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.

- **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.

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).

- 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.

- **Significance**

  Facilitated administration, taxation, communication, and the preservation of knowledge.

- **"The Alphabet" (book)**

  Authored by **David Diringer**, a seminal work on the history and development of writing systems.

Trade Networks and Cultural Exchange in the Ancient World

- Herodotus: Greek historian, known as 'The Father of History'.
- Parthians: Ancient Iranian people, originated from Iran.
- Greek numeral system: 'Alpha' (A/α) represents the number 1.

2. Byzantine Empire and Eastern Roman Empire

The Reign of Justinian I: Codification of Law (Corpus Juris Civilis), Reconquests, Hagia Sophia

- **Justinian I (Reigned 527-565 CE)**

  Emperor of the Eastern Roman (Byzantine) Empire, based in Constantinople.

- **Codification of Law (Corpus Juris Civilis)**
  - Justinian's most significant and lasting contribution, a comprehensive compilation and revision of Roman law.
  - Consisted of four main parts:
    1. **Codex**

       Collection of imperial constitutions (laws).

    2. **Digest (Pandects)**

       Summaries of writings from respected Roman jurists.

    3. **Institutes**

       A legal textbook for students.

    4. **Novellae**

       New laws enacted by Justinian after 534 CE.
  - Project led by the jurist Tribonian.
  - Significance: Formed the basis for civil law in many modern European legal systems.
- **Reconquests**
  - Aimed to restore the former glory and territory of the Western Roman Empire.
  - Chief general: Belisarius.
  - Key reconquered areas: North Africa (from Vandals), Italy (from Ostrogoths), and parts of southern Spain (from Visigoths).
  - Resulted in significant strain on the empire's resources; many gains were temporary.
- **Hagia Sophia (Church of Holy Wisdom)**
  - Grand cathedral built in Constantinople (532-537 CE) following the Nika Riots.
  - Architects: Anthemius of Tralles and Isidore of Miletus.
  - An architectural masterpiece, famed for its massive dome and innovative engineering.
  - Served as the imperial church and a symbol of Byzantine power and Christian faith.

Transition from Roman to Byzantine Empire: Foundation and Early History

- The term 'barbarian' is derived from the Greek word 'barbaros', meaning a non-Greek.
- Romans used the term 'barbarian' for Germanic tribes, Gauls, and Huns.
- Rome, Italy, is the riverside city located on the Tiber River.
- Roman civilization developed on the bank of the Tiber River.
- Rome is known as "The City of Seven Hills".
- Colosseum is a famous site located in Rome.

3. Medieval Africa and the Americas

Art, Architecture, and Religious Beliefs: Key features and expressions across major African and American civilizations.

- First Olympic Games were held in 776 BC.
- Angkor Wat Vishnu Temple is located in Cambodia (Kampuchea).
- Romulus was the first king of Rome.
- Shailendra dynasty established its empire in Sumatra, Java etc., in the 8th century A.D.
- Angkor Wat temple is a memorial to the fame of ruler Suryavarman II.
- The Myson temple complex is the legacy of the ancient Champa kingdom in South-East Asia.
- Qubilai Khan, grandson of Genghis Khan, was the founder of the Yuan Dynasty in China.
- Machu Picchu is in Peru.
- Petra is in Jordan.
- Göbekli Tepe is in Turkey.

Mesoamerican Civilizations: Post-Classic Maya, Aztec Empire (Mexica), their political systems, religion, and agricultural innovations.

- **Mesoamerican Civilizations: Overview**
  - **Geographical Extent:** Southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica.
  - **Shared Characteristics:** Maize-based agriculture, sophisticated calendars, polytheistic religions, urban development.
- **Post-Classic Maya (c. 950–1539 CE)**
  - **Location:** Yucatán Peninsula (Northern Lowlands), Southern Mexico, Guatemala, Belize.
  - **Political System:** Fragmented city-states, often engaged in warfare or alliances; examples include Chichen Itza and Mayapán (which formed a confederacy). Less centralized than Classic Maya.
  - **Religion:** Polytheistic; veneration of deities like Kukulkan (Feathered Serpent, similar to Aztec Quetzalcoatl). Ritual sacrifice practiced.
  - **Agricultural Innovations:** Milpa system (slash-and-burn), raised fields, terracing. Primary crops: Maize, beans, squash, chili peppers.
- **Aztec Empire (Mexica, c. 1345–1521 CE)**
  - **Location:** Central Mexico, specifically the Valley of Mexico. Capital: Tenochtitlan (built on Lake Texcoco).
  - **Rise to Power:** Formed the Triple Alliance in 1428 (Tenochtitlan, Texcoco, Tlacopan), with Tenochtitlan becoming the dominant power.
  - **Political System:** A tribute empire, a loose confederation of city-states compelled to pay tribute to Tenochtitlan. Ruled by an emperor (Tlatoani) from Tenochtitlan.
  - **Religion:** Polytheistic. Key deities: Huitzilopochtli (god of war and sun, required human sacrifice), Tlaloc (rain god), Quetzalcoatl (feathered serpent god of creation and knowledge). Extensive human sacrifice central to religious practice.
  - **Agricultural Innovations: Chinampas** (highly productive artificial islands/floating gardens on lakebeds) were a defining feature. Also used terracing and irrigation. Primary crops: Maize, beans, squash, amaranth.
- **North-South Sequence of Civilizations (Relevant for MCQ):**
  1. Maya (Mesoamerica: Yucatán, Southern Mexico)
  2. Aztec (Mesoamerica: Central Mexico)
  3. Muisca (South America: Colombia)
  4. Inca (South America: Andes, covering Peru, Ecuador, Bolivia, Chile)

North American Indigenous Societies: Mississippian Culture (Cahokia) and Ancestral Puebloans, their settlements and societal structures.

- **Mississippian Culture**
- **Period & Location**

  c. 800-1600 CE; Eastern Woodlands of North America, particularly Mississippi River Valley.

- **Key Feature**

  Monumental earthen mound building (temple mounds, burial mounds).

- **Economy**

  Advanced agriculture, primarily maize (corn), beans, squash; supported large populations.

- **Societal Structure**

  Complex chiefdoms, hierarchical society with elites, priests, and commoners.

- **Settlements**

  Large, planned towns often centered around a plaza and major mounds, some protected by palisades.

- **Cahokia**
  - **Location**

    Near modern St. Louis, Illinois, USA.

  - **Peak**

    c. 1050-1200 CE.

  - **Significance**

    Largest pre-Columbian city north of Mexico; population estimated 10,000-20,000+.

  - **Main Structure**

    Monks Mound (largest earthen mound in North America).

  - **Decline**

    Began in 13th-14th centuries, reasons debated (environmental, social, disease).

- **Ancestral Puebloans (formerly Anasazi)**
- **Period & Location**

  c. 100-1600 CE; Four Corners region (SW USA: Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah).

- **Key Feature**

  Distinctive multi-story masonry and adobe dwellings, often built into cliff faces or on mesas.

- **Economy**

  Dryland farming (maize, beans, squash), sophisticated water management systems.

- **Societal Structure**

  Generally more egalitarian than Mississippian, but evidence of social hierarchy in major centers (e.g., Chaco Canyon); clan-based, matrilineal.

- **Kivas**

  Underground or semi-underground ceremonial structures, central to religious life.

- **Major Settlements**
  - **Chaco Canyon (New Mexico)**
    - **Peak**

      c. 850-1250 CE.

    - **Features**

      "Great Houses" (large, multi-room complexes like Pueblo Bonito), extensive road network, astronomical alignments.

    - **Function**

      Likely a major ceremonial, economic, and political hub.

  - **Mesa Verde (Colorado)**
    - **Peak**

      c. 1150-1300 CE.

    - **Features**

      Famous for elaborate cliff dwellings (e.g., Cliff Palace, Spruce Tree House), built into natural alcoves.

    - **Purpose**

      Provided shelter and defensible positions.

- Other sites include Canyon de Chelly, Bandelier.

- **Decline/Dispersal**

  Late 13th century, likely due to prolonged drought, resource depletion, and possibly social or political factors; led to migrations and eventual formation of modern Pueblo tribes.

Spread and Impact of Islam in North and West Africa: Cultural, intellectual, and economic transformations.

- Islam spread to North Africa (Maghreb) via Arab conquests from the 7th century, incorporating Berber populations.
- Spread to West Africa was primarily gradual and peaceful, through Trans-Saharan trade routes, by merchants and scholars (11th-15th centuries).
- Key empires influenced: Ghana, Mali, Songhai; Berber dynasties like the Almoravids also played a role.
- **Cultural Impact**: Adoption of Arabic as a lingua franca for administration and scholarship, integration of Sharia law with local customs, Islamic architecture (mosques, madrasas).
- **Intellectual Impact**: Establishment of Quranic schools and madrasas; Timbuktu emerged as a major center for Islamic scholarship (Sankore University), attracting scholars and housing vast libraries.
- Islamic scholars contributed to fields like theology, law, mathematics, astronomy, and medicine.
- **Ibn Battuta**, a renowned medieval traveler and writer, was from **Morocco** (14th century), providing extensive accounts of his travels, including West Africa.
- **Economic Impact**: Flourishing Trans-Saharan trade (gold, salt, slaves, kola nuts) connecting West Africa to North Africa, Middle East, and Europe.
- Development of significant urban trade centers like Timbuktu, Gao, Djenné, and Sijilmasa.
- Introduction of Islamic banking practices, standardized weights, measures, and the dinar coinage.

4. Renaissance and Humanism in Europe

Definition and Core Principles of Humanism

- Humanism: An intellectual movement during the Renaissance that emphasized human potential, achievements, and capabilities rather than divine or purely theological matters.
- It marked a shift in focus from medieval scholasticism towards worldly life, classical learning, and the value of individual human experience.

- **"Humanist" (15th-century Europe)**

  Referred to masters who taught "studia humanitatis" (humanistic studies).

- **Core Subjects of "studia humanitatis"**

  Grammar, Rhetoric, Poetry, History, and Moral Philosophy.
- These subjects emphasized the development of skills through discussion and debate, fostering eloquence and civic engagement, rather than subjects solely connected with religion.

- **Key Principles/Characteristics**
- Slackened the direct control of religion over human life, promoting a more secular outlook without necessarily being anti-religious.
- Believed human nature was many-sided, encouraging the development of diverse talents and intellectual pursuits.
- Was concerned with good manners, civic virtue, and the ideal of the well-rounded individual (the 'Renaissance Man').
- It did

  not criticize material wealth, power, or glory; instead, it often embraced worldly achievements, success, and the enjoyment of life within a framework of virtue.

- Founder of Humanism Francesco Petrarca (Petrarch) is widely regarded as the "Father of Humanism."

Impact on Education, Philosophy, and Scholarship

- First University Chair of Sanskrit was founded in France.

Key Humanist Thinkers and their Contributions (Petrarch, Valla, Pico della Mirandola, Erasmus)

- **Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374):**
  - "Father of Humanism."
  - Italian poet and scholar; pioneered the rediscovery of classical texts.
  - Coined the term "Dark Ages" to describe the period following the Roman Empire.
  - Emphasized the study of classical Latin and Greek literature (e.g., Cicero, Virgil).
  - Advocated for *vita activa* (active civic life) combined with *vita contemplativa*.
  - Key work: *Canzoniere* (collection of sonnets).
- **Lorenzo Valla (c. 1407–1457):**
  - Italian humanist, rhetorician, and educator.
  - Pioneered critical textual analysis and philology.
  - Demonstrated, using linguistic and historical analysis, that the "Donation of Constantine" (a document granting temporal power to the Pope) was a forgery.
  - Advocated for the pure and elegant usage of classical Latin.
  - Key works: *On the Donation of Constantine*, *Elegances of the Latin Language*.
- **Giovanni Pico della Mirandola (1463–1494):**
  - Italian Renaissance philosopher.
  - Author of *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (1486), a manifesto of human potential.
  - Argued for human free will and the capacity for self-improvement and self-creation (human perfectibility).
  - Believed humans, uniquely, can choose their own place in the hierarchy of creation.
  - Sought to synthesize diverse philosophical and religious traditions (Platonism, Aristotelianism, Kabbalah, Christianity).
- **Desiderius Erasmus of Rotterdam (c. 1466–1536):**
  - Dutch humanist, Catholic priest, social critic, and theologian.
  - Known as the "Prince of the Humanists."
  - Leading advocate of "Christian Humanism," blending classical scholarship with Christian piety.
  - Criticized abuses within the Catholic Church through satire (e.g., *In Praise of Folly*) while remaining Catholic.
  - Produced a new critical edition of the Greek New Testament (1516), which influenced later vernacular Bible translations.
  - Emphasized inner piety and ethical living over external rituals; advocated for peace and tolerance.

Legacy and Transition to the Reformation and Age of Exploration

- **Renaissance & Scientific Revolution Legacy**

  Fostered intellectual inquiry, empirical observation, and technological innovation, laying the foundation for later industrial advancements.

- **Age of Exploration & Colonialism**

  Established vast global trade networks, ensuring a

  regular supply of raw materials from colonies (e.g., cotton, timber) and creating expansive markets for manufactured goods.

- Capital Accumulation Wealth generated from transatlantic trade and colonial ventures