

Learning, Literature, & the Arts of the Middle Ages



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Explain the emergence of universities and their importance to medieval life.
- Understand how newly translated writings from the past and from other regions influenced medieval thought.
- Describe the literature, architecture, and art of the High and Late Middle Ages.
- Examine the lasting heritage of the Byzantine Empire.

Rise of Medieval Universities

The Church sought better educated clergy & literacy for men.

Schools sprung up in cathedrals to train the clergy & evolve into the first universities

Universities would often bring prestige & profit to the regions they were located.

Students would often study from sun up to sun down & students were expected to memorize what they heard

Education

Programs would cover math, astronomy, music, grammar, rhetoric, logic, law, medicine, & theology

Women were expected to pursue their “natural gifts” at home. Raising children & managing the house.

Convents would educate girls & **Christine de Pisan** writes *The City of Ladies*.

New Knowledge Reaches Europe

Muslim scholars were translating works of Greek Thinkers into Arabic

Jewish & Christian scholars then translated into Latin

Scholasticism- Using reason to support the Christian belief

Thomas Aquinas- Scholastic who concluded that faith & reason exist in harmony.

He also believed in the common good of law that benefits all.

Science & Math

Study & the use of experiments of the Greeks pushed scientific works

All true knowledge must fit in with Church Teachings though, which led to little progress

The use of Arabic numerals allowed for advanced mathmatics

Medieval Literature

Writings in the vernacular, every day language of everyday people, began to appear

People began to write down oral traditions & stories of great heroic deeds

Dante Alighieri- wrote the Divine Comedy which takes the reader on a journey to hell, purgatory, & heaven

Geoffery Chaucer- Wrote the Canterbury Tales about a band of English pilgrims traveling to Thomas Becket's Tomb

Architecture & Art

Victor Hugo- says that “men had no great thought that they did not write down in stone.”

Romanesque Buildings- churches that reflected Roman influences with thick walls & towers

Gothic Style- Type of architecture made up of flying buttresses, stone supports that stood outside the Church

Churches would carve stone sculptures such as gargoyle to decorate the Church.

Paintings & Tapestries

Altarpieces would decorate the space behind the church alter

Woven wall paintings added color & warmth to castle walls.

Illumination- Elaborate designs & illustrations in handwritten books.

The Byzantine Heritage

Byzantine artists would create **Icons**- images designed to evoke the presence of God.

They preserved the classic works of ancient Greece & Rome & produced books

Anna Comnena- First important female historian.

The Byzantine Empire would move written works across Europe leading to future cultural booms.