

## II-2. People and Places

Reasoning with parts is based on the premise that perceptions rooted in reality-based facts and criteria provide knowledge that is unlikely to be contradictory and inconsistent, and therefore a viable basis for successful behaviors. For example *Jeevatthan* explores the worlds of living being to understand attributes of life without ad hoc assumptions and other clouds of cultural self-interest.

### **As-it-was**

The Hindi word *itihās* (History) comes from *etihas* which in Sanskrit stands for "as it was." If the present (as-it-is) is a matter of perception, certainly the past is more so. The past of a country, people and their culture, is a multidimensional tapestry. A linear narrative does little justice to the exploration of multiple relations. For such reasons all histories are means for certain ends.

The perspective of a bard, the traditional keeper of history, was to please its patron. The British bureaucrats James Mill and Max Mueller who never visited India influenced the colonial policies through their anti-orientalist and orientalist streaks. Such perceptions of India were also shaped by the Vedic interpretations provided by the Brahmins who provided legitimacy to the ruling class, of course for a fee. Some aspects of the social and political history of *Early India* (2002) are addressed by Romila Thapar. Our concern here is about the course of development of a highly influential secular thought process that remains alien to the European and Vedic mind set.

Our concern here is about the thought process that builds on testable assumptions and reasoning to arrive at tentative conclusions that are continually validated by practice. This secular approach for the validation of perceptions is so deeply rooted in human mind that the arguments influence virtually everything we know about the Indian Mind. Yet the formative influences that shaped the process are not considered to be the realm of political, social or economic history.

Being fully aware of the limitations of reconstructing the development of the thought, I have ground my perceptions to understand the continuity of the reasoning that evolves with time.

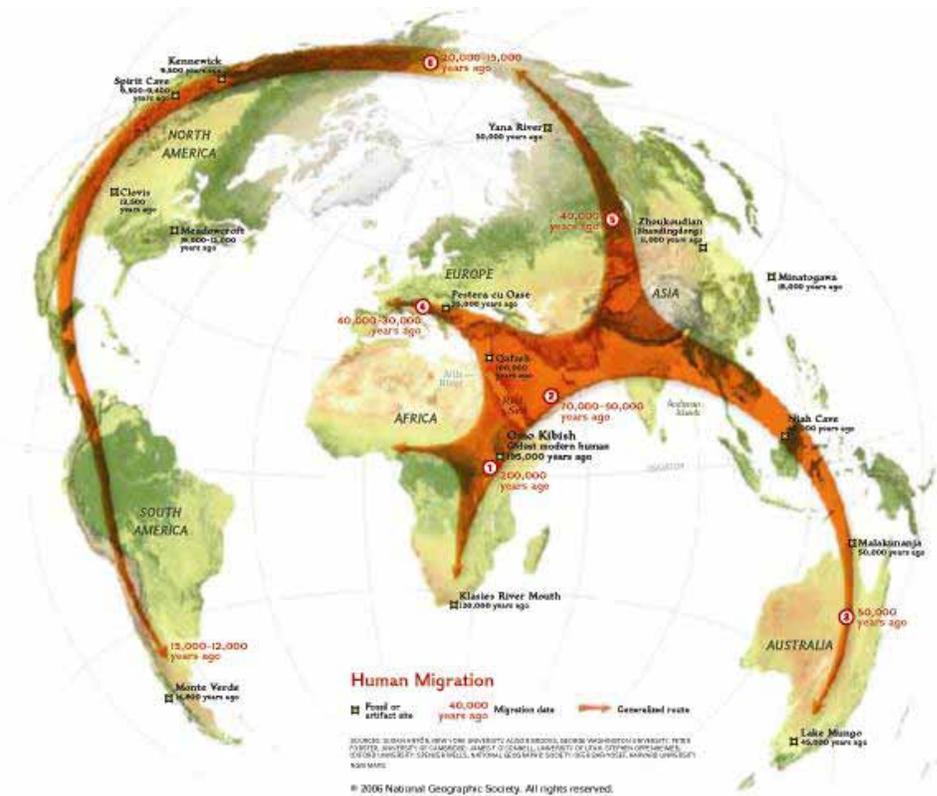
Anugam based secular world view developed in the Ganga Valley (misspelled in English as *Ganges*) of North East India (Figure II-1). People and events happened long before the word history was invented and the historical records began to be reconstructed in a particular way from a variety of artifacts. Also human concerns for individual behaviors and social order evolved long before the practices were structured into language, and organized and institutionalized dharm and religions were invented.

After about 1000 BCE a need for organized clash of ideas emerged with the influx of Indo-Ary migrants to the Ganga Valley from the North West, possibly well beyond the Sindhu valley (Figure II-2). Samhita 10-38-3; 8-70-7; 8-71-8 of Rig Ved (ca. -1300c) refer to a group of *arhat* monks and others who do not acknowledge the Supreme and would not perform sacrifices. Rishabh, Ajit and Aristnemi (the 1st, 2nd and 21st Arihant) of this tradition are mentioned by name in the Yajur Ved (ca. -1000c). Arishtnemi means *respected by the enemy*. Around 800 BCE followers of the *Arhat* tradition began to be organized by the jinkalp monks or jinver (plural). In the later Hindu and Buddhist works they are called *Nigganth* or The book-less and the god-less. Following the lead of the last Arihant Mahaveer, the supporters of Arihant tradition, probably a numerical minority even at that time, called the Jain (corrupted from *jin-anugami*) shaped the non-violence based secular world-view. As resuscitated by Gandhi, it is now generally acknowledged to be the desirable alternative to virtually all other means of conflict resolution.

The Arihant world-view flourished independent of the outside influences. Only after 1200 BCE it came in contact with

Vedic belief in the Vedic hymns that are believed to be the timeless works of non-human (*a-pourushey*). As a result of this encounter during 700 to 300 BCE the Vedang tradition of Supreme evolved into Vedantic (literally end-of ved) constructs of Brahm, Atma, Paramatma, and Chitannya through the Upanishadic discourses in the Ganga Valley. About 50 of these narratives are available that address criticisms of the Vedang.

Ved Vyas compiled Mahabharat around 200 BCE. It is a story of confrontation of cultures set several around 1000 BCE in the region between the Sindhu Valley and the Ganga Valley. During the intervening period the Indo-Persian migrants began to stratify their social hold by creating a birth-based cast structure that broadened with time to provide divine blessing to kings. As it became clear that the world is far more complex, Shankar (ca 800 CE) argued that the world around us is an illusion and therefore there is little incentive to know it, let alone to understand its workings. This negativity still resonates widely in the worship phase of Hinduism heralded the Hindu trinity of Brahma (Brahmins), Vishnu (Vaishnav) and Shiv (Shaivites).



**Out of Africa to India.**

Pattern of distribution of particular mitochondrial and Y chromosome genes in human populations have provided remarkable insights into the course of early human migrations and development of cultures. Based on the available evidence migration to India occurred in several waves. One of the first if not the first groups to move “out of Africa” about 60,000 years ago reached Australia at least 50,000 years ago via the coast line of India to Bay of Bengal, Borneo, New Guinea and finally to Australia. They also settled along the way. The genetic markers show that all humans outside sub-Saharan Africa are descendents of the people who first settled in settled between the delta of Euphrates and Indus valley now populate all the continents.

The next stage of inland migration is apparently along the river banks of the settled delta and coastal regions. One of these

groups of foragers reached Western Europe around 30,000 years ago, and their descendents were apparently destroyed during the ice age of about 15,000 years ago.

Those who remained in the Ganga and Indus valleys Ganges valley have had a continuity of 35,000 years of settlement without interruption by ice age. In my opinion, after the end of the ice-age around 10,000 years ago the migrants from Northwest India again began to resettle along the Euphrates and Tigris rivers where they introduced agriculture. Since then this group of speakers of the Indo-European languages has introduced agriculture to virtually all regions of Europe.

There are indications of later waves of migrations to India. Apparently, about 5000 years ago a group from Southern Iran came to West and South India. They probably assimilated with the earlier migrants resulting in the Dravidian culture of South India. These Dravidian languages also differ from the other two groups of languages in India. After the domestication of horse ca 4000 years ago in Mongolia and Caspian regions the Vedic Aryans came to India. They brought Vedic Sanskrit that has similarity to the Hittite and Germanic branches of the Indo-European language tree.

Prior to the arrival of the Aryan culture another group of people flourished in the Ganga valley. Their languages (outside the Dravidian family) form the basis for virtually all the modern regional Indian languages with varying contributions from Sanskrit and Persian. The present Nagri script also evolved out of the Brahmi script of the pre-Aryan origins. As the Vedic Sanskrit was purified and formalized between 400 BC to 300AD, the earlier languages were called the natural or Prakrit languages. The pre-Aryan inhabitants did not believe in the God or Omniscience.

Each Arihant (Figure II-1) is called a Tirthankar (literally builder of the landing place) for providing a perspective for the changing times while building on the ideas of their intellectual predecessors. According to the tradition, an Arihant balances the counterbalancing forces and conditions for the change. All the 24 Arihant lived in the Ganga Valley of North India (Figure II-1). Several were born in Ayodhya, Sarnath and Hastinapur. These locations are also prominent in the current Hindu belief system, possibly inspired by the local traditions adopted by the Ary migrants (1500 to 700 BCE). The epic of Ramayan (written around 700 BCE) is set in the Ayodhya region of unknown period. The Mahabharat (written around 200 BCE) is set (around 1000 BCE) in the Hastinapur region, a few hundred miles north of New Delhi. Historicity of the characters of these epics remains to be established although some of them are clearly from the Afghanistan or farther west. Influence of these epics and local customs in the shaping each other and the Hindu traditions and thought is unquestionable.

**Table II-1. Anugam -based Shared Knowledge (*Vangmay*).**

\* Rishabhath (ca. 3000 BCE) outlined the syllogism:

उपपानेई वा विगमेई वा धुवेई वा

***Inputs and outputs make up the net total of the change in the reality.*** The conservation relationship of input (*upappa, utpad*, product) and output (*vigam, vyay*, expenditure) to the net (*dhuv, dhrouvy*, sum-total) applies to all real worlds that are finite including matter, energy, money, information, knowledge, occupied-space, and event-time.

\* Twenty-four Arihant (Rishabhath to Mahaveer, ca. 3000 to 527 BCE, Figure II-1) developed other reality based syllogisms such

that “Demonstrated relationship of a new assertion to an existing argument reinforces the argument.”

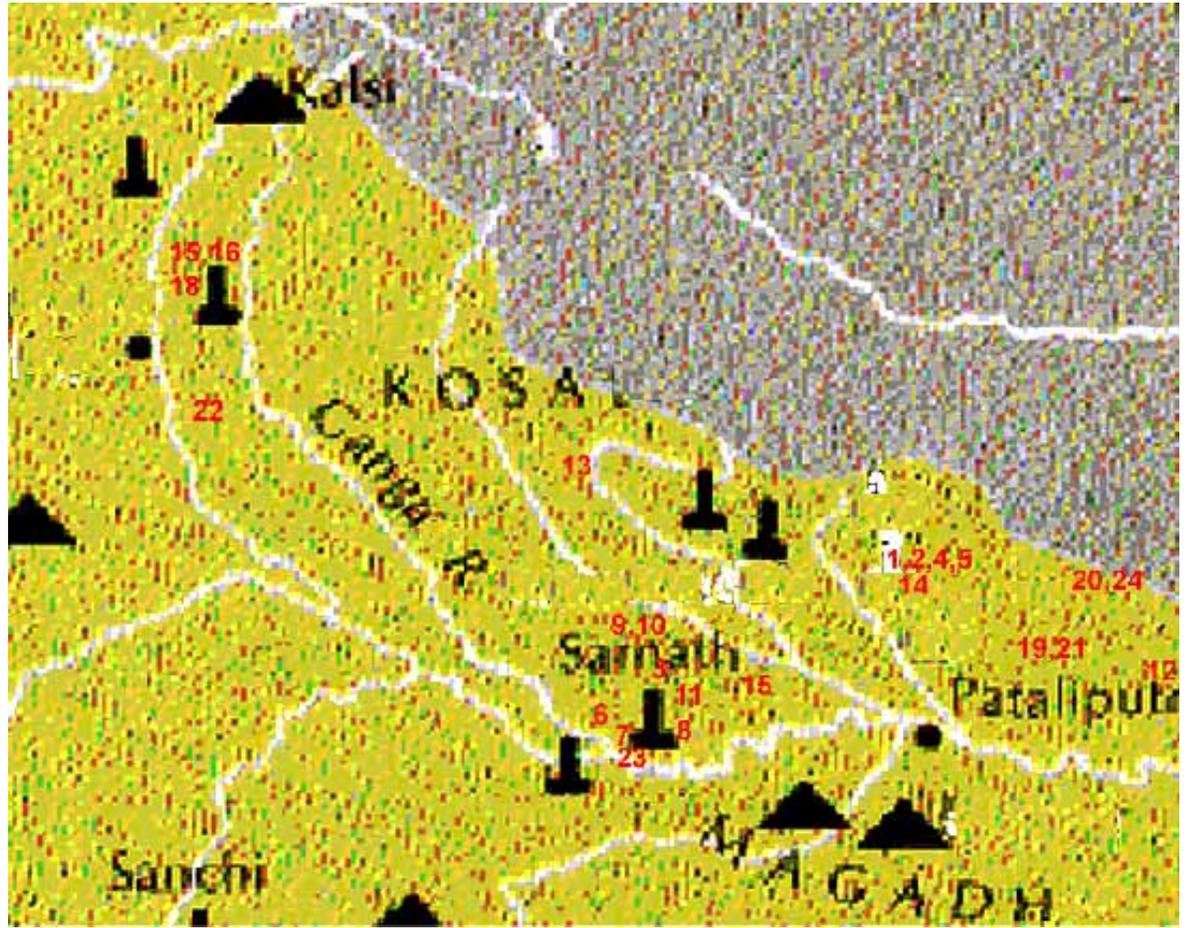
\* Vardhman, the Mahaveer (599-527 BCE) consolidated, organized, refined, and taught methods to develop reality-based shared knowledge without *ad hoc* or unsubstantiated assumptions.

\* As the leaders of the original group (*Mool Sangh*) of Mahaveer his main disciples Indrabhuti Gautam and Sudharm organized the discourses in twelve parts (*Dwadash ang*) during 527 to 515 BCE.

As the discussion leader Gautam also organized the rules for guiding reason. Gautam's *Nay* or *Nyay-Sutr* was compiled by Akchpad (ca. 100c). Commentaries by Vatsyayan (400c) and others have provided the basis for the development of organized debates (*vaad*), not only with a developed convention of language and grammar, but also in terms of what can be asserted in accord with syllogisms based on the evidence and intrinsic (*vyapti*). In the later centuries the thrust of *Nay* shifted from empirical reality-based reasoning towards the use of *Nyay* (the *Nay*-based conclusions) with the authority of *a priori* as evidence. By 1320c in *Tattvachintamani* by Gangesh the focus of *Navy-Nyay* is on alternative definitions, associations and pervasions (*upadhi*).

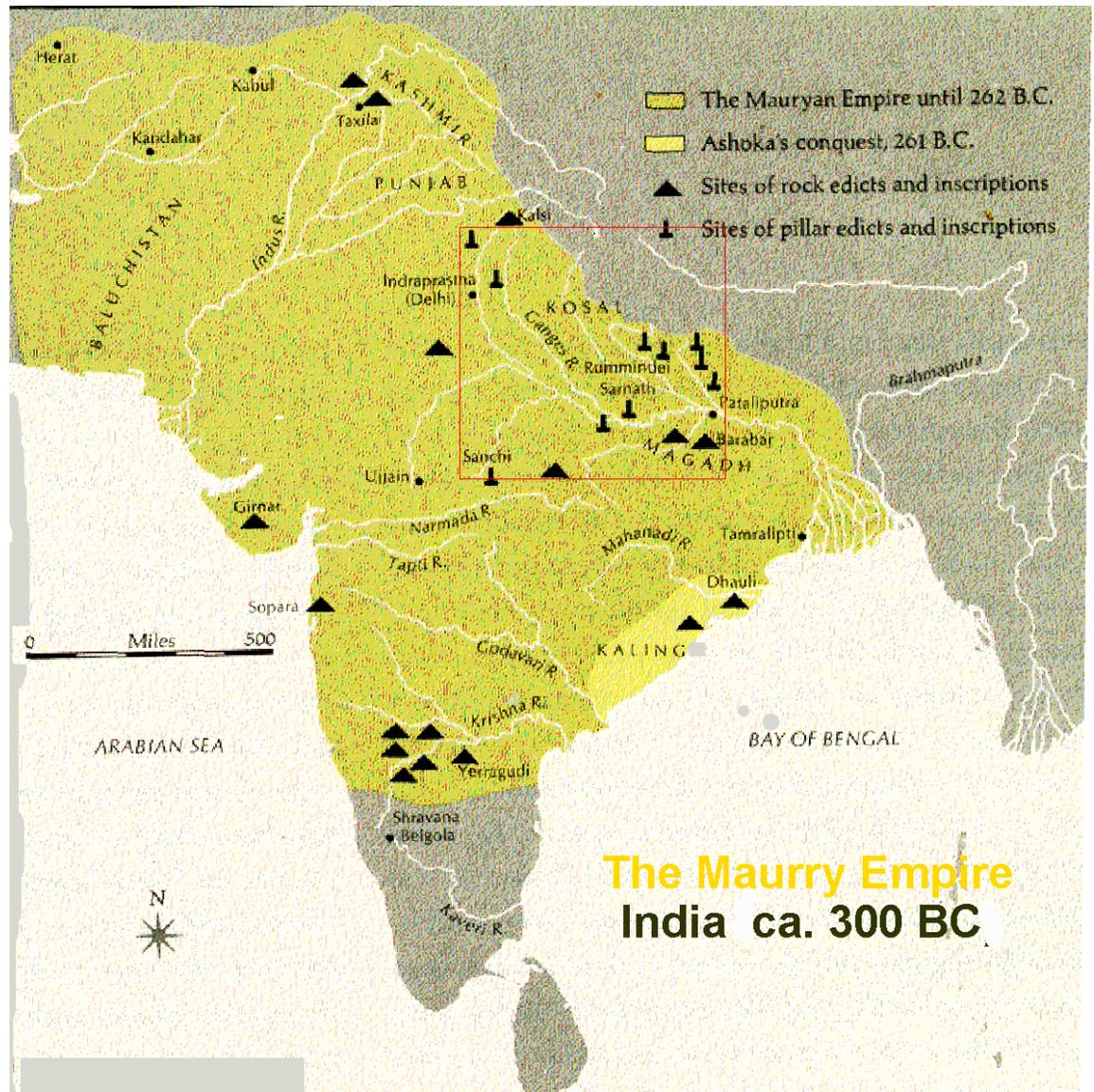
Sudharm probably consolidate the anugam: ***the criteria based process to validate the perception of the constant quality or the gun = basis, property, intrinsic***. This part of *itthivay*, the 12<sup>th</sup> *ang* (Table II-3), to deal with the change of perception is hall mark of Jeevatthan. The collected works of the 12 *Ang* were orally transmitted in *Patliputr* through a continuous line of monks for 8 generations. Seeing the inevitable, as the political climate took a turn for the worse, Bhadrabahu (II- 9) and some of his disciples moved to South (ca 350 BCE). Soon thereafter (ca -335BCE) another group of his disciples also moved to West India.

***Context for itthivay:*** The main concern of the itthivay of Mahaveer is to minimize the doubt and uncertainty in the changing contexts. Unequivocal affirmation or negation is a long terms process based on the successes of the present and past behaviors. Since the future never arrives, at any given point all one can expect is to avoid identified contradictions and inconsistencies. Behaviors are modified within the context emerging criteria to be validated with practice in the broader historical and cultural contexts. Thus the goal of itthivay is to navigate through the emerging challenges while being guided by the bed-rock of the prior knowledge of the 14 Purv Ang that is the repository of the ways in which people in the past dealt with situations.



**Figure II-1.** The Ganga Valley of the North India. The places of birth of the 24 Arihant (-3000 to -600c) are in red #.

1. RishabhNath	Ayodhya	13. VimalNath	Kampilya (near Kayamganj)
2. AjitNath	Ayodhya	14. AnantNath	Ayodhya
3. SambhavNath	Shravasti (near Bahraich)	15. DharmNath	Ratnapur (near Fajjabad)
4. AbhinandanNath	Ayodhya	16. ShantiNath	Hastinagpur (near Meruth)
5. SumatiNath	Ayodhya	17. KunthuNath	Hastinagpur
6. PadamPrabhu	Kaushambi (near Prayag)	18. ArNath	Hastinagpur
7. SuparshvaNath	Varanasi	19. MalliNath	Mithila
8. ChandraPrabhu	Chandrapur (near Sarnath)	20. Munisuvrat	Rajgrah (near Nalanda)
9. Pushpdant	Kakandi (near Devaria)	21. NamiNath	Mithila
10. ShitalNath	Bhadrapur	22. NemiNath	Dwaravati (near Shikohabad)
11. ShreyansNath	Singhpur (near Sarnath)	23. ParshvNath	Varanasi
12. Vasupujya	Champapur (near Bhagalpur)	24. Mahaveer	Kundalpur (near Nalanda)



**Figure II-2.** Map of India with the Maurya (Mauryan) Empire (ca. 300 BCE) marked in color. Key rivers and regions of ancient significance are indicated. The Sindhu (Indus) river in the North-West goes through the region of the Indus Valley civilization. Details of the Ganga Valley region are shown in Figure II-1. The historicity of this period and other details are very well documented through the various edicts and inscriptions. Major sites are marked in the map.

Historicity of the last 3 Arihant is now established (Roy, 1984): Neminath (ca -1000c in the Mahabharat period), Parshvnath (- 800c) and Mahaveer (-599 to -527c). Hastimal (1971) has compiled the traditional material that also provides insights into the thought processes and contributions attributed to all the 24 Arihant. A significant point about the period spanning the Arihant is that the knowledge of the prior Angs is retained along with the itthivay of each arigant. Put another way, each Arihant provides a new perspective for the changing times while retaining the relevance of the earlier knowledge.

**Note:** There is virtually no written material that goes back to the period before 200 BCE. Mahaveer must have been convincing in his arguments because by all accounts he persuaded many laymen and scholars to change their minds. The views of this book-less (*niggantth*) are consistently debated and quoted even today. In the traditional Jain sources there is remarkable unanimity about Mahaveer and what happened for the next 250 years after him. It is not surprising that differing accounts appears after the original group dispersed from Patliputr around 350 BCE (Chapters II-7, 8 and 9).

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