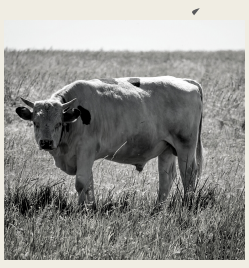
The Ancient History of CHEESE

9,000 BC

Domestication of sheep and goats first takes place in the Upper Euphrates and Tigris River Valleys* [7, 15, 22, 27, 28].
*Modern-day Turkey

8,500 BC

Domestication of cattle first takes place in the Middle Euphrates and Tigris River Valleys* [2, 12, 27, 28].
*Modern-day Iraq and Syria



6,500 BC

People first use jars and pots to store milk products in Western Anatolia* [12, 26]. Shards of pots were found to have high levels of milk fat and protein residues and minimal lactose residue, suggesting products such as cheese or butter[19].
*Modern-day Turkey

5,500 BC

Lactose tolerance became prevalent among European adults [9, 17, 20]. Before this point, dairy products may have been harvested exclusively for infants and toddlers or to make low-lactose products, like cheese and butter[4, 19].

5,000 BC

Peoples in North and Central Europe, Central Italy, the Balkans, and Pakistan use sieves for dairy processing, most likely to separate curds from whey to make cheese [1, 13, 23, 24, 25].

4,000 BC

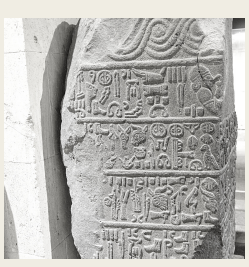
Earliest definitive proof of adult milk consumption. Proven by finding traces of milk proteins in a British farmer's dental tartar[6].

3,500 BC

The Sumerians of Uruk, Mesopotamia* use cuneiform tablets to write history's first accounts of cheesemaking [10, 11, 14, 18].
*Modern-day Iraq

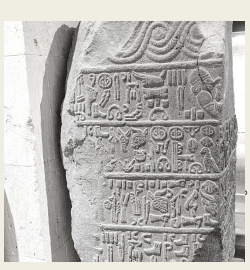
1,500 BC

Hittites provide definitive evidence of rennet and rennet coagulated cheese in Anatolia* [16, 21, 29]. They use language modifiers to differentiate cheese flavor, texture, and size and become the first to use cheese as military rations; a practice that will carry on for centuries [3, 5, 15, 19].
*Modern-day Turkey



1,200 BC – 500 AD

Hittite civilization falls, classical Greek civilization, Roman Empire, and the Celtic culture rise. Each group develops its distinct cheesemaking culture and helps to spread it across Europe and Asia [18, 19].



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