

History Alive The Medieval World and Beyond

Glossary

abandoned to leave something behind

abdicated abandoned

absolute monarchies a monarchy in which the ruler's power is unlimited

absolute monarchy a monarchy in which the ruler's power is unlimited

absolved released

abstract existing as an idea without physical form

accumulated to gather something over time, in greater and greater numbers or amount

achievement a positive result gained by hard work

acquiesce agree

acquired to come into possession of something

adaptations a change made to an existing object or way of doing things

adapted to change to fit a new situation

adaption a change made to an existing object or way of doing things

administered to manage and organize

Age of Exploration a period of European exploration and discovery that lasted from about 1418 to 1620

alliance a bond between families, states, or other groups to further their common interests

alternative a choice that differs from another option

Amida Buddhism a form of Buddhism founded on the belief that all people can reach paradise by relying on the mercy of Amida Buddha

analyzed to examine or think about carefully

Anglicanism a Protestant denomination of Christian faith founded by Henry VIII in England

annihilation destruction

anti-Semitism hostility or discrimination against Jews

appliqué a technique in which shaped pieces of fabric are attached to a background fabric to form a design or picture

apprentice a person who works for a master in a trade or craft in return for training

appropriations distributions

approximately a close estimate

aqueduct a pipe or raised channel built to carry water over a long distance

arbitrary based on personal preference instead of reason

aristocracy a ruling class of noble families

aristocrats someone who holds a high social level

artifact an item left behind by an earlier culture

artifacts an item left by an earlier culture

assent approval

astronomy the study of the stars and planets

authority the power to influence or command

authorized to give official permission

available ready for use

axis a line on which an object spins

ayllu an Incan clan (group of related families), the basic unit of Incan society

Aztecs a Mesoamerican people who built an empire in central Mexico that flourished from 1428 to 1519 C.E.

behalf something that is done for someone else

Bhakti movement a movement within Hinduism that emphasized personal devotion and social and religious equality

bill of rights a list of basic human rights that a government must protect

boycott a refusal to do business with an organization or group

bubonic plague a deadly contagious disease caused by bacteria and spread by fleas; also called the Black Death

bureaucracy a highly complex body of workers with many levels of authority

Bushido a samurai code that called on warriors to be honest, fair, and fearless

Byzantine Empire the name for the eastern Roman Empire, located at the crossroads of Europe and Asia; it lasted from about 500 to 1453 C.E.

Caesar Augustus Julius Caesar's grandnephew and adopted son, Octavian; Rome's first emperor

call and response a song style in which a singer or musician leads with a call, and a chorus responds

call-and-response a song style in which a singer or musician leads with a call, and a chorus responds

Calvinism a Protestant denomination of Christian faith founded by John Calvin

candid honest, open

capitalism an economic system based on investment of money for profit

captured to take control of a person or thing by force

cartography the science and art of making maps

causeway a solid earthen roadway built across water or low ground

ceremonial center a large plaza in a city center, surrounded by temples and palaces, where religious rituals and other public ceremonies took place

Charlemagne the leader of the Franks from 768 to 814 C.E., who unified most of the Christian lands of Europe into a single empire

charter a written grant of rights and privileges by a ruler or government to a community, class of people, or organization

chivalry the medieval knight's code of ideal behavior, including bravery, loyalty, and respect for women

Christianity the religion based on the life and teachings of Jesus

circulation the passing of something, such as money, from person to person

city-state an independent state consisting of a city and its surrounding territory

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civil service examination a test given to qualify candidates for positions in the government

civil service examinations a test given to qualify candidates for positions in the government

civil war a war between groups in the same country

clarified made understandable; made clear

classical art art influenced by the styles and techniques of ancient Greece and Rome

clergy the body of people, such as priests, who perform the sacred functions of a church

collapsed a sudden break down or failure

colonies a territory, often very large, under the political and economic control of another country

colony a territory, often very large, under the political and economic control of another country

combined with others worked with Parliament

commerce the buying and selling of goods; business

commodity an economic good; something useful or valued

common law a body of rulings made by judges or very old traditional laws that become part of a nation's legal system

communal shared by a community or group

communicates to exchange or share thoughts, feelings, or information using words, writing, or other methods

conduct a person's behavior, especially in front of other people

conflict a disagreement or fight caused by opposing points of view

conformity uniform behavior according to a set of social or cultural rules or beliefs

conjured pleaded with

consanguinity blood ties

Consequently as a result of

considerable a large amount

Constantine Roman emperor who, in 330 C.E., moved the capital to Byzantium and later renamed it Constantinople

Constantinople the city on the eastern edge of Europe, which Constantine made the capital of the Roman Empire in 330 C.E.

constitutional monarchy a form of government in which the monarch's power is limited by a basic set of laws

constrains forces, compels

contradict to disagree, especially by saying the opposite

contrast a strong difference between two or more things

convert someone who has changed their religious beliefs so they accept a different or new religion

convulsions disturbances

cooperation the action of working together

corruption a pattern of illegal or immoral activities by government official

cottage industry a small-scale business in which people produce goods at home

Counter-Reformation a movement of the Catholic Church, in reaction to the Reformation, in which Catholic leaders worked to correct abuses, to clarify and defend Catholic teachings, to condemn what they saw as Protestant errors, and to win back members

courtier a male member of a ruler's court

courtiers a male member of a ruler's court

credibility worthy of being believed

Crusades a series of religious wars launched by European Christians to reclaim Jerusalem and other holy sites from Muslims

cultural diffusion the spread of cultural elements from one society to another

currency the form of money used in a country

daimyo a local lord in Japan in the era of the samurai

Dante Alighieri a great Italian author of the Renaissance who wrote *The Divine Comedy*

decline a slow breakdown or failure

dedicated assigned to a particular purpose

democratic ruled by the people. In a democracy, citizens elect representatives to make and carry out laws.

denomination a particular religious group within a larger faith; for example, Lutheranism is one denomination within Christianity.

denounces formally announces

depository storage site

despotism rule by a single person with absolute power

detrimental something that does harm or damage

devoted to be completely committed to something; loyal

dialect a regional variety of a language

dialects a regional variety of a language

dictator a ruler with absolute power

disavow publicly condemn

disciple a person who helps spread the religious teachings of another

dispute disagreement

dissolved disbanded, broken up

distinctive clearly different

distribute to give out or deliver

diverse a group of people or things with obvious differences between one another

divine related to or coming from a god or gods

doctrine a belief or set of beliefs, especially relating to religion

document a written work containing information

dominate to have control or power over something

Donatello a Florentine sculptor who was one of the first to use a realistic, lifelike style

dramatically noticeable and remarkable

drastic extreme or severe

dynasty a line of rulers descended from one family

Eastern Orthodox Church a Christian religion that developed out of early Christianity in the Byzantine Empire

economic relating to trade or money

economy a system of managing the wealth and resources of a community or region

edition a version of a printed text

efficient functioning in the best way, with very little or no waste

Elaborate detailed and often complicated; carefully planned

elevated to raise

emancipated to free

emerged to appear or arise; to move from a low position to a higher one

emotional related to emotions or feelings

emperor the political leader of a territory containing several countries or groups of people

emphasis extra attention or importance placed on something

emphasized to call attention to or highlight the importance of something

empire a large territory in which several groups of people are ruled by a single leader or government

endeavoured tried

engrossed copied in large, clear handwriting

Enlightenment a period from the late 1600s to the late 1700s in Europe, in which people changed their outlook on life by seeing reason as the key to human progress

enormous very large

epidemic an outbreak of a contagious disease that spreads quickly and over a wide geographic area

epidemics an outbreak of a contagious disease that spreads quickly and over a wide geographic area

equation a mathematical statement in which the answer equals the statement

eroded to slowly break down or destroy

errors something that differs from what is correct

estimate a guess as to the value or size of something

evaporation the process in which a liquid, such as water, turns into a gas

evinces shows evidence of

evolution the slow process of change in plants and animals from simpler forms to more complex forms

evolved to slowly change over a long period of time

feudalism the economic and political system of medieval Europe in which people exchanged loyalty and labor for a lord's protection

fief land granted by a lord to a vassal in exchange for loyalty and service

Five Pillars of Islam the most basic acts of worship for Muslims: declaration of faith, prayer, charity, fasting, and making a pilgrimage to Mecca

Florence an Italian city-state and leading cultural center during the Renaissance

folktale a story that is passed down orally and becomes part of a culture's tradition

folktales a story that is passed down orally and becomes part of a culture's tradition

formidable alarming

formula a series of numbers or letters that represent a mathematical or scientific rule

foundation the basis from which an idea or situation develops

function the use or purpose of something

fundamental at the most basic level

gender roles customs relating to the position of men and women in society

genealogies an account of the line of ancestry within a family

genealogy an account of the line of ancestry within a family

geocentric theory a theory that Earth is the center of the solar system or the universe.
Geo is Greek for "earth."

geometric one or a number of simple shapes, such as triangles, squares, or circles

Ghana a medieval civilization and empire in West Africa

glyph a symbol for a word, idea, or sound in a hieroglyphic system of writing

glyphs a symbol for a word, idea, or sound in a hieroglyphic system of writing

golden age a period of great happiness, prosperity and achievement

Gospel an account of the life and teachings of Jesus; four of them are included in the New Testament of the Christian Bible

gravity the force of attraction between all masses in the universe

griot a talented poet-musician of the Mande people, who tells stories, sings songs, and recites poems to share history

guild an organization of people in the same craft or trade

gunpowder an explosive powder made of saltpeter and other materials

Gupta Empire the empire covering much of northern India that was ruled by the Guptas from around 320 C.E. to around 550 C.E.

habeas corpus the legal concept that an accused person cannot be jailed indefinitely without being charged with a crime

Heian period the cultural flowering in Japan that took place between the late 8th and the late 12th centuries

heliocentric theory a theory that places the sun at the center of the solar system with the planets, including Earth, revolving around it. Helio is Greek for "sun."

hereditary passed on from parent to child; inherited

heretic a person who holds beliefs that are contrary to a set of religious teachings

hierarchy a system of organization with lower and higher positions

hieroglyphic writing that uses pictures as symbols

Holy Land the area between Egypt and Syria that was the ancient homeland of Jews and the place where Jesus Christ had lived; also called Palestine

humanism a philosophy that tries to balance religious faith with an emphasis on individual dignity and an interest in nature and human society

humanities collectively, areas of study that focus on human life and culture, such as history, literature, and ethics

Hundred Years' War a series of battles fought between France and England from 1337 to 1453

hypothesis an idea or assumption to be tested in an experiment

identifies to recognize something for what it is

illuminated to decorate a book with detailed designs and small pictures, especially using gold, silver, or bright colors

immortal able to live forever

imperial belonging or related to an emperor

imported to bring in a product from another country to sell it

impressive causing admiration or awe

Incas people of a culture in the Andes Mountains of South America that arose in the 1400s c.e. and lasted until 1532

individualism the belief in the importance of an individual's achievements and dignity

indulgence a grant by the Catholic Church that released a person from punishment for sins

indulgences a grant by the Catholic Church that released a person from punishment for sins

inestimable invaluable

inferior lower in rank or quality

Inflation a rise in prices, often due an increase in the supply of money

ingenious especially intelligent, creative, or clever

innovation something new; an improvement

innovations something new; an improvement

inoculate to protect against disease by transmitting a disease-causing agent to a person, stimulating the body's defensive reactions

Inquisition a judicial body established by the Roman Catholic Church to combat forms of religious error

insight to see the inner nature of a situation; to understand

institution a society or organization founded for a religious, educational, social, or similar purpose

insurrections rebellions

intellectual related to the interest in or study of ideas

intense strong effect or feelings; extreme

irrigation a means of supplying land with water

Islam the religion of Muslims

isolated set apart from other people or things

Jenne-jeno an ancient West African city built along the Niger River, which existed for 1600 years

Jesus the founder of Christianity upon whose life and teachings the religion is based

jihād an Arabic term that describes the struggle, usually an internal, spiritual one, that Muslims undergo to get closer to God. A small percentage of Muslims interpret jihād to justify acts of violence and terrorism.

Johannes Gutenberg a German inventor who, in about 1450, developed the first printing press with movable type in Europe

judiciary powers courts of law

Julius Caesar a Roman general who ended the Roman Republic when he seized power and became dictator for life

jurisdiction authority

kente a traditional form of cloth produced in West Africa

khagan emperor

khan the title used by rulers of Mongol tribes

khanate a territory led by a khan. The khanates were the four divisions of the empire.

kindred family relationships

kinship family relationship, either by birth, marriage, or adoption

lenses curved transparent material that, when looked through, changes the appearance of an object, often making it appear larger or smaller. The transparent material is often glass.

Leonardo da Vinci a famous Renaissance artist, scientist, and inventor

logic a way of thinking that uses reason

Lutheranism a Protestant denomination of Christian faith founded by Martin Luther

Magna Carta a written legal agreement signed in 1215 that limited the English monarch's power

magnanimity generosity

magnetic something that acts like a magnet. A magnet attracts iron and some other metals.

Mahayana Buddhism a branch of Buddhism that became popular in China and focused on salvation through personal faith

maintain to continue in the same way

Mali a West African empire ruled by the Mande that became a major crossroads of the Islamic world

Mansa Musa the first West African ruler to practice Islam devoutly

maritime relating to the sea

market economy an economy in which prices are determined by the buying and selling decisions of individuals in the marketplace

martial arts styles of fighting or self-defense, such as modern-day judo and karate, that began mostly in Asia

Martin Luther a German priest who broke away from the Catholic Church to start his own religion, Lutheranism. His posting of the Ninety-Five Theses started the Reformation.

Mass a measure of the amount of matter in an object

mass-produce to make quantities of an item by using standardized designs and dividing steps of production among the workers

mathematics the study of numbers

matrilineal a family line traced through the mother

Maya the people of an important Mesoamerican civilization that lasted from about 2000 B.C.E. to 1500 C.E.

meditation a spiritual discipline that involves deep relaxation and clearing the mind of distracting thoughts

mercantilism an economic policy by which nations try to gather wealth by controlling trade and establishing colonies

mercenaries hired soldiers

mercenary a professional soldier who is paid to fight for another country or group

meritocracy rule by officials of proven merit

Mesoamerica the region extending from modern Mexico through Central America

Messiah a savior who many Jews believe had been promised to them by God

Michelangelo a Renaissance artist, renowned for his painting and sculpture

microscopes an instrument used to make very small objects visible

Miguel Cervantes the Spanish Renaissance author of the masterpiece *Don Quixote*

Ming the dynasty that ruled China after the overthrow of the Yuan

missionary someone who tries to convert others to believe in a particular religion or set of beliefs

mock fake

Model Parliament a governing body created by King Edward I that included some commoners, Church officials, and nobles

momentum a force gathered over time

Mongols foreign rulers of China from Mongolia who established the Yuan dynasty

monotheism the belief in a single God

Moor a name given to Muslims who lived in the Iberian peninsula

mosaic a picture made up of small pieces of tile, glass, or colored stone

mosque a Muslim house of worship

motives something that causes a person or people to act

movable type individual characters made of wood or metal that can be arranged to create a printing job and then be used over again

Muhammad a man born around 570 C.E. who taught the faith of Islam

Muslim a follower of the Islamic faith

Muslims a follower of the Islamic faith

mythical not real; imagined

nationalism the identification with, and devotion to, the interests of one's nation

naturalization becoming a citizen

natural law the concept that there is a universal order built into nature that can guide moral thinking

natural rights rights that belong to people "by nature," simply because they are human beings

neighbouring province Canada

New World the name given by Europeans to the Americas, which were unknown to most Europeans before the voyages of Christopher Columbus

Niccolò Machiavelli a Renaissance statesman and historian who wrote *The Prince*

Niger River the longest river in West Africa, which was a kind of trading highway in early times

Nok a people living in West Africa in the 500s B.C.E. who mastered ironworking

obstructed blocked

offices government jobs

oracle a person through whom a god or spirit is believed to speak about the future

oral tradition learning and cultural ideas passed down orally, from one generation to the next

oral traditions learning and cultural ideas passed down orally, from one generation to the next

orbit the path on which one object circles another

pagoda a tower-shaped structure with several stories and upturned, tiled roofs

pagodas a tower-shaped structure with several stories and upturned, tiled roofs

parable a simple story that explains a moral or religious lesson

pastoral nomad a person who migrates and depends on the livestock they raise

patriarch in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the bishop of an important city

patrilineal a family line traced through the father

Pax Romana a 200-year period of peace and stability established and maintained

perfidy deceit, treachery

persecute to cause a person to suffer because of his or her beliefs

persecuted to cause a person to suffer because of his or her beliefs

petitioned asked in writing

philosopher a scholar, teacher, or thinker who seeks knowledge

philosophers a scholar, teacher, or thinker who seeks knowledge

philosophy the study of wisdom, knowledge, and the nature of reality

pictograph a drawing that stands for a word, phrase, or name

pictographs a drawing that stands for a word, phrase, or name

pilgrimage a journey to a holy site

plaza a public square or open area in a city where people gather

plot a secret plan made for a specific purpose, to bring about a certain outcome

policy an overall plan, especially of a government

polygamy having more than one spouse at one time

polytheism belief in more than one god

portolan charts navigational maps based on compass directions and observations of pilots at sea

predict to say what will happen in the future, based on experience or reason

Prince Shotoku a Japanese ruler who encouraged cultural diffusion from countries on the Asian mainland

process a series of actions that produce a certain result

proclaimed to announce publically

prophet a person who speaks or interprets the words of God

proportions the relationship between amounts, numbers, or sizes

prosperity a situation of wealth and success

prosperous wealthy or successful

Protestant a Christian who separated from the Roman Catholic Church during the reformation; today, any member of a Christian church founded on the principles of the Reformation

proverb a popular saying meant to express something wise or true

provinces a territory that is part of a country or an empire

prudence common sense

Punic Wars a series of wars fought between Rome and Carthage for control of the Mediterranean

Puritans English Protestants who wanted to “purify” the Anglican Church of Catholic elements

quartering housing

Qur’an the holy book of the religion of Islam

Ramadan the ninth month of the Islamic calendar during which Muslims are required to fast

rational using reason and understanding

rationalism a belief in reason and logic as the primary paths to knowledge

rebellious opposing or disobeying authority

rectitude righteousness

redress the righting of wrongs

reform to make change in order to bring about improvement

Reformation a religious reform movement from the early 1500s to the 1600s that led to the formation of new Christian groups

reign the period of time during which a king or other monarch rules

religion a set of spiritual beliefs, values, and practices

religious order a brotherhood or sisterhood of monks, nuns, or friars

religious tolerance the acceptance of different religious beliefs and customs

Renaissance a great flowering of culture, based on classical Greek and Roman ideas and art, that began in Italy in the Late Middle Ages and spread throughout Europe

republic a form of government in which citizens elect representatives to rule for them

republics a form of government in which citizens elect representatives to rule for them

required to have to do something based on a rule or command

resident someone who lives in a place

response an answer to something that is done or said

restoration the return of a past state, situation, or ruler

restrictions a limit or control placed on something

Resurrection in Christian belief, Jesus's rise from the dead

revealed to show or make known something that was hidden or secret

revolt a violent action in opposition to a government or law

ritual a set of actions that is always performed the same way as part of a religious ceremony

Roman Catholic Church the Christian church headed by the pope in Rome

Roman Empire an empire that, at its height, around 200 C.E., spanned the Mediterranean world and most of Europe

rural the countryside, as opposed to a city or town

sacrament a sacred rite of the Christian religion

sacrifice a gift of an animal for slaughter to honor the gods

Sahara a large, hot desert in North Africa that covers about 3.5 million square miles

Sahel a zone of semidesert, south of the Sahara, where short grasses, small bushes, and a few trees grow

saints someone officially recognized as holy by the Catholic Church

samurai a member of a powerful warrior class in Japan

savanna a vegetation zone of tall grasses and scattered trees, with a long rainy season

scientific method a step-by-step method of investigation involving observation and theory to test scientific assumptions

Scientific Revolution a major shift in thinking between 1500 and 1700, in which modern science emerged as a new way of gaining knowledge about the natural world

scribe a person trained to write or copy documents by hand

secular relating to earthly life rather than to religious or spiritual matters

segment a part of something that is divided from the whole

segregation the forced separation of one group from the rest of a community

semidivine half-human and half-god

separation of powers the division of powers among branches of government

serf a peasant who could not leave the lord's land on which he or she was born and worked

shah a ruler in certain Middle East lands, especially Persia (modern-day Iran)

shahs a ruler in certain Middle East lands, especially Persia (modern-day Iran)

shamanism Mongol religion characterized by a belief that gods, demons, and ancestral spirits respond to a shaman, a priest

shari'ah the search to understand God's law, which relies heavily on the Qur'an and the Sunnah

Shinto a Japanese religion that expresses love and respect for nature

shogun the head of the military government of Japan in the era of the samurai

sibling a brother or sister

siege a military action in which a place is surrounded and cut off to force those inside to surrender

significant having meaning and importance

simony the selling and buying of positions in the Catholic Church

site of encounter a specific place where people from different cultures meet and exchange products, ideas, and technologies

slash-and-burn agriculture a farming technique in which vegetation is cut away and burned to clear land for growing crops

smelting the process of melting ore to produce iron or other metals from it

social contract an agreement in which people give power to a government in exchange for its protections

social pyramid a social structure in the shape of a pyramid, with layers representing social classes of different rank

solar year the time it takes Earth to travel once around the sun

Songhai a people who broke away from the empire of Mali and eventually built their own vast empire in West Africa

sophisticated having experiences and knowledge, especially with culture and art

starving to suffer or die from lack of food

status the position of a person, either socially or professionally

stela a vertical stone slab or pillar with carvings or inscriptions

stelae a vertical stone slab or pillar with carvings or inscriptions

stimulated to encourage the growth or activity of something

stressed to place importance on something

sultan the supreme ruler of a Muslim state

Sunnah the example that Muhammad set for Muslims about how to live

supreme the highest level

surplus more than is needed or used

survive to continue to exist

suspended temporarily stopped

suspension bridge a bridge held up by cables anchored at each end

suspension bridges a bridge held up by cables anchored at each end

sustain to support or provide nourishment for

Tale of Genji a Japanese novel and Heian masterpiece written by Murasaki Shikibu; considered one of the great works of world literature

technique a specialized method used to achieve a desired result

telescope an instrument used to view distant objects

Tenochtitlán the capital city of the Aztec Empire

tenure right to hold

terra-cotta a baked clay used to make pottery, tiles, and sculptures

territory a specific area of land

textile a woven cloth

textiles a woven cloth

texture the way a surface looks and feels

theocracy a government or state in which God is the supreme ruler, and religious officials govern in God's name

theses an argument, often written, to support an idea

tolerance to be sympathetic and accepting of what others believe or do, even if those ideas differ from your own

traditional a belief, custom, or way of doing something that has existed for a long time

transient passing, fleeting

transmitted to pass something on to someone else

trans-Saharan trade trade between peoples north and south of the Sahara

treaty a written agreement between two or more nations

trephination a type of surgery in which a hole is made in the skull

tributary a conquered country or territory that pays tribute to the conqueror

tribute payment made by one ruler or country to another for protection or as a sign of submission

tyranny unjust government

unalienable undeniable

unification the process of joining two or more things together

unique one of a kind

unwarrantable unjustified

urbanization the growth of cities

usurpations unlawful power grabs

verbal spoken, rather than written

vernacular common language

vision the idea someone has for the way something should be

vital necessary for the existence of something

vocabulary a collection of words that make up a language

ward a political unit within a city, often a neighborhood

warlord a military leader operating outside the control of the government

warlords a military leader operating outside the control of the government

widespread spread out over a large area or among many people

William Shakespeare an English Renaissance poet and playwright whose plays show a deep understanding of human behavior

Zen Buddhism a form of Buddhism that stresses self-reliance and achieving enlightenment through meditation