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A teacher in a classroom.

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They are society's heroes."10Getty"Better than a thousand days of diligent study is one day with a great teacher."Advertisement - Continue Reading Below11Getty"Your heart is slightly larger than the average human heart, but that's because you're a teacher."12Getty"Teachers can change lives with the right mix of chalk and challenges."Advertisement - Continue Reading Below13Getty"Teaching is the greatest act of optimism."14Getty"Students don't care how much you know until they know how much you care."Advertisement - Continue Reading Below15Getty"It is not what is planted into the student, but what is planted, that counts."16Getty Images"I am not a teacher, but an awakener."Advertisement - Continue Reading Below17Getty Images"Education is not the filling of a pot but the lighting of a fire."18Getty Images"Those who know, do. Those that understand, teach."Advertisement - Continue Reading Below19Getty Images"The function of education is to teach one to think intensively and to think critically. Intelligence plus characterthat is the goal of true education."20Getty Images"The best teachers are the ones that change their minds."Leah HallLeah Hall is currently a digital producer and writer for Country Living. She is based in Huntsville, Alabama.Watch NextAdvertisement - Continue Reading BelowInstitution of higher learningFor other uses, see Academy (disambiguation). "Academia" redirects here. For other uses, see Academia (disambiguation). "Academic" redirects here. For other uses, see Academic (disambiguation).Bologna University, Italy, established in AD1088, is the world's oldest academic institution in continuous operation.Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, United Kingdom, a military academy for the preparation of military officersAn academy (Attic Greek: ἄκαδημος) is an institution of tertiary education. The name traces back to Plato's school of philosophy, founded approximately 386 BC in Akademia, a sanctuary of Athena, the goddess of wisdom and skill, north of Athens, Greece. The Royal Spanish Academy defines academy as scientific, literary or artistic society established with public or private or as a society established by a professional or technical group. Plato's Academy mosaic from PompeiiThe word comes from the Academy in ancient Greece, which derives from any geographical, institutional, economic or personal continuity with the original Academy. The original Academy, the gymnasium was made famous by Plato as a center of learning. The sacred space, dedicated to the goddess of wisdom, Athena, had formerly been an olive grove, hence the expression "the groves of Academe".[2]n these gardens, the philosopher Plato conversed with followers. Plato developed his sessions into a method of teaching philosophy and in 387BC, established what is known today as the Old Academy.By extension, academia has come to mean the accumulation, development and transmission of knowledge across generations as well as its practitioners and transmitters. In the 17th century, British, Italian and French scholars used the term to describe types of institutions of higher learning.Main article: Platonic AcademyThe School of Athens, fresco by Raphael (1509/1510), that depicts a congregation of philosophers, mathematicians, and scientists fromAncient Greece, including Plato, Aristotle, Pythagoras, Archimedes, and HeraclitusBefore Akademia was a school, and even before Cimon enclosed its precincts with a wall,[3] it contained a sacred grove of olive trees dedicated to Athena, the goddess of wisdom, outside the city walls of ancient Athens.[4] The archaic name for the site was Hekademia, which by classical times evolved into Akademia and was explained, at least as early as the beginning of the 6th century BC, by linking it to an Athenian hero, a legendary "Akademides". The site of Akademia was sacred to Athena and other immortals.Plato's immediate successors as "scholarh" of Akademia were Speusippus (347/339 BC), Xenocrates (339/314 BC), Polemon (314/269 BC), Crates (c.269/266 BC), and Arcesilaus (c.266/240 BC). Later scholars include Lacydes of Cyrene, Carneades, Clitomachus, and Philo of Larissa ("the last undisputed head of the Academy").[5][6] Other notable members of Akademia include Aristotle, Theophrastus, Theophrastus of Eresos, Theophrastus of Prusa, Theophrastus of Candia, Philoponus of Byzantium, and Aristotle's student, Alexander of Aphrodisias. After the institution's closure, Akademia was revived[7] as a new institution of some sort by a group of late antique writers who called themselves "successors" (diadochoi) of Plato) and presented themselves as an uninterupted tradition reaching back to Plato. However, there cannot have actually been any geographical, institutional, economic or personal continuity with the original Academy. The original Academy, the gymnasium was made famous by Plato as the revived Akademia in the 6th century were drawn from various parts of the Hellenistic cultural world and suggest the broad syncretism of the common culture (see koine). Five of the seven Akademia philosophers mentioned by Agathias were Syrian in their cultural origin: Hermias and Diogenes (both from Phoenicia), Isidoros of Gaza, Damascius of Syria, Iamblichus of Coele-Syria and perhaps even Simplicius of Cilicia.[8]The emperor Justinian ceased the school's funding in AD529, a date that is often cited as the end of Antiquity. According to the sole witness, the historian Agathias, its remaining members looked for protection under the rule of Sassanid king Khosrau I in his capital at Ctesiphon, carrying with them precious scrolls of literature and philosophy, and to a lesser degree of science. After a peace treaty between the Persian and the Byzantine empire in 532 guaranteed their personal security (an early document in the history of freedom of religion), some members found sanctuary in the pagan stronghold of Harran, near Edessa. One of the last leading figures of this group was Simplicius, a pupil of Damascius, the last head of the Athenian school.It has been speculated that Akademia did not altogether disappear.[8][9] After his exile, Simplicius (and perhaps some others), may have travelled to Harran, near Edessa. From there, the students of an academy-in-exile could have survived into the 9th century, long enough to facilitate the Arabic revival of the Neoplatonist commentary tradition in Baghdad.[9]Main articles: Ancient higher-learning institutions, Madrasa, and Medieval universitySee also: History of universitiesMain article: Ancient higher-learning institutionsIn ancient Greece, after the establishment of the original Academy, Plato created and pupils developed epipheils of his method. Aristotle, Averroes, and Plato's student, Aristotle, established the Ashraf Academy, another student, established the New Academy. In 335 BC, Aristotle refined the method with his own theories and established the Lyceum in another gymnasium.The Lyceum, Serapeum and library of Alexandria Egypt was frequented by intellectuals from Africa, Europe and Asia, studying various aspects of philosophy, language and mathematics. The University of Timbuktu was a medieval university in Timbuktu, which comprised three schools: the Mosque of Djingereber, the Mosque of Sidi Yahya, and the Mosque of Sankore. During its zenith, the university had an average attendance of around 25,000 students within a city of around 100,000 people.In China a higher education institution Shang Xiang was founded by Shun in the Youyu era before the 21st century BC. The Imperial Central Academy at Nanjing, founded in 258, was a result of the evolution of Shang Xiang and it became the first comprehensive institution combining education and research and was divided into five faculties in 470, which later became Nanjing University.In the 8th century another kind of institution of learning emerged, named Shuyuan, which were generally privately owned. There were thousands of Shuyuan recorded in ancient times. The degrees from them varied from one to another and those advanced Shuyuan such as Bailudong Shuyuan and Yuelu Shuyuan[10] (later become Hunan University) can be classified as higher institutions of learning.Taxila or Takshashila, in ancient India, modern-day Pakistan, was an early centre of learning, near present-day Islamabad in the city of Taxila. It is considered one of the ancient universities of the world. According to scattered references which were only fixed a millennium later it may have dated back to at least the 5th century BC.[11] Some scholars date Takshashila's existence back to the 6th century BC.[12] The school consisted of several monasteries without large dormitories or lecture halls where the religious instruction was most likely still provided on an individualistic basis.[13] Takshashila is described in some detail in later Jataka texts, written in Sri Lanka around the 5th century AD.[14]It became a noted center of learning at least several centuries BC, and continued to attract students until the 11th century. Although the exact date of its founding is uncertain, it is believed to have been founded by Chanakya, a philosopher, economist, royal advisor and politician who was active in the 4th century BC. The Ayurvedic healer Charaka studied at Taxila.[17]Generally, a student entered Takshashila at the age of sixteen. The Vedas and the Eighteen Arts, which included skills such as archery, hunting, and elephant her, were taught, in addition to its law school, medical school, and school of military science.[17]Nalanda, ancient center of higher learning in Bihar, India,[18][19] from 427 to 1197Nalanda was established in the 5th century AD in Bihar, India.[18] It was founded in 427 in northeastern India, not far from what is today the southern border of Nepal. It survived until 1197 when it was set upon, destroyed and burnt by the marauding forces of Ikhtiyar Uddin Muhammad bin Bakhtiyar Khilji. It was devoted to Buddhist studies, but it also trained students in fine arts, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, politics and the art of war.[19]The center had eight separate compounds, 10 temples, meditation halls, classrooms, lakes and parks. It had a nine-story library where monks meticulously copied books and documents so that individual scholars could have their own collections. It had dormitories for students, perhaps a first for an educational institution, housing 10,000 students in the university's heyday and providing accommodation for 2,000 professors.[20] Nalanda University attracted pupils and scholars from Korea, Japan, China, Tibet, Indonesia, Persia and Turkey.The geographical position of Persia allowed it to absorb cultural influences and ideas from both west and east. This include the spread of the Greek form of schools in the new Hellenistic cities built in Persia after the invasion of Alexander the Great.[21]Under the Sasanians, Syriac became an important language of the administration and intellectuals, rivaling Greek. Several cities developed centers of higher learning in the Sasanian Empire, including Mosul, al-Hira, and Harran (famous for the Pythagorean School of the Sabians). The Grand School was the main center of learning in the Persian capital Ctesiphon, but little is known about it. Perhaps the most famous center of learning in Persia was the Academy of Gundishapur, which was founded in the 6th century AD in Gundishapur, a city in the province of Khuzestan, which was founded in the 9th century and in Cairo, Al-Azhar University in the 10th century, and in Mali, the University of Timbuktu in about 1100. Muntassiriya Madrasah in Baghdad, Iraq, was established in 1227 as a madrasah by the Abbasid Caliph al-Mustansir. Its library had an initial collection of 80,000 volumes, given by the Caliph. The collection was said to have grown to 400,000 volumes.Main article: Medieval universityEstablished in 1224 by Frederick II, Holy Roman Emperor, University of Naples Federico II in Italy is the world's oldest state-funded academic institution in continuous operation.[22][23]In Europe, the academy dates to the ancient Greeks and Romans in the pre-Christian era. Newer universities were founded in the 12th and 13th centuries, and the European institution of academe took shape. Monks and priests moved out of monasteries to cathedral cities and other towns where they opened the first schools dedicated to advanced study. The most notable of these new schools were in Bologna and Salerno, Naples, Salamanca, Paris, Oxford and Cambridge, while others were opened throughout Europe.The seven liberal artsThe Trivium (Grammar, Rhetoric, and Logic), and the Quadrivium (Arithmetic, Geometry, Music, and Astronomy)had been codified in late antiquity. This was the basis of the curriculum in Europe until newly available Arabic texts and the works of Aristotle became more available in Europe in the 12th century.It remained in place even after the new scholasticism of the School of Chartres and the encyclopedic work of Thomas Aquinas, until the humanism of the 15th and 16th centuries opened new studies of arts and sciences.With the Neoplatonist revival that accompanied the revival of humanist studies, academia took on newly vivid connotations.During the Florentine Renaissance, Cosimo de' Medici took a personal interest in the new Platonic Academy that he determined to re-establish in 1439, centered on the marvellous promise shown by the young Marsilio Ficino. Cosimo had been inspired by the arrival at the otherwise ineffective Court of Florence of the Platonic Academy in Rome, which had been founded in 1409 by Pico della Mirandola. Cosimo's Academy was founded in the Palazzo Medici in Florence, Italy, in 1462. 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