

Different Drummers

Nonconforming Thinkers in History

Free and Independent Thinking In History—A Time Line

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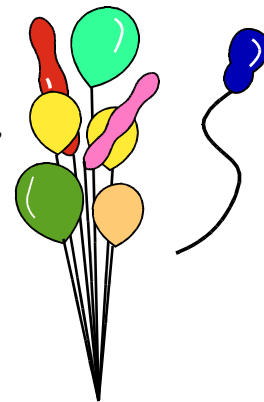
Publishing Information

Different Drummers: Nonconforming Thinkers in History was developed and produced by Instructional Systems, Sacramento, California. The materials were designed, written, and edited by Dr. Mynga Futrell and Dr. Paul Geisert of Instructional Systems.

The James Hervey Johnson
Charitable Educational Trust
contributed to development of these
Different Drummers materials

Published in Canada

ISBN 1-55212-231-X



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Free and Independent

Thinking in History

A Time Line

by: Paul Geisert, Gerald A. Larue, John B. Massen

Sources:

Freethought Across the Centuries: Toward a New Age of Enlightenment by Gerald A Larue. Amherst, New York: Humanist Press, 1996.

The Timetables of History, Third Edition, Bernard Grun (based on Werner Stein's *Kulturfahrplan*). New York: Simon and Schuster, 1991.

The New Columbia Encyclopedia, Fourth Edition. New York: Columbia University Press, 1975.

The Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th Edition. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc., 1997.

The authors welcome your suggestions for corrections, additions, and/or improvements to the Time Line (for its revision).

Different Drummers Version 1.0

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DATE	HISTORICAL EVENTS	EVENTS OF FREE AND INDEPENDENT THINKING
BEFORE THE COMMON ERA (BCE)		
c. 70,000–50,000	Humans begin to bury their dead (p. 36) Migrants from Asia enter America (p. 354)	
c. 25,000	Humans are creating cave paintings of animals and humans in caves in France and Spain, perhaps with religious or superstition-related purposes (p. 36)	
c. 9,000–4,001	The development of agriculture and the domestication of animals begins in the Middle East (p. 39) Village culture begins in China (p. 321) Start of Japanese culture (p. 339) Cultivation of maize, beans, squash, other plants in Mexican highlands Humans begin to use metal for tools and weapons (p. 51)	<div style="border: 2px solid gray; padding: 10px;"> <p>All <i>italicized</i> page numbers in parentheses refer to <i>Freethought Across the Centuries</i> by Gerald A. Larue. <i>Italicized</i> text preceded by an arrow (↔) is used to indicate historical events that have direct consequences for free and independent thinking.</p> </div>
4000–3501	Proto-Dravidians enter India (p. 291) Settlement of Greece (p. 138) and Rome (p. 174) A number of small cities appear in Sumer in the Tigris-Euphrates Valley; the start of a 1500 year civilization	
3500–3001	Temples built in Sumeria at Eridu, Tepe Gawra and Uruk (p. 52) The Sumerians invent the first form of writing, cuneiform (p. 53)	
3000–2501	Indus Valley civilization (3000–1500): cities at Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa have high degree of architectural and city planning (p. 291) An urban civilization flourishes in Sumeria (p. 54 ff.) Gods of Sumer are human in every way and, under different names, become the gods of subsequent Mesopotamian people (p. 56) Egyptian mythology has more than 80 gods known by name (p. 47) Upper and Lower Egypt are united by King Menes (c. 2900) (p. 80) Age of the great Egyptian pyramids (2680–2565): Cheops Pyramid is laid out using astronomical measurements; the Great Sphinx is built	
2500–2001	Idea of existence after death appears in the Osirian cult in Egypt (p. 93) Book of the Dead: Egyptian funerary literature, for use by deceased in afterworld; contains many basic ideas of Egyptian religion (p.87, 96) Sargon of Akkad conquers the Sumerians and unites all Mesopotamia, creating the world's first empire (2371–2230) (p. 63) The Epic of Gilgamesh (c. 2000) the oldest epic poem in world literature, is written in Mesopotamia (pp. 57-61)	

<p>2000–1501</p>	<p>Stonehenge in England, one of many megalithic monuments, is built for religious worship</p> <p>Minoan civilization on Crete (c. 2000–1450) (p. 139-141)</p> <p>Babylonia flourishes under King Hammurabi (1792–1750), and Marduk is the supreme god—king of kings and lord of lords (p. 43); the Hammurabi dynasty falls in 1600</p> <p><i>Code of Hammurabi</i>, one of the earliest sets of codified laws, is written (by legend: given by the sun Shamash to Hammurabi) (pp. 43, 65)</p>	<p>Poem titled “Prayer to Every God” is written by anonymous poet; it demonstrates the plight of an early worshiper (p. 44)</p>
<p>1500–1001</p>	<p>Shang dynasty (1523–1027), China’s first documented historic dynasty, a complex agricultural civilization on Honan plain (p. 322)</p> <p>Invention of alphabetic writing in Syria (1500)</p> <p>Formative Period of Meso-American culture (1500 BCE–300 CE): the Olmecs and Quetzalcoatl mythology (p. 364)</p> <p>Pre-Classic period of Mayan culture (1500 BCE–300 CE) (p. 366)</p> <p>Mycenaeans in Greece (c. 1450–1100) (pp. 141-142)</p> <p>Hittites, from west Turkey c. 2000, establish Hittite Empire, the chief power and cultural force in W. Asia 1400–1200; master use of iron</p> <p>Beginning of Mayan culture (Pre-Classic period, 1500 BCE–300 CE)</p> <p>The Aryans of central Asia begin migrating to India (p. 293)</p> <p>Indian Vedic religion: Indian Vedas are oldest Hindu scriptures and the most ancient religious texts in an Indo-European language</p> <p>Beginning of Chinese Chou Dynasty (1027–256)</p>	<p>Songs of the harpists offering guidance to successful living are inscribed in Egyptian tombs; many show evidence of secular and critical thinking (p. 98)</p>
<p>1000–801</p>	<p>Greek religion has 12 gods living on Mount Olympus (p. 145)</p> <p>The Hebrews establish a kingdom in what is now Palestine, which reaches its greatest strength under king David; Jerusalem, a Canaanite walled city, becomes the capital of the Hebrew kingdom; Solomon (c. 972–c. 932) constructs first Hebrew temple (pp. 106-107)</p> <p>The Hebrews are monolatrous; Yahweh is the supreme god of the nation, and other gods are recognized (p. 109)</p> <p>After Solomon’s death, the Hebrew kingdom splits (c. 922) into Israel in the north and Judah in the south (p. 106)</p>	<p>“Wisdom Schools” are developed as learning centers teaching courses in pragmatic ethics; initially, the schools are run as secular institutions by the palace and not by the temple (p. 116)</p>
<p>800–701</p>	<p>Alphabetic writing begins in Greece (Phoenician alphabet) (780)</p> <p>The first recorded Olympic Games are held in Greece (776)</p> <p>The Greek epic poems the <i>Iliad</i> and the <i>Odyssey</i> are composed (p.143)</p> <p>High priest of Thebes (Egypt) is a woman</p> <p>Jewish prophets fight religious and social abuses (p. 123)</p> <p>Northern kingdom of Israel is destroyed by the Assyrians (c. 721) and disappears from history, and only Judah is left of the Davidic empire; the Samaritans are the remnants of the Hebrews of ancient Israel</p> <p>Etruscan culture evolves in Italy</p> <p>According to legend, Rome is founded in 753 by Romulus (p. 172)</p>	<p>In India, medicine becomes divorced from priesthood</p> <p>Amos, a prophet of Tekoa, the Prophet Isaiah of Jerusalem, and Micah of Moresheth all speak as religious humanists (pp. 123-124)</p>

<p>700—601</p>	<p>Assyria under Ashurbanipal becomes one of greatest ancient empires King Josiah seeks to purify and centralize Yahweh worship in Jerusalem (p. 109) Democratic government slowly begins in Athens, Corinth, Sparta, and Thebes, the chief city-states of Greece for over 500 years (p. 152ff.) New Babylonian Empire starts [lasting nearly a century and reaching its height under Nebuchadnezzar]</p>	<p>Ashurbanipal, Assyrian King (669–633); famous library with over 22,000 clay tablets, the chief sources of knowledge of ancient Mesopotamia; cover history, medicine, astronomy, astrology, movements of planets</p>
<p>600—501</p>	<p>Zoroaster (c. 628–c. 551) founds Persian religion (p. 74-76) Lao-tse (604–524), Chinese philosopher, reputedly founds Taoism Belief in reincarnation and law of <i>karma</i> are added to Hinduism; caste system develops (p. 294) Cyrus II (553–529) of Persia founds the Persian empire Jainism is founded in India (p. 296) Confucius (551–479) founds Confucianism in China (pp. 325-330) Siddhartha Gautama (Buddha) is born (563); founds Buddhism (p. 298) Babylon conquers Judah and tears down the walls of Jerusalem and the temple (586); Jews are exiled until freed by Cyrus of Persia (538); temple is rebuilt (516) (p.110) Jews forsake monolatry and become monotheistic, claiming that their deity is the only God and all others are false (pp. 109, 110, 461) Great temple to Apollo is built at Delphi, site also of the Delphic Oracle—a priestess, the most famous and powerful oracle in Greece Greek Thespis has first public performance of a tragedy Building of the Temple of Jupiter in Rome The people of Rome revolt against their Etruscan rulers (509) and establish a republic (p. 176)</p>	<p>Ancient Jewish Skeptics record feelings of abandonment by Yahweh (p. 114) Agur, son of Yakeh from Massa, writes in Proverbs 30 the confessions of a skeptic unable to understand God and his creation (p. 119) Thales of Miletus (625?–542?), Greek philosopher, seeks to explain the universe materialistically (p. 159) Anaximander of Miletus (c. 610–c. 546), Greek philosopher, the first thinker to develop a cosmology, or systematic philosophical view of the world; he anticipates the theory of evolution and later was often called the founder of astronomy (p. 160) Pythagoras (c. 580–500) is best known for his Pythagorean Theorem for triangles; his mathematical study of the cosmos evolved into concept of earth as a sphere with revolving planets — an idea dormant until Copernicus (p. 161) Siddhartha Gautama (563–483), founder of Buddhism, rejects Hinduism with its multitude of gods and begins his independent quest for the meaning of human existence; as the Buddha, teaches an individualistic humanism and displays a practical atheism (pp. 5, 299) Xenophanes (560–478) founds school of philosophy; points out that gods are simply projections by humans of humans themselves (p. 160) Confucius (551–479), a humanist, believes that humans alone are responsible for solving societal problems, teaches that individuals should act in the right way because of inner moral law, and is agnostic in that he acknowledges “ignorance as to the gods” and indifference toward religious rites (p. 326) Heraclitus (c. 540–c. 480) writes that fire is the basic stuff of the universe; he mocks rituals and prayers before statues, rejects claims of mystery religions and the notion of personal gods, but does not deny that gods exist (p. 161)</p>
<p>600—501 (continued)</p>		<p>Anaximenes of Miletus (6th cent.), Greek philosopher and materialist, portrays humans as part of the natural world (p. 160) Aesop (6th cent.), former Phygian slave, writes his famous morality tales With Confucius, Buddha, Zoroaster, the Jews becoming monotheists, the Greek poets, artists, philosophers, and scientists — in the sixth century human wisdom and achievement reach a new high plateau; one that extends in Greece for several centuries</p>

THE START OF THE GOLDEN AGE OF PHILOSOPHY AND FREETHOUGHT

500–451	<p>Britain is invaded by Iron-Age people Beginning of Greek “Democracy” (<i>p. 154</i>) Aeschylus, Greek dramatist (<i>526–426</i>) The Torah: the “Five Books of Moses” (Pentateuch) receive their definite form, becoming the primary guide for Jewish life and worship (<i>p. 125</i>) Ezra, Hebrew scribe, goes to Jerusalem to restore Jewish law Building of the first Temple of Saturn in Rome (c. 498) Building of the Temple of Zeus in Olympia (c. 460)</p>	<p>Anaxagorus (500–428), Greek philosopher of nature remembered for his cosmology and for his discovery of the true cause of eclipses; he was exiled from Athens on charges of impiety for asserting that the sun is an incandescent stone (<i>p. 157</i>) Pericles (490–429) becomes the center of the intellectual circle in Athens; his speech as recorded by Thucydides contains no reference to gods, only a noble expression of humanism in which man is the sole measure of society (<i>p. 157</i>) Zeno of Elea (c. 490–c. 430), the founder of dialectic Protagoras of Abdera (c. 490–420), Greek philosopher, teaches that “Man is the measure of all things” and, concerning the gods, says: “I have no means of knowing either that they exist or that they do not exist...;” at age 70 he is accused and convicted of atheism and forced to leave Athens (<i>p. 164</i>)</p>
450–401	<p>Cratinus, Greek author of comedy (d. c. 419) Sophocles (496–406), Greek tragic poet Euripides (485/480–406), Greek tragic poet Peloponnesian War between Athens and Sparta (431–404) Nehemiah, governor (445–433), rebuilds the Wall of Jerusalem</p>	<p>During the time of Pericles (443–429), Athens reaches the height of its cultural and imperial achievement; probably never again in the history of the West (unless perhaps in Renaissance Florence) is so much creative genius gathered in one place; an environment of openness and tolerance nourishes the development of rational critical thinking and inquiry Critias, Athenian Sophist (c. 480–403), states: “a wise and clever man invented fear [<i>of the gods</i>] for mortals, that there might be some means of frightening the wicked...” (<i>p. 165</i>) Socrates, Athenian philosopher (470?–399), develops the “Socratic method,” which remains a magnificent tool for open inquiry and freethought, with continuing impact throughout western philosophic history. He is put to death on charges of impiety (<i>pp. 157; 162-164</i>) Leucippus of Miletus (5th cent.) and especially Democritus of Abdera (c. 460–370), Greek philosophers, postulated the existence of atoms in ceaseless motion as the basic stuff of the universe out of which all phenomena emerge (<i>p. 162</i>) Hippocrates (c. 460–c. 370), Greek physician and “Father of Medicine,” bases his work on objective observation and deductive reasoning; shows that diseases have natural causes</p>

<p>400–351</p>	<p>Birth of Alexander the Great (356–323), one of world’s greatest leaders</p>	<p>Samkhya and Mimamsa schools of Hinduism are avowedly atheistic (<i>p. 295</i>) Plato (427?–347) writes “Apology” in defense of Socrates; founds The Academy (387), a school in Athens—two notable students: Aristotle and Alexander the Great [<i>school is to last for 900 years until closed by Christian emperor Justinian</i>] (<i>pp. 163-164</i>). Diogenes of Sinope (c. 400–c. 325) founds the Cynic school of philosophy; they renounce all material possessions and social entanglements and are indifferent to death, holding no beliefs in an afterlife (<i>p. 165</i>) Qoheleth (4th cent.) writes in Ecclesiastes concerning the questions of how one finds meaning in what appears to be a meaningless existence, and how one lives when the heavens are silent and there are no answers to basic human questions of meaning (<i>p. 121</i>)</p>
<p>350–301</p>	<p>Philip II of Macedon conquers the Greeks (338) and establishes a federal system of Greek states Alexander the Great’s conquests extend to the border of India Hellenistic Age starts after Alexander’s death [<i>lasting almost 300 years</i>]</p>	<p>Mencius (372–289) of China develops a humanistic philosophy based on the idea that human nature is intrinsically good (<i>p. 328</i>) Pyrrho of Elis (c. 360–270) founds a Greek school of skeptics—among later skeptics to follow are Timon, Arcesilaus, Carneades, and Sextus Empiricus—who claim that real knowledge of things is impossible, truth is unattainable, and the search for truth is a vain exercise; called “systematic skepticism” (<i>pp. 22, 166</i>) Epicurus (c. 341–270), Greek philosopher, while not denying the existence of gods, argues that the gods do not interfere in the lives of humans, who have freedom of choice, and that there is no afterlife (<i>p. 167</i>) Zeno of Citium (335–263), Greek philosopher, founds the Stoic school, believes that the aim of philosophy is happiness according to virtue and submitting to nature’s law (<i>p. 168</i>) Aristotle (384–322), Greek philosopher, pupil of Plato, teacher of Alexander the Great: his philosophy follows empirical observation and logic as the essential methods of rational inquiry; founds the Peripatetic school of philosophy in Athens (335), which emphasizes direct observation of nature, and scientific theory must follow facts of nature; later, he profoundly influences the Western world Aristoxenus (4th cent): first to base musical theory on analysis of musical practice</p>
<p>300–251</p>	<p>Mexican sun temple Atetelio at Teotihuacan (300) Roman plebeians get equality under Roman law (287) (<i>p. 176</i>) Rome controls Italy (<i>p. 177</i>) First Punic War (264–241) (<i>p. 177</i>) Asoka, one of greatest rulers of ancient India (273–232), unites most of India, converts to Buddhism and makes it the state religion (<i>p.303</i>)</p>	<p>Aristarchus of Samos (c. 310–c. 230), Greek astronomer of Alexandria, concludes that the earth is smaller than the sun and rotates around it, explains that earth’s rotation causes day and night, and explains seasons Archimedes (287–212)—scientist, inventor, and mathematician—envisions the unlimited possibilities that can be called forth from individuals (<i>p. 406</i>)</p>
<p>250–201</p>	<p>Colossus of Rhodes (built 292–280) is destroyed by earthquake (224) Ch’in dynasty (221–207) establishes China’s first strong central government and begins the Great Wall Second Punic War (218–201), with Hannibal crossing the Alps (<i>p. 177</i>)</p>	<p>Eratosthenes (c. 275–c. 195) measures the circumference and tilt of the earth, and the size and distance from the earth of the sun and the moon</p>

200–151	Indian heroic epic <i>Mahabharata</i> is being written (200BCE–200CE), the longest single poem in world literature Han dynasty, China’s “imperial age” (202 BCE–220 CE) The Rosetta stone is inscribed [<i>Discovered in 1799 in Egypt, it provides scholars with the key to translating Egyptian hieroglyphics</i>] The Romans conquer Greece (168)	
150–101	Third Punic War (149–146)	Crates of Mallus (2nd cent.) forms great globe of the world (c. 150); Greeks, knowing the earth is a sphere, are first to use globes to represent the earth
100–51	Pompey and Caesar form the First Triumvirate (60); Caesar leads the first Roman invasion of Britain (54)	Cicero (106–43), greatest Roman orator, translates Plato’s <i>Timaeus</i> into Latin and writes treatises embracing the Roman ideal of <i>humanitas</i> , which exalts human decency, nobility of action, morality and respect as the qualities that make for civilized living; later, during the Renaissance, <i>humanitas</i> will become a central element in European culture (p. 182) Lucretius (99–55), Roman rationalist who embraces the philosophies of Epicurus and Democritus, writes <i>De Rerum Natura</i> , philosophic poem about the materialistic universe based on atoms (everything, even the soul, is made up of atoms); he argues that religion was invented because humans are ignorant of the real causes of cataclysms and attribute them to the wrath of the gods, and he views first step to freedom from fear as realizing that nothing is ever begotten out of nothing by the divine will (p. 182)
50–01	Era of Caesar, Brutus, Cassius, Mark Antony Augustus becomes the first Roman emperor (27) Roman Empire rules [<i>lasting 500 years</i>] Jesus of Nazareth is born (4?)	Virgil (70–19), Roman poet, teaches ideas of individual worth, writes the <i>Aeneid</i> , one of the world’s greatest long poems (p. 406)
COMMON ERA (CE)		
1–50	Romans crucify Jesus (29?) Rome conquers half of Britain (43) Saul of Tarsus (Paul) sets out on his missionary travels (p. 194) One of the earliest Christian groups forms at Corinth (p. 196)	⇐ <i>Under Caligula (Emperor 37–41), Jews are treated harshly; but under Claudius I (Emperor 41–54 CE), they are granted full religious freedom and are protected from interference by pagans (p. 188)</i> ⇐ <i>Jews and Christians are considered to be atheists due to their refusal to worship the Roman gods; atheism constitutes here the absence of belief in the Roman gods, and not denial of the existence of a god or gods (p. 188)</i>
51–100	Emperor Nero (54–68) orders barbarous persecution of Christians Revolt of the Jews against Rome; Jerusalem captured and destroyed (70) Ming-Ti, new emperor of China, introduces Buddhism (p. 333) Jewish savants meet (90–120) to determine writings to be included in the <i>Jewish Bible</i> (p. 125)	Juvenal (55?–140?), the Stoic satirist, views the foibles of Roman life with sarcastic amusement and ironic wit, mocking the gods of the empire, and scoffing at those who believe in the afterlife; he states “Fortune has no divinity, could we but see it: it’s we ourselves, who make her a goddess, and set her in the heavens” (p. 183)
101–150	Divisions within the early Christian church (p. 198) Revolt against Rome by the Jews under Bar Kokhba (122–135) China invents paper, bringing it to an advanced stage of development	

<p>151–200</p>	<p>Closing of Christian canon (determining which books will be in the New Testament) (p. 203) The bishop of Rome gains his predominant position as Pope (c. 200)</p>	<p>Ptolemy (2nd century, Greco-Egyptian), last great ancient astronomer, views the earth as stationary center of the universe, around which revolve the sun, moon and stars (the geocentric, Ptolemaic System)—a view adopted by the Church of Rome; this view prevailed until invalidated by Copernicus and Galileo in 16th century (p. 24) Sextus Empiricus (late 2nd cent.–210 CE), perhaps the greatest ancient authority on skepticism (from whose name <i>empiricism</i> is derived) presents the wise skeptic as one who suspends judgment about the gods, there being no conclusive proof either way (p. 186)</p>
<p>201–250</p>	<p>Beginnings of Manichaeism (242) (p. 202)</p>	
<p>251–300</p>	<p>Growing Buddhist influence in China (p. 333)</p>	
<p>301–350</p>	<p>Mayan Classic Period begins in Central America (p. 366) Constantine issues the Edict of Milan, which grants freedom of worship to Christians of the Roman Empire (313) India begins its golden age under the Gupta dynasty (c. 320–c. 550) Seat of Roman Empire moved to Constantinople (330) The Byzantine Empire starts (330) [lasting until 1453]</p>	<p>Pappus of Alexandria (c. 320), the last great Greek geometer, writes <i>Synagoge</i> (c. -340), eight books accounting for the most important works in ancient Greek mathematics; his efforts to arrest the general decay of mathematics in the late Roman Empire were unsuccessful; describes five machines in use— cogwheel, lever, pulley, screw, wedge</p>
<p><i>GREEK FREETHOUGHT PHILOSOPHY COMES TO A VIRTUAL END.</i></p>		
<p>351–400</p>	<p>St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome (rebuilt during 16th century) Lo-tsun, a Chinese monk, founds the Caves of the Thousand Buddhas in Kansu (360) The Huns invade Europe (360) Roman legions begin to leave Britain (383) The Roman Empire splits into the East Roman (or Byzantine) Empire and the West Roman Empire (395) The Goths sack Athens, Sparta, and Corinth (395)</p>	<p>⇐ <i>Christianity assumes power in the state during the reign (379–395) of Emperor Theodosius I, and Greek freethought philosophy essentially ends when non-Christian worship centers are demolished and rituals are outlawed, often by Christian monks. Christians see themselves as a people apart. Marriages between Christians and Jews are regarded legally as adultery. (p. 168)</i></p>
<p>401–450</p>	<p>Visigoths under Alaric sack Rome (410) Attila becomes ruler of the Huns (445)</p>	<p>⇐ <i>Hypatia of Alexandria (370–415), a famous Neoplatonist philosopher and educator, is brutally murdered and her body virtually torn to pieces, encouraged by Cyril, Christian Bishop of Alexandria — later sainted by the church (p. 168)</i> ⇐ <i>The famed library of Alexandria, home of a half-million manuscripts, is ravaged by Christian fanatics (435) (p. 169)</i></p>
<p>THE START OF THE MIDDLE AGES (ALSO KNOWN AS THE MEDIEVAL PERIOD AND THE EARLY PORTION THE DARK AGES) <i>LITTLE THAT WAS WRITTEN IN THIS TIME HAS COME DOWN TO US TO STUDY.</i></p>		
<p>451–500</p>	<p>St. Patrick brings Christianity to Ireland Huns withdraw from Europe after Attila’s death (453) Codex Bezae, New Testament in Greek and Latin in facing pages Vandals under Gaiseric sack Rome (455) The Germanic chieftain Odoacer overthrows Emperor Romulus Augustulus (476), marking the end of the West Roman Empire Ostrogoths invade Italy (488), set up kingdom with capital at Ravenna</p>	<p>Philosopher Proclus (410?–485) heads the Platonic Academy at Athens and is the last major Neo-Platonic teacher</p>

501–550	Emperor Wu-Ti of southern Liang dynasty (502–557) and a great patron of Buddhism, helps establish that religion in China Justinian I, Emperor (527–565): Byzantine Empire expands; art and architecture reaches greatest heights; and Roman law is codified, unifying the state and greatly influencing all later legal history	Jewish savant concludes that Moses could not have written about his death and burial in last eight verses of Deuteronomy (p. 126) ← <i>Justinian I, Byzantine Emperor (527–565), eradicates all vestiges of heathenish thought, and closes schools of philosophy in Athens; Athens, once the center of freethought and open exchange of ideas, joins the Christian world in turning from philosophy to theology, focused on the idea of Jesus as world savior (p. 169)</i> Aryabhata (476–550), Hindu astronomer and mathematician; one of the first known to have used algebra; his writings include rules of arithmetic and of plane and spherical trigonometry, and solutions of quadratic equations; writes on powers and roots of numbers, and compiles a manual of astronomy.
551–600	Buddhism enters Japan from Korea (552) (p. 430) Birth of Muhammad (570?), founder of Islam	
601–650	Muhammad begins preaching about 610, flees from Mecca to Medina (his flight in 622, called the Hejra, marks the start of the Islamic calendar) (pp. 234, 238) China builds the Grand Canal (605–610) The T'ang Dynasty starts in China (618) [lasting over 300 years]	Muhammad (570?–632) breaks from the multi-god religion of ancient Arabia and, as an independent thinker, establishes Islam (p. 5).
651–700	The Ghana Empire, the first great black empire in western Africa, flourishes as a trading state	
701–750	Late Classic Mayan period (600–900); with 14,000,000 population, reaches greatest developments in arts and science Charles Martel and the Franks defeat invading Muslim Moors in France (732); the victory prevents the Muslims from overrunning Europe Abbasids become caliphs of the Islamic world (749), reigning over 500 years, with capitals in Damascus, Baghdad and Samarra	
751–800	Umayyad dynasty of Moors is established at Cordoba, Spain (756) Pope Leo III crowns Charlemagne, ruler of Franks, as emperor of former Roman empire (800), finalizing split with Byzantine empire	
801–850		Vedanta system, formulated by Samkaracarya (788–820) and one of six classical systems of Indian philosophy, is avowedly atheistic (p. 295)
851–900		Ar-Razi (c. 865–923), Persian physician, mathematician and philosopher, draws from Greek thought to produce his own freethinking, rationalist, anti-religious teachings in Muslim Persia; places reason, God's greatest blessing, above religion (p. 246)
901–950	The Toltec empire starts a reign of 600 years	
951–1000	Vladimir I, Grand Duke of Kiev, converts the Russians to Christianity The Sung Dynasty of China starts a reign of over 300 years	

1001–1050	Chinese initiate world's first paper currency (1024) Toledo, Cordoba and Seville become centers of Moorish culture, famed for their universities and architectural treasures	Avicenna (980–1037) seeks to harmonize philosophy and the Islamic faith (<i>p. 246</i>) Abul-Ala al-Mar'arri (973–1057), blind Syrian Poet-philosopher, does not deny God exists, but his conception of God includes notion that everything is governed by blind fate; he rejects belief in resurrection or divine revelation and challenges the claims of revealed religion (<i>p. 248</i>)
1051–1100	Ecclesiastical animosity between Rome and Constantinople, leading to a schism in the 9th century, becomes permanent in 1054 with separate Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches (<i>p. 204</i>)	
1101–1150	Angkor Wat is constructed by Suryavarman II, king of Khmer Empire in Cambodia; probably the largest religious structure in the world Chinese and Europeans discover the principle of magnetic compass: lodestone floating on stick in water aligns itself with polestar	Omar Khayyam (? –1132), perhaps the best known Persian freethinker, writes the poem <i>The Rubaiyat</i> and, characteristically of Arab agnostics, he places his freethinking above creed and is no conformer to Muslim regulations (<i>p. 248</i>) Abraham ibn Ezra (c. 1088–11670, Spanish Jewish scholar, concludes Moses wrote only parts of the Torah (<i>p. 126</i>) Adelard of Bath (12th cent.) studies in Muslim countries, where he learns to follow reason rather than authority (<i>p. 405</i>)
1151–1200	Yoritomo becomes the first shogun to rule Japan (1192)	Averroes (1126–1198) seeks to harmonize philosophy and the Islamic faith (<i>p. 246</i>) Pierre Waldes challenges religious hierarchy; Waldenses are declared heretics by the Pope (1184) and by the Fourth Lateran Council (1215)
1201–1250	Christian victory (1212) begins the downfall of Moors in Spain English barons force King John to grant a charter of liberties called Magna Carta (1215) Papal (or Medieval) Inquisition is formally established (1233); it is reorganized in 1542 and ended in 1965 Towers of Notre Dame Cathedral are completed in Paris (1245)	Saadi of Shiraz (1185–1292), poet, focuses on the humanistic and humanitarian dimensions of Islam and writes: "To worship God is nothing other than to serve the people" (<i>p. 249</i>)
1251–1300	Mongols: Jenghiz Kahn (1167?–1227) rules one of the greatest land empires ever known; his grandson, Kublai Khan, founder of the Yuan Dynasty (1250–1368), retains Chinese institutions and builds a realm admired by Marco Polo	Roger Bacon (c. 1214–1292), Oxford Franciscan, stresses the importance of testing in scientific experimentation and calls for "the empirical investigation of nature;" he dies in prison for his ideas (<i>pp. 405, 418</i>)
THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES AND THE START OF THE RENAISSANCE		
1301–1350	Aztec empire starts a reign of 200 years Most widespread epidemic begins in Constantinople in 1334, spreads throughout Europe [<i>returning Crusaders were a factor</i>] and kills up to three-fourths of population of Europe and Asia in 20 years	Dante Alighieri (1265–1321), theistic humanist, marks a beginning in Italian Humanism; exiled in 1302, he writes the <i>Divine Comedy</i> (<i>p. 223</i>) William of Ockham (?–1349?), an Oxford scholar and a Franciscan, defends the independence of the state from the authority of the church, and sees the true Church as consisting of the whole community of the faithful [<i>his statements later influence reformers like Luther</i>] (<i>p. 405</i>) Francesco Petrarch (1304–1374), theistic humanist, is critical of all learning, including law, medicine, astrology and theology (<i>p. 223</i>) Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375) writes frankly in his <i>Decameron</i> about humans and the affections; his <i>Three Rings</i> poses the question about the three major religions (Jewish, Christian, and Muslim): "Each believes itself to be the heir to revealed truth, but which one is right?" (<i>p. 223</i>)

1351–1400	The Ming Dynasty begins its nearly 300-year rule of China	John Wyclif (1328?–1384) translates the <i>Bible</i> into English (p. 211) Shams-uddin Muhammadan (Hafiz, 1325–1389), one of finest Persian lyric poets, warns against the pietistic judgment by the righteous: “...what do you know, who, beyond the veil, will be judged to be good or evil?” (p. 249) Ibn-Khaldun (1332–1406)—Arab historian, philosopher, and sociologist—says astrology is worthless and harms civilization, and rejects claims of alchemists that they can transmute one substance into another (p. 247)
1401–1450	Korea develops an efficient phonetic alphabet and printing with movable metal type	⇐ <i>In 1414, England passes law stating that those found reading the Bible in their own language will forfeit land, cattle, life, and goods (p. 211)</i> Lorenzo Valla (1406–1457), theistic humanist, argues that vows of chastity result only from superstition (p. 224)
1451–1500	First books are printed in Europe with movable type The Ottoman Turks capture Constantinople (Istanbul) and overthrow the Byzantine Empire (1453); the Ottoman Empire starts [<i>lasting almost 600 years</i>] Spanish Inquisition established (1478) and controlled by Spanish kings, is much harsher than Medieval Inquisition controlled by Popes (p. 382) When witch burning was already common, Pope Innocent VIII increases priestly power to persecute witches (1484); persecution spreads rapidly throughout Europe and ultimately reaches America (p. 205) Christopher Columbus reaches America (1492) (p. 379) The Spanish conquer Granada and extinguish Moorish kingdom (1492) Cabot sails to the New World (1497) (pp. 395-396)	Gutenberg (1397–1468) prints a Latin version of the <i>Bible</i> (1456) on a printing press using movable type; rapid and cheap reproductions of literary works become popular (p. 213) Girolamo Savonarola (1452–1498), Dominican priest, denounces Catholic church practices and is arrested, tortured, hanged, and his body burned (p. 208)

THE START OF THE REFORMATION

1501–1550	<p>Inca empire reaches its peak (1493–1527) (p. 374)</p> <p>Michelangelo completes painting the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in the Vatican (1508–1512)</p> <p>Christianity reaches China (1513) (p. 334)</p> <p>Balboa discovers the Pacific (1513) (p. 384)</p> <p>Hernando Cortes in 1519 marches into Mexico and conquers Montezuma's empire, topples the entire Aztec empire (pp. 383-84)</p> <p>Ferdinand Magellan commands the first around-the-world exploration (1519–1522), proving the earth is round (p. 384)</p> <p>Verranzano sails to the New World (1524) (p. 396)</p> <p>Babur, a Muslim prince, invades India (1525) and founds the Mogul Empire [which lasts over 300 years]</p> <p>Pizzaro invades Peru and confronts the Incas (1526) (pp. 384-87)</p> <p>Cartier discovers Gulf of St Lawrence (1535) (p. 396)</p> <p>Coronado discovers the Grand Canyon (1540)</p> <p>Pope, in order to combat Protestantism, reorganizes the Papal Inquisition, which becomes known as the Roman Inquisition (1542) [best known historically for its condemnation of Galileo (see 1601–1650)]</p> <p>Christianity reaches Japan (1549) (p. 345)</p>	<p>Desiderius Erasmus (1467–1536), Dutch Christian humanist, translates the New Testament from the original Greek and mocks pilgrimages, rites, ceremonies, and other aspects of the Catholic Church; he stresses piety and love of others as the heart of Christianity (pp. 208, 406)</p> <p>Nicolaus Copernicus (1473–1543), Polish canon and astronomer, as he dies publishes his beliefs, known as the Copernican System [<i>the solar system is heliocentric (planets revolve around the sun at the center)</i>] (p. 24)</p> <p>Martin Luther (1483–1546) breaks with the authority and dogma of the Church of Rome (1517) (pp. 5, 209, 408)</p> <p>Huldreich Zwingli (1484–1531), in Switzerland, breaks with the Catholic Church, forms the Anabaptists movement (p. 410)</p> <p>William Tyndale (1484–1536) translates the <i>Bible</i> into English, is arrested, imprisoned for 16 years, tried and executed by strangulation at the stake and burned; but, his work becomes the basis of subsequent English versions (p. 213)</p> <p>Miles Coverdale (1488–1569) translates the <i>Bible</i> (1535) in an edition which is widely accepted by both clergy and laity (p. 213) [<i>There is a thriving market for Bibles in the language of the people. Many translations follow.</i>]</p> <p>Francois Rabelais (1494?–1553), French theistic humanist, lover of nature and life who esteems both human reasoning ability and science, faults the way the church attempts to control worship (p. 224)</p> <p>Michael Servetus (1511–1553), Spanish physician who discovered the circulation of blood, lays the foundation of Unitarianism, arguing that the Trinity as enunciated in the Nicene Creed was not found in the New Testament; he is burned at the stake, with Calvin's approval (p. 228)</p> <p>John Calvin (1509–1564) in France, influenced by the teachings of Luther and Erasmus, builds on Zwingli's work and begins the formation of the Reformed Church (pp. 210, 411)</p>
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THE START OF THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION

1551–1600	<p>Archbishop James Ussher in Ireland, using dates in Genesis, declares that Adam was created in 4004 BCE (p. 464)</p> <p>Persecuted Moors revolt (1568), are nearly exterminated by Inquisition</p> <p>Spanish colonies are established in Central and South America; Spanish priests force many American Indians into labor and Christianity</p> <p>Roanoke colony begins (1587)</p> <p>The Royal Navy of England defeats the Spanish Armada, establishing England as a great naval power (1588)</p>	<p>Michel Eyquem Montaigne (1533–1592), in France, influences “the theological crisis” through skepticism which challenges the rule of faith (p. 415)</p> <p>Giordano Bruno of Nola (1548–1600), Deist or perhaps pantheist, uses Copernican cosmology, openly rejecting the Ptolemaic theory that the earth is the center of the universe, which is the dogma of the Church; he is imprisoned in Rome, tortured, and burned alive at the stake as an impenitent heretic (p. 412)</p> <p>William Shakespeare (1564–1616) writes many of the world's greatest plays between 1590 and 1616</p>
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THE START OF THE ENLIGHTENMENT

1601–1650	<p>Jamestown founded (1607)—the first permanent English settlement in America (p. 397)</p> <p>Henry Hudson discovers the Hudson River (1609)</p> <p>The last Moors are expelled from Spain (1609), extinguishing the glory of Moorish civilization in Spain, which made incalculable contributions to Western Europe—in art, architecture, medicine, science, and learning (especially ancient Greek learning)</p> <p>Plymouth Colony is founded (1620) (p. 399)</p> <p>Massachusetts Bay Colony is founded (1630s) (p. 399)</p> <p>Manchus complete conquest of China (1644), establishing the Ch'ing dynasty [lasting over 250 years]</p>	<p>⇐ <i>The last two Englishmen to be burned at the stake for their faith are Unitarians (Bartholemew Legate and Edward Wightman); they die in 1612 (p. 228)</i></p> <p>Galileo Galilei (1564–1642), using telescope, corroborates Copernicus's theory and is persecuted and prosecuted by the Roman Catholic Church (1633); he says, "methinks that in the Discussion of Natural Problemes, we ought not to begin at the authority of ...Scripture; but at sensible experiments and necessary demonstrations" (p. 24) [see also CE 1950–2000]</p> <p>Rene Descartes (1596–1650) French philosopher, as a skeptic, thinks that the method of doubt becomes the cause of the acquisition of knowledge (p. 416)</p> <p>Sir Walter Raleigh, Deist, writes <i>History of the World</i> (1613–16) in which he questions the biblical story of Noah's ark and how all the creatures could have been contained in a small boat (pp. 219, 414)</p>
1651–1700	<p>The Salem (Mass.) Witch Trials take place (1692)</p>	<p>Baruch (Benedict) Spinoza (1632–1677), Dutch Jewish philosopher, rejects the Jewish Torah and its message, and questions miracles and the divinity of Jesus; is deeply committed to principles of free speech and freethought (pp. 126, 416)</p> <p>John Ray (1627–1705), geologist, argues that fossils are the remains of living organisms and that the earth has undergone dramatic changes that can not be reconciled with the Genesis account of creation (p. 468)</p> <p>John Locke (1632–1704) advocates church-state separation and religious toleration [his <i>Two Treatises of Government</i> (1690) contains major ideas used by Jefferson in the opening to the <i>Declaration of Independence</i>] (pp. 417, 420)</p> <p>Isaac Newton (1642–1727), possibly the greatest scientist who ever lived, proposes that reason is the key to understanding the universe and that, with understanding, human problems can be solved by humans, who are to be the masters of their own fate; if knowledge rests on reason, then political and religious authority should rest on consent (p. 419)</p>
1701–1750	<p>Colonial settlers move into Ohio River Valley (1740)</p>	<p>Voltaire (1694–1778), French writer and playwright, becomes a champion of reason and tolerance (p. 419)</p>

<p>1751–1800</p>	<p>Accelerating rate of changes leads to Industrial Revolution beginning around 1750, primarily in Great Britain</p> <p>British Empire in India begins (1757), recognized by Treaty of Paris (1763)</p> <p>England imposes many unjust laws: Sugar Tax: Stamp Act; English Proclamation of 1763; Quartering Act of 1765: Townshend Acts of 1767</p> <p>Boston Massacre (1770)</p> <p>Boston Tea Party (1773)</p> <p>First Continental Congress forms (1774), which continues until 1789</p> <p>Thomas Paine authors a pamphlet titled <i>Common Sense</i>; he urges the colonists to establish a republic of representative government (1776)</p> <p>The 13 American Colonies adopt the Declaration of Independence, establishing the United States of America (1776)</p> <p>The Revolutionary War in America takes place between 1775 and 1781</p> <p>The Articles of Confederation go into effect (1781)</p> <p>The Confederation is in a crisis with many economic and financial problems</p> <p>The Constitutional Convention convenes (1787), drafts a new Constitution which is ratified by nine states in 1788, and the new federal government begins to function in 1789</p> <p>Congress proposes Bill of Rights (first ten Amendments to the Constitution) in 1789, which is ratified in 1791</p> <p>Washington and John Adams become Presidents, 1789 and 1797</p> <p>The French Revolution begins (1789)</p>	<p>Denis Diderot (1713–84), edits French 28-volume Encyclopédie (1751–72), which has incalculable influence in supporting the skepticism and rationalism of the Enlightenment, and is a major factor in the intellectual preparation for the French Revolution</p> <p>Moses Mendelsohn (1729–1786), Jewish freethinker, seeks to embrace rationalism and some aspects of Deism, while continuing to hold to non-rational aspects of Jewish law (p. 133)</p> <p>Ethan Allen (1737–1789), truly a freethinker, publishes the first formal publication in the United States openly directed against the Christian religion (1784) (p. 443)</p> <p>The Federal Constitution is ratified (1788), followed (1791) by the First Amendment, “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof...” (p. 11)</p> <p>Mary Wollstonecroft (1759–1797) of England publishes (1792) what has been called the first “considered statement of feminism” (p. 424)</p> <p>Thomas Paine (1737–1809) publishes <i>The Age of Reason</i> (1795); he evaluates the <i>Bible</i> from the point of view of a freethinker and rational Deist who is grounded in an emerging astronomical science (p. 445)</p> <p>The first Unitarian churches in America are founded (1794 & 1796) by the English chemist, Joseph Priestly, discoverer of oxygen (p. 228). [<i>Unitarians have included Ralph Waldo Emerson, Thomas Jefferson, Oliver Wendell Holmes, Henry W. Longfellow, Julia Ward Howe, Susan B. Anthony, and Daniel Webster.</i>]</p> <p>Elihu Palmer (1764–1806) contributes to freethought through his anti-Christian Deism, denying the divine authority of the <i>Bible</i> and the divinity of Jesus (p. 447)</p>
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<p>1801–1850</p>	<p>Jefferson becomes President and John Marshall becomes Chief Justice of the Supreme Court (1801)</p> <p>The Louisiana Purchase from Spain (1803)—U.S. acquires the land that allows expansion to continue</p> <p>Lewis and Clark undertake a great exploration to the West Coast (1803–06)</p> <p>Revolutions of 1808–1826 bring political independence to thirteen Latin American nations</p> <p>The War of 1812 between the U.S. and Great Britain (1812–15) is followed by a time of great cultural and political change</p> <p>Napoleon Bonaparte is defeated at Waterloo (1815)</p> <p>Spanish Inquisition is abolished (1834), 356 years after it was created</p> <p>Great migration from the trans-Appalachian frontier into the central and western states</p> <p>Texas is annexed as a state (1845); Mexican War (1846–48)</p> <p>Large influx of settlers and gold seekers into California, many from the Oregon Trail</p> <p>The world of the American Indian changes, soon to be lost forever</p> <p>The North becomes urbanized and industrialized</p> <p>The South becomes the cotton kingdom with plantations and slavery</p> <p>A wave of German and Irish immigrants reaches the shores of the growing country</p>	<p>Jefferson writes (1802): “...I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between church and state” (<i>p. 16</i>)</p> <p>Lord Byron (1788–1824), English poet, affected by the skepticism of Hume, does “not believe in revealed religion because no religion is revealed” and denies the basis for Christian redemption theories (1811) (<i>p. 473</i>)</p> <p>⇐ <i>In 1835 the Roman Catholic Church removes Galileo’s books from their index of Prohibited Books (p. 25)</i></p> <p>In 1848, the first Women’s Rights Convention in human history, Seneca Falls, NY, signs a Declaration of Principles (<i>p. 426</i>)</p>
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<p>1851–1900</p>	<p>European colonial expansion starts in Africa and Asia Commodore Matthew Perry visits Japan and opens ports to U.S. trade, ending Japan’s isolation (1854) Great Britain appoints Indian advisors to its Viceroy (1861), but crowns Queen Victoria as Empress of India (1877) to reinforce control Sectional conflict, antislavery movement, the growth of the U.S. by the addition of states; all lead to a house divided and civil war (1861) North against South, a nation at war and a long march to the South’s defeat by Lincoln’s Union forces in the American Civil War (1865) Reconstruction and reconciliation rapidly affect Southern life The transcontinental railroads transform the country A reshaping of the Great Plains takes place; the American Indians lose their lands to farmers and ranchers Great resources, invention, mass production, and entrepreneurs create a great industrial power; people in great numbers, both immigrants and citizens move to industrial cities Exploited workers organize into labor unions The Gilded Age of opulence is marred by big businesses’ attempts to manipulate the political system, leading to corruption and scandals A impulse to reform the political system sweeps the nation, and a populist revolt is the result The Suez Canal opens (1869) Germany becomes united under Kaiser Wilhelm I (1871) Alexander Graham Bell invents the telephone (1876) The U.S. fights the Spanish-American War (1898); takes control of Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines following the war</p>	<p>Charles Darwin (1809–1892) publishes Theory of Evolution in 1859 in his <i>Origin of Species</i>; it revolutionizes thought concerning the origins of the human race; he is attacked by clergy because his ideas clash with the Genesis stories of creation (pp. 34, 220, 464) Sir Charles Lyell (1797–1875), British geologist, trying to accommodate geological findings to the Genesis account, ends up demonstrating convincingly the presence of humans long before the time allowed in biblical chronology (1863), facilitating later acceptance of Darwin’s theory of evolution (p. 468) Robert Green Ingersoll (1833–1899), American patriot, civil libertarian, lawyer, agnostic, humanist, is a spokesperson for freethought; his public lectures reach thousands of people long before the age of radio and television (p. 448) The Hindu Freethought Union forms in 1875 in Madras, India and challenges the teaching of the <i>Code of Manu</i> which includes statements such as “A husband must be constantly worshiped as a god by a faithful wife” (p. 312) Felix Adler (1851–1933), a Reformed Rabbi, forms the Ethical Culture movement (1876) intended to create a society that focuses on ethics rather than on biblical creed (p. 130) Andrew Dickson White (1832–1918), first President of Cornell University, develops the idea of a university detached from all sects and free to pursue truth without deference to dogma; writes (1896) <i>A History of the Warfare of Science with Theology in Christendom</i>, “The establishment of Christianity, beginning a new evolution of theology, arrested the normal development of the physical sciences for over fifteen hundred years.” (p. 458)</p>
<p>1901–1950</p>	<p>The Wright brothers make the first successful airplane flights (1903) The Panama canal is built (1904–14) The United States develops a pluralistic society as immigration and expansion result in many different types of people living together Competing crusades sweep the country, including prohibition of alcohol, child labor movements, and women’s organizations seeking women’s suffrage The assassination of Archduke Francis Ferdinand of Austria-Hungary plunges Europe into First World War (1914–18) The United States is drawn into the “Great War” (1917) The Communists seize power in Russia (1917)</p>	<p>Mark Twain (Samuel Clemens, 1835–1910) writes satirical and biting skeptical and freethought humor in his <i>Letters From the Earth</i> (1905) [<i>his daughter did not permit their publication until 1940</i>] (p. 473) Finland, a semi-autonomous region of the Russian Empire, grants its women the right to vote, the first such action anywhere in the world (1906) Khalil Gibran (1883–1931), Lebanese Muslim, writes <i>The Prophet</i>; he is a naturalistic humanist when directing one in search of God to look at playing children, or into space, or at the wonders of nature (p.250) Edwin Markham (1852–1940) writes on excluding people of different ideas (p.30) “He drew a circle that shut me out / Heretic, rebel, a thing to flout; “But Love and I had the wit to win: / We drew a circle that took him in.”</p>

	<p>The Progressive Movement attempts reform in education, city planning, state government, and federal government</p> <p>First commercial radio broadcasting station in the U.S. (1920)</p> <p>Alexander Fleming discovers penicillin (1928)</p> <p>First computers are developed (1930–40)</p> <p>British Broadcasting Corporation makes the world’s first TV service (1936)</p> <p>Germany invades Poland, starting World War II (1939–1945)</p> <p>Japan attacks Pearl Harbor, and the U.S. enters the war (1941)</p> <p>U.S. drops atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki (1945)</p> <p>Chinese Communists conquer China (1949)</p> <p>North Korean Communist troops invade South Korea, starting the Korean War (1950–53)</p>	<p>Sigmund Freud (1856–1939), founder of psychoanalysis, teaches that the god hypothesis was invented by humans to meet human needs (p. 452)</p> <p>C. G. Jung (1875–1961), one of Freud’s disciples, discusses mythic thinking: “[<i>mankind</i>] needed the strongest inner compulsion, which can only be explained by the irrational force of instinct, for man to invent those religious beliefs whose absurdity was long since pointed out by Tertullian.” (p. 453)</p> <p>Albert Einstein (1879–1955), Jewish physicist and mathematician and winner of the Nobel Prize, publishes his special theory of relativity (1905); probably best described as a pantheist-agnostic-Humanist, he writes: “I do not believe in the immortality of the individual, and I consider ethics to be an exclusively human concern with no superhuman authority behind it.” (pp. 134, 456)</p> <p>Louis D. Brandeis (1856–1941), a freethinking Jewish humanist, is the first Jew to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States (1916–39) (p. 134)</p> <p>Humanist Manifesto is published in the U.S. (1933)</p> <p>Julian Huxley (1887–1975), British research scientist and first Director-General of UNESCO (1946–48), writes: “I do not believe in the existence of a god or gods . . . the actual gods of historical religions are only the personifications of impersonal facts of nature and of facts of our inner mental life.” (p. 457)</p> <p>Expanding rationalism and freethinking in India via multiple organizations and activities: M. N. Roy produces a journal, <i>Independent India</i>, teaching that ethics and morals need not be based on religion and superstition; first Atheist center is established (1940) in Mudunary by Gora; Indian Science and Rationalists Association (1949) with 86,000 members exposes fraudulent “godmen” who deceive the gullible public by “religious trickery”</p> <p>Japan, in 1946, develops a national constitution providing for the complete separation of church and state (p. 346)</p>
<p>1951–2000</p>	<p>The Soviet Union launches the first artificial satellite (1957)</p> <p>The Vietnam War starts (1957 through 1975)</p> <p>The Soviet Union removes its missiles from Cuba, ending a serious Cold War crisis (1962)</p> <p>Vatican replaces Roman Inquisition with Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, governing vigilance in matters of faith (1965)</p> <p>U.S. astronauts make the first manned moon landing (1969)</p> <p>Researchers develop the first successful recombinant DNA procedure (1974)</p> <p>Soviet troops fight a war in Afghanistan (1979–1989)</p> <p>Break up of the Soviet Union (1990–91)</p> <p>End of the cold war with Soviet Union (1991)</p>	<p>William Foxwell Albright puts forth the concept of Theistic Humanism, the study and cultivation of our higher cultural heritage in the light of Judeo-Christian religious tradition (1952) (p. 224)</p> <p>Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), mathematician, philosopher, winner of the Nobel Prize in Literature (1950), writes in <i>Why I am Not a Christian</i> (1957): “I think all the great religions of the world — Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam, and Communism — both untrue and harmful. It is evident as a matter of logic that, since they disagree, not more than one of them can be true.” (p. 455)</p> <p>Erich Fromm writes of the importance of rational faith which is to be distinguished from irrational faith (1964) (p. 454)</p> <p>Indian Secular Society (begun in 1959) challenges the inequities between men and women; and Indian Humanist Union begins publishing the <i>Humanist Outlook</i> (1974) (pp. 313-316)</p>

1951–2000

(continued)

Imagine†

by John Lennon

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us only sky
Imagine all the people
Living for today

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do
Nothing to kill or fight for
And no religion too
Imagine all the people
Living life in peace

Chorus

You may say that I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope some day you will join us
And that the world will be as one.

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood [and sisterhood]
of [woman and] man
Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world

Chorus

You may say that I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope some day you will join us
And that the world will live as one.

Richard L. Rubenstein, Jewish scholar, writes *After Auschwitz* (1966), saying God's silence during the holocaust shows God is Dead; but The Death of God movement, with no organized following, fades (p. 131)

Emil Weitzner initiates the development of Humanistic Judaism, which focuses on humans and the human mind rather than god (1959), and Sherwin Wine organizes the Society for Humanistic Judaism (1969) (p. 132)

Periyar (1879–1973) leads openly atheistic Self Respect movement in South India; describes the Hindu scriptures as “things made some two thousand to three thousand years ago when human civilization was nothing short of barbarism. That period lacked scientific knowledge and the people were ignorant of the very sense of growth and development.” (1973) (p. 312)

Humanist Manifesto II is published in the U.S. (1973)

Carl Sagan, astronomer and Humanist, states: “Religions ought to be subject to at least the same degree of skepticism as contentions about UFO visitations ... I think it is healthy for the religions themselves to foster skepticism about the fundamental underpinnings of their evidential bases.” (1974) (p. 470)

⇐ *Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini of Iran makes it clear that there is no room in traditional Islam for the secularism and atheism expressed by Muslim writers* (1979) (p. 252)

A 1987 survey of Unitarian Universalists congregations shows: 7% are Atheists, 55% are Humanist-Existentialist, and less than 4% accept the concept of God or the divine as a superior or supernatural being (p. 229)

Salman Rushdie publishes *The Satanic Verses* (1989) and lives under the threat of death by fundamentalist Muslims who find his writing distasteful, blasphemous, and heretical (p. 26)

⇐ *Pakistan passes a mandatory death penalty for anti-Muslim blasphemes* (1991) (p. 258)

Scientists studying mitochondrial DNA demonstrate that the concept of race has no biological basis, and all human beings are members of a single human family (1992) (p. 34)

⇐ *The Vatican* (1992), after a 13-year investigation of its case against Galileo, publicly acknowledges “a sad misunderstanding” when it wronged Galileo in 1633

Edward O. Wilson teaches “love of life — biophilia” rather than loving a supernatural entity (1993) (p. 458)

⇐ *The Catholic Church accepts the scientific explanation for the creation of life: evolution through natural selection* (1996)

† According to Professor Larue, writing in *Freethought Across the Centuries*, “If freethinkers indulged in prayer, the [above] song could be recognized as a freethought prayer. In any case, it reflects a longing for universal peace and understanding, devoid of the divisions, religious and otherwise, that separate humankind into warring camps.” (p. 474)