

History Of Anatolia

Introduction

Anatolia has been of primary importance during various periods of human history and has been the cradle of many original civilizations. The Çayönü, Hacilar and Çatalhöyük settlements which developed during the Late Stone Age (8000-5500 BCE) are three of the oldest cultures in the world. Çatalhöyük was the leading center during this period. Thus, Anatolia was a leader of the world during the 8th, 7th and 6th millenniums BCE. After a long unproductive period (5500-2500 BCE) Anatolia again became the scene of great civilizations. While the Hattis (2500-2000 BCE) were not as advanced as Egypt or Mesopotamia, they were still one of the leading peoples of that era.

Examples of Hatti masterpieces made from gold, silver and a gold-silver alloy found in Alacahöyük. Horoztepe and Mahmatlar are still displayed in the Museum of the Anatolian Civilizations. These are the most beautiful

examples of the art of ancient times after the treasure of Ur which belonged to the Sumerians

During the 14th century BCE, the superstate of the Hittites was one of the 3 great and powerful countries. They set up a federal empire and dominated Syria and Mesopotamia. This nation of an Indo-European origin, in which women were equal to men and even the rights of slaves were protected, had a government unequalled legally.

In the 8th century BCE, the Greeks became acquainted with the 2 thousand year-old treasure of knowledge from Mesopotamia through the late Hittite principality in southeastern Anatolia. They acquired the Phoenician alphabet from Al Mina which is near Antioch. They took the mythology and art of sculpture from late Hittite centers like Malatya, Kargameş and Zincirli. During the 8th century BCE, a Greek's headgear, helmet, skirt, belt and hairstyle were similar to those of the Hittites due to their influence.

The Urartians (860-580 BCE), Frygians (750-300 BCE) and Lykians (700-300) civilizations had great influence on the western world with their metallic masterpieces, textiles, furniture and music.

During the period of the philosophers (600-545 BCE), Anatolia was the leading culture center of the world. Finally the leadership of the world culture was transferred from Egypt and Mesopotamia to the Western Anatolian cities. The philosophers freed from belief in jinn, fairies and religion, sought the causes of natural events with an open mind. Their work formed the basis of the present Western civilization. Using this free way of investigation, Thales of Miletus calculated and reported that there would be an eclipse of the sun on May 28, 585. This was the first time in history that a natural event had been calculated before it happened.

After the Persian occupation (545-333 BCE) Anatolia lost its position of leadership. However, during the Hellenistic Period (333-30 BCE), it still retained world famous cultural centers. During this period the most important cities included Pergamum, Miletus, Priene, Ephesus and Teos. During this period the architecture of Anatolia greatly influenced that of Rome.

During the Roman era (30 BCE-395 CE) Anatolia was one of the world's most developed regions. The cities of western Anatolia were equal to those of Rome during this period. For the first time, during the Roman era, transportation was by well kept roads in good condition connected by stone bridges. In the cities, waterways brought plentiful water which poured from fountains. Every city had gymnasiums, stadiums, theaters, city halls and agora buildings, public baths, libraries, comfortable houses, covered roads lined with posts, health centers and large public squares. Amazingly, many of these cities are still standing to a great extent.

The Seljuk civilization, with its well kept roads, stone bridges, inns, water ways, mosques, theological schools, observatories, libraries, public baths, schools for poor children and palaces, was one of the more advanced examples of the middle Ages including Europe. The Seljuks in many ways influenced Europeans who came to Anatolia during the crusades. Their works of art with their eye-catching beauty are amazing.

The Ottomans (1299-1923) forged a powerful empire and for years they ruled Eastern Europe and the Balkans. The Ottomans further developed the superior culture and the art of works of the Seljuks. They produced unequalled masterpieces such as glazed earthenware, miniature paintings, jewelry, textiles, embroidery, rugs and particularly, architecture.

Under the leadership of Atatürk, the Turkish Republic which was set up in 1923 continued developing and once again Anatolia was on his way to being a country of science, culture and art. In reality, Anatolia not only is rich in knowledge and culture. It is also very important medically. Because it has been settled frequently and has undergone invasions, it is rich in human remnants. Paleoanthropological studies, which have been done on these remnants, are clarifying the little known topics of human history.

During the archaic era of civilizations like that of ancient Greece, Rome and Byzantium, Anatolia, because of the influence of Kos and Knidos Schools, became a leader of rationalistic medicine. Anatolian physicians developed theories that have long been used in medicine. Besides this, the health institutions in Anatolia have an important position in medical history.

Since the 11th century, Turkish people have been in Anatolia. Thus, the country came into contact with Turkish-Islamic medicine. Between the 11th to the 16th century, the Turkish medical literature were influenced by ancient medical theories. These included sections on diseases of the mouth and teeth. Besides this, one of the oldest monographs on dentistry was written during this period.

We have seen that dentistry in the 16th -19th centuries regressed in Anatolia. In the 20th century, it began to revive and in 1909, the first school of dentistry opened. In 1923 with the proclamation of the Turkish Republic, dentistry developed in all its aspects and became modernized.

BCE developed the most original civilizations of the world at that time in Anatolia. The remaining masterpieces of these three cultures, which are displayed in Turkish museums, still produce wonder in the viewers.

The Ancient Greek-Roman Era

The scholarly processes which began in western Anatolia during the 5th century BCE with philosophers like Thales, Heraclitus and Democritus. Hippocrates who was born at Kos in 466 was the founder of rational medicine. He learned medicine in Kos, İzmir and Ephesus. He went to Egypt. He worked as a physician in Athens. He died in 396 BCE in Larissa. Not only was he a very productive author (his works are collected in 10 large volumes) he was also the interpreter of a new theory in medicine and was the founder of rational medicine. Hippocrates gave very important information concerning stomatology in his writings. Dentist Antipas from Pergamum (4th century CE) the first known dentist in Anatolia. The supremacy of Anatolia in medicine as well as in stomatology continued in the Roman and Byzantium until the 11th century CE.