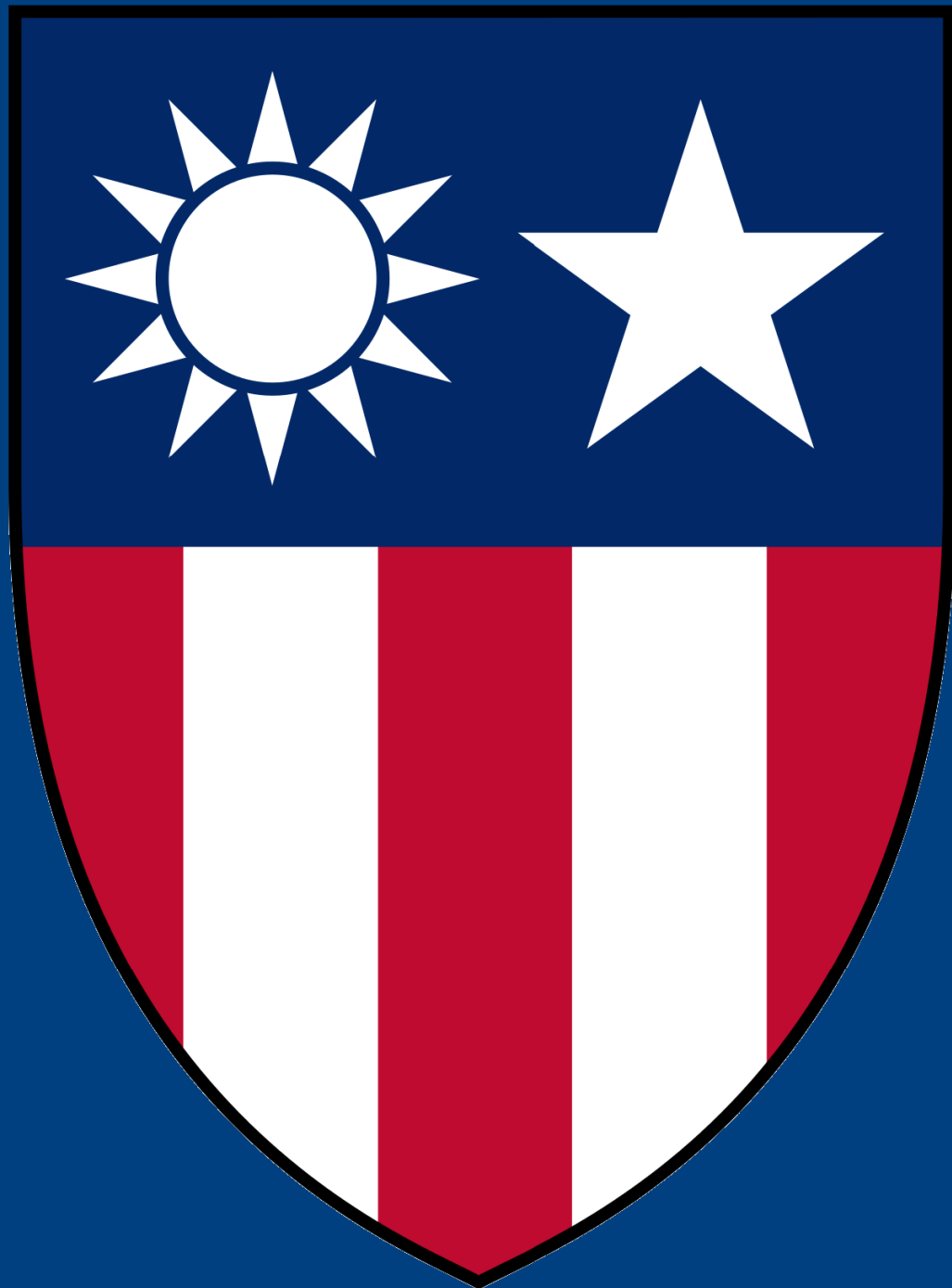


# THE PACIFIC WAR

## PART II





**THE FORGOTTEN  
WORLD WAR:**

**THE CHINA –  
BURMA – INDIA  
THEATER IN  
WORLD WAR II**

**WEEK 2**

UNION OF SOVIET SOCIALIST REPUBLICS

ALASKA

CANADA

BERING SEA

SEA OF OKHOTSK

KALEUTIAN ISLANDS

Pacific Ocean Areas (POA) included Central, South, Southeast and Northern Pacific Areas.

North Pacific Area  
XXXXX  
Central Pacific Area

UNITED STATES

UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DIRECTION

POA and SWPA under UNITED STATES STRATEGIC DIRECTION

JAPANESE OUTER PERIMETER 2 July 1942

Central Pacific Area  
XXXXX  
South Pacific Area

CHINA

MANCHURIA

SEA OF JAPAN

PACIFIC OCEAN

POA NIMITZ

INDIA

BURMA

THAILAND

INDOCHINA

PHILIPPINE IS.

MINDANAO

GUINEA

NEW GUINEA

SOLOMON IS.

GILBERT

LINE ISLANDS

HAWAIIAN ISLANDS

PEARL HARBOR

JOHNSTON IS.

MARSHALL IS.

WAKE

Calcutta

Mandalay

Bangkok

SAIGON

Manila

SPRATLY IS.

PHILIPPINE SEA

SAIPAN

GUADALCANALES

TRUK

WAKKANAI

MAJURO

MILLE

MAKIN

TOROWAKA

GILBERT

ANDAMAN IS.

KRA Isthmus

MALAYA

BORNEO

CELEBES

JAVA

TIMOR IS.

COAST GUARDS

NEW BRITAIN

NEW GUINEA

GUADALCANALES

TRUK

WAKKANAI

MAJURO

MILLE

MAKIN

WANDA ROAD

KUNMING

CHUNGKING

CHANGSHA

PEKING

SHANGHAI

RYUKYU IS.

OKINAWA

FORMOSA (TAIWAN)

HONG KONG

HAINAN

CLARK FIELD

MANILA

SPRATLY IS.

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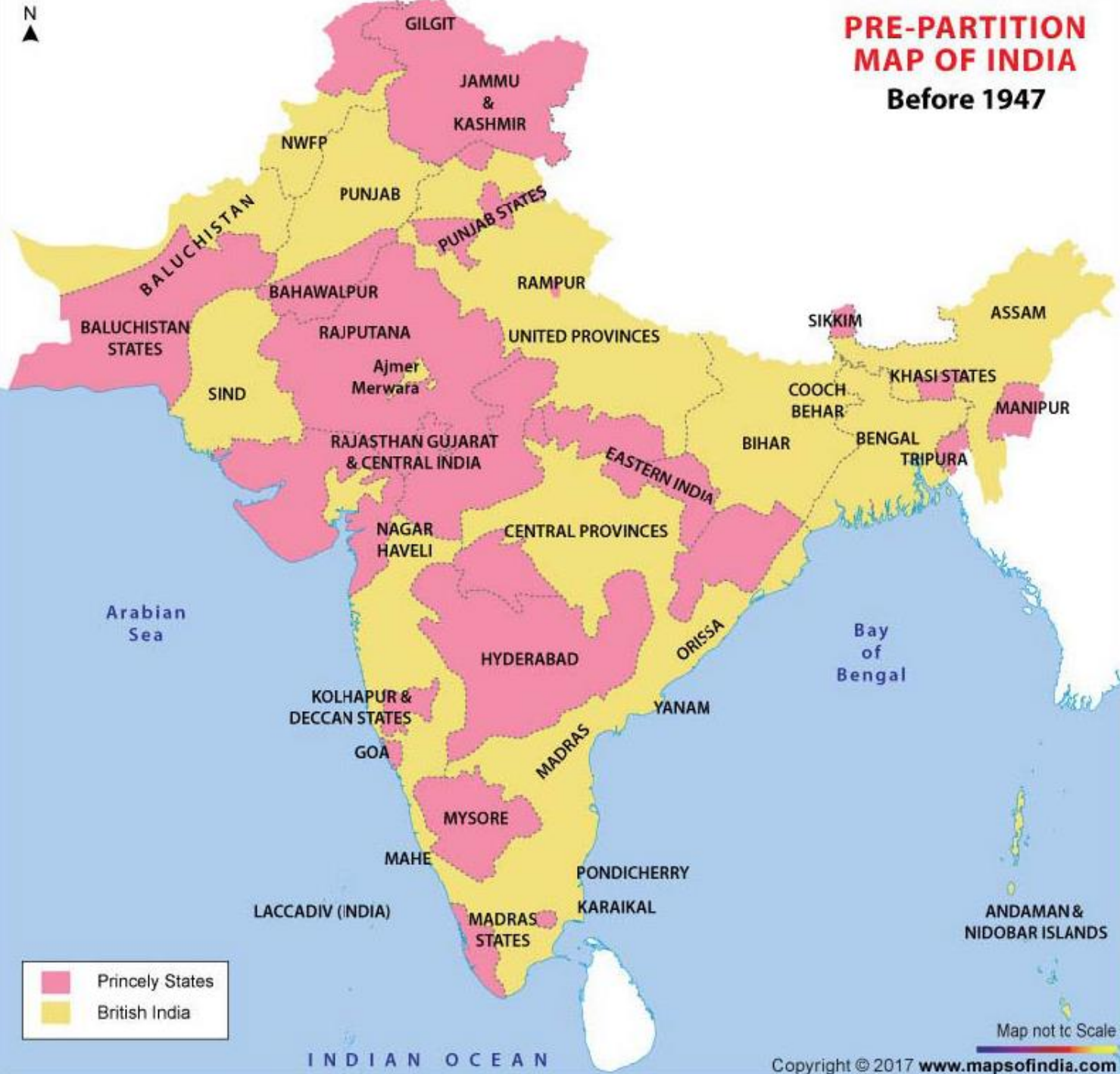
SHANGHAI

RYUKYU IS.



# PRE-PARTITION MAP OF INDIA

Before 1947



■ Princely States  
■ British India

Map not to Scale

New Dehli to Imphal 1,062 miles.  
New Dehli to Chongqing 1,792 miles.  
Calcutta to Imphal 386 miles.  
Ranchi to Imphal 553 miles.  
Ramgarh to Lido 682 miles.  
Imphal to Mandalay 239 miles.  
Imphal to Rangoon 568 miles.  
Lido to Myitkyna 175 miles.  
Assam to Kunming 522 miles.

London to Naples 1,003 miles.  
London to Moscow 1,553 miles.  
Normandy to Paris 151 miles.  
Normandy to Pilsen 639 miles.  
Naples to Rome 117 miles.



**India was critical to the Allied war effort on the mainland of Asia.**

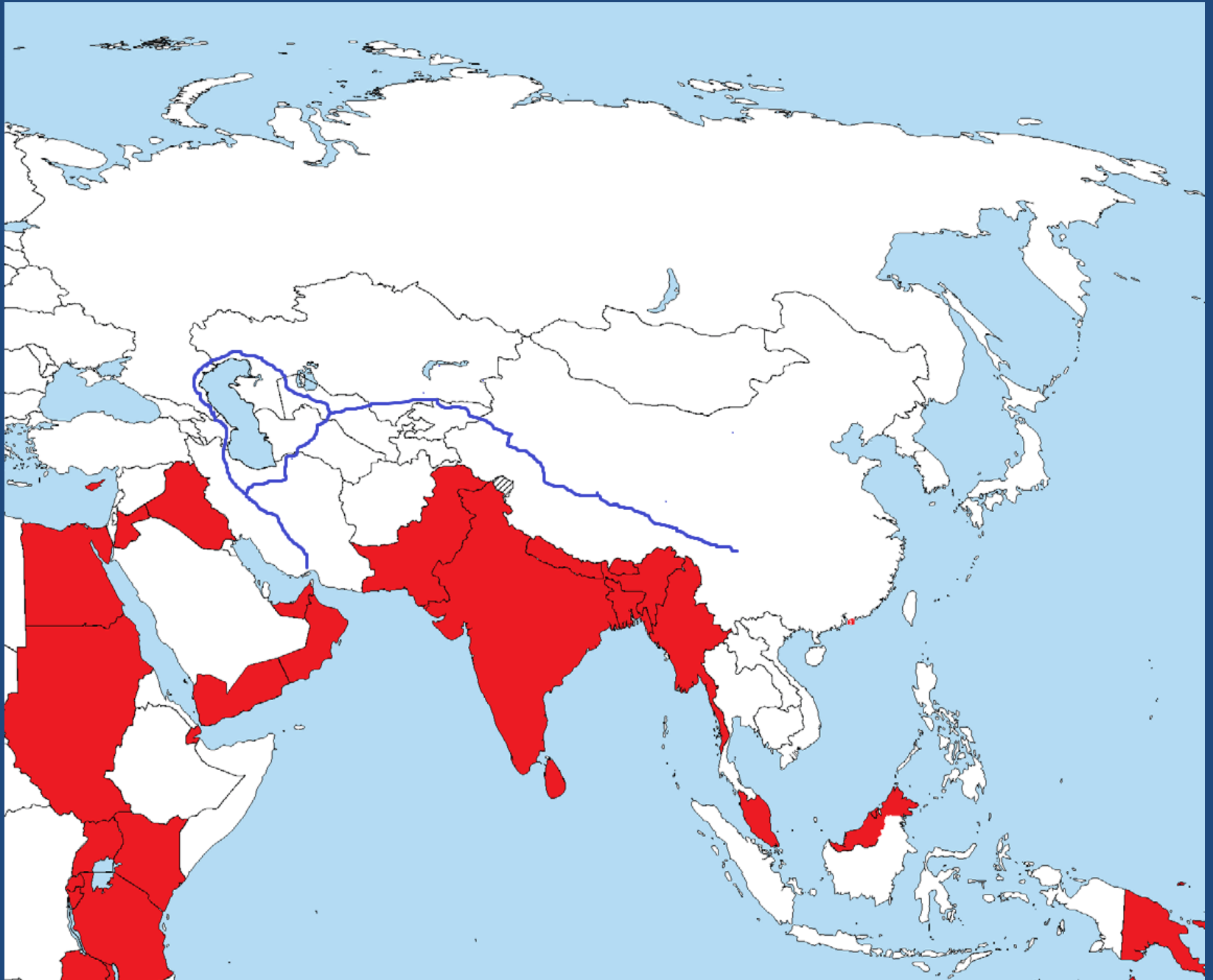
**It was the only base of supply in the region.**

**China was effectively blockaded at sea by Japan and (mostly) inaccessible by land.**

**There was a passable land route at the time from Bandr Abas in Iran at the Straits of Hormuz through part of the Soviet Union and the Gobi Desert to Chongqing (over much of the ancient Silk Road). But it was mostly a dirt road, impassible in rains and over 5,000 miles long.**

**Moreover, the more reliable (and longer) route was threatened by the Germans in the summer of 1942.**

**It was rejected even as scouting parties were attempting it as it was too long and required too many trucks – more supplied would be needed to drive the road than could be delivered over it.**





**India would serve as a training area – training British, Indian, American and ultimately five divisions of Chinese troops for fighting in the east.**

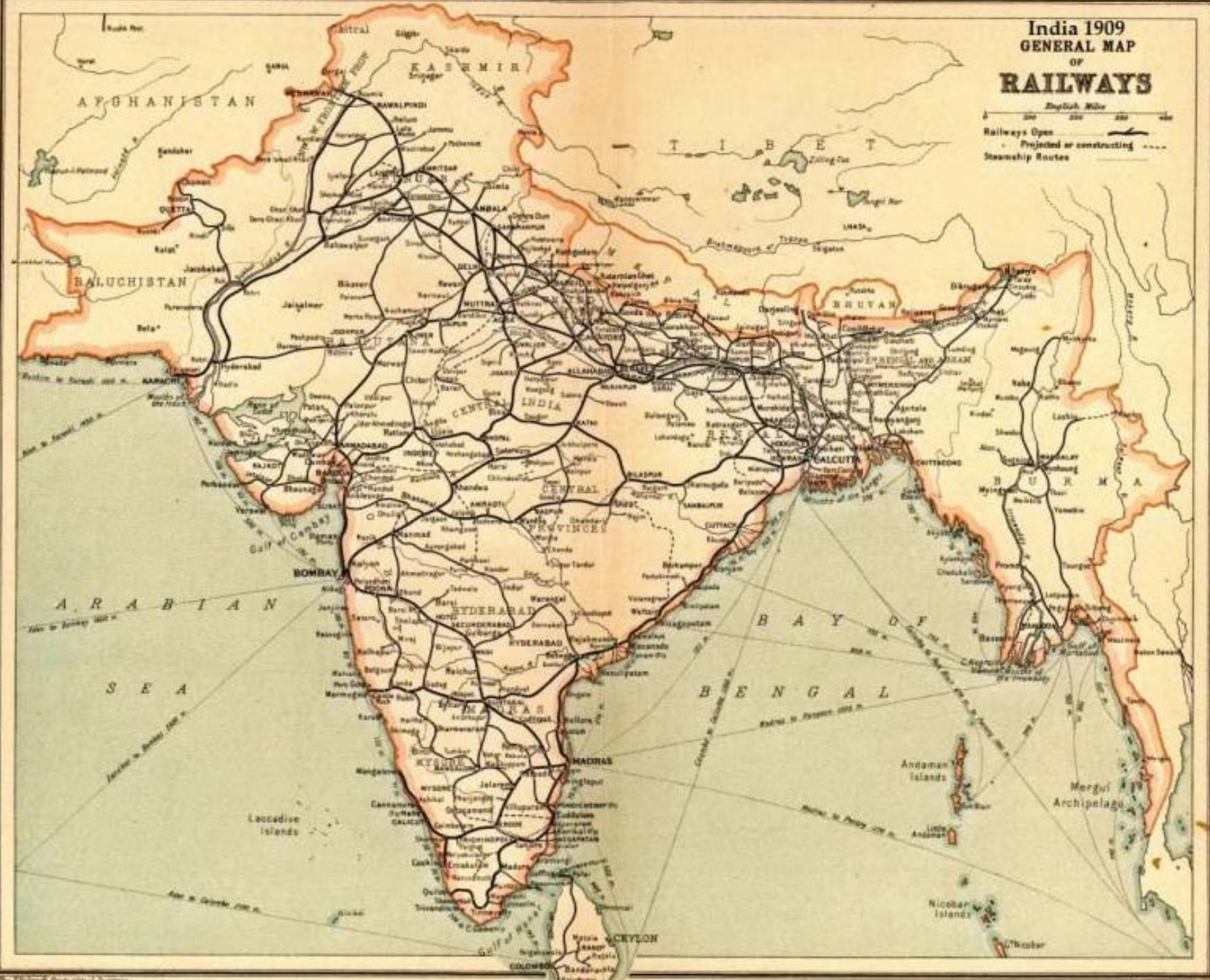
**India would supply the bulk of the soldiers fighting the Japanese outside of China.**

**The bloodiest battle the Western Allies fought against the Japanese before Okinawa would take place in India.**

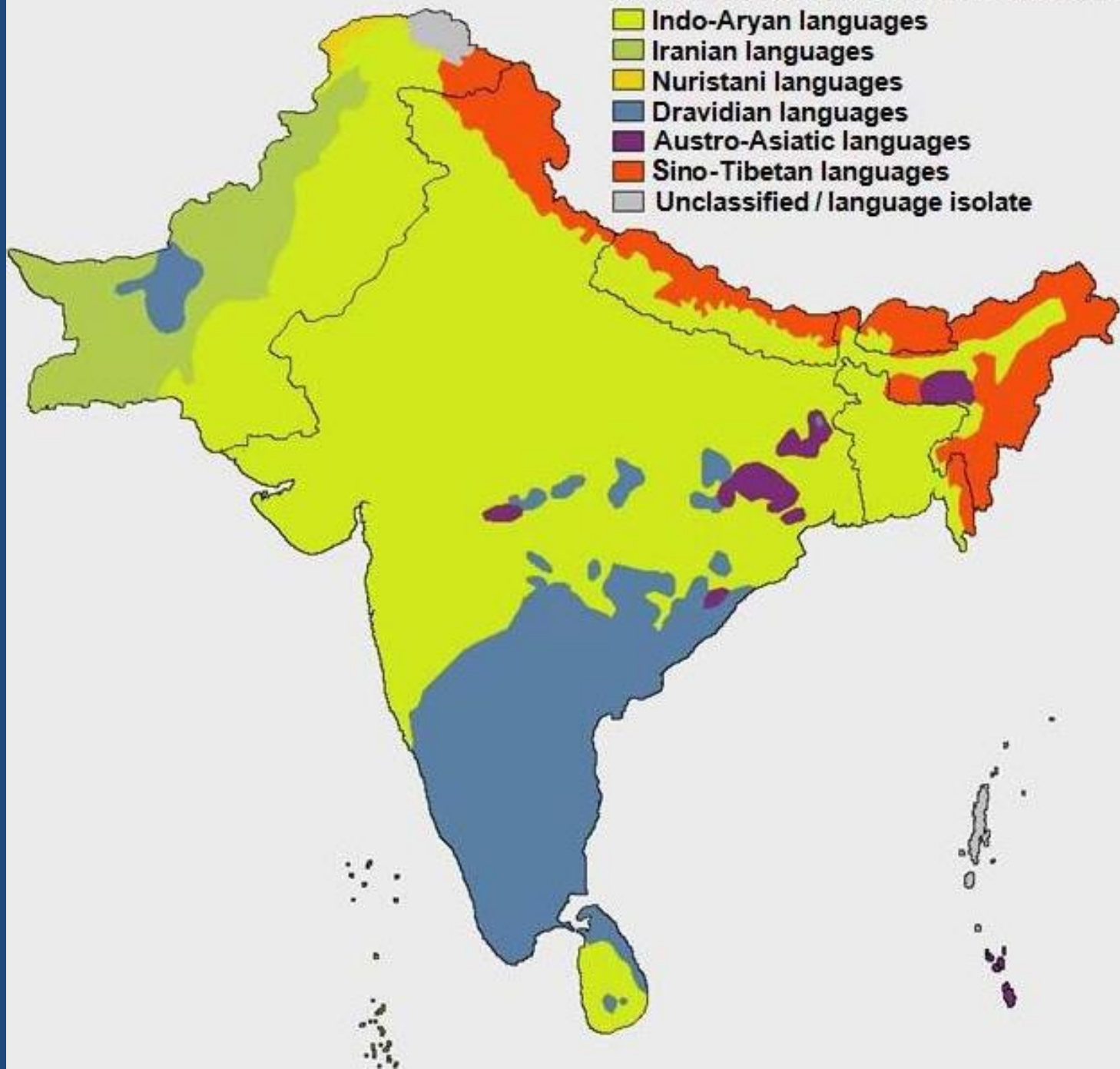
**But... for many reasons, India was less than an ideal base.**

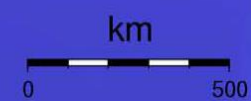
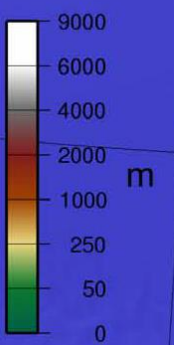
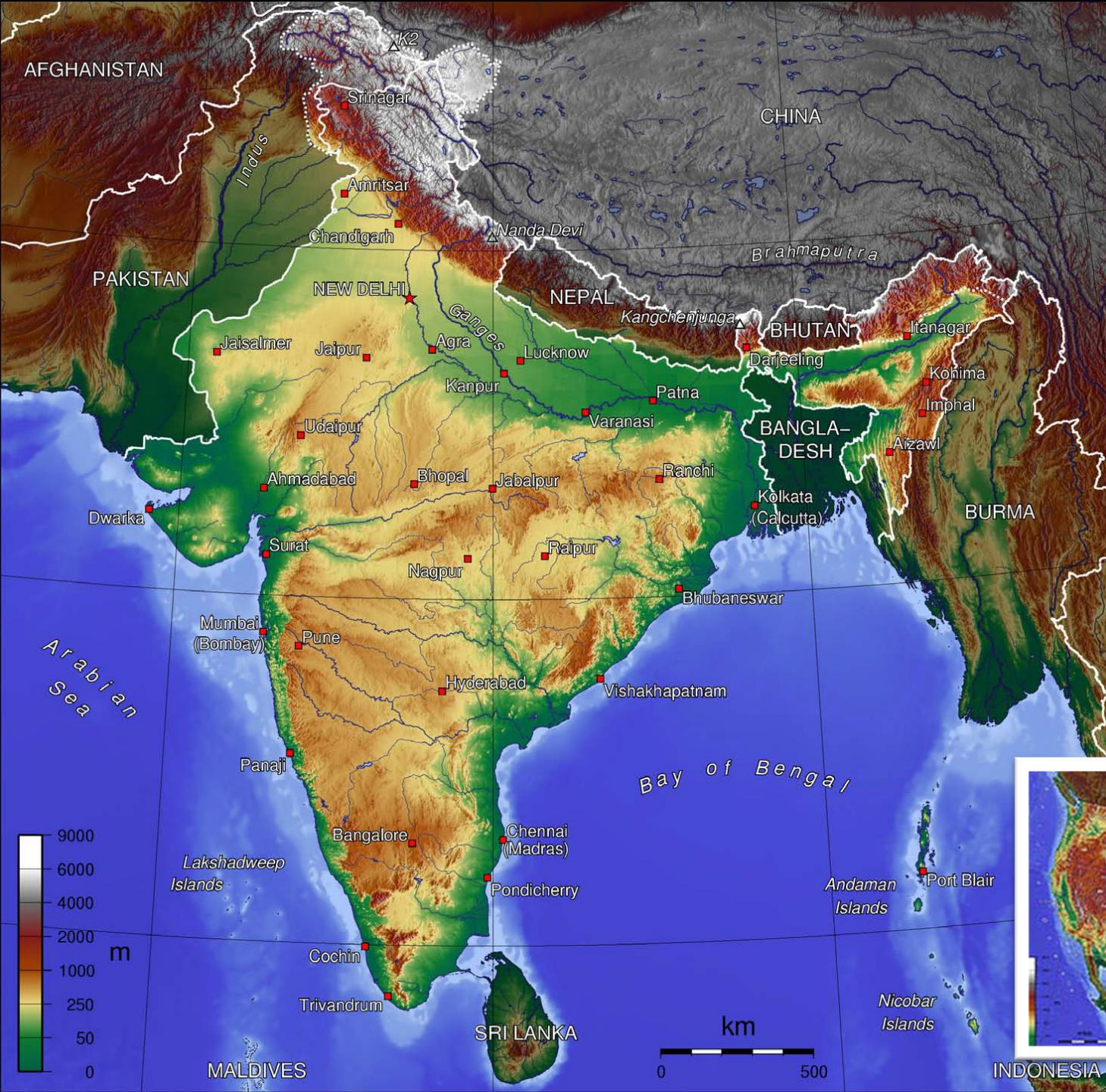
# India 1909 GENERAL MAP OF RAILWAYS

English Miles  
0 100 200 300  
Railways Open ———  
Projected or constructing - - - -  
Steamship Routes ———



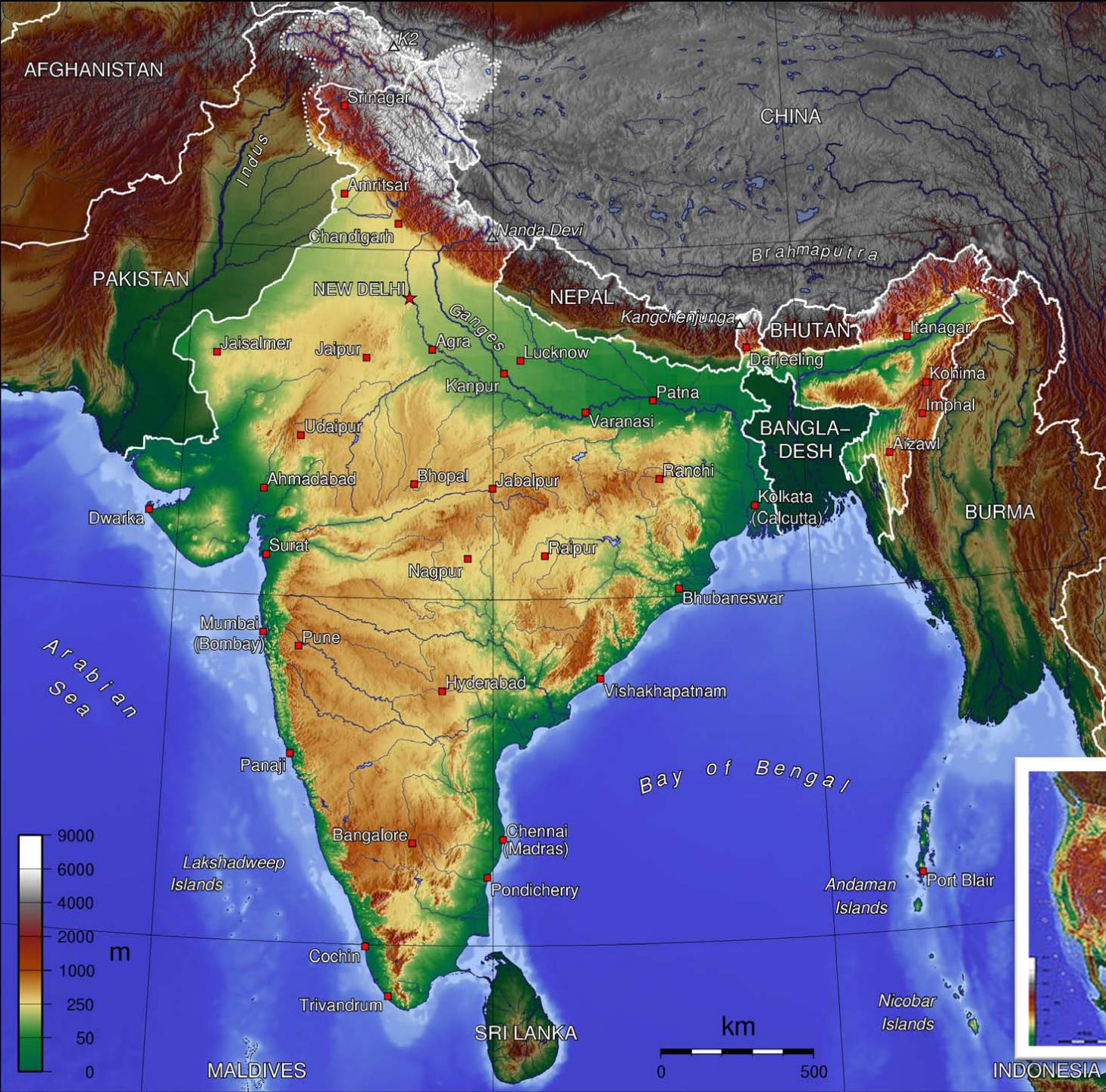
# SOUTH ASIAN LANGUAGE FAMILIES

















**“If a man says he is not afraid of dying, he is either lying or he is a Gurkha.”**

**Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw, British Indian Army 1935 – 1947,  
Indian Army 1947 – 1973, Chief of Staff Indian Army 1969 – 1973**



The Company had gained control of the Ganges river valley in the north, southern India and a narrow strip between them along the Bay of Bengal.

The problem was the remains of the Mughal Empire – the Maratha Confederacy – in the center. So long as it remained independent one way or another, it threatened the entirety of the Company’s enterprise.

The plan was to deal with the problem by subverting the local rulers if possible making them dependent allies or by taking them if necessary.

The company believed secured borders meant greater profits.

That was not a false belief but they also believed control equaled security meaning that if they did not control it, they could not be secure.

This meant that they needed to control the places from where a threat to their economic activities might arise and not merely the boarder of where their activities actually were located.

The obvious question would be where this line of reasoning ended?

The Maratha was obvious based upon their position on a map. But were they truly the only threat out there?

Security against a weak and divided Maratha Confederacy did not mean security against all potential threats.

By 1810, the Company had already encountered a new, united, strong and expanding empire to their immediate west – the Sikhs. It was founded in 1799 and the Company already had to buy them off to avoid the distraction.

Sikh Empire

سرکار خالصہ

ਖ਼ਾਲਸਾ ਸਰਕਾਰ

c. 1839 CE

ਚੀਨ  
China

ਚੀਨ  
China

تیبت

ਤਿੱਬਤ

Tibet

برطانوی ہندوستان

ਬਰਤਾਨਵੀ ਹਿੰਦوستان

British India (EIC)

افغانستان  
ਅਫ਼ਗਾਨਿਸਤਾਨ  
Afghanistan

پشاور  
ਪੇਸ਼ਾਵਰ

کشمیر  
ਜੰਮੂ ਕਸ਼ਮੀਰ

لاہور  
ਲਾਹੌਰ

Lahore

مِلتان

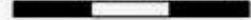
بہاولپور

کلات  
کلاٹ  
Kalat

سندھ  
Sindh



0 100 200 300



0 100 200 300  
میل  
Miles

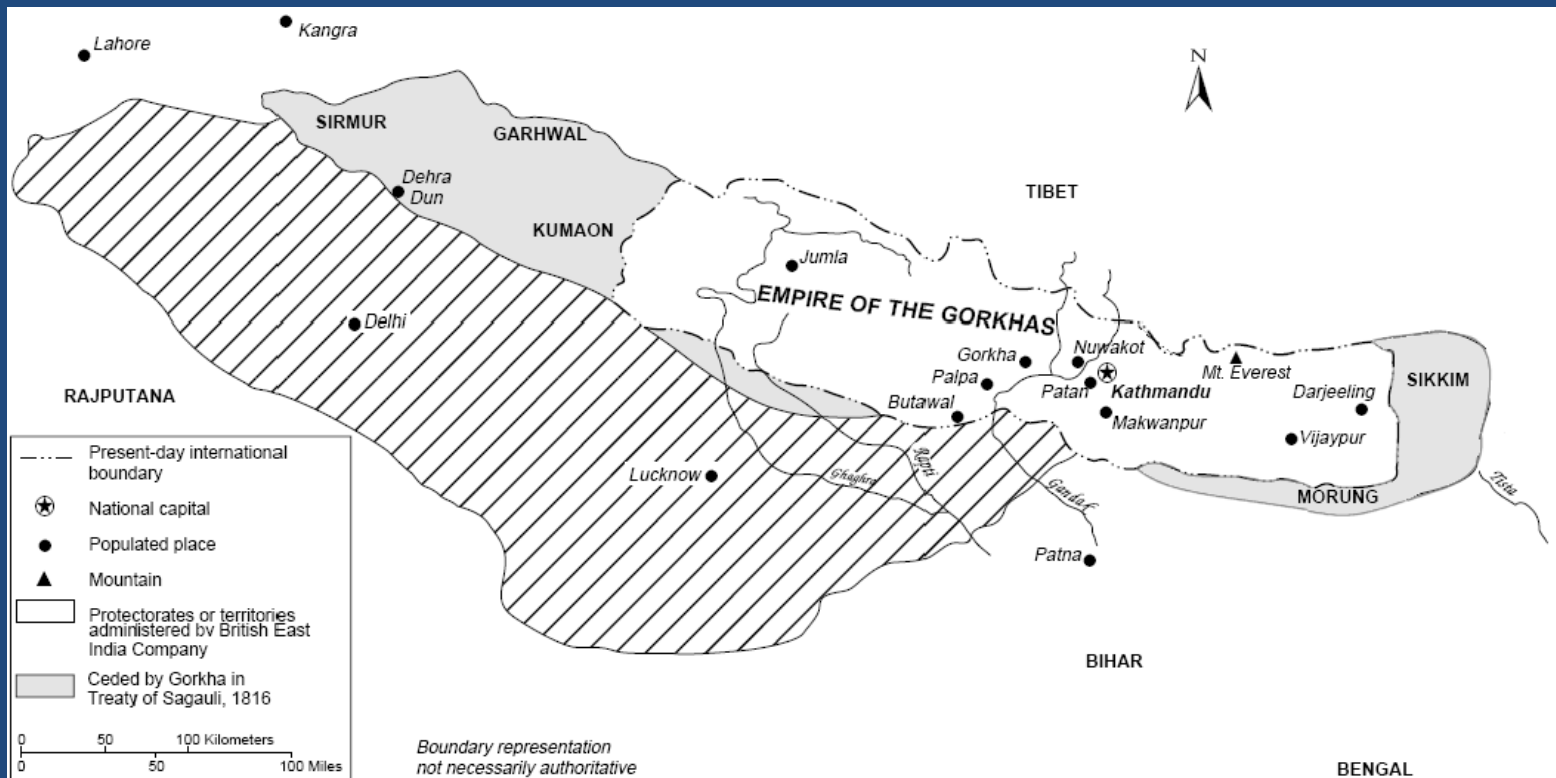


Today, few would think of Nepal as an expansionist, warlike state.

But they were just that in the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

They had invaded Tibet – only to be eventually driven back by the overwhelming force of the Qing Dynasty – numbers if not quality.

In 1814, they turned south – right into the Company controlled Ganges valley.



The company had a large, modern army and thought they could deal with the Gurkha's in short order and – perhaps – open a trade route to Tibet as a result.

They learned that their modern army was no match for the terrain and their Sepoys proved unnerved by the ferocity of the Gurkhali.

They asked for help from the British Army – offering to pay for the service.

It was 1814 – but Napoleon was supposedly defeated so a small force was dispatched.

It helped. What helped more was the fact that the Gurkha soldier was most loyal to those who paid the most. It was more Gurkha turncoats who turned the tide against Nepal than the arrival of British troops.

That being said, the victory was far short of what the Company had come to expect against the Indian states and far more costly.

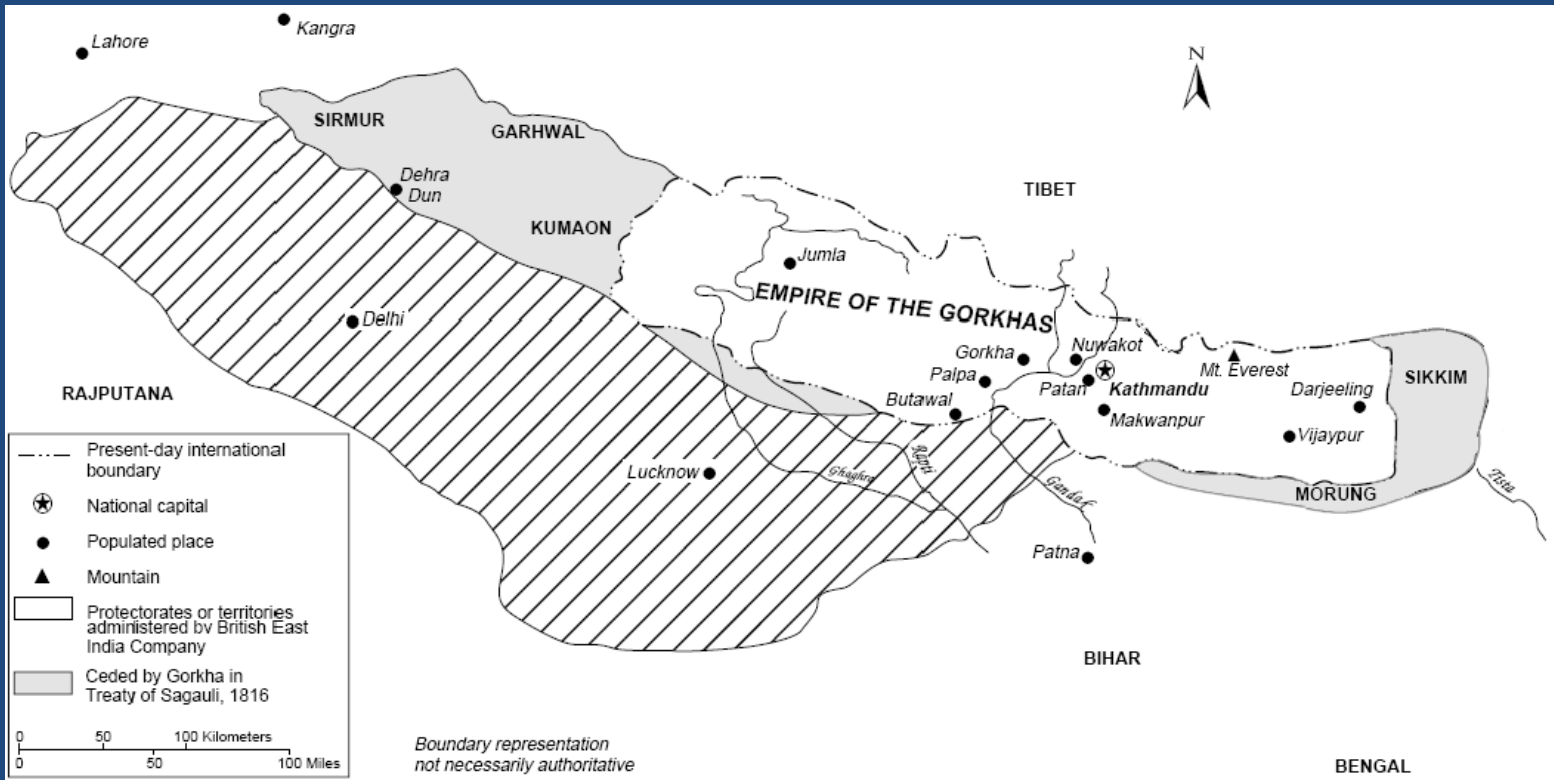
Victory in the two year war had cost twice as much as all their campaigns since 1763 combined.

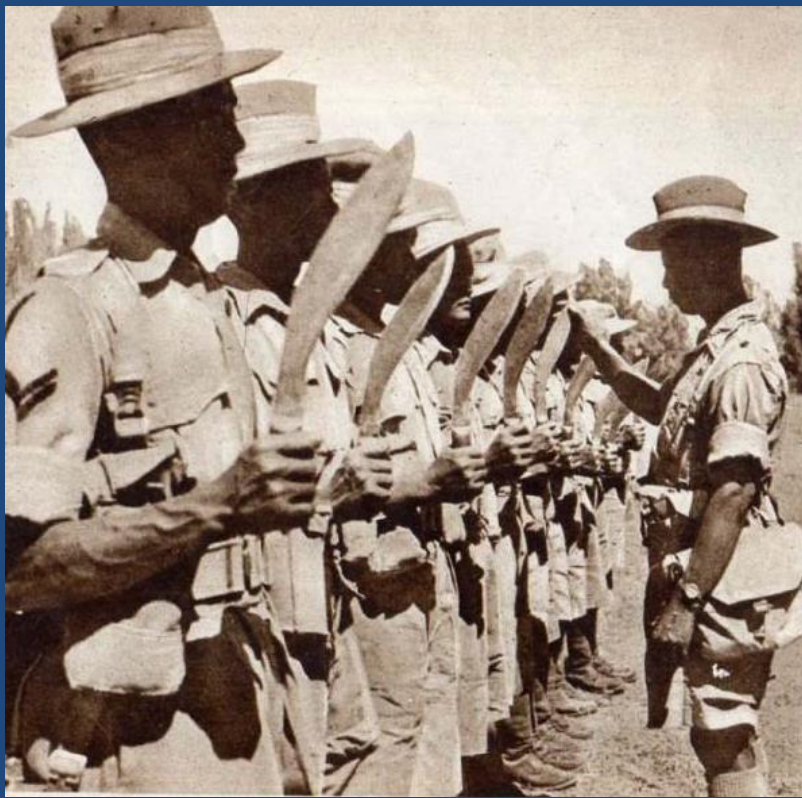


The Company regained the territory it had lost and gained some additional territories that had only recently been taken by the Gurkha. The border of Nepal was agreed upon and the Company agreed to a defensive alliance.

Nepal remained independent.

But the Company asked and Nepal agreed to recruit Gurkha soldiers into its army – soldiers that would prove their worth when the Company finally turned its attention to the Sikhs in 1839.





Since 1816, Nepal's leading export has been soldiers and its leading source of external income was the soldiers' pay plus fees paid for recruitment.

Gurkhas were crucial in the Burma Campaign of World War II.

Gurkha regiments remain as parts of both the British Army and the Indian Army to this day – a critical deal in Indian independence being retention of the

Gurkha in both armies.

The U.N. Charter forbids member states from employing mercenary soldiers for any reason with three specific exceptions:

The Swiss Guards at the Vatican.

The French Foreign Legion, and

The Gurkhas – provided the Gurkhas are serving in the British or Indian Armies.



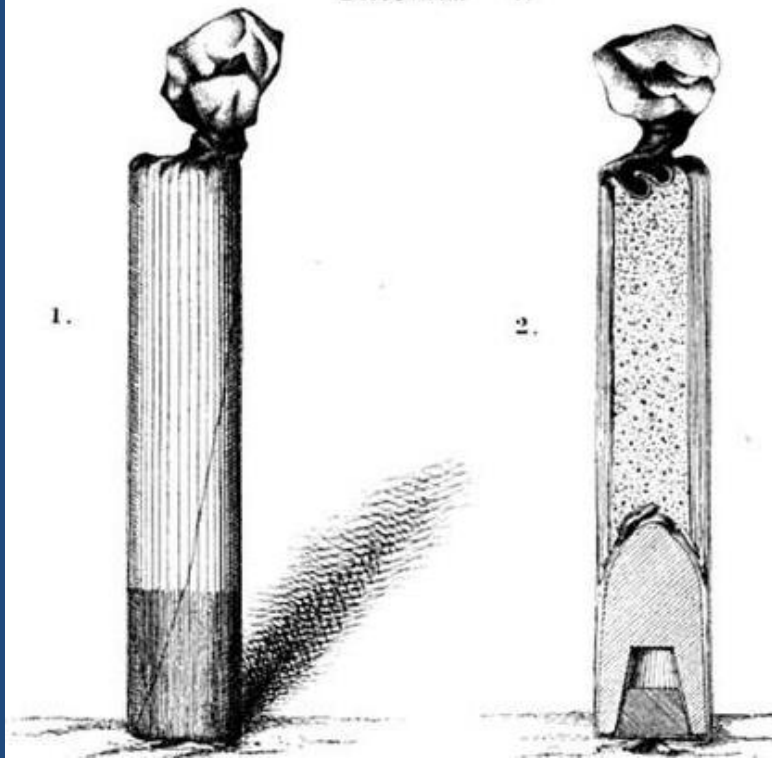
In 1857, the Indian Army mutineed.

Not all of them, not even most of them but far too many for the comfort of their employer the East India Company.

And it was not just the army, the population rose up as well.

Not all of them, not even most of them but given that the army was then in in being to prevent just such an uprising and was itself a part of it and this was a major crisis and one the Company could neither control nor easily contain.

DIAGRAM 1.



In popular history, the Indian Mutiny is blamed on a new rifle and rifle cartridge.

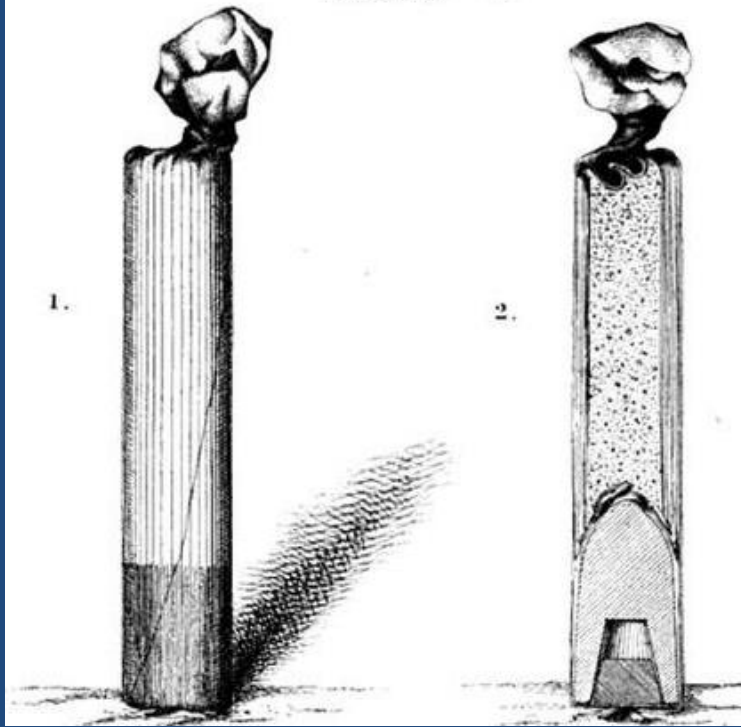
In 1853, Enfield produced its version of the Minie rifled musket. Designed by a Frenchman, the Minie Ball allowed ease of loading with the accuracy of a rifles.

The cartridge included the round (bottom) and a load of powder wrapped in paper that was also used as wadding to keep the round seated in the barrel. The paper was covered with tallow both to hold it together and to lubricate the barrel to ease loading.



Tallow is made from animal fat – usually pork or beef. The Sepoy Army was mostly Moslem or Hindu meaning their religious dietary rules prohibited consumption of pigs or cows respectively.

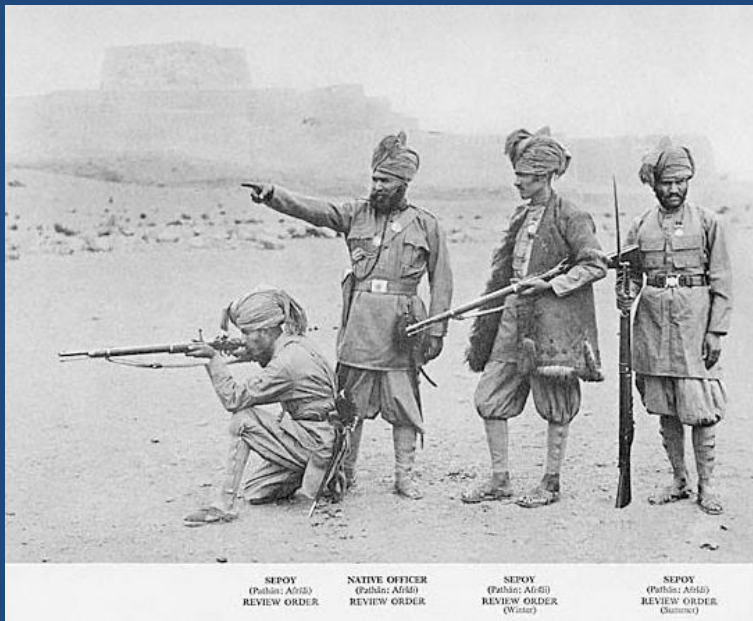
DIAGRAM 1.



The units were recruited by region but they were not segregated by religious beliefs or by dietary preferences.

And therein lies part of the problem with the tallow explanation.

The Army ate the same rations and consideration was not made based upon religious concerns – and the soldiers never complained about the food.



The next problem was the Enfield rifles was not in general issue in India until 1860 or so. In 1857, it was in field trials with only a small number of soldiers – far too few for the mutiny that occurred.

But the fact is a substantial portion of the Army did mutiny in 1857 and the population as well. Why?

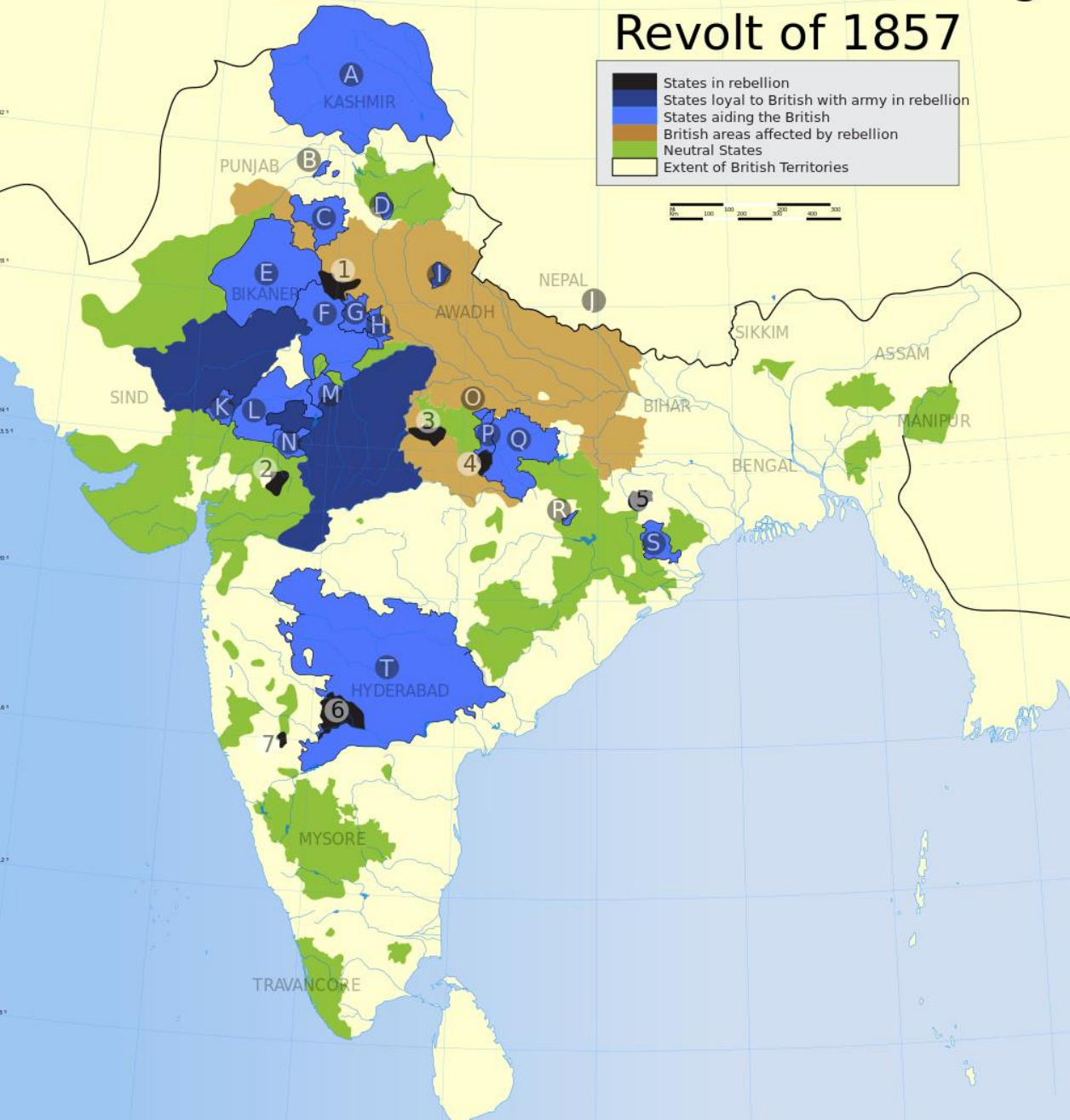
SEPOY  
(Pathan: A616)  
REVIEW ORDER

NATIVE OFFICER  
(Pathan: A616)  
REVIEW ORDER

SEPOY  
(Pathan: A616)  
REVIEW ORDER  
(Water)

SEPOY  
(Pathan: A616)  
REVIEW ORDER  
(Dismount)

# Indian States during Revolt of 1857





### British Conquest of India

<span style="color: red;">■</span> 1753-75	<span style="border: 1px solid yellow; border-radius: 50%; padding: 2px;"> </span> Area most affected by the Indian mutiny of 1857
<span style="color: orange;">■</span> 1792-1805	<span style="color: orange;">★</span> Major centre of uprising
<span style="color: lightorange;">■</span> 1815-58	<span style="color: purple;">→</span> British Campaigns
<span style="color: pink;">■</span> After 1858	<span style="border: 1px dashed gray; padding: 2px;"> </span> Under British supervision, later annexed
<span style="color: lightgreen;">■</span> Dependent state	<span style="border-bottom: 1px solid gray; width: 20px; display: inline-block;"></span> Boundary of British India, c. 1890
<span style="color: palegreen;">■</span> Minor dependent state	<b>Other territories</b>
	<span style="color: brown;">■</span> Portuguese
	<span style="color: blue;">■</span> French

The popular history is correct – the British East India Company's policies and practices were the direct cause of the mutinies.

But the Army's cause and the general population's cause were not identical.

## **THE ARMY**

The Army recruited by local regions. A recruiter set up in a city or town and recruited for a specific battalion or regiment – almost all of the soldier were thus drawn from the area around that recruiting center. To the extent units were intentionally segregated it was by language.

The specific policies varied as each recruiter set the policy he felt best when he set up and his successors continued the policies.

Some recruiters only recruited from the upper castes.

Some only recruited from the lower castes – but not the Untouchables.

Some recruited without regard to caste.



# THE ARMY

Pay was uniform and the Army was one of the best paid in the world at the time.

Sepoy soldiers actually made more than soldiers then serving in the British Army.

European (white and mostly British) soldiers made more than their Sepoy counterparts and certainly more than their cousins in the British Army.

Sepoy (native) officers (and there were such officers) made as much as their counterparts in the British Army.

European (white and mostly British) made about 30% more than their Sepoy counterparts – and that much more than they would have made in the British Army.

This pay scheme and disparity between the India Army and British Army survived until 1947.

# THE ARMY

European (white and mostly British) soldiers made more than their Sepoy counterparts and certainly more than their cousins in the British Army.

The recruiter also had authority to determine the terms of the enlistment contracts and again these varied.

Some units signed on to the defense of India. They could serve anywhere in the Indian subcontinent or on its frontiers in any capacity the Company required.

Some units signed on for local service only. They could not be employed more than a few days march from their province for any reason.

Some signed on to serve wherever the Company or British Empire required them.

All signed on for a fixed term of employment (how long varied), and they were not required to serve beyond that time without a new contract – or additional pay in lieu of such contract.

# THE ARMY

In 1857, the Company found itself in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Anglo Burmese War. The 1<sup>st</sup> War was fought on the frontiers of India. This one was not – at least not under the terms of the contracts. Moreover, the Company also pledged to send units to support the British in Malaya and elsewhere.

In Burma, troops whose contracts expired were not released and sent home as per their contract nor paid a bonus in lieu of a contract if that were an alternative.

In India, many of the units that mutinied were either about to be sent overseas or feared they might be.

The Army mutiny was actually a form of labor strike precipitated by management's breach of what they felt was a binding contract of employment.

## THE GENERAL UPRISING

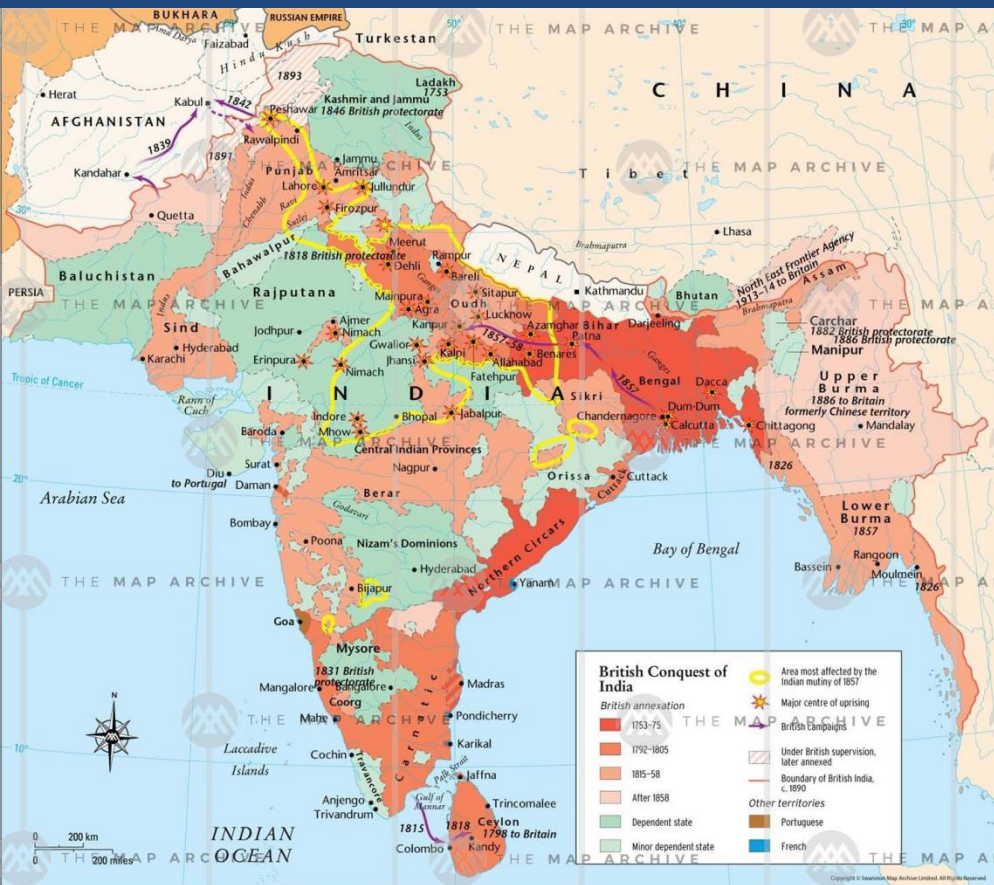
The vast majority of the civilian population could care less about the complaints of soldiers – particularly about complaints about their terms of service. It did not affect anyone not in the Army and the way to avoid it was not to enlist.

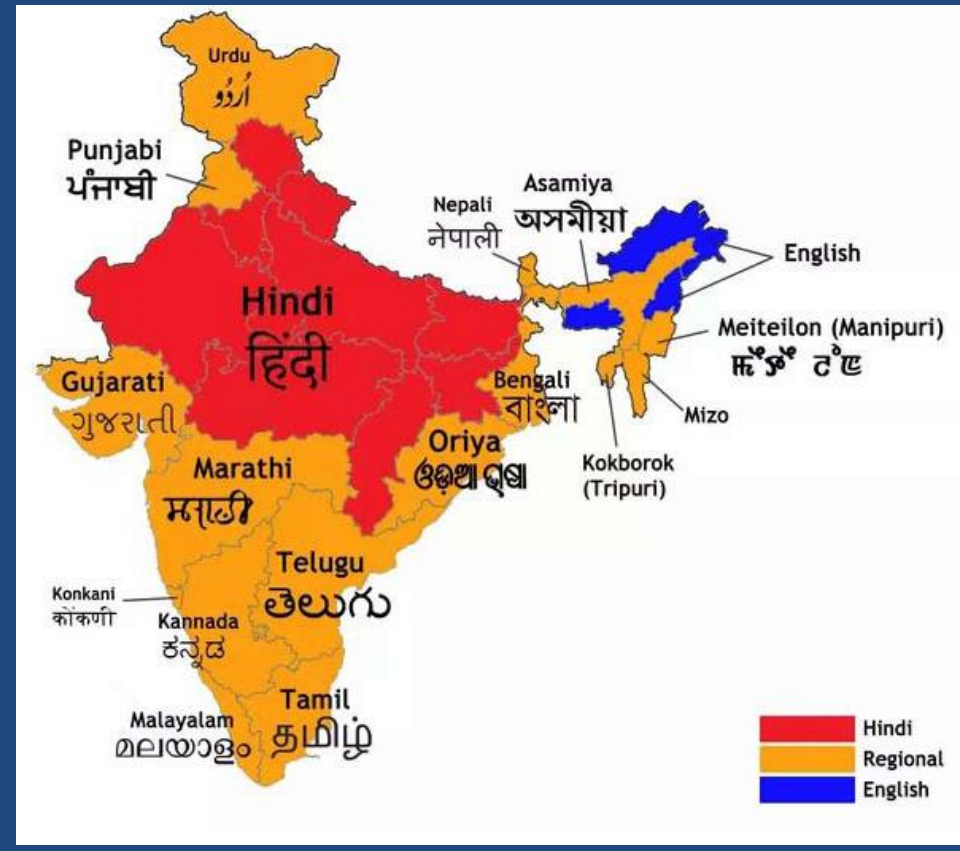
The Army, however, was what kept the civilian population in line.

Now, the Army was not doing so in many places and in those places and others the civilians had their own complaints about the failings of the British East India Company and without the threat of the Army coming to suppress them, nothing was left to keep them from rising up against their rulers.

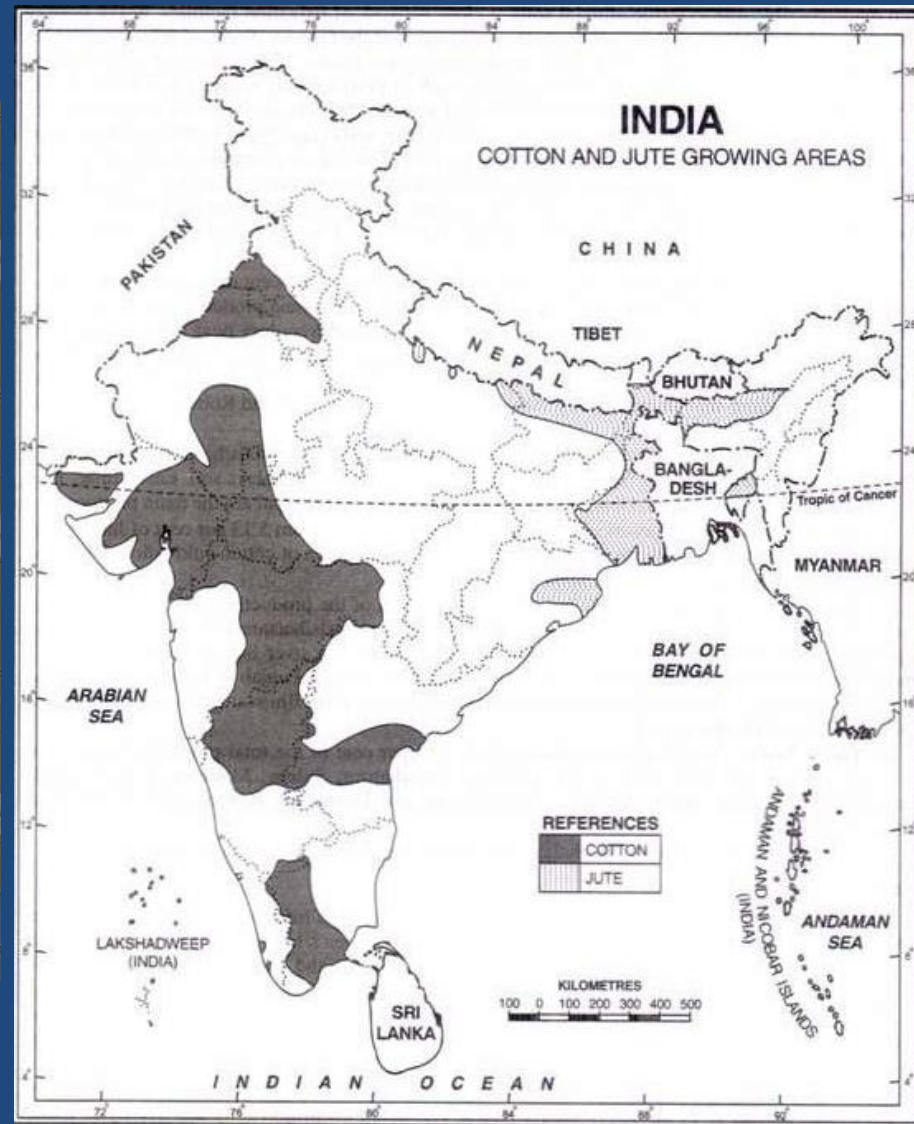
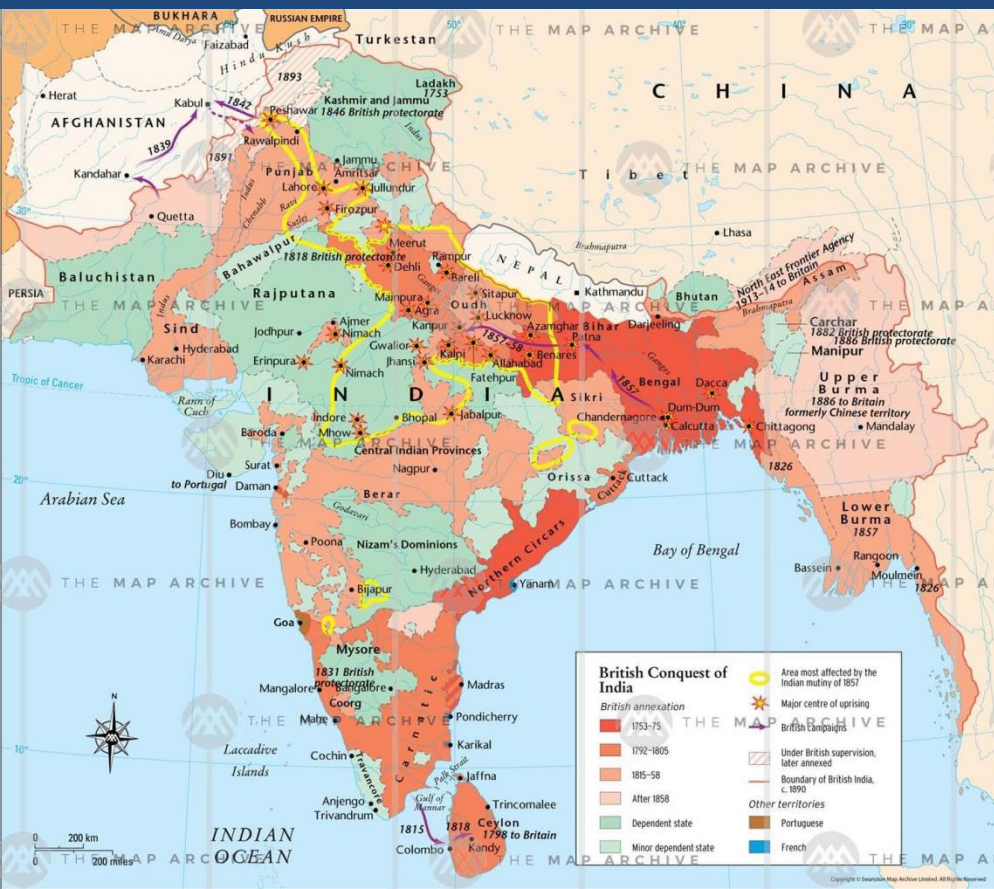
But what were those complaints?

Certainly, it had nothing to do with what animal fat was used on Army rifles cartridges.











# THE GENERAL UPRISING

The Parliamentary Inquiry that followed found there was no specific religious motivation – although the rising was used to vent such frustrations.

The rising was predominately amongst Hindi speakers – although not exclusively.

The rising was predominantly in the densely populated Ganges river basin, although not into eastern Bengal nor was it exclusive to the Ganges.

It also affected major areas of cotton cultivation – usually those in or very close to the major areas in rebellion.

What was common – from trial records of “ring leaders” – was a general hatred of the Company’s economic policies and specifically taxation. Most of the rebelling region was controlled and taxed directly by the Company. Taxes were high and there was nothing to show for it.

The Company did not build roads for general use. It did not build or run schools. It did nothing for India with the money besides pay its Army and administrators and the population was aware of this.

## THE GENERAL UPRISING

Britain had to send a sizable force (for the time) to India to quell the rebellions and found out that the Company claimed it was nearly broke.

Given that the Company was the largest stock issuer in Britain at the time, finding out the blue chip stock was not worth one tenth of its trading price was a bit of a shock.

Taxes raised in India went to paying dividends to stock holders and buying influence with the press, the government and Parliament – which was why none of this was known until now.

Far more was unveiled – sharp business practices, very un-British ways of dealing with local populations and foreign powers, the fact that the Company of the first half of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century makes today's drug cartels look like rank amateurs, and more.

The result was the Company was out of business and the British Government took over.

# Empire of the Great Qing

25th Year of the Jiaqing Emperor (A.D. 1820)



**Qing Dynasty**  
1636 – 1911

Since the most ancient of times, the right to rule the world was known as the Mandate of Heaven.

The Empire would continue so long as it had such Mandate and would fall without it.

The implication was that so long as things seemed to be going well and seemed that they would go well in the future, there was little real trouble but if they went south and there was no perception that the situation was temporary, the Emperor had lost the Mandate.

The Emperors were autocrats who ruled through a highly trained bureaucracy and local administrators supported by a loyal army for internal and external security.

In most instances, the Dynasty fell when the system failed.

The system failed when the economy failed. The “why” never really entered into it. The system was as likely to fail through gross mismanagement by the government as it was to events beyond any control (drought, famine, etc.)

It failed when through mismanagement or through disaster the government could no longer raise money to rule effectively.

In other words, it failed most often when it could no longer pay the army or the local governors.

This led to peasant revolts backed by the local garrisons.

(Peasant revolts were always a problem but usually suppressed by the army.)

The result was always fragmentation into warring states led by local governors and generals with segments of the former army.

The smaller states would then struggle to become dominant and eventually one would rise to dominate them all and there would be a new Empire and dynasty.

The period in between empire was always violent and anarchic.

The period of such reorganization (for in essence that is what it was) could take as few as a handful of years to centuries.

The Second Sino-Japanese War and World War II fell during what arguably was the most recent such period of social-political reorganization in China between the collapse of the Qing Dynasty and the consolidation of today's People's Republic of China.



China was the first country to introduce paper money but it was always a desperate measure at currency reform and failed – proving to be subject to rapid devaluation.

The primary currency for over a thousand years was silver.

The problem was there was never enough when the economy started to do well.

This was because China had few silver resources of its own and those were meager.

Most of China's silver came through trade and tribute (foreign countries paying China – arguably in what we would see as a form of protection racket.)





Until the later 19<sup>th</sup> Century, silver was also the primary source of monetary exchange in commercial transactions in Europe.

Europe had far more natural silver resources than China.

In 1545, the Spanish Silver mine at Potosi (Bolivia) began production and within a decade Europe had plenty of silver (thanks to Spain spending its wealth as fast as it could dig.)



Silver devalued quickly in Europe – but not in China. In 1530, the purchasing power of silver in China was twice that of Europe and it would increase once Spanish silver flooded the European economy.



In 1512, the Portuguese arrived in Portuguese arrive in Guangzhou (Canton) to trade. The Ming Dynasty saw little point as the barbarians had little of interest.

The Chinese were impressed with the more advanced firearms – which the Portuguese were reluctant to trade – not that it mattered as a trader ran afoul of the laws, lost his ship, it's cargo and it's cannon and firearms which the Chinese promptly copied.



But the Portuguese and those that followed had one thing the Chinese wanted and would gladly sell anything not nailed down to get – silver.

That being said, the Chinese restricted the Europeans to a handful of coastal ports – travel beyond was forbidden. (The sole exception were the Jesuits who were seen as scholars more than anything else.)



The Chinese did trade for some European goods – or goods from Europeans specifically: cotton from India, spices from Southeast Asia, some European wool and later furs from the Americas.

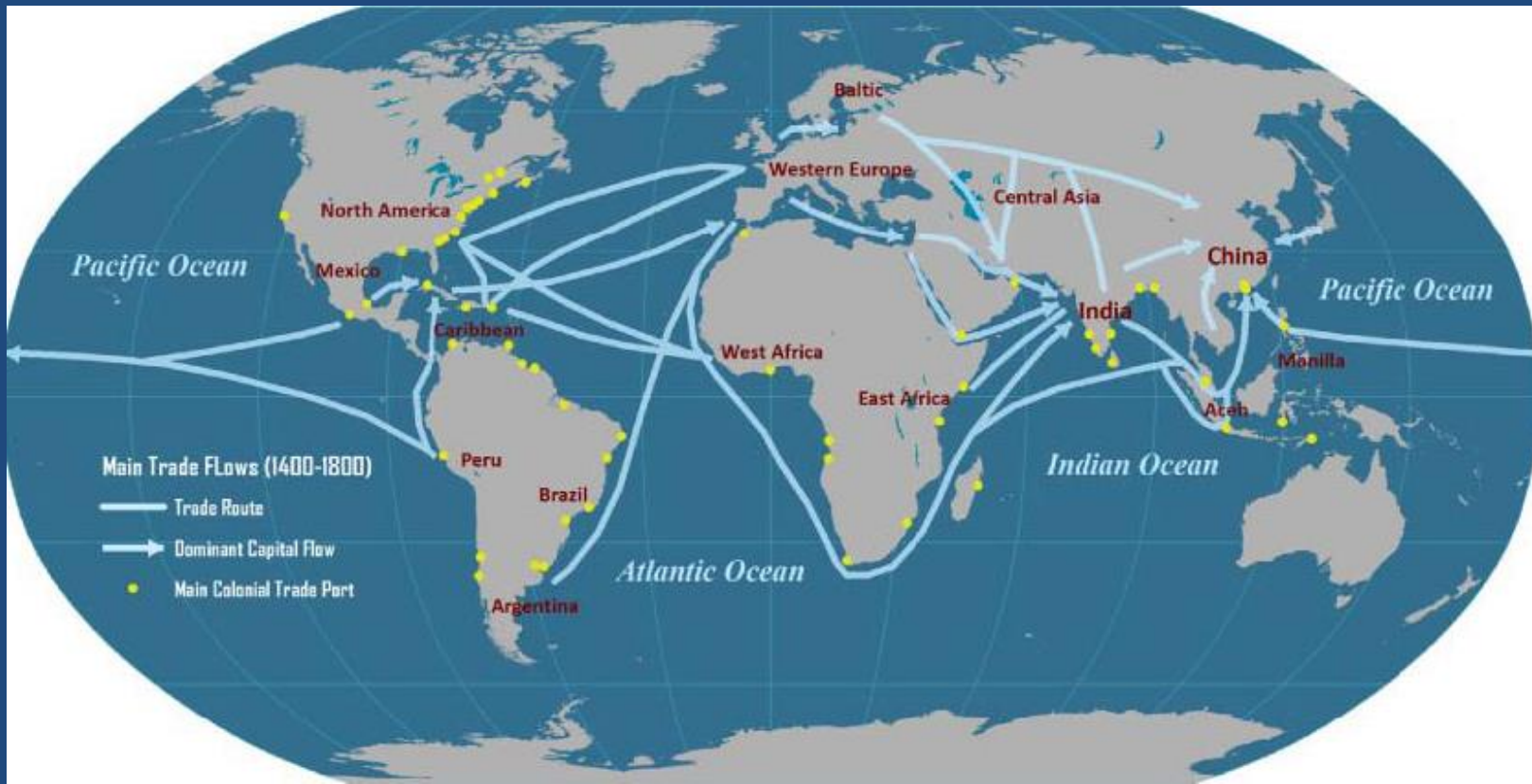
But most trade goods acquired from China were paid for with silver.

The British tried to set up trade as early as 1620 but the Chinese were persuaded not to trade with them by the Portuguese and, later the Dutch.

When the Dutch largely left the market, the British East India Company moved in setting up its first trading port on Taiwan in 1672.

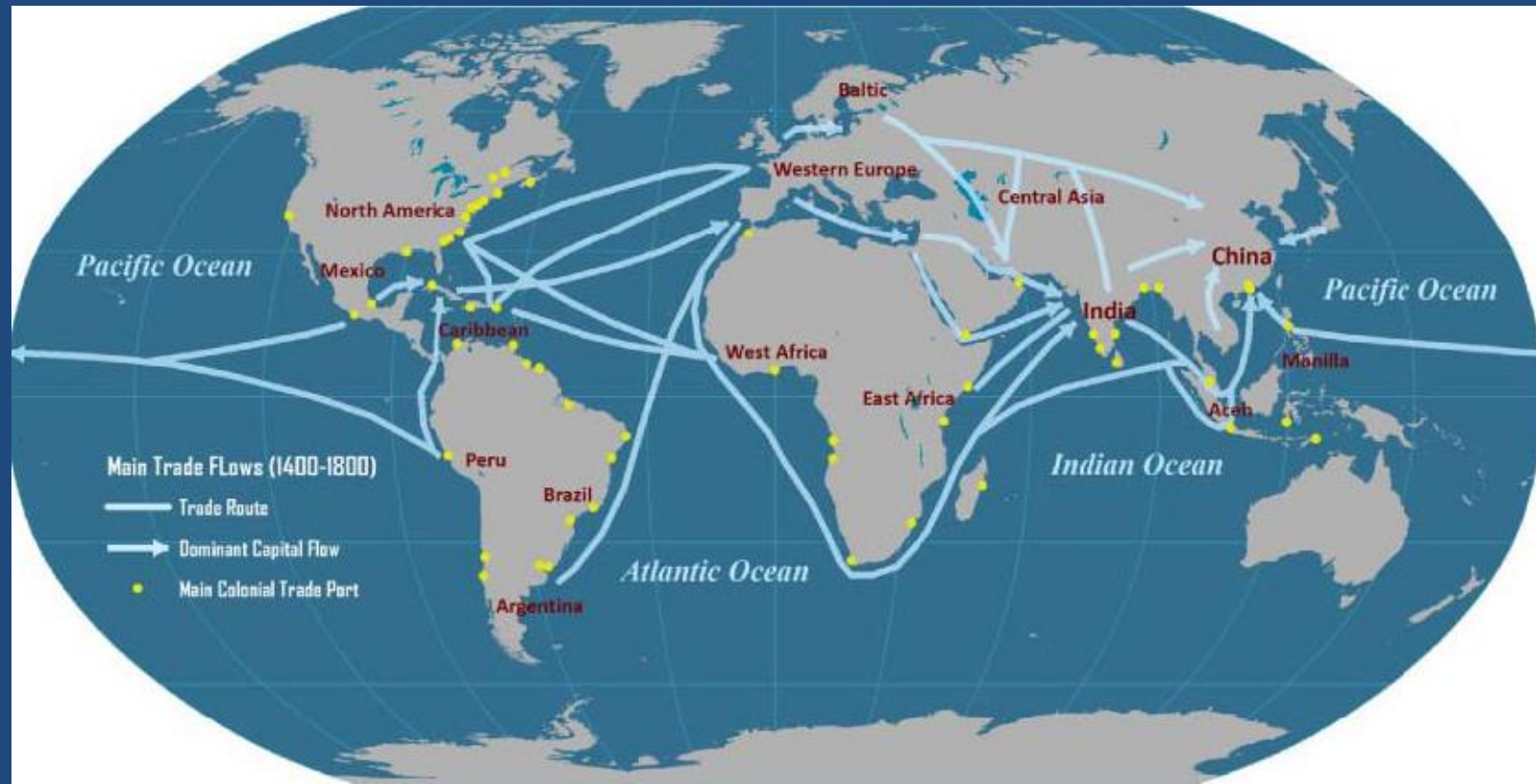
By 1700, Britain and the other European countries trading with China had amassed a sizeable trade deficit.

Around 1700, the Qing Dynasty banned trade from all but two ports – Macau with Portugal and Guangzhou for all other foreign traders. Trade was restricted to Chinese monopolies that were agents for the Chinese government.



These restrictions did not raise concern given the extremely favorable exchange rate that still existed.

By 1773, after fighting two major world wars (and soon to begin a third) Britain had a major cash flow problem and the government could not longer afford the massive trade deficit. The East India Company was asked to find a way to reduce if not eliminate the deficit.





The primary trade was in tea. The simple solution would be to grow tea somewhere else – such as in India. In 1773 (as far as the British then knew) there was no tea outside of China.

And it was grown and processed inland, far from the trading port at Guangzhou.



And the Brits (and all other barbarians) were banned from travel outside of Guangzhou.

And even if they were not, the sale of a tea plant or seeds to a foreigner or possession of such by a foreigner were crimes in China punishable by death.



The East India Company had a product – opium. It was sold for medicinal use (mostly) in Europe. Parliament (and others) however were beginning to restrict it.

It was an illicit narcotic in China and had been illegal there since 1729 – but there was an active trade in the drug through smugglers.

The East India Company took over the production of India opium and became the sole supplier – increasing production most of which went to China but not on East India Company ships. They sold it in India for resale in China.

By 1825, the Company was buying almost all the tea it needed with the money it made from selling opium to China.

**The East India Trading Company's cunning plan to sell drugs to the Chinese to offset the trade imbalance ran into a small problem from the beginning. While the British government had no qualms about Chinese addicts, it was not about to be seen as causing the addiction so the Trading Company was forbidden to ship opium on its ships to China.**

**But they were not prohibited from paying others to ship their opium to China.**

**And "others" came as it was too profitable a trade to pass up.**

**And by "others" read Americans.**

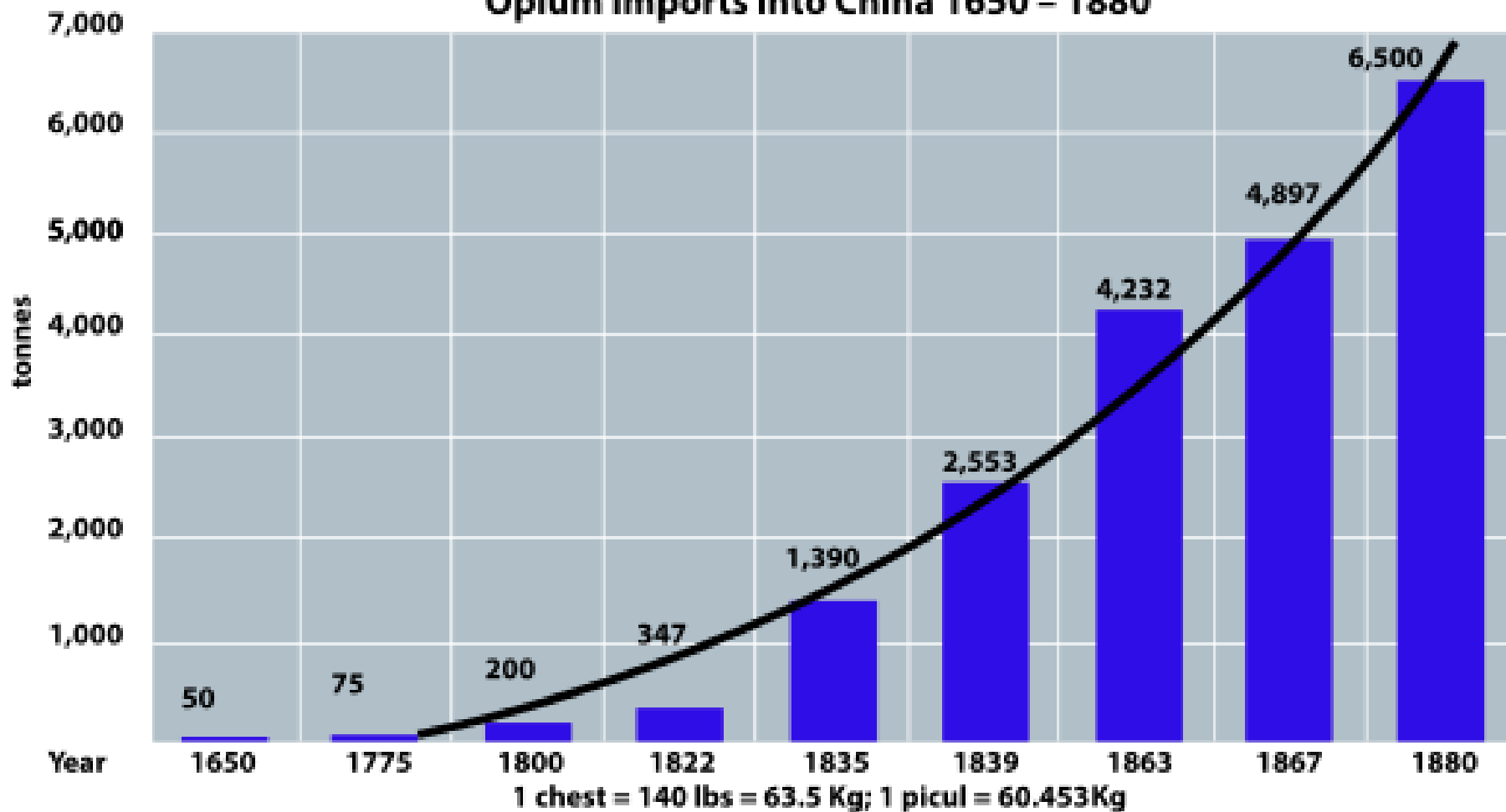
**Most of the wealth of America's gilded age, the mansions in New York and Newport RI and so on began with the Opium Trade and began during the American Revolution.**

**Most of the families who made their initial fortunes in the trade kept quite about it once they moved on to less unsavory business opportunities. These included names such as Vanderbilt, Astor and Roosevelt among others.**

**FDR would often regale guests about his brief time in China when his grandfather traded there. He never brought up what specifically was traded. It was opium.**



## Opium Imports into China 1650 – 1880



Source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

Until 1860, China had no diplomatic relations with any European country nor the United States.

Historically, China only accepted embassies from countries that paid tribute to their emperor.

This meant to have formal relations with China, a country had to accept the Chinese Emperor as the supreme ruler.

It also meant the countries seeking relations with China had to pay for the recognition and keep paying to keep it.

No Western country would accept such conditions thus there was no communication between China and the west.

China was all too aware of their drug problem by 1800. But as it did not seem to affect things, did little to combat it.

By the 1830's, however, the trade deficit was shifting from China to the West through the opium trade. Silver was leaving the country and not returning.

China considered many ways of addressing the imbalance – one that now threatened the tax revenues. It considered taxation, monopolization of the opium trade in China, internal eradication of the trade. All were considered too difficult, disruptive or time consuming – as the money was leaving.

So instead, the Chinese authorities entered Canton, seized all the opium and burned it and seized any ship carrying opium and any other cargo.

## FIRST OPIUM WAR 1839 - 1842

The East India Company was not involved. Parliament was not thrilled about the nature of the goods destroyed but they were not about to allow the Chinese to seize their merchants or their goods.

The Royal Navy literally blasted their way into China's ports and rivers and a small ground force landed to bring China to heel.

The Chinese Army outnumbered them ten to one in each encounter – and lost every encounter.

They were at the same technological level as they had been in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century – which was now far behind.



China was forced to sue for peace. The Treaty of Nanking – under threat of bombardment – was the first of several “Unequal Treaties” to the benefit of Western trade and detriment of Chinese sovereignty.

- China ceded Hong Kong to Britain “in perpetuity.” It was little more than a fishing village in 1839 but became the base for British military operations in the war.
- China was forced to open 4 new ports to British trade including Shanghai.
- China could not impose restrictions on British trade.
- British merchants were not restricted to the treaty ports and could deal directly with merchants and suppliers – not through government agents.
- British subjects could not be tried in Chinese courts, and
- China had to pay Britain £6 million for the opium they destroyed.

What followed could be described as “passive-aggressive” on the part of China.

They did not comply immediately citing administrative difficulties and inequities – not with regard to China but the other Western traders.

They did not pay the indemnity citing fiscal problems.

British merchants were harassed (or worse) outside treaty ports which the Chinese authorities blamed on bandits.

While claiming the need for equity between all trading partners, the Chinese prevaricated in treating with them separately and proved sharp dealers – refusing to grant truly equitable terms.

And by 1850, China had serious problems of its own:

# Hong Xiuquan



Born to a family of farming peasants of an ethnic minority, as a boy he obtained a patronage to study for the civil service.

He failed the examination four times.

During this time, he heard a missionary while working in Guangzhou and became convinced he was the brother of Jesus and that the Qing were demons and agents of the devil – and thus responsible for all the ills in China.

He developed a following for his “religion” but as it was anti-government and anti-establishment, in 1850 the Qing sent an army to suppress him and his followers.

The much larger Qing army was routed and the Taiping took it as a sign they were destined to overthrow the Qing.

The Taiping Rebellion was one of the bloodiest wars in history.

It lasted from the Qing's first failed attempt to suppress the Taiping (initially the followers of Hong Xiuquan) until his death in 1864 although the Qing would not completely end it until the last of his followers were exterminated in 1871.

Chinese records until after World War II are at best speculative as to absolute numbers. It is estimated between 30 million and 100 million died during the rebellion, most as a result of the economic disruption in southern China – a primary agricultural region – and the famine and disease that followed.

For the first decade, the Taiping succeeded because they were better armed and equipped than the Qing. The Taiping traded willingly and on favorable terms with the west – for modern arms and ammunition.

The war turned when the Qing accepted Western aid – and leadership.

Decades later, the Taiping and the devastation they caused fueled anti-western sentiment throughout China as the movement was believed to have Western roots. (It did not except to the extent it motivated a lunatic.)



The turning of the tide of the Taiping Rebellion coincided with the end of the Second Opium War. China had not complied with its agreements regarding trade or been open to any expansion of those agreements.

That there was a rebellion was not seen by the west as an acceptable excuse.

In 1856, a British merchant ship was seized and the crew accused of piracy seizing most of the Chinese members of the crew as pirates (but not the Europeans or other nationalities.) The British launched a series of punitive expeditions in retaliation.

Ultimately, the British were joined by other nations disgruntled with the Chinese government's uncooperative attitude. France, Russia and the United States fought against the Qing (the U.S. sent ships from its Navy only.)

The Qing were just as effective in this second trade war as in the first – not at all.

The Treaties of Tianjin of 1858 effectively ended the war although it would not take effect until China (reluctantly) signed it in 1860. It allowed:

- The British, French, Russians and U.S. would have permanent embassies in Beijing (formerly a closed city.)
- Eleven more ports would be opened to western trade as would the entire navigable length of the Yangtze river.
- Foreigners could travel freely throughout China and not just within the trading ports.
- China could not interfere with U.S. immigration agents (not what you think! This means China could not prevent Chinese from immigrating as they had been trying to do for over a decade.)
- China must admit Christian Missionaries throughout the country without restriction, and.
- They had to legalize opium and pay another huge indemnity.
- But they did get aid from France and Britain to deal with the Taiping.

Prior to 1880, immigration from China had been encouraged by U.S. interests along the Pacific Coast. Since the onset of the Gold Rush of 1848, there had been an acute labor shortage and China had a supply – and one that would work for whatever wage offered without complaint.

Until 1860, China tried to prevent such immigration.

In 1868, the U.S. signed a new “most favored nation” treaty with China that abrogated most of the “unequal” provisions in the prior treaty. U.S. citizens would be under Chinese jurisdiction in China and vice versa.

But in that treaty, both nations could bar the citizens of the other from any naturalization process (they could not change citizenship).

By then, many of the Chinese who had been in the U.S. for at least ten years were now U.S. citizens and could bring their families but the ones who had arrived later were not and would not be citizens with any right to bring their families.

In 1880, a new treaty with China suspended most Chinese immigration to the U.S.

By 1880, there was a labor surplus in California in particular and organized labor was beginning to take shape.

The Chinese worked harder for lower wages than white labor would accept and thus they were deemed a threat.

In 1883, the Chinese Exclusion Act was passed barring all immigration except for diplomats and students under scholarship (who would have to return to China once they finished their education.)

Illegal immigration had begun earlier – as the families of non-citizen Chinese were smuggled into the U.S. on ships trading with China. This continued and was deemed a major problem by the U.S. government thus any Chinese (citizen or not) who left the country was denied re-entry.

In 1906 there was somewhat of an amnesty. The records of Chinese immigration, U.S. birth and naturalization since 1848 were lost in the San Francisco Fire. It was impossible to prove a Chinese was illegal provided they were in the U.S. before the fire.

But the exclusion of future immigrants remained in full force until 1947.

There were three types of Americans (and Europeans) in China between the 1860's and 1841:

- 1) The Legations – business, banking and trade.
- 2) The diplomats, military missions and attaches and other government agency employees.
- 3) The Missionaries.

Each group was in China for very different reasons with very different motivations and thus saw a very different China than the others.



The “factories” (warehouses) at Guangzhou in 1820. Guangzhou and the Portuguese concession at Macau were the only ports open to westerners at that time. Westerner were barred from the rest of China.

With the exception of Beijing, the Legations – Cantonments – International Settlements – that arose in China starting in Guangzhou and increasing after 1860 were not diplomatic communities. They were commercial centers.

The Europeans engaged in trade and finance lived within the walls (and they were walled) settlements. Their trading houses and businesses that needed access from outside were at the edge of the settlements.

They looked European because they were.

The Chinese did not live there (except the domestic servants). Most could not remain there after dark.

The people who did live there were in the business of profit and most made fortunes off the Chinese – preferably in deals as much to their profit as possible.

In the 1870's Western companies took over collection of port fees, import tariffs and export duties from the Qing government – for a hefty cut. To the Qing, they had never seen such revenue as the Westerners did not skim nearly as much as their former Chinese customs inspectors.

By the 1890's Western bankers had introduced the Qing government to the wonders of modern governmental finance – debt.

The Qing piled it up.

The bankers and businessmen knew that the money was being misused but each loan gave them a bigger cut of the internal tax revenue and more profit.

If the Chinese government were fools about money, the Westerners were more than willing to fleece them.

If the Qing did not wish to be taken to the cleaners, they should not look like “laundrymen.”

Beyond their walls, Chinese cities were cramped and dirty.

The businessmen of the Legations had very cynical views about the Chinese ability to govern – one that never improved.

As for the Chinese businessmen, the Westerners knew when they were swimming in shark infested waters – which was most of the time.



The diplomats in Beijing had to deal with the Chinese government. Historically, it had a professional civil service – something the United States would not begin to develop until the 1880's after a series of corruption scandals.

The Chinese bureaucrats were a mixed bag. Some were corrupt and others professional. But the real headache for those in Beijing was that any agreement or arrangement would be subject to the whim of the Emperor. China was an autocracy.

But from 1861 on, there was seldom an actual Emperor. From 1861 until 1912 there were three Emperors, all came to the throne before they were six and between them they ruled in their own right a total of eight years.

(One died of small pox at the age of nineteen.)

(One was forced into retirement at the age of twenty-seven)

(The last – Puyi was only six when the Qing Dynasty was overthrown.)



From 1861 until 1908, China was “ruled” by women, not Emperors.

Cixi (top) was the consort of the Xianfeng Emperor and mother of the Tongzhi Emperor. Ci’an was another consort of the Xianfeng Emperor. Xianfeng had a wife and 17 consorts and concubines when he died at age 30. He had only three children, and only two survived infancy.

Cixi and Ci’an staged a palace coup against the chosen regents of the six year old Tongzhi and controlled the fate of the dynasty together until Ci’an’s death in 1880. Cixi controlled for most of the rest of her life, dying in 1908.



As regent, they had no right to the Imperial Seal. Without the seal, no law, decree or treaty was truly binding and no one had a truly official position.

It meant nothing was truly certain and no agreement with China could be guaranteed or relied upon.

Beginning in the 1860's, thousands of Christian Missionaries would go to China. The United States and Britain sent the most.

Most (but not all) of the U.S. missionaries relied entirely upon donations from their congregations back home not only to run their mission but to merely subsist. Without donations, they would be stranded and destitute.

They sent regular reports of China and their success – the latter being highly debatable but the truth would be a personal financial disaster.

They did set up hospitals, schools and universities and sent hundreds to the U.S. universities. But the number who truly converted to Christianity was negligible when compared to China as a whole.

The American people heard more from the missionaries than any other source.

Chinese were clean, hard working, desirous of education, modernization and progress – and democracy. In other words just like Americans.

China was “timeless” in these reports. (True given its civilization was the oldest continuous one in the world.)

Their people were peaceful. (This was false. The violence of the Taiping rebellion dwarfed our own contemporaneous Civil War and China never recovered. Banditry – bands of marauders looted and pillaged, many were unpaid soldiers. And by 1900, rebellion and civil war became the norm.)

The reports said little about crime or the opium trade (which makes our own drug problems seem tame in comparison).

It said little about the feudal land ownership situation where most Chinese owned next to nothing but owed everything they and their descendants could hope to make in backed rent and taxes. The missionary was never so safe as to offend the landowner class.

There was social mobility in China. A tenant’s son could escape the rents and taxes through education – almost without exception. This was why the missionaries were somewhat successful as they educated peasants and with that education the peasants escape the life of the Ku-Li class (Laborer and to the West “Coolie”)

# POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF THE INDIAN EMPIRE

English Miles  
0 100 200 300 400



## UNDER THE RAJ (BENEFITS)

The immediate effect was taxation. There was a large reduction in taxes and tax revenue was used almost entirely within India.

Schools were built. Universities were opened. Roads, railroads and irrigation projects were built.

The Army remained as before mostly except certain units were truly exempted from foreign service and the rest were not – this affected new enlistments or re-enlistments. The pay advantages over the British Army remained.

Less immediate was the reform of the legal system. While the Raj kept the political administrative structure of either direct administration or administration by local, loyal rulers; it imported the Common Law legal system for all the courts – replacing diverse legal customs and traditions and made the laws as uniform as possible.

And (for better or worse) the best and brightest Indian scholars were now admitted to higher education in Britain – Cambridge, Oxford and the like.

## UNDER THE RAJ

## (DOWNSIDE)

The Company had allowed manufacturing to continue. Britain banned importation of manufactured goods that competed with British manufacturing but did not control who the Company traded with so while Indian cotton cloth generally could not be exported to Britain, the Company could export it elsewhere.

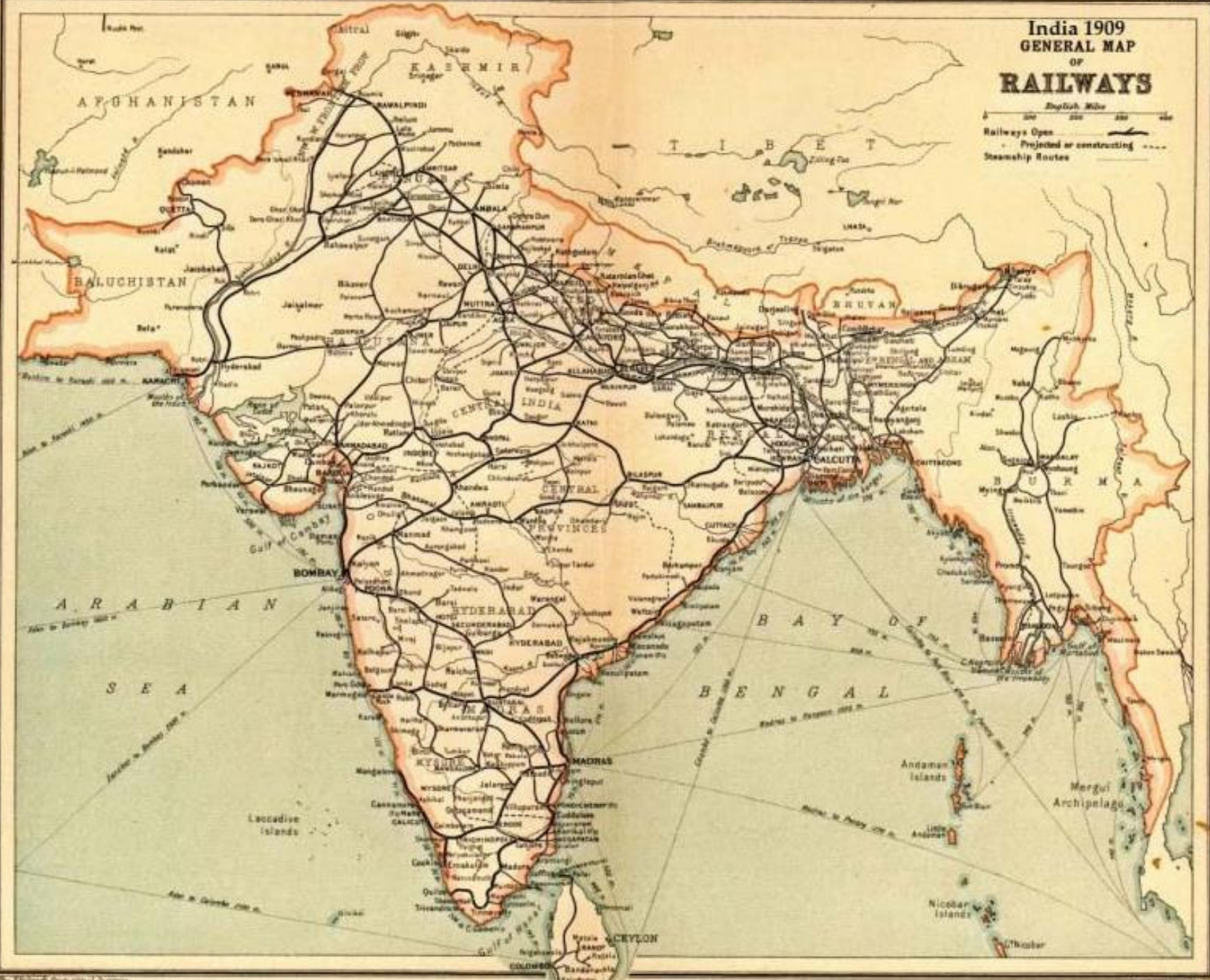
Under the Raj, India fell entirely under the British economic system. All Indian textile manufacturing was shut down. Raw materials were sent to British mills and returned to India for sale – at lower quality and a higher cost.

The Raj did not outlaw monopolies. Many railroads fell under one monopoly or another and were only used for that monopoly's goods and its clients. Often two or more railroads in different gauges covered substantially identical routes and there were many places with no railroads at all or insufficient for any expanded need – such as a war.

If India were to be the ideal base for a war, it needed at least a compliant population and an efficient transportation system. It would have neither.

# India 1909 GENERAL MAP OF RAILWAYS

English Miles  
0 100 200 300  
Railways Open ———  
Projected or constructing - - - -  
Steamship Routes ———





## UNDER THE RAJ

## (DOWNSIDE)

Primary and Secondary education followed British models that were very pro-British Empire and anti anything else. It ignored Indian history and culture or where it could not explained why it was all wrong.

The newly educated Indians saw the world and saw that India was not what they thought it could be. They could work in government but could not really become the government and did not see the British as allowing that to happen.

The India National Congress Party was founded in 1885. It was the first party or organization to emerge anywhere in the British Empire (including Ireland) dedicated to the end of colonial rule.

For several decades, however, it was more of a fringe element. It was there, but aside from a small number of progressive intellectuals it had no real following.

Indian Nationalism was a bit hard to explain beyond anti-colonialism. India had only ever been truly united under the British politically and remained divided regionally, religiously, ethnically and linguistically.

The Indian National Congress found no support among Muslims not because they believed the Party was wrong about it all but because it was founded by Hindus and its membership was almost entirely Hindu thus whatever future it sought was a Hindu future – and arguably not one the Muslims would appreciate.

In 1906, the All India Muslim League formed. It also favored self-rule and an end to British colonialism, but would not accept subordination to the Hindus.

World War I began to change things. Taxes were raised to pay for the war in Europe. Trade dropped because of the war in Europe

But more critically, the India Army suffered humiliating defeat under British Army command in 1915. That defeat, derided in the Indian press – usually less than critical – made the War and the British less acceptable in India – the former more than merely unpopular.

The two parties saw fit to combine into one to advocate for independence from Britain.



If in 1890 one were to predict a future leader in a successful nationalist movement, one would have never considered Mohatmas Gandhi.

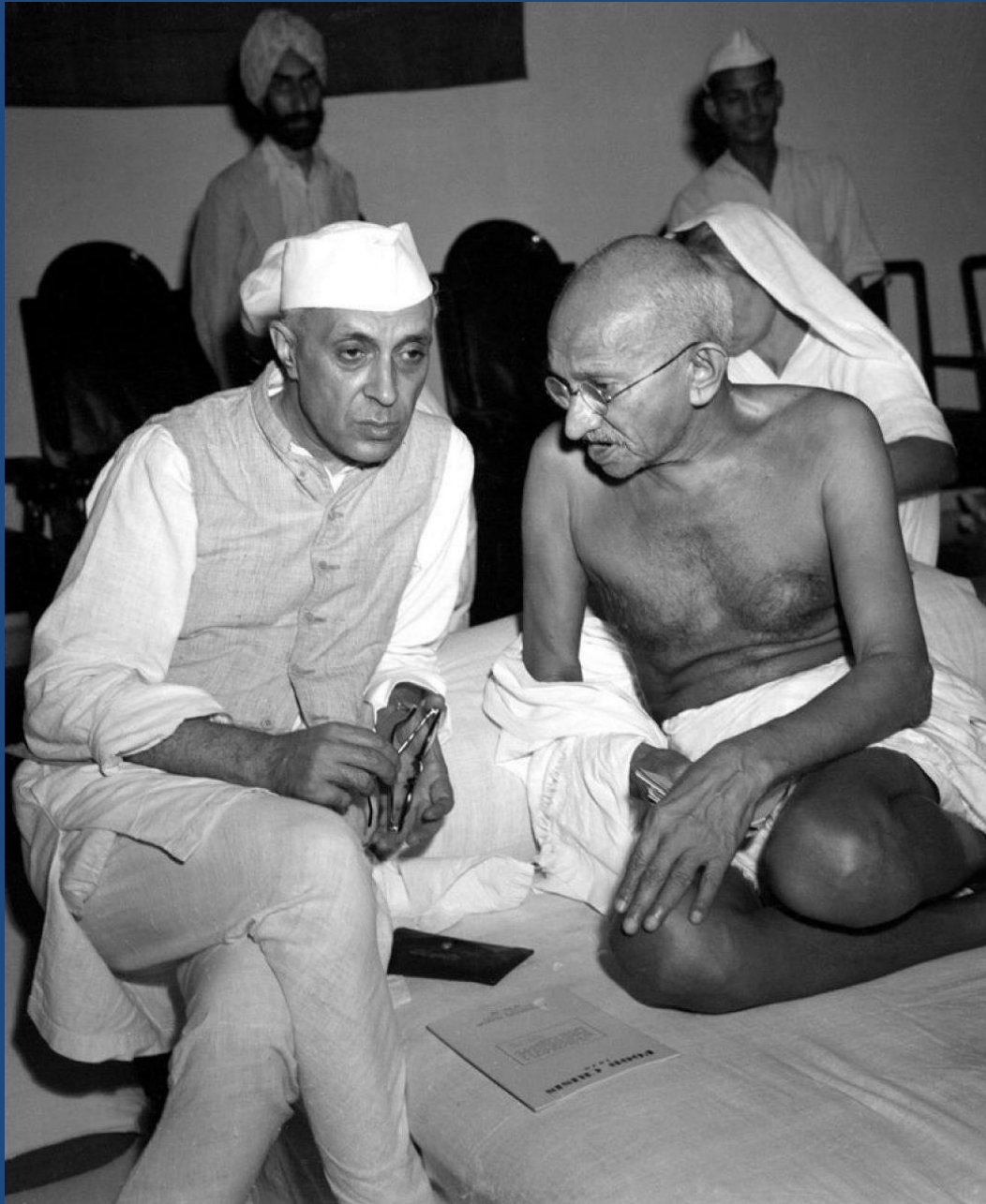
He was a lawyer by then, but not a successful one given his shyness made cross-examination difficult. He considered himself British of Indian ancestry.

The future Gandhi was still years away, but it began in South Africa of all places.



In a last attempt at a legal case, he took a case for a friend in South Africa – and stayed to advocate for basic civil rights for Indian nationals.

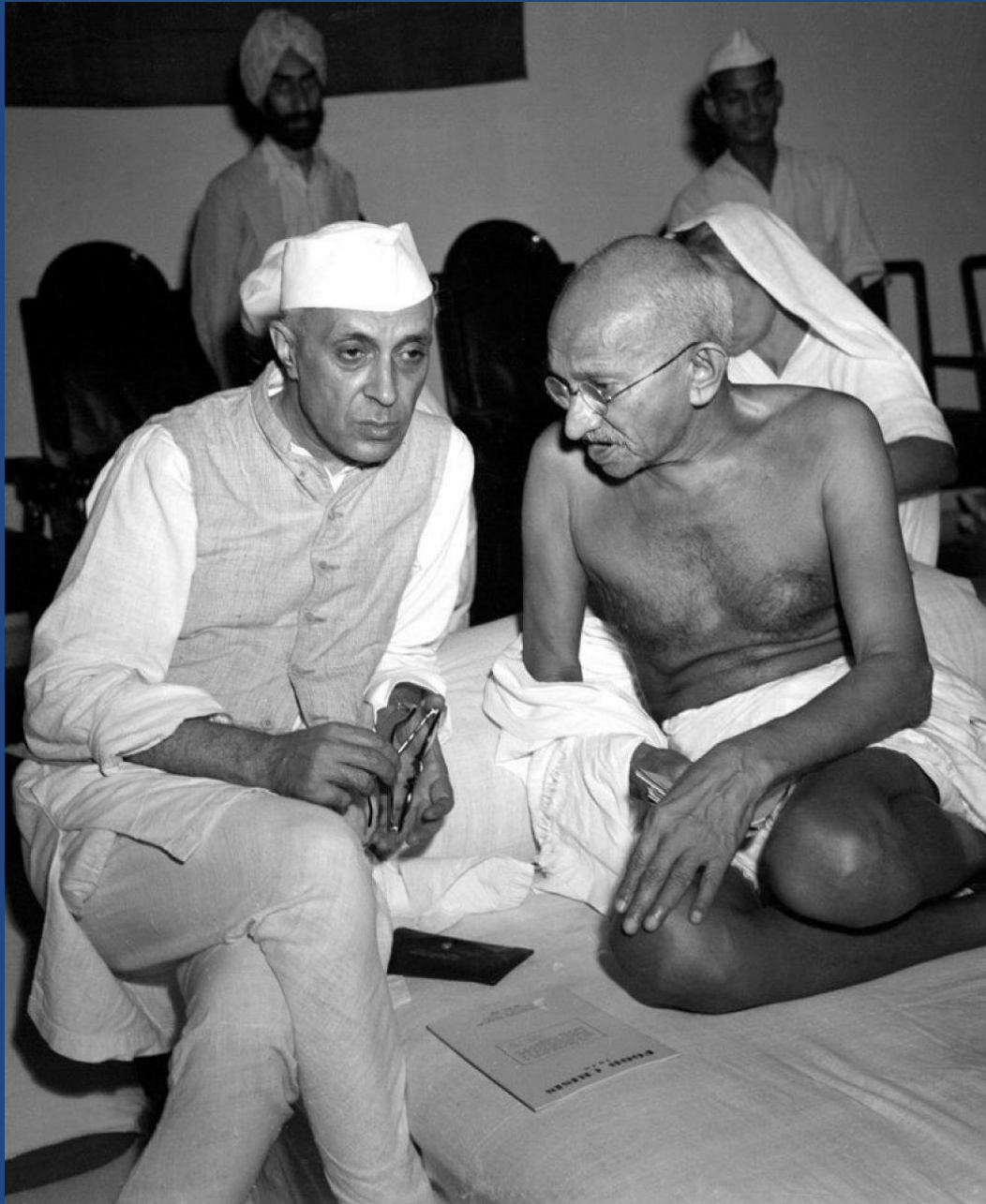
In 1899, he formed a volunteer Indian ambulance corps for the Boer War.



His efforts in South Africa were more successful than similar efforts in India and he was invited to return in 1914 and continue the success.

To the horror of many, he was a successful recruiter for the War. He argued that patriotic service in war would lead to greater respect – and freedoms – in peace.

It did not work out that way. He changed his approach. While he was always in favor on non-violent resistance, the form of that resistance would prove fluid. If it didn't work, he would try it in a different way the next time.



Churchill hated him – and had since at least 1928 when he complained about British import policies through boycott – unsuccessfully at the time but much to Britain’s annoyance.

And he learned the British did not honor patriotism. He argued the India Army should not fight the Germans – as the Viceroy declared war in 1939 without so much as a by-your-leave.

In 1942, he and his party would decide India should not fight or support or allow the war. Fortunately for the allies, that was not the general opinion.

With Gandhi, the separatist movement hoped to be united at least until they were free of Britain.



But there was a younger, less patient element represented by another charismatic leader Chandra Bose. He advocated for violent insurrection. When this failed to gain any real ground, he found himself first in Germany and later in Japan as the self-declared leader in exile of an India allied with the Axis powers.

He raised an Indian Army from Indian prisoners of Germany and Japan to fight the British. He hoped to do so in India as well and failed miserably.

His army was not any good at anything other than waiting for the shooting to stop to surrender to the British or Indians.

The ideal base was politically stable with bases or the ability to rapidly build bases and an adequate transportation infrastructure.

India was not ideal.

There were few bases and little ability in country to change that in early 1942.

The rail system was barely adequate for peacetime use and inadequate for expanded wartime use.

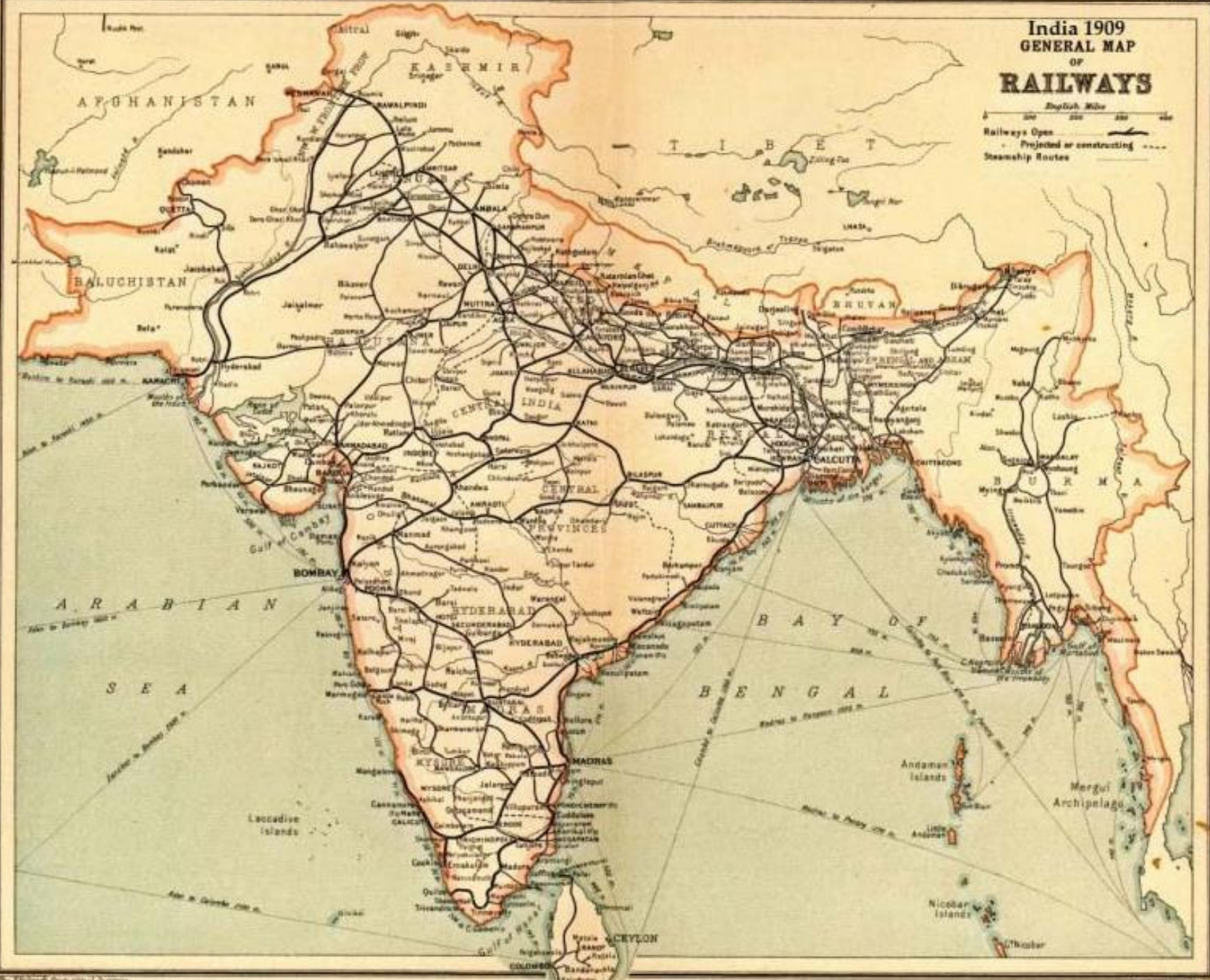
The country was not politically unified – it never had been – and the National Congress Party with increasing support was trying to break from Britain sooner rather than later and had proven they would use economic disruption to make their points.

On the other hand, the India Army was not as politicized and would not be so.

Despite its problems, India would prove a paradise for the Allies when compared with China...

# India 1909 GENERAL MAP OF RAILWAYS

English Miles  
0 100 200 300  
Railways Open ———  
Projected or constructing - - - -  
Steamship Routes ———





# THE 2<sup>nd</sup> SINO-JAPANESE WAR

At Shanghai and Wuhan (1937 and 1938), the Chinese had shown they could fight and that the Japanese could fail. It was a lesson Chiang understood and one the Japanese chose to ignore blaming their lack of success on anything other than that, perhaps, they were not invincible.

China, however, would not fight for every inch. They had plenty of ground to give up and each time they did, Japan's supply problems increased.

China had its own supply problems as well and a leadership one –Chiang.

He played favorites and favorites had nothing to do with skill or luck but all about absolute loyalty to Chiang. Favorites got supplies. Most favorites got artillery. Everyone else got what was left when Chiang got around to it and disloyal generals were left with nothing and if their Army (corps) was in trouble that was their problem.

In early 1939, one general was left hanging facing the Japanese without support. Wang Jingwei surrendered his Army and allied with Japan and was named the leader of China by the Japanese.

# THE 2<sup>nd</sup> SINO-JAPANESE WAR

The Chinese had no intention of offensive action. Chiang considered the Japanese a distraction as he could not eliminate the Communists to the North so long as Japan remained a threat.

And Japan could not ignore the 4,000,000 strong Chinese Army either.

In 1939, they launched operations to secure the South China coast and cut off the main supply route from Hanoi. This was to be an overland operation to take the ports from behind. The first objective was the Hunan city of Changsha.

The Chinese could fight and when they decided to do so it rarely went well for the Japanese. Changsha was a disaster. The attacking Japanese Army suffered over 40% casualties **and were thrown back.**

They would try again in 1941, and fail again.



# BURMA ROAD

While the U.S. was hard pressed to provide any meaningful support to China – due to the prevailing attitudes in the public and restrictions imposed by Congress, Britain had no such restraints.

Keeping Japan occupied in China meant Japan could not threaten British interests elsewhere.

And while Britain hoped to contain the appetite of Nazi Germany, they could not be certain of success. But they felt they could contain Japan and without using force.

And that meant ensuring Chiang and his armies were supplied. Supply from the east (South China Sea) could not be counted upon. While Japan had not imposed a blockade, their Navy controlled the sea approaches.

Overland was not immediately possible. There was a railroad that ran from the port of Rangoon, Burma to Lashio. Burma was a British Colony. But there was no overland route from Burma or India or Nepal over the Himalayas into China.

So the Chinese built one. They began in late 1937 and finished within a year.

# BURMA ROAD

The road connected Lashio with Kunming China. From there existing roads connected to the Nationalist capital at Chongqing.

The British were not particular who contributed supplies.

Germany still supplied arms and materiel to the Chinese Nationalists. (That would change in September 1939 when the two countries were at war).

What the British could not supply were vehicles.

But trucks were one commodity that the U.S. had not included under the restrictions of the Neutrality Acts so in short order U.S. trucks were on the road.

For now, Japan was unconcerned.



# BURMA ROAD

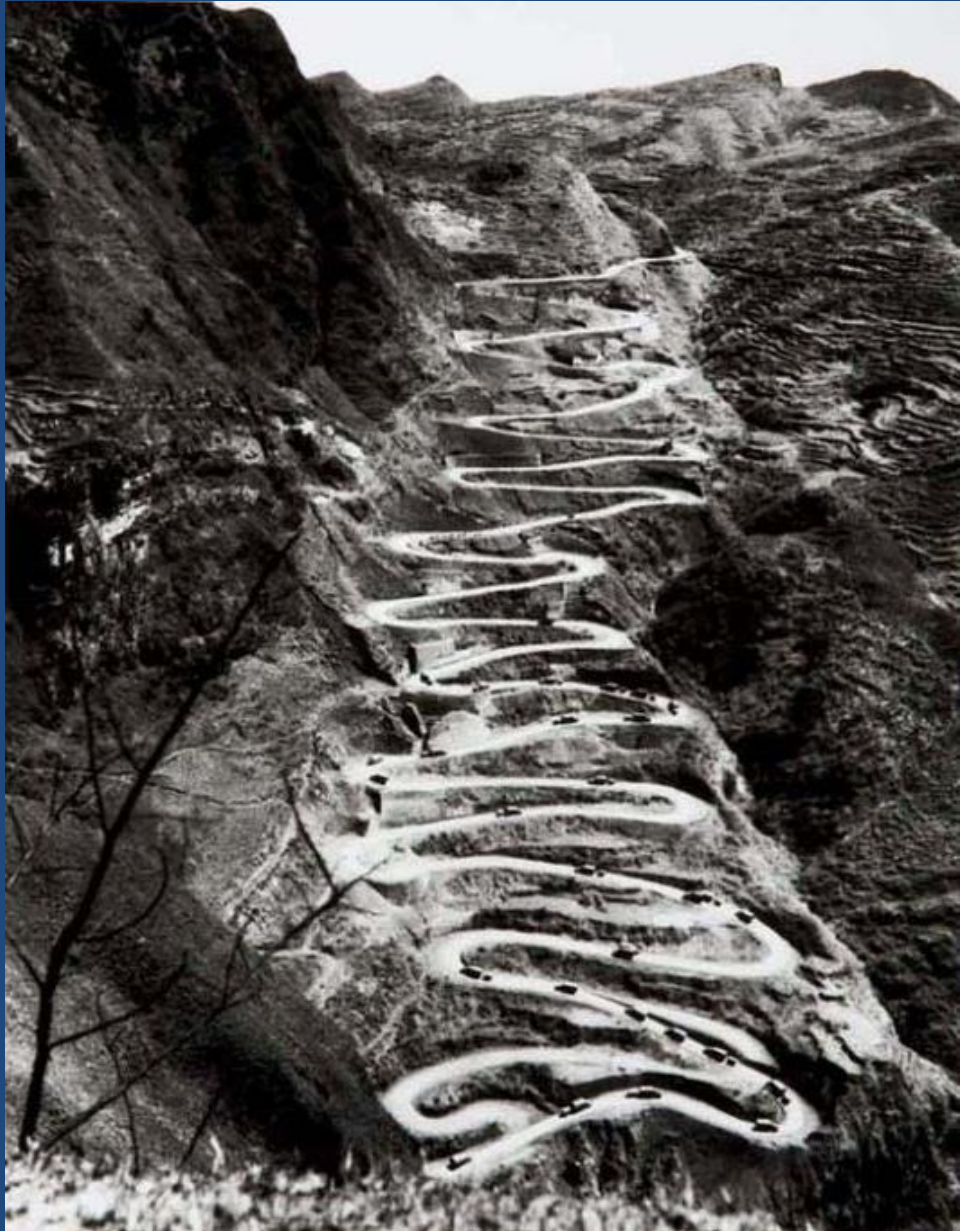
The road was not an efficient supply route. Built by 4,000,000 Ku-Li (of whom around 1,000,000 died of disease, malnutrition and accident), the 700 mile long road was a marvel.

But the Chinese local officials could not help themselves. Convoys took weeks to cover the route, often held up until someone paid a local toll.

For a time, most trucks broke down without completing one trip. The Chinese drivers did not understand that trucks needed things like oil.

(American volunteers arrived to fix that).

It was a supply route but never surpassed the route it was meant to replace.



By mid November 1941, the British and the Americans had a good idea about what was coming.

They had been convinced war with Japan was just a matter of time since June at the latest and diplomatic efforts were not about avoiding war but delaying its onset as long as possible.

The Japanese diplomatic, Army and Merchant Marine codes had been broken. (The Navy's operational codes had not).

The invasion fleets were under air surveillance (the local commanders were under orders not to provoke any incident.)

Most of the Japanese opening moves failed to achieve strategic or even tactical surprise. In many cases, allied intelligence predictions a week before war broke out were within an hour or less of actual events.

But Allied intelligence completely lost sight of the Japanese carriers and failed to foresee that Thailand would let the Japanese in without a fight.



On December 8<sup>th</sup> (local time), the Japanese landed on the Kra Peninsula. Actually, it was one hour before the first bombs dropped on Hawaii.

The Japanese tasked the 25<sup>th</sup> Army with the capture of Malaya and Singapore, landing most of it in Thailand.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Army numbered about 30,000 men. The Malaya Command numbered over 90,000.

At the Thai – Malaya border, the British had deployed a division plus a brigade – giving the Japanese a 1.5 to one advantage but against an enemy that was in prepared positions...



The 25<sup>th</sup> Army was commanded by Lt. Gen. Tomoyuki Yamashita.

He had opposed the war in China in 1937 and every day since. He was opposed to provoking a war with Britain or the United States. He did not believe the Japanese soldier was markedly better by being Japanese, only by being better trained.

Like Hideiki Tojo, he had spent what time he had in the West in Germany but had reached very different conclusions.

He was, therefore persona non grata in Tokyo and often labeled a defeatist.

But he was also a professional.





Most of Yamashita's troops had been in Indochina in the preceding months.

They had some training in the jungles in the months before they boarded ships for the invasion but prior to that none of them – officer or soldier – had ever seen a jungle before.

They were, however, all veterans of the war with China and had seen combat before.

They had learned to move light – not relying on motorized transport.

But they had tanks. The Japanese tanks were no match for the current British tanks but 200 obsolete design tanks was better than none at all...





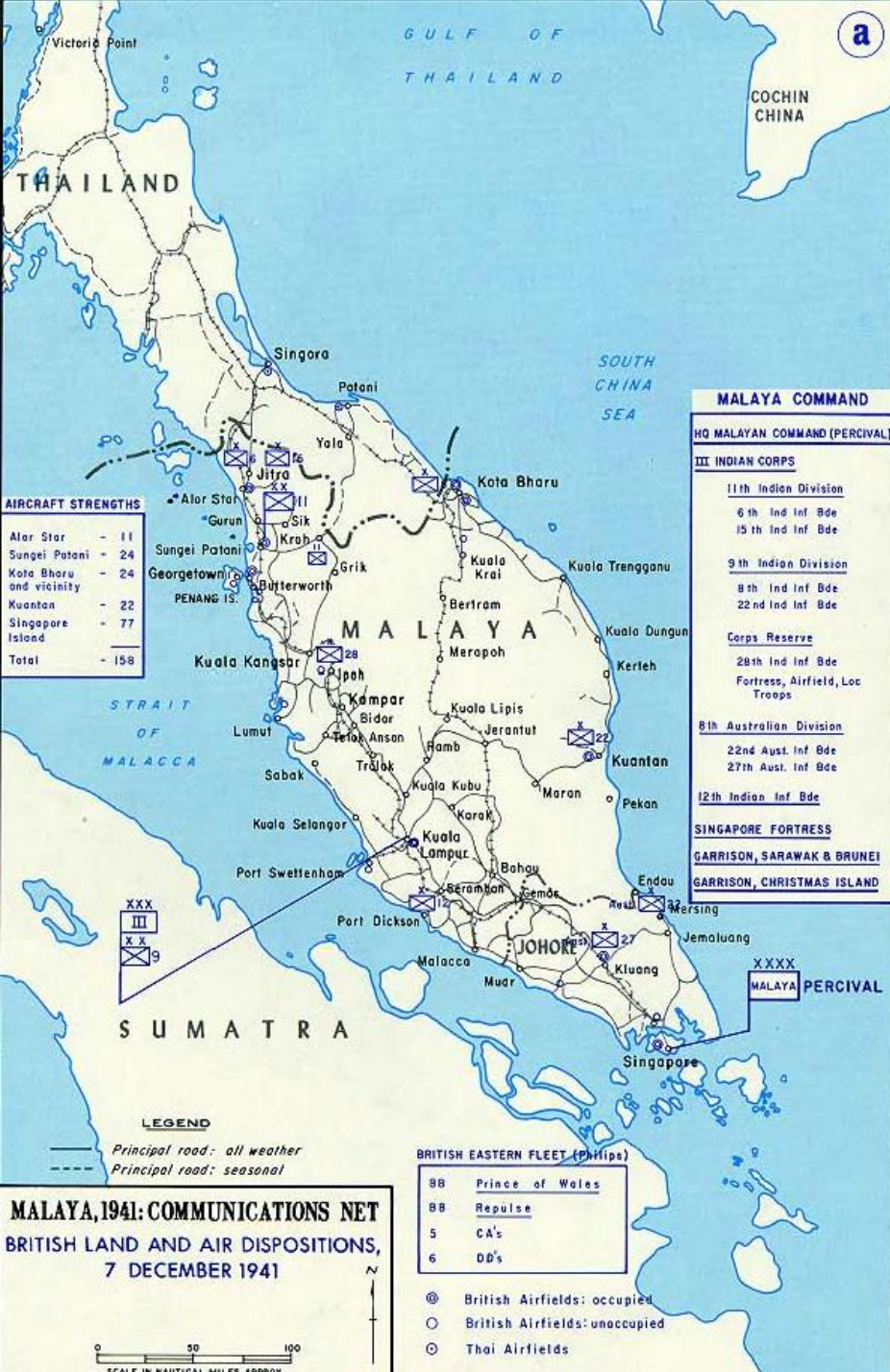
Lt. Gen. Arthur Percival commanded the 90,000+ Malaya Command.

He had once been its Chief-of-Staff.

He was sent from his post on the Imperial General Staff to take command in Sep. 1941. He had drafted a study that argued a defense of Malaya from invasion required more than twice the force he would have and over 200 tanks.

He had no tanks.

Most of his troops were either trained for deployment to fight in the deserts of North Africa or had barely completed basic training. Many had never fired a rifle before. Only one division bothered to try and train in the jungle.

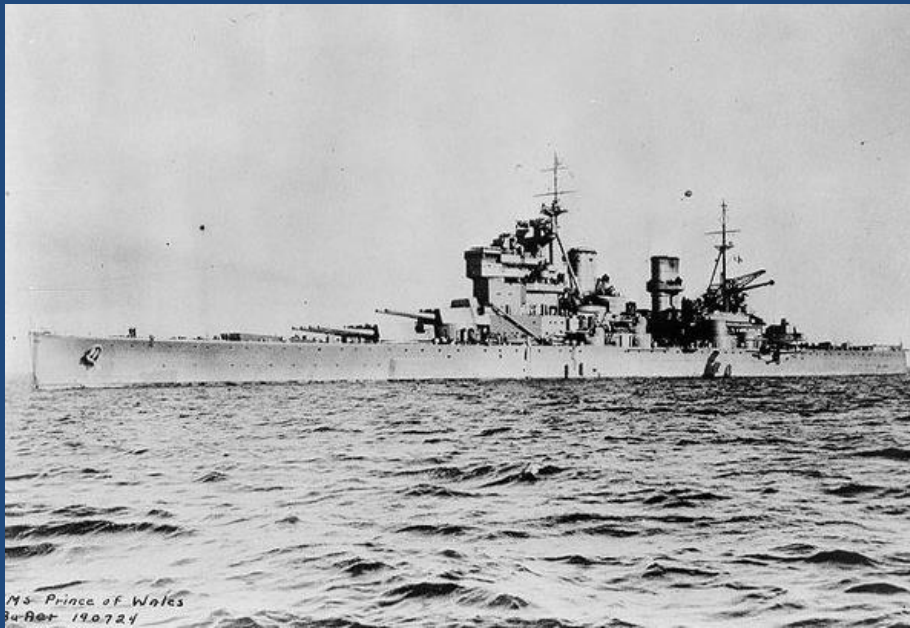


The British had based their defense on the belief that the Royal Navy would respond to any threat and that the Japanese would not risk it or if they did the Navy would make short work of them.

But the British had a plan to hold until the Navy swept the Japanese away.

The British plan had been called Operation Matador. Before the Japanese landed, the forward units would enter Thailand and secure the landing beaches.

The plan was never executed. Their commander was under orders not to provoke Thailand into the war – not knowing the Thai government had already sided with Japan.



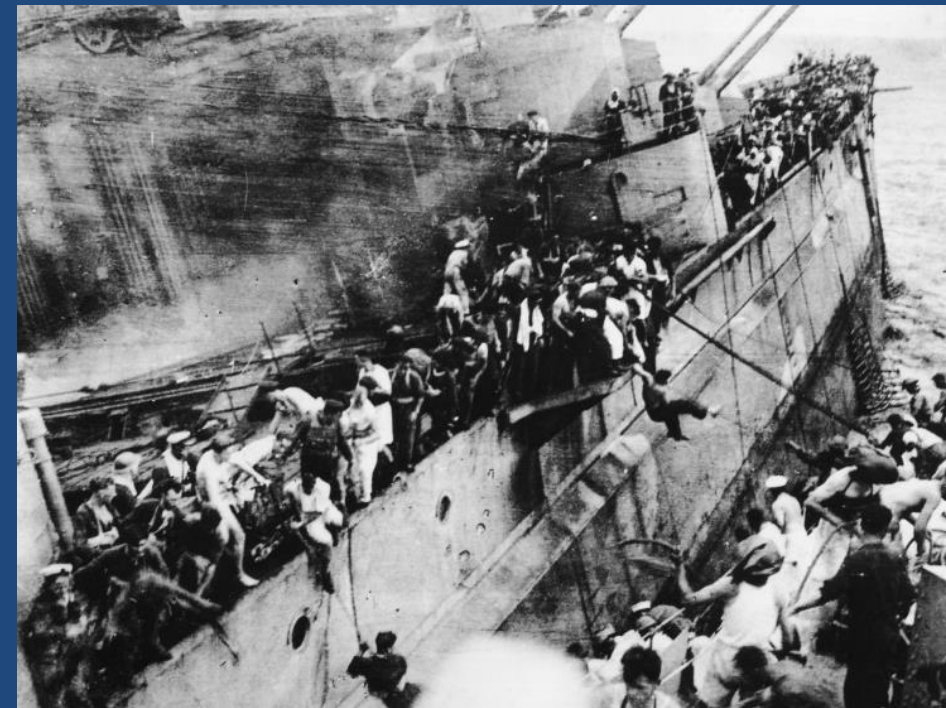
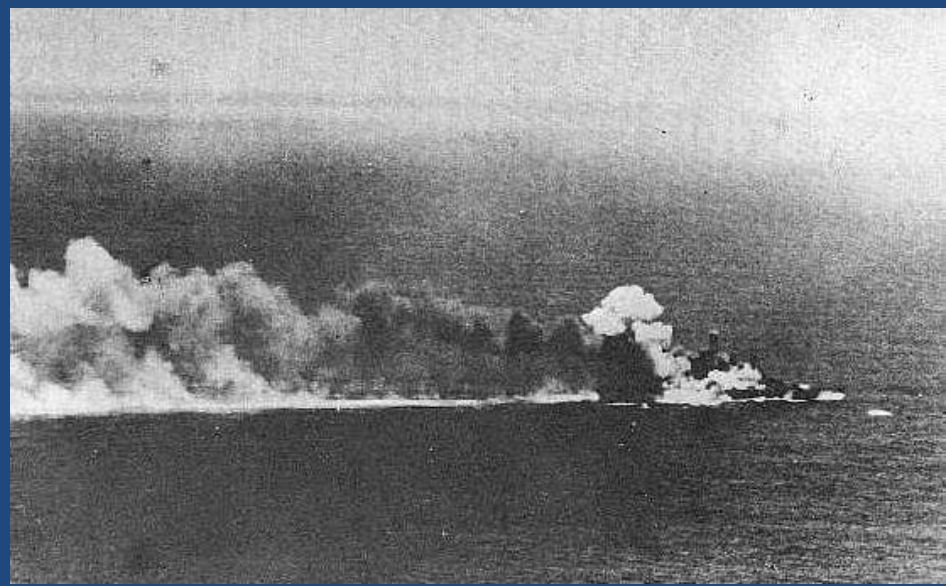
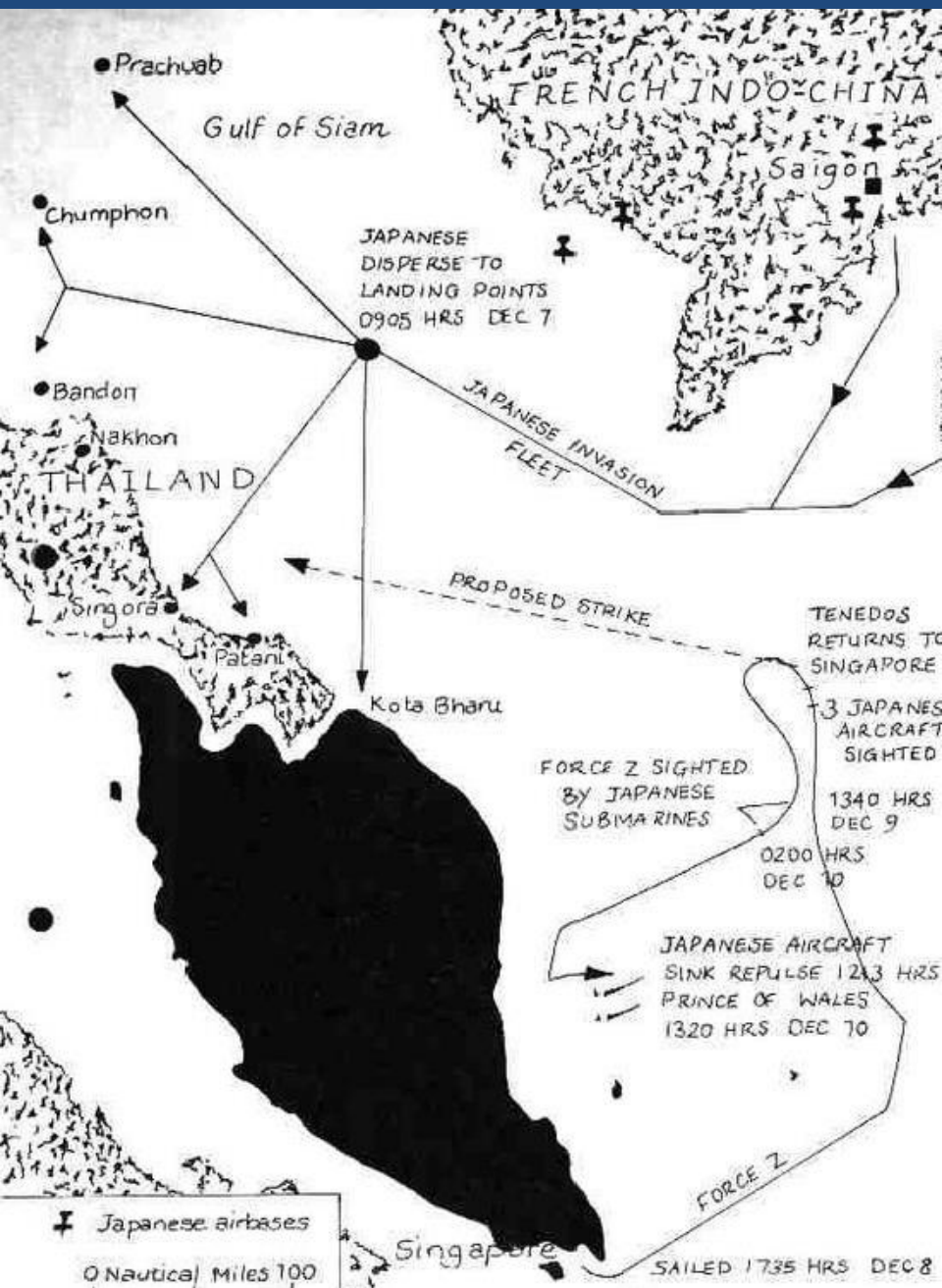
The Royal Navy did send a task force to defend Singapore. At the end of November 1941, the battleships HMS Prince of Wales and HMS Repulse plus eleven smaller escorts arrived at Singapore.

Designated Force Z, they were to combat any Japanese naval forces in the South China Sea threatening Malaya and destroy any amphibious force.



It was all the navy could spare given the war in the Atlantic and Mediterranean Seas.

They were held in port until the war broke out on December 8<sup>th</sup>. Then they were sent to deal with the invasion. It did not go well...



The Japanese were well trained, well led and individually well equipped. The infantry was light and highly mobile and would use terrain to their advantage.

They used the jungle to mask the movements of units maneuvering around the British flanks. And they were aggressive.

But their tactics usually meant their units became separated and for every advance they would need to spend some time reorganizing their units and supply train before the next advance.

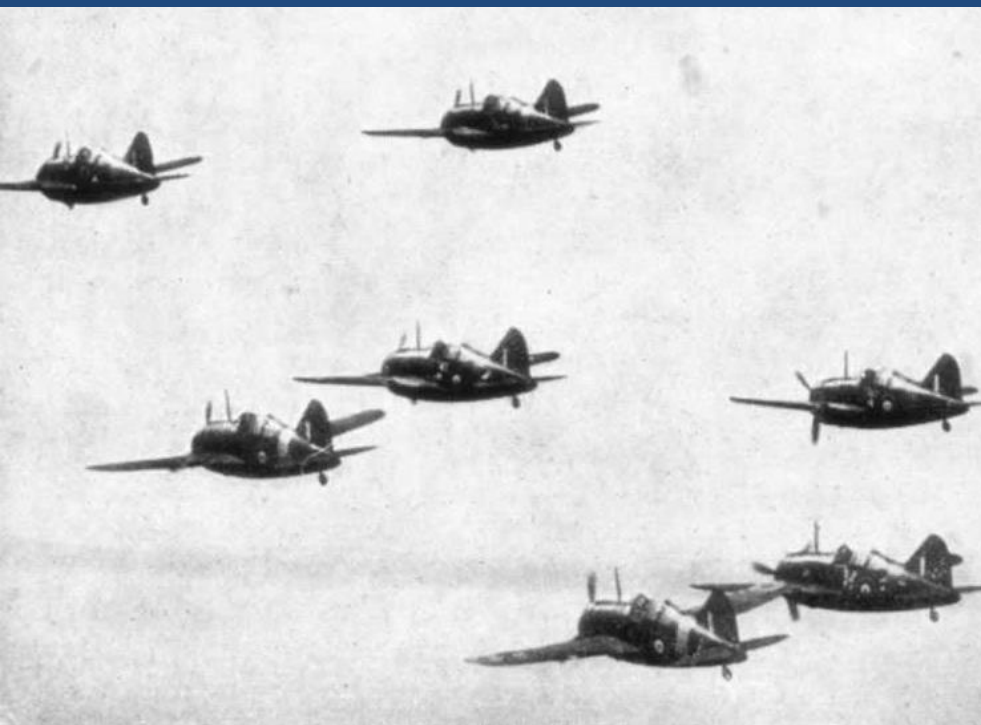




The British were not nearly as well trained and while generally well supplied and equipped, their war was all about the roads as all of their transport was by road. They could block the advance, but they did not secure their jungle flanks consistently or effectively which allowed the Japanese to get behind them time and again.



They spent as much time fighting through a roadblock in their rear as fighting the main Japanese advance and once the Japanese were in the rear, the entire force fell back several miles before attempting to set up another defense.

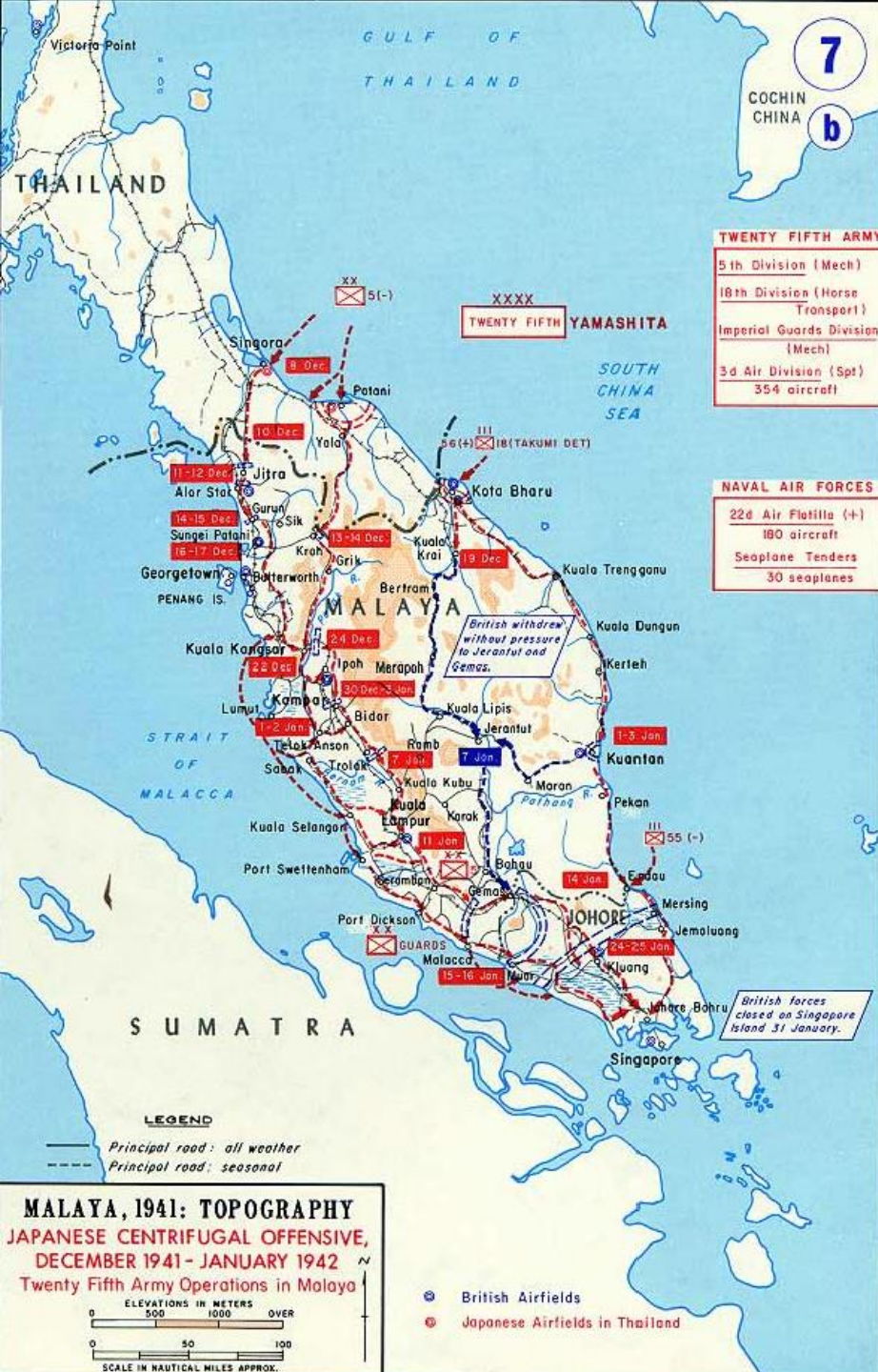


The RAF was tasked with support of the Army. Prior to the war, their staff believed that the existing ground force could hold with adequate air support. Adequate was determined to be 400 combat planes.



They had 158 on December 7<sup>th</sup>. And most of their fighters were already obsolete. While they had two squadrons of Hawker Hurricanes, most of their fighters were U.S. Brewster Buffalos, which the U.S. Navy had replaced almost as soon as they were delivered because they were already under powered and under gunned.





The 11<sup>th</sup> Indian Division on the Thai border was driven down the Peninsula. The British forces on the coast were able to retreat without pressure after the Japanese had driven them from their forward positions.

Gen. Percival managed to keep them supplied, but he did not reinforce until a month after the invasion when two brigades arrived from India – they were untrained and undermanned and were all but wiped out.

He retained a ground force of almost twice the size at Singapore and never sent them forward. He also never prepared defenses believing it would hurt morale.



The last British forces evacuated the peninsula for Singapore on Jan. 25<sup>th</sup> 1942 blowing the bridges behind them.

The Japanese would not launch an attack until Feb. 9<sup>th</sup> as it needed to bring up the entirety of its army and supplies.



Percival decided to defend the entire coast. When the attack came, it fell upon a single brigade – one that had little training and had seen no action. Percival refused to weaken his defense elsewhere to shore up the Australian brigade that was in the fight.

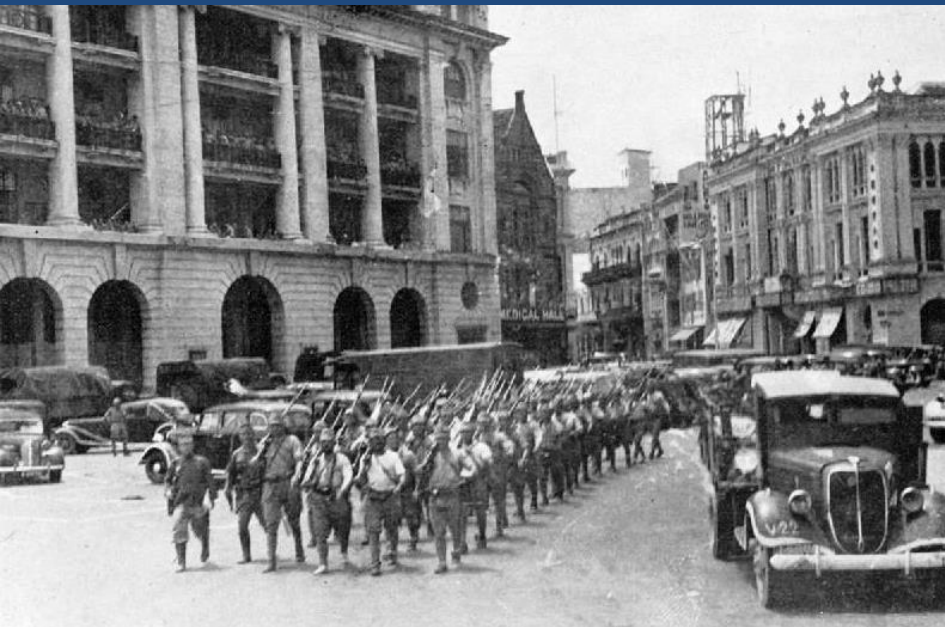
It could not hold and neither could Percival.



Singapore fell in six days.

Percival asked to discuss surrender on Feb. 15<sup>th</sup> 1942 and was directed to lead a surrender party personally while allowing the Japanese army to enter the city and take his troops into custody.

He had been ordered to stand and fight. He had been ordered to fight to the last round.



85,000 troops surrendered. Most had never fired a shot. They turned over supplies sufficient to have withstood over four months of siege.

It was the worst defeat in British history.





Prior to the war, Burma was the backwater of the British Empire. It was an appendage to India that India did not want and in 1937 it became a separate colony.

The British in the colonial administration were generally those who were expendable or forgettable. The best, brightest and ambitious of the Colonial Office civil service were not sent to Burma, only the ones no one else wanted.

The “indigenous” civil service (police and others) were mostly Indian, not Burmese. Burmese were deemed unreliable. Finance was run by Chinese. The Burmese Army was mostly Kachin, Karen, Chin and Shan with some Burmese.



The Burmese Division had some good officers who stayed on after partition in 1937 and some long service NCO's, but most were recent recruits and untrained. It was under equipped as well.

This was not seen as a problem. Who in their right mind wanted Burma?

The Japanese actually did not want Burma. But they did want to cut the supply line to China and by 1941 that supply line was the port of Rangoon, the Rangoon – Lashio railway and the Burma Road.

The Burma Army deployed in November 1941 just in case to prevent any invasion from Japanese held Indochina...



On June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1941, Gen. Archibald Wavell was relieved as commander of CinC Middle East in North Africa and “exiled” to Commander-In-Chief India. At that time, Britain did not anticipate war with Japan or any threat to India or Burma so a move from a combat command was “exile.” Wavell had been unable to lift the siege of Tobruk..

Malaya was a separate command and answered directly to London.

On December 10<sup>th</sup>, 1941, Wavell was designated Commander-In-Chief of American-British-Dutch-Australian forces (ABDA) for the defense of Malaya, Singapore and Indonesia.

He was given command of a ship that was already sinking...

Whether Lt. Gen. Percival understood the command realignment is debatable. He continued to act as if his only valid orders came from London. Wavell's orders were suggestions and usually ignored.

Prior to December, Percival did not answer to the CinC India and much of Wavell's staff as ABDA commander remained in Delhi.

It should be noted, Percival was not India Army. He considered it and Indian troops as little more than well dressed rabble. After all, they were led by officers commissioned by a mere Viceroy and not the King.

The Indian Army had little respect for the British Army. While most India Army officers were British, they considered the British Army officers barely trained, barely literate and not at all professional. (The British Army officers still tended to be aristocracy and upper class. The India Army officers were generally from the middle class.)

(It did not help that an India Army officer had to suffer about a 30% cut in pay whenever he was assigned to Britain and promoted faster than his British Army counterparts.)



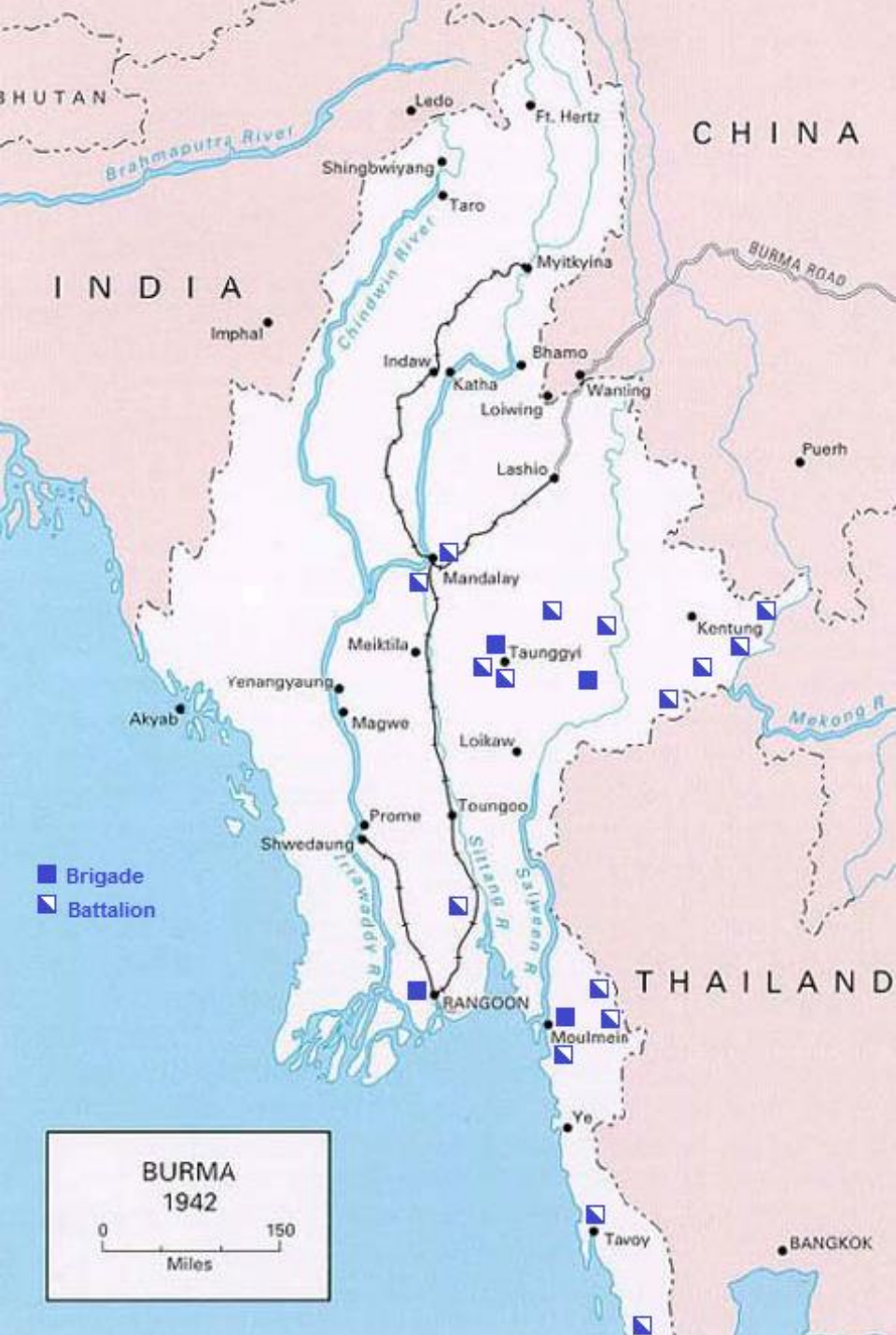
Wavell was powerless to stop the collapse in Southeast Asia and it certainly did not help that early in January he fell off a pier in Singapore and cracked his spine (he did not see the edge as he was blind in one eye.)

A week after the fall of Singapore, his ABDA command became a naval command only (as only the small navy was left and not for much longer) and Wavell returned to CinC India.

Just in time to inherit another disaster in the making.

Burma had remained under India Army and its chain of command and thus outside of the ABDA command. Now, it was Wavell's problem but he had more actual authority over Burma as CinC India than he had as CinC ABDACom over Malaya Command (Percival) or the Dutch.

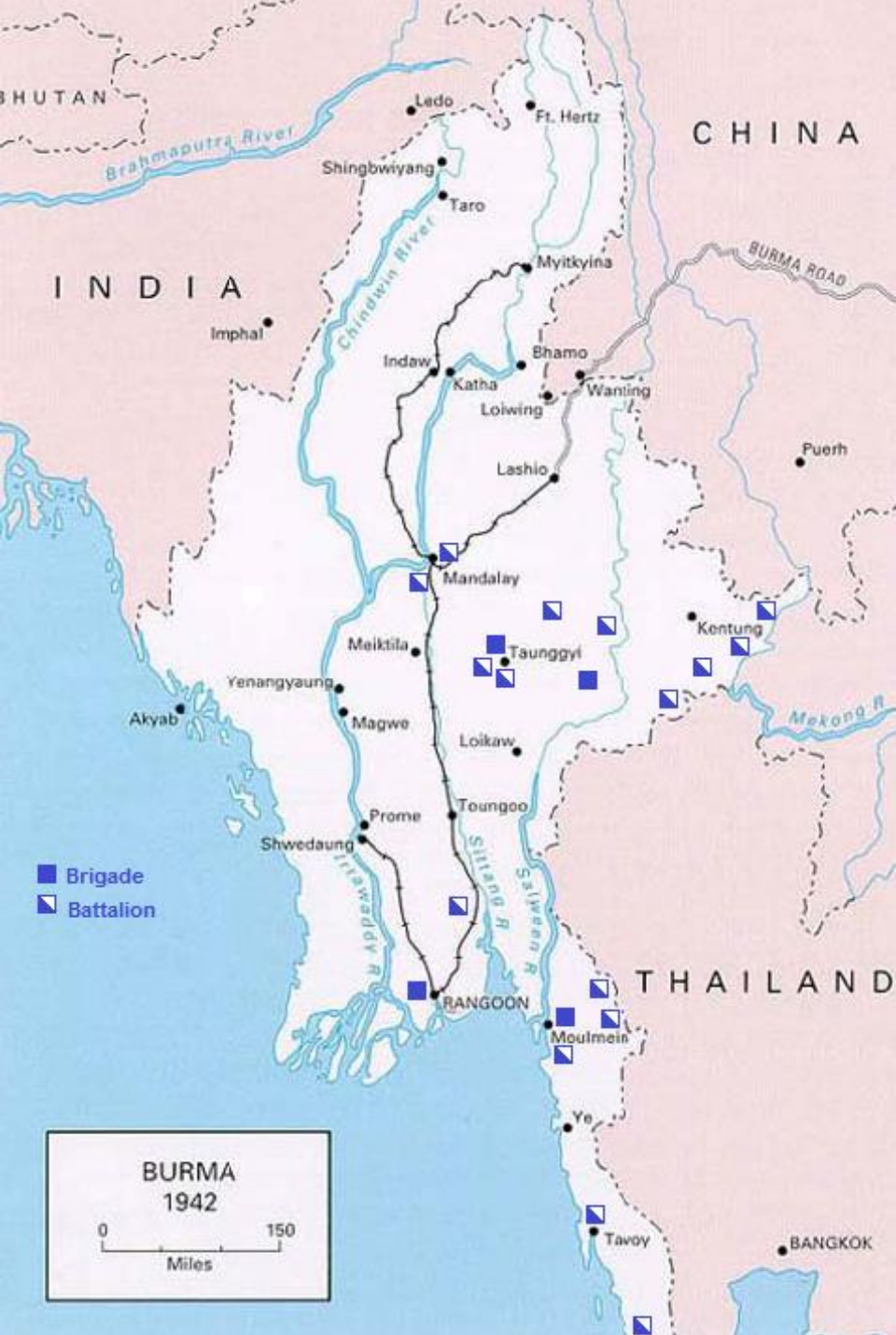
Now he could give an order that could not be ignored and deal with ineffective officers rather than merely complain about them.



In December 1941, the defense of Burma consisted of less than two divisions in strength. There was the Burma Division, two independent Indian Army brigades and other smaller units scattered about the country.

The Air Force had six fighter squadrons and would be joined by one squadron from the American Volunteer Group later in the month.

Most of its units had only recently been called up – some within the last couple of months. All were under strength and under equipped. They had no tanks and little in the way of artillery. (Malaya had its full complement of artillery and more.)



There were actually three invasions of Burma by the Japanese. The first two were by elements of Yamashita's 25<sup>th</sup> Army (the one mostly in Malaya). A battalion took Victoria point – southern most part of Burma – on December 14<sup>th</sup>. It was considered indefensible and had already been evacuated.

Another brigade entered Burma on Jan. 7<sup>th</sup> and seized Tavoy.

The two took airfields to deny them to the RAF and protect Yamashita's lines of supply and to provide bases for bombing Rangoon. The first raid occurred on Jan 10<sup>th</sup>. The small allied fighter force at Rangoon tore the raid to pieces.

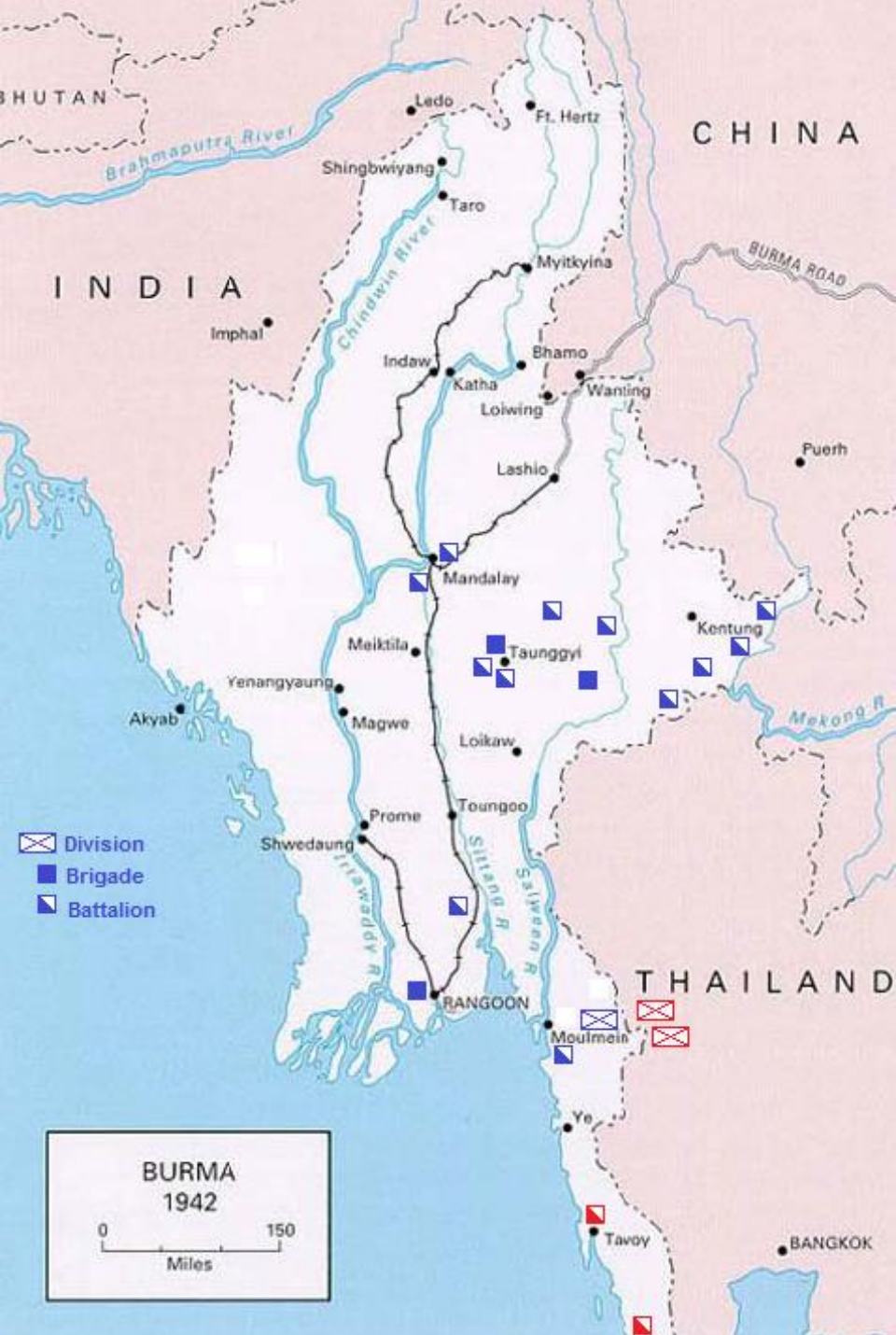
In late December, Wavell met with Chiang Kai-Shek about the pending threat to Burma. He told Chiang that without help from the Chinese, the British would not be able to keep the Burma Road open.

Chiang had assumed that now that the barbarians were fighting amongst themselves, his distraction with the Japanese was all but over. He now began to learn it was not that simple.

Chiang agreed to send two armies to Burma (a Chinese Army – and Japanese as well – was roughly similar to a British or American Corps – three divisions).

Wavell also appointed his Chief-of-Staff Lt. Gen. Thomas Hutton to command the now nominally two divisions in Burma, the 17<sup>th</sup> Indian and 1<sup>st</sup> Burma. Hutton was told to keep Rangoon open as long as possible to accept reinforcement and keep supplies flowing to China.





The 17<sup>th</sup> Indian Division Headquarters and its 46<sup>th</sup> Brigade arrived at Rangoon on Jan 7<sup>th</sup>. The 16<sup>th</sup> Independent Indian Brigade at Moulmein became a part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Division.

The Division had two other Brigades which had been sent to reinforce Malaya and were all but wiped out at the Battle of Muar (Jan 14 – 22).

The new brigade had been trained for fighting in North Africa and there was no time to retrain for a very different environment.

On January 20<sup>th</sup>, the real invasion began.