

CANNABIS TIMELINE

by Erowid

6000 B.C.

Cannabis seeds used for food in China

4000 B.C.

Textiles made of hemp are used in China. Remains have been found of hemp fibers from this period and from Turkestan a century later. ¹

2727 B.C.

First recorded use of cannabis as medicine in Chinese pharmacopoeia. In every part of the world humankind has used cannabis for a wide variety of health problems. ²

1500 B.C.

Cannabis cultivated in China for food and fiber

1500 B.C.

Scythians cultivate cannabis and use it to weave fine hemp cloth. (Sumach 1975)

1200 - 800 BCE

Bhang (dried cannabis leaves, seeds and stems) is mentioned in the Hindu sacred text Atharva veda (Science of Charms) as "Sacred Grass", one of the five sacred plants of India. It is used by medicinally and ritually as an offering to Shiva. ³

700 - 600 BCE

The Zoroastrian Zend-Avesta, an ancient Persian religious text of several hundred volumes, and said to have been written by Zarathustra (Zoroaster), refers to bhang as Zoroaster's "good narcotic" (Vendidad or The Law Against Demons)

700 - 300 BCE

Scythian tribes leave Cannabis seeds as offerings in royal tombs.

500 B.C.

Scythian couple die and are buried with two small tents covering censors. Attached to one tent stick was a decorated leather pouch containing wild Cannabis seeds. This closely matches the stories told by Herodotus. The gravesite, discovered in the late 1940s, was in Pazryk, northwest of the Tien Shan Mountains in modern-day Khazakstan.

500 B.C.

Hemp is introduced into Northern Europe by the Scythians. An urn containing leaves and seeds of the Cannabis plant, unearthed near Berlin, is dated to about this time.

500 - 100 BCE

Hemp spreads throughout northern Europe.

430 B.C.

Herodotus reports on both ritual and recreation use of Cannabis by the Scythians (Herodotus The Histories 430 B.C. trans. G. Rawlinson).

100 - 0 BCE

The psychotropic properties of Cannabis are mentioned in the newly compiled herbal *Pen Ts'ao Ching* which is attributed to an emperor c. 2700 B.C.

0 - 100 A.D.

Construction of Samartian gold and glass paste stash box for storing hashish, coriander, or salt, buried in Siberian tomb.

70

Dioscorides mentions the use of Cannabis as a Roman medicament.

170

Galen (Roman) alludes to the psychoactivity of Cannabis seed confections.

500 - 600

The Jewish Talmud mentions the euphoriant properties of Cannabis. (Abel 1980)

900 - 1000

Scholars debate the pros and cons of eating hashish. Use spreads throughout Arabia.

1090 - 1256

In Khorasan, Persia, Hasan ibn al-Sabbah, the Old Man of the Mountain, recruits followers to commit assassinations...legends develop around their supposed use of hashish. These legends are some of the earliest written tales of the discovery of the inebriating powers of Cannabis and the supposed use of Hashish. 1256 Alamut falls

Early 12th Century

Hashish smoking very popular throughout the Middle East.

12th Century

Cannabis is introduced in Egypt during the reign of the Ayyubid dynasty on the occasion of the flooding of Egypt by mystic devotees coming from Syria. (M.K. Hussein 1957 - Soueif 1972)

1155 - 1221

Persian legend of the Sufi master Sheik Haidar's of Khorasan's personal discovery of Cannabis and it's subsequent spread to Iraq, Bahrain, Egypt and Syria. Another of the earliest written narratives of the use of Cannabis as an inebriant.

13th Century

The oldest monograph on hashish, Zahr al-'arish fi tahrim al-hashish, was written. It has since been lost.

13th Century

Ibn al-Baytar of Spain provides a description of psychoactive Cannabis.

13th Century

Arab traders bring Cannabis to the Mozambique coast of Africa.

1231

Hashish introduced to Iraq in the reign of Caliph Mustansir (Rosenthal 1971)

1271 - 1295

Journeys of Marco Polo in which he gives second-hand reports of the story of Hasan ibn al-Sabbah and his "assassins" using hashish. First time reports of Cannabis have been brought to the attention of Europe.

1378

Ottoman Emir Soudoun Scheikhouni issues one of the first edicts against the eating of hashish.

1526

Babur Nama, first emperor and founder of Mughal Empire learned of hashish in Afghanistan.

1549

Angolan slaves brought cannabis with them to the sugar plantations of northeastern Brazil. They were permitted to plant their cannabis between rows of cane, and to smoke it between harvests. ³

mid 16th Century

The epic poem, Benk u Bode, by the poet Mohammed Ebn Soleiman

Foruli of Baghdad, deals allegorically with a dialectical battle between wine and hashish.

17th Century

Use of hashish, alcohol, and opium spreads among the population of occupied Constantinople

1606-1632

French and British cultivate Cannabis for hemp at their colonies in Port Royal (1606), Virginia (1611), and Plymouth (1632). ³

Late 17th Century

Hashish becomes a major trade item between Central Asia and South Asia.

1798

Napoleon discovers that much of the Egyptian lower class habitually uses hashish (Kimmens 1977). He declares a total prohibition. Soldiers returning to France bring the tradition with them.

19th Century

Hashish production expands from Russian Turkestan into Yarkand in Chinese Turkestan.

1809

Antoine Sylvestre de Sacy, a leading Arabist, reveals the etymology of the words "assassin" and "hashishin"

1840

In America, medicinal preparations with a Cannabis base are available. Hashish available in Persian pharmacies.

1843

Le Club des Hachichins, or Hashish Eater's Club, is established in Paris. ³

after 1850

Hashish appears in Greece.

1856

British tax ganja and charas trade in India

1870 - 1880

First reports of hashish smoking on Greek mainland

c. 1875

Cultivation for hashish introduced to Greece

1877

Kerr reports on Indian ganja and charas trade.

1890

Greek Department of Interior prohibits importation, cultivation and use of hashish.

1890

Hashish made illegal in Turkey

1893 - 1894

The India Hemp Drugs Commission Report is issued.

1893 - 1894

70,000 to 80,000 kg of hashish legally imported into India from Central Asia each year.

1906

Pure Food and Drug Act is passed, regulating the labelling of products containing Alcohol, Opiates, Cocaine, and Cannabis, among others. The law went into effect Jan 1, 1907 ⁴ [Details]

Early 20th Century

Hashish smoking very popular throughout the Middle East.

1915 - 1927

Cannabis begins to be prohibited for nonmedical use in the U.S., especially in SW states...California (1915), Texas (1919), Louisiana (1924), and New York (1927).

1920

Metaxas dictators in Greece crack down on hashish smoking.

1920s

Hashish smuggled into Egypt from Greece, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, and Central Asia

1926

Lebanese hashish production peaks after World War I until prohibited in 1926.

1928

Recreational use of Cannabis is banned in Britain.

1920s - 1930s

High-quality hashish produced in Turkey near Greek border.

1930

Yarkand region of Chinese Turkestan exports 91,471 kg of hashish legally into the Northwest Frontier and Punjab regions of India

1930s

Legal taxed imports of hashish continue into India from Central Asia.

1934 - 1935

Chinese government moves to end all Cannabis cultivation in Yarkand and charas traffic from Yarkand. Both licit and illicit hashish production become illegal in Chinese Turkestan.

1936

Propaganda film "Reefer Madness" made to scare American youth away from using Cannabis.

1937

Cannabis made federally illegal in the U.S. with the passage of the Marihuana Tax Act.

1938

Supply of hashish from Chinese Turkestan nearly ceases.

1940s

Greek hashish smoking tradition fades.

1941

Indian government considers cultivation in Kashmir to fill void of hashish from Chinese Turkestan.

1941 - 1942

Hand-rubbed charas from Nepal is choicest hashish in India during World War II.

1945

Legal hashish consumption continues in India

1945 - 1955

Hashish use in Greece flourishes again

1950s

Hashish still smuggled into India from Chinese Central Asia

1950s

Moroccan government tacitly allows kif cultivation in Rif Mountains.

1962

First hashish made in Morocco.

1963

Turkish police seize 2.5 tons of hashish

1965

First reports of *C. afghanica* use for hashish production in northern Afghanistan

1965

Mustafa comes to Ketama in Morocco to make hashish from local kif.

1966

The Moroccan government attempts to purge kif growers from Rif Mountains.

1967

"Smash", the first hashish oil appears. Red Lebanese reaches California.

Late 1960s - Early 1970s

The Brotherhood popularizes Afghani hashish.

1970 - 1973

Huge fields of Cannabis cultivated for hashish production in Afghanistan. Last years that truly great afghani hashish is available

1972

The Nixon-appointed Shafer Commission urged use of cannabis be re-legalized, but their recommendation was ignored. Medical research continues. ²

Early 1970s

Lebanese red and blonde hashish of very high-quality exported. The highest quality Turkish hashish from Gaziantep near Syria appears in western Europe.

Early 1970s

Afghani hashish varieties introduced to North America for sinsemilla production. Westerners bring metal sieve cloths to Afghanistan. Law enforcement efforts against hashish begin in Afghanistan

1973

Nepal bans the Cannabis shops and charas (hand-rolled hash) export.

1973

Afghan government makes hashish production and sales illegal.

Afghani harvest is pitifully small.

1975

FDA establishes Compassionate Use program for medical marijuana.

1976 - 1977

Quality of Lebanese hashish reaches zenith.

1978

Westerners make sieved hashish in Nepal from wild Cannabis.

Late 1970s

Increasing manufacture of "modern" Afghani hashish. Cannabis varieties from Afghanistan imported into Kashmir for sieved hashish production.

1980s

Morocco becomes one of, if not the largest, hashish producing and exporting nations.

1980s

"Border" hashish produced in northwestern Pakistan along the Afghan border to avoid Soviet-Afghan war.

Early 1980s

Quality of Lebanese hashish declines.

1983 - 1984

Small amounts of the last high-quality Turkish hashish appear.

1985

Hashish still produced by Muslims of Kashgar and Yarkland (NW China).

1986

Most private stashes of pre-war Afghani hashish in Amsterdam, Goa, and America are nearly finished.

May 13, 1986

Dronabinol is placed into Schedule II by the DEA. ⁵

1987

Moroccan government cracks down upon Cannabis cultivation in lower elevations of Rif Mountains.

1988

DEA administrative law Judge Francis Young finds after thorough

hearings that marijuana has clearly established medical use and should be reclassified as a prescriptive drug. His recommendation is ignored.

1993

Cannabis eradication efforts resume in Morocco.

1994

Heavy fighting between rival Muslim clans continues to upset hashish trade in Afghanistan

1994

Border hashish still produced in Pakistan.

1995

Introduction of hashish-making equipment and appearance of locally produced hashish in Amsterdam coffee shops.

Oct 23, 2001

Britain's Home Secretary, David Blunkett, proposes relaxing the classification of cannabis from a class B to class C. As of June 10, 2002, this has not taken effect. [\[More Info\]](#) [\[Details\]](#)

References

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