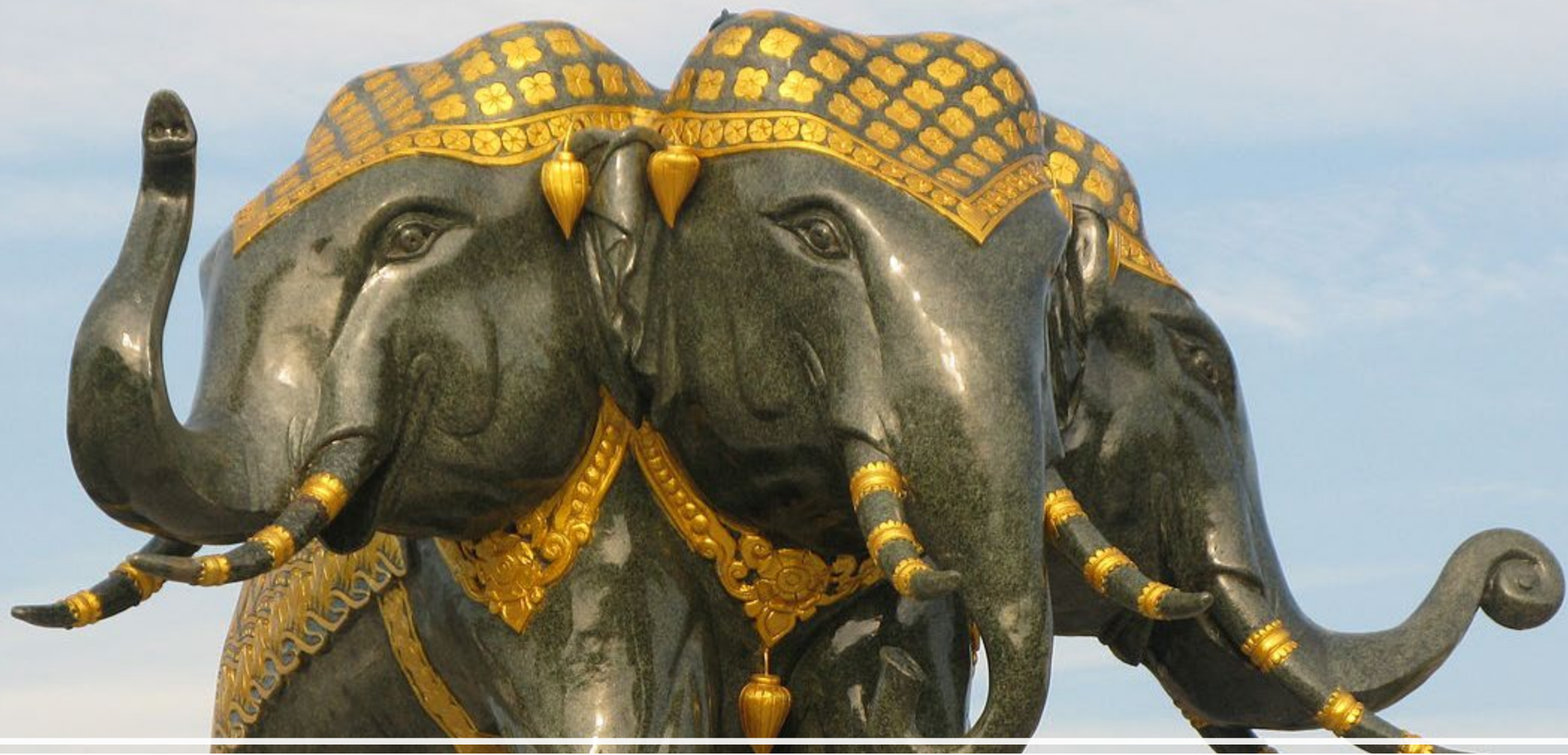




War Elephants and Ancient India

# Timeline of India

Events in the Land of The Timeless Theater

Pre-Historic

## Pre-History



Indian History is as old as the History of Mankind. Artifacts dating back to as much as 500,000 years have been found

Rock Paintings  
Cave Life & Cave Art

2000 B.C.

## Indus & Saraswati Civilizations

Harappa and Mohenjodaro Communities (2500 - 1550 B.C.)



Dravidian traditions are established in south

Hero-stones

1000 B.C.

## Vedic Period

Aryan Migration

The Vedas are composed

Mahabharat is composed



Hinduism takes deep roots

Caste System is established

Hinduism Potpourri

## Rise of Jainism and Buddhism

Gautama Buddha (563 -483 B.C.)



Mahaveera (399 B.C.)

Bimbisara of Magadha (542-490 B.C.)

Jainism

Buddhism

600 B.C.

400 B.C.

## Mauryan Period

The Great Alexander invades parts of India (326 B.C.)

Chandra Gupta Maurya (300 B.C.) and establishment of the Indian Empire

Emperor Ashoka (272 B.C.) and spread of Buddhism

Mauryan Empire

O.A.D.

## Golden Age of Indian Arts & Sciences



Khajuraho Temples are built

The Hoysala Dynasty

The temples of Belur, Halebid are built

Chalukyas of Badami and Kalyan

Guptas (320-647)

Pallavas of Kanchi (300-883)

Fa-Hien (400) & Hsuen-Tsang (630) in India

10th century India

Alberuni in India (1020)

Mahmud Ghazni invades Somnath temple (1026)

1200 A.D.

## Muslim Invasions

Marco Polo visits India (1288)

Khilji Dynasty (1300)

The Vijayanagar Empire (1336-1565)

Ibn Batuta in India

First voyage of Vasco-da-Gama to Goa (1498)



Southern Dynasties: Chola, Pandya, Hoysala, Rashtrakuta, Ganga, Chalukyas

Hyder Ali and Tipu Sultan (1761 - 1799)

Women in Medieval Deccan

Bhakti Movement

1500 A.D.

## The Moghul Empire

Akbar defeats Rana Pratap at Haldighat (1576)

East India Company is formed (1600)



Moguls: Babur (1530), Akbar (1605), Aurangzeb (1700)

Charu Gobind Singh and the Khalsa

Taj Mahal is built

Shivaji (1646) and the Marathas

Bahamani Kings

Battle of Plassey (1757)

1800 A.D.

## The British Rule

Prohibition of Sati (1829)

First Indian war of Independence (1857)

Indian National Congress is formed (1885)

19th Century India

History of India

Timeline of Freedom Movements

1900 A.D.

## India's Freedom Struggle

Massacre at Jallianwala Bagh (1919)

Quit India Movement (1942)



The March of Dandi and Rise of Mahatma Gandhi (1930)

Martyrdom of Bhagat Singh

Subhas Bose and Indian National Army

Biographies of Tilak, Savarkar, Cama

India during 19th century

India during 20th century

1947 A.D.

## Free and Modern India

Partition of India and Freedom at Midnight (1947)

Wars with Pakistan and liberation of Bangladesh (1971)

The non-aligned movement

The rise of Nehru-Gandhi Family

The Emergency (1976)

Rise of Regionalism



India wins Cricket World Cup (1983)

Operation Blue Star, Indira Gandhi's Assassination and violence against Sikhs (1984)

Bhopal Gas Tragedy

India tests nuclear device (1998)

Outsourcing creates a service economy boom (2005)

# Elephants in the Rigveda (1500-500BCE)

- Rigveda 4.4.1: “Proceed like a king attended by his followers on his elephant: you are the scatterer of your foes...”
- Rigveda 4.10.4: “Like hunters on the track of wild elephants, we call you down in the evening and at dawn with our oblation...”
- Aitareya Brahmana 8.22: “With this ceremony, Udamaya, the son of Atri, inaugurated Anga. Thence Anga went conquering everywhere over the whole earth, up to its ends, and sacrificed the sacrificial horse. This Anga, who was not defective in any respect, had once said: ‘I give thee, O Brahman, ten thousand elephants and ten thousand slave girls ,if you call me to this sacrifice’”.



# The War elephant

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- ““Master Ra<sub>ḥ</sub>hap<sub>ṛ</sub>la, there exist in this court elephant troops and cavalry and chariot troops and infantry, which will serve to subdue any threats to us. “
- “When the king’s elephant obeys his tamer’s orders to get up and sit down and carries out his instructions, the elephant tamer trains him further in the task called imperturbability. He ties a giant plank to his trunk; a man with a lance in his hand sits on his neck; men with lances in their hands surround him on all sides; and the elephant tamer himself stands in front of him holding a long lance pole. When the elephant is being trained in the task of imperturbability, he does not move his forelegs or his hindlegs; he does not move his forequarters or his hindquarters; he does not move his head, ears, tusks, tail, or trunk. The king’s elephant is able to endure blows from spears, blows from swords, blows from arrows, blows from other beings, and the thundering sounds of drums, kettledrums, trumpets, and tomtoms. Being rid of all faults and defects, purged of flaws, he is worthy of the king, in the king’s service, considered one of the factors of a king”

# War Elephants in the Mahabharata (4<sup>th</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> BCE)



- The sages said, 'O son of a suta! We wish to hear everything about the akshouhini that you mentioned to us. You know everything. Tell us exactly the size of an akshouhini, with foot soldiers, horses, chariots and elephants.'
- Souti said, 'One chariot, one elephant, five foot soldiers and three horses make up a patti. Three pattis are known as a senamukha and three senamukhas make up a gulma. Three gulmas are named a gana and three ganas a vahini. The wise know that three vahinis collectively form a pritana. Three pritanas make a chamu, three chamus an anikini and the wise say that ten times an anikini is known as an akshouhini. O best of Brahmanas! Those who know arithmetic have calculated that there are 21,870 chariots in an akshouhini and the number of elephants is the same. Know that the number of foot soldiers is 109,350 and the number of horses is 65,610. O best of Brahmanas! I have described to you in detail that which those who are familiar with numbers call an akshouhini.'
- Excerpt from Parvasamgraha Parva



DRAWN BY A. CASTAIGNE.

THE MEETING OF ALEXANDER AND PORUS

# Alexander and Porus

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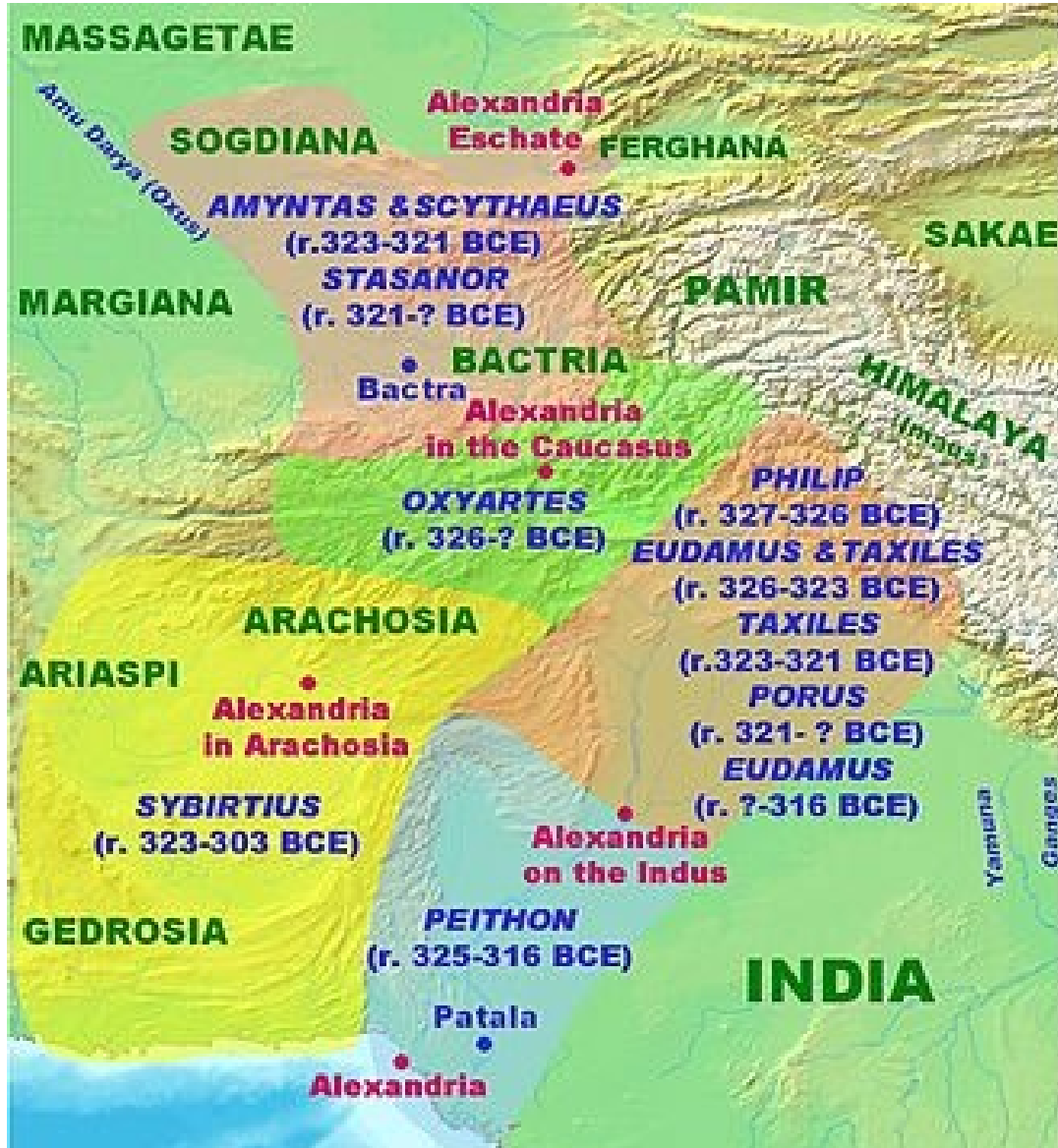
- In the archonship of Chremes at Athens, the Romans elected as consuls Publius Cornelius and Aulus Postumius.<sup>15</sup> In this year Alexander repaired his army in the land of Taxiles and then marched against Porus, the king of the neighbouring Indians.<sup>16</sup> 2 He had more than fifty thousand infantry, about three thousand cavalry, more than a thousand chariots of war, and one hundred and thirty elephants. He had enlisted the support of a second king of the neighbouring regions, whose name was Embisarus; he had an army little smaller than that of Porus. Diod. Sic. 16.87.1



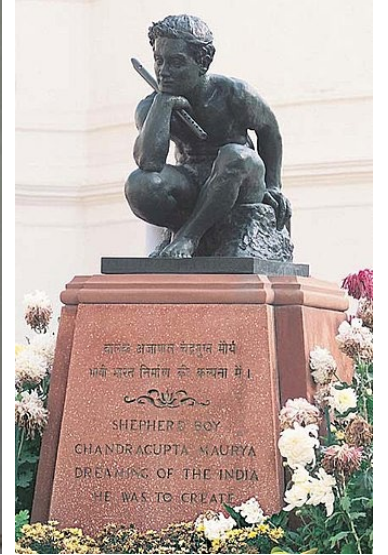
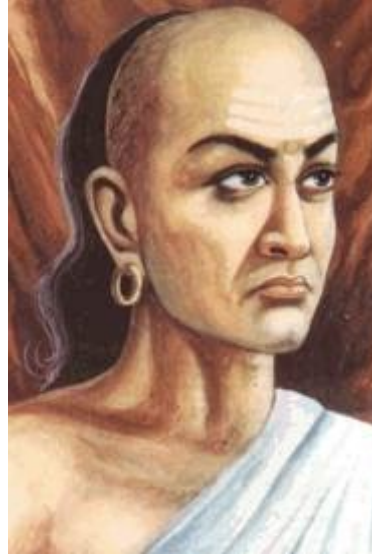
# The other side of the river: Nanda

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- He questioned Phegeus about the country beyond the Indus River, and learned that there was a desert to traverse for twelve days, and then the river called Ganges, which was thirty-two furlongs in width and the deepest of all the Indian rivers. Beyond this in turn dwelt the peoples of the Tabraesians and the Gandaridae, whose king was Xandrames. He had twenty thousand cavalry, two hundred thousand infantry, two thousand chariots, and four thousand elephants equipped for war.<sup>47</sup> Alexander doubted this information and sent for Porus, and asked him what was the truth of these reports. Porus assured the king that all the rest of the account was quite correct, but that the king of the Gandaridae was an utterly common and undistinguished character, and was supposed to be the son of a barber. His father had been handsome and was greatly loved by the queen; when she had murdered her husband, the kingdom fell to him. Diod. Sic. 16.93



# Chandragupta Maurya



# Elephants in the Arthaśāstra

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- During a time when excessive heat has abated, he should march with regiments consisting mostly of elephants; 46 for elephants sweat internally and thus become leprous, 47 and when they cannot immerse in water and drink water, they have internal secretions and thus become blind. 8 Therefore, one should march with regiments consisting mostly of elephants only in a region with abundant water and during the rainy season. 49 When conditions are opposite, he should march into a region with little rain or muddy areas with regiments consisting mostly of donkeys, camels, and horses. 50 In the rainy season, he should march into a region that is mostly desert with all four divisions of the army

# Elephants in the Arthaśāstra II

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- 6 A force with elephants, mechanical devices, and carts at its center, and equipped with lances, javelins, spears, bamboos, and darts (2.18.7) is the counterforce for an elephant force. 27 The same, but with a large quantity of stones, clubs, armor, hooks, and “hair-grabbers,” (2.36.18 n.), is the counterforce for a chariot force. 28 The counterforce for a cavalry force is the very same, or else elephants with armor or horses with armor. 29 Chariots with defensive coverings and infantrymen with protective armor are the counterforce for an army with the four divisions