

UNIT 1



The Earliest Civilizations

Five articles discuss some of the dynamics of early civilizations. The topics include the development of social organization, the early Mediterranean world, and early civilization's relationship with the environment.

To the Reader Topic Guide

Overview

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| 1. Hatshepsut: The Female Pharaoh, John Ray, <i>History Today</i> , May 1994. | iv |
| Ancient Egypt, like most societies, was patriarchal. But <i>Egyptian women</i> enjoyed more freedoms and legal rights than did their counterparts in the classical world of Greece and Rome. Under some circumstances, albeit rare ones, a woman could rule the land of the Nile. This article describes just such an instance and details how a <i>female pharaoh</i> came to power. | 2 |
| 2. <i>Secrets of the Lost Tomb</i> , Michael D. Lemonick, <i>Time</i> , May 29, 1995. | 4 |
| <i>Ramses II</i> is among the best known of all the pharaohs of ancient Egypt. Scholars thought they had learned all there was to know about his sacred tomb, until they pried open a door that had been blocked for thousands of years. Michael Lemonick presents a report on what they discovered. | 6 |
| 3. <i>Shards of Speech</i> , David W. Anthony, <i>The Sciences</i> , January/February 1996. | 12 |
| Many ancient and modern languages spring from a common source spoken more than 5,000 years ago— <i>Proto-Indo-European</i> (PIE). David Anthony considers some intriguing questions: "Who were the original speakers of PIE?" "Where did they live?" "How did its regional dialects become the dominant languages in so much of Europe and Asia?" | 16 |
| 4. <i>Grisly Assyrian Record of Torture and Death</i> , Erika Bleibtreu, <i>Biblical Archaeology Review</i> , January/February 1991. | 21 |
| Can an <i>empire</i> be maintained by violence? The Assyrians relied on destruction and devastation to conquer and control their subjects. Erika Bleibtreu chronicles the bloody policies of the <i>Assyrian kings</i> . | 24 |
| 5. <i>Early Civilizations and the Natural Environment</i> , J. Donald Hughes, from <i>Ecology in Ancient Civilizations</i> , University of New Mexico Press, 1975. | |
| The early civilizations emerged because they effectively used their natural environments. They fell, says J. Donald Hughes, because they failed to maintain a harmonious balance with <i>nature</i> . This selection treats the relationship between <i>environment</i> and <i>civilization</i> in <i>Egypt</i> and <i>Mesopotamia</i> . | |

UNIT 2



Greece and Rome: The Classical Tradition

Eleven articles focus on Greek and Roman societies. Religion, sports, education, and the impact of philosophy and exploration on the development of Hellenic society are discussed.

Overview

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| 6. Winning at Olympia , Donald G. Kyle, <i>Archaeology</i> , July/August 1996. | 30 |
| Modern scholars are attempting to demythologize the ancient <i>Olympics</i> . Together, these related articles show how <i>archaeology</i> and <i>art history</i> can be used to "test and revise ancient literary accounts of how athletes trained, worshiped, competed, won, and celebrated, and how they were motivated, rewarded, and honored." | |
| 7. The Martial Republics of Classical Greece , Paul A. Rahe, <i>The Wilson Quarterly</i> , Winter 1993. | 37 |
| Paul Rahe ponders the link between the ancient and the modern, concentrating on the themes of <i>patriotism</i> and <i>militarism</i> . The citizen militia was at the heart of the <i>polis system</i> in Greece. In ancient Greece, "the citizen's entire existence was bound up with his participation in the religious affairs of the community," especially its wars. | |
| 8. The Hoplite and His Phalanx: War in an Agricultural Society , Victor Davis Hanson, from <i>The Western Way of War: Infantry Battle in Classical Greece</i> , Oxford University Press, 1989. | 43 |
| Sometime in the late eighth or early seventh century B.C., Greek warfare underwent a fundamental change. Infantrymen (<i>hoplites</i>) equipped with body armor, round shield (or <i>hoplon</i>), and spear began taking on their opponents in close combat rather than flinging javelins from afar or depending upon chariots. This new approach to fighting simplified and democratized warfare, while limiting the scope and scale of the fighting. | |
| 9. The Athenian Democracy and Its Slaves , Dimitris Kyrtatas, <i>History Today</i> , February 1994. | 48 |
| Slaves carried out many important functions in ancient Athens. But was Athenian <i>democracy</i> contingent upon the existence of <i>slavery</i> ? What, if anything, did Athenians say about the apparent contradiction between their democracy and their institution of slavery? | |
| 10. Herodotus—Roving Reporter of the Ancient World , Carmine Ampolo, <i>The UNESCO Courier</i> , March 1990. | 52 |
| <i>Herodotus</i> , "the father of history," inaugurated the two main tendencies in Greek (and Western) <i>historiography</i> . History, he demonstrated, combines the gathering of information and the recounting of a story. This account shows how the ancient writer used his sources to shape narratives that are readable and informative even after 2,500 years. | |
| 11. Love and Death in Ancient Greece , Kenneth Cavander, <i>Horizon</i> , Spring 1974. | 54 |
| This discussion of an ancient murder case involving an Athenian who murdered his wife's lover sheds light on <i>ancient Greek society</i> . Specifically, it considers justice and the <i>place of women in Hellenic society</i> . | |

UNIT 3



The Judeo-Christian Heritage

Five articles examine the impact that Jesus, Paul, politics, and clashing cultures had on the Judeo-Christian heritage.

12. **The Oldest Dead White European Males**, Bernard Knox, *The New Republic*, May 25, 1992. 58
Ancient Greek civilization is undergoing an unflattering reevaluation by scholars. Here renowned classicist Bernard Knox defends *Hellenic culture* and affirms its continuing significance for our time.
13. **Greek Gifts?** Peter Green, *History Today*, June 1990. 66
Alexander the Great was not just another glory-seeker. Many historians credit him with using his conquests to advance a grand design that would deliberately fuse *Greek and Oriental cultures*. Other Greeks, however, did not share his vision. In this article, Peter Green argues that condescension and cultural arrogance, rather than a mission to civilize, marked Greek reactions to the peoples they ruled.
14. **Democracy in Rome**, John North, *History Today*, March 1994. 73
The ancient antecedents of modern democratic politics are not confined to fifth-century Athens. They also can be traced to *republican Rome*.
15. **Everyday Life for the Roman Schoolboy**, Keith Hopkins, *History Today*, October 1993. 77
Keith Hopkins demonstrates that ancient Roman schooling and school texts reveal much about the life of the times—including issues of *status, sexuality, conflict, and violence*, as well as *moral and political values*.
16. **Friends, Romans, or Countrymen? Barbarians in the Empire**, Stephen Williams and Gerard Friell, *History Today*, July 1994. 83
In late Rome, the Empire came to depend upon barbarians, mainly Germanic tribesmen, to protect its frontiers. Centuries later, the great eighteenth-century historian *Edward Gibbon* saw the barbarization of the Empire as a prime cause for its *decline and fall*. This selection explores whether these foreigners were Rome's salvation or its doom.

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17. **Jews and Christians in a Roman World**, Eric M. Meyers and L. Michael White, *Archaeology*, March/April 1989. 90
Recent archaeological finds have shed new light on *Judaism and Christianity* in the Roman province of Palestine and elsewhere. The evidence summarized here suggests that Jews, Christians, and pagans lived together in greater harmony than previously supposed.
18. **Who Was Jesus?** *U.S. News & World Report*, December 20, 1993. 95
Scholarly attempts to understand the roots of the *Christian religion* continually face a familiar obstacle: there are no firsthand written accounts of Jesus' life. While there were eyewitnesses to Christ's public ministry, it is unlikely that the authors of the four Gospels were among them. This article surveys the accomplishments and frustrations of recent *biblical scholarship*.

UNIT 4



Moslems and Byzantines

Four selections discuss the effects of Greek Hellenic and Christian cultures on the development of the Muslim and Byzantine worlds.

19. **Women and the Bible**, Cullen Murphy, *The Atlantic Monthly*, August 1993. 99
Why did ancient Jewish and early Christian writings ignore or downplay the **domain of women**? Cullen Murphy explores efforts by present-day scholars, driven by various historical, theological, personal, and political motives, to answer this question while filling in the gaps of our knowledge of **gender issues in biblical times**.
20. **Handmaid or Feminist?** Richard N. Ostling, *Time*, December 30, 1991. 112
Mary, mother of Jesus, is the most revered woman in the history of Western civilization. But **the Madonna** has symbolized different things to different eras. This article surveys images of Mary through the ages.
21. **God's City**, Richard Z. Chesnoff, *U.S. News & World Report*, December 18, 1995. 115
Jerusalem is sacred to **Jews, Christians, and Moslems**. This fact has made the city a place of conflict as well as a place of hope. Richard Chesnoff presents a broad survey of Jerusalem's 3,000-year history.

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22. **Byzantium: The Emperor's New Clothes?** Alexander Kazhdan, *History Today*, September 1989. 122
Was **Byzantine civilization** an extension of **late Roman culture**, or was it a new departure? Did Byzantine civilization differ from late Roman culture? Was it a **medieval** antecedent of "**totalitarianism**"? And how did the Byzantines influence the development of **Russia** and **the Balkans**? These issues are explored by a leading Russian historian.
23. **War by Other Means: The Legacy of Byzantium**, Michael Antonucci, *History Today*, February 1993. 128
Michael Antonucci examines how an astute **foreign policy** enabled the **Byzantine Empire** to resist for centuries the hostile peoples who coveted Byzantine lands and wealth.
24. **The World of Islam**, *Time*, April 16, 1979. 132
This essay identifies **the basic components of Islam**, the world's youngest and second-largest religion. Across the Eastern Hemisphere, but primarily in that strategic crescent that straddles its political roots, the world community of Islam is experiencing a great revival—with important consequences for the West.
25. **The Rise of the Umayyad Dynasty in Spain**, J. Derek Latham, *The UNESCO Courier*, December 1991. 137
J. Derek Latham describes how **Islam** came to **Spain** and how **Cor-doba** became a great center of **Arabic culture**.

UNIT 5



The Medieval Period

Twelve selections examine the medieval world. The topics include knighthood, trade exploration, education, and culture.

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| 26. The Viking Saga , Magnus Magnusson, <i>The UNESCO Courier</i> , December 1983. | 142 |
| <i>Vikings</i> usually are depicted as warriors and freebooters who left their northern homelands to pillage civilized Europe. Magnus Magnusson, however, shows that the Vikings advanced the European economy by stimulating <i>trade and exploration</i> and by developing mercantile centers such as York. | |
| 27. The Golden Age of Andalusia under the Muslim Sultans , Stanley Meisler, <i>Smithsonian</i> , August 1992. | 145 |
| During the medieval period, southern Spain was <i>Europe's greatest center of culture</i> —thanks to its unique blend of Arabic, Christian, and Jewish elements. This article scrutinizes <i>the art of "Al-Andalus"</i> and shows how the Muslim rulers created a unique climate of creativity for their subjects. | |
| 28. The Paris Bibles and the Making of a Medieval Information Revolution , Jay Tolson, <i>Civilization</i> , January/February 1996. | 149 |
| According to Jay Tolson, " <i>An information revolution</i> unquestionably took place between the last quarter of the 12th century and the first quarter of the 13th." It was then that the Bible was first made available in a one-volume portable format. This development, when combined with the invention of movable type in 1455, contributed greatly to the spread of literacy and the widespread use of books. | |
| 29. Crusade's Strange Twist , Richard McCaffery Robinson, <i>Military History</i> , August 1993. | 154 |
| The Crusades originated with a request from Constantinople that the religious and political leaders of Europe mount a military effort to counter the Muslim threat to <i>Eastern Christendom</i> . Much to the surprise of the Byzantines, however, the infamous <i>Fourth Crusade</i> saw Christians from western Europe pillage Constantinople. | |
| 30. In France, an Ordeal by Fire and a Monster Weapon Called 'Bad Neighbor,' David Roberts, <i>Smithsonian</i> , May 1991. | 161 |
| Mountaintop castles are all that remain of a heretical European sect that was the target of a crusade. <i>The war against the Cathars</i> also triggered <i>the Inquisition</i> . This is the story of the struggle and its aftermath. | |
| 31. Studying the Lives of Medieval Women , Emilie Amt, <i>Washington College Magazine</i> , Spring 1993. | 166 |
| Until relatively recently, history has ignored <i>women</i> . This is, in part, because they were excluded from power and education, making it more difficult for them to leave their traces in the records of their times. Emilie Amt recounts some of the difficulties and rewards of <i>studying medieval women</i> . | |
| 32. Girls Growing Up in Later Medieval England , Jeremy Goldberg, <i>History Today</i> , June 1995. | 169 |
| In our limited sources, it is noted that medieval children—girls especially—are seldom seen or heard. In this article, Jeremy Goldberg describes these sources and attempts to make the most out of what little we know about <i>late medieval girlhood</i> . | |

UNIT 6



Renaissance and Reformation

Nine articles discuss the importance of trade and commerce on the development of the modern state, the role of art in the Renaissance, culture, and the emergence of religion.

33. **Anorexia Religiosa**, A. J. Dunning, from *Extremes: Reflections on Human Behavior*, Harcourt Brace & Company, 1992. **175**
Catherine of Siena starved herself to death in the name of God. A. J. Dunning, a medical doctor with an interest in the history of physical and mental disorders, reviews Saint Catherine's case in light of what we know about the modern eating disorder, anorexia nervosa.
34. **Horsemen of Cruel Cunning**, Peter A. Kiss, *Military History*, December 1986. **180**
Thirteenth-century Europe narrowly avoided being conquered by Asian marauders. Only good fortune and stiff resistance by Hungarian armies prevented the *Mongols* from extending their empire into central and western Europe. This selection recounts *King Bela's* defense of Hungary—and the West.
35. **How a Mysterious Disease Laid Low Europe's Masses**, Charles L. Mee Jr., *Smithsonian*, February 1990. **185**
The great *plague* of the fourteenth century destroyed a third of Europe's population and had profound psychological, social, religious, economic, and even artistic consequences. Charles Mee spells out the causes, symptoms, and effects of the epidemic that altered *medieval life*.
36. **Saints or Sinners? The Knights Templar in Medieval Europe**, Helen Nicholson, *History Today*, December 1994. **190**
The Order of the Temple (*Knights Templar*) was created to protect pilgrims traveling in the Holy Land. Over the years, the Order grew wealthy and powerful. Then, early in the fourteenth century, the king of France and the pope turned against the Knights Templar, alleging that they engaged in all manner of fraudulent financial schemes and religious malpractices. Helen Nicholson weighs the charges against the Order.
37. **Jan Hus—Heretic or Patriot?** František Šmahel, *History Today*, April 1990. **194**
A century before Martin Luther's rebellion, Czech reformer Jan Hus questioned the authority and doctrine of the *Roman Catholic Church*. His challenge inspired *Czech nationalism*; his execution led to an armed rebellion against the Church and its defenders. The episode is recounted here by a modern Czech historian.

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38. **How Jacques Coeur Made His Fortune**, Marshall B. Davidson, *Horizon*, Winter 1976. **200**
It was a *commercial revival* that thawed the frozen society of *medieval Europe* and cleared the way for *modern society*. Marshall Davidson chronicles the adventures and misadventures of an early capitalist during this time of transition.
39. **Petrarch**, Morris Bishop, from *The Italian Renaissance*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985. **205**
"Petrarch," says Morris Bishop, "was the first modern scholar, the first modern literary man." His poetry, his interest in classical humanism, and the story of his love for the mysterious Laura are explored in Bishop's essay.

40. **Our Man from Arezzo**, Gene Mitchell, *Mankind*, May 1979. 211
The Renaissance redefined the place of the *artist in society*. The career of Pietro Aretino, poet and opportunist, is a case in point. Gene Mitchell portrays him as a symbol of the darker side of the Renaissance.
41. **Machiavelli**, Vincent Cronin, *Horizon*, Autumn 1972. 216
Despite his acknowledged brilliance, *Machiavelli, political theorist and historian*, is often associated with the worst traits of *Renaissance statecraft*—manipulation, murder, mendacity, and massacre. Biographer Vincent Cronin questions that view and portrays the famous Florentine as a patriot and defender of civilization.
42. **Women of the Renaissance**, J. H. Plumb, from *The Italian Renaissance*, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1985. 220
The new prosperity of Europe during the *Renaissance* had a profound impact upon the lives of *women*. Many benefited materially—along with their successful husbands. Yet women themselves increasingly were “a marketable commodity,” as J. H. Plumb explains in this selection.
43. **Columbus—Hero or Villain?** Felipe Fernández-Armesto, *History Today*, May 1992. 224
In the 500 years since his first voyage of discovery, *the image of Columbus* has gone through many changes—though the facts remain the same. How can we account for these conflicting images of the man, and by what standards should we judge the explorer?
44. **Luther: Giant of His Time and Ours**, *Time*, October 31, 1983. 229
After five centuries, scholars are still having difficulty coming to terms with the contradictions of the tempestuous Martin Luther. Was he a revolutionary or counterrevolutionary, anti-Semite or saint, scholar or propagandist? *Luther's impact on politics, religion, and thought* are reviewed here.
45. **Explaining John Calvin**, William J. Bouwsma, *The Wilson Quarterly*, New Year's 1989 edition. 232
John Calvin's image in history is well established. The religious reformer has been credited with—or blamed for—promoting the *capitalist work ethic, individualism, and Puritanism*. But his biographer William Bouwsma says our image of Calvin as a cold, inflexible moralist is mistaken. According to the author, Calvin's life and work were full of “the ambiguities, contradictions, and agonies” of a troubled time.
46. **That Others Might Read**, Joseph H. Hall, *Biblical History*, August 1987. 236
It is an article of faith for Protestants that *Christians* should read the *Bible*. Since few Europeans knew Latin, the Reformation inspired new translations of the Bible in French, Dutch, German, and other vernacular languages. This article tells the story of *the earliest English Bible*.

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