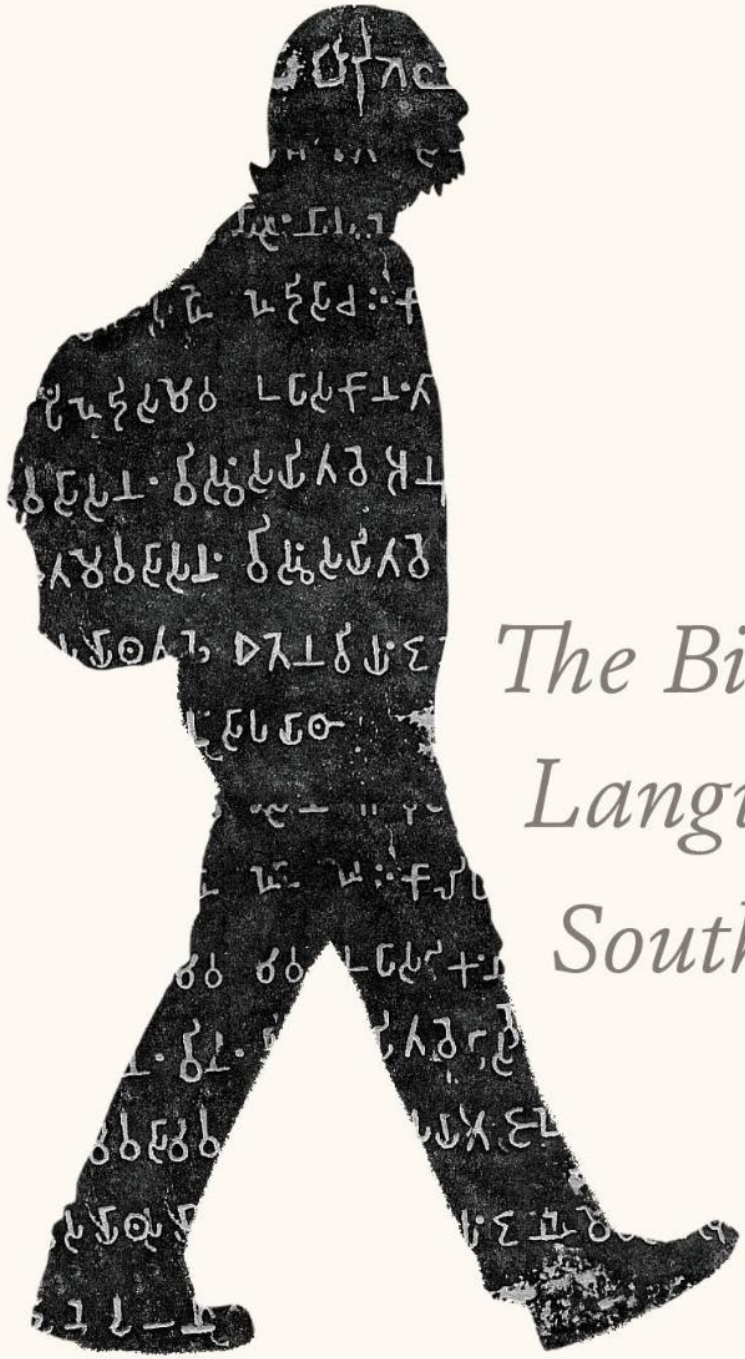
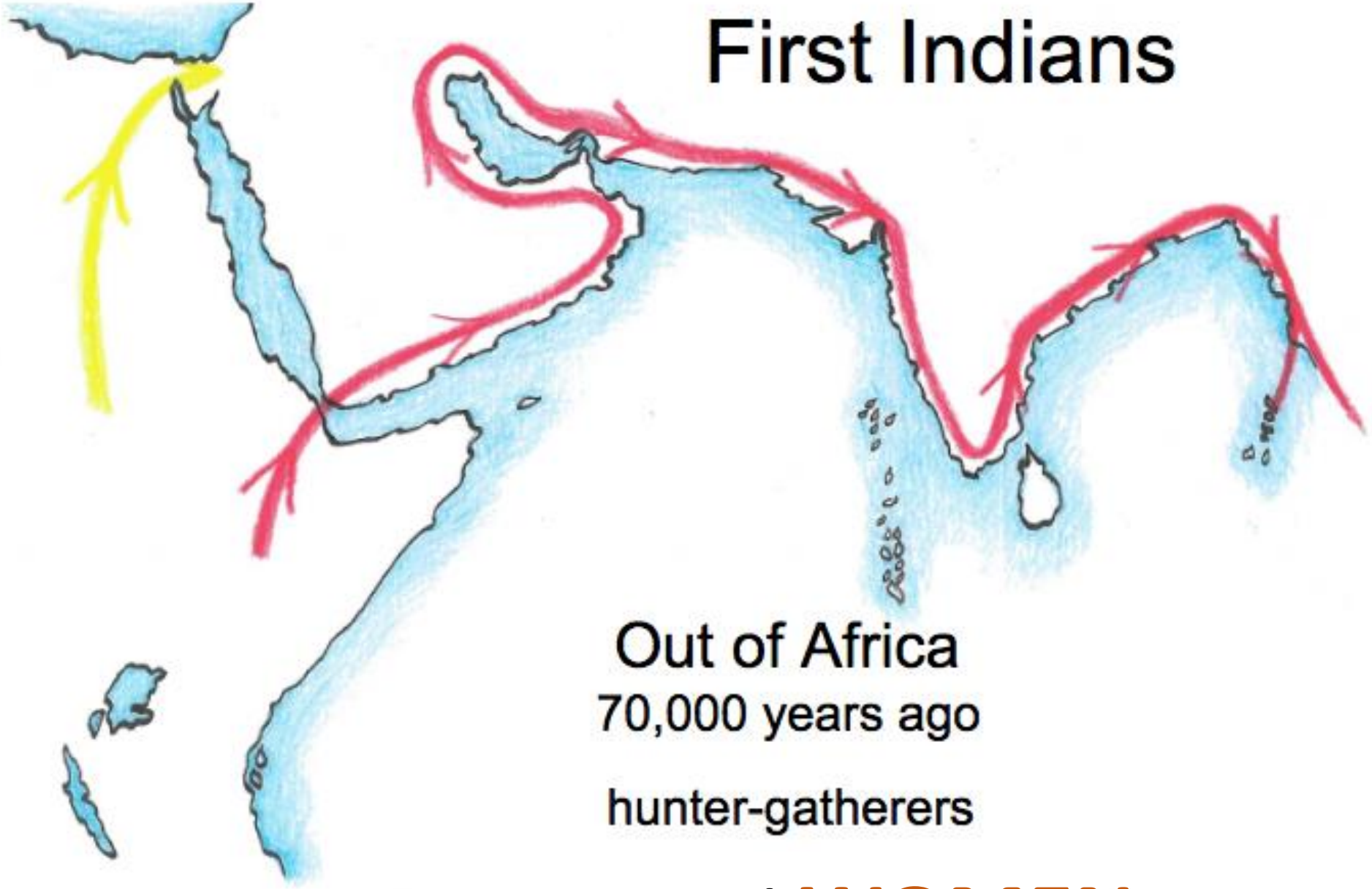
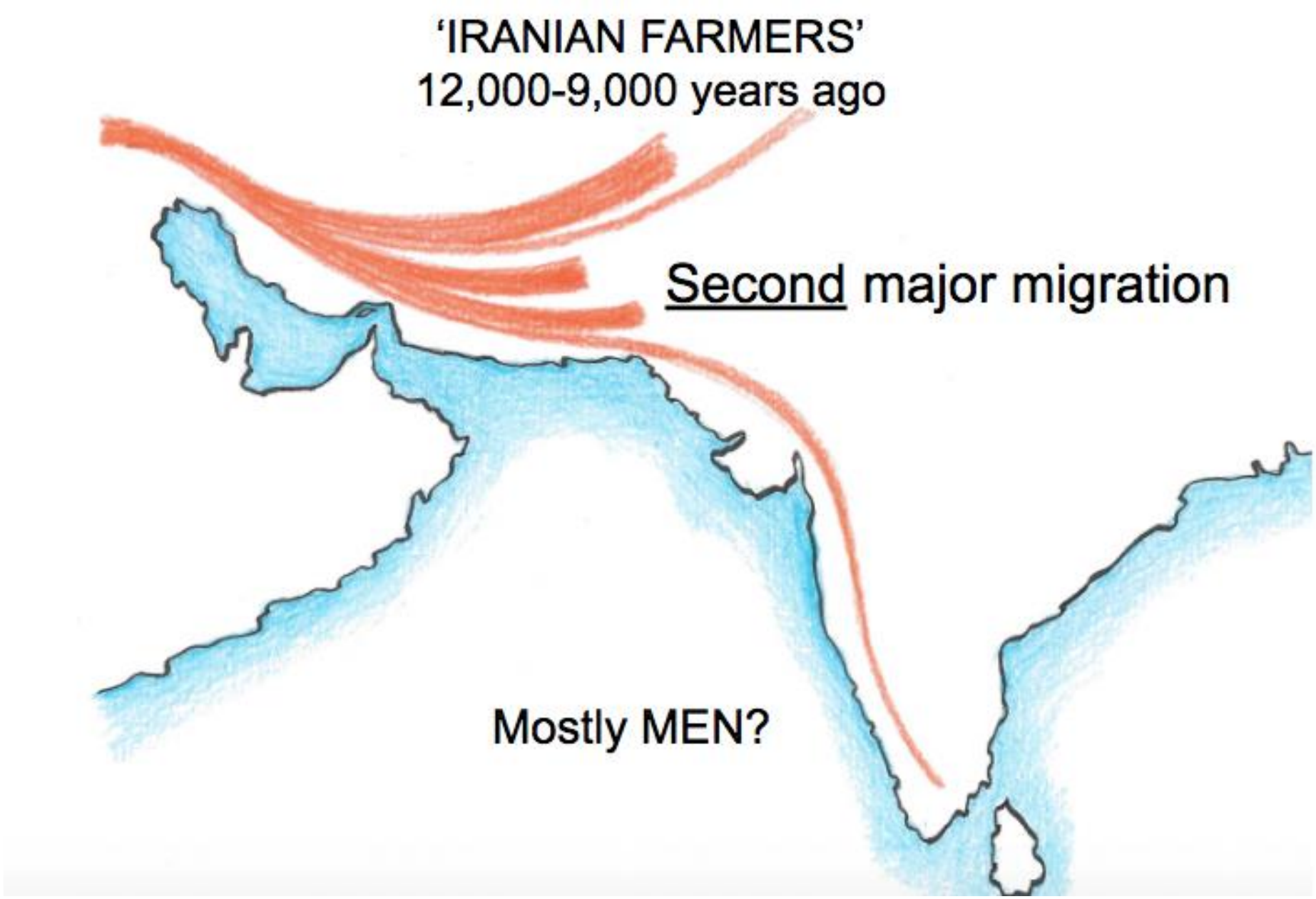


The Birth of Language in South Asia



MEN and **WOMEN**

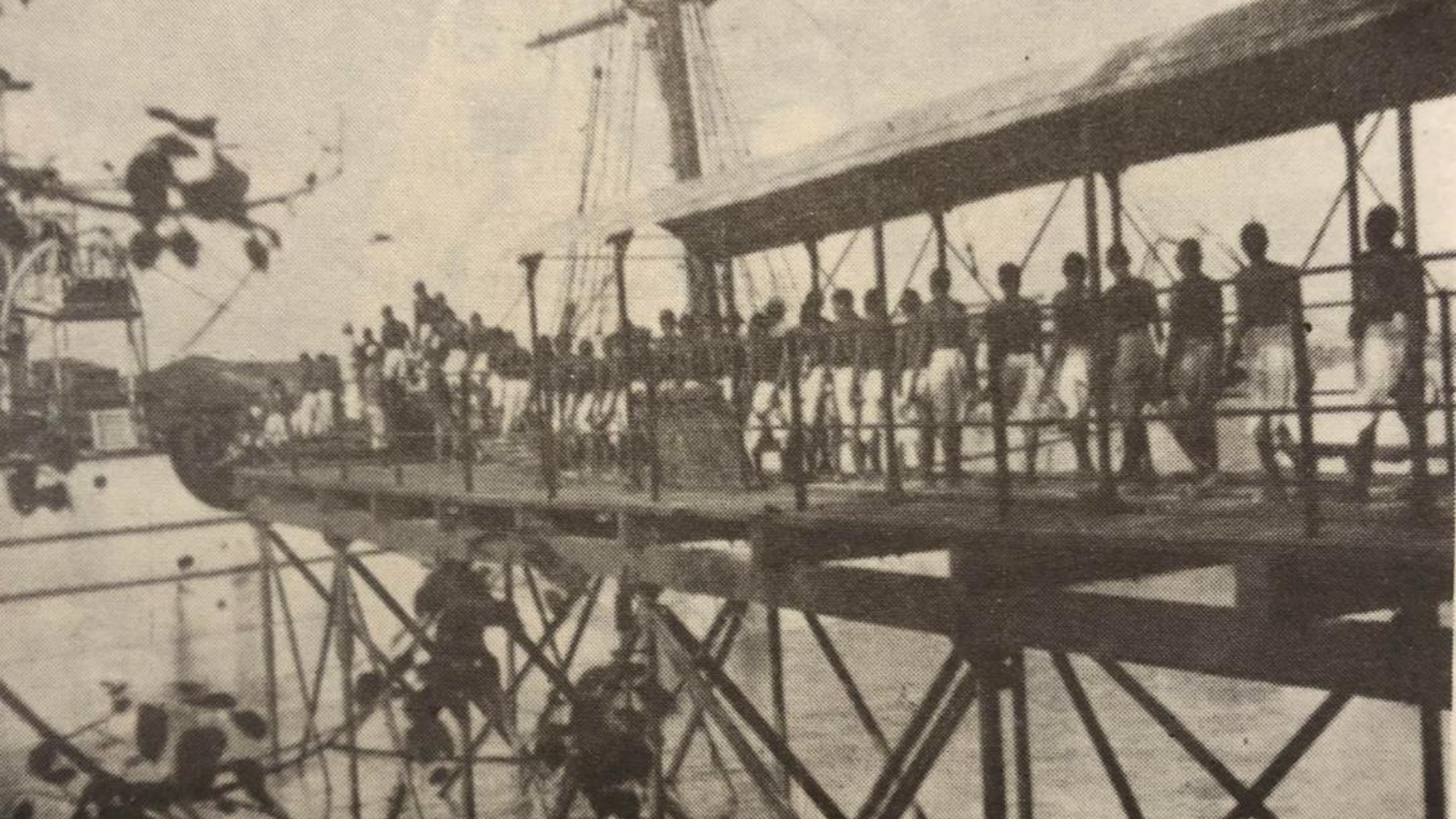

'IRANIAN FARMERS'
12,000-9,000 years ago
Second major migration
Mostly MEN?

Piecing together the historical EVIDENCE

??

4000+ years ago?

from LINGUISTIC MODELS and LANGUAGE DATA



VOCABULARY from PATERNAL SIDE

(SUPERSTRATUM)

‘father tongue’

GRAMMAR from MATERNAL SIDE

(SUBSTRATUM)

‘motherland’

MATRIX)

Migrant FATHERS

+

Local MOTHERS

all languages of migrating male groups
would have a **substratum** from the
WOMEN'S LANGUAGES

(including Hunza Burushaski, a 'language isolate')

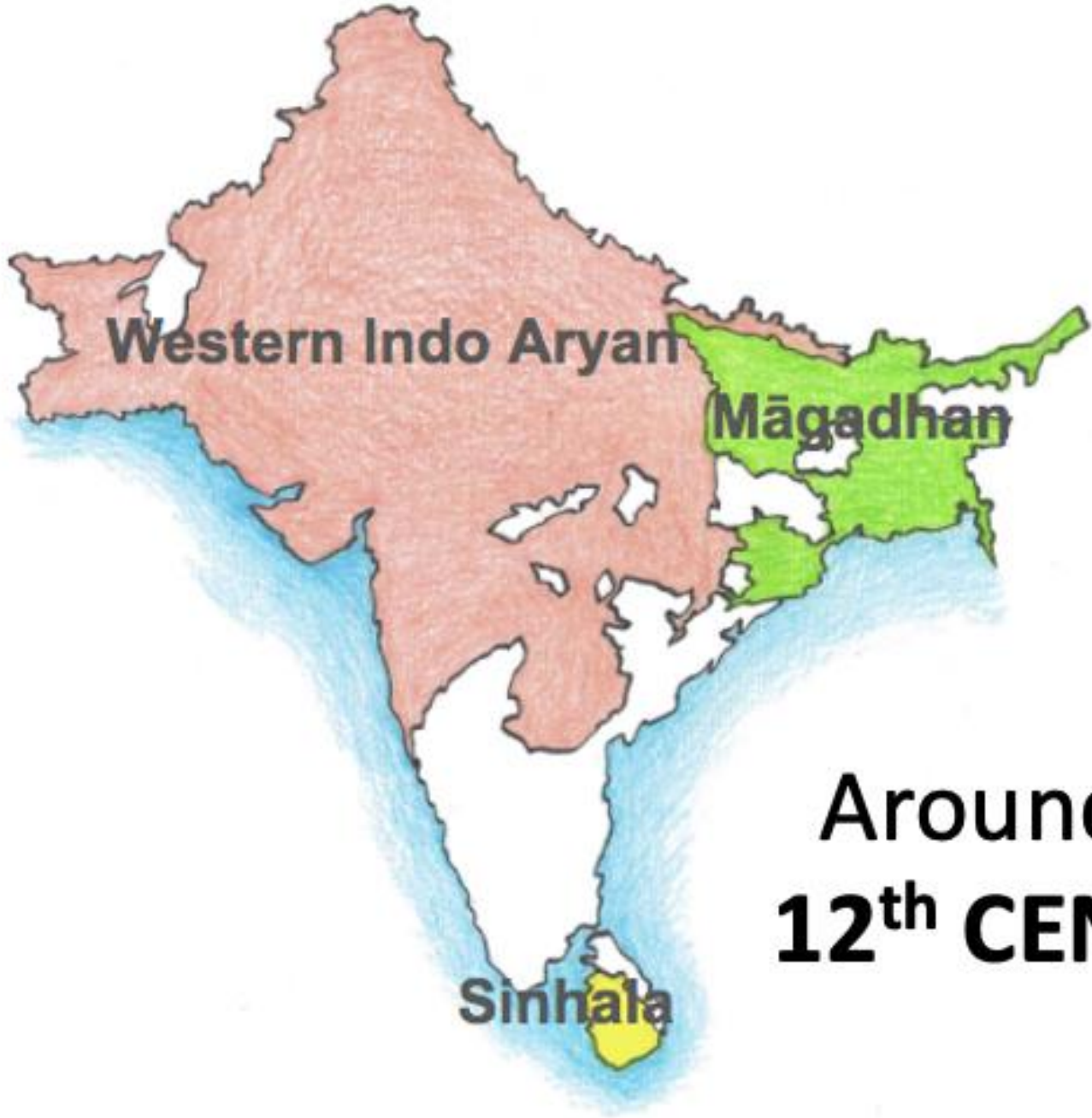
INDUS VALLEY LANGUAGES

SANSKRIT
PRAKRITS

INDUS VALLEY LANGUAGES WITH PRAKRIT VOCABULARY

‘INDO-ARYAN’ CREOLE LANGUAGES

INDUS VALLEY LANGUAGE
SUBSTRATUM
(OPERATING SYSTEM)



Around the
12th CENTURY

To find LANGUAGE X

Identify FEATURES
(in sound system, grammar)

What FEATURES in the Indo-Aryan languages do NOT come from Sanskrit/prakrits?

How do they compare with FEATURES in other languages outside the Indus Valley Periphery?

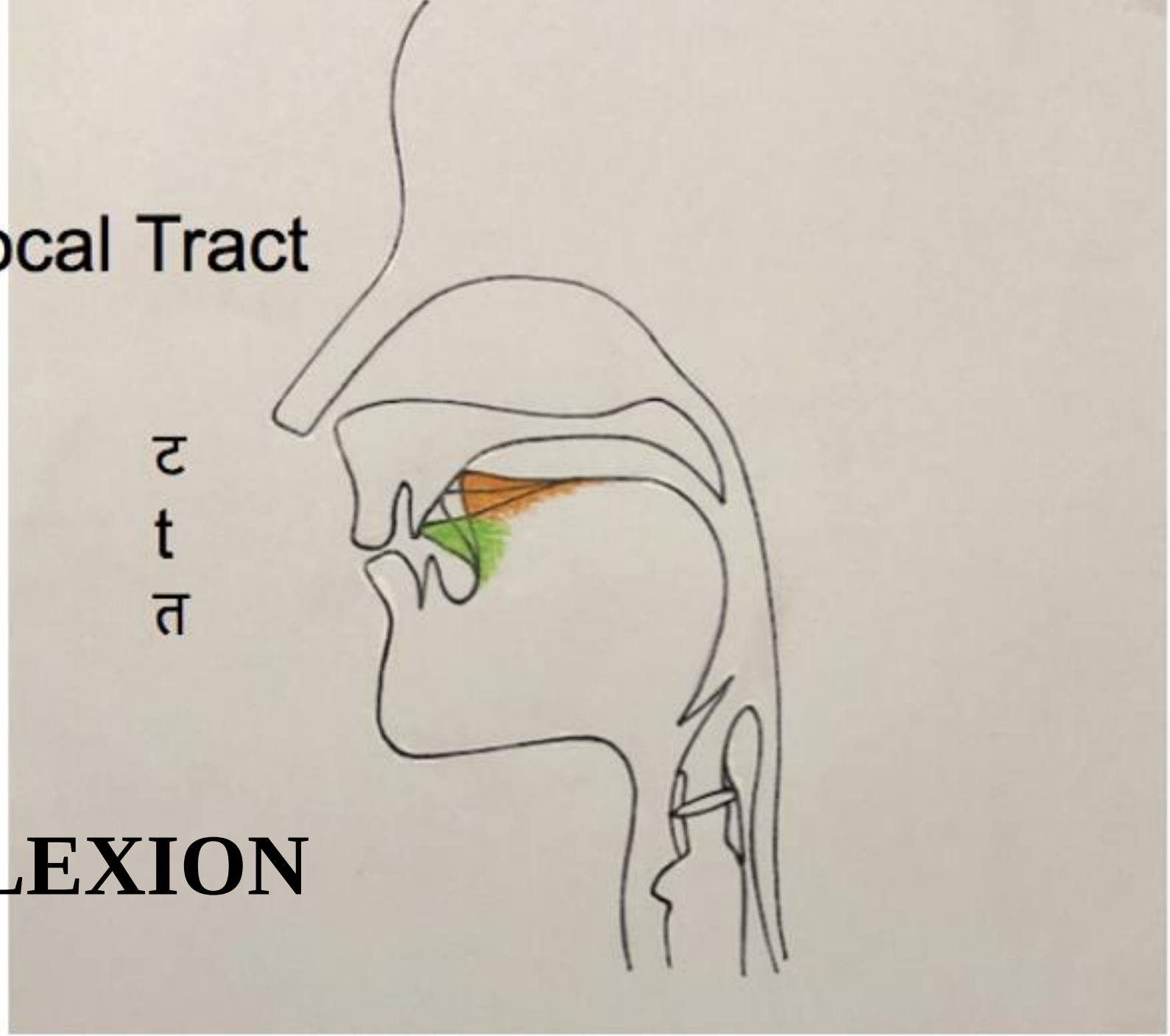
SOUNDS

RETROFLEXION

ṭ ḍ ṇ ḷ ṣ

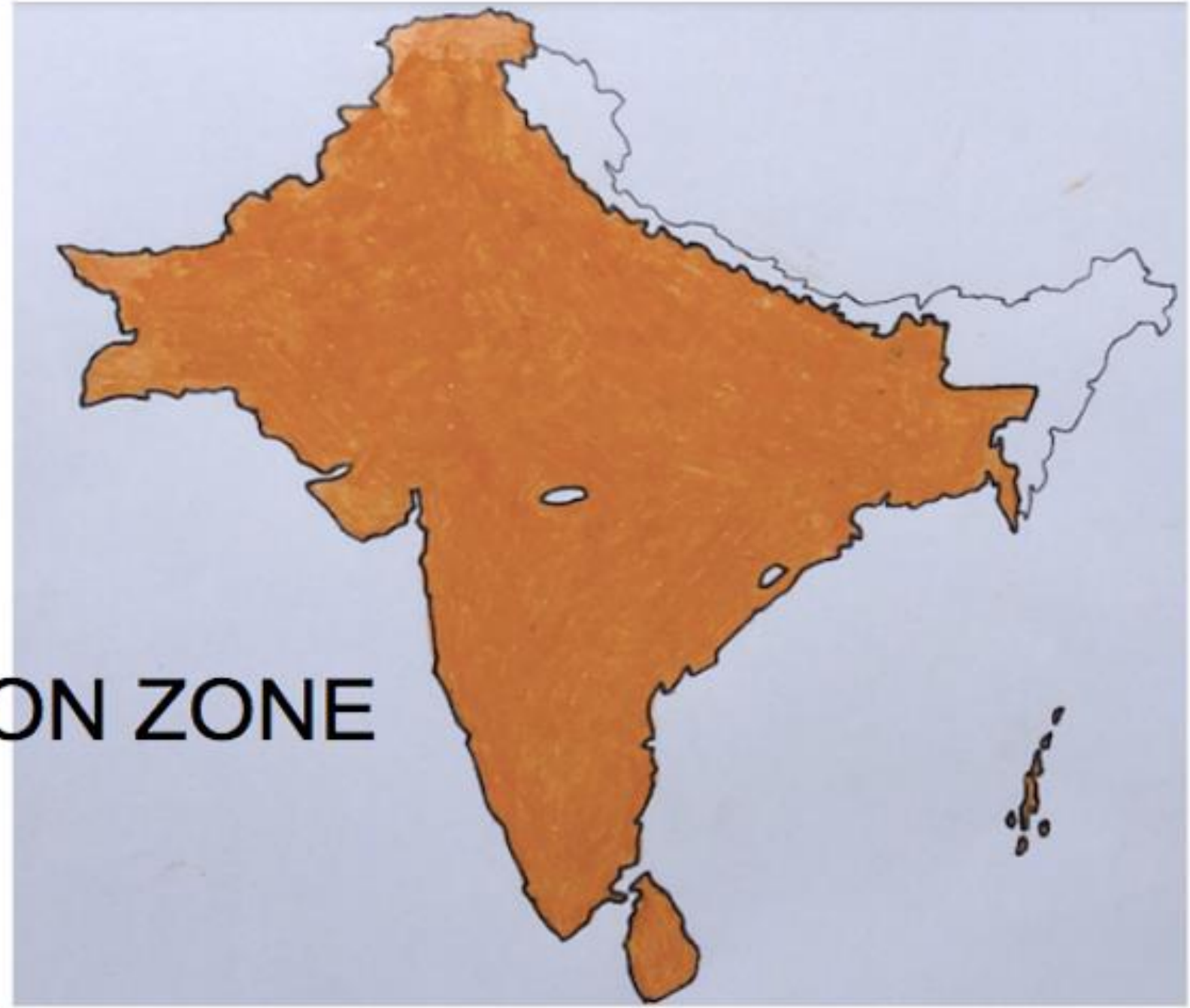
ASPIRATION

kh ćh ṭh th ph
gh jh ḍh dh bh



RETROFLEXION

South Asian
RETROFLEXION ZONE



RETROFLEX SOUNDS in IVC Periphery Languages

Punjabi:	ṭ	ḍ	ṛ	ṇ	ḷ			
Sindhi:	ṭ	ḍ	ṛ	ṇ		ṣ		
Balochi:	ṭ	ḍ	(ṛ)					
Pashto:	ṭ	ḍ	ṛ	ṇ		ṣ	ṭṣ	ḍẓ
Burushaski:	ṭ	ḍ				ṣ	ṭṣ	ḍẓ
Brahui:	ṭ	ḍ	ṛ	ṇ				
Sanskrit	ṭ	ḍ						

***FUN FACT*:**

OLDER than DRAVIDIAN

Punjabi:	*k kh g ʔ*	*ć ćh j ʔ*	*ṭ ṭh ḍ ʔ*	*t th d ʔ*	*p ph b ʔ*
Sindhi:	*k kh g ʔ*	*ć ćh j ʔ*	*ṭ ṭh ḍ ʔ*	*t th d ʔ*	*p ph b ʔ*
Balochi:	*k g*	*ć j*	*ṭ ḍ*	*t d*	*p b*
Pashto:	*k g*	*ć j*	*ṭ ḍ*	*t d*	*p b*
Burushaski:	*k kh g*	*ć ćh j*	*ṭ ṭh ḍ*	*t th d*	*p ph b*
Brahui:	*k kh g*	*ć j*	*ṭ ṭh ḍ*	*t th d*	*p ph b*

No VOICED ASPIRATES at all

Areas **without Voiced Aspirates**:

1. **Indus Valley Periphery**
2. **South India**
3. The Tribal Northeast
4. Tibetan languages

GRAMMAR

CALQUES

Sentences ‘thought’ in one language
and expressed in the words of another language

‘it is with me only’

Dakkhini:	*kaun*	*bolā-**ki***	*us-ku*	*pūccho*
Telugu:	*ewaru*	*annāru-**o***	*wāḍni*	*aḍugu*
	Who	said-***ki*/*o***	to-him	ask

'Ask (the person) who said it'

Hindi-Urdu	*us-ko*	*pūchho*	*jisne*	*yeh*	*kahā*
	to-him	ask	who	this	said

'Ask (the person) who said it'

The BIGGEST DIFFERENCE between

Northern Dravidian

and

Southern Dravidian

is

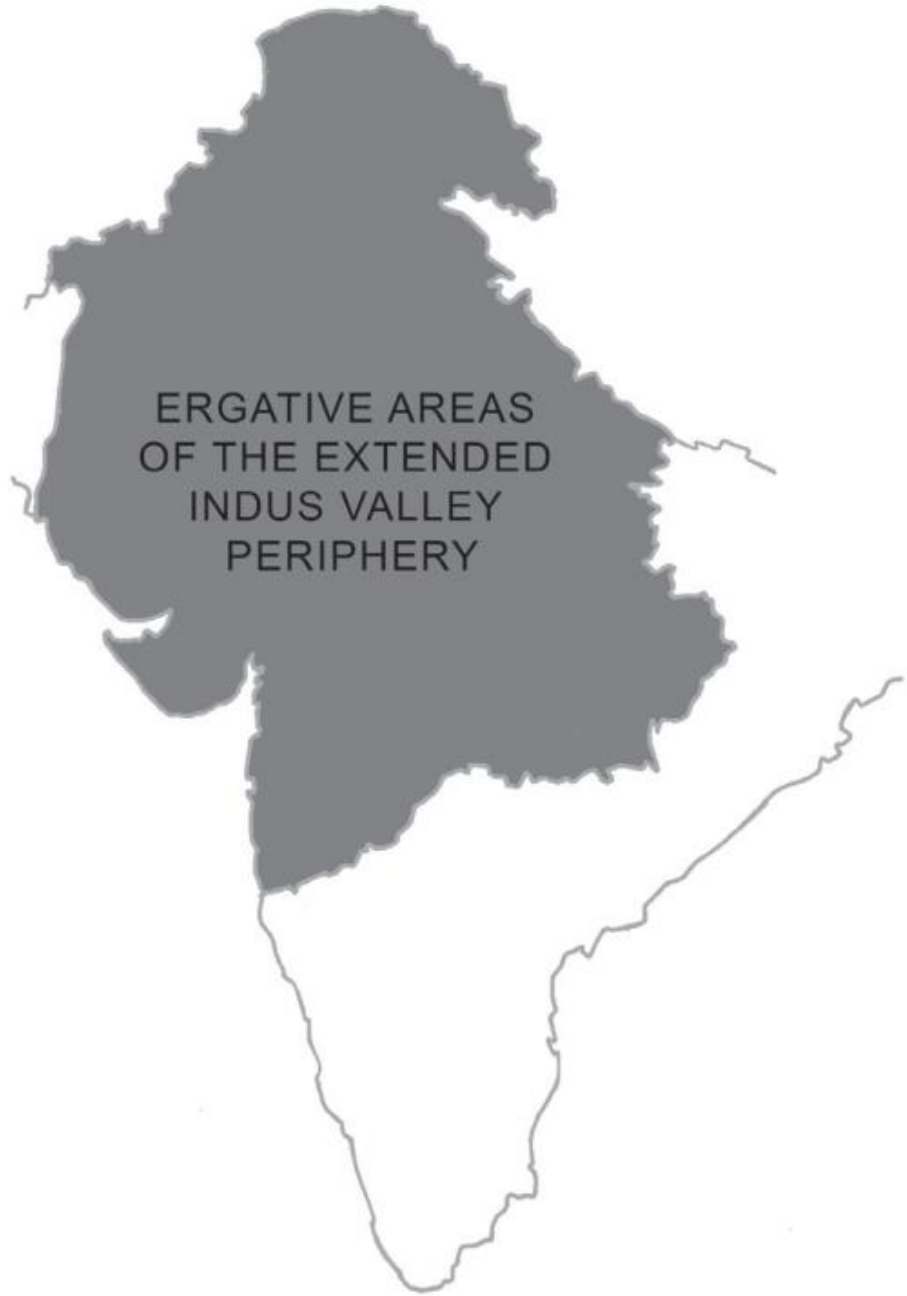
ERGATIVITY

ERGATIVITY (full)

By-me the cat OM-see-AM	'I see the cat'
By-me the cat OM-will see-AM	'I will see the cat'
By-me the cat OM-saw-AM	'I saw the cat'

ERGATIVITY (split)

I	*the cat see-SM*	'I see the cat'
I	*the cat will see-SM*	'I will see the cat'
I	*the cat was seeing-SM*	'I was seeing the cat'
By-me	*the cat seen-OM*	'I saw the cat'


ERGATIVE AREAS
OF THE EXTENDED
INDUS VALLEY
PERIPHERY

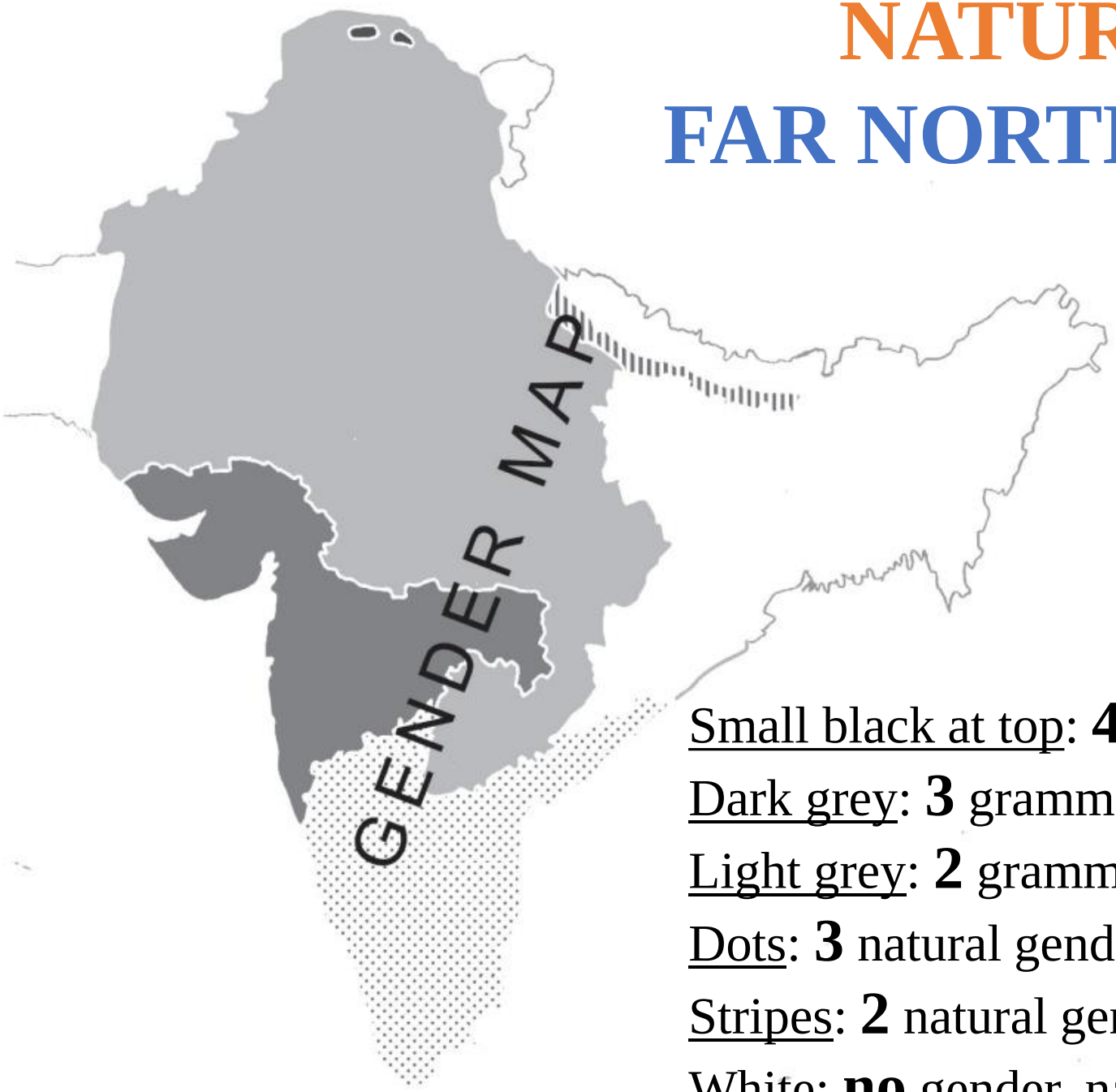
VARIETY as a sign of a CENTRE OF ORIGIN

Dark grey: split ergativity in past tense, ergative marking on agent, all persons

Light grey: split ergativity in past tense, ergative marking on agent only in 3rd person

Dots: split ergativity in past tense, with **NO** ergative marking

Black: full ergativity in **ALL** tenses, ergative marking on agent



NATURAL GENDER in the FAR NORTH, DRAVIDIAN SOUTH, NEPAL

Small black at top: **4** natural genders, verb agreement

Dark grey: **3** grammatical genders, verb and adjective agreement

Light grey: **2** grammatical genders, verb and adjective agreement

Dots: **3** natural genders, he/she/it, verb agreement

Stripes: **2** natural genders, verb and adjective agreement

White: **no** gender, natural or grammatical

Hindi: *ghar* ***mẽ***

Tamil: *vīṭṭ* ***il***

Sanskrit: ***gṛhe***

Hindi:	*khāt**ā** hai*	he eats
	*khāt**ī** hai*	she eats
Tamil:	*sāpiḍ**aran***	he eats
	*sāpiḍ**arā***	she eats
	*sāpiḍ**adı***	it eats
Sanskrit:	***khādāti***	**he/she/it eats**

FEATURES of LANGUAGE X

Full Retroflexion

Voiceless Aspirates

NO Voiced Aspirates

Full Ergativity

Natural Gender

Gender Agreement with Verbs

Object Marking

Postpositions

Geminate Consonants???

Dakkhini-style Subordinate Clauses???

Compound Verbs???

Dravidian Vowels???

Honorifics???

Copula Deletion???

Preference for NOUNS???

FULL ERGATIVITY in LANGUAGE X

No ERGATIVITY in Southern First Indian languages ???

No ERGATIVITY in Southern Dravidian languages

No ERGATIVITY in Dakkhini

Mundari:

Soma	*hon-ko*	*lel-**ko**-ka-e?*
Soma	child-pl	see-**3pl.O**-3sg:S-Ques

'May Soma see the children?'

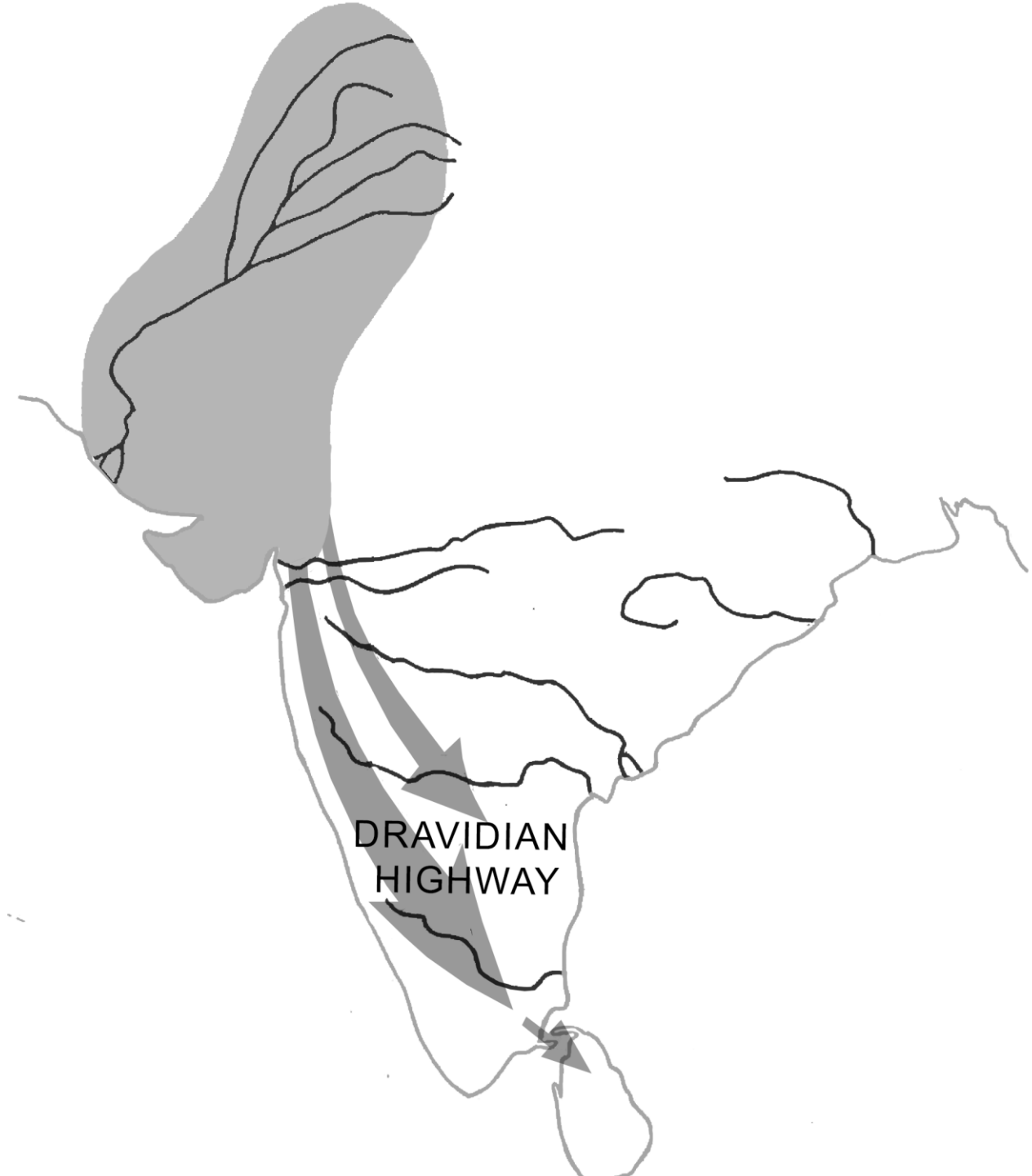
(ERGATIVITY-lite)

Santali:

(iñ)	*p-ea*	*maṛaŋ*	*gāi*	*ñei-ket'-**ko**-a-ñ*
I	three	big	cow	see-past-**3pl.O**-finite-1sg.S

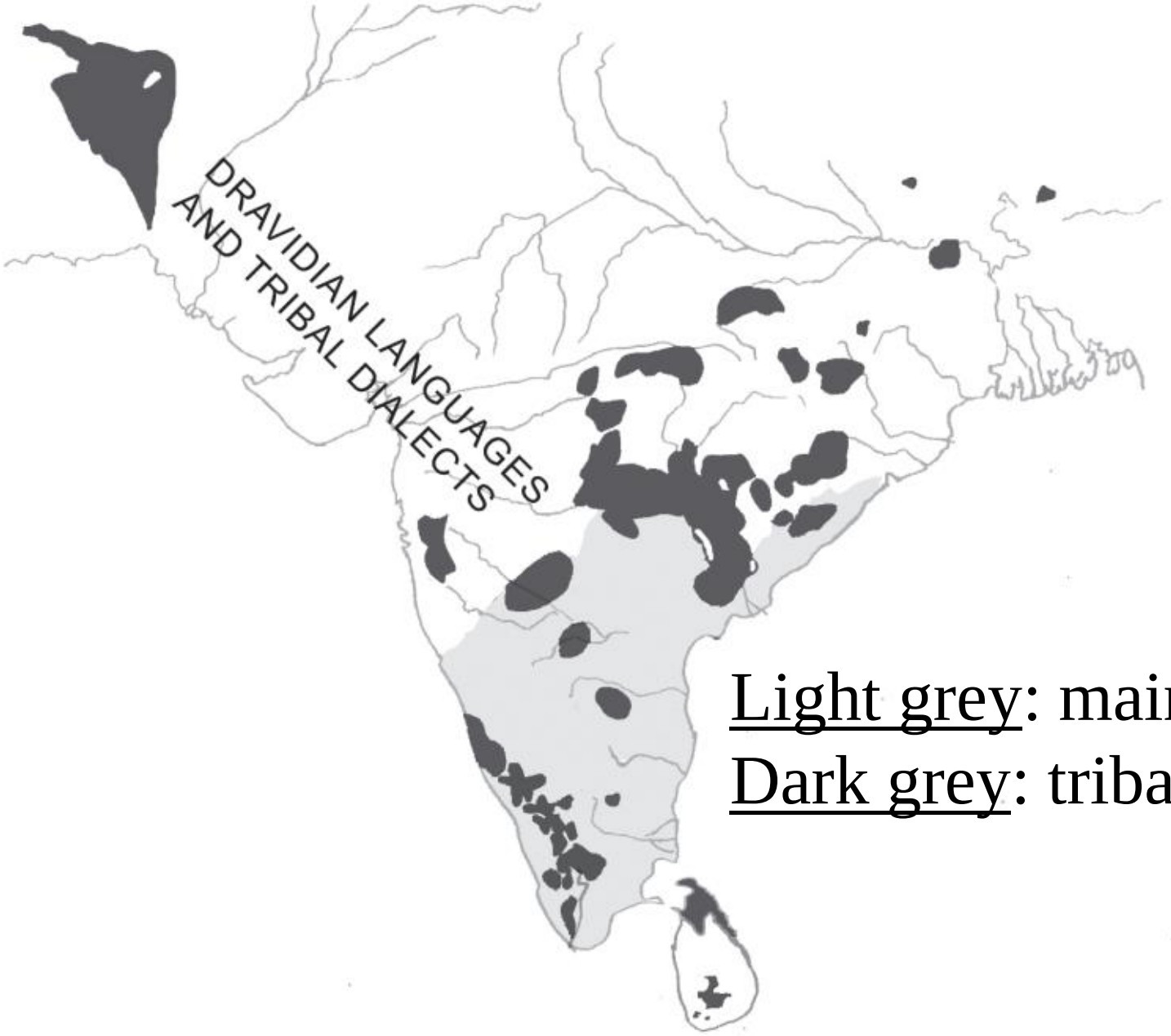
'I saw three big cows'

This DOUBLE MARKING, object as well as subject, is **MISSING** from the **southern Munda languages**


DRAVIDIAN
HIGHWAY

EARLY
DAKKHINI

WESTERN
MARATHI
CENTRAL
MARATHI
EASTERN MARATHI
SOUTHERN MARATHI



Light grey: mainstream Dravidian languages
Dark grey: tribal Dravidian languages

BRAHUI
BALOCHI