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WORLD HISTORY

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1. Prehistoric Societies and Early Human Civilization

Ancient Egyptian Civilization: Dynastic Rule, Religion, and Monumental Architecture

- Ancient Egyptian Civilization flourished along the Nile River in Northeast Africa.
- **Dynastic Rule**

  Governed by Pharaohs, considered divine rulers.
- Unification of Upper and Lower Egypt (c. 3100 BCE) by Pharaoh Menes (Narmer) marked the beginning of dynastic rule.
- Key Dynastic Periods include the Old Kingdom (Pyramid Age), Middle Kingdom, and New Kingdom (Empire Age).
- **Ptolemaic Dynasty (323-30 BCE) ruled Egypt following Alexander the Great's death; founded by Ptolemy I Soter.**
- Religion Polytheistic, with emphasis on the afterlife.
- Belief in the afterlife led to elaborate burial practices, including mummification.
- Key deities included Ra (sun god), Osiris (god of the underworld), and Isis (goddess of magic and healing).
- Pharaohs served as intermediaries between gods and humans.
- **Monumental Architecture**

  Characterized by massive stone structures.
- **Pyramids**

  Served as tombs for pharaohs and queens (e.g., the Great Pyramid of Giza, built for Pharaoh Khufu).
- **Temples**

  Dedicated to gods and pharaohs (e.g., Karnak, Luxor Temples).
- **Sphinx**

  A mythical creature with a lion's body and a human head; often served as a guardian (e.g., the Great Sphinx of Giza, near Khufu's pyramid). The Sphinx is definitively associated with Egyptian Civilization.

- **Obelisks**

  Tall, four-sided, narrow tapering monuments ending in a pyramid-like top.

- **Alexandria**

  A city founded by Alexander the Great in Egypt, became the capital under the Ptolemaic Dynasty.
- The **Mouseion (Museum and Library) at Alexandria** was founded by Ptolemy I Soter early in the 3rd Century BCE in Egypt, becoming a major center of learning.

Chalcolithic Cultures: Copper Usage and Village Societies

- Chalcolithic Age (Copper Age) marks the period when copper was first used, alongside stone tools.
- Copper was the first metal used by humans.
- Chalcolithic societies were predominantly agrarian, characterized by the development of village settlements.
- A 7000-year-old prehistoric settlement has been discovered in Bulgaria, showcasing early Chalcolithic or late Neolithic-Chalcolithic transition cultures.

Early Chinese Civilizations: Shang and Zhou Dynasties

- **Shang Dynasty (c. 1600-1046 BCE)**

  First documented Chinese dynasty.
- Characterized by sophisticated bronze metallurgy, oracle bone script (earliest Chinese writing), and chariot warfare.

- **Zhou Dynasty (c. 1046-256 BCE)**

  Overthrew Shang.
- Introduced the concept of the "Mandate of Heaven" to legitimize rule.
- Established a decentralized feudal system.
- Witnessed the development of iron metallurgy.
- Period included the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period (marked by political fragmentation).
- Confucianism and Taoism emerged during the Zhou era.

- **Great Wall of China**

  Initial sections built by various states for defense, significantly unified and expanded by Qin Shi Huang (Qin Dynasty, 221-206 BCE).
- Purpose: Protection against northern nomadic invaders, primarily the Xiongnu (often identified with the Huns in general historical context).

- **Paper Manufacture**

  Credited to Tsai Lun (Han Dynasty, c. 105 CE).

Emergence of Early River Valley Civilizations: General Characteristics

- Most early civilizations evolved predominantly in river valleys.
- The main cradles of early river valley civilizations include:
  - The Fertile Crescent (comprising Mesopotamia and Egypt)
  - The Indian Subcontinent
  - China

Indus Valley Civilization: Urban Planning, Trade, and Unique Features

- **Urban Planning**

  Followed a grid pattern, dividing cities into rectangular blocks.

- **Two-Tier Division**

  Most cities had a Citadel (smaller, elevated, western side, public buildings like granaries, Great Bath) and a Lower Town (larger, eastern side, residential areas).

- **Standardized Bricks**

  Used burnt and sun-dried bricks in a uniform ratio (e.g., 1:2:4) across the civilization.

- **Advanced Drainage System**

  Elaborate covered drains, often running under major streets, with inspection holes and house drains connecting to main lines.

- **Great Bath (Mohenjodaro)**

  Large, watertight public bath with changing rooms, likely for ritualistic bathing.

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- **Granaries**

  Large structures for grain storage, prominent in cities like Mohenjodaro and Harappa.

- **Trade Networks**

  Extensive internal trade for raw materials and external trade with Mesopotamia, Oman, Afghanistan, and Iran.

- **Trade Items (Exports)**

  Agricultural products (cotton), beads, terracotta figurines, pottery.

- **Trade Items (Imports)**

  Gold (Kolar, Afghanistan), silver (Afghanistan, Iran), copper (Khetri, Oman), lapis lazuli (Afghanistan).

- **Trade Evidence**

  Harappan seals found in Mesopotamian cities (Ur, Kish); Mesopotamian texts mention trade with "Meluha" (IVC).

- **Mode of Transport**

  Bullock carts for land trade; boats and ships for riverine and maritime trade (Lothal was a prominent port).

- **Seals**

  Predominantly square/rectangular steatite seals with animal motifs (e.g., unicorn) and an undeciphered pictographic script. Used for trade and administration. *Cylindrical stone seals, while characteristic of Mesopotamia, were also found at some Harappan sites (e.g., Kalibangan), indicating trade and cultural exchange.*

- **Script**

  Pictographic, not yet deciphered, with around 400 distinct signs, typically written from right to left.

- **Standardized Weights & Measures**

  Cubical chert weights in a binary system (1, 2, 4, 8, 16, 32...) for trade and taxation.

- **Metallurgy**

  Knowledge of copper, bronze, gold, and silver. Iron was unknown.

- **Religious Practices**

  Worship of a Mother Goddess, a male deity (Proto-Shiva/Pasupati Mahadeva), and natural elements (trees, animals); no evidence of large temples.

- **Art & Craft**

  Highly developed pottery (black-on-red ware), terracotta figurines, bronze casting (Dancing Girl), and stone sculpture (Priest King).

Mesopotamian Civilizations: Sumer, Akkad, Babylon, and Assyria

- Mesopotamia: "Land between two rivers," located between Euphrates and Tigris rivers.
- Birthplace of city life and one of the earliest civilizations.
- **Sumer (c. 4500-1900 BCE)**

  First Mesopotamian civilization. Developed cuneiform script, ziggurats, and independent city-states (e.g., Ur, Uruk).

- **Akkad (c. 2334-2154 BCE)**

  First empire created by Sargon the Great, uniting Sumerian city-states.

- **Babylon (c. 1894-539 BCE)**
  - Old Babylonian Empire (Amorite dynasty): Most famous ruler Hammurabi, known for Hammurabi's Code (one of the earliest written legal codes).
  - Neo-Babylonian Empire (Chaldean dynasty): Nebuchadnezzar II, built Hanging Gardens of Babylon (one of Seven Wonders) and Ishtar Gate.
- **Assyria (c. 2500-609 BCE)**
  - Known for highly militaristic empire, iron weapons, and efficient administration.
  - Capital Nineveh, King Ashurbanipal's library (vast collection of cuneiform tablets).
- Avesta: Sacred text of Zoroastrianism, originated in ancient Iran (Persia). Exhibits linguistic and thematic similarities with the Rigveda.

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Neolithic Revolution: Origins of Agriculture, Animal Domestication, and Early Settlements

- **Neolithic Revolution**

  Transformative period (c. 10,000 BCE - 4,500 BCE) marking the shift from nomadic hunter-gatherer subsistence to settled agricultural food production.

- **Drivers**

  Post-Ice Age climate warming, population growth, resource depletion, technological advancements.

- **Origins of Agriculture (Cultivation)**
  - Systematic planting & harvesting of crops.
  - **Earliest Crops**

    Wheat & Barley (Fertile Crescent, c. 9000-8000 BCE).
  - **Other Key Crops**

    Rice (East Asia, c. 7000 BCE), Maize (Mesoamerica, c. 7000-5000 BCE), Millet (Africa & East Asia).
- **Animal Domestication**

  Taming & breeding animals for human benefit.
  - **Earliest**

    Dog (Paleolithic/Mesolithic era).
  - **Neolithic Animals**

    Sheep & Goat (Fertile Crescent, c. 8500 BCE), Pig (c. 8000 BCE), Cattle (c. 6500 BCE).
  - **Purposes**

    Food (meat, milk), wool, hides, labor, security.
- **Early Settlements**

  Emergence of permanent villages and sedentary lifestyle.
  - **Key Examples**

    Jericho (Jordan Valley, c. 9000 BCE), Çatalhöyük (Anatolia, c. 7500 BCE), Mehrgarh (Balochistan, c. 7000 BCE).
- **Consequences & Impact**
  - **Demographic**

    World population c. 5 million by 10,000 BCE, followed by significant growth due to reliable food sources.
  - **Socio-economic**

    Food surplus, specialized labor, social stratification, development of crafts (pottery, weaving), polished stone tools, and early trade.
  - **Cultural**

    Foundation for complex societies, eventually leading to urban civilizations.
  - **Environmental**

    Land alteration (deforestation, irrigation), impact on biodiversity.

Origin of Humans and Early Hominids

- Stratigraphy: Branch dealing with the study of rock layers (strata) and their formation, crucial for reconstructing Earth's history.
- Geological Eras Sequence: Paleozoic → Mesozoic → Cenozoic.
- Geological Periods Sequence (Mesozoic Era): Triassic → Jurassic → Cretaceous.
- Geological Periods Sequence (Paleozoic Era, partial): Silurian → Devonian → Carboniferous.
- Socrates: Greek philosopher sentenced to death by poisoning (hemlock).

Palaeolithic Age: Hunter-Gatherer Societies, Stone Tools, and Cave Art

- Palaeolithic Age: Characterized by hunter-gatherer societies, obtaining food by hunting wild animals and gathering wild plants.
- Many modern indigenous groups, though not strictly Palaeolithic, retain or traditionally practiced a hunter-gatherer lifestyle.
- **Eskimos (Inuit)**

  Indigenous peoples inhabiting the Arctic regions (e.g., Greenland, Canada, Alaska, Siberia).

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- Eskimos are traditionally known for using 'Igloo' (snow house) as a form of shelter, particularly during winter.
- **Vedda Tribe**

  Indigenous ethnic group native to Sri Lanka.
- Veddas historically lived as hunter-gatherers in the forests of Sri Lanka.

Social Stratification, Governance, and Religious Beliefs in Early Civilized Societies

- **Social Stratification**

  Early civilized societies were highly hierarchical, often with limited social mobility.
- Common social classes included: Rulers (kings, pharaohs), priests, military elites, scribes, merchants/artisans, farmers, and slaves.
- Status was largely ascribed by birth or profession.
- **Governance**

  Characterized by centralized authority, often in the form of monarchies or theocracies.
- Rulers (e.g., kings, pharaohs) held significant political, economic, and often religious power.
- Development of administrative systems, laws (e.g., Code of Hammurabi), and tax collection to manage territories and resources.
- Public works (irrigation, monumental architecture) were common projects of state power.
- **Religious Beliefs**

  Predominantly polytheistic, worshipping multiple gods and goddesses.
- Deities were often associated with natural phenomena, human emotions, or specific societal functions.
- Gods were frequently anthropomorphic (human-like in form and characteristics), particularly in Greek and Roman traditions.
- Temples and elaborate rituals played a central role, with a powerful priestly class mediating between humans and the divine.
- Belief in an afterlife was common, influencing burial practices and monumental architecture (e.g., Egyptian pyramids).
- **Greek Pantheon**

  Zeus is the most powerful God in the Greek pantheon, recognized as the king of the Olympian gods, and god of the sky, thunder, and justice.

Technological Advancements (e.g., irrigation, wheel, writing systems) in Early Civilizations

- **Irrigation Systems**
  - Developed early in Mesopotamia (Sumerians), Egypt, Indus Valley, and China.
  - Utilized canals, dams, and levees to control river flow (e.g., Tigris, Euphrates, Nile, Indus, Yellow River).
  - Enabled large-scale agriculture, leading to food surpluses, population growth, and urban development.
- **The Wheel**
  - Invented c. 3500 BCE in Mesopotamia.
  - Initially used as a potter's wheel for efficient pottery production.
  - Later adapted for transportation (carts, chariots) c. 3200 BCE, revolutionizing trade, warfare, and movement of goods.
- **Writing Systems**
  - Developed independently in various civilizations to record information, laws, history, and trade.
  - **Cuneiform**

    Earliest known writing system, developed by Sumerians in Mesopotamia c. 3200 BCE; wedge-shaped marks on clay tablets.
  - **Hieroglyphs**

    Ancient Egyptian writing system, combining logographic and alphabetic elements.
  - **Indus Script**

    Found in the Indus Valley Civilization (c. 2500-1900 BCE), currently undeciphered.