

# HUMAN CULTURE PART II

The crucial differences which distinguish human societies and human beings are not biological. They are cultural.  
-Ruth Benedict





# Human Culture Part II

- Popular Culture
- Diffusion
- Cultural Hearths





# POPULAR CULTURE

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

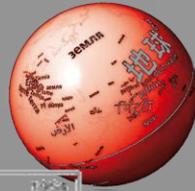




# Popular Culture

- **Wide Distribution:** differences from place to place uncommon, more likely differences at one place over time
- **Housing:** only small regional variations, more generally there are trends over time
- **Food:** Franchises, cargo planes, superhighways and freezer trucks have eliminated much local variation. Limited variations in choice regionally, especially with alcohol and snacks. Substantial variations by ethnicity.
- **Clothing:** Jeans and music have become valuable status symbols in many regions including Asia and Russia, despite longstanding folk traditions.



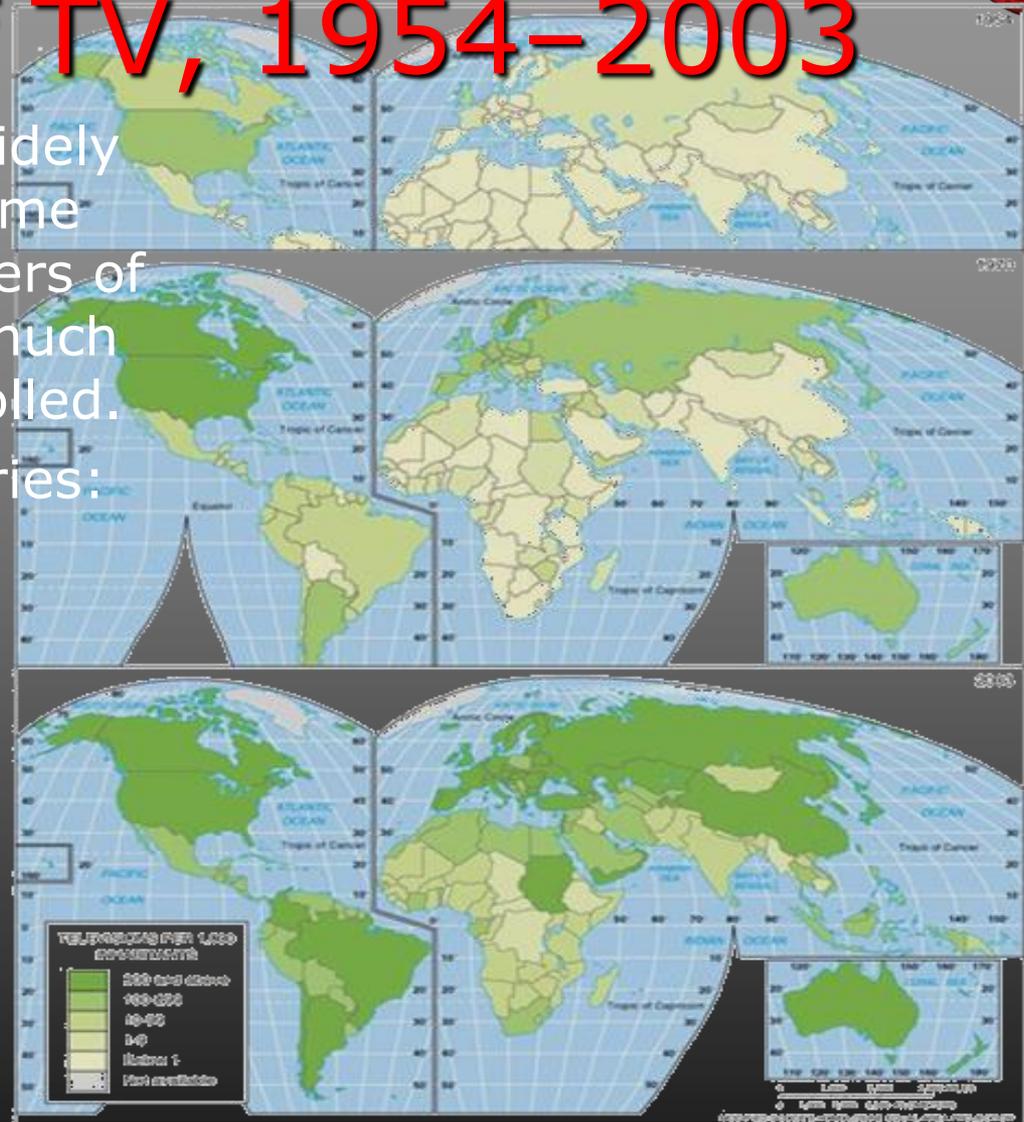


# Diffusion of TV, 1954-2003

Television has diffused widely since the 1950s, but some areas still have low numbers of TVs per population and much media is still state-controlled.

Ten Most Censored Countries:

1. Eritrea
2. North Korea
3. Saudi Arabia
4. Ethiopia
5. Azerbaijan
6. Vietnam
7. Iran
8. China
9. Myanmar (Burma)
10. Cuba



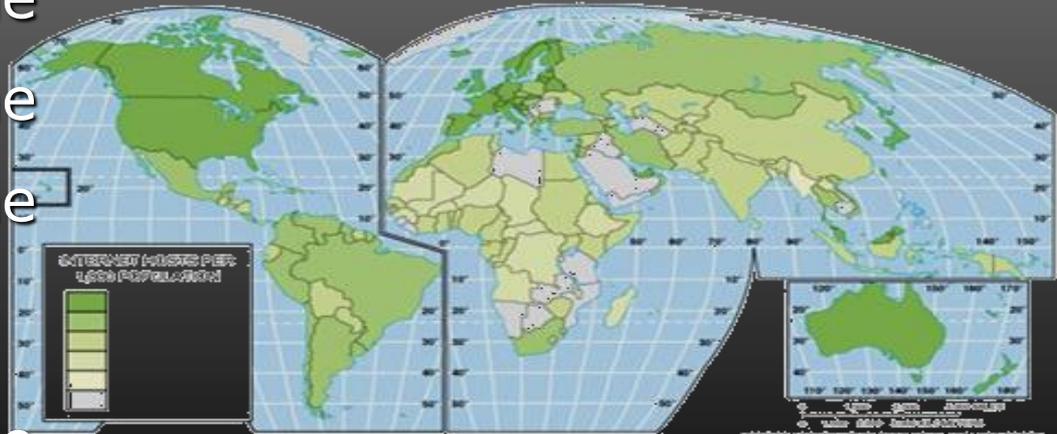
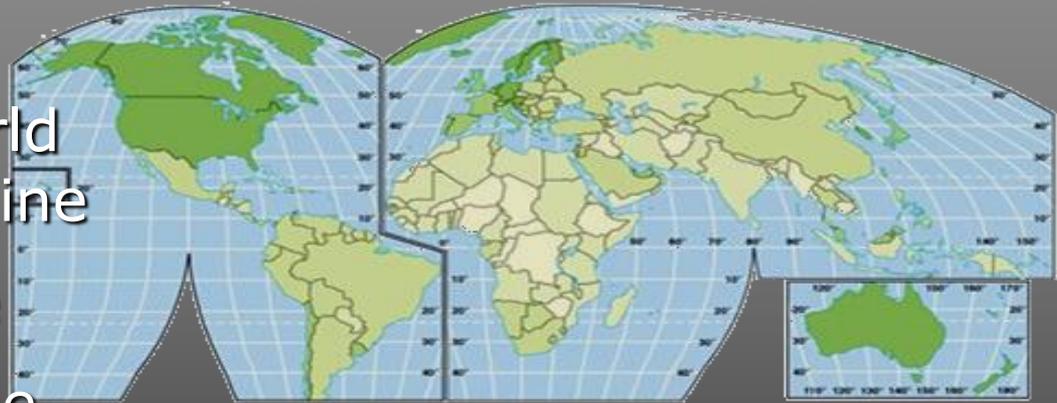
Source: Committee to Protect Journalists: [www.cpj.org](http://www.cpj.org)





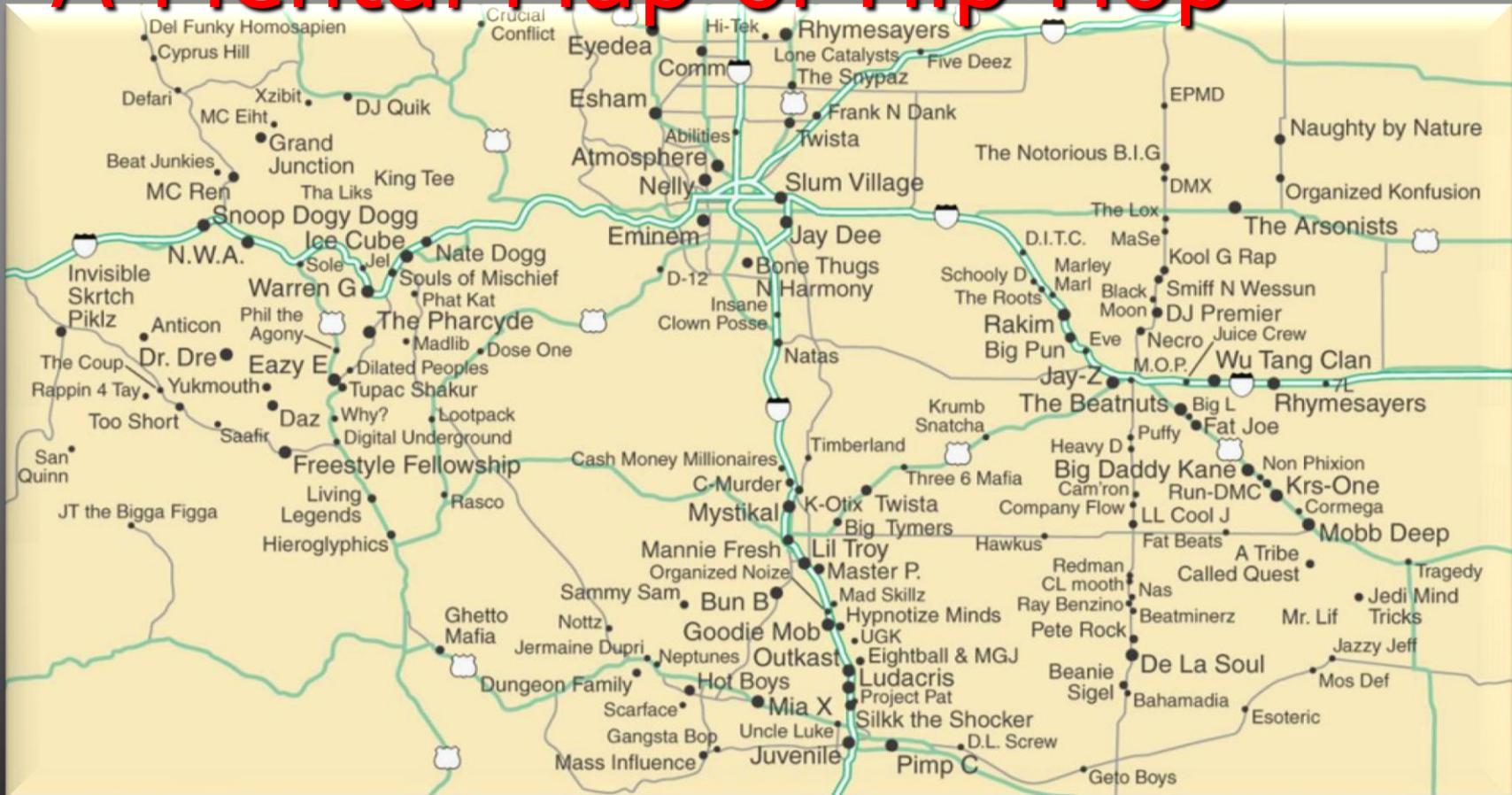
# Diffusion of the Internet

- diffusion following same pattern as TV but more rapid
- 1995: 0.4% of world population was online
- 2000: 5.8% online
- 2005: 15.7% online
- 2010: 28.8% online
- 2015: 46.4% online
- ...but online users not uniformly spread across globe





# A Mental Map of Hip Hop



This mental map puts major hip hop performers near others and where they performed.





# Popular Culture

- **Effects on Landscape:** breeds homogenous, “placeless” (Relph, 1976) landscape
  - complex network of roads and highways
  - Commercial structures tend towards ‘boxes.’
  - Dwellings may be aesthetically suggestive of older folk traditions.
  - Planned and gated communities more and more common.
- **Disconnect with Landscape:** indoor swimming pools, desert surfing





# Problems with the Globalization of Culture



**Often Destroys Folk Culture** or preserves traditions as museum pieces or tourism gimmicks.

- Mexican Mariachis, Polynesian navigators; cruise line simulations
- Change in traditional roles and values, Polynesian weight problems

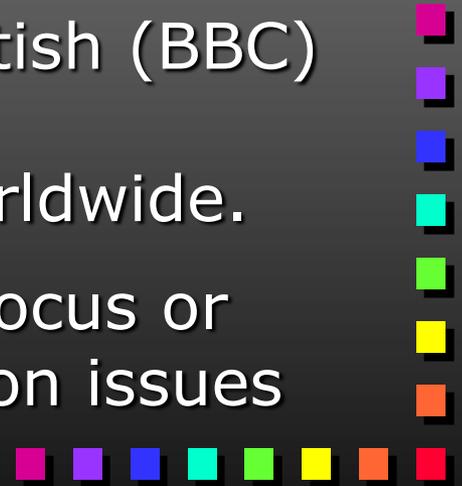




# Problems with the Globalization of Culture

## Western Media Imperialism?

- US, Britain and Japan dominate worldwide media.
- Glorified consumerism, violence, sexuality and militarism?
- US (Networks and CNN) and British (BBC) news media provide/control the dissemination of information worldwide.
- These networks are unlikely to focus or provide third world perspective on issues important in the LDCs.





# Environmental Problems with Cultural Globalization

Accelerated resource use through accelerated consumption

- mineral extraction for machines, plastics and fuel
- new housing and associated energy and water use
- Golf courses use valuable water and destroy habitats worldwide.
- Furs: minx, lynx, jaguar, kangaroo, whale, sea otters (18<sup>th</sup> Century Russians) fed early fashion trends.
- inefficient over-consumption of meats (10:1), poultry (3:1), even fish (fed other fish and chicken) by meat-eating pop cultures

Pollution: waste from fuel generation and discarded products, plastics, marketing and packaging materials





# Contemporary Cultural Regions





# DIFFUSION

[Return to Table of Contents](#)





# Cultural Diffusion

- Spatial spread of learned ideas, innovations and attitudes
  - spatial interaction – movement of people, goods and ideas within and among regions
- Each cultural element originates in one or more places and then spreads.
- Some spread widely, others remain confined to an area of origin.
- “100 Percent American”

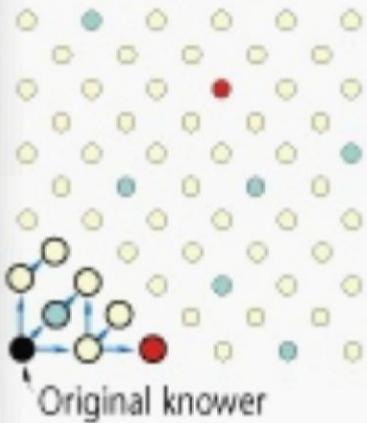




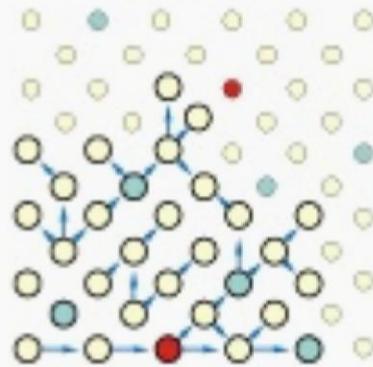
# Cultural Diffusion

## CONTAGIOUS EXPANSION DIFFUSION

Early Stage

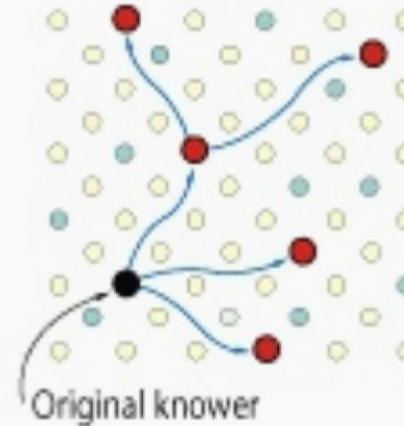


Later Stage

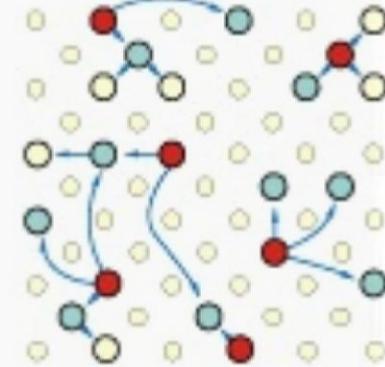


## HIERARCHICAL EXPANSION DIFFUSION

Early Stage

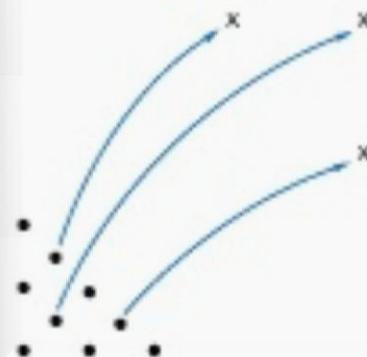


Later Stage



## RELOCATION DIFFUSION

Before Migration



After Migration



Each circle or dot is one person or place.

● Nonknower

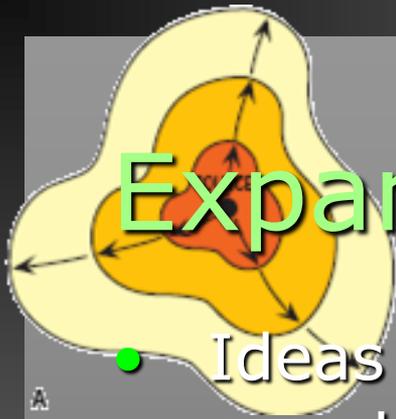
● "Very important" person or place

○ Knower

● "Important" person or place

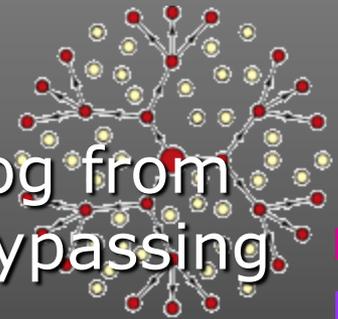
— Path of diffusion

○ Person or place low in social-economic hierarchy



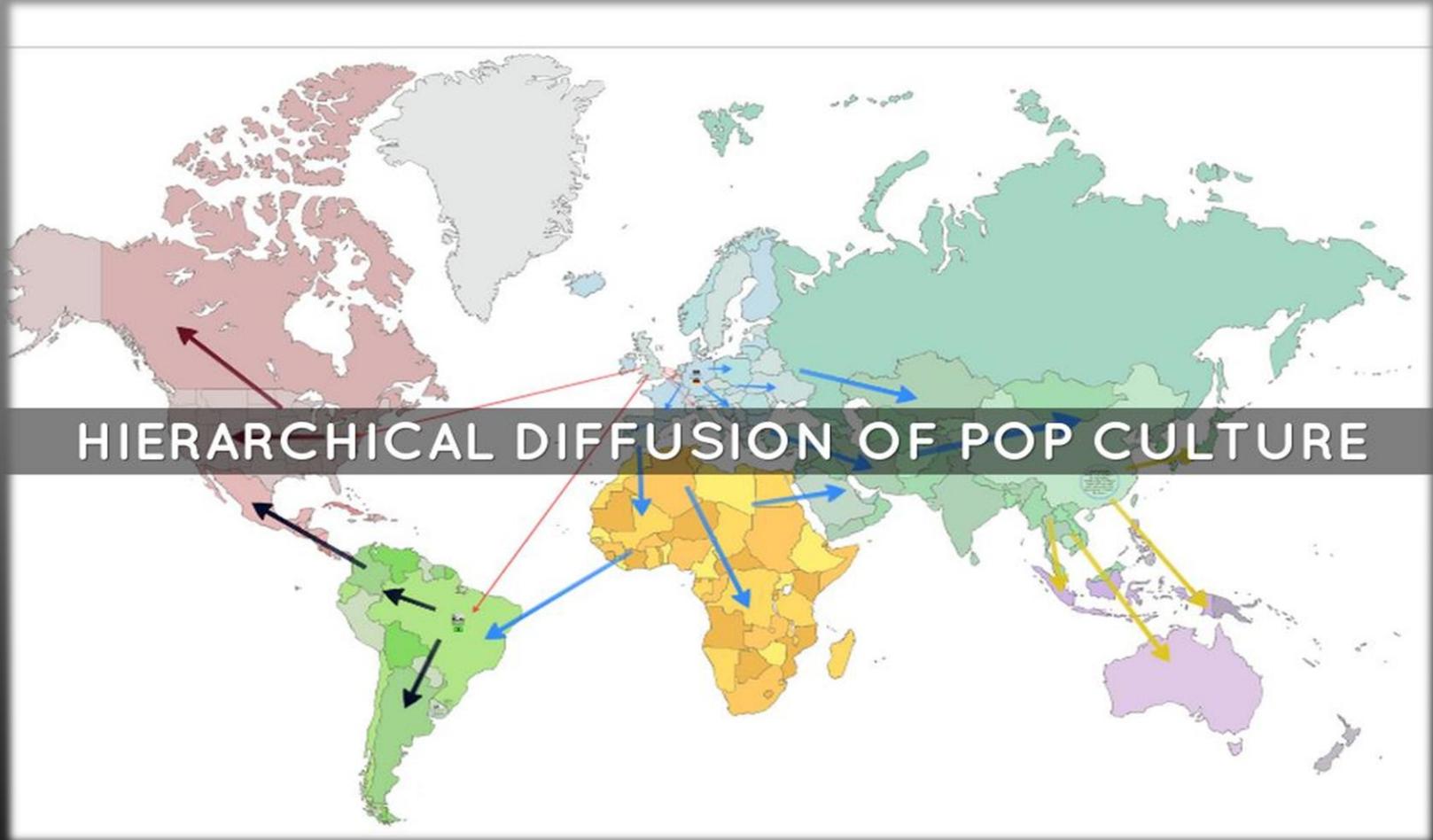
# Expansion Diffusion

- Ideas spread throughout a population from area to area.
- Creates a snowballing effect.
- Subtypes:
  - hierarchical diffusion: Ideas leapfrog from one node to another temporarily bypassing some.
  - contagious diffusion: wavelike, like a disease
  - stimulus diffusion: specific trait rejected, but idea accepted





# Diffusion of Soccer





# Relocation Diffusion

- Relocation diffusion occurs when individuals migrate to a new location carrying new ideas or practices with them.
- Religion is a prime example.





# Time-Distance Decay Factor

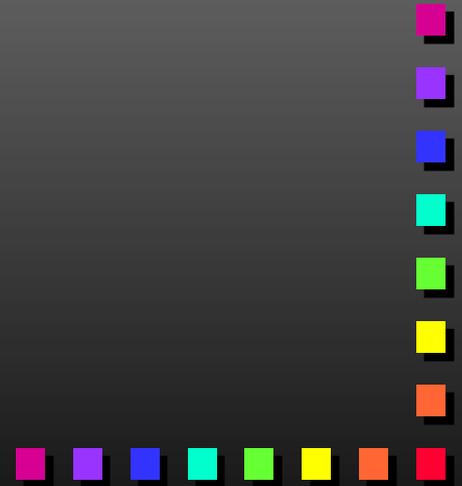
- ripples on a pond
- Acceptance of an innovation is strongest where it originated.
- Acceptance weakens as it is diffused farther away.
- Acceptance also weakens over time.





# Tobler's 1<sup>st</sup> Law of Geography

All things are related. However, all other things being equal, those things that are closest together are more related.





# Barriers to Diffusion

- Absorbing barriers completely halt diffusion.
- More commonly barriers are permeable, allowing part of the innovation wave to diffuse, but acting to weaken and retard the continued spread.
- physical barriers
- cultural barriers





# Stages of Innovation Acceptance

1. Acceptance takes place at a slow steady rate.
2. Trait gains acceptance and spreads rapidly.
3. Slower growth and acceptance of innovation follows.





# Susceptibility to An Innovation

- More crucial when world communications are rapid and pervasive.
- Friction of distance is almost meaningless.
- Must evaluate and explain on a region-by-region basis.
- Inhabitants of two regions will not respond identically to an innovation.
- Geographers seek to understand spatial variation in receptiveness.





# Cultural Integration

- Cultures are complex wholes rather than series of unrelated traits.
- Cultures form integrated systems in which parts fit together causally.
- All cultural aspects are functionally interdependent on one another.
  - Changing one element requires accommodating change in others.
  - To understand one facet of culture, geographers must study the variations in other facets and how they are causally interrelated and integrated.





# Cultural Integration

- The Influence of Religious Beliefs
  - voting behavior
  - diet and shopping patterns
  - type of employment and social standing
  - Hinduism segregates people into social classes (castes) and specifies what forms of livelihood are appropriate for each.
  - Mormon faith forbids consumption of alcoholic beverages, tobacco and other products, thereby influencing both diet and shopping patterns.





# Cultural Integration

If improperly used, it can lead the geographer to cultural determinism. For example:

- physical environment is inconsequential as an influence on culture
- culture offers all the answers for spatial variations
- nature is passive while people and culture are the active forces





# CULTURAL HEARTHS

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

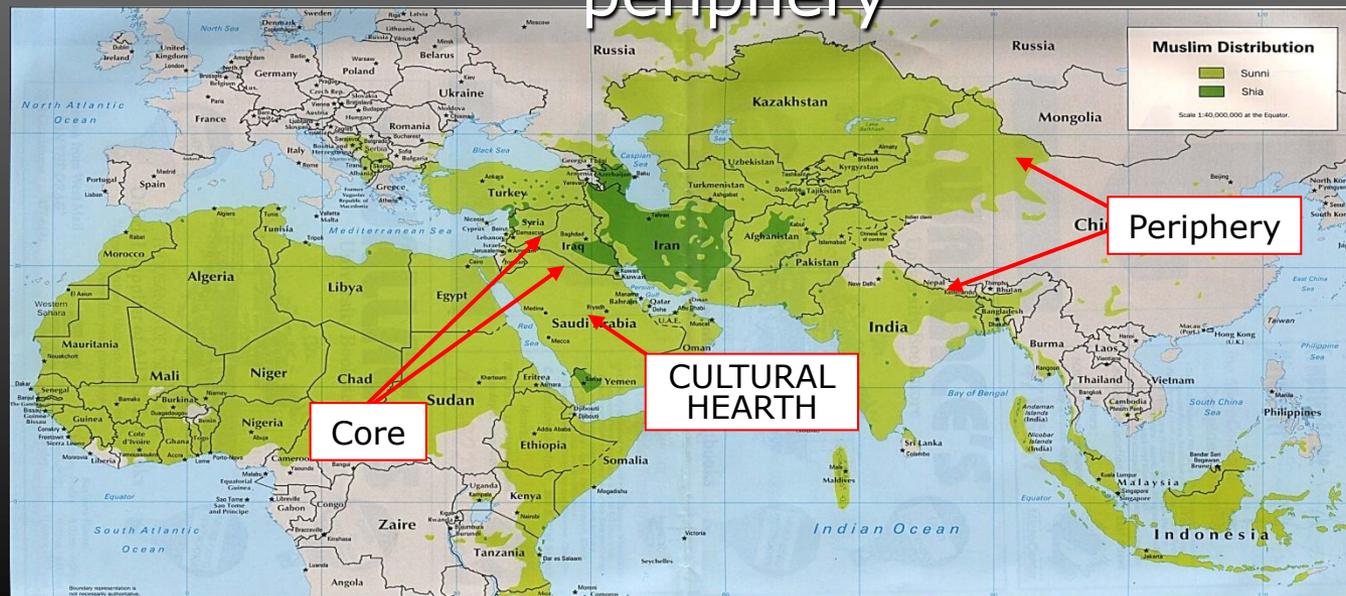




# Cultural Hearth

...a regional cradle of civilization where distinct cultural traits, elements and values are developed and shared.

Culture spreads from a cultural hearth to form a cultural region that has a core and a periphery





# Characteristics of a Cultural Hearth

- greatly influences surrounding regions ... the closer an area is to the hearth the stronger the influence
- an urban culture relative to the population density in the rest of its specific environment
- social stratification and labor specialization
- government
- metallurgy and other technologies
- ability to travel, close to navigable rivers, lakes, ocean, etc





# Characteristics of a Cultural Hearth

- long-distance trade
- writing, astronomy, mathematics
- close to rivers or lakes that flooded annually, use systematic agriculture and irrigation to produce surplus food for predominantly sedentary population
- had to adopt residential patterns and organized behavior to protect crops from animal and insect predators





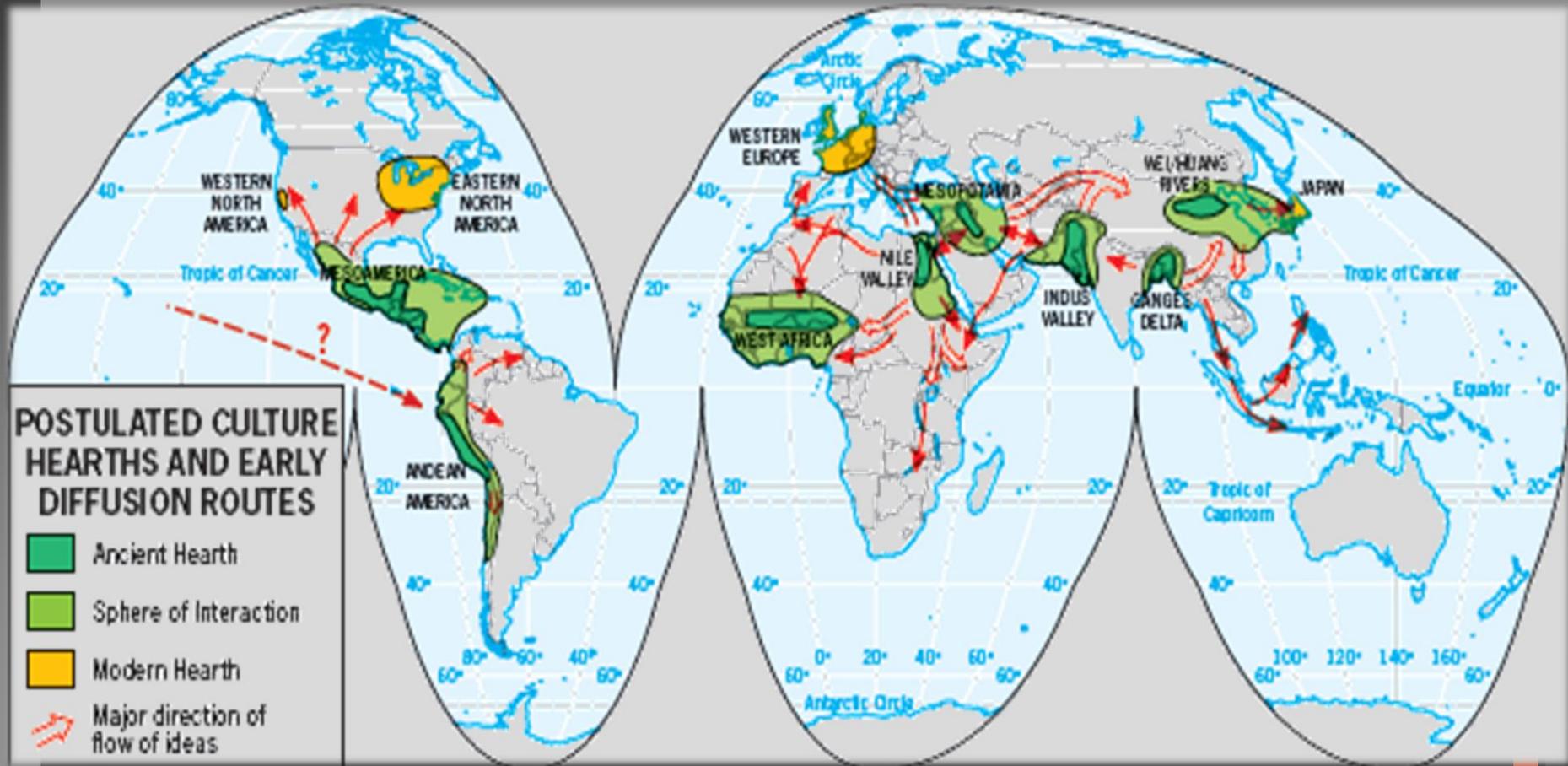
# Characteristics of a Cultural Hearth

- religion, the use of iron tools and weapons, highly organized social structures and the development of agriculture started and spread from these areas
- For a more detailed discussion of cultural hearths, refer to the [Margin Notes for Cultural Geography](#).





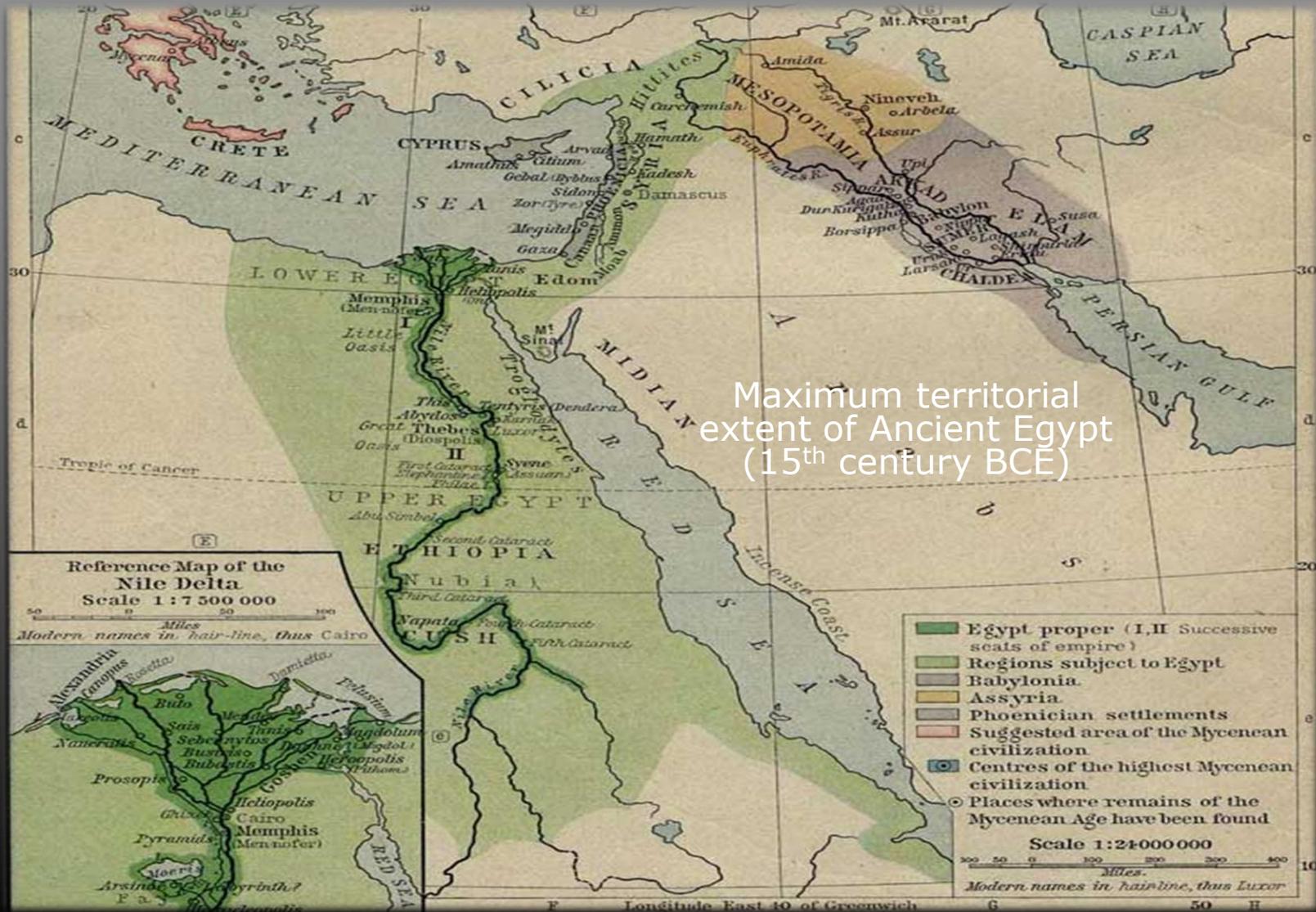
# Cultural Hearths





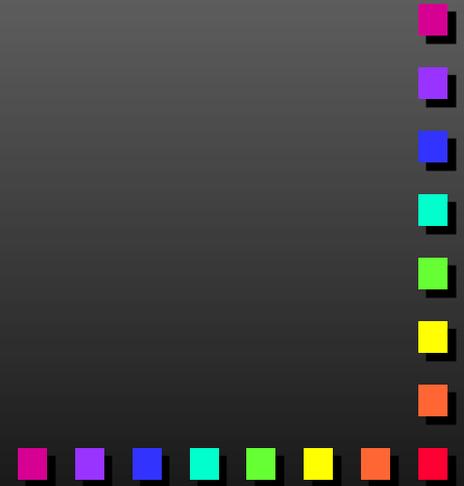


# Cultural Hearth: Egypt



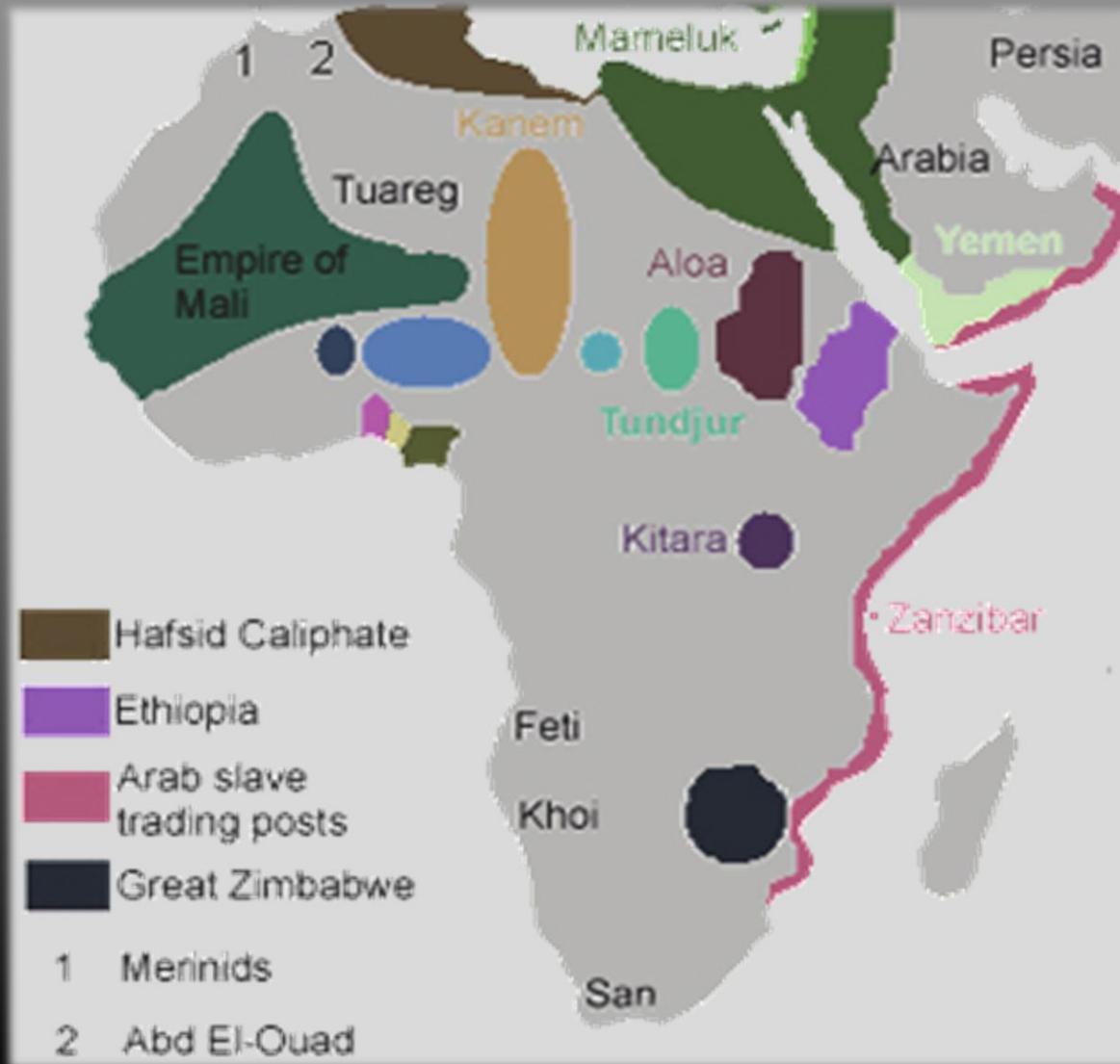


# Cultural Hearth: Israel

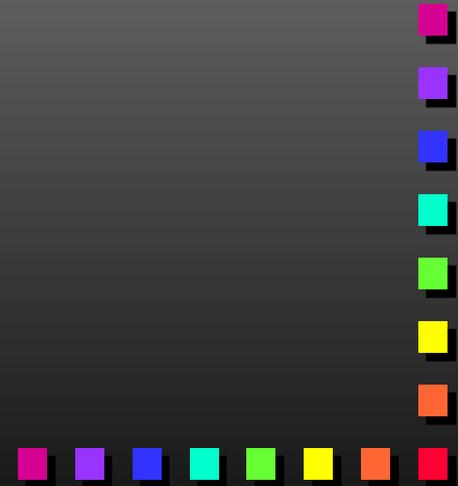




# Cultural Hearths: Africa



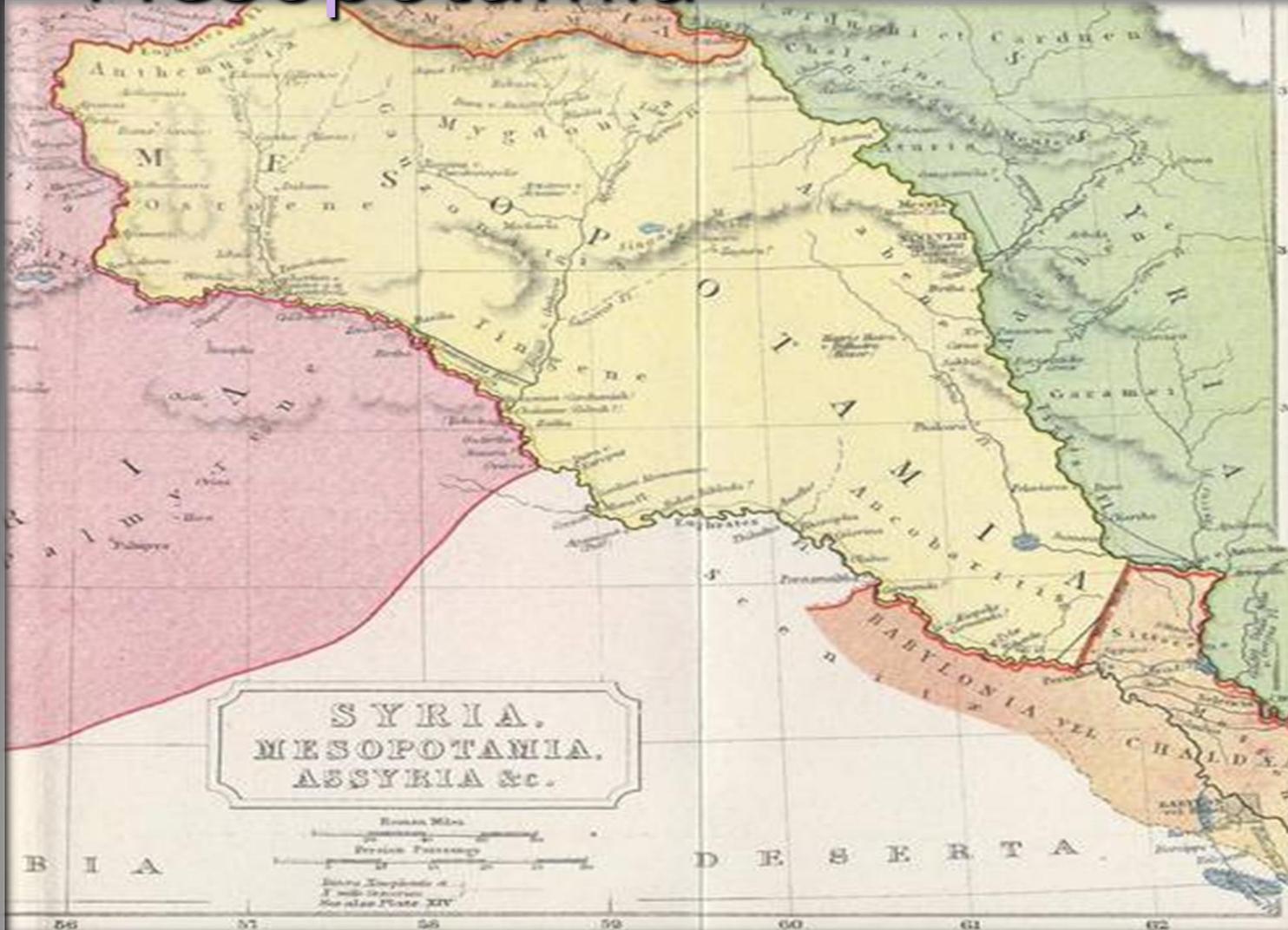
- Kush
- Ghana
- Mali
- Forest Kingdoms
- Swahili Kingdoms
- Great Zimbabwe / Mwenemutapa Empire





# Cultural Hearth: Mesopotamia

The Sumerians  
The Akkadians  
The Amorites  
The Hittites  
The Kassites  
The Assyrians  
The Chaldeans





# Cultural Hearth: Greece



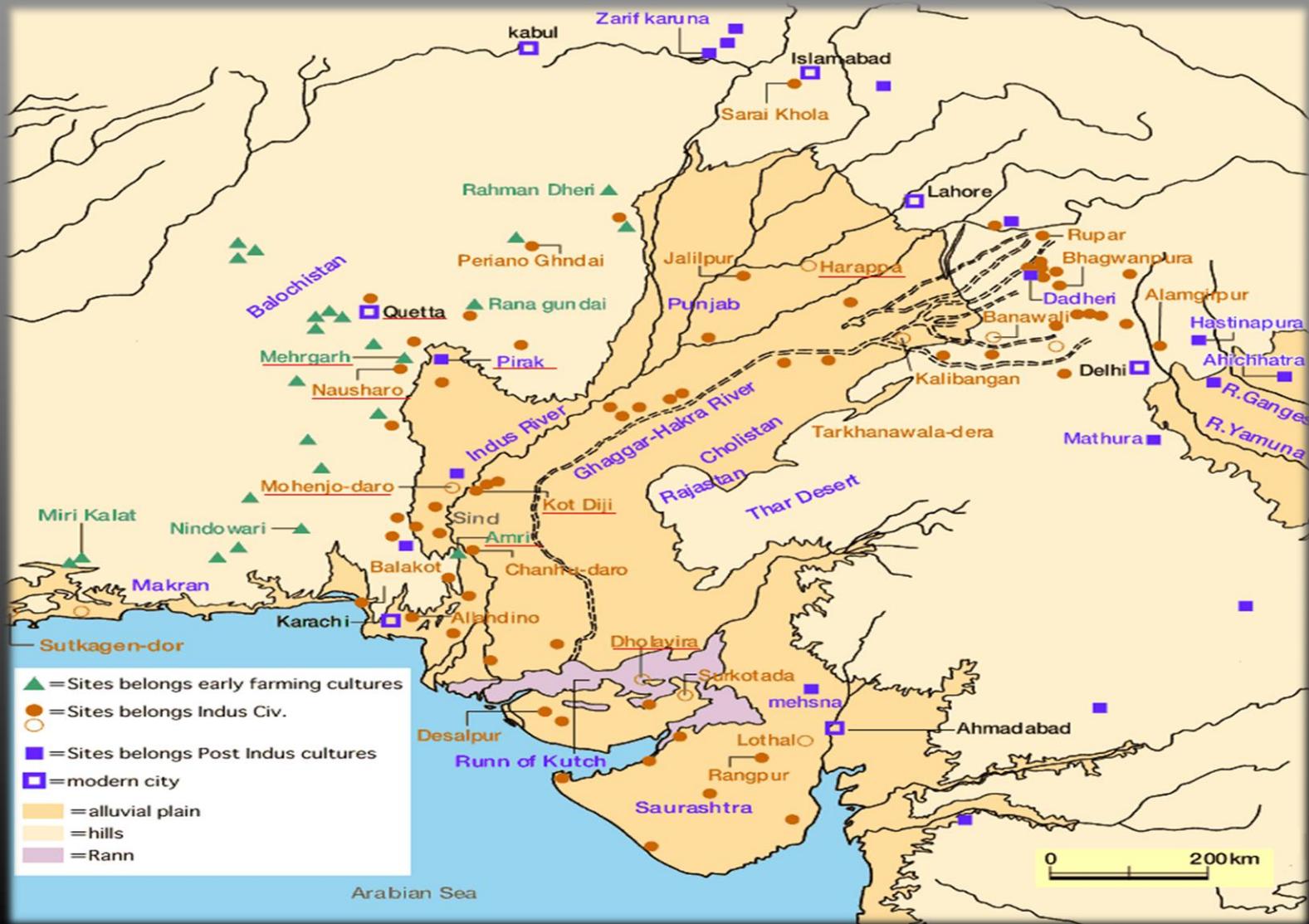


# Cultural Hearth: Rome





# Cultural Hearth: India





# Cultural Hearth: China





# Cultural Hearths: Mayans and Aztecs

Olmecs  
 Teotihuacán  
 Toltecs  
 Mexicas / Aztecs  
 Mayas





# Cultural Hearth: Incas

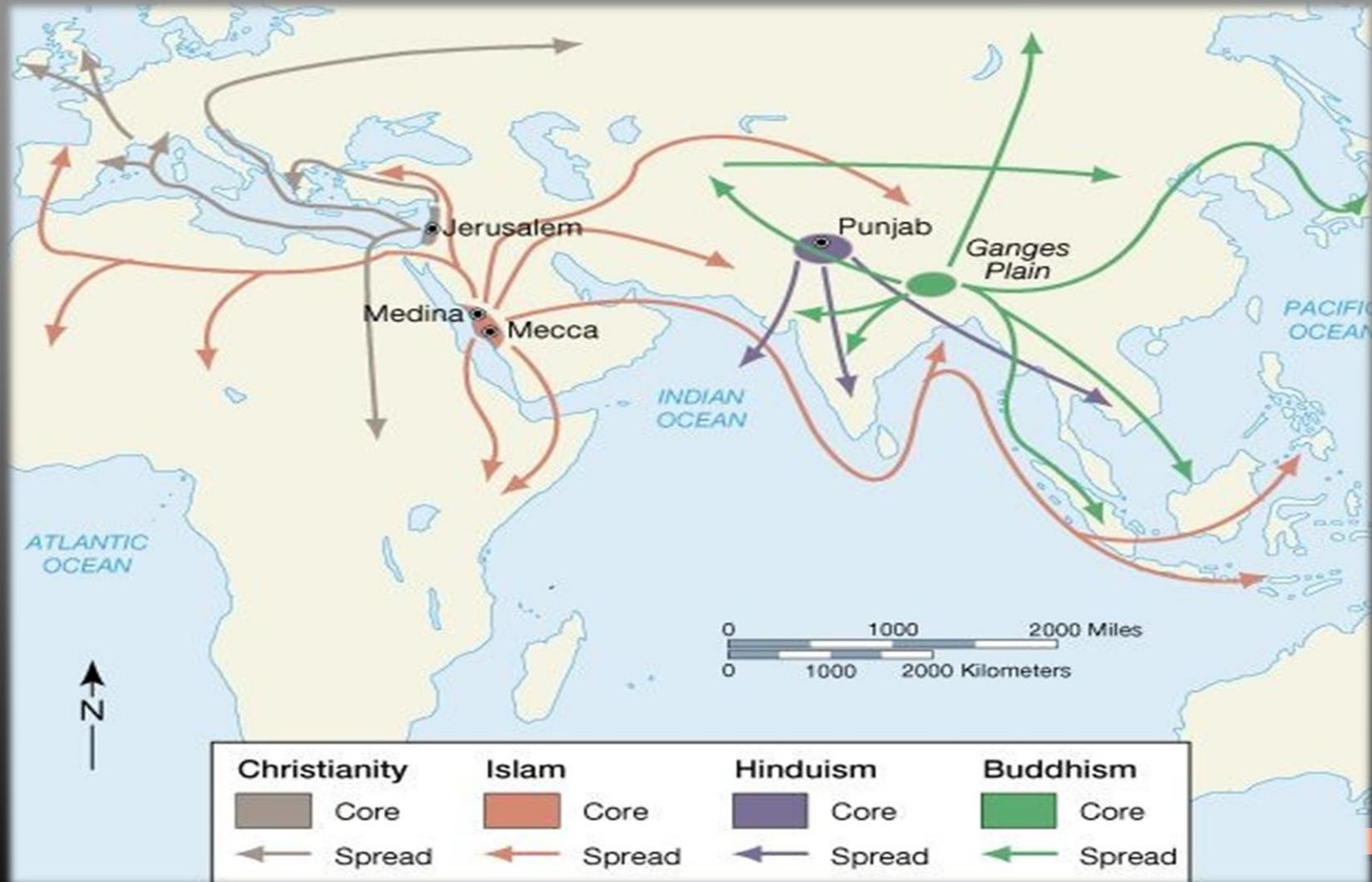


Chavín  
Tiahuanaco  
Incas



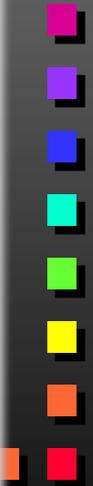
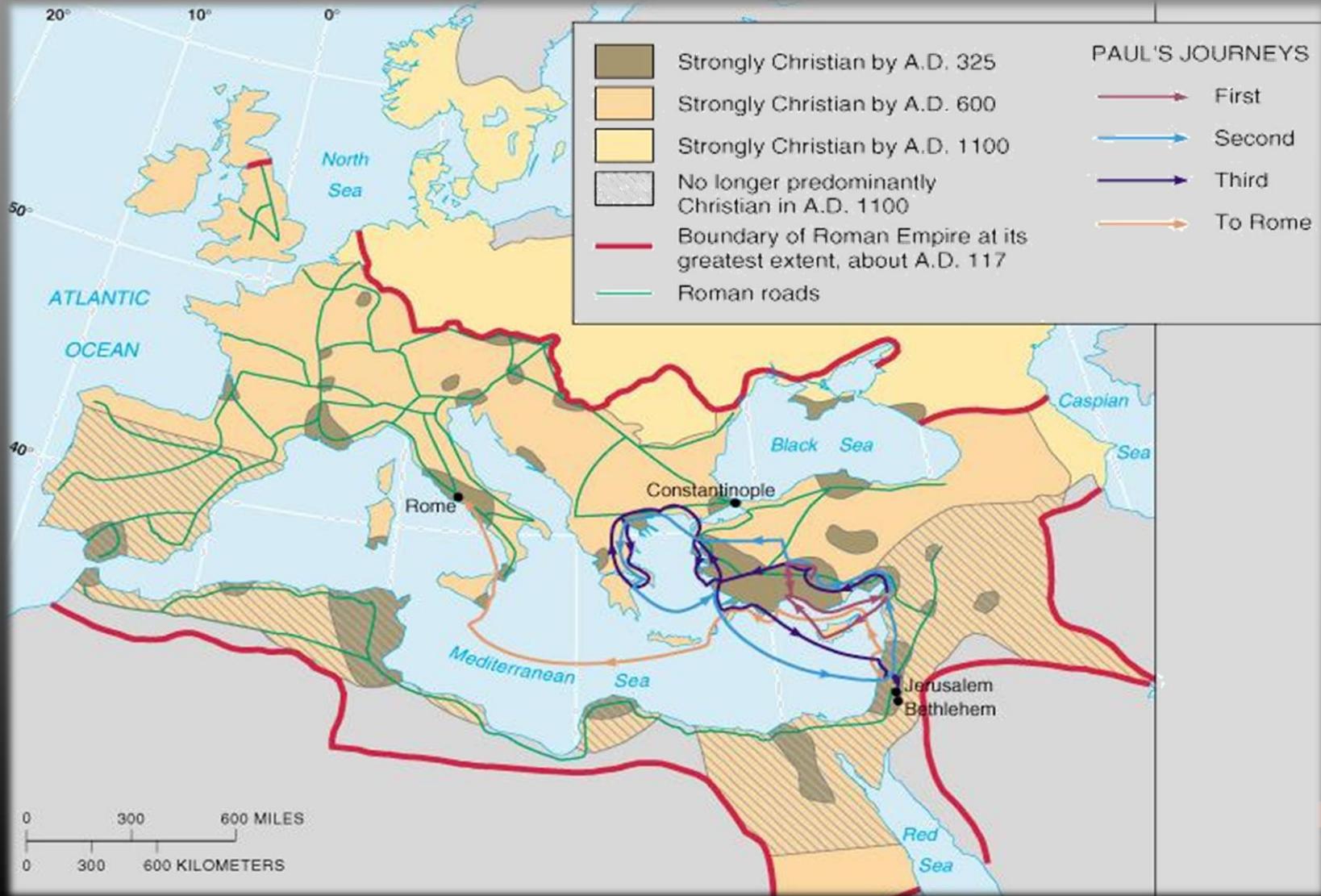


# Cultural Hearths: Religion



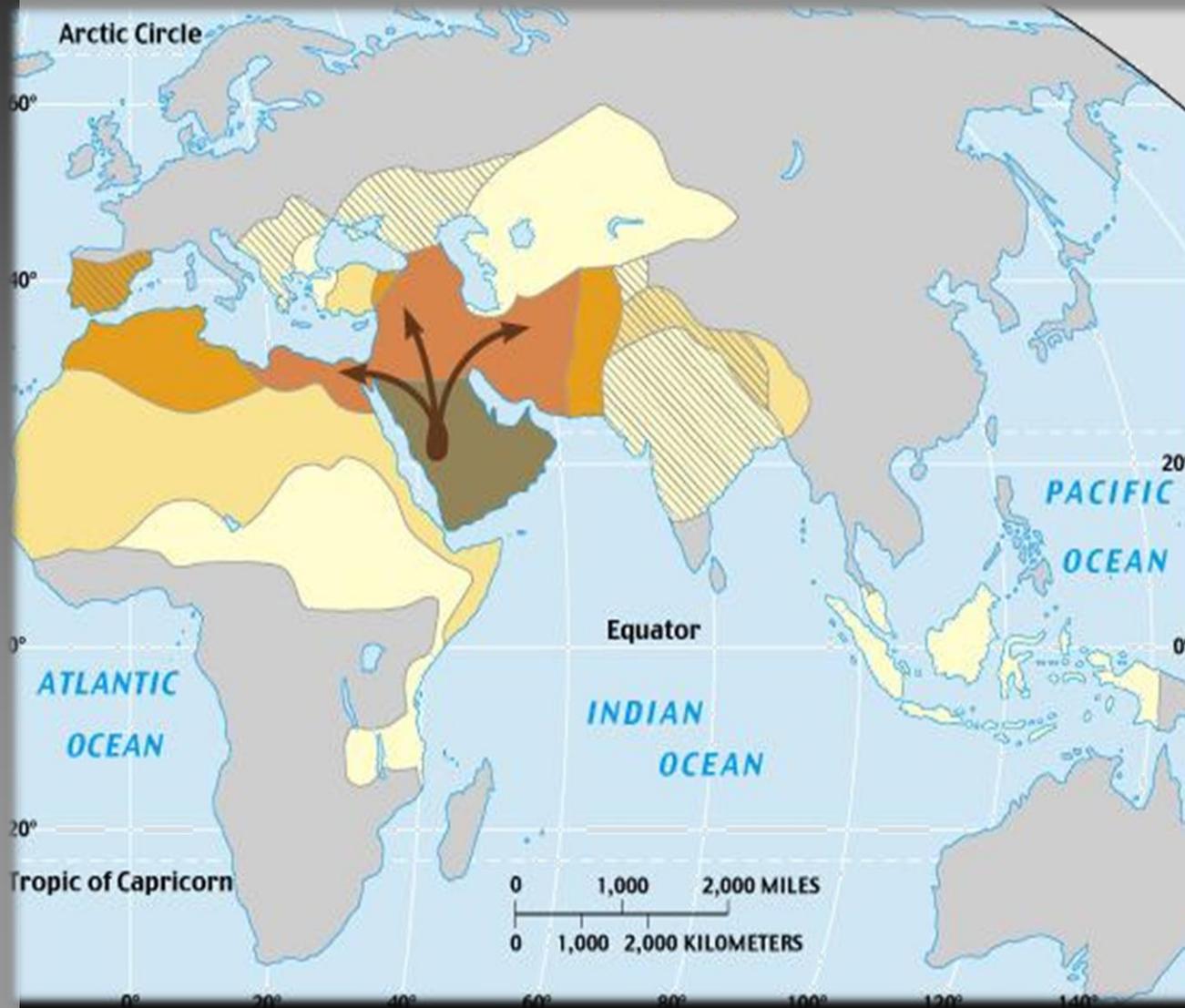


# Cultural Hearth: Christianity





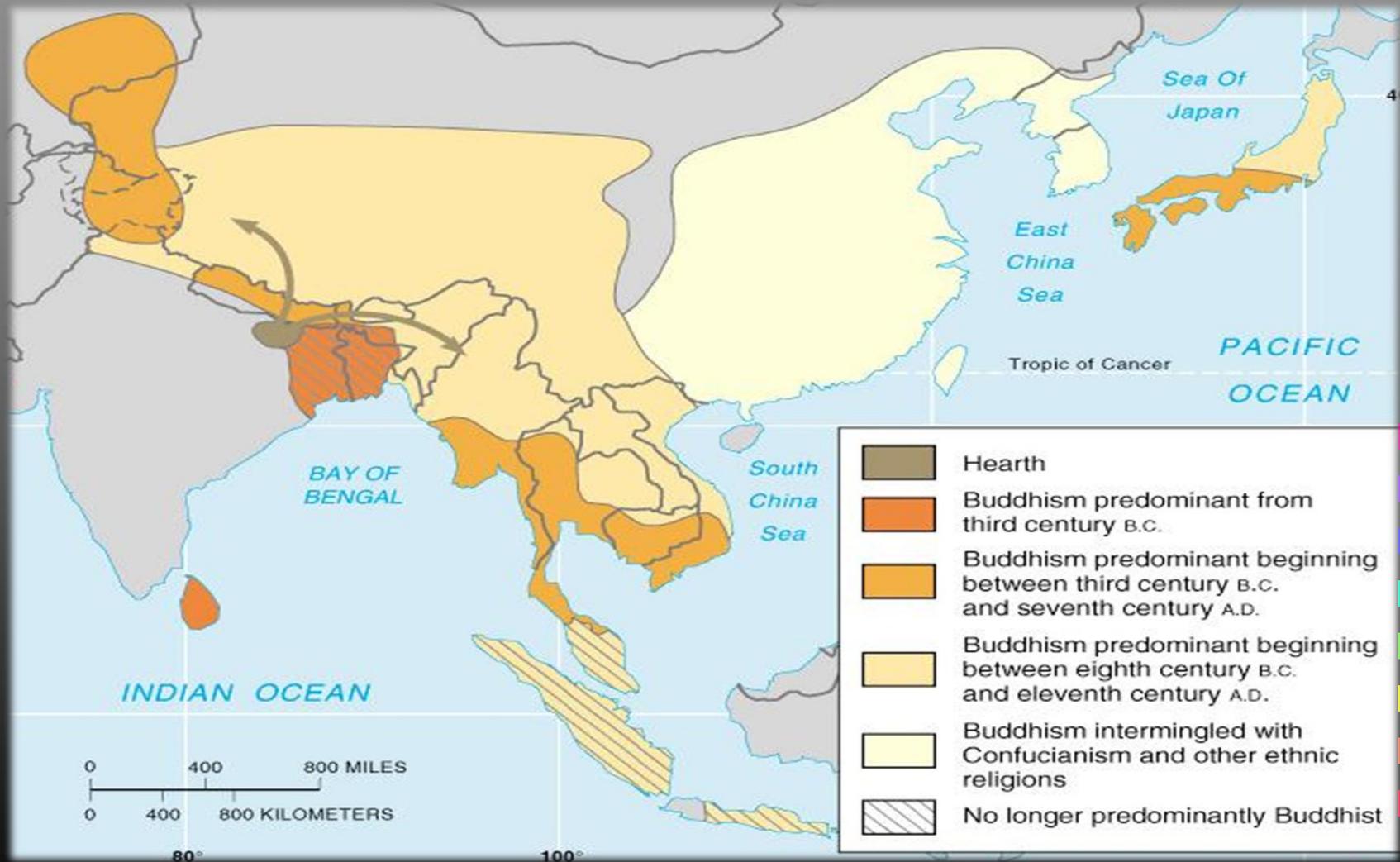
# Cultural Hearth: Islam



-  **Hearth, about A.D. 570**
-  **Muslim by A.D. 632**
-  **Muslim by A.D. 656**
-  **Muslim by A.D. 750**
-  **Muslim by A.D. 1300**
-  **Muslim after A.D. 1300**
-  **No longer predominantly Muslim**

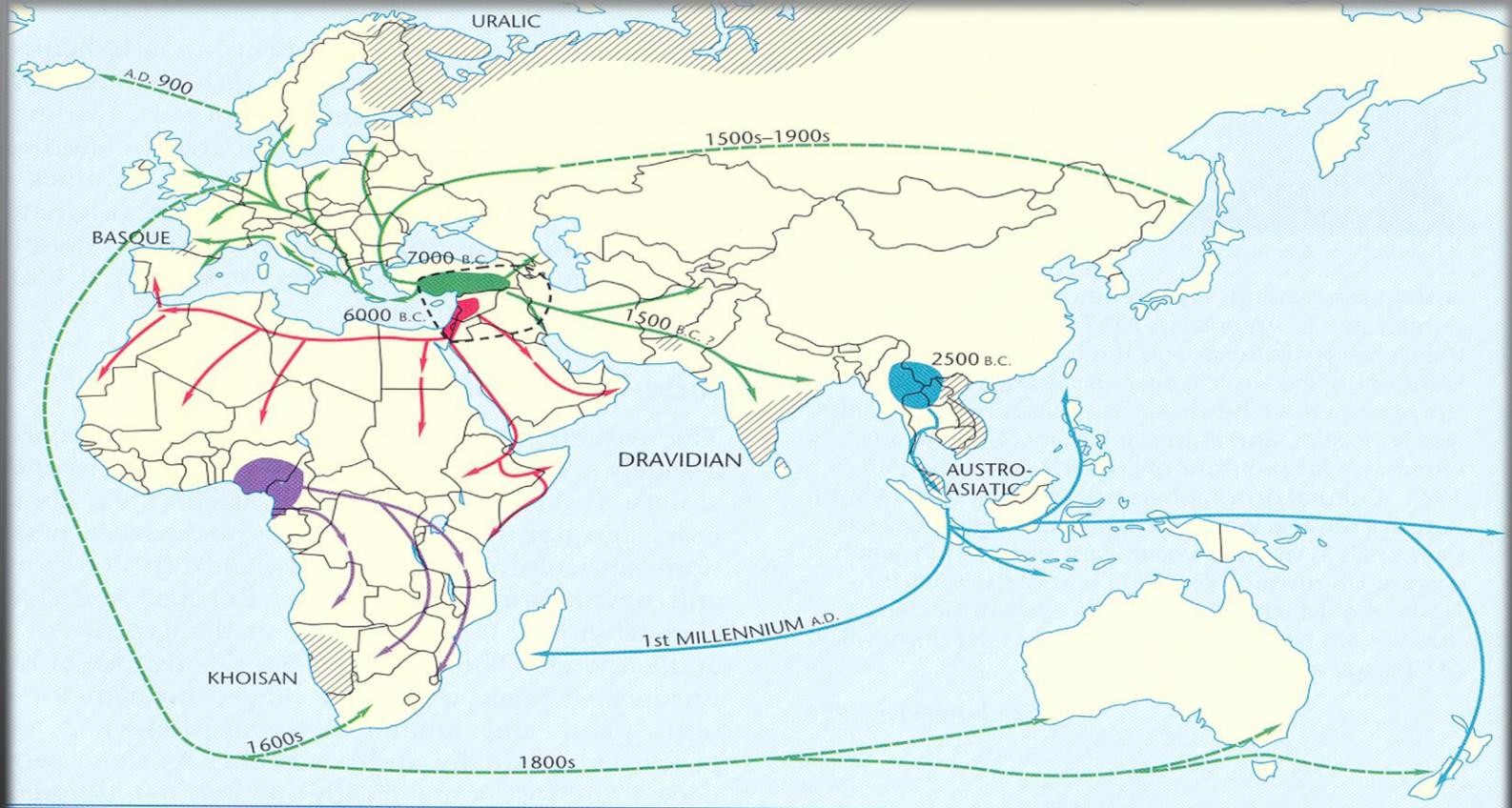


# Cultural Hearth: Buddhism

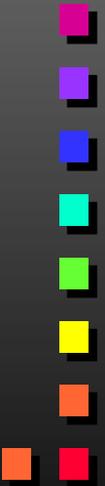




# Cultural Hearths: Language



- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
|  Indo-European source  |  Afro-Asiatic source |  Selected language families in retreat refuges  |
|  Prehistoric diffusion |  Diffusion           |  Presumed area of Nostratic speech, 12,000 B.C. |
|  Later diffusion       |  Niger-Congo source  |  |
|  Austronesian source   |  Diffusion           |  |
|  Diffusion             |   |  |





# The End

[Return to Table of Contents](#)

