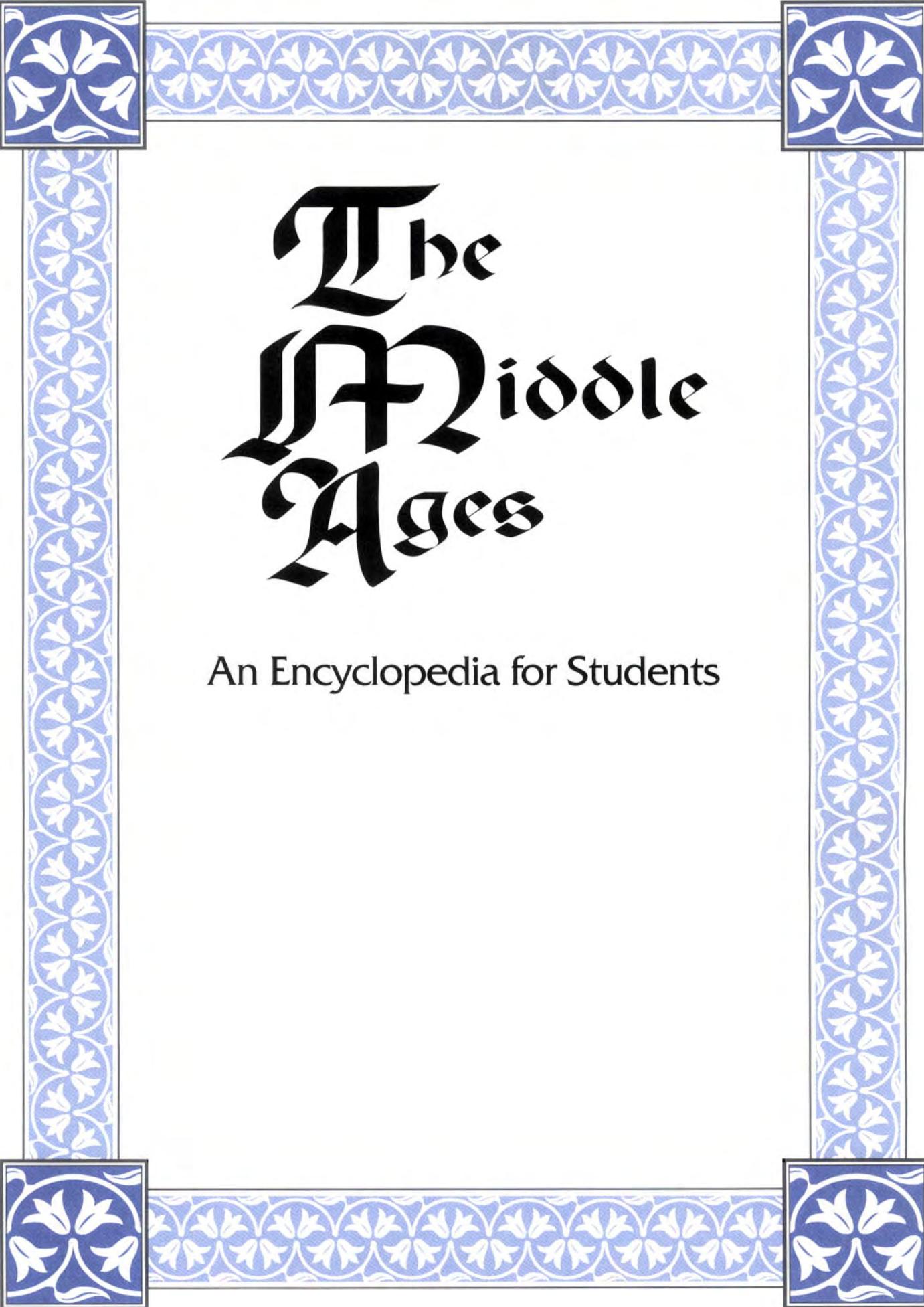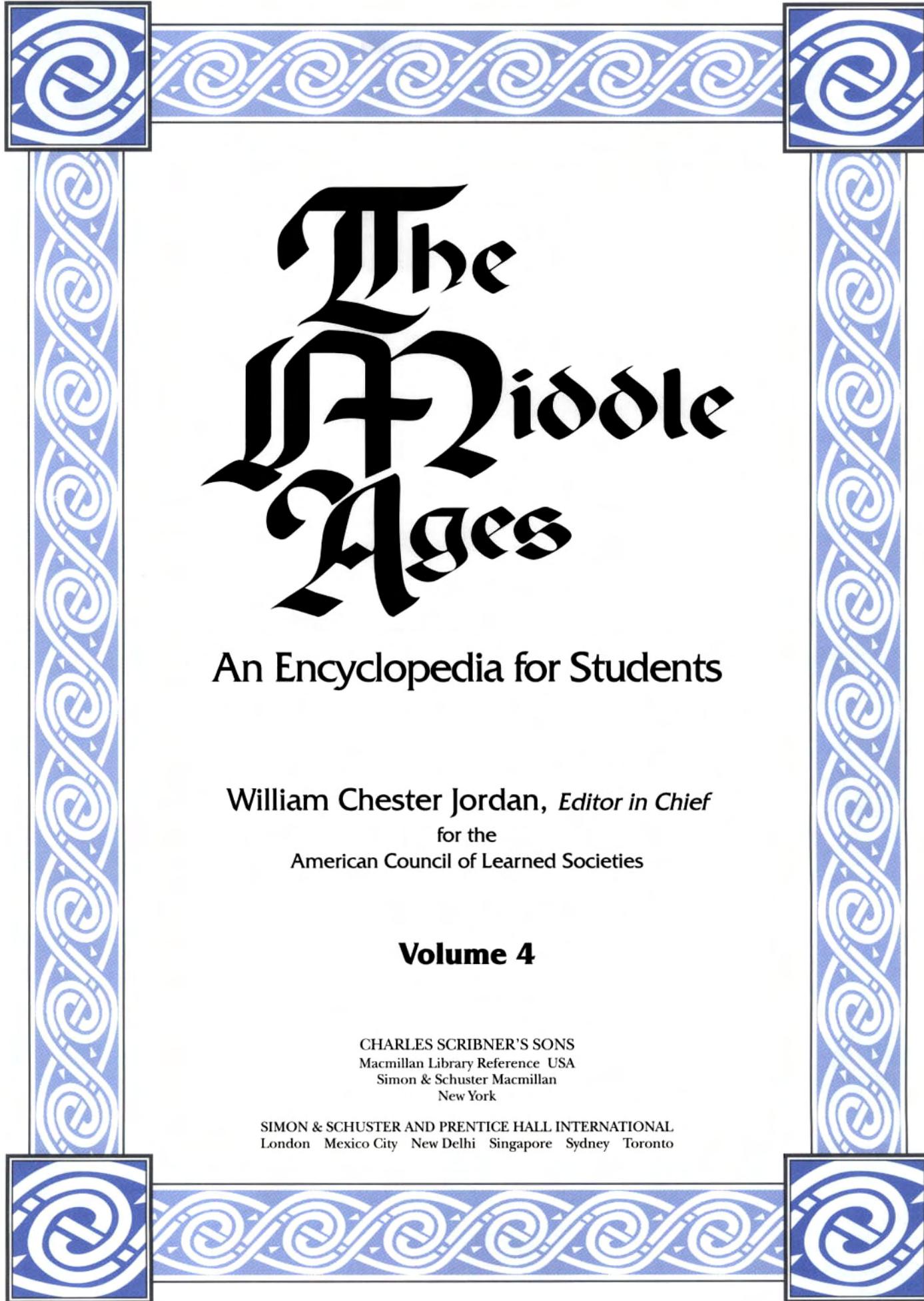# The Middle Ages

The Middle Ages

An Encyclopedia for Students

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William Chester Jordan, *Editor in Chief*

for the
American Council of Learned Societies

Volume 4

Psellos, Michael

1018–ca. 1078
Scholar, statesman,
and historian

* **patron** person of wealth and influence who supports an artist, writer, or scholar

Michael Psellos was one of the most important scholars in the history of the BYZANTINE EMPIRE. His works covered a wide range of subjects, including SCIENCE, MATHEMATICS, MUSIC, astronomy, MEDICINE, LAW, and philosophy. His work helped to preserve ancient Greek learning and to popularize it for his 11th-century readers. His most important work was *Chronographia,* a history of the Byzantine imperial court from 976 to 1077.

Born in CONSTANTINOPLE to parents of modest means, Michael Psellos attracted the attention of imperial patrons* while he was still a young man. After Emperor Michael IV (who reigned from 1034 to 1041) appointed him to his first high office, he continued to serve at court until about 1054. Then he left the capital and retired to a monastery on Mount Olympus. However, soon the empress THEODORA I recalled him to court, and he reached the height of his political power during the reign of his former pupil, Emperor Michael VII Doukas (who reigned from 1071 to 1078). However, he fell out of favor for reasons that are unclear and was forced to leave. (*See also* **Astrology and Astronomy; Byzantine Literature; Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages; Historical Writing.**)

Ptolemy

See *Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages.*

Purgatory, Idea of

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

* **penance** an act of repentance for sin

* **doctrine** principle, theory, or belief presented for acceptance

The idea of purgatory—a place where human souls reside temporarily after death—developed during the medieval period in both the Christian and Islamic religious traditions. Each religion has a somewhat different view of purgatory, which is based on the sacred writings and theology* of each faith.

In Christianity, the idea of purgatory developed from two early customs: praying for the dead and performing penance* to atone for one's sins. According to early church doctrine*, after a sin was committed, the sinner was readmitted into the church only after years of severe penance. From this came the idea that atonement for every sin was required, either during one's lifetime or afterward. At the same time, St. AUGUSTINE taught that prayers and the celebration of a Mass for the dead were effective substitutes for the punishment of sin in this world. However, the prayers of the living could not help the damned. Together, these ideas suggested the existence of a place between heaven and hell. This place eventually became known as purgatory, a "place of cleansing," where sins were cleansed by fire.

According to Christian doctrine, the righteous entered heaven at death, while the wicked entered hell. The imperfectly righteous—sinners who had neglected penance during their lives, or who were unable to perform penance before they died—had to atone for their sins after death, in purgatory. Purgatory was only a temporary state. While there, sinners would suffer various terrible pains, part of which was the pain of

Qala'un al-Mansur

died 1290
Sultan of Egypt and Syria

Qur'an

Rashi

1040–1105
Rabbi and scholar

* **Talmud** large body of collected writings on Jewish law and tradition

* **Pentateuch** first five books of the Old Testament; also referred to as the Torah in Jewish tradition

See color plate 4, vol. 1.

Rabbi Solomon ben Isaac, known as Rashi, was a rabbi and scholar whose commentaries on the Talmud* and the BIBLE have had a tremendous influence on Jewish thinking from the Middle Ages to the present. His Talmudic commentary is among the most inclusive and authoritative in Jewish thought, and his commentary on the Pentateuch* is considered a masterpiece.

Born in Troyes in northeast France, Rashi studied at Jewish academies in Worms and Mainz, which were the major centers of Talmudic studies in medieval Germany. After completing his studies, he spent the remainder of his life working on his commentaries on the Talmud and the Bible.

Rashi's commentary on the Talmud is unequaled in its brevity and clarity. Within a century after Rashi's death, it became the basis for almost all Talmudic studies. Rashi not only addressed the central issues of each Talmudic text. He also commented on the grammar, the writing style, and the strength of the argument. The end result was that text and commentary became inseparably interwoven.

Rashi's commentary on the Pentateuch combined the literal meaning of the text (as understood by Rashi) with earlier interpretations and oral Jewish law. The commentary had a huge impact on European Jewish life. It was taught to Jews in early childhood, and the images of biblical figures and the messages established by Rashi influenced the Jewish imagination for almost a thousand years. Rashi's work also influenced medieval Christian thinking on the Bible. (*See also* **Hebrew Literature; Jewish Communities; Judaism; Maimonides, Moses.**)

Ravenna

* **baptistery** room or hall for holding baptisms. Early Christian baptisteries were often large, freestanding buildings.

* **basilica** oblong building with rows of columns dividing the interior into a nave, or central aisle, and side aisles

Ravenna is a city on the northeastern coast of Italy. It is renowned for its large collection of monuments from the 400s and the 500s, which show a Byzantine architectural style beginning to differentiate itself from the styles of the West.
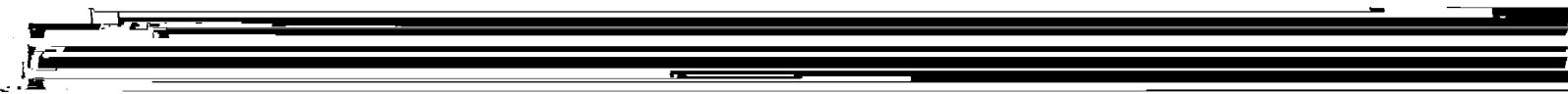
An important port city under the Romans, Ravenna became the capital of the Western Empire in 402. In 493, the OSTROGOTHS seized the city and made it the capital of their kingdom. In 540, Ravenna was recaptured by the Byzantines and served as the seat of Byzantine governors until 751, when it was taken by the LOMBARDS. Five years later, Ravenna and its surrounding lands were seized by the FRANKS and given to the PAPACY, which maintained control of the region until the 1200s. After that, the city was ruled by a dynasty of local lords and dominated by VENICE for about the next 200 years. In 1509, Ravenna once again came under papal control.

Ravenna's historic architecture reflects its turbulent early history. The city is famous for the colorful MOSAICS in its late Roman and Byzantine buildings. Its most celebrated Byzantine-style church is San Vitale, which was begun after 525. Octagonal in shape, San Vitale is similar to churches in CONSTANTINOPLE. It is considered a showpiece of Byzantine influence in Italy.

Ravenna is also noted for its Orthodox baptistery*, built around 400, and several basilicas* that date from the late 400s. Also notable are the

Razi, al-

ca. 854–925 or 935
Islamic physician
and philosopher

philosophical ideas were fiercely debated during the Middle Ages. However, al-Razi's greatest influence in both the Islamic world and in Europe was on the development of medicine and science. (*See also* **Islam, Religion of; Medicine; Science.**)

Relics

The relics of Christian saints were kept in special containers called reliquaries. Many reliquaries were small enough to be carried, and they came in a variety of shapes. They were often beautiful works of art, made of gold, silver, or ivory, and encrusted with precious stones. The value of the reliquary was a reflection of the value of the relic it contained.

Many people believe that saints and their remains possess special powers. People pray to saints to ask for help in urging God to answer their requests. Relics—such as bones, crosses, or pieces of clothing—help the faithful to feel connected to departed saints.

The veneration* of relics was very popular in the Middle Ages. Memorial rites were performed at the tombs of venerated Christians, such as St. Peter in Rome. Many people believed that being buried near a saint's remains increased their chances of salvation on Judgment Day. For that reason, large cemeteries grew up around the graves of saints. People also thought that saints protected the communities in which they were buried. When the Byzantine emperor Leo I sought to move the remains of St. Simeon from Antioch to CONSTANTINOPLE, the people of Antioch objected. They insisted that the saint's relics kept their city safe from harm.

In the early Middle Ages, these cemeteries fell into disuse, and the saints' tombs were endangered by ruin or attacks by non-Christians. In Rome and elsewhere, the remains were dug up and relocated for safekeeping. Soon a brisk trade in the buying and selling of relics developed. Some people even tried to steal relics or to buy them for their personal use. Others tried to "find" new ones, and disputes arose concerning ways to identify true relics from fake ones.

The relics of especially famous saints attracted pilgrims and gifts of money and land from the faithful. Churches and monasteries that had such relics kept them in special containers, called reliquaries, which were often exquisitely crafted from precious materials. (*See also* **Canonization; Christianity; Indulgences; Pilgrimage; Purgatory, Idea of; Saints, Lives of.**)

Religious Instruction

In the early Middle Ages, most people did not know how to read. They learned about religion by memorizing prayers and by listening to SERMONS in church. Parents taught their children the most important prayers. The church expected that, by age seven, children would know the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed, which contained the basic principles of CHRISTIANITY. MISSIONARIES spread these same principles to adult converts. In the late 12th century, the church also required people to learn the Hail Mary, a prayer to the mother of Jesus. The church taught Christians the correct way to make the sign of the cross (a devotional gesture made with the hand). Some children, usually boys, received further religious instruction at school, where they learned how to read simple prayers.

Clergy members were responsible for teaching people how to better understand and practice Christianity. In church, priests often read stories about the lives of saints, and, several times a year, they delivered sermons about the life and teachings of Jesus. By the 1200s, Dominican and Franciscan friars frequently visited churches to preach and give sermons.

Works of art were also effective forms of religious instruction. People who could not read learned Bible stories from statues, carvings, stained glass windows, and paintings. Beginning in the 1200s, religious plays became popular. They presented moral lessons and biblical tales in a dramatic and entertaining way. In the later Middle Ages, when more people among the middle and upper classes could read, books of religious instruction in Latin and in vernacular* languages became available.

* **vernacular** language or dialect native to a region; everyday, informal speech

For Jews, religious instruction of the young (particularly sons) was regarded as a father's duty. This applied to wealthy and poor households alike. Teaching was often begun by the father and later taken over by a private instructor. Students, sometimes as young as three, would begin by learning the Hebrew alphabet. After basic reading skills were mastered, students studied the first five books of Hebrew Scripture (the Pentateuch), which were read publicly in the synagogue*. This initial training was followed by some study of the Talmud*. Jewish culture put special value on higher religious study, which usually meant a more detailed study of the Talmud. Some attention was paid to girls' education as well, although girls usually did not go on to advanced studies.

* **synagogue** building of worship for Jews
* **Talmud** large body of collected writings on Jewish law and tradition

Islamic religious teaching relied heavily on memorization of the Qur'an and hadith*. From childhood on, Muslims of different races and languages committed the Qur'an to memory in Arabic and recited it to set patterns. Primary schooling was held in the elementary school, known as the *kuttab* or *maktab,* where children learned grammar, reading, and writing by studying the Qur'an. At the age of 15, male Muslims could begin study of Islamic law at a college, or madrasa. (*See also* **Dominicans; Drama; Franciscans; Glass, Stained; Sacraments; Saints, Lives of; Schools; Sermons.**)

* **hadith** collected traditions of the words and deeds of Muhammad

Rhetoric

Rhetoric is the art of speaking and writing persuasively. It is based on principles and rules of composition that were developed by the ancient Greeks and Romans. Rhetoric was an important branch of learning throughout the medieval world for Europeans, Byzantines, Muslims, and Jews.

Western European Rhetoric. Medieval Europeans based their ideas about rhetoric mostly on the works of Roman scholars, especially Marcus Tullius Cicero, who lived in the first century B.C. Cicero believed that the chief use of rhetoric was to persuade an audience through speech. He identified the main settings for speeches as law courts and political assemblies. Cicero provided detailed instructions on the correct way to prepare for the delivery of various types of speeches and listed the elements of an effective speech. Other Roman writers and later medieval scholars expanded Cicero's work into a large body of scholarship dealing with such subjects as oratory*, poetry, and figures of speech.

* **oratory** public speaking

Rhetoric was one of seven subjects that formed the basis of secular* education in the Middle Ages. The other six subjects were grammar, dialectic (logic), geometry, arithmetic, astronomy, and MUSIC. Medieval Europeans advanced the study of rhetoric well beyond speech making. The three main types of rhetoric they recognized were poetry, preaching, and letter writing. The formal study of letter writing was a medieval innovation inspired by the growth of government and the church, which made written communication increasingly vital. Medieval scholars wrote many books in Latin on the art of letter writing, about 300 of which have survived. The center of letter-writing studies was the Italian city of Bologna.

Rhetoric is a good example of the way people in the Middle Ages used the past to meet their needs. They relied on the works of Cicero and other ancient scholars, but they also added to this body of knowledge to develop new skills.

Byzantine Rhetoric. The Byzantines found rhetoric most useful for teaching men in public life how to make speeches, which nearly always followed a carefully structured format. Speeches were to the Byzantines what journalism is today—a source of news and information and a way to influence popular opinion. As Christianity spread, the Byzantine CLERGY adopted this formal approach to religious speaking, and they applied it in their delivery of elaborate sermons. Many sermons were collected into books for other clergy members to study.

Arabic Rhetoric. In the Islamic world, rhetoric was partly a literary subject, partly a religious one, and partly a practical tool. Unlike Byzantine or western European rhetoric, Arabic rhetoric was not influenced by the ancient Greek or Latin tradition. The first known book about Arabic literary rhetoric was written about 887 and compared old and new styles of poetry. Muslim religious scholars used rhetoric to study how language is used in the QUR'AN, the sacred book of Islam. On a practical level, the study of rhetoric taught government clerks how to write proper letters and documents. Many Arabic manuals on rhetoric contained sample letters for various occasions that clerks used as models. Arabic rhetoric was the foundation for other rhetorical traditions in the Islamic world. Although Persian was important as a language for poetry, only a few books on the art of poetry writing were composed in the Persian language, and they are based on Arabic texts.

Hebrew Rhetoric. Although there was a flourishing tradition of Hebrew poetry in Spain, southern France, and Italy, the only work on rhetoric and poetics from the Jewish community that survives was written in Arabic. This is the *Book of Discussion and Conversation* by Moses ibn Ezra (who died about 1140). Ibn Ezra's book followed the tradition of Arabic rhetoric. It contained a long section on rhetorical techniques, as well as suggestions about the topics a poet should study and about the elements of a good poem. In addition, Ibn Ezra tried to answer questions about Hebrew literary history, such as why the Hebrew language had fewer words than the Arabic language. He believed that the reason was that most JEWISH COMMUNITIES lived in exile.

Later Jewish scholars used rhetoric to examine the BIBLE. The most comprehensive work on this subject was written in the 1400s by Judah

> **Remember:** Consult the index at the end of Volume 4 to find more information on many topics.

ben Jehiel, who based his work on the ancient Latin rhetorical tradition rather than on the Arabic tradition. (*See also* **Astrology and Astronomy; Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages; Encyclopedias and Dictionaries; Sermons.**)

Richard I the Lionhearted

1157–1199
King of England

See map in Crusades (vol. 2).

Although Richard I was king of England from 1189 until his death in 1199, the course of his life was largely determined by events in France. Richard was raised and educated in France and ruled large territories there. He belonged to the Plantagenets, the ruling family in England that was descended from the Norman invader, William I the Conqueror. During his reign as king of England, disputes with the French king PHILIP II AUGUSTUS led to a series of fierce battles. Richard's skill on the battlefield and his courage during the CRUSADES earned him the nickname "Lionhearted."

Richard's mother, ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE, was the heiress to a vast region in France, and Richard became duke of AQUITAINE at age 11. His father, King HENRY II OF ENGLAND, also ruled large parts of France. Henry had been duke of Normandy and count of Anjou before claiming the English throne. In his late teens, Richard began having bitter disputes with his father.

When Henry died in 1189, Richard inherited the English throne and his father's French territories. Richard traveled to England just long enough to receive his crown and establish his royal government. Less than a year later, he left on a crusade. On his way to the Holy Land, Richard joined the French king, Philip II Augustus, in SICILY. At the time, Richard was betrothed to Philip's half sister Alice, but he asked Philip to release him from the betrothal. Richard wanted to marry Berengaria, the

Treachery at home forced Richard the Lionhearted to make a truce with Saladin to end the Third Crusade. Philip II of France had seized some of Richard's French territories. Returning to defend his lands, Richard was imprisoned by German emperor Henry VI, an ally of Philip. He was ransomed after more than a year in captivity. This illumination shows Richard being brought as a prisoner before the emperor.

daughter of the king of NAVARRE. Philip agreed to the request in return for a large payment and some of Richard's lands in France. Richard then went to CYPRUS, where he married Berengaria.

Richard finally reached the Holy Land, joined forces with Philip, and together they captured the port of Acre. Richard then captured Jaffa, scoring another important victory for Christianity. In the meantime, Philip was plotting to seize more of Richard's French possessions to increase his own power in France. Pretending to be ill, Philip abandoned the crusade and returned to France.

Learning of Philip's treachery, Richard made plans to return to England. But first he agreed to a truce with the Muslim leader SALADIN that allowed Christian pilgrims to visit JERUSALEM safely and protected the lands the crusaders* had captured in SYRIA. On his return journey, Richard avoided France, fearing that Philip might try to block him. However, when he traveled through Austria and Germany instead, the duke of Austria captured him and turned him over to the German emperor, Henry VI, an ally of Philip. The emperor kept Richard captive for more than a year and demanded a large ransom for his release. Upon the payment of 150,000 marks of silver, the emperor released Richard on February 4, 1194, in the city of Mainz.

Within six weeks, Richard was back in England, where he made immediate plans for a war of revenge against Philip. On May 12, 1194, leaving the government of England in the hands of Hubert WALTER, the archbishop of CANTERBURY, Richard crossed the English Channel to France, never to return to England. For the next five years, he campaigned against Philip, and, in the course of winning every battle, he reclaimed all the French lands he had lost. To celebrate his victories, Richard built himself an impressive castle in Normandy. True to his character as a warrior, he died in France from a wound he received in battle. (*See also* **Angevins; England; Normans; Warfare.**)

* **crusader** person who participated in the holy wars against the Muslims during the Middle Ages

Richard II

1367–1400
King of England

* **depose** to remove from high office
* **chancellor** official who handles the records and archives of a monarch

In 1377, at age 10, Richard II became king of England after the death of his grandfather, Edward III. His own father, EDWARD THE BLACK PRINCE, had died in 1376. A council of barons advised the young king, but in the 1380s, while still a teenager, Richard began taking a more active role in the affairs of state. During the Peasants' Rebellion of 1381, Richard acted courageously by meeting with the rebels. The concessions he made were later revoked, and the rebels were ruthlessly suppressed.

In 1386, a baronial group opposed to his policies, led by his uncle, Thomas, duke of Gloucester, deposed* Richard's chancellor* and established a commission to supervise the king. Richard tried unsuccessfully to counteract this threat to his power.

Two years after Richard's wife, Anne of BOHEMIA, died, he strengthened his truce with France by marrying Isabelle, the eight-year-old daughter of the French king, CHARLES VII. During two expeditions to IRELAND, Richard assembled an army of followers to confront his opponents in England. They captured the duke of Gloucester, who died in

custody, and brought some of the duke's allies to trial before parliament. Two other allies, the duke of Norfolk and Henry Bolingbroke, were exiled, and the king confiscated the property of the duke of Lancaster, Bolingbroke's uncle.

In 1399, Henry Bolingbroke returned from exile. Richard, who was unable to raise a sufficient force to oppose him, surrendered the crown, and Bolingbroke became King Henry IV. Richard died several months later in February 1400. (*See also* **England; Hundred Years War; Peasants' Rebellions and Uprisings.**)

Richard III

1452–1485
King of England

Richard III served briefly as king of England after the death of his older brother, King Edward IV, who reigned from 1461 to 1483. Richard, the youngest son of the duke of York, lived during the WARS OF THE ROSES, the extended struggle for control of the English monarchy by members of the House of York and the House of Lancaster. In 1461, Edward seized the throne from the Lancastrian king, HENRY VI. When Richard became duke of Gloucester upon his brother's coronation, he was only nine years old. Richard served his brother faithfully to the end of Edward's reign.

In October 1470, a rebel group led by the earl of Warwick and Richard's other brother, George, drove Edward and Richard into exile and restored Henry VI to the throne. Edward and Richard returned the following March and defeated the rebels in battles at Barnet and Tewkesbury. Edward imprisoned Henry VI in the Tower of London, where Henry was murdered, probably on orders from Edward and Richard.

For the rest of Edward's reign, Richard served as lieutenant general for northern England. When Edward died in 1483, the crown was supposed to pass to Edward's 12-year-old son as Edward V, but Richard seized the crown for himself. He then proceeded to put his nephews, Edward V and his younger brother Richard, in the Tower of London, where they too were subsequently murdered. The Lancasters took their revenge in 1485 when Henry Tudor landed in Wales and killed Richard in battle on Bosworth Field to become the new king of England as Henry VII. With the death of Richard, the last Yorkist king, the Wars of the Roses ended.

Roads and Bridges

The Byzantines and the Muslims did not have extensive systems of roads and bridges in the Middle Ages, preferring rather to travel by sea or by camel, respectively. In the early Middle Ages in Europe, few roads and bridges existed. In the centuries following the fall of the Roman Empire, no strong central governments existed to build or maintain them. However, by the 1100s, when trade increased and CITIES AND TOWNS developed, roads and bridges became important features of life in medieval Europe.

Byzantine and Islamic Roads.   Located at the crossroads between Europe and Asia, the BYZANTINE EMPIRE's capital, CONSTANTINOPLE, was the
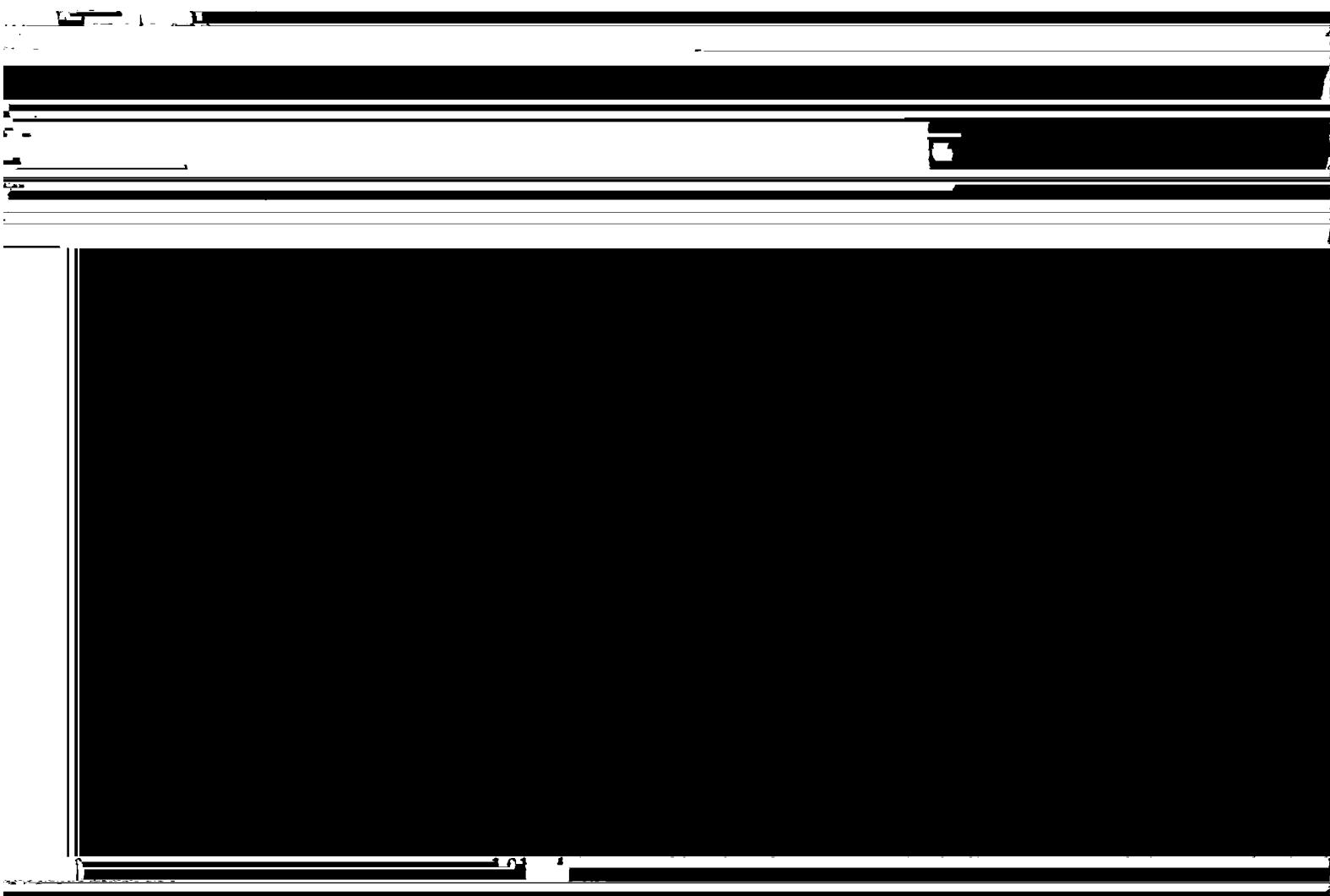
Bridge Life

In the Middle Ages, bridges were more than just a way to get across a river. Many were lined with stores, public buildings, and other structures. At different times and places in medieval Europe, a person could go to school, live in a house, shop in a market, go to church, or even be born in a hospital—all on a bridge. A person could raise fish in a pond under a bridge and grind corn in a mill attached to a bridge. He or she could be tried in court—and even executed—on a bridge. Bridges were often the center of a town's life.

* **patron saint**   saint held as guardian of a group's spiritual life

* **indulgence**   release from all or part of a punishment for a sin

* **guild**   association of craft and trade workers that set standards and represented the interests of its members

spots, especially in Germany, roads across marshes and swamps were built with wooden planks.

A French chronicler, writing in the 1200s, listed five kinds of roads: 4-foot-wide paths too narrow for carts; 8-foot-wide roads on which carts could travel but two carts could not pass; 16-foot-wide roads on which two carts could pass; 32-foot-wide roads that were wide enough for herds of cattle; and 64-foot-wide roads like those built by the Roman emperor Julius Caesar.

Smaller roads often belonged to the estates of local lords, churches, or monasteries, which collected tolls from people who used them. The large roads usually belonged to the king. By the 1200s, it had become customary for the tolls paid by travelers to be used to maintain and improve the roads. If the tolls on large roads were insufficient, the king might order towns along the way to contribute money or labor for the upkeep of the roads.

European Bridges.   The Romans had been much more interested in building roads than bridges. When they came to rivers, they were more likely to look for a shallow, safe place to cross on foot or by barge than to build a bridge. The medieval period, however, was a great age of bridge building. Medieval people built hundreds of impressive timber and stone bridges, some of which are still in use today. They believed that bridges were pleasing in God's sight because they helped travelers, many of them pilgrims, to cross dangerous and difficult places.

Medieval people wanted their bridges to be protected by SAINTS, and a chapel to a bridge's patron saint* was often built on or near the bridge. Building and caring for bridges was considered an act of religious merit. In fact, the church granted indulgences* to those who donated their labor or money for the construction of bridges.

Church-related institutions such as chapels, hospitals, monasteries, and convents were often built on or near bridges, and sometimes these institutions received a share of the bridge tolls. In some communities, people formed guilds* or brotherhoods to raise money for their local bridge. Bridges also were funded by taxes and charitable gifts.

Although most medieval bridges were neither fortified nor designed for defense, some were built for military use. These bridges had forts on them from which troops could defend against enemy soldiers who wanted to cross the bridge or pass under it. Bridges sometimes played an important role in military defense. For example, armed men on London Bridge prevented Danish invaders from advancing up the Thames River in 1016.

In the early Middle Ages, most bridges belonged to the church or to local lords and were made of wood, but in the 1100s two significant changes took place. First, as towns sprang up and grew in size, townspeople assumed responsibility for the construction and upkeep of local bridges. Bridge maintenance became more of a civic duty than an act of religious devotion. Second, bridge builders used stone for their larger and more ambitious ventures. Although stone bridges were more costly and difficult to construct than wooden ones, they lasted longer, and there was less chance of their being destroyed by fire or flood. The Ponte Vecchio in Florence, Italy, and the Old London Bridge are two examples of great medieval stone bridges. (*See also* **Crusades; Trade; Travel and Transportation; Warfare.**)

Robert I of Scotland

1274–1329
King of Scotland

See map in England (vol. 2).

Robert I was a member of the Bruce family, one of several families that claimed the Scottish throne in the 1200s. Robert spent much of his life fighting opponents, including the English king, EDWARD I, who claimed authority over Scotland. Robert finally won the right to rule an independent Scotland free of English control.

Robert was still in his 20s when he first participated in these conflicts. He fought alongside his father, who sought to depose the Scottish king, John Balliol. After the king was ousted, several prominent Scotsmen competed to replace him. In 1306, Robert quarreled with and subsequently murdered John Comyn, lord of Badenoch and a leading Scottish patriot. Robert then claimed the monarchy for himself and traveled to Scone, where he had himself crowned. Scone was the place where Scottish kings were traditionally crowned.

A few months later, English forces confronted Robert at Methven, where the Scots were defeated. Robert fled to the remote Western Isles, but his three brothers were captured and executed. After the death of King Edward I in 1307, Robert launched a campaign to regain control of Scotland. Beginning in the north, he advanced south, defeating his enemies and taking one region after another. In 1313, he captured Perth. A year later he met the large army of the English king, Edward II, on the battle field. Robert and his much smaller force inflicted a crushing defeat on the English at Bannockburn.

Since the English refused to make peace and recognize Robert as Scotland's legitimate ruler, Robert raided northern England. In 1328, a weakened English government finally agreed to a peace treaty that recognized Robert as the independent king of Scotland. The treaty also arranged for the marriage of Robert's son David to the sister of EDWARD III OF ENGLAND.

While seeking to win Scotland's freedom, Robert also tried to strengthen and unify the country. To help govern, he appointed two capable assistants—his nephew, Thomas Randolph, whom he made the earl of Moray, and Sir James Douglas. By establishing an order of succession to the throne—his son David (King David II) followed by his grandson (Robert II)—he solidified Scotland's position as an independent kingdom. (*See also* **Scotland.**)

Robert d'Arbrissel

ca. 1047–1117
Founder of French religious order

Robert d'Arbrissel was a French religious reformer and preacher who founded a religious order that was respected for its piety and its creation of leadership roles for women. Born in the village of Arbrissel in BRITTANY, Robert studied literature and philosophy in PARIS. In 1089, the bishop of Rennes summoned him to assist with efforts at church reform in Brittany. Robert campaigned vigorously against various corrupt church practices, such as clerical marriage (it was becoming customary in this period for priests not to marry) and simony (buying and selling church positions). Robert spent four years preaching against these practices, as he became more strict about his own religious life.

In 1095, he went to live in the forest as a hermit. Whenever a large enough group of his followers expressed the desire to join him, Robert

founded a monastery for them. He did this with the approval of Pope URBAN II.

In 1098, Robert left the monastery to devote himself exclusively to public preaching. His powerful sermons attracted many followers from all social classes—from lepers* and peasants to nobles, including many women. In 1101, Robert established a new religious order at Fontevrault, near Poitiers, with separate facilities for men and women. (ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE, queen of France, retired to Fontevrault after the death of her husband.) Robert refused the title of abbot and instead named two women to head the order.

During his extended travels as a preacher in western France, he founded other religious communities associated with Fontevrault. In 1115, Robert formally placed the order under the leadership of an abbess, and he himself continued preaching until his death in 1117.

* **leper**   person who has leprosy

Robin Hood

One of the most popular and enduring legends of medieval England is the story of Robin Hood. According to the legend, Robin Hood was an outlaw who lived in Sherwood Forest with his gang and stole from the rich to help the poor. But this image of Robin Hood, created by writers and playwrights in the 16th and 17th centuries, differs from the earlier accounts of the man. The original Robin Hood who appeared in a handful of medieval BALLADS was a shadier figure.

Scholars have tried to identify the real-life Robin Hood, the historical figure who might have served as the basis for the legends, but no such identification has been possible. It seems that the Robin Hood story is a composite loosely based on the exploits of a group of outlaws who operated in the vicinity of Barnsdale, a town in the Yorkshire region of northern England. Apparently, the MINSTRELS who sang ballads about the exploits of these criminals combined tales about them with stories about the sheriff of Nottingham, which is actually 50 miles south of Barnsdale. Gradually, the sheriff and characters from the other ballads merged and became part of the Robin Hood legend. The legend's characters included a jolly monk named Friar Tuck and a beautiful woman named Maid Marian, both of whom had appeared in English and French poems, stories, and ballads long before Robin Hood.

The Robin Hood stories were probably composed in the early 1300s and spread by traveling minstrels. A reference to Robin Hood occurs in *Piers Plowman,* an English poem written in 1377. That poem describes a lazy priest who cannot say his prayers properly but can remember rhymes about "Robyn Hood." Another early reference dates from 1439 when the people of the Derbyshire district asked the English parliament to arrest a troublemaker who was living in the woods in the manner of "Robyn Hode." These and other early references suggest that the figure of Robin Hood was not admired by the general public. He was regarded more as an outlaw than as a hero. One medieval Scottish historian wrote that only foolish people celebrated him, and another chronicler described him as an assassin.

By the 1500s, the image of Robin Hood underwent an important change. The darker aspects of the legend faded, and the "new" Robin

Hood was portrayed as kind, brave, and generous. He remained an outlaw, but he was seen as the honorable victim of an unjust and corrupt society, as represented by the evil sheriff of Nottingham. This Robin Hood was a new type of hero. Unlike the aristocratic heroes of older romances, he was neither a prince nor a knight. Instead, he was a freeman of ordinary status who reflected the growing self-confidence of the English peasantry, a group that felt increasingly free to criticize the social ills caused by weak monarchs and corrupt local officials.

The Robin Hood stories appealed to a wide audience that included all levels of society. He was, and continues to be, regarded as a noble-hearted bandit committed to setting right the wrongs of society and securing justice for the downtrodden. (*See also* **England; English Language and Literature; Outlaws and Outlawry.**)

Roger of Salisbury

ca. 1065–1139
Bishop and statesman

* **chancellor** official who handles the records and archives of a monarch

* **fiscal** pertaining to financial matters and revenues

The man whom some called "Roger the Great" rose from obscure beginnings to become the bishop of Salisbury and one of England's most effective statesmen. As a priest in Normandy, Roger met and impressed the young future king of England, HENRY I. When Henry crossed the English Channel to England, he brought Roger with him and quickly put his administrative skills to work. In 1101, Henry appointed Roger royal chancellor*. Roger soon became bishop of Salisbury as well.

Henry I, who reigned from 1100 to 1135, spent most of his time dealing with troublesome matters in Normandy, relying on Roger to govern England in his absence. As the king's JUSTICIAR, or representative, Roger streamlined the government, making it more efficient, especially its finances and its court system. His most lasting contribution to English government was his creation of the EXCHEQUER, the department that manages the royal finances and public revenues. By doing so, Roger established the first effective fiscal* system in Europe. Roger also brought the government closer to the people by sending royal justices out into the countryside to hear pleas and complaints.

As bishop of Salisbury, Roger rebuilt the cathedral at Old Sarum (an ancient fortress town located one mile from the later town of Salisbury) on a grand scale and erected many new churches, monasteries, and castles. Roger's power and influence did not long outlive King Henry, however. King Stephen, who reigned from 1135 to 1154, turned against Roger and had him imprisoned. Roger and his family were forced to give up their money and property. Roger died in poverty on December 11, 1139. (*See also* **Angevins; Chancery; England; Normans.**)

Roland, Song of

The *Song of Roland* is a French epic poem about the deeds of the Frankish emperor CHARLEMAGNE and his nephew Roland, who was one of his lieutenants. The 4,002-verse poem was written around 1100, although earlier versions of the story may have existed.

The *Song of Roland* is the oldest known example of the CHANSON DE GESTE, a type of medieval poem that celebrated CHIVALRY and noble deeds. The poem is based on an event that occurred in 778 when Muslims

Roman de la Rose

represent Youth, Wealth, Beauty, and Courtesy. In the garden, the narrator falls in love with a beautiful Rose. His attempts to win the Rose are aided by the God of Love, who gives him advice about proper behavior for a lover. In this first section of the *Roman de la Rose,* the narrator also meets such enemies as Jealousy and Fear. This first part of the poem ends with the narrator pining away for his unattainable love.

Between 1275 and 1280, Jean de Meun wrote a long conclusion to the *Roman de la Rose,* in which he continued the story of the lover's quest to win the Rose. Using such allegorical figures as Jealousy and Reason, he changed the poem from a hymn of praise for courtly love to a philosophical discussion about the nature of love. This part of the poem includes many passages that offer the writer's views on various subjects, such as the unfaithfulness of women and the greed of the clergy*. The poem ends with Venus, the goddess of love, setting fire to the castle in which the Rose is hidden, thus allowing the narrator to possess the Rose at last. (*See also* **Allegory; French Language and Literature.**)

* **clergy** priests, deacons, and other church officials qualified to perform church ceremonies

Roman Numerals

* **decimal system** system of numeration that is based on units of ten

* **abacus** device for making arithmetic calculations consisting of a frame with rows of counters or beads that slide back and forth

Roman numerals are the letter symbols used by the ancient Romans to represent numbers. These symbols continued to be used throughout the Middle Ages until they were finally replaced by the Arabic numerals used today.

Roman numerals were based on a decimal system* that used different symbols for tens, hundreds, and thousands and for the halfway point of each order (5, 50, and 500). The seven symbols of the Roman numeral system were I (1), V (5), X (10), L (50), C (100), D (500), and M (1000). The Romans calculated with an abacus* and did not use zero because the abacus did not require it as a place holder.

Arabic numerals and arithmetic were introduced into Europe in the late 1100s. However, people continued to use Roman numerals along with the new Arabic numerals, and many medieval manuscripts have both Roman and Arabic numerals in the same text. In the 1100s, the works of the great Arab mathematician al-Khwarizmi were widely translated into Latin and adapted for Europeans. Although these works showed the advantages of Arabic numerals for more advanced mathematical calculations, the Arabic system of written arithmetic using the new notation only gradually took the place of Roman numerals. Roman numerals remained in use in Europe until the early 1400s. Since that time, Roman numerals have been used only for ornamental purposes. (*See also* **Mathematics.**)

Romanesque Architecture

Romanesque was the dominant architectural style of Europe from the early 1000s to the mid-1100s. The term *Romanesque* was chosen to describe this style by later art historians because of certain similarities with ancient Roman architecture, most notably the use of vaults and round arches. Visually, the round arches contrast dramatically with the pointed arches that were a prominent characteristic of the Gothic architecture that followed. Romanesque architecture is known primarily
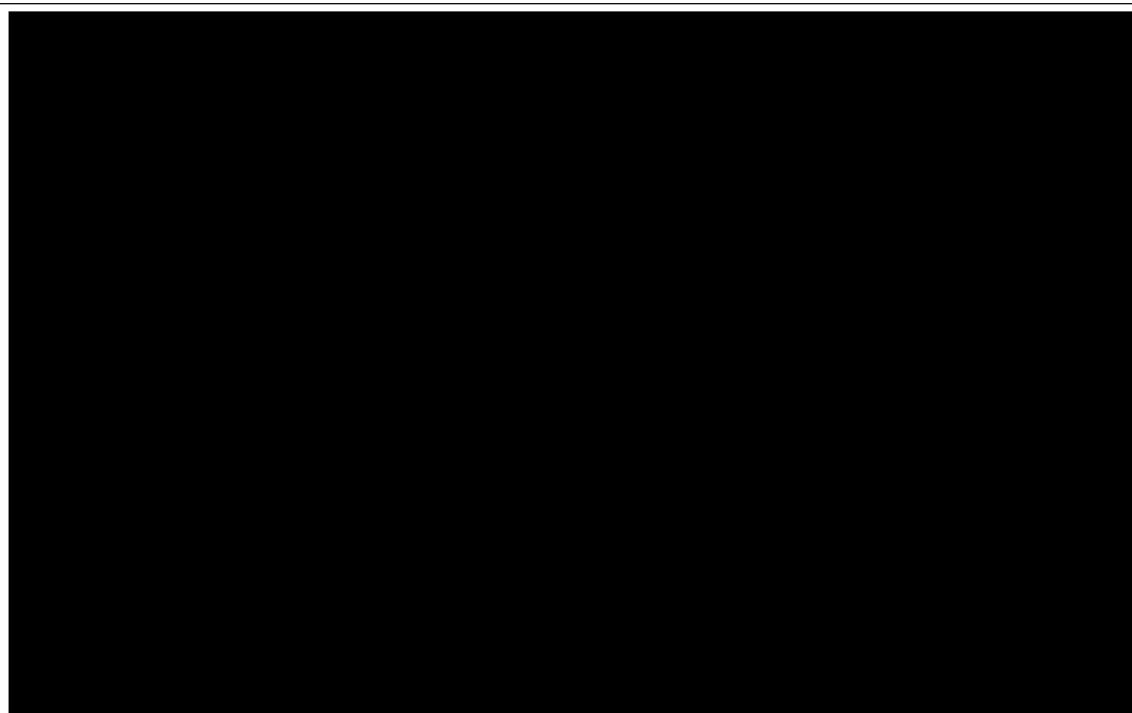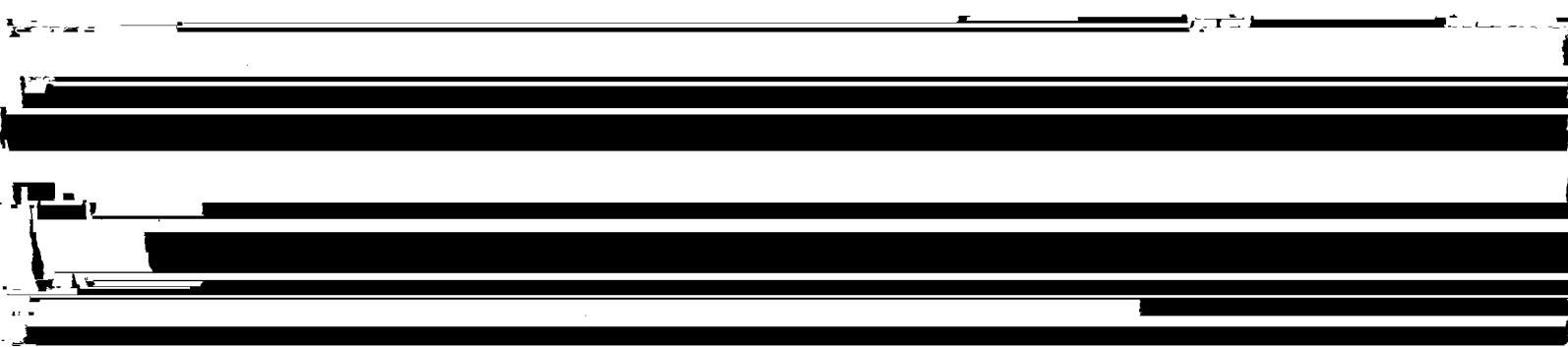
* **vault** section of a three-dimensional arched ceiling of stone

* **pier** stone pillar used to sustain vertical pressure

* **apse** vaulted, semicircular section of a church, usually at the east end

* **basilica** oblong building with rows of columns dividing the interior into a nave, or central aisle, and side aisles

* **transept** the shorter part of a cross-shaped church, at right angles to the nave

* **choir** part of a church near the altar that is reserved for the singers

* **ambulatory** passageway around the choir and altar sections of a church

* **capital** uppermost portion of a column

* **barrel vault** round arched ceiling made of stone or brick

* **crypt** underground room of a church or cathedral, often used as a burial place

* **facade** front of a building; also, any side of a building that is given special architectural treatment

from earlier architectural styles, in which flat, continuous wall surfaces were standard.

Another characteristic of Romanesque architecture is the regular use of large masonry vaults* over interior spaces. Such large-scale vaults were a common feature of ancient Roman architecture, but they were not used widely in the pre-Romanesque period. Pre-Romanesque buildings typically had wooden roofs, which were a fire hazard. Builders during the Romanesque period tried to eliminate this danger by rediscovering the vaulting techniques of the ancient Romans. Large masonry vaults must be supported by solid, massive walls and piers*, and these features became characteristic of Romanesque architecture as well. There is relatively little light in Romanesque interiors. Romanesque builders seem to have thought that wall openings would weaken their structures, so they did not pierce windows through their heavy vaults and thick walls. This problem led to architectural experimentation and ultimately contributed to the development of the Gothic style in architecture.

Romanesque churches follow two basic ground plans. One is the echelon apse* plan. Churches of this type consist of a cross-shaped basilica* with small apses that open off the east walls of the transept*, the choir*, and the choir aisles. The other ground plan features an ambulatory* and radiating chapels. In this plan, the aisles next to the choir come together in a semicircular passage, called an ambulatory, that surrounds the central apse. Small chapels radiate off these passages, and worshipers can walk through the passage to visit the chapels without disturbing services in the main part of the church. The ambulatory and radiating chapel plan often was used for large churches, such as cathedrals and pilgrimage churches.

Variations in Romanesque Style. The Romanesque style had three basic sources. The first was Roman architecture. In addition to the round arch, the architects of Romanesque churches borrowed Roman decorative elements, such as moldings, grooved pilasters, and elaborately sculpted capitals* on columns. A second source of Romanesque architecture was the pre-Romanesque architecture of northern Spain, southern France, and northern Italy dating from 950 to 1020. Many buildings in these areas had features that were developed more fully in the Romanesque period, including heavy supporting walls, large barrel vaults*, and rudimentary bays. The third major source for Romanesque architecture was Ottonian architecture, the name given to architecture of the Holy Roman Empire from 950 to 1050. Ottonian buildings are close in size to the major structures of the Romanesque period. Many had semicircular crypts* similar to the ambulatories of Romanesque churches. Others had wall articulation that suggested the beginnings of the bays that were a basic characteristic of Romanesque. The Ottonian emphasis on elaborate facades*, often incorporating towers, was also carried over to the Romanesque period.

Building from these sources, Romanesque architects evolved a variety of regional styles. While all reflected the basic characteristics of the Romanesque, these styles also exhibited unique characteristics that became identified with certain geographic areas. The Romanesque style reached its fullest expression in France, where the regions of NORMANDY

and BURGUNDY were especially influential. Among the most important Romanesque buildings in France were the successive churches of the great BENEDICTINE abbey of Cluny, the first built between 955 and 1010 and the second between 1088 and 1130. The later church was at one time the largest in Christendom. Other parts of Europe—including England, Spain, Italy, and Germany—developed local variations on the Romanesque style. In Spain, for example, Islamic architecture was an important influence. In Italy, the architectural heritage of the early Christian era remained a powerful influence on the Romanesque style.

Spread of Romanesque Architecture.   As Romanesque architecture developed, it spread throughout Europe and even into the Holy Land*. In time, it became a truly international style, the first in Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire. Monastic orders, particularly the CISTERCIANS, helped to spread the Romanesque style as they did missionary work and established new monasteries.

The Romanesque architecture that developed around the edges of the European heartland tended to reflect the nearest major regional style. In Scandinavia, for example, German influence was very strong. The architecture of the region of Dalmatia, along the coast of the Adriatic Sea, relied heavily on Italian Romanesque designs. Finally, the Romanesque architecture of the Holy Land reflected the French Romanesque style, a result of the considerable French presence there. (*See also* **Construction, Building; Romanesque Art.**)

* **Holy Land**   Palestine, the site of religious shrines for Christians, Jews, and Muslims

Romanesque Art

A style of art known as Romanesque flourished in western Europe from around 1000 to 1150. Romanesque art developed in close association with Romanesque architecture, and much of it was produced as decoration for buildings constructed during this period. Its origins were linked with the reform of religious life that began in the 900s, and, as a result, most Romanesque art is religious in subject matter. The greatest innovations in art during the Romanesque period occurred in sculpture adorning monuments and in mural painting. Other art forms—such as manuscript illumination, stained glass, and metalwork—also exhibited features of the Romanesque style.

Characteristics of Romanesque Art

There are distinct regional differences in the Romanesque style within western Europe. Yet there also are some elements common to almost all Romanesque art. Romanesque art, especially painting and sculpture, is both expressive and dramatic. Figures may be distorted and lines are irregular and twisted, creating a sense of agitation. In addition, movement is often exaggerated, creating a sense of extreme liveliness and visual excitement. Romanesque art emphasizes emotion, particularly religious excitement, and it presents rich images drawn from daily life. It also exhibits a taste for fantasy and the grotesque*. The stone walls of cathedrals and the pages of illuminated manuscripts are sometimes filled with grotesque and fanciful creatures. Most of these characteristics are especially evident in Romanesque sculpture.

* **grotesque**   fanciful style of decorative art using distorted, ugly, or unnatural forms of people, animals, or plants
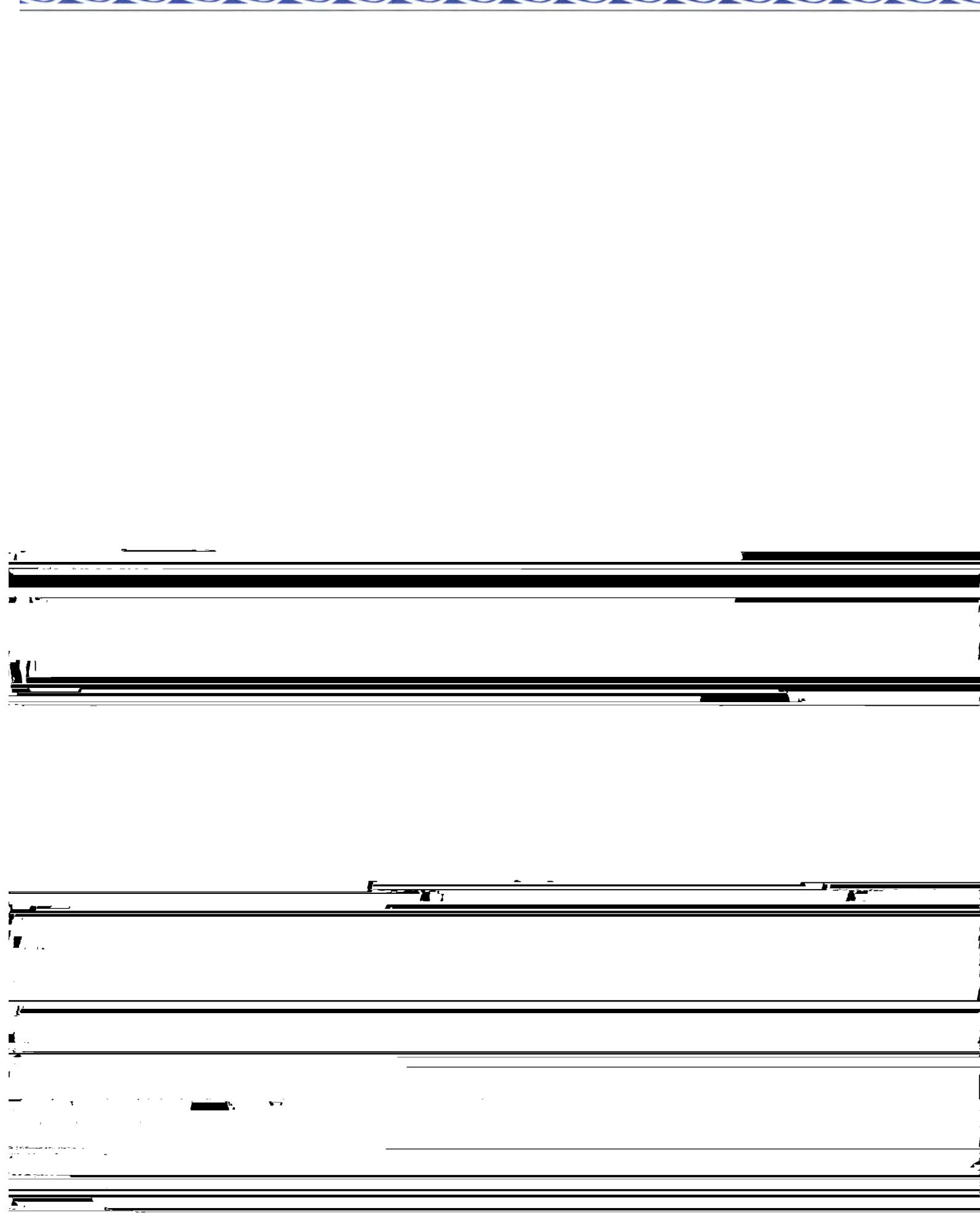
* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

* **portal** large doorway or entrance

* **font** basin for holy or baptismal water

* **cloister** covered passageway around a courtyard in a monastery or convent

* **fresco** method of painting in which color is applied to moist plaster and becomes chemically bonded to the plaster as it dries; also refers to a painting done in this manner

The Worldly Versus the Unworldly

Romanesque sculpture can be appreciated from both a religious and a secular point of view. In the 1100s, Bernard of Clairvaux denounced Romanesque sculpture as too worldly. He worried that it was so excessively ornate that it would distract monks from their contemplation of God. Abbot Suger of St. Denis, on the other hand, believed that people could best understand God through the contemplation of worldly things, such as ornate sculptural decoration and other elaborate works of art.

a lack of background space is typical of the Romanesque style in Lombardy. An unusual feature at the Cathedral of Modena is the representation of secular* subjects as well as religious scenes. The south portal* of the cathedral contains scenes from Aesop's fables, and arches have scenes of King Arthur and his knights.

Another Lombard sculptor, Niccolò da Verona, created figures that were smaller and better proportioned than those of Wiligelmo. His works have more persons in historical scenes, more suggestions of background of city and landscape, and more decorative details. His masterpiece, signed and dated 1135, appears in the Cathedral of Ferrara. It depicts the legendary St. George as a knight in armor killing a dragon, as well as figures of the biblical prophets that have such intensity of feeling that they seem to be shouting their prophecies.

In TUSCANY, relief sculpture did not appear until the mid-1100s. This was because the Romanesque architecture of the region favored a purely architectural mode of decoration and did not have a place for sculpture. When relief sculpture appeared, it was on pulpits, fonts*, and other types of church furniture rather than on the surfaces of buildings. This sculpture was more classical in style than that of any other region.

In southern Italy and Sicily, Romanesque sculptors drew from several cultural traditions. For example, the sculptures in the cloister* of the magnificent abbey cathedral of Monreale, which date from the late 1100s, display the influence of ancient Roman art, BYZANTINE ART, and ISLAMIC ART.

Romanesque Painting

The walls of Romanesque churches often were decorated with mural paintings in fresco* or with MOSAICS. The large, often unbroken expanses of wall in these churches provided excellent surfaces on which painters could work. Romanesque mural paintings were often monumental in scale and bold in color and form. There were many regional styles of wall painting in Europe during the Romanesque period.

Rome and Italy.   The churches of Rome abound in splendid fresco and mosaic paintings from the 1100s. The unique style of these works reflects the early Christian traditions of the city. Among the best preserved of these decorations are the mosaics and frescoes in the church of San Clemente. Elsewhere in Italy, Byzantine influence was very strong, especially in small churches in southern Italy, in Sicily, and in VENICE.

Spain.   Many small churches in CATALONIA in northeastern Spain contain fresco decorations. Their lively and expressive style, with vigorous and contorted shapes and figures, is typically Romanesque. At the same time, many murals also reflect a strong Byzantine influence. Paintings on panels of wood from the region portray scenes of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and various saints. Their vivid colors make them brilliant examples of Romanesque art.

France.   The most complete set of Romanesque frescoes in France, dating from the early 1100s to the mid-1100s, is in the abbey church of St. Savin-sur-Gartempe, near the city of Poitiers. The colors of the frescoes include vivid shades of yellow, red, and green against light backgrounds.

* **nave** main part of a church or cathedral between the side aisles

Frescoes in the nave* of the church are especially impressive. They depict scenes from the Old Testament, beginning with the Creation and continuing to the story of Moses.

Frescoes of Christ and the saints in the small chapel at Berzé-la-Ville in Burgundy reveal Byzantine influence in the use of dark backgrounds and highlights. They also reflect the restless, agitated quality that is such an important characteristic of the Romanesque style.

Manuscript Illumination

During the Romanesque period, many illuminated manuscripts were produced by church schools and monasteries. Among the most popular books produced were large Bibles and the lives of SAINTS. In general, manuscript illumination shows the characteristics of Romanesque painting: strong colors; exaggerated postures and movement; some Byzantine influence in figure types, drapery, and lighting effects; and a mix of highly traditional and fantastic subjects. England especially was a prolific center of Romanesque manuscript painting. (*See also* **British Isles, Art and Architecture; Gothic Architecture; Gothic Painting; Gothic Sculpture; Romanesque Architecture.**)

Rome

The Germanic invasions of the 400s and the 500s that hastened the collapse of the Roman Empire left the once mighty capital, Rome, a shadow of its former self. During the Middle Ages, Rome became the center of a long power struggle between popes, German emperors, foreign invaders, and the city's nobility. By the end of the Middle Ages, Rome was the headquarters of the powerful PAPACY and the international capital of the Roman Catholic Church.

Early Middle Ages.   The Byzantines who captured Rome from the OSTROGOTHS in 553 found the city depopulated and disorderly. The problems worsened 20 years later, when another Germanic group, the LOMBARDS, invaded Italy. The Lombard invasion had the effect of almost cutting off Rome from the rest of the Italian peninsula, which remained in Byzantine hands. By the late 500s, much of Rome's administration and social organization had collapsed. The civic offices responsible for managing the city and maintaining its aqueducts*, walls, and imperial palaces had declined or disappeared. Even the Roman Senate ceased to function.

* **aqueduct** channel, often including bridges and tunnels, that brings water from a distant source to where it is needed

Pope GREGORY I THE GREAT, concerned about the disrepair of the aqueduct system and the frequent collapses of ancient buildings, assumed leadership. Although he never had political control of Rome, he used church land to supply the city with food and essential services, including the care of refugees. Severe flooding of the Tiber River and the PLAGUE that followed added to his difficulties.

The Lombard threat against Rome intensified in the 700s, when the Lombards seized towns in the Tiber River valley north of Rome and threatened to attack Rome. Pope Zacharias I appealed to the FRANKS for help. In 756, the Lombards attacked Rome and plundered the sanctuaries until the Franks arrived and drove them back. When the Lombards attacked

Relics of Ancient Greatness

Many of the temples and monuments built by the ancient Romans were still standing in Rome in the early 500s. Around that time, however, the people of Rome began removing blocks of stone from the ancient structures for use in new construction. They also began building churches and homes over the sites of theaters, arenas, and other structures from pre-Christian Rome. In the late Middle Ages, Rome's governing body enacted laws to protect the city's ancient heritage, as people began to see the monuments of antiquity as a priceless legacy from the past.

choose German bishops. In 1084, Henry entered Rome and appointed a new pope, Clement III, to replace Gregory. Clement in turn crowned Henry emperor. Several weeks later, the NORMANS arrived in the city to support Gregory. They defeated the Germans, but they also looted and set fire to parts of the city.

Control of Rome soon returned to the German emperors, who gave the Roman people the right to elect their own magistrates and senators and to control their economic resources. Friction emerged between the papacy and the Roman COMMUNE, or city government. This friction erupted into civil war under Pope INNOCENT III. In the mid-1200s, Rome's city government was fiercely against the papacy. During this period, Roman churches were financially exploited and sometimes even destroyed.

Between 1304 and 1377, the papacy was based in AVIGNON in southern France. Rome's economy suffered because, with the pope absent, there was less reason for pilgrims to visit that city and to spend money there. The popes tried to control their Italian lands from Avignon, but the power and independence of the Roman commune remained strong.

In the late 1300s, Pope Boniface IX limited the authority of the commune by forcing it to recognize his right to appoint city officials. The city senator became a papal official, and Roman judges came under papal influence. The papacy even gained the power to set aside city laws. By the early 1400s, the commune had lost its financial independence, and the papacy had established itself as the unofficial financial administrator of the city. Boniface had succeeded in establishing a papal authority over the Roman city government that would last for the rest of the Middle Ages.

The papacy of Pope Martin V marked the beginning of a new chapter in Rome's history. As the Middle Ages drew to a close, Rome was set to enter the Renaissance as the financial and administrative center of the Roman Catholic Church. Rome was also beginning to wield considerable political power, as European rulers sought papal endorsement of their right to govern. (*See also* **Christianity; Cities and Towns; Holy Year; Italy; Migrations, Germanic; Nobility and Nobles; Papal States; Pilgrimage; Schism, Great.**)

Royal Households

The growth of medieval kingship increased the size and scope of royal households. Royal households had existed since ancient times, when kings were surrounded by followers who saw to the king's comfort and helped him perform his duties. In the early Middle Ages, the kings of Europe were surrounded primarily by their military officers and advisers. However, as they became involved in activities other than fighting—such as managing their land and finances and administering justice—the kings delegated some of their duties to the members of their household. Food, drink, and clothing had to be provided. Horses needed to be looked after. The many details connected with moving the king, his family, and his household from residence to residence had to be taken care of.
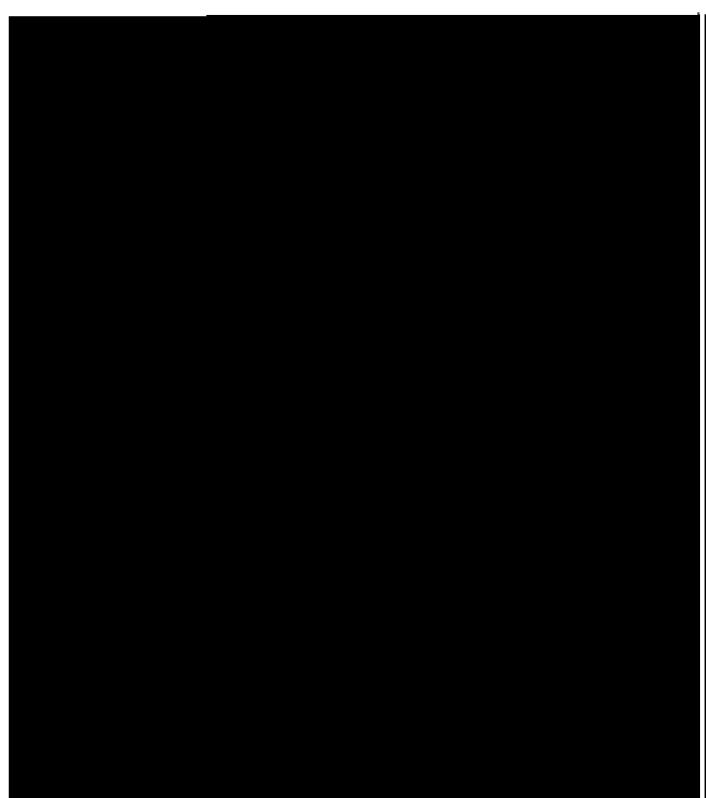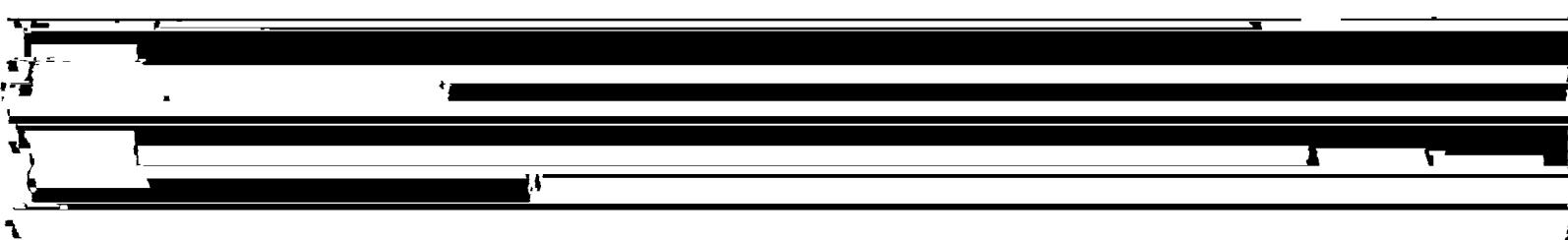
had huge households. During peacetime, however, the staff was much smaller than when the ruler was preparing to go to war.

Membership in the royal household was considered a great honor and sometimes a great danger. The French kings often preferred not to appoint high seneschals or chancellors (keepers of records) for fear that they might become rivals for the throne. However, for any ambitious individual, no matter how lowly his duties, service close to the king and his family meant economic and social advancement. (*See also* **Chaplain; Kingship, Theories of.**)

Royal Touch

In the late Middle Ages, the kings of France and England were thought to have the ability to cure people with scrofula simply by touching them. Scrofula was called the "king's evil." It is an infection that enlarges the lymph glands. The term was also applied to jaundice, leprosy, and other disorders of the neck and face.

In *Vita Aedwardi regis,* a biography of King EDWARD THE CONFESSOR of England, the young king was said to have performed a healing miracle on a woman whose throat glands were infected. The biographer of King Robert II the Pious of France reported that the king healed sick people, including lepers*, by touching the diseased part of their bodies and making the sign of the cross.

Around 1124, Abbot Guibert of Nogent reported seeing King LOUIS VI of France perform his "customary miracle," healing crowds of people who came to him with scrofula. Guibert remarked that Louis's father, Philip I, had also performed miracles until his sins deprived him of his healing power.

By the late 13th century, royal touching to cure the "king's evil" was a regular practice in both France and England. English public records show that in 1276/1277 Edward I's confessor gave a penny to each of the 627 people cured of scrofula. In 1307/1308, many sufferers came to King PHILIP IV THE FAIR of France from as far away as Spain and Italy. The custom of royal touching continued in England until 1714 and in France until 1789. (*See also* **Kingship, Theories of; Medicine.**)

* **leper** person who has leprosy

Rublev, Andrei

ca. 1360–1430
Monk and artist

* **fresco** method of painting in which color is applied to moist plaster and becomes chemically bonded to the plaster as it dries; also refers to a painting done in this manner

* **icon** Christian religious image of a saint, often painted and placed on a screen in the church; most common in the Eastern Church

Andrei Rublev was the most famous Russian artist of the Middle Ages. A monk at the Trinity–St. Sergius Monastery at Zagorsk near Moscow, he was frequently mentioned in both medieval chronicles and later sources.

Rublev's first known works, which date from 1405, were the frescoes* and icons* of the Annunciation Cathedral in the Kremlin (in Moscow). He worked on the cathedral with two other artists. In 1408, he and his friend Daniel Chorny painted decorative works in the Dormition Cathedral in Vladimir. Several years later, Rublev and Chorny worked together on the Trinity Cathedral at Zagorsk.

The most famous of Rublev's surviving icons were found in 1918 under some firewood in a barn near the Dormition Cathedral of Zvenigorod. Although the icons had been damaged, they show Rublev's great skill. The best known of the icons is the Old Testament Trinity, now

in the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. Rublev's creative artistry influenced many later Russian icon painters. (*See also* **Byzantine Art; Icons; Muscovy, Rise of.**)

Ruiz, Juan

1283–1350
Spanish poet

* **parody** to ridicule by imitating; a work produced in this way

Spanish poet Juan Ruiz wrote the *Libro de buen amor (The Book of Good Love)*, a long poem that was one of the most important literary works of medieval Spain. Little is known about Ruiz except that he was a priest in a small town near Guadalajara in central Spain. The *Libro*, written in the early 1300s, expresses the author's thoughts on pure (good) love and impure (evil) love. The poem has always delighted readers because of Ruiz's artistry in combining different themes and poetic styles and its sense of exuberance and joy. At the same time, the *Libro* has annoyed some critics because of the difficulties in categorizing the work with a particular literary tradition and in assessing its true meaning. Accurate interpretation is hindered by the poet's constantly changing stance and by his tendency to parody* established literary and cultural traditions. The text can be understood in a number of ways. It deals with the distinction between truth and falsity, and between the apparent and the real. This concern characterized Spanish literature up to the late 1600s.

The *Libro* combines philosophical argument with parodies of religious works, fables, praises of the Virgin Mary, stories of amorous adventures, and new compositions based on medieval, classical, and Islamic tales. Together, they form a vivid, humorous, but critical view of medieval Spanish society that is similar in tone to the *Canterbury Tales* of Geoffrey CHAUCER. Because of this similarity, Ruiz has often been called the "Spanish Chaucer." (*See also* **Spanish Language and Literature.**)

Rumi

1207–1273
Persian mystical poet

* **mystical** referring to the belief that divine truths or direct knowledge of God can be experienced through meditation and contemplation as much as through logical thought

* **theologian** person who studies religious faith and practice

Jalal al-Din, known as Rumi in the West, was the greatest mystical* poet in the Persian language. His works have had a profound and enduring influence on the spiritual life of Muslims in Iran, Turkey, central Asia, and India. Rumi also founded a mystical brotherhood known as the Mawlawiya, which still exists. Members are sometimes known as Whirling Dervishes because dancing and music are part of its spiritual practices.

Born in Balkh, a town in present-day Afghanistan, Rumi later moved to ANATOLIA. Although he seemed destined to become a theologian* and teacher like his father, several important spiritual relationships dramatically changed his life and transformed him into a great mystical poet. The first and most important of these was his relationship with Shams-i Tabrizi, a wandering mystic whom Rumi met in 1244. Rumi's affection for Shams inspired a hidden poetic talent. Under Shams's influence and encouragement, Rumi began writing poems in great abundance. His poems were eventually collected in a single volume called the *Divan*. His most significant work, the *Mathnawi*, was a long narrative poem, containing more than 25,000 couplets, which became the most important Persian mystical work. (*See also* **Iran; Islam, Religion of; Mysticism.**)

Runes

Rurik

ca. 800s
Founder of the
Russian state

See map in Kievan Rus (vol. 3).

eventually moved his seat of power to that city, where he built a fortress and became a genuine ruler of Russian lands. His rule extended as far south as the city of Kiev.

Rurik left Russia in 873 to take over his father's land in Friesland. He left his Russian realm to his kinsman Oleg because his son Igor was very young. Russian princes from this time on claimed descent from Rurik. One line of descendants supplied the grand princes and tsars* of Moscow until the late 1500s. (*See also* **Kievan Rus; Muscovy, Rise of; Scandinavia; Vikings.**)

* **tsar** Slavic term for emperor

Russia

See *Kievan Rus; Muscovy, Rise of; Novgorod.*

Sacraments

* **consecrate** to declare someone or something sacred in a church ceremony

Sacraments are the sacred practices or ceremonies of the Christian church. They are considered a form of grace given to the faithful by God, through Christ, in order to keep the faith alive and growing.

The word *sacrament* is derived from the Latin word *sacrare,* which means to consecrate* or to make a mystery. In the early history of the church, the word came to mean a sacred mystery, and it was used to describe any ritual of the church. This meaning was later narrowed to include only certain rituals. Over the course of the Middle Ages, the Christian church came to recognize seven sacraments: baptism, penance or confession, the Eucharist or Holy Communion, confirmation, holy orders, matrimony, and extreme unction.

Baptism is the first rite of joining the church, during which an individual is cleansed of sin and prepared for his or her eventual entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven. Penance or confession is a means by which sinners receive forgiveness for their sins through prayer, fasting, or some other action. Confession, penance, and forgiveness of sins traditionally have been necessary in order to partake of the Eucharist. The Eucharist, or Holy Communion, is the core of the Mass at which the faithful celebrate Christ and join him in spiritual union. Confirmation is the ritual in which one's joining the church at baptism is confirmed and strengthened. At first, confirmation was a part of the baptismal rite, but it became a separate ritual in the late 700s. Matrimony, or marriage, is the sacred union of two people with the blessing of the church. Holy orders refers to the ordination of clergy*. When a person takes holy orders, he vows to serve and obey God and carry out the duties of the church. Extreme unction is the last rite of the church, in which a priest grants a dying person forgiveness for sin. The rite was (and still is) of great importance because it removed an individual's remaining sin and prepared him or her for entrance into the Kingdom of Heaven.

By the end of the Middle Ages, these seven sacraments had become standardized rituals within the Roman Catholic Church. After the Reformation in the 1500s, the newly formed Protestant churches rejected most of the sacraments. They accepted only baptism and Communion as sacred. (*See also* **Anointing; Christianity; Death and Burial in Europe; Religious Instruction.**)

* **clergy** priests, deacons, and other church officials qualified to perform church ceremonies

Saints, Lives of

Europe, except that here it remained more focused on individual saints than on collections of saints' lives. The 800s and the 900s were considered a golden age for this type of writing. Many saints' lives were written at this time to remember missionaries, women saints, and the founders of monasteries.

Muslims and Jews also wrote about the lives of their saints. The most complete source book about the lives of the early Islamic mystics is *Hilyat al-awliya (The Ornament of the Saints)*. Written about 1000, it preserved the sayings and teachings of early Sufi masters as well as details about their lives. Jewish literature also contains many stories about leading zaddikim (saints), who symbolized both strict adherence to Jewish law and a love of God and of other people. (*See also* **Bede; Books, Manuscript; Byzantine Literature.**)

See color plate 5, vol. 3.

See color plate 6, vol. 3.

Saladin

1137/1138–1193
Military leader

* **crusader** person who participated in the holy wars against the Muslims during the Middle Ages

The Muslim leader Saladin is best known for his victory over Christian crusaders* at the Battle of HITTIN, his recapture of JERUSALEM in October 1187, and his defensive struggle against the enemies of Islam during the Third Crusade. To many in the Islamic world, Saladin was a model of piety, humility, generosity, and chivalry. His exploits gained him the admiration of Muslims and the respect of many Christians.

Saladin belonged to an ambitious Kurdish family with roots in ARMENIA, but he rose to prominence in IRAQ and SYRIA. His father, Ayyub, and his uncle, Shirkuh, were in the service of powerful Syrian leaders, including the famous Nur al-Din. The prestige and influence of Saladin's father and uncle were helpful in promoting Saladin's own career.

In 1156, Saladin was put in charge of the security forces of DAMASCUS. He soon became an officer in charge of communication between Nur al-Din and his military commanders, a position that helped Saladin gain first-hand experience in running a military organization. Saladin's political power grew as a result of the significant role he played in three military expeditions against the FATIMID EMPIRE of Egypt between 1164 and 1169. During these campaigns, he displayed superior organizational talent, distinguished himself in battle, and helped seize control of the Fatimid CALIPHATE by killing its treacherous VIZIER. With his reputation firmly established, he became commander of the Syrian army in Egypt, and he was appointed vizier of the Fatimid caliphate.

In this position, Saladin quickly launched a series of military, economic, and administrative reforms in Egypt. He also organized successful military operations in Yemen, NUBIA, and North Africa and put down local rebellions. By 1171, he had emerged as a powerful force in the AYYUBID family, and he suppressed the Fatimid caliphate. When Nur al-Din died in 1174, Saladin rushed to Damascus to take control. This attempt to expand his power led to rivalries between Saladin and Nur al-Din's descendants and to years of internal struggles. By 1186, he had defeated his opponents and gained control of northern Syria, Iraq, and eastern ANATOLIA.

Saladin next turned his attention to the Christian crusaders. In July 1187, his Muslim army won a great victory over the crusaders at the Battle

Saladin was one of the most famous warriors of the Middle Ages. He was a hero to the Muslim people and won the respect of many Christians as well. Although much of his fame rests on his battles with Richard the Lionhearted during the Third Crusade, Saladin led many military campaigns, including victories in Syria, Iraq, and Egypt. Saladin's army is shown here in this French illumination from the 1300s.
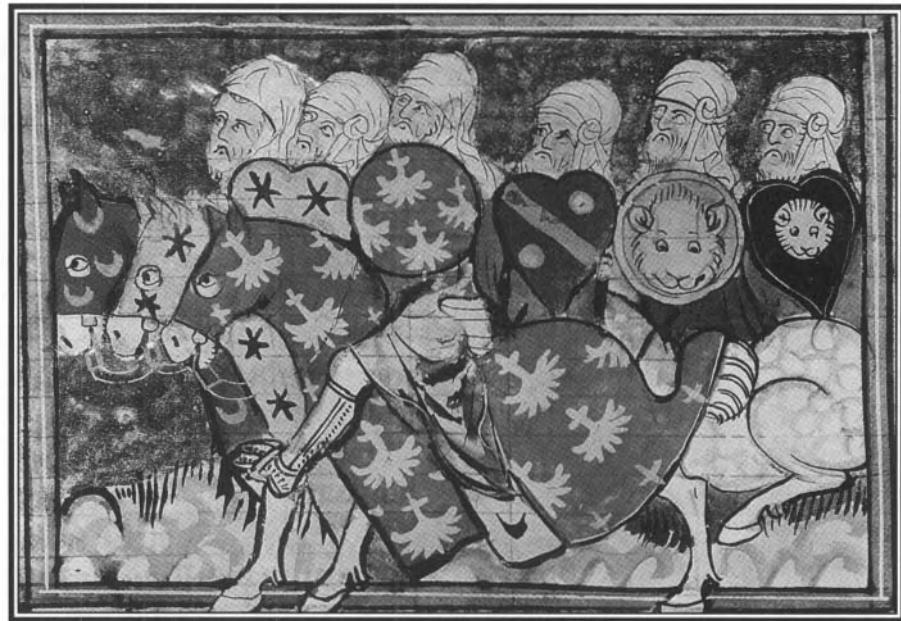
* **Holy Land** Palestine, the site of religious shrines for Christians, Jews, and Muslims

of Hittin. With the loss of military protection, crusader territories in the Holy Land* quickly fell to Saladin's army. The high point in the struggle came in October 1187, when Jerusalem surrendered to Saladin.

Despite Saladin's victories, he never succeeded in expelling the crusaders from the Middle East. Crucial fortresses along the Mediterranean coast remained in Christian hands, and the defense of these strongholds eventually led to the Third Crusade. Although Jerusalem was never reconquered, crusader attacks inflicted crippling blows to Saladin's status. The Egyptian navy was destroyed and Egypt's resources were severely strained. After losing several battles to RICHARD I THE LIONHEARTED, Saladin signed a three-year truce with the crusaders in 1192. He died in Damascus soon afterward, following a brief illness. Although Saladin had failed to destroy the crusaders, his recovery of Jerusalem won him the lasting admiration of Muslims. Among his other great achievements were the reestablishment of

* **Sunnites** Muslim majority who believed that the caliphs should rule the Islamic community

the Sunnite* branch of Islam in Egypt and the founding of Ayyubid rule in Egypt, Syria, and Iraq. (*See also* **Crusades; Egypt; Jerusalem.**)

Samarkand

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 3).

Samarkand is an ancient city located in central Asia (in present-day Uzbekistan). It is thought that the city was originally founded in the mid-500s B.C. by the Persian king Cyrus the Great. Cyrus reportedly established Samarkand as a frontier outpost to protect Persia from attacks by central Asian nomads.

Throughout much of its early history, Samarkand drifted in and out of the political influence of Persia. It was usually dominated locally by Turkish and Mongol groups. The importance of the city was its location. It was a major stopping place on the main trade route between Asia and the West, and it was one of the last outposts for merchants traveling east.

After its conquest by the Arabs in the early 700s, Samarkand became one of the easternmost outposts of Islam. At first a part of the Islamic

Empire of the UMAYYADS and ABBASIDS, the city was eventually ruled by a succession of local dynasties*. During a revival of Iranian culture in the 900s, Samarkand became a flourishing center of Islamic learning and Persian artistic and literary activity. After the late 900s, the city was ruled by a succession of Turkish dynasties. Then, in the early 1200s, it was conquered by the Mongols and incorporated into the MONGOL EMPIRE. Under Mongol rule, Samarkand went into a period of decline, and much of the city fell into ruin.

By the mid-1300s, Mongol rule of the region around Samarkand gave way to a period of anarchy. Out of this chaos emerged a local chieftain named TAMERLANE. Tamerlane reestablished order and made Samarkand his capital. Although responsible for unprecedented and unparalleled horrors in the Middle East, Russia, and India, Tamerlane brought a period of renewal to Samarkand. He spared no expense in transforming the half-ruined city into a showcase of his rule. Tamerlane brought captive craftsmen and artisans* from the lands he conquered to Samarkand and put them to work on building projects. This period saw the construction of impressive Islamic architectural works throughout the city. Some of these buildings and monuments still distinguish some of the older parts of Samarkand today. (*See also* **Genghis Khan; Iran; Iraq; Islam, Conquests of.**)

Samarra

amarra was the second great capital city of the ABBASIDS. Situated along the Tigris River north of BAGHDAD, the city was founded by caliph* al-Mu'TASIM in 835. It served as the administrative center of the Abbasid Empire until caliph al-Mu'tadid returned the government to Baghdad in 892.

Samarra was probably founded because of the hostility of the population of Baghdad to al-Mu'tasim's Turkish guard. To help reduce public anger toward these foreign troops, the caliph decided to leave Baghdad and to establish a new city. The site he chose was situated on a large plain and did not offer any commercial, geographic, or strategic advantages. It is possible that the site had been settled at various periods going back to ancient times. One legend says that al-Mu'tasim built the city in fulfillment of an ancient prophecy.

Samarra consisted of a series of isolated settlements extending like a ribbon for about 20 miles along both banks of the Tigris River and outside the perimeter of the city. The city was planned very carefully. Al-Mu'tasim built three palaces, numerous dwellings for his staff and Turkish army, and an extensive economic system, including a market area surrounding the main mosque*. Careful attention was paid to keeping the military separate from the general population. Military settlements were situated a considerable distance from the main markets, and slave girls were imported to provide wives for the Turkish troops, who were forbidden to marry other women.

The main thoroughfare of Samarra was called the al-Sarijah. This road extended the entire length of the city, and government buildings, the main mosque, and city markets were all situated along it. All important

roads ran parallel to it. The absence of major bisecting roads was probably a deliberate effort to discourage movement between military settlements and civilian areas. Samarra was thus essentially a series of military camps kept separate from one another.

Samarra grew and expanded under later caliphs, and the distinction between military settlements and other neighborhoods gradually blurred. Increasingly, Samarra took on the features of an integrated city and lost those of a military camp. Despite the expansion and changes that occurred in the mid-800s, caliph al-Mu'tadid abandoned Samarra in 892 and moved the government back to Baghdad. Thereafter, Samarra declined rapidly. (*See also* **Caliphate; Iraq.**)

Sanctuary, Right of

* **abbey** monastery under the rule of an abbot or abbess

In the Middle Ages, fugitives from the law had the right to protection and shelter in churches. This was called the right of sanctuary. Every church or chapel, including its churchyard, was considered a sanctuary—a place where the accused could claim asylum and not be pursued. Some abbeys* had large areas of sanctuary, with limits clearly marked by signs, such as stone crosses.

The fugitive in sanctuary had to surrender any weapons, make confession to church officials, and place himself under their supervision. Then he had a set time, often 40 days, to make a choice: surrender to the law and stand trial, or publicly confess guilt and go into exile. The sanctuary was guarded by a group of villagers who would be fined if the fugitive escaped. If he failed to decide after the allotted time, the church was forbidden to give him any more food or drink.

Fugitives who chose exile lost all their possessions. They had to walk to the borders of the kingdom, bareheaded and barefoot, keeping to the highway and carrying a cross as a sign of protection. Even so, their enemies might lie in ambush. If they left the highway or returned from exile without the king's permission, they could be executed.

In many countries, the right of sanctuary existed until modern times. Though France suppressed it in the 1400s, churches could still offer sanctuary in England until 1623 and in Prussia until 1794. (*See also* **Law.**)

Santiago de Compostela

* **apostle** early follower of Jesus who traveled and spread his teachings

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place

Santiago de Compostela is a city in the province of Galicia in northwestern Spain. The city dates from the early 800s, when an ancient tomb was discovered there. The tomb was thought to be that of the apostle* James. According to tradition, James's body was brought to the area because he had Christianized the region through his preaching. Shortly after the discovery of the tomb, a small church was built above it, and James was eventually declared the patron saint of Spain.

The tomb of James immediately became an important pilgrimage* site, and a city developed around it. In the late 800s, the original church was replaced by a larger one, but that one was destroyed by the Arab caliph al-MANSUR when he captured and destroyed the city in 997. Construction

* **Romanesque** referring to a style of architecture developed in Italy and western Europe between the Roman and Gothic periods and characterized by round arches, thick walls, and small windows

* **consecrate** to declare someone or something sacred in a church ceremony

* **ambulatory** passageway around the choir and altar sections of a church

* **relic** object cherished for its association with a martyr or saint

of a large, Romanesque* cathedral began around 1075, and this church was consecrated* in 1211. The design of this church, often called the "pilgrimage plan," was shared by certain other pilgrimage churches of the period. It had galleries over the aisles as well as an ambulatory* with chapels situated away from the center to accommodate large crowds of worshipers moving through the church to visit the relics*.

In the 1100s and the 1200s, Santiago de Compostela was one of the most important spiritual centers of Western Christianity, attracting thousands of pilgrims each year. Only Jerusalem and Rome were more important pilgrimage centers. The city and its cathedral also served Christians as a counter to the Muslims in the rest of Spain. Santiago became a vivid symbol of the ancient roots and current vitality of the Christian church in Spain. (*See also* **Mass, Liturgy of; Pilgrimage; Relics; Romanesque Architecture.**)

Sasanians

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 3).

* **pagan** word used by Christians to mean non-Christian and believing in several gods

* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization such as a government

* **magistrate** ruling official of a town

For more than four centuries (from 224 to 651), the Sasanian dynasty* ruled Persia, the region of present-day IRAN and IRAQ. Sasanian rule ended in the mid-600s when the Arabs conquered the region.

The founder of the Sasanian dynasty was Ardesir I, who came to power in about 224. Ardesir had killed the former king and acquired the title "king of kings" by winning the support of other local rulers. He further strengthened his position by placing members of his family in government. Ardesir's son, Sabuhr I, led Persia's military struggle against the Roman Empire—a conflict that would continue throughout Sasanian history. In 259, Sabuhr I defeated the Romans and captured the Roman emperor Valerian.

The Sasanians established the Zoroastrian religion—founded by the prophet Zoroaster in the sixth century B.C. and practiced in western Persia at that time—as the state religion. This decision led to the persecution of non-Zoroastrians, including Manichaeans, Christians, and native Persian pagans*, whom the Zoroastrian church condemned as worshipers of demons.

Sabuhr II, who reigned from 309 to 379, succeeded in centralizing the Sasanian Empire by establishing a state bureaucracy* to administer the region. The government bureaucracy was run by a chief civil official, and most of its members were recruited from the lower ranks of the priesthood and the nobility. However, doctors, astrologers, poets, and musicians also served the government.

When ARMENIA converted to Christianity and developed close ties to the Roman Empire in the 300s, Sabuhr II invaded Armenia, which at that time divided its loyalty between Rome and Persia. Sabuhr II also encouraged the Zoroastrian campaign against other religions. During his reign, taxes on Christians doubled, and persecutions against Jews and Manichaeans increased. Despite periods of persecution, Christianity flourished. Some Sasanian rulers tolerated Christians, and some actually favored them, appointing Christians to positions of authority as magistrates*, tax collectors, bankers, doctors, and ambassadors. The top jobs, however, were reserved for the Zoroastrian clergy.

Xusro I (pronounced Khusrau), whose reign began in 531, was considered the model of a wise and just ruler. He was known for his support of scholars. His grandson, Xusro II, undertook successful military campaigns against the BYZANTINE EMPIRE. He invaded deep into Byzantine territory, taking JERUSALEM in 614 and EGYPT in 619. In 622, the Byzantines defeated the Sasanians, weakening the empire, which was beginning to feel growing pressure from ARABIA. Arab forces raided Sasanian territory several times and then attacked in full force in the 630s. The Arabs defeated the Sasanians in major battles in 636 and 642, opening the Iranian plateau to Arab conquest. This marked the beginning of the Islamic era in Iran.

The Sasanian cultural heritage survived the Arab onslaught and enriched the Islamic civilization that developed after the 600s. Many Islamic writers and rulers admired the Sasanians, and some later Islamic dynasties in Iran traced their ancestry to the Sasanians. Unlike many other lands conquered by the Arabs, Iran never adopted the Arabic language. (*See also* **Arabic Language and Literature; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Religion of; Islamic Art and Architecture.**)

Scandinavia

See map in Vikings (vol. 4).

Aside from scattered references in ancient sources, Scandinavia was little known to the rest of the world before the VIKING raiders from the region began terrorizing Europe in the 800s. The Christianization of the Scandinavian nations—Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland—between about 950 and 1100 linked the area more closely to European civilization.

Early History

The earliest surviving reference to Scandinavian peoples appeared in a work by the Greek geographer Strabo, who described the writings of a sailor's journey to the far north around the fourth century B.C. The Roman writer Pliny, writing in the first century A.D., used the name *Scadinavia* (the *n* was added later) to refer to the Germanic tribes who lived around the Baltic and North Seas. The Roman historian Tacitus, writing in his *Germania* in A.D. 98, discusses the kingdom of Sweden, the Lapp people of northern Scandinavia, and the Finns. Other references to Scandinavia appear in the early medieval period. However, it was not until the 800s—when CAROLINGIAN Europeans traveled to Scandinavia and the Vikings raided Europe—that Scandinavia entered European history.

The Scandinavians did not write about their early history. What little is known about them (from before 800) comes from archaeological remains and artifacts found at settlement sites, graves, and other places. Among the articles discovered were spears, swords, horns, pictorial stones, and gold jewelry.

In the early Middle Ages, the common political unit in southern Scandinavia was the *herred,* or district. Decisions were made by yeomen (free farmers) who met at regular intervals at a local public assembly. A central assembly generally approved a new king's right to rule, and when the king attended such assemblies, he did so as a guest. The assemblies

Scandinavian Society

Yeomen, or free farmers, formed the basis of medieval Scandinavian society. Those yeomen who owned their own land had greater status than those who rented from or worked for others. Yeomen, at their public assemblies, made decisions affecting the community and gave judgments in lawsuits.

Local leaders rose to positions of power by means of noble birth, wealth, marriage to a woman of noble family, or royal favor. Men could also achieve leadership through personal qualities—especially bravery, which Scandinavians deemed the highest virtue.

* **bishopric** office of or area governed by a bishop

* **archbishopric** church district headed by an archbishop

could replace the monarch if he broke the law or failed to bring prosperity and success to the region. Over time, the king played a greater role in defense—building fortifications, guarding coasts, and constructing roads and bridges. As his power increased, so did the size of his entourage (those who went with him when he moved from place to place).

During the Middle Ages, the peoples of Scandinavia were united by shared language and customs. For a time, they were politically unified as well. However, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, and Iceland did not maintain their unity. Iceland was most distinctive in being ruled by chieftains in a "democracy" until it came under the authority of the Norwegian king.

Denmark

The first reference to Denmark appears in Carolingian chronicles of the ninth century, which report frontier skirmishes against a Danish king named Godfred. Soon after, Vikings from Denmark and other parts of Scandinavia came from the north to explore, raid, colonize, and trade in Europe. The first Vikings set out in small groups under the leadership of war chieftains. Gorm the Old and his son Harald II Bluetooth were the first to launch full-scale attacks beyond the Baltic and North Seas.

In the 980s, Harald's son, Sweyn I Forkbeard, set out to conquer England and became the English king in 1014. Sweyn was succeeded by his son Cnut I the Great, who spent most of his time in England and greatly admired English civilization. He not only allowed ANGLO-SAXON customs to continue in England, he also introduced them in Denmark. Danish interest in England died with Cnut and his sons. Succeeding Danish kings concentrated on raising the standard of living in Denmark. However, European interest in Scandinavia increased after the mid-1000s. Several historical sources reported the growing contact between Scandinavia and the rest of Europe. Adam of Bremen's *History of the Bishops of the Church of Hamburg,* written in the 1070s, described in detail the missionary work carried out in Denmark by the German church. The most outstanding of the Danish historians who emerged at this time was Saxo Grammaticus. His *Gesta Danorum,* a massive history of the Danes from the beginning of the monarchy to about 1185, compares in size and worthiness to BEDE's great *Ecclesiastical History of the English People.*

Sweyn II Estridsen, Cnut's nephew and an Anglo-Saxon earl, was the first and most important Danish king. In 1042, he received Denmark as his share of Cnut's vast North Sea empire and ruled it until his death in 1074. Sweyn promoted the growth of Christianity in Denmark. Working with the archbishop of Hamburg, he organized the Danish church into eight bishoprics*—an act that greatly impressed Pope GREGORY VII, who wrote Sweyn a series of friendly letters. The church was further strengthened in 1103 when a Danish archbishopric* was established in Lund.

For 60 years following Sweyn's death, Denmark was ruled by his five sons, who were elected king in succession. After the last son died in 1134, family members fought bitterly for the crown. Family rivalries led to the election of two kings. Both candidates appealed to the German emperor FREDERICK I BARBAROSSA, who tried to divide the kingdom between them. Family rivalries resurfaced many times until one member of the family, Waldemar I, finally emerged as the sole ruler.

The Waldemar Age—from 1157 to 1241 and including the reigns of Waldemar I and his sons Cnut VI and Waldemar II—was the high point of Danish medieval history. The kings and the archbishops of Lund worked together to strengthen both church and state. Denmark expanded its power in the Baltic, conquering Estonia and German coastal areas. Eventually, tensions developed between church and state, the nobility revolted, and the monarchy fell.

The monarchy enjoyed a brief revival under Waldemar IV in the mid-1300s. His remarkable daughter Margaret, married to the Norwegian king, established the Nordic Union that united Denmark, Norway, and Sweden into a single Scandinavian government in 1397. Her son, Olaf, ruled both Norway and Denmark, and her grandnephew, Eric of Pomerania, served as king of Sweden. The union prospered under Margaret, but after her death, the Swedes withdrew and chose their own king. Denmark and Norway remained united for four centuries.

Sweden

In the early Middle Ages, Sweden was virtually unknown to the rest of Europe. Historians Jordanes (a Goth) and Procopius (a Byzantine) recorded stories of sailors, traders, and Scandinavian officers who served in the armies of Gothic Italy and Byzantium. According to their accounts, three major tribes lived in Sweden—Goths, Swedes, and Ostrogoths. Other, smaller tribes in western Sweden were part of the Danish Empire.

The peoples of Sweden lived in small villages and engaged in farming, herding, hunting, and fishing. The climate was favorable for AGRICULTURE, and trade was also important to the economy. Archaeological evidence shows that the inhabitants of Sweden traded with the Romans and Greeks and later with the FRANKS, ANGLO-SAXONS, and Irish. Birka, a new town built on an island in Lake Mälar, became a center of international trade and a temporary residence of the king of Sweden.

During the Viking era (800–1000), the kingdom of Sweden was a loose federation of the three main tribes. The Swedes chose the king, and the other tribes then decided whether to accept or reject the Swedish choice. The Swedish king, in fact, had little power except in time of war, and sometimes the Goths preferred to have their own king. From earliest medieval times, the Swedish people were linked by water. They traveled readily along the ocean coast and on rivers and lakes. Scandinavian ships—light, swift, and seaworthy—both united the Swedes and other Scandinavian peoples and allowed them to sail across the seas and down the rivers of Europe.

In the 900s, Sweden was Christianized, probably by English missionaries. Swedish kings were Christian, although several early kings were expelled by their pagan* opponents. In the mid-1000s, Christianity gained a stronger foothold in Sweden when a diocese* was established in the new city of Skara.

During the later Middle Ages, the Swedish kingdom expanded eastward. Sweden established settlements on both sides of the Gulf of Finland, attempted to control trade in northern Russia, and colonized the sparsely populated northern parts of Sweden. The 14th century brought civil war between the Swedish kings and the nobility who opposed them. The conflict ended when Margaret of Denmark was recognized as ruler of all three

A stela is a freestanding stone that is carved or inscribed. It is used to mark a grave or to commemorate an important event. Stelae are an ancient art form. The one shown here is from Gotland, a Swedish island in the Baltic Sea, and dates from before the year 1000. Scandinavian stelae sometimes depicted scenes from Viking mythology.

* **pagan**   word used by Christians to mean non-Christian and believing in several gods

* **diocese**   church district under a bishop's authority

Scandinavian kingdoms. However, later, the Swedes left the Nordic Union, and Sweden remained an independent kingdom until the close of the Middle Ages.

Norway

Medieval Norway was an agricultural society with few villages and fewer towns. Most people lived on farms and supplemented their farming with fishing, hunting, and wood cutting. Fish made up a large part of the daily diet of the people who lived in the northern and western coastal districts.

As the population of Europe increased after 1000, so did the demand for Norwegian stockfish (fish dried in the open air without salt). In addition, the fasting rules of the church banned the eating of meat on certain days, which meant that many people ate fish instead. This further increased the demand for Norwegian stockfish, which accounted for as much as 80 to 90 percent of Norway's exports. With the money they made from selling stockfish, the Norwegians imported much-needed grain and malt. The western port of Bergen became a bustling center of foreign trade, especially with England and Germany.

As the population of medieval Norway increased, settlement expanded into the interior and into the sparsely populated north. Overpopulation in the southern and western coastal areas may have been the main force behind the Viking colonization of the Shetland, Orkney, Hebrides, and Faeroe Islands in the North Atlantic. Even after the Viking emigrations from Norway, the country's population continued to grow. In the early 1300s, the population was between 300,000 and 500,000. However, the BLACK DEATH of 1349–1350 and the epidemics that followed drastically reduced the Norwegian population.

The unification of Norway, which had begun with the reign of King Harald I Fairhair in the late 800s, proceeded with periods of military struggle that pitted the king against local chieftains who resisted his rule. In the late 1300s, Olaf IV (the son of Norway's King Haakon VI and the Danish princess Margaret) became king of Denmark even before he inherited his father's Norwegian throne. Olaf's reign strengthened the Danish-Norwegian union that eventually lasted for more than four centuries.

Iceland

Iceland is an island in the North Atlantic Ocean. In the mid-800s, it was inhabited by only a few Irish hermits. A Scandinavian explorer discovered Iceland by mistake when a fierce wind blew him off course as he sailed to the Faeroe Islands. His chance discovery of the remote island led to further exploratory visits and then to large-scale colonization.

Between 870 and 930, thousands of Scandinavians settled in Iceland. Most were Norwegian, but some came from Denmark, from Sweden, and from Scandinavian settlements in SCOTLAND, IRELAND, and the North Atlantic islands. The main reasons for the large-scale emigration from Scandinavia seem to have been overpopulation and the dissatisfaction of local chieftains in western Norway with policies of King Harald I Fairhair. By 930, more than 30,000 Scandinavians had settled in Iceland.

Fearful of allowing a king to gain too much power, the settlers established a government that gave local chieftains the authority to control the legislative and judicial processes. The chieftains gave land to their followers

Remember: Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of Volume 4 will guide you to more information on many topics.

in exchange for allegiance and the payment of taxes. The chieftains also provided their followers with protection, settlement of disputes, and places of worship. As more settlers came to Iceland and the number of disputes between neighbors increased, judicial assemblies became necessary for areas larger than those controlled by a single chieftain.

The most important assembly was the Althing, an islandwide assembly that had been established by 930. It met for two weeks every June. The legislative body associated with it—the Lögrétta—had 144 members, two bishops (after Christianity was introduced to Iceland), and a "lawspeaker" whose main duty was to recite the laws to the assembly from memory. (Iceland's laws were first written down around 1117.)

When Iceland was divided into four regions in 965, the Althing had four Quarter Courts whose members were chosen from the island's 36 chieftaincies. The Fifth Court was introduced in the early 1000s to serve as an appeals court. After the Lögrétta adopted Christianity in about 1000, the chieftains found a way to control the new religion the way they had controlled the old pagan religion—by building their own churches and becoming priests themselves or appointing their own priests. After two dioceses were established at Skálholt (1056) and Hólar (1106), the Althing chose the bishops, who were usually relatives of the chieftains. When a TITHE (church tax) was imposed in 1097, the chieftains kept half the money they collected in their districts.

Iceland's main product was a rough wool cloth, but the island never seemed to have enough cloth to export in exchange for the grain it needed. Despite Iceland's attempt to trade with other places, its only consistent trading partner was Norway. Iceland's commercial tie to Norway was strengthened in 1022 by a trading agreement.

In the 1200s, strife among Icelandic chieftains became so intense, and their opposition to church reforms so extreme, that the people called on the king of Norway for help. In 1262, the island's leading chieftains agreed to a political union with Norway. In return for an annual tax, the king kept peace on the island and passed no laws that were burdensome to the Icelanders. However, after the union, Norwegian laws were introduced, and the authority of the Althing and the Lögrétta was reduced.

By the end of the Middle Ages, there was peace in Iceland, and the island was receiving basic necessities—but at a price. Although the island had been settled in part to escape royal power, it was now dependent on the united kingdom of Denmark and Norway. (*See also* **Fishing, Fish Trade; German Language and Literature; Historical Writing; Kievan Rus; Law; Migrations, Germanic; Scandinavia, Culture of; Ships and Shipbuilding.**)

Scandinavia, Culture of

The literary culture of medieval Scandinavia consisted of two types of material: the old mythology and sagas (long tales or poems about heroes from Scandinavia's pre-Christian past), and the newly created material such as rhymed chronicles, saints' lives, sermons, and other religious works written on Christian themes.

Mythology and Sagas. Most of what we know about pre-Christian Scandinavian culture comes from medieval Icelandic poems called Eddas,

Golden Hoards

Early Scandinavian culture encompassed more than literature. Scandinavian artists and craftspeople produced magnificent weapons and jewelry. Long two-edged swords, spearheads, battle-axes, pins, bracelets, and necklaces have been found in graves and settlement sites throughout the region. The most spectacular finds are superbly decorated gold necklaces. Bracteates—thin gold disks meant to be sewn onto clothing—have also been found. Many bracteates were stamped with figures of heroes or gods; their wearers believed that the bracteates had supernatural powers.

* **heathen** not believing in the God of the Bible

which recorded the Norse legends about heroes, gods, giants, and the origins of the world. One important source of information about Norse legend and myth is a manuscript called the Codex Regius of the *Poetic Edda.* Another is the *Prose Edda,* a handbook of poetry compiled by Icelander Snorri Sturluson around 1220.

The chief god of the pre-Christian Scandinavians was called All-father. He was supreme over 12 other gods, the best known of whom were Odin and Thor. Odin—later equated with All-father—was the highest and oldest of these gods. Wednesday (Woden's day in Old English) was named for him. Thor, the strongest of the gods, was often pictured in battle against evil forces represented by giants, trolls, wolves, and other creatures, such as the Midgard serpent, who lived in the ocean and was coiled around the earth. Thursday (Thor's day) was named for this god. Two other weekdays bear the names of Scandinavian dieties. The name of Tyr, the boldest of the gods, was given to Tuesday (Tyr's day), while the name of Odin's wife, Frigg, the preeminent goddess, was given to Friday.

The sagas are long narratives that describe the deeds of notable Vikings and other Scandinavians. Although the sagas are concerned mainly with events of the 10th and the 11th centuries or earlier, they were not written down until the 1200s and the 1300s. Because the sagas were passed along orally and preserved only in memory for many years, there are various versions of each popular tale. The *Greenlanders' Saga* and the *Saga of Erik the Red* are of special interest to modern historians. They tell how Norse adventurers founded a colony on Greenland, a large island off the coast of North America, and how Vikings became the first Europeans to see the Americas.

Rhymed Chronicles. The rhymed chronicle originated on the European Continent in the late 1100s and appeared in Scandinavia in the late 1200s and the early 1300s. A rhymed chronicle is an account in verse of a historical event or series of events, usually in honor of an aristocrat or aristocratic family. The style and structure of the medieval Scandinavian chronicles were based on models from elsewhere in Europe, especially from Germany.

The first and perhaps the finest of the Scandinavian rhymed chronicles is *Erikskrönikan (The Chronicle of Erik).* Composed anonymously between 1322 and 1332, *Erikskrönikan* set the pattern for all later Scandinavian chronicles. The longest surviving version of the chronicle contains 4,545 lines. It opens with the following lines: "May God grant you honor and praise./He is the source of all comely virtue,/All earthly pleasure and heavenly grace,/For he reigns over them both."

Erikskrönikan chronicles Sweden's history from the rule of Erik Eriksson in 1249 to the selection of Magnus II Eriksson as king in 1319. Most of the first part of the poem, which chronicles events to the year 1301, is about a war against the heathen* Finns. The next section narrates the events of the next few decades, including a 1309 sea battle between the king of Norway and Duke Erik, the brother of King Birger Magnusson of Sweden. The last part of the chronicle describes a feast at Nyköping Castle to which King Birger invites his brothers Erik and Waldemar. The king imprisons and executes his brothers in a scene that forms the emotional core of the chronicle and raises it to the level of a true epic poem. None of the

other Scandinavian chronicles comes close to achieving its high artistic standard.

Of the Scandinavian chronicles that followed *Erikskrönikan,* only *Karlskrönikan,* the longest of the rhymed chronicles (9,628 lines), is of special interest. This is because it contains valuable historical information. Completed in 1452, *Karlskrönikan* chronicles Sweden's history from 1390 to 1452. The poem seems to contain two distinct chronicles and is probably the work of two anonymous authors.

Religious Works.   The medieval religious literature of Scandinavia and Iceland consisted of commentaries on the BIBLE, translations, SERMONS, lives of saints, accounts of visions and revelations, theological* handbooks, prayer books, and other devotional writings. These works were not fundamentally Scandinavian. They closely resemble Latin sources and were part of the teaching and preaching of missionaries who Christianized Scandinavia.

* **theological** pertaining to the nature of God, the study of religion, and religious beliefs

CHRISTIANITY was introduced to Scandinavia in the 800s, first to Denmark and Sweden, and later to Norway, Iceland, and Greenland. St. Ansgar, the first archbishop of Hamburg in northern Germany, is credited with bringing Christianity to Denmark and Sweden about 830. However, missionaries from the British Isles also went to Scandinavia. They may have been the ones who inspired Scandinavian writers to use their native languages. The missionary period lasted until 1104, when the church established an archbishopric* in Lund, in southern Sweden, to serve the needs of Sweden and Denmark. In the mid-1100s, two additional archbishoprics were created in Scandinavia.

* **archbishopric** church district headed by an archbishop

Medieval Scandinavians were deeply interested in stories about the lives of saints. More than 100 saints and groups of saints had their stories told in Icelandic and Norwegian sagas, and collections of saints' lives were constantly revised and expanded to make the legends fuller and better. Literature about Mary, the mother of Jesus, was also extremely popular in Scandinavia, especially legends about the miracles she was said to have performed. Stories about her life circulated in Iceland as early as the 1100s, and a long series of Swedish tales about her miracles was also found.

Two nearly complete manuscripts from about 1200—one Icelandic and the other Norwegian—are the best surviving source of medieval Scandinavian sermons. Theological handbooks, schoolbooks, prayer books, and other works used in worship from the medieval period were mainly in Latin or translated from Latin. As with most Scandinavian religious literature, inspiration for these works came from abroad, particularly from Germany. (*See also* **Anglo-Saxons; English Language and Literature; Handbooks (Fachschrifttum); Latin Language; Saints, Lives of; Scandinavia; Vikings.**)

Schism, Great

* **papacy** office of the pope and his administrators

From 1378 to 1417, the Roman Catholic Church was divided by allegiances to rival papacies*: one centered in AVIGNON in France, the other in ROME, Italy. Known as the Great Schism, this division was not about matters of faith; it involved a conflict between persons and politics.

The papacy had moved to Avignon in 1308 because of political conflicts. For the next 70 years, the Avignon popes, all of whom were French, had the support of all Catholics. In 1378, Pope Gregory XI moved the papacy

back to Rome. He died shortly thereafter. The people of Rome, who feared that the papacy would be returned to Avignon, demanded the election of an Italian pope. Under pressure, the cardinals* chose an Italian archbishop, who became Pope Urban VI.

Urban VI soon lost the support of many church leaders because of his policies and his abusive behavior. The cardinals declared his election invalid and elected a French cardinal as Pope Clement VII. Urban VI, however, refused to step down, so Clement fled to Avignon, where he set up a rival papal court. These rival courts at Rome and Avignon had the support of different parts of Europe. Support for Avignon came from France, Scotland, parts of Spain, and Sicily. The Roman papacy was recognized by England, Ireland, and most other states of Europe. Some states remained neutral.

The existence of two papacies, each with substantial support, caused tensions and problems throughout western Europe. Finally, in the 1390s, some European leaders began pressing for an end to the schism. In 1394, the French sought a diplomatic solution to the problem: the voluntary abdication* of both reigning popes and the election of a single new one. When both popes refused, a general church council was convened. The Council of Pisa of 1409 deposed* both the Avignon pope, Benedict XIII, and the Roman pope, Gregory XII, and elected a new pope, Alexander V, to head a united church. Although this solution was supported by most European rulers, the deposed popes still had many followers, and they refused to step down. The result was that instead of two popes, there were now three. Neither Alexander V nor his successor, John XXIII, could gather enough support to establish a unified papacy.

The Great Schism was resolved finally in 1417 at the Council of Constance. The Roman pope, Gregory XII, was persuaded to resign. The Avignon pope, Benedict XIII, and the other pope, John XXIII, were deposed. A new pope, Martin V, was chosen to head a unified papacy. Martin had substantial support throughout Europe, and the schism ended. While it lasted, the Great Schism delayed church reforms and raised important questions concerning papal authority. On this last issue, the Council of Constance proclaimed the doctrine* of "conciliarism"—the idea that a general council representing the whole church was the supreme religious authority to which even popes had to submit. (*See also* **Papacy, Origins and Development.**)

Scholasticism

S cholasticism was a way of thinking that sought to combine classical, Christian, and worldly knowledge into a single belief system. The term *Scholasticism* comes from the Latin word *schola,* which originally meant a learned conversation or debate but later came to refer to a school. Scholasticism was a way of teaching and learning that was widely used in the UNIVERSITIES of Europe, especially in the disciplines of theology* and philosophy*.

The Scholastic method originated in the work of European scholars of church law and theologians of the 11th and the 12th centuries.

* **cardinal** high church official, ranking just below the pope

* **abdication** giving up the throne voluntarily or under pressure

* **depose** to remove from high office

* **doctrine** principle, theory, or belief presented for acceptance

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

* **philosophy** study of ideas, including science

Albertus Magnus was a major figure in the Scholastic movement of the 13th century. Albert was interested in the ideas of Aristotle and tried to bring these ideas into harmony with the Christian faith. Scholasticism was a way of teaching and learning that was widely used in medieval European universities.

Scholasticism developed as these scholars tried to find agreement among the authorities. The Bible was, for many people, the highest authority. Yet some sections of the Bible seemed to contradict other sections. Furthermore, the ideas of other respected authorities, such as the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, did not always agree with the Bible. The theologian's task was to closely examine these conflicting texts and then to interpret them in such a way as to make them agree with one another.

Scholars of church law faced a similar task when confronted with centuries-old statements from church councils, popes, and other religious authorities. Sometimes, these statements were in conflict with one another. However, since all such statements were believed to be inspired by true Christian faith and human reason, agreement was very important. Scholasticism grew out of the need to find harmony among different authorities. Scholastics often used the principles of logical argument developed by Aristotle to accomplish their work.

By 1200, Scholasticism was flourishing in the universities of Europe. In these centers of learning, Scholasticism found expression in three types of writing that were popular in the medieval schools—commentary, question, and summa. The commentary consisted of a detailed examination of a textual passage. The question consisted of a written debate or discussion of an issue. The summa was a summary of an issue that was used to introduce a subject to new students. All three types of writing reflected two basic principles of Scholasticism—belief in the importance of authoritative religious and scholarly texts, and close attention to detail. After the 1500s, Scholasticism changed when summaries came to be used more frequently than commentaries and questions, and agreement among different sources ceased to be the main purpose of study. (*See also* **Aquinas, Thomas, St.**)

Schools

See color plate 13, vol. 1.

D uring the Middle Ages, schools played an important role in both western European and Islamic society. In general, schools made no attempt to provide a broad public education. Instead, they provided a private, specialized education aimed at promoting LITERACY among certain groups of the population and training young people for specific roles, especially religious roles, within their society.

European Schools

There were various types of schools in medieval Europe, including cathedral schools, monastic schools, grammar schools, and palace schools. Throughout the medieval period, education at these schools was a luxury generally available to only a small minority of the male population, and schools were established and supported primarily by the church.

Cathedral Schools.   Medieval cathedral schools existed to train CLERGY for their religious duties. Thus, education was largely practical and emphasized knowledge of Latin and church law, singing of hymns, preparation of documents, performance of the liturgy*, and administration of the SACRAMENTS. Literature, the liberal arts, theology, and philosophy were

* **liturgy** form of a religious service, particularly the words spoken or sung

sometimes included as part of the curriculum as well, but only to make the study of the BIBLE easier.

The beginnings of cathedral schools date from the late Roman Empire. Before that time, clergy members were educated in secular* Roman schools, and they learned religious skills through practice and imitation while serving in the church. As Roman schools closed, bishops established schools of their own. The first bishops' schools were founded in the 300s and the 400s. By the 600s and the 700s, cathedral schools had become important centers of learning in northern Italy and elsewhere in Europe. In the early 800s, CHARLEMAGNE ordered all cathedrals to provide schools for training religious leaders. As a result, cathedral schools were opened in all the cathedral towns of his realm. As these towns grew, so did the schools. Many gained a reputation for the excellence of their teaching and curriculum. Cathedral schools began to dominate medieval education and intellectual life in the late 900s. By the 1000s and the 1100s, cathedral schools at PARIS, Rheims, Chartres, Liège, TOLEDO, COLOGNE, and CANTERBURY had become leading centers of European intellectual life.

The intellectual excellence of schools depended on the master, or head teacher. Until the 1100s, when a license to teach was required, no specific standards governed the choice and conduct of the master. He usually had to be at least 25 years old, although younger masters were known. His classroom might be located in the cathedral itself, in a room in the bishop's palace, or in a special building reserved for his use.

Curriculum varied from school to school, depending on the resources available and the special interests of the master. Elementary instruction always included learning to read and write basic Latin, to sing, and to calculate. Instruction in reading began with recognition of the letters of the alphabet. This went hand in hand with writing, as students learned to copy letters on parchment or wax tablets. Students used books of psalms* as their first reading texts, and they memorized the contents. While learning the psalms, students were introduced to singing and chanting.

Calculation was another basic skill students had to master. In addition to learning how to perform simple arithmetical functions, students also learned how to determine the time of day and the date of important holy days, which required understanding complicated formulas related to the movement of the sun, moon, and other heavenly bodies. Students also learned how to measure fields, tally harvests, and perform various financial transactions.

As students learned basic skills, they also were introduced to the study of Latin, the language of the church. The study of Latin began in earnest after reading, writing, calculation, and chant were mastered. Students were expected not only to be able to read Latin, but also to write and speak it with ease. These skills often took many years to acquire.

From the 6th to the 13th century, learning was commonly divided into the seven liberal arts, consisting of the trivium (grammar, rhetoric*, and logic) and the quadrivium (arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy). Some students also pursued studies in history, geography, law, science, and medicine. The main purpose of all training was to better understand the Christian faith. Uncovering the meanings of the Bible was a

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

* **psalms** sacred songs from the Old Testament of the Bible

* **rhetoric** art of speaking or writing effectively
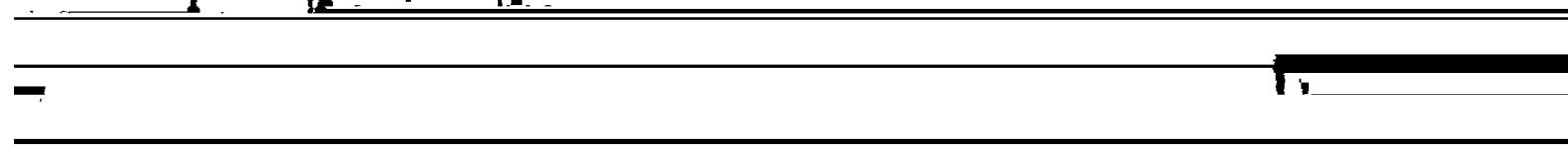
Charlemagne's successor, Louis I the Pious, led reforms to remove all secular influences from the monasteries and to limit monastic schooling to future monks. Such reforms, continued through the Middle Ages, tended to push the responsibility for public education onto other types of schools. Monasteries that continued to teach secular students separated them from the novices* by creating classrooms in town or outside the monastery walls. Over the course of the Middle Ages, monastic schools declined in importance, but they were still essential for the education of monks into the 11th century.

*** novice** person in a religious order during a period of probation before taking vows

Grammar Schools.   Medieval grammar schools taught young people the crafts of writing and reading. The most basic type of grammar school was a simple, casual meeting between a student and any literate person. Beginning in the 500s, grammar schools were incorporated within monastic schools. Many of these schools offered education to outsiders as well as to young novices and others connected with the monastery.

In the 800s, ALCUIN OF YORK, the tutor of Charlemagne's son, initiated reforms that led to the development of grammar schools in cathedrals. These schools were modeled after those in the monasteries. In 1215, a church council made grammar schools mandatory for all cathedrals. Around the same time, religious orders of FRANCISCANS and DOMINICANS established grammar schools in cities. These schools offered the basics of learning to townspeople and recruited future members for the order. Some of the more important urban grammar schools provided the elementary preparation for future university students, and Franciscan and Dominican schools were crucial in the founding of the early universities.

Palace Schools.   Schools were an important feature of court life in many early medieval monarchies*. By educating the children of nobles, these schools helped secure the loyalty of noble families to the king. Instruction at palace schools was quite elementary, and much of the training was vocational. The children were educated in the military and bureaucratic duties of a court noble for the roles they would assume when grown up. The atmosphere in palace schools was informal. There was no fixed curriculum, and instruction could take place anywhere in the palace and at any time. Relationships among students and between students and their teachers was close.

*** monarchy** nation ruled by a king or queen

The best-known palace school was that of the CAROLINGIANS, particularly during the reign of Charlemagne. Royal patronage* attracted scholars to this school from all over Europe. In the 1000s and the 1100s, the academic functions of palace schools were taken over by monastic and cathedral schools, and later by universities.

*** patronage** the support of an artist, writer, or scholar by a person of wealth and influence

Islamic Schools

The most important type of school in the Islamic world was the Muslim college. Developed by Muslims in the 600s and the 700s, the college was unknown in western Europe until the late 1100s. Education at a Muslim college consisted mainly of studies of the QUR'AN, Islamic law, and Arabic grammar and rhetoric. In the early Islamic era, colleges were located in mosques*, and students came from home to attend classes. In the 900s, a new type of college developed in which an inn was added to house students

*** mosque** Muslim place of worship

* **synagogue** building of worship for Jews

from out of town. This became necessary since students might require many years to finish their education.

By the 1000s, another form of Muslim college was developed—the madrasa. The madrasa was a private institution located in a building complex that combined the teaching function of a mosque with housing for students. Madrasas flourished, and a network of them was established throughout the Islamic world. The curriculum remained the same as that of the earlier colleges.

Besides the mosque and the madrasa, education also was available at monastery colleges and at institutions that combined the various functions of the mosque, madrasa, and monastery. All these Muslim colleges taught only subjects that related to Islamic religion and law. Greek sciences, including philosophy and mathematics, were taught privately in the homes of scholars or in other institutions, such as hospitals.

Jewish Schools

Education was very important among the Jews, and various forms of private and community-sponsored institutions developed in JEWISH COMMUNITIES throughout the medieval world. As with Christian and Muslim education, Jewish education also was focused on religion. Jewish schools, however, reflected major cultural differences between the Jewish communities of northern Europe and those of Spain and the Islamic world. In northern Europe, Jewish schools emphasized piety and the study of the Talmud, the body of religious writing relating to Jewish tradition. In Spain and the Islamic world, Jewish schools combined a study of the Bible, Hebrew grammar, Jewish law, and the Talmud with studies of sciences, philosophy, logic, mathematics, music, and medicine.

To provide their sons with an education, many Jewish fathers hired private tutors. Synagogues* also supplied schoolrooms with teachers paid for by parents or the community. Jewish communities throughout the medieval world were very involved both in providing educational opportunities and in supervising curriculum and instruction. (*See also* **Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages; Judaism; Law Schools; Religious Instruction.**)

Science

* **optics** branch of physics that deals with the properties and phenomena of light

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

* **philosophy** study of ideas, including science

I slamic and Jewish scholars studied and preserved the scientific, philosophical, and medical works of ancient Greece, and then they went on to develop their own scientific traditions. Europeans, who benefited both from the learning of the ancient Greeks and from Islamic science, made many further scientific contributions, particularly in such fields as mechanics and optics*. For many European scholars, science was a means of understanding God's creation, and scientific principles were often examined in relation to theology* and philosophy*. For more about European science, see the articles listed at the end of this entry.

Islamic Science. Scientific endeavors in the Islamic world began in the mid-700s, as scholars in BAGHDAD translated ancient Greek texts into Arabic. Work on translating ancient texts continued into the 900s, and Islamic

science reached its greatest levels of achievement at different times and places over a period that extended to the early 1400s.

Those who embraced the medieval scientific tradition came from various parts of the Islamic world and were of different backgrounds. Some were Christians, others were Jews, and still others were Muslims. A common factor was that Arabic was the predominant language of scientific expression and communication. The use of Arabic was the major reason for the spread of scientific knowledge throughout the Islamic world.

The early translations of Greek texts were supported by the rulers and elite classes of Islamic society. Although some translations were made under the UMAYYADS in DAMASCUS, it was not until the rise of the ABBASIDS in the mid-700s that the job of translation developed into a major undertaking. Among the first scientific texts translated into Arabic were astronomical works originally written in Sanskrit* and Persian. During the reign of HARUN AL-RASHID, great works of Greek science by Euclid and Ptolemy were made available in Arabic. Soon, Islamic scholars had access to an enormous amount of ancient science and philosophy, including works by Aristotle and Plato.

* **Sanskrit** ancient sacred and literary language of India

At the same time that Abbasid power declined, centers of learning multiplied across the Islamic world. A large public library, the Dar al-Ilm (House of Science), was founded in CAIRO in 1004. In the 12th century, scholars of astronomy, philosophy, and medicine flourished in Muslim Spain. In SAMARKAND (in southwest Asia), a scientific observatory was founded in the 1400s.

One factor in the spread of scientific knowledge was the greater availability of relatively inexpensive manuscripts as a result of a papermaking technique learned from the Chinese in the 700s. Another factor was the rapid growth of libraries throughout the Islamic world. Many private libraries were accessible to some scholars, and libraries attached to mosques* and schools were open to all. The observatory—a scientific institution with a permanent staff, library, and astronomical instruments—contributed to the spread of scientific knowledge.

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

The achievements of Islamic science were significant. In mathematics, Islamic scholars devised and applied new techniques of numerical calculation and expanded various mathematical concepts that were already known. Islamic astronomers made many observations of the planets and constructed sophisticated and reliable observation instruments, such as sundials and ASTROLABES. Islamic engineers designed and built mechanical devices, such as CLOCKS and fountains, and explained the principles of mechanics in simple, nonmathematical ways. Islamic scholars were concerned not only with scientific concepts, but also with the practical application of scientific principles. Thus, science was used to build better SCIENTIFIC INSTRUMENTS and to determine direction and time more accurately.

Jewish Science.   Jewish scholars, many working within the Islamic world or along its borders with Europe, made important contributions to medieval science. Jewish scholars researched and wrote on various branches of science and did scientific translations, mainly from Arabic into Hebrew. Some also translated Arabic works into Latin, often at the

* **patron** person of wealth and influence who supports an artist, writer, or scholar

request of Christian patrons*. This helped spread Islamic science to western Europe.

Many Jewish scholars focused on astronomy, acquainting themselves with the works of the Greeks in Arabic translation and with the contributions of the Arabs. The most important and original Jewish astronomer was Levi ben Gershom of southern France, known for his accurate calculations of planetary distances. Some Jewish scholars, famous for their work in astronomy, also made important contributions in mathematics. The astronomer Abraham bar Hiyya, for example, wrote the earliest European work on algebra. Several Jews were well-respected authorities on medicine, translating medical works from Arabic and other languages into Hebrew.

Toward the end of the Middle Ages, Jewish science was affected by several factors. The expulsion of the Jews from scientific centers in Spain and southern France and their exclusion from European universities had an adverse affect. In the end, Jews shared with their Muslim neighbors the decline of Arab science that took place in the late medieval period. (*See also* **Alchemy; Aquinas, Thomas, St.; Artillery; Astrology and Astronomy; Bacon, Roger; Calendars; Grosseteste, Robert; Heating; Jews, Expulsion of; Khwarizmi, al-; Lenses and Eyeglasses; Lighting Devices; Maps and Mapmaking; Mathematics; Medicine; Metals and Metalworking; Navigation; Oresme, Nicole; Technology; Waterworks.**)

Scientific Instruments

* **Hellenistic** referring to Greek history, culture, or art after Alexander the Great

After the fall of the Roman Empire in the 400s, knowledge of ancient scientific instruments was generally lost to the West. Such knowledge continued in the East for a time, but eventually religious and political upheaval caused many scholars to flee to the Islamic world. Science flourished in the medieval Islamic world, and, from there, knowledge of ancient Hellenistic* science and technology was dispersed again to medieval Europe.

Beginning in the 800s, many technological advances were made in the Islamic world as a result of developments in mathematics, astronomy, navigation, and other related fields. Among the scientific instruments that came to the Muslims from the ancient Greeks and Romans were the armillary sphere (for determining the time of equal day and night and the motions and positions of heavenly bodies), the globe, and the ASTROLABE. Other scientific instruments included the quadrant (for measuring altitude), the equatorium (for finding the positions of the planets), and the torquetum (a type of astronomical compass for measuring the stars or angles along the horizon). The Muslims used and improved these devices to suit their own scientific needs. Many of the astronomical instruments were used in observatories—institutions in which professional astronomers worked. Such observatories are thought to have developed in the Islamic world.

Most of these scientific instruments came to medieval Europe through SICILY in the 900s and the 1000s and through SPAIN in the 1100s and the 1200s. Europeans also made important contributions to the development of scientific instruments during the Middle Ages. One of the most important instruments was the compass, which may have originated

Scotland

Scotland, in the northernmost part of the British Isles, is a land of steep mountains, rugged coastlines, and long sea inlets called firths. The region emerged as an independent kingdom during the Middle Ages. In the early medieval period, the area had been occupied by a number of small kingdoms. In the 11th century, these small states united to become the kingdom of Scotland. Although Scotland remained independent for the rest of the Middle Ages, its history was shaped by its relationship with England, its powerful neighbor to the south.

Friendship with England.   At first, relations between medieval England and Scotland were friendly. When England came under the rule of the NORMANS in 1066, the Scottish kings welcomed Norman noblemen and churchmen to Scotland. The Norman newcomers and the Anglo-French influence they brought to Scotland strengthened the ties between the Scottish and English crowns and broadened the horizons of Scottish culture and society.

Unlike some of the independent-minded Scottish lords, the Norman settlers were loyal to the crown. By giving them titles and estates, the Scottish kings created a band of strong followers who helped the crown control uprisings and rebellions of the old families. In the 1100s and the 1200s, the Scottish monarchy* grew steadily more powerful. Between 1220 and 1260, Scotland enlarged its borders by annexing* some western islands and mainland territory in the north previously held by Norway.

Scotland's economy also grew during these years as new towns and cities were formed, some by royal decree. People from FLANDERS who settled in Scotland brought with them not only their experience in trade and commerce but also their knowledge of the wool industry. Scottish wool became a valuable export and the basis of Scotland's economy. (The industry suffered greatly in the late 1200s and the early 1300s when disease struck the sheep herds of Scotland and England.)

Wars of Independence.   In 1290, King Edward I of England claimed supreme power over Scotland, marking a new phase in Scottish history. Several years earlier, the Scottish king Alexander III had died without leaving an heir. When 13 Scottish noblemen claimed the throne, Edward I was asked to settle the problem. He took the opportunity to claim overlordship of Scotland for himself.

The first great leader of Scottish resistance to English rule was a knight named William Wallace, who was supported by the "middling folk" of Scotland—the growing middle class of small landholders, merchants, and townspeople. For the first time in Scottish history, ordinary people participated in the political affairs of the country.

In 1298, the English defeated Wallace and his supporters in the Battle of Falkirk, and the leadership of the resistance passed to the aristocrat Robert Bruce. He was one of several nobles who had tried to claim the throne after the death of Alexander III. In 1306, Bruce seized the crown. As king, he continued to resist the English, keeping Scotland free of English control until his death in 1329.

War broke out again when King EDWARD III OF ENGLAND invaded Scotland in 1341. Scottish independence was seriously threatened until Edward turned his attention to war against France instead. In the late 1300s, Scotland's independence became more secure after the landowners in southern Scotland drove the last of the English from the border territories.

* **monarchy** nation ruled by a king or queen

* **annex** to add a territory to an existing state
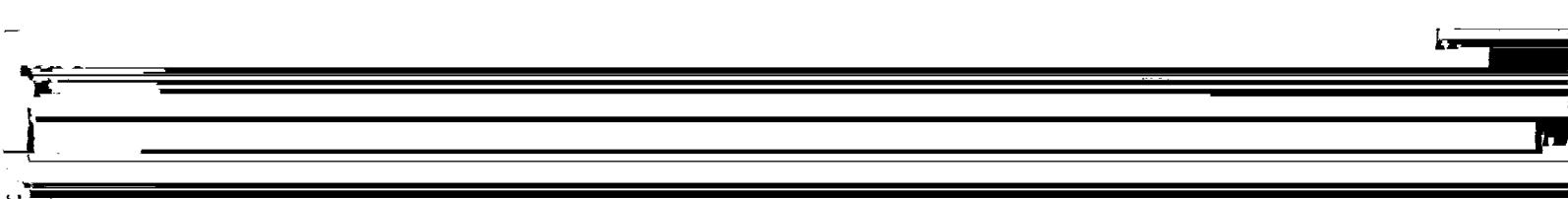
France and Scotland were a source of displeasure for England, which was France's great rival of that period.

In the early 1500s, Scotland's alliance with France brought disaster to the Scottish monarchy and army. King James IV, who ruled Scotland from 1488 until 1513, tried to strengthen his country's ties with England by marrying a daughter of the English royal family while remaining loyal to France. James's involvement in the politics of other European countries also helped bring about his downfall.

In 1513, while England was at war with France, James led a Scottish army of 30,000 into England, hoping to help the French by diverting English troops from attacking France. English and Scottish troops met at Flodden Hill, where the Scots were roundly defeated. The battle ended with James IV and 10,000 of his followers—including most of the ruling elite of Scotland—lying dead in the mud. This devastating defeat marked the end of medieval Scottish history. (*See also* **England; Nobility and Nobles; Wool.**)

Sculpture

See *British Isles, Art and Architecture; Byzantine Architecture; Gothic Sculpture; Islamic Art and Architecture; Romanesque Art; Spanish Art and Architecture.*

Seals and Charters

* **mandate**   official command or decree

* **dynasty**   succession of rulers from the same family or group

Seals are marks or symbols pressed into wax or metal and attached to various types of documents. During the Middle Ages, seals commonly were used to close a package or text, guaranteeing that its contents were not tampered with, and to show that documents were authentic. Seals were especially important on charters—official documents that recorded and provided proof of legal action, such as deeds, contracts, constitutions, privileges, or mandates*. Used throughout medieval Europe and the Islamic world, seals were a mark of authority as well as a claim and proof of ownership.

Seals were used widely in ancient Rome, and the practice was adopted by people in the early Middle Ages. During the period of the MEROVINGIAN dynasty*, for example, rings engraved with names or symbols were used to make impressions on seals that closed letters or served as marks of office. Beginning perhaps in the 500s, the placing of wax seals on documents as a mark of authentication became a practice solely of a king. In the 800s, bishops were the first nonroyal individuals to prove that documents were true by using personal seals. Then, in the 900s, dukes, princes, and other members of the nobility used seals of their own.

At first, seals had no legal standing, but they were useful in authenticating documents. However, as the use of seals on documents became more widespread, a fundamental change occurred. Increasingly, authority became associated with the seal itself rather than with an individual's personal power. As a result, the seal soon evolved as a symbol of legal proof, and it became a convenient way to validate written records and to

The Seljuk sultanate reached the height of its power in the late 1000s under Alp Arslan's son, Malikshah. The Seljuks ruled a vast empire from the Mediterranean to central Asia and from Arabia to the Caucasus region. After Malikshah's death, a domestic crisis rocked the Seljuk state. Malikshah's successor, his son Berkyaruq, was faced with rebellious relatives who sought either the sultanate or their own independent domains. Internal divisions eventually tore apart the sultanate, and local tribal chieftains established their own independent states.

Less-powerful branches of the Seljuks founded other Turkish dynasties during the period. A Seljuk dynasty in ANATOLIA, known as the Seljuks of Rum, was founded in the 1070s. This dynasty withstood challenges from Turkish lords, the Byzantines, and crusaders*, but it finally fell to the Mongols in the late 1200s and the early 1300s. Another Seljuk dynasty ruled in Syria from 1078 to 1117. This short-lived line, founded by a brother of Malikshah, gave way to local tribal leaders. A fourth Seljuk state was established in Kirman, a region in southeastern Iran. Founded in the 1040s by a brother of Alp Arslan, it remained a relatively untroubled, isolated area for most of its history. Dynastic strife in the late 1100s led to a period of anarchy, followed by occupation by other rebellious Turkish tribes.

* **crusader** person who participated in the holy wars against the Muslims during the Middle Ages

The Seljuk states were marked by two contrasting features. On the one hand was the Iranian tradition of absolute monarchy and Muslim legal tradition. Opposed to this were the ideas of the Turkish tribesmen—social equality, a nonrestrictive form of government, and laws based on traditional custom. The Seljuks were never able to settle these differences. As they moved further from their tribal roots, their tribesmen became increasingly dissatisfied. Internal struggles and dynastic strife gradually reduced their power and authority and led to their downfall. Despite their eventual downfall, the Seljuks were successful in introducing large numbers of Turkish peoples into Anatolia and the Middle East. In doing so, they changed forever the ethnic composition of the region. Turkish culture and language have remained dominant up to the present day. (*See also* **Anatolia; Iran; Iraq; Sultan.**)

Seneschal

In the Middle Ages, a seneschal was a senior official who advised a lord or a king and managed his estates. In some parts of Europe, the seneschal wielded great power and had wide-ranging responsibilities.

In the early Middle Ages, great lords traveled frequently and their household servants and officials traveled with them. In time, the administration of manors and estates became more complex, and it became necessary for some household officials to remain behind to supervise their lord's affairs. This was the origin of the seneschal.

In England and Germany, the seneschal was just an estate manager of a monarch or rural lord. In France, however, a household official known as the royal seneschal emerged as the most important administrator after the king. In addition to supervising the royal court and advising the king, the royal seneschal often was put in command of feudal armies and was given various judicial and ceremonial responsibilities. Lesser
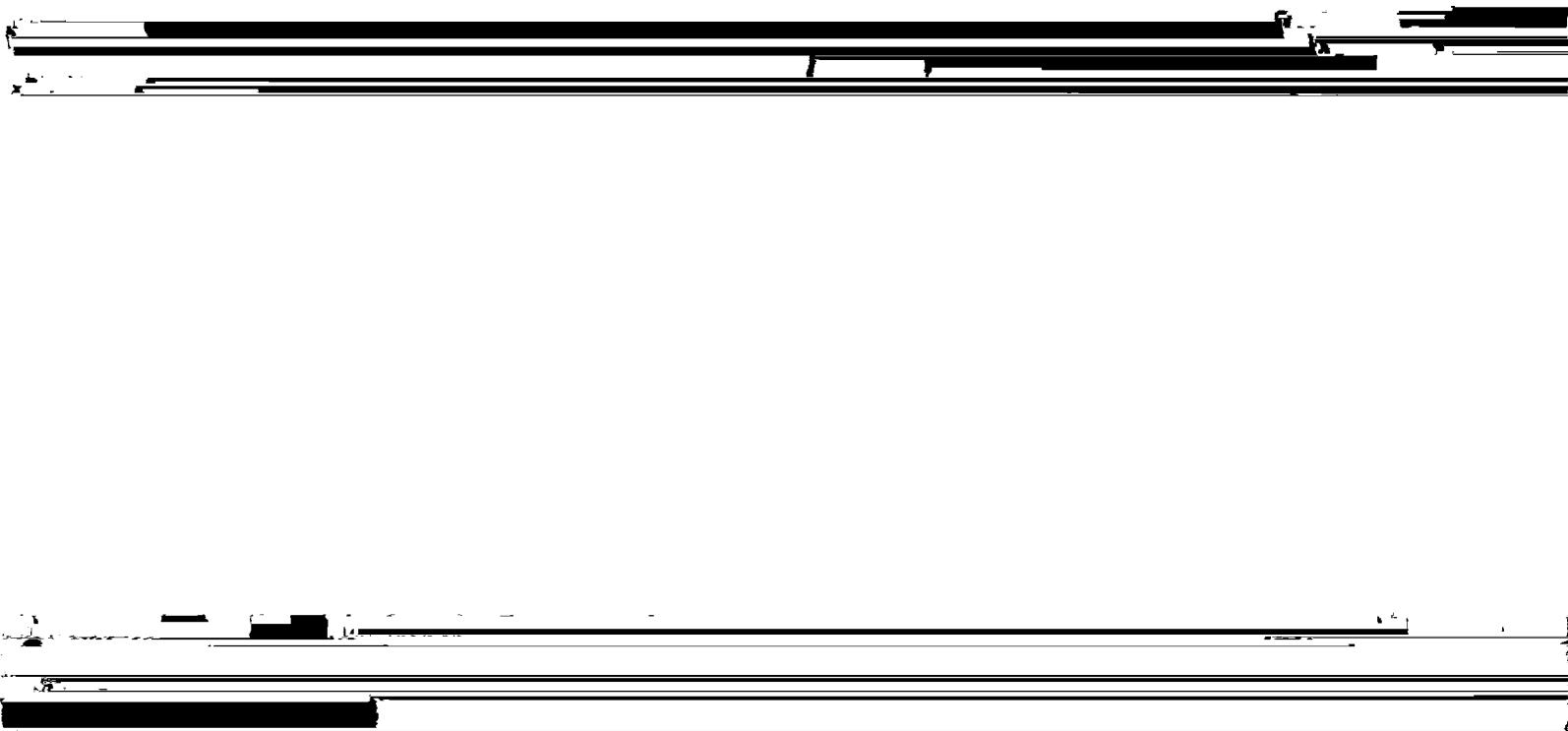
Serbia

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place

* **relic** object cherished for its association with a martyr or saint

Nemanjic rulers, who remained on the throne until 1371, turned Serbia into a significant power in the Balkan region. Under their rule, religion and culture flourished. In exchange for the church's support, Nemanjic rulers gave the church large tracts of land and built many MONASTERIES. The Byzantine Church appointed Sava to be Serbia's first archbishop in 1219. Sava died in Bulgaria in 1235 on his return from his PILGRIMAGE to the Holy Land. His body was brought back to Serbia and buried in the monastery of Milesevo, which had been built by the Nemanjic ruler Vladislav. Sava was declared a saint by the Byzantine Church. His shrine was a popular pilgrimage* site, and his relics* had a reputation for working miracles.

Serbia's economy flourished during the Nemanjic dynasty. The Nemanjic encouraged trade, coined money, and developed Serbia's natural resources—silver, lead, gold, copper, and iron. Under their rule, Serbia became the leading producer of silver in the Balkans.

The Nemanjic were often at war, both to defend Serbia against Bulgaria and Byzantium and to gain new territory. During their long reign, the Nemanjic suffered no major defeats and added Albania, Macedonia, and parts of Greece to the Serbian state. Serbia reached its greatest size under Dusan, who reigned from 1331 to 1355. He gave the country its first official code of laws. Dusan's dream of conquering Byzantium was never realized because he died before he could begin his campaign.

Despite the creation of a strong state with a well-organized central government, Serbia suffered from internal conflict during the two centuries of Nemanjic rule. Power struggles among members of the dynasty often led to revolts and civil war. After Dusan's death, Serbian unity was threatened when various members of the royal family seized territories for themselves.

In the mid-1300s, a new threat appeared when the Ottoman Turks from northwestern ANATOLIA began their campaign to conquer Byzantium and the Balkans. The Ottomans defeated Serbian troops in key battles—at Marica in 1371 and at Kosovo in 1389. In the early 1400s, Serbia and Hungary united briefly to check the Ottoman advance, but soon Serbia was fighting for its survival against a new Ottoman offensive.

When the last Serbian government fell to the Ottomans in 1459, the Serbian state disappeared as an independent state. Serbia remained part of the Ottoman Empire until the 1800s. (*See also* **Bulgaria; Christianity; Nobility and Nobles; Ottomans and Ottoman Empire; Relics.**)

Serfs and Serfdom

* **hereditary** passed on from parent to child

* **feudal** referring to the social, economic, and political system that flourished in western Europe during the Middle Ages

In medieval Europe, large numbers of peasant workers were bound to the land in a state of semi-bondage. These workers, known as serfs, were required to perform various types of farm and household labor for their masters. The status of serfs was usually hereditary*, and serfdom was distinguished from slavery in that serfs usually had limited rights. The conditions of serfdom varied from time to time and from place to place. In western Europe, it arose during the feudal* period and disappeared around 1300. In eastern Europe, particularly in Russia, serfdom was not fully established until the late 1500s and the early 1600s, and it was not abolished there until the 1860s.
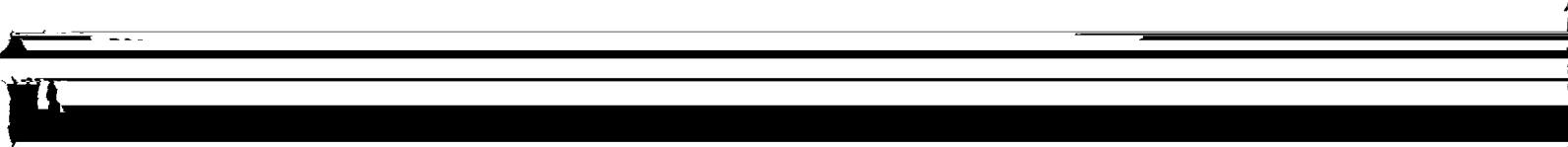
the lord an annual payment, usually in agricultural products. The relationship between slave and master was thus profoundly changed. The rights of the slave over his family were recognized, and he had gained a degree of economic independence. Little by little, the slave had become a serf.

The Status of Serfs.   The status of serfs, like that of slaves, was marked by a lack of personal liberty. Serfs could gain freedom only through a formal ceremony known as manumission. Serfdom was hereditary, and serfs increasingly were considered the property of their lord. The lord could sell serfs, pass them on to heirs, require services whenever desired, and take back land he had given them. The lord had the duty of protecting and defending his serfs against any and all dangers. The bond between master and serf could not be broken, even if a serf ran away or if a female serf married a serf on another estate and went there to live. In the latter case, the two lords usually reached a compromise, perhaps by agreeing to divide the couple's children between them or by one lord's buying out the other's claim. In order to control the migration of serfs, masters generally exercised their right to approve or disapprove the marriages of their serfs.

Even when serfs held land, they were not full members of peasant society. They could not join the CLERGY or enter a monastery, and they were excluded from all public institutions, such as the courts of law. The lord, rather than the courts, had full power to punish a serf for misdeeds or crimes.

The political developments that led to the feudal system had important effects on legal and social class distinctions. As public institutions lost power, it became impossible to prove one's freedom in the courts. As a result, the legal barrier that separated free persons from the unfree was weakened, and old concepts of liberty and servitude were destroyed. Thus, between 1000 and 1200, there was a slow but steady disappearance of social customs and laws that set the serf apart from other peasants. From the 1000s on, serfs were no longer only the descendants of slaves. More and more peasants sought protection from local lords and relinquished the rights to their property in return. In this way, many free peasants became serfs. Serfdom became based not only on ancestry but also on varying degrees of obligation to the lord and dependency on him.

The Decline of Serfdom.   Beginning in the 1200s, the number of serfs in western Europe declined, as a great movement to free them developed. In many parts of rural France, serfs became a minority of the population. In Spain, where the granting of privileges was essential to the resettlement of lands conquered from the Muslims, monarchs encouraged the decline of serfdom. The same was true in the Italian regions of Lombardy and Tuscany, where the great towns led the movement to end serfdom. In order to weaken the power of nobles and to acquire more taxpayers, the governments of those towns abolished all forms of personal servitude and eliminated other obstacles to freedom. In England, meanwhile, the number of villeins—the English term for unfree persons—remained at a high level for a long time.

After 1300, it became increasingly difficult to distinguish between serf and free peasant because both were almost always at the same economic

Hiding from Ivan

Ivan IV's terrorism and violence against the Russian people led to a mass flight from central and north-eastern Russia. Entire districts were emptied of their inhabitants. In some areas, as many as 97 percent of the farm homesteads were vacated. Most of the migrants fled east and south into regions that had only recently been opened to Russian settlement. Others went into the freezing woods of northern Russia. Some, however, went no farther than the forests and marshes surrounding their old neighborhoods.

See map in Kievan Rus (vol. 3).

* **tsar** Slavic term for emperor

level. The burdens imposed by the lord were only slightly heavier for serfs, and most serfs were simply small landholders like most other villagers. In addition, because the lord had a strong connection to his serfs, he often appointed them to minor offices, such as policeman, BAILIFF, keeper of the oven, or operator of the winepress. Through such favored treatment, some serfs were able to improve their positions, becoming village leaders and even acquiring modest wealth. As the distinction between serf and free person became increasingly unclear, a new distinction arose—one based on the size of one's landholding.

By the middle of the 1300s, and for about a century thereafter, the situation of serfs changed everywhere in western Europe. Repeated outbreaks of the BLACK DEATH, rebellions, urban and rural uprisings, economic depression, and the difficulties of lords in trying to deal with these problems led to the decline of serfdom in many regions. In eastern Europe, however, serfdom became more deeply rooted and continued to exist for hundreds of years.

Serfdom in Russia.   The roots of serfdom in Russia reach back to the period of KIEVAN RUS, when the status of many peasants declined as a result of the growth of large-scale private landownership. Land that had belonged to peasants was absorbed into large estates owned by princes, other lords, and the church, and the peasants were reduced to renters or landless laborers. As time went on, a distinction was drawn between these landless peasants and other peasants, with the former considered inferior even though they had not yet lost their personal freedom.

In the 1200s, many peasants in Kievan Rus fled north to escape the Mongol invasions. These peasants sought protection from local princes, other lords, and monastery officials, who allowed them to settle as free renters on land in exchange for various services, such as clearing forests. The practice of placing oneself under the protection of lords became more and more widespread, and it played a significant role in the eventual transformation of the Russian peasant into a serf.

By the mid-1500s, the judicial powers of the lords over their peasant renters had become an established institution. The conditions of peasants worsened during the reign of Tsar* Ivan IV in the mid-1500s. Ivan decreed that all landholders had to perform military service for him or pay additional money. In order to meet their obligations to the tsar, the landholders demanded increased rents and services from their peasants. In the late 1500s, Russia was torn by political and social upheaval caused by Ivan's insane drive for absolute power. He confiscated the estates of princes and executed thousands of people. The terror and turmoil caused many peasants to flee and caused others to sell themselves into slavery for protection.

The final act in the transformation of the Russian peasant to serf occurred in the 1600s against a backdrop of terrorism, foreign and civil wars, political chaos, and economic disaster. During this time, the movement of peasants was completely restricted, and legal codes gave the landlords nearly unlimited authority over their peasants. By the mid-1600s, the once free Russian peasant was bound to his lord, and the only rights he possessed were those allowed by his master. (*See also* **Agriculture; Feudalism; Nobility and Nobles; Slavery.**)

Sermons

In the Middle Ages, sermons contributed greatly to the spread of religion. In all three major religions—CHRISTIANITY, JUDAISM, and ISLAM—preaching was used to instruct, reinforce, and spread the faith.

Western European Sermons.   In medieval Europe, large numbers of people were illiterate. Therefore, sermons by the CLERGY were the primary means of educating the laity*.

Although church fathers such as AUGUSTINE and Pope GREGORY I recognized the importance of preaching, there were few distinguished preachers in the early Middle Ages. Almost all clerical preaching was done in Latin before audiences of other clergy. In the 900s and the 1000s, nearly all sermons were delivered in MONASTERIES twice daily, either by the abbot or by one of the monks. In the 1100s, church scholars also known for their preaching included ANSELM OF CANTERBURY, BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX, and Peter ABELARD.

Preaching to lay audiences, not in Latin but in the vernacular*, became more widespread in the late 1100s, especially when such sermons were seen as a way of combating heresy*. The emergence of the FRANCISCAN and DOMINICAN preaching orders in the early 1200s contributed to the trend toward popular preaching. After sermons in the vernacular were delivered, they were often written down and preserved in Latin, sometimes in an abridged form. Collections of sermons and handbooks on preaching circulated widely in the 1200s and the 1300s.

Sermons were preached throughout the church year—at Mass on Sunday and on feast days as well. Mass sermons, which followed the reading of the Gospel* for the day, were usually explanations or interpretations of the meaning of the passage. However, sermons were not delivered just on those occasions. Bishops and other church leaders frequently preached when they visited monasteries and parishes and attended church assemblies. Sermons were also preached to highlight such special occasions as ordinations*, consecrations*, dedications, elections, coronations, and PILGRIMAGES.

Theological* education emphasized the importance of preaching. At the University of Paris, for example, theology students were required to deliver at least one sermon a year and had to show competence in preaching as a requirement for being granted a degree. Both teachers (called masters) and students were expected to attend university sermons.

Jewish Sermons.   The purpose of Jewish sermons was to explain the meaning of texts from the BIBLE. Tied to the weekly readings from the Five Books of Moses (Torah), they were usually given in the vernacular rather than in Hebrew and were delivered in the synagogue* and at festivals and weddings as well.

The preacher (darshan) began the sermon with a preface that contained a quotation from the Bible or some other religious text, which he then related to the Scripture reading of the day. In the sermon itself, he explained various verses from the day's reading and usually ended with a message of encouragement or comfort. The preacher often introduced stories and parables* to illustrate the meaning of the text.

* **laity** those who are not members of the clergy

* **vernacular** language or dialect native to a region; everyday, informal speech

* **heresy** belief that is contrary to church doctrine

* **Gospels** accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus as told in the first four books of the New Testament

* **ordination** church ceremony in which a person becomes a member of the clergy

* **consecration** church ceremony declaring someone or something sacred, as when a bishop is ordained

* **theological** pertaining to the nature of God, the study of religion, and religious beliefs

* **synagogue** building of worship for Jews

* **parable** simple story that illustrates a religious or moral lesson

Great Preacher

Ibn al-Jawzi was a leading Muslim scholar and a remarkable preacher. At the height of his career, tens of thousands of people flocked to hear him. According to his own estimate, he converted 100,000 people to Islam during his lifetime.

A Spanish visitor to Baghdad in 1184 who heard Ibn al-Jawzi preach at three separate rallies described him as "the wonder of all time." Many of the younger preachers he trained took up preaching posts in Cairo, Damascus, and other large Muslim cities.

* **rabbi** teacher of Jewish law and religion and spiritual leader of a Jewish congregation

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

From the 600s through the 1100s, great efforts were made to collect the sermonic teachings of the great rabbis* of the first four centuries, even though these anthologies often contained only prefaces or summaries rather than complete texts. A Jewish work from the Islamic world known as the *She'iltot (Questions)* from Ahai of Shabha (680–752) consisted of legal questions and answers that were then expanded into sermons.

Late medieval Jewish anthologies were encyclopedic works that were used as handbooks for preaching. The most original of these from northern Europe was the *Sefer Hasidim (Book of the Pious)* by Rabbi Judah he-Hasid, who died in 1217. Sermonic literature from southern France and Spain showed a special interest in philosophical issues. The influence of ARISTOTLE and MAIMONIDES can be seen in the sermons of Abraham bar Hiyya, who died about 1136, and Jacob ben Abba Mari Anatoli, who died in 1256. The last great Jewish medieval sermon collection that attempted to harmonize philosophy and Judaism was the *Aqedat Yitzhaq (Binding of Isaac)* of Isaac Arama, who died in 1494.

Islamic Sermons.   Preaching also played an important role in the spread of Islam. Although Islamic preachers were active during the lifetime of MUHAMMAD, their role in spreading the new religion increased after his death in 632.

Two distinct kinds of Islamic preaching emerged early—the Friday sermon and the popular sermon. During the first Islamic century, the Friday sermon became an established Muslim tradition. UMAYYAD caliphs* and their provincial governors gave sermons in the main mosques in connection with Friday noon prayers. However, by the end of the Umayyad period, responsibility for these Friday sermons was delegated to a special class of preachers appointed by the CALIPHATE. The length of the Friday sermon varied; generally it was brief, no more than 10 or 15 minutes.

In addition to the Friday sermon, another quite different kind of preaching emerged. Although some of the popular preachers who emerged were appointed by governmental officials, most of them operated without official authorization. Since they were not confined to the mosque by law or custom, they were able to preach beyond the reach of the authorities at times of their own choosing.

These lay preachers gave sermons that told stories with religious lessons such as those found in the QUR'AN. In fact, the Arabic word for such a preacher—*qass*—literally means a storyteller. These preachers believed that it was their responsibility to teach, support, and, when necessary, criticize the Muslim community. They also regarded the conversion of non-Muslims as one of their most important duties. Some *qassas* (plural of *qass*) accompanied Muslim armies on their military campaigns to inspire the troops and convert captured prisoners.

Although these lay preachers were often criticized by traditional Muslim leaders and authorities who tried to control them, they remained active and respected in the Muslim community until the late Middle Ages, when their popularity began to decline. (*See also* **Arabic Language and Literature; Clergy; Feasts and Festivals; Hebrew Literature; Jewish Communities; Jews, Expulsion of; Latin Language; Mass, Liturgy of the; Monasticism; Parish; Religious Instruction; Rhetoric.**)

Seven Deadly Sins

See *Virtues and Vices.*

Shahnama

* **succession** the transmission of authority on the death of one ruler to the next

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

The *Shahnama* is an epic poem that narrates the story of the Iranian people from the Creation of the world until the mid-600s. It includes the stories of kings, legendary heroes, and romances. This scene, showing the cavalry charge of Faramouz, is from a manuscript of the *Shahnama* dating from the 1300s.

The *Shahnama (Book of Kings)* is the greatest epic poem of IRAN. Written in the Persian language in the early 1000s by Abu'l-Qasim Firdawsi, the *Shahnama* recounts the history of the Iranian people from the Creation of the world until the conquest of the SASANIANS by the Arabs in the 600s. Firdawsi uses the unifying theme of Iranian kingship and royal succession* to tie together tales of kings, mythical heroes, and legendary characters.

The *Shahnama* presents a history of events in the order in which they occurred in four Iranian dynasties*, one following another, including two early ones that are considered mythical or legendary. Each dynasty is broken down into the reigns of each of its kings, and the stories of these kings form the basic storytelling units of the poem. Woven into these stories are exciting tales and romances about mighty heroes of a foreign dynasty that invaded Iran in ancient times. Over the centuries, the tales of these heroes and their family histories became integrated with the stories of the Iranian royal dynasties.

The world depicted in the *Shahnama* is vast. War and hunting expeditions take Persian heroes beyond Iran to Arabia, the Byzantine Empire, central Asia, China, and India. In the stories of each dynasty, one theme remains constant—the conflict between settled Iranians and their nomadic enemies. Firdawsi adds to this the struggle between good and evil. Firdawsi also uses the work to preach the virtues of wisdom, justice, and honesty and to point out the values of honor, patriotism, and freedom. (*See also* **Chronicles; Historical Writing; Iran.**)

Sheriff

* **reeve** administrative assistant or steward

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

In medieval England, each county (or shire) was headed by an agent of the king called the sheriff (from shire-reeve*). This position was established throughout most of England by about the year 1000. The traditional head of the county was the earl, who presided over the county court along with the bishop and the sheriff. Earls and bishops often were busy with other matters, however, and sheriffs gradually gained greater responsibility for county affairs. The increased power of the sheriff became apparent after the Norman conquest in 1066, when earls lost their links to the counties, and bishops' courts were separated from secular* institutions. Thereafter, the sheriff emerged as the general governor of the county. He became head of the county court and was in charge of defense, the police, and the collection of county revenues.

The office of sheriff was commonly given to earls and important barons, and in some counties the position was hereditary. Beginning in the 1200s, however, it became customary to appoint local knights. Gradually, the royal government sought to curtail the power of the sheriff, and one responsibility after another was taken away. By the 1300s, the sheriff had ceased to be the true head of the county. He became an agent of royal

justices of the peace, with responsibility to collect the king's debts, decide on bail for prisoners, and organize juries. (*See also* **England; Law; Normans; Parliament, English; Shire.**)

Shi'ites

See *Caliphate.*

Ships and Shipbuilding

See map in Crusades (vol. 2).

The Viking ship was the greatest accomplishment of early medieval shipbuilding. It made Viking exploration, trade, and colonization possible. The ship in this photograph is from Norway and dates from about the year 800. It is believed to have been a pleasure craft used in protected waters and was not designed for use on long expeditions.

D uring the Middle Ages, Mediterranean shipping was based on Greek and Roman traditions. In northern Europe, shipbuilding began as a simple industry carried on by a few men and developed into a technically advanced enterprise. In the late Middle Ages, increased contact between northern and southern Europe led to an exchange of information that greatly improved the design of sailing ships.

Mediterranean Shipbuilding.   The ancient Romans used a ship propelled by oars, called a galley, for both warfare and transport. The galley was well suited for a sea such as the Mediterranean, which was relatively calm during the warm-weather sailing season. Although the galley had sails that could be raised for cruising, the ship's oar power was what made it effective for combat. During the Middle Ages, the galley kept its special status as a combat vessel, but improvements in sail design and the construction of sailing ships led to its eventual decline.

By the early Middle Ages, the square, cross-rigged sail began to be replaced by the triangular, fore-and-aft rigged (or lateen) sail. Fore-and-aft rigging provided sailing ships and galleys with greater ability to move and change direction, especially when heading into the wind, and its use spread throughout the Mediterranean.

Another important development was the skeleton-first technique of ship construction. Ships had been constructed from the outside in—with the outer shell built before the internal framework. Using the new technique, the basic framework was constructed first, and then the hull planking was nailed to it. This change saved time and money and paved the way for more ambitious ship designs.

In the 1100s, shipping on the Mediterranean greatly increased as a result of the CRUSADES. Although most European participants in the First Crusade went to the Holy Land by land routes, Italian ships were enlisted to supply the armies, to rescue trapped forces, and to keep the crusaders in contact with western Europe. In later crusades, Italian ships transported entire armies. Between crusades, there was a steady flow of maritime traffic to and from the newly won crusader territories. The result of all this traffic was a boost to the economies of VENICE, GENOA, PISA, and other Christian Mediterranean ports.

As the amount of Mediterranean shipping increased, so did improvements in ship materials and design. In the 13th century, cotton, which dried quickly, was introduced from Arabia and replaced linen as sailcloth. In the 14th century, Mediterranean sailors had increased contact with northern European ships, and Mediterranean shipbuilders began to make

Northern shipbuilders adopted many of the best features of Mediterranean shipbuilders, and vice versa. For example, the Mediterranean method of skeleton-first construction began dominating shipbuilding in northern Europe in the 1400s.

Full-Rigged Ship.   In the 15th century, the ultimate refinement of the sailing ship took place. The carrack, the first true full-rigged ship, appeared on the western shores of Europe, perhaps on the Bay of Biscay. A half century later, full-rigged ships could be found sailing the North and Baltic Seas of northern Europe as well.

The best features of northern and southern building methods were combined in the construction of the full-rigged ship. This new type of large, wooden ship had three masts—the foremast and the mainmast, carrying square sails, and the mizzenmast, having a triangular sail. Its improved speed, flexibility, durability, and safety made the full-rigged ship better than any ship before it. Features of its design dominated European shipbuilding for the next three centuries. (*See also* **Exploration; Navigation; Technology; Trade; Vikings.**)

Journey Long and Dangerous

A round trip by sea across the Indian Ocean to Asia usually took two winters (with the summer spent ashore). If the trip went as far as China or the East Indies, or included East Africa, it might take three or more years.

Ships traveled in convoys for protection against pirates, who launched their attacks from islands along shipping routes. Pirates, reefs, and overloading resulted in frequent shipwrecks.

Shire

By the early 800s, much of England was divided into administrative districts called shires. The origins of these shires depended on local history. In western England, they formed around towns and countryside once ruled by various Anglo-Saxon chieftains. In other parts of England, they were formed from independent kingdoms, recently conquered territories, tax districts, or tribal divisions, or by the unification of provinces.

In the late 800s, King ALFRED THE GREAT organized the shires along standard patterns that made governing easier. Each shire was directed by ealdormen (later known as aldermen) who represented royal authority. These officials often were members of royal families who had ruled earlier territories; others were relatives of the king. The ealdormen were responsible for gathering warriors, presiding over shire courts and assemblies, and enforcing royal decrees.

By the mid-900s, shires were subdivided into smaller areas, called hundreds or wapentakes, to make governing more manageable. Some of these units were subdivided even further. After the Norman conquest of 1066, the term *shire* was replaced with *county*, from a French term for a similar type of district in France. (*See also* **Commune; Count, County; England; Law.**)

Shota Rustaveli

1172–ca. 1216
Georgian poet

* **courtier** person in attendance at a royal court

Shota Rustaveli is the most renowned poet of GEORGIA. Almost nothing is known about his life. Legend says that he was a courtier* of Queen TAMAR, that he was deeply in love with her, and that he ended his days in a monastery. Rustaveli's great epic poem, the *Vep'khistqaosani (The Man in the Panther's Skin)*, is considered a Georgian national treasure. Dedicated to Queen Tamar, it dates from the early 1200s.

The poem tells the story of a hero named Tariel who falls in love with Nestan-Darejan, the daughter of a king of India. She returns his love but is promised to another, whom Tariel kills. The princess is taken away to an inaccessible fortress, and Tariel, dressed in a panther's skin, wanders

the world in search of his beloved. In the end, he finally succeeds in rescuing her.

The poem's major themes are love, friendship, and devotion to the service of women. Unlike most medieval Georgian literature, the *Vep'khistqaosani* does not contain Christian themes and references. Its originality made it extremely popular throughout Georgia, and for centuries Georgian brides traditionally included a copy of the epic in their dowries. (*See also* **Kievan Rus; Muscovy, Rise of; Novgorod.**)

Sicily

The island of Sicily, in the center of the Mediterranean Sea near the coast of North Africa, is an extension of the Italian peninsula. In the Middle Ages, Sicily had great strategic importance. Rulers who controlled the island and its ports had valuable military and commercial advantages.

Sicily in Early Middle Ages

At the beginning of the Middle Ages, Sicily was a province of the BYZANTINE EMPIRE (together with the southern and eastern parts of the Italian peninsula). However, the rise of ISLAM and its subsequent spread soon ushered in a new era in the island's history.

Muslim Conquest of Sicily.   The Muslim forces that conquered North Africa in the 600s raided Sicily and removed the island's valuable property. The raids continued for more than a century.

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 3).

In 827, Ziyadat Allah I, the Aghlabid ruler of Ifriqiya (which included eastern Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania), launched a military campaign against the island that captured the city of Mazara and established a permanent Muslim foothold on the island. From their base in Mazara, the Muslims extended their rule over the island during the next 75 years. They took Palermo in 831, Castrogiovanni (the island's Byzantine capital) in 859, and Syracuse in 878. When Taormina fell in 902, nearly all of Sicily was in Muslim hands.

Islamic Sicily.   A series of emirs, or governors, administered Sicily as a province of Ifriqiya. During the two and a half centuries Sicily remained under Muslim control, Ifriqiya was controlled by three important dynasties—the Aghlabids until 909, the FATIMIDS until about 1050, and the Zirids until the NORMAN conquest of the island in the late 1000s.

For almost a century, beginning in the mid-900s under the Fatimids, a semi-independent, hereditary dynasty* of governors called the Kalbites ruled Sicily. During this period, the island became a prosperous center of Mediterranean trade and a major producer of both raw and woven SILK. During the years of Muslim rule, a flourishing Islamic culture developed in Sicily, and it continued well after the Norman conquest of the island.

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

Kingdom of Sicily

Following conquests in northern France in the 900s and England in 1066, the Normans turned their attention to the Mediterranean. The Norman
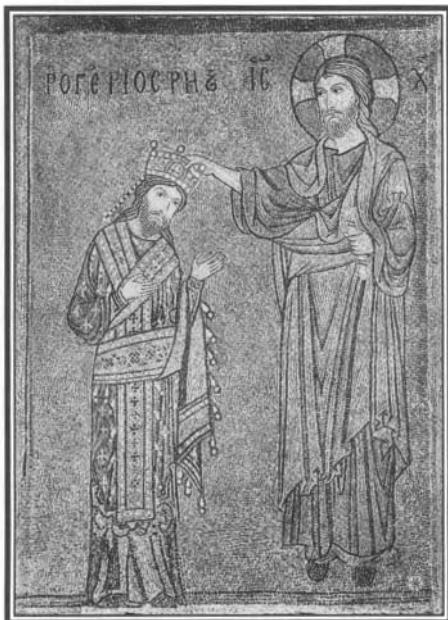
Roger II assumed control of Sicily and southern Italy in 1101. He was finally accepted and crowned king on Christmas Day in 1130. Under Roger's leadership, the Kingdom of Sicily became an important Mediterranean power. In this mosaic from Palermo, Italy, Roger is being crowned by Christ.

* **sultan** political and military ruler of a Muslim dynasty or state

* **coronation** ceremony during which a leader, king, or queen is crowned

conquest of southern Italy and Sicily happened gradually. In 1030, the duke of Naples rewarded the Norman leader, Rainulf, with the nearby county of Aversa in return for Rainulf's help against the LOMBARDS. (Rainulf's nephew, Richard, who succeeded him, became the prince of Capua in 1058.) Farther south, the sons of TANCRED of Hauteville carved out domains for themselves in Apulia at the expense of the Byzantines.

The Hauteville domination in southern Italy over the other Norman lords began with the arrival of Robert and Roger Guiscard. Concerned with the growing Norman influence in Italy, the PAPACY at first tried to stop the growing power and influence of the Guiscard brothers. Then, in 1059, Pope Nicholas II decided to make the Guiscards papal vassals—Robert as duke of Apulia and Calabria (as well as future duke of Sicily) and Roger as prince of Capua. In return, the brothers promised to defend the PAPAL STATES and drive the Muslims from Sicily.

Although the conquest of Sicily was the joint effort of both brothers, Roger did most of the fighting because Robert increasingly turned his attention to the Adriatic Sea on the other side of Italy. Roger took advantage of feuding among Sicilian Muslims by joining with the sultan* of Syracuse to capture Messina in 1061. After Robert Guiscard captured Bari in 1071 and ended Byzantine rule in southern Italy, he and Roger, supported by a fleet of 58 ships, captured Palermo and Catania. However, not until 1095 was Norman control of Sicily secure.

The main result of Norman conquest on the island was the spread of Roman influence—Latin culture, church beliefs and practices, papal power, and western MONASTICISM. On the Italian mainland, the monastery of Monte Cassino, under the leadership of Abbot Desiderius, became an important center of learning and culture.

Roger II and His Successors.   Following the death of Roger Guiscard in 1101, his son, Roger II, assumed control of both Sicily and southern Italy. After summoning an assembly to Salerno that declared his right to be king, he was crowned (by a representative of a claimant to the papal throne) in the cathedral of Palermo on Christmas Day in 1130, although the true pope withheld confirmation until 1139.

Faced with the difficult task of uniting the different peoples and regions in southern Italy and Sicily into a single kingdom, Roger II drew together the leaders of the various Muslim, Lombard, Byzantine, and other communities and found a way to use existing institutions in the interests of his kingdom. Under his successful leadership, the Kingdom of Sicily (called the *Regno*) became the chief European power in the Mediterranean region west of Greece and remained so until Roger died in 1154.

During the rule of his grandson, William II, who reigned from 1172 to 1189, the kingdom's chief rival was FREDERICK I BARBAROSSA, emperor of the HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, who wanted to dominate Italy. In 1184, William II made a treaty with Frederick that gave his aunt and heir, Constance (daughter of Roger II), in marriage to Frederick's son, Henry. This fateful marriage paved the way for passage of the Kingdom of Sicily into the hands of the German Hohenstaufen dynasty.

Following Frederick's death, his son Henry went to Rome in 1191 for his coronation* as emperor. He then invaded the *Regno* and, in Palermo,

Protected Minorities

During the 250 years of Muslim rule in Sicily, the majority of the island's inhabitants were Christians who did not want to convert to Islam. Islamic law granted them the status of a protected minority. In return for payment of a poll tax, Christians were guaranteed safety for themselves and their property and freedom to practice their religion. The same status was accorded to the island's small Jewish community.

* **excommunicate**   to exclude from the rites of the church

* **monarchy**   nation ruled by a king or queen

* **depose**   to remove from high office

had himself crowned king of the Kingdom of Sicily. His brief reign—from 1194 to 1197—was important because it connected the Kingdom of Sicily to the Holy Roman Empire for the next two generations. After Henry died, his wife, Constance, forced the Germans out of the kingdom. Shortly before her death in 1198, she sought the protection of Pope INNOCENT III for her four-year-old son, Frederick Roger.

Emperor Frederick II.   Young Frederick married Constance of ARAGON in 1208 and allied himself to Pope Innocent III, who at the time was engaged in a struggle with the Holy Roman Emperor Otto IV over the issue of papal rights in Italy and Germany. When Otto moved against the Kingdom of Sicily in 1210, Innocent excommunicated* him and with French support undermined his position in Germany.

In November 1211, when a group of German representatives came to Palermo and informed the 17-year-old Frederick of his election to the German monarchy*, he hurried to Germany, where the princes and bishops eagerly made him the new German ruler. He spent the next eight years in Germany dealing with state matters before returning to Italy to be crowned emperor by the pope in 1220. When he returned to the *Regno* after his long absence, Frederick took steps to reestablish strong monarchical rule in the kingdom in the face of opposition from the nobility, the church, and the Muslims of Sicily. Frederick only then kept the promise he had made to the pope to go on a CRUSADE to the Holy Land. While there, he joined the force that made it possible to negotiate the return of Jerusalem to Christian control.

On his return from the East, Frederick issued the Constitution of Melfi of 1231, which reestablished royal power in the *Regno* by using Roman law and tradition to support the idea that within the kingdom there was no higher power than the king. From his base in the Kingdom of Sicily, Frederick sought to strengthen his authority as emperor. Conflict between himself and the papacy eventually led to Frederick's excommunication, and then to Pope Innocent IV's being exiled from Italy. Innocent summoned a council that met in Lyons in 1245. There he condemned and deposed* Frederick. Two years later, Frederick suffered a major military defeat near Parma, and he died in Apulia in 1250.

Angevins and Aragonese.   The papacy, determined to end Hohenstaufen rule in Italy and Sicily after Frederick's death, persuaded Charles of Anjou, the brother of the French king LOUIS IX, to come to Italy and rule the kingdom. Charles's defeat of Frederick's grandson in battle put an end to Hohenstaufen rule in Italy. As a result of the papal policy that successfully checked the power of the German emperor in Italy, French influence increased.

After Charles moved the capital of the Kingdom of Sicily from Palermo to NAPLES, he sought to expand his influence. Growing resentment against the French eventually caused the Sicilians to force the ANGEVINS from the island and to invite Pedro of ARAGON to be their king instead. Aragonese rule lasted about a century, and then Sicily and the Italian part of the kingdom were ruled separately—the island by the Aragonese and the mainland by the Angevins.

Aragonese rule over Sicily brought increased Spanish involvement in the affairs of the island. By the time Alfonso of Aragon became the ruler

of Sicily, Spanish domination of the island was complete. When he annexed* the kingdom of Naples in 1443, the two parts of the Kingdom of Sicily reunited. This time, however, the kingdom was under Aragonese rule, a sign of the growing power of Spain.

*** annex** to add a territory to an existing state

Cultural Achievements. During the Middle Ages, the Kingdom of Sicily played an important cultural role by bringing Greek and Arab learning to Europe. During the 1100s and the 1200s, Sicilians paid for translations from Arabic of works on philosophy, astronomy, and medicine, which then passed into the mainstream of European scholarship.

The royal court at Palermo was a center of intellectual life that attracted Arab, Greek, and Latin scholars. The English scholar, Adelard of Bath, who translated the works of Euclid (the mathematician) and the astronomical tables of al-KHWARIZMI, was one of the great scholars who visited Sicily. The most famous and important Arabic work produced on the island was the universal geography of al-Idrisi, completed in the 1150s and written at the request, and under the patronage*, of Roger II, to whom it was dedicated. Scholars in the kingdom were responsible for translations of works by PLATO, ARISTOTLE, Ptolemy, Euclid, and others, either directly from the Greek or from Arabic translations of the Greek.

*** patronage** the support of an artist, writer, or scholar by a person of wealth and influence

The court of Frederick II was especially lively because of the emperor's strong intellectual pursuits. He was interested in mathematics and had personal contacts with the mathematician Leonardo Fibonacci of PISA. He discussed philosophical issues with Muslim scholars. He wrote a treatise* called *De arte venandi cum avibus (On the Art of Hunting with Birds)*. In 1224, Frederick founded the University of Naples, which quickly became a respected European center for the study of law and medicine. (*See also* **France; Germany; Italian Language and Literature; Italy; Medicine.**)

*** treatise** long, detailed essay

Siena

See map in Italy (vol. 3).

Siena is a hill town in the Italian region of TUSCANY. Located about 30 miles south of the great city of FLORENCE, it might have seemed inevitable that Siena would become dependent on its powerful neighbor. Yet, for centuries, Siena remained independent and was famous throughout Europe for its banking and commerce.

Little is known of Siena's early history. There is some evidence to suggest that a community existed in pre-Roman times. According to legend, the town became Christian in the late third century as a result of the preaching of a Roman noble, St. Ansano. The people of medieval Siena believed in the legends that linked them to the greatness of ancient Rome. They believed that Siena was founded by sons of Remus, one of Rome's legendary founders. The emblem of medieval Siena, which is similar to that of Rome, strengthened the connection to that city.

From the 700s to the 1100s, Siena was involved in bitter disputes with its arch rival, the town of Arezzo, presumably over territorial claims. During the 800s and the 900s, the bishop of Siena played a prominent role in the town's political development and was more influential than the CAROLINGIAN counts who controlled the region.

In the 1100s and the 1200s, Siena became embroiled in quarrels between the popes and the Holy Roman Emperors. In 1167, during struggles

and commerce switched their support to the papacy, and the city became allied with Florence.

In 1287, a new political regime took control of Siena's government and ruled for nearly 70 years. This new government—the Nine Governors and Defenders of the Commune and the People of Siena—was known simply as the Nine. The Nine was an oligarchy* of powerful merchants and bankers from the noble and middle classes who supported the Guelph position. The Nine focused on hard work, dedication to detail, and a practical approach to government. They developed and standardized many of Siena's most important governmental institutions and policies. The Nine also supervised town planning projects, which included widening and straightening the streets and unifying the architectural style of the city. The rule of the Nine coincided with the greatest era of Sienese art.

In 1355, a pro-imperial revolution broke out in Siena and overthrew the government of the Nine. Nearly two centuries of political instability followed, which led to the town's increasing dependence on Florence and its eventual loss of independence. By 1530, Siena had become a satellite of Holy Roman Emperor Charles V, and in 1557 it was sold to Cosimo de' Medici, the duke of Florence. Two years later, the once-independent Siena became part of the grand duchy* of Tuscany. (*See also* **Banking; Commune; Florence; Italy; Medici Family; Tuscany.**)

* **oligarchy** form of government in which a few people hold all the ruling power

* **duchy** territory ruled by a duke or a duchess

Siffin, Battle of

* **succession** the transmission of authority on the death of one ruler to the next

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 3).

* **arbitration** settlement of a dispute by referring it to a person(s) whose decision the conflicting parties agree to accept

Beginning on July 19, 657, Muslim fought Muslim in a fierce conflict known as the Battle of Siffin. The issue behind the battle was the succession* to the Islamic CALIPHATE. The battle was the climax to a series of events that began a year earlier with the assassination of caliph* Uthman. The assassins proclaimed ALI IBN ABI TALIB as the successor. Uthman's cousin MU'AWIYA, the powerful governor of SYRIA, first withheld his allegiance from Ali and then broke openly with him. He became the leader of a movement to avenge Uthman's death, and he called for a council to choose a new caliph.

Faced with this challenge to his leadership, Ali assembled an army and marched against Mu'awiya. Both sides met at Siffin in May 657. For two months, the rival armies faced each other while the leaders negotiated. Neither side really wanted to fight. Members of the same families or tribes were on both sides, and all feared that bloodshed might lead to continuing revenge. Negotiations failed, however, and fighting began.

The battle was long, bloody, and indecisive. After ten days, fighting was stopped when some of Mu'awiya's troops held up copies of the QUR'AN and asked that it be used to judge the issue. Reluctantly, Ali agreed to arbitration*. Many of his supporters were furious and asked him to withdraw his agreement. When Ali refused, they left. This break with Ali marked the beginnings of a group known as the Kharijites and led to Ali's death at the hands of a Kharijite assassin a few years later. Mu'awiya, meanwhile, returned to Syria unopposed and began amassing power that enabled him to gain the empire for himself after Ali's death. (*See also* **Iran; Iraq; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Religion of.**)

Sigismund, Emperor

1368–1437
Emperor and king

* **crusades** holy wars declared by the pope against non-Christians. Most were against Muslims, but crusades were also declared against heretics and pagans.

* **sultan** political and military ruler of a Muslim dynasty or state

Sigismund was a man of great ambition and energy who considered himself a second CHARLEMAGNE. He lacked the skills his ambition required, however, and his life was a long series of conflicts and half-realized aspirations that took him throughout Europe and beyond.

In 1387, Sigismund became king of Hungary after marrying Mary, the daughter of Hungary's King Louis the Great. At this time, the Ottoman Turks were advancing on Europe, and in 1395 they invaded Hungary. Sigismund organized a crusade* against them, which ended in a crushing defeat by the sultan* BAYAZID I at Nicopolis (in present-day Bulgaria) in 1396.

In 1410, Sigismund was elected Holy Roman Emperor. Among his most important goals was to resolve the Great Schism in the Christian church and to end the HUNDRED YEARS WAR. Sigismund was a major figure at the Council of Constance, which restored unity to the Western Church. However, his attempts to end the Hundred Years War were unsuccessful.

Sigismund's most bitter struggle was with Bohemia, where he was crowned king in 1420. Bohemia was embroiled in a political and religious upheaval inspired by the reformer JAN HUS. Sigismund promised Hus safe conduct to the Council of Constance so that Hus could plead his case before church leaders. But Sigismund failed to defend Hus while there, and Hus was arrested and burned at the stake. The incident led to 20 years of internal struggle in Bohemia, which Sigismund tried to end with anti-Hussite crusades against his own subjects. Finally, in 1436, Sigismund granted Hussites the right to preach their doctrines, and they, in turn, reluctantly accepted him as their king. (*See also* **Bohemia-Moravia; Germany; Hungary; Hus, Jan; Ottomans and Ottoman Empire.**)

Silk

See map in Trade (vol. 4).

Medieval Europeans valued silk greatly for its luxurious, soft texture and its beautiful design patterns. During the early Middle Ages, Europeans imported their silk from China. Then, Italy developed the silk-weaving techniques that made it a leader in silk production. Northern Italy maintained almost exclusive control of Europe's silk industry through the end of the Middle Ages.

Sericulture (the production of raw silk by the raising of silkworms) began in ancient China. The Chinese method involved collecting the eggs of silk moths. After hatching, the caterpillars, or silkworms, fed on chopped mulberry leaves for 42 to 45 days. Toward the end of the feeding period, the silkworms secreted a liquid that solidified when it came into contact with the air. The filament that was formed was spun into a cocoon.

The cocoon filament was then converted into silk yarn for weaving by two processes: reeling and throwing. To provide greater strength and uniformity, three or more filaments were slowly unwound or "reeled" together from their cocoons by a hand crank onto a circular reel. To make the silk suitable for weaving, a twist was added to the yarn (throwing).

Sericulture and silk production remained a closely guarded secret of the Chinese government for more than 2,000 years. Around 140 B.C., some

silk moth eggs and the secrets of sericulture were smuggled out of China to central Asia, India, Japan, Korea, and SASANIAN Persia. The West, however, did not learn the secrets of sericulture until the 500s, when two BYZANTINE monks succeeded in smuggling silk moth eggs and mulberry seeds—the two essential ingredients for silk making—into CONSTANTINOPLE. There it became a state monopoly and one of the Byzantine Empire's most important industries. After the Islamic conquests, the Arabs introduced sericulture to SPAIN and SICILY.

By the 1200s, silk weaving was well established in Italy. Two Italian cities, Lucca and Bologna, became famous for the development of a silk-throwing machine, one of the most important new technologies in the history of textiles. Invented in Bologna by an exile from Lucca by the name of Borghesano, the machine allowed two to four people to replace several hundred hand-thrower workers and to produce fine, strong silk yarn. Advanced models of the machine appeared in silk-throwing mills in FLORENCE and VENICE in the 14th century.

Another important development was the introduction of the drawloom from Persia. The key feature of this machine enabled weavers to produce complex, detailed designs and led to the manufacture of a wide variety of silks, silk-based fabrics woven with other fibers, and silks interwoven with gold or silver. During the late Middle Ages, northern Italian towns exercised a virtual monopoly over the European silk industry. (*See also* **Clothing; Iran; Islam, Conquests of; Italy; Technology; Textiles; Trade.**)

Simon de Montfort the Younger

ca. 1200–1265
Political leader and reformer

* **duchy**   territory ruled by a duke or a duchess

Simon de Montfort the Younger, a longtime associate of King HENRY III OF ENGLAND, broke off his close relationship with the king when he tried to restrict royal power. Simon's attempt to control the king led to the constitutional crisis of 1258–1265 and to his fatal confrontation with Henry's son, Prince Edward (EDWARD I).

Montfort was the son of a French nobleman, Simon de Montfort III, leader of the ALBIGENSIAN crusade. In 1230, the younger Montfort went to England, where he won the favor of Henry III. He became earl of Leicester in 1231, and seven years later he married Henry's sister Eleanor. In 1239, after he quarreled with Henry over a financial matter, he returned to France with his wife and then went on a CRUSADE. When he came back to England, he settled his differences with Henry and served as peacemaker between Henry and dissatisfied barons. At Henry's request, Montfort agreed to act as administrator in the troubled duchy* of Gascony in southwestern France. He left, however, when Gascon nobles, and later Henry himself, accused him of financial wrongdoing.

Montfort made peace with Henry again in 1253, but at the PARLIAMENT at Oxford in 1258 he supported the demand of the barons for reform of the government. In 1263, convinced that there was no peaceful road to reform, the barons asked Montfort to lead them in their attempt to carry out the reforms proposed by the Oxford parliament. Montfort's forces, composed mostly of younger barons and men from the towns,

defeated the royal army and captured King Henry and his oldest son, Edward.

Montfort then broadened his base by calling for two parliaments to reform the royal government. He ordered each shire (county) to elect four knights as representatives to the parliament that met in London in 1264. For the second parliament in 1265 he called for two burgesses* from each borough*.

Montfort's plan for the formation of a small group to direct operations, consisting of only a few barons and himself, convinced other barons to support Henry's son, Edward, who had escaped from captivity and was able to lead the royal forces. In the military battles that followed, Edward first defeated Montfort's son Simon, and then Montfort himself and his other sons at Worcestershire. Montfort was killed and his head was cut off. Thus his attempt to restrict royal power was ended. (*See also* **England; Nobility and Nobles.**)

* **burgess** a representative of a borough

* **borough** medieval town with special duties and privileges, such as sending representatives to parliament

Simony

* **apostle** early follower of Jesus who traveled and spread his teachings

* **ordination** church ceremony in which a person becomes a member of the clergy

* **benefice** church office to which property or income is attached

Simony refers to the buying and selling of church offices and holy orders. The term *simony* comes from Simon the Magician, a New Testament figure who tried to buy sacred powers from the apostle* Peter.

Simony became a serious problem in the fourth century when the Christian church was transformed into a wealthy institution whose offices were valuable enough to be bought and sold. Until the 500s, simony was understood as the giving or taking of money in return for ordination* or appointment to church office. In the 500s, however, Pope GREGORY I THE GREAT broadened the idea to include the transfer of a valuable object, the use of flattery or influence to gain favor, and the giving of service in expectation of reward.

Although prohibitions against simony were incorporated into church law, they were seldom enforced until the 11th century. At that time, a vigorous reform movement, known as the Investiture Controversy, made simony one of its central issues. Old laws against simony were refined and expanded, and many established payments were abolished. Some actions, such as the purchase of a priesthood, were condemned outright. Others, such as trading one benefice* for another, were considered wrong but tolerable. Despite the reforms, simony persisted through the Middle Ages and well beyond, and it became one of the central issues of the Protestant Reformation of the 1500s. (*See also* **Benefice; Church-State Relations.**)

Slavery

Slavery, which had been widespread in the ancient world, continued into the Middle Ages. However, by the last years of the Roman Republic the legal position of slaves had improved, and in the Islamic world slavery was largely limited to urban households. Although medieval slavery continued in the Mediterranean world in both Christian and Muslim countries, it ceased to be significant in FRANCE, GERMANY, ENGLAND, and SCANDINAVIA.

The Military Elite

The Janissaries were the regular infantry troops of the Ottoman Empire. Technically the sultan's slaves, they were first recruited from his legal share (one-fifth) of war booty. In 1395, forcible induction into the army of non-Muslim males, ages 8 to 20, began. Recruits received years of rigorous training, including instruction in the Turkish language and customs and conversion to Islam. Isolated from the Muslim population because of their non-Muslim birth, and from the Christian population because of their conversion to Islam, they were dependent on the sultan. Charged with guarding him at home and in battle, the Janissaries came to be regarded as the elite military force within the empire.

See map in Trade (vol. 4).

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

European Slavery

The medieval Christian attitude toward slavery was based on the idea from the BIBLE that slavery should not exist when master and slave belong to the same race and religion. However, it took several centuries for that idea to gain wide acceptance in Europe.

Early Middle Ages. When the VISIGOTHS and OSTROGOTHS ruled parts of Italy in the 400s and the 500s, they kept their slaves in a constant state of terror. For example, a slave could be killed if he was involved in a lawsuit that concerned his master, and he could be burned alive if he started a fire or had intercourse with a widow (even if she consented).

The clash of Christians and non-Christian populations of central and northern Europe before the Christianization of those lands resulted in the enslavement of the Saxon tribes in Germany and England and the peoples of Scandinavia. After the Carolingians established the policy that banned Christian slaves in a Christian society, European slavery declined, and the number of SERFS (rural workers subject to the will of their landowners) increased.

The European slave trade flourished through the sale of large numbers of non-Christian slaves to Muslim Spain and North Africa. In the 800s and the 900s, large numbers of SLAVS were transported by slave traders through Christian Europe to the Muslim world. As the Slavic people of KIEVAN RUS, POLAND, BOHEMIA-MORAVIA, CROATIA, SERBIA, and BULGARIA converted to Christianity, the slave trade in these regions declined.

Later Middle Ages. The clash of peoples of different religions was the main reason for the persistence of slavery and the slave trade in the late medieval period. The confrontation between Christianity and Islam provided slaves to both sides since those captured in battle were usually enslaved.

In the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, slavery eventually disappeared, even though it was never officially abolished. Captured prisoners of war had been the chief source of slaves, and, after the 1300s, Byzantine war efforts were largely unsuccessful. In this way, Byzantine slavery gradually decreased.

From the 1100s through the 1400s, the international slave trade turned to the shores of the Black Sea and, eventually, to Africa. In the 12th century, Italian merchants from VENICE and GENOA bought slaves in the Black Sea region and supplied them to the AYYUBID and MAMLUK dynasties* of EGYPT. By the 1300s, Genoese and other Italian merchants had a virtual monopoly on the international slave trade. They exported Turks, Mongols, and other peoples from the Caucasus and Crimea regions and blacks from Africa, at first through Muslim ports in North Africa and later from Portuguese trading posts in Africa.

This trade supplied slaves to the Mediterranean world to both Christian and Muslim countries. The number of slaves in Italian towns grew in the late Middle Ages. In the 1100s, slaves accounted for perhaps 10 percent of the population of Genoa and, by the late 1300s, perhaps 15 percent. On Mediterranean islands, such as Crete and Majorca (where escape was difficult), the percentage of slaves was even higher and the conditions much harsher. Some Majorcan landowners owned more than 60 slaves. Many slaves were chained and locked in cellars for the night. In addition, a special police force was established to capture runaways and to put down
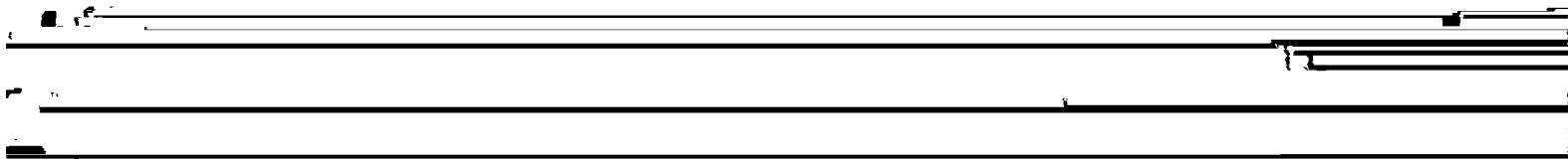
enslavement of Muslims, Jews, and Christians living under Islamic rule, slaves were by definition outsiders from beyond the Islamic world.

The newly acquired slave (children were preferred) was given a distinctive slave name. Then he or she was trained, educated, and socialized into Islam and into the master's household. The nature of the training varied greatly from household to household. The future slave soldier was trained in the use of weapons. The future business agent was trained in accounting. Some young slaves were even trained to be professional musicians. Those trained from their earliest years in religious studies sometimes became recognized scholars as adults.

Adult males, often acquired as prisoners of war, were not considered good investments since they were more difficult to subdue into slavery. Adult female slaves were viewed more favorably because they could bear children, who could then be trained as needed. Slaves who earned their own capital through their service were in a position to buy their freedom.

Manumission.   The ultimate goal of Islamic slavery was freedom for the slave (called manumission) and his or her integration into Muslim society. Slavery was not meant to be permanent, and second-generation slavery was rare. Islamic slavery was regarded as a way to convert outsiders into insiders, and the training of young slaves usually ended with their manumission in early adulthood. The freed slave was reborn as a member of the Muslim community, integrated into its social network, and linked even more strongly with the former master. Manumission was not a severance of the master-slave relationship as much as it was a remaking of the relationship into an even deeper relationship of clientage, which was a type of artificially created kinship. The freed slave became a loyal client, and this new relationship might extend for generations. (*See also* **Agriculture; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Religion of; Warfare.**)

Slavic Literature

See map in Kievan Rus (vol. 3).

During the Middle Ages, the people known as SLAVS spread out into many parts of eastern Europe and western Russia. As the Slavs established new communities in many different areas, the Slavic language evolved from a single language into the dozen or so different languages that Slavic peoples speak today.

A written Slavic language began among the West Slavs when CYRIL AND METHODIOS, two missionary monks from the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, traveled to Moravia (which later became part of the former Czechoslovakia). They created a Slavic alphabet, using mostly Greek letters. Then they translated biblical and religious texts into Slavic, using this new alphabet. Thus, the Moravians were the first Slavs to have their own written language. A modified form of this Cyrillic alphabet (named in honor of St. Cyril) is used today by Russians, Ukrainians, Belorussians, Bulgarians, and most of the peoples of the former Yugoslavia.

By 1000, this earliest Slavic written language—now called Old Slavic or Old Church Slavonic—was used throughout those parts of the Slavic world that were under Byzantine influence. However, some western

Russian Literary Renaissance

A great burst of Russian literary activity occurred as the medieval period ended. In the late 1400s, churchmen in Novgorod produced the first complete Slavic translation of the Bible. A merchant named Afanasii Nitikin wrote a remarkable travel account called *Journey Beyond Three Seas*. A military narrative called *Tale of the Taking of Constantinople* was widely read because it predicted that Russia would free Constantinople from the Turks. Also, the first Russian version of the Dracula story—a tale that is still popular today—appeared around 1475.

* **Gospels** accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus as told in the first four books of the New Testament

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

* **annals** written account of events year by year

* **chronicles** record of events in the order in which they occurred

See color plate 1, vol. 1.

* **theologian** person who studies religious faith and practice

* **ecclesiastical** pertaining to a church

Slavs, such as the Czechs and the Poles, used LATIN rather than Old Slavic because they had adopted the Roman rather than the Byzantine form of Christianity. For this reason, the modern Polish and Czech languages use the Latin alphabet instead of the Cyrillic. In addition to the church texts that Cyril and Methodios translated into Old Slavic for the Moravians, the western Slavs produced original works, including biographies of Cyril and Methodios, poems placed at the beginning of Gospel* translations, and prayers.

After the Byzantines were expelled from Moravia, Czech literature came under the Western influence of Latin, German, French, and Italian. The little surviving Czech literature from the medieval period consists of religious writings based on Latin models from Germany and Italy. The most accomplished poetry of the period was an anonymous hymn to St. Wenceslas, the martyred patron saint of the Czechs.

Eastern Europe's first university was founded in PRAGUE in 1348, ushering in a golden age of cultural activity. Many secular* works were published during this time. These were mostly love poems, satirical verses, and student drinking songs. Czech prose consisted mostly of translations of the BIBLE, the travels of Marco POLO, the autobiography of the emperor CHARLEMAGNE, and other works. The leading Czech prose writer of the Middle Ages was Tomás ze Stítného (ca. 1325–1400), who wrote on various religious subjects. In the 1400s, JAN HUS and his followers wrote sermons, letters, and pamphlets in Czech (instead of Latin) in order to communicate their ideas about church reform to the greatest number of people.

Medieval Polish literature was religious. It consisted of annals*, chronicles*, saints' lives, religious songs, and sermons. Most were written in Latin. The first works in Polish, written during the late Middle Ages, were also about religion.

Bulgaria created a flourishing Old Slavic literature, which it passed on to the eastern Slavs and Serbs. Medieval Bulgarian religious and philosophical works, written in Old Slavic, reflected a strong Byzantine influence. In Croatia, the Latin alphabet was preferred over the Cyrillic. Medieval Croatian literature consisted mostly of translations of Latin religious texts. Serbia remained closely linked to Bulgaria and Byzantium, and Serbian monks translated many Byzantine works, including sermons, hymns, and religious poems as well as histories of Alexander the Great and the Trojan War. After Turkey occupied Serbia and made it a Turkish province in 1459, Serbian literary activity decreased dramatically.

Works translated into Old Slavic in KIEVAN RUS were mostly religious works, such as saints' lives and the sermons of early Greek theologians*. However, Russian writers also made their own original contributions, such as the masterful *Slovo o zakone i blagodati (Sermon on Law and Grace)*, written about 1050 by Ilarion, the first native Russian to head the Russian Christian church.

The last major Old Russian work before the Mongol conquest was *Patericon,* a large collection of tales about the monks of Kiev's Monastery of the Caves. Filled with tales of miracles, demons, and divine interventions, the work was eagerly read by later generations of Russian readers. Literature continued to be produced in many centers, especially Moscow, after the Mongol conquest. Works of this period include translations of ecclesiastical* works, travel accounts, philosophical and medical texts, and

historical epics. The most famous epic is the *Zadonshchina* of the late 1400s, which is about the famous Battle of Kulikovo. (*See also* **Historical Writing; Mongol Empire: Saints, Lives of; Sermons.**)

Slavs

* **nomadic** wandering from place to place to find food and pasture

See map in Kievan Rus (vol. 3).

Since the Middle Ages, the people called Slavs have been the largest cultural and language group in eastern Europe. No one knows for sure where the original Slav homeland was located. Most scholars think that it was somewhere between the Baltic Sea in the north, the Black Sea in the south, the Volga River in the east, and the Oder River in the west.

In the mid-500s, nomadic* tribes called the Turkic Avars moved from central Asia into the area north of the Black Sea. Later, they pushed westward to the basin of the Danube River in eastern Europe. The Slavs who lived in these areas were either conquered by the Avars or forced to move elsewhere. The eastern Slavs—ancestors of the Ukrainians, Russians, and Belorussians—migrated north into southern Ukraine. The southern Slavs—ancestors of the Bulgarians, Serbians, Croatians, Macedonians, and Slovenes—migrated south into the Balkan Mountains. Other Slavs went west and north along the Danube as far as the Baltic coast, some of them as allies of the Avars. These became the western Slavs—ancestors of the Czechs, Slovaks, and Poles. (In the Middle Ages, all Slavic tribes on the borders of Germany were called Wends).

Slavs considered land to be communal, and movable possessions (such as livestock, slaves, weapons, and tools) to be personal property. The oldest Slavic law codes make little reference to land ownership. One such code of laws, the *Russkaya pravda*—which greatly influenced the law codes of Poland, Lithuania, and other eastern European countries—does not mention land boundaries or landed property in its oldest form. The only mention of land in this oldest version is about protecting forests.

The Slavs, who worked the land communally as members of large extended families or clans, had no individual land ownership until the end of the Middle Ages. Late in the Middle Ages, with the rise of kings and princes who wanted to reward their supporters with estates, Slavic law began to recognize land rights. (*See also* **Bohemia-Moravia; Bosnia; Bulgaria; Croatia; Kievan Rus; Muscovy, Rise of; Poland; Serbia; Serfs and Serfdom; Slavic Literature.**)

Snorra Edda

See *Scandinavia, Culture of.*

Social Classes

Before the 11th century, sharp distinctions between social classes did not exist in western European society. There were many groups, each group blending into those above and below it. The groups that existed in early medieval France, for example, consisted of great lords, CLERGY (ranging from archbishops to doorkeepers), CASTELLANS (governors of forts and castles), KNIGHTS (some were mercenaries), tenants, free peasants, and those in varying degrees of servitude and

Rapid commercial expansion after 1000 led to the growth of towns and cities. A new urban social class evolved, which did not have the traditional feudal relationship with the nobility. This illumination from the 1300s shows merchants and nobles riding past peasants tilling the soil. Free peasants and other noncitizens of a town could become citizens with the approval of the town's government.

See color plate 14, vol. 1.
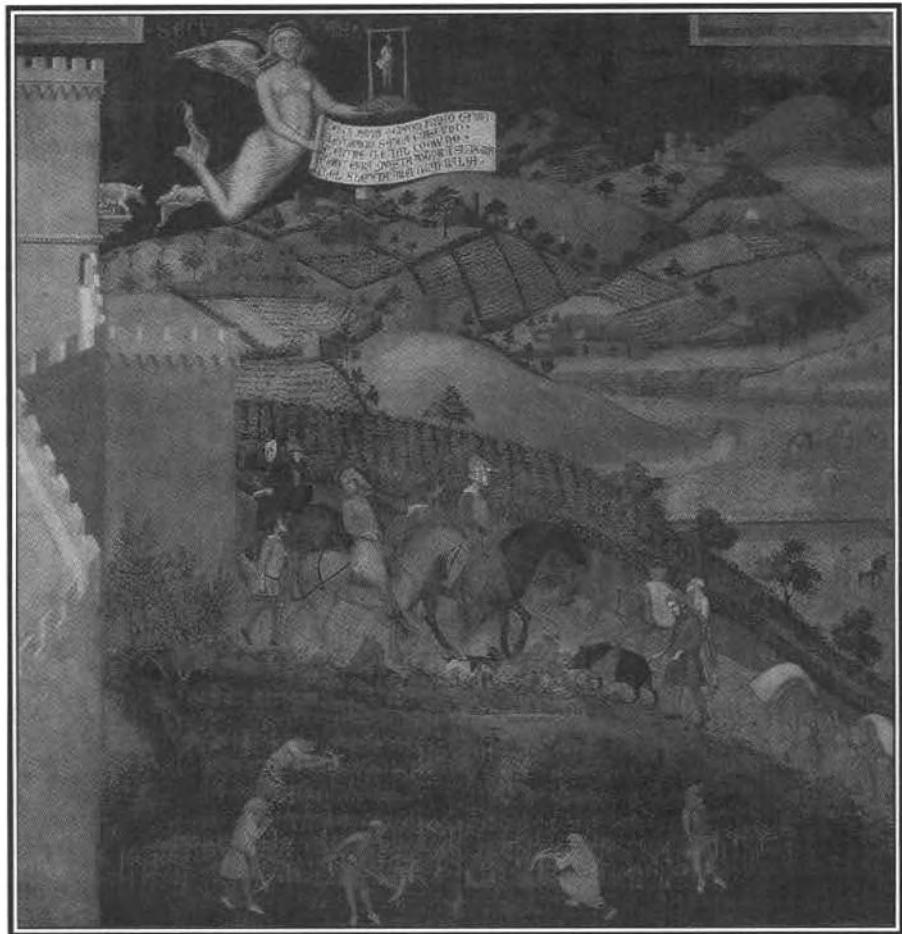
dependency—shepherds, peddlers, servants, and beggars. In the later Middle Ages, clearer social classes evolved. In the Byzantine Empire, social classes also grew more distinct and rigid as the Middle Ages progressed.

Western Europe. In the early Middle Ages, lords controlled most of the land and earned their income from it without having to actually work it. On the other hand, peasants did the work and were subject to the will of the lord. Together, these two groups accounted for about 90 percent of the population.

By the 12th century, NOBILITY was based more on family ties and prestige than on the amount of land owned. Knighthood was one way to achieve prestige and power, and many nobles were knights. However, not all knights were nobles; some were from humble peasant backgrounds with little or no land and few resources.

In the 1100s, the high costs of the knight's equipment—a horse, coat of mail, armor, shield, sword, and helmet—drew a line between those who could afford to equip and train themselves and those who could not. Those who became knights were considered aristocrats*, especially if they married into a noble family or had a castle. Those who could not afford to become knights faded into the peasantry. During the Middle Ages, the number of nobles increased, as free peasants, officeholders, and even prosperous serfs found means to buy their way into the nobility. The growth of the noble class, combined with a sense of privilege and

* **aristocrats** people of the highest social class

responsibility among the nobles, made this the dominant group in medieval European society.

The peasants did not achieve the same sense of class identity. Most peasants felt isolated. Some left the land and moved to towns and cities. In many parts of Europe, the peasantry itself was divided into several groups: independent plowmen who lived and worked on their own land; laborers who worked the land of others for wages; and serfs who generally were bound to the land as tillers of the soil. Depending on the size and quality of their landholdings, some serfs were better off than freemen.

The rapid commercial expansion in western Europe after 1000 stimulated the growth of towns and cities. It also increased the number of townspeople who supported themselves by trade and manufacturing and were able to save and invest money. As towns achieved some degree of independence, especially in Italy and Germany, the new urban class began to express itself politically. The citizens of towns stood apart from the feudal relationship between lord and peasant. Residents of towns and cities demanded the right to govern themselves. Residents of many communities pressured kings into granting them town charters*.

Not everybody who lived in a town was a citizen. Citizenship was reserved for artisans, merchants, and others who owned property, paid taxes, and contributed to the defense of the town. Wage earners, apprentices*, and servants were not considered citizens. Most townsfolk inherited their citizenship, although free peasants and other noncitizens could acquire citizenship with the approval of the town government. Those who were not citizens were prohibited from attending assemblies, standing guard duty, or participating fully in the life of their towns.

Although citizens formed a distinct social group within each town, townspeople as a whole did not form a social class across a region or country. Differences that existed regarding towns and their charters, difficulties of communication, and the lack of government or social standards prevented townspeople from joining forces for a common cause with people of other towns. Although there were exceptions, such as in the HANSEATIC LEAGUE, most urban dwellers pursued their interests locally.

As with townspeople, the status of the clergy was also separate from the fundamental feudal relationship between lord and vassal*, although the church drew its support from both groups. In a society in which the church was an extremely powerful and influential institution, clergymen enjoyed prestige and special privileges. The clergy included several subclasses. At the top of the hierarchy were bishops and abbots, usually from noble families or those with large landholdings. At the other end were village priests, usually from peasant origins. Clergy members who lacked BENEFICES (church positions supported by endowments) were wage earners who made their living by assisting at parishes or conducting church services for fees.

Byzantine Empire. Politically, the Byzantine Empire was a continuation of the ancient Roman Empire. Byzantine society was shaped by the actions of the early emperors Diocletian (who reigned from 284 to 305) and CONSTANTINE (who reigned from 307 to 337). In an attempt to reorganize the Roman Empire and to return the region to its former glory, these emperors placed strict controls on farmers and city workers. In Byzantine cities,

See color plate 10, vol. 1.

* **charter** written grant from a ruler conferring certain rights and privileges

* **apprentice** person bound by legal agreement to work for another for a specific period of time in return for instruction in a trade or art

* **vassal** person given land by a lord or monarch in return for loyalty and services

Swedish Peasants

Sweden was home to Europe's most successful peasant class. Land, forests, and lakes were abundant. Feudal lords were few and weak. Serfdom in Sweden did not begin until the 13th century.

Swedish peasants owned about half of the country's farmland. They had a share of the political power as well. In 1319, when it was time to choose a new king, peasant representatives were called to vote. Later in the century, the Swedish crown established the Riksdag, the country's first parliament. The peasants were given their own chamber or house in the Riksdag.

workers engaged in labor that the empire considered essential—such as shipbuilders, bakers, pork dealers, and state factory workers—were tied for life to their trades, and these trades were hereditary. Byzantine workers, as well as farmers, were legally obliged to follow the trade of their fathers. These restrictions were loosened later in the Middle Ages, although many people continued by custom to follow the family trade.

People who worked the fields were tied to the soil for life. Many peasants were oppressed by heavy taxes and by local officials who exploited them. Many peasants ran away or became serfs on the large estates of landowners, hoping for better treatment. They were often disappointed since many landowners also exploited them with little regard for their well-being. Serfs had few rights.

In the early Middle Ages, some Byzantine villages were inhabited by free peasants who owned and farmed their own land. By the 900s, however, the landed aristocracy and the MONASTERIES had taken over most of these areas. Several emperors enacted laws designed to protect the villages, but these laws did little to halt the growth of large estates. As in European society, the Byzantine clergy also became a powerful class in society. Clergy members were considered a strong spiritual force on which the safety of the empire depended. The emperors were unable to keep the monasteries from expanding their holdings, as once-free villages became church property.

By the 1300s, the disintegration of the Byzantine countryside was complete. Peasants were oppressed, villages were deserted, and there was open rebellion against greedy landowners. When Turkish armies marched from the east to conquer the empire, the countryside lay weak and defenseless. One Turkish invader wrote, "God has decreed that we should take the land from the Christians because they do not conduct their affairs . . . with justice, because they look to wealth and favor, and the rich treat the poor with haughtiness, and do not help them either with gifts or with justice." (*See also* **Chivalry; Commune; Inheritance Laws and Practices; Land Use; Peasants' Rebellions and Uprisings; Serfs and Serfdom; Slavery; Trade.**)

Spain, Muslim Kingdoms of

See map in Aragon (vol. 1).

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

After the Muslims conquered Spain (called al-Andalus in Arabic) in the early 700s, they occupied and dominated all but the northernmost regions of Spain and Portugal for much of the medieval period. Beginning in the 1200s, the Christian Spanish states in the north asserted themselves against the Muslims and drove them from Spain.

Conquest and Reconquest.   According to Islamic accounts, Tariq ibn Ziyad (who had just conquered North Africa) invaded Spain in 711 with an army of Arab officers and about 12,000 BERBERS. Following the conquest, an 18,000-man force led by Musa ibn Nusayr, the Arab governor of North Africa, occupied Seville, Saragossa, and most of the rest of Spain.

The UMAYYAD caliph* of DAMASCUS ordered both Tariq and Musa home from Spain. Between 714 and 756, the Muslim territory in Spain had 20 governors. Many of these governors fell from power as a result of an older Arab feud that was transported to Spain.

At first, the Muslims viewed Spain as a launching place for the conquest of Europe. They seized the city of BARCELONA in northern Spain and advanced into southern France as far as Poitiers until CHARLES MARTEL and Eudes of AQUITAINE stopped their advance in 732. By this time, the borders of al-Andalus were firmly set. Only a narrow strip of unconquered Christian states remained in northern Spain. These included CASTILE, ARAGON, NAVARRE, and CATALONIA.

The first emir (military ruler) of al-Andalus was Abd al-Rahman I. During his long reign from 756 to 788, he repelled Christian raiders, crushed revolts, and brought more Syrian supporters to Spain. More revolts and VIKING attacks from the north plagued the emirs of al-Andalus in the 800s. However, the 900s brought a kind of golden age to the emirate under Abd al-Rahman III (who ruled from 912 to 961) and under his son al-Hakam II (who ruled from 961 to 976).

Abd al-Rahman III, who boldly gave himself the title of caliph in 929, made al-Andalus a mighty sea power. His ships raided the islands and coasts of the western Mediterranean and plundered the Rhône valley in southern France. His attacks along the North African coast convinced the FATIMID rulers to move their capital to EGYPT at the opposite end of the Mediterranean. Abd al-Rahman III also undertook ambitious building projects and began the first regular minting of gold coins.

Abd al-Rahman III's reign was notable for the splendor of the palaces, baths, country estates, castles, and mosques* that were built. One impressive example is the Great Mosque of CÓRDOBA, which was decorated with gold imported from Africa. With the help of Berber sultans*, the rulers of al-Andalus had access to trade routes through the Sahara desert and south of the Sahara. Along these routes, gold was transported. From the mid-800s to the mid-1200s, African gold bolstered the economic prosperity of al-Andalus and helped make its capital of Córdoba as splendid as CONSTANTINOPLE and BAGHDAD.

Around 1000, the Spanish Muslim CALIPHATE split into a patchwork of 20 to 30 principalities* ruled by local dynasties. The five major principalities were Badajoz, TOLEDO, and Saragossa in the north and Seville and GRANADA in the south. These principalities often fought among themselves. Occasionally the Christian states of Europe became involved in these struggles.

In 1085, the Christian ruler Alfonso VI of Castile conquered the border region of Toledo. Around the same time, the Christian warrior known as the CID captured the coast of VALENCIA. Worried representatives of several Muslim principalities asked for aid from the Almoravids, an Arab dynasty from North Africa. Not only did the Almoravids drive the Castilians back, but they also seized control of Seville, Granada, Valencia, Saragossa, and other principalities, thus making al-Andalus part of their empire. The Almoravids were in turn replaced by the Almohads, who took control of Morocco and Spain. They made Seville the capital of a vast territory that stretched from the Atlantic Ocean to Tripoli.

The conquest of Muslim Spain by the Christian states in the north began in earnest in the early 1200s. JAMES I THE CONQUEROR of Aragon and Catalonia raided Valencia in 1225, captured the island of Majorca in 1229, and then conquered the Valencian lands in 1232–1245. Meanwhile, Ferdinand III and his son ALFONSO X EL SABIO of Castile and León captured Córdoba (1236), Jaén (1246), Seville (1248), and Cadiz (1262).

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

* **sultan** political and military ruler of a Muslim dynasty or state

* **principality** region that is ruled by a prince
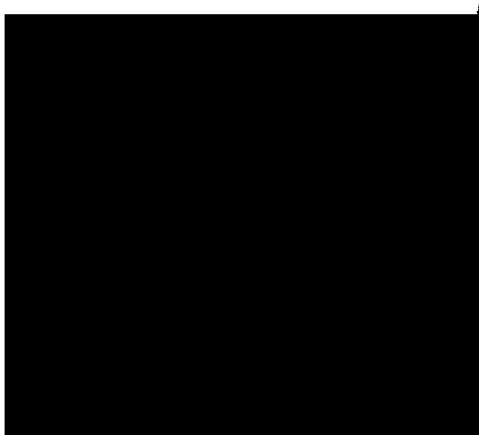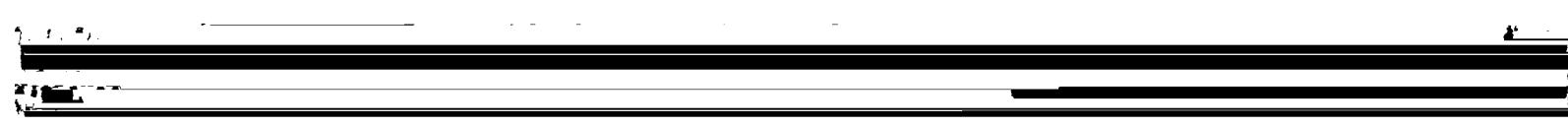
self-governing, with their own leaders and laws. Because of this fairly tolerant attitude, Jewish immigration to Muslim Spain increased substantially. Spanish Jews held important positions in Spanish Muslim society as statesmen, scholars, physicians, and merchants.

This diversity of peoples and traditions helped make al-Andalus a leader in astronomy, geography, metaphysics, music, mysticism*, poetry, law, theology*, history, medicine, travel, agricultural and botanical research, and architecture. Muslim Spain's high level of scholarship and culture brought new ideas to western Europe and contributed to the development of scholasticism and health care. Many great thinkers and writers lived and worked in Muslim Spain, including the Arab philosopher IBN RUSHD and the Jewish philosopher MAIMONIDES. (*See also* **Arabic Language and Literature; Historical Writing; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Religion of; Islamic Art and Architecture; Jewish Communities; Jews, Expulsion of; Medicine; Science; Scientific Instruments.**)

* **mysticism** belief that divine truths or direct knowledge of God can be experienced through faith, spiritual insight, and intuition

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

See color plate 15, vol. 3.

Spanish Art and Architecture

During the Middle Ages, Spain's art and architecture reflected the country's unique blend of Islamic, Christian, Jewish, and other traditions. The brilliant heritage created by this ethnic variety made a deep and lasting impression on the medieval culture of western Europe.

Islamic Influence.   Spain was ruled by Muslims for nearly eight centuries during the Middle Ages. The style of Islamic Spanish art (called Hispano-Mauresque art) was established during the peak of North African Arab rule in Spain, from 756 to 1031. The two major architectural achievements of this early period are the Great Mosque* of CÓRDOBA and the palace city of Madinat al-Zahra. Both were created in terms of rectangular units, and, in both, this regular geometry is disguised by lavish, colorful decoration, such as patterns of alternating wedge-shaped pieces of white stone and red brick.

Construction of the Great Mosque began in 785 under the rule of Abd al-Rahman I. The mosque has a simple stone exterior, an open courtyard, and a covered area containing 11 parallel aisles. Separating the aisles, and supporting the flat ceiling, are unique two-tiered arcades*. The lower, horseshoe-shaped arches rise from short columns, and the upper arches rise close above the lower ones. The builders of the mosque combined fine masonry of specially cut stones and columns that were taken from the ruins of earlier buildings of the Romans and VISIGOTHS. Additions were made to the mosque in 848, 969, and 987.

A palace was built next to the Great Mosque, so that the caliphs* could enter the mosque through a private door from the palace. Soon, there were also secondary palaces erected outside the city. The earliest and most important of these "suburban" palaces was Madinat al-Zahra. This was a vast and sumptuous structure, built for the caliph Abd al-Rahman III (who reigned from 912 to 961), on a hillside six miles northwest of Córdoba. Begun in 936 and used until 981, Madinat al-Zahra was an administrative center as well as a royal residence for the ruler and his court. It had a mint* and workshops for various luxury items, such as elegantly carved ivory boxes. Madinat al-Zahra contained a series of separate courtyards

* **mosque** Muslim place of worship

* **arcade** long, arched passageway

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

* **mint** to make coins by shaping and stamping metal; the place where coins are made

Islamic Tiles

The Islamic taste for ornamentation gave rise to the medieval Spanish ceramics industry. Muslims used tiles to cover the lower part of the walls of their buildings.

Tiles from the Alhambra are shaped like polygons. Made of a single color, each small piece was either sawed into shape after firing or set into a mold before firing. The pieces were then set into bands of blue, green, white, brown, and black patterns.

The early Old Spanish period is represented by a few poems and prose texts that were written between 1100 and 1250. The language of these works was greatly influenced by local dialects. These early works are highly individual, and scholars do not consider them to follow any particular literary tradition.

Classical Old Spanish (sometimes referred to as standardized Old Spanish) was spoken and written from 1250 to 1400. During this period, the differences among dialects disappeared, and the language became more standard and universal. The texts that survive from this period include a few poems and several types of didactic* prose, such as SERMONS and HANDBOOKS of morals. Standardized Old Spanish was encouraged by Alfonso XI, king of CASTILE, and his nephew Don Juan MANUEL.

Late Old Spanish (1400–1500) came under Portuguese, French, and Italian influences. These languages added many words and phrases to Spanish. Once again, dialects appeared, but this time more because of foreign influences than because of differences among the regions of Spain.

Old Spanish has been traced to 1100, but scholars believe that an even older form of Spanish existed. Called Archaic Spanish, it is thought to have been in use from about 900 to 1100. There are very few documents in Archaic Spanish—only a few charters, contracts, and assorted fragments of other written works. A few scholars believe that a still older form of Spanish, from the period between 400 and 900, was the link between the LATIN LANGUAGE of the Roman Empire and Archaic Spanish. However, no actual evidence of this intermediate language has been found.

Spoken Old Spanish had many dialects. The three major ones were those of the kingdoms of ASTURIAS-LEÓN, CASTILE, and NAVARRE and ARAGON. As these northern Spanish-Christian kingdoms expanded southward through Muslim Spain, the characteristics of their speech mixed. There was also a distinct dialect spoken by the Mozarabs, who were Spanish Christians who adopted some aspects of Arab culture.

In addition to its vernacular language, Spain had several literary languages. For much of the Middle Ages, Latin, Arabic, and Hebrew were the languages of learning and literature in Spain. Poetry and prose in the Spanish vernacular appeared around the middle of the medieval period. However, Spanish did not replace Latin as the chief literary language of Spain until the 1300s.

Latin Literature.   The major figure of Spanish literature in Latin during the early medieval period was Isidore of Seville (ca. 560–636). Isidore's religious writings and histories greatly influenced medieval European scholars, and his 20-volume encyclopedia of ancient learning established him as the "schoolmaster to the Middle Ages." Another important writer of the early Middle Ages was Eugenius II, bishop of Toledo, who wrote poetry in Latin.

After the Muslim conquest of Spain in the early 700s, education in Latin declined—not just in Islamic southern regions of Spain but also in the Christian north. In the Muslim city of CÓRDOBA, a Christian writer named Paulus Alvarus (ca. 800–ca. 861) praised contemporary Christian martyrs*, and he expressed regret that many young Christians were turning away from Latin and studying Arabic instead. One important Christian work from this period was the *Chronica* of King Alfonso III of Asturias,

* **didactic** designed or intended to teach

See map in Aragon (vol. 1).

Remember: *Words in small capital letters have separate entries, and the index at the end of Volume 4 will guide you to more information on many topics.*

* **martyr** person who suffers and dies rather than renounce a religious faith

Alfonso X was king of Castile from 1252 to 1284. Many significant cultural developments occurred at his court. He established the Castilian version of Spanish as the language of prose, and he was the author of several books, including a history of Spain. This miniature is from Alfonso's *Cantigas de Santa María*, a collection of songs in praise of the Virgin Mary.

written about 883. It was the first of a series of official court histories that continued for the rest of the Middle Ages.

Medieval Spain, especially the city of Toledo, became the major center of translation of ancient Greek and medieval Arabic works on science and philosophy. Translated into Latin, these works had an enormous impact on European learning, beginning in the 1100s. Muslim Spain was the cultural bridge between the Arabic and Latin worlds and produced two of the leading philosophers of the Middle Ages—IBN RUSHD (also called Averroës) and Moses MAIMONIDES.

As elsewhere in Europe, Latin as a literary language was replaced by the vernacular from the 13th century on. Nevertheless, Latin remained the preferred language of scholars and the church. Leading Spanish literary figures of this later period who wrote in Latin included Raymond Sabunde of BARCELONA, a priest at the University of TOULOUSE. He was the author of *Theologia naturalis*, a work that inspired the 16th-century French writer Montaigne.

Spanish Literature from 900 to 1300. Spanish vernacular literature appeared around 900 in Islamic Spain. The mixed population of Christians, Muslims, and Jews was largely bilingual, speaking Old Spanish and probably one other language, such as Arabic or Hebrew.

According to Arabic historians writing in the 1100s, a type of poem called a *muwashshah* was invented about 900 by Muhammad of Cabra, who built his poems around popular verses and songs in the language of the people. The first surviving *muwashshah* that contains some Spanish vernacular is a Hebrew poem by Yosef al-Katib, written not later than 1042. Some surviving *muwashshahs* have only a few Spanish phrases. Others, in Arabic and Hebrew, have more than 60 songs or verses in Spanish. Scholars now think that the *muwashshahs* and other early Spanish poems are related to a

type of poem called "the women's love song" that is at least as old as the Roman Empire and perhaps older. Similar poems occur in French, Portuguese, and Slavic literature.

Spanish writers produced several epic poems about the deeds of heroes, national pride, and ancient or historic events. The earliest Spanish epic poem was probably *Siete infantes de Lara,* which may have been written before 1000. It was the story of a family feud that resulted in murder and revenge. Although all but a few verses have been lost, it is clear from these fragments and from later chronicles* that *Siete infantes de Lara* was one of the masterpieces of medieval Spanish literature. This lost work influenced later Spanish writers of epic poems, ballads, and plays.

The "counts cycle" was a series of epic poems that dealt with real and imagined events during the time of the first counts of Castile. Although some of these poems have been lost, their stories were summarized in other texts. One interesting aspect of these poems is that women were featured in prominent roles and dominated much of the action. Although the poems originated in Christian northern Spain, Muslims are not cast as villains. Muslims are portrayed as enemies in battle, but the real villains of these epics are other Christians, often members of the hero's own family. Muslims often appear as generous and honorable characters.

The longest and best of the surviving Spanish epic poems is the *Poema de mío Cid,* written by an unknown author about 1207. It tells the story of the real-life warrior Rodrigo Díaz de Vivar (ca. 1043–1099), who was called the Cid (Arabic for lord). The style and tone of the poem are unusually dignified and restrained. For example, the number of warriors in the battle scenes is realistically small, not improbably large as in many other epic poems, and the heroic deeds described are not so exaggerated as to be incredible.

A new form of Spanish poetry called *clerecia* emerged in the early 1200s. The *clerecia* poems were associated with monasteries and universities in the Christian north. (The first Spanish university was founded at Palencia in the 1220s.) The earliest and longest of these poems was the *Libro de Alexandre.* The poem, which is about Alexander the Great, was intended to be a lesson for rulers. Its concerns a hero of dazzling talent and achievement who conquers the world but, through a flaw in his character, brings about his own downfall. Part romance and part epic, the poem is one of the best of the many medieval works about Alexander the Great.

Although the most important prose continued to be written in Latin, vernacular prose works appeared in the late 1100s. King Ferdinand III of Castile (who reigned from 1217 to 1252) helped to establish vernacular Spanish as a language of scholarship by having the law codes translated into Spanish. His successor, ALFONSO X EL SABIO, established the Castilian version of Spanish as a language for learned prose by forming an international body of scholars, translators, and artists to write essays in Spanish on law, history, science, and religion. One of Alfonso's most ambitious works was an encyclopedia of law, which had a significant effect on later Spanish history.

Spanish Literature from 1300 to 1500. The two major figures of Spanish literature in the early 1300s were Don Juan Manuel in prose and Juan

* **chronicles** record of events in the order in which they occurred

Happy Ending

The *Poema de mío* Cid, unlike most other medieval epics, has a happy ending. The hero of the poem is the Cid, who has been exiled by his enemies in the royal court. The king restores him to favor and suggests that the Cid give his daughters in marriage to nobles called the Infantes de Carrión. The marriages end disastrously when the nobles beat and abandon their young wives in a forest. With the king's help, the daughters are saved, their honor is restored, and they are happily remarried to royal husbands.

RUIZ in poetry. Manuel, a nephew of Alfonso X el Sabio, wrote two major works: *Libro del conde Lucanor et de Patronio* (completed in 1335) and *Libro de los estados* (written about 1327–1332). They deal with the need to save one's soul by living a good life. The poet Juan Ruiz collected the lyric poems he wrote over many years in a single book, *Libro de buen amor*, which appeared in 1330. Ruiz's poems display a remarkable variety of styles, moods, and subjects. They also reflect influences of western European, Arabic, and Hebrew cultures. Ruiz's poems helped establish Spain's tradition of lyric poetry*.

One of the great philosophical poems of the late 1300s was the *Proverbios morales* of Rabbi Shem Tov ben Yitzhak Ardutiel. Shem Tov was the only medieval writer who produced major literary works in both Castilian and Hebrew. The *Proverbios morales* is a long, melancholy, carefully organized poem about wisdom, with occasional touches of personal feeling.

During the reign of John II of Castile in the early 15th century, poems were collected in *cancioneros* (songbooks). One of the best poets of this period was Íñigo López de Mendoza (1398–1458), who wrote many different kinds of poems as well as a history of European poetry. Another exceptional poet was Juan de Mena (1411–1456), whose political allegory*, *Laberinto de Fortuna* (written in 1444), is considered a literary masterpiece.

The 1400s also brought a great outpouring of prose literature, including SERMONS, satire, chronicles, biographies, and travel accounts. *Memorias*, an autobiography that Leonor López de Córdoba (1362/1363–ca. 1412) dictated at the end of her life, is the first surviving book in Spanish literature by a woman author. At the end of the century, many works were written to celebrate the deeds of Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, whose marriage paved the way for a single Spanish monarchy.

Thousands of poems were written in the late 1400s. One of them, considered the greatest elegy* in the Spanish language, was *Coplas que fizo por la muerte de su padre*, written in 1479 by Jorge Manrique. Florencia Pinar, who wrote love poems, is the only Spanish woman poet whose work survives as more than a few fragmentary lines.

At the end of the Middle Ages, religious and secular* plays were written and performed at the University of Salamanca and the Toledo Cathedral. These works were the beginning of a tradition of lively Spanish drama that has continued ever since. (*See also* **Arabic Language and Literature; Arthurian Literature; Courtly Love; Hebrew Literature; Historical Writing; Spain, Muslim Kingdoms of; Spanish Art and Architecture; Troubadour, Trouvère; Universities.**)

* **lyric poetry** poetry that has the form and general effect of a song

* **allegory** literary device in which characters represent an idea or a religious or moral principle

* **elegy** song or poem that expresses sorrow for one who has died

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

Stephen I of Hungary, St.

ca. 975–1038
King of Hungary

* **pagan** word used by Christians to mean non-Christian and believing in several gods

Stephen I was the founder of the medieval kingdom of Hungary and was its first Christian king. His reign was notable for the development of Christian institutions and for the organization of the Hungarian state.

Stephen was the son of Grand Prince Géza, a noble who had introduced Christianity into Hungary. After Stephen succeeded his father in 997, he spent several years fighting pagan* nobles who claimed the throne. He then sought the pope's permission to be crowned a Christian king. With his coronation, Stephen became the first Christian king in eastern Europe. Strong cultural contacts with the Latin West that followed determined the country's direction for the next thousand years.

Strengthened by the international acceptance of his royal authority and victories over rivals, Stephen turned his attention to organizing his kingdom and the church. He confiscated tribal lands for the crown and established a system of royal counties. He created a ruling class of nobles and knights, and he set up an administration similar to that of other royal courts. To organize the church, Stephen created bishoprics* and monasteries. In his later years, he reopened the old pilgrimage route from western Europe to Jerusalem and established hostels* and way stations along the route.

The last years of Stephen's life were overshadowed by warfare with neighboring states and the issue of succession*. When his son, Prince Imre, was killed in a hunting accident, Stephen named a nephew as his successor. This caused years of internal strife. Plagued by illness and grief over Imre's death, Stephen died in 1038. (*See also* **Hungary.**)

* **bishopric** office of or area governed by a bishop
* **hostel** lodging place or inn

* **succession** the transmission of authority on the death of one ruler to the next

Suger of St. Denis
1081–1151
Abbot

* **patron** person of wealth and influence who supports an artist, writer, or scholar

* **crusade** holy war declared by the pope against non-Christians. Most were against Muslims, but crusades were also declared against heretics and pagans.

* **regent** person appointed to govern a kingdom when the rightful ruler is too young, absent, or disabled

Suger was a man of many talents. As the abbot of St. Denis, the royal abbey north of PARIS, he undertook various administrative reforms and worked hard to expand the abbey's properties and influence. As a historian, he wrote important chronicles that celebrated the deeds of France's kings. However, his most enduring legacy was as a patron* of architecture. His additions to the abbey church of St. Denis, designed by daring and creative architects, influenced a new GOTHIC ARCHITECTURE that spread from Paris throughout western Europe.

Born into the lesser nobility, Suger entered the monastery of St. Denis at about age ten. While studying there, he formed a lasting friendship with a fellow student, the young prince Louis, who became King LOUIS VI OF FRANCE. As a result of this friendship, Suger later became deeply involved in French politics as well as religion.

Suger became abbot of St. Denis in 1122. Under his direction, the abbey prospered as never before. He increased revenues, improved administration, pursued forgotten claims to lands and rights, and initiated reforms that returned the monks to a strict observance of monastic rule.

In addition to Suger's responsibilities as abbot, he was very involved in politics and the royal court. He accompanied Louis VI on several military expeditions. He was an important and trusted royal adviser who was sent on diplomatic missions to the PAPACY. From 1147 to 1149, when Louis was on the Second Crusade*, Suger served as regent* and governed France in the king's absence. (*See also* **Crusades.**)

Sultan

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

Sultan was a title for one who held political authority. In Arabic, the word *sultan* originally referred to the concept of political power, might, or authority. However, by the tenth century the word was applied to individuals. In 1051, the Seljuk leader Toghril-Beg was given the title by the caliph* al-Muqtadi as a sign of his position of political power in the Islamic world. Later, the title was used by the AYYUBIDS, MAMLUKS, OTTOMANS, and others. The word was distinctly Islamic, and the title of sultan was used only in Muslim regions. (*See also* **Caliphate.**)

Sunna

Sunna is an Arab concept that developed during the early history of Islam. It came to mean, in a legal sense, a recommended behavior, especially of the prophet MUHAMMAD.

In pre-Islamic times, the Arabic term *sunna* generally meant way, or manner of acting. With the growth of Islam, various pre-Islamic customs, modeled on the practices of the prophet Muhammad, were incorporated into the new faith. Muslims gradually adopted these as a standard code of behavior and faith.

During the time of the first four caliphs*, the concept of Sunna was applied to their rules and customs, and, in this way, a model was created that later Muslims followed. Since politics and religion were closely linked in the early Islamic period, Sunna emerged as both a religious and a political concept.

As Sunna developed as a political concept, it also evolved with a combined religious and legal meaning. The Sunna of Muhammad eventually became more important than the Sunna of his associates. The great jurist Muhammad ibn Idris al-Shafi'i (who died in 820) established Sunna as a major source of Islamic law, second only to the Qur'an. After al-Shafi'i, the term *sunna* was applied almost exclusively to the deeds and sayings of Muhammad.

Muhammad's Sunna was transmitted through hadith, his recorded sayings and deeds. The Sunna of Muhammad was considered sacred and became identified with orthodox Muslims, the Sunnites*. They believed unconditionally in a number of religious doctrines, including predestination*, and, eventually, the idea that Sunna and Islam are essentially identical. The latter concept implied that any deviations, or changes, from Sunna signify a departure from the truth. Extremely rigid in their observance in the beginning, the Sunnites gradually gained some flexibility. (*See also* **Abu Bakr; Caliphate; Imam; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Political Organization of; Islam, Religion of; Qur'an.**)

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

* **Sunnites** Muslim majority who believed that the caliphs should rule the Islamic community

* **predestination** doctrine that God alone determines whether a Muslim goes to paradise or hell

Sunnites

See *Caliphate; Sunna.*

Sutton Hoo

Sutton Hoo is a burial mound near the English town of Woodbridge, about 70 miles northeast of London. In 1939, an 89-foot-long ship that had been ceremonially buried at Sutton Hoo in the 600s was discovered and excavated. Although the ship had almost completely disappeared, the objects that were buried with it made Sutton Hoo the most important European collection of early medieval treasures.

Artifacts found at the site include a helmet ornamented with Swedish designs, a round wooden shield, a 34-inch iron sword, a set of ten silver bowls, a pair of silver spoons, a bronze hanging bowl, a large silver dish with Byzantine markings, a maple-wood lyre, and a pair of drinking horns. The most beautiful objects uncovered at Sutton Hoo were shoulder clasps, a large gold buckle, and a gold-framed purse lid.

Switzerland

The modern nation of Switzerland evolved in the late Middle Ages in a rugged, forested region between Lake Zurich and Lake Lucerne in the Alps Mountains of south-central Europe. The Swiss Confederation was a partnership between mountain people who wanted to protect their independence and growing cities that wanted to remain free of outside control.

Toward the Swiss Confederation. Switzerland has always been at the crossroads of Europe. Sandwiched between France, Germany, and Italy, it is a place where cultures and languages have met and mingled. In the 400s, it was colonized by the Burgundians, ancestors of the French-related western Swiss, and the ALAMANNI, ancestors of the German-related eastern Swiss. By the mid-500s, the FRANKS had defeated the Burgundians and the Alamanni, bringing the various territories of the future Switzerland under the rule of the Frankish CAROLINGIAN Empire. For several centuries, the territories of the future Switzerland were incorporated into the HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE.

In the late 1100s, the Zähringens, a southern German dynasty*, strengthened their hold over Zurich and the French-speaking regions of Switzerland. In 1197, the archbishop of Cologne offered the German imperial crown to Duke Berchtold V of Zähringen, but the duke refused it. Berchtold died in 1218 without leaving an heir, resulting in an abrupt end to the Zähringen dynasty. By the end of the 1200s, much Swiss territory was controlled by the Austrian HABSBURG DYNASTY, but resistance to Habsburg rule was rising in Switzerland.

The core of the Swiss Confederation that emerged in the late Middle Ages was an isolated, mountainous area called the *Waldstätte* (forest districts). In 1291, as various members of the Habsburg family squabbled over territorial claims, the people of the *Waldstätte* felt war coming. They barricaded their valleys with rock walls and wooden fences, and representatives of three of the forest communities—Uri, Schwyz, and Niwalden—signed a pact to defend each other. This agreement formed the basis for the creation of the Swiss Confederation.

In the early 1300s, the people of Uri and Schwyz proclaimed their independence by invading the local abbeys, which were under Habsburg protection. Duke Leopold of Habsburg led his large army to punish them in 1315. Lying in ambush at the Morgarten Pass, the mountaineers massacred the Austrian knights, who had no time to assemble in battle formation. The duke escaped, but the independence of the *Waldstätte* had been preserved.

Growth of Cities and the Confederation. Although Swiss cities were relatively small (only the cathedral cities of Basel and Geneva had more than 5,000 people), the alliances they formed with the *Waldstätte* played an important part in the creation of the Swiss Confederation. Lucerne joined the alliance in 1332, followed by Zurich (1351) and Bern (1353). The cities provided fresh, dynamic leadership and strengthened the Confederation in its dealings with outsiders, especially the Habsburgs, who still controlled more Swiss territory than the Confederation did. Leadership was provided in turn by Zurich, Lucerne, Schwyz, and Bern. After the mid-1300s, the urban element outweighed the rural element in the Confederation.

See map in Carolingians (vol. 1).

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group
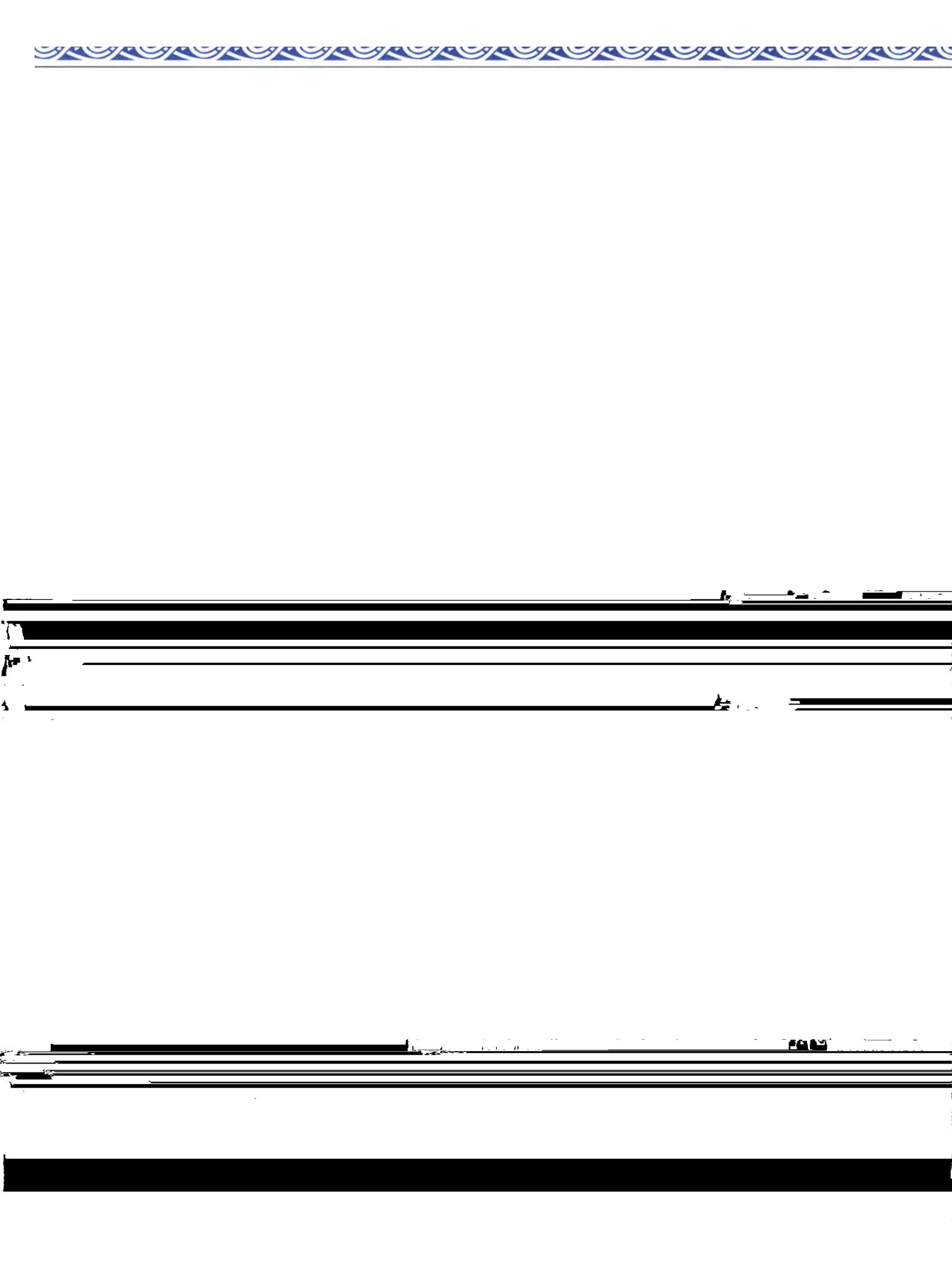
state, it did recognize that Switzerland had separated itself from the German Empire.

The Swiss Confederation continued to expand after the end of the Middle Ages. Basel joined the Confederation in 1501. Geneva, Lausanne, and the western French-speaking territories joined much later, as did several small republics in the south. (*See also* **France; Germany; Migrations, Germanic.**)

Syria

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **booty** prizes of war

Located at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea, medieval Syria included the lands that make up present-day Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Jordan as well as parts of Turkey, Iraq, and Saudi Arabia. In the Middle Ages, the country was the crown jewel of the early Arab Empire and a battleground between Christians and Muslims.

In ancient times, Syria was one of the most important territories of the Roman Empire. Its numerous cities flourished, and an extensive trade in wine, olive oil, silk, glass, and Indian spices brought the region great wealth. Syria was also the birthplace of CHRISTIANITY, and Syrians were among the first converts to the religion. In the early Middle Ages, a large majority of the population were Christian.

When the Roman Empire was divided into eastern and western sections in the 300s, Syria came under Byzantine rule. In the 400s and the 500s, the Christian population of Syria became divided over matters of faith. Some Syrian Christians followed traditional church teachings, while others did not. Religious disunity was followed by political instability. In the early 600s, Syria was invaded by the Persians, but they were pushed back by Byzantine armies. A greater threat soon followed, however. Between 633 and 638, Muslim armies from Arabia invaded Syria and conquered it. The Muslim governor, MU'AWIYA, divided Syria into several military districts, and both Muslim Arab immigrants and Christian Arab Syrians received land in return for constant military preparedness against the Byzantines. Christian Arabs quickly converted to Islam and merged with immigrants to form an Arab ruling class.

Under the first Islamic dynasty* of the UMAYYADS, Syria became the center of a vast Islamic Empire that stretched from Spain in the west to India in the east. The Syrian city of DAMASCUS was the capital of the Umayyad Empire, and taxes and booty* provided the caliphs who lived there with a magnificent royal court. The Umayyad caliphs improved Syrian agriculture and built irrigation works for fields, orchards, and farms. The Umayyad caliph Abd al-Malik built the Dome of the Rock in JERUSALEM, one of the main places of Muslim worship.

Umayyad rule came to an end in 750, when the ABBASIDS seized power. The Abbasid caliphs moved the center of rule to BAGHDAD in Iraq, and Syria was left at the periphery of a new empire centered farther east. Syrians were dropped from the military and ruling classes and replaced with Turkish soldiers and governors. Although they were no longer a part of the ruling elite in Syria, the local populations in cities such as Damascus and Aleppo maintained a degree of self-rule.

In the mid-900s, parts of Syria were taken over by the FATIMIDS. The Fatimid dynasty, which was centered in Egypt, established a separate

Christian Church in the Middle East

Syria was home to the first Christians and saw the rise of the earliest Christian churches. There were several Christian groups active in the Middle East in the early medieval period: the Nestorians, the Monophysites, the Melchites, and the Maronites. Each had their own doctrines and followed their own traditions. However, they were united in their use of Syriac (the language of the non-Greek-speaking Christians of the Middle East) in the church liturgy. Syriac is still used today in the Christian churches of Turkey, Syria, Iraq, and western Iran.

In 1516, Syria was invaded by the OTTOMANS, and the Mamluk dynasty ended. Syria remained a part of the Ottoman Empire until 1918. For most of the four centuries of Ottoman rule, Syria's economy remained weak and its politics fragmented. (*See also* **Ayyubids; Bohemond I, Prince of Antioch; Byzantine Empire; Castles and Fortifications; Tancred.**)

Tabari, al-

839–923
Muslim scholar

Al-Tabari was considered one of the most learned and productive Islamic scholars of the 800s and the early 900s. Born in northern Iran, al-Tabari studied with various scholars at the leading centers of Islamic learning. He became the foremost authority on the QUR'AN in his time. He was also among the greatest Islamic historians as well as a leading scholar in hadith (traditions of Muhammad's life), Islamic law, and Arabic grammar. His productivity and writing set a standard for medieval Muslim scholarship that was never surpassed.

While al-Tabari wrote numerous works, his reputation is based largely on two works: his 30-volume commentary *(Tafsir)* on the Qur'an, and his "Chronicle of Prophets and Kings." The commentary on the Qur'an represented a major advance in Qur'anic interpretation because of the amount of detailed material presented and the organized way in which individual verses of the Qur'an were treated. The commentary also includes the views of many earlier scholars and lists a wide range of sources. Al-Tabari's chronicle* records events from the Creation to 915, dividing history into pre-Islamic and Islamic times. The material on the pre-Islamic era is loosely organized by dynasties. Beginning with the year 622, the start of the Muslim calendar, events are organized by the year in which they occurred. No other work matched the authoritative scope of this chronicle. It became the most important source for the study of early Islamic history. (*See also* **Arabic Language and Literature; Encyclopedias and Dictionaries; Historical Writing; Islam, Religion of.**)

* **chronicle** record of events in the order in which they occurred

Talmud

See *Judaism.*

Tamar, Queen of Georgia

Ruled from 1184 to 1212
Medieval ruler of Georgia

Tamar was a medieval queen of Georgia, a country in the Caucasus region between the Black and Caspian Seas. Under Tamar's rule, Georgia reached the height of its power and prestige in the Middle Ages. Independent of the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, the kingdom dominated the Caucasus region.

The daughter of King Giorgi III, Tamar ruled with her father from 1156 until his death in 1184. Opposing families in the royal council then tried to prevent Tamar from exercising full authority. She was forced to appoint a chief adviser acceptable to them and to marry a Russian prince. After the death of her adviser, Tamar began to assert her own authority. She quickly divorced her husband and married someone of her own choice (a prince from another region in the Caucasus). Together, they put down a rebellion of Georgian nobles in 1191.

Tamerlane

1336–1405
Central Asian conqueror

opportunist and political manipulator, Tamerlane maneuvered among various Mongol factions struggling for power in west central Asia, and he became a chieftain in 1361. He quickly gathered power, and by 1370 he had become master of Transoxiana, a region in western Asia. Over the next decade, he extended his control to neighboring regions and began campaigns against western Iran, the Caucasus region, and eastern Anatolia. In the 1380s and the 1390s, Tamerlane's conquests were interrupted several times by military campaigns against the GOLDEN HORDE in Russia, all of which were successful.

In 1398 and 1399, he turned his attention to India, where he campaigned with even greater brutality than usual. He then went to Syria and conquered DAMASCUS, seizing it from the MAMLUK DYNASTY in 1400–1401. His presence in Syria provoked the anger of the Ottoman sultan*, BAYAZID I, whom Tamerlane met in battle and defeated in central Anatolia in 1402. He went on to plunder territories as far as the city of Izmir on the Mediterranean coast of western Anatolia. Three years later, while planning a massive attack on China, Tamerlane died.

Tamerlane's empire was made and governed on horseback. Little was done to establish a government in the conquered areas, although he did establish a capital at SAMARKAND. Conquered regions were simply plundered and left, often to be conquered again at a later time. Because the empire was largely thrown together to satisfy the desire for booty*, it fell apart soon after his death. His vision of restoring the grandeur of the Mongol Empire thus was never achieved.

* **sultan**   political and military ruler of a Muslim dynasty or state

* **booty**   prizes of war

Tancred
1075–1112
Crusader

See map in Crusades (vol. 2).

Tancred was a nobleman who played an important role in the success of the First Crusade (1095–1099). The grandson of Robert Guiscard, the Norman conqueror of southern Italy, and nephew of BOHEMOND I, later prince of Antioch, Tancred was well prepared for military life. He became a crusader in 1096 and spent the rest of his life in the Middle East. There, he sought to conquer land from the Greeks, the Turks, the French, and even from his uncle Bohemond.

On the way to the Holy Land, Tancred's first encounter with the Turks and his refusal to take an oath of allegiance to the Byzantine emperor Alexios I Komnenos marked him as a daring fighter and an ambitious young man. While in Byzantine lands, Tancred seized Tarsus, a town in southern ANATOLIA. He was soon forced to abandon it, however, and he returned to the main army of crusaders. After arriving in the Holy Land, Tancred took part in the captures of Antioch and JERUSALEM and seized Bethlehem for himself. While in Jerusalem, he plundered the temple and gained great wealth.

Tancred continued his conquests and was made prince of Galilee. In 1101, he became regent* of Antioch while its prince, his uncle Bohemond, was held captive by the Muslims. During his regency, Tancred defeated the Greeks and the Turks for control of SYRIA. After spending years in the conquests of Syria and PALESTINE, Tancred died in December 1112. His accomplishment in helping expand Christian influence in the Middle East paved the way for the achievements of later crusaders. (*See also* **Crusades; Komnenos Family; Warfare.**)

* **regent**   person appointed to govern a kingdom when the rightful ruler is too young, absent, or disabled

Tapestries
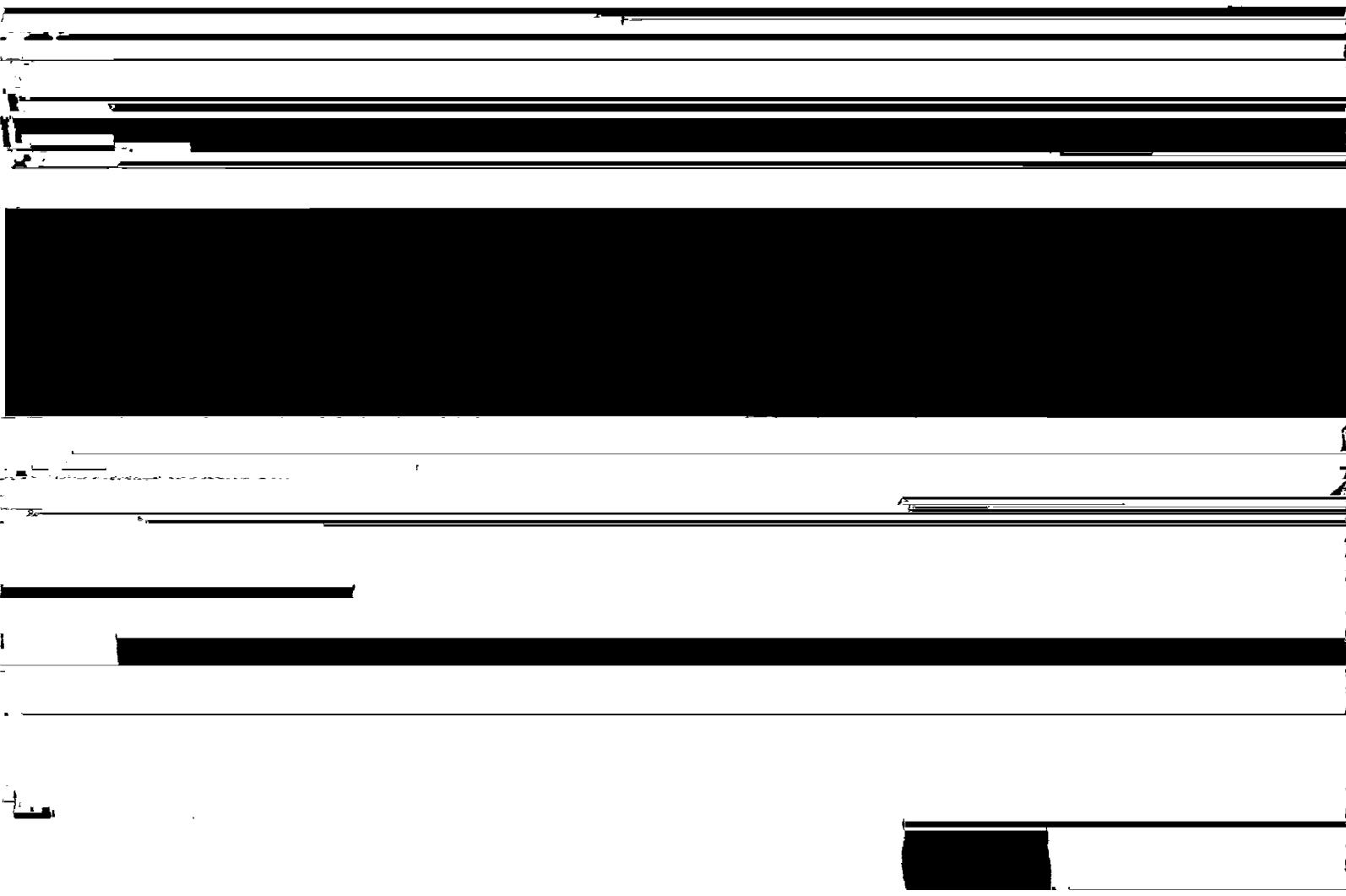
Taxation

Taxation is the process of transferring money or items of value from private individuals to the state or government. The revenues, or income, from taxes are then used for a variety of purposes, such as supporting a government, maintaining armies, and building roads and bridges. During the Middle Ages, taxation varied from region to region and from country to country, and people were subject to many different kinds of taxes.

Taxation in Western Europe

Medieval Europeans were heavily taxed, often in the form of money or crops. Taxes were often given directly to the local lord whose land they farmed and to the king for the support of the realm. Kings levied taxes on exports and imports, various goods (such as wine), the services of knights, and even marriages.

In addition to taxes paid directly to a lord or ruler, people paid indirect taxes, such as tolls for the use of roads, bridges, ports, and market space. Another type of indirect tax was the obligation to provide either special labor in times of need or service in the army during wartime. Villagers might be summoned to build roads or fortresses when the king wished to move or house his troops. Furthermore, townspeople might be asked to maintain roads and local militias.

Jews and Muslims were often taxed heavily in Christian kingdoms. These patterns were common throughout western Europe, but the cases of England and France illustrate some other important aspects of medieval taxation.

Taxation in England. During the period of Anglo-Saxon rule (in the early Middle Ages), taxes in the form of crop payments and military or civil service were common in England. These obligations were assessed on the basis of landholdings. A monetary tax was first devised in 991. Beginning in 1012, taxes known as gelds were collected annually to support the king's armies. The gelds and other revenues were collected by royal officials known as reeves. After 1016, earls* were responsible for tax collection and may have received a portion of the revenue in return. Tolls (fees for privileges, services, or usage) were another form of tax during this period. The most common tolls were those collected on goods sold in the markets and those for passage in and out of seaports or through towns.

When the NORMANS conquered England in 1066, they kept many of the existing taxes and introduced some new ones. These new taxes included scutage (the payment of money in place of military service), feudal aids (money paid to the king in times of special need, such as ransoms and royal marriages), and tallage (gifts or money from towns and boroughs within the king's realm). The Normans also introduced taxes on trade and on Jewish moneylenders.

Under the ANGEVINS, other taxes were imposed on the English people. These included a tax on movable wealth (valuable items that were moved) and a tax on the income of every person in the realm. These taxes originated as a way of financing the CRUSADES, the holy wars that the Christians waged against the Muslims. In the 1200s, import and export taxes were added to the list of taxes in England.

In addition to all these royal taxes, the people of England were taxed by the church, local lords, and boroughs*. Church taxes included the

* **earl** governor of a region in Anglo-Saxon times. The term was later used for a noble title.

* **borough** medieval town with special duties and privileges, such as sending representatives to parliament

soul scot (a required offering to a priest at the graveside of a dead person) and the churchscot (a payment of grain or other product to a priest). Eventually, Christians were required to pay the church TITHES, a tenth of their agricultural income in the form of grain or livestock. Another church tax, called Peter's Pence, was collected for the PAPACY in ROME. Lords required both crops and service from those who farmed the manor. Boroughs also taxed their inhabitants in order to pay their lords and for other services.

Taxation in France.   Like their English counterparts, French nobility taxed the peasants who worked the land for them and also extracted service in the form of labor. In addition, working-class people had to pay many types of fees for the use of forests, the maintenance of roads, and the operation of mills, ovens, and winepresses. Other payments were owed by vassals* to their lords at the time of the marriage of the lord's daughter or the knighting of his son.

Wars, especially the crusades, required significant payments to the French king. In fact, from 1294 to 1356 a special tax, the war subsidy, was imposed every year to pay the expenses of waging war. After 1356, this tax was replaced by a regular and permanent tax. Taxes known as *aides* were collected on salt, wine, and other commodities. These taxes remained a basic part of the French tax system for four centuries. They were the ancestor of the taille, a regular tax levied by the king on his subjects.

Additional Church Taxes.   The church was a major tax collector in medieval Europe. The most common church tax was the tithe, even for kings and emperors, who paid tribute to the papacy in return for favor and protection. The church also received revenues from tolls, fines, fees, and rents. After the mid-1200s, the papacy established taxes on religious benefices*. These taxes became important sources of revenue for the late medieval popes.

Although the church as an institution was a major tax collector, the clergy itself had to pay taxes. Monks secured their monastery's independence from local bishops by paying annual dues to the pope. Bishops, archbishops, and other high clergy members made payments to the papacy when they were appointed to office. In the early 1200s, papal efforts to finance the crusades led to an income tax, in which nearly all clergymen were ordered to pay a part of their income. European monarchs sometimes taxed the clergy with permission from the papacy, usually to help finance crusades. By the early 1300s, monarchs insisted that they were entitled to tax their clergy whether or not they had papal permission. This resulted in serious disagreements between the church and the state. By the end of the Middle Ages, rulers not only taxed their clergy at will but also shared in the profits of papal taxation.

Resistance to Taxation.   Taxation was a frequent source of conflict in medieval Europe. Kings resented the papal taxation of churches and lands within their kingdoms. They also resented their inability to tax clergy and churches within their own kingdoms without papal permission. The clergy resisted the heavy taxes required by the papacy, as well as the efforts of secular rulers to impose taxes on them. Other taxpayers resented the high taxes imposed on them by their kings and lords, and the poor felt especially burdened by taxes.

Medieval Europeans were heavily taxed by both secular and church governments. The issue of fair taxation was a constant source of conflict. This detail of Masaccio's *Tribute Money* shows a tax payment changing hands. This painting is considered a commentary on a new taxation system begun in Florence, Italy, in the 1400s.

* **vassal** person given land by a lord or monarch in return for loyalty and services

* **benefice** church office to which property or income is attached

Frontier Economics

Frederick II, one of the most skilled monarchs of the Middle Ages, ruled Germany and parts of Italy. As emperor, he initiated financial reforms in the mid-1200s that elevated his realm to a position of great power in Europe. He eliminated all internal tolls throughout the empire and imposed a state tariff to be levied only at the frontiers. Each frontier in his empire had royal warehouses, to which importers and exporters brought their taxable goods. After the customs duties were paid, the merchandise could be shipped or resold. Through this practice, Frederick gained revenues for his empire and the opportunity to use these goods as leverage in time of war or for diplomatic purposes.

* **imperial** pertaining to an empire or emperor

Revolts by taxpayers were not uncommon. In 1358, French peasants rose up against their landlords in the Jacquerie, a revolt aimed at the nobility but arising from the burden of taxation. Peasants attacked nobles and the clergy, and they burned houses and churches before being crushed by the army. In England, the Peasants' Revolt of 1381 erupted, partly over the issue of fair taxation. It was quickly suppressed.

Efforts to find new ways of raising money led to important developments in government. Although the earliest European PARLIAMENTS were assembled, in part, to collect taxes, the issue of fair taxation eventually led members to demand the right to consent to taxation.

Taxation in the Byzantine Empire

In the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, the village as a whole was responsible for the tax obligations of each of its inhabitants. If one villager died, for example, other villagers had to pay his share of taxes until the total tax obligation of the village was adjusted. Large landowners were considered separate taxable units.

A direct tax on the land was the main type of tax. Until the 1300s, the tax rates on land varied according to its productivity. Thereafter, the same tax rate was applied to land of all qualities. Each villager was required to pay a tax on the land he farmed. The land tax was paid only by the landowner. Several other taxes, however, were paid by the individuals who cultivated the land, whether they owned it or not. These included a hearth tax on each farmer's household, a tax on the number of oxen he owned, and a tax on the quantity of land he could cultivate efficiently. Special taxes were paid for the use of pasturelands.

Several other taxes were imposed periodically for special needs, such as building roads and bridges, cultivating state-owned lands, and supplying fortresses or feeding armies. In addition, people were obligated to provide lodging for state officials or military troops passing through their area. Certain groups—including large landowners, state officials, and religious institutions—often were granted exemptions from these types of taxes. Farmers who provided military service were exempt unless they failed to perform their military duties when required.

Taxes were collected by special imperial* officials who reported directly to the central financial administration in Constantinople, the capital city of the empire. Taxes for the maintenance of POSTAL SERVICES and roads were controlled by a separate high-ranking official of the emperor's court.

Byzantines also were subject to a number of indirect taxes, including customs duties, sales taxes, and various tolls for crossing bridges, using seaports, and weighing merchandise. Exemptions from such taxes were sometimes granted to certain individuals and institutions, especially monasteries. Foreign merchants from VENICE, GENOA, and other trading cities often obtained important exemptions as well.

Taxation in the Islamic World

In the medieval Islamic world, agriculture formed the basis of most wealth and prosperity. As a result, taxation was based primarily on land and crops. Medieval Muslims distinguished between two types of land: state land captured from non-Muslims and land owned by Muslims. Both

were taxed, but Muslim-owned land was subject to a lower rate of taxation than the other. During the reign of the UMAYYADS, attempts were made in parts of the empire to change the status of Muslim-owned land so that it could be taxed more heavily. This was true in EGYPT, where the change in land status was accompanied by the introduction of direct taxation on individuals.

Muslim rulers taxed land on the basis of its productivity, with irrigated land more heavily taxed than nonirrigated land. Different tax rates also applied to particular crops and to the productive capacity of various types of trees, bushes, and vines. Tax rates generally were reassessed periodically to account for changes in productivity.

Tax payments typically were made in either cash or crops. Under the Umayyads, the governors of provinces* were responsible for collecting tax revenues and ensuring that they were deposited in the royal treasury at DAMASCUS. This proved unsatisfactory, however, so the ABBASIDS appointed special tax collectors to gather a certain portion of provincial taxes. The remaining taxes were raised through a system known as "tax farms." Under this system, powerful individuals in BAGHDAD issued bonds* for the revenue owed by a province, village, or district. These persons were then held liable for the taxes, which they had to collect. (*See also* **Benefice; Cities and Towns; Feudalism; Peasants' Rebellions and Uprisings; Simony; Trade.**)

* **province** Roman term for an area controlled by the empire

* **bond** certificate of ownership of a specified portion of debt that is due to be paid at a certain time

Technology

Technology includes all the ways people manipulate their environment to provide the objects necessary for their life and comfort. The medieval world inherited much technology from the ancients. Medieval craftsmen also developed new technologies of their own. Agriculture, manufacturing, and commerce were all improved during the Middle Ages because of innovations in how various related skills were performed.

Byzantine Technology

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

* **philosophy** study of ideas, including science

* **treatise** long, detailed essay

Byzantine scholars put great emphasis on theology* and philosophy*. In general, they took little interest in the marketplace and in the mechanical and industrial arts. Byzantine scholars, however, preserved treatises* on mechanics by several early Greek writers. Later, this knowledge found its way to the Islamic world and then to Europe, where it influenced the development of gears, pulleys, and wind-driven machines.

Byzantium had at least two remarkable inventions—Greek fire and the marvelous automata (robotlike devices) of the imperial throne room in CONSTANTINOPLE. Greek fire was a crude oil substance that was sprayed through a bronze pump to set fire to enemy ships. The automata were mechanical models of singing birds, roaring lions, and moving beasts that astonished and delighted visitors to the palace.

The Byzantines were also innovators in the development of counterweights. They developed and manufactured the glass counterweight, which was used to weigh commercial goods. This invention was later adapted and refined by the Arabs.

Agricultural Technology.   The Byzantine Empire was largely rural and agricultural. Illustrated manuscripts depict carts and yokes, threshing tools, plows, and many other farm implements. The *Geoponica,* a Byzantine manual of farming techniques and procedures, appeared in the 900s. It contains a veterinary section that is especially attentive to the health of horses, which were vital to the cavalry units of the Byzantine army.

Alchemy.   ALCHEMY was the medieval chemistry that tried to turn base metals into gold. In Byzantium, alchemy, industrial arts, and fine arts became linked, as artisans discovered how to make base metals look like gold or silver. Rings, belt buckles, and pins made of iron, bronze, or lead were coated with silver to create the illusion of the real thing. Tests to confirm the purity of silver and gold were improved, as well as techniques for the care of metals, such as the removal of oxides.

Islamic Technology

The Islamic world is a major link in the chain of the history of technology. Many factors contributed to the high level of technological achievement in Islamic civilization. The Islamic state united a vast number of peoples and cultures under a single government that encouraged the spread of ideas. Intellectual life was stimulated by the fact that Arabic was the universal language of science. Engineers enjoyed great status in society, and artisans were respected for their skill.

The leading industrial technology of the Islamic world was textile manufacturing. English words such as *damask* and *muslin* refer to types of cloth developed in the Islamic world. Other important Arab industries used the principle of distillation* in the manufacture of perfumes, rose water, fats, and oils. Hard soap was first made in the Islamic world, and the manufacture of inks, pigments, and paints reached a high degree of development. Papermaking was introduced to the Islamic world, and eventually to Europe, by Chinese prisoners who started a paper industry at SAMARKAND in the 700s. The earliest Islamic paper factories were established in Baghdad and Syria, and the Islamic world pioneered major innovations in paper technology.

Mechanical Genius.   Islamic engineers rarely wrote about ordinary machines. Instead, they recorded only the cleverest and most remarkable inventions. Al-Jazari's *Kitab fi ma'rifat al-hiyal al-handasiya (Book of Knowledge of Ingenious Mechanical Devices),* written in the late 1100s, was the most important document about machines between ancient times and the Renaissance. It discusses water clocks, fountains, water-raising machines, and a piston pump driven by a power wheel.

Waterpower was one of the most important technologies in the Islamic world. Tidal mills were used in IRAQ before the 900s, and later huge mills were built to harness the power of rivers to grind grain. Waterpower was used to drive paper mills in Samarkand and to crush gold ores. Windmill power was also widely used, especially in Egypt in the crushing of sugarcane.

Civil Engineering.   Islamic civil engineering endeavors included architectural construction, irrigation canals, dams, and surveying. Engineers and architects held high government offices and were in charge of vast

* **distillation**   extracting a pure substance from a mixture

Borrowed from Asia

Many European products, processes, and tools originated in China or elsewhere in Asia and were carried to the West by traders and travelers. Rice, cotton, sugar, and silkworms were all introduced from Asia. The Chinese invented gunpowder and rockets, which were adopted by the Islamic world and then passed on to Europe. The blowgun, for example, originated in Malaysia and reached Europe by the late 1400s. Europeans used blowguns to kill small birds and later adapted the air-pressure principle of the blowgun for devices to load and unload large amounts of liquids and grains.

however, was chiefly used on board ships, where neither water clocks nor weight-driven clocks would work because of the constant motion. Technicians experimented from the 1260s until close to 1330 before a true mechanical clock was invented. The intensity and extent of this quest for a more accurate clock are shown by the fact that, at about the same time, inventors reached two related solutions to the problem: the verge and the wheel escapement. By the early 14th century, Europe had arrived at a technological attitude toward problem solving that would remain part of its culture.

Exchanges of Ideas.   The best technological improvements by one culture were often adapted by another culture. European improvements in shipbuilding in the Middle Ages included the invention of the sternpost rudder, and the shift from the skin-first to the skeleton-first sequence in constructing the hull of a ship. Northern European shipbuilders borrowed ideas from shipbuilders in southern Europe, and vice versa. Both northern and southern Europeans borrowed the triangular-shaped sail used earlier in the Islamic world.

Another example of technological exchange was the introduction of the magnetic compass into Europe from China (by way of the Muslims) in the 1190s. The magnetic compass was a boon to navigation. The compass could identify the position of the North Star in any weather. Europeans used the compass effectively to extend the number of months a ship could successfully navigate the high seas.

Technological Advances.   Advances in technology in one field also gave rise to advances in other fields. The evolution of the crossbow is an example of how one invention sprang from another. The crossbow, a weapon of war, had been used by ancient Romans. However, the Roman model was ineffective in warfare, and it was used mostly for hunting birds. The crossbow's power depends chiefly on the ability of a trigger to keep tension in a bowstring. As early as the 700s, craftsmen in the West worked to develop a better trigger. The trigger went through five stages of development until it reached its final version in the late 1000s. The new crossbow was considered by the Byzantines and the Muslims to be a horrible device. It usually shot not arrows but square-headed bolts that made terrible wounds.

During the 12th and the 13th centuries, no major changes appeared in the crossbow. It continued to be made of wood or animal horn, or a combination of both. Then, in the early 14th century, craftsmen started to make the crossbow of steel. An extraordinary range of new implements began to appear to make the steel crossbow, including ratchets, cranked gears, screws, levers, and pulleys, in many variations and combinations. The metal parts of these appliances had to be composed of steel or very hard iron, since the pressure in drawing a steel bow would deform a softer metal. Makers of crossbows became experts in shaping metal into complex forms.

The new technology of the steel crossbow was soon used in clock making to produce the coiled steel springs in portable and miniature clocks. The most common form of spring used today in wagons, railway cars, automobiles, and the landing gear of airplanes likewise was a by-product of the technology of the medieval steel crossbow. (*See also* **Agriculture; Arabic Numerals; Bells; Books, Manuscript; Glass; Metals and Metalworking; Printing, Origins of; Roads and Bridges; Ships and Shipbuilding; Textiles; Warfare; Weights and Measures; Writing Materials and Techniques.**)

See map in Trade (vol. 4).

Teutonic Knights

See *Knights, Orders of.*

Textbooks

* **treatise** long, detailed essay

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

* **scribe** person who hand-copies manuscripts to preserve them

Medieval textbooks were the treatises* that UNIVERSITIES used in lectures in the 1200s. Authoritative texts, such as the works of ARISTOTLE, and commentaries on their contents became the foundation of the university curriculum.

Each faculty—liberal arts, theology*, LAW, and MEDICINE—compiled its own list of standard works that lecturers taught and that students were responsible for mastering. As ancient Greek and Arab texts were increasingly translated into Latin, a growing number of treatises became available to Europe's universities for use as textbooks.

The need for standard textbooks led universities such as those in Paris, Oxford, and Bologna to regulate the production and sale of books. At each university, a stationer (combining the roles of publisher and librarian) prepared the official version text (called the exemplar) with the assistance of scribes*, binders, and illustrators. The stationer was the ultimate authority on what material the exemplar contained, and he was in charge of lending it to scholars.

The exemplar was usually divided into 4 to 6 folios, or sections, of 8 to 12 pages (or *peciae*) each. After university masters examined the *peciae* of an exemplar for accuracy, the exemplar's title was added to the official list of authorized university texts the stationer could lend to students. A scholar could rent a *pecia* and either read or copy it. After he returned the original to the stationer, he could rent another. In this way, university scholars read and made copies of important scholarly texts. (*See also* **Books, Manuscript; Law Schools; Medicine; Rhetoric; Writing Materials and Techniques.**)

Textiles

Textiles are woven fabrics of cotton, linen, wool, silk, or a combination of these fibers. During the Middle Ages, the manufacturing of textiles was an important industry in both Europe and the Islamic world.

In Europe, the manufacture of textiles became a major industry that employed many people. In fact, in terms of employment, output, and contributions to international trade, the textile industry became the most important manufacturing industry in Europe in the later Middle Ages. Textiles were valuable trade items, and major textile-producing nations such as Italy, France, Flanders, and England became rich from the export of cloth. Prosperous textile merchants became leaders within their communities.

Various types and qualities of woven fabrics were produced in medieval Europe—from coarse, inexpensive cloths to fine, expensive, luxurious materials. Silks and linens were highly prized. The most valued and expensive textiles were soft, heavy woolens made from the finest wool fibers.

* **treadle** foot-operated lever that moves parts of a loom

* **nap** fuzzy surface of cloth

Scottish Tartans: Badge of Identification

Among the most famous examples of the weaver's skill are the Scottish tartans. These woolen cloths of checks and stripes were made into cloaks and kilts. The kilt is a knee-length skirt gathered in pleats around the waist and held in place by a belt. Scottish men wore the kilt as battle dress and for everyday use. Both men and women wore cloaks of tartan.

Tartans were created by village weavers who extracted dyes from local herbs and berries to produce earthy shades of purple, mossy green, and brown. They often repeated the sett, the small check pattern, and added thin bars of color that give the tartan its special look. No one knows for sure when and why tartans became badges of identification for Scottish clans. However, about 2,000 different designs are currently in use.

Another bundle of yarn was then passed back and forth through the vertical yarns, creating a woven cloth of vertical and horizontal threads. The introduction of the horizontal loom in the 11th century revolutionized the textile industry in Europe. This type of loom was a boxlike device with various beams, rollers, straps, and pulleys operated by a foot treadle*. The horizontal loom gave weavers greater control over the weaving process and enabled them to produce cloth more quickly. It also allowed weavers to create cloths of much longer lengths, unlike vertical looms on which cloth length was limited to the loom's height. The main problem with the original horizontal loom was that the width of the cloth was limited. This problem was later resolved by the development of the broadloom, a wider version of the horizontal loom.

Once woven, cloth went through various finishing processes to clean the fabric, remove knots and defects created during weaving, tighten the yarns, stretch the fabric, remove wrinkles and creases, and raise the nap* of the fibers. These processes helped make the fabric stronger and more durable, and they created a smooth, uniform appearance.

In the early Middle Ages, textile making was mostly a rural, family-based craft with little division of labor. Most of the work was done by women. However, as textile manufacturing developed into a large industry, the need for numerous skilled workers increased. As a result, textile workers became highly specialized, with woolsorters, combers, carders, spinners, reelers, weavers, dyers, and others involved in only specific parts of the textile-making process. Men also came to dominate the industry, although women still worked as wage earners in various parts of the process. During the later Middle Ages, some textile workers, including weavers and dyers, organized themselves into GUILDS to protect their interests and to ensure the quality of products. These guilds were dominated by men. In some parts of Europe, textile and other crafts guilds had a prominent role in local government and politics.

In the Islamic world, textiles were very important in both art and the economy. Textile manufacture and trade probably occupied a majority of the working population, and textile centers were located throughout the empire, from Spain in the west to Iran in the east.

A full array of types and qualities of fabrics was available to the inhabitants of the Islamic world. Fabrics were used for clothing, but they also constituted the bulk of household furnishings. In both rural and urban settings, Muslim furnishings consisted mainly of carpets, curtains, covers, and hangings. Instead of chairs, people sat on fabric-covered cushions laid on top of carpets. The quality and richness of textiles reflected their owner's wealth and position. Textiles also played an important political role as diplomatic gifts and rewards to high officials and other persons. The beautifully woven and embroidered carpets and other textiles produced in the Islamic world were much sought after by nobles and rich merchants of Europe.

Certain areas became famous for specific types of textiles and designs. BAGHDAD and Spain, for example, were noted for rich silks. Spanish silks often were woven with scenes of people or animals. In the 1200s, ANATOLIA emerged as a prominent weaving region, and it remained a carpet-producing center for centuries to come. (*See also* **Clothing; Silk; Tapestries; Trade; Wool.**)

Theodora I, Empress

ca. 500–548
Byzantine empress

Theodoric the Ostrogoth

ca. 454–526
King of the Ostrogoths

After Theodoric led his people to Italy in 488–489, he defeated the barbarian leader ODOACER and set up his government in RAVENNA. He kept much of the Roman administration and established peace and equal justice for both Goths and Romans. Although Theodoric was an Arian Christian, he tolerated Jews and Catholics and even helped Catholics to rebuild their churches.

During his lifetime, the Ostrogoths remained strong and had considerable influence over other tribes in the West. The kingdom weakened rapidly following his death and was soon conquered by the armies of JUSTINIAN I.

Theophano, Empress

died after 976
Byzantine empress

* **regent** person appointed to govern a kingdom when the rightful ruler is too young, absent, or disabled

Theophano was a Byzantine empress with an apparent fondness for court intrigue. She is believed to have been behind the murder of three emperors.

She is accused of having helped poison Constantine VII and later of murdering her husband Romanos II. After Theophano became regent* following Romanos's death in 963, she married Nikephoros II Phokas. She and her lover, John Tzimiskes, then plotted the murder of her new husband. After the murder of Nikephoros, Theophano was banished to a convent. She escaped, only to be caught and exiled to ARMENIA. When her son BASIL II became emperor, Theophano returned to the capital but took no further part in government. (*See also* **Byzantine Empire.**)

Thomas the Slav

died 823
Rebel

See color plate 8, vol. 3.

* **depose** to remove from high office

* **iconoclastic** referring to a movement to remove icons (images of Christ and the saints) from all churches

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

Thomas was the leader of a large-scale revolt against the BYZANTINE EMPIRE that gained a great deal of support and lasted for several years. The revolt threatened the capital city of CONSTANTINOPLE and seriously weakened the empire before it was finally quelled.

Thomas came from Asia Minor, and, as his name suggests, he was of Slavic origin. He captured the attention of the Byzantine world by claiming to be Emperor Constantine VI, who many years earlier had been illegally removed from the throne in a conspiracy led by his mother.

At the time, Byzantium was in a state of turmoil. Political intrigue and murders had led to frequent changes in the monarchy. After Constantine's mother was deposed* and her successor was killed in battle, the region had four different rulers in the next ten years. The religious controversy over ICONS was also dividing the empire. Moreover, Arabs and Bulgarians were pressing across the empire's frontiers, and the rise of CHARLEMAGNE had put an end to Byzantium's claim to a role in western Europe.

Thomas began his rise by rallying support in his home area of Asia Minor. With support from Arabs, Persians, Armenians, and other groups opposed to Byzantium, the revolt spread across the whole of Asia Minor. Thomas presented himself as the champion of the poor, and he won support from those opposed to the iconoclastic* policy of Emperor Michael II. Under the protection of the ABBASID caliph*, Thomas was crowned

**Thousand
and One Nights**

set in medieval BAGHDAD. The *Thousand and One Nights* did not come to the attention of Europeans until the early 1700s, when a French translation was published. (*See also* **Arabic Language and Literature; Harun al-Rashid; Iran.**)

Timbuktu

During the Middle Ages, the fabled city of Timbuktu was a bustling West African trading center. Located on the Niger River on the southern rim of the Sahara desert, Timbuktu connected the Islamic world north of the desert with sub-Saharan West Africa. Medieval Arab merchants and travelers who visited the city were the first to write about its commerce and learning.

The Niger River, which flows through the desert region of the southern Sahara, provided opportunities for settlement and trade in what would otherwise have been an impossibly harsh environment. Local chronicles date the origins of Timbuktu at about 1100, when it served as an exchange place. From Timbuktu, the Niger River flows westward through the desert and then southward through the tropical forest until it reaches Africa's west coast and empties into the Atlantic Ocean.

The fate of Timbuktu was closely tied to the growth and decline of trade across the Sahara in the late Middle Ages. As long as desert caravans made their way across the desert from North Africa to the empires in the southwest, Timbuktu prospered. The city was the chief supplier of goods and the main transit point for their delivery across the desert to Islamic North Africa. Trade included salt from the desert, gold from farther south, cattle from nearby nomadic herders, and grain from the farmers of the Middle Niger Delta. In the 1500s, sea traffic on the Atlantic replaced camel caravans as the best way to reach West Africa.

Three West African empires—Ghana, MALI, and Songhai—contributed to Timbuktu's prosperous years. Ghana was already flourishing when Timbuktu became a major trading center. Timbuktu's first significant commercial transactions may have been conducted with the Ghanaian city of Wagadu in the east. As Ghana declined in importance, the empire of Mali took its place, and Timbuktu became the active hub of this great civilization that extended across the southern Saharan region. In about 1470, Songhai was reorganized by King Askia Muhammad. He created a decentralized empire and allowed Timbuktu to participate as a free city with the authority to direct its own internal and commercial affairs.

Timbuktu combined its rich cultural diversity with Islamic learning to create a unique city of merchant-scholars at the edge of the desert. The population consisted of various African tribes, herders, farmers, and BERBERS and Arabs from the north. Timbuktu was a meeting place of many languages and traditions. The great Muslim traveler IBN BATTUTA, who visited in 1353, wrote an extensive description of the city. That description is the earliest surviving account of medieval Timbuktu.

Timbuktu gained a reputation throughout West Africa as a city of scholars, especially legal scholars. Its most important legal thinker was Ahmad Baba, whose fame spread throughout the Islamic world. The

wealthy merchants who controlled Timbuktu gave positions of honor, status, and authority to the city's scholars. (*See also* **Islam, Conquests of; Law; Trade.**)

Tithes

A tithe is a tax of ten percent that the church levied on the revenue from people's occupations during the Middle Ages. Farmers, for instance, were obligated to pay a tenth of their annual harvest to the church. Income from any trade, craft, or commercial transactions was similarly taxed.

The tithe provided revenue for the support of the CLERGY, repairs and maintenance of church buildings, and relief for the poor. Tithes also provided funds for other social services of the church, such as education and medical care.

Although refusal to pay the tithe was rare, underpaying was common. Those who were most reluctant to pay the tithe were often new converts who discovered that their conversion to Christianity came with an unwanted financial obligation. (*See also* **Hospitals and Poor Relief; Law; Parish; Taxation.**)

Toledo

* **archbishop**   head bishop in a region or nation

* **Mozarab**   Spanish Christian who had adopted some aspects of Arab culture

* **enclave**   country or part of a country contained within the boundaries of another country

* **dynasty**   succession of rulers from the same family or group

The city of Toledo, located on the Tagus River in central Spain, was an important cultural center during the Middle Ages for Christians, Muslims, and Jews. After the VISIGOTHS gained control of Spain in the 500s, they made Toledo their capital. During the almost two centuries of Visigothic rule, Toledo became an important Christian city with its own archbishop*. Then in 711, Muslims from North Africa invaded Spain and brought Toledo and most of the rest of Spain under their rule.

Under Muslim rule, Toledo became a center of Islamic learning. Some of Toledo's Christians converted to Islam, but others, called Mozarabs*, continued to practice Christianity. A large Jewish community also existed in Toledo at this time. While the Muslims occupied central and southern Spain, the rulers of the small Christian kingdoms in northern Spain dreamed of the day when they could drive the invaders out. Occasionally, Mozarab enclaves* inside Islamic Spain rebelled against their Muslim rulers.

From the late 1020s until the Christians reconquered the city in 1085, Toledo prospered under the rule of the independent Dhu'l-Nunid dynasty*. During the rule of al-MA'MUN, who governed the city from 1043 to 1075, Toledo reached its greatest size with a population of about 37,000. Al-Ma'mun enhanced the city's reputation for learning by his support for the work of scientists, especially in the fields of astronomy and horticulture (the science and art of growing flowers, fruits, vegetables, and ornamental plants). Under his direction, royal horticulturists expanded the city's splendid gardens, which were irrigated by an elaborate system of waterwheels.

See map in Aragon (vol. 1).

In 1085, the Christian ruler of CASTILE, Alfonso VI, conquered the city of Toledo. The capture of this city had great symbolic importance because of the city's history as the Visigothic capital and as the home of an archbishop. Alfonso VI placed the administration of the newly conquered city in the hands of a leader of the city's Mozarab community. However, the nobles and townspeople from Castile, who came to Toledo to seize estates and property abandoned by fleeing Muslims, soon were in charge of the city.

The new Christian rulers of Toledo built on the city's tradition of learning and culture. With support from the Castilian kings, Toledo became an important center for the translation of ancient scholarly texts. Scholars translated Greek and Arabic texts into Latin. These translations facilitated the spread of ancient Greek and Islamic science, mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, and geography to the great European UNIVERSITIES.

* **synagogue** building of worship for Jews

During the first centuries of Christian rule, the Jewish community of Toledo continued to grow and prosper. The city had two Jewish quarters, and many synagogues* were built during this period. However, in the late 1300s, the Christian attitude toward Jews changed, and the persecution of both Jews and Muslims intensified. In 1391, mobs sacked and destroyed one of Toledo's Jewish quarters. A century later, in 1492, all of the Jews of Spain, including what remained of Toledo's once flourishing Jewish community, were expelled from Spain.

During the late Middle Ages, Christians continued to drive Muslims farther south in Spain until they captured the last Muslim city, Granada, in 1492. During the Christian reconquest of Spain, Toledo remained an important symbol and a rallying place for Spanish Christian rulers in their quest to reclaim and unite all of Spain. (*See also* **Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Religion of; Islamic Art and Architecture; Jews, Expulsion of; Spain, Muslim Kingdoms of; Spanish Art and Architecture; Spanish Language and Literature.**)

Tomislav

early 900s
King of Croatia

Tomislav was medieval CROATIA's greatest ruler. Croatia is a region in southeastern Europe located between the Adriatic and Black Seas. Tomislav unified Croatia by bringing together its coastal and inland territories, ended Frankish claims in the region, and defended Croatia against Hungarian and Bulgarian invaders.

About 910, Tomislav became the ruler of the coastal part of Croatia, which was called Dalmatian Croatia. The Hungarians, who had recently arrived, were raiding central Europe and the Balkans, and they were threatening the interior of Croatia, known as Pannonian Croatia. Although the FRANKS were in theory overlords of the Pannonians, they offered no help. The Pannonian chiefs then sought assistance from Tomislav, who defeated the Hungarians and created a border between Hungary and Croatia that still exists along the Drava River. Tomislav then took control of the Pannonian region himself and, for the first time, the two Croatias were united. About 925, Tomislav became the first king of united Croatia. (*See also* **Bulgaria; Hungary.**)

By the end of the Middle Ages, however, judicial torture had become routine procedure in most western European courts. (*See also* **Heresy and Heresies; Law; Trials; Witchcraft, European.**)

Toulouse

* **monarchy** nation ruled by a king or queen

* **Celtic** referring to the ancient inhabitants of Europe, known as Gauls in France and Britons in Britain

See map in Carolingians (vol. 1).

* **militia** army of citizens who may be called into action in a time of emergency

* **crusade** holy wars declared by the pope against non-Christians. Most were against Muslims, but crusades were also declared against heretics and pagans.

L ocated on the Garonne River in southwestern France, the medieval city of Toulouse was the center of a fiercely independent region. The counts of Toulouse were powerful political figures who played a leading role in resisting the church and the monarchy*. The independence of Toulouse ended in the 1200s, however, when the French kings overcame the rebellious counts and took control of the city.

The city, which was Celtic* in origin, was under Roman authority from the second century B.C. until 413, when the VISIGOTHS conquered the city and their king, Theodoric I, established his court there. In 507, the FRANKS captured Toulouse, but they failed to establish a strong local government. Instead, a family of local nobles took control of the city. From the 700s on, the city under the counts of Toulouse served as a center of Christian defense against Muslim invaders from Spain.

During this period, Toulouse stood entirely inside a wall the Romans had built around it. However, in the 1000s, as the population of the city increased, Toulouse expanded beyond its Roman wall. The townspeople built a bridge over the Garonne River that connected the city with the suburbs that had sprung up on the opposite bank.

In the mid-1100s, the citizens of Toulouse formed a city council with representatives from every quarter of the city. As the council grew in power, Toulouse became a city-state virtually independent of the counts of Toulouse. The city government maintained a militia* that allowed it to gain control over the villages and the nobles in the surrounding countryside for nearly 25 miles.

Toward the end of the 1100s, southern France became a hotbed of HERESY led by the CATHARS, who posed an especially serious threat to the church. They maintained that the God of the Old Testament (the Hebrew Bible) was really the devil and, therefore, that the church was worshiping an evil god. They accused church leaders of corruption and called for more spiritual ways of living. The Cathars gained many followers, particularly in Toulouse and in the nearby city of Albi. The townspeople of Toulouse became deeply divided, some supporting the Cathars and others opposing them.

By 1208, the Cathars were so numerous that Pope INNOCENT III launched the Albigensian crusade* to rid the city and region of them. The counts of Toulouse, who were opposed to foreign intervention, soon found themselves battling the combined forces of the church and the French king. In 1211, the crusader army under Simon de Montfort (the Elder) attacked Toulouse. The city resisted until the following year, when Simon's defeat of Count Raymond VI allowed him to enter the city.

The Treaty of Paris in 1229 settled the fate of Toulouse by arranging the marriage of the daughter of Count Raymond VII to Alphonse of Poitiers, the brother of King LOUIS IX. The marriage assured that the king's family would control Toulouse. The death of Raymond VII, the last count

of Toulouse, in 1249, marked the end of independence for Toulouse. Thereafter, Toulouse became an administrative center for the French crown in its campaign to assert the king's control over southern France.

In the early 1300s, the population of the city reached 35,000. However, by 1405, it was down to 22,500, due to warfare and the devastation caused by the BLACK DEATH. A fire that raged for two weeks destroyed most of the city in 1463. (*See also* **Carolingians; Cities and Towns; Inquisition; Islam, Conquests of; Languedoc.**)

Trade

Trade—the exchange of goods for other goods or for money—was a vital part of the economic life of the Middle Ages. Trade between countries varied over time, and the goods shipped ranged from basic necessities, such as salt and grain, to luxury items, such as silk and other fine fabrics. Trade was also important at the local level—for example, when the dairymaid sold her butter at a nearby town market, or when the craftsman traded something he had made for farm produce.

Armenian Trade

Armenia is situated along east-west land routes linking the Mediterranean region to central Asia and the Far East. Because of this central location, Armenia has always played an important role in trade and commerce.

In ancient times, southern Armenia benefited from its closeness to the flourishing cities of Mesopotamia and northern Syria. Under the Roman Empire, and later the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, Armenia was the center of trade for Persia (now known as IRAN), the countries bordering the Black Sea, and Europe. Some of this commerce involved Armenian goods, especially horses, which had been highly prized since ancient times. The most important item, however, was silk from the Far East. Silk was carried over caravan trails to markets, where it was sold to the luxury industries that served the Byzantine court.

Armenian merchants suffered a blow when silkworm cocoons were smuggled into the Byzantine Empire, enabling the Byzantines to make their own silk. A far more serious blow was struck by the Arab invasions of the mid-600s, when constant warfare between Byzantium and the Arabs closed the overland trade routes. Armenian commerce declined in the late 600s and the early 700s, and many Armenian cities and towns were converted into Arab military garrisons*.

A great revival occurred when Armenia became politically stable once again under the Bagratid dynasty* of Armenian kings in the late 800s. A major east-west route was reopened, linking the capital of Dwin with the coastal city of Trebizond. New towns and cities were built. Some of them may have had populations rivaling those of western European cities.

Earlier, Armenian trade had been primarily a transit trade—it involved goods produced elsewhere that simply passed through Armenia. The Bagratid trade revival, however, depended on native industries. Food, timber, and mineral products were important, but manufactured goods

* **garrison** military post

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

dominated the market. The greatest demand was for textiles: cushions, covers, rugs, flowered silks, and the famous "Armenian goods," which were red-dyed fabrics embroidered with silk or gold.

Beginning in the mid-1000s, war with Byzantium and the SELJUK Turks ended the prosperity of the Bagratid era. Armenia's great cities were sacked, and trade became nonexistent. In the early 1200s, peace and economic growth returned to Armenia, and the region once again became the center of a transit trade between the newly created empire of Trebizond and the trading posts maintained on the Black Sea coast by the Italian merchant cities of GENOA and VENICE. When the MONGOL EMPIRE expanded into western Asia, Armenian commerce expanded as well. Armenian merchants obtained special Mongol passes that allowed them to travel as far as central Asia. Gradually, though, rising taxes imposed by the Mongols ruined the Armenian economy, which was further damaged by fighting as the Mongol Empire broke up. The final blow to trade in Armenia came in the late 1400s, when European seafarers discovered new routes to Asia. Traffic on the overland highways through Armenia dwindled. Some Armenian merchants left their homeland to settle in eastern Europe, the Black Sea region, and elsewhere.

Byzantine Trade

Trade in the early Byzantine Empire followed patterns that had been established during the Roman Empire. Spices, pearls, precious stones, and silk from the Far East and the Middle East traveled west to the Byzantine Empire and then farther west to Italy and parts of Europe. Trade within the Byzantine Empire was even more active, for the empire was a single, enormous trading organization, with a common currency and low internal taxes and customs fees.

Interference by the state, however, put a crimp in commercial activity. The government controlled the shipment of grain from EGYPT to CONSTANTINOPLE, it prohibited all but state-owned producers from making silk, and it decreed that all military equipment be manufactured in state factories. Private individuals were unable to operate these enterprises.

Small-scale trade existed at local levels, in the form of exchanges between villages and the surrounding countryside at FAIRS. The major eastern cities manufactured luxury items, such as papyrus (paper made from reeds) and high-quality glass, in small quantities for those who could afford them.

Period of Decline. In the 600s, warfare, PLAGUES, and other catastrophes resulted in a decline in the Byzantine population. The economy became largely agricultural, and people concentrated on producing enough to feed themselves. The empire lost its rich eastern provinces to the Arabs, and the capital city of Constantinople felt the loss of Egypt and its grain. The distribution of free bread to the people of that city, a regular practice since the 300s, ended in the early 600s.

Some long-distance trade did continue, in spite of the difficulties created by the general economic decline, by Arab invasions and conquests, and by the eventual disruption of the sea routes by Muslim pirates. The silk industry grew during the 600s, using raw silk produced within the Byzantine Empire.

See map in Crusades (vol. 2).

See color plate 1, vol. 1.

Constantinople at its center, the empire's sphere of trade extended to Italy, Egypt, Russia, and Turkey. In the 1100s, western Europe became an important market for trade, as Byzantine merchants expanded their trade routes to include Spain and France. Although some Byzantine merchants became wealthy, their political power as a group was limited by an aristocracy whose wealth was land based.

After 1000, Western merchants penetrated the Byzantine economy. In return for Venice's military assistance against the Normans, the Byzantine emperor granted Venetian merchants the right to trade freely in Constantinople and a number of other Byzantine cities. Similar privileges were granted to PISA in 1111 and to Genoa in 1135.

By the late 1100s, the Venetians were deeply involved in the empire's internal trade. Many Westerners lived in Byzantine cities. Perhaps as many as 30,000 Venetians lived in Constantinople in the 1100s. However, there was growing resentment toward them. All Venetians were expelled from Byzantine territories by the emperor Manuel I Komnenos in 1171. Eleven years later, mobs in Constantinople massacred large numbers of Western-ers and burned or seized their property.

These events made Westerners eager to obtain firmer control of com-mercial outposts in the Byzantine Empire, and the CRUSADES offered them an opportunity to do so. During the Fourth Crusade in 1204, Venice cap-tured Constantinople, gaining a dominant position in Byzantine trade. By the time the Byzantines recaptured Constantinople in 1261, the city was again an active commercial center, although Italian merchants dominated the economy.

By the 1300s, Byzantine aristocrats were involved in trade and bank-ing. The Byzantines exported raw materials and agricultural products to western Europe, and they imported cloth, soaps, and weapons. Native Byzantine industries had disappeared. By the 1400s, the Byzantine state had virtually turned over its economy to foreigners, who lived in colonies in Constantinople and other cities and who did not pay taxes or customs fees.

Islamic Trade

Trade had a long history in the Middle East even before the rise of Islam created a large empire. Wherever there were settlements and towns, there was commerce. References to caravan merchants in the BIBLE indicate that, long before the medieval period, there was a well-organized overland trade system in operation in western Asia and the Middle East. Muham-mad himself had experience in the caravan trade that crossed the Arabian peninsula and carried spices from southern Arabia to the markets of Byzantium, Syria, and Egypt.

The spread of Islam in the late 600s and the early 700s rearranged political, cultural, and economic boundaries, bringing about a tremen-dous growth in commerce. Many very diverse areas were joined under a single political and military rule. The world of Islam extended from the Atlantic shores of Spain and Morocco, across North Africa, and east as far as India and central Asia—an expanse that became one gigantic trad-ing area. In the course of their conquests, the Arabs captured large amounts of gold and silver, and these precious metals stimulated eco-nomic development.

Regulating Trade

In Europe in the Middle Ages, trade was governed by many different authorities at different levels. Local lords or town councils oversaw the daily operation of the marketplaces. Private groups of merchants and tradespeople—such as guilds—determined the amount of goods to be produced and the price of these goods. As the national governments grew stronger and more complex, they began to regulate commerce. Many modern principles of commerce originated in the Middle Ages, including truth in labeling, fair trade, and quality standards.

Baghdad in the 800s and the 900s was the center of a great empire. Its markets contained panther skins, rubies, ebony, and coconuts from India; silk, paper, slaves, and marble workers from China; felt and hawks from North Africa; and donkeys, papyrus, and fine cloth from Egypt. The map of the medieval Islamic world, from Morocco in the west to the borders of China in the east, was dotted with cities and towns. Regardless of their size or importance, all towns had a marketplace and some craft workers.

Commercial Arrangements.   Long before they existed in the West, mechanisms for extending loans and for transferring and exchanging money over long distances were used by merchants in the Islamic world. Islamic promissory notes (written promises to pay back money owed by a certain time) were probably the origin of modern bank checks. Islamic merchants used a variety of flexible partnership arrangements to pool their money so that they could finance new businesses. Such partnerships also reduced risks and losses by sharing the burden among several parties.

Islamic law had strict rules against USURY, but merchants still found ways to make profits. Trade in the Islamic world was nurtured by Islam, which generally had a positive attitude toward commerce and the honest pursuit of profit.

Mediterranean Trade.   Commercial contact between the Middle East and western Europe declined between the 700s and the 900s, but it did not cease altogether. Until the early 1000s, the commercial center of the Islamic world was Baghdad. In the early 1000s, wars in the East and the commercial expansion of western Europe combined to shift the commercial center of the Islamic world to the eastern Mediterranean, especially to Egypt.

During the 1000s and the 1100s, Egypt's major exports were flax (a plant fiber) and linen, which were eagerly sought by European merchants. Egypt also served as a market through which Asian spices, most notably pepper, and other Asian products passed. Egypt imported silk from Spain and Sicily as well as olive oil from North Africa and metals from western Europe. Trade between the Islamic world and western Europe continued through the end of the Middle Ages and beyond.

Western European Trade

Trade in western Europe during the Middle Ages was divided into two great spheres, each centered on an inland sea. The trade of northern Europe was centered on the Baltic and North Seas and the river systems that flow into them. Southern European trade used the Mediterranean as its great highway. The northern trade dealt mainly in bulk goods, such as food and other basic items, and in relatively few luxury goods. The southern trade included bulk goods, but it also was characterized by luxury goods, such as silks and spices imported from Asia. The two trading spheres overlapped in FLANDERS and in CHAMPAGNE, where merchants from all over Europe met at the great international fairs of the Middle Ages. Later, the northern and southern trades met in the markets of BRUGES and Antwerp.

The Romans had developed the large-scale transport of goods from one part of their empire to another, but in the early Middle Ages, after
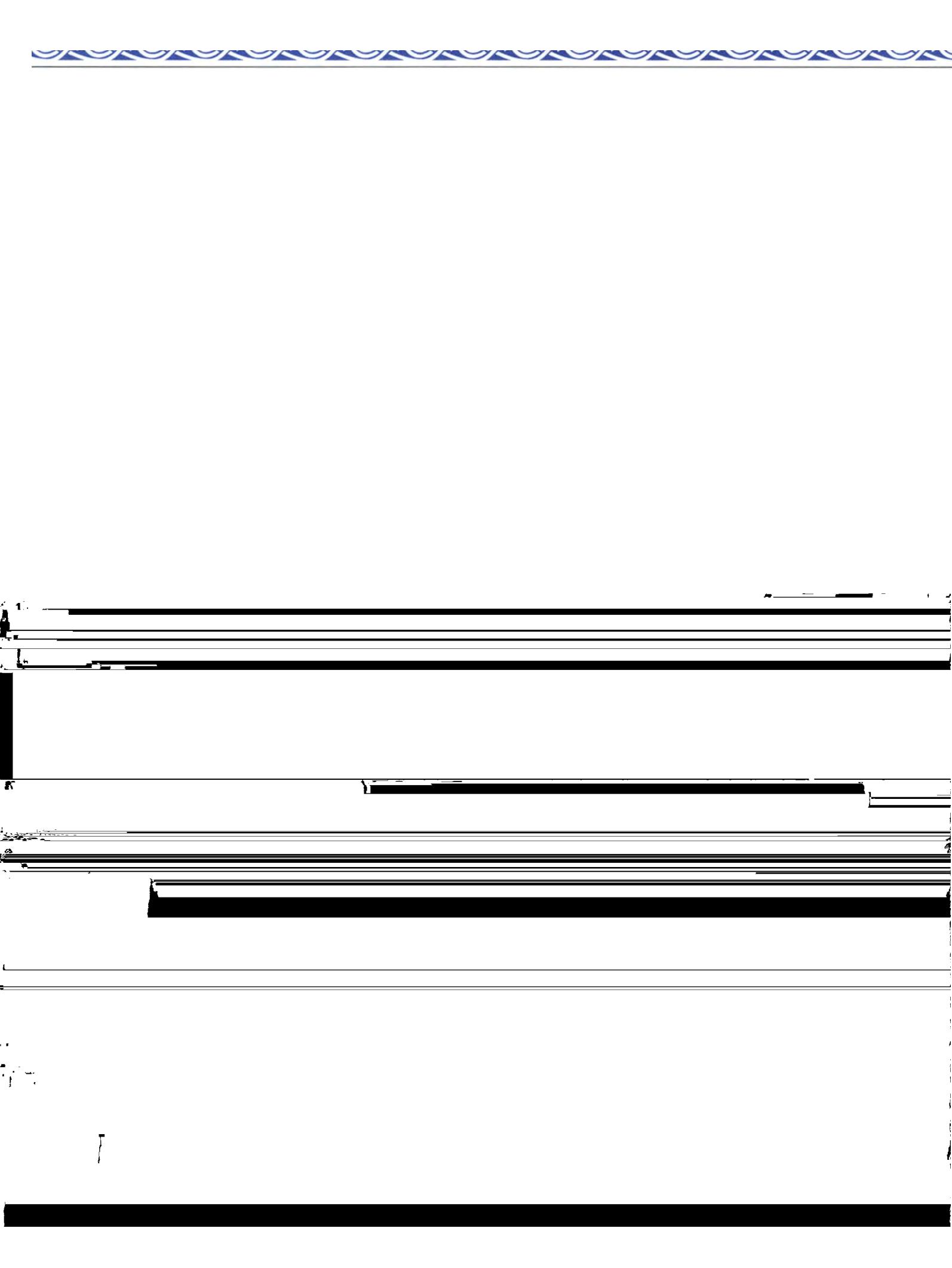
own countrysides. Political and military events of the late Middle Ages also disrupted commerce. Genoa suffered in the 1400s as its politics sank into chaos, and the Low Countries were battered by the HUNDRED YEARS WAR. By the end of the Middle Ages, trade in western Europe was in a period of deep decline. (*See also* **Agriculture; Banking; Fishing, Fish Trade; Fur Trade; Guilds; Islam, Conquests of; Markets; Roads and Bridges; Scandinavia; Silk; Slavery; Travel and Transportation; Weights and Measures.**)

Travel and Transportation

* **pilgrimage** journey to a shrine or sacred place

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 2).

During the Middle Ages, in both Europe and the Islamic world, people traveled for a variety of reasons, including trade and pilgrimages*. They traveled under many different circumstances and by several different means.

The Arab conquests of the 600s and the 700s created an immense Islamic Empire that made travel and transportation necessary for reasons of government, defense, and cultural and religious unity. A common language and religion made travel across the vast empire both convenient and more common than elsewhere in the medieval world. As Muslims expanded their empire and trade routes west to Europe, European interest in the East and other faraway places increased considerably in the late Middle Ages.

Western European Travel

During the early Middle Ages, western Europeans traveled very little. Following the Germanic migrations and the collapse of the Roman Empire in the West, Europe was in a state of social disorder and economic depression that discouraged people from leaving home. As political and economic conditions improved later in the Middle Ages, travel and trade within and beyond western Europe increased.

* **imperial** pertaining to an empire or emperor

The Early Years. The system of roads built by the Romans had given Europeans the means of relatively easy travel and communication. From the eastern Mediterranean all the way to Britain, travelers and imperial* messengers could journey with a high degree of safety along the highly advanced Roman network of roads. By easing travel and communication, the network helped trade to flourish and CHRISTIANITY to spread after its legalization in the 300s.

However, with the fall of the Roman Empire, travel and transportation decreased sharply, as Europe's economy declined and trade diminished and became more localized. In many places where people struggled to feed themselves and their families, they had neither the money nor the leisure time for travel. Furthermore, travel was illegal for SERFS, who were not permitted to leave their work on the lord's land.

* **feudal** referring to the social, economic, and political system that flourished in western Europe during the Middle Ages

* **siege** long and persistent effort to force a surrender by surrounding a fortress with armed troops, cutting it off from aid

Travel could also be dangerous. Travelers risked being robbed, killed, or kidnapped by bandits. Many of those who were kidnapped were sold into slavery. The frequent battles that occurred during the feudal* period posed another threat to travelers. Travelers could be caught up in the fighting or prevented from reaching their destinations by blockades or sieges*.

See map in Trade (vol. 4).

* **shrine** place that is considered sacred because of its history or the relics it contains

* **relic** object cherished for its association with a martyr or saint

* **martyr** person who suffers and dies rather than renounce a religious faith

* **diocese** church district under a bishop's authority

* **chronicler** person who records events in the order in which they occurred

See color plate 8, vol. 3.

Of course, some people did travel during the early Middle Ages. Those who traveled in the service of kings, nobles, or the pope were given food, lodging, and horses by designated families in each region whose duty it was to take care of official travelers. Royal and noble households also traveled. Great lords moved their entire households—including family members and servants—from estate to estate, living off the food and provisions that had been gathered before the move.

Moreover, medieval government was of a highly personal nature. Kings and lords traveled through their realms to show themselves to their people, thus reaffirming the bonds of loyalty and protection that were so much a part of FEUDALISM. Many kings spent the greater part of each year traveling through their kingdoms to oversee the operations of their royal governments. In addition, rulers and nobles traveled in the course of military campaigns.

Many Europeans who traveled during the early Middle Ages did so for religious reasons. The spread of Christianity increased the number of people who traveled as pilgrims, as officials on church business, and as MISSIONARIES. Pilgrims traveled to JERUSALEM, ROME, and hundreds of other religious shrines*, most of which drew pilgrims because they contained the relics* of SAINTS. As early as the 600s, pilgrims from as far away as England traveled to Rome. Not only was Rome the city where the pope lived, but it was the burial site of the two most famous martyrs* of early Christianity—Peter and Paul. Another popular pilgrimage destination of the early Middle Ages was the shrine of St. Martin in Tours in France, which was believed to have the power to cure disease. Pilgrimages were also considered a way in which people could atone, or make amends, for their sins. Many a sinner, burdened by the past, believed that his or her sins would be forgiven by a pilgrimage to the shrine of a martyr or a saint. For religious pilgrims, the dangers and difficulties of travel only added to the merit of the pilgrimage.

Other people traveled for reasons of church business and politics. Bishops and archbishops made the journey to Rome to see the pope, and some popes traveled in western Europe, especially in Italy and France. Many CLERGY members and lesser church officials traveled constantly, carrying out their duties within the provinces, dioceses*, and PARISHES.

In the early medieval period, Christian missionaries were active in Gaul (present-day France), Germany, and the British Isles. Accounts of some missionary journeys in Gaul suggest that the missionaries traveled by riverboat. During the 500s and the 600s, many travelers used waterways because the Roman roads were falling into disrepair and new roads and bridges had not been built. Missionaries from IRELAND were among the greatest travelers of the early Middle Ages. They carried Christianity to SCOTLAND and northern England and founded MONASTERIES in England, Scotland, France, Italy, and SWITZERLAND.

The monks of the British Isles, especially Ireland, were famous for their learning. They traveled through Christendom as welcome guests in monasteries and courts. One chronicler* recorded the story of two Irish monks who arrived in Gaul with a shipload of merchants. They went with the merchants to the marketplace, where they announced that they had wisdom to sell. When CHARLEMAGNE heard about them, he invited them to his court.

for the transport of these goods. These fairs and markets attracted many people, some of whom came from great distances. Since fairs brought prosperity to the regions where they were held, efforts were made to promote them and to attract more sellers. The counts of CHAMPAGNE, the site of one of Europe's largest and best-known fairs, offered safe conduct through their realm and protection for merchants on their way to or from the fairs.

Toward the end of the Middle Ages, merchants hired agents in distant places to buy and sell goods for them. Instead of traveling themselves, the merchants assigned carriers to transport goods on packhorses or in carts or riverboats. This practice gave birth to a new professional class of brokers and movers.

Religious travel continued to increase in the late Middle Ages, as the church and the PAPACY expanded. As its administrative bureaucracy* grew more complex, more officials traveled on church business, inspecting monasteries and enforcing regulations. There was also a steady stream of travelers bound for the church's headquarters in Rome on religious business.

An interest in relics remained relatively constant throughout the medieval period. During the 11th century, a new practice arose—taking the relics on tour. When funds were needed to repair or rebuild a monastery, convent, church, or cathedral, the relics housed there were taken to remote parts of the country where people were willing to pay money to view the sacred objects. The clergy members who accompanied the relics traveled extensively for this purpose.

Pilgrimages became so popular that roads leading to certain shrines were often congested with travelers. In 1400, the French royal council forbade the king's subjects from making pilgrimages to Rome for fear that so many Frenchmen out of the country at one time would leave the kingdom defenseless.

Although a religious motivation seems to have been strong among most pilgrims, there is some evidence to suggest that, for some people, pilgrimages were an escape from the boredom of their lives, or simply a chance to travel and to satisfy their curiosity about the world. Evidence from the late 1300s suggests that while on the journey pilgrims generally enjoyed themselves. The pilgrims in Geoffrey CHAUCER's great poem, the *Canterbury Tales,* for example, are clearly in a holiday mood as they make their way to CANTERBURY to visit the shrine of St. Thomas BECKET.

By the late Middle Ages, pilgrimages had formed the foundation of a major industry—the travel business. Pilgrims provided financial support for the inns, vendors, and other services in the villages and towns that lined the pilgrimage routes. Some of the earliest known guidebooks were essentially descriptions of pilgrimages, complete with maps of the routes and notes about inns, ferryboats, and other useful travel information.

ROYAL HOUSEHOLDS traveled extensively during the late Middle Ages since kings and nobles spent much of their time on the road. In fact, from the 900s on, German emperors did not have permanent capitals. Instead, they traveled widely throughout their domain, setting up court at their various estates or taking quarters in religious houses. The kings of

* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization such as a government

See map in Crusades (vol. 2).

England also traveled extensively. An account of King HENRY II OF ENGLAND reported that "he was always traveling about on intolerable daily journeys which seemed twice the normal length, and he was merciless in this to his household which followed him." Likewise, the kings of France traveled so often that, in 1319, Philip V changed his residence 81 times. All this travel allowed monarchs to inspect their realms, to show themselves to the people in order to strengthen their loyalty, and to find new places where they could indulge themselves in their favorite sports, HUNTING AND FOWLING.

Royal officials joined the kings in their travels. They took along the royal ARCHIVES, which were packed in special barrels and transported by packhorses. Until the 13th century, people who had business at the English or the French court first had to find out where the king was and then to travel with him until their business was finished. Judges, tax collectors, and other government officials also traveled more widely as their duties increased and became more complex.

Many craftspeople traveled to practice their crafts. English stoneworkers, for example, journeyed from place to place to work on the king's various building projects. Artists, entertainers, and minstrels traveled from place to place, and poets traveled in search of wealthy patrons*. In the 1100s and the 1200s, TROUBADOURS visited the courts of France, Spain, and Italy, and some even ventured as far as Hungary and the Middle East.

* **patron** person of wealth and influence who supports an artist, writer, or scholar

See color plate 9, vol. 1.

With the growth of UNIVERSITIES, increased numbers of students were willing to travel to study with certain greatly respected scholars. The universities of Bologna (in Italy) and Paris (in France) attracted teachers and students from all over Europe. Poor, wandering students barely able to afford food and books became familiar figures in the Middle Ages. In England in the 1300s, traveling students who did not have papers from their teachers attesting to their good standing were regarded as beggars and could be sent to jail.

The CRUSADES, which were called to liberate Jerusalem and the rest of the Holy Land from Muslim control, involved all social classes—from the rootless and "masterless" men and women who followed PETER THE HERMIT on the First Crusade, to the sons of kings and nobles who organized their own expeditions. The crusades and the subsequent establishment of crusader kingdoms in the Holy Land opened up travel to the East.

* **steppe** vast treeless plain of southeastern Europe and Asia

In the 13th and the 14th centuries, merchants and missionaries pushed well into the central Asian steppes* along the silk routes, which had been made secure by the conquests of the MONGOLS. Missions to the Mongol kingdom in the 13th century and the travels of Marco POLO to the East stimulated interest in travel beyond Europe to India, China, and other distant places. The knowledge of China and the East encouraged Portuguese and Spanish sailors to travel to the Azores, the Canary Islands, and Africa in the 15th century in search of an alternate route to the East that would bypass Muslim-held territories.

Islamic Travel

Freedom of movement was an important feature of medieval life in the Islamic world, since the conquests of Arab armies created a far-flung empire that stretched from Persia (IRAN) in the east to Spain in the west and

included ARABIA, the rest of the Middle East, and North Africa. Throughout the Middle Ages, government officials, merchants, Islamic scholars, and pilgrims traveled widely across this huge region. Of the many journals, diaries, geography books, and writings of travelers about their journeys, the best known is the autobiography of IBN BATTUTA. While most of these medieval Islamic travelers belonged to the middle or upper levels of society, travel also touched the lives of poor peasants, whose culture was influenced by travelers and goods from faraway places.

Reasons for Travel. People in the medieval Islamic world traveled for many reasons—for trade opportunities, for religious pilgrimages, for military campaigns, for the administration of conquered territories, or as part of the large population shifts that occurred when nomadic* tribes migrated or when the government relocated groups of people from one part of the empire to another.

* **nomadic** wandering from place to place to find food and pasture

Most Muslims traveled for economic or religious reasons, and often they combined the two. For example, a merchant might buy or sell goods on his way to visit MECCA or another holy shrine. The quest for religious knowledge was one of the leading reasons for travel in the Islamic world. Muslims believed that the best way to learn the traditional lore of their faith was to hear it recited by a scholar who had heard it from an earlier scholar. For this reason, students who were deeply dedicated to the study of Islam sometimes spent years traveling throughout the Islamic world for a chance to sit at the feet of renowned scholars.

Travel Conditions. Long-distance travel was fairly commonplace in the medieval Islamic world. Unhindered travel appears to have been a goal of Islamic governments, and there were few political barriers to travel, even between hostile states.

However, travel was expensive, tiring, and sometimes dangerous. While goods and passengers traveled by sea between Mediterranean ports and between Arabia and India, ships were subject to piracy and shipwreck. Most Muslims depended on overland travel, which had its own difficulties.

During the early Middle Ages, wheeled vehicles disappeared from the Middle East almost entirely. Transportation was by foot or by animal, with pack animals carrying belongings. The military used horses for battle and for rapid communications. Strong governments maintained a system of horse relays to carry official messengers swiftly across the empire. Ordinary travelers, however, were limited to donkeys, mules, and camels. Most freight was carried by camels, which could be fitted with covered litters to transport women and sick people. Travelers banded together in large caravans for reasons of security. These caravans averaged about 20 miles a day, spending each night at a caravansary*.

* **caravansary** lodging in the East where caravans stopped to rest, usually surrounding a spacious courtyard

The ideas and information that travelers spread across the Islamic world helped create and maintain the cultural unity that characterized the Islamic world. In turn, travel was made easier for Muslims because many features of life, such as the Arabic language and the Islamic faith, were the same from Spain to Persia. A student, merchant, or pilgrim who traveled from one part of the Islamic world to another could expect to find a familiar and comfortable welcome at every stage of the journey. (*See also* **Cities and Towns; Islam, Conquests of; Migrations, Germanic; Pilgrimage; Relics; Roads and Bridges; Slavery; Trade.**)

Trials

Methods for determining guilt or innocence, or trials, changed greatly during the Middle Ages. In the early medieval period, Europeans used oaths and physical ordeals to determine the fate of an accused person. Ordeals continued until the 1100s, when European courts developed new ways of making decisions that relied on witnesses, judges, and juries.

Oaths. In most ordinary and many serious crimes, the parties swore oaths as to their innocence, and they brought others to court to swear to the worthiness of their oaths. The elders presiding over the case then determined the guilt or innocence of the parties and an appropriate punishment, if any.

Ordeals. The ordeal courts were used to determine whether an accused person was innocent or guilty of a serious crime. Ordeals were based on the belief that God actively takes part in human events to reward the good and to punish the wicked. The ordeal was used as a way to focus God's attention on a specific case. The outcome of the ordeal was in God's hands, and it was thought that God would not allow an innocent person to suffer or a guilty one to escape punishment. A priest usually blessed the proceedings, and the results were accepted without question.

There were various kinds of ordeals. In the ordeal of cold water, accused criminals were tied up and submerged in water. If they floated to the surface, they were considered to be guilty. In the ordeal of boiling water and the ordeal of hot iron, the accused person's hands were scalded or burned. If the wounded hands became infected within three days, the person was considered guilty.

Another form of ordeal was called trial by combat. The accuser and the accused, each swearing to the truth of his claim, fought until one was victorious. The winner was considered truthful and the loser untruthful. The loser lost more than the case in question. He could be further punished for making a false claim.

Confidence in physical ordeals gradually declined. In the late 1100s, the English king HENRY II enacted legal reforms that reduced the reliance of courts on ordeals. The Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 forbade priests from participating in ordeals, and these trials slowly disappeared from most parts of Europe in the 1200s.

Inquests. Ordeals were replaced by inquests, in which judges heard witnesses on both sides of a dispute. In criminal cases, the suspect was publicly accused at the beginning of the inquest. Then, the testimony of the witnesses was heard. After the questioning of witnesses (and, sometimes, the judicial TORTURE of the accused) was completed, the court issued its judgment. Inquests became widely used in England, France, and Italy. Church courts also held inquests. Commonly used for such crimes as robbery, murder, arson, and forgery, inquests were also used to settle land disputes.

One of the most significant of King Henry's reforms was the requirement that a jury be present at inquests. (A jury is a group of people summoned by the court to hear evidence and sworn to hand down a decision based on that evidence.) In England, two types of juries emerged for criminal cases—the grand jury, which was used to indict, or accuse, a suspect;

The story circulated among storytellers in WALES as early as the 800s. Eventually, it came to France, where a version known as the *Estoire* appeared about 1150. This version is now lost, but most of the other medieval versions were based on it.

Several poets who produced new versions of the Tristan story in the late 1100s added their own interpretations. For example, Eilhart and Beroul emphasized the lovers' cleverness in escaping detection, while Thomas of BRITTANY and Gottfried von Strassburg stressed the ideals of CHIVALRY and COURTLY LOVE.

Thomas's version was the source for Gottfried von Strassburg's romance, which he wrote about 1210. He followed Thomas's example by focusing on Tristan's loyalty and devotion, which were two principles of courtly love. Gottfried explored the powerful nature of love and its effect on Tristan's behavior. He described Tristan's love as an almost mystical* experience and even used religious symbols to describe it.

Gottfried's work and other Tristan poems were widely read and translated both during and after the Middle Ages. The story of Tristan continues to this day to fascinate readers and to challenge writers to create ever new versions of the legend. (*See also* **Arthurian Literature; Celtic Languages and Literature; French Language and Literature; German Language and Literature.**)

* **mystical** referring to the belief that divine truths or direct knowledge of God can be experienced through meditation and contemplation as much as through logical thought

Trota and Trotula

According to legend, Trota was a respected woman physician in the Italian city of Salerno in the 1100s. She was credited with the authorship of a handbook of general medical care, called the *Practica,* based on her practical knowledge. She was also considered to be the author of the *Trotula,* an immensely popular work on women's medicine that was named after her.

The *Trotula,* which first appeared about 1200, consisted of three treatises*. The most widely read treatise was the first one, which concentrated on gynecology* and obstetrics*. The second one was also about women's medicine, but it included advice on cosmetics and beauty aids as well. The third treatise dealt with cosmetics and care of the body. Translated into many languages, including Irish, English, French, German, Flemish, and Catalan, the *Trotula* was the most popular work on women's medicine in the later Middle Ages. (*See also* **Handbooks (Fachschrifttum); Medicine; Women, Roles of.**)

* **treatise** long, detailed essay

* **gynecology** branch of medicine that deals with diseases and care of the female reproductive system

* **obstetrics** branch of medicine that deals with childbirth

Troubadour, Trouvère

Troubadours and trouvères were composers of poetic songs in medieval France. The troubadours, who lived in southern France and began composing first, were popular in the late 1100s. The trouvères, based in the north, became active in the 1200s. The poetry of both groups, written in the local vernacular* rather than in Latin, represented a new style of literature.

Troubadour poetry was meant to be sung, and the poet usually composed both the words and the melody. In the south, the poems were

* **vernacular** language or dialect native to a region; everyday, informal speech

In northern France, one of the first trouvères to write in the troubadour style was CHRÉTIEN DE TROYES, who later became famous for his longer romance poetry. Like the southern troubadours, the trouvères sang about the romantic ideals of courtly love, although the trouvères developed different rhyming patterns and refrains and wrote in their own local dialect. Some trouvères formed poetry GUILDS and organized poetry competitions. The most popular of these guilds was called the Puy d'Arras. The trouvères helped spread the idea of courtly love to other parts of northern Europe. (*See also* **Chivalry; French Language and Literature; Italian Language and Literature; Provence; Spanish Language and Literature.**)

Troy, Story of

The story of the fall of Troy was one of the most popular tales of the Middle Ages. While modern readers know the story from the works of the ancient Greek poet Homer, who described the fall of Troy in his epic poem, the *Iliad,* medieval readers learned about Troy in the works of medieval authors, especially Benoît de Sainte-Maure.

Benoît, a French clerk who worked in the court of King HENRY II OF ENGLAND, wrote his 30,000-verse *Roman de Troie (Romance of Troy)* about 1165. Based on the work of authors from the 300s and the 400s, Benoît's poem tells the story of the Greek adventurers Jason and his companions, the Argonauts, their search for the Golden Fleece (the wool of a flying ram), and the long siege of Troy by the Greeks. Benoît also told the story of the Trojan Horse, the large wooden horse with Greek warriors hidden inside it that the Greeks used to fool the Trojans and to bring about Troy's defeat.

Like other medieval authors who wrote about the ancient world, Benoît filled his poem with details from medieval life—people, architecture, ARMOR, and CLOTHING of the Middle Ages. Benoît displayed extensive knowledge of ancient history and geography and stressed the importance of learning from the ancient world. Written in Old French, his poem was enormously popular and was widely copied, imitated, and translated into other languages. The poem influenced the English writers John LYDGATE and Geoffrey CHAUCER and the Italian writer Giovanni BOCCACCIO, all of whom wrote their own versions of the story of Troy. (*See also* **Classical Tradition in the Middle Ages; French Language and Literature.**)

Turmeda, Anselm

ca. 1352–ca. 1423
Catalan author

Anselm Turmeda was a colorful late medieval writer who examined religion and human nature from a unique blend of Christian and Muslim perspectives. Born in the Spanish province of CATALONIA, Turmeda became a FRANCISCAN monk at the age of 20 and later studied theology in Paris and Bologna. About 1387, he converted to Islam in the North African city of Tunis and took the Arabic name Abdallah el Tarjumi. However, he continued to write in Catalan and to maintain contact with his homeland.

Turmeda's best-known work is *La disputa de l'ase (Debate with a Donkey),* in which he debates a donkey and seven insects about human

nature, the soul, wisdom, and immortality. The *Disputa* also includes tales about the seven deadly sins, criticisms of religious orders, and prophecies about the future. Turmeda's autobiography in Arabic, *Tuhfa,* which criticizes Christianity, became well-known throughout the Islamic world and remains in print in Arabic. Turmeda's tomb in Tunis is a Muslim holy site. (*See also* **Encyclopedias and Dictionaries; Islam, Religion of; Virtues and Vices.**)

Tuscany

See map in Italy (vol. 3).

Tuscany is a province in western ITALY, north of Rome, that was fought over in the early Middle Ages. After the cities of Tuscany achieved self-government in the 1100s, the region continued to experience conflict, as cities and factions within cities engaged in intense political struggles. In the late Middle Ages, after the city of FLORENCE achieved superiority over the region, Tuscany became a center of art and culture.

Tuscany had been under Roman control until 489, when THEODORIC THE OSTROGOTH invaded Italy. The Goths routed the Byzantines at Mugello in 542, but ten years later the Byzantines defeated the Goths to win control of Tuscany. Because the people resented the Byzantines for imposing heavy taxes on them, the massive LOMBARD invasion of Italy in 569 met little resistance in Tuscany.

After years of disorder and destruction in the 500s and the 600s, Tuscan cities revived during the reign of the Lombard king Liutprand from 712 to 744. After CHARLEMAGNE's invasion from 773 to 774 ended Lombard rule in northern Italy, he sent some of his forces to Florence to place the city under the control of his supporters.

From about 810, Boniface I (a supporter of Charlemagne from BAVARIA) and his family governed Tuscany for 150 years. In 845, Boniface's grandson, Adalbert I, gained control of the most important route through the Apennine Mountains, which controlled communications between Rome and northern Italy. In doing so, he became master of Tuscany and one of the most powerful men in Italy.

In the 900s, after the rulers of Tuscany allied themselves with the HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, Tuscany was ruled by noble families with political ties to the empire. However, in the 1000s, the cities of Tuscany became divided. Some cities supported the German emperor, while others allied themselves with rebellious factions. Tuscan cities fought against one another, and their disagreements were further complicated by bitter feuds between noble families.

In 1028, Emperor Conrad II made Boniface, the count of CANOSSA, the ruler of Tuscany. However, after Boniface's death, his daughter Matilda (the marquess of Tuscany) defied Emperor Henry IV, and the emperor laid siege* to Florence to break Matilda's resistance. When the city survived his attack and forced him to leave, Matilda extended her control over the surrounding Tuscan countryside.

In the 1100s, after Florence and other Tuscan cities became independent communities governed by city councils, they continued to be divided by internal conflicts. After fierce fighting between the GUELPHS

* **siege** long and persistent effort to force a surrender by surrounding a fortress with armed troops, cutting it off from aid

AND GHIBELLINES had gripped Florence for years, Florence passed into the hands of the city's GUILDS in the mid-1300s. During this time, Florence gained control of the rest of Tuscany and became a powerful Italian city-state.

In the 1400s, Florence was dominated by the wealthy MEDICI FAMILY. Under the patronage* of Cosimo de' Medici, Florence became the leading city in Italy in art and culture. At the height of its power and splendor, Florence under Lorenzo the Magnificent was the center of art and culture that helped launch the Italian Renaissance. (*See also* **Italian Language and Literature; Migrations, Germanic.**)

* **patronage** the support of an artist, writer, or scholar by a person of wealth and influence

Ulama

*U*lama is the term used to refer to Islamic religious scholars who have had a great influence on Islamic history. Over the centuries, the ulama have transmitted Islamic knowledge and interpreted the QUR'AN, the holy book of Islam. They have also been state officials with civil and judicial responsibilities.

The ulama never formed a distinct social class, although they played an important role in the establishment of religious, political, legal, and economic institutions throughout the Islamic world. They were theologians*, lawyers, judges, legal consultants, prayer leaders, preachers, teachers, scribes, secretaries, agents, market inspectors, and tax collectors. The influence of the ulama shaped public opinion in many areas. They could rally public support for a ruler or rally the public against a regime they opposed.

The rise of the ulama was connected to the need of the early Islamic communities to preserve and transmit knowledge of the Qur'an and hadith*. They played a major role in the development and elaboration of Islamic law.

Despite their great influence, the ulama did not have a formal system of education until the late 11th century, when a SELJUK leader introduced the idea of colleges for training ulama. The ulama remained an important force in public life until the 1800s, when some parts of the Islamic world adopted modern bureaucracies* and secular* education. (*See also* **Caliphate; Damascus; Islam, Political Organization of; Islam, Religion of.**)

* **theologian** person who studies religious faith and practice

* **hadith** collected traditions of the words and deeds of Muhammad

* **bureaucracy** large departmental organization such as a government

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with everyday life

Umar I ibn al-Khattab

ca. 592–644
Founder of the Islamic state

*U*mar I ibn al-Khattab was the second caliph* and the real founder of the Islamic state that rose to greatness during the Middle Ages. A member of an influential clan, Umar at first opposed MUHAMMAD. After converting to Islam, however, Umar urged Muhammad to make his teachings public. He was not only Muhammad's father-in-law, but he became the prophet's adviser and close friend.

Umar was among the first 50 people to join Islam. He was the first person to urge that Muhammad's teachings be collected in a holy book of Islam, the QUR'AN. It was he who decided that the Islamic calendar should begin with the hegira, Muhammad's move to Medina in 622.

* **caliph** religious and political head of an Islamic state

After Muhammad's death, ABU BAKR was elected the first caliph. In 634, Umar succeeded Abu Bakr and began an active campaign to spread Islam through expansion and conquest. During his ten-year reign as caliph, Muslims created the core area of what eventually became a large Islamic empire. In well-planned campaigns, Umar's forces conquered IRAQ, SYRIA, and EGYPT. This Arab-Islamic expansion brought about large population shifts, as Arab Muslims colonized the newly conquered lands. Urban growth increased dramatically. The most important new cities were Basra and KUFA in Iraq and al-Fustat in Egypt. Built to house troops and their families, these cities eventually became provincial* capitals. Basra grew into a cosmopolitan* port where merchants traded with China and East Africa.

Umar argued against turning the conquered lands into booty* to be plundered by the invading Muslims. Instead he imagined an expanding, unified Islamic state. Non-Muslims were free to remain in this state if they accepted Islamic rule and agreed to pay taxes. Umar created an administrative and fiscal structure for the newly formed Islamic state. He started the practice of setting salaries for state officials, including the office of caliph. The state established a system of taxes and collected its share of each area's produce, which was distributed to the soldiers. Soldiers who had participated in the conquests and their families were also given salaries and other benefits.

As the state grew larger and more complex, so did the caliph's duties. Umar delegated some of his responsibilities, including the leading of prayer and the judging of disputes, to other officials. He kept a tight grip on all state officials to ensure that they did not steal from the public treasury.

Umar died of wounds inflicted by an assassin's dagger on November 3, 644. He left behind a well-established and organized state. (*See also* **Caliphate; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Political Organization of; Islam, Religion of.**)

* **provincial** referring to a province or an area controlled by an empire

* **cosmopolitan** having an international outlook, a broad worldview

* **booty** prizes of war

Umar Khayyam

1048–1131
Persian poet
and mathematician

During his lifetime, Umar Khayyam was widely respected as a leading mathematician and astronomer in his native Persia (present-day IRAN). To later generations, he was better known as a poet. His best-known work is a set of melancholy poems called the *Rubaiyat* (a ruba'i was a quatrain, or verse of four lines).

During 18 years at the sultan's court in Isfahan, Umar Khayyam created a new solar calendar and drew up plans for a large, new observatory. His poems were not mentioned in any source from his own lifetime. Following his death, however, other writers began to quote them. By the mid-1300s, some 60 quatrains had appeared; by the 1800s, more than 1,200 quatrains were attributed to Umar Khayyam. His work achieved vast international fame after Edward FitzGerald of Britain translated them into English in 1859. Some quatrains were widely quoted, especially this one: "The moving finger writes, and having writ/Moves on, nor all your piety nor wit/Shall lure it back to cancel half a line/Nor all your tears wash out a word of it." Modern scholars, however, believe that only about 100 of the quatrains were actually written by Umar Khayyam.

Umayyads

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **Shi'ites** Muslims who believed that Muhammad chose Ali and his descendants as the rulers and spiritual leaders of the Islamic community

* **Sunnites** Muslim majority who believed that the caliphs should rule the Islamic community

* **caliphate** office and government of the caliph, religious and political head of the Islamic state

* **provincial** referring to a province or an area controlled by an empire

* **autocratic** ruling with absolute power and authority

The Great Mosque at Córdoba

One of the largest mosques in the world, the Great Mosque of Córdoba, was built during the Middle Ages. Begun in 785 during the caliphate of Abd al-Rahman I, the mosque is surrounded by an outer wall and set inside a courtyard. The interior of the mosque is notable for its 856 columns, linked by red and white horseshoe-shaped arches. This forest of columns creates an ever-shifting perspective for the eye of the viewer. Some of these columns were taken from older Christian and Visigothic buildings. Mihrabs, or prayer niches, in the walls of the building face in the direction of the holy city of Mecca. Enlarged in the 800s and the 900s, the mosque became a Christian church after the conquest of Córdoba in 1236.

The Umayyads were the first Islamic dynasty*. They ruled over a vast empire stretching from Spain in the west to central Asia and India in the east. It was during the early days of the Umayyad rise to power that Islam split into Shi'ite* and Sunnite* factions, a division that has continued to the present.

Foundations of Umayyad Power. The Arabian city of MECCA was home to the powerful Umayyad clan. The Umayyads played an important role in Arabian trade, and they became major landholders in the western Arabian peninsula. Their economic importance was matched by social and political influence. By the time Islam emerged in the early 600s, the Umayyads enjoyed a dominant position in Mecca, and they also had significant contacts and influence among the Arab tribes in SYRIA.

When MUHAMMAD's forces occupied Mecca in 630, the Umayyads at first opposed the Prophet. Yet, they soon were participating in the early Arab conquests, and their chieftains played important roles as military leaders. Umayyad fortunes in the early caliphate* centered on the rise of two of the clan's leading figures, Uthman ibn Affan and MU'AWIYA ibn Abi Sufyan. Uthman, an early convert to Islam and a son-in-law of Muhammad, was appointed caliph in 644 and became the founder of the dynasty. As caliph, Uthman appointed Umayyad kinsmen to important provincial* posts and took major steps toward centralizing power. Meanwhile, Mu'awiya, who was governor of Syria, did much to strengthen Umayyad power there.

Uthman's autocratic* policies and the favored position of the Umayyads throughout the empire eventually provoked a mounting tide of discontent and then open opposition. Rising tensions resulted in the murder of Uthman in 656, and this was followed by a period of great turmoil and civil war. The only leader acceptable to the various opposition groups was ALI IBN ABI TALIB, Muhammad's cousin and son-in-law. Ali had strong support from a faction that came to be known as the Shi'ites. (In time, the Shi'ites became a general movement within Islam that opposed the ruling dynasty, while Orthodox Muslims, or Sunnites, supported the caliph as the rightful representative of the Islamic community.) Ali was named caliph by Arab leaders from the city of Medina, but he never enjoyed general support within the empire. In addition, Mu'awiya refused to acknowledge Ali's claim to the caliphate. When Ali was assassinated in 661, Mu'awiya became caliph. With his succession, the Sufyanid branch of the Umayyad dynasty began.

As caliph, Mu'awiya governed on a grand scale. He shifted the caliphate to DAMASCUS, and the city became the Umayyad capital and the administrative center of the Islamic world. Lavish palaces and administrative buildings were built, and court life and ceremonies were based on practices borrowed from the Byzantines and the SASANIANS of Iran. Mu'awiya skillfully increased his power and gained the support of various tribal groups, and he continued the development of a centralized, authoritarian regime. When Mu'awiya died in 680, his son Yazid succeeded him as caliph. This established a precedent of hereditary succession to the caliphate.

Early Umayyads. The greatest achievement of the early Umayyads was the devising of a system that unified their domains and laid the

foundations for the development of other governmental institutions. Under Mu'awiya and Yazid, the caliphate developed a strong imperial government with various bureaucratic departments. In the provinces, authority was delegated to a small circle of trusted commanders, or emirs. The emirs exercised full executive, military, and economic powers. They supervised their own provincial bureaucracies and reported directly to the caliph. Their provincial capitals became military garrisons* from which the armies of the caliph could carry Islam into neighboring territories.

At the same time, early Umayyad rule was also characterized by internal rivalries among various Islamic factions. Many Arabs, particularly in IRAQ, the heartland of the empire, resented what they considered to be unfair use of their land and an invasion of their rights. In addition, many newly converted Muslims were rapidly becoming resentful of their second-class status within Umayyad society. After the deaths of Yazid and his successor, Mu'awiya II, the enemies of the Umayyads took advantage of the mounting chaos. Rebellions erupted in the late 600s, and a different branch of the Umayyad dynasty gained control. This branch of the dynasty, the Marwanids, produced all the remaining Umayyad caliphs.

During the late 600s and the early 700s, the Umayyads continued to face internal strife and challenges to their authority. The caliphs of this period thus sought to strengthen their base of power. Steps were taken to regularize the system of dynastic succession. Authority in the provinces was concentrated in the hands of a small group of trusted professional officers rather than tribal allies. Lastly, the caliphs sought to unify the various parts of the empire by promoting Arabic as the common language of government and religion.

*** garrison** military post

***patron** person of wealth and influence who supports an artist, writer, or scholar

See map in Byzantine Empire (vol. 2).

***booty** prizes of war

High Point of Umayyad Rule. The first half of the 700s marked the peak of Umayyad political power and expansion. In the west, Umayyad troops quickly conquered North Africa and swept into Spain in 711. In the Middle East, the armies of the caliph besieged CONSTANTINOPLE (unsuccessfully) and then pressed on into central Asia. In the east and the south, Arab forces reached as far as the Indus River valley. This vigorous period of conquest was accompanied by the growth of large trading cities and a large-scale migration of Arabs throughout the empire. Canals and irrigation systems were repaired and extended, large tracts of unexploited land were reclaimed, and roads were built. Charitable services for the poor and disabled were established, and mosques were rebuilt or enlarged. Islamic culture and scholarship increased, as the Umayyad caliphs became patrons* of poets, artists, and scholars. This era marked the emergence of a distinctly Islamic culture and political system, which helped to unite the vast empire.

Collapse of the Umayyad Regime. Umayyad rule depended on the loyalty of a small Arab ruling class who served as the military leaders, administrators, and officials of the empire. This ruling class had great privileges, such as not having to pay taxes on conquered lands and having the first access to booty*. Meanwhile, the lands conquered by the Umayyads contained many non-Arabs who had converted to Islam. Many of these converts had cultures far older and more advanced than that of the Arabs. However, since they were not Arab by birth, they were treated as

second-class citizens. This led to resentment against the Umayyads and eventually gave rise to rebellion. In the 740s, anti-Umayyads took control of towns in IRAN and Iraq, and the Umayyads were defeated in several major battles. In 749, Abul-Abbas of the ABBASID clan was named caliph. This marked the beginning of the Abbasid dynasty. In 750, the last Umayyad ruler, Marwan ibn Muhammad, fled from Syria to Egypt, where he was killed.

Although Umayyad rule of the Islamic Empire was ended, the Umayyad story was far from over. One family member, Abd al-Rahman, escaped the slaughter of his family and fled to Spain, where he founded a new Umayyad dynasty. Abd al-Rahman I declared Islamic Spain independent of the Abbasid caliphate, and he ruled as emir from 756 to 788. His court at CÓRDOBA consisted of a small circle of relatives and family friends who had moved to Spain on hearing of his success. By the early 800s, Spain (known as al-Andalus in Arabic) was an independent state within the Muslim world, and its emir held all civil and religious power.

In 929, Abd al-Rahman III was confident enough in his power to proclaim himself caliph of al-Andalus. Abd al-Rahman III waged war on the Christian kingdoms of northern Spain and sought to undermine the Muslim rulers of North Africa. His rule marked the high point of Islamic culture in Spain, and he built beautiful mosques, gardens, libraries, and palaces throughout the realm. Umayyad rule in Spain continued to grow under al-MANSUR, a powerful vizier* who waged constant war against the Christian kingdoms in the late 900s. By the mid-1000s, however, internal dissension threatened the power of the Umayyads of Spain. The caliphate was abolished in 1031, and the Umayyad kingdom was divided into a number of small kingdoms ruled by Arab, BERBER, or MAMLUK leaders. (*See also* **Arabia; Caliphate; Islam, Conquests of; Spain, Muslim Kingdoms of.**)

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 2).

See color plate 11, vol. 2.

* **vizier** Muslim minister of state

Universities

Universities and colleges began in the Middle Ages. While schools and academies of various kinds had existed throughout the ancient world, organized institutions of higher learning were not established until the late medieval period. The first use of the term *university* was in reference to a group of scholars and their students in PARIS in 1221.

The university was a legally recognized group of people with an identity who were organized for a purpose, similar to a modern corporation. This independent legal standing is what made the university different from other schools. For example, many cathedrals and monasteries had schools, but these schools did not have separate, distinct existences under the law.

Universities generally were formed in one of two ways. A university could develop from an already existing school (or group of students and teachers), or it could be founded with a charter* from the pope or from a king. Once a university was incorporated, it became an independent legal entity, although medieval universities maintained close ties with the church, and university officials often held church positions as well.

* **charter** written grant from a ruler conferring certain rights and privileges

Originally, colleges were residences for students that were funded by charitable donations. They later developed into institutions of higher learning where students could reside as well as attend lectures. In the Middle Ages, colleges usually were associated with universities. For example, Oxford University in England was, and is to this day, made up of a number of colleges.

European Colleges and Universities. The first colleges in Europe were founded in France and in Italy in the late 1100s. English and Spanish colleges began in the mid-1200s, and these were followed by German colleges in the 1300s and Scottish and Polish ones in the 1400s. European colleges evolved from student residences into self-governing academic communities where students and scholars learned together, usually as part of a university.

Several developments paved the way for the emergence of universities in the 1200s. Schools that were connected to cathedrals and monasteries produced a pool of scholars and an atmosphere favorable to learning. Interest in learning was also stimulated by increased contact with Islamic scholars and by new translations of Arabic works and the works of ancient Greek thinkers—especially ARISTOTLE, whose works on logic and the sciences became an important part of the curriculum of medieval universities. Furthermore, the incorporation of many towns and GUILDS established a legal model for the incorporation of universities.

Europe's first university grew out of the community of scholars and teachers who lived in Paris and who were making that city an important center of higher learning. By the mid-1200s, the University of Paris (later and currently referred to as the Sorbonne) had been organized as a self-governing corporation, licensed to grant degrees in theology*, church law, medicine, and arts.

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of religious truth

At about the same time, another kind of university was emerging in Bologna, Italy, a city that was becoming Europe's center for legal studies. In addition to teaching LAW, faculty members in Bologna delivered lectures on such practical subjects as composition, for training civil servants in the preparation of documents. Around 1200, the students of Bologna, who had organized themselves into two groups—one for Italians and one for foreign students—formed the University of Bologna. The students ran the university themselves. They elected their own administrators and directed the teachers by having the power to withhold their fees.

The first university in the British Isles, Oxford University, also originated in the 1200s. Like Bologna, Oxford was a student-run university with assemblies of students in charge of establishing its rules and managing its operations. By the end of the Middle Ages, Europe had dozens of universities, both large and small, from SCOTLAND and SCANDINAVIA in the north to PORTUGAL in the west and HUNGARY in the east.

European universities offered similar courses of study and had similar requirements. Students could begin their academic training at about 14 years of age in a section of the university called the faculty of arts. There they studied grammar, logic, history, MATHEMATICS, and philosophy. These young arts students generally attended lectures for six years and spent the next two years conducting disputations*. Students who

* **disputation** debate; exercise in the oral defense of a thesis by the principles of logic
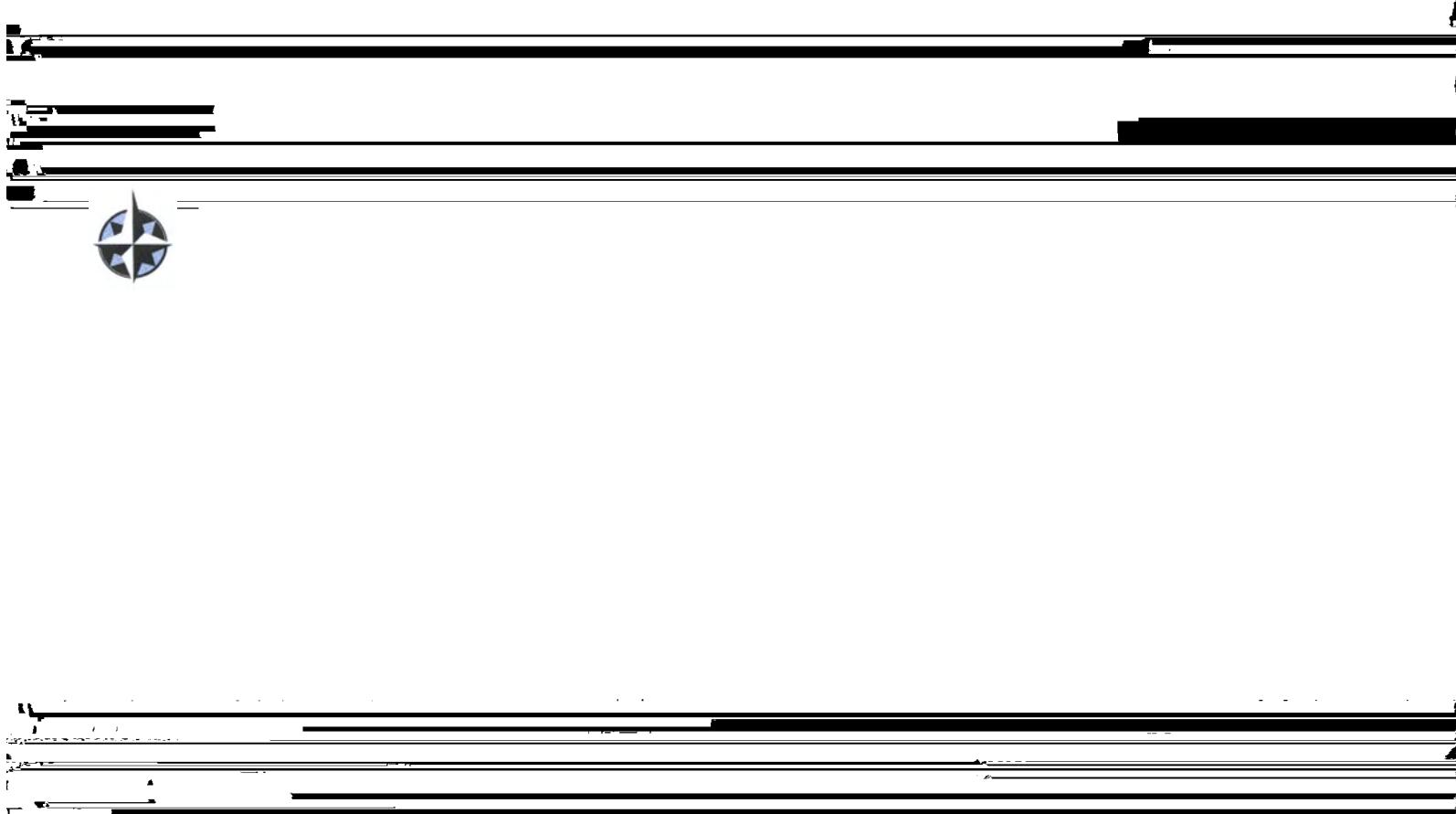
Hasanawaih (who died around 1014) funded 3,000 colleges over the 30-year period of his governorship. Since Islamic law was the most important subject, other college members were subordinate to the professor of law, who was usually also the college's director.

Students began their higher studies at the age of 15 and finished their undergraduate studies in four years. The graduate could then teach young children or go on to higher-level studies, which could take up to 20 years. A graduate degree made him eligible to receive a license to teach college and to issue legal opinions. (*See also* **Books, Manuscript; Law; Libraries.**)

Urban II, Pope

ca. 1035–1099
Pope and reformer

* **crusades** holy wars declared by the pope against non-Christians. Most were against Muslims, but crusades were also declared against heretics and pagans.

See map in Holy Roman Empire (vol. 2).

See map in Crusades (vol. 2).

Urban II, best remembered as the pope who called for the First Crusade*, was a church reformer who helped the PAPACY recover from one of its most difficult periods. The final split between the Byzantine and Roman branches of the church had been followed by a struggle between the papacy and the HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE that had threatened to divide the Western Church.

Before becoming pope, Urban was a French cleric known as Odo. In 1084, Pope GREGORY VII sent him to Germany. The German king Henry IV had just conquered ROME, had installed Clement III as the new pope, and had had himself crowned emperor. During Easter Week in 1085, Urban held a meeting inside Germany on behalf of Pope Gregory. At that meeting, Urban urged that all the acts and followers of Clement III be condemned. Urban's action was in bold defiance of the emperor, and it was done within the emperor's own territory.

In 1088, Urban was elected the new pope, but his position was so insecure that he dared not enter Rome, where Clement III was still in residence and claimed to be pope. Urban spent the first five years of his papacy outside Rome gathering support against Clement. By 1093, he felt strong enough to enter Rome and to take charge of the papacy. As pope, Urban implemented many of the reforms that Gregory VII had favored. He also established diplomatic contact with the Byzantine emperor Alexios I KOMNENOS in the hope of healing the rift between the Eastern and Western Churches.

In 1095, at the Council of Clermont in France, Urban called for the First Crusade to liberate JERUSALEM. He is probably best known for this act. The titanic struggle that followed between Europe's crusaders and the Muslim Turks lasted for two centuries and changed the course of medieval history. (*See also* **Christianity; Church-State Relations; Crusades; Pilgrimage.**)

Usury

Usury refers to the practice of charging interest on loans. While today the practice is widely accepted (with the term *usury* generally reserved for interest rates that are excessively high), in the Middle Ages usury meant the payment of any interest at all.

Medieval Christian, Jewish, and Islamic law all forbade the repayment of any amount of money greater than the original amount of the loan. On the other hand, the ancient Romans had had no such objections to

charging interest on loans, although later Roman law codes had set limits on the interest rates that could be charged.

Nevertheless, the success of the church in portraying usurers as wrong-doers who deserved punishment in heaven as well as on earth is reflected in the *Divine Comedy,* the great medieval poem of DANTE ALIGHIERI. The *Divine Comedy* describes in vivid detail the tortures inflicted on the souls of usurers in the seventh circle of hell. (*See also* **Excommunication; Law; Trade.**)

Valencia

See map in Aragon (vol. 1).

* **parliament** meeting or assembly of elected or appointed representatives

* **viceroy** person appointed to rule a country or province as the official deputy, or representative, of the ruler

* **charter** written grant from a ruler conferring certain rights and privileges

* **feudal** referring to the social, economic, and political system that flourished in western Europe during the Middle Ages

Valencia is both a province and a city on the Mediterranean coast of SPAIN. During the early Middle Ages, Valencia was controlled at different times by the VISIGOTHS, the Byzantines, and the Muslims. In the 1200s, it became a separate Christian kingdom within the kingdom of ARAGON. The region's many active seaports helped Valencia become a major trading power in the Mediterranean. By the 1400s, the city of Valencia had become the most important city of Spain, rivaling other European trading giants, such as VENICE.

When the Muslims conquered Spain in the 700s, Valencia became part of the region of Arabic Spain known as al-Andalus. In 1094, Valencia was briefly reconquered from the Muslims by the Spanish soldier and hero known as the CID. The province was taken back by the Muslims in 1102. Finally, between 1232 and 1245, Valencia was captured from the Muslims by James I, the king of Aragon and count of BARCELONA.

James I established Valencia as a separate kingdom within Aragon and allowed it to have its own parliament*, currency, and laws. In James's day, the region prospered with many large castles and walled towns. Heavily irrigated plains dotted its coastal regions, and bustling port cities linked it in trade with North Africa, the Balearic Islands, and southern France. Despite the Christian conquest and efforts to colonize the region with Christians, Muslims remained in the majority for many years, and they maintained their own laws, language, and religion.

James I organized his new kingdom with an administration headed by a viceroy*, who was assisted by other officials. The parliament, or cortes, initially met only during crises but later evolved into a permanent representative group. Each town in the kingdom elected executive officers, a legislative council, and a court. Local customs were codified into law by charters*. The crown controlled most of the cities and a great amount of land. However, the nobility and the church dominated other areas, and their rights were protected by feudal* privileges. As a result, Valencia was a mixture of land and interests of the king, the nobility, and the church and semi-independent territories.

Valencia developed a rich history and culture in the later Middle Ages. It was home to many religious orders and provided the church with several popes. A university was founded in 1245, and higher education flourished. Europe's first psychiatric hospital was established in the city of Valencia in 1409. The kingdom became a bridge for the exchange of medical knowledge from the Islamic world to Europe. Valencia's celebrated paper industry, founded by the Muslims, helped to spread the use of paper in Europe.

When printing came into use in the 1400s, the city of Valencia became Spain's most important publication center.

The 1400s were, in many ways, the golden age in Valencia. The city was a prosperous commercial and cultural center. Literature flourished with many remarkable poets, writers, and musicians. This period was also a time of great unwillingness to accept others of different religious views, including Muslims, and especially Jews. The INQUISITION began its activity in Valencia in 1484. This intolerance—combined with internal strife, corruption, commercial crises, piracy, and PLAGUE in the 1500s—marked the end of the medieval period in Valencia. (*See also* **Castellan; Jews, Expulsion of; Spain, Muslim Kingdoms of.**)

Vandals

See map in Migrations, Germanic (vol. 3).

* **booty** prizes of war

The Vandals were a Germanic people who entered the Roman Empire in the early 400s. They settled first in Spain and then in North Africa, where they lived for about a century until their defeat by the BYZANTINE EMPIRE. The region of Andalusia in southern Spain is named after them.

The Vandals originated in SCANDINAVIA or the Baltic region. In the first century, they began migrating south and settled in eastern Europe. Pressure from the HUNS in the late 300s forced the Vandals and other Germanic peoples westward into the Roman Empire. The Vandals moved into Spain in 409, but within a few years they were driven farther south by the VISIGOTHS.

Under the leadership of King Genseric, the Vandals left Spain in 429 and migrated to the Roman provinces of North Africa. As a result of several treaties with the Romans, the Vandals took control of the richest parts of that region. In 455, the Vandals captured ROME and pillaged the city for two weeks. They carried off booty* and took many captives, including the widow and two daughters of the emperor, Valentinian III. The Vandals also raided Sicily and other islands, virtually paralyzing Mediterranean commerce.

Vandal power slowly declined after 477 as a result of internal and external pressures. Their rule in North Africa ended in 533 when Byzantine forces sent by Emperor JUSTINIAN I easily defeated the Vandal army. Within a short time, all traces of Vandal occupation had disappeared. The actions of the Vandals, however, are remembered in the English word *vandalism,* which means malicious or wanton destruction of property. (*See also* **Migrations, Germanic.**)

Venice

See map in Italy (vol. 3).

The Italian city-state of Venice was one of the leading powers of medieval Europe. Rising on mudbanks and little islands in lagoons along the northern Adriatic Sea, the city and its history were greatly influenced by geography. Situated between the BYZANTINE EMPIRE to the east and European states to the north and west, Venice became a great center of commerce and trade. Its wealth came from shipping goods from one corner of the world to another. In a world that was largely rural

Venice was one of the largest cities in medieval Europe and was an important center of international commerce. It is located in northern Italy at the center of a shallow lagoon on the Adriatic Sea. This late medieval map shows Venice with its system of canals, including the Grand Canal near the center, which cuts the city in half. Venice had few economic rivals during the Middle Ages.

* **feudal** referring to the social, economic, and political system that flourished in western Europe during the Middle Ages

* **apostle** early follower of Jesus who traveled and spread his teachings

* **relic** object cherished for its association with a martyr or saint

and feudal*, and dominated by warriors and religious officials, Venice was almost unique: an urban commercial center ruled by wealthy merchants and their families.

Early History. According to local legend, Venice was founded in the early Christian era by the apostle* Mark while he was preaching Christianity in the region. In reality, the area was largely uninhabited until the late 300s, when its isolated mud flats and islands became a refuge for Romans fleeing the mainland during the Germanic invasions. The destruction on the mainland caused by successive waves of invaders, particularly the Lombards, convinced many Romans to remain in the lagoons. By the late 500s, a dozen settlements existed in the area. One of these, the Rialto, would later became the heart of the city of Venice.

The lagoon settlements became a sanctuary for Roman culture. For the Byzantines, the area was an important link with the West and a base of operations to extend their control along the western Adriatic coast. By the end of the 600s, the lagoon area had become a military province of the Byzantine Empire, ruled by a dux. In time, the dux, or doge, became the chief executive of Venice.

In the late 700s and the early 800s, the CAROLINGIANS attempted to gain control of the lagoon communities. Their failure to conquer the Rialto marked the beginning of that community as the center of Venice. In 810, Venice gained important rights from the Byzantines, including the right to trade in Carolingian territory in the West. About this same time, the remains of the apostle Mark were brought to Venice from Egypt. A chapel was built to house the saint's relics*, and this eventually evolved into the magnificent cathedral of San Marco. These events were important steps toward greater independence and wealth.

Emerging Independence. In the 800s and the 900s, as Byzantine influence in the West weakened, Venice aggressively extended its control over the northern Adriatic. It defeated neighboring towns, set up connections in conquered regions, destroyed pirate strongholds, and established a naval presence to keep the seas open and to prevent Muslim forces from advancing up the coast. As a reward for military aid against the Muslims, the Byzantine emperor granted the Venetians various privileges, including a reduction in taxes on imports and other trade advantages. In 1082, the emperor granted Venetians other special rights, including not having

How Venice Prospered

Venetian power rested on a government-controlled navy and privately run businesses. Venetian ships were built by private builders to standards set by the government. The city's fleets were organized, led, and protected by the state, and each voyage was under government control.

In contrast, the raising of money for business ventures was private and was restricted to Venetian citizens. Money for commercial ventures was raised in a variety of ways: the sea loan, a straight loan at a high rate of interest; the cambio, a bill of exchange; and the *colleganza*. The *colleganza* involved two investors: one who invested money, and another who invested time and effort and actually took the physical risks of a trading voyage. The partners split the profits. For the partner who made the voyage, it was possible to gain profits with very little money. For the money investor, a successful venture usually provided a good return on the investment.

* **crusades** holy wars declared by the pope against non-Christians. Most were against Muslims, but crusades were also declared against heretics and pagans.

* **booty** prizes of war

* **hereditary** passed on from parent to child

See color plate 7, vol. 1.

to pay taxes on trade within the empire, the right to live under their own laws, and the right to establish commercial districts in other cities. These privileges assured Venice a leading role in the trade of the empire and the Mediterranean region. Venice soon became one of the richest cities in Europe.

During the 1100s, Venice faced problems at home and elsewhere. At home, power struggles among different groups led to a number of political reforms, including limitations on the power of the doge and the establishment of a group of advisers to him. Yet, political power remained in the hands of wealthy merchants, whose commitment to commercial growth helped produce more wealth for the city. Abroad, Venice faced increasing resentment and hostility from its economic competitors, especially the Byzantine Empire and the city of GENOA. In the 1100s, popular uprisings and incidents of violence threatened Venetian traders and communities in the empire, and steps were taken to limit Venetian privileges. In 1171, the Byzantine emperor ordered the arrest of all Venetians in the empire and seized their property. The Venetians responded by sending a large, but unsuccessful, naval force against the Byzantine Empire. Despite such problems, Venice continued to flourish.

New Power and Wealth.   Venice entered a new phase of power and wealth during the crusades*. During the Fourth Crusade, Venice was assigned to transport European crusaders to the Holy Land. As partial payment for this service, Venice received a large share of booty* when the crusaders attacked and plundered CONSTANTINOPLE in 1203 and 1204. The immense wealth gained from this crusade solidified Venice's position as a leading European power.

Once again, success brought problems. Increased wealth led to renewed internal tensions, as new merchant families competed with old established families for political power and social status. The city also endured a long series of wars with Genoa. War broke out between the two powers in 1258, with the first victory going to Venice. Triumph was short-lived, however, and Venice suffered a series of major defeats in the late 1200s. This period of war was just the beginning of a conflict that continued until the late 1300s.

Venetian dominance in the East began to wane in the late 1200s and the 1300s as a result of growing competition, a slowing of economic growth, and shrinking markets. Continuing losses in the war with Genoa, plus the burden of its cost, created new tensions in the city, and these led to further changes in government. In 1298, a hereditary* ruling class was created, and political participation was limited to about 200 wealthy families. A large, centralized government emerged in the early 1300s, with power in the hands of two groups: the Council of Forty, which was concerned mainly with criminal and internal matters, and the Senate, which was concerned with diplomatic and commercial concerns.

The last phase of the war with Genoa began in the 1370s, when the Genoese sailed up the Adriatic and threatened the lagoon cities. In 1379, the Genoese navy approached Venice and tried to starve the city and force it to surrender. The Venetians, however, blockaded the Genoese ships in the lagoon and starved them into submission instead. This was a great victory for Venice. Early in the 1400s, Venice conquered a number

of territories in northeastern Italy. This expansion broadened Venetian economic interests and laid the foundation for its continued power and prosperity. With its triumph over Genoa and its move onto the mainland, Venice consolidated the rule of a merchant nobility over a commercial empire connecting East and West. It also created a territorial state that dominated some of the richest lands in Italy. (*See also* **Commune; Crusades; Italy; Lombards, Kingdom of; Trade.**)

Vikings

The term *Vikings* refers to the Scandinavians who sailed out of their northern homelands of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark in the 800s, 900s, and early 1000s. Propelled by a need for more land and the rapid growth of population, Vikings raided, plundered, settled, and traded from the North Atlantic in the west to Russia in the east. Their warriors made their presence felt in Europe and the Mediterranean and struck fear into the hearts of all who experienced their onslaught. The period of Viking expansion took place from about 800 to about 1050. This era is called the Viking Age.

In Scotland and Ireland. The first Viking raids were accomplished by warriors from Norway and occurred in the British Isles around 793. Sharing a North Sea location with the Norsemen (Vikings from Norway), the British Isles presented an accessible target. Setting out from the fjords (deep sea inlets) of Norway's coast, the Norse sailed south to the Orkney and Shetland Islands off Scotland's north coast. After raiding the islands and both the Irish and Scottish coasts of the Irish Sea, the Vikings settled Orkney and Shetland. Both islands remained under Scandinavian control for the rest of the Middle Ages.

In the early 800s, the Norse began raiding along the coasts of Ireland. By the 830s, they had established permanent settlements there. Some of these grew into such towns as Dublin, Limerick, Wexford, Wicklow, and Cork. During the 900s, the Norse made political connections with the Vikings at York, a town in the north of England. When Ireland's Vikings converted to Christianity and intermarried with the native Irish, their absorption into Irish culture became inevitable.

Nevertheless, the Viking destruction greatly disrupted the culture of Ireland. Viking attacks put an end to the Irish production of illustrated manuscripts, which had achieved a high level of sophistication. The production of metalwork and stonework also suffered. The anonymous Irish author of *The War Against the Foreigners* recalled the era of destruction with bitterness: "If each tongue shouted incessantly in a hundred thousand voices, they could never list the sufferings which the Irish—men and women, laity and clergy, young and old—endured from these warlike, savage people."

In the North Atlantic. The excellent ships and navigational skills of the Vikings allowed them to sail west into the stormy North Atlantic from Shetland. They explored and settled the Faeroe Islands, Iceland, Greenland, and eventually North America.

A Famous Forgery

A map of the world showing Vinland appeared in 1965 and was immediately hailed as the only pre-Columbian map to show North America. However, the unusually accurate depiction of Greenland and some other features raised doubts about the map's authenticity. In 1972, analysis of the map using modern techniques revealed that the ink on the map contained a chemical compound unavailable before 1920. Even the map's strongest defenders were forced to admit that it was a forgery.

Iceland was the major achievement of Viking overseas settlement. With the exception of a few Irish monks, the island had no native population when the Vikings arrived. Thus, there was no need for conquest and there were no people to absorb. Once Iceland was sighted by the Vikings in the 860s, a period of intense settlement followed. Between 870 and 930, the population of the island grew to between 15,000 and 25,000. The Icelandic Vikings adopted Christianity around 1000, when two Icelandic chieftains returned from Norway, where they had been converted by King Olaf Tryggvason. They convinced the other chieftains to accept Christianity.

For the Vikings, Iceland was a stepping-stone into the North Atlantic. Eric the Red reached Greenland in the 980s and returned to Iceland to organize a colonizing party. Twenty-five ships set out for the new land, but only 14 arrived. The surviving settlers established towns on the southwestern coast. Christian missionaries soon followed, and religious communities and dioceses* were founded. By the 1400s, however, the Greenland settlements ended, probably as a result of the harsh climate.

* **diocese** church district under a bishop's authority

The North American continent was within easy reach of Greenland, and the Vikings landed and settled there briefly about 1000. One of the Icelandic sagas, called *Greenlanders' Saga,* tells how Bjarni Herjolfsson was thrown off his course in 985. The Viking was on his way from Iceland to Greenland when a violent storm broke out. Sailing west, Herjolfsson sighted land in three different places before he returned to Greenland. Years later, Leif, son of Eric the Red, retraced Herjolfsson's route and landed in all three places. Farther south, Leif sighted another land. He called this place Vinland. Later expeditions by Leif's relatives to this site led to settlements. However, none of the settlements on Vinland lasted more than three years. The Vikings' hostile contact with native peoples, called Skraelings by the Vikings, may have been the reason for the failure of the settlements.

In the 1960s, excavations at L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland uncovered the remains of a medieval Viking settlement. Archaeologists estimate that it may have been inhabited for 20 or 30 years. However, there is no evidence to link this site with Vinland.

Danes in Frankish Lands and Beyond.   Vikings from the Danish peninsula made major raids on the lands of the FRANKS beginning in 834. At first, these raids were seasonal. Between spring and autumn, Viking raiding parties attacked randomly along the French coast and up rivers. However, after 850, the Vikings spent the winter in Frankish lands as well. Monks fled their monasteries, and people living along the coasts and rivers moved inland. Some communities paid ransom (later called DANE-GELD) to avoid attack, but the Vikings simply took the silver and attacked elsewhere.

Some Vikings sailed all the way to Spain and the Mediterranean. From 859 to 862, a fleet of 60 Viking ships raided the eastern shores of Spain and the Balearic Islands, sailed up the Rhône River to Valence, and attacked Italy.

The greatest period of Viking destruction lasted from 879 to 892. During this time, a great Viking army plundered unchecked between the Seine and the Rhine Rivers, while other Vikings raided the Loire region.

See color plate 12, vol. 2.

See map in Kievan Rus (vol. 3).

* **Byzantium** ancient city that became Constantinople; also refers to the Byzantine Empire
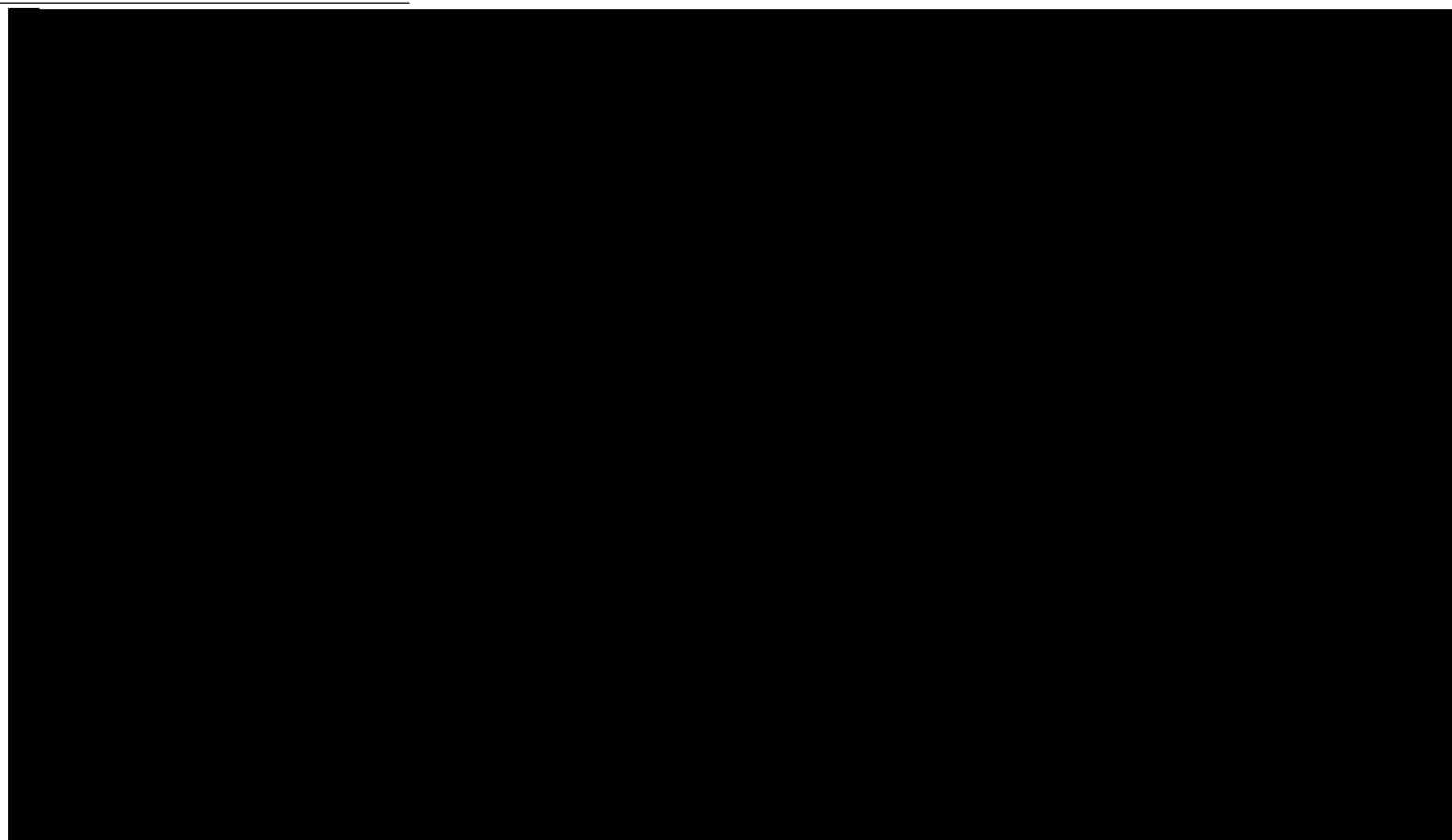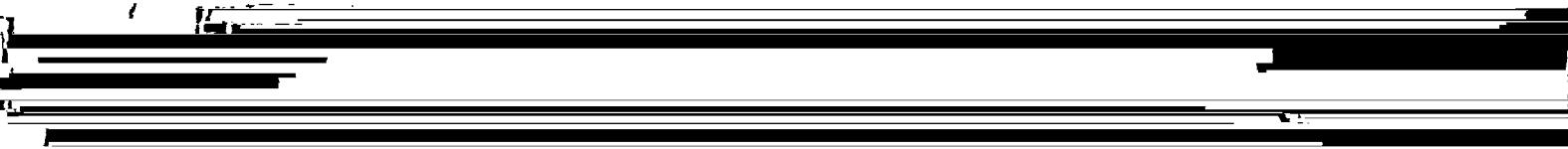
when King ALFRED THE GREAT defeated them. The Danish leader Guthrum converted to Christianity and left Wessex, and he and Alfred agreed on a boundary between their lands.

York became the center of a Viking kingdom from which the Danes exercised power as far west as Dublin. Large numbers of Danes settled in northern England during the late 900s, as evidenced by the many Scandinavian words in the English language. Some of these include *happy, call, law,* and *ill.* Danish control of York ended in 954, but Viking power in England continued.

The second wave of Danish attacks were national campaigns led by the Danish royal family and its generals. From 991 to 1009, the English king Ethelred II the Unready was forced to pay more than 100,000 pounds of silver in danegeld to the Danish invaders. However, tribute was not enough. The Danes seized the English crown, first in 1014 and then in 1016, when CNUT THE GREAT became king of England. Cnut ruled England until 1035. He also became the Danish king in 1019 and king of Norway in 1028.

Swedes in Russia.   In the early 800s, Vikings from Sweden crossed the Baltic Sea and penetrated the river systems of Russia. They settled first at NOVGOROD, then farther south. There, under the leadership of Rurik, they founded KIEVAN RUS. In the years immediately after 989, the conversion to Christianity of Vladimir I, the leader of Kievan Rus, resulted in the baptism of much of the population, as well as closer commercial ties with Byzantium*. Intermarriage between the Vikings and the native population created a new group of Slavic people—the Russians. (*See also* **Exploration; Historical Writing; Navigation; Scandinavia; Scandinavia, Culture of; Ships and Shipbuilding.**)

Villages

* **archaeologist** scientist who studies past human cultures, usually by excavating ruins

Villages, rural communities surrounded by fields, were the principal environment in which people lived until the 1800s, when the Industrial Revolution drove people to the cities.

Origins of Villages.   Before the Middle Ages, Europe did not have many settled communities that could be called villages. Rural life was usually organized around the single household. People lived on isolated farms or in hamlets of two or three households. People identified themselves with a family, clan, or tribe, rather than with a geographical location. Their sense of community came from kinship ties, not from where they lived.

The Romans organized the countryside of their empire around individual farmsteads, called villas. These farmsteads were located near trading posts along the roads. Some of the villages that later emerged on lands belonging to the Roman Empire—from Italy to England—were probably located on the sites of old Roman villas.

Historians and archaeologists* are still studying the history of villages to determine when people first began to gather together in large numbers of villages. Some have suggested that village settlement originated as early as the 500s. These early villages, however, were often not permanent. Archaeologists who have uncovered and examined traces of early medieval

communities in England, Germany, and elsewhere have discovered that many villages formed and were abandoned after a few generations. Other villages were inhabited very briefly, perhaps only for a few years, and then their inhabitants moved on. New villages were later built on the sites of some of these early settlements. Other early village sites remained abandoned forever.

The rural settlement patterns of the middle medieval period emerged over several centuries. The individual farmsteads that the Romans had built across Europe were mostly abandoned between the 200s and the 600s. However, this period was not necessarily the time when the villages were first settled. During the early Middle Ages, much of the European countryside was uninhabited.

The growth of villages took place in two stages. The first stage is difficult to date because it occurred at different times in different parts of Europe. This initial stage was hastened as people felt a weakening of the ties that linked them to their clans or tribes. Instead of identifying themselves in terms of kinship, individuals and families started to identify themselves by where they lived. People who lived in the same area began to see that they were linked by a shared neighborhood, even though they did not yet live in a central place but remained scattered across the countryside. This stage in the history of villages has been called the territorial community. People living within a territorial community worked together to enforce and to maintain local law and order, and to decide how public resources—such as timber, water, and grazing pastures—could best be shared.

Certain settlements existed side by side with the territorial communities. These were the great manors of the nobles. Manors were much like the old Roman villas. They included slaves and peasants who were dependent on the lord for their livelihood.

Beginning in the 800s and continuing through the 900s, the territorial communities and the lordly households entered the second stage in the history of villages. During this stage, people living in a territorial community drifted toward a population center, which eventually became a village. The term *village* comes from the Latin word *villa*.

Rural dwellers moved into villages for many reasons. In places where the countryside was lawless or dangerous, people sought safety in numbers. They also realized that living close together made it easier to cooperate on community projects, such as building a bridge or clearing a field. Lords and nobles supported the growth of villages too. During this period, the lords gained much authority and built castles for themselves and their families. Country folk found themselves increasingly under the authority of these powerful individuals. Landowners wanted the peasants who worked their land to live in one place so that the landlord's agent—called a reeve—could more easily collect rents or taxes from the peasants. Some villages grew up around castles or manor houses. Others sprang up along well-traveled roads. Christianity also helped many villages get started. As churches were built across the countryside, villages grew up around them. The church could serve as a meeting hall, a warehouse, or a place of refuge as well as a place of worship.

By the year 1000, stable villages had formed across Europe, especially in areas where most people made their living from the land.

Remember: Consult the index at the end of Volume 4 to find more information on many topics.

Village Justice

In many parts of Europe, the final say in matters of guilt and punishment lay with the local lord, but villagers also took much responsibility for maintaining law and order. Communities invented ways to keep the peace. They fined people for violent, drunken, or insulting behavior. Serious offenders could be punished with mockery or even banishment. Villagers appointed constables to patrol the lanes and roads and chose officials to round up stray animals. Some villages had fire prevention rules, since a single fire could destroy an entire community of thatch-roofed houses.

Villages dotted central England, the grain-growing regions of northern Europe, the Mediterranean plains of southern France and Italy, and the open lands of Spain and of central and eastern Europe. In other parts of Europe, where the growing of grain was less important, there were fewer villages. In rugged or mountainous regions—such as the Alps, the highlands of central Europe, and the Pyrenees Mountains of northern Spain—isolated individual homesteads remained scattered over the countryside.

Village Life.   Villages consisted of households, which included a married couple, their children, and perhaps a few elderly or unmarried relatives. The head of the household was the husband or father, who spoke for all members of the household in village affairs. Most records of medieval villages contain information only about the heads of households. Villages were not assemblies of equals. People living in a medieval village were very much aware of which households were the most prosperous, and the heads of these households generally had the greatest influence in the village councils.

Villages ranged in size from 10 households with a total of about 50 people (anything smaller was a hamlet) to well over 200 households with more than 1,000 people. Unlike the larger, busier settlements called market towns, villages did not have major markets to attract buyers from the surrounding area. Instead, several villages would send produce and other wares to the nearest market town to be traded or sold.

The history of the village is a history of fields as well as of houses. The center of the village was an area of houses, built near a castle, manor house, or church. Around this core were vegetable gardens, orchards, and outbuildings, such as stables. Beyond lay the fields from which the villagers drew their livelihood.

By the 1200s, three kinds of field systems had been developed by villagers. Each system reflected a specific landscape. The open-field system, which probably dates from the 700s or the 800s, was common in central England and across the fertile plain that stretched from France to Poland. In this system, farmland was made up of long, narrow strips that were grouped together in blocks. The holdings of individual peasants or of landlords consisted of strips scattered among various blocks. Crops were raised on different strips each year, and animals could graze on the strips that were not planted with crops. In the infield-outfield system, used in northern Europe, grain fields near the village were farmed intensively, while fields farther away were used as pastures for grazing animals. The Mediterranean system continued the Roman practice of mixing vegetable gardens, olive and chestnut groves, and vineyards with small grain fields. In each case, peasants spread out from the residential core of the village in the morning to work their fields and the fields belonging to their landlords, and they returned to their homes in the center of the village at night.

Much of Europe was ravaged by PLAGUES and war during the middle and the late 1300s. During this time, most villages lost large segments of their population, and some villages disappeared entirely. In one area of southern France, for example, a tax record from 1471 lists 577 villages, but 157 of them had no inhabitants. When villages were resettled in the 1400s

and the 1500s, people tended to build solid, long-lasting homes. Village houses built before about 1459 seldom lasted for more than one or two generations, but some of those built around 1500 still survive. Even where villages were completely rebuilt after the Middle Ages, however, the villagers continued to use the fields that had been laid out by earlier medieval farmers. Fields, rather than buildings, are the best surviving traces of medieval villages. (*See also* **Agriculture; Castles and Fortifications; Family; Feudalism; Nobility and Nobles; Serfs and Serfdom.**)

Villon, François

ca. 1431–ca. 1463
Poet

François Villon was one of the best-known poets of the Middle Ages. His adventurous life made him a popular hero in romantic tales set in medieval PARIS. Although his taste for autobiographical poetry puts him very much in the spirit of poets of the 20th century, his life was a good deal more exciting than that of most modern poets.

François Villon was born in poverty in Paris, where he was adopted by a priest. He served for a time in the minor ranks of the CLERGY and studied at the University of Paris. Unable or unwilling to take up a career, Villon spent the rest of his life living by his wits.

In 1455, he was charged with theft and the murder of a priest and was sent to prison. Released by authorities when they issued a pardon of prisoners in honor of a celebration, he was then received at the court of Charles of Orleans. However, before long he was sent away and was reduced to tramping the highways. He was sentenced to death for a minor crime, but he was released on appeal and was exiled from Paris. What happened to Villon after 1463 is not known. What is certain, however, is that he found the time, perhaps while in hiding or in prison, to create some of the greatest poems ever written in the French language.

His surviving works include two mock wills, the *Lais* (1456) and the *Testament* (1461), and various BALLADS and other poems. Two of his most admired poems are the "Debate Between Villon and His Heart" and the "Ballad of Hanged Men." Villon's writings capture the sights, sounds, people, and folklore of Paris in the 1400s. The energy of his language and the complexity of his emotions have kept his work alive for more than five centuries. (*See also* **French Language and Literature.**)

Vincent Ferrer, St.

1350–1419
Preacher

* **ordain** to bless, dedicate, and appoint to a particular level of the clergy. Ordination is performed by a bishop in the Roman Catholic and Eastern Orthodox Churches.

For 20 years, the DOMINICAN preacher Vincent Ferrer traveled across Europe preaching to thousands of people. Bands of flagellants (followers who whipped themselves in penance for their sins) assisted him in his travels. In his SERMONS, Vincent urged his listeners to confess their sins, renounce their evil ways, and prepare themselves for the Last Judgment, which he said was approaching. During a troubled time, brought on by the BLACK DEATH and the Great SCHISM, he sometimes preached to as many as 20,000 people at a time. His preaching was said to have moved even those who did not understand Spanish.

Born in VALENCIA, Vincent entered the Dominican Order at age 17 and was ordained* 12 years later. He served as confessor to Queen Yolanda

of ARAGON for four years before moving to AVIGNON to be the confessor and chaplain of the newly elected pope Benedict XIII. On October 3, 1398, during a serious illness, Vincent had a vision of Jesus standing between St. DOMINIC and St. FRANCIS OF ASSISI and urging him to "go forth and preach."

For the rest of his life, Vincent did exactly that. He preached throughout Europe, at first walking, but then, when his health began to fade, riding a donkey. In 1418, close to the end of his life, he preached before King HENRY V OF ENGLAND in Normandy.

Vincent helped end the Great Schism by persuading King Ferdinand I of CASTILE to withdraw Spain's support for the antipope* in Avignon. The Parisian theologian John GERSON wrote to Vincent, "But for you, this union [of the papacy] could never have been accomplished." (*See also* **Papacy.**)

* **antipope** one who claims the pope's title but is not recognized in modern lists as a legitimate pope

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Vincent of Beauvais

ca. 1190–ca. 1264
Friar and encyclopedia writer

* **priory** small monastery or convent headed by a prior or prioress

The largest and most comprehensive encyclopedia of the Middle Ages may have been the work of a DOMINICAN friar whose life and identity are buried in shadows. Vincent was born in Beauvais around 1190. He studied at the University of Paris and was one of the first to join the newly founded Dominican house of St. Jacques in Paris. In about 1230, he was transferred to a new priory* in his hometown of Beauvais, where he pursued his scholarly interests and served as assistant to the prior in the 1240s. The turning point for his scholarly work came when King LOUIS IX OF FRANCE learned of his collection of quotations and passages from the works of great authors. The king requested a copy for himself and provided the money Vincent needed to finish the project.

Vincent's three-part work, *Speculum maius*, summarized all the knowledge from ancient and Christian thinkers that was available at the time. The first part, *Speculum naturale*, was a survey of all SCIENCE and learning. It covered scientific topics from ALCHEMY to zoology and praised the scholarship of the ancients. The second part, *Speculum historiale*, traced the history of the world from the Garden of Eden to the year 1254. The third part, *Speculum doctrinale*, presented intellectual theories about language, MATHEMATICS, economics, and education. Some manuscripts also contained a fourth part, *Speculum morale*, but that was added in the 1300s by an unknown source. The great encyclopedia, which cited more than 400 sources and contained more than 3,000,000 words, was quickly translated into many languages and served as a major reference work for nearly 400 years. (*See also* **Bible; Encyclopedias and Dictionaries.**)

Virtues and Vices

Virtues and Vices are the qualities of good and evil in human thought and conduct. They played a significant role in medieval religion and art.

In ancient Greece, the philosopher Plato discussed the concept of Virtues in his famous work the *Republic*. Plato considered various Virtues to be necessary traits for the ideal citizen. During the Middle Ages, the Christian church adopted and promoted these traits to the faithful. The

* **theological** pertaining to the nature of God, the study of religion, and religious beliefs

* **cardinal** of primary importance

* **fresco** method of painting in which color is applied to moist plaster and becomes chemically bonded to the plaster as it dries; also refers to a painting done in this manner

main Christian Virtues included the three theological* virtues of faith, hope, and charity and the four cardinal* virtues of prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. The opposing Vices were idolatry (worshiping false gods), despair, avarice (greed), cowardice, and the Seven Deadly Sins of pride, covetousness, lust, anger, gluttony, envy, and sloth.

In the Middle Ages, the Virtues and Vices often were represented in art by human figures. Considered to belong to a category of angels, the Virtues usually were represented by female figures wearing armor and carrying objects of symbolic meaning. The depiction of Virtues and Vices was popular in medieval frescoes*, sculpture, and illuminated manuscripts. CHARTRES CATHEDRAL, for example, contains sculptures of the Virtues and Vices. In Gothic art, the Virtues often were depicted as walking on their corresponding Vices. The conflict between the Virtues and Vices was also a common theme in medieval literature. For the church, the Virtues and Vices served as a way to teach and spread ideas of morality and righteousness. (*See also* **Allegory; Angels; Cathedrals and Churches; Christianity.**)

Visigoths

* **Moors** Spanish Muslims descended from the Arab conquerors

See map in Migrations, Germanic (vol. 3).

The Visigoths were part of a larger group of Germanic peoples known as the Goths, who migrated from SCANDINAVIA to the Black Sea region during the early Christian era. In the early Middle Ages, the Visigoths migrated into the Roman Empire and finally settled in SPAIN, where they ruled until they were conquered by the Moors* in 711.

In the late 200s, the Visigoths raided eastern parts of the Roman Empire and settled in the Roman province of Dacia. For about 100 years, they lived in relative peace with the Romans, adopting many Roman ideas and customs. Relations between the Visigoths and the Romans began to deteriorate in the late 360s. Even so, when the HUNS defeated the OSTROGOTHS and pushed toward Visigothic territory, the Visigoths asked and received permission to enter the Roman Empire in 376. Tensions soon increased again between the Romans and the Visigoths, and in 378 the Visigoths defeated the Roman army at the Battle of Adrianople.

In 401, under the leadership of King Alaric I, the Visigoths tried to move into Italy, but they were stopped by the VANDALS. In 410, they returned, entered Italy, and sacked ROME. From Italy, the Visigoths entered Gaul (modern-day France) and signed a treaty with the Romans that allowed them to settle in the province of Aquitanica Secunda (AQUITAINE). Under the leadership of King Theodoric I, the Visigoths increased their power, expanded their territory, and helped the Romans fight the Vandals and the Huns.

By the late 400s, the Visigoths controlled a large territory in southern Gaul. However, after their defeat by the FRANKS in 507, they withdrew from Gaul and based their kingdom in Spain. During the late 500s, the Visigoths in Spain accepted Catholic CHRISTIANITY. In the 600s, they adopted laws that helped unite the Roman and Visigothic parts of the population.

Rebellions and civil wars in the late 600s left the Visigothic kingdom badly divided and disorganized. When the Moors invaded Spain in 711, the Visigoths were easily defeated, and their kingdom came to an end. As

the Moors advanced, parts of the Visigothic population retreated to the northwestern part of Spain and eventually created a separate Christian state known as the kingdom of ASTURIAS. (*See also* **Asturias-León; Law; Migrations, Germanic; Spanish Art and Architecture; Spanish Language and Literature; Toledo.**)

Visions

The rich, and sometimes mystical, imagination of the Middle Ages found expression in the literature of visions that appeared all over western Europe in the 1100s and reached a high point in the 1300s.

Medieval CHRISTIANITY encouraged followers to look beyond this world to another. As a result, people perceived reality on different levels. For example, a rose might be a rose, but it also might be something more—a spiritual symbol or the manifestation of an invisible spirit. For the medieval mind, various levels of reality—natural, symbolic, mystical, and moral—sometimes overlapped and merged.

In the 1100s, medieval artists and writers developed an extensive visionary literature to express this many-layered reality. They composed stories about dreams, visions, and mystical experiences. Often the work involved a person falling asleep and having a dream that taught him or her some important lesson about truth. However, some works, such as the *Divine Comedy* of DANTE ALIGHIERI and the *Confessio Amantis* of John GOWER, were not cast explicitly as dreams or visions even though they were clearly visionary writings.

* **vernacular** language or dialect native to a region; everyday, informal speech

Visionary literature was often written in the vernacular*, although some very important works were written in Latin. Those who wrote in Latin include HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, Elizabeth of Schönau, Gertrude the Great, Richard of St. Victor, and St. BONAVENTURE.

Some works were light, while others explored profound philosophical and religious issues. As a whole, they covered the wide range of medieval experience, thought, and imagination. Visionary literature was also one realm of medieval Christianity where women participated in an important way. (*See also* **Allegory; Beguines and Beghards; Boccaccio, Giovanni; Chaucer, Geoffrey; English Language and Literature; French Language and Literature; German Language and Literature; Italian Language and Literature; Latin Language; Petrarch; Roman de la Rose; Spanish Language and Literature.**)

Vizier

Beginning in the late 700s, the chief administrator of the Muslim caliphate* was called the vizier (*wazir* in Arabic). Originally a financial officer who shared power with the chief secretary, the vizier during the time of the ABBASIDS rose to be the caliph's chief executive agent. Today we might call such a person a prime minister.

The title originally comes from the QUR'AN, the Islamic holy book, which describes Aaron, the brother of Moses, as his *wazir,* or aide. The role

* **caliphate** office and government of the caliph, religious and political head of the Islamic state

Vlad Tepes

ca. 1431–1476
Prince of Walachia
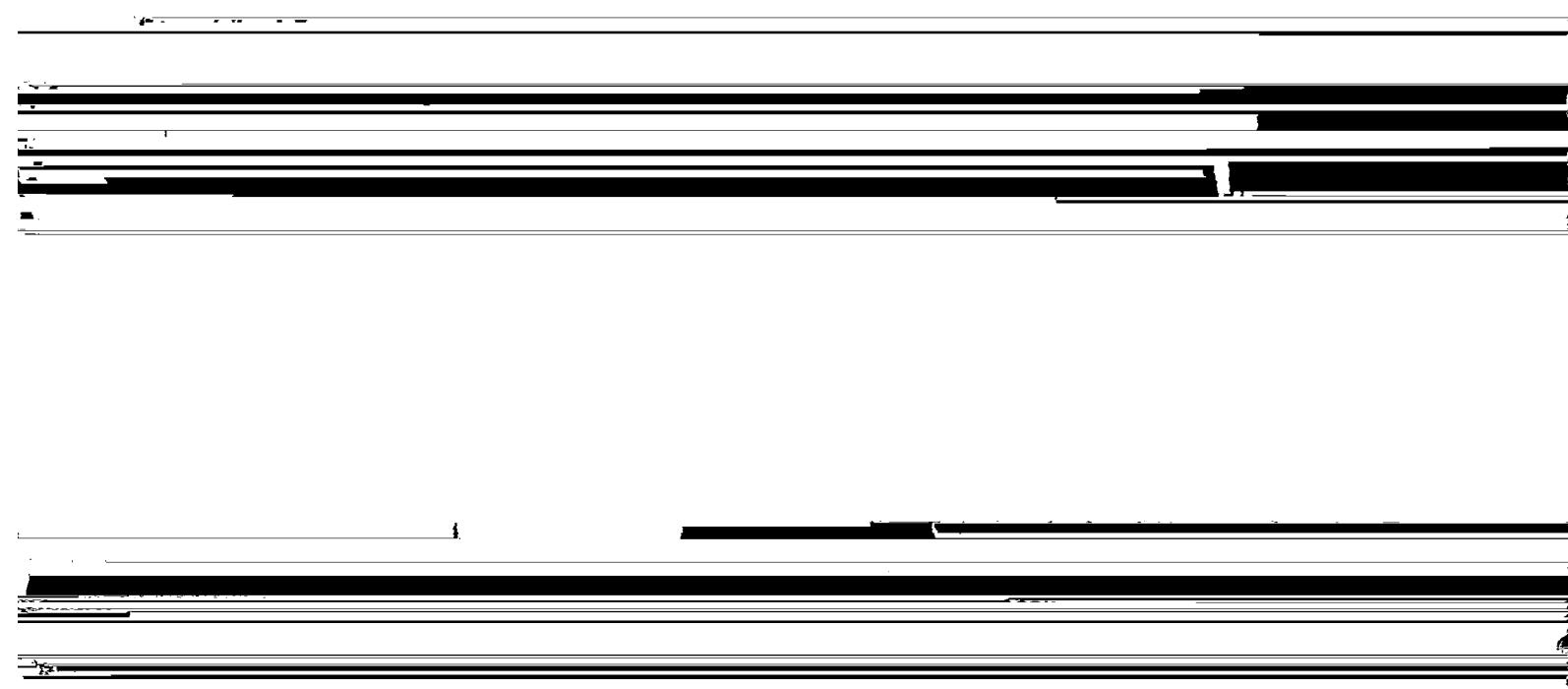
Walachia and Moldavia

The Social Pyramid

Society in Walachia and Moldavia was shaped like a pyramid. At the top was a small but powerful class of voivodes and their families. Below them were the officers of the court and the principal landowners. Lower on the social scale—but still members of the privileged classes—were the clergy and the wealthy merchants. Below them were the free peasants, artisans or craftspeople, and miners. Lower still were the serfs, and at the bottom of the pyramid were the slaves. These were mostly Gypsies or prisoners of war. Gypsies often worked for princes as artisans or in wealthy households. Usually they had no rights, and, like prisoners of war, they were treated as property to be disposed of at their master's whim.

See map in Ottomans and Ottoman Empire (vol. 3).

* **principality** region that is ruled by a prince

By the 1200s, Walachia and Moldavia had been settled by a people called the Vlachs. Although the Vlachs spoke the Romanian language, which is related to Latin, their origins are the subject of intense debate among scholars. Some experts claim that the Vlachs were descended from the Romans who colonized the area during the height of the Roman Empire in the 200s, and that people of Roman origin lived continuously in the region from that time. Other historians argue that the early Roman inhabitants of the eastern Balkans were wiped out by invaders during the early Middle Ages, and that the Vlachs came into Walachia and Moldavia from south of the Danube in the 1200s. Whatever the Vlachs' origin, by the 1200s they overwhelmingly outnumbered the other ethnic groups that lived in Walachia and Moldavia.

In the late Middle Ages, Walachia and Moldavia were semi-independent states ruled by princes called voivodes (from the Slavic word for governor). Because medieval Walachia and Moldavia were frontier states—situated between Latin Western Europe and the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, and later between Christianity and Islam—they were often drawn into wars started by their larger, more powerful neighbors.

History of Walachia.   In the early 1200s, the Hungarian kings treated Walachia as a district of southern Hungary. They built a fortress, called Severin, from which to oversee lands that had been ruled by Vlach voivodes. A century later, a Vlach voivode named Basarab I (1310–1352) defeated a Hungarian army in battle in 1330 and won Walachia's political independence. He was succeeded as voivode by his son, Nicholae Alexandru. The Basarab family ruled Walachia until the 1600s.

The third Basarab voivode, Vladislav I, who ruled from 1364 to 1377, forged an agreement with Hungary. In return for recognizing the king of Hungary as Walachia's overlord, Vladislav was given the fortress of Severin and part of Transylvania. The greatest of the Basarab voivodes was Mircea the Old, who ruled from 1386 until 1418. Mircea expanded Walachian territory to the mouth of the Danube, encouraged the growth of mining and trade, and kept peace with Moldavia, HUNGARY, BULGARIA, and POLAND. Mircea also founded churches and monasteries. During his reign, the greatest threat to Walachia came from the south. The southern Balkan peninsula had been occupied since the late 1300s by the OTTOMANS, an Islamic Turkish people who were at war with the Byzantine Empire. Walachia became the front line of Christian resistance against the Muslim advance into Europe.

After Mircea's death, two branches of the Basarab family fought for control of Walachia. One side was supported by the Ottoman Turks and the other by Hungary. Throughout the middle and late 1400s, Walachia was in turmoil, alternately controlled by Hungary and the Turks. The most notorious voivode of this era was VLAD TEPES, also known as Dracula. When the Ottomans defeated Hungary in 1526, Walachia passed into the hands of the Ottoman Empire.

History of Moldavia.   In the mid-1300s, a Hungarian king sent one of his warlords east across the Carpathians to extend Hungary's borders into the region called Moldavia. Instead, this warlord and his successors set up an independent principality* in Moldavia, attracting Vlach migrants to settle there. Hungary kept trying to gain control of Moldavia, however,
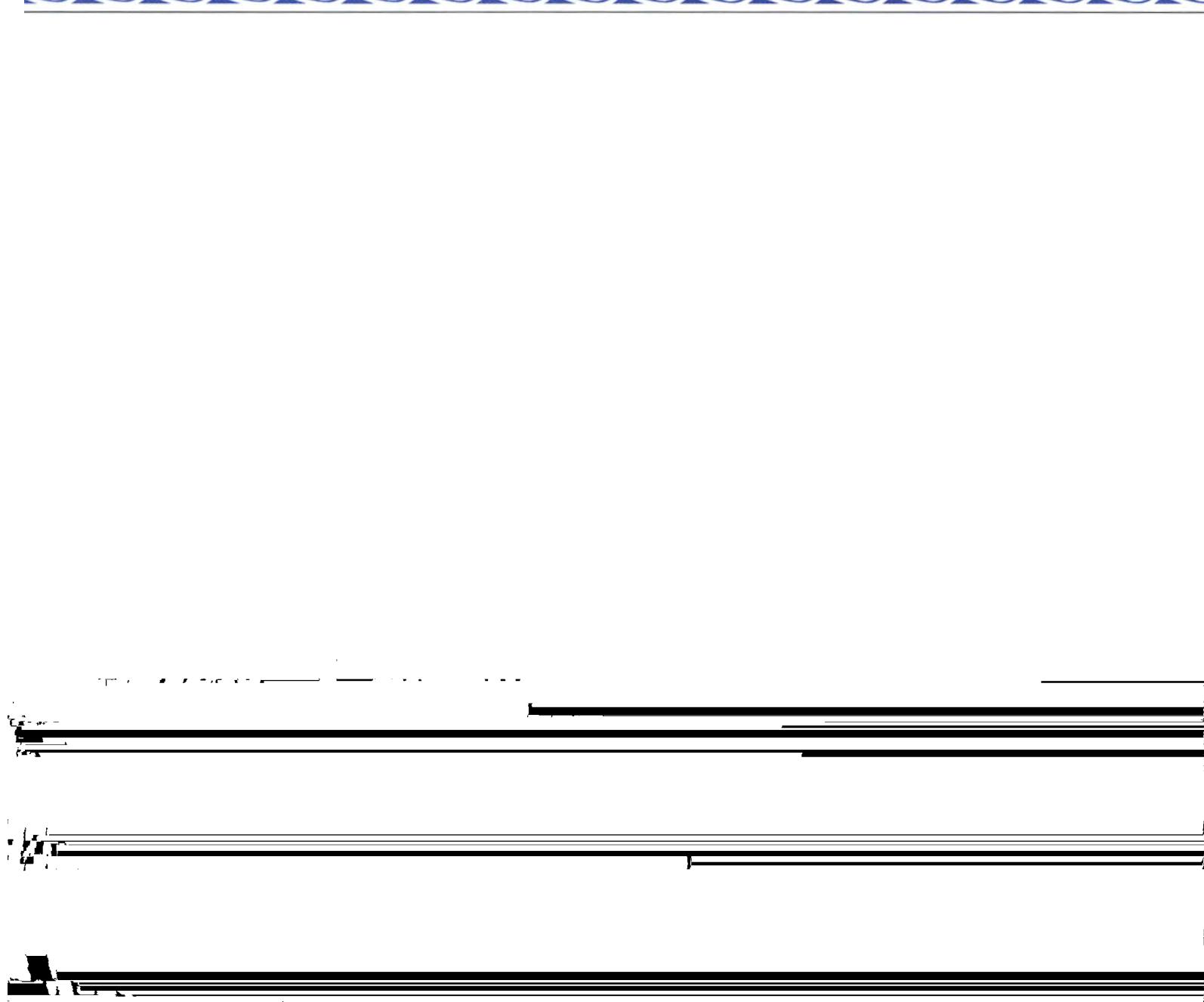
alive. Latin Christian communities existed (often uneasily) side by side with Orthodox communities in the principalities. Hungary, Poland, and the PAPACY all sent missionaries into the region.

Most books written in Walachia and Moldavia before the mid-1400s were religious texts. The most interesting is a history called *Chronicle of the Days When the Land of Moldavia Was Founded by the Will of God*. It was written under the command of Stephen the Great of Moldavia. The artworks of Walachia and Moldavia were modeled on those of the Byzantines. The most elaborate of these were paintings of religious scenes that covered the outer walls of churches.

The Vlachs were originally migrating herders who lived by raising sheep, cattle, and goats. During the late Middle Ages, they entered enthusiastically into trade with other regions. Wheat, wine, wax, cattle, and honey from Walachia and Moldavia were shipped south along the Black Sea coast and on to Italy, where they were exchanged for cloth and other manufactured items. The Vlachs continued to live mostly in the countryside, while the towns that grew up along trade routes in Walachia and Moldavia were inhabited by a mix of Germans, Poles, Armenians, Jews, Greeks, and Italians.

Waldensians

* **heresy** belief that is contrary to church doctrine

* **lay** not linked to the church by clerical office or monks' and nuns' vows

* **excommunicate** to exclude from the rites of the church

The Waldensians were a group of Christians who lived in western Europe from the late 1100s to the end of the Middle Ages. Waldensianism was the longest-lived, and probably the largest, of all medieval movements called heresies*.

The Waldensian movement was begun by Waldes, a wealthy French merchant from the town of Lyons. About 1173, Waldes had a deeply religious experience that convinced him to give away his wealth and to devote his life to begging and preaching. Waldes quickly gained many followers in and around Lyons.

As Waldensianism grew, church officials became hostile to the movement because it put the CLERGY in a bad light. The Waldensians were ordered to stop begging in public, but they refused. In 1179, Waldes and some followers went to Rome to bring their case before a church council presided over by Pope Alexander III. The officials at the council resented the way that the Waldensians' poverty reflected badly on the great wealth of the church and the clergy. More importantly, however, the church officials strongly condemned the lay* preaching of the Waldensians and ruled that they could preach only if authorized to do so by their local priests. Back in Lyons, the local priests refused to give the Waldensians permission to preach. When the Waldensians disobeyed and preached anyway, they were excommunicated* and expelled from the city. The movement soon spread to other cities in southern France and northern Italy.

At first, the Waldensians were only a troublesome sect, but they soon adopted more heretical ideas and established their own church with their own priests and rituals. The Waldensians considered the Church of Rome to be corrupt, and they condemned its power. They urged that the priests of the Roman Church be ignored and disobeyed and that worthy followers,

including women, become the new priests of the Waldensian church. The Waldensians refused to accept the concept of PURGATORY, and they believed that people went directly to either heaven or hell after death. Without Purgatory, there was no need for prayers for the dead or INDULGENCES. The practice of selling prayers for the dead and indulgences was a major source of income for the church, and without it the very existence of the church was threatened. The Waldensians also believed in a literal interpretation of the Bible's moral teachings, urged the reading of the Bible in the vernacular*, and denied the cult of saints.

By the time Waldes died, sometime between 1205 and 1218, Waldensianism had spread from its base in southern France and northern Italy and had become firmly established in many areas of western Europe. In some areas of BOHEMIA, MORAVIA, and Germany, entire villages adopted the heretical faith. The reaction of the church to the Waldensians remained mostly hostile. At first, the Waldensians were excommunicated and banished from their towns. Occasionally, INQUISITIONS forced some of them to repent or be burned. Large-scale inquisitions, begun around the 1230s, stopped the spread of Waldensianism in some areas. By about 1300, the movement had been wiped out in urban areas of the Mediterranean region, but it survived in mountainous rural areas. Inquisitions against Waldensians in Bohemia were especially ruthless. Elsewhere in Europe, however, the Waldensians were left alone for long periods until the end of the Middle Ages or longer. They exist in northern Italy and southern France even today. (*See also* **Bible; Christianity; Heresy and Heresies.**)

* **vernacular** language or dialect native to a region; everyday, informal speech

Wales

* **Briton** person who inhabited Britain before the Anglo-Saxon invasions

See map in England (vol. 2).

I n the Middle Ages, Wales was a fiercely independent land located on a wide peninsula in the western part of the British Isles, where Welsh princes fought to preserve their freedom from English rule. Despite pressures from the outside, the Welsh maintained their language and culture and celebrated the heroes of their history in song and poem.

The medieval Welsh were a Celtic-speaking people who, like the neighboring Britons*, had been ruled by the Romans during their occupation of Britain. As the Romans withdrew from the British Isles in the early 400s, other peoples moved into Wales—Britons from the north, Irish from the west, and ANGLO-SAXONS from the east—to create what became the Welsh people. By the early 500s, several Welsh kingdoms began to take shape. These were Gwynedd in the northwest, Powys in the east midlands, Dyfed in the southwest, and Gwent in the southeast. Out of this patchwork of small domains emerged several strong rulers who eventually dominated the other princes and laid the foundation for a united kingdom of Wales.

The most powerful Welsh kingdom in the early medieval period was Gwynedd, located on the island stronghold of Anglesey and ruled by Cadwallon. After the king of Northumbria defeated him in battle in the 600s, Cadwallon fled across the Irish Sea to IRELAND. He later returned to Wales and expanded his kingdom eastward at the expense of the English. Cadwallon's dream of further conquests ended when he was killed in battle by

Lords of
the Border

The Norman lords that William the Conqueror installed in the border area between Wales and England used their military skill to expand Norman rule into Wales. From their castle strongholds, the lords exercised kinglike authority over the people under their rule. Unlike their English counterparts, they could wage war on their own, raise armies, and build castles without the king's permission. They were free to exploit the people in their area by collecting rents, confiscating crops, and levying tolls and fines.

towns that were springing up. Welsh people living on the manors* and in the towns gradually absorbed Norman customs into their native culture. However, the Welsh in the highland regions of the north continued their traditional customs. Two distinct cultures appeared in Wales: Norman, located mainly in the south and border areas, and Welsh, located firmly in the north.

Welsh princes regarded the Norman kings of England as their overlords and paid them homage*, believing that doing so would make them more secure against future Norman aggression. However, the English kings wanted more than Welsh homage; they wanted to rule Wales. King HENRY II tried to conquer Wales but failed and never tried again. Welsh princes such as Owain Gwynedd and Rhys ap Gruffydd frustrated further English attempts at conquest. Their defiance inspired the further growth of Welsh identity. In 1176, Rhys ap Gruffydd invited Welsh poets to Cardigan castle for an eisteddfod, or congress, during which they competed in the performance of songs and poems in praise of ancient Welsh traditions.

In the early 1200s, Llywelyn the Great tried to gain for Wales the same kind of independent status enjoyed by SCOTLAND in relation to the English crown. As Prince of Wales, he paid homage to the king of England on behalf of all other Welsh lords. They, in turn, paid homage to him. In this way, Llywelyn hoped to unify Wales under his rule. As a result of the truce he made with King HENRY III in 1233, he succeeded in achieving his aims. LLYWELYN AP GRUFFYDD also assumed the title of Prince of Wales and gained the homage of important Welsh lords. His undoing was his failure to pay homage to Henry's ambitious and unforgiving successor, EDWARD I. Edward attacked Wales, annexed* Welsh lands, and forced Llywelyn to pay homage. The Welsh were momentarily subdued, but they rose up against Edward in 1282. One year later, the English crushed the Welsh rebellion and executed its leaders.

English Control Strengthened. The English then extended their political control and the rule of English law over Wales. They divided the land into counties called SHIRES and embarked on an intensive program of castle building. These huge fortresses, bustling with arms and soldiers, supported English rule in a hostile environment and prevented further Welsh uprisings. In 1303, Edward I installed his son, the future EDWARD II, as Prince of Wales in order to make peace with the rebellious Welsh. Many Welsh became supporters of the new English order and served as SHERIFFS and military leaders in the English army.

The last rebel to fight for Welsh independence was Owen Glendower, who led a revolt across Wales in 1400. Students from Oxford University and Welsh laborers in England rushed home to join the revolt. Even Charles VI of France gave his support to Glendower. The English king, Henry IV, quelled the rebellion and forced Glendower to retreat. Frightened by the Glendower uprising, the English joined Wales to England once and for all in 1536. Union came only after Wales served as a battleground between English royal factions—the Lancastrians and the Yorkists—competing for the crown of England. (*See also* **British Isles, Art and Architecture; Celtic Languages and Literature; England; Wars of the Roses.**)

Walter, Hubert

ca. 1150–1205
**Justiciar, chancellor,
and archbishop**

* **crusades** holy wars declared by the pope against non-Christians. Most were against Muslims, but crusades were also declared against heretics and pagans.

* **archbishop** head bishop of a region or nation

* **chancellor** official who handles the records and archives of a monarch

Hubert Walter's service to two English kings made him one of the most powerful administrators of the medieval period in western Europe. In 1190, Walter accompanied RICHARD I THE LION-HEARTED on a crusade* to the Holy Land, where his diplomatic skills impressed the king. After deciding to return home, Richard placed Walter in charge of organizing and supervising the return of his knights while he went on ahead. On Richard's return trip to England, however, he was captured and held for a very large ransom by the emperor HENRY VI OF GERMANY.

Walter eventually reached England, and he took charge of the government as its JUSTICIAR, or administrator, for Richard during the king's absence. In 1193, Walter also became the archbishop* of CANTERBURY. As head of both church and state, Walter demonstrated extraordinary administrative ability. His first task was to raise the money for Richard's ransom. He did so by levying heavy taxes. The English CLERGY were not used to paying taxes, but when Walter insisted that they must, they were in no position to argue with the archbishop. The money was raised and Richard was freed in 1194. The king, however, spent only a few months in England before departing for territorial wars in FRANCE. He never returned.

Walter governed England until Richard's death in 1199. As archbishop of Canterbury, he then crowned King John, who recognized Walter's ability by making him chancellor* of England, a position he held until his death in 1205. (*See also* **Angevins; Church-State Relations; Crusades.**)

Walther von der Vogelweide

ca. 1170–ca. 1230
Singer and composer

* **notation** system for recording music using written notes or symbols

* **patronage** the support of an artist, writer, or scholar by a person of wealth and influence

Walther von der Vogelweide was medieval Germany's greatest singer and composer. He was greatly admired in his time for the beauty of his singing voice and the melodies he composed. Unfortunately, there was no reliable musical notation* in his day, and his music has long since been lost. Based on his lyrics that survived, he is now remembered as a poet. It was, however, his ability as a minstrel and creator of musical entertainments that provided him with his living.

Musicians of the medieval period depended on the patronage* of the nobility for their living. During Walther's years (more than 30) as a professional musician, he had many patrons. Some songs praise one potential emperor, while others express admiration for another who also claimed the throne. These political shifts probably reflect a change in patronage.

Walther composed other kinds of songs as well. His love songs were especially popular. He wrote songs about COURTLY LOVE in which he presented the romantic ideal, and he composed love songs in which he celebrated the joys of physical love. Walther also composed religious songs and hymns to be sung in church and by people making PILGRIMAGES.

One of his most popular songs, *Unter der linden,* is about love under a linden tree. Another of his famous songs contemplates the difficulties of obtaining wealth, honor, and God's grace at the same time. One of his final songs, called his *Elegy,* asks, "Where have they vanished, all my many years?" Although Walther was paid to compose great melodies, his memory has endured because of his exceptional lyrics. (*See also* **German Language and Literature; Goliards; Music; Troubadour, Trouvère.**)

Warfare

See map in Migrations, Germanic (vol. 3).

The Middle Ages saw significant changes in the way wars were fought. In western Europe, the military tradition under feudalism* gave way to the use of mercenaries* and gunpowder weapons. Both of these changes prepared the way for the advent of modern warfare. Significant changes also took place in Byzantine and Islamic warfare.

Western European Warfare

The history of medieval warfare in western Europe can be divided into three periods: tribal warfare (500–ca. 730), feudal warfare (ca. 730–ca. 1200), and late medieval warfare (ca. 1200–1500).

Tribal Warfare. Little is known about the warfare of the Germanic peoples who established themselves in the western provinces of the Roman Empire. In the army of the VISIGOTHS, the king was the supreme commander. Under him were the commanders of the provincial* armies and their divisions. The field army consisted of officers and slaves. Both served as the regular fighting troops and were provided with full military equipment. Apparently, the Visigoths learned how to fight on horseback during their years on the Ukrainian steppes*, as they showed by their victory over the Roman legions at Adrianople in 378.

In the kingdom of the LOMBARDS in Italy, military service was required of all freemen. Members of the upper classes served as warriors on horseback (cavalry), while the lower classes made up the foot soldiers (infantry). They all were required to supply their own weapons and armor. The ANGLO-SAXONS in England had a similar system. All able-bodied freemen were obliged to serve in the infantry when summoned.

The FRANKS also required every freeman to be available for military service. Like other Germanic tribes whose original homeland was the forest—where cavalry was of little use—the Franks fought as infantry. After their defeat in 554 at the hands of Byzantine horse archers, however, the Franks began using body armor. By the early 700s, the Frankish* king and great lords and their households rode to battle on horses. However, their main method of fighting was carried out on foot.

Military Feudalism. Military feudalism developed in the early Middle Ages in response to the collapse of Roman government in western Europe and the threat from the Arabs, who had conquered North Africa and Spain. The decline of trade and the economic slowdown that followed deprived European rulers and lesser lords of the resources they needed to maintain an army.

The Muslim conquest of Visigothic Spain in the early 700s created a crisis for the Franks. This crisis became especially acute after the Arabs pushed across the Pyrenees into southern France. The Arab advance was finally stopped by CHARLES MARTEL near Poitiers in 732, but the Franks were unable to follow up on their victory because they could not chase after the mounted Arabs. As a result, the Franks decided to train troops to fight on horseback.

The introduction of the stirrup in the early 700s gave mounted warriors distinct advantages over the infantry. The horseman—protected by shield, iron cap, and chain mail* shirt—could rise in his stirrups and brace himself to strike the enemy with his lance or sword. A bit and bridle
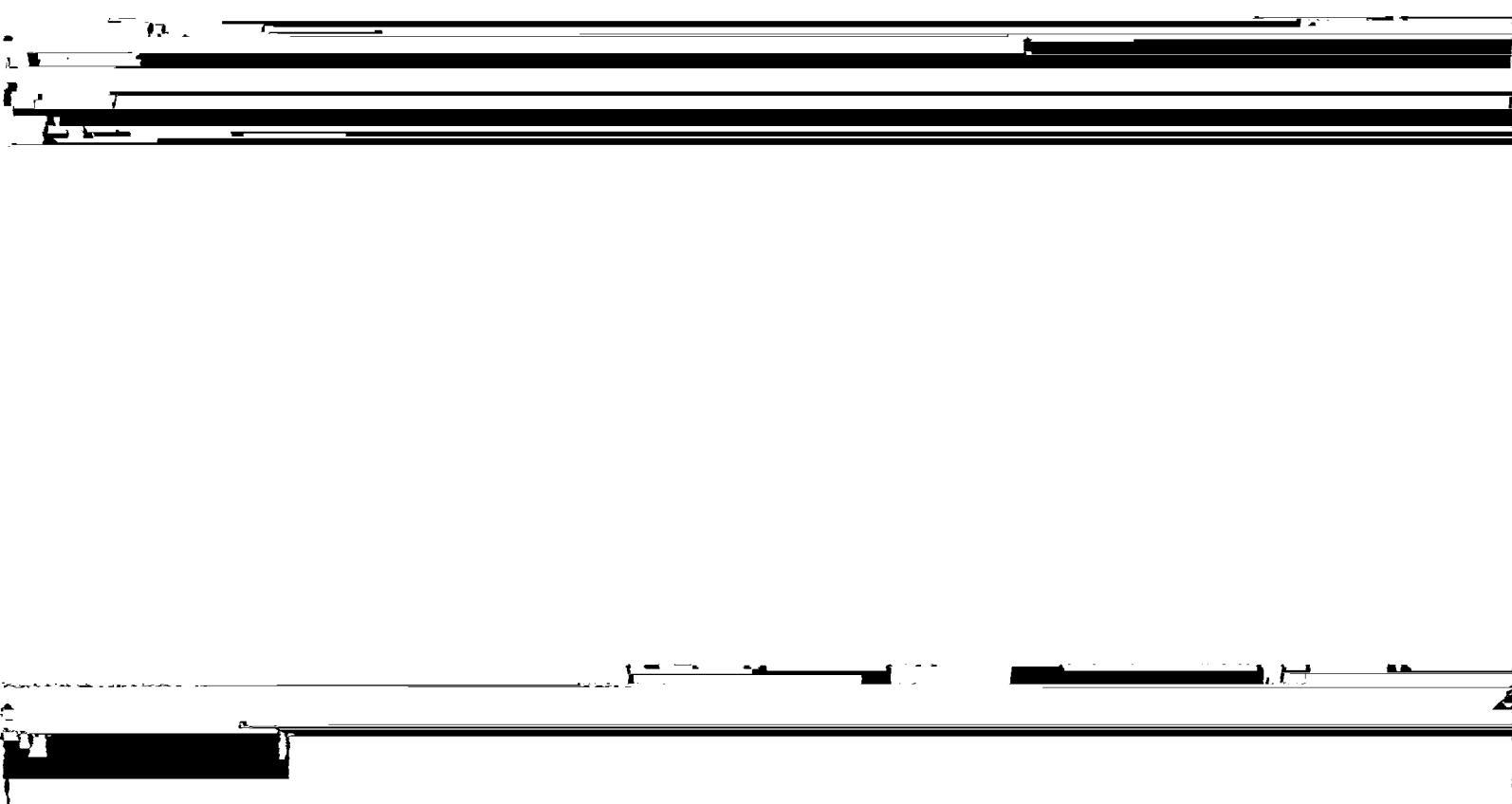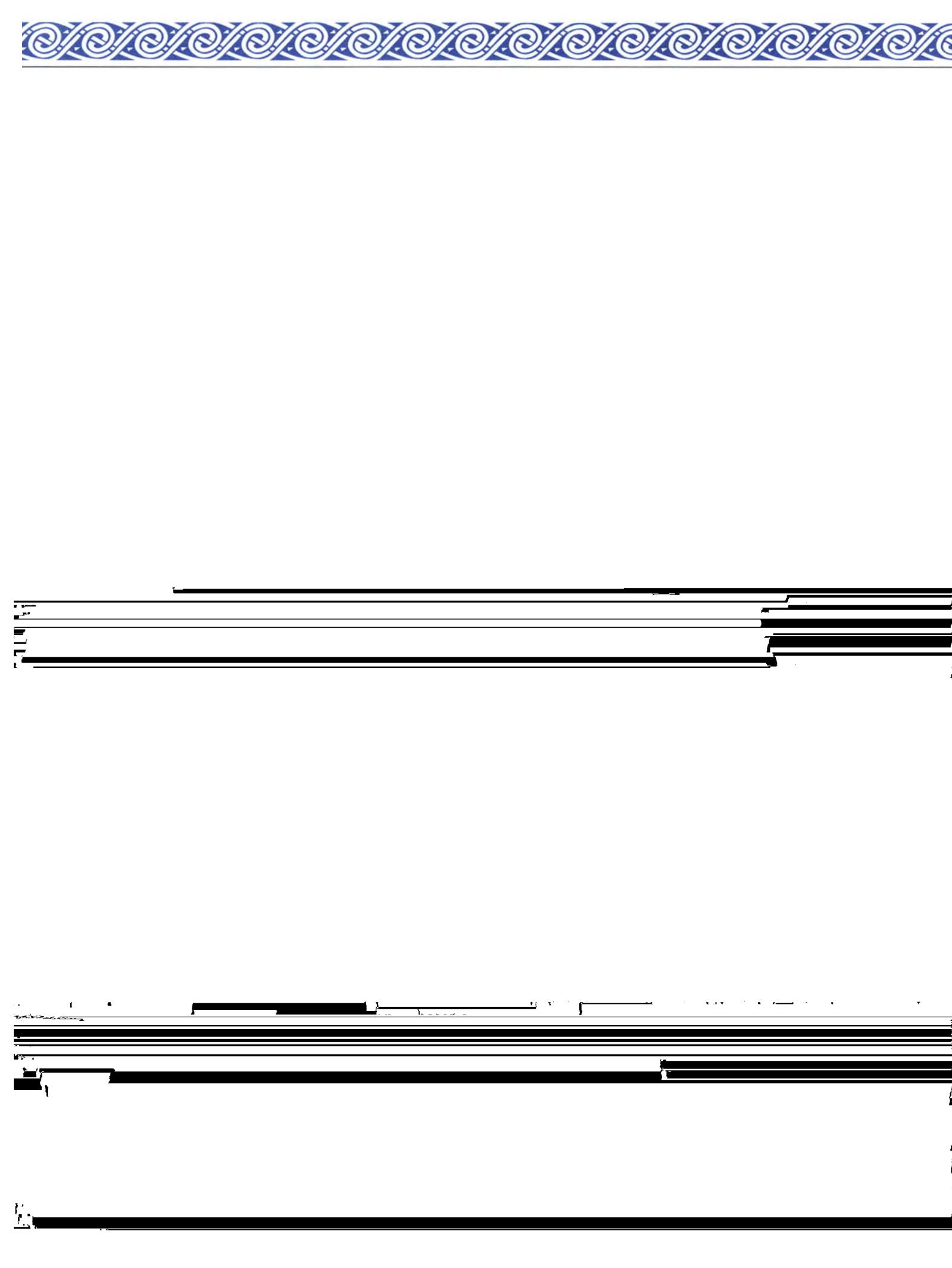
decisively when they needed to. Also, during times of long, drawn-out warfare, the Byzantine military did best when a steady and efficient flow of supplies and money was maintained.

Byzantine armies tended to be small, and most campaigns rarely exceeded 20,000 troops. The Byzantines relied on tactics that involved ambushes, ruses, and sudden cavalry charges rather than masses of men fighting in fixed positions. The Byzantines did not station huge armies on their borders to defend their lengthy frontiers. Instead, they kept mobile field armies farther back ready to engage foreign invaders once they had moved into the interior.

Often Byzantine troops tried to cut off and destroy smaller units of an army. Sometimes, they blocked mountain passes needed by foreign invaders to return to their own territory. They engaged in a pitched battle only when they were sure that they possessed overwhelming superiority and that the odds for a victory were good.

Byzantine warfare relied on cavalry and mounted archers more than on infantry. The arrows required by the mounted archers were supplied by districts that specialized in the production of arrows. They were carried to the army on a train that might also transport other supplies for the army, such as shields, javelins, siege machines, chain mail sleeves, metals, timber, leather, cloaks, cloth, containers, carpentry materials, tools, jars, food, and wine.

After the 1000s, the Byzantine Empire depended increasingly on outsiders to maintain its military effectiveness. In its last years, the empire had to hire foreigners who were familiar with the new firearms and artillery.

In lengthy wars that lacked a decisive outcome, the Byzantines often sought peace through negotiation. Sometimes, the military leaders launched campaigns that were designed to create a more favorable bargaining position or to give a boost to peace talks already underway. Throughout the long history of the empire, Byzantine diplomats and generals learned how to negotiate and fight simultaneously in the hope of winning a reasonable settlement.

Islamic Warfare

In the Middle Ages, Muslim armies consisted of warriors from the highest social class, volunteers, conscripts*, and mercenaries. The duty to fight for Islam provided a strong motivation, and warriors were rewarded with wealth and prestige. After the initial wave of Islamic conquests in the 600s and the 700s, most Muslim rulers resorted to the services of paid foreign troops and slaves.

Infantry and Garrison Cities.   Infantry played a central role in early Islamic warfare. In the earliest days of Muslim conquests in the 600s, armies consisted of foot soldiers armed with bows and spears. Their commanders were wealthy nobles on horseback. Camels were used in the Middle East and North Africa for riding and for transporting baggage. The animals were usually placed around the camp to help warn the Muslims of the approach of invaders. Muslims also used ditches to fortify encampments or battlefield positions.

Early Muslim warriors built garrison cities called *amsar* to help them dominate each new territory they conquered. These were usually tents and

* **conscripts** men drafted for military service

Better Alive than Dead

Medieval warfare was not destructive by modern standards, especially for members of the aristocracy. Commanders did more maneuvering than fighting, and politics and diplomacy were often more important than battles. During the Hundred Years War, the total amount of actual fighting was only a few weeks.

By the late 1300s, the armor worn by knights in battle had become so heavy that knights rarely engaged in heavy battle or were seriously injured. Also, if a prisoner could afford to, he might buy his freedom by paying a ransom. Thus, a captured enemy soldier might be more valuable alive than dead.

huts surrounding a central area that consisted of the commander's residence and a place for meetings, prayer, and drills. The central area also served as an inner fortress in time of attack. The garrison city as a whole was a base for the launching of the next wave of military conquest.

Cavalry and Infantry.   While infantry continued to form the bulk of Islamic fighting forces, the number of horsemen grew with the wealth of the empire and the development of an aristocracy. IRAN, Central Asia, and other places in the eastern part of the empire provided troops trained for cavalry warfare.

A military tradition of the coordinated use of infantry and cavalry developed in Egypt, North Africa, and Spain. Slaves from Europe and Africa provided the manpower for the regiments of foot guards who were used in the center of the battle line. Armed with swords, spears, and round shields, these slave troops stabilized the center of the battle formation and protected the commander and his armored mounted escort, as well as the archers and javelin throwers. A lightly armed cavalry was placed on the wings of the battle formation to harass the enemy. This latter group also might be held in reserve until released to rout the broken ranks of the enemy.

On the frontiers of the empire in Spain and central Asia, Muslim warfare consisted of cavalry raids against non-Muslims. The raids were designed to frighten, confuse, and keep the enemy off balance. The SELJUK Turks, who emerged on the central Asian frontier of the Islamic Empire in the 1000s, conquered Iran by using the Turkoman nomads* who followed them into the Middle East as mounted warriors. The army of SALADIN, who confronted the crusaders* in the Holy Land, employed horsemen trained to charge and retreat, concentrate or scatter, until they formed as one unit for the final attack.

This kind of warfare relied on the speed and mobility of cavalry. Cavalry warfare reached the height of its effectiveness in the 1200s during the rule of the MAMLUKS in Egypt. The OTTOMANS' use of artillery and heavy siege guns toward the end of the Middle Ages anticipated the more destructive weaponry of modern warfare. (*See also* **Armor; Castles and Fortifications; Chivalry; Crusades; Islam, Conquests of; Islam, Religion of; Knighthood; Knights, Orders of; Migrations, Germanic; Slavery; Weapons.**)

* **nomad** person who wanders from place to place to find food and pasture

* **crusader** person who participated in the holy wars against the Muslims during the Middle Ages

Wars of the Roses

The Wars of the Roses consisted of a series of battles fought in England between 1455 and 1487 by the two rival houses of Lancaster and York. Several historical plays by William Shakespeare made the Wars of the Roses a famous part of English history. Shakespeare treated the three decades of battles and intrigues as a dramatic duel for the throne of England between the two noble houses. However, the struggle was more complex than that because many participants switched sides in their pursuit of self-interest, and many nobles avoided participation altogether. By the end of the wars, the ability of English nobles to disrupt national life had been checked, and the authority of PARLIAMENT had been strengthened.

1471, her troops were defeated. The Yorkists killed Margaret's son in the battle and had her husband murdered in the Tower of London. The Wars of the Roses seemed over, and it appeared that Edward IV and the Yorkists had won.

Third Phase (1483–1487).   After Edward IV died in 1483 and his 12-year-old son was crowned Edward V, the young king's ambitious uncle, Richard of Gloucester (the boy's protector) proclaimed himself King RICHARD III. He placed the young king and his brother in the Tower of London, where they were subsequently murdered. Richard III himself was killed in battle at Bosworth on August 22, 1485, by the forces of young Henry Tudor, representing the Lancastrian line. He became King Henry VII, the first Tudor king. Two years later, the Wars of the Roses ended when a Yorkist challenger was killed trying to win back the crown from the Lancastrians. This was the last time an English king and a rival claimant met on a battlefield. (*See also* **Cade's Rebellion; Prisons; Warfare.**)

Waterworks

* **dike**   earthen bank constructed to prevent flooding of low-lying land

* **sluice**   structure with gates for controlling the flow of water from a canal or river

During the Middle Ages, water was a very important resource, as it is today. It was needed to maintain health and agricultural production, and also to support industry and to enhance transportation. As beneficial and necessary as water was to medieval communities, it could also be extremely destructive in times of flooding. The increase in the construction of waterworks during the Middle Ages had as much to do with production as it did with protection.

Early medieval leaders in both the East and the West understood the need to regulate water flow. The Byzantine emperor Justinian, who reigned from 527 to 565, built several underground cisterns, or tanks, to store a water supply for the city of CONSTANTINOPLE. In Italy, St. Frediano, the bishop of Lucca (in Italy) from 561 to 589, successfully drained the Lucchese plain by redirecting the course of the Serchio River from the eastern to the western side of his city so that it emptied directly into the sea instead of into the Arno River. In this way, the land was made suitable for farming.

Efforts to control flooding and to develop water systems were made by local people who had little knowledge of the types of systems that were successful elsewhere. The most urgent water issue of the early medieval period was flooding. Flooded plains made the cultivation of fields difficult. Furthermore, flooding impeded the construction of effective canal projects. For example, in the late 700s, CHARLEMAGNE tried to construct a canal to link the Rhine and the Danube Rivers in order to ease the transport of military equipment, but rains kept washing away the canal's foundations.

Western Europeans responded to the population growth of the 11th century with an increase in waterworks projects. Perhaps the most spectacular of these were in the Low Countries (the Netherlands) along the North Sea. Much of this coastal region was marshland and peat bogs. People of the region reclaimed the wetlands. They did this by building dikes* and sluices* around a marshy area and then removing the water. The reclaimed tract of land was known as a polder. Between the 12th and the 14th centuries,

hundreds of windmills were built to remove the water. By the early 1300s, the reclaimed lands supported more than 3,000 households, or about 13,000 people.

In the medieval cities of western Europe, water was often supplied through pipes that ran into the city from water sources beyond the city walls. The cathedral and priory* of Canterbury were supplied with water by lead pipes that fed into water tanks and a fishpond. Medieval Nuremberg had water mains made of hollow logs and special machines for drilling them.

Increased trade during the Middle Ages led to the construction of many bridges. As larger and more rapidly flowing rivers were spanned, stone replaced wood as the preferred building material. Some medieval bridges were built on artificial islands called starlings, but this method had problems. The piers on which the bridges were constructed were close together, increasing the water flow through the remaining passages. The rapidly flowing water eroded the base material of the starlings on which the piers rested. By the 1300s, this problem was solved by the invention of the cofferdam, a watertight enclosure that enabled bridge builders to construct piers below the riverbed.

Canal construction also increased during the Middle Ages. Between 1391 and 1398, a canal was built that connected the North and the Baltic Seas and that eliminated the need to sail around Denmark to reach Prussia. The canal's system of locks and gates allowed ships to be raised and lowered in keeping with changing elevation levels of the land along the canal. The canal was an impressive demonstration of how far medieval engineering and waterworks construction had advanced. (*See also* **Agriculture; Castles and Fortifications; Flanders and the Low Countries; Land Use; Roads and Bridges; Travel and Transportation.**)

* **priory** small monastery or convent headed by a prior or prioress

Weapons

See color plate 10, vol. 1.

Throughout the medieval world, various types of weapons were used to defend land and people and to attack enemies. There were several classes of medieval weapons: edged weapons, such as swords and daggers; shafted weapons, such as lances and axes; and missile weapons, which included arrows and cannon. During the Middle Ages, technological advances in ARMOR led to changes in weaponry and weapon design. Moreover, the development of cannon dramatically changed the nature of warfare.

Edged Weapons.   Swords and daggers were the most common weapons used in hand-to-hand combat. The sword was the only weapon that was designed solely for killing people and that did not develop from hunting weapons, such as bows and arrows, or from tools, such as knives and axes. The sword was universally regarded as the most noble of weapons, and many medieval epics celebrated the sword because of the awe, and even magic, associated with it.

The medieval sword was a straight cut-and-thrust weapon, usually with a double-edged blade more than two feet in length. Sword making was a specialized art. Blacksmiths had to laboriously hammer and weld together thin strips of steel and iron of varying hardnesses to form the core of the

Murderous Weapon

The medieval crossbow, a short bow mounted crosswise on a wooden stock, shot arrows and stones with deadly force. Invented by the Chinese in 1200 B.C. and in use in Europe since Roman times, the crossbow had undergone improvements by the 12th century that greatly increased its effectiveness as a weapon. In 1139, a church council declared the crossbow "too murderous" and tried unsuccessfully to ban its use against Christians—although against heretics and infidels it was highly recommended. The crossbow remained popular throughout the Middle Ages.

shorter lances, 8 to 10 feet in length. Battle lances had sharp points, while tournament lances were tipped with blunt projections that helped prevent them from piercing armor. Other shafted weapons included various types of spears and pole arms*, including the halberd*, poleax*, and partisan*.

Missile Weapons.   During the early Middle Ages, the most common projectile weapons were the crossbow and the longbow*. The arrows fired by these weapons could be very deadly. By the early 1300s, for example, improvements in the crossbow allowed its arrows to pierce the meshes of a chain mail* shirt. Many improvements in armor were made to overcome the danger of improved bows.

The most revolutionary development in medieval weaponry was the introduction of cannon. In the Islamic world, cannon were first used in the mid-1200s. The earliest recorded use of cannon in western Europe was in the early 1300s. The early cannon often were dangerous to those using them, since structural weaknesses could produce fatal explosions. As cannon became heavier, problems arose in moving them and aiming them accurately. By the late 1300s, cannon with barrels weighing up to 600 pounds were in use, and by the 1400s cannon could fire projectiles weighing hundreds of pounds.

The development and improvement of cannon reversed the centuries-old dominance of defense over offense. Since large cannon projectiles could destroy the defensive walls of castles or towns, fortifications had to be redesigned and strengthened. The most famous medieval victory involving cannon was the defeat of the city of CONSTANTINOPLE by the OTTOMANS in 1453, when cannonballs as heavy as 800 pounds made holes in city walls that had withstood attack for more than one thousand years. (*See also* **Armor**; **Chivalry; Crusades; Knighthood; Metals and Metalworking; Technology; Warfare.**)

* **pole arms** shafted weapons with axlike cutting blades

* **halberd** weapon with an axlike cutting blade and a sharp, pointed spike

* **poleax** weapon with a blade combining ax, hammer, and spike

* **partisan** weapon with a long spear blade and a pair of curved projections at the base

* **longbow** archer's weapon about five to six feet in length for the rapid shooting of arrows

* **chain mail** flexible armor made of small metal rings linked together

Weights and Measures

See color plate 1, vol. 1.

In the Middle Ages, systems of weights and measures often varied from place to place. Some measurements of Roman origin continued to be used, while many other regional standards of measurement arose.

The Romans had maintained a system of measures across their empire, and the system survived in the BYZANTINE EMPIRE. In medieval Europe, the basic Roman unit of weight, the *libra*, continued to be used. The French *livre*, the Italian *lira*, and the English pound (abbreviated *lb.*) all have a common Roman origin. The Roman mile continued to be used as well, but it became based on the northern European units of feet instead of on the Roman standard of 1,000 paces. Liquid measurement was based on the *pinte*, or pint, which was about equal to the modern quart. The medieval quart was a unit of dry measurement, about equal to the modern quart.

In medieval Europe, however, people created measures as they needed them. To understand the medieval system, think about a recipe that calls for "a heaping spoonful" or "large eggs." How much is "heaping"? How small can a "large" egg be before it becomes a medium-sized
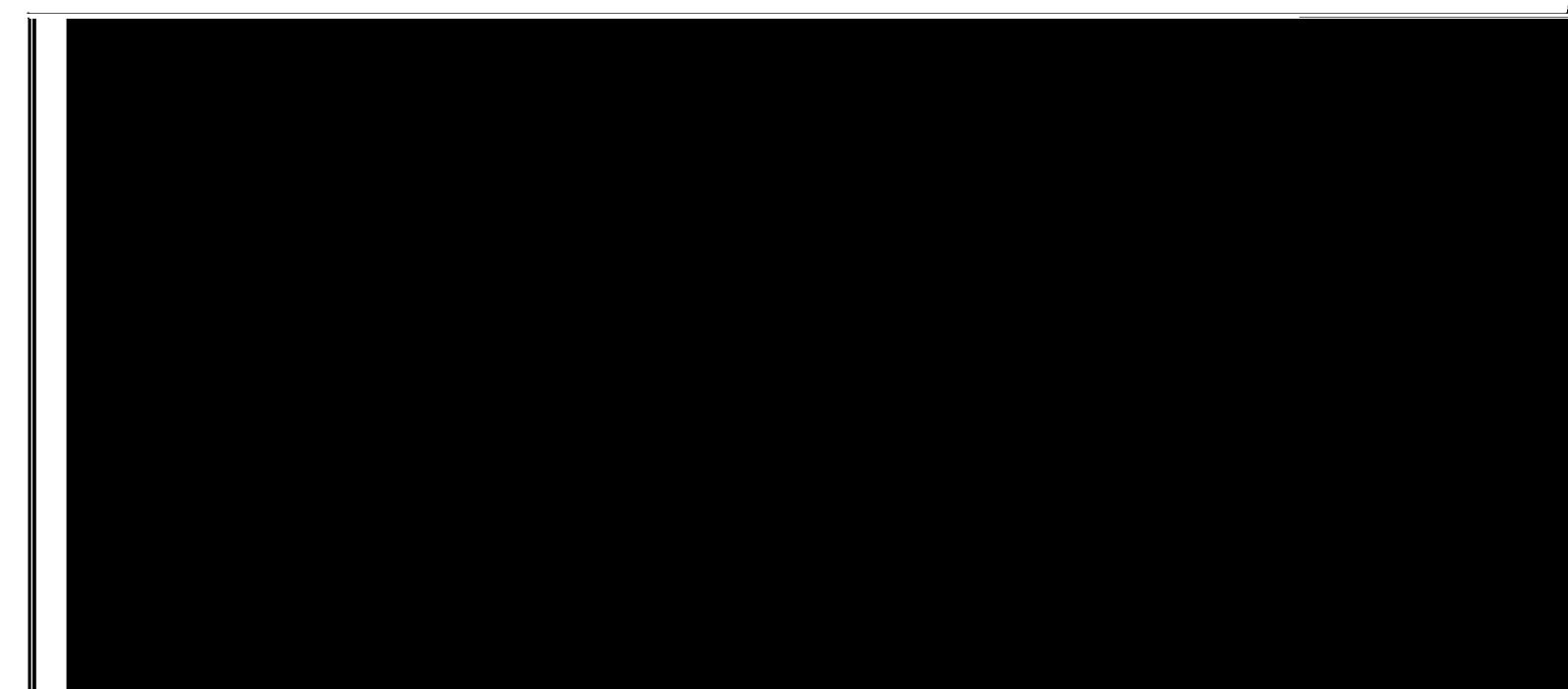
In the late medieval period, some places also developed consistent standards for wholesale shipments of goods. For example, Bordeaux and several other French cities produced wine in units called *pièces*. A merchant in a distant city who ordered 10 *pièces* of wine from Bordeaux knew exactly how much wine he was buying.

Westminster Abbey

* **abbey** monastery under the rule of an abbot or abbess

* **nave** main part of a church or cathedral between the side aisles

Westminster Abbey is the magnificent church in London that is the traditional site for the coronations and burials of the kings and queens of England. For more than 900 years, it has been an English national shrine. Westminster Abbey is also one of England's most important Gothic structures.

The last Saxon king, EDWARD THE CONFESSOR, began building an abbey* church near his palace in Westminster around 1050. After Edward's death in 1066, he was buried in the abbey. Shortly thereafter, the new king of England, WILLIAM I THE CONQUEROR, was crowned there, beginning its tradition as the site of royal burials and coronations.

King HENRY III ordered construction of the present building in 1245, but the nave* was not finished until the 1400s. Henry wanted to copy the royal churches of France and may have sent his architect, Henry of Reynes, to study the latest French styles of the cathedrals at Rheims and Amiens. Although the architecture of Westminster Abbey is English in most respects, it has many French Gothic features, especially its soaring height and its flying buttresses. Westminster Abbey has been called "the most French of all English Gothic churches." (*See also* **Gothic Architecture.**)

William IX of Aquitaine

1071–1126
Aristocrat and troubadour

William of Aquitaine was a nobleman and poet. Also known as Guillaume de Poitiers, he was the seventh count of Poitiers and ninth duke of Aquitaine. However, he was also a TROUBADOUR who loved worldly pleasures and scorned religious leaders who took a more somber view of worldly joys. In the eyes of many of his medieval contemporaries, he was a scandalous, mocking, but fascinating fool, who made a joke of everything, even his own soul.

Although William was an important and active member of the French aristocracy, he is remembered today primarily for his poetry. He was the earliest of the troubadours whose works are known to have survived, and he was the first poet whose verse expressed the tradition of COURTLY LOVE that soon came to be so important in European literature. Of the 11 of his poems that are in existence, 6 are burlesques (witty, mocking poems) and 5 are serious. Of the last group, 4 are about love and the remaining one is a farewell to CHIVALRY.

The burlesques are obscene, blasphemous, and full of insults designed to offend religious feelings. One poem was considered so shocking that, many years later, a translator refused to render it into English. William offended the church in other ways too. In 1097, while the lord of TOULOUSE

was away during the First Crusade, William seized Toulouse, even though all lands belonging to crusaders were protected by the church. When the bishop excommunicated* him, William had the bishop arrested. William went on two crusades himself. The first ended in disaster in 1101, when the Turks slaughtered his army as it was crossing ANATOLIA. His second crusade in Spain in 1120 was much more successful. (*See also* **Crusades; French Language and Literature.**)

* **excommunicate** to exclude from the rites of the church

William I of England, the Conqueror

ca. 1027–1087
Duke of Normandy
and king of England

* **duchy** territory ruled by a duke or a duchess

* **feudal** referring to the social, economic, and political system that flourished in western Europe during the Middle Ages

See color plate 4, vol. 2.

William I, better known as William the Conqueror, was the first NORMAN ruler of England. His invasion and conquest of England, in 1066, ushered in an era that changed forever the course of English history, culture, and language.

Born in Normandy (a region of present-day France), William was the illegitimate son of the duke of Normandy, Robert I. When Robert died on a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, young William was designated as his successor. For about ten years, however, Normandy fell into great disorder, as various members of the duke's family struggled for positions of power. The crisis erupted in 1046/1047 when William's cousin, Guy of Burgundy, attempted to seize power with the support of several other Norman lords. William defeated his opponents with help from the French king, Henry I, and established his authority to rule.

As duke of Normandy, William maintained a very strong relationship with the nobility and assumed an authority over the church that was exceptional. William strengthened his duchy* against external threats from the count of Anjou and the king of France by defeating several invasion attempts and gaining control of the region of Maine to the south. To protect his western frontier, he maintained the traditional Norman dominance in BRITTANY. He strengthened his position to the east by marrying Matilda, the daughter of the count of FLANDERS, and establishing feudal* lordships over several counts in the area. By the 1060s, William had unified Normandy, brought new lands into his domain, established unquestioned control over the nobility, and developed a good relationship with the church. The duchy was now sufficiently strong and at peace for William to direct his attention toward England.

One of William's uncles was the childless king EDWARD THE CONFESSOR of England. Edward had invited William to England in 1051 (and may have named him his heir). In 1064, the English earl, Harold of Wessex, visited Normandy. Harold was another potential heir to the English throne, but William claimed that Harold's visit to Normandy signified a recognition of William's claim to the throne. When King Edward died in 1066, Harold took the throne. William protested Harold's assumption of power and invaded England. At the Battle of HASTINGS on October 14, 1066, William's Norman army defeated Harold's forces. William was crowned king of England in WESTMINSTER ABBEY on December 25, 1066.

William spent the rest of his life ruling both England and Normandy, moving frequently between the two areas. In England, he launched military campaigns against WALES and SCOTLAND that strengthened English

control over those regions. In France, he defended Normandy against the French king and seized more territory. His ability to adapt the institutions of both realms to his rule reflected his skill as a statesman. His control over the colonization of England by the Norman nobility was evidence of his great authority. The creation of the DOMESDAY BOOK was proof of the abilities of his administration. The close relationship between England and France that William established greatly influenced the later development of both countries. William was killed in 1087 during a military campaign in France, and he was buried in a Norman abbey in the town of Caen in northern France. (*See also* **Bayeux Tapestry; England; Lanfranc of Bec.**)

William Marshal

ca. 1146–1219
Knight, baron, and
guardian of England

* **dynasty** succession of rulers from the same family or group

* **squire** aide to a knight

* **duchy** territory ruled by a duke or a duchess

* **feudal** referring to the social, economic, and political system that flourished in western Europe during the Middle Ages

William Marshal played a leading role in English history during the reigns of several kings from the Plantagenet dynasty*. During his long and full life, William served his royal masters as knight, trusted counselor, tutor, and guardian of the realm. When he died at the age of 73, William Marshal was remembered as "the best knight who ever lived."

Taking his last name from his grandfather, who was marshal at the court of HENRY I OF ENGLAND, the young William was sent to Normandy to serve as squire* to the CHAMBERLAIN of the duchy*. There, he became skilled in tournaments and received his training for battle.

He also came to the attention of Henry II's wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Through her influence, William became the military tutor and leading knight in the household of Henry's oldest son. William quickly established himself as a trusted military and political adviser and a knight of the highest order.

King RICHARD I THE LIONHEARTED rewarded William's loyalty by bestowing on him a wife, Isabel, and vast estates, both in England and in Normandy. In a short time, William became one of the major landed BARONS of the realm. During Richard's reign in the 1190s, William was at the center of English political life. He served in a series of administrative and military positions in England and in several border areas. In addition, he went to war for Richard against the French king, PHILIP II AUGUSTUS. When King JOHN came to the throne in 1199, he rewarded William with more land and various important positions.

However, William's relationship with John was an uneasy one much of the time. John was suspicious of William's divided loyalties, since William was a feudal* lord in France as well as in England. The two were reconciled at a crucial time in John's troubled reign, and William may have played a vital role in the drafting and the acceptance of MAGNA CARTA in 1215.

On his deathbed, John appointed Marshal the guardian of his young son, HENRY III, and of the kingdom itself until Henry was old enough to assume power. During his guardianship, Marshal took the first steps toward the restoration of political stability and royal authority within the kingdom. (*See also* **Chivalry; Crusades; England; Feudalism; Nobility and Nobles; Warfare.**)

William of Wykeham

1324–1404
Bishop, chancellor,
and educator

* **chronicler** person who records events in the order in which they occurred

* **bishopric** office of or area governed by a bishop

* **chancellor** official who handles the records and archives of a monarch

Born to an English peasant family in Wickham (in Hampshire, England), William rose to a position of power in the court of King EDWARD III. So important was William's influence as Edward's chief minister that the French chronicler* Jehan FROISSART reported that at the English court "all things were done by him and without him nothing was done."

When William entered the king's service about 1347, he began as a clerk and keeper of the king's dogs. He rose steadily in the ROYAL HOUSEHOLD, and in 1356 he was given the responsibility for enlarging Windsor Castle, the king's favorite residence. His building success gained him the confidence of the king and the respect of the court. After his ordination as a priest in 1362, he was quickly rewarded with major church offices. In 1366, he became the bishop of Winchester, one of the wealthiest bishoprics* in Europe. One year later, the king appointed William chancellor* of England.

William amassed a great fortune, which he used in the service of education and religion. In 1387, he founded a school in Winchester for poor students. By the time construction was completed on Winchester College School, as it was called, it was the largest school in England. William also founded New College, Oxford, and enlarged Winchester Cathedral, one of the largest churches in England.

During the reign of King RICHARD II, from 1367 to 1400, William was criticized for mismanaging the royal finances. PARLIAMENT dismissed him in 1371, but William soon returned to favor at court and remained active in English politics until his death. (*See also* **England; Gothic Architecture; Schools; Universities.**)

Witchcraft, European

* **heresy** belief that is contrary to church doctrine

* **incantation** magical chant

In medieval Europe, what began as simple sorcery or magic developed into the practice of witchcraft. Church leaders condemned witchcraft as devil worship and as a dangerous heresy* and ruthlessly persecuted anyone suspected of being a witch. The European witch trials and burnings that began in the late Middle Ages resulted in the deaths of between 100,000 and 200,000 people (mostly women) and the torture, harassment, and intimidation of millions more.

Origins.   European magic developed out of the tradition of sorcery. In fact, the Old English word *wicca* (pronounced witcha) means sorcerer. Sorcery used simple charms and spells to achieve practical results, such as curing a headache or putting a curse on an enemy. Sorcerers used herbs, folk medicine, and wax figures to heal and to cast spells. One Anglo-Saxon magical formula to get rid of warts advised individuals to "take the water of a dog and the blood of a mouse, mix together, smear the warts with this; they will soon disappear." To shrink an enemy into insignificance, a person was advised to recite the following curse: "May you become as small as a linseed grain, and much smaller than the hipbone of an itch mite, and may you become so small that you become nothing."

Some magic incantations* included religious (usually Christian) elements, such as in the following recommendation for a heart ailment: "If a

* **excommunicate** to exclude from the rites of
 the church

Forced Confession

In 1438, in La Tour du Pin in south-
ern France, the Inquisition arrested
an old man named Pierre Vallin
and had him tortured until he con-
fessed to having served the devil
for 63 years.

Vallin was also forced to confess
that he offered his own baby
daughter up as a human sacrifice,
attended witches' meetings, and
ate the flesh of murdered children.
After his conviction, Vallin was tor-
tured again and was forced to
name other witches. Following his
confessions, Vallin was burned at
the stake.

and making it a heresy, punishable by burning at the stake. After the first
execution of heretics at Orleans (in France) in 1022, the church's war
against heresy intensified. In 1198, Pope INNOCENT III ordered that any-
one continuing to hold heretical beliefs after having been convicted and
excommunicated* should be arrested again and burned at the stake.

Between 1227 and 1235, Pope Gregory IX established the papal Inqui-
sition. In 1252, Pope INNOCENT IV issued a decree that authorized the im-
prisonment, torture, and execution of heretics. Since witchcraft was in-
creasingly defined as a heresy that involved a pact with the devil and
sorcery was regarded as another form of witchcraft, the conviction rates of
people accused of witchcraft skyrocketed.

The Inquisition presumed that everybody accused of witchcraft must
be guilty. Suspects, therefore, were interrogated and tortured until they
confessed. These confessions were then used as evidence to support a
conviction.

Witch Craze.   The European witch hunts gained momentum when a Do-
MINICAN friar, Heinrich Institoris, became the inquisitor for southern Ger-
many in 1474. In 1486, Institoris published his *Malleus maleficarum* (called
the "hammer against witchcraft"). It quickly became one of the most
widely read books of the time, and it was published in 14 editions by 1520.
This work helped fan the flames of the witch craze that engulfed Europe
during the Renaissance and the Reformation—and later America—and
destroyed many thousands of innocent women. (*See also* **Alchemy; Astrol-
ogy and Astronomy; Devils and Demons; Joan of Arc; Magic and Folklore;
Torture; Trials.**)

Wolfram von Eschenbach

ca. 1170–1217
German poet

Wolfram von Eschenbach was one of the most popular poets of
medieval Germany. His literary output was enormous. It is esti-
mated that he wrote more than 40,000 verses. Today, he is re-
membered for his major work, *Parzival*. Little is known about Wolfram's
life except that he was probably a knight in the service of a German lord
who supported his writing.

Wolfram's reputation rests on *Parzival,* his epic poem about a knight's
quest for the Holy Grail, the cup Jesus drank from during the Last Supper.
The story is similar to the story told by the French poet CHRÉTIEN DE
TROYES. The young hero Parzival travels to the court of King Arthur and
has many adventures while serving the king. When he becomes lost in a
forest, a mysterious stranger directs him to the Grail Castle. There, King
Amfortas suffers from a crippling illness, which Parzival fails to inquire
about. His failure to ask a question of the king seals Parzival's fate because
asking would have cured Amfortas. Shamed by his seeming lack of compas-
sion, the knight renounces God and sets off in search of the Grail. After
numerous adventures and encounters with other knights and maidens,
Parzival returns to the Grail Castle. He asks the redeeming question of Am-
fortas, he becomes the Grail King, and his sons inherit the Grail Kingdom.

Parzival is filled with religious symbolism. The Grail is a symbol of salva-
tion, and the Grail Kingdom is a symbol of heaven. Parzival's failure to ask
Amfortas the cause of his pain symbolizes human sinfulness. In addition,

many scholars point to the story's political meaning. Wolfram lived during the time of the HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE, and from that perspective the Grail Kingdom may be seen as a training ground for potential rulers. Parzival's rule over the kingdom may be his birthright, but he must demonstrate maturity in order to claim it. (*See also* **Arthurian Literature; Chansons de Geste; Chivalry; German Language and Literature.**)

Women, Roles of

See
color plate 2,
vol. 1.

During the Middle Ages, the primary role of women was to maintain family life. Men became warriors, merchants, and artisans, while women generally became wives, mothers, and housekeepers. Nevertheless, some medieval women found ways to develop their talents within and beyond the functions sanctioned by both society and religion.

Women in Europe.   In medieval Europe, young girls did not have as much personal or legal freedom as boys. While unmarried, they were under the authority of their fathers. After marriage, they answered to their husbands. Unmarried women generally were looked on with suspicion and were seen as burdens on their families. Among the upper classes, however, women could choose the convent as an acceptable alternative to marriage. Some of these women, including HROTSWITHA VON GANDERSHEIM and HILDEGARD OF BINGEN, made great contributions to literature and to learning.

The role of women in the medieval period depended on social class. Upper-class women and queens often knew how to read, write, and calculate with numbers, and they were often well versed in many subjects. Many were responsible for taking care of household accounts and managing estates while their husbands were at war or conducting business at court. Noble ladies left some household tasks to servants while they supervised the running of the manor.

Among the middle class in medieval towns, women often helped in their husbands' businesses or practiced a trade of their own. Many middle-class women developed skill in business, led fairly independent lives, and were treated with respect by their husbands because of their contributions.

In peasant families, women had full responsibility for household activities and often shared in agricultural labors as well. In addition to cooking, cleaning, sewing, tending gardens, and caring for domestic animals, they also helped plow and harvest crops.

By far the most important responsibility of the majority of medieval women was the management of the household. The manufacture of clothing and the preparation of food were entirely in the hands of women. They also made candles, soap, and dyes, and they prepared medicines and cosmetics from herbal recipes. Women were responsible for raising the children and teaching their daughters household skills. The many responsibilities of women in the household gave them a position of significant influence in the family.

Under FEUDALISM, the role of women changed somewhat. Legally, their position worsened. Their right to inherit property was restricted in favor of male heirs (although a daughter could inherit an estate if there were no sons). A wife's duty was to produce a male heir, and, if she did not, her husband could seek to have the marriage annulled. Widows had to relinquish

The Education of Young Ladies

Aristocratic parents in the Middle Ages often did not raise their own children. It was customary for them to send their children to the homes of other nobles for education and training. Young girls generally were trained as ladies-in-waiting. Under the supervision of the lady of the manor, girls were taught to spin, weave, embroider, sew, and prepare medicines and cosmetics. They also learned to sing, dance, play music, and read and write in their own language and possibly in a foreign language. Since mealtime rituals were very important, girls learned proper table manners. During leisure hours, they might sit in the garden and listen to music, read romances, or engage in flirtatious conversation with young boys in training as pages and squires. Their exposure to the company of young men was important, since part of the reason for sending young girls to other households was to find suitable marriage partners for them.

The primary role of women in the Middle Ages was caring for the family. A woman learned household skills—weaving, spinning, sewing, baking, and brewing. She also learned to prepare household items, such as candles, medicines, and cosmetics. In upper-class families, the woman supervised servants who performed these household tasks.

guardianship of their children to their overlord, and they had to obtain the consent of the overlord to remarry. Yet, while the legal position of women worsened, among the upper and middle classes life probably became more civilized and comfortable for women. Whether the code of honor known as chivalry influenced this development is in dispute.

Women in the Islamic World.   The family was recognized as the foundation of Islamic society, and among its most important functions were to perpetuate and to increase the Muslim population. Marriage was seen as a union of a man and a woman who were attracted to each other by their basic differences: male toughness, harshness, and aggressiveness tempered by female gentleness, softness, and acceptance. Women thus had a somewhat equal, though different, role in the family.

In the Islamic world, the husband was the head of the family. A good wife respected her husband and obeyed his wishes. Meanwhile, the husband was expected to make sure that his wife's needs were served at his expense, although, in practice, wives often volunteered to take care of the household chores themselves. They stayed at home to care for their children and to look after other domestic responsibilities. However, ordinary women ventured out when necessary to obtain items that the family needed. Upper-class women, on the other hand, tended to remain at home, deliberately keeping themselves away from the public eye. When they went out, they covered their faces with veils. (Ordinary women dressed modestly but went about their work with their faces uncovered.)

Divorce was rare in Islamic society. Islamic law provided full legal rights for women. For example, a woman could have the right to divorce written into her marriage contract. Even if she had not done so, she could still apply for divorce on the grounds of cruelty or the failure of her husband to provide for her well-being. Despite such laws, it was often easier for men to obtain a divorce than it was for women.

Women in Jewish Society.   The role of the Jewish woman in medieval society was also defined by her position as wife and mother. Jewish girls generally were restricted to home instruction in practical matters in preparation for their family responsibilities. Marriage was valued very highly, and having children was a basic commandment of the Jewish religion. Mutual rights and duties of spouses were written into a marriage contract, and women had the same right to divorce as men. If childless, widows were sometimes obligated to marry a brother of their husband.

Jewish women often enjoyed a higher status in practice than in the law. For instance, although Jewish widows had no right of inheritance, it was not uncommon for them to participate in the economic life of the community. A few Jewish women even studied religious law and became scholars. (*See also* **Courtly Love; Family; Inheritance Laws and Practices; Islam, Religion of; Women's Religious Orders.**)

See color plate 4, vol. 1.

Women's Religious Orders

During the Middle Ages, monastic houses for women were the only alternative to marriage for daughters of the nobility. The religious life had important benefits for women of the Middle Ages since it provided the opportunity for women to receive an education, to apply their skills, and to pursue a career. Ordinarily, these paths were closed to women in medieval society. It is important to remember that most women who became nuns in the Middle Ages were from the upper classes. Poor women and peasant women had fewer alternatives.

Many of the medieval religious houses for women were subject to supervision and control by the MONASTERIES with which they were associated. However, some of the nuns governed themselves, and sometimes even the monks. The legacy of these medieval women—as reflected in their writings, their artwork and handicrafts, and their spirituality—has made a rich and enduring contribution to history.

Early Female Monasticism.   As MONASTICISM spread in western Europe in the early medieval period (500s–800s), several religious houses for women were founded. Most of these were located in the region that later became France. Double monasteries, consisting of two houses—one male, one female—were common at this time.

Inspired by Frankish double monasteries, the English established 12 double houses of their own. Several of these were founded by a noblewoman and abbess*, Hilda of Whitby, in the late 600s. The VIKING invasions that began in the mid-800s ended the growing monastic culture in England. On the European continent, however, new monasteries for women continued to be founded. In northern Italy, for example, there were approximately 45 monasteries for women by 1100.

After 1000, the women's monastic movement underwent a change. Women wanted their own communities, to be based on the Benedictine Rule, especially as it was followed by the monks at Cluny in France. The members of some of the new houses elected their own abbess, usually in the presence of the founder and the founder's family. The abbess was then consecrated* by the bishop, although, beginning in the mid-1000s, that privilege was frequently claimed by the pope.

* **abbess** female head of an abbey or monastery. The male equivalent is an abbot.

* **consecrated** declared sacred during a church ceremony
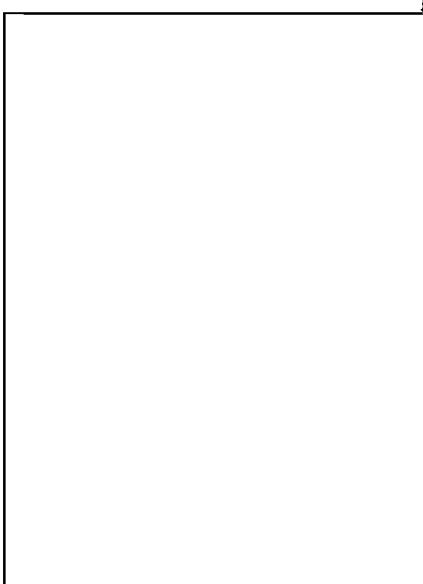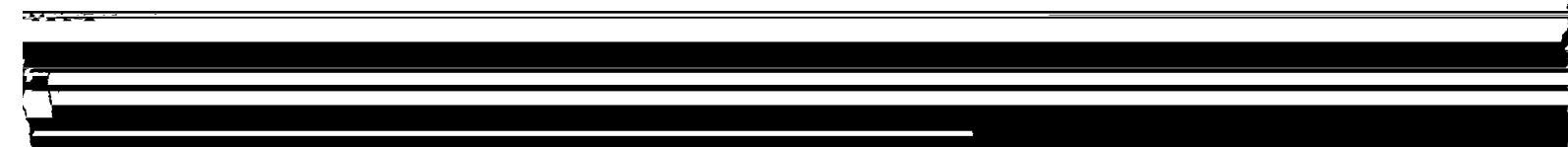
Separate Lives

In the 1100s, the English cleric Gilbert of Sempringham organized a religious order for men and women. The brothers and sisters lived in the same monastery but in separate houses. They could talk through a small hole in the wall of the women's house, but they could not see each other. There was only one church, but the men and women were separated by a heavy curtain. They could hear each other pray and sing, but they still could not see each other.

* **prioress** head of a convent; rank below abbess

In 1207, the local bishop gave Dominic permission to establish a convent for 12 women who wanted to devote their lives to prayer. He connected it to a nearby house of Dominican men, and he took personal responsibility for the convent's spiritual direction. Dominic assigned the day-to-day management of the convent to Guillelmine Fanjeux, who served as its prioress* until her death in 1225. In 1218, the convent at Prouille (France) received papal recognition as an independent religious community belonging to the Dominican order.

In 1218 and 1219, two more Dominican houses for women were established in Madrid and Rome. In 1224, however, the order suspended the establishment of any additional ones. Several years later, a shift in papal attitude toward monastic houses for women led to the creation of more houses. By 1303, there were 42 Dominican convents in Italy, 74 in Germany, 13 in France, 8 in Spain, and others in Bohemia, Poland, Hungary, Scandinavia, and England (where the Dominicans founded their first convent in 1356).

The Franciscan Second Order, known as the Order of St. Clare or Poor Ladies, was established in 1212 by St. FRANCIS OF ASSISI, when a house for a young woman named Clare who wanted to join the Franciscans was built at the church of San Damiano in Assisi, Italy. As later houses for the order were built, they were supplied with a new rule by Hugolino, a cardinal who served as protector of the order. The new rule did not include the principle of poverty as set down by St. Francis, and it greatly displeased Clare.

When Hugolino ascended to the papacy as Pope Gregory IX, he offered property and income to the Poor Ladies. This was a tempting offer since most women's houses were poor and always in need. However, Clare refused. She then obtained papal permission for the sisters of San Damiano to live a life of complete poverty. Although Hugolino's rule remained in effect for other houses of the Poor Ladies, some stayed loyal to the ideal of poverty. One such house was established in Prague by Agnes, daughter of the king of BOHEMIA. Pope INNOCENT IV tried to place the Poor Ladies under the supervision of the Franciscan brothers, but both sides objected. In 1298, Pope BONIFACE VIII gave the sisters of the Order of St. Clare rights equal to those of the Franciscan brothers.

By 1400, there were about 15,000 sisters of the Order of St. Clare and 400 convents in Europe. About 250 of these were in Italy and the rest mostly in France, Spain, and Germany. The convents of the Order of St. Clare ranged in size from as few as 3 members to as many as 250 in NAPLES and Krakow (in Poland). Most of the larger houses had between 50 and 80 members. (*See also* **Beguines and Beghards; Christianity; Clergy; Family; Mysticism; Women, Role of.**)

Wool

Wool was one of the most important products of medieval economies. In England and Flanders, it was the leading export product. Wool merchants amassed great fortunes, and those involved in the processing of wool, from its raw state into finished cloth, were important workers in a prosperous industry.

The cool and damp climate of the British Isles was ideal for raising thick-coated sheep, and most landowners in England kept flocks. In the
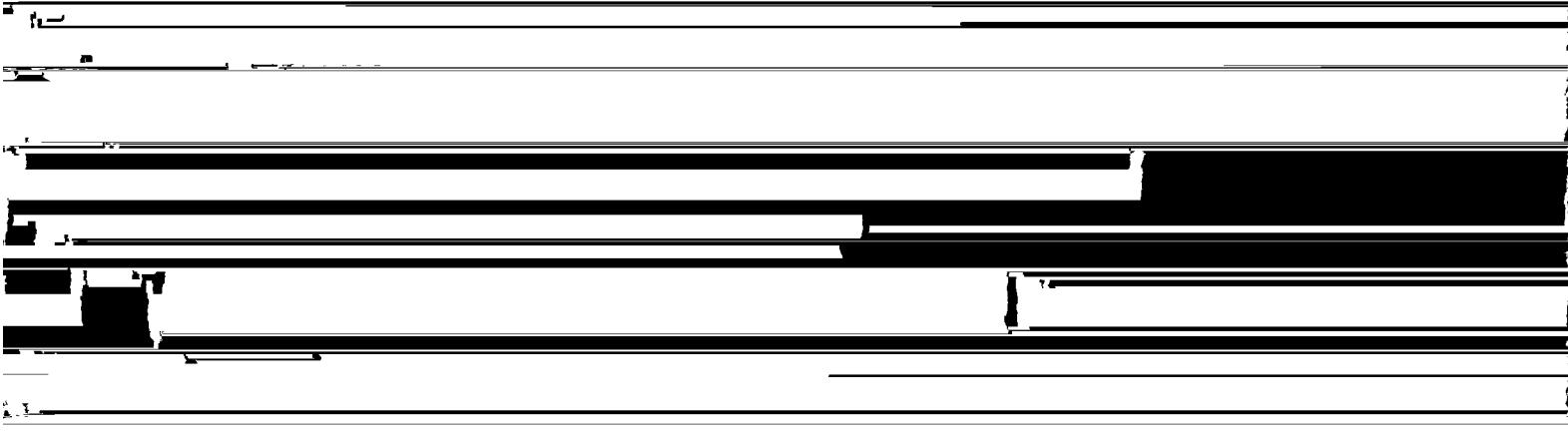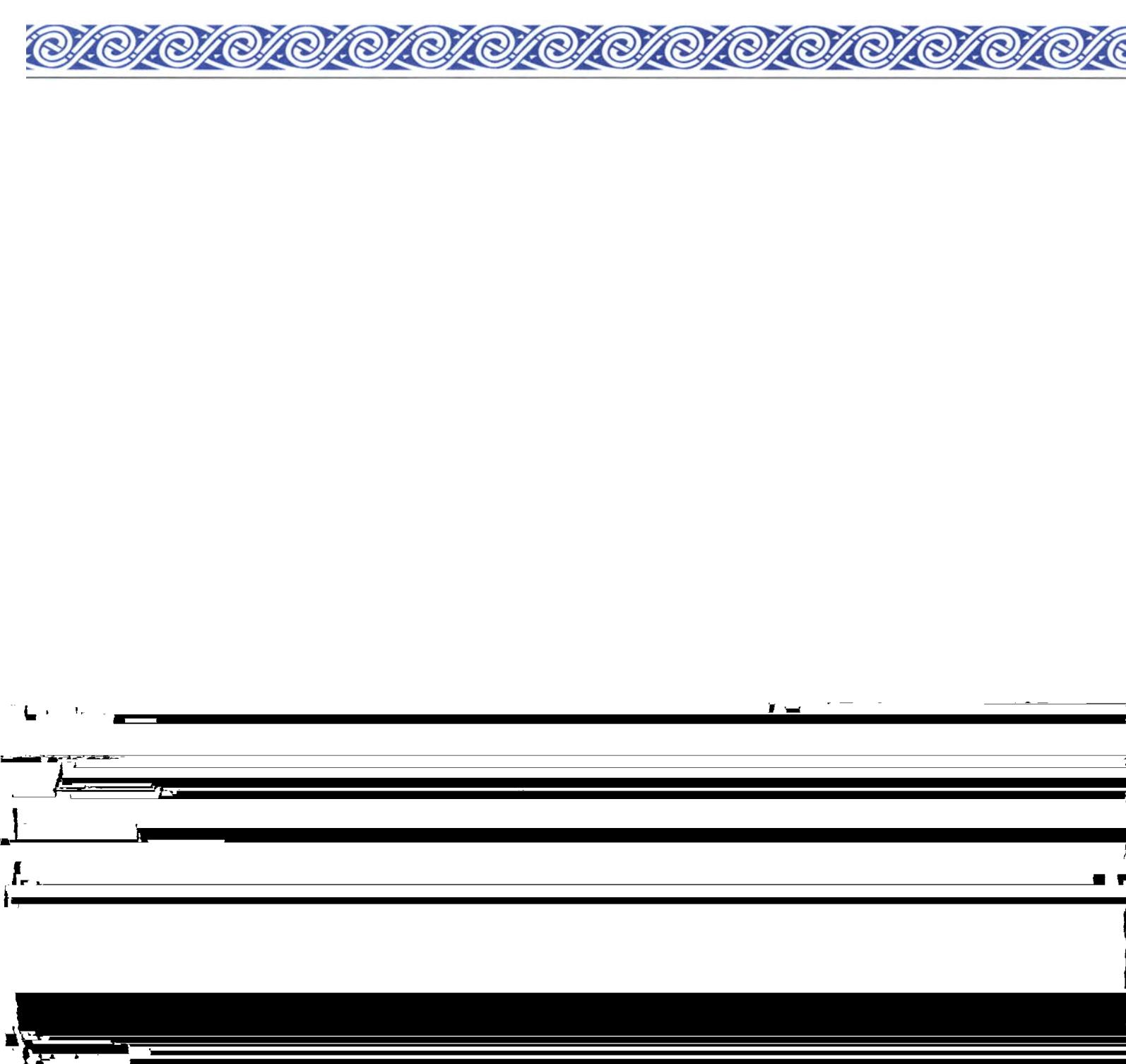
* **lampblack** carbon compound made from the soot of burning oil and used as a pigment in paints and inks

* **tannin** compound derived from oak bark and other plant materials

* **vitriol** type of metallic compound that has a glassy appearance

* **scribe** person who hand-copies manuscripts

See color plate 8, vol. 2.

* **pumice** volcanic material used for smoothing and polishing

Inks were made from lampblack*, soot, tannin*, vitriol*, and nuts. The inks favored by scribes usually were dark and heavy, and they required paper with a glazed surface. Reed pens were considered better when working with thick inks and glazed papers. Scribes generally owned expensive writing sets that consisted of a container for reeds, an inkpot, and possibly an ink pad—an implement made of wool or flax that helped spread ink evenly on writing materials.

The development of European papermaking in the 1200s led to a decline in Islamic papermaking in later centuries. By the 1300s and the 1400s, less expensive European-made papers poured into the Islamic world, and the local papermaking industry vanished.

Writing in Western Europe.   Medieval writing in western Europe was done on a wide variety of materials. The expense and scarcity of manufactured writing materials, such as paper and parchment, sometimes encouraged the use of readily available natural materials. In Sweden and Russia, for example, writing often was done on birch bark, and in Spain and Ireland various types of documents were scratched on pieces of slate. Wax tablets were used quite extensively by scribes* throughout Europe. Because wax tablets were easy to erase, they were particularly favored for writing rough drafts and other texts that were frequently revised.

While a variety of materials might be used for ordinary texts, important texts that were meant to be more permanent were usually written on either parchment or papyrus. Papyrus was imported primarily from Egypt. When the Islamic conquests disrupted Mediterranean commerce in the 600s, the supply of papyrus was reduced, and parchment became the most important writing material. Early medieval parchment was thick and stiff. In the later Middle Ages, technological advances produced parchment that was unsurpassed for its thinness, flexibility, whiteness, ink retention, and durability.

The craft of papermaking was first introduced in western Europe in the 1000s by Muslims in Spain and Sicily. At first, Europeans imported paper from Muslim producers in the Mediterranean region, but, by the late 1200s, paper mills in Italy were also manufacturing paper. By the 1300s, paper overtook parchment as the preferred writing material in western Europe, and as technologies advanced, manufacturers could produce large quantities of paper more cheaply.

The two most common types of pens used in medieval Europe were the calamus, made from a carved reed, and the quill, or penna. Early medieval scribes also used a hard-pointed, pen-shaped instrument, called a stylus, for making line rules on wax tablets or parchment or for sketching illustrations. The stylus was eventually replaced by black lead in the 1100s and then by ink in the 1200s. A variety of different-colored inks was used. Text usually was written in black or brown ink, while titles, initial letters, and other marks were written in red or other colors.

Medieval scribes used pumice* stones and razors to smooth out rough places in the parchment and to erase mistakes. They often used compasses for designing page layouts and illustrations and a straightedge to help keep text running along a straight line. During the late Middle Ages, scribes often used wooden pattern boards that had slots cut into them to guide the drawing of the lines used as line rules. (*See also* **Books, Manuscript; Printing, Origins of.**)

Wulfstan of York

died 1023
Church leader and scholar

* **archbishop** head bishop in a region or
nation

Wulfstan of York was an important figure in England during the late 900s and the early 1000s. However, we know little of his life before 996, when he became bishop of London. In 1003, he was made archbishop* of York, a post he held until his death.

Wulfstan was probably a BENEDICTINE monk before his rise to prominence. He was a noted scholar, especially interested in law, and he may have been a member of the royal council. He drew up a code of laws aimed at ending lawlessness in northern England. The code is considered noteworthy because it provided that 12 leading citizens in each community should seize habitual lawbreakers and force them to come to court. This may have been the forerunner of the jury system that was later established by King HENRY II. He may also have written some laws that were later passed by CNUT THE GREAT, the Danish king who ruled England from 1016 to 1035. In his writings, Wulfstan outlined the public duties of each class of society, urged Cnut to govern as a Christian king, and promoted the blending of the Danish and Anglo-Saxon cultures.

Wulfstan's reputation, however, rests on his power as a preacher of forceful and eloquent sermons about the basics of the Christian faith. He often wrote under the pen name of Lupus (Wolf), and in his most famous sermon—*Sermon of the Wolf to the English*—he paints a grim picture of English society in the early 1000s. It was a time when priests and monks often strayed from their vows and duties and the king had difficulty enforcing Christian values on new Danish settlers. (*See also* **England.**)

Wyclif, John

ca. 1335–1384
**English theologian
and reformer**

* **philosophy** study of ideas, including science

* **theology** study of the nature of God and of
religious truth

* **heretic** person who disagrees with
established church doctrine

* **rector** priest in charge of a parish

* **secular** nonreligious; connected with
everyday life

* **Eucharist** Christian ritual commemorating
Christ's Last Supper on earth; also called
Communion

* **excommunicate** to exclude from the rites of
the church

John Wyclif was a controversial English theologian who wrote many influential works on philosophy* and theology*. Wyclif was critical of the church, and he was denounced as a heretic* for some of his views on church doctrine. His writings and ideas influenced the LOLLARDS in England, Jan HUS in BOHEMIA, and other religious reformers.

Wyclif was educated at Oxford University, and from 1356 to 1381 he spent much of his time there as a respected teacher. He was also a rector* at several PARISHES (local communities served by the church), including one in Lutterworth (in Leicestershire), where he lived during the last years of his life. In 1371, Wyclif became active and outspoken on political issues. He attended a meeting of PARLIAMENT that year at which the status of church property was discussed. Wyclif sided with those who argued that secular* authorities could seize church property in times of emergency. During the next few years, Wyclif became active in the anticlerical movement, and his interests turned towards church doctrine.

Several of Wyclif's views on church doctrine were condemned in 1377 by Pope Gregory XI, who called for his arrest. Attempts to condemn Wyclif in England failed at first, in part because he was protected by powerful individuals. In 1380, however, a commission at Oxford declared Wyclif's teaching on the Eucharist* heretical. The following year, Wyclif retired to Lutterworth, where he continued to write his controversial views. No attempt was made to excommunicate* him—no doubt because of continued support by powerful people.

An idea found in many of Wyclif's writings is the differentiation between the "actual church," with its hierarchy of church officials, and the "true

The Wyclif Bible

The Wyclif Bible was one of the great landmarks in the history of the Bible and of the English language. The Wyclif Bible was the first translation of the Latin Bible into the English vernacular. It is unclear whether Wyclif himself initiated this Bible, although his emphasis on the importance of Scripture certainly inspired the work. It is also doubtful that Wyclif took part in the immense task of the actual translation and its revisions. Most of the work on the Bible was done by his followers, notably Nicholas Hereford.

Yet, his ideas took root among many religious reformers, and Wyclif became a forerunner of the great church reform of the 1500s known as the Protestant Reformation. (*See also* **Christianity; English Language and Literature; Excommunication; Heresy and Heresies; Mass, Liturgy of; Universities.**)

Wynkyn de Worde

died ca. 1534
Printer and bookseller
in London

* **duchy**   territory ruled by a duke or a duchess

Although Wynkyn de Worde was the most important English printer and bookseller of the late Middle Ages, little is known about his early years. He came from the duchy* of Lorraine (part of present-day France), and by 1479 he had settled in London as assistant to printer William CAXTON. He later owned several print shops, where he produced religious works, dictionaries, Latin grammars, sermons, almanacs, practical manuals, and poems and plays. De Worde published more than 700 volumes, which included the works of many authors. Some of these works were illustrated by his own woodcuts. De Worde introduced new styles of printing into England, and he also helped to modernize and simplify the English language. (*See also* **Books, Manuscript; Latin Language; Printing, Origins of.**)

Yaroslav the Wise

ruled 1019–1054
Russian ruler

* **steppe** vast treeless plain of southeastern
Europe and Asia

See map in Byzantine
Empire (vol. 2).

* **metropolitan** in the Eastern Church, a high-
ranking bishop of a large city

In 1019, after a long war with his half brother, Yaroslav became grand prince of the Russian state called KIEVAN RUS. At first, he had to divide the state with another half brother, Mstislav, but after Mstislav died in 1036, Yaroslav was the sole ruler of united Rus. Brave in battle, although he was lame since childhood, Yaroslav waged war on the Poles, the Baltic peoples, the BYZANTINE EMPIRE, and the Turkic peoples of the steppes*, extending the Russian borders in all directions. He also used diplomacy and marriage to link his family to several royal families in Europe.

Yaroslav's reign was the golden age of medieval Russian culture. He founded schools and libraries, paid scholars to translate Greek and Latin works into the Slavic language of the Russian people, and beautified his capital city of Kiev with many monasteries and churches, including a splendid cathedral called Hagia Sophia. He also built new city walls that had a famous gate called the Golden Gate. According to the metropolitan* who was the head of the Russian church at that time, Yaroslav gave "the famous city of Kiev a crown of glory." (*See also* **Dmitrii Ivanovich Donskoi; Ivan III of Muscovy; Muscovy, Rise of; Novgorod.**)

Yazid I ibn Mu'awiya

ruled 680–683
Early Islamic ruler

* **caliph** religious and political head of an
Islamic state

Yazid I, the most controversial ruler of early Islamic times, was the second caliph* of the UMAYYAD dynasty*. Raised in Syria, Yazid inherited the CALIPHATE from his father, MU'AWIYA. Unfortunately, Yazid was unable to hold together the fragile alliances that Mu'awiya had forged among rival Arab tribes. Yazid's brief reign was a time of turmoil and disaster for the young Islamic state.

Trouble erupted when al-Husayn ibn Ali refused to accept Yazid as caliph. As the grandson of the prophet MUHAMMAD, the founder of Islam, al-Husayn had many followers who supported his own campaign to become caliph. In 680, Yazid's Umayyad forces trapped al-Husayn in the city

of Karbala, in present-day Iraq. Al-Husayn refused to surrender and was killed. This intensified the split between Shi'ites and other early Muslims. Al-Husayn became a martyr* of the Shi'ites, who still form a small but powerful minority within Islam.

For several years, Yazid struggled to keep rival tribes and sects in line. The final explosion came in 683, when one of al-Husayn's comrades led a revolt in Mecca. Umayyad forces besieged the holy city. Yazid remained in Syria, where he died two months into the siege. His death threw the Islamic Empire into confusion, as factions broke away or fought for power. Yazid entered Islamic history as the caliph responsible for the murder of the Prophet's grandson and the violation of Mecca. (*See also* **Husayn ibn Ali, al-; Islam, Conquests of.**)

Ypres

See map in Trade (vol. 4).

Ypres, a town in the southwestern part of present-day Belgium, was an important center of cloth production during the Middle Ages. The town was part of the county of FLANDERS, a nearly independent state whose strong counts had loose ties to their overlords, the kings of France. Ypres and other Flemish towns gradually won their independence during the later Middle Ages.

Ypres (called Ieper in the Flemish language) is located on the Iperleet, a tributary of the Yser River. In the 800s, the count of Flanders built a castle on the Iperleet to defend the region against VIKING invaders. The castle was administered by the CASTELLAN, a representative of the count. The fortification and its outbuildings were all that comprised Ypres for a period of 100 years.

When western Europe entered an economic revival in the 900s, Ypres benefited from its location near two important trade routes: the Yser River and the road that linked the Flemish city of BRUGES with France. A community of merchants settled on the banks of the Iperleet across from the castle. Here, in an area called the forum, they built homes, warehouses, and a market. Later, a large hall that became the center of the wool trade was added. Until the 1100s, the forum was governed by the castellan. The townspeople who lived in the forum of Ypres were legally free, whereas the peasants of the countryside were not.

Golden Age of Prosperity. As Ypres and nearby towns grew in size and economic importance, they began to demand greater independence from the counts of Flanders. After one count, Charles the Good, was assassinated in Bruges in 1127, independence came quickly. Charles left no heirs, and a war broke out among nobles for his title. To win their support, these nobles granted charters* to various towns, turning them into self-governing COMMUNES. Ypres received such a charter and became independent of the castellan's authority. The merchants of the forum were responsible for the town's finances, justice system, security, defense, and GUILDS. They governed Ypres through a council of 13 magistrates. At first, the magistrates were appointed for life by the count, but after 1209 they were elected by the inhabitants of Ypres for terms of one year.

The 1200s were a golden age of economic and political power for Ypres. The city was already known as the foremost Flemish center of wool

Wool and Good Works

Ypres was run by its leading merchant families, whose wealth from wool enabled them to adopt the manners and lifestyle of nobility. These prosperous families also had a strong sense of civic pride, and they did much to improve the quality of life in Ypres. They built churches, funded public works, established hospitals, and organized schools. Their pride and wealth were reflected in the hall they built to house the cloth guilds. It was the largest and most magnificent guild hall in western Europe—a symbol of the prosperity the merchants enjoyed during the Middle Ages.

cloth production. The craftspeople of Ypres imported raw wool from England and made it into fine cloth. Merchants from all over western Europe sought Ypres's product. By the 1200s, Ypres, together with the Flemish cities of GHENT and Bruges, controlled the political and economic life of Flanders. Wealthy merchants forced the counts to follow practices that benefited the interests of these cities.

Commerce in Ypres during the mid-1200s included not only the wholesale wool trade but also a system of banking and credit. Wool from Ypres was bought and sold at the large medieval FAIRS, one of which was held near Ypres. Merchants came from France, Italy, and Germany to attend the fair, and the economy of the region boomed as a result of this interaction. Ypres was also part of the powerful federation of merchant cities called the HANSEATIC LEAGUE. At its peak, Ypres had a population of about 28,000.

Misfortune and Decline.   Many factors brought about the decline of Ypres, which began in the late 1200s. There were bitter conflicts among the craftspeople who made the wool and the merchants who sold it. One issue was the demand of the craftspeople for a role in local government. Wars between France and Flanders in the 1300s disrupted industry and trade, bringing strife to the countryside and higher taxes to pay for the wars. In 1316, Europe entered a period of severe famine. During this time, nearly 3,000 people died in Ypres from starvation and disease. Thirty years later, the PLAGUE devastated the region again. At one point, the population of Ypres fell to as low as 8,000.

In 1384, Flanders came under the rule of the powerful dukes of BURGUNDY, who tried to restore the region's prosperity. By that time, however, the economy of Ypres was in ruins. Cheaper wool cloth made in England was sweeping Flemish cloth from the European markets. In the centuries that followed, trade shifted to Europe's seaports and industrial centers, and Ypres's fortune declined. (*See also* **Textiles; Trade; Wool.**)

Zanj

See map in Islam, Conquests of (vol. 2).

Zanj was a medieval Arabic term for the peoples of East Africa. The Zanj were known in the Middle East in pre-Islamic times, but the first recorded use of the word was in 680 in a reference to Zanj slaves. Muslims regarded the Zanj as socially inferior, and this attitude was reinforced by racial and cultural hostility reflected in Arabic literature and folklore. Medieval Arabic writers considered the Zanj to be lazy and dishonest, and descriptions of Zanj slaves usually emphasized their blackness. The Zanj were also thought to possess magical powers.

Fear and distrust of the Zanj were reinforced for centuries by a great slave revolt that occurred in southern IRAQ between 868 and 883. Most of the rebels were Zanj slaves who had been subjected to the harshest and cruelest of conditions. The rebels succeeded in taking control of much of southern Iraq, and it was not until 882 that the ABBASIDS were able to capture the rebel capital and end the revolt. The memory of this slave revolt discouraged the further use of large concentrations of slave labor for agriculture in Islamic countries. However, black slaves continued to be popular as soldiers and domestic servants.

Information in Arabic sources about the Zanj was limited to the coastal areas of East Africa. Nevertheless, this information was important because it was the only written evidence about East Africa before the Portuguese arrived there in the 1400s. The first Islamic mention of Zanj land dates from the 700s, and more extensive accounts come from the works of Arab geographers of the 900s and the 1100s.

Islamic sources describe the land of Zanj as a place of rivers, harbors, islands, mountains, volcanoes, and cities. The Zanj were divided into different ethnic groups and kingdoms that were constantly at war. They had no horses, so their soldiers rode cattle. Zanj kings ruled according to custom, and if a king ruled unjustly, he could be killed and his children denied succession to the throne. The Zanj engaged in trade, farming, gold mining, fishing, and hunting, especially for leopards and elephants. They wore iron jewelry, filed their teeth, and loved music and dancing. They greatly admired the Arabs and were easily kidnapped by slave merchants. The Zanj worshiped idols and natural forces and had medicine men, but they also believed in a supreme being. By the late Middle Ages, many Zanj rulers had converted to Islam, which became firmly established in Zanj cities and coastal regions. (*See also* **Maps and Mapmaking; Nubia; Slavery.**)

Suggested Readings

Atlases and Encyclopedias
History and Society
Daily Life
Biography
Women in the Middle Ages
Christianity
The Islamic World
The Jewish World
Literature
Art and Architecture
Science and Technology
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* **Asterisk denotes book for young readers.**

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