

## HSST HISTORY MODULE

### WORLD HISTORY PART 1



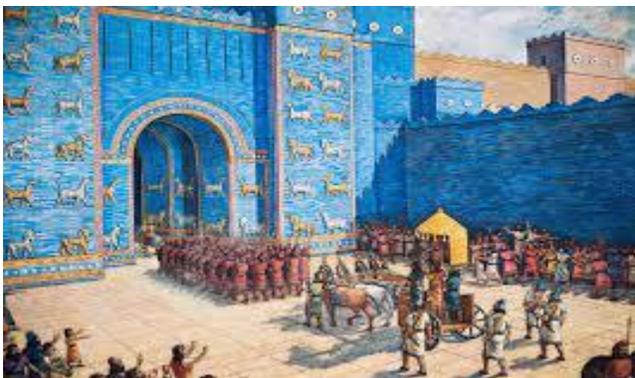
## Early civilizations

### Ancient Mesopotamian civilizations

**Mesopotamian** civilizations formed on the banks of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers in what is today Iraq and Kuwait.

Early civilizations began to form around the time of the Neolithic Revolution—12000 BCE.

Some of the major Mesopotamian civilizations include the **Sumerian, Assyrian, Akkadian, and Babylonian civilizations.**



Evidence shows extensive use of technology, literature, legal codes, philosophy, religion, and architecture in these societies.

Civilizations born along rivers By roughly 6000 to 8000 years ago, agriculture was well under way in several regions including Ancient Egypt, around the Nile River; the Indus Valley civilization; Mesopotamia, between the Tigris and Euphrates rivers; and Ancient China, along the Yellow and Yangtze rivers.

This is because the regular river floods made for fertile soil around the banks and the rivers could also supply fresh water to irrigate crops. It's no coincidence that as agriculture allowed for denser and denser populations along with more specialized societies, some of the world's first civilizations developed in these areas as well.

### **Ancient Mesopotamia**

Mesopotamia—mainly modern-day Iraq and Kuwait—in particular is often referred to as the cradle of civilization because some of the most influential early city-states and empires first emerged there—although it's not the only place! Its modern name comes from the Greek for middle—mesos—and river—potamos—and literally means a **“country between two rivers.”** Those two rivers are the Tigris and Euphrates.

Not only was Mesopotamia one of the first places to develop agriculture, it was also at the crossroads of the Egyptian and the Indus Valley civilizations. This made it a melting pot of languages and cultures that stimulated a lasting impact on writing, technology, language, trade, religion, and law. Associated with Mesopotamia are ancient cultures like the Sumerians, Assyrians, Akkadians, and Babylonians.

Learning about this time period can be a little confusing because these cultures interacted with and ruled over each other over the course of several thousand years. These terms can also be associated with city-states, languages, religions, or empires—depending on the time and context we are looking at.

### **Sumerians**

Let's start with Summer. We believe Sumerian civilization first took form in southern Mesopotamia around 4000 BCE—or 6000 years ago—which would make it the first urban civilization in the region.

Mesopotamians are noted for developing one of the first written scripts around 3000 BCE: wedge-shaped marks pressed into clay tablets.

This cuneiform—another way to say wedge-shaped—script was also adapted by surrounding peoples to write their own languages for roughly 2000 years, until Phoenician, which the letters you are reading now are based on, began to become the dominant script in the first millennium BCE. Cuneiform is also the script that one of the world's first great works of literature, The Epic of Gilgamesh, was written in.

**Mesopotamians** used writing to record sales and purchases, to write letters to one another, and to tell stories. The incredibly important invention of the wheel is also credited to the Sumerians; the earliest discovered wheel dates to 3500 BCE in Mesopotamia.

Sumerians built ships that allowed them to travel into the Persian Gulf and trade with other early civilizations, such as the Harappans in northern India. They traded textiles, leather goods, and jewelry for Harappan semi-precious stones, copper, pearls, and ivory.

Sumerian religion was polytheistic—or **worshiped multiple gods**—many of which were anthropomorphic—they took human-like form. Temples to these gods were constructed atop massive ziggurats which were in the centers of most cities. These structures would have taken thousands of people many years to construct.

**A black-and-white image of an Epic of Gilgamesh tablet on a black background with cuneiform (wedge-shaped) writing.**

**A black-and-white image of an Epic of Gilgamesh tablet on a black background with cuneiform (wedge-shaped) writing.**

## **Akkadian Empire**



- Around 3000 BCE, the Sumerians had significant cultural interchange with a group in northern Mesopotamia known as the Akkadians—named after the city-state of Akkad. The Akkadian language is related to the modern languages of Hebrew and Arabic. These languages are known as Semitic languages. The term Semitic comes from the biblical character Shem, a son of Noah, the purported progenitor of Abraham and, accordingly, the Jewish and Arab people.
- Around 2334 BCE, Sargon of Akkad came to power and established what might have been the world’s first dynastic empire.
- The Akkadian Empire ruled over both the Akkadian and Sumerian speakers in Mesopotamia and the Levant—modern day Syria and Lebanon. The Empire of Akkad collapsed in 2154 BCE, within 180 years of its founding.
- The Akkadian Empire is pictured in brown. The directions of the military campaigns are shown as yellow arrows.
- The Sumerian Empire is pictured in red. The directions of the military campaigns are shown as yellow arrows.

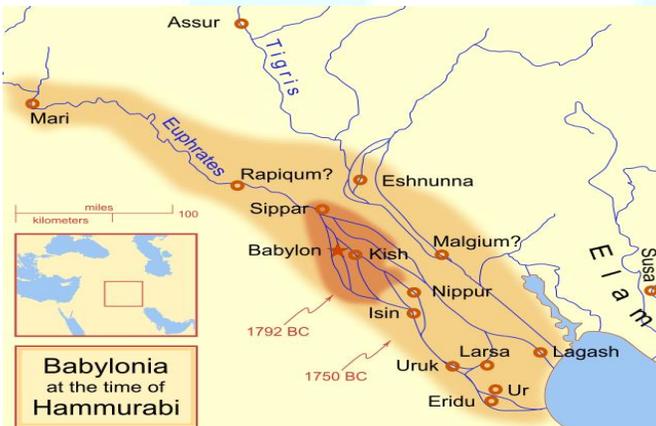
## Assyrian Empire

Assyria is named for its original capital, the ancient city of Ašur—also known as Ashur—in northern Mesopotamia.

Ashur was originally one of a number of Akkadian-speaking city states ruled by Sargon and his descendants during the Akkadian Empire. Within several hundred years of the collapse of the Akkadian Empire, Assyria had become a major empire.

For much of the 1400 years from the late twenty-first century BCE until the late seventh century BCE, the Akkadian-speaking Assyrians were the dominant power in Mesopotamia, especially in the north. The empire reached its peak near the end of this period in the seventh century.

- At that time, the Assyrian Empire stretched from Egypt and Cyprus in the west to the borders of Persia—modern-day Iran—in the east. The major exceptions to Assyrian dominance were the Babylonian Empire established by Hammurabi and some more chaotic dark ages where there wasn't a dominant power.



## Babylon

- Map of Babylonia at the time of **Hammurabi**. Map is of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers and the surrounding areas. Empire highlighted in brown and, near Babylon, red.
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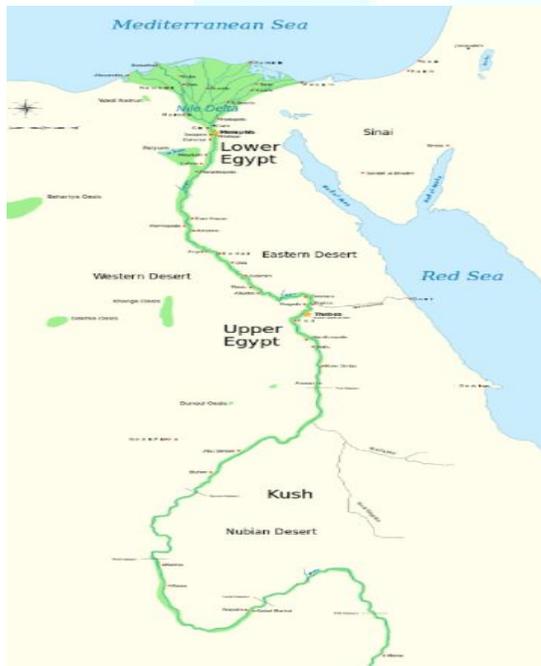
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- The extent of the Babylonian Empire at the start and end of Hammurabi's reign. Babylon was a minor city-state in central Mesopotamia for a century after it was founded in 1894 BCE.
- Things changed with the reign of Hammurabi, from 1792 to 1750 BCE. He was an efficient ruler, establishing a centralized bureaucracy with taxation. Hammurabi freed Babylon from foreign rule and then conquered the whole of southern Mesopotamia, bringing stability and the name of Babylonia to the region.
- One of the most important works of this First Dynasty of Babylon was the compilation in about 1754 BCE of a code of laws, called the Code of Hammurabi, which echoed and improved upon the earlier written laws of Sumer, Akkad, and Assyria. It's similar to the Sumerian king Ur-Nammu of Ur's code, written from 2100 to 2050 BCE.
- Hammurabi's code is one of the oldest deciphered writings of significant length in the world. Written in about 1754 BCE by the sixth king of Babylon, Hammurabi, the Code was written on stone stele—slabs—and clay tablets. The Code consists of 282 laws with scaled punishments depending on social status, adjusting "an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth".
- For example, if a person from a noble class broke an enslaved person's arm, they would have to pay a fine, whereas if a noble person broke another noble person's arm, the offending noble would have their arm broken.
- Some have seen the Code as an early form of constitutional government, the presumption of innocence, and the ability to present evidence in one's case.
- The Babylonian Empire established by Hammurabi lasted for 260 years until Babylon got sacked by invaders in 1531 BCE.
- In the period between 626 BCE and 539 BCE, Babylon asserted itself again over the region with the Neo-Babylonian Empire. This new empire

was overthrown in 539 BCE by the Persians who then ruled over the region until the time of Alexander the Great, 335 BCE.

## **Egyptian and Chinese civilization**

- Egyptian civilization developed along the Nile River in large part because the river's annual flooding ensured reliable, rich soil for growing crops.
- Repeated struggles for political control of Egypt showed the importance of the region's agricultural production and economic resources.
- The Egyptians kept written records using a writing system known as **hieroglyphics**.
- Egyptian rulers used the idea of divine kingship and constructed monumental architecture to demonstrate and maintain power.
- Ancient Egyptians developed wide-reaching trade networks along the Nile, in the Red Sea, and in the Near East.



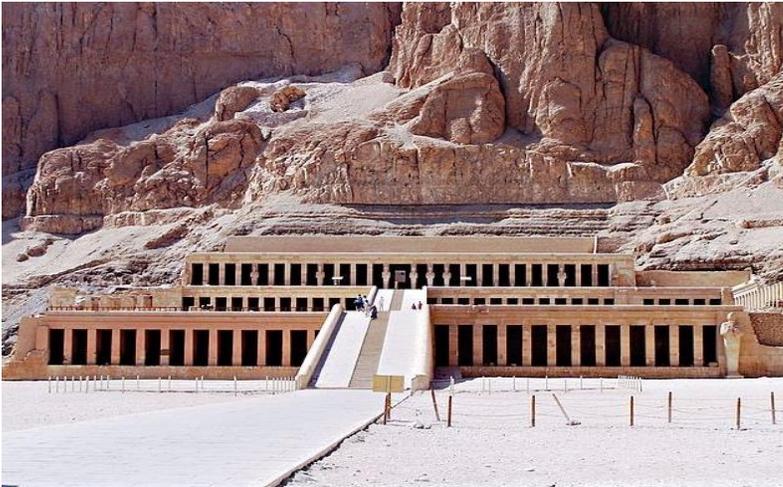
## **Early Egypt**

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- ❖ Much of the history of Egypt is divided into three “kingdom” periods— Old, Middle, and New—with shorter intermediate periods separating the kingdoms.
- ❖ The term “**intermediate**” here refers to the fact that during these times Egypt was not a unified political power, and thus was in between powerful kingdoms.
- ❖ Even before the Old Kingdom period, the foundations of Egyptian civilization were being laid for thousands of years, as people living near the Nile increasingly focused on sedentary agriculture, which led to urbanization and specialized, non-agricultural economic activity.
- ❖ Map of Ancient Egypt and the Mediterranean and Red seas.
- ❖ Land is beige and the habitable regions of Egypt are highlighted in Green (all along the Nile River and the delta that opens out to the Mediterranean Sea in the north).
- ❖ Lower Egypt is the northern region and Upper Egypt is the southern region of this map.
- ❖ Map of Ancient Egypt and the Mediterranean and Red seas. Land is beige and the habitable regions of Egypt are highlighted in Green (all along the Nile River and the delta that opens out to the Mediterranean Sea in the north).
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- ❖ The areas in green show the habitable regions of Egypt. Note the locations of the Nile Delta, Upper and Lower Egypt, the Sinai Peninsula, and Kush (Nubia). Image courtesy Wikimedia Commons.
- ❖ Evidence of human habitation in Egypt stretches back tens of thousands of years. It was only in about 6000 BCE, however, that widespread settlement began in the region.
- ❖ Around this time, the Sahara Desert expanded. Some scientists think this expansion was caused by a slight shift in the tilt of the Earth.

## E ▶ ENTRI

- ❖ Others have explored changing rainfall patterns, but the specific causes are not entirely clear. The most important result of this expansion of the Sahara for human civilization was that it pushed humans closer to the Nile River in search of reliable water sources.
- ❖ Apart from the delta region, where the river spreads out as it flows into the sea, most settlement in the Nile Valley was confined to within a few miles of the river itself (see map above).



- ❖ The Nile River flooded annually; this flooding was so regular that the ancient Egyptians set their three seasons—Inundation, or flooding, Growth, and Harvest—around it.
- ❖ This annual flooding was vital to agriculture because it deposited a new layer of nutrient-rich soil each year. In years when the Nile did not flood, the nutrient level in the soil was seriously depleted, and the chance of food shortages increased greatly.
- ❖ Food supplies had political effects, as well, and periods of drought probably contributed to the decline of Egyptian political unity at the ends of both the Old and Middle Kingdoms.
- ❖ Although we do not know the specific dates and events, most scholars who study this period believe that sometime around the year 3100 BCE, a leader named either Narmer or Menes—sources are unclear on

## ENTRI

whether these were the same person!—united Egypt politically when he gained control of both Upper and Lower Egypt.

- ❖ Somewhat confusingly, when you look at a map of this area, Lower Egypt is the delta region in the north, and Upper Egypt refers to the southern portion of the country, which is upriver from the delta.
- ❖ You may encounter this terminology when reading about rivers in history, so a good trick is to remember that rivers flow downhill, so the river is lower toward its end at the sea and higher closer to its source!
- ❖ After political unification, divine kingship, or the idea that a political ruler held his power by favor of a god or gods—or that he was a living incarnation of a god—became firmly established in Egypt. For example, in the mythology that developed around unification, Narmer was portrayed as Horus, a god of Lower Egypt, where Narmer originally ruled. He conquered Set, a god of Upper Egypt. This mythologized version of actual political events added legitimacy to the king's rule.
- ❖ **The use of hieroglyphics**—a form of writing that used images to express sounds and meanings—likely began in this period. As the Egyptian state grew in power and influence, it was better able to mobilize resources for large-scale projects and required better methods of record-keeping to organize and manage an increasingly large state.
- ❖ During the Middle Kingdom, Egyptians began to write literature, as well.
- ❖ Some writing was preserved on stone or clay, and some was preserved on papyrus, a paper-like product made from reed fiber.
- ❖ Papyrus is very fragile, but due to the hot and dry climate of Egypt, a few papyrus documents have survived. Hieroglyphic writing also became an important tool for historians studying ancient Egypt once it was translated in the early 1800s.
- ❖ An example of New Kingdom hieroglyphics from the thirteenth century BCE. Four vertical columns of colorfully painted hieroglyphics on a white background depict birds, eyes, a crab, and pottery, among other images.

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  - ❖ An example of New Kingdom hieroglyphics from the thirteenth century BCE. Image courtesy British Museum
  - ❖ As rulers became more powerful, they were better able to coordinate labor and resources to construct major projects, and more people required larger supplies of food. Projects to improve agricultural production, such as levees and canals became more important.
  - ❖ Irrigation practices consisted of building mud levees—which were walls of compacted dirt that directed the annual flooding onto farmland and kept it away from living areas—and of digging canals to direct water to fields as crops were growing.
  - ❖ Elites, those individuals who were wealthy and powerful, began building larger tombs which were precursors to the pyramids. These tombs represented a growing divide between the elite and common people in Egyptian society. Only the wealthy and important could afford and be considered as deserving of such elaborate burials.
  - ❖ A mastaba, which was the typical grave marker for early Egyptian elites. Looks like a pyramid except lower to the ground and with a flat top instead of a pointed one.
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- Old Kingdom Egypt: 2686–2181 BCE**
- ❖ During the Old Kingdom period, Egypt was largely unified as a single state; it gained in complexity and expanded militarily. Old Kingdom rulers built the first pyramids, which were both tombs and monuments

## E ▶ ENTRI

for the kings who had them built. Building monumental architecture—such as the Great Pyramid and the Sphinx in Giza, and temples for different gods—required a centralized government that could command vast resources.

- ❖ Great Sphinx of Giza (mythical creature with a human head and a lion's body) and the pyramid of Khafre. The tourists in the photo look like specks compared to these structures.

## Chinese civilization



- Chinese civilization, as described in mythology, begins with Pangu, the creator of the universe, and a succession of legendary sage-emperors and culture heroes who taught the ancient Chinese to communicate and to find sustenance, clothing, and shelter.
- The first prehistoric dynasty is said to be Xia, from about the twenty-first to the sixteenth century B.C.
- Until scientific excavations were made at early bronze-age sites in 1928, it was difficult to separate myth from reality in regard to the Xia. But since then, and especially in the 1960s and 1970s, archaeologists have uncovered urban sites, bronze implements, and tombs that point to the existence of Xia civilization in the same locations cited in ancient Chinese historical texts.

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- At minimum, the Xia period marked an evolutionary stage between the late neolithic cultures that followed the settlement of nomadic tribes in the fertile valleys of the Yellow River And the subsequent first Chinese urban civilization of the Shang dynasty.
- Thousands of archaeological finds in the **Huang He** (Yellow River), Henan Valley --the apparent cradle of Chinese civilization--provide evidence about the Shang dynasty, which endured roughly from 1700 to 1027 B.C. The Shang dynasty (also called the Yin dynasty in its later stages) is believed to have been founded by a rebel leader who overthrew the last Xia ruler.
- Its civilization was based on agriculture, augmented by hunting and animal husbandry.
- Two important events of the period were the development of a writing system, as revealed in archaic Chinese inscriptions found on tortoise shells and flat cattle bones (commonly called oracle bones or), and the use of bronze metallurgy.
- A number of ceremonial bronze vessels with inscriptions date from the Shang period; the workmanship on the bronzes attests to a high level of civilization.
- The study of the heavens was one of the central features of Chinese civilization and the resulting calendar was a sacred document, sponsored and promulgated by the reigning monarch.
- For more than two millennia, a Bureau of Astronomy made astronomical observations, calculated astronomical events such as eclipses, prepared astrological predictions, and maintained the calendar.
- After all, a successful calendar not only served practical needs, but also confirmed the consonance between Heaven and the imperial court.
- The beginnings of the Chinese calendar can be traced back to the 14th century B.C.E. Legend has it that the Emperor Huangdi invented the calendar in 2637 B.C.E.

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- The Chinese calendar is based on exact astronomical observations of the longitude of the sun and the phases of the moon indicating that the Chinese astronomers of the time were quite capable of carrying out intricate and detailed observations and calculations.
- Analysis of oldest surviving astronomical records inscribed on oracle bones reveals a sophisticated Chinese lunisolar calendar, with intercalation of lunar months.
- Various intercalation schemes were developed for the early calendars, including the nineteen-year and 76-year lunar phase cycles that came to be known in the West as the Metonic cycle and Callippic cycle. From the earliest records, the beginning of the year occurred at a New Moon near the winter solstice.
- The choice of month for beginning the civil year varied with time and place, however. In the late second century B.C.E.A calendar reform established the practice, which continues today, of requiring the winter solstice to occur in month 11.
- This reform also introduced the intercalation system in which dates of New Moons are compared with the 24 solar terms. However, calculations were based on the mean motions resulting from the cyclic relationships.
- Inequalities in the Moon's motions were incorporated as early as the seventh century C.E., but the Sun's mean longitude was used for calculating the solar terms until 1644.
- The Chinese astronomers were among the earliest to keep systematic records of their observations of the heavens. Sitings and records of these sitings go back over forty centuries.
- The Chinese observed sunspots, meteorites, eclipses and comets which they called "**guest stars.**" They also observed rare events such as the splitting of comets as the record of 896 CE from the Tang Dynasty indicates, and meteorite showers. The earliest account of the latter exists in The Chronicles of Zuo Ming regarding such a shower in 687 BCE.

## E ▶ ENTRI

- Observing total solar eclipses was, for example, a major element of forecasting the future health and successes of the Emperor, and astrologers were left with the onerous task of trying to anticipate when these events might occur.
- Failure to get the prediction right, in at least one recorded case in 2300 B.C. resulted in the beheading of two astrologers.
- "Here lie the bodies of Ho and Hi, Whose fate, though sad, is risible; Being slain because they could not spy **Th' eclipse which was invisible.**" - Author unknown (Refers to the Chinese eclipse of 2136 B.C. or 2159 B.C.)
- Because the pattern of total solar eclipses is erratic in any specific geographic location, many astrologers no doubt lost their heads.
- By about 20 B.C., surviving documents show that Chinese astrologers understood what caused eclipses, and by 8 B.C. some predictions of total solar eclipse were made using the 135-month recurrence period. By A.D. 206 Chinese astrologers could predict solar eclipses by analyzing the Moon's motion.
- They were also one of the earliest people to make star maps: Shi Shen, an astronomer, cataloged an eighth-volume series of his observations of the heavens in the 4th century BCE.
- The earliest known western star maps were made by the Greek astronomer Hiparchus in 2 BCE.
- In addition to their observations and records of the heavens, the Chinese also developed highly sophisticated navigational systems based on the stars. Chinese sailors in the third century BCE were already able to find their bearings using the Great Dipper and the North Pole.
- In conjunction with their observations of the heavens the Chinese also built planetariums, and various instruments including armillaries for measuring the celestial coordinates.
- Scientists reading the records estimate that the Chinese were probably using an armillary to map the heavens by the 4th century BCE.

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- In Chinese history, the study of astronomy was inseparable from mathematics.
- From the earliest times, the Chinese, according to Joseph Needham, were far in advance of contemporary civilizations such as those of Egypt, Babylon, Greece and Rome.
- There is evidence, for instance, that the Chinese had mastered the decimal system since the dawn of history. The earliest treatise on mathematics, Zhoubi suanjing was probably written during the Zhou Dynasty between 1030-1022 BCE.
- During the **Han Dynasty (221 BCE-220 CE)** several mathematical treatises were compiled by distinguished mathematicians such as Liu Hui whose Haidao suanjing (The Sea and Island Mathematical Manual) appeared sometime around 220CE.
- The dual studies in astronomy and mathematics would result in some of the most remarkable inventions including the astronomical clock by the astronomer Su Song over nine hundred years ago.
- In the second century CE the famous astronomer Shang Heng devised a mobile water-driven globe which revolved in correspondence with the movements of the heavenly bodies.

## Legacy of Greece and Rome



**Ancient Greeks and Romans** contributed to the development of democracy. The Greeks were the first civilization to let citizens get involved in political decision making.

They made laws and banished their countrymen using the ballot box. Also, the Greeks had several brilliant thinkers/philosophers that encouraged people to examine their lives and use logic/reason to make sense of their world.

When the Romans took over control of the ancient world, they adopted and made changes to democratic thinking.

Putting laws in writing and on public display made sure that laws were applied equally to everyone.

The Romans, under Justinian, codified over 1000 years of law and organizing it set a precedent that modern societies emulate. In all, the greatest gift from the ancients is the idea that individuals are citizens of a country and not just subjects of the ruling class.

Reforms of Solon In 594 B.C., Solon, a respected statesman, passed a law outlawing slavery based on debt and canceled the farmers' debts.

This simple act enabled Athens to avoid revolution or civil war.

Solon continued his policies of political reform. He established four classes of citizenship based on wealth rather than heredity.

Only citizens of the three higher classes were able to hold public office.

Yet, even the lowest class of citizens could vote in the assembly.

All free adult males were citizens.

**Life in Ancient Greece**

The ancient Greeks were great thinkers, warriors, athletes, artists, and politicians. They were also great builders. Their skills had beautiful temples, spectacular theaters, and other dazzling public buildings.

**and Artisans**  
They were born out of necessity. They made things of wood and metal, and they were also good at repairing things. They were also very decorative. Their work was not only useful, but it was also beautiful. They were really good at their work, and they were also very creative. They were also very hardworking.

**Bold Builders**  
The ancient Greeks had a grand style of architecture that is still copied today. The Greeks believed that the secret to making a great building was in the details. They carefully designed their buildings, making sure all the angles, shapes, and sizes were just right.

**Great Thinkers**  
The Greeks created a new way of thinking that emphasized logic, reasoning, and observation. It was called democracy. Plato and Aristotle were famous teachers of the time. Hippocrates, a doctor, and Archimedes, an inventor and mathematician, were also famous Greeks.

**Greek Gods**  
The Greeks believed that gods lived on a high mountain called Mount Olympus. They had a lot of gods, and they were all very powerful. They were also very human-like. They had feelings, and they could be angry or happy. They were also very beautiful. They were also very powerful. They were also very human-like. They had feelings, and they could be angry or happy. They were also very beautiful. They were also very powerful.

**THE AGES OF ANCIENT GREECE**

2000 B.C.	1350 B.C.	1250 B.C.	750 B.C.	700 B.C.	500 B.C.	326 B.C.
Minoan civilization reaches its peak on the island of Crete.	Mycenaean civilization reaches its peak on the island of Crete.	The Trojan War is fought.	Greek city-states, such as Athens, are founded.	A reform called the Cleisthenes reforms is introduced.	Alexander the Great conquers the world.	Alexander the Great conquers the world.

**Greek Gods**

<b>Zeus</b> : King of the gods, father of many children.	<b>Poseidon</b> : Brother of Zeus, god of the sea.	<b>Hermes</b> : Son of Zeus, messenger of the gods.	<b>Hades</b> : Brother of the gods, ruler of the underworld.
<b>Athena</b> : Goddess of wisdom.	<b>Artemis</b> : Goddess of the hunt.	<b>Demeter</b> : Goddess of agriculture.	<b>Zeus</b> : King of the gods.

## ENTRRI

Solon also created a new Council of Four Hundred. This body prepared business for the already existing council.

Solon also introduced the legal concept that any citizen could bring charges against wrongdoers.

Although these acts increased participation in government, Athens was still limited as a democracy. Only citizens could participate in the government, and only about one-tenth of the population were citizens at the time.

**Athenian law** denied citizenship to women, slaves, and foreign residents.

Slaves formed about one-third of the Athenian population.

Cleisthenes Enacts More Reforms Beginning in 508 B.C. The Athenian leader Cleisthenes introduced further reforms. Because of his reforms, **Cleisthenes** is generally regarded as the founder of democracy in Athens.

He worked to make Athens a full democracy by reorganizing the assembly to balance the power of the rich and poor.

He also increased the power of the assembly by allowing all citizens to submit laws for debate and passage. Cleisthenes then created the Council of Five Hundred.

The Council proposed laws and counseled the assembly.

Council members were chosen at random from among the Citizens.

These reforms allowed Athenian citizens to participate in a limited democracy. However, still only one-fifth of Athenian residents were actual citizens.

### **Greek Democracy Changes**

From 490 to 479 B.C. The Greeks fought Persian invaders who were attempting to conquer Greece. The Greek city-states fought side by side as allies and defeated the Persian forces.

The Athenians maintained democracy during the Persian Wars by holding public debates about how to defend their city. After Prussia's defeat, Athens continued to develop democracy.

A wise and able statesman named Pericles led Athens for 32 years, from 461 to 429 B.C.

**Pericles Strengthens Democracy** Pericles strengthened Greek democracy by increasing the number of paid public officials and by paying jurors.

This enabled poorer citizens to participate in the government. Through greater citizen participation, Athens evolved into a direct democracy. This is a form of government in which citizens rule and make laws directly rather than through representatives.

In Athens, more citizens were actively involved in government than in any other city state. In a speech, Pericles expressed his great pride in Athenian democracy when he said, **“Our constitution is called a democracy because power is in the hands not of a minority but of the whole people.”**

Democracy ended in Greece after a war between the two strongest city-states, Athens and Sparta. Macedonia, a nearby state, invaded Greece and defeated the weakened city-states.

**Greek Philosophers** Use Reason During the fourth century B.C. in Athens, several great thinkers appeared. They used logic and reason to investigate the nature of the universe, human society, and morality. These Greek thinkers based their philosophy on the following assumptions:

**(1) The universe (land, sky, and sea) is put together in an orderly way and is subject to absolute and unchanging laws; and**

## E ▶ ENTRI

**(2) people can understand these laws through logic and reason.**

The Greeks' respect for human intelligence and the power of reason had allowed the ideas of democracy to flourish.

The first of these great philosophers was Socrates.

He encouraged his students to examine their most closely held beliefs. He used a question-and-answer approach that became known as the Socratic method.

**Socrates'** greatest pupil was Plato . In his famous work The Republic, Plato set forth his vision of a perfectly governed society. He wanted society governed not by the richest and most powerful but by the wisest, whom he called philosopher-kings.



### **Rome Develops a Republic**

- While Greece was in decline, a new civilization to the west was developing. From about 1000 to 500 B.C The earliest Romans—the Latins—battled with Greeks and Etruscans for control of the Italian peninsula.

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- The Romans were the victors. From Kingdom to Republic Beginning about 600 B.C.A series of kings ruled Rome. Then, in 509 B.C.A group of Roman aristocrats overthrew a harsh king.
- They set up a new government, calling it a republic. A republic is a form of government in which power rests with citizens who have the right to elect the leaders who make governmental decisions. It is an indirect democracy, in contrast to the direct democracy in which all citizens participate directly in the government.
- In Rome, as in Greece, citizenship with voting rights was granted only to free-born males.
- In the early republic, two groups struggled for power. The patricians were aristocratic landowners who held most of the power.
- The plebeians were common farmers, artisans, and merchants. The patricians inherited their power and social status.
- They claimed that their ancestry gave them the authority to make laws for Rome and its people.
- The plebeians were citizens of Rome with the right to vote. But they were barred by law from holding most important government positions. In time, plebeian pressure on the patricians gained them political power.
- Twelve Tables An important victory for the plebeians was forcing creation of a written law code. With laws unwritten,
- patrician officials often interpreted the law to suit themselves.
- In 451 B.C., a group of ten officials began writing down Rome's laws.
- They had the laws carved on 12 tables, or tablets, and publicly displayed. The Twelve Tables established the idea that all free citizens had the right to protection of the law and that laws would be fairly administered.
- Republican Government Like the Athenians, the Romans

had established a government with separate branches.

- Two officials called consuls commanded the army and directed the government. Their term of office was only one year. The legislative branch was made up of a senate and two assemblies. Patricians made up the senate.
- It controlled foreign and financial policies and advised the consuls. The two assemblies included other classes of citizens. In times of crisis, the republic also provided for a dictator, a leader who had absolute power to make laws and command the army.
- The dictator was limited to a six-month term. For hundreds of years after the founding of the republic, Rome expanded its territories through conquest and trade.
- But expansion created problems. For decades, Rome alternated between the chaos of civil war and the authoritarian rule of a series of dictators. Eventually, the republic collapsed. In 27 B.C., Rome came under the rule of an emperor.

## **Roman Law**

Rome had become a great power not only by conquering other lands but also by bringing the conquered peoples into its system. The Romans tried to create a system of laws that could be applied throughout the Roman Empire.

Like the Greeks, they believed that laws should be based on principles of reason and justice and should protect citizens and their property. This idea applied to all people regardless of their nationality. It had a great influence on the development of democracy throughout the Western world.

## E ▶ ENTRI



Some important principles of Roman law were

- All citizens had the right to equal treatment under the law.
- A person was considered innocent until proven guilty.
- The burden of proof rested with the accuser rather than the accused.
- Any law that seemed unreasonable or grossly unfair could be set aside.

**A Written Legal Code** Another major characteristic of the Roman government was its regard for written law as exemplified by the creation of the Twelve Tables in 451 B.C. Nearly 1,000 years later, in A.D. 528, Emperor Justinian ordered the compilation of all Roman laws from the earlier code.

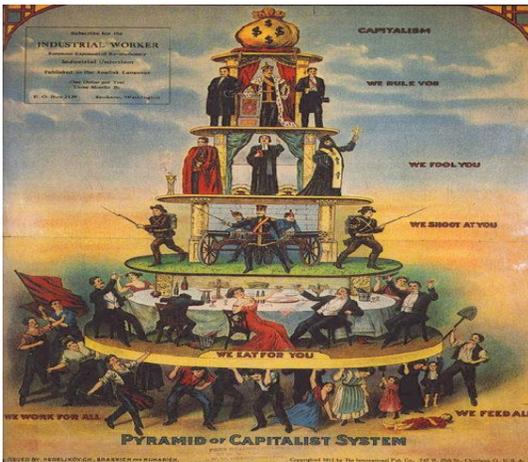
After its completion, this new code consisted of four works. The Code contained nearly 5,000 Roman laws. The Digest was a summary of legal opinions. The Institutes served as a textbook for law students. The Novellae contained laws passed after 534.

The Code of Justinian later became a guide on legal matters throughout Western Europe. Written laws helped establish the idea of “a government of laws, not of men,” in which even rulers and other powerful persons could be held accountable for their actions. Legacy of Rome gave the world the idea of a republic. Rome also adopted from the Greeks the notion that an individual is a citizen in a state rather than the subject of a ruler.

Perhaps Rome's greatest and most lasting legacy was its written legal code and the idea that this code should be applied equally and impartially to all citizens.

Rome preserved and added to Greece's idea of democracy and passed on the early democratic tradition to civilizations that followed.

## Feudalism



### What is Feudalism?

- Feudalism was a combination of legal and military customs in medieval Europe that flourished between 9th and 15th centuries.
- It was a way of structuring society around relationships derived from the holding of land in exchange for service or labor.
- In feudalism, a lord gave his most trusted men, known as vassals, land and power over all the people living there, and in return they swore loyalty to him and promised to give him a share of their taxes and provide military support whenever called upon.

### Feudalism in Europe

- ❖ Feudalism in Europe emerged somewhere around the 9th century and continued to exist as a dominant social structure until the 15th century.

## ENTRI

- ❖ It began when mounted soldiers started establishing land holdings of their own, essentially a result of the decentralization of power in the Empires.
- ❖ This led to vast land holdings in the hands of these soldiers who eventually became the nobility and the land was further subdivided into vassals and fiefs.
- ❖ •Feudalism in Europe had its origins under the Frankish Empire where it borrowed from Roman and Germanic traditions.
- ❖ Initial feudal structure consisted of the king handing out land grants to the nobles who in turn gave land to lords. Lords then hired peasants, bonded or free, to cultivate the land. In return, nobles and lords provided aid to the king during wars and owed their allegiance to him.
- ❖ Feudalism in Europe arose because after Frankish armies and soldiers settled down, they were able to secure landholdings.
- ❖ And since previous social structures as were present during the
- ❖ The Roman era had crumbled in Western Europe, feudalism emerged as a viable alternative for the new social circumstances.
- ❖ This is why it rapidly spread to other parts of Europe as well.

### **Decline of Feudalism in Europe**

- The bedrock of feudalism was the need for the King to get armed help from nobles in return for land.
- Over time, the organization and nature of the armies became more sophisticated and it came to increasingly comprise of professional soldiers and mercenaries, who would fight for money or a fixed pay, as opposed to the knights and fighting men provided by nobles in the early days of feudalism.

## **E ▶ ENTRI**

- This trend was coupled with many events such as the Black Death, changes in economy from land-based to money-based and the increasingly greater cognizance among the peasants of their rights which culminated in the Peasants' Revolt in England and similar revolts in other parts of Europe.
- The decline of feudalism in England by the 14th century also marked similar trends all over Europe.

## **Church in Europe**

Religious practice in medieval Europe (c. 476–1500) was dominated and informed by the Catholic Church.

The majority of the population was Christian, and "Christian" at this time meant "Catholic" as there was initially no other form of that religion. The rampant corruption of the medieval Church, however, gave rise to reformers such as John Wycliffe (l. 1330–1384) and Jan Hus (l. c. 1369–1415) and religious sects, condemned as heresies by the Church, such as the Bogomils and Cathars, among many others. Even so, the Church maintained its power and exercised enormous influence over people's daily lives from the king on his throne to the peasant in the field.



The Church regulated and defined an individual's life, literally, from birth to death and was thought to continue its hold over the person's soul in the afterlife.

The Church was the manifestation of God's will and presence on earth, and its dictates were not to be questioned, even when it was apparent that many of the clergy were working far more steadily toward their own interests than those of their god.

A dramatic blow to the power of the Church came in the form of the Black Death pandemic of 1347-1352 during which people began to doubt the power of the clergy who could do nothing to stop people from dying or the plague from spreading.

Even so, the Church repeatedly crushed dissent, silenced reformers, and massacred heretical sects until the Protestant Reformation (1517-1648) which broke the Church's power and allowed for greater freedom of thought and religious expression.

## **Church Structure & Beliefs**

## ENTRI

The Church claimed authority from God through Jesus Christ who, according to the Bible, designated his apostle Peter as "the rock upon which my church will be built" to whom he gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven (Matthew 16:18-19).

Peter was therefore regarded as the first Pope, the head of the church, and all others as his successors endowed with the same divine authority.

By the time of the Middle Ages, the Church had an established hierarchy:

- **Pope – the head of the Church**
- **Cardinals – advisors to the Pope; administrators of the Church**
- **Bishops/Archbishops – ecclesiastical superiors over a cathedral or region**
- **Priests – ecclesiastical authorities over a parish, village, or town church**
- **Monastic Orders – religious adherents in monasteries supervised by an abbot/abbess**

The Church maintained the belief that Jesus Christ was the only begotten son of the one true God as revealed in the Hebrew scriptures and that those works (which would become the Christian Old Testament) prophesied Christ's coming.

The Church hierarchy maintained the social hierarchy. One was born into a certain class, followed the profession of one's parents, and died as they had. Social mobility was extremely rare to nonexistent since the Church taught that it was God's will one had been born into a certain set of circumstances and attempting to improve one's lot was

tantamount to claiming God had made a mistake. People, therefore, accepted their lot and made the best of it.

### **Church in Daily Life**

The lives of the people of the Middle Ages revolved around the Church. People, especially women, were known to attend church three to five times daily for prayer and at least once a week for services, confession, and acts of contrition for repentance.

The Church paid no taxes and was supported by the people of a town or city. Citizens were responsible for supporting the parish priest and Church overall through a tithe of ten percent of their income. Tithes paid for baptism ceremonies, confirmations, and funerals as well as saint's day festivals and holy day festivals such as Easter celebrations.

Ordeals, like executions, were a form of public entertainment and, as with festivals, marriages, and other events in community life, were paid for by the people's tithe to the Church. The lower class, as usual, bore the brunt of the Church's expenses but the nobility was also required to donate large sums to the Church to ensure a place for themselves in heaven or to lessen their time in purgatory.

The Church's teachings on purgatory – an afterlife realm between heaven and hell where souls remained trapped until they had paid for their sins – generated enormous wealth for various clergy who sold writs known as indulgences, promising a shorter stay in purgatory for a price. Relics were another source of income, and it was common for unscrupulous clerics to sell fake splinters of Christ's cross, a saint's finger or toe, a vial of water from the Holy Land, or any number of objects, which would allegedly bring luck or ward off misfortune.

## ENTRI

The teachings of the Church were a certainty to the people of the Middle Ages. There was no room for doubt, and questions were not tolerated. One was either in the Church or out of it, and if out, one's interactions with the rest of the community were limited.

Jews, for example, lived in their own neighborhoods surrounded by Christians and were regularly treated quite poorly.

The French king Charles Martel (r. 718–741), defeated the Muslim invasion of Europe at the Battle of Tours (also known as the Battle of Poitiers, 732), and so Muslims in Europe were rare at this time outside of Spain and the traveling merchants conducting trade.

A citizen of Europe, therefore – who did not belong to either of these faiths – had to adhere to the orthodox vision of the Church in order to interact with family, community, and make a living.

If one found one could not do so (or at least appear to do so), the only option was a so-called heretical sect.

### **Corruption & Heresy**

The heretical sects of the Middle Ages were uniformly responses to the clear corruption and greed of the Church. The immense wealth of the Church, accrued through tithes and lavish gifts, only inspired a desire for even greater wealth which translated as power.

An archbishop could, and frequently did, threaten a noble, a town, or even a monastery with excommunication – by which one was exiled from the Church and so from the grace of God and commerce with fellow citizens – for any reason. Even well-known and devout religious figures – such as Hildegard of Bingen (l. 1098–1179) – were subject to **'discipline'** along these lines for disagreeing with an ecclesiastical superior.

The priests were notoriously corrupt and, in many cases, illiterate parasites who only held their position due to family influence and favor. Scholar G. G. Coulton cites a letter of 1281 in which the writer warns how

## ENTRI

"the ignorance of the priests precipitates the people into the ditch of error" (259) and later cites the correspondence of one Bishop Guillaume le Maire from Angers, who writes:

The medieval mystic Margery Kempe (l. C. 1342–1438) challenged the wealthy clerics to reform their corruption while, almost 200 years before, Hildegard of Bingen had done the same as had men like John Wycliffe and Jan Hus. The Church was not interested in reform, however, because it had the last word on any subject as God's voice on earth.

Those who found the abuses of the Church too intolerable and were seeking an honest spiritual experience instead of an unending pay-to-pray scheme, which not even death could halt, joined religious sects outside the Church and attempted to live peacefully in their own communities.

The best-known of these were the Cathars of Southern France who, while they interacted with the Catholic communities they lived near or in, had their own services, rituals, and belief system.

These kinds of communities were routinely condemned by the Church and destroyed, their members massacred, and whatever lands they had confiscated as Church property. Even an orthodox community which adhered to Catholic teachings – such as the Beguines – was condemned because it was begun spontaneously as a response to the needs of the people and was not initiated by the Church.

The Beguines were laywomen who lived as nuns and served their community, holding all possessions in common and living a life of poverty and service to others, but they were not approved by the Church and were therefore condemned; they were disbanded along with their male counterparts, the Beghards, in the 14th century.

## **E ▶ ENTRI**

These groups, and others like them, attempted to assert spiritual autonomy based on the scriptural authority of the Bible, without any of the Church's trappings or elaborate ritual.

The Cathars believed that Christ never died on the cross and was therefore never resurrected but that, instead, the son of God had been spiritually offered for the sins of humanity on a higher plane. The gospel stories, they claimed, should be understood as allegories using symbolic language rather than static histories of a past event. They further advocated for the feminine principle in the divine, reversing a goddess of wisdom known as Sophia, to whom they devoted their lives.

Living simply and serving the surrounding community, the Cathars amassed no wealth, their priests owned nothing and were highly respected as holy men even by Catholics, and Cathar communities offered worthwhile goods and services.

The Beguines, while never claiming any beliefs outside of orthodoxy, were equally devout and selfless in their efforts to help the poor and, especially, poor single mothers and their children.

Both of these movements, however, offered people an alternative to the Church, and the medieval Church found that intolerable.

Any change in people's attitudes toward religion threatened the power of the Church, and the Church had enough power to crush such movements even in cases where sects such as the Cathars had significant support and protection.

## **Reformation**



John Wycliffe and his followers (known as Lollards) had been calling for reformation since the 14th century, and it might be difficult for a modern-day reader to fully understand why no serious attempts were made at reform, but this is simply because the modern era offers so many different legitimate avenues for religious expression. In the Middle Ages, it was inconceivable that there could be any valid belief system other than the Church.

Heaven, hell, and purgatory were all very real places to the people of the Middle Ages, and one could not risk offending God by criticizing his Church and damning one's self to an eternity of torment in a lake of fire surrounded by demons. The wonder is not so much why more people did not call for reform as that anyone was brave enough to try.

**The Protestant Reformation** did not arise as an attempt to overthrow the power of the Church but began simply as yet another effort at reforming ecclesiastical abuse and corruption.

Martin Luther (l. 1483-1546) was a highly-educated German priest and monk who moved from concern to outrage over the abuses of the Church.

**Martin Luther's** 95 Theses (1517) famously criticized the sale of indulgences as a money-making scheme having no biblical authority and no spiritual worth and opposed the Church's teachings on a number of other matters.

Luther was condemned by Pope Leo X in 1520 who demanded he renounce his criticism or face excommunication. When Luther refused to recant, Pope Leo moved ahead with the excommunication in 1521, and Luther became an outlaw. Like Wycliffe, Hus, and others before him, Luther was only stating the obvious in calling for an end to rampant abuse and corruption.

Like Wycliffe, he translated the Bible from Latin into the vernacular, opposed the concept of sacerdotalism whereby a priest is necessary as an intermediary between a believer and God, and maintained that the Bible and prayer were all one needed to commune directly with God. In making these claims, of course, he not only undermined the authority of the Pope but rendered that position – as well as those of the cardinals, bishops, archbishops, priests, and others – ineffectual and obsolete.

**According to Luther**, salvation was granted by the grace of God, not by the good deeds of human beings, and so all of the works the Church required of people were of no eternal use and only served to fill the Church's treasury and build their grand cathedrals.

Owing to the political climate in Germany, and Luther's own charisma and intelligence, his effort at reform became the movement which would break the power of the Church. Other reformers such as Huldrych Zwingli (l. 1484-1531) and John Calvin (l. 1509-1564) broke new ground in their own regions and many others followed suit.

- The monopoly the Church held on religious belief and practice was broken, and a new era of greater spiritual freedom was begun, but it was not without cost.
- In their zeal to throw off the oppression of the medieval Church, the newly liberated protestors destroyed monasteries, libraries,

and cathedrals, the ruins of which still dot the European landscape in the present day.

- The Church had certainly become increasingly corrupt and oppressive and its clergy was frequently characterized far more by a love of worldly goods and pleasures than spiritual pursuits but, at the same time, the Church had initiated hospitals, colleges and universities, social systems for the care of the poor and the sick, and maintained religious orders which allowed women an outlet for their spirituality, imagination, and ambitions.
- These institutions became especially important during the Black Death pandemic of 1347-1352 which killed millions of people in Europe and significantly impacted people's faith in the vision of the Church.
- The **Protestant Reformation**, unfortunately, destroyed much of the good the Church had done in reacting to the corruption it had fallen into and its perceived failure to meet the challenge of the plague outbreak.
- Eventually, the different movements would organize into the Christian Protestant sects recognizable today – **Lutherans, Presbyterians, Episcopalians**, and so on – and set up their own institutes of higher learning, hospitals, and social programs.
- When the Reformation began, there was only the Church, the monolithic powerhouse of the Middle Ages, which afterwards became only one option for religious expression among many.

## **Arab civilization**



- The Arabs were originally the people of the Arabian desert. Converted to Islam in the 7th century A.D. They conquered the Middle East from the Sassanid and Byzantine empires and established a succession of Arab-Islamic Middle Eastern empires from Spain to Central Asia and from the Caucasus to India.
- More profoundly, Islam, as well as its laws and doctrines, became the universally accepted religion and culture of the Persians, Turks, and many other peoples. What is referred to as Arab Civilization is a combination of certain classical Arab values [see Arab], Islamic culture and institutions, the inherited knowledge of the great civilizations of the Old World, and the unity provided by the Arabic language.
- 
- The Arabs preserved and built upon existing knowledge in the realms of
- government, literature, philosophy, history, art and architecture, music, physical and mathematical sciences, biology, medicine, engineering, navigation, and commercial law.
- Although Arab control over Islamic empires proved ephemeral, Islam continued to flourish as a religion and civilization of the Middle East. Currently, one fifth of the world's population is Muslim,

and Islam has become the second largest religion in both Europe and North America.

### **Pre-Islamic Arabia**



- Arabia was the cradle of Islam and of Arab civilization. In the 6th century A.D. it was a region with some sedentary agricultural and commercial life in the south (Yemen) and on the borders of Syria and Iraq, but the harsh interior was the domain of camel-raising nomads (bedouins).
- The bedouins were polytheists whose gods did not take the shape of humans or animals, but rather were amorphous spirits usually associated with specific geographic features, particularly those that gave comfort or shelter such as caves or watering holes. Their gods also dwelled in the skies.
- Additionally, they believed in jinns or spirits which could be good or bad and which came to the world in the form of animals. The socio-political unit of organization was the tribe .

## ENTRI

Among the various tribes of the peninsula, there were numerous disputes over water and pasturage. Culturally, the Arabs relied on poetry as a form of news, entertainment, and history.

The Arabian peninsula was surrounded by two more advanced civilizations, the Byzantine and Sasanian Empires, which were frequently at war with one another.

While the peninsula was somewhat insulated from the superpower disputes, they were aware of military techniques, weapons, material goods, and notions of monotheism emanating from spreading settlements, itinerant preachers, and contacts with converted border people.

By the 7th century A.D. The most advanced Arab communities were at the oases of Mecca and Medina. Mecca was a sanctuary settled in the 5th century A.D. by the Quraysh tribe. Its shrine, the kaaba, was a center of pilgrimage and trade for pagans, Christians, and Jews. The base of the shrine was a black meteor above which a cabinet-like structure was built—according to legend with some connection to Abraham. The kaaba housed a number of different idols, but it was mainly associated with the local god of Mecca, Hubal. There was also some association with Allah, the god of divinity. Allah was the same word used by Arabic-speaking Christians and Jews to refer to their God.

**The kaaba and the nearby well of Zamzam** stimulated the Meccan economy, and a service industry developed to cater to the food, housing, and clothing needs of the pilgrims. Medina, a town about 200 miles north of Mecca, was an agricultural oasis plagued by feuds amongst its tribes, which included both pagans and Jews.

### **Life and Teachings of Muhammad**

Muhammad was born in Mecca circa 570 A.D. and earned his living in the caravan trading business of his wife Khadija. Muhammad was

## ENTRI

troubled by the disparities among certain clans within his tribe and the changes that had taken place in Meccan society with the development of its economy. He used to retreat to a cave on Mt. Hira to meditate, and during one of these sessions around the year 610, the archangel Gabriel appeared and asked Muhammad to recite. After some initial confusion Muhammad found himself Reciting.

Muslims believe that he directly received the word of God. It was only after Muhammad's death that these revelations were organized and recorded in the Quran.

The earliest verses of the Quran were pithy, ear-catching messages regarding the power and goodness of Allah (literally the God), man's duty to Him, the coming of a Day of Judgment, and the role of Muhammad as a prophet.

### Orthodox Caliphate

- Muhammad's death in 632 was a test of survival for the Muslims. The powerful among the clans of Medina, as well as the earliest followers from Mecca, sought to preserve the integrity of the religion and the political bonds of the confederation by electing **Abu Bakr** as a successor (caliph) to Muhammad.
- There would be no other prophet for the Muslims, but there was a need for someone to fill the many functions that Muhammad had served during his lifetime.
- Abu Bakr, an early convert, loyal follower, and father-in-law to Muhammad, was a logical choice. Some of the tribes refused to accept his leadership and stopped paying mandatory alms to the central treasury.
- Abu Bakr sent loyal Arab troops to reign in the rebelling tribes, initiating the so-called Wars of Apostasy.
- Tribes in flight, or seeking compensation for their losses, soon breached both the Iraqi-Sassanian and the Syrian-Byzantine

## E ▶ ENTRI

frontiers. Abu Bakr encouraged raids into Palestine, where success emboldened the Arab tribesmen to merge forces and defeat a Byzantine army near Gaza

- in 634. From then on, sporadic incursions became invasions. The immediate causes of the Arab conquests were pressures and opportunities generated by wars among the Arabs themselves. Religious motives were in the background.
- The impoverishment and violence of life on the peninsula was the tinder for the spark caused by the Wars of Apostasy.

### Umayyad Dynasty



Muawiya's reign (661-680) marks the beginning of the Umayyad dynasty, sometimes referred to as the Arab Kingdom due to the prominent role played by Arabs. Umayyad rule also marks the beginning of the hereditary principle for the caliphate, a principle that would remain until the dissolution of the caliphate in 1924.

It should be noted, however, that although the first four caliphs followed an elective principle, it was a rather narrow group that participated in the election.

Muawiya's leadership represented an amalgam between Byzantine and traditional Arab elements, and it built upon the success that he had established as governor. He secured his son Yazid's place as caliph, a move which he nonetheless buttressed with an oath of allegiance from the leading tribes.

## **Abbasid Caliphate—Golden Age of Arab Civilization**

The new Abbasid dynasty enacted a revolution in the Arab Empire. The Abbasids accepted the equality of all Muslims, and privilege was no longer based upon Arab blood but on service to Islam and the empire. Not surprisingly, there were widespread conversions during this period. Although the Abbasids embraced Shiite sentiment in bringing down the Umayyads, once in power they turned to more orthodox elements to run the administration.



Indeed the caliphate now made defense of Islam a state priority and attempted to stamp out all vestiges of heresy. The Abbasids showed much more compassion to its Christian, Zoroastrian, and Jewish communities, which were allowed to thrive and in fact had a strong influence on the development of Islam.

Arabic, the official language of the empire, was the language of religion and government. Although many in the subject population retained their language, e.g. the Persians, the literate, urban population was often bilingual.

In the Abbasid government the Arabs had to share power and privilege with non-Arabs, and the caliphate no longer relied upon a solely Arab

## ENTRI

army. Arabs remained important as governors, generals, courtiers, and in religious life, but Persian scribes were the backbone of an enormously strengthened bureaucracy.

While the Umayyads followed Byzantine tradition, the Abbasids followed Persian models of leadership.

**The Barmecide** (Barmakid) family of viziers (chief ministers) headed the government from about 750 to 803.

In some of the provinces the caliphs appointed their own governors, but in others, local princes and notables continued to rule as vassals or tributaries. The empire was not rigidly organized; it adjusted flexibly to the realities of power in all provinces.

The ultimate objective of government organization was taxation, and on the local level, government staff, with assistance from local notables, taxed the peasants. Abbasid government was thus based upon the support of Arab populations and elites, the administrative classes, landowning and local ruling notabilities of every race and religion, the commercial classes who benefited from territorial unification, and finally, on the *ulama'*, the religious establishment. The vast empire was connected by an updated version of the old Persian postal system. To compare it with some institutions from American history, it combined a pony express system with an FBI/CIA type of intelligence gathering network.

**The Abbasids** also utilized a system of flares and mirrors, creating a pre-modern telegraph network. In the ninth century a message could travel from Baghdad to Tunis in 24 hours. It would be another 1000 years before this method could be surpassed.

## Transition to Modern Age

## E ▶ ENTRI

The transition from the medieval to the modern world was foreshadowed by economic expansion, political centralization, and secularization. A money economy weakened serfdom, and an inquiring spirit stimulated the age of exploration. Banking, the bourgeois class, and secular ideals flourished in the growing towns and lent support to the expanding monarchies.

The church was weakened by internal conflicts as well as by quarrels between church and state.

As feudal strength was sapped, notably by the Hundred Years War and the Wars of the Roses, there emerged in France and England the modern nation state. A forerunner of intellectual modernity was the new humanism of the Renaissance. Finally, the great medieval unity of Christianity was shattered by the religious theories that culminated in the Protestant Reformation.

### 1. Renaissance



- ❖ The term Renaissance means **“revival” or “rebirth”**.
- ❖ It also denotes the noteworthy modifications that took place in Europe during the transition period between the medieval and modern.
- ❖ Growth of science, art, architecture, sculpture, painting, literature, geography and religion were seen in this period.
- ❖ Spirit of humanism and individualism has developed.
- ❖ The religious makeover was signified by the Reformation.

- ❖ These changes that took place in Europe were collectively called the “Renaissance”.

## **Renaissance in Europe and Renaissance in Italy**

### **The birthplace of the Renaissance is Italy**

- ❖ Italy is the cradle of the Latin language and ancient civilization.
- ❖ The city-states in Italy like Venice and Florence patronized literature and art.
- ❖ The renaissance movement was ignited in the city of Florence by the publication of ‘Divine Comedy’ by the poet Dante.
- ❖ This movement then spread to elsewhere in Europe and reached its zenith in the 16th century.

### **The revival of Classical Literature**

- ❖ The most significant contribution of the Renaissance was the resurrection and studying of ancient Latin and Greek literature.
- ❖ The pioneering scholar was Petrarch (1304 –1374). He collected and compiled the works of Aristotle and Plato.
- ❖ His student Boccaccio also promoted classical learning.
- ❖ Many Greek scholars who came from Constantinople spread the ancient Greek literature in Florence.
- ❖ Pope Nicholas V founded the Vatican Library in the 15th century.
- ❖ Erasmus edited the New Testament in the Greek language.

❖ **Role of the printing press**

- ❖ The invention of the printing press by John Gutenberg had influenced Renaissance literature.
- ❖ The first book published by John Gutenberg was The Bible.
- ❖ William Caxton was the first to set up a printing press in England.
- ❖ Later many printing presses were set up throughout Europe
- ❖ These Printing Presses provided motivation to the Renaissance movement.

**Renaissance Literature**

- ❖ Geoffrey Chaucer is known as the father of English literature
- ❖ He wrote the Canterbury Tales in English.
- ❖ Machiavelli wrote History of Florence and The Prince.
- ❖ Cervantes authored the famous Don Quixote.
- ❖ Utopia was written by Sir Thomas Moore in Latin.
- ❖ The Elizabethan era marked the commencement of the English Renaissance.
- ❖ The period also saw the rise of William Shakespeare, Christopher Marlowe, Edmund Spenser, Sydney and Ben Johnson etc.
- ❖ Montaigne went against the authority and the dictatorship of the past and made the title “the first modern man”.
- ❖ Martin Luther translated the Bible in the German language.

**Renaissance of Art**

- ❖ Paintings and art in the Middle Ages were dominated by Christianity but in the Renaissance period, love of nature and the human body provided muses to this domain.
- ❖ Leonardo da Vinci is known as the **“Renaissance Man”**.
- ❖ His famous works of art were the ‘Last Supper’ and ‘Mona Lisa’.
- ❖ Michelangelo was both a sculptor and painter.
- ❖ Some consider his painting “Last Judgment” as one of the best in the world.

### **Renaissance of Sculpture**

- ❖ Lorenzo Ghiberti (1378–1455) was the most important renaissance sculpture.
- ❖ He created the famous doors at the Baptistery of Florence.
- ❖ Michelangelo made the statue of David in Florence.
- ❖ Donatello molded the statue of St. Mark at Venice and St. George in Florence.

### **Development of Science**

- ❖ Francis Bacon is regarded as the father of modern science.
- ❖ The heliocentric theory was given by Nicolaus Copernicus.
- ❖ Sir Isaac Newton established that the movements of all celestial bodies were controlled by gravitation.
- ❖ Laws of planetary motion were stated by Johannes Kepler.
- ❖ Galileo Galilei invented the telescope and brought new evidence to support the Copernican theory.
- ❖ Cordus is made from alcohol and sulphuric acid.

- ❖ Carbon dioxide was discovered by Helmont.
- ❖ Vesalius wrote a treatise on human anatomy.

### **Results of the Renaissance**

- ❖ The Renaissance was deemed the symbol of the commencement of the modern age.
- ❖ The spirit of inquiry has developed among people.
- ❖ The subsequent scientific inventions created significant changes in the life of humanity.
- ❖ The invention of the Mariner's Compass led to several

### **Geographical discoveries.**

## **2.Reformation – Early 16th Century**

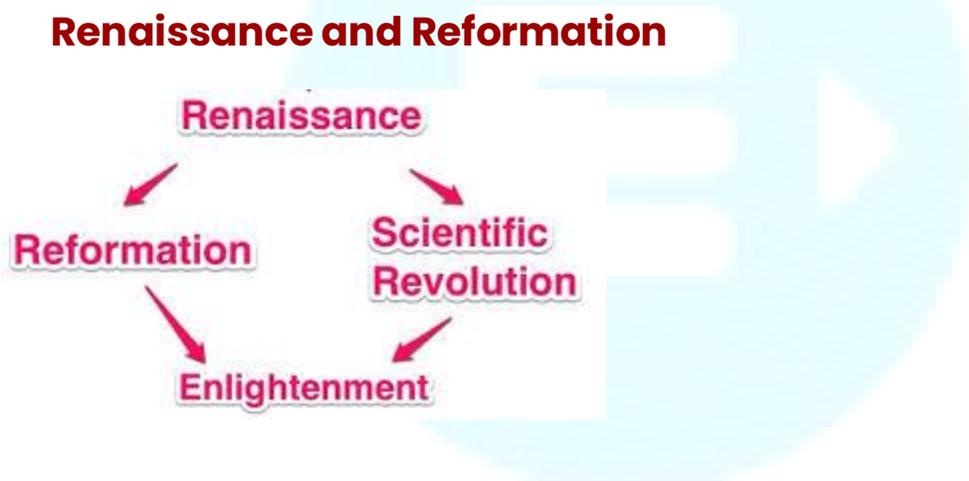
Protestant reformation was a movement against the practices & authority of the radical Catholic Church. Protestant leaders started setting up Protestant Churches in different countries of Europe. Under Martin Luther, a monk who opposed the Letters of Indulgence and other Church evils, the first Protestant Church was set up in Germany (from 1520-1545) under the King's support.

Nationalism also played a role as the people now despised the authority of Catholic Church located in Rome. In England, Queen Elizabeth I made the Church of England, the official church, by declaring its independence from the Church in Rome and adopting some Reformation principles.

Protestant churches adopted the use of language spoken by the people, rather than the elitist Latin. The Bible was translated into local languages.

The use of local languages further increased national consciousness & thus Renaissance and Reformation can be said to be a precursor to nationalism in Europe.

Reason was popularized as more important than Religion & by the 17th century, half of Europe had set up their own Protestant Churches.



### **Catholic Reformation or Counter Reformation** (late 16th century)

A reform process was initiated by the Catholic Church in response to the rising popularity of the Protestant Churches. In Spain, the reformers formed an organization of clergymen to work as **“Soldiers of Jesus”**. Members of this organization came to be known as Jesuits and they went to France and Germany to win back followers. They also set up missions in India, China, Africa and America.

After these reformations, religious wars began among the followers of both sects and many followers were killed on both sides. The violence against Protestants in England resulted in their migration to North America where their colonies later laid the foundation of the USA. In England, due to the pro-Catholic religious policies of King Charles I, religious violence merged into the English Civil War (1642–51) which was fought between the Parliamentarians and the pro-Monarchy Royalists over the form of government.

### **Beginning of International Trade & Colonialism**

Voyages of Discovery (at the end of 15th century) also characterized the beginning of the Modern Age in Europe. This changed the economy of many European nations as with the discovery of these new lands, Colonialism began its march.

### **Rise of Absolute Monarchies**

The King-Merchant nexus and the decline of Feudalism by the end of Middle Ages (600 AD to 1500 AD) helped the Kings in consolidating their hold on power. Strong rulers in the form of Absolute Monarchies rose by subjugating the Feudal Lords and defying the Church's political interference.

## **3. Geographical Discoveries**



### **Causes**

Henry the Navigator of Portugal laid the foundation for long distance sea voyages. He established a navigation school to train sailors. In his school, he

taught them how to use navigational instruments such as the mariner's compass and the astrolabe.

The impulse for seafaring and adventurous spirit to explore uncharted sea waters was kindled by the curiosity generated by the Renaissance and the travel accounts of Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta. This was further fuelled by the crusading spirit of the Missionaries who dared to undertake dangerous voyages to spread the gospel to the non-believers in distant lands.

But the primary factor was economic. When the Ottoman Turks blocked the land route between the East and the West, spices and other goods became costlier.

The European traders were deprived of the huge profits they were earning out of their trade in spices. This intensified the urge to discover a new sea route to Asia. The monarchs supported sea voyages in the hope that resources from trade would free them from their dependence on nobles.

A breakthrough was made in the fourteenth century when a copy of Ptolemy's Geography was brought from the Byzantine Empire to the West. By the middle of the fourteenth century, thanks to the printing press, multiple copies of Henry the Navigator were made and circulated widely. It greatly increased the knowledge of the sea routes.

## **Portuguese Explorations**





The sailors of Prince Henry had traveled into the Atlantic upto the islands of Azores and Madeira. They explored the west coast of Africa. Lopo Gonzalves was the first sailor to cross the equator.

Till then sailors did not dare to venture beyond, as they harbored fears about boiling waters and sea monsters. Bartholomew Diaz ventured further down the African coast reaching cape point or the southern tip of Africa in 1487 A.D. (C.E.).

He named it the Cape of Storms as he encountered fierce storms there. However, King John of Portugal renamed it as Cape of Good Hope as it provided hope to reach India by sea.

The Portuguese established trading posts along the west coast of Africa dealing in lumber, ivory and slaves. The establishment of trading posts enabled them to buy slaves and transport them directly to Portugal. The slaves were employed in the sugarcane plantations, and sugar was exported to Europe.

Slaves were purchased from the African slave market and transported to the colonies under inhuman conditions in slave ships. They were chained and cramped into narrow spaces with insufficient air to breathe.

Many died during the journey. For those who survived, the suffering continued in the plantations. Slave trade increased with the discovery and colonization of America.



## **Spain and Discovery of the New World**

In 1492 A.D. (C.E.), Columbus, with the support of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain, set sail in three ships. He crossed the Atlantic Ocean and reached the Bahamas Island, Cuba and Haiti.

Columbus thought he had reached the frontier areas of Asia. Hence, he called the natives he encountered as Indians. Amerigo Vespucci, another sailor, made three or four voyages and landed on the American mainland.

He realized that it was not Asia and that they had stumbled upon a new continent. Hence, he called it the New World. Later, a German cartographer, while preparing a map of the world, named the new world after Amerigo Vespucci and called it America.

## **Portuguese–Spanish Rivalry**

The Portuguese claimed the territories discovered by Columbus. The dispute was referred to the Pope Alexander VI who drew an imaginary line north to south west of Azores and declared that the territories to the west of that line belonged to Spain and that of the east to the Portuguese.

In 1497 A.D. (C.E.) **Vasco da Gama** sailed from Portugal as the head of four ships to find a sea route to India by going around Africa. After reaching the Cape of Good Hope, he set sail to India with the help of an Arab navigator. On 20th May 1498 A.D. (C.E.) he reached Calicut on the Malabar Coast. At Calicut Vasco da Gama was astounded to find pepper and other spices, a precious commodity in Portugal, available at low prices.

He bought as much spices as possible. Back home he earned huge profits. Later the Portuguese navy defeated the **Zamorin of Calicut** and captured Goa and made it its headquarters for all its possessions in the East. Thus the foundation of the Portuguese Empire in the East was laid.

In 1519 A.D. (C.E.), Ferdinand Magellan sailed westward and crossed the Straits, which later came to be known as Magellan Straits. As the sea was calm he called it the **Pacific Ocean**.

On reaching an island he named it as Philippines after the Spanish Prince Philip. He was killed in a war with the locals. However, the ship in which he had traveled returned to Spain. Thus the first circumnavigation of the world had taken place.