

Ancient history

Ancient history is the aggregate of past events^[1] from the beginning of recorded human history and extending as far as the Early Middle Ages or the Post-classical Era. The span of recorded history is roughly 5,000 years, beginning with Sumerian Cuneiform script, the oldest discovered form of coherent writing from the protoliterate period around the 30th century BC.^[2]

The term classical antiquity is often used to refer to history in the Old World from the beginning of recorded Greek history in 776 BC (First Olympiad). This roughly coincides with the traditional date of the founding of Rome in 753 BC, the beginning of the history of ancient Rome, and the beginning of the Archaic period in Ancient Greece. Although the ending date of ancient history is disputed, some Western scholars use the fall of the Western Roman Empire in 476 AD (the most used),^{[3][4]} the closure of the Platonic Academy in 529 AD,^[5] the death of the emperor Justinian I in 565 AD,^[6] the coming of Islam^[7] or the rise of Charlemagne^[8] as the end of ancient and Classical European history

In India, ancient history includes the early period of the Middle Kingdoms,^{[9][10][11]} and, in China, the time up to the Qin dynasty.^{[12][13]}

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Study

Historians have two major avenues which they take to better understand the ancient world: archaeology and the study of source texts. Primary sources are those sources closest to the origin of the information or idea under study.^{[14][15]} Primary sources have been distinguished from secondary sources which often cite, comment on, or build upon primary sources.^[16]

Archaeology

Archaeology is the excavation and study of artefacts in an effort to interpret and reconstruct past human behavior.^{[17][18][19][20]} Archaeologists excavate the ruins of ancient cities looking for clues as to how the people of the time period lived. Some important discoveries by archaeologists studying ancient history include:

- The Egyptian pyramids^[21] giant tombs built by the ancient Egyptians beginning about 2600 BC as the final resting places of their royalty
- The study of the ancient cities of Harappa (Pakistan),^[22] Mohenjo-daro (Pakistan), and Lothal^[23] in India (South Asia).
- The city of Pompeii:^[24] an ancient Roman city preserved by the eruption of a volcano in AD 79. Its state of preservation is so great that it is a valuable window into Roman culture and provided insight into the cultures of the Etruscans and the Samnites.^[25]
- The Terracotta Army.^[26] the mausoleum of the First Qin Emperor in ancient China
- The discovery of Knossos by Minos Kalokairinos and Sir Arthur Evans
- The discovery of Troy by Heinrich Schliemann.

Source text

Most of what is known of the ancient world comes from the accounts of antiquity's own historians. Although it is important to take into account the bias of each ancient author, their accounts are the basis for our understanding of the ancient past. Some of the more notable ancient writers include Herodotus, Thucydides, Arrian, Plutarch, Polybius, Sima Qian, Sallust, Livy, Josephus, Suetonius, and Tacitus.

A fundamental difficulty of studying ancient history is that recorded histories cannot document the entirety of human events, and only a fraction of those documents have survived into the present day.^[27] Furthermore, the reliability of the information obtained from these surviving records must be considered.^{[27][28]} Few people were capable of writing histories, as literacy was not widespread in almost any culture until long after the end of ancient history.^[29]

The earliest known systematic historical thought emerged in ancient Greece, beginning with Herodotus of Halicarnassus (484–c. 425 BC). Thucydides largely eliminated divine causality in his account of the war between Athens and Sparta,^[30] establishing a rationalistic element which set a precedent for subsequent Western historical writings. He was also the first to distinguish between cause and immediate origins of an event.^[30]

The Roman Empire was one of the ancient world's most literate cultures,^[31] but many works by its most widely read historians are lost. For example, Livy, a Roman historian who lived in the 1st century BC, wrote a history of Rome called Ab Urbe Condita (*From the Founding of the City*) in 144 volumes; only 35 volumes still exist, although short summaries of most of the rest do exist. Indeed, only a minority of the work of any major Roman historian has survived.

Archaeological field surveys

Reasons that an area undergoes an archaeological field survey

- *Artifacts found*: Locals have picked up artifacts.
- *Literary sources*: Old literary sources have provided archaeologists with clues about settlement locations that have not been archaeologically documented.
- *Oral sources*: In many locations, local stories contain some hint of a greater past, and there is often some truth to them.
- *Local knowledge*: In many cases, locals actually know where to find something that is of interest to archaeologists.
- *Previous surveys*: In some places, a survey was carried out in the past, and is recorded in an obscure academic journal.
- *Previous excavations*: Excavations carried out before the middle of the 20th century are notoriously poorly documented.
- *Lack of knowledge*: Many areas of the world have little known about the nature and organisation of past human activity.

Chronology

Prehistory

Prehistory is the period before written history. The early human migrations^[32] in the Lower Paleolithic saw Homo erectus spread across Eurasia 1.8 million years ago. The controlled use of fire occurred 800,000 years ago in the Middle Paleolithic 250,000 years ago, Homo sapiens (modern humans) emerged in Africa. 60–70,000 years ago, Homo sapiens migrated out of Africa along a coastal route to South and Southeast Asia and reached Australia. 50,000 years ago, modern humans spread from Asia to the Near East. Europe was first reached by modern humans 40,000 years ago. Humans migrated to the Americas about 15,000 years ago in the Upper Paleolithic.

The 10th millennium BC is the earliest given date for the invention of agriculture and the beginning of the ancient era. Göbekli Tepe was erected by hunter-gatherers in the 10th millennium BC (c. 11,500 years ago), before the advent of sedentism. Together with Nevalı Çori, it has revolutionized understanding of the Eurasian Neolithic. In the 7th millennium BC, Jiahu culture began in China. By the 5th millennium BC, the late Neolithic civilizations saw the invention of the wheel and the spread of proto-writing. In the 4th millennium BC, the Cucuteni-Trypillian culture in the Ukraine-Moldova-Romania region develops. By 3400 BC, "proto-literate" cuneiform is spread in the Middle East.^[33] The 30th century BC, referred to as the Early Bronze Age II, saw the beginning of the literate period in Mesopotamia and Ancient Egypt. Around the 27th century BC, the Old Kingdom of Egypt and the First Dynasty of Uruk are founded, according to the earliest reliable regnal eras.

Timeline of ancient history

Middle to Late Bronze Age

The Bronze Age forms part of the three-age system. It follows the Neolithic Age in some areas of the world.

In the 24th century BC, the Akkadian Empire^{[34][35]} was founded in Mesopotamia.

The First Intermediate Period of Egypt of the 22nd century BC was followed by the Middle Kingdom of Egypt between the 21st to 17th centuries BC. The Sumerian Renaissance also developed c. the 21st century BC in Ur. Around the 18th century BC, the Second Intermediate Period of Egypt began.

By 1600 BC, Mycenaean Greece developed. The beginning of the Shang dynasty emerged in China in this period, and there was evidence of a fully developed Chinese writing system. The beginning of Hittite dominance of the Eastern Mediterranean region is also seen in the 1600s BC. The time from the 16th to the 11th centuries BC around the Nile is called the New Kingdom of Egypt. Between 1550 BC and 1292 BC, the Amarna Period developed in Egypt.

Early Iron Age

The Iron Age is the last principal period in the three-age system, preceded by the Bronze Age. Its date and context vary depending on the country or geographical region.

During the 13th to 12th centuries BC, the Ramesside Period occurred in Egypt. Around 1200 BC, the Trojan War was thought to have taken place.^[36] By around 1180 BC, the disintegration of the Hittite Empire was under way.

Brief ancient chronology

(Common Era years in astronomical year numbering)

In 1046 BC, the Zhou force, led by King Wu of Zhou, overthrew the last king of the Shang dynasty. The Zhou dynasty was established in China shortly thereafter

Pirak is an early iron-age site in Balochistan, Pakistan, going back to about 1200 BC. This period is believed to be the beginning of the Iron Age in India and the subcontinent.

In 1000 BC, the Mannaeen Kingdom began in Western Asia. Around the 10th to 7th centuries BC, the Neo-Assyrian Empire developed in Mesopotamia. In 800 BC, the rise of Greek city-states began. In 776 BC, the first recorded Olympic Games were held.

Classical Antiquity

Classical antiquity is a broad term for a long period of cultural history centered around the Mediterranean Sea, which begins roughly with the earliest-recorded Greek poetry of Homer (9th century BC), and continues through the rise of Christianity and the fall of the Western Roman Empire (5th century AD), ending in the dissolution of classical culture with the close of Late Antiquity.

Such a wide sampling of history and territory covers many rather disparate cultures and periods. "Classical antiquity" typically refers to an idealized vision of later people, of what was, in Edgar Allan Poe's words, "the glory that was Greece, the grandeur that was Rome!" In the 18th and 19th centuries AD, reverence for classical antiquity was much greater in Europe and the United States than it is today. Respect for the ancients of Greece and Rome affected politics, philosophy, sculpture, literature, theatre, education, and even architecture and sexuality.

In politics, the presence of a Roman Emperor was felt to be desirable long after the empire fell. This tendency reached its peak when Charlemagne was crowned "Roman Emperor" in the year 800, an act which led to the formation of the Holy Roman Empire. The notion that an emperor is a monarch who outranks a mere king dates from this period. In this political ideal, there would always be a Roman Empire, a state whose jurisdiction extended to the entire civilized world.

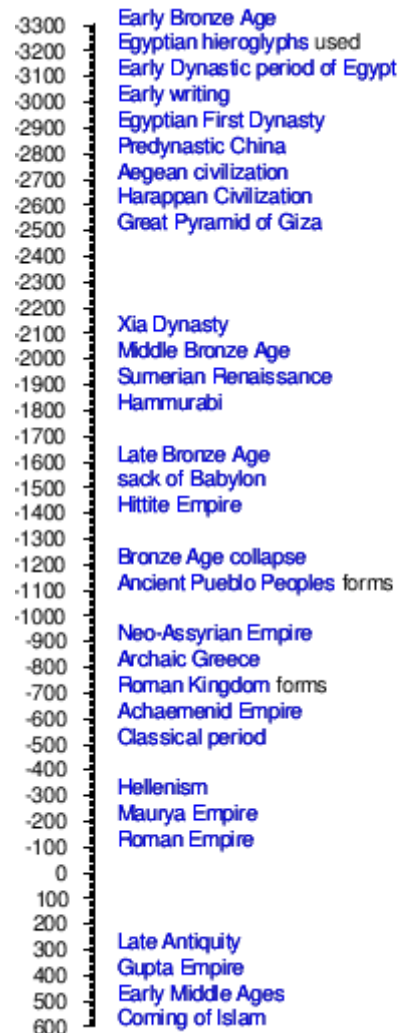
Epic poetry in Latin continued to be written and circulated well into the 19th century. John Milton and even Arthur Rimbaud received their first poetic educations in Latin. Genres like epic poetry, pastoral verse, and the endless use of characters and themes from Greek mythology left a deep mark on Western literature.

In architecture, there have been several Greek Revivals (though while apparently more inspired in retrospect by Roman architecture than Greek). Still, one needs only to look at Washington, DC to see a city filled with large marble buildings with façades made out to look like Roman temples, with columns constructed in the classical orders of architecture.

In philosophy, the efforts of St Thomas Aquinas were derived largely from the thought of Aristotle, despite the intervening change in religion from paganism to Christianity. Greek and Roman authorities such as Hippocrates and Galen formed the foundation of the practice of medicine even longer than Greek thought prevailed in philosophy. In the French theatre, tragedians such as Molière and Racine wrote plays on mythological or classical historical subjects and subjected them to the strict rules of the classical unities derived from Aristotle's *Poetics*. The desire to dance like a latter-day vision of how the ancient Greeks did it moved Isadora Duncan to create her brand of ballet. The Renaissance was partly caused by the rediscovery of classic antiquity^[37]

Early classical ancient history

- 776 BC: First Olympic Games, generally considered the beginning of Classical Antiquity.
- 753 BC: Founding of Rome (traditional date)^[38]



- 752 BC: Piye (once transliterated as *Piankhi*;^[39] d. 721 BC) was a Kushite king who conquered Egypt and founded the Twenty-fifth dynasty of Egypt
- 745 BC: Tiglath-Pileser III becomes the new king of Assyria.^[40] With time he conquers neighboring countries and turns Assyria into an empire
- 722 BC: Spring and Autumn period begins in China; Zhou dynasty's power is diminishing; the era of the Hundred Schools of Thought^{[41][42]}
- c. 750 BC: Breach of the Marib Dam in Arabia Felix.^{[43][44][45]} Three new dams were built by the Sabaeans.^[46]
- c. 615 BC: Rise of the Median Empire^[47]
- 612 BC: Attributed date of the destruction of Nineveh and subsequent fall of Assyria.^{[48][49]}
- 600 BC: Sixteen Maha Janapadas ("Great Realms" or "Great Kingdoms") emerge. A number of these Maha Janapadas are semidemocratic republics.^[50]
- c. 600 BC: Pandyan kingdom in South India^{[51][52][53]}
- 599 BC: Mahavira,^[54] founder of Jainism is born as a prince at Kundalavana, who ruled Magadha Empire.^[55]
- 563 BC: Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha), founder of Buddhism is born as a prince of the Shakya tribe, which ruled parts of Magadha, one of the Maha Janapadas^{[56][57]}
- 551 BC: Confucius, founder of Confucianism, is born^[58]
- 550 BC: The Achaemenid Empire is founded by Cyrus the Great^[59]
- 546 BC: Cyrus the Great overthrows Croesus King of Lydia^[60]
- 544 BC: Rise of Magadha as the dominant power under Bimbisara.^[61]
- 539 BC: The Fall of the Babylonian Empire^{[62][63]} and liberation of the Jews by Cyrus the Great^[64]
- 529 BC: Death of Cyrus the Great^[65]
- 525 BC: Cambyses II of Persia conquers Egypt^{[66][67]}
- c. 512 BC: Darius I (Darius the Great) of Persia,^[68] subjugates eastern Thrace, Macedonia submits voluntarily and annexes Libya, Persian Empire at largest extent
- 509 BC: Expulsion of the last King of Rome, founding of Roman Republic (traditional date)^{[69][70]}
- 508 BC: Democracy instituted by Cleisthenes at Athens^[71]
- c. 500 BC: Panini standardizes the grammar and morphology of Sanskrit in the text *Ashtadhyayi*.^[72] Panini's standardized Sanskrit is known as Classical Sanskrit
- 500 BC: Pingala develops system ranks of binary patterns.^{[73][74]}
- 490 BC: Greek city-states defeat Persian invasion at Battle of Marathon.^{[75][76]}
- 480–479 BC: Greek city states decisively defeat the Persians at the Battle of Salamis and the Battle of Plataea, ending once and for all the Persian threat to Greece.^[77]
- 480 BC King Leonidas of Sparta died 10 August
- 475 BC: Warring States period begins in China as the Zhou king became a mere figurehead; China is annexed by regional warlords.^[78]
- c. 469 BC: Birth of Socrates^[79]
- 465 BC: Murder of Xerxes I of Persia^[80]
- 460 BC: First Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta^[81]
- 449 BC: End of the Greco-Persian Wars. Macedonia, Thrace and Ionia gain independence from Achaemenid Persia.
- 447 BC: Building of the Parthenon at Athens started^{[82][83]}
- 424 BC: Nanda dynasty comes to power.^[84]
- 404 BC: End of Peloponnesian War^[85] between the Greek city-states
- 399 BC: February 15—The Greek philosopher Socrates^[86] is sentenced to death by Athenian authorities in Athens, condemned for impiety and the corruption of youth.^{[87][88]} He refuses to flee into exile and is sentenced to death by drinking hemlock.



The Mediterranean in c. the 4th century BC. Phoenician cities are labelled in yellow, Greek cities in red, and other cities in grey



Eastern Hemisphere in 500 BC.

- c. 385 BC: The Greek philosopher Plato,^[86] a former disciple of Socrates, founds a philosophical school at the Akademia, from land purchased from Akademus, in Athens^[89] – later famously known as the Academy.^[90] There, Plato, and the later heads of the school, called scholarchs, taught many of the brilliant minds of the day including the famous Greek philosopher Aristotle
- 335 BC: The Greek philosopher Aristotle^[91] founds his philosophical school – known then as the Lyceum^[92] (named because it was located near the site of the Lyceum gymnasium^[90] in Athens) – and begins teaching there.
- 331 BC: Alexander the Great defeats Darius III of Persia in the Battle of Gaugamela^[93]
- 326 BC: Alexander the Great defeats Indian king Porus in the Battle of the Hydaspes River^[94]
- 323 BC: Death of Alexander the Great at Babylon^[95]
- 321 BC: Chandragupta Maurya overthrows the Nanda Dynasty of Magadha.^[96]
- 307 BC: The Greek philosopher Epicurus founds his philosophical school, the Garden of Epicurus^[90] outside the walls of Athens.^[97]
- 305 BC: Chandragupta Maurya seizes the satrapies of Paropanisada (Kabul), Aria (Herat), Arachosia (Qanadahar) and Gedrosia (Baluchistan) from Seleucus I Nicator, the Macedonian satrap of Babylonia, in return for 500 elephants.^[98]
- c. 302 BC: Pandyan dynasty, Chola dynasty, and Chera dynasty rule separate areas in South India^[99]
- 294 BC: Zeno of Citium founds the philosophy of Stoicism in Athens^[100] (the philosophy derives its namesake from the fact that Zeno and his followers would regularly meet near the Stoa Poikile ("Painted Porch")^[90] of the Athenian agora.)
- c. 252 BC: Ashoka the Great becomes the emperor of the Mauryan Empire^[101]
- c. 252 BC: Thục Dynasty takes over Việt Nam (then Kingdom of Âu Lạc)^[102]
- c. 249 BC: Rise of Parthia^[103] (Ashkânîân), the third native dynasty of ancient Persia^[104]
- c. 233 BC: Death of Emperor Ashoka the Great^[105] Decline of the Mauryan Empire^[106]
- 221 BC: Construction of the Great Wall begins.^{[107][108]}
- c. 220 BC: Qin Shi Huang, ruler of the Qin dynasty, unifies China (end of Warring States period)^[109]
- c. 220 BC: Simuka, founder of the Satavahanas dynasty, rules area in South India^[110]
- 209 BC: Kingdom of Nan Yueh is established by Tch'ao T'o (Trieu Dynasty)^[111]
- 208 BC: The Xiongnu replaces the Mongolic Donghu as the dominant tribe of the Mongolian steppe and then five years later defeats the Yuezhi in Gansu, making a cup out of the skull of their leader^[112]
- c. 206 BC: Liu Bang is proclaimed emperor and the Han dynasty is established.^[113]
- 202 BC: Scipio Africanus defeats Hannibal at Battle of Zama^{[114][115]}
- 189 BC: Artaxiad Dynasty in Armenia is founded^[116]
- c. 184 BC: Shunga Empire founded.^[117]
- 149 BC–146: Third and final Punic War;^[118] destruction of Carthage by Rome^[119]
- 146 BC: Corinth in Greece was destroyed by Rome and Roman authority became supreme throughout Greece^[120]
- 140 BC: The first system of imperial examinations was officially instituted in China by the Han dynasty emperor Han Wu Di.^[121]
- c. 127 BC: Chang-Kien finds the western lands of civilisation and trading opens on routes of the Silk Road.^{[122][123]}
- 111 BC: The Nam Viet Kingdom^[a] (Triệu Dynasty) is destroyed by the first Chinese domination of Việt Nam.^[111]
- 95–55 BC: Tigranes the Great reigns in Armenian empire.^[124]
- 53 BC: Led by General Surena, the Parthians decisively defeat a Roman invasion at the Battle of Carrhae^{[125][b][126]}
- 49 BC: Conflict between Julius Caesar and Pompey the Great lead to the Roman Civil War.^[127]



Eastern Hemisphere in 323 BC.



Eastern Hemisphere in 200 BC.

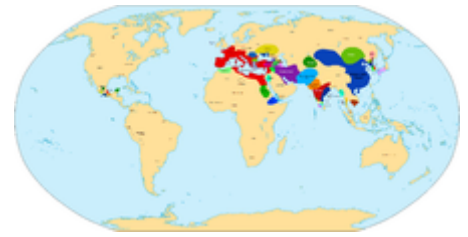


Eastern Hemisphere in 100 BC.

Mid-classical ancient history

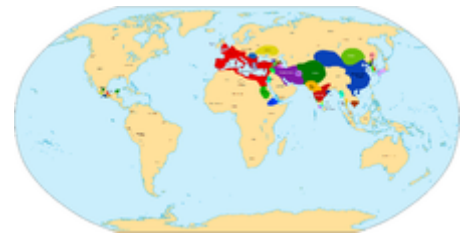
- 44 BC: Julius Caesar murdered by Marcus Brutus and others,^[127] the end of the Roman Republic and the beginning of the Roman Empire

- 27 BC: Octavian is proclaimed princeps (first citizen) by the Roman Senate and adopts the title Augustus (lit. "the august one").
- 6 BC: Earliest estimated date for birth of Jesus of Nazareth
- 5 BC: Birth of Jesus Christ (Ussher chronology)
- 9: Battle of the Teutoburg Forest, the Imperial Roman Army's bloodiest defeat.
- 14: Death of Emperor Augustus (Octavian), ascension of his adopted son Tiberius to the throne
- 29: Crucifixion of Jesus Christ.
- 69: Year of the four emperors in Rome
- 70: Destruction of Jerusalem by the armies of Titus.



World in 1.

- 117: Roman Empire at largest extent under Emperor Trajan
- 192: Kingdom of Champa in Central Việt Nam
- 3rd century: The Buddhist Srivijaya Empire established in the Malay Archipelago.
- 220: Three Kingdoms period begins in China after the fall of Han dynasty.
- 226: Fall of the Parthian Empire and Rise of the Sassanian Empire
- 238: Defeat of Gordian III (238–244), Philip the Arab (244–249), and Valerian (253–260), by Shapur I of Persia and Valerian is captured
- 280: Emperor Wu established Jin dynasty providing a temporary unity of China after the devastating Three Kingdoms period.



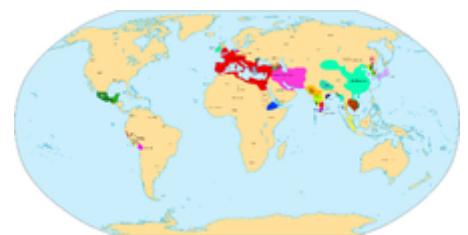
World in 100.

Late classical ancient history

- 285: Emperor Diocletian splits the Roman Empire into Eastern and Western Empires
- 313: Edict of Milan legalized Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, and thus ended the previous state-sanctioned persecution of Christians there
- 335: Samudragupta becomes the emperor of the Gupta empire
- 378: Battle of Adrianople, Roman army under Eastern Roman Emperor Valens is defeated by the Germanic tribes
- 395: Roman Emperor Theodosius I outlaws all pagan religions in favour of Christianity
- 410: Alaric I sacks Rome for the first time since 390 BC
- c. 455: Skandagupta repels an Indo-Hephthalite attack on India.
- 476: Romulus Augustus, last Western Roman Emperor is forced to abdicate by Odoacer, a half Hunnish and half Scirian chieftain of the Germanic Heruli; Odoacer returns the imperial regalia to Eastern Roman Emperor Zeno in Constantinople in return for the title of dux of Italy; traditionally, the most frequently cited date for the end of the Roman Empire (although the Eastern Roman Empire, based in Constantinople, would still continue to exist until 1453)
- 529 The Eastern Roman Emperor Justinian I ordered the prominent philosophical schools of antiquity throughout the Eastern Roman Empire (including the famous Academy in Athens, among others) to close down—allegedly because Justinian frowned upon the pagan nature of these schools



Eastern Hemisphere in 200 AD.



World in 300.

Classical ancient history end

The transition period from Classical Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages is known as Late Antiquity. Some key dates marking that transition are:

- 293: reforms of Roman Emperor Diocletian
- 395: the division of Roman Empire into the Western Roman Empire and Eastern Roman Empire
- 476: the fall of Western Roman Empire
- 529: closure of Platonic Academy in Athens by Byzantine Emperor Justinian I

610: the rise of Islam

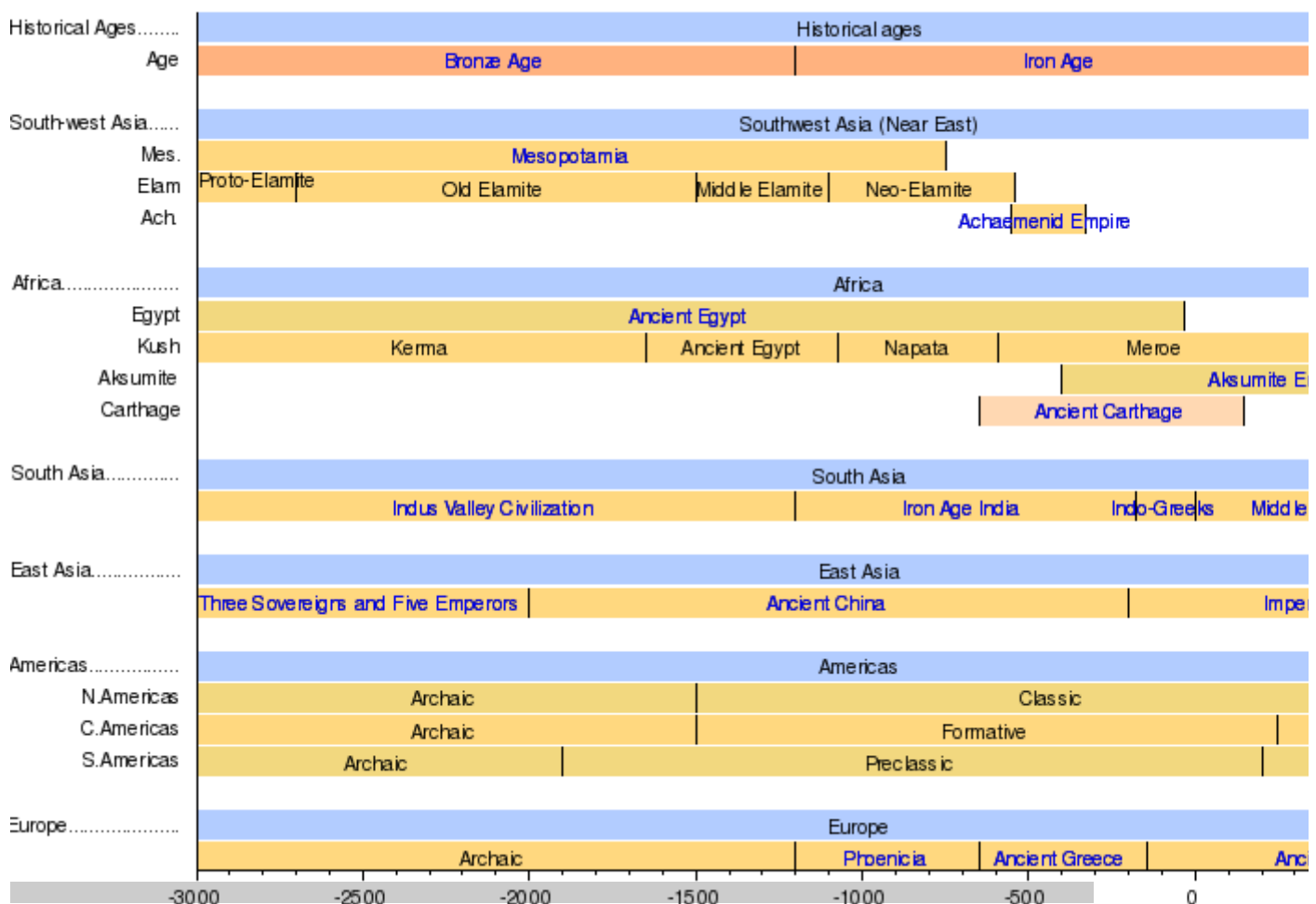
The beginning of the post-classical age (known generally as the Middle Ages) is a period in the history of Europe following the fall of the Western Roman Empire spanning roughly five centuries from AD 500 to 1000. Aspects of continuity with the earlier classical period are discussed in greater detail under the heading "Late Antiquity". Late Antiquity is the transitional centuries from Classical Antiquity to the Middle Ages in both mainland Europe and the Mediterranean world: generally from the end of the Roman Empire's Crisis of the 3rd century (c. 284) to the Islamic conquests and the re-organization of the Byzantine Empire under Heraclius.



Eastern Hemisphere in 476 AD.

Prominent civilizations

Comparative timeline

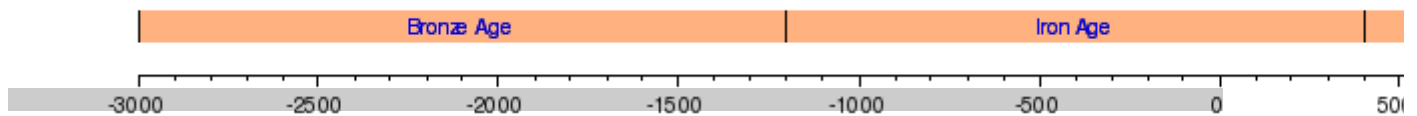


Comparison table

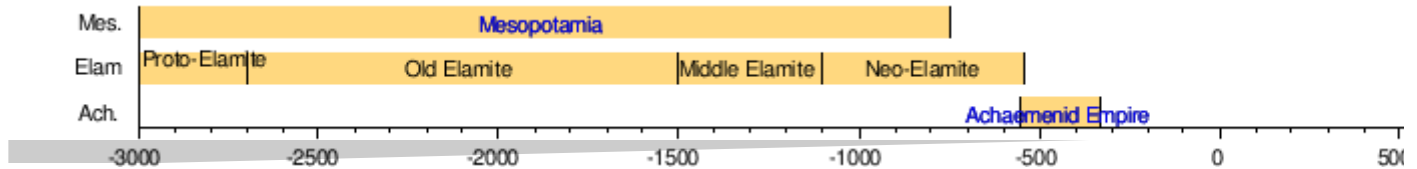
Name	Period	Area	Occupations	Writing	Religion
<u>Mesopotamian</u>	3300 – 750 BC	Sumer, Babylonia, Assyric Highlands	Dairy farming, textile, metal working, potter's wheel, sexagesimal system	Cuneiform	Polytheistic
<u>Ancient India</u>	3000 – 500 BC	<u>South Asia</u>		<u>Pictographic</u>	<u>Hinduism</u>

			potter's wheel, Agriculture, dams, city planning, Mathematics, temple builders, Astronomy, Astrology, Medicine, literature, Martial arts		
<u>Egyptian</u>	3000 – 30 BC	North Eastern Africa along River Nile	Egyptian Pyramids, Mummification, Decimal system, Solar calendar	Hieroglyphic	Polytheistic
<u>Nubian</u>	3000 – 350 BC	North Eastern Africa along River Nile	Mud brick temple, pottery, Nubian pyramids, Solar calendar	Hieroglyphic	Polytheistic
<u>Mayan</u>	2000 BC – 1200 AD	Mexico, Central America	Agriculture, Architecture, Astronomy, chemistry, cotton, drama, dyeing, mathematics, medicine, physics, poetry, vigesimal system	Hieroglyphic	Polytheistic
<u>Chinese</u>	2100 BC – 1 AD	China	Silk, Pottery, Chinaware, Metals, Great Wall, Paper	<u>Chinese</u>	Polytheistic
<u>Persian</u>	730 BC	Greater Persia	Agriculture, architecture, landscaping, postal service	<u>Cuneiform, Pahlavi</u>	<u>Zoroastrianism</u>
<u>Greek</u>	2700 BC – 1500 BC (Cycladic and Minoan civilization), 1600 BC – 1100 BC (Mycenaean Greece), 800 BC (Ancient Greece)	Greece (Peloponnese, Epirus, Central Greece, Western Greece, Macedon), later Alexandria	Agriculture, winemaking, architecture poetry, drama, philosophy, history, rhetoric, mathematics, political science, astronomy, physics, chemistry, medicine, warfare	<u>Greek</u>	Polytheistic
<u>Roman</u>	600 BC – 400 AD	Italy	Agriculture, Roman calendar, concrete	<u>Latin</u>	Polytheistic
<u>Aztec</u>	1325 AD – 1519 AD	Mexico	Agriculture, smelting, metalworking	<u>Pictographic</u>	Polytheistic
<u>Inca</u>	1300 AD – 1532 AD	Ecuador, Peru, Bolivia, Chile	Textile looms, agriculture, Inca architecture	–	Polytheistic

Historical ages



Southwest Asia (Near East)



The Ancient Near East is considered the cradle of civilization. It was the first to practice intensive year-round agriculture, created the first coherent writing system, invented the potter's wheel and then the vehicular- and mill wheel, created the first centralized governments, law codes and empires, as well as introducing social stratification, slavery and organized warfare, and it laid the foundation for the fields of astronomy and mathematics.

Mesopotamia

Mesopotamia is the site of some of the earliest known civilizations in the world. Early settlement of the alluvial plain lasted from the Ubaid period (late 6th millennium BC) through the Uruk period (4th millennium BC) and the Dynastic periods (3rd millennium BC) until the rise of Babylon in the early 2nd millennium BC. The surplus of storable foodstuffs created by this economy allowed the population to settle in one place instead of migrating after crops and herds. It also allowed for a much greater population density, and in turn required an extensive labor force and division of labor. This organization led to the necessity of record keeping and the development of writing (c. 3500 BC).

Babylonia was an Amorite state in lower Mesopotamia (modern southern Iraq), with Babylon as its capital. Babylonia emerged when Hammurabi (fl. c. 1728–1686 BC, according to the short chronology) created an empire out of the territories of the former kingdoms of Sumer and Akkad. The Amorites being ancient Semitic-speaking peoples, Babylonia adopted the written Akkadian language for official use; they retained the Sumerian language for religious use, which by that time was no longer a spoken language. The Akkadian and Sumerian cultures played a major role in later Babylonian culture, and the region would remain an important cultural center, even under outside rule. The earliest mention of the city of Babylon can be found in a tablet from the reign of Sargon of Akkad, dating back to the 23rd century BC.

The Neo-Babylonian Empire, or Chaldea, was Babylonia under the rule of the 11th ("Chaldean") dynasty, from the revolt of Nabopolassar in 626 BC until the invasion of Cyrus the Great in 539 BC. Notably, it included the reign of Nebuchadnezzar II, who conquered the Kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem.

Akkad was a city and its surrounding region in central Mesopotamia. Akkad also became the capital of the Akkadian Empire.^[128] The city was probably situated on the west bank of the Euphrates, between Sippar and Kish (in present-day Iraq, about 50 km (31 mi) southwest of the center of Baghdad). Despite an extensive search, the precise site has never been found. Akkad reached the height of its power between the 24th and 22nd centuries BC, following the conquests of king Sargon of Akkad. Because of the policies of the Akkadian Empire toward linguistic assimilation, Akkad also gave its name to the predominant Semitic dialect: the Akkadian language, reflecting use of *akkadû* ("in the language of Akkad") in the Old Babylonian period to denote the Semitic version of a Sumerian text.

Assyria was originally (in the Middle Bronze Age) a region on the Upper Tigris, named for its original capital, the ancient city of Assur. Later, as a nation and empire that came to control all of the Fertile Crescent, Egypt and much of Anatolia, the term "Assyria proper" referred to roughly the northern half of Mesopotamia (the southern half being Babylonia), with Nineveh as its capital. The Assyrian kings controlled a large kingdom at three different times in history. These are called the Old (20th to 15th centuries BC),

Middle (15th to 10th centuries BC), and Neo-Assyrian (911–612 BC) kingdoms, or periods, of which the last is the most well known and best documented. Assyrians invented excavation to undermine city walls, battering rams to knock down gates, as well as the concept of a corps of engineers, who bridged rivers with pontoons or provided soldiers with inflatable skins for swimming.^[129]

Mitanni was an Indo-Iranian^[130] empire in northern Mesopotamia from c. 1500 BC. At the height of Mitanni power, during the 14th century BC, it encompassed what is today southeastern Turkey, northern Syria and northern Iraq, centered around its capital, Washukanni, whose precise location has not been determined by archaeologists.

For more details on this topic, see Mesopotamia and the History of Iraq

Ancient Persia

Elam is the name of an ancient civilization located in what is now southwest Iran. Archaeological evidence associated with Elam has been dated to before 5000 BC.^{[131][132][133][134][135][136][137]} According to available written records, it is known to have existed from around 3200 BC – making it among the world's oldest historical civilizations – and to have endured up until 539 BC. Its culture played a crucial role in the Gutian Empire, especially during the Achaemenid dynasty that succeeded it, when the Elamite language remained among those in official use. The Elamite period is considered a starting point for the history of Iran.

The Medes were an ancient Iranian people. They had established their own empire by the 6th century BC, having defeated the Neo-Assyrian Empire with the Chaldeans. They overthrew Urartu later on as well. The Medes are credited with the foundation of the first Iranian empire, the largest of its day until Cyrus the Great established a unified Iranian empire of the Medes and Persian, often referred to as the Achaemenid Persian Empire, by defeating his grandfather and overlord Astyages the king of Media.

The Achaemenid Empire was the largest and most significant of the Persian Empires, and followed the Median Empire as the second great empire of the Iranians. It is noted in western history as the foe of the Greek city states in the Greco-Persian Wars, for freeing the Israelites from their Babylonian captivity, for its successful model of a centralized bureaucratic administration, the Mausoleum of Halicarnassus (one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World), and for instituting Aramaic as the empire's official language. Because of the Empire's vast extent and long endurance, Persian influence upon the language, religion, architecture, philosophy, law and government of nations around the world lasts to this day. At the height of its power, the Achaemenid dynasty encompassed approximately 8.0 million square kilometers, held the greatest percentage of world population to date, stretched three continents (Europe, Asia and Africa) and was territorially the largest empire of classical antiquity.

Parthia was an Iranian civilization situated in the northeastern part of modern Iran. Their power was based on a combination of the guerrilla warfare of a mounted nomadic tribe, with organizational skills to build and administer a vast empire – even though it never matched in power and extent the Persian empires that preceded and followed it. The Parthian Empire was led by the Arsacid dynasty which reunited and ruled over significant portions of the Near East and beyond, after defeating and disposing the Hellenistic Seleucid Empire, beginning in the late 3rd century BC. It was the third native dynasty of ancient Iran (after the Median and the Achaemenid dynasties). Parthia had many wars with the Roman Republic (and subsequently the Roman Empire), which marked the start of what would be over 700 years of frequent Roman-Persian Wars.

The Sassanid Empire, lasting the length of the Late Antiquity period, is considered to be one of Iran's most important and influential historical periods. In many ways the Sassanid period witnessed the highest achievements of Persian civilization and constituted the last great Iranian Empire before the Muslim conquest and the adoption of Islam.^[138] During Sassanid times, Persia influenced Roman civilization considerably,^[139] and the Romans reserved for the Sassanid Persians alone the status of equals. Sassanid cultural influence extended far beyond the empire's territorial borders, reaching as far as Western Europe,^[140] Africa,^[141] China, and India, playing a role, for example, in the formation of both European and Asiatic medieval art.^[142]



Geographical extent of Iranian influence in the 1st century BC. The Parthian Empire (mostly Western Iranian) is shown in red, other areas, dominated by Scythia (mostly Eastern Iranian), in orange.

For more details on this topic, see Persian Empire and the History of Iran

Armenia

The early history of the Hittite empire is known through tablets that may first have been written in the 17th century BC but survived only as copies made in the 14th and 13th centuries BC. These tablets, known collectively as the Anitta text,^[143] begin by telling how Pithana the king of Kussara or Kussar (a small city-state yet to be identified by archaeologists) conquered the neighbouring city of Neša (Kanesh). However, the real subject of these tablets is Pithana's son Anitta, who conquered several neighbouring cities, including Hattusa and Zalpuwa (Zalpa).

Assyrian inscriptions of Shalmaneser I (c. 1270 BC) first mention Uruartri as one of the states of Nairi – a loose confederation of small kingdoms and tribal states in the Armenian Highland from the 13th to 11th centuries BC. Uruartri itself was in the region around Lake Van. The Nairi states were repeatedly subjected to attacks by the Assyrians, especially under Tukulti-Ninurta I (c. 1240 BC), Tiglath-Pileser I (c. 1100 BC), Ashur-bel-kala (c. 1070 BC), Adad-nirari II (c. 900), Tukulti-Ninurta II (c. 890), and Ashurnasirpal II (883–859 BC).

The Kingdom of Armenia was an independent kingdom from 190 BC to 387 AD, and a client state of the Roman and Persian empires until 428. Between 95 BC – 55 BC under the rule of King Tigranes the Great, the kingdom of Armenia became a large and powerful empire stretching from the Caspian to the Mediterranean Seas. During this short time it was considered to be the most powerful state in the Roman East.^{[144][145]}

Arabia

The history of Pre-Islamic Arabia before the rise of Islam in the 630s is not known in great detail. Archaeological exploration in the Arabian peninsula has been sparse; indigenous written sources are limited to the many inscriptions and coins from southern Arabia. Existing material consists primarily of written sources from other traditions (such as Egyptians, Greeks, Persians, Romans, etc.) and oral traditions later recorded by Islamic scholars.

The first known inscriptions of the Kingdom of Hadhramaut are known from the 8th century BC. It was first referenced by an outside civilization in an Old Sabaic inscription of Karab'il Watar from the early 7th century BC, in which the King of Hadramaut, Yada'il, is mentioned as being one of his allies.

Dilmun appears first in Sumerian cuneiform clay tablets dated to the end of 4th millennium BC, found in the temple of goddess Inanna, in the city of Uruk. The adjective Dilmun refers to a type of axe and one specific official; in addition, there are lists of rations of wool issued to people connected with Dilmun.^[146]

The Sabaeans were an ancient people speaking an Old South Arabian language who lived in what is today Yemen, in south west Arabian Peninsula from 2000 BC to the 8th century BC. Some Sabaeans also lived in D'mt, located in northern Ethiopia and Eritrea, due to their hegemony over the Red Sea.^[147] They lasted from the early 2nd millennium to the 1st century BC. In the 1st century BC it was conquered by the Himyarites, but after the disintegration of the first Himyarite empire of the Kings of Saba' and dhu-Raydan the Middle Sabaeen Kingdom reappeared in the early 2nd century. It was finally conquered by the Himyarites in the late 3rd century.

The ancient Kingdom of Awsan with a capital at Hagar Yahirr in the wadi Markha, to the south of the wadi Bayhan, is now marked by a tell or artificial mound, which is locally named Hagar Asfal. Once it was one of the most important small kingdoms of South Arabia. The city seems to have been destroyed in the 7th century BC by the king and mukarrib of Saba Karib'il Watar, according to a Sabaeen text that reports the victory in terms that attest to its significance for the Sabaeans.

The Himyar was a state in ancient South Arabia dating from 110 BC. It conquered neighbouring Saba (Sheba) in c. 25 BC, Qataban in c. 200 AD and Hadramaut c. 300 AD. Its political fortunes relative to Saba changed frequently until it finally conquered the Sabaeen Kingdom around 280 AD.^[148] It was the dominant state in Arabia until 525 AD. The economy was based on agriculture.

Foreign trade was based on the export of frankincense and myrrh. For many years it was also the major intermediary linking East Africa and the Mediterranean world. This trade largely consisted of exporting ivory from Africa to be sold in the Roman Empire. Ships from Himyar regularly traveled the East African coast, and the state also exerted a considerable amount of political control of the trading cities of East Africa.

The Nabataean origins remain obscure. On the similarity of sounds, Jerome suggested a connection with the tribe Nebaioth mentioned in *Genesis*, but modern historians are cautious about an early Nabatean history. The Babylonian captivity that began in 586 BC opened a power vacuum in Judah, and as Edomites moved into Judaeen grazing lands, Nabataean inscriptions began to be left in Edomite territory (earlier than 312 BC, when they were attacked at Petra without success by Antigonos I). The first definite appearance was in 312 BC, when Hieronymus of Cardia, a Seleucid officer, mentioned the Nabateans in a battle report. In 50 BC, the Greek historian Diodorus Siculus cited Hieronymus in his report, and added the following: "Just as the Seleucids had tried to subdue them, so the Romans made several attempts to get their hands on that lucrative trade."

Petra or Sela was the ancient capital of Edom; the Nabataeans must have occupied the old Edomite country, and succeeded to its commerce, after the Edomites took advantage of the Babylonian captivity to press forward into southern Judaea. This migration, the date of which cannot be determined, also made them masters of the shores of the Gulf of Aqaba and the important harbor of Elath. Here, according to Agatharchides, they were for a time very troublesome, as wreckers and pirates, to the reopened commerce between Egypt and the East, until they were chastised by the Ptolemaic rulers of Alexandria.

The Lakhmid Kingdom was founded by the Lakhum tribe that immigrated out of Yemen in the 2nd century and ruled by the Banu Lakhm, hence the name given it. It was formed of a group of Arab Christians who lived in Southern Iraq, and made al-Hirah their capital in (266). The founder of the dynasty was 'Amr' and the son Imru' al-Qais converted to Christianity. Gradually the whole city converted to that faith. Imru' al-Qais dreamt of a unified and independent Arab kingdom and, following that dream, he seized many cities in Arabia.

The Ghassanids were a group of South Arabian Christian tribes that emigrated in the early 3rd century from Yemen to the Hauran in southern Syria, Jordan and the Holy Land where they intermarried with Hellenized Roman settlers and Greek-speaking Early Christian communities. The Ghassanid emigration has been passed down in the rich oral tradition of southern Syria. It is said that the Ghassanids came from the city of Ma'rib in Yemen. There was a dam in this city, however one year there was so much rain that the dam was carried away by the ensuing flood. Thus the people there had to leave. The inhabitants emigrated seeking to live in less arid lands and became scattered far and wide. The proverb "They were scattered like the people of Saba" refers to that exodus in history. The emigrants were from the southern Arab tribe of Azd of the Kahlan branch of Qahtani tribes.

Levant

Though the Ugaritic site is thought to have been inhabited earlier, Neolithic Ugarit was already important enough to be fortified with a wall early on. The first written evidence mentioning the city comes from the nearby city of Ebla, c. 1800 BC. Ugarit passed into the sphere of influence of Egypt, which deeply influenced its art.

Israel

Israel and Judah were related Iron Age kingdoms of the ancient Levant and had existed during the Iron Ages and the Neo-Babylonian, Persian and Hellenistic periods. The name Israel first appears in the stele of the Egyptian pharaoh Merneptah c. 1209 BC, "Israel is laid waste and his seed is no more."^[149] This "Israel" was a cultural and probably political entity of the central highlands, well enough established to be perceived by the Egyptians as a possible challenge to their hegemony, but an ethnic group rather than an organised state.^[150] Archaeologist Paula McNutt says: "It is probably ... during Iron Age I [that] a population began to identify itself as 'Israelite'," differentiating itself from its neighbours via prohibitions on intermarriage, an emphasis on family history and genealogy, and religion.^[151]

Israel had emerged by the middle of the 9th century BC, when the Assyrian king Shalmaneser III names "Ahab the Israelite" among his enemies at the battle of Qarqar (853). Judah emerged somewhat later than Israel, probably during the 9th century BC, but the subject is one of considerable controversy.^[152] Israel came into increasing conflict with the expanding neo-Assyrian empire which

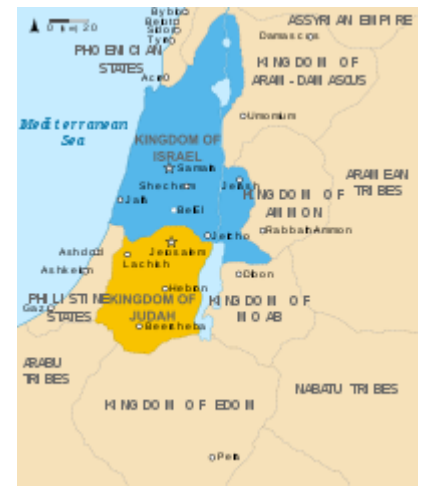
first split its territory into several smaller units and then destroyed its capital, Samaria (722). A series of campaigns by the Neo-Babylonian Empire between 597 and 582 led to the destruction of Judah.

Followed by the fall of Babylon to the Persian empire, Jews were allowed, by Cyrus the Great, to return to Judea. The Hasmonean Kingdom (followed by the Maccabean revolt) had existed during the Hellenistic period and then the Herodian kingdom during the Roman period.

Phoenicians

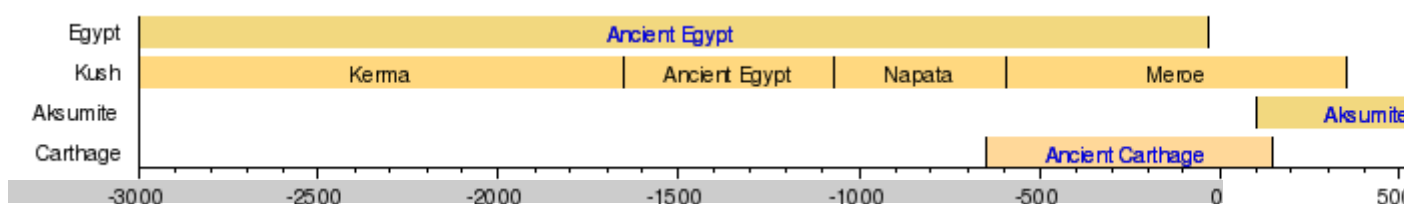
Phoenicia was an ancient civilization centered in the north of ancient Canaan, with its heartland along the coastal regions of modern-day Lebanon, Syria and Israel. Phoenician civilization was an enterprising maritime trading culture that spread across the Mediterranean between the period of 1550 to 300 BC.

A written reference, Herodotus's account (written c. 440 BC) refers to a memory from 800 years earlier, which may be subject to question in the fullness of genetic results. (*History*, I:1). This is a legendary introduction to Herodotus' brief retelling of some mythical Hellene-Phoenician interactions. Though few modern archaeologists would confuse this myth with history a grain of truth may yet lie therein.



The Iron Age kingdom of Israel (blue) and kingdom of Judah (yellow)

Africa



Egypt

Ancient Egypt was a long-lived civilization geographically located in north-eastern Africa. It was concentrated along the middle to lower reaches of the Nile River reaching its greatest extension during the 2nd millennium BC, which is referred to as the New Kingdom period. It reached broadly from the Nile Delta in the north, as far south as Jebel Barkal at the Fourth Cataract of the Nile. Extensions to the geographical range of ancient Egyptian civilization included, at different times, areas of the southern Levant, the Eastern Desert and the Red Sea coastline, the Sinai Peninsula and the Western Desert (focused on the several oases).

Ancient Egypt developed over at least three and a half millennia. It began with the incipient unification of Nile Valley polities around 3500 BC and is conventionally thought to have ended in 30 BC when the early Roman Empire conquered and absorbed Ptolemaic Egypt as a province. (Though this last did not represent the first period of foreign domination, the Roman period was to witness a marked, if gradual transformation in the political and religious life of the Nile Valley, effectively marking the termination of independent civilisational development).

The civilization of ancient Egypt was based on a finely balanced control of natural and human resources, characterised primarily by controlled irrigation of the fertile Nile Valley; the mineral exploitation of the valley and surrounding desert regions; the early development of an independent writing system and literature; the organisation of collective projects; trade with surrounding regions in east / central Africa and the eastern Mediterranean; finally, military ventures that exhibited strong characteristics of imperial



Khafre's Pyramid (4th dynasty) and Great Sphinx of Giza (c. 2500 BC or perhaps earlier)

hegemony and territorial domination of neighbouring cultures at different periods. Motivating and organizing these activities were a socio-political and economic elite that achieved social consensus by means of an elaborate system of religious belief under the figure of a (semi)-divine ruler (usually male) from a succession of ruling dynasties and which related to the larger world by means of polytheistic beliefs

Nubia

The Kushite state was formed before a period of Egyptian incursion into the area. The Kushite civilization has also been referred to as Nubia. The first cultures arose in Sudan before the time of a unified Egypt, and the most widespread is known as the Kerma civilization. It is through Egyptian, Hebrew, Roman and Greek records that most of our knowledge of Kush (Cush) comes.

It is also referred to as Ethiopia in ancient Greek and Roman records. According to Josephus and other classical writers, the Kushite Empire covered all of Africa, and some parts of Asia and Europe at one time or another. The Kushites are also famous for having buried their monarchs along with all their courtiers in mass graves. The Kushites also built burial mounds and pyramids, and shared some of the same gods worshipped in Egypt, especially Amon and Isis.

Axum

The Axumite Empire was an important trading nation in northeastern Africa, growing from the proto-Aksumite period c. 4th century BC to achieve prominence by the 1st century AD. Its ancient capital is found in northern Ethiopia, the Kingdom used the name "Ethiopia" as early as the 4th century.^{[153][154]} Aksum is mentioned in the 1st century AD Periplus of the Erythraean Sea as an important market place for ivory, which was exported throughout the ancient world, and states that the ruler of Aksum in the 1st century AD was Zoscales, who, besides ruling in Aksum also controlled two harbours on the Red Sea: Adulis (near Massawa) and Avalites (Assab). He is also said to have been familiar with Greek literature.^[155] It is also an alleged resting place of the Ark of the Covenant and home of the Queen of Sheba. Aksum was also one of the first major empires to convert to Christianity.

Land of Punt

The Land of Punt, also called Pwenet, or Pwene^[156] by the ancient Egyptians, was a trading partner known for producing and exporting gold, aromatic resins, African blackwood, ebony, ivory, slaves and wild animals.^[157] Information about Punt has been found in ancient Egyptian records of trade missions to this region. The exact location of Punt remains a mystery. The mainstream view is that Punt was located to the south-east of Egypt, most likely on the coast of the Horn of Africa. The earliest recorded Egyptian expedition to Punt was organized by Pharaoh Sahure of the Fifth Dynasty (25th century BC) although gold from Punt is recorded as having been in Egypt in the time of king Khufu of the Fourth Dynasty of Egypt.^[158] Subsequently, there were more expeditions to Punt in the Sixth Dynasty of Egypt, the Eleventh dynasty of Egypt, the Twelfth dynasty of Egypt and the Eighteenth dynasty of Egypt. In the Twelfth dynasty of Egypt, trade with Punt was celebrated in popular literature in "Tale of the Shipwrecked Sailor".

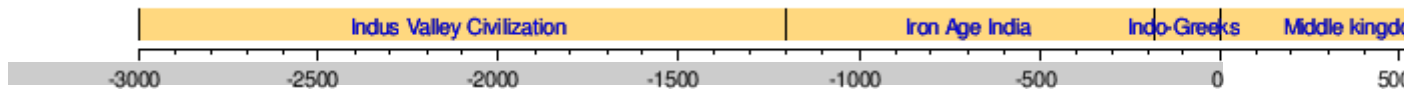
Nok culture

The Nok culture appeared in Nigeria around 1000 BC and mysteriously vanished around 200 AD. The civilization's social system is thought to have been highly advanced. The Nok civilization was considered to be the earliest sub-Saharan producer of life-sized Terracotta which have been discovered by archaeologists.^[159] A Nok sculpture resident at the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, portrays a sitting dignitary wearing a "Shepherds Crook" on the right arm, and a "hinged flail" on the left. These are symbols of authority associated with ancient Egyptian pharaohs, and the god Osiris, which suggests that an ancient Egyptian style of social structure, and perhaps religion, existed in the area of modern Nigeria during the late Pharonic period.^[160] (Informational excerpt copied from Nigeria and Nok culture articles)

Carthage

Carthage was founded in 814 BC by Phoenician settlers from the city of Tyre, bringing with them the city-god Melqart.^[161] Ancient Carthage was an informal hegemony of Phoenician city-states throughout North Africa and modern Spain from 575 BC until 146 BC. It was more or less under the control of the city-state of Carthage after the fall of Tyre to Babylonian forces. At the height of the city's influence, its empire included most of the western Mediterranean. The empire was in a constant state of struggle with the Roman Republic, which led to a series of conflicts known as the Punic Wars. After the third and final Punic War, Carthage was destroyed then occupied by Roman forces. Nearly all of the territory held by Carthage fell into Roman hands.

South Asia



The earliest evidence of human civilization in South Asia is from the Mehrgarh region (7000 BC to 3200 BC) of Pakistan. Located near the Bolan Pass, to the west of the Indus River valley and between the present-day Pakistani cities of Quetta, Kalat and Sibi, Mehrgarh was discovered in 1974 by an archaeological team directed by French archaeologist Jean-François Jarrige, and was excavated continuously between 1974 and 1986. The earliest settlement at Mehrgarh—in the northeast corner of the 495 acres (2.00 km²) site—was a small farming village dated between 7000 BC–5500 BC. Early Mehrgarh residents lived in mud brick houses, stored their grain in granaries, fashioned tools with local copper ore, and lined their large basket containers with bitumen. They cultivated six-row barley, einkorn and emmer wheat, jujubes and dates, and herded sheep, goats and cattle. Residents of the later period (5500 BC to 2600 BC) put much effort into crafts, including flint knapping, tanning, bead production, and metal working. The site was occupied continuously until about 2600 BC.[2]

In April 2006, it was announced in the scientific journal *Nature* that the oldest evidence in human history for the drilling of teeth in vivo (i.e. in a living person) was found in Mehrgarh. Mehrgarh is sometimes cited as the earliest known farming settlement in South Asia, based on archaeological excavations from 1974 (Jarrige et al.). The earliest evidence of settlement dates from 7000 BC. It is also cited for the earliest evidence of pottery in South Asia. Archaeologists divide the occupation at the site into several periods. Mehrgarh is now seen as a precursor to the Indus Valley Civilization.



Standing Buddha, Gandhara, 1st century AD.

Indus Valley Civilization

The Indus Valley Civilization (c. 3300–1700 BC, flourished 2600–1900 BC), abbreviated IVC, was an ancient civilization that flourished in the Indus and Ghaggar-Hakra river valleys primarily in what is now Pakistan, although settlements linked to this ancient civilization have been found in eastern Afghanistan, and western India. Minor scattered sites have been found as far away as Turkmenistan. Another name for this civilization is the Harappan Civilization, after the first of its cities to be excavated, Harappa in the Pakistani province of Punjab. The IVC might have been known to the Sumerians as the Meluhha, and other trade contacts may have included Egypt, Africa, however the modern world discovered it only in the 1920s as a result of archaeological excavations and rail road building. Prominent historians of Ancient India would include Ram Sharan Sharma and Romila Thapar.



A possible representation of a "yogi" or "proto-Shiva", 2600–1900 BCE

Mahajanapadas

The births of Mahavira and Buddha in the 6th century BC mark the beginning of well-recorded history in the region. Around the 5th century BC, the ancient region of Pakistan was invaded by the Achaemenid Empire under Darius in 522 BC^[162] forming the easternmost satraps of the Persian Empire. The provinces of Sindh and Panjab were said to be the richest *satraps* of the Persian Empire and contributed many soldiers to various Persian expeditions. It is known that Indian contingent fought in Xerxes' army on his expedition to Greece. Herodotus mentions that the Indus satrapy supplied cavalry and chariots to the Persian army. He also mentions that the Indus people were clad in armaments made of cotton, carried bows and arrows of cane covered with iron. Herodotus states that in 517 BC Darius sent an expedition under Scylax to explore the Indus. Under Persian rule, much irrigation and commerce flourished within the vast territory of the empire. The Persian empire was followed by the invasion of the Greeks under Alexander's army. Since Alexander was determined to reach the eastern-most limits of the Persian Empire he could not resist the temptation to conquer India (i.e. the Punjab region), which at this time was parcelled out into small chieftain-ships, who were feudatories of the Persian Empire. Alexander amalgamated the region into the expanding Hellenic empire.^[163] The Rigveda, in Sanskrit, goes back to about 1500 BC. The Indian literary tradition has an oral history reaching down into the Vedic period of the later 2nd millennium BC.

Ancient India is usually taken to refer to the "golden age" of classical Indian culture as reflected in Sanskrit literature, beginning around 500 BC with the sixteen monarchies and 'republics' known as the Mahajanapadas, stretched across the Indo-Gangetic plains from modern-day Afghanistan to Bangladesh. The largest of these nations were Magadha, Kosala, Kuru and Gandhara. Notably, the great epics of Ramayana and Mahabharata are rooted in this classical period.

Amongst the sixteen Mahajanapadas, the kingdom of Magadha rose to prominence under a number of dynasties that peaked in power under the reign of Ashoka Maurya, one of India's most legendary and famous emperors. During the reign of Ashoka, the four dynasties of Chola, Chera, and Pandya were ruling in the South, while the King Devanampiya Tissa was controlling the Anuradhapura Kingdom (now Sri Lanka). These kingdoms, while not part of Ashoka's empire, were in friendly terms with the Maurya Empire. There was a strong alliance existed between Devanampiya Tissa (250–210 BC) and Ashoka of India,^[164] who sent Arahat Mahinda, four monks, and a novice being sent to Sri Lanka.^[165] They encountered Devanampiya Tissa at Mihintale. After this meeting, Devanampiya Tissa embraced Buddhism the order of monks was established in the country.^[166] Devanampiya Tissa, guided by Arahat Mahinda, took steps to firmly establish Buddhism in the country



A political map of the Mauryan Empire, including notable cities, such as the capital Pataliputra, and site of the Buddha's enlightenment.

The Satavahanas started out as feudatories to the Mauryan Empire and declared independence soon after the death of Ashoka (232 BC). Other notable ancient South Indian dynasties include the Kadambas of Banavasi, western Ganga dynasty, Badami Chalukyas, Western Chalukyas, Hoysalas, Kakatiya dynasty, Pallavas, Rashtrakutas of Manyaketha and Satavahanas.

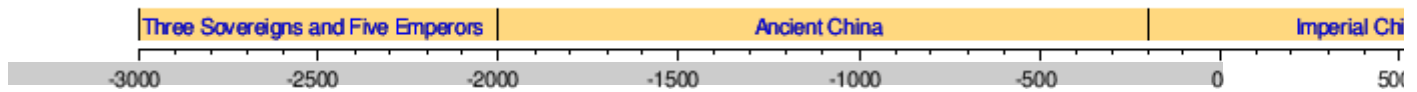
Middle kingdoms

The period between AD 320–550 is known as the Classical Age, when most of North India was reunited under the Gupta Empire (c. AD 320–550). This was a period of relative peace, law and order, and extensive achievements in religion, education, mathematics, arts, Sanskrit literature and drama. Grammar, composition, logic, metaphysics, mathematics, medicine, and astronomy became increasingly specialized and reached an advanced level. The Gupta Empire was weakened and ultimately ruined by the raids of Hunas (a branch of the Hephthalites emanating from Central Asia). Under Harsha (r. 606–47), North India was reunited briefly

The educated speech at that time was Sanskrit, while the dialects of the general population of northern India were referred to as Prakrits. The South Indian Malabar Coast and the Tamil people of the Sangam age traded with the Graeco-Roman world. They were in contact with the Phoenicians, Romans, Greeks, Arabs, Syrians, Jews, and the Chinese.^[167]

The regions of South Asia, primarily present-day Pakistan and India, were estimated to have had the largest economy of the world between the 1st and 15th centuries AD, controlling between one third and one quarter of the world's wealth up to the time of the Mughals, from whence it rapidly declined during British rule.^[168]

East Asia



China

Ancient era

The early part of the Shang dynasty described in traditional histories (c. 1600–1300) is commonly identified with archaeological finds at Erligang, Zhengzhou and Yanshi, south of the Yellow River in modern-day Henan province. The last capital of the Shang (c. 1300–1046 BC) at Anyang (also in Henan) has been directly confirmed by the discovery there of the earliest Chinese texts, inscriptions of divination records on the bones or shells of animals—the so-called "oracle bones".



An oracle bone

Towards the end of the 2nd millennium BC, the Shang were overrun by the Zhou dynasty from the Wei River valley to the west. The death of King Wu of Zhou soon after the conquest triggered a succession crisis and civil war that was suppressed by Wu's brother, the Duke of Zhou, acting as regent. The Zhou rulers at this time invoked the concept of the Mandate of Heaven to legitimize their rule, a concept that would be influential for almost every successive dynasty. The Zhou initially established their capital in the west near modern Xi'an, near the Yellow River, but they would preside over a series of expansions into the Yangtze River valley. This would be the first of many population migrations from north to south in Chinese history.

Spring and Autumn

In the 8th century BC, power became decentralized during the Spring and Autumn period, named after the influential Spring and Autumn Annals. In this period, local military leaders used by the Zhou began to assert their power and vie for hegemony. The situation was aggravated by the invasion of other peoples from the northwest, such as the Quanrong, forcing the Zhou to move their capital east to Luoyang. This marks the second large phase of the Zhou dynasty: the Eastern Zhou. In each of the hundreds of states that eventually arose, local strongmen held most of the political power and continued their subservience to the Zhou kings in name only. Local leaders for instance started using royal titles for themselves. The Hundred Schools of Thought of Chinese philosophy blossomed during this period, and such influential intellectual movements as Confucianism, Taoism, Legalism and Mohism were founded, partly in response to the changing political world. The Spring and Autumn period is marked by a falling apart of the central Zhou power. China now consisted of hundreds of states, some only as large as a village with a fort.



Territories occupied by different dynasties and modern political states throughout the history of China

Warring States

After further political consolidation, seven prominent states remained by the end of the 5th century BC, and the years in which these few states battled each other is known as the Warring States period. Though there remained a nominal Zhou king until 256 BC, he was largely a figurehead and held little power. As neighboring territories of these warring states, including areas of modern Sichuan and Liaoning, were annexed, they were governed under the new local administrative system of commandery and prefecture. This system had been in use since the Spring and Autumn period and parts can still be seen in the modern system of Sheng and Xian.

(province and county). The final expansion in this period began during the reign of Ying Zheng, the king of Qin. His unification of the other six powers, and further annexations in the modern regions of Zhejiang, Fujian, Guangdong and Guangxi in 214 BC enabled him to proclaim himself the First Emperor (Qin Shi Huangdi).

Japan

Japan first appeared in written records in AD 57 with the following mention in China's *Book of the Later Han*^[169] "Across the ocean from Luoyang are the people of Wa. Formed from more than one hundred tribes, they come and pay tribute frequently." According to the Kojiki, Emperor Jimmu, in 660 BC, unified the many peoples of the Japanese archipelago and established order. The *Book of Wei*, written in the 3rd century, noted the country was the unification of some 30 small tribes or states and ruled by a shaman queen named Himiko of Yamataikoku.

During the Han dynasty and Wei dynasty, Chinese travelers to Kyūshū recorded its inhabitants and claimed that they were the descendants of the Grand Count (Tàibó) of the Wu. The inhabitants also show traits of the pre-sinicized Wu people with tattooing, teeth-pulling and baby-carrying. The *Book of Wei* records the physical descriptions which are similar to ones on Haniwa statues, such men with braided hair, tattooing and women wearing large, single-piece clothing.

Korea

According to the Samguk Yusa and other Korean medieval-era Folklore collection, Gojoseon was the first Korean kingdom.^[170] Gojoseon was founded in 2333 BC by the legendary ruler Dangun, said to be descended from the Lord of Heaven. Then, Korea was governed for Jizi^[171] and the 40th generation descendant.^{[172][173]} According to Records of the Grand Historian, Korea was founded by Wiman from China in 197 BC.^[174] In 105 BC, Han dynasty China ruined Korea and ruled for about 400 years.

The Three Kingdoms (Baekje, Goguryeo, and Silla) conquered other successor states of Gojoseon and came to dominate the peninsula and much of Manchuria. The three kingdoms competed with each other both economically and militarily; Goguryeo and Baekje were the more powerful states for much of the three kingdoms era. At times more powerful than the neighboring Sui dynasty, Goguryeo was a regional power that defeated massive Chinese invasions multiple times.^[175] As one of the Three Kingdoms of Korea, Silla gradually extended across Korea and eventually became the first state since Gojoseon to cover most of Korean peninsula in 676. In 698, former Goguryeo general Dae Jo-yeong founded Balhae as the successor to Goguryeo.

Unified Silla itself fell apart in the late 9th century, giving way to the tumultuous Later Three Kingdoms period (892–936), which ended with the establishment of the Goryeo Dynasty.^[176] After the fall of Balhae in 926 to the Khitan, much of its people were absorbed into Goryeo Dynasty.

Vietnam

Around 3000 BC, the 15 different Lạc Việt ethnic tribes lived together in many areas with other inhabitants. Due to increasing needs to control floods, fights against invaders, and culture and trade exchanges, these tribes living near each other tended to gather together and integrate into a larger mixed group. Among these Lac Viet tribes was the Van Lang, which was the most powerful tribe. The leader of this tribe later joined all the tribes together to found the Hồng Bàng Dynasty in 2897 BC. He became the first in a line of earliest Vietnamese kings, collectively known as the Hùng kings (Hùng Vương). The Hùng kings called the country, which was then located on the Red River delta in present-day northern Vietnam, Văn Lang. The people of Văn Lang were referred to as the Lạc Việt. The next generations followed in their father's footsteps and kept this appellation. Based on historical documents, researchers correlatively delineated the location of Văn Lang Nation to the present day regions of North and north of Central Vietnam, as well as the south of present-day Kwangsi (China).

The Đông Sơn culture was a prehistoric Bronze Age culture that was centered at the Red River Valley of northern Vietnam. Its influence flourished to other parts of Southeast Asia, including the Indo-Malayan Archipelago from about 2000 BC to 200 AD. The theory based on the assumption that bronze casting in eastern Asia originated in northern China; however, this idea has been discredited by archaeological discoveries in north-eastern Thailand in the 1970s. In the words of one scholar, "Bronze casting began

in Southeast Asia and was later borrowed by the Chinese, not vice versa as the Chinese scholars have always claimed. Evidence of early kingdoms of Vietnam other than the Đông Sơn culture in Northern Vietnam was found in Cổ Loa, the ancient city situated within present-day Hà Nội.

Mongols

North-western Mongolia was Turkic while south-western Mongolia had come under Indo-European (Tocharian and Scythian) influence. In antiquity, the eastern portions of both Inner and Outer Mongolia were inhabited by Mongolic peoples descended from the Donghu people, including the Xianbei, Wuhuan, Rouran, Tuoba, Murong, Shiwei, Kumo Xi and Khitan. These were Tengriist horse-riding pastoralist kingdoms that had close contact with the Chinese. The Donghu are first mentioned by Sima Qian as already existing in Inner Mongolia north of the state of Yan in 699–632 BC. The Mongolic-speaking Xianbei (208 BC–234 AD) originally formed a part of the Donghu confederation, but existed even before that time, as evidenced by a mention in the Guoyu "晉語八" section which states that during the reign of King Cheng of Zhou (reigned 1042–1021 BC) the Xianbei came to participate at a meeting of Zhou subject-lords at Qiyang (岐陽) (now Qishan County) but were only allowed to perform the fire ceremony under the supervision of Chu (楚), since they were not vassals by covenant (诸侯). As a nomadic confederation composed of the Xianbei and Wuhuan, the Donghu were prosperous in the 4th century BC, forcing surrounding tribes to pay tribute and constantly harassing the State of Zhao (325 BC, during the early years of the reign of Wuling) and the State of Yan (in 304 BC General Qin Kai was given as a hostage to the Donghu).

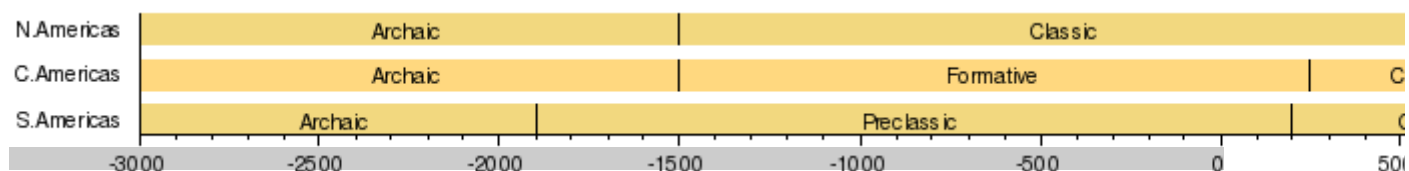
In 208 BC Xiongnu emperor Modu Chanyu, in his first major military campaign, defeated the formerly superior Donghu, who split into the Xianbei and Wuhuan. The Xianbei fled east all the way to Liaodong. In 49 AD the Xianbei ruler Bianhe attacked the Xiongnu and killed 2000 people after having received generous gifts from Emperor Guangwu of Han. In 54 AD the Xianbei rulers Yuchoupen and Mantu presented themselves to the Han emperor and received the titles of wang and gou. Until 93 AD the Xianbei were quietly protecting the Chinese border from Wuhuan and Xiongnu attacks and received ample rewards. From 93 AD the Xianbei began to occupy the lands of the Xiongnu. 100,000 Xiongnu families changed their name to Xianbei. In 97 AD Feijuxian in Liaodong was attacked by the Xianbei, and the governor Qi Sen was dismissed for inaction. Other Xianbei rulers who were active before the rise of the Xianbei emperor Tanshihuai (141–181) were Yanzhiyang, Lianxu and Cizhiqian. The Xianbei gave rise to different Mongolic branches, for example the Rouran (330–555), Khitan (388–1218) and Shiwei (444–present day). The Khitans developed the Khitan scripts in 920–925 AD. The Rouran king Shelun was the first major leader of the steppes to adopt (in 402 AD) the title of Khagan (可汗) or Qiudoufa Khan (丘豆伐可汗) (which was originally a title used by Xianbei nobles).

The Mongols of Genghis Khan were the Menggu sub-tribe of the Shiwei Xianbei. The first surviving Mongolian text is the Stele of Yisüngge, a report on sports in Mongolian script on stone, that is most often dated at the verge of 1224 and 1225.^[177] Other early sources are written in Mongolian, Phagspa (decrets), Chinese (the Secret history), Arabic (dictionaries) and a few other western scripts.^[178]

Huns

The Huns left practically no written records. There is no record of what happened between the time they left Mongolian Plateau and arrived in Europe 150 years later. The last mention of the northern Xiongnu was their defeat by the Chinese in 151 at the lake of Barkol,^[179] after which they fled to the western steppe at Kangju (centered on the city of Turkistan in Kazakhstan). Chinese records between the 3rd and 4th centuries suggest that a small tribe called Yueban, remnants of northern Xiongnu, was distributed about the steppe of Kazakhstan.

Americas



In pre-Columbian times, several large, centralized ancient civilizations developed in the Western Hemisphere^[180] both in Mesoamerica and western South America

Andean civilizations

The Central Andes in South America has the largest ancient civilization register, spanning 4,500 years from Norte chico to the latest civilization, the Inca Empire

Mesoamerica

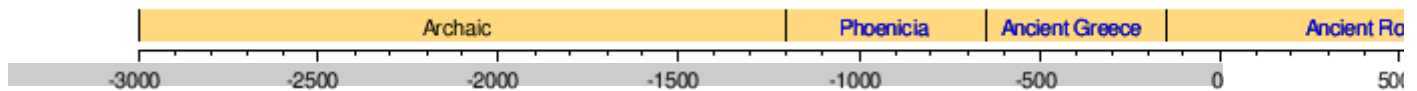
Mesoamerican ancient civilizations included the Olmecs and Mayans. Between 2000 and 300 BC, complex cultures began to form and many matured into advanced Mesoamerican civilizations such as the: Olmec, Izapa, Teotihuacan, Maya, Zapotec, Mixtec, Huastec, Purépecha, "Toltec" and Aztec, which flourished for nearly 4,000 years before the first contact with Europeans. These civilizations' progress included pyramid-temples, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, and theology

The Zapotec emerged around 1500 years BC. They left behind the great city Monte Alban. Their writing system had been thought to have influenced the Olmecs but, with recent evidence, the Olmec may have been the first civilization in the area to develop a true writing system independently. At the present time, there is some debate as to whether or not Olmec symbols, dated to 650 BC, are actually a form of writing preceding the oldest Zapotec writing dated to about 500 BC.^[181]

Olmec symbols found in 2002 and 2006 date to 650 BC^[182] and 900 BC^[183] respectively, preceding the oldest Zapotec writing.^{[184][185]} The Olmec symbols found in 2006, dating to 900 BC, are known as the Casajal Block

The earliest Mayan inscriptions found which are identifiably Maya date to the 3rd century BC San Bartolo, Guatemala.^{[186][187]}

Europe



Etruria

The history of the Etruscans can be traced relatively accurately based on the examination of burial sites, artifacts, and writing. Etruscans culture that is identifiably and certainly Etruscan developed in Italy in earnest by 800 BC approximately over the range of the preceding Iron Age Villanovan culture. The latter gave way in the 7th century to a culture that was influenced by Greek traders and Greek neighbors in Magna Graecia, the Hellenic civilization of southern Italy.

From the descendants of the Villanovan people in Etruria in central Italy, a separate Etruscan culture emerged in the beginning of the 7th century BC, evidenced by around 7,000 inscriptions in an alphabet similar to that of Euboean Greek, in the non-Indo-European Etruscan language. The burial tombs, some of which had been fabulously decorated, promotes the idea of an aristocratic city-state, with centralized power structures maintaining order and constructing public works, such as irrigation networks, roads, and town defenses.



Classical antiquity by region

Africa · Anatolia · Balkans · Britain · Egypt · Gaul · Greece · Hispania · Italy

Greece

Ancient Greece is the period in Greek history lasting for close to a millennium, until the rise of Christianity. It is considered by most historians to be the foundational culture of Western Civilization. Greek culture was a powerful influence in the Roman Empire, which carried a version of it to many parts of Europe.

The earliest known human settlements in Greece were on the island of Crete, more than 9,000 years ago, though there is evidence of tool use on the island going back over 100,000 years.^[188] The earliest evidence of a civilisation in ancient Greece is that of the Minoans on Crete, dating as far back as 3600 BC. On the mainland, the Mycenaean civilisation rose to prominence around 1600 BC, superseded the Minoan civilisation on Crete, and lasted until about 1100 BC, leading to a period known as the Greek Dark Ages.

The Archaic Period in Greece is generally considered to have lasted from around the eighth century BC to the invasion by Xerxes in 480 BC. This period saw the expansion of the Greek world around the Mediterranean, with the founding of Greek city-states as far afield as Sicily in the West and the Black sea in the East.^[189] Politically, the Archaic period in Greece saw the collapse of the power of the old aristocracies,^[190] with democratic reforms in Athens and the development of Sparta's unique constitution. The end of the Archaic period also saw the rise of Athens, which would come to be a dominant power in the Classical period, after the reforms of Solon and the tyranny of Pisistratus.^[190]

The Classical Greek world was dominated throughout the fifth century BC by the major powers of Athens and Sparta. Through the Delian League, Athens was able to convert Pan-hellenist sentiment and fear of the Persian threat into a powerful empire, and this, along with the conflict between Sparta and Athens culminating in the Peloponnesian war, was the major political development of the first part of the Classical period.^[191]

The period in Greek history from the death of Alexander the Great until the rise of the Roman empire and its conquest of Egypt in 30 BC is known as the Hellenistic period. The name derives from the Greek word Hellenistes ("the Greek speaking ones"), and describes the spread of Greek culture into the non-Greek world following the conquests of Alexander and the rise of his successors.

Following the Battle of Corinth in 146 BC, Greece came under Roman rule, ruled from the province of Macedonia. In 27 BC, Augustus organised the Greek peninsula into the province of Achaea. Greece remained under Roman control until the break up of the Roman empire, in which it remained part of the Eastern Empire. Much of Greece remained under Byzantine control until the end of the Byzantine empire.

For more details, see the articles in the category of Ancient Greek culture

Rome

Ancient Rome was a civilization that grew out of the city-state of Rome, originating as a small agricultural community founded on the Italian Peninsula in the 9th century BC. In its twelve centuries of existence, Roman civilization shifted from a monarchy to an oligarchic republic to an increasingly autocratic empire.

Roman civilization is often grouped into "classical antiquity" with ancient Greece, a civilization that inspired much of the culture of ancient Rome. Ancient Rome contributed greatly to the development of law, war, art, literature, architecture, and language in the Western world, and its history continues to have a major influence on the world today. The Roman civilization came to dominate Europe and the Mediterranean region through conquest and assimilation.

Throughout the territory under the control of ancient Rome, residential architecture ranged from very modest houses to country villas. A number of Roman founded cities had monumental structures. Many contained fountains with fresh drinking-water supplied by hundreds of miles of aqueducts, theatres, gymnasiums, bath complexes sometime with libraries and shops, marketplaces, and occasionally functional sewers.



Timelapse of area under Roman control.

However, a number of factors led to the eventual decline of the Roman Empire. The western half of the empire, including Hispania, Gaul, and Italy, eventually broke into independent kingdoms in the 5th century; the Eastern Roman Empire, governed from Constantinople, is referred to as the Byzantine Empire after AD 476, the traditional date for the "fall of Rome" and subsequent onset of the Middle Ages.

Late Antiquity

The Roman Empire underwent considerable social, cultural and organizational change starting with reign of Diocletian, who began the custom of splitting the Empire into Eastern and Western halves ruled by multiple emperors. Beginning with Constantine the Great the Empire was Christianized, and a new capital founded at Constantinople. Migrations of Germanic tribes disrupted Roman rule from the late 4th century onwards, culminating in the eventual collapse of the Empire in the West in 476, replaced by the so-called barbarian kingdoms. The resultant cultural fusion of Greco-Roman, Germanic and Christian traditions formed the cultural foundations of Europe.

Germanic tribes

Migration of Germanic peoples to Britain from what is now northern Germany and southern Scandinavia is attested from the 5th century (e.g. Undley bracteate).^[192] Based on Bede's *Historia ecclesiastica gentis Anglorum*, the intruding population is traditionally divided into Angles, Saxons, and Jutes, but their composition was likely less clear-cut and may also have included ancient Frisians and Franks. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle contains text that may be the first recorded indications of the movement of these Germanic Tribes to Britain.^[193] The Angles and Saxons and Jutes were noted to be a confederation in the Greek Geographia written by Ptolemy in around AD 150.

Anglo-Saxon is the term usually used to describe the peoples living in the south and east of Great Britain from the early 5th century AD.^[194] Benedictine monk Bede identified them as the descendants of three Germanic tribes the Angles, the Saxons, and the Jutes, from the Jutland peninsula and Lower Saxony (German: *Niedersachsen*, Germany). The Angles may have come from Angeln, and Bede wrote their nation came to Britain, leaving their land empty.^[195] They spoke closely related Germanic dialects. The Anglo-Saxons knew themselves as the "Englisc," from which the word "English" derives.

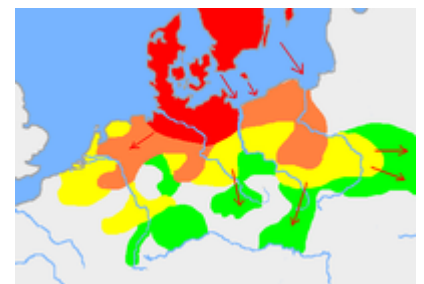
The Celts were a diverse group of tribal societies in Iron Age Europe. Proto-Celtic culture formed in the Early Iron Age in Central Europe (Hallstatt period, named for the site in present-day Austria). By the later Iron Age (La Tène period), Celts had expanded over wide range of lands: as far west as Ireland and the Iberian Peninsula, as far east as Galatia (central Anatolia), and as far north as Scotland.^[196] By the early centuries AD, following the expansion of the Roman Empire and the Great Migrations of Germanic peoples, Celtic culture had become restricted to the British Isles (Insular Celtic), with the Continental Celtic languages extinct by the mid-1st millennium AD.

Viking refers to a member of the Norse (Scandinavian) peoples, famous as explorers, warriors, merchants, and pirates, who raided and colonized wide areas of Europe beginning in the late 8th.^[197] These Norsemen used their famed longships to travel. The Viking Age forms a major part of Scandinavian history, with a minor, yet significant part in European history.

Developments



Map of the Nordic Bronze Age culture, around 1200 BC.



The expansion of the Germanic tribes 750 BC – AD 1 (after the *Penguin Atlas of World History* 1988):

- Settlements before 750 BC
- New settlements by 500 BC
- New settlements by 250 BC
- New settlements by AD 1

Religion and philosophy

New philosophies and religions arose in both east and west, particularly about the 6th century BC. Over time, a great variety of religions developed around the world, with some of the earliest major ones being Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism in India, and Zoroastrianism in Persia. The Abrahamic religions trace their origin to Judaism, around 1800 BC.

The ancient Indian philosophy is a fusion of two ancient traditions: Sramana tradition and Vedic tradition. Indian philosophy begins with the Vedas where questions related to laws of nature, the origin of the universe and the place of man in it are asked. Jainism and Buddhism are continuation of the Sramana school of thought. The Sramanas cultivated a pessimistic world view of the samsara as full of suffering and advocated renunciation and austerities. They laid stress on philosophical concepts like Ahimsa, Karma, Jnana, Samsara and Moksha. While there are ancient relations between the Indian Vedas and the Iranian Avesta, the two main families of the Indo-Iranian philosophical traditions were characterized by fundamental differences in their implications for the human being's position in society and their view on the role of man in the universe.

In the east, three schools of thought were to dominate Chinese thinking until the modern day. These were Taoism, Legalism and Confucianism. The Confucian tradition, which would attain dominance, looked for political morality not to the force of law but to the power and example of tradition. Confucianism would later spread into the Korean peninsula and Goguryeo^[198] and toward Japan.

In the west, the Greek philosophical tradition, represented by Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, was diffused throughout Europe and the Middle East in the 4th century BC by the conquests of Alexander III of Macedon, more commonly known as Alexander the Great. After the Bronze and Iron Age religions formed, the rise and spread of Christianity through the Roman world marked the end of Hellenistic philosophy and ushered in the beginnings of Medieval philosophy.

Science and technology

In the history of technology and ancient science during the growth of the ancient civilizations, ancient technological advances were produced in engineering. These advances stimulated other societies to adopt new ways of living and governance.

The characteristics of Ancient Egyptian technology are indicated by a set of artifacts and customs that lasted for thousands of years. The Egyptians invented and used many basic machines, such as the ramp and the lever, to aid construction processes. The Egyptians also played an important role in developing Mediterranean maritime technology including ships and lighthouses.

The history of science and technology in India dates back to ancient times. The

Indus Valley civilization yields evidence of hydrography, metrology and sewage collection and disposal being practiced by its inhabitants. Among the fields of science and technology pursued in India were Ayurveda, metallurgy, astronomy and mathematics. Some ancient inventions include plastic surgery, cataract surgery, Hindu-Arabic numeral system and Wootz steel.

The history of science and technology in China show significant advances in science, technology, mathematics, and astronomy. The first recorded observations of comets and supernovae were made in China. Traditional Chinese medicine, acupuncture and herbal medicine were also practiced.

Ancient Greek technology developed at an unprecedented speed during the 5th century BC, continuing up to and including the Roman period, and beyond. Inventions that are credited to the ancient Greeks such as the gear, screw, bronze casting techniques, water clock, water organ, torsion catapult and the use of steam to operate some experimental machines and toys. Many of these inventions occurred late in the Greek period, often inspired by the need to improve weapons and tactics in war. Roman technology is the engineering practice which supported Roman civilization and made the expansion of Roman commerce and Roman military possible over nearly a thousand years. The Roman Empire had the most advanced set of technology of their time, some of which may

Ancient technology

- Egyptian technology
- Indian technology
- Chinese technology
- Greek technology
- Roman technology
- Iranian technology

have been lost during the turbulent eras of Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. Roman technological feats of many different areas, like civil engineering, construction materials, transport technology, and some inventions such as the mechanical reaper went unmatched until the 19th century

Qanats which likely emerged on the Iranian plateau and possibly also in the Arabian peninsula sometime in the early 1st millennium BC spread from there slowly west- and eastward.^[199]

Maritime activity

The history of ancient navigation began in earnest when men took to the sea in planked boats and ships propelled by sails hung on masts, like the Ancient Egyptian Khufu ship from the mid-3rd millennium BC. According to the Greek historian Herodotus, Necho II sent out an expedition of Phoenicians, which in three years sailed from the Red Sea around Africa to the mouth of the Nile. Many current historians tend to believe Herodotus on this point, even though Herodotus himself was in disbelief that the Phoenicians had accomplished the act.

Hannu was an ancient Egyptian explorer (around 2750 BC) and the first explorer of whom there is any knowledge. He made the first recorded exploring expedition, writing his account of his exploration in stone. Hannu travelled along the Red Sea to Punt, and sailed to what is now part of eastern Ethiopia and Somalia. He returned to Egypt with great treasures, including precious myrrh, metal and wood.

Warfare

Ancient warfare is war as conducted from the beginnings of recorded history to the end of the ancient period. In Europe, the end of antiquity is often equated with the fall of Rome in 476. In China, it can also be seen as ending in the 5th century, with the growing role of mounted warriors needed to counter the evergrowing threat from the north.

The difference between prehistoric warfare and ancient warfare is less one of technology than of organization. The development of first city-states, and then empires, allowed warfare to change dramatically. Beginning in Mesopotamia, states produced sufficient agricultural surplus that full-time ruling elites and military commanders could emerge. While the bulk of military forces were still farmers, the society could support having them campaigning rather than working the land for a portion of each year. Thus, organized armies developed for the first time.

These new armies could help states grow in size and became increasingly centralized, and the first empire, that of the Sumerians, formed in Mesopotamia. Early ancient armies continued to primarily use bows and spears, the same weapons that had been developed in prehistoric times for hunting. Early armies in Egypt and China followed a similar pattern of using massed infantry armed with bows and spears.

Artwork and music

Ancient music is music that developed in literate cultures, replacing prehistoric music. Ancient music refers to the various musical systems that were developed across various geographical regions such as Persia, India, China, Greece, Rome, Egypt and Mesopotamia (see music of Mesopotamia, music of ancient Greece, music of ancient Rome, Music of Iran). Ancient music is designated by the characterization of the basic audible tones and scales. It may have been transmitted through oral or written systems. Arts of the ancient world refers to the many types of art that were in the cultures of ancient societies, such as those of ancient China, Egypt, Greece, India, Persia, Mesopotamia and Rome.

See also

- Outline of ancient history
 - Outline of ancient China
 - Outline of ancient Egypt

- Outline of ancient India
- Outline of classical studies
 - Outline of ancient Greece
 - Outline of ancient Rome
- List of ancient dishes and foods
- List of historians, inclusive of most major historians
- List of history journals#Classical
- Classics
- Timeline of ancient history



Ancient Iranians attached great importance to music and poetry.
7th-century silver plate. The British Museum.

Notes

- a. In the modern period, roughly the area called Canton and Cochin China
- b. Crassus and his son were killed during the battle and almost all of Roman army were killed or captured. even the golden aquilae (legionary battle standards) was captured by Parthian's army (It was first and last time that aquilae was captured by Roman's enemy).

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External links

Websites

- Ancient History Encyclopedia
- Ancient Civilizations—British Museum's website on various topics of ancient civilization
- Ancient history sourcebook
- The Perseus digital library
- Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman world

Directories

- Ancient_history at Curlie (based on DMOZ)
- Ancient History— Academic Info: directory of online resources for the study of ancient history
- Ancient History Resources: Ancient history research links for high school and college students.

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