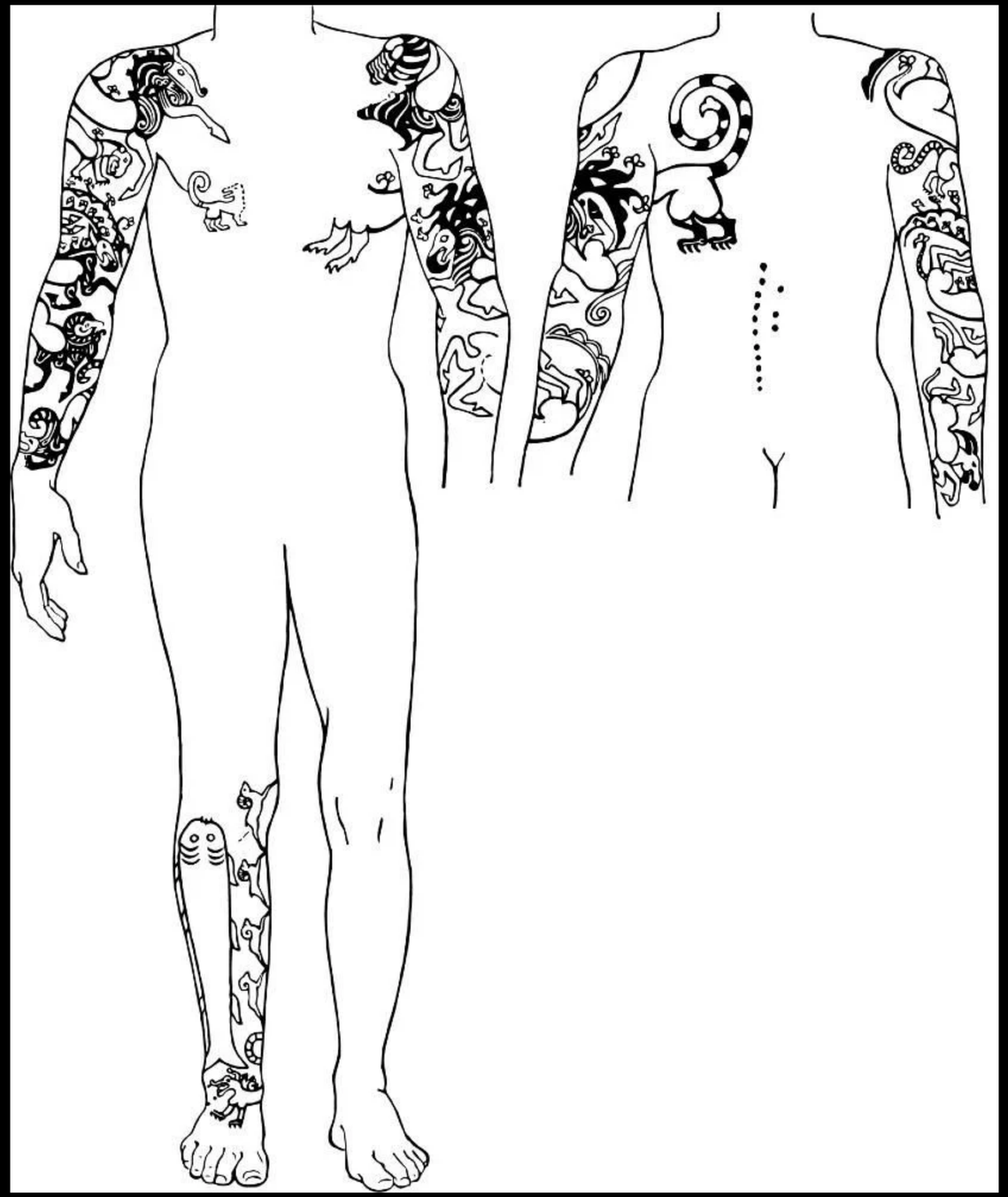
Getting high is old news

“Now, researchers have discovered evidence of **cannabis use around 2800 years ago** —a few hundred years earlier than existing, indirect evidence of the plant’s use. The discovery comes **from a Scythian burial mound in southern Siberia**, where researchers uncovered more than 1400 tiny cannabis seeds. Radiocarbon dating revealed they were likely deposited in the **8th century B.C.E.**, around the time the burial mound was constructed. The researchers also found preserved human hair at the burial site; a chemical analysis revealed the presence of the compound cannabinol in the hair, which is produced from THC, the psychoactive component of cannabis. ‘It’s only so often as an archaeologist that you get to drug test a person that’s been dead for nearly 3000 years,’ co-author Gino Caspari told *The New York Times*.”

“Together, the evidence indicates that **ancient people were using the plant at least in part for its mind-altering properties, potentially during funerary rituals or other cultural practices**. These people ‘were probably not the first to use cannabis in a psychoactive way,’ Caspari said. ‘I honestly think that Neanderthals, Denisovans and maybe Homo erectus already had an idea of what things like cannabis could be used for,’ he continued, ‘but this is the oldest instance where we can actually prove it.’”

https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/#inbox/FMfcgzQjgqKNDcrZDqjHCTpxfmKJrGbh

NICE TATTs!



Scythian Body Art

https://www.britishmuseum.org/blog/introducing-scythians

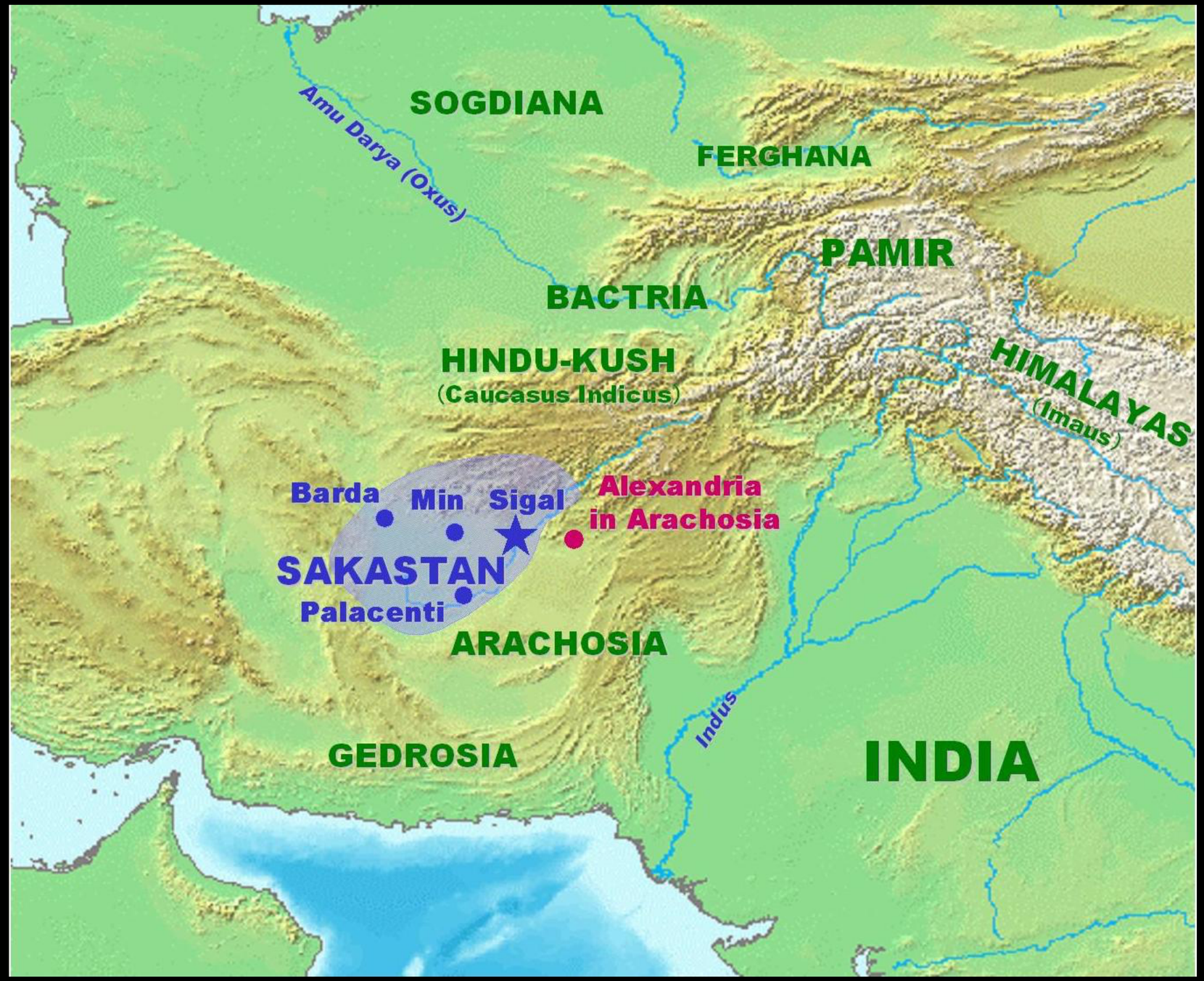
Saka Territories (c. 800 BCE - c. 400 CE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saka

‘Land of the Sakas’

(c. 100 BCE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saka#/media/File:SakastanMap.jpg



The Heavenly Horse, commonly known as the Ferghana Horse, is an ancient ceremonial bronze finial. It originates from Bactria, dating back to the 4th-1st century BC, and was skillfully crafted by Saka tribes.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saka#/media/File:Cult_of_Heavenly_horse_bronze_horse_ancient_finial_Bucephalus_Ancient_Akhal_Teke.jpg

Warriors with daggers and bows

Dagger blade decoration from Kurgan 4, Burial 2 (5th-4th century BCE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saka#/media/File:Filippovka,_individuals_on_a_dagger_blade,_Kurgan_4,_Burial_2.jpg



Recumbent stag plaque (Kazakhstan; 8th to 6th century BCE]



Xiongnu confederacy, mid- 2nd century BCE

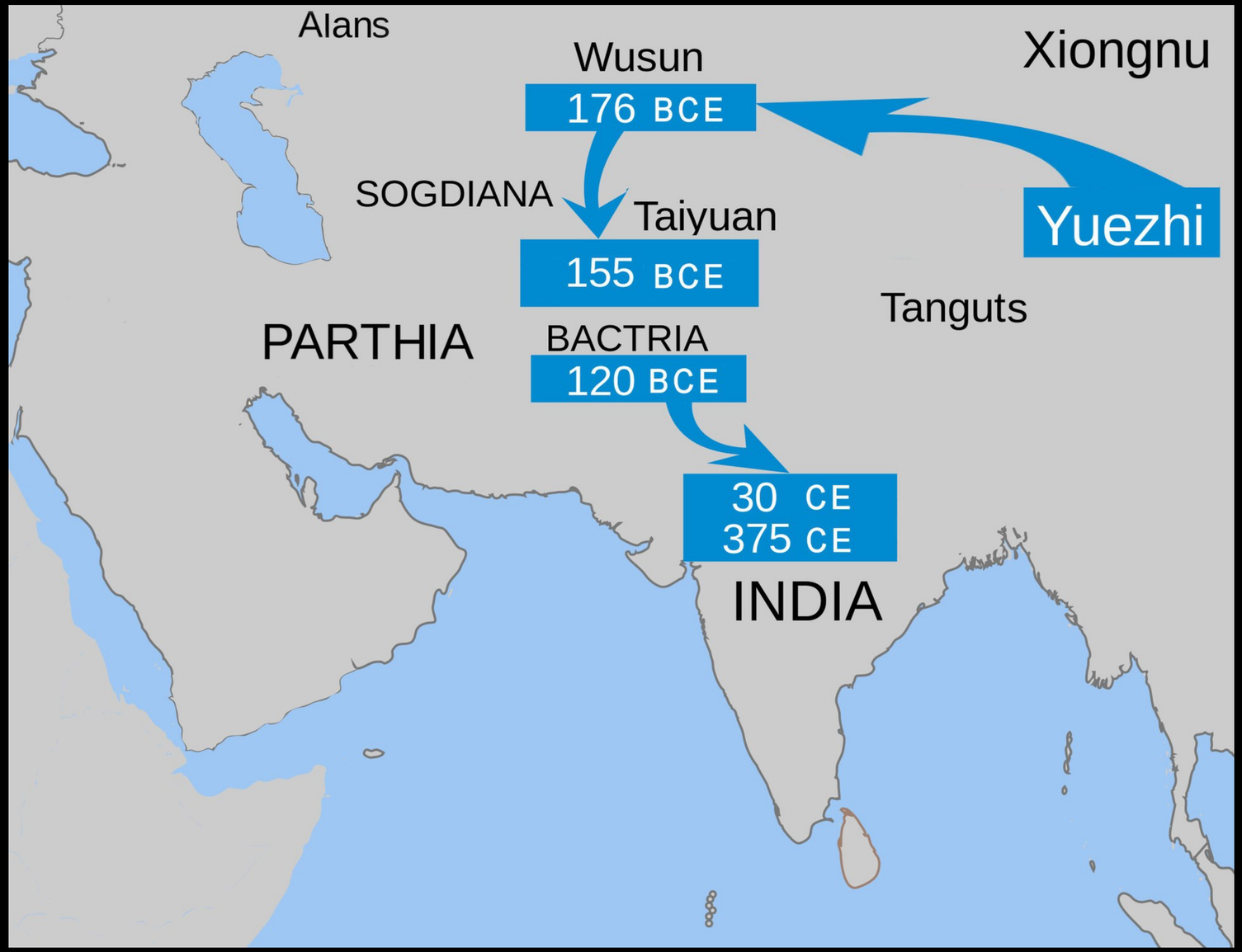
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xiongnu

Video: Xiongnu artifacts



https://human.libretexts.org/Courses/Evergreen_Valley_College/Asian_Art_History_(Gustlin_and_Gustlin)/05:_The_Maritime_and_Overland_Silk_Road_(400_BCE__50_BCE)/5.06:_Xiongnu__3rdcentury_BCE__1stcentury_CE

Migrations of the Yuezhi



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VMNlZdaYJgc&t=291s

Harness ornament in the shape of a coiled wolf

(c. 400 BCE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:狼紋青銅車馬飾-Harness_Ornament_in_the_Shape_of_a_Coiled_Wolf_MET_2002_201_61.jpg

Nomad on a Bactrian Camel (c. 300 BCE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:MET_2002_201_83_O1.jpg

Belt plaque in the shape of a standing wolf

(c. 300 BCE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:狼紋青銅帶飾-Belt_Plaque_in_the_Shape_of_a_Standing_Wolf_MET_DT5398.jpg

Yuezhis depicted on a Xiongnu carpet (c. 50 CE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:Noin-Ula_carpet.jpg



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:Kalchayan_Prince_warrior_(full).jpg

Yuezhi noblemen:

over fire altar



as mounted warrior



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:Noin-Ula_nobleman_over_firealtar.jpg

Yuezhi (left) fighting
a Sogdian
behind a shield (right)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:Noin-Ula_battle_scene.jpg

Excavated Yuezhi dagger



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:TillyaTepe_dagger.jpg

Kushan Buddist art (c. 300 CE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuezhi#/media/File:Buddha_triad_monk_layman_Guimet_MG21157.jpg

Hephthalite Empire c. 500 CE



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hephthalites

The Hephthalites: Paradigmatic Silk-Roads Polity

- Tribal confederation that dominated central and southwest Asia, northern India (c. 400 - c. 700 CE)
- *Hunas* in Sanskrit; 'White Huns' in Byzantine Greek
- Nomadic Turkic peoples from Altai region of eastern Mongolia
- Empire stretched from the Caspian Sea and Sasanid borders to northern India and across Central Asia into the Tarim Basin
- Fought against, exacted heavy tributes from the Sasanian empire
- Invaded India and destroyed the Gupta Empire
- Gradually adopted settled, urbanized lifeways
- Tolerant: Practiced Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Manichaeism, and Eastern (Nestorian) Christianity

Persian depiction of Hephthalites in combat



https://silk-road.com/artl/heph.shtml

Bactrian inscription:

ηβοδαλο ββγο ēbodālo bbgo

"Yabghu (Lord)

of the Hephthalites”

(5th century - early 6th century CE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hephthalites#/media/File:Seal_of_a_Hephthalite_king_with_the_Bactrian_inscription_The_Lord_(Yabgu)_of_the_Hephthalites._End_5th_century_early_6th_century_CE.jpg

Balalyk Tepe festivities

(fresco: c. 5th century CE)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hephthalites#/media/File:Balalyk_Tepe_festivities.jpg

Hephthalite (滑, Hua) ambassador at the Chinese court of the Southern Liang in the capital Jingzhou in 516–526 CE



滑國使

部索虜入居桑乾滑爲小國屬芮芮齊時始走莫獻而居後強大
征其旁國破波斯槃槃罽賓烏纙龜茲疎勒于闐勾般等國開地
千里其土溫暖多山川少林木有五穀國人以麪及羊肉爲糧獸有師子兩
腳駱駝野驢有角人善騎射著小袖長身袍金玉爲絡帶如人被裘頭上
刻木爲角長六尺金銀飾之少女子兄弟共妻無城郭穹廬屋爲居東向
開戶其王坐金床隨太歲轉與妻並坐接賓客無文字以木爲契刻之
約物數與旁國通則使旁國胡爲胡書羊皮爲紙無職官所降小國使
其王爲奴隸事天神每日則出戶祀神而後食其跪一拜而止止卽鳴其
王手足賤者鳴王衣蓳以木爲□父母死子截一耳蓳已卽去魏晉以
來不通中國天監十五年國王姓厭帶名夷栗陁始使蒲多達□□獻
延賓□□名縝杯普通元年又遣富何了了獻黃師子白貂裘
波斯□子錦王妻□□亦遣使康符真同貢物其使人蓽頭剪髮
著波斯錦褶□錦袴朱麋皮長壟鞾其語言則河南人重譯而通焉

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hephthalites#/media/File:Huaguoshi.jpg



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rouran_Khaganate#History

Uyghur Khaganate (c. 800 CE)

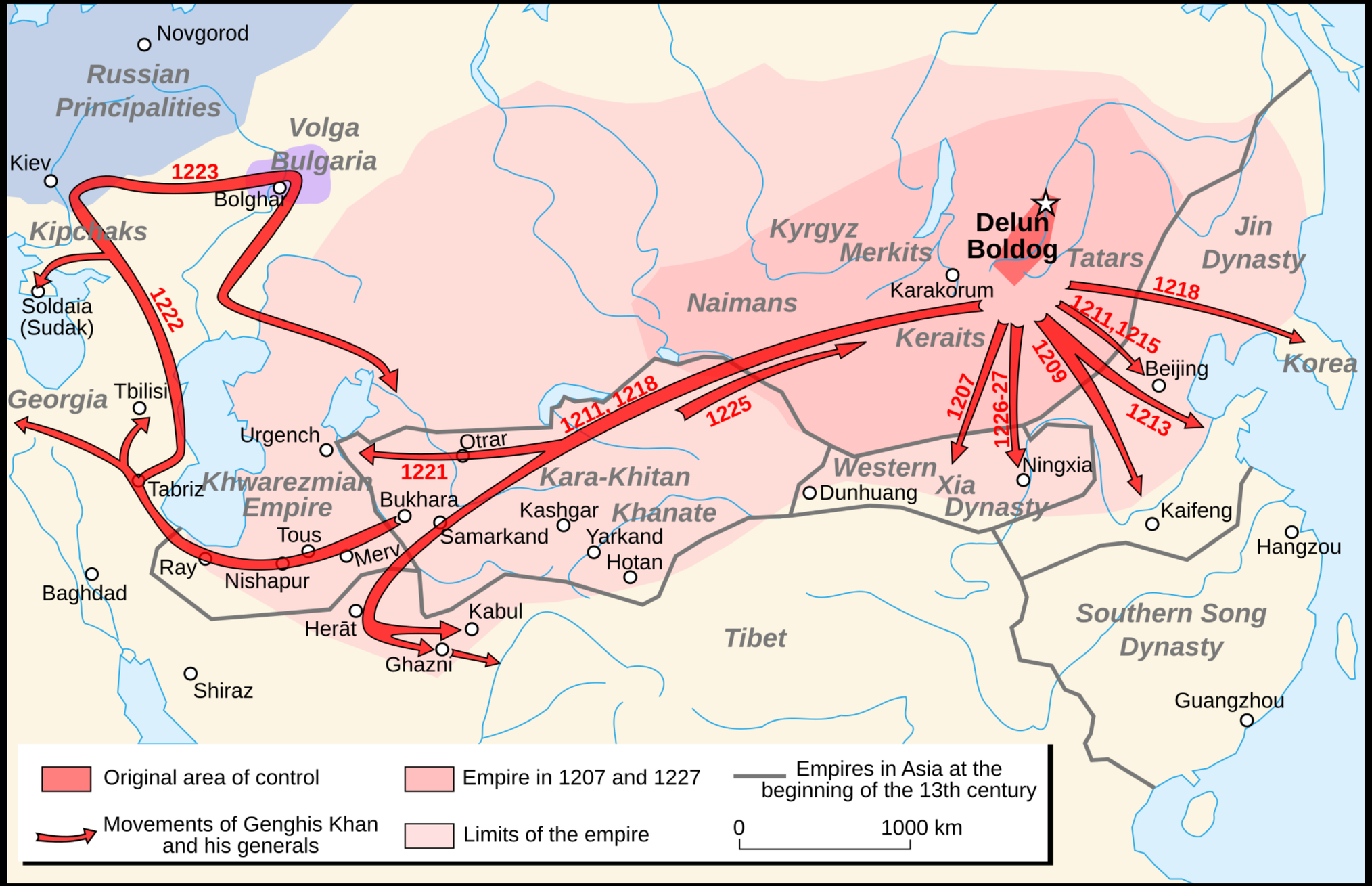


https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Uyghurs#/media/File:Old_World_820.png

The Qara Khitai empire in 1169 at its greatest extent



https://www.facebook.com/Drahmadabdelfattah/posts/the-empire-of-the-qara-khitai-in-eurasian-history_-between-china-and-the-islamic/



13th-Century Mongol Military Campaigns

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barbarian#/media/File:Genghis_Khan_empire-en.svg



Interactive version:

https://www.freeman-pedia.com/mongols#google_vignette

Mongol Agenda for Eurasia:

- Use terror as primary instrument of conquest
- If a city surrendered, plunder and leave people to their ways, under a Mongol governor-general
- If a city resisted, capture craftsmen, ballistic experts, astrologers and clergy; kill all the rest

Europeans named Mongols “Tartars,” from Latin *Tartarus* (Hell).

V. Hansen, *The Silk Road* (p. 394)

Ilkhan cultural restitution

"When Ibn Battuta arrived in the region nearly a century later, Persia and Iraq were still suffering from the devastating effects of the Mongol Invasion, particularly on its economy and agricultural prosperity. But Ibn Battuta also witnessed positive aspects of Mongol rule on Persian culture.

"After the Mongols converted to Islam, they became patrons of Persian art and learning. One example can be seen in the observatory at Margheh in which Persian and Chinese scholars collaborated to work out astronomical tables of great importance. The master historian of the age was Rashid al-Din, a Jewish convert to Islam who wrote a Collection of Histories, the first truly universal history of mankind ever written embracing all of Islam, China, Byzantium, and western Europe. Chinese cultural influence is also found in Persian miniature painting, calligraphy, and textile and pottery design."

https://orias.berkeley.edu/resources-teachers/travels-ibn-battuta/journey/iraq-and-persia-1326-1327

Nicholas Morton on Mongol ‘Barbarism’

They set up research centers, paving the way for scientific advances.

They set up research centers, paving the way for scientific advances.

They set up research centers, paving the way for scientific advances.

“The Mongols’ leaders **considered intellectuals and scholars to be important assets,** and they generally sought to put them to work for the betterment of their empire. In the 1260s, Hulegu, a Mongol commander and grandson of Genghis Khan, established a **research center for thinkers across Eurasia** at a place called Maragha (now located in East Azerbaijan Province of Iran). Hulegu wanted these intellectuals to exercise their talents in his service and he was eager for them to devote themselves to the study of **alchemy, astrology and anything that might improve the lifespan or health of the reigning sultan**. Many of these goals were naturally unworkable, and yet by assembling so many highly trained thinkers, he paved the way for advances that would have a lasting impact, especially in the field of **trigonometry**, as George Lane shows in *Early Mongol Rule in Thirteenth-Century Iran*. Hulagu also worked with the Persian astronomer Nasir al-Din al-Tusi to build the **Maragha Observatory**, which was among the most advanced observatories in the world at the time.”

https://www.history.com/articles/mongol-empire-innovation

They accelerated trade and expansion of new inventions.

“The Mongol Empire **encouraged free trade** and often took items from one country and introduced them to other countries. This opened up new markets—and economies flourished.

“The Mongol conquest of China meant that technologies which formerly had been little known in the wider world could now filter into the vast networks spanning the Mongol Empire. As Timothy May demonstrates in The Mongol Art of War, a key example is **gunpowder**. Little is known about how exactly gunpowder technology travelled out from China to the wider world, but it was in this period that it reached the Mediterranean and, from there, into the Byzantine Empire, Western Christendom and many parts of the wider world. Ahmad al-Hassan points out in a 2003 study, that some parts of the Muslim world already had access to gunpowder and its forbears. Even so, the advent of the **Mongol Empire** seems to have **substantially accelerated the diffusion of this technology**.”

They spread weapon technologies.

“While some military technologies were traveling westwards, others were heading east. During the 1270s, Mongol rulers in the Near East sent Muslim engineers capable of constructing **advanced siege catapults** into China to assist in the Mongols’ final overthrow of the Song dynasty. These were **counterweight trebuchets** which, as Michael S. Fulton writes in Artillery in the era of the Crusades, had been developed in the Near East during the Crusader wars of the late 12th century.”

They experimented with paper money.

“The Mongols experimented with the use of paper money, which had originally developed in China. As documented in writings by Marco Polo, Mongol leaders in the Near East deployed this new form of currency in their major trading emporium at Tabriz and i**nsisted that people make use of it on pain of death**. The result was calamitous, as local communities refused to trust the new paper notes. It remains, however, an example of the Mongols’ desire to experiment with the ideas and practices of their conquered subjects.”

They organized highly efficient armies.

“Meanwhile the Mongols’ opponents worked hard to learn from the formidable empire. In 1245, the Franciscan Friar John of Plano Carpini was sent by Pope Innocent IV on a mission into the Eurasian steppe to represent Christendom’s interests to the Mongols and gather as much information as possible about this new foe. When John returned to Italy, he presented a grim report describing the **sheer scale and efficacy of the Mongol war machine**.

“He advised Christendom’s rulers to learn from their model, known as the **decimal system**. According to this approach, squads of 10 soldiers are organized into companies of 100, who are then organized into formations of 1,000, and so forth. Having witnessed the efficacy of this system, John felt that only armies arrayed in the same way had a chance of defeating the Mongols in battle. His advice was ignored, but other powers made use of this system to great effect.”

Roman and Mongol Military Organizations

Centuria (80 - 160 men)

Cohort (6 centuria)

Legion (10 cohorts)

Regional army (6 legions)

All armies (30 legions)

Total force (400,000 men)

Arban (10 men)

Jagun (10 arbans)

Minghan (10 jaguns)

Tumen (10 minghans)

Field army (1-3 Tumens)

Total force (130,000 men)

Mixed Legacies

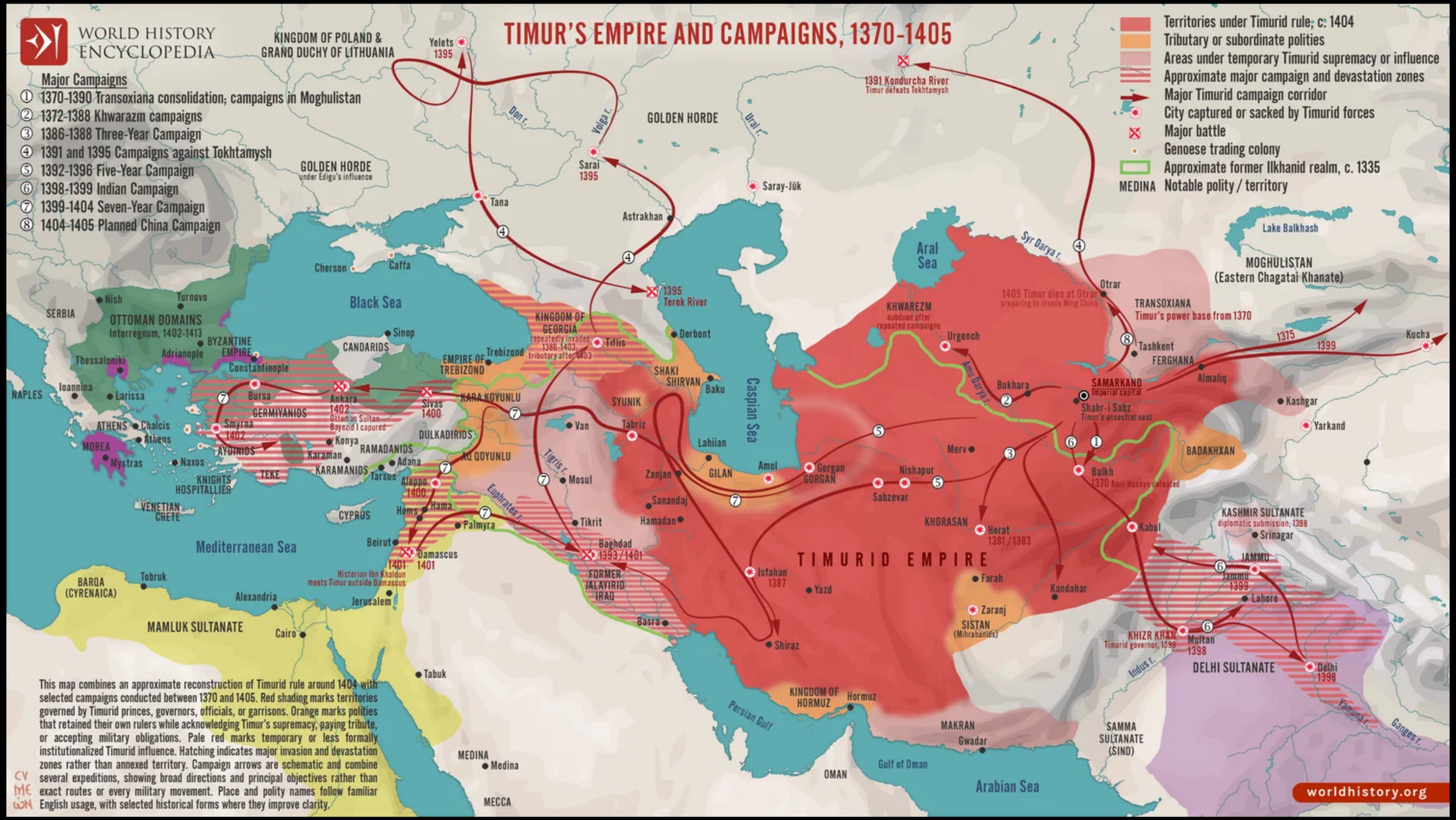
They Also (Inadvertently) Spread Disease

They Also (Inadvertently) Spread Disease

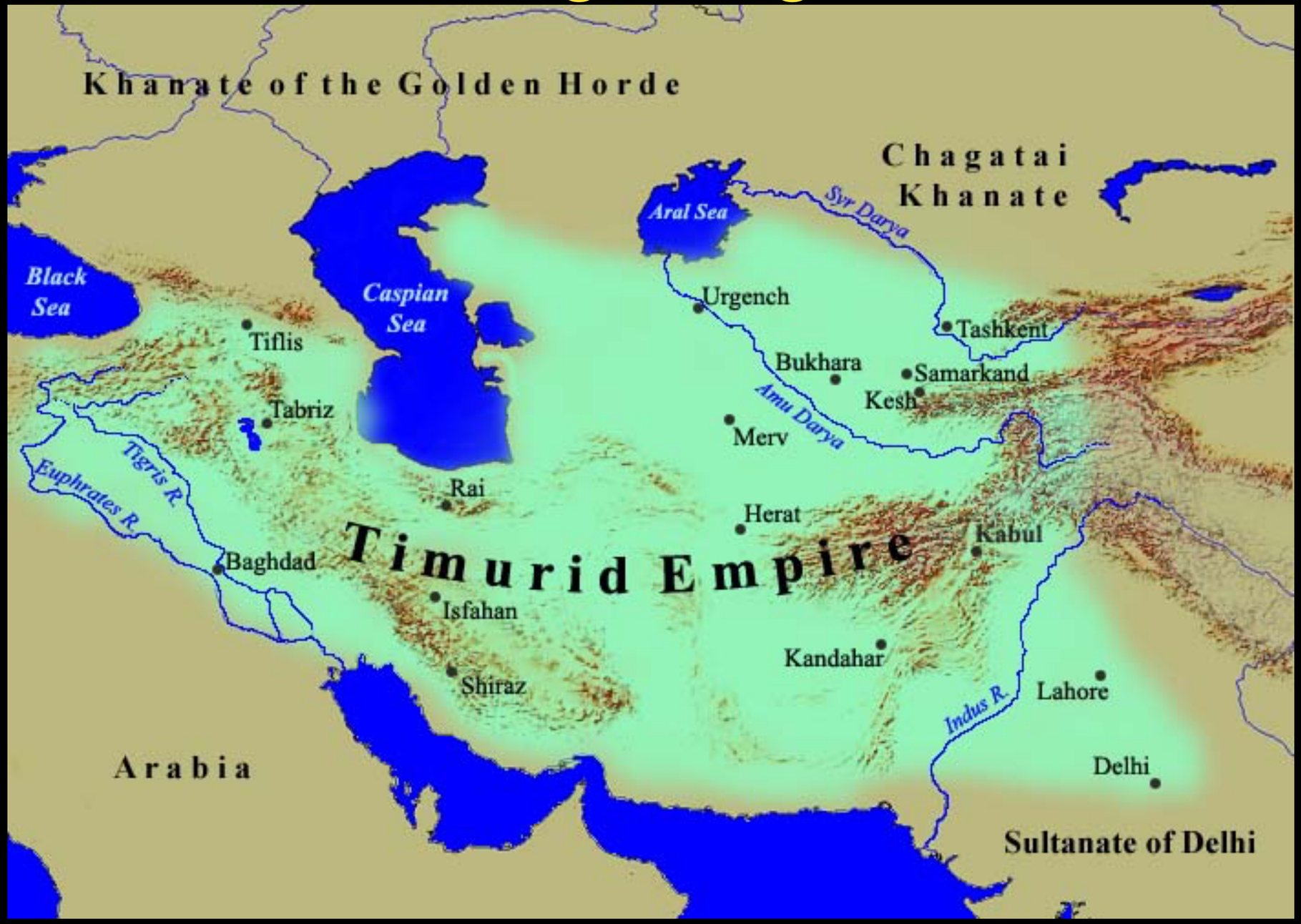
They Also (Inadvertently) Spread Disease

“While the Mongol Empire’s conquests contributed to new innovations, it wasn’t solely ideas that crossed enormous distances during this period. The rise of the Mongol Empire also enabled the spread of the **Black Death**. As Monica Green suggests in a 2020 study, **this plague may have been transmitted by the rodents and their fleas inadvertently carried by Mongol armies and traders out from the Tian Shan mountains to infect communities both within the empire and beyond its borders**.

“Over time, the Mongol Empire fragmented into different warring territories as its leading dynasties competed with one another for control over its vast territories. New rulers emerged, often adopting the culture and beliefs of the people under their control, serving to deepen the rifts within the empire. As the Mongol Empire diminished, a chapter closed on this period when ideas, religions (and diseases) travelled swiftly from one end of the continent to the other.”


WORLD HISTORY ENCYCLOPEDIA
TIMUR'S EMPIRE AND CAMPAIGNS, 1370-1405
Major Campaigns
① 1370-1390 Transoxiana consolidation; campaigns in Moghulistan
② 1372-1388 Khwarazm campaigns
③ 1386-1388 Three-Year Campaign
④ 1391 and 1395 Campaigns against Tokhtamysh
⑤ 1392-1396 Five-Year Campaign
⑥ 1398-1399 Indian Campaign
⑦ 1399-1404 Seven-Year Campaign
⑧ 1404-1405 Planned China Campaign
Territories under Timurid rule, c. 1404
Tributary or subordinate polities
Areas under temporary Timurid supremacy or influence
Approximate major campaign and devastation zones
Major Timurid campaign corridor
City captured or sacked by Timurid forces
Major battle
Genoese trading colony
Approximate former Ilkhanid realm, c. 1335
MEDINA Notable polity / territory
KINGDOM OF POLAND & GRAND DUCHY OF LITHUANIA
Yelets 1395
1391 Kondurcha River
Timur defeats Tokhtamysh
Don r.
Volga r.
Ural r.
GOLDEN HORDE
GOLDEN HORDE under Edigu's influence
Sarai 1395
Saray-Jük
Tana
Astrakhan
Aral Sea
Syr Darya r.
Lake Balkhash
MOGHULISTAN (Eastern Chagatai Khanate)
Cherson
Caffa
Black Sea
1395 Terek River
KHWAREZM subdued after repeated campaigns
1405 Timur dies at Otrar preparing to invade Ming China
Otrar
TRANSOXIANA Timur's power base from 1370
SERBIA
Nish
Turnovo
OTTOMAN DOMAINS Interregnum, 1402-1413
KINGDOM OF GEORGIA repeatedly invaded 1386-1403, tributary after 1403
Tiflis
Derbent
Urgench
Tashkent
FERGHANA
1375
1399
Kucha
Sinop
CANDARIDS
BYZANTINE EMPIRE
Adrianople
Constantinople
Thessaloniki
EMPIRE OF TREBIZOND
Trebizond
SHAKI
SHIRVAN
Baku
Caspian Sea
Amu Darya r.
Bukhara
SAMARKAND Imperial capital
Shahr-i Sabz Timur's ancestral seat
Almaliq
Kashgar
Yarkand
NAPLES
Ioannina
Larissa
Bursa
Ankara 1402 Ottoman Sultan Bayezid I capured
Sivas 1400
KARA KOYUNLU
SYUNIK
Tabriz
Van
Lahijan
GILAN
Amol
Gorgan GORGAN
Merv
Nishapur
Sabzevar
Balkh 1370 Amir Husayn defeated
BADAKHXAN
ATHENS
Chalcis
Athens
Smyrna 1402
GERMIYANIDS
AYDINIDS
Konya
DULKADIRIDS
RAMADANIDS
Karaman
KARAMANIDS
Adana
Tarsus
Aleppo 1400
AQ QOYUNLU
Tigris r.
Mosul
Zanjan
Sanandaj
Hamadan
MOREA
Mystras
Naxos
TEKE
KNIGHTS HOSPITALLIER
VENETIAN CRETE
CYPRUS
Homs
Hama
Palmyra
Euphrates r.
Tikrit
Baghdad 1393 / 1401
FORMER JALAYIRID IRAQ
KHORASAN
Herat 1381 / 1383
Kabul
KASHMIR SULTANATE diplomatic submission, 1398
Srinagar
JAMMU
Jammu 1399
Lahore
Mediterranean Sea
Beirut
Damascus 1401
1401 Historian Ibn Khaldun meets Timur outside Damascus
Isfahan 1387
Yazd
Farah
Kandahar
Zaranj
SISTAN (Mihrabanids)
KHIZR KHAN Timurid governor, 1399
Multan 1398
Indus r.
DELHI SULTANATE
Delhi 1398
Yamuna r.
Ganges r.
BARQA (CYRENAICA)
Tobruk
Alexandria
Jerusalem
MAMLUK SULTANATE
Cairo
Tabuk
Shiraz
Basra
KINGDOM OF HORMUZ
Hormuz
Persian Gulf
MAKRAN
Gwadar
SAMMA SULTANATE (SIND)
Gulf of Oman
OMAN
Arabian Sea
MEDINA
Medina
MECCA
This map combines an approximate reconstruction of Timurid rule around 1404 with selected campaigns conducted between 1370 and 1405. Red shading marks territories governed by Timurid princes, governors, officials, or garrisons. Orange marks polities that retained their own rulers while acknowledging Timur's supremacy, paying tribute, or accepting military obligations. Pale red marks temporary or less formally institutionalized Timurid influence. Hatching indicates major invasion and devastation zones rather than annexed territory. Campaign arrows are schematic and combine several expeditions, showing broad directions and principal objectives rather than exact routes or every military movement. Place and polity names follow familiar English usage, with selected historical forms where they improve clarity.
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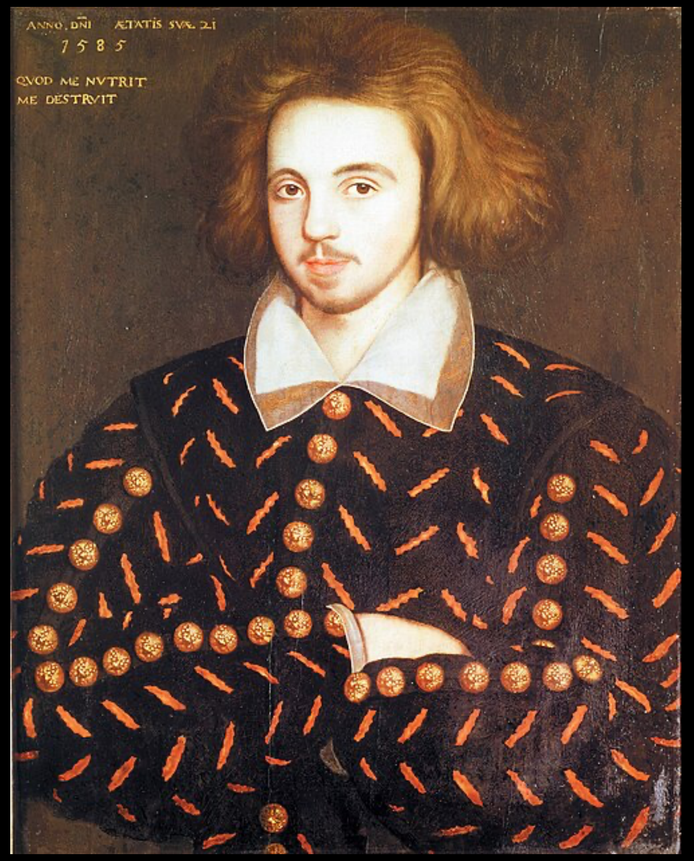
Timur's Rough Neighborhood



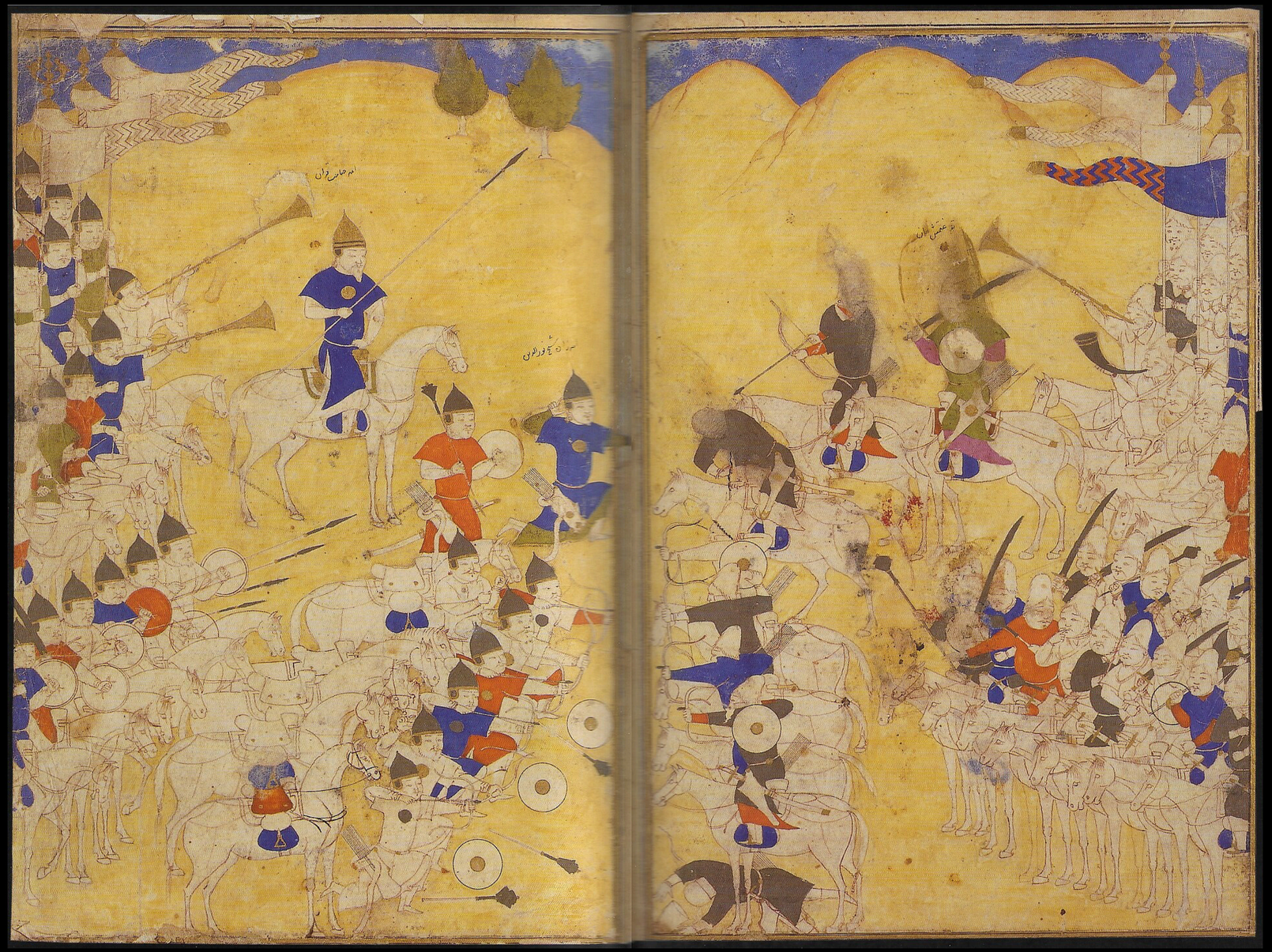
https://ballandalus.wordpress.com/2014/08/30/the-scholar-and-the-sultan-a-translation-of-the-historic-encounter-between-ibn-khaldun-and-timur/

Timur meets with historian Ibn Khaldun

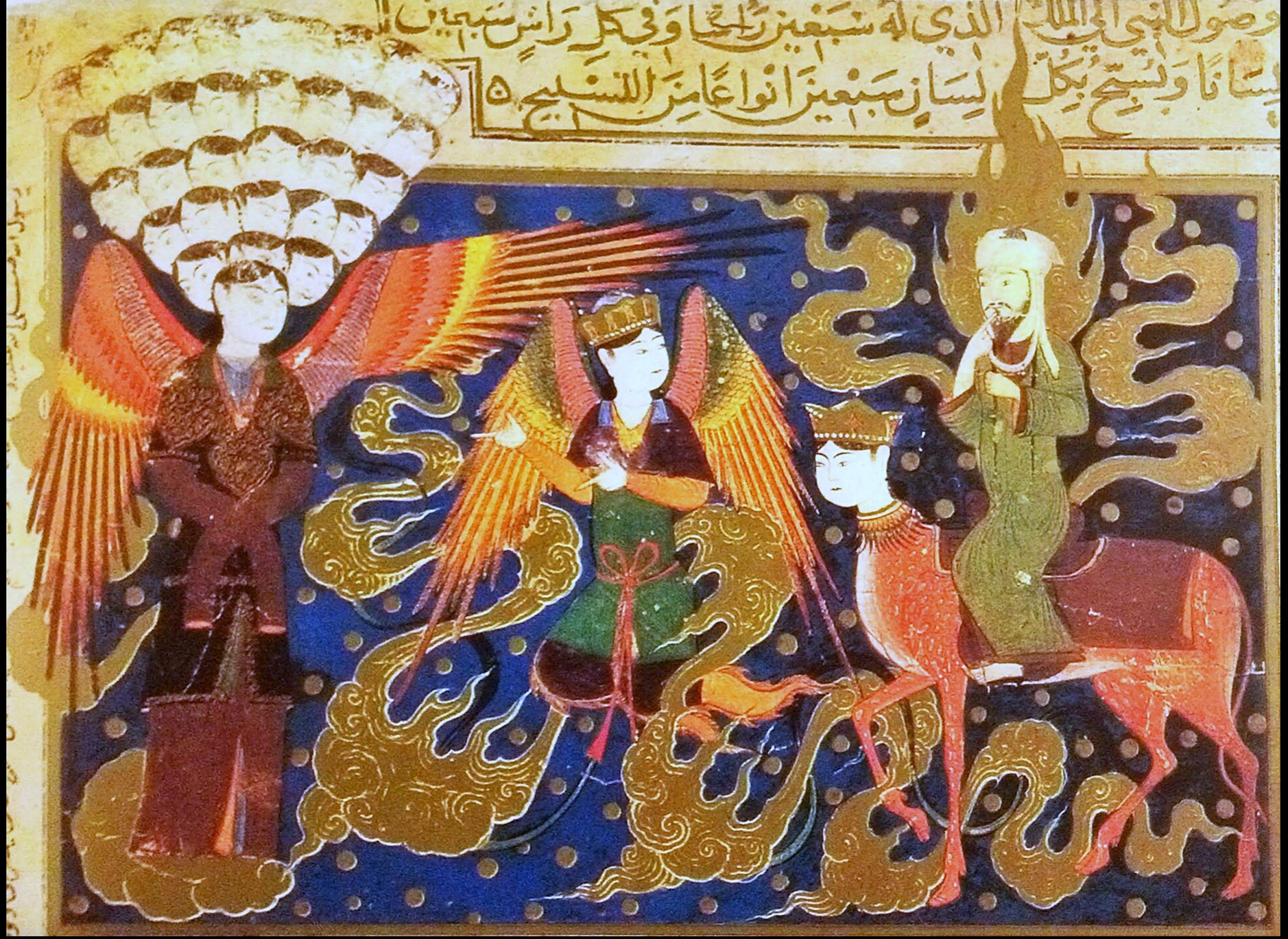
Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamberlaine the Great*



Battle between Timur (left) and Tokhtamysh (right).
Topkapi H.2153, 1420–1440, possibly Herat.



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timurid_Empire#/media/File:Battle_between_Timur_and_Toqtamish_Khan,_1420-1440,_possibly_Herat._Topkapi_H.2153.jpg



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timurid_Empire#/media/File:Mir_Haydar_-_Mira'j-nameh_-_The_prophet_meet_a_multi-face_angle.jpg

Contemporary depiction of the Qara Qoyunlu forces of Qara Iskandar (left) in battle against the Timurid forces of Ibrahim Sultan (right) in April 1429. *Shahnama of Ibrahim Sultan* (c.1430)



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Timurid_Empire#/media/File:Qara_Qoyunlu_forces_(left)_in_battle_against_Timurid_forces_(right)._1430_Shahnama,_Bodleian_Library,_ms._Add_176,_folios_6r-7v.jpg