Prehistory, Mesopotamia and Egypt

The Prehistoric World

Prehistory

- What does “prehistory” mean exactly?
- A quick word about dating systems
  - BC = BCE
  - AD = CE
History of Earth

• The Earth came into existence some 4.6 billion years ago.
• Life Forms on Earth showed up some 2 to 3 billion years ago.
• The first human ancestors showed up between 6 to 4 million years ago.
• Anatomically modern human beings appeared 200,000 years ago.
• Human civilization occurred around the years 3500 BCE.

If we condense the history of the earth into one 24 hour day, all that we know of human life would exist only in the last 30 seconds.

The Prehistoric period can be divided into three periods:

• Paleolithic (2,000,000-10,000 BCE)
  – Cave paintings in Altamira, Spain and Lascaux, France
  – Venus of Willendorf
• Mesolithic (10,000-8,000 BCE)
• Neolithic (8,000-3,000 BCE)
Neolithic Period
Agricultural Revolution

• Large portions of humans settled down and became farmers and herders.
• Which led to the growth of permanent settlements into urban centers.