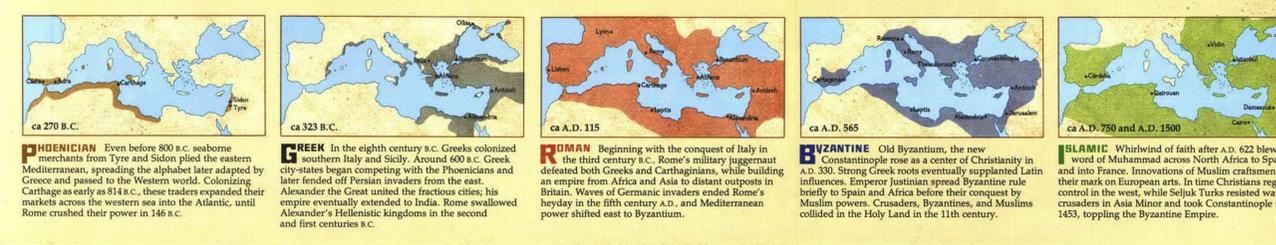




The Historic Mediterranean 800 B.C. TO A.D. 1500



PHENICIAN Even before 800 B.C. seaborne merchants from Tyre and Sidon plied the eastern Mediterranean, spreading the alphabet later adopted by Greece and passed to the Western world. Colonizing Carthage as early as 814 B.C., these traders expanded their markets across the western sea into the Atlantic, until Rome crushed their power in 146 B.C.

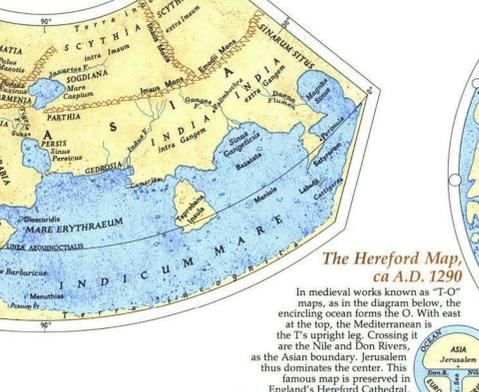
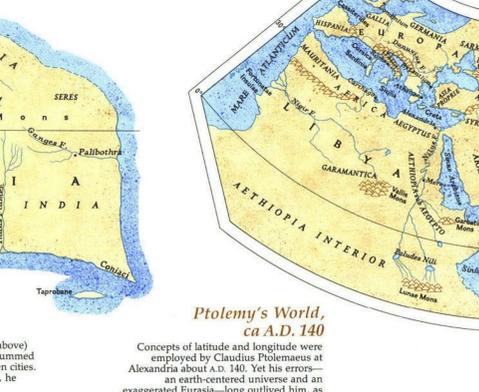
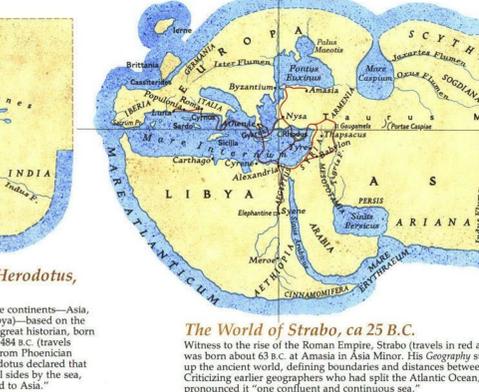
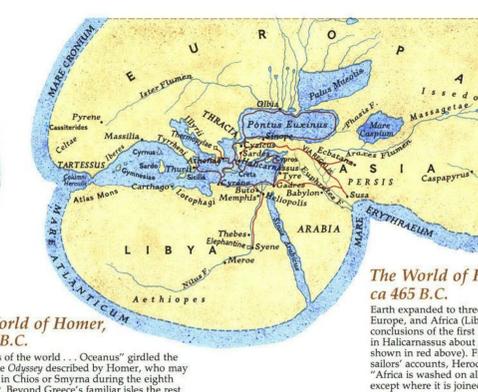
GREEK In the eighth century B.C. Greeks colonized southern Italy and Sicily. Around 600 B.C. Greek Mediterranean states began competing with the Phoenicians and later fended off Persian invaders from the east. Alexander the Great united the fractious cities; his empire eventually extended to India. Rome swallowed Alexander's Hellenistic kingdoms in the second and first centuries B.C.

ROMAN Beginning with the conquest of Italy in the third century B.C., Rome's military juggernaut defeated both Greeks and Carthaginians, while building an empire from Africa and Asia to distant outposts in Britain. Wars of Germanic invaders ended Rome's heyday in the fifth century A.D., and Mediterranean power shifted east to Byzantium.

BYZANTINE Old Byzantium, the new Constantinople rose as a center of Christianity in A.D. 330. Strong Greek roots eventually supplanted Latin influences. Emperor Justinian passed Byzantine rule briefly to Spain and Africa before their conquest by Muslim powers. Crusaders, Byzantines, and Muslims collided in the Holy Land in the 11th century.

ISLAMIC Whirlwind of faith after A.D. 622 blew the word of Muhammad across North Africa to Spain and into France. Innovative Muslim craftsmen left their mark on European arts. In time Christians regained control in the west, while Seljuk Turks resisted waves of crusaders in Asia Minor and took Constantinople in 1453, toppling the Byzantine Empire.

Heart of an Expanding World
 "We... live... like ants or frogs about a pond..." Thus the Greeks came to realize how their home sea dwarfed them, as they wrestled to define a "very large" earth not with mythology but with science. In Homer's time the notion of a flat disk prevailed. Thales of Miletus argued about 585 B.C. that the disk floated on water. Anaximander envisioned a cylinder crowned by a disk of inhabited land, while Anaximenes proposed a rectangle hovering on compressed air. Pythagoras decided on the sphere; Aristotle agreed, using hard evidence such as the curved shadow projected by the earth on the moon during eclipse. Eratosthenes was first to calculate earth's circumference but overestimated it by about 16 percent. His critic, Ptolemy, later underdosed the mark by a fourth. "Heresy" cried ecclesiastical scholars of the Middle Ages, because scientific advances did not jibe with their strict scriptural interpretations of the world. In place of learned debate, hearsay ran rampant with tales of monstrous horse-footed men and boiling rivers that colored maps for centuries. Topsy-turvy map at far right shows a typical medieval view.



The World of Homer, ca 700 B.C.
 "The limits of the world... Oceanus" girdled the lands of the *Cilixes* described by Homer, who may have lived in Chios or Smyrna during the eighth century B.C. Beyond Greece's familiar isles the rest of the Mediterranean remained a vague outline.

The World of Herodotus, ca 465 B.C.
 Earth expanded to three continents—Asia, Europe, and Africa (Libya)—based on the conclusions of the first great historian, born in Halicarnassus about 484 B.C. (travels shown in red above). From Phoenician sailors' reports, Herodotus declared that "Africa is washed on all sides by the sea, except where it is joined to Asia."

The World of Strabo, ca 25 B.C.
 Witness to the rise of the Roman Empire, Strabo (travels in red above) was born about 63 B.C. in Asia Minor. His *Geography* summed up the ancient world, defining boundaries and distances between cities. Criticizing earlier geographers who had split the Atlantic Ocean, he pronounced it "one confluent and continuous sea."

Ptolemy's World, ca A.D. 140
 Concepts of latitude and longitude were employed by Claudius Ptolemaeus at Alexandria about A.D. 140. Yet his errors—such as the Tropic of Cancer—dominate the center. This famous map is preserved in England's Hereford Cathedral.

The Hereford Map, ca A.D. 1290
 In medieval works known as "T-O" maps, the world is shown as a diagram below, the encircling ocean forms the O. With east at the top, the Mediterranean is the T's upright leg. Crossing it are the Nile and Don Rivers, as the Asian boundary. Jerusalem thus dominates the center. This famous map is preserved in England's Hereford Cathedral.