Important Periods During the Ancient World

Paleolithic Age (2.5 mil – 8000 BCE) A prehistoric period during which early humans made use of crude stone tools and weapons (also known as the Old Stone Age).

Neolithic Age (8000 – 3000 BCE) A prehistoric period during which early humans learned to polish stone tools, make pottery, grow crops and domesticate animals (also called the New Stone Age).

Neolithic Revolution - The period of major change in human life between the Neolithic and Bronze Ages when people shifted from being nomadic hunter-gatherers to settled farmers.

Bronze Age (3000 BCE – 600 BCE) A period in human history when people mixed copper and tin to create a new metal strong enough to make tools and weapons to replace the traditional polished stone tools of the Neolithic Age.

Greek Dark Ages (1200 BCE – 750 BCE) A period of Greek History from the Dorian Invasion and the end of the Mycenaean Civilization till the rise of the first Greek city-states, which was void of major record keeping or historical evidence.

Iron Age (1300 BCE – 500 CE) A period in human history that varies from region to region as people discovered the greater strength and durability of iron tools and weapons.

Dynastic Age in China (1700 BCE – 256 BCE) A period in Chinese history between the Shang and Zhou Dynasties during which the ideas of the Mandate of Heaven gave Emperors and their families the authority and justification to rule over and expand the boundaries of China.

Feudal Period in China (475 BCE – 221 BCE) A period in Chinese history between the Zhou and the Qing Dynasties when the economic and political systems were based on reciprocal ideals of land, loyalty and service between the ruling noble warlords and their vassals.

Antiquity (500 BCE – 500 CE) A period in human history from the beginning of recorded history in the old world to the start of the Middle Ages.
LOCATIONS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

River Valley Civilizations (3500 B.C.E. – 450 B.C.E.):

1. Mesopotamia  (Known as “The Land Between Two Rivers” – An area in the Eastern Fertile Crescent located between the Tigris and Euphrates Rivers in the area of modern Iraq where fertile soils allowed agriculture to develop)
2. Egypt       (The area along the Nile River Valley on the Western tip of the Fertile Crescent where fertile soils allowed agriculture to develop)
3. Indus        (The area located along the Indus and Ravi Rivers in modern day Pakistan where Fertile soil allowed agriculture to develop and the ancient cities of Harappa and Moenjo Daro were established)
4. Huang He     (The fertile area along the Huang He River Valley in Northeastern China where agriculture first developed)

HISTORY MAKERS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Ancient Mesopotamia (2350 B.C.E. – 400 B.C.E.):
1. Sargon      (Akkadian Leader who created First Known Empire)
2. Hammurabi   (Consolidated the first known Written Code of Laws)

Ancient Egypt (3200 B.C.E. – 670 B.C.E.):
1. Narmer       (Unified the Upper and Lower Kingdoms of Egypt)

Ancient Israel (1800 B.C.E. – 900 B.C.E.):
1. Abraham      (Patriarch of the Hebrews who led migration from Ur to Canaan)
2. Moses        (Prophet who led the Hebrews on Exodus from Egypt to Palestine and Introduced the 10 Commandments)
3. Solomon      (Most powerful Hebrew King, created Great Trade Empire, directed building of the Great Temple and had his Wisdom Tested by the Queen of Sheba)

Ancient Persia (550 B.C.E – 330 B.C.E.):
1. Cyrus I (The Great)   (Military Genius who founded the Persian Empire)
2. Darius I              (Created strong government with Provinces & Satraps)

Ancient China (550 B.C.E – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Confucius            (Philosopher who created ideas of Filial Piety & Bureaucracy)
2. Shi Huangdi          (Qin Ruler who Unified China and became it’s First Emperor, Created Centralized Government & the First Great Wall)
3. Laozi                (Philosopher credited with development of Daoism in China)

IMPORTANT GROUPS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD

Mesopotamian Societies (3500 B.C.E. – 450 B.C.E.):
1. Sumerians           (First known group of people to develop a civilization in the region of Mesopotamia)
2. Akkadians           (Conquered the Sumerians in 2350 B.C.E. and developed first known Empire in the region of Mesopotamia)
3. Babylonians         (Conquered the Sumerians in 2000 B.C.E. and created the famed city of Babylon)
4. Hebrews             (Nomadic Herders who were forced out of Ur in Mesopotamia and wandered to Canaan and Egypt where they were eventually made slaves by the Egyptians)
Important Groups of the Ancient World

Indo-European Invaders (2000 B.C.E. – 250 B.C.E.)
1. Hittites (Nomadic group that occupied the Anatolian region of modern Turkey by 2000 B.C.E., introducing the Chariot and Iron Technology to Mesopotamia and Egypt)
2. Aryans (Nomadic group that settled the Indus Valley and Central Plateau of South Asia by 2000 B.C.E., introducing the Vedas and developing the Caste system of Social Classes)
3. Assyrians (Warrior class society that conquered Mesopotamia and seized control of Egypt between 850 – 612 B.C.E.)

1. Minoans (Seafaring traders who lived on Crete and dominated trade on the Mediterranean and spread their culture of Art, Sports, and Linear Writing from 2000 – 14000 B.C.E.)
2. Phoenicians (Seafaring traders who settled in the area of modern day Lebanon and dominated trade the Mediterranean from 1100 – 842 B.C.E. Greatest Legacy: Phoenician Alphabet)

Ancient Kingdoms & Empires (1570 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Egyptians (A mixed group of people living along the Nile River in modern Egypt and Sudan who were unified into a great Empire by Narmer around 3000 B.C.E.)
2. Persians (A mixed group of people living in the region of modern Iraq and Afghanistan who were unified into a great Empire by Cyrus the Great around 550 B.C.E.)
3. Chinese (A mixed group of East Asians that were unified into an Empire by Emperor Shi Huangdi around 221 B.C.E.)

Ancient America (1200 B.C.E. to 200 B.C.E.):
1. Olmec (First known civilized group of Mesoamerica of Southern Mexico around 1200 B.C.E.)
2. Chavin (First influential civilization along the base of the Andes Mountains)

Movement in the Ancient World

Prehistoric & Neolithic Age (40,000 B.C.E. – 3500 B.C.E.):
1. Nomads (Highly mobile kinship groups who moved from place to place foraging and/or following seasonal or migrating food sources)
2. Hunter-Gatherers (Nomadic groups whose food supply depended on killing animals or collecting plants)
3. Beringia (The Land Bridge believed to link the Americas to Eurasia upon which the nomadic tribes migrated from Asia to the Americas toward the end of the Ice Age)

Ancient River Valley Civilizations (3500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Cultural Diffusion (The process in which ideas, influences and products spread outward from one society to another)
2. Cultural Blending (The process in which ideas, influences and products from many different regions and/or societies are mingled together to create new ideas and practices)
3. Migration (Movement of people or animals from one region to another due to environmental, economic, or political changes, usually happening over a long period of time)
4. Chariot (Highly mobile horse drawn battle wagon and transportation vehicle introduced to the Middle East by invading Hittites and Assyrians before the age of Antiquity)
5. Dhow (Early boat developed in ancient Mesopotamia and Egypt, which used a rudder and triangular sails, serving as the primary mode of transportation along the regions major waterways)
Governance within the Ancient World

Ancient River Valley Civilizations (3500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):

1. **Institution** (A long lasting pattern of organization in a society)
2. **Monarchy** (Government where power is in the hands of a single ruler – ie; King or Emperor)
3. **Dynasty** (A succession of rulers from the same family)
4. **Theocracy** (A Government highly influenced by Religious Beliefs and / or led by a Divine Ruler)
5. **Empire** (A large region that brings together several groups or people, provinces, states or countries under a single ruler)
6. **City-States** (An urbanized area and its surrounding territory that functions as an independent political unit with its own ruler)

Ancient Mesopotamia (3500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):

1. **Hammurabi’s Code** (First Consolidated Code of Written Laws created in Babylon during the rule of Hammurabi)
2. **Tribute** (Financial payment from a weaker power to a stronger one to ensure peace)

Ancient Egypt (3500 B.C.E. – 450 B.C.E.):

1. **Pharaoh** (Egyptian Monarchs who were considered “God Kings” due to their divine status)
2. **Kingdom** (Major territory under the rule of a King or Queen)

Ancient China (2000 B.C.E. – 250 B.C.E.):

1. **Mandate of Heaven** (Belief that the royal authority of a monarch came from the God’s or Heaven)
2. **Dynastic Cycle** (Pattern of rise, stabilization, decline and replacement of ruling class families)
3. **Feudalism** (Political system in which Nobles are granted use of the monarch’s lands in Return for the Nobles loyalty, military service and protection of the people)

Military Conflicts of Antiquity

Conflicts during the Age of Antiquity (1200 BCE – 500 CE):

**Trojan War (circa 1200’s B.C.E.)** – War between the Greek Mycenaean’s and the City-State of Troy due to a Mycenaean Prince kidnapping Helen of Troy. This conflict is well known for inspiring Epic Poems by Homer (Iliad & Odyssey) and Virgil (Aenied) and for the infamous Trojan Horse.

Social Classes of the Ancient World

Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia (3500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):

**UPPER CLASS**
1. Royalty (King, Queen and Royal Family were at the top of the Social Pyramid)
2. Nobility (Wealthy Land Owners, Priests, Government Officials and Military Commanders)

**MIDDLE CLASS**
3. Tradesmen (Merchants, Traders, Artisans and Craftsmen)

**LOWER CLASS**
4. Laborers (Peasant Farmers and Laborers)
5. Slaves (Foreigners Captured in Battle, Criminals, Debtors, and those Born into Slavery)
Religious Beliefs within the Ancient World

Ancient River Valley Civilizations (3500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Theocracy (A Government highly influenced by Religious Beliefs and / or led by a Divine Ruler)
2. Polytheism (A Religion based on the belief in multiple Gods or Deities)

Ancient Mesopotamia (3500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Ziggurat (A Pyramid Shaped monument in the center of a city dedicated to the City-God, ie: Ur)

Ancient Egypt (3500 B.C.E. – 450 B.C.E.):
1. Pharaoh (Egyptian Monarchs who were considered “God Kings” due to their divine status)
2. Pyramid (A Large Tomb designed to assist the Pharaoh in their travel to the afterlife)
3. Mummification (Embalming and Drying process used to preserve Royalty / Nobility for the afterlife)
4. Canopic Jars (Clay Vessels used by embalmers to hold the brain, liver, and other internal organs)
5. Hieroglyphics (Form of Pictograph writing known as “Sacred Writing” used for spells, curses, and religious purposes to protect the dead on their passage to the afterlife)

Ancient China (2000 B.C.E. – 250 B.C.E.):
1. Mandate of Heaven (Belief that the royal authority of a monarch came from the God’s or Heaven)
2. Oracle Bones (Animal Bones or Tortoise Shells on which priest wrote scared questions to the Gods)

Ancient India (1500 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Vedas (Sacred literature of the Aryans who migrated into the Indus Valley around 1500 BCE)
2. Brahmins (Priests within the Aryan social class structure)
3. Caste (Social Class Structure developed based on the Aryan traditions of Reincarnation)
4. Hinduism (Religion founded in India based on the Aryan Vedas, Caste system and Reincarnation)
5. Buddhism (Religion founded in India based on Hindu traditions & teachings of Siddhartha Guatama)
6. Jainism (Religion based on the belief that everything in the Universe has a soul and should not be harmed)
7. Reincarnation (The Hindu and Buddhist belief in rebirth of the individual spirit or soul)
8. Karma (The Hindu and Buddhist belief in the effects of good and bad deeds on the soul)
9. Dharma (The Hindu and Buddhist belief in a person’s moral duties in life)
10. Moksha (The Hindu belief of achieving Perfect Understanding with the Gods and a Release from Life in this World)
11. Enlightenment (The Buddhist tradition of seeking wisdom)
12. Nirvana (Buddhist belief in reaching the ultimate release from selfishness and pain)
13. Siddhartha Guatama (The Founder of Buddhism who’s search for wisdom caused him to become known as the “Enlightened One”)
14. Buddha (Name given to Siddhartha Guatama meaning “Enlightened One”)

Ancient Middle East (1800 B.C.E. – 200 B.C.E.):
1. Monotheism (A Religion based on the belief in only one God)
2. Hebrews (Tribal group cast out of Babylonia due to their adoption of the first Monotheistic Faith)
3. Abraham (Prophet and Patriarch of the Hebrew People who’s two sons – Ishmel and Issac would become promoters of the Monotheistic belief in Palestine and Arabia)
4. Torah (The Sacred Hebrew Scripture containing the first five books of God’s message)
5. Palestine (Major Province in the Middle East originally settled by the Phoenicians along the Mediterranean Sea – located in area adjacent to modern Israel)
6. Canaan (Ancient land of the Philistines traditionally granted to the Hebrews by God)
7. Covenant (A Mutual Promise between God and his followers - originally the Hebrews)
8. Moses (Hebrew Prophet who led his people on the Exodus, out of Slavery in Egypt to Canaan)