A History of Knowledge

Oldest Knowledge

What the Sumerians knew

What the Babylonians knew

What the Hittites knew

What the Persians knew

What the Egyptians knew

What the Indians knew

What the Chinese knew

What the Greeks knew

What the Phoenicians knew

What the Romans knew

What the Barbarians knew

What the Jews knew

What the Christians knew

Tang & Sung China

What the Japanese knew

What the Muslims knew

The Middle Ages

Ming & Manchu China

The Renaissance

The Industrial Age

The Victorian Age

The Modern World

What the Phoenicians knews
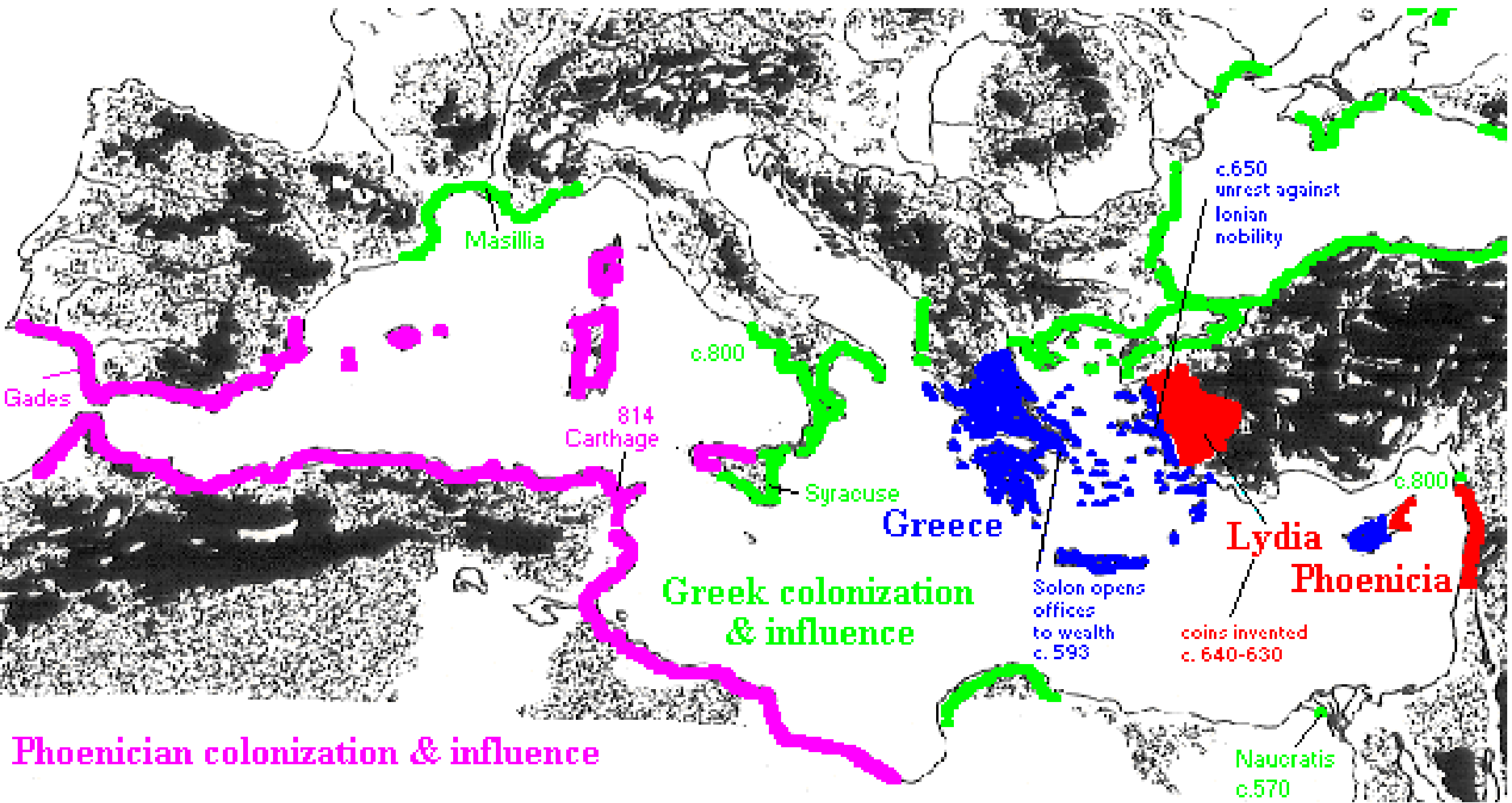
Piero Scaruffi

Copyright 2018
http://www.scaruffi.com/know

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Bibliography**
  - **Glenn Moore: Phoenicians (2000)**
  - **Barry Cunliffe: The Ancient Celts (1997)**

Phoenicians and Greeks

Masillia

Gades

c.800

814 Carthage

Syracuse

Greece

Greek colonization & influence

Solon opens offices to wealth c. 593

c.650 unrest against Ionian nobility

Lydia

Phoenicia

coins invented c. 640-630

c.800

Naucratis c.570

Phoenician colonization & influence

4

What the Phoenicians knew

- **No name for "Phoenician" people ("phoenician" means "purple people" in Greek)**
- **Canaanites (Northern Semitic people, ancestors of both Phoenicians and Hebrews, 2500 BC - 1000 BC)**
- **El chief god of the Canaanites, and his wife Anat**

Map of Phoenicia, Phoenician Colonies & Trading Posts
© http://phoenicia.org — copyright watermark is embedded
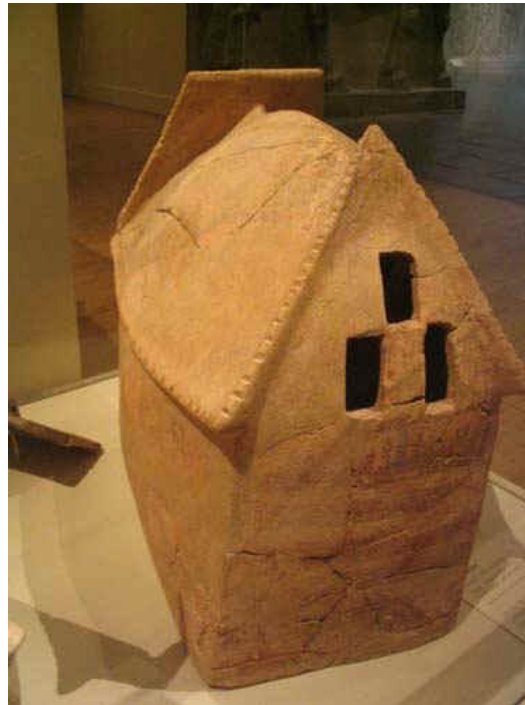
What the Phoenicians knew

- **1800 BC-1400 BC: Phoenicia occupied by Egypt**
  - **tin and lapislazuli from Afghanistan to Egypt**
  - **copper from Cyprus to Egypt**
  - **timber from Phoenicia to Egypt**
- **12th c BC: Collapse of Egyptian and Mesopotamian economies**
  - **Reshaping of the old trade routes**
  - **Phoenician merchants became the protagonists not the serfs of international trade**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **1200 BC: Phoenicians move from Arabia to the Mediterranean coast**

- **Shipbuilding (1200BC) and navigation (north star)**

- **11##: founding of trading post in Tunisia (Utica)**

- **1104 BC: founding of trading post on the Atlantic (Cadiz): tin, gold, copper**

- **11th c BC: urban expansion and commercial expansion abroad**

- **Sea trade**

- **Colonization**

- **Silver of Spain prompts the creation of a series of ports from Lebanon to Spain**

- **Trinity of gods: the father El/Baal, creator of the universe; the son Baal/Melqart, responsible for the annual cycle of vegetation; the heavenly mother**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Ossuary of Azor, Canaan 3-4,000 BC shaped like a building of the era**
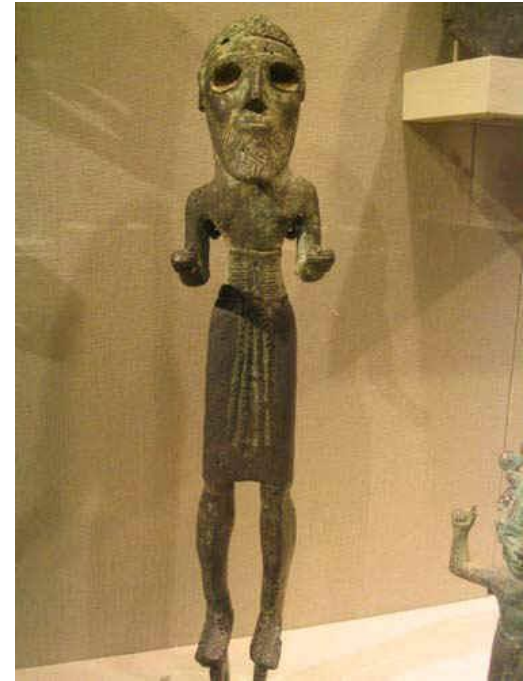

(Metropolitan Museum)

Cyprus

Vessel of diabase stone
(5,500 BC)

Terracotta amphor
(2,000 BC)

Lebanon: copper statue
(2500 BC)

Copper lingot
(1450-1050 BC)

(Metropolitan Museum)

Cyprus

2500 BC

2000 BC

1650 BC

(Getty Villa)

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Byblos**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Byblos**
  - **Golden age 3rd millennium BC**
  - **Most important trading post in the Mediterranean**
  - **Crossroads of Anatolia, Mesopotamia, Egypt**
  - **Exporting cedar wood, resin, oil, wool, boats (eg boat for king Snofru)**
  - **Importing gold, linen, papyrus ("byblos"= collection of sheets in Greek) from Egypt, ebony (Sudan), lapislazuli (Mesopotamia), copper (Cyprus)**
  - **2150 conquered by Amorites**
  - **1725 by Hyksos**
  - **1580 by Egypt**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Cosmogony of Philo of Byblos**
  - **Elioun first god, father of Uranus and Ge, grandfather of El**
  - **El is father of all gods, husband of Asherah and is dethroned by his son Baal**
  - **Elioun = Hittite god Alalu**
  - **Uranus = Hittite god Anu**
  - **El = Hittite god Kumarbi = Greek god Kronos = father of all gods**
  - **Baal = Teshub = Zeus**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Language**
  - **1500 BC: Canaanites develop an alphabet of 24 symbols by removing the vowels from the old Semitic cuneiform alphabet**
  - **1000 BC: Byblos condenses original 30 signs to 22**
  - **Written from right to left**
  - **Ahiram sarcophagus from Byblos (10th c BC) with oldest Phoenician inscription (Beirut National Museum)**
  - **Right to left writing because stonemasons used a chisel in the left hand and a hammer in the right hand**

What the Phoenicians knew

Oldest alphabetical inscription
Sarcophagus of king Ahiram of Byblos, 1000 BC

What the Phoenicians knew

Phoenician:

Greek:

Hebrew:

Phoenician -- c. 900 B.C.																								
Earliest Greek -- c. 750 B.C. (Western Variant)	A	B	Γ	Δ	E	F	Z	H	Θ	I	K	Λ	M	N	Ξ	O	Π	M	Q	P	Σ	T		Y		Φ X Ψ
Etruscan -- c. 650 B.C.																									
Latin -- c. 500 B.C.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		I	K	L	M	N		O	P		Q	R	S	T	V		X
C to G -- 3rd cent. B.C.																									
Latin -- 1st cent. B.C.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H		I	K	L	M	N		O	P		Q	R	S	T	V		X Y Z
Latin -- Middle Ages	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N		O	P		Q	R	S	T	U	V W	X Y Z

http://www.wam.umd.edu/~rfradkin/alphapage.html

What the Phoenicians knew

Sumerian cuneiform
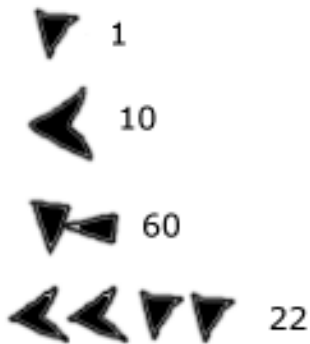
Old Persian Numbers

4   5   10   11   30   100

1 - 10 in Greek acrophonic numbers

Greek Attic system

Phoenicians use their letters
to mean numbers.

Hebrew

Value	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Value x 1	א Alef 05D0	ב Bet 05D1	ג Gimel 05D2	ד Dalet 05D3	ה He 05D4	ו Vav 05D5	ז Zayen 05D6	ח Het 05D7	ט Tet 05D8
Value x 10	י Yod 05D9	כ Kaf 05DB	ל Lamed 05DC	מ Mem 05DE	נ Nun 05E0	ס Samekh 05E1	ע Ayin 05E2	פ Pe 05E4	צ Tzadi 05E6
Value x 100	ק Qof 05E7	ר Resh 05E8	ש Shin 05E9	ת Tav 05EA					

Ionic system (after 100BC,
from Phoenician numbers)

1 = A
2 = B
3 = Γ
4 = Δ
5 = E
6 = ζ
7 = Z
8 = H
9 = Θ

The Alphabet Family Tree

http://phoenicia.org
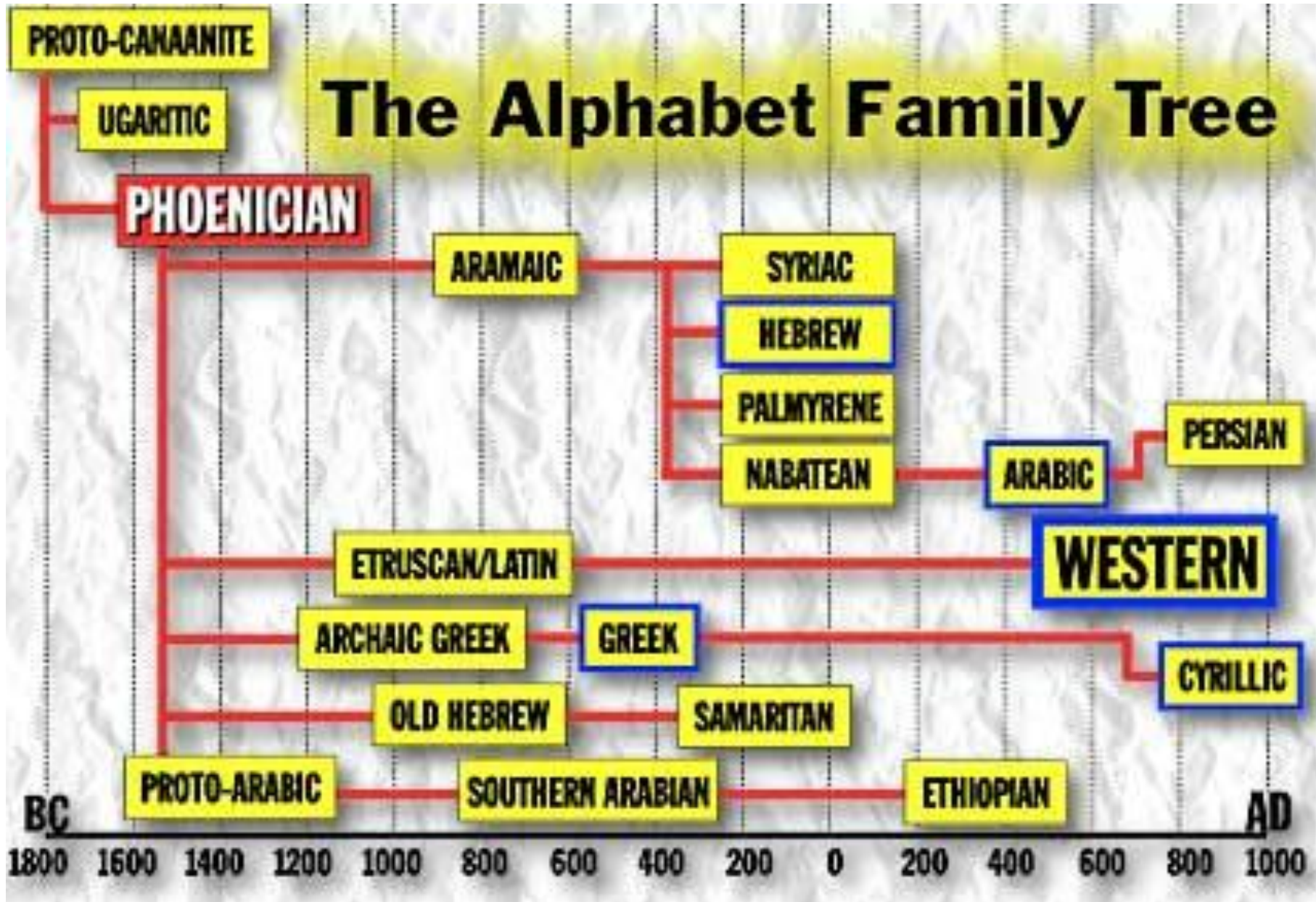
Ugarit

- **Independent city-state between 1500-1200 BC**
- **Cosmopolitan center with palaces, temples, vaulted tombs, archives in several languages**
- **Trade with Egypt, Mesopotamia, Aegean islands and the Hittites (Anatolia)**
- **1,500 BC: alphabet**

First alphabet, 1400 BC
(Damascus museum)

Ugarit, 1350 BC (Damascus Museum)

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Arameans or Syriacs**
  - **Semitic, nomadic people of Mesopotamia**
  - **Settled in Syria in the 14th century BC**
  - **Small tribes that never unified in an empire**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Aramaic**

  - **Aramaic language (originally a dialect of Akkadian) written with the Phoenician alphabet**
  - **International trade language of the Middle East between 1000 and 600 BCE**
  - **Official language of the Persian Empire (539-337 BC)**
  - **Aramaic used as far as Egypt and China**
  - **Aramaic becomes the language of the Jews in Palestine (Jesus preaches in Aramaic)**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Aramaic**
  - **Aramaic evolves into Christian Aramaic, Syriac (4th to 7th c. AD)**
  - **Aramaic declines with the Arab conquest (7th c. AD)**
  - **Aramaic survives as the languages of Christian communities in Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Iraq, Iran**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Aramaic**
  - **850 BC: 22-character alphabet derived from Phoenician**

Basalt stele in Aramaic (750 BC) from Sfire (Syria), a treaty between two kings, one of the oldest Aramaic inscriptions (Damascus Museum)
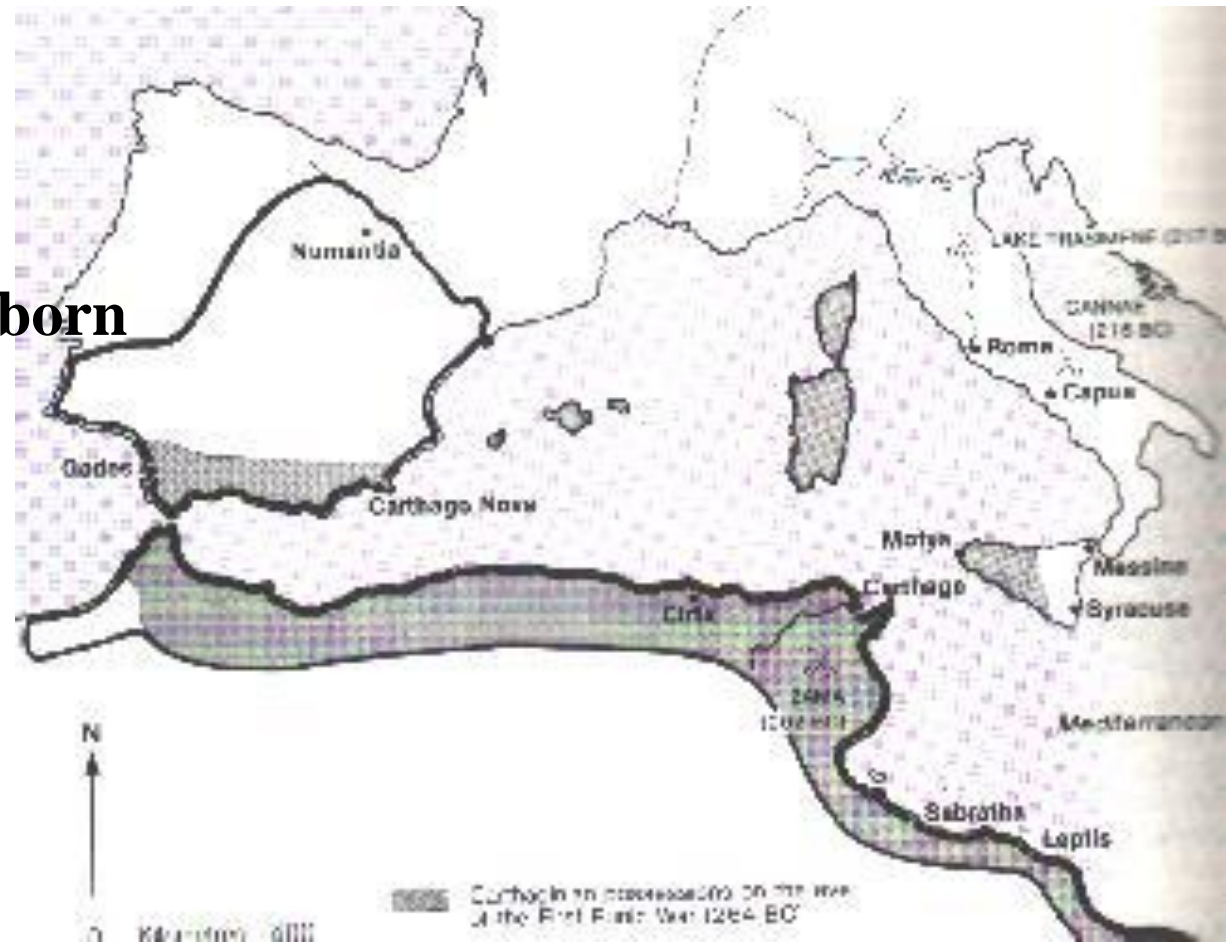
What the Phoenicians knew

- **City-states (Tyre, 950 BC; Carthage , 814BC)**
- **Straits of Gibraltar**
- **Celts**
- **605 BC: Babylonian occupation (Nebuchadnezzar II)**
- **600 BC: Phoenicians circumnavigate Africa**
- **333 BC: Alexander annexes all Phoenician cities**
- **198 BC: the Phoenician cities fall under Seleucid rule**
- **146 BC: Rome destroys Carthage**
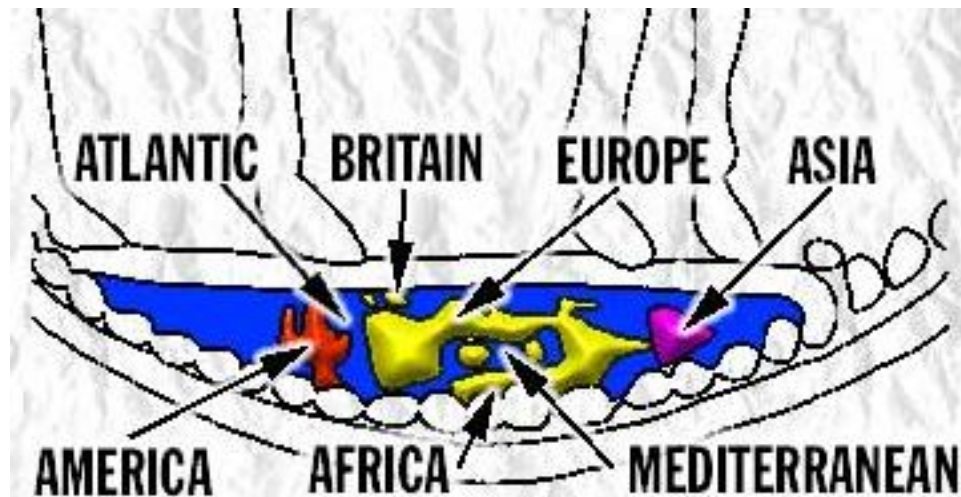- **64 BC: the Phoenician cities are conquered by Roman general Pompey**

What the Phoenicians knew

- **Carthage (Kart-Hadasht) before the Punic wars**
- **Founded by Tyre 9th BC**
- **Independent after Nebuchadnezzar's invasion of Palestine**
- **Metal trade**
- **Society of merchants,**
- **not warriors**
- **Duty to sacrifice first-born**
- **Army of mercenaries**
  - **Numidians**
  - **Libyans**
  - **Spaniards**
  - **Gauls**
  - **Italians**
  - **Greeks**

What the Phoenicians knew

MAP →

ATLANTIC BRITAIN EUROPE ASIA

AMERICA AFRICA MEDITERRANEAN

www.mtholyoke.edu

What the Celts knew

- **Megalithic culture (Western and Northern Europe, 4000-2000 BC)**
  - **15,000 megalithic tombs found so far**
  - **Originally developed in France 5,000 BC, then spread to Iberia, British Isles (3,500 BC)**

What the Celts knew

- Megalithic culture
  - Barnenez/Finistere (France, 3800 BC)
  - Gavrinis gallery-type dolmen (France, 3500 BC)
  - New Grange's tomb (Ireland, 3400 BC, 90mx15m)
  - Carnac (Britain, 3000 menhirs, 3kms long)
  - Stonehenge's cromlech (Britain, 2300 BC)
  - Ashdown (Britain)
  - Soto dolmen (Spain)
  - Los Millares' necropolis (Spain)
  - Ggantija Temples (Malta, 3500-2400 BC)
  - Nuraghi of Sardinia (Italy)

Newgrange, Ireland

Ggantija Temples, Malta, 3500-2400 BC
oldest free-standing structures
in the world

Gavrinis Island, Brittany, France, 3,500BC

Monte d'Accoddi
(Sardinia, 2700 BC)

29

Megaliths
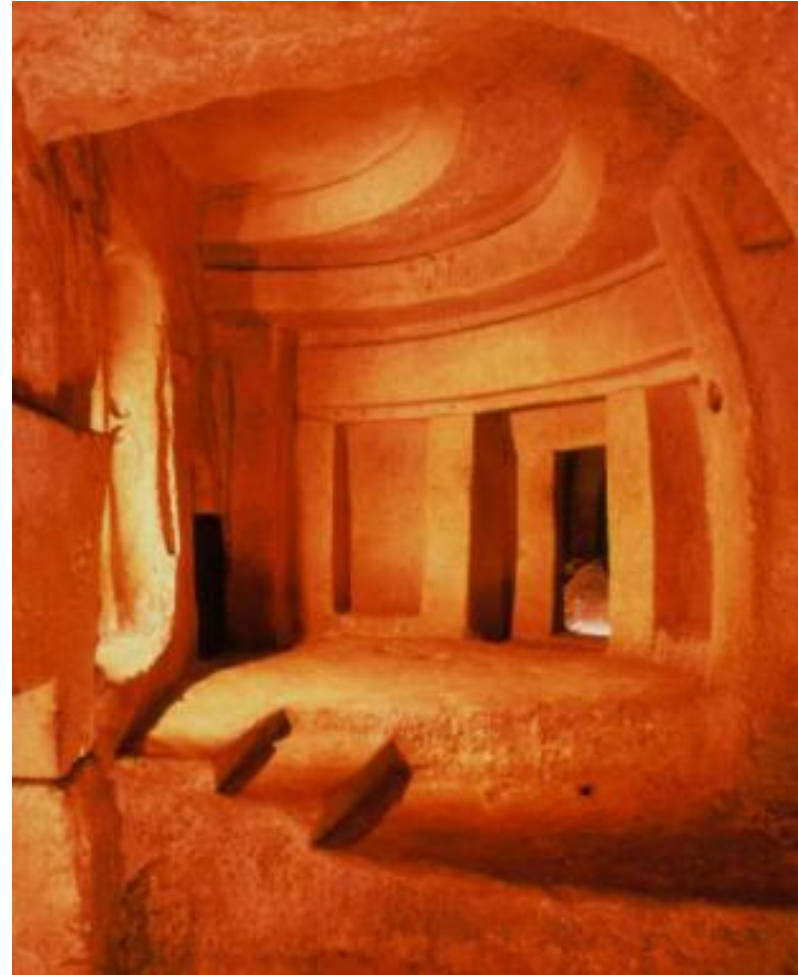

Giganti di Mont'e Prama 30
(Sardinia, 800 BC)

Bronze Age in Germany

Nebra sky disk (1,600 BC)

What the Celts knew

- **Malta**

Hal Saflieni Hypogeum
(Malta Tourism Authority)

What the Celts knew

- **Megaliths**
  - **Menhir**
  - **Cromlech (a group of menhirs set in a circle)**
  - **Dolmen**

What the Celts knew

- **Megaliths**
  - **Cult of the Dead: the house of the dead are built of stone (the house of the living are built of wood)**
  - **Ritual communion with the ancestors**
  - **The megaliths might be substitute bodies for the dead**

What the Celts knew

- **Megalithic cultures of the 20th century**
  - **Indonesia**
  - **Melanesia**

What the Celts knew

- **Vinca culture (Balkans, 4000 BC)**
  - **Non-IndoEuropean**
  - **Proto-writing**

What the Celts knew

- **Urnfield culture (Central Europe, 1300-700 BC)**
    - **Non-IndoEuropean**
    - **Agriculture**
    - **Bronze**
    - **Cremation**
    - **Horse as a status symbol**
- **Atlantic region**
    - **Network of trading communities**
    - **Copper from Ireland, Iberia, Wales**
    - **Tin from Brittany, Galicia, England**
    - **Gold from Ireland, Iberia, Wales**

What the Celts knew

- **Hallstatt culture (Central Europe, 1200-500 BC)**
  - **IndoEuropean**
  - **Hallstatt C: early Iron Age (800–600 BC)**
    - **Vehicle burials for the aristocracy (Rhine to Bohemia)**
    - **Cavalry sword**

What the Celts knew

- **Hallstatt culture (Central Europe, 1200-500 BC)**
  - **Hallstatt D (600-450 BC)**
    - **Hill forts**
    - **Linking the river systems of the Rhone, Rheine, Seine, Danube**
    - **Four-wheel funerary wagon**
    - **Trade with Etruscans of the Po Valley**
    - **Trade with Greeks via Massalia/Marseilles**

What the Celts knew

- **Hallstatt culture (Central Europe, 1200-500 BC)**

Celtic hill fort of Bopfingen

What the Celts knew

- **LaTerre Culture (450-370 BC)**
  - **Decline of hill forts**
  - **Two-wheel chariot as a funerary cart**

What the Celts knew

- **Celts**
  - **Burials**
  - **Four-wheeled chariot**
  - **Iron**
  - **Indo-European language**
  - **Druids (both priests, scholars and teachers)**
  - **Human sacrifice**
  - **Naked warriors**
 - **War chariot**
  - **Endemic warfare**

What the Celts knew

- **Celts**
  - **Dualism between the male god of the tribe (Dagda) and the female god of the land (Morrigan)**
  - **Many other gods appearing in many guises**
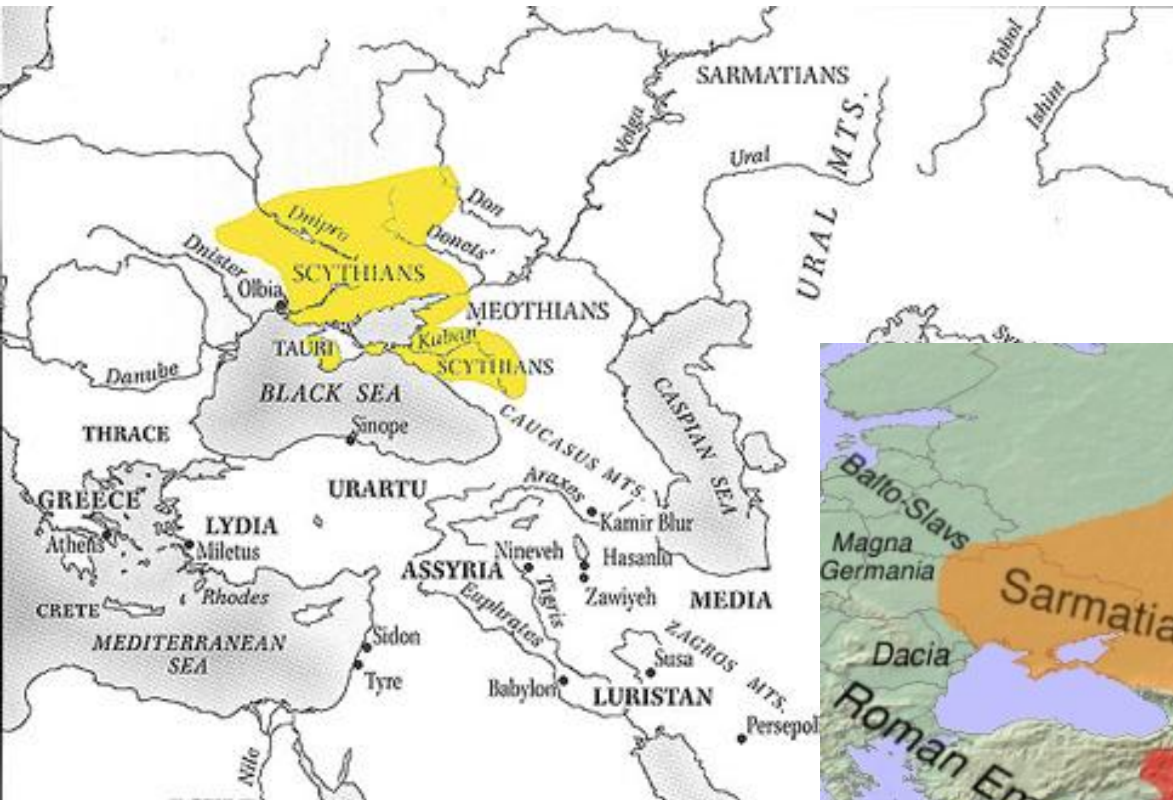
What the Celts knew

- **Celts**
  - **400 BC: Migration into the Po Valley**
  - **390 BC: Celts/Gauls defeat the Roman army**
  - **4th c: Celts migrate east through the Danube valley**
  - **225 BC: Battle of Telamon/Talamone between the Gauls and the Romans (last European battle with chariots)**

Celts

Cultural Atlas of the World - Greece - page 170
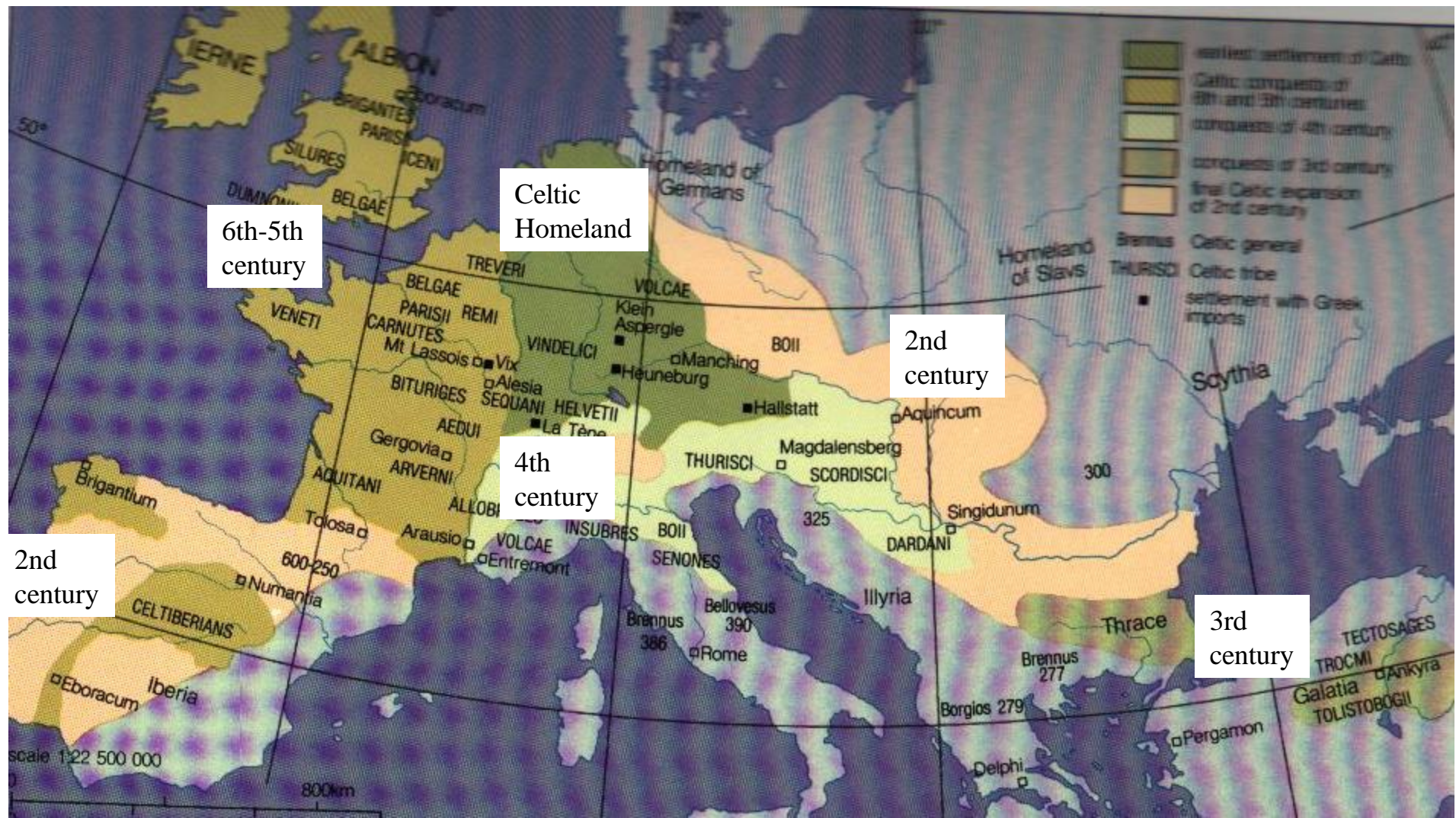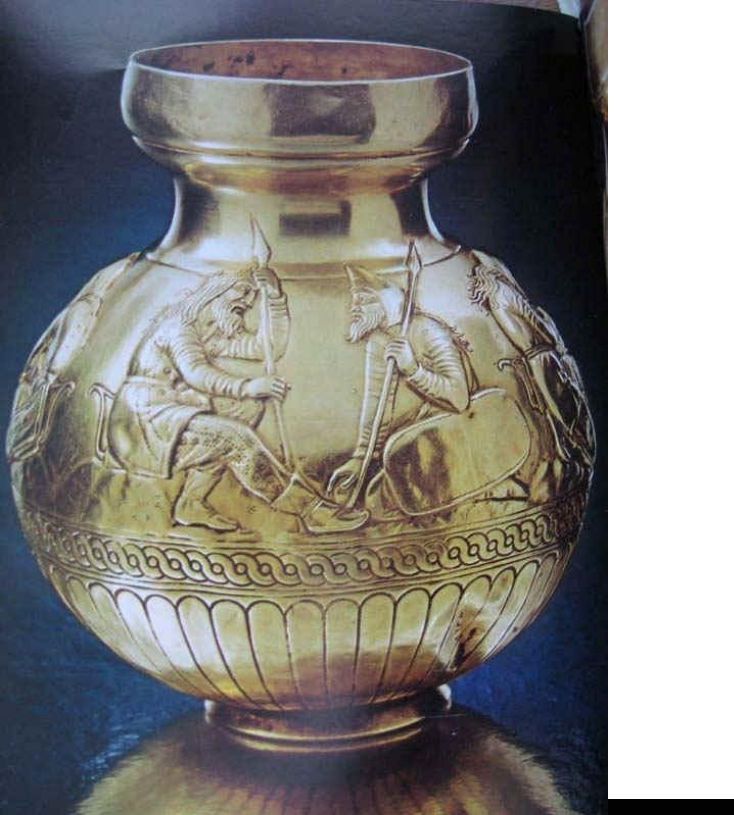
Scythians

Scythians

7th c BC

100-50 BC

Scythians

- **Nomadic herders of the steppes north of the Black Sea**
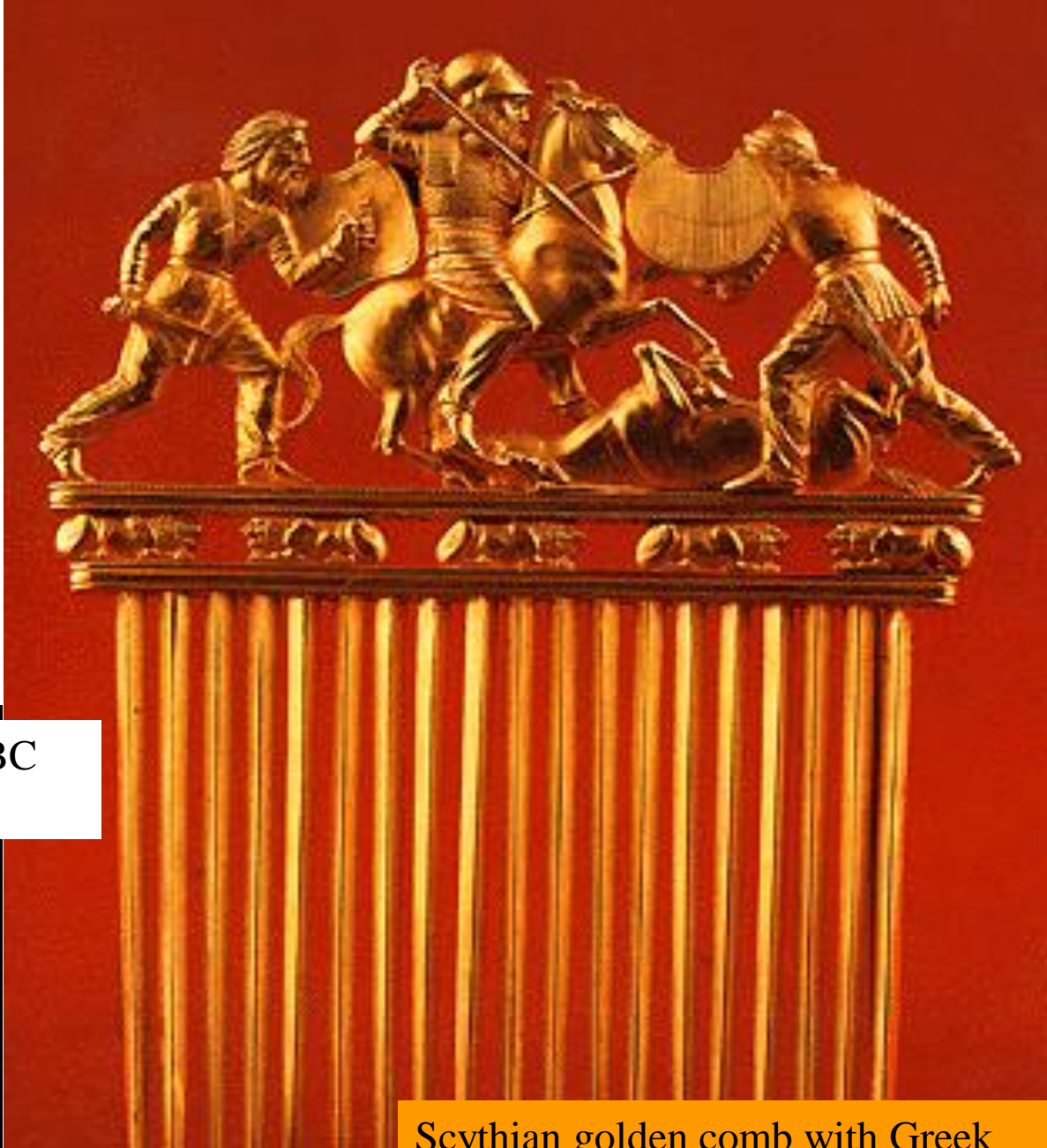- **Persian linguistic group**

Scythian golden bottle of 6th-4th c BC (Hermitage, St Petersburg)

Scythian object of unknown purpose of 6th-4th c BC (Hermitage, St Petersburg)

Scythian golden comb with Greek influence of 6th-4th c BC (Hermitage, St Petersburg)

Scythian mirror with Chinese,
Persian and Greek motifs of 6th-4th
c BC (Hermitage, St Petersburg)

Piero Scaruffi
Copyright 2018
http://www.scaruffi.com/know