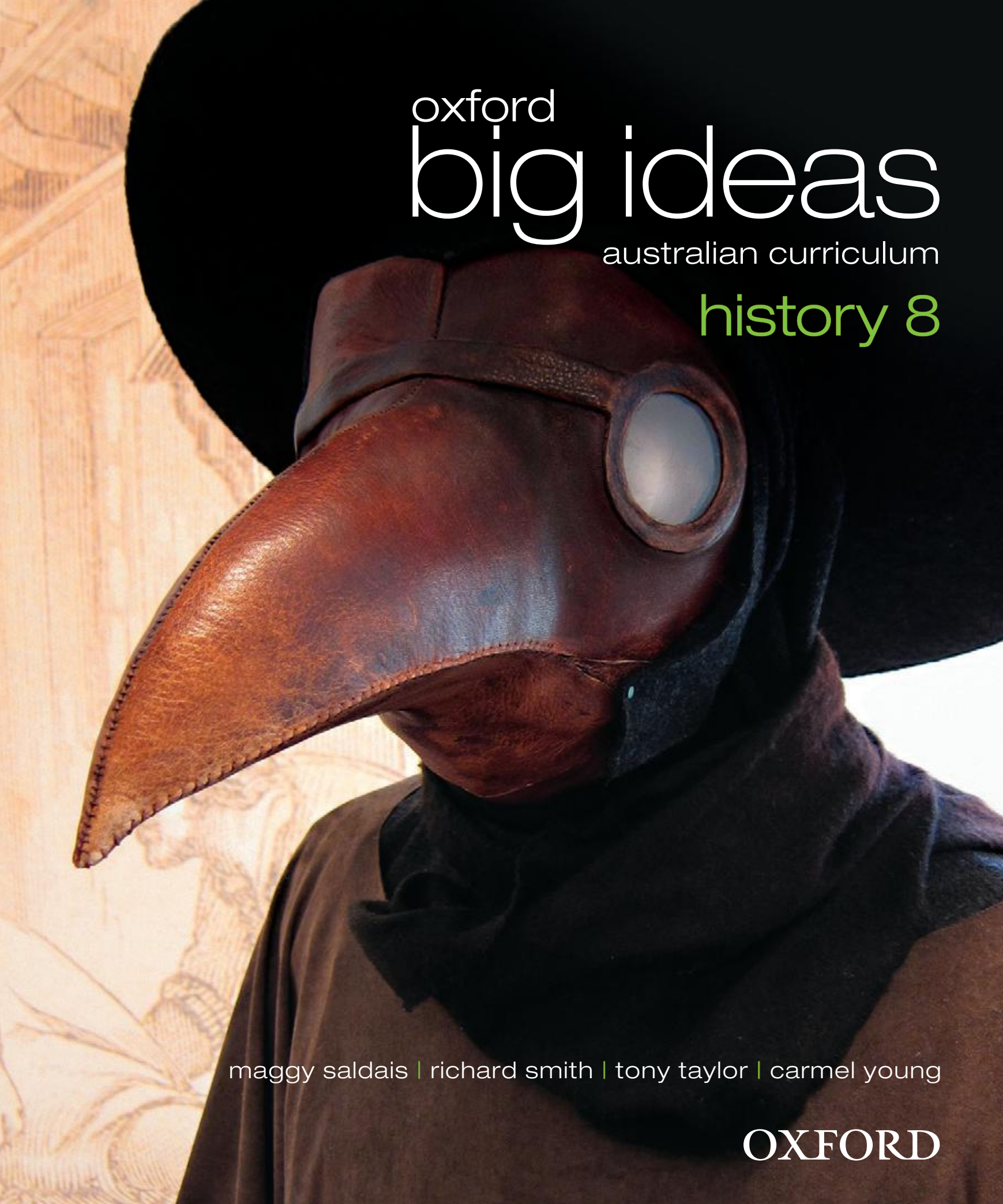


oxford big ideas

australian curriculum

history 8

maggy saldais | richard smith | tony taylor | carmel young

OXFORD

ebook

- Gives you access to all student book content and online resources
- Looks like the student book for easy reference
- Zoom, search, add or share notes and bookmarks
- Navigate by page number, table of contents or thumbnails

Click here to access online extras
oup.com.au/011

* Notes and bookmarks are not available if using the 'online view' via the obook. If using an ebook network version, notes and bookmarks are stored in each local computer's cache and do not transfer across multiple computers.

oxford big ideas australian curriculum history 8

maggy saldais | richard smith

consultants: tony taylor, carmel young, michael spurr
contributors: anthony bidgood, helen butler, jonathan clements, stephen dixon, bernie howitt, cynthia wardle

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Oxford University Press is a department of the University of Oxford.
It furthers the University's objective of excellence in research,
scholarship, and education by publishing worldwide. Oxford is a registered
trademark of Oxford University Press in the UK and in certain other
countries.

Published in Australia by Oxford University Press
253 Normanby Road, South Melbourne, Victoria 3205, Australia

© Maggy Saldais, Richard Smith 2012

The moral rights of the author have been asserted.

First published 2012

Reprinted 2012 (twice), 2013

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system,
or transmitted, in any form or by any means, without the prior permission in writing of Oxford
University Press, or as expressly permitted by law, by licence, or under terms agreed with the
appropriate reprographics rights organisation. Enquiries concerning reproduction outside the scope
of the above should be sent to the Rights Department, Oxford University Press, at the address above.

You must not circulate this work in any other form and you must impose this same condition on
any acquirer.

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication data

Maggy Saldais
Oxford big ideas. History 8 : Australian Curriculum / Maggy Saldais.
ISBN 9780195571097 (pbk.)
ISBN 9780195576597 (pbk. obook/assess)
ISBN 9780195524949 (pbk. plus obook/assess/MULTI)
Includes index.
For secondary school age.
History - - Textbooks.
Civilization – History – Textbooks.
Culture – Origin.
Smith, Richard.

900

Reproduction and communication for educational purposes
The Australian *Copyright Act 1968* (the Act) allows a maximum of one chapter
or 10% of the pages of this work, whichever is the greater, to be reproduced
and/or communicated by any educational institution for its educational purposes
provided that the educational institution (or the body that administers it) has
given a remuneration notice to Copyright Agency Limited (CAL) under the Act.

For details of the CAL licence for educational institutions contact:

Copyright Agency Limited
Level 15, 233 Castlereagh Street
Sydney NSW 2000
Telephone: (02) 9394 7600
Facsimile: (02) 9394 7601
Email: info@copyright.com.au

Edited by Frith Luton
Illustrated by Bill Wood, Richard Bonson, Ian Laver and MAPgraphics Pty Ltd
Proofread by Ingrid De Baets and Tina Hutchings
Indexed by Don Jordan, Antipodes Indexing

Disclaimer

Indigenous Australians and Torres Strait Islanders are advised that this publication may include
images or names of people now deceased.

*Links to third party websites are provided by Oxford in good faith and for information only.
Oxford disclaims any responsibility for the materials contained in any third party website
referenced in this work.*

contents

What is… *Oxford Big Ideas History?* vi

Using *Oxford Big Ideas History* viii

Australian Curriculum: History 8—Scope and sequence x

Overview

1.0 The ancient to the modern world: an overview 2

1.1 How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age? 6

1.2 What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies? 26

1.3 What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period? 36

1.4 Which significant people, groups and ideas from the period have influenced the world today? 48

Depth studies

The Western and Islamic world 56

o The Ottoman Empire [**o**book only]

1 How was society organised during the Ottoman Empire?

2 What were the most significant achievements and developments of the Ottoman Empire?

3 How did the policies and power of the Ottoman Empire change other societies?

o Renaissance Italy [**o**book only]

1 How were societies in Renaissance Italy organised?

2 What developments and achievements characterised Renaissance Italy?

3 How did Renaissance culture spread and what is its legacy?

contents

2.0 The Vikings 62

2.1 How was Viking society organised? 66
2.2 What developments and achievements led to Viking expansion? 82
2.3 How did Viking conquests change other societies? 90

3.0 Medieval Europe 102

3.1 How was society in medieval Europe organised? 106
3.2 What developments and achievements influenced life in medieval Europe? 132
3.3 How and why did society in medieval Europe change? 142

The Asia–Pacific world 160

4.0 The Khmer Empire 166

4.1 How did the Khmer Empire rise to power and what were its greatest achievements? 170
4.2 How was society organised during the Khmer Empire? 184
4.3 How and why did the Khmer Empire come to an end? 200

5.0 Japan under the shoguns 208

5.1 What was life in Japan like before the rise of the shoguns? 212
5.2 How did the rise of the shoguns change the way Japanese society was organised? 224
5.3 How did life change under the rule of the *shogun* and why did this period come to an end? 238

o The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [obook only]

1 How did Polynesian settlers spread across the Pacific?
2 What was life like in Māori societies?
3 What were the most significant Māori cultural achievements?

contents

Expanding contacts 254

6.0 Mongol expansion 260

6.1 How was Mongol society organised? 264

6.2 How did Mongol conquests and expansion change other societies? 272

7.0 The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa 292

7.1 How were societies organised at the time of the Black Death? 296

7.2 How did the Black Death spread and what were its effects? 306

o The Spanish conquest of the Americas [obook only]

1 How were societies in the Americas organised before the arrival of the Spanish?

2 Why did the Spanish colonise the Americas?

3 What were the effects of the Spanish conquest in the Americas and around the world?

Glossary 330

Index 336

Acknowledgements 342

What is...

Oxford Big Ideas History?

Oxford Big Ideas History is a brand-new series developed and written specifically to meet the requirements of the Australian Curriculum across Years 7–10. Based on a big ideas framework, the pedagogy enables students to develop deep, transferable understandings and skills.

Source 5.2 Japan's mountainous landscape left little flat land for farming. Fujiyama (or Fuji) is the large conical mountain in the background.

5.1 What was life in Japan like before the rise of the *shog*

The first historical mention of Japan is in a Chinese acco in 280 CE. It mentions the eastern island of Wo, which co some 30 'warring countries'. It was thought these 'coun have been separate clans—groups of families related by marriage. Each clan honoured a particular god conside ancestor of all clan members. The most direct line to the kami was the clan leader.

Each clan was led by a group of warriors. These warrio protected the people in return for a share of the rice har clans fought each other for land and power.

212 oxford big ideas history 8: australian curriculum

Why big ideas?

The Australian Curriculum: History identifies a range of key inquiry questions—or **big ideas**—that span each year level and direct student learning. These big ideas, together with a range of historical skills, key concepts and cross-curricular priorities, form the foundation of the Australian Curriculum: History.

Research shows that students achieve greater success when the information they learn is connected to big ideas. *Oxford Big Ideas History* provides students and teachers with the opportunity to discover, explore and connect with an inquiry-based series written for the Australian Curriculum.

What are the big ideas?

At each year level of the Australian Curriculum: History, students are expected to engage with a set of key inquiry questions, such as:

- 'How do we know about the ancient past?'
- 'What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence society?'
- 'How do new ideas and technological developments contribute to change?'
- 'How did the nature of global conflict change during the twentieth century?'

Oxford Big Ideas History is built around these big ideas. Each chapter of the course is carefully organised around big questions that are linked directly to the Australian Curriculum: History—helping students develop deep, transferable understandings and skills.

Key features

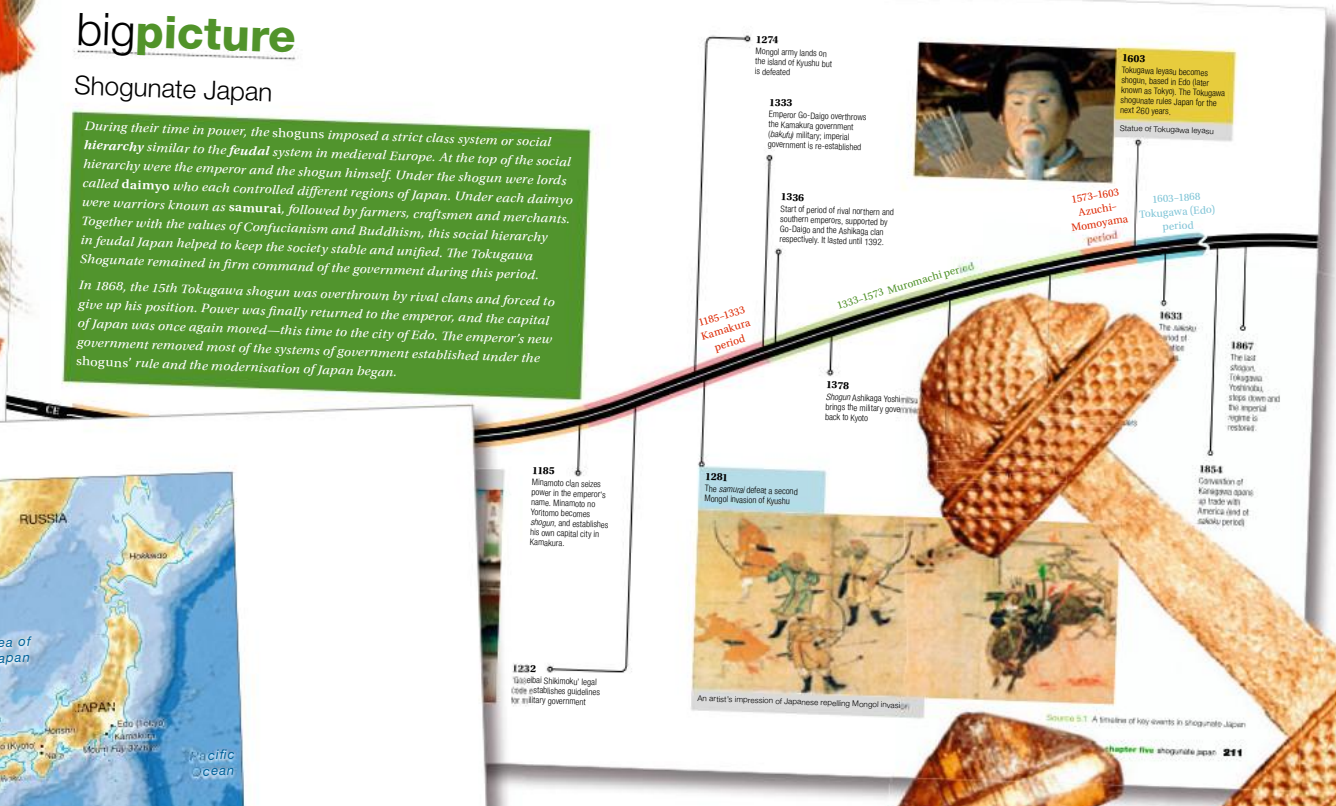
- organises learning around meaningful inquiry-based questions, or big ideas, that are closely mapped to the content of the Australian Curriculum: History
- provides complete coverage of all overview and depth study options from the curriculum across the print and digital components
- integrates both strands of the Australian Curriculum: History with an explicit focus on the acquisition of historical skills and key concepts at each year level
- caters for even the most reluctant learners, with a wealth of stunning images, illustrations and engaging source materials
- provides a complete teaching and learning program at each year level, in both print (textbooks, workbooks and teacher kits) and digital formats (**obooks** and interactive workbooks).

bigpicture

Shogunate Japan

During their time in power, the shoguns *imposed a strict class system or social* ***hierarchy*** *similar to the* ***feudal*** *system in medieval Europe. At the top of the social hierarchy were the emperor and the shogun himself. Under the shogun were lords called* **daimyo** *who each controlled different regions of Japan. Under each daimyo were warriors known as* **samurai**, *followed by farmers, craftsmen and merchants. Together with the values of Confucianism and Buddhism, this social hierarchy in feudal Japan helped to keep the society stable and unified. The Tokugawa Shogunate remained in firm command of the government during this period.*

In 1868, the 15th Tokugawa shogun was overthrown by rival clans and forced to give up his position. Power was finally returned to the emperor, and the capital of Japan was once again moved—this time to the city of Edo. The emperor's new government removed most of the systems of government established under the shoguns' *rule and the modernisation of Japan began.*



Source 5.3 Japan is a chain of islands. The peaks of underwater mountain ranges form these islands on the surface of the Pacific Ocean.

Geography

Japan has more than 3000 islands, but most Japanese live on the four largest islands of Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu and Hokkaido. Japan's rugged terrain means that only 15 per cent of the land can be farmed. Throughout Japan's history, local clans (family groups) fought over fertile land or what little there was.

The mountainous landscape encouraged many Japanese to look to the sea for a living. Early Japanese settlers fished from coastal villages. To this day, seafood remains an important part of the Japanese diet. Merchants travelled along the coastline, visiting villages with goods to trade. The sea surrounding Japan separated its people from Asia and, as a result, Japan developed its own unique religion, arts and social structures.

Check your learning

1 Look at Source 5.3. What body of water separates Japan from the Asian mainland?
2 How did Japan's location affect the way it developed as a society?
3 What impact did Japan's mountainous terrain have on the development of society?

chapter five shogunate japan 213

Using *Oxford Big Ideas History*

Big questions

Each chapter of *Big Ideas History* is structured around key inquiry questions from the Australian Curriculum. This supports students and teachers as they implement an inquiry-based approach to history.

Key inquiry questions are used to organise chapters and help students connect with learning.

depth study

The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

During the 14th century, a ***pandemic*** *spread across Asia, Europe and Africa— it became known as the Black Death. Scientists and historians think merchants introduced it to Europe in 1347. They were returning home from the East, where the pandemic is thought to have started. Within three years, it had spread through most of Europe, Asia and into north Africa. A lack of medical knowledge, filthy living conditions, superstitions and fear helped the disease to spread quickly.*

The Black Death had three related forms. The most common was the **bubonic plague**—a disease that still exists today. This disease is caused by the bacterium *Yersinia pestis*, found in the blood of fleas that are carried by rodents. It enters the body through the bite of a flea. Within a week, the victim has a fever, a headache and severe vomiting. Soon afterwards, glands in the groin, armpits and neck swell into large blackish bulges called **buboes**. They leak a foul pus, if they burst. Death in severe cases occurs within 48 hours.

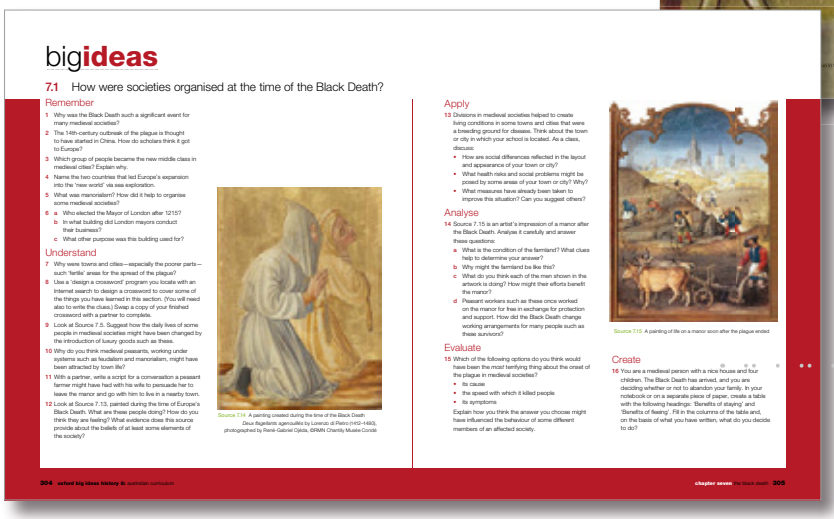
The impact of the Black Death on Europe was very significant. In Europe alone, 25 million people—one-third of the population—died.

Key inquiry questions

7.1 How were societies organised at the time of the Black Death?

7.2 How did the Black Death spread and what were its effects?

7


bigideas

7.1 How were societies organised at the time of the Black Death?

Remember

1 Why was the Black Death such a significant event for many medieval societies?
2 The 14th-century outbreak of the plague is thought to have started in China. How do scholars think it got to Europe?
3 Which group of people became the new middle class in medieval cities? Explain why.
4 Name the two countries that led Europe's expansion into the 'new world' via sea exploration.
5 What was manorialism? How did it help to organise some medieval societies?
6 a Who elected the Mayor of London after 1215?
b In what building did London mayors conduct their business?
c What other purpose was this building used for?

Understand

7 Why were towns and cities—especially the poorer parts—such 'fertile' areas for the spread of the plague?
8 Use a 'design a crossword' program you locate with an Internet search to design a crossword to cover some of the things you have learned in this section. (You will need also to write the clues.) Swap a copy of your finished crossword with a partner to complete.
9 Look at Source 7.5. Suggest how the daily lives of some people in medieval societies might have been changed by the introduction of luxury goods such as these.
10 Why do you think medieval peasants, working under systems such as feudalism and manorialism, might have been attracted by town life?
11 With a partner, write a script for a conversation a peasant farmer might have had with his wife to persuade her to leave the manor and go with him to live in a nearby town.
12 Look at Source 7.13, painted during the time of Europe's Black Death. What are these people doing? How do you think they are feeling? What evidence does this source provide about the beliefs of at least some elements of the society?

Source 7.14 A painting created during the time of the Black Death
Deux flagellants agenouillés by Lorenzo di Pietro (1410–1480), photographed by René-Gabriel Ojéda, ©RMN Chantilly Musée Condé

Apply

13 Divisions in medieval societies helped to create living conditions in some towns and cities that were a breeding ground for diseases. Think about the town or city in which your school is located. As a class, discuss:
- How are social differences reflected in the layout and appearance of your town or city?
- What health risks and social problems might be posed by some areas of your town or city? Why?
- What measures have already been taken to improve this situation? Can you suggest others?

Analyse

14 Source 7.15 is an artist's impression of a manor after the Black Death. Analyse it carefully and answer these questions:
a What is the condition of the farmland? What clues help to determine your answer?
b Why might the farmland be like this?
c What do you think each of the men shown in the artwork is doing? How might their efforts benefit the manor?
d Peasant workers such as these once worked on the manor for free in exchange for protection and support. How did the Black Death change working arrangements for many people such as these survivors?

Source 7.15 A painting of life on a manor soon after the plague ended

Evaluate

15 Which of the following options do you think would have been the most terrifying thing about the onset of the plague in medieval societies?
- its cause
- the speed with which it killed people
- its symptoms

Explain how you think the answer you choose might have influenced the behaviour of some different members of an affected society.

Create

16 You are a medieval person with a nice house and four children. The Black Death has arrived, and you are deciding whether or not to abandon your family. In your notebook or on a separate piece of paper, create a table with the following headings: 'Benefits of staying' and 'Benefits of fleeing'. Fill in the columns of the table and, on the basis of what you have written, what do you decide to do?

304 oxford big ideas history 8: australian curriculum

chapter seven the black death 305

Learning sequences are carefully organised around the key inquiry questions in the Australian Curriculum to help students delve deeply into topics.

Stunning full-colour photography to generate discussion and interest.

big ideas activity blocks at the end of each section use Bloom's Taxonomy and other strategies to cater for a multiplicity of learning styles.

Engaging learning

Each student book chapter combines a range of engaging historical sources, skills and concepts with a wide range of supporting activities. This content is brought to life with stunning illustrations and photographs to engage students.

The end of the world?

There have been a number of pandemics throughout history. For example, there was a plague in Europe in 430 B.C. and again in the 6th century. The plague that struck in the 14th century had a devastating effect on society. Partly this was due to Europe's larger population (exposing more people to rapid infection). Partly it was due to religious beliefs at the time, and to the limited medical knowledge.

This labelled illustration briefly presents some of the impacts of the Black Death on medieval society.

Source 7.37
[The people] sickened by the thousands daily, and died unattended and without help. Many died in the open street, others dying in their houses, making it known by the stench of their rotting bodies. Consecrated churchyards [those blessed by the priests] were not enough for the burial of the vast multitude of bodies, which were heaped by the hundreds in vast trenches like goods in a ship's hold, and covered with a little earth.

Translated extract from *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio

Source 7.38 A modern artist's impression of the impact of the plague on a medieval town

An estimated 25 million people died in a few years, possibly up to one-third of the european population.

Doctors wore full-body cloaks, and masks with long beaks filled with sweet-smelling substances. Sick female patients began to allow male doctors to examine all parts of their bodies, which was not common before.

The Black Death caused a huge labour shortage in towns and on the farms. Many feudal manors were largely deserted, either because workers had died or run away.

Believing the plague was God's punishment for wrongdoing, people known as flagellants began walking around whipping themselves.

Some people adopted an 'eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die' attitude, celebrating in drinking houses as they waited to die.

Doctors suggested unusual cures, such as telling people to sniff herbs or lemon leaves, or even their own fences. Sometimes leeches were attached to remove blood believed to be causing an imbalance in the body.

There were so many dead bodies (in the streets and houses) they had to be buried in mass pits. Bodies were collected and put on carts that travelled the streets.

People began to avoid others for fear of catching the disease; some ran away. Many victims were abandoned even by their own family and were left to suffer and die alone.

People did not know then about the health dangers associated with mice and rats, nor did they know that disease could be transferred by coughing and sneezing.

The plague caused some people to question their beliefs. Many priests died too, causing some to think that the Church was powerless to stop this terrible epidemic.

320 oxford big ideas history 8: australian curriculum

chapter seven the black death, europe and africa 321

Stunning full-colour illustrations encourage even the most reluctant learners to engage in historical inquiry.

Deep learning

Key concepts are explicitly covered in the Overview, and are constantly revisited throughout each chapter in the '**focus on ...**' boxes, allowing students to consolidate their learning.

empathy: leprosy

People still contract leprosy today. It is caused by a bacterium that infects the nerves, particularly in extremities such as fingers, toes and the nose. It leads to a loss of sensation in body tissue. Sufferers do not feel anything (for example, the pain of burns or cuts) parts of the body can be easily injured, and often lost. Fortunately, today leprosy can be cured with antibiotics.

In medieval times, victims of leprosy were seen as cursed. They were social outcasts to be avoided at all costs. They were condemned to live in colonies on remote islands or in caves.

This might seem very unjust to us, knowing what we know today about the disease, but we need to exercise our historical empathy to understand how medieval people felt. Think for a moment how someone who did not understand what caused leprosy would react to a sight like that shown in Source 7.22. The treatment of lepers in medieval times was motivated by fear and ignorance.

Source 7.22 This man with leprosy has lost most of his fingers.

Looking for answers

People in medieval times had no real idea about what caused the Black Death. They also did not understand why infections would spread in waves. Some believed that it meant the world was about to end.

As we have seen, some people blamed the Jews. Some Europeans believed that the plague was God's punishment for wrongdoing. They used stories from the Old Testament of the Bible to support their views. They believed that if they went on pilgrimages or used holy relics (such as a piece of the body of a dead saint) they could be saved. Many people flocked to churches to pray.

Some people thought that if they punished themselves, God would stop punishing their community. These people, known as flagellants (see Source 7.24), would walk around, often from town to town, singing hymns and flogging themselves or each other until their bare backs were a scarred and bleeding mess. Despite this, people continued to die in their thousands.

Clues in the heavens

A few people looked to the skies for answers (see Source 7.25). In medieval times, astronomical events to do with the planets, and the Sun and Moon were then often believed to trigger events on Earth.

Source 7.24 Procession of flagellants, painted by the Spanish artist Goya between 1815 and 1819

Jupiter
Mars
Saturn
Venus
Mercury

Source 7.25 A close alignment of planets on 5 May 2002, which will next occur in 2060. Such a sight in 1345 (for three of these planets anyway) had medieval people talking!

One such event occurred on 20 March 1345: the planets of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars were aligned closely in the night sky (at least to the naked eye). This unusual event was considered by certain people to have caused a toxic cloud to form over India. As this cloud drifted on, it was said to infect people below with the plague.

Smells

Bad smells were considered by many people to be the cause of disease. To counteract the odours, people carried small bunches of flowers or parcels filled with fragrant herbs, spices or flowers. Vinegar and human faeces were unified too. Green wood (such as from the rosemary plant) was also burned in the home to give off a fragrant smoke. People were encouraged by doctors not to sleep on their backs—it was believed that bad smells could slip too easily up their nostrils.

Source 7.26

[You are to remove] ... the human faeces and filth lying in the streets and lanes ... with all speed to places far distant, so that no greater cause of mortality (death) may arise from such smells.

Comment made by King Edward III (1312–1377) to London's mayor on observing the state of the city

Other risks

When a lack of medical knowledge was combined with the unhygienic conditions in which many medieval people lived, it is not surprising that so many people died young, and that the Black Death took hold so quickly and killed so many people. Life expectancy in Europe at that time was between 30 and 40 years. One in every two babies died before they were five. About one in five women died in childbirth. Most women had at least six children, and complications during or after childbirth were common.

Check your learning

1 What bacterium causes the bubonic plague?
2 Brainstorm this question as a class: Why does ignorance so often cause fear?
3 Use historical empathy adopt the mind-set of a medieval person who is confronted by the leprosy sufferer shown in Source 7.22. Compose a statement they might make to their family. Think about what might have motivated them to react that way. Don't superimpose your own views.
4 Describe two actions that some medieval people took to seek what they believed would be God's forgiveness.
5 Medieval people did not know what caused the plague, but they did have some ideas. Describe two possible causes put forward.

312 oxford big ideas history 8: australian curriculum

chapter seven the black death in asia, europe and africa 313

Check your learning question blocks appear throughout the chapter, allowing students to reflect on and consolidate their learning.

Content is designed for depth of learning. Concepts are revisited with increasing levels of complexity so that students gain a rich understanding of key historical concepts.

connectingideas

The Black Death

Ignorance, fear ... and prejudice

The Black Death spread rapidly because people did not know what caused it. Consequently, they had no idea how to avoid it. 'Cures' and defences were adopted, and reasons put forward to explain what was happening. People were found to blame. When none of these strategies stopped people dying, fear grew more intense. It was not until centuries later—the 1890s—that it was discovered that the fleas on rats were the problem. More specifically, bacteria they carried were the cause. Had people known this in the 14th century, millions of lives might have been saved, and a great many spared needless pain and fear.

Source 7.47 Isabella Dinoire, the world's first person to receive a partial face transplant. Her own face had been seriously mauled by a dog.

As medical skills improve and new knowledge is acquired, more can be done to save lives and improve the quality of life. Stem-cell research, for instance, has raised the hopes of many that treatments might one day be found for incurable illness and conditions.

- Organ transplants have also given many recipients the chance for a longer (or better) life. Since 1965, around 30000 Australians have benefited from such transplants.
- Others choose to donate their whole body to science. They give permission for their body to be dissected and examined in the interest of advancing medical knowledge.

1 While many scientists support these developments, not all community groups or individuals do. Some religious groups and experts in ethics, have expressed concerns about some of them. As a class, discuss why you think this might be the case.
2 Do you think similar concerns were discussed when the medieval Church refused to allow body dissections for medical reasons? Give reasons for your opinion.
3 What are your personal views about organ donation? Express these in some imaginative way—a poem, a piece of music, an artwork or sculpture.

Most people in our society visit a doctor if they are sick or injured; however, some prefer to try alternative medicines. Therapies include acupuncture, cupping, homeopathy, massage, herbal or vitamin remedies, spiritual healing, 'mind over matter' healing, yoga and meditation. Some traditional doctors support alternative medical techniques. There is still prejudice in the minds of many that alternative medicine is a bit like the treatments offered by women healers in medieval times.

1 Many medieval women who used their knowledge of herbs and other healing techniques were accused of being witches, and were brutally killed.
   a Why do you think medieval people sometimes reacted this way?
   b In our society, people are no longer accused of being witches; however, some similar attitudes still exist. Why do you think this is the case?
2 In small groups, discuss what you think about alternative medicine. What is the general view of the group? Report back to the rest of the class.
3 Of the alternative medical treatments mentioned above, find out more about one of them. Write a facts chart on it.

Source 7.50 A treatment, traditional in China but considered alternative in Australia, called cupping. It is used to promote blood circulation.

The AIDS virus has killed more than 25 million people since the early 1980s. It has damaged many communities, particularly in developing countries. At first, many infected victims unknowingly passed the virus on. When people started dying, certain groups—drug users and homosexual men—were blamed, as the disease was most common among these groups. In a similar way to the Black Death, HIV/AIDS has now spread to people from all walks of life. At first, the rapid death rate and lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS caused great fear. People who became infected—even young children—tended to be treated without compassion or understanding.

1 Conduct some research on the current situation with HIV/AIDS worldwide. Are social attitudes towards this disease changing? Suggest reasons for your view.
2 Based on what you know about the Black Death, suggests reasons why:
   a HIV/AIDS initially caused such great fear
   b some people found the need to blame certain groups of society
   c some people went out of their way to avoid victims, or to prevent them from living as ordinary members of a community.
3 Look at Source 7.48. In what way is this condition like and unlike the buboes of a plague victim? Why do you think such physical evidence, in both cases, is so frightening?

Source 7.48 The skin of an AIDS sufferer, with a cancerous side infection (known as Kaposi's sarcoma) commonly contracted by people with HIV/AIDS

Q Fast-forward to the year 2100. Based on what you currently know, predict what the medical world might then be like. Think about what diseases might be curable, and what medical advances might have been made in terms of prolonging life. Predict what public attitudes might be towards medicine, and why.

328 oxford big ideas history 8: australian curriculum

chapter seven the black death in asia, europe and africa 329

Connecting ideas activities encourage students to transfer and connect what they have learned in each chapter to areas of interest or personal experience, making learning fun and meaningful.

Integrated teaching and learning support

obook

The **obook** is Oxford's next generation ebook, offering online and offline access to the complete range of content at each year level. Each **obook** contains a range of interactive resources, as well as links to video, audio and supporting websites. The **obook** allows students to take notes and highlight text, then save and export their work.

Workbook

Each level *Oxford Big Ideas History* is supported by a Workbook that provides extra practice of key historical skills and supports an inquiry-based approach to learning—perfect for use in class or at home. An interactive digital Workbook is also available.

Teacher Kit

Each Teacher Kit includes the student textbook in a wraparound format containing teaching strategies, lesson ideas and planning tips, assessment advice and suggested answers to all activities in the textbook and Workbook.

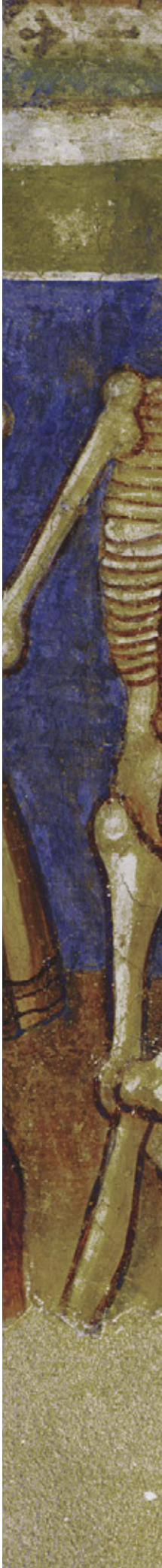
Australian Curriculum: History 8—Scope and sequence

The Australian Curriculum: History is organised into two interrelated strands: Historical Knowledge and Understanding and Historical Skills. *Oxford Big Ideas History 8* has been written to address both of these strands in an integrated way and enable students to meet the Year 8 achievement standard.

Year 8 level description (excerpt)	The Year 8 curriculum provides a study of history from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern period (*c*. 650–1750 CE). This was when major civilisations around the world came into contact with each other. Social, economic, religious, and political beliefs were often challenged and significantly changed. It was the period when the modern world began to take shape.
Key inquiry questions	The key inquiry questions at this year level are: • How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age? • What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies? • What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period? • Which significant people, groups and ideas from this period have influenced the world today?

Historical knowledge and understanding

		Chapters		Suggested class time
Overview	This overview of the historical period **MUST** be studied	1.0	The ancient to the modern world: an overview	10%
Depth studies	**The Western and Islamic world** Choose **ONE** of the depth study options ➞	o	The Ottoman Empire [**obook** only]	30%
		o	Renaissance Italy [**obook** only]	
		2.0	The Vikings	
		3.0	Medieval Europe	
	The Asia–Pacific world Choose **ONE** of the depth study options ➞	4.0	The Khmer Empire	30%
		5.0	Japan under the shoguns	
		o	The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [**obook** only]	
	Expanding contacts Choose **ONE** of the depth study options ➞	6.0	Mongol expansion	30%
		7.0	The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa	
		o	The Spanish conquest of the Americas [**obook** only]	



Historical skills

Chronology, terms and concepts	• Sequence historical events, developments and periods (ACHHS148) • Use historical terms and concepts (ACHHS149)
Historical questions and research	• Identify a range of questions about the past to inform a historical inquiry (ACHHS150) • Identify and locate relevant sources, using ICT and other methods (ACHHS151)
Analysis and use of sources	• Identify the origin and purpose of primary and secondary sources (ACHHS152) • Locate, compare, select and use information from a range of sources as evidence (ACHHS153) • Draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources (ACHHS154)
Perspectives and interpretations	• Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources (ACHHS155)
Explanation and communication	• Develop texts, particularly descriptions and explanations that use evidence from a range of sources that are acknowledged (ACHHS156) • Use a range of communication forms (oral, graphic, written) and digital technologies (ACHHS157)

Year 8 achievement standard

By the end of Year 8, students recognise and explain patterns of change and continuity over time. They explain the causes and effects of events and developments. They identify the motives and actions of people at the time.

Students explain the significance of individuals and groups and how they were influenced by the beliefs and values of their society. They describe different interpretations of the past. Students sequence events and developments within a chronological framework with reference to periods of time. When researching, students develop questions to frame an historical inquiry. They analyse, select and organise information from primary and secondary sources and use it as evidence to answer inquiry questions.

Students identify and explain different points of view in sources. When interpreting sources, they identify their origin and purpose, and distinguish between fact and opinion. Students develop texts, particularly descriptions and explanations, incorporating analysis. In developing these texts, and organising and presenting their findings, they use historical terms and concepts, evidence identified in sources, and acknowledge their sources of information.

© Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority 2011. Content descriptions and elaborations. This is an extract from the Australian Curriculum and is current as at October 2011. ACARA neither endorses nor verifies the accuracy of the information provided and accepts no responsibility for incomplete or inaccurate information. In particular, ACARA does not endorse or verify the content descriptions are solely for Year 8; and that all the content descriptions for Year 8 have been used. You can find the unaltered and most up to date versions of this material at http://www.australiancurriculum.edu.au/. This material is reproduced with the permission of ACARA.

overview

The ancient to the modern world: an overview

The period of time between about 650 CE and 1750 CE marked the end of the ancient world and the beginning of the modern world. It was a time of great change. Civilisations rose and new religions spread. New inventions emerged, as well as new ideas about art, politics, literature, religion and science.

New **societies** took shape in Europe. Other societies—for example, in China and India—changed in major ways. Some changes were driven by the spread of religions and by shifting economic and social values. Others were the direct result of migration, battles for power, and the spread of a disease known as the Black Death.

The more powerful societies of this period competed to increase their power and territory, causing many violent conflicts. Many also chose to explore the seas in search of new lands and riches.

Many **sources** of **evidence** of this period remain. Among them are these stone carvings at Angkor Thom in Cambodia. Made in the 12th century, they are a relic from the Khmer Empire.

Key inquiry questions

1.1 How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?

1.2 What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies?

1.3 What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period?

1.4 Which significant people, groups and ideas from the period have influenced the world today?

Stone faces carved at Angkor Thom, Cambodia

1

bigpicture

The ancient to the modern world: an overview

The 1100-year period between the end of the ancient world and the dawn of modern world (c. 650–1750 CE) was often marked by instability. There were a number of reasons for this. Many migrating peoples were on the move. This brought them into contact with other societies, often resulting in conflict. Religions such as Buddhism, Christianity and Islam were spreading their influence. Trade grew rapidly in many regions, particularly towards the end of this period. This prompted a rapid growth of towns and cities. Trade also played a deadlier role: it helped to spread a pandemic that killed millions.

Changing political and economic ideas shaped how some societies at this time were organised. The world was being changed, too, by voyages of discovery, new inventions and new ways of thinking about science and the arts.

A statue of William the Conqueror

1066
William the Conqueror leads a Norman army to defeat the Anglo-Saxons and win control of England

CE

***c.* 476** Ancient Rome's Western Empire collapses, starting a period in Europe known as the Middle Ages

***c.* 550**
Gupta Empire in India is destroyed by the Huns, starting a period of chaos in India

610
Muhammad begins to record the most important religious text in Islam—the Qur'an; he died 22 years later, in 632

The Qur'an, the central religious text of Islam

***c.* 750**
Polynesians colonise New Zealand

768
Emperor Charlemagne founds the Holy Roman Empire; he was the greatest ruler of Western Europe during the Middle Ages

793
Vikings first attack England, starting a 200-year regime of terror for England and Europe

Artist's impression of a fleet of Viking ships

802
The Khmer Empire founded by King Jayavarman II; under his leadership, the Khmers adopt Hinduism

An artist's impression of the first landing of Christopher Columbus in the Caribbean

1492
Italian explorer Christopher Columbus reaches the Americas

1260
Kublai Khan (grandson of Genghis Khan) is declared 'Great Khan' and becomes a powerful Mongol leader

1185
Japan comes under the rule of its first *shogun* (a military leader); shoguns rule Japan for the next 400 years

1299
The Ottoman Empire founded under the rule of Osman I

***c.* 1100**
Inca civilisation emerges in South America

***c.* 1427**
Aztec Empire founded in central Mexico

1526
The Moghul Empire is established in India

1521
Spanish forces destroy the Aztec Empire in central America

1206
Genghis Khan unites Mongol tribes for the first time

1347
First evidence in Europe of the outbreak of the pandemic known as the Black Death

***c.* 1140**
Khmer King Suryavarman II starts building the Angkor Wat temple in today's Cambodia

1278
Under the leadership of Kublai Kahn, the Mongols defeat the Sung Dynasty in China and set up the Yuan Dynasty. For the first time, China is ruled by foreigners.

An artist's impression of Kublai Khan with explorer Marco Polo

1095
European Christians begin the First Crusade—a military expedition to reclaim the city of Jerusalem from Muslims. There were another seven Crusades over the next 200 years.

Source 1.1 A timeline of some key events in the period from the ancient to the modern world

Source 1.2 A medieval painting from 1375, Niccolo and Maffeo Polo (father and uncle of Marco Polo) crossing Asia

1.1 How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?

***Societies** change for many reasons. Wars, religion, discoveries and inventions, trade, natural disasters and contact between different cultures can all play a part. In this chapter, we will look briefly at how a number of societies changed during the period of study. Later in the year, you will choose to look at a few of these in more depth.*

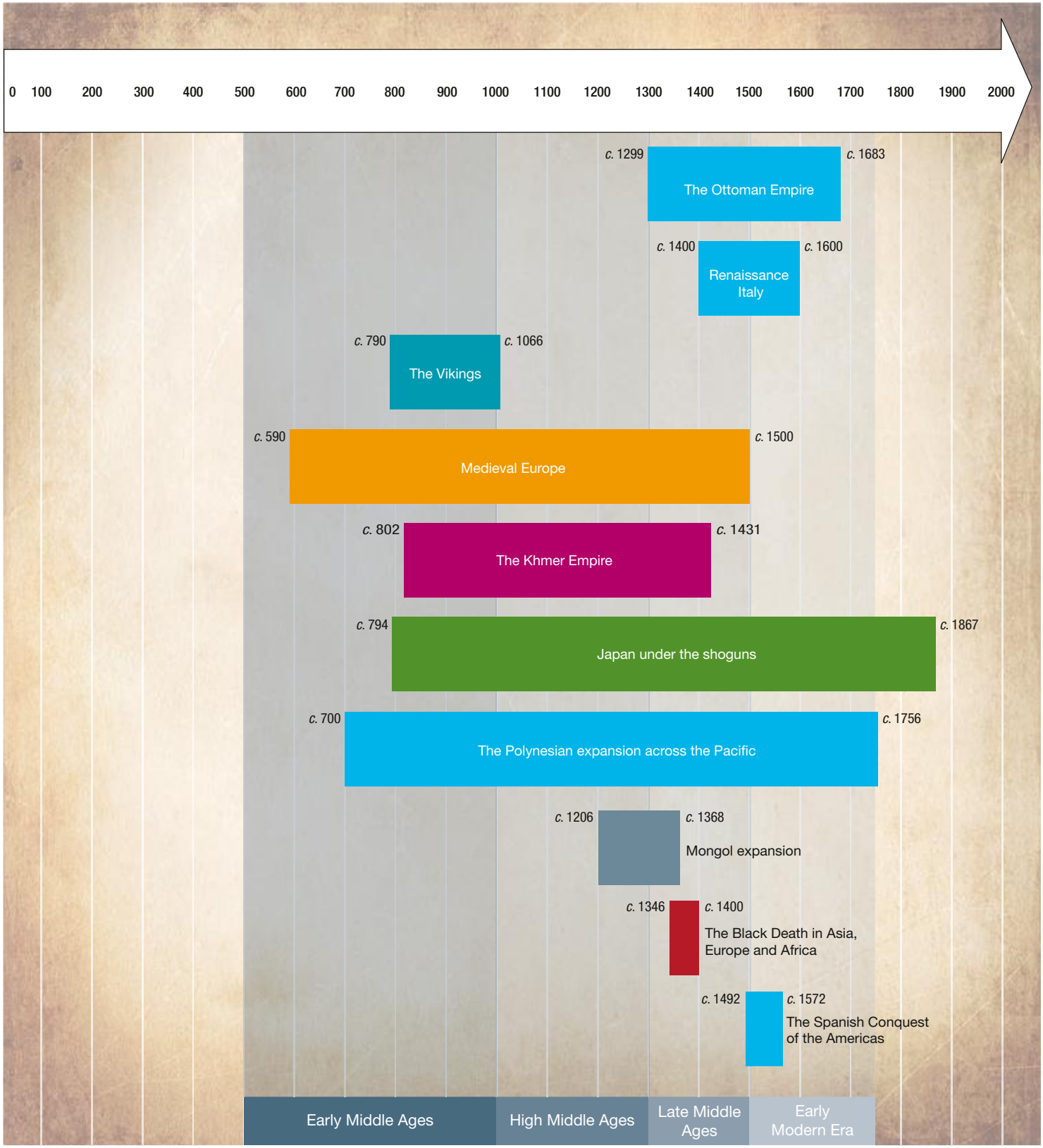
Tracking the changes

To begin, we will focus on some of the changes that occurred in Europe during the period of study. Then we look at how some societies in other parts of the world were changing. In particular, we explore changes brought about by:

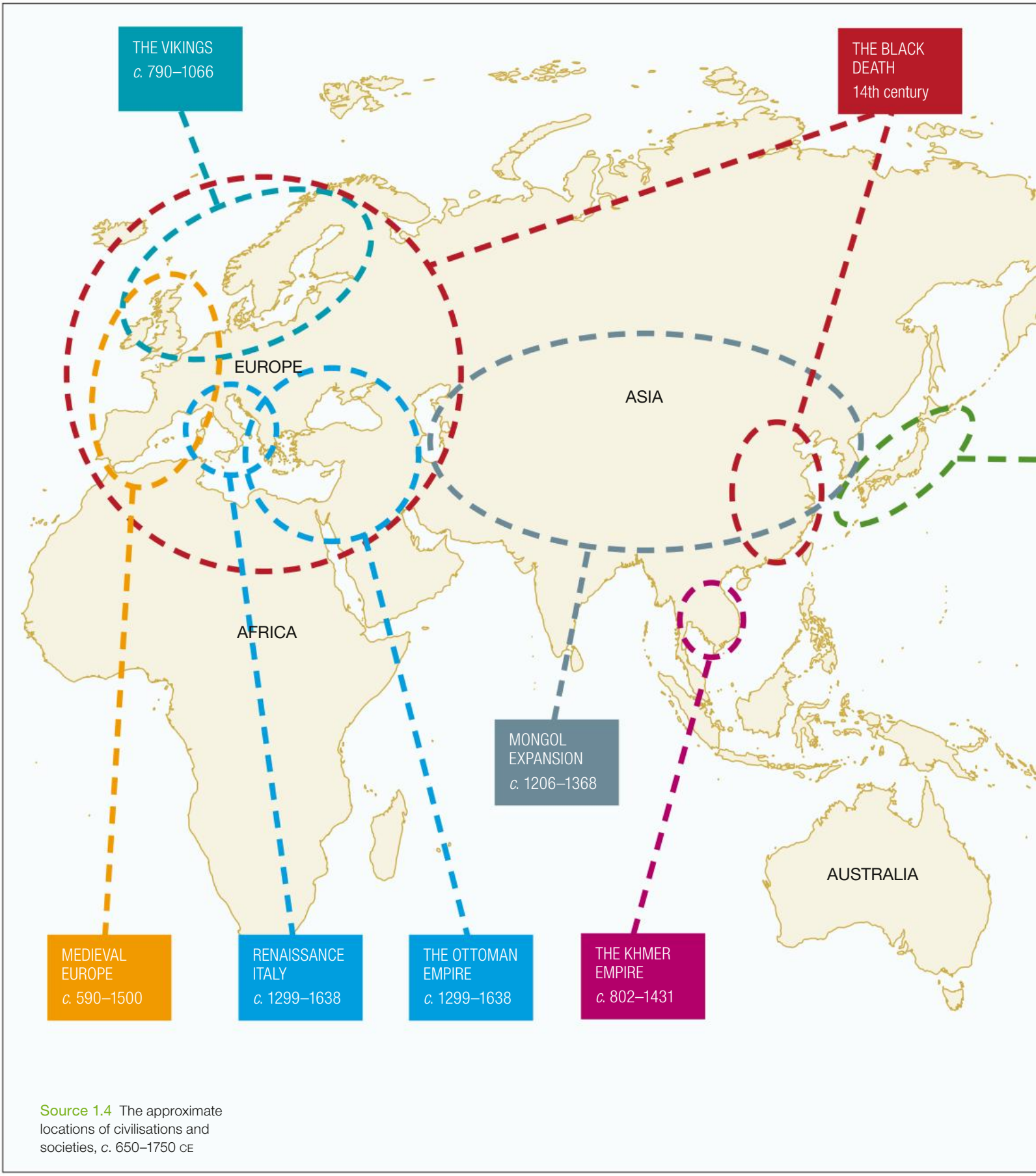
- the collapse of ancient societies
- the migration of peoples
- conflict and wars
- the spread of religions
- the emergence of new ideas.

The **timeline** in Source 1.3 plots the span of significant periods, events, **empires** and **dynasties**. The world map in Source 1.4 shows their location.

The rise and fall of civilisations

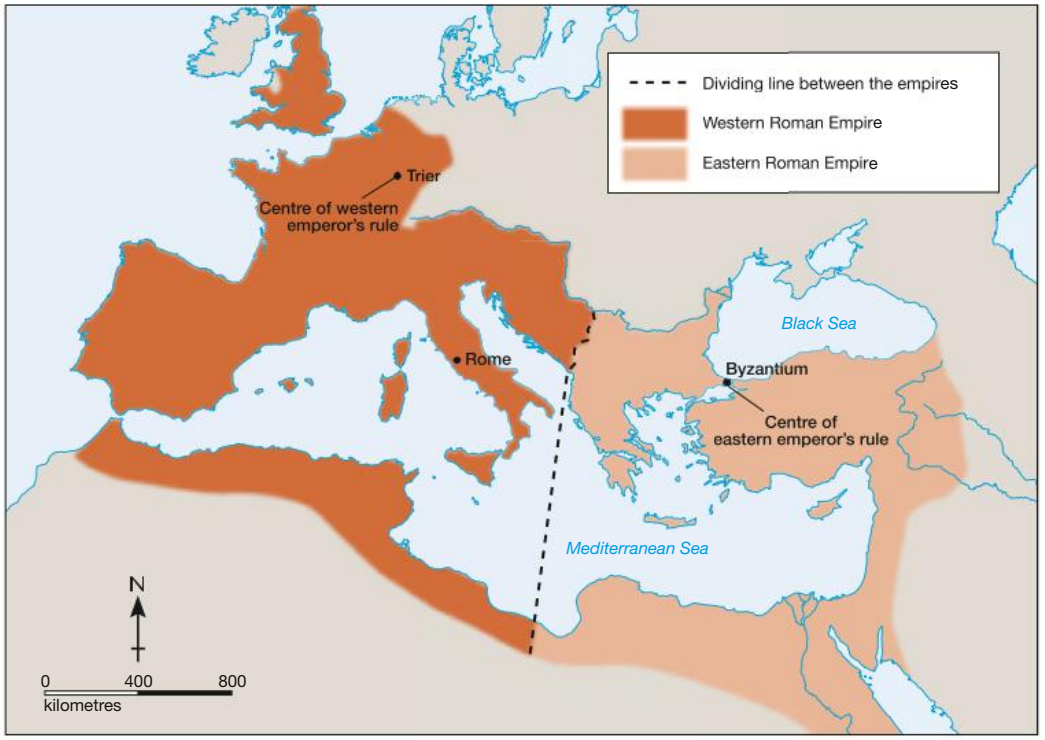


Source 1.3 A timeline showing the rise and fall of civilisations and societies, *c.* 650–1750 CE



Source 1.4 The approximate locations of civilisations and societies, *c.* 650–1750 CE

NORTH AMERICA
JAPAN UNDER THE SHOGUNS
c. 794–1867
SOUTH AMERICA
THE POLYNESIAN EXPANSION
c. 1700–1756
THE SPANISH CONQUEST
c. 1492–1572



Source 1.5 How the ancient Roman Empire was split in two

The collapse of ancient societies

Societies collapse for a range of reasons. These include wars, natural disasters, invasions, disease, poor leaderships. Mostly a mixture of these reasons is involved, as was the case with the collapse of ancient Rome.

The collapse of ancient Rome's Western Empire

The ancient Roman Empire reached its peak around 117 CE. At that time, it stretched from Britain in the north, to the northernmost part of Africa in the south; from as far west as modern Portugal to as far east as modern-day Iraq.

However, over the next 60 years it started to weaken. One reason was the huge pressure placed on its army through war. Also significant was the arrival at its borders of waves of migrating peoples. By 284 CE, when Diocletian became emperor, the empire had become very unstable. The 25 emperors who ruled in the 50 years before him had nearly all been killed in war or assassinated.

Dividing the empire

Diocletian was a strong leader. One of his decisions was to split the empire in two, to make it easier to manage. Rome would remain the capital of the Western Empire, with its emperor being the 'more senior' of the two emperors. Byzantium, later renamed Constantinople, would become the capital of the Eastern Empire. Today, it is the city of Istanbul.

But even this drastic action did not provide the stability that Diocletian had hoped for. By 310 CE there were six rival emperors competing for power. The 'winner' was Constantine, in 312 CE.

Source 1.6 An artist's impression of a Visigoth attack on Rome in 410 CE

Wars: Barbarian tribes were increasingly on the attack against the empire. There were also civil wars fought by those wanting to be the next emperor.

Scene from the 2000 movie *Gladiator*, showing Roman soldiers just before a battle with barbarians

Population pressures: The Roman population was reducing due to plague, famine, lead poisoning (from lead water pipes) and war.

Reasons why Rome fell

Weakening morale: Wars, corruption and inefficiency in the **bureaucracy**, and a loss of self-discipline all took their toll on Roman morale.

Declining agriculture: Many farm slaves died. Less agricultural production meant less tax in the empire's 'coffers'.

Christianity: At first, Romans tortured and killed Christians. They were seen as a threat to society because they worshipped only one god (unlike the ancient Romans who worshipped many gods). Christians also refused to worship the emperor.

An artist's impression of Christians in Rome being fed to the lions as punishment for their beliefs

Declining economy: The costs of upkeep for the army and emperor were high, so taxes were increased. The declining value of Roman coins affected trade. Cost-cutting meant maintenance of roads and public buildings was often neglected.

Source 1.7 Some contributing causes to the collapse of the Western Roman Empire

Waves of barbarians

Tribal peoples had been moving towards the empire's borders from the 3rd century CE. This migration intensified over time. Among the earliest to arrive were the Vandals and the Goths (made up of the Ostrogoths and Visigoths). Later, Rome's army would be fighting another group from the East: the Huns.

After Emperor Constantine's death in 337, the empire was in turmoil. Civil wars again broke out as different men pushed to be the next emperor. Thousands of Roman soldiers died. In order to replace them, the leaders of the army recruited people from outside the empire, known as **barbarians**. Around the same time, barbarians were put to work on farms all over the empire. The increased numbers of non-Romans intermixing with Romans caused tensions. Meanwhile, other groups of barbarians were attacking Roman settlements.

In 476, the Ostrogoths attacked the city of Rome. They forced the emperor, a boy, to give up his power. It was over for the Western Empire. The Eastern (or Byzantine) Empire would continue until 1453.

Check your learning

1 Write a paragraph to explain some impacts barbarians had on the empire of ancient Rome.

2 Explain how Christians were treated by the ancient Romans and why.

3 Discuss as a class:
   - **a** What a society needs to stay strong
   - **b** How change can both strengthen and weaken a society.

4 Look at Source 1.7. How many of these factors do you think are common to all declining civilisations? Are there lessons to be learned for our Western civilisation?

skill**drill**

Identify and locate relevant sources

Knowing how to find relevant and reliable sources is an essential skill for a historian. Some ways to find these are described below.

Locating relevant sources using ICT

The Internet is a massive database. In fact, its size is one of the challenges a historian faces in locating sources. Anyone can post information online; so, not every site can be trusted to provide reliable information. Furthermore, the best site is almost certainly not going to be the first one you see. However, the Internet is definitely a good tool to gather sources. You might like to search these sites:

For photographs:

- Corbis
- Wikimedia Commons
- British Museum

For maps, interactive maps and satellite images of the Earth:

- Google Earth
- The Map as History

For illustrated articles and multimedia:

- National Geographic
- History.com

For a range of Australian newspapers (printed between 1803 and 1854):

- National Library of Australia

Be wary of blogs or Wikipedia, as anyone can post on these. Wikipedia itself warns users that its content may be open to dispute. Look for sites created by government or educational bodies, or by reputable organisations. Sites posted by museums, libraries and encyclopaedias are useful.

Locating relevant sources by other means

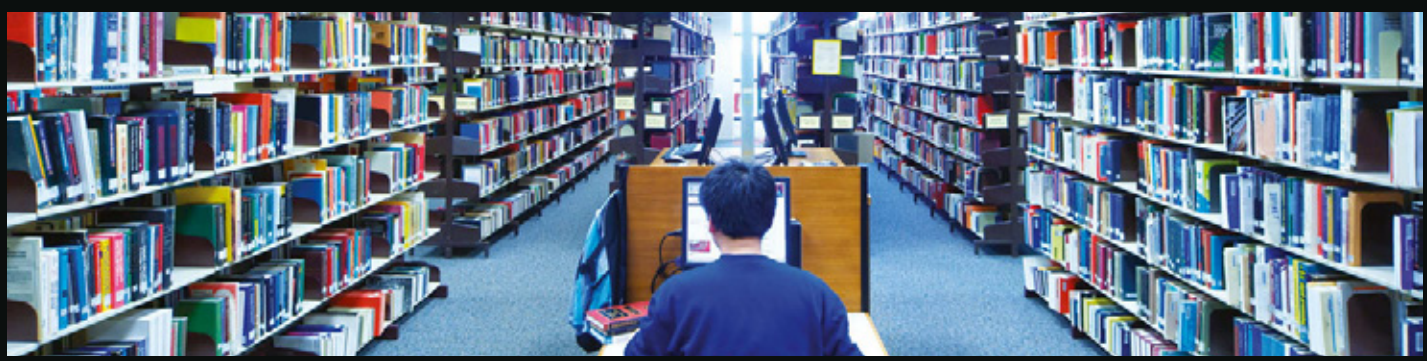
You will find useful sources in your school or public library. Don't forget the reference collection (dictionaries and encyclopaedias) and the serials collection (journals and magazines). If you need help, ask the librarian.

Historical societies are also helpful. These are groups of historians and volunteers who promote the study of history, and conduct research into areas of interest. There are historical societies in towns and cities all over Australia. One of the largest is the Royal Australian Historical Society.

Other useful sources can be found in your local newspaper or family magazines. Browse through what's on offer in your local newsagent too. Sometimes there are interesting historical series. You might even sift through the old letters, albums and scrapbook files of your parents or grandparents!

Check your learning

Conduct research to locate what you think might be ten useful sources of information about any aspect of one of the depth studies you will be investigating. Locate five sources using the Internet; use other methods to locate the other five. The sources can be images, text extracts, diagrams, videos or maps. Prepare a paper or digital display of your findings.



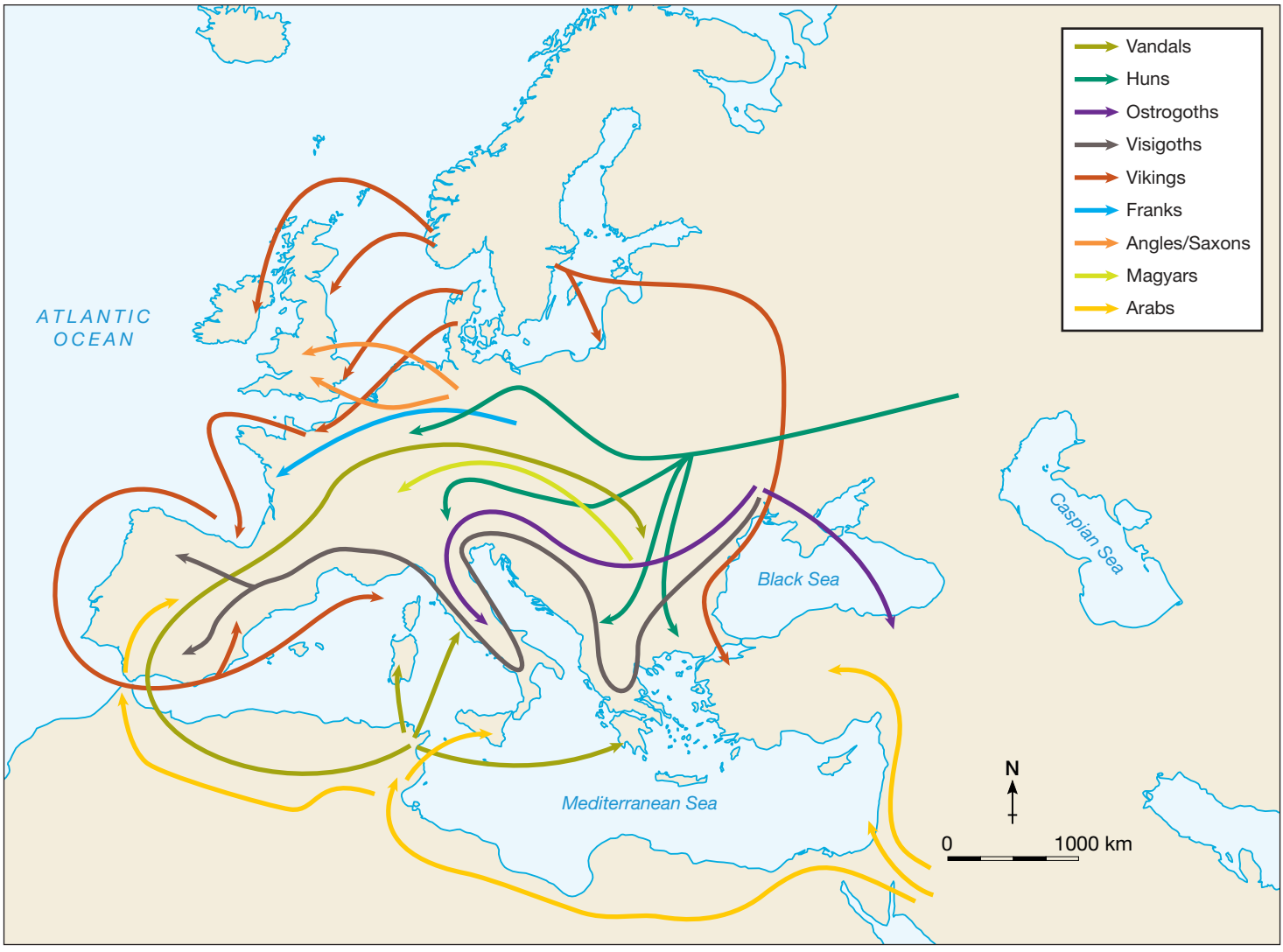
Source 1.8 Knowing where to look for relevant sources is a crucial part of the research process.

The migration of peoples

After 476, the barbarian tribes that helped to end the Western Roman Empire settled in different regions. The Vandals set up their base first in Spain, and then in north Africa. The Visigoths settled in Spain (after expelling the Vandals). The Ostrogoths settled in Italy. But this did not mean the end of migrations.

Shifting populations

New peoples were on the move—to settle or to plunder. These included Saracens (Muslim tribes of Arabs from a region in modern-day Egypt), Magyars (from modern-day Hungary), Mongols (from north-east Asia) and, later, Vikings (from modern-day Scandinavia). This ongoing threat forced many people in Europe to protect themselves, in turn, changing the way some societies operated.



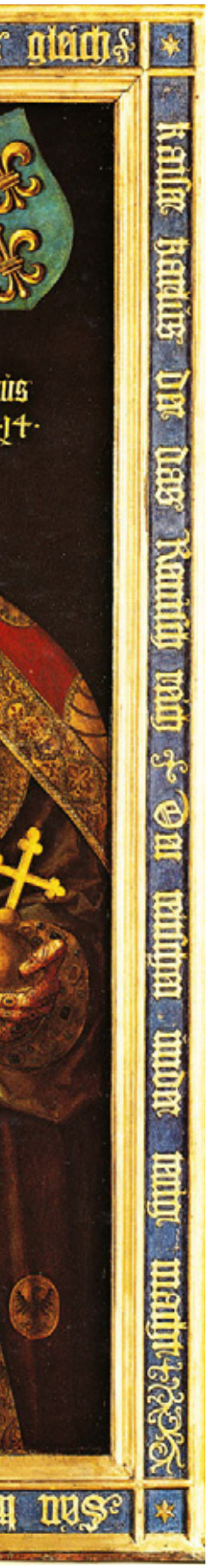
Source 1.9 Movement of barbarians in the 4th and 5th centuries CE

Source 1.10 A 16th-century illustration of Attila, leader of the Huns (who died in 453 CE). It portrays him as a demon.

Huns

The Huns swept down from the Mongolian steppes in the 5th and 6th centuries. They were skilled archers and horse-riders, fierce in battle and fierce to look at—the cheeks of baby boys were cut with swords to prevent the growth of beards.

The Huns weakened the Western Roman Empire, but they ended the Gupta Empire of India in 550 CE.



Source 1.11 A portrait of Charlemagne, King of the Franks from 768 until his death in 814. For the last 14 years of his life, he was also known as Holy Roman Emperor.

Franks

The Franks were Germanic tribes from the lower Rhine region (in modern-day Germany). During the 500s, the Franks migrated to an area known as Gaul (roughly, today's France). About 300 years later, the empire of the Frankish Carolingian Dynasty included most of Western Europe. The Franks were a major force in spreading Christianity.

Source 1.12 An artist's impression of Theodoric the Great

Ostrogoths

Soon after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, the Eastern emperor sent a man named Theodoric (*c.* 454–526) to re-take Italy. Though he was an Ostrogoth, Theodoric set himself up as a sort of Roman emperor in Ravenna. He allowed ancient Rome's culture to continue alongside Gothic traditions. But when he started expanding his territory, surrounding rulers became concerned. In the mid 500s, Byzantine Emperor Justinian I declared the Gothic Wars. That was the end of Theodoric's empire.

Vikings

In 900 CE, after repeated attacks by raiding Vikings, the French king, Charles the Simple, gave the Viking leader Rollo (*c.* 855–931) a tract of land: Normandy. The deal was that Viking invasions would stop. When the English king, Edward the Confessor, died in 1066, William, Duke of Normandy—a descendant of Rollo— believed he had a right to the throne. But so did others. So William and his Norman troops invaded England. William won the Battle of Hastings and was crowned King of England that year.

Check your learning

1. Why might Europeans have feared attacks by the Huns?
2. Conduct research to find out more about the Magyars and the Saracens. Write a paragraph on each to explain their impact on European society.
3. How did the Merovingian Dynasty change things for the Franks?
4. Draw a diagram to show how the following people were linked: Edward the Confessor, Rollo, Charles the Simple and William, Duke of Normandy.

key**concepts**

cause and effect

Cause and effect is the link between what causes (or motivates) an action and the effects of that action. History provides countless examples of the link between these two factors.

What caused Britain to become 'Anglo-Saxon'?

Most of Britain was once part of the ancient Roman Empire. Britain's local people then were Celts. They were a warlike people; they often fought naked, with their skin heavily tattooed or painted blue.

During the 5th century, the Roman army that had been stationed in Britain left. It was needed to help defend other parts of the empire against barbarian attack. With the army gone, law and order began to break down in parts of Britain. This concerned local leaders. It prompted them to recruit mercenaries from northern Germany to help to keep control. These recruits were from tribes known as Angles and Saxons. They were paid in land.

Over time, many of these recruits settled in Britain on the land they were given. As their numbers swelled, the Celts were pushed out towards the edges: today's Scotland, Wales and Cornwall. The **Anglo-Saxons** began to set up their own kingdoms. By the mid-9th century, three were dominant: Northumbria, Mercia and Wessex.

Source 1.13 An artist's impression of the Battle of Mons Badonicus (*c.* 500 CE). It was one of many conflicts between the Celts and the Anglo-Saxons in Britain.

1. What caused (or motivated) local leaders in Britain to recruit the support of the Angles and Saxons?
2. With a partner, draw a concept map to display what short- and long-term effects you think payments in land had on the Anglo-Saxons.
3. What effect do you think pushing the Celts off their land would have had (a) on the Celtic culture and (b) on the Anglo-Saxon settlers?

skill**drill**

Identify and describe points of view, attitudes and values in primary and secondary sources

History is recorded by people from different backgrounds, cultures and time periods. Such differences typically affect people's values and attitudes. Two people might therefore describe or depict a person or event very differently.

A source can sometimes be a primary source or secondary source — it can sometimes even be both. For example, a 19th-century painting of an ancient battle would be a secondary source for a study of that battle, and a primary source for a study of the artist's life.

Source 1.14 Features of primary and secondary sources

Primary sources are:	Secondary sources are:
• created at the time of an event, or very soon after • created by those who saw, heard or took part in an event themselves • often very rare or one-of-a-kind items.	• created after an event—sometimes a long time afterwards • often based on primary sources • objects that express an opinion or an argument about a past event.

Following are two text extracts written about the Vikings and a Viking **artefact**. Analyse the sources carefully. Think about why the writers wrote what they did. Consider whether their perspective on the Vikings 'sits' with the **evidence** provided by the other source. What does your analysis reflect about the values and perspectives of the Vikings and of those who wrote the extracts?

Source 1.15

This year came dreadful fore-warnings over the land of the Northumbrians [people from the north], terrifying the people most woefully [terribly]: there were immense sheets of light rushing through the air, and whirlwinds, and fiery, dragons flying across the firmament [sky]. These tremendous tokens [signs] were soon followed by a great famine: and not long after, on the sixth day before the ides [13th] of January in the same year, the harrowing [disturbing] inroads of heathen [non-Christian] men made lamentable havoc [terrible chaos] in the church of God in Holy-island, by rapine [violent robbery] and slaughter.

Extract from the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, a collection of documents created by Christian monks in approximately the 800s CE

Source 1.16 A pair of gold Viking brooches from the 10th century CE

Source 1.17

They are the filthiest race that God ever created. They do not wipe themselves after a stool [going to the toilet], nor wash themselves thereafter, any more than if they were wild asses. They come from their country in the North, anchor their ships in the Volga River, and build large wooden houses on its banks. In every such house there live ten or twenty, more or less... Every morning a girl comes and brings a tub of water, and places it before her master. In this he proceeds to wash his face and hands, and then his hair, combing it out over the vessel [bowl]. Thereupon he blows his nose, and spits into the tub, and leaving no dirt behind, conveys [puts] it all into the water. When he has finished, the girl carries the tub to the man next to him, who does the same.

A letter by Ahmad ibn-Fadlan, an Arab travel writer in the 10th century CE

Check your learning

1. Consider Sources 1.15 and 1.17.What points of view about the Vikings are evident from these sources?
2. The Vikings were often brutal invaders and plunderers of monasteries. Why might this have influenced the attitudes of the writers of Sources 1.15 and 1.17?
3. Are the sources here primary or secondary sources for a study of the Viking Age? Explain.
4. What does Source 1.16 suggest about the values and attitudes of the creator of these items?

Conflict and wars

The period between 650 CE and 1750 CE was marked by frequent conflict and wars. Sometimes the conflict was motivated by a desire for the land and resources of rival peoples. Other times fighting was in the name of religion. Let's look at two significant wars involving Europeans at the time and see how these conflicts changed societies.

The Battle of Hastings

The Battle of Hastings, as mentioned earlier, was fought in 1066 in England, between the Saxon army of the English king, Harald Godwineson, and the Norman army of William, Duke of Normandy. After winning this battle, the new king, William the Conqueror, introduced a number of Norman traditions to England. The most important among these were the systems of **feudalism** and **manorialism**; they changed the way English society was organised.

The Crusades

The **Crusades** were a series of wars fought at various times between 1096 and 1291 in a region known as the **Holy Land**—now made up of countries such as Israel, Lebanon and Syria. Armies from Christian areas in Europe travelled to this region and fought armies of Muslims. The main reason for the Crusades was to gain control over the city of Jerusalem. Jerusalem was an important religious city for Christians, Muslims and Jews at the time, and remains that way today.

Before the first Crusade, European merchants and travellers to the region were on good terms with the local Arabs. Things changed when a militant Muslim group—the Seljuk Turks—took control. They closed Jerusalem to Jewish and Christian pilgrims. This caused the Pope to call for volunteers to form an army and recapture the city.

The resulting conflict:

- caused great loss of life
- saw Crusaders return with many new goods and ideas that impacted on European society
- sowed the seeds of religious tension, which continues to the present day in that part of the world.

Source 1.18 An artist's impression of a battle from the First Crusade

Check your learning

1. In what way did the Battle of Hastings bring about major change for England?
2. How did things change for European merchants and travellers to the Holy Land when the Seljuk Turks took control?
3. Find three goods or ideas that were introduced to European society by returning Crusaders.

Source 1.19 Medieval artist Andrea di Buonaiuto's impression of devout European Christians

The spread of religions

The period between 650 CE and 1750 CE saw a number of religions spread their influence through different parts of the world. These included Christianity and Islam.

Spread of Christianity

After the collapse of the Western Roman Empire, Christianity offered hope during what was often a difficult time. Christian missionaries travelled great distances to convert others (such as the Germanic tribes). Many of these missionaries were murdered in the process.

Many Christian converts among these tribes continued to practise some of their former traditions. The legacy of this is still clear today. Some Christian festivals—Easter, for example—involve customs (such as giving eggs) linked to non-Christian traditions of past societies.

The Roman Catholic Church dominated European society during this period of time. Its teachings strongly influenced how people should live their lives. By around the 10th century, the Church was also providing a great deal of practical help such as education, care for the sick, legal advice and other community services.

Spread of Islam

Islam was founded by the Prophet Muhammad. His teachings spread quickly. When he died in 632 CE, the Arabian Peninsula was already an Islamic region. The spiritual leaders, or ***caliphs***, who succeeded Muhammad, continued to spread the Prophet's teachings throughout a growing Islamic Empire. The Islamic Empire eventually included most of Asia Minor, northern Africa and Spain. Islamic missionaries and traders spread the Islamic faith eastwards, to India and then to Indonesia.

Check your learning

1. Christianity began in the region we know today as the Middle East. Why was it the dominant religion in Europe after the fall of the Western Roman Empire?
2. In what other ways, besides providing religious direction, did the Church impact on Europe's society?
3. Who were the *caliphs*?
4. Explain how the Islamic faith ended up in regions of the world such as Indonesia.

The emergence of new ideas

After the fall of the Western Roman Empire, rival tribes and kingdoms ruled the area for around 500 years. There were often conflicts and wars over territory and resources like food and water. The threats that rival kingdoms posed to one another, along with uncertainty about raiding tribes, created a culture of self-defence across Europe. Rulers and wealthy landlords built castles for protection and surrounded themselves with private armies.

As a result, two new ideas emerged and evolved into systems that would influence life all over Europe. They were known as feudalism and manorialism.

- Feudalism was a loose political system made up of many two-way agreements between a '**lord**' and his '**vassal**'. Each agreement involved the lord giving a **fief** (usually a piece of land) to a vassal in return for that vassal's loyalty and support.
- Manorialism was the economic system that supported feudalism. The lord provided peasants with protection and support on his manor in exchange for their farm labour and loyalty. The concepts of feudalism and manorialism are explored further in Chapter 3.

Later, things changed again with the discovery of new lands and the growth in trade. The money and goods that poured into Europe saw towns and cities grow rapidly. Some merchants became very rich, especially bankers. The idea of trading or investing for profit began to take hold. These new economic ideas, which would form the basis and spread of capitalism, helped to end feudalism (already weakened by the **Black Death**). Politically, emerging nation states such as England, France, Portugal and Spain were beginning to compete for power.

Source 1.20 An artist's impression of a European marketplace during late medieval times. Marketplaces were a result of the new wealth and prosperity brought by trade.

Change in other societies

While Europe transformed first into a feudal society and then into nation states driven by capitalism, major changes were occurring in other parts of the world. A few are discussed here; more detail is provided in the related depth studies.

The Khmer Empire—the collapse of ancient societies

The region made up of countries such as Laos, Cambodia, Malaysia and Thailand was once a part of the Khmer Empire. Its start is usually regarded as 802 CE, when King Jayavarman II declared that he was king of all the world's rulers.

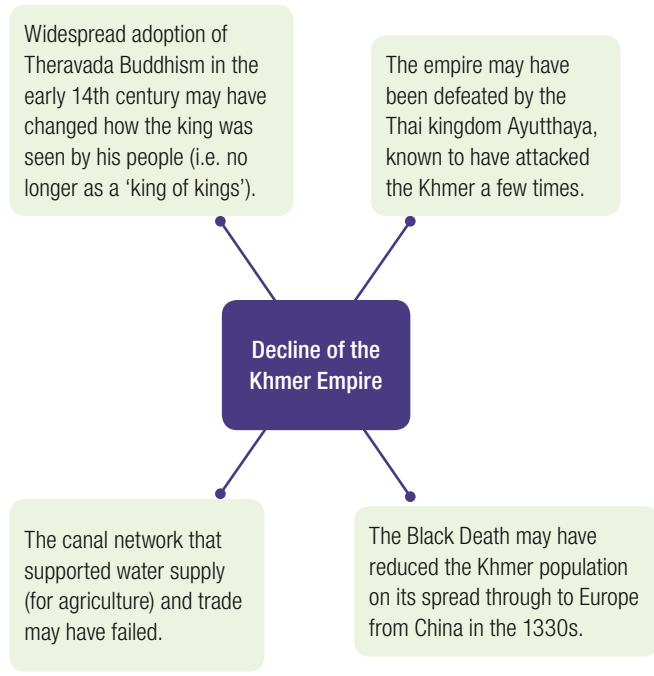
The prosperity of Khmer society came largely from its agriculture (mainly rice growing). It was also a very religious society. During the 500 years or so that the Angkor/Khmer civilisation lasted, many temples were built (see Source 1.21).

There were times of peace, urban development and cultural advance. But there was also a great deal of conflict and fighting. Many

Source 1.21 The temple at Angkor Wat, built in the early 12th century to honour the Hindu god Vishnu

Khmer rulers struggled to maintain control over their expanding empire. There were also religious tensions at times. The latter half of the 13th century saw King Jayavarman VIII, a committed Hindu, attempt to remove all evidence of Buddhism in the empire. The next king, Srindravarman (who ruled until 1309), was a devout follower of **Therevada Buddhism**.

The Khmer left no written records, but many inscriptions and carvings in stone survived. After 1327, these carvings stopped along with the construction of temples signalling the decline or end of the civilisation. Some possible reasons for this are outlined in Source 1.22.



Source 1.22 Some possible reasons given for the decline of the Khmer Empire

Polynesia—the migration of peoples

Evidence suggests that the Pacific islands of Polynesia were settled by a migration that began in Taiwan about 3500 years ago. Moving south-east, the migrants are thought to have moved over time from one island to the next. They travelled on bamboo rafts and, later, in double-hulled canoes. DNA tests indicate that they sometimes took with them people they had met with on the way.

By examining artefacts such as their pottery and the types of houses they built, many historians contend that they migrated first to Melanesia, then to Micronesia. Within 2500 years, they had populated all the islands of Polynesia. Along the way, they spread their **culture** and language.

Source 1.23 A reconstruction of the first Christian church erected in Greenland, *c.* 1000

Vikings—the spread of religions

For around 200 years after 793 CE—when they attacked the **monastery** at Lindisfarne in England—the Vikings were best known as brutal raiders. Evidence suggests they were greatly feared.

In time though, the Vikings began settling in some of the areas they had raided (such as England, Ireland and France). In these countries, many Vikings were exposed to Christianity and converted. Travellers between these outposts and the Viking homeland of Scandinavia carried the Christian message. By the end of the 11th century, Christianity was dominant not only in Scandinavia but also in Viking settlements such as Greenland and Iceland.

One immediate effect was the building of Christian churches (see Source 1.23). Viking burial practices were also changed. Christian Vikings began burying their dead, rather than burning them in boats as they had done before.

Mongols—conflict and wars

At its peak, the huge Mongol Empire extended from the eastern coast of China through to the eastern borders of Europe. The Mongols were fierce fighters, and often mercilessly cruel. Their leader, Genghis Khan, united the Mongol people in the late 1100s. Under the rule of Genghis Khan and his successors, the Mongol army conquered many tribes and peoples across Asia—expanding Mongol control within 100 years.

Kublai Khan, one of Genghis Khan's many grandsons, ruled the Mongols at the time of one of their most important conquests—China. Kublai Khan set up a new dynasty there in 1279 called the Yuan Dynasty. It lasted until 1368.

The Mongols also took control in India, and threatened the Khmer Empire for a time. The Mongols destroyed much of the Islamic Arab civilisation that existed to their west, even pushing into modern-day Poland and Hungary.

Source 1.24 The top part of a suit of armour worn by a *samurai*

Many societies were conquered and changed by the Mongols, but not all changes were negative. The close control Mongols maintained over the **Silk Road** made it safer for travellers and promoted trade. This trade route between east and west saw Chinese inventions such as paper, gunpowder and the magnetic compass reach Europe. These inventions alone had a substantial impact on societies across Europe.

Japan under the shoguns—the emergence of new ideas

Until the early 8th century, successive emperors of the powerful Yamato Dynasty controlled Japan. Then, in 858, another strong dynasty emerged: the Fujiwaras. During the next three centuries of Fujiwara rule, the emperor gradually lost power in all else but name. The politically powerful figures in Japan after the 12th century were the shoguns. Yoritomo Minamoto was the first *shogun*. *Shogun* rule continued until 1867.

This new arrangement introduced what is sometimes called Japan's feudal period:

- Reporting to the *shogun* were the ***daimyo***. These **warlords** often lived in castles, as did the feudal lords of Europe.
- The *daimyo*, in turn, were supported by bands of warriors called ***samurai***. The *samurai* lived by a code of conduct, as did European knights, and they similarly pledged allegiance to their lord.
- Peasants farmed the land of the warlords, in much the same way as European peasants farmed the land of the manors.

Check your learning

1 List three possible reasons for the collapse of the Khmer Empire.

2 a From where do many scholars think the migrants who populated Polynesia first came?

b How long did it take before all Polynesian islands were settled with these migrants?

3 Explain why Viking practices in dealing with their dead changed early in the second millennium.

4 Locate a map of the Mongol Empire at its biggest. List ten modern countries that were once part of this empire.

5 How had the political system in Japan changed by the 12th century?

key**concepts**

continuity and change

In any society, some changes happen quickly (such as the effects of natural disasters like earthquakes), whereas other changes happen slowly (like the spread of new ideas and ways of thinking). Other things about a society may not change at all over time.

The things that stay the same are continuities, whereas the things that change (whether quickly or slowly) are, of course, called changes. At any point in time, all societies feature a mixture of **continuity and change**.

Here are some tips to help you analyse continuity and change.

1. Identify what has changed, then think about:
   - what caused the change
   - whether it was slow or fast; local or widespread
   - whether it had a positive or negative impact, or no impact at all.
2. Identify anything that is very similar or has continued unchanged. Think about why it might have lasted so long.

Source 1.25 An Aztec dancer in Mexico City preparing for a cultural celebration

The Aztecs—then and now

In 1519, the troops of the Spanish **conquistador** Hernando Cortés destroyed the city of Tenochtitlán, the Aztec capital. Some 40 000 Aztecs were killed. Others died from diseases the Spaniards introduced, such as smallpox. The Aztecs, a once-proud people, were stripped of their culture and dignity. In time, survivors blended into the society of Spaniards (and others) who came to settle in their land.

The capital of Mexico, Mexico City, is built on the ruins of Tenochtitlán. It has changed dramatically from the city that Cortés destroyed, but around one million Aztec descendants still live there. Most of them are farmers. Many continue to speak the ancient Aztec language—Nahuatl. Most are members of the Roman Catholic Church, but their beliefs also include a mix of ancient Aztec traditions and viewpoints.

1. Conduct some Internet research to find photographs of Mexico City today as well as artists' impressions of Tenochtitlán. Describe some obvious changes.
2. Explain why the lives of Aztec descendants today are examples of continuity and change.
3. Compare Sources 1.25 and 1.26. Identify as many examples of continuity and change as you can.

Source 1.26 An Aztec brazier (container for burning something in)

bigideas

1.1 How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?

Remember

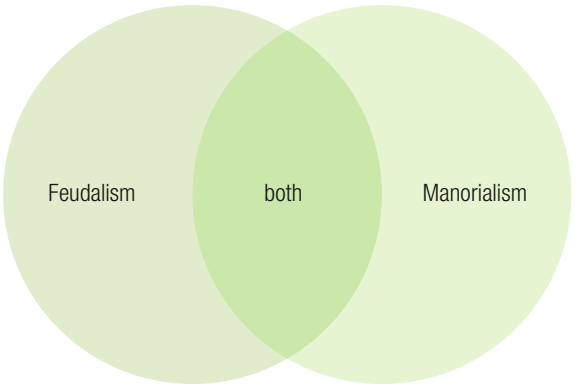
1 a What was the role of the *samurai* in Japan?
  b Explain how the role of the emperor in Japan was changed by the emergence of shogunates.

2 In what way were the homeland countries of the Vikings changed by Christianity?

Understand

3 What are some reasons given for the collapse of the Khmer Empire?

4 In small groups, discuss why feudalism and manorialism emerged in Europe. How were they similar? How were they different? Present your findings in a Venn diagram, as shown below:



5 Why did the Christian Church come to be such a strong force in medieval Europe?

6 Write an imaginary dialogue between William the Conqueror and Kublai Khan. Your focus is on how each of these rulers changed the societies they lived in. You might need to do some research.

Apply

7 In small groups, discuss how 'change and continuity' are evident in Australian society. A spokesperson will need to summarise and present group findings to the class.

Analyse

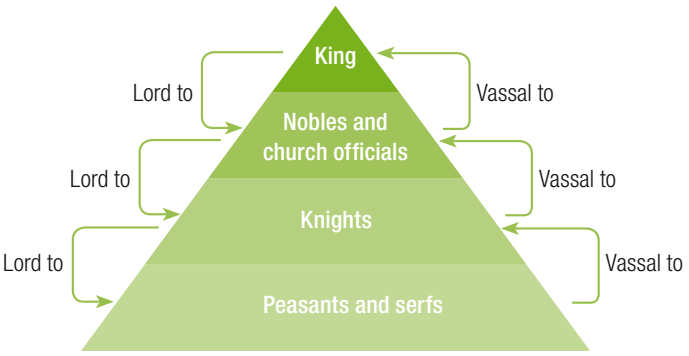
8 a What do you think motivates each of the following types of people to contact other societies: missionaries, doctors, businesspeople, tourists?
  b Suggest one way in which each type of person might affect another society with which they come in contact.

Evaluate

9 Use ICT and other means to locate and identify five useful sources about the Frankish king Charlemagne. Use evidence from these sources to decide if you think he was a significant figure in history.

Create

10 With a partner, create a hanging mobile that demonstrates the principles by which the society of medieval Europe was organised under feudalism. Use the diagram below to help you.



Source 1.27 A 15th-century painting of heretics (people whose religious beliefs conflicted with the teachings of the Church) being burned at the stake by Christian authorities

1.2 What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies?

What people believe and value affects how they live their lives and interact with others. Sometimes, tensions arise when one group regards their beliefs or ***values*** *to be more 'correct' than those of others. Beliefs and values can be a strong force for change in a society, for better or worse. The period from c. 650 CE to c. 1750 was a time when many new ideas and attitudes emerged. Many were linked to teachings that would become major religions.*

In this section, we will look at a range of beliefs and values that emerged across the world during the period of study. We will explore the effects they had on different societies.

As already mentioned, Christianity was the dominant religion in medieval Europe. During this time the teachings of the Church were a great influence on the lives of almost all people. In many ways, the Church was a positive influence on societies across Europe – providing education, caring for the sick and supporting the community. However, those who disobeyed the teachings of **the Church** could expect to be punished. Over time, the power and influence of the Church lessened somewhat as a result of movements such as the **Renaissance**, the **Reformation**, the **Scientific Revolution**, and the **Enlightenment**.

While Christian beliefs dominated Europe; Islam, Buddhism and Hinduism were spreading in Asia. The spread of Buddhism had been greatly helped by the 'missionary' efforts of Ashoka the Great (*c.* 304–232 BCE), ruler of the Indian Mauruyan Dynasty. By the early 500s CE, Buddhism had reached Japan (through contact with Chinese and possibly Korean Buddhists). It would become a popular religion in Japan, alongside the indigenous religion, Shinto.

Key features of religions in the period

The major world religions that influenced the period we will be studying are briefly described below.

Source 1.28 A statue of Confucius

Confucianism

- Founded in China by Kóng Qiu, later known as Confucius (born *c.* 551 BCE)
- More a code for living than a religion
- Taught that if family members and rulers upheld values such as obedience, justice, truth, respect, honour and treating one another fairly, societies would be stable
- Followers documented his sayings in a text called *The Analects*.

Source 1.29 The interior of the Basilica of St Nazaire and St Celse, in southern France, built in the 11th century and blessed by Pope Urban II in 1096

Christianity

- Began with the birth, and later the crucifixion, of Jesus Christ at the start of the 1st millennium CE. Jesus was a Jew and is believed to be the Son of God.
- Followers believe that Jesus died for the sins of humankind.
- Christians hold that there is one god, who offers forgiveness of sin and eternal life through belief in Jesus.
- Christians typically go to church, pray, study the Bible and try to live by its principles, particularly those in the New Testament.

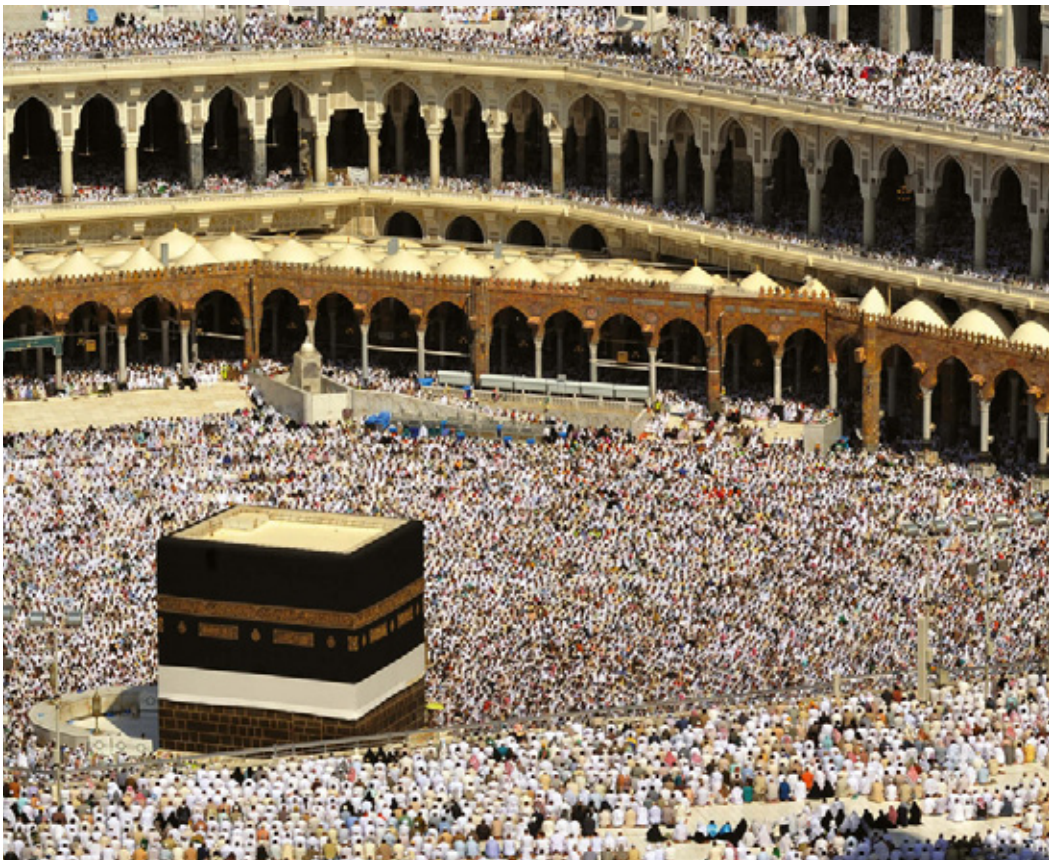
Source 1.30 A sculpture of the god Vishnu

Hinduism

- Belief system of the earliest people of India; traces back some 3500 years.
- Only a person born a Hindu can be a Hindu.
- Hindu societies are organised according to a **caste system**.
- Creator god Indra, three main gods (Brahma; Shiva, the destroyer; Vishnu, the preserver) and a huge number of lesser gods. Enlightenment comes through **reincarnation** (rebirth).
- Hindus meditate and make **pilgrimages** to holy places. The natural world is seen as part of the divine world.

Islam

- Founded in Arabia in the early 600s CE by the prophet Muhammad.
- Muslims hold that there is one god (Allah) and Muhammad is his messenger; humans must submit to the will of Allah to enter Paradise when they die.
- A Muslim's main religious duties (the Five Pillars) are:
  1. to declare one's faith in front of witnesses
  2. to pray five times a day
  3. to give to the poor
  4. to eat nothing during the day during Ramadan
  5. to make a pilgrimage to **Mecca** once in a lifetime, if able.
- Eating pork is forbidden.
- The Muslim holy book is called the Qur'an.



Source 1.31 The Great Mosque of the Haram Sharif in Mecca. It surrounds the Kaaba, a granite structure covered with a black silk cloth. This is the most sacred placed in the world for Muslims.

Source 1.32 Jews praying at the Wailing Wall in the Old City of Jerusalem. It is a sacred place for Jews worldwide.

Judaism

- Belief system of the Jewish people; the first major religion to believe in one god.
- Believers obey the commandments as set out in the Tanakh (the Old Testament of the Bible), particularly the first five books (the Torah, the book of law). Practices include circumcision for baby boys, ***bar mitzvah*** ceremonies, and eating foods prepared in accordance with Jewish dietary laws (called kosher food). Eating pork is forbidden.

Taoism

- Founded in China by Lao-Tzu (600–531 BCE).
- To live forever, a person must become one with the life force (the Tao or 'the Way'). This means balancing within oneself the yin and yang (equal and opposite) forces that make up everything in the universe.

Source 1.33 Part of the difficult route to the summit of the Taoist holy mountain Song Shan in China. At the top there is also a Buddhist temple, the Shaolin temple, famous for its links with the development of Kung fu.

Shinto

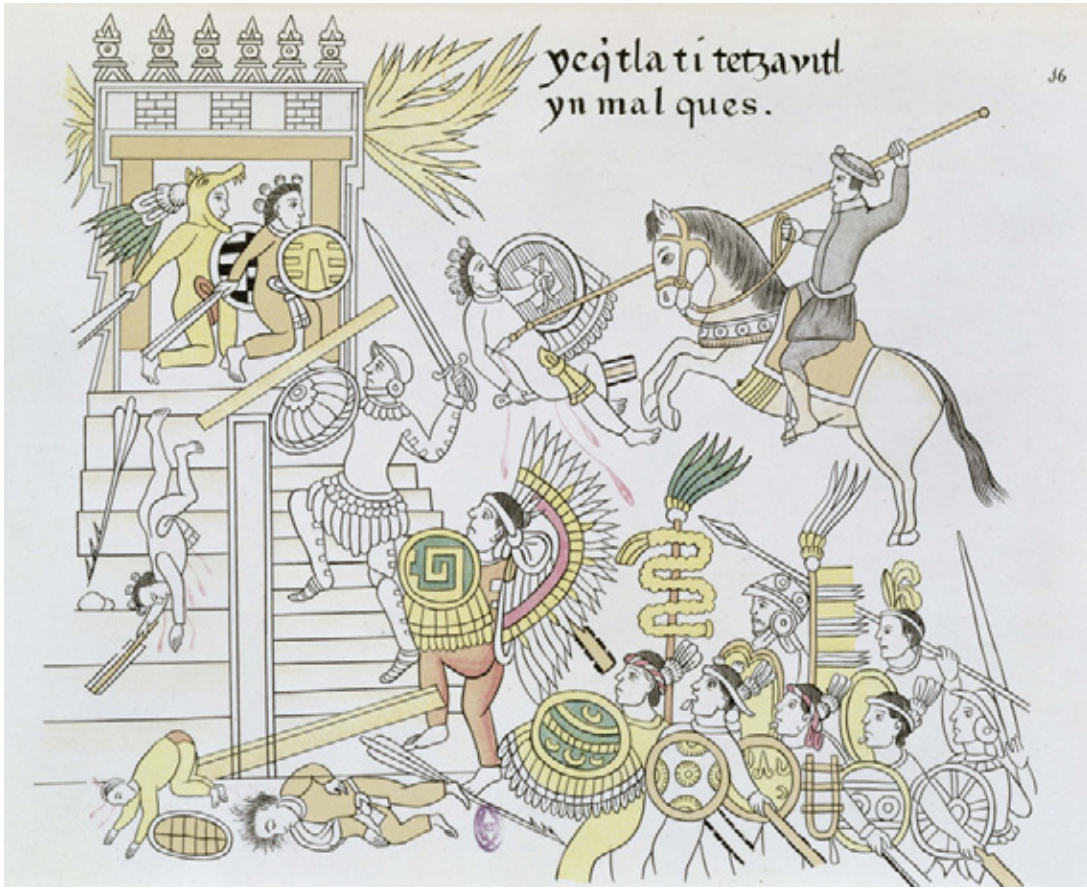
- Belief system of the early Japanese people; many scholars agree it is at least 2500 years old.
- Humans avoid evil through rituals to purify themselves and by calling on the ancient spirits. Offerings are made to these spirits at shrines.

Source 1.34 Shinto shrine in the Kii mountains in Japan

Source 1.35 Buddhist monks at a festival in Thailand

Buddhism

- Founded by the Indian prince Siddharta Gautama (Buddha), born around 563 BCE.
- To end pain and suffering, a person works towards spiritual enlightenment through cycles of reincarnation (rebirth). On reaching this state (Nirvana), as Buddha did, a person is freed from all the bad things about being human.
- There are Four Noble Truths:
  1. Life is full of suffering
  2. Suffering comes because people crave things
  3. By getting rid of craving, one is freed
  4. The only way to do this is to have the 'right' understanding, speech, actions, efforts, livelihood, intentions, awareness and concentration.



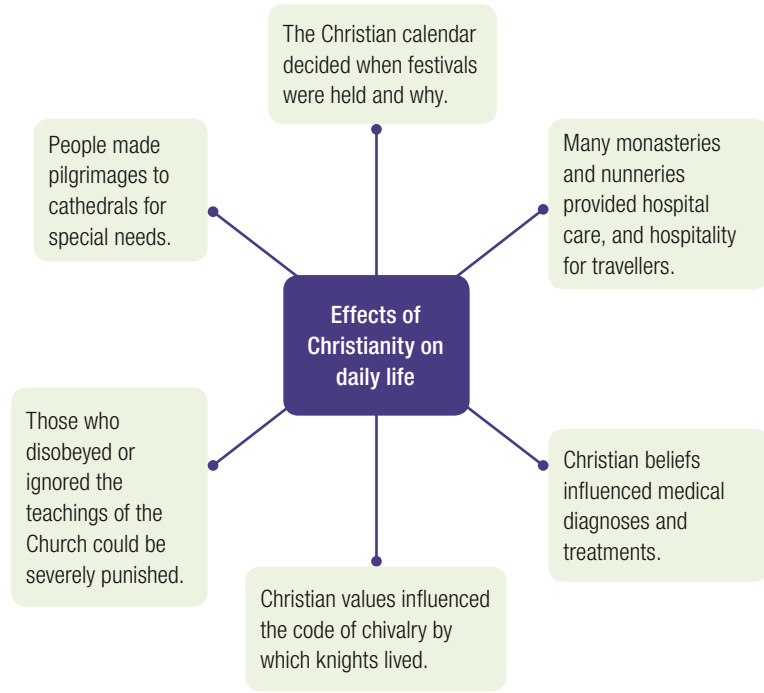
Source 1.36 A modern copy of art from a 16th-century text showing Spanish invaders destroying an Aztec temple and relics. One Aztec belief was that their sun god Huitzilopochtli needed offerings of freshly removed hearts for good harvests.

How beliefs and values shaped borders and customs

As we have seen, beliefs and values of a particular group of people affect their everyday lives and shape their interaction with others. Sometimes, there are tensions when one race or group of people regard their beliefs or values to be 'more correct' than those of others.

Changes in Europe and Britain

By the 11th century, the Church was more unified than it had been before. It was also very powerful politically. Churches, cathedrals, monasteries and nunneries dotted the landscape. Many chose to devote their lives to religious service. Some became monks and nuns, while others became parish priests. People's lives revolved around their religious beliefs and the obligations this placed on their lives. As we saw earlier, belief systems drove Christians and Muslims to fight for control over Jerusalem and the **Holy Land** for over two centuries.



Source 1.37 Some ways in which Christianity impacted on life in medieval Europe

keyconcepts
empathy

Historical **empathy** is thinking about what happened in the past from the perspective of people living at the time. It is more than knowing *what* people did; it is understanding *why* they did it, given their beliefs, customs and values.

Empathy does not mean thinking like a time traveller. That would mean imposing your modern-day values on a culture or people, and judging them by *your* standards.

Someone without historical empathy might, for instance, condemn an ancient society for allowing the practice of owning slaves. Someone with historical empathy, by contrast, would realise that owning slaves at the time was often a normal practice, like having a housekeeper today.

Historical empathy is strengthened by finding out as much as you can about your topic. You can better understand people's motives and actions when you view them in the context of the times in which they lived.

Seppuku

Samurai were the disciplined warriors who emerged in Japan towards the end of the first millennium. They protected family clans and, later, feudal warlords.

Seppuku, a ritual suicide, was how many *samurai* chose to end their life. It was often seen as the only way to deal with personal shame, or defeat in battle. It was in keeping with the code of conduct of *samurai* warriors: the ***bushido*** code. The code's values were courage, loyalty, respect, honesty, benevolence (doing good), rectitude (doing the correct thing) and honour.

Source 1.38

> *[Committing seppuku] meant that he [the samurai] could end his days with his transgressions [wrongdoings] wiped away and with his reputation ... enhanced. The cutting of the abdomen released the samurai's spirit in the most dramatic fashion, but it was an extremely painful and unpleasant way to die, and sometimes the samurai who was performing the act asked a loyal comrade to cut off his head at the moment of agony.*
>
> From *The World of the Warrior* by Stephen Turnbull, Ospley Publishing, London, 2006

Source 1.39 A lithograph of a *samurai* warrior committing *seppuku*

1. Why did many *samurai* choose to commit *seppuku*?
2. What aspects of the *bushido* code would a *samurai* break if he:
   - a ran away from a fight
   - b cheated a comrade for financial gain
   - c was fatally wounded in battle by an enemy he despised?
3. *Seppuku* is, from our viewpoint perhaps, an unnecessary and gruesome way to die. But try to think like a *samurai*: why might his values and obligations make *seppuku* an unavoidable choice for the situations described in question 2?

Changes in India

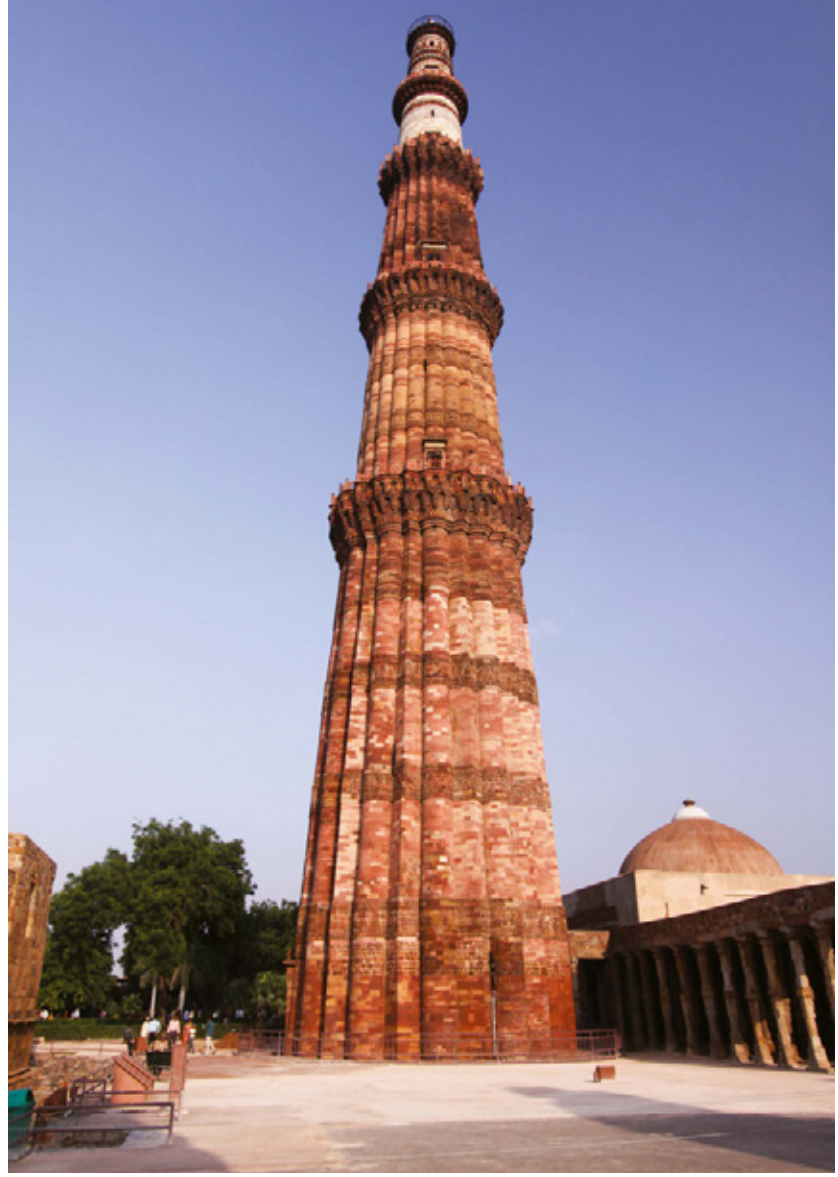
Muslim merchants were trading with India from about the late 7th century. Hinduism was then dominant in India. By 1206, an Islamic governing body had been set up in India's north. It was founded by a former slave. Mosques and Islamic art and architecture began to change the landscape of the Indian subcontinent.

Changes in South-East Asia

Muslim merchants also introduced Islam to Malaysia in the late 9th century. Traders from India had already helped spread Hinduism there as well as in Sri Lanka, the Philippines and the former Khmer Empire. From about 1200 CE, Islam became increasingly strong in Indonesia.

As different religious beliefs took hold, societies changed. For example, public architecture changed (e.g. places of worship, monuments, statues). Often dress codes changed, as did people's roles (e.g. the role of women, and people affected by the Hindu caste system).

Buddhists were also on the move to spread their faith. Missionaries travelled to today's Myanmar (Burma), Cambodia, Laos, Thailand, Korea and China—mostly via the **Silk Road**. Buddhism gained rapid influence in China during the 5th and 6th centuries. The first Buddhist missionaries moved into Japan in 552. About 1000 years later, the first Christian missionary arrived in Japan—Francis Xavier.



Source 1.40 This minaret in Delhi, built on the orders of Qutb-ud-din-Aibek, is 72.5 metres high.

Source 1.41 An Islamic mosque in Melaka, where Muslim traders first had a presence in Malaysia some 1300 years ago

Check your learning

1. List some ways by which Christianity and the Church influenced the society of medieval Europe.
2. Use ICT and other means to locate sources about the code of chivalry. Write a paragraph on your findings.
3. Draw a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the values of the European code of chivalry with those of the *samurai bushido* code.
4. Describe, in general terms, how some societies in South-East Asia were changed by the beliefs and values of visiting merchants. Give specific examples.

key**concepts**

evidence

Artefacts and the remains of buildings or other structures are historical sources. They will potentially tell us something about the past. But sources are not **evidence**. Evidence is the information or clues you uncover by asking specific questions about a source. The two religious buildings shown here are sources. Your task is to think about the evidence these sources provide.

Source 1.42 Part of the interior of Hagia Sophia, in Istanbul

Source 1.43 An exterior view of part of the Blue Mosque, in Istanbul

The Ottoman Empire and important mosques

The Ottoman Empire, founded about 1300 CE, lasted until 1922. The Ottomans were a Turkish people, originally from central Asia. Their empire at its peak included Turkey, parts of the southern regions of western Asia and eastern Europe, and the northern regions of Africa. The Ottomans spread the religion of Islam.

The massive Hagia Sophia (or Aya Sofya) was initially built as a Christian church in Constantinople in the 6th century. After the Ottomans conquered the city in 1453, Hagia Sophia was changed into a mosque. Christian **icons** and features were removed, and Islamic features added. Since 1935 it has been a museum.

The then Ottoman sultan, Ahmet I, used Hagia Sophia as a model when he built the Sultan Ahmed Mosque in the early 17th century. It is often called the Blue Mosque because of the many thousands of blue tiles that line its interior. It has the most minarets of any mosque in Istanbul.

1 What evidence do these buildings provide about the importance of religion (of whatever faith) to residents of Constantinople during the period of study?

2 Look carefully at Sources 1.42 and 1.43. Record four aspects you observe about each.

3 Frame a research question for each building to guide your research for more evidence about how it was used during the Ottoman Empire.

bigideas

1.2 What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies?

Remember

1 Copy the following table in your notebook. Draw lines to connect the sentence starters in the left-hand column with their correct endings in the right-hand column.

Taoism was founded in China by	the Indian prince Siddharta Gautama (Buddha), born around 563 CE
The teachings of Confucius are recorded in a text called	Judaism
The religion whose sacred text includes the New Testament is	Qur'an (or Koran)
The Islamic sacred text is called the	Christianity
Buddhism was founded by	*The Analects*
The first major religion to believe in one God was	Lao-Tzu (600–531 BCE)

2 Prepare an illustrated facts chart on three selected world religions. Conduct additional research to add to information you obtain from this textbook.

Understand

3 Why do you think conflicts between religions occur? Brainstorm as a class.

4 What might have happened if:

- **a** Islamic merchants had never traded in Indonesia?
- **b** Confucius had never lived?

Brainstorm possibilities in small groups.

Apply

5 Find out about the Japanese *kamikaze* pilots of World War II. Compare and contrast their actions with those of *samurai* warriors who committed *seppuku*.

Analyse

6 In pairs, design a questionnaire to test your friends and family to find out what they know about the major world religions. Analyse your findings. What do you conclude?

Evaluate

7 Recreate a panel discussion about the best ways to improve tolerance in your school of different beliefs and values. You will need a host and five panel members. Others can assist by providing research data and suggestions to panel members, and by making a video or audio recording of the proceedings.

Create

8 Write a short essay on this topic: In what ways have the belief systems and values of [a religion of your choice] impacted on the world's societies?

Questions to guide your research for this topic could include the following:

- How has this religion influenced the sorts of buildings erected?
- What behaviours does this religion encourage?

Source 1.44 This modern Afghan family is on the move along part of what was once the Silk Road. This network of roads and tracks was a prime means of contact between Eastern and Western societies.

1.3 What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period?

People from different societies come into contact with each other for many reasons. They may have been forced to migrate because of natural disasters, famine, war or for political reasons. Some societies move in order to expand their territory or to seize the resources of another people. Whatever the reasons, contact between different societies has both good and bad effects.

Most of the time, groups of people during the period of study made the decision to move in order to:

- trade with others
- explore and expand their territory
- conquer other peoples
- convert them to a particular religion.

Contact with other societies often led to a clash of cultures and interests. This was sometimes the case even when the intent of the contact was peaceful.

Contact through war

Some would say that wars and conflict are part of being human. Causes of war vary; however, the effects often mean a gain of land or wealth for the victors and death and devastation for the losers. Win or lose, all wars change the societies involved.

Some causes of war

Societies sometimes have contact through war because of their religious beliefs. An example is the **Crusades**. Wars may also be fought to gain territory or resources, as happened with the conquest of Constantinople. Some people fight to plunder—the Vikings and the Huns are two examples of this.

Wars fought for land and resources

We saw earlier how tribes of Angles and Saxons drove the local Celts off their land. Later, William, Duke of Normandy, took the same lands from the Anglo-Saxons and became the English king.

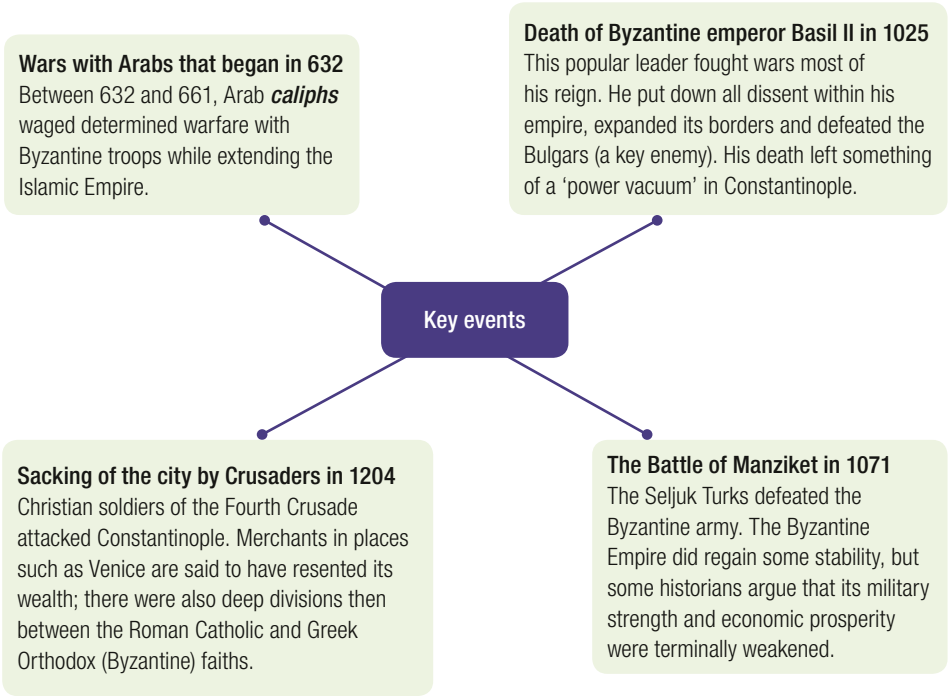
By the early 1500s, the Spanish were also fighting wars over land. Their target was central and South America, the homeland of the Aztecs, the Incas and the remnants of the Maya people. There had been rumours of huge stores of gold and silver there for the taking.

Wars to win territory marked the start and end of China's five major **dynasties** between 618 and 1912. Two were the dynasties of invaders. The first was the Yuan Dynasty (1279 to 1368) set up by the conquering Mongols. Some 300 years later, the Manchus overpowered the last of the native Chinese dynasties, the Ming, to form the Qing Dynasty. It lasted till 1912.

Source 1.45 An artist's impression of Viking warriors arriving in their longships for a lightning raid

key**concepts**
contestability

Not everything recorded about the past is a fact. To reach a carefully considered view (a contention) about some event or person in the past, historians examine as many relevant sources of evidence as possible. But this does not mean that all historians come to the same conclusions. This is what we call **contestability**. There is rarely, if ever, a 'right' view; but some views are more warranted than others. Learning to contest viewpoints, based on evidence, is a fundamental concept for the study of history.



Source 1.46 Some key events that historians argue marked the 'beginning of the end' for Constantinople

Decline of Constantinople

Constantinople, the Byzantine capital, was, at its height, a huge and wealthy city. It stood at the gateway of two continents (Europe and Asia) and was a key hub for trade along the Silk Road. On 29 May 1453, it fell to Ottoman Turks. Capturing Constantinople was the ultimate prize for the growing Ottoman Empire.

Under Mehmed II (1432–81), the Ottoman Turks had laid siege to the city for two months before storming it. An eye witness, Nicolo Barbara, reported: '… all through the day the Turks made a great slaughter of Christians … The blood flowed in the city like rainwater in the gutters after a sudden storm …'

The year 1453 marked the end for Christian Constantinople. But had it already lost its authority? If so, when?

1 What event marked the end of the Byzantine Empire?
2 Why do some historians contend that (a) the death of Basil II and (b) contact with Seljuk Turks at the Battle of Manziket might have started the decline of Constantinople's power?
3 The brutal sacking of Constantinople in 1204 saw Christians fighting Christians. How do you think this would have impacted on the morale of Constantinople?

key**concepts**
perspectives

Different people will often have different **perspectives** (or points of view) about the same topic or issue. This may be a reflection of the person's age, gender, education, prejudices or fears. It may also just reflect a lack of information. For example, witnesses to an argument between two classmates will probably have different views about what happened. These will depend on how much witnesses saw or heard; what they feel about those involved; and their own opinions about the topic being debated.

Source 1.47 Illustration and text from 16th-century manuscript *History of Indians*, showing Cortés being welcomed by the indigenous people

Understanding the different perspectives of people from the past helps historians to consider what might have motivated these people. The more perspectives historians consider about an event or person, the more likely they are to get closer to the truth.

Spanish contact in the Americas

In 1519, Spanish **conquistador** Hernando Cortés led a mission into modern-day Mexico. His intent was to make contact with the Aztec capital city of Tenochtitlán. Reports were that it was a city of great wealth (which included gold). He wanted to claim this territory (and its resources) for Spain. He succeeded. His men looted and destroyed the city.

The wealth that flowed from the conquest of this region greatly benefited Spain. The **Indigenous** people did not fare so well. As so often happens with a conquered people, their perspective was largely unheard. But some Spaniards were prepared to speak on their behalf.

Here are two perspectives on the Spanish contact with the Indigenous Aztecs.

Source 1.48

> *In all the markets and public places of this city are seen daily many labourers waiting for someone to hire them ... I will say no more than that the manners of the people, as shown in their interactions with one another, are marked by as great an attention to the proprieties [proper behaviours] of life as in Spain, and good order is equally well observed; and considering that they are barbarous people, without the knowledge of God, having no interaction with civilised nations, these traits of character are worthy of admiration.*
>
> Translated extract from a letter Cortés sent to Charles V, King of Spain

Source 1.49

> *[The Spaniards'] reason for killing ... such an infinite number of souls [indigenous people] is that they have an ultimate aim, which is to acquire gold ... survivors were distributed among the Christians to be slaves ... [They sent] the men to the mines to dig for gold ... and the women into the fields of the big ranches to hoe and till the land ... Nor to either the men or the women did they give any food except ...things of little substance. The milk in the breasts of the women with infants dried up and thus, in a short while, the infants perished ... And the men died in the mines and the women died on the ranches from the same causes, exhaustion and hunger.*
>
> Translated extract from *Brief Account of the Devastation of the Indies*, Bartolomé de Las Casas, 1542

1. What different impressions do you get about how some Spaniards regarded the Indigenous people from Sources 1.48 and 1.49?
2. What do you think was motivating Cortés when he wrote to the king? Do you think he would have reported what is presented in Source 1.49? Why?
3. Bartolomé de Las Casas was a Spanish Catholic priest who settled in central America in the 1500s. What do you think might have motivated him to write what he did?

keyconcepts
significance

Imagine how many people have lived on Earth. Now think of all their stories, and everything they did in their life. This includes not only what they did by themselves, but every single contact they had with others. Even if it were possible for historians to collect the billions of sources of evidence this represents, there is no way they could analyse this amount of evidence. As a result, their interest is mainly in evidence that is significant.

The definition of **significance** for a historian includes some of the following:

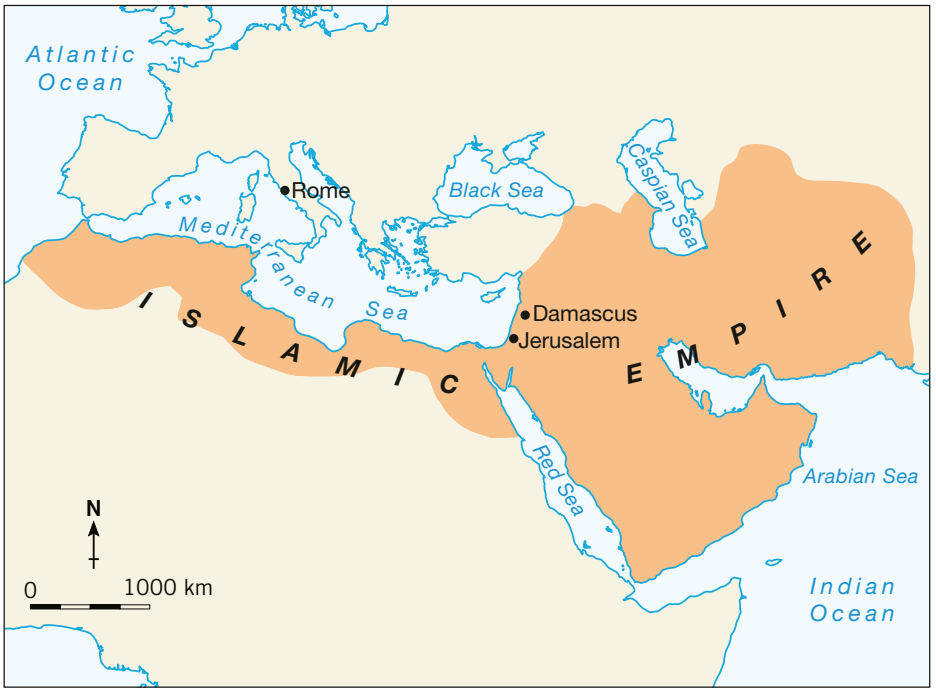
- something (or someone) important to people in the past
- something or someone affecting a large number of people's lives; it may be extreme, or long-lasting
- something relevant about something (or someone) that sheds new light on an issue.

The Battle of Badr

We mentioned earlier that some contacts between peoples are motivated by religious belief. The Battle of Badr of 17 March 624 is one such battle.

Most of what we know about it comes from Islamic secondary sources. It was a fight between the powerful Quraishi rulers of the city of Mecca and the prophet Muhammad and his supporters. It was the biggest of their many fights. Despite the odds being heavily in favour of the Quraishi army, it was Muhammad's force that won.

The victory greatly lifted his profile in the region. It also gave prominence to his Muslim message and attracted many followers. The battle was a key factor in Islam's becoming a major world religion. Supporters believed Muhammad had won a great victory and were open to receive his spiritual message. Within close to 100 years, the Islamic empire would be in place.



Source 1.50 The extent of the Islamic empire by the 8th century

1 Use a modern atlas to list all modern countries that (in whole or part) were once part of this Islamic empire at its peak.
2 Which of the definitions of historical significance listed left, do you think best applies for the Battle of Badr? Why?
3 Why do you think Muhammad's victory would have rapidly earned him a respectful following?

Some effects of wars

How people view the effects of a war depends on their perspective. What one person sees as a great victory, another may see as a tragedy. These differing perspectives need to be kept in mind when analysing the effects of war.

Widespread disability and death for fighters and civilians

Population figures are contested for the number of deaths in the Americas as a result of contact with Europeans. One source ('*La catastrophe démographique*' from the French journal *L'Histoire*, No. 322, July–August 2007) suggests that an Indigenous population of approximately 30 million was reduced to about six million between 1492 and the late 1500s. This loss of potential labour prompted many Europeans settlers in the region to import slaves. Around 10 million Africans were forcibly transported to work on European plantations in the Americas.

Source 1.51 African slaves awaiting transportation to the Americas

Cultures destroyed or badly eroded

Sometimes armies completely destroyed conquered cities. Reasons were often linked to religion. For instance, the Spanish destroyed many of the buildings and **artefacts** of the Aztecs and Incas, because they believed them to be the works of **pagan** 'savages'.

Changed social structure

In 1206, a Mongolian called Temujin (later known as Genghis Khan) began tribal raids throughout Asia. Through warfare, he and his successors created a huge empire. His grandson Kublai Khan set up the Yuan Dynasty in China, in 1279. Once in power there, he changed the social order: Mongols were at the top and Indigenous Chinese at the bottom.

Introduction of new ideas

Soldiers returning from distant battles sometimes bring back goods or new ideas. This happened with European fighters who returned from the Crusades.

Spread of disease

Sometimes contact through warfare (and through trade) spreads disease. The **Black Death** pandemic was introduced into Europe in the early 1300s by merchants who had contact with traders from the East. But they, in turn, had been in contact with the bacterium via infected Mongol troops attacking the Genoan trading city of Kaffa in 1346 (see Source 1.52).

The plague killed about 30 per cent of Europe's population. This widespread loss of labour was one of the factors that helped to end **feudalism**. Workers could now demand higher prices for their labour (because labour was in short supply). This ran against the principles of feudalism.

Introduction of new political or religious regimes

By 1526, at the Battle of Panipat, the Mongol leader Babur overthrew the last traces of India's Delhi sultanate. He set up the Mughal Dynasty (1525–1857). Under this dynasty, Indian society became more tolerant of different religions. People explored the arts. As a consequence, the society prospered, with strong government and trade.

Destruction of the environment

'Scorched earth' tactics involve destroying anything of benefit to 'the enemy'. William the Conqueror used this tactic in the late 11th century in Britain. It helped him to bring rebel communities in northern England under his control. With their fields and forests burned out, people had no food. Those who survived these kinds of attacks were sometimes forced to become cannibals in order to live. This area of England took a long time to recover its former fertility and social stability.

Source 1.52

Being confined to their own parts of the city, they [the poor] fell ill daily in their thousands, and since they had no one to assist them or attend to their needs, they inevitably perished [died] ... Many dropped dead in the open streets, both by day and by night, whilst a great many others, through dying in their own houses, drew their neighbour's attention to the fact by the smell of their rotting corpses ...

The effects of the plague in Florence, Italy, from *The Decameron*, Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375)

Check your learning

1. Describe some effects on the Indigenous societies of America of contact with warring Europeans.
2. Explain how the social structure of China was changed after Kublai Khan set up the Yuan Dynasty.
3. What did contact through warfare have to do with helping to spread the Black Death pandemic?
4. Why do you think some peoples (including William the Conqueror) use 'scorched earth' tactics as part of fighting war?

Source 1.53 The Taj Mahal (in Agra, India), built by Mughal ruler Shah Jahan as a tomb for his favourite wife, is a symbol of India's wealth and prosperity at the time.

Contacts through trade

Trade in Europe declined during the early part of the period of study. Travel became difficult and dangerous, and there was fear of the unknown. This decline cut Europe off from contact with trading partners, and the society's economy stagnated.

In contrast, the Byzantine and Islamic empires were then flourishing. Muslim sea traders were pushing into the Indian Ocean and beyond. During the 6th century, they had trade contacts in the Indies (Indonesia and Malaysia). Some 100 years later, they were in China.

The Silk Road—renewal of trade for Europe

By the start of the second millennium, the raids of **barbarians** in Europe had largely stopped. People felt safer. Many, free to leave feudal manors, drifted towards growing towns where they might become merchants. The **Silk Road**, a vital link between East and West in the early part of the first millennium CE, was again in use. Trade was greatly helped by the protection Mongol rulers gave this key trading route during the 14th century.

New discoveries, new markets

By the 1200s, trading ports in modern-day Italy, such as Venice, Genoa and Florence, were becoming busy commercial centres. Tales by travellers to the East such as Marco Polo were exciting the curiosity of many Europeans. The ancient Greek historian Herodotus had written of giant ants used to search for gold in areas to the east of Persia. Now there were people who had been to such places.

Source 1.54 A modern artist's impression of Marco Polo in Sumatra

skill**drill**

Develop historical texts that use evidence from a range of sources

Being able to write historical texts, such as essays, is a skill that all history students need to develop. You do not have to agree with the statement in an essay topic; in fact, many great essays are written by people who disagree. All viewpoints, however, whether supporting or disagreeing with the essay topic, must be supported by evidence.

Never write in the first person, by saying things such as 'I believe …' and 'I think …'. Always write in the third person; use statements such as 'people have said', 'historians have argued' or 'it could be concluded'.

How to research and write a historical essay

Step 1: Be very clear about what you are being asked to do

Read the topic carefully to work out exactly what you are being asked to do. Do not simply write everything you know about the topic—only what is relevant to the question.

Step 2: Research the topic and collect evidence

Read/examine primary sources you collect for evidence. Think about concepts such as perspectives and contestability as you do so. Also consult secondary sources to see what others might have said or represented about the topic. But don't substitute their ideas for your own. It is *your* opinion that is important.

Step 3: Prepare a draft

Your essay will consist of:

- an introduction (a few sentences to state what you will be presenting or arguing)
- main body of the text (four to six paragraphs that provide supporting evidence for your viewpoint or approach)
- a conclusion (to sum up all that you have already said, without introducing any new material).

Step 3: continued…

Each paragraph in your essay should begin with a sentence that states the main point being made in the paragraph.

A graphic organiser can help you to organise your thoughts in planning your essay, and help you to frame your argument in a logical way.

Step 4: Redraft, edit and 'polish' your essay

Return to your draft after a few hours or days. You may well find it is then easier to detect points you might have left out, or poorly argued or expressed. Revise your draft in the light of this review. Read your revised draft at least twice to check for errors, then read it aloud to check for fluency.

Step 5: Compile your list of references

Prepare your list of references as recommended by your teacher. To do this, you will need to have kept full details of all sources you consulted during your research: websites (and date checked), names of books, their authors, publisher and place of publication, relevant pages numbers and so on.

Source 1.55 Key steps in researching and writing a historical essay

Check your learning

Plan and write an essay on a topic chosen by your teacher. Use the tips given here to help you plan your research, and to organise your thinking and writing.

Trading empires

Towards the later part of the period of study, **monarchies** in Europe were starting to compete for power. All were eager to increase their wealth and expand their territories. This meant finding new markets and faster ways to reach them. Trade along the Silk Road was starting to prove slow and expensive (as traders, merchants and thieves along the route all took their share of profits).

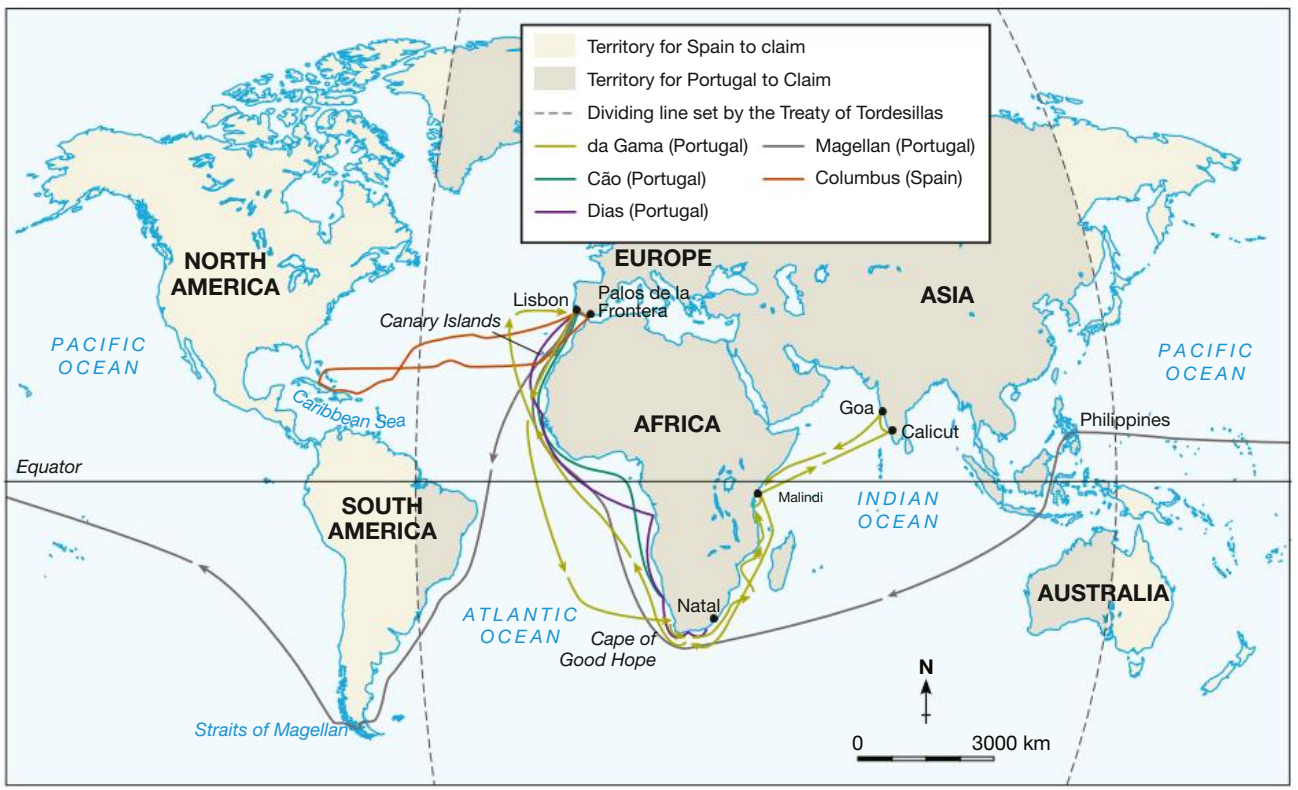
Some European monarchs began to invest money in discovering unknown parts of the world. By the late 13th century, it was the Portuguese who had the most advanced shipbuilding skills in Europe—they developed a new ship known as a *caravel* that was excellent for sea exploration. They were the European trailblazers in exploring unknown oceans.

Europeans, though, were not the only sailors then exploring distant parts of the world. The Arab traveller Ibn Batuta (1307–1377), for example, travelled as widely as Marco Polo. The Chinese sailor Zheng He (1371–1435) sailed west from China seven times, as far west as Africa and the Persian Gulf.

Source 1.56 A model of caravels in the Belem Maritime Museum in Lisbon, Portugal

Sea routes to the 'Indies'

During the 15th and 16th centuries, the emerging nations of Europe opened sea routes up to India, the Indies and the Americas. Both the French and English had trading posts (mostly for fur) in Canada by the 1600s. The first Europeans in the Indies, already settled by Muslim traders, were the Portuguese (arriving in the 1500s). The Dutch and the British soon followed, all eager for a share of the rich spice market. The Dutch won, pushing the Portuguese out of all except Timor. The British chose to retreat and to concentrate on their trade interests in India.



Source 1.57 Key European journeys of discovery during the 15th and 16th centuries. The Treaty of Tordesillas of 1494, negotiated by the then Pope, divided the world either side of a vertical line through the Atlantic Ocean. It was agreed that the Spanish would own any territory discovered to the west of it, and the Portuguese any land to the east.

Effects of trade and new markets

The sea journeys of discovery undertaken by the Europeans dramatically changed their **society**. Europeans began eating potatoes and tomatoes and chewing tobacco (from markets in the Americas). The Americas were introduced to lemons, sugar and wheat.

Cities and towns in Europe expanded in size and wealth. This led in time to the forming of trading networks. Raw materials such as metals, furs, silk, tea, timber and spices poured into Europe. The economic boom was particularly strong in today's Italy. At the time, it was made up of over 200 separate **city-states** (such as Venice and Milan).

Merchant bankers and patrons

Some merchants in Italy became so wealthy that they took on roles as money lenders and bankers. A few began to play key roles in city-state governments. For example, the Visconti family governed Milan from early 1300s to 1447. For a time from 1434, the Medici family dominated the way Florence was ruled.

Many of these super-wealthy families became patrons of the arts. Their private money built many stately public buildings and monuments. Other funding was used to support 'students'. Patrons opened their homes (or courts) as places where artists, sculptors and writers could study and share ideas.

Skilled workers

Growing numbers of skilled workers in Europe, together with large numbers of new imported materials and goods, meant the birth of many new industries. In the Flanders region of Europe, for example, a textile industry began to boom. The raw wool usually came from local monasteries.

Source 1.58 A 17th-century painting by Giovanni da San Giovanni showing scholars and artists at the home of Lorenzo de' Medici (centre)

Source 1.59 An illustration depicting a medieval market in Europe. Merchants also sold their goods at trade fairs, which drew huge crowds.

bigideas

1.3 What were the causes and effects of contact between societies in this period?

Remember

1 What short- and long-terms effects did the Battle of Badr have?

2 Explain how parts of the society of India were changed by the Battle of Panipat.

3 List some of the broad causes of war during the period of study, giving specific examples.

Understand

4 What effects did the contacts through war ultimately have for the Byzantine Empire?

5 Conduct some research on the Treaty of Tordesillas. Draw the line depicted by this treaty on a blank map of the world. How did this division influence the colonisation of some Indigenous societies?

Apply

6 Contact with other cultures (mainly through trade) changed the diet of many societies in the period of study. How has your diet been influenced by contact with other cultures?

Analyse

7 In 1204, Christian Crusaders attacked Constantinople. What do you think would have been the perspective on this event of *each* of the following: (a) Ibn al-Athīr, (b) the Crusaders involved in the attack, (c) surviving Byzantine Christians?

Source 1.60

> *They entered the city [Constantinople] and ravaged it for three days, killing and plundering. The Byzantines were all either killed or became destitute. A group of Byzantine aristocrats sought refuge in Hagia Sophia but were followed by the Franks [Crusaders], and although a number of priests, monks, and abbots came out, begging them with the crosses and Bibles they were carrying, the Franks disregarded them, killing them all and plundering the church.*
>
> Translated extract, by medieval Muslim scholar Ibn al-Athīr

Evaluate

8 Based on the information you have covered in this chapter, do you think it was war or trade that:

a forced most contact between peoples in the period of study

b had the most significant impacts on world societies?

Discuss these questions in small groups. A spokesperson will report group findings to the class.

Create

9 Identify either two individuals mentioned in this section or two groups. Conduct sufficient research, in pairs, to write and perform a role play between them. Your focus will be on why and how you helped to change societies.

10 Create a presentation of your choice (e.g. PowerPoint display, role play, movie, poem etc.) to explain why you think an individual of your choice from this section was a significant figure in changing world history.

Source 1.61 A marble sculpture of university law students at Bologna, Italy, in the late 1300s

1.4 Which significant people, groups and ideas from the period have influenced the world today?

The period between c. 650 CE and 1750 CE was a time of new ideas. The movement of large numbers of people around the world, together with events such as the Crusades and the Mongol conquests, greatly increased contact between Europe and the rest of the world. By the late 13th century, Europeans were becoming increasingly curious about the world. Many became interested in 'classical' art and literature. Over time, some people began to challenge the teachings of the Church and develop new ways of thinking and learning about the world. This period lasted for around 300 years, and became known as the ***Renaissance****.*

The Renaissance was an age of invention, discovery and exploration. Knowledge increased rapidly, especially in the arts and sciences. Many of the people, ideas and inventions of the Renaissance went on to significantly influence the world we live in today.

For example, this shift in ideas motivated a 17th-century Christian monk by the name of Martin Luther to defy the Catholic Church. His actions sparked what became known as the **Reformation**. The effect of this was the formation of a breakaway Christian group—known as Protestants. An English king, Henry VIII, would also later defy the Pope to create a Protestant church known as the Church of England.

Ideas and learning beyond Europe

The pursuit of knowledge and new ideas was happening in many other parts of the world before the Renaissance began in Europe. Let's look at two examples briefly. More detail about these trends is included in the depth studies.

New developments in China

By the 9th century, craftsmen in China had developed a way to mass-produce books. They did this by carving words and pictures into wooden blocks, inking them, and then pressing paper onto the blocks. Each block consisted of an entire page. As in Europe centuries later, the introduction of printing in China lowered the price of texts, helping to boost literacy.

In the 11th century, movable type (one piece of type for each character) was invented. Movable type was never widely used in China because whole-block printing was cheaper. However, when movable type reached Europe in the 15th century, it revolutionised the communication of ideas.

New developments in Africa

Today only about 1.9 per cent of the population of Mali in Africa undertake university study. Yet, in the 1100s, a university in Timbuktu had around 25 000 students, many of them foreigners. The university was housed then, as today, in the Sankore Mosque. At the time, it was recognised as a centre of world-class academic excellence.

Source 1.62 An ancient painting of scholars in China gathering printed texts

Source 1.63 Sankore Mosque in Timbuktu, Mali, continues to house the University of Sankore, though its scope and operation have changed. It now has very few resources.

Check your learning

1. In what way has the Catholic monk Martin Luther influenced the world of today?
2. Find out through research what the French word 'renaissance' means.
3. Explain how the Chinese printed their first books.
4. Today, Mali is one of the poorest countries on Earth. What might you say to some of the teenagers you met there?

Source 1.64 This painting, *Supper at Emmaus*, shows some of the new techniques and styles of painting introduced during the Renaissance—making them much more realistic than ever before.

The Renaissance

The Renaissance movement began in what we know as Italy during the 13th century. It was marked by a renewed interest in the cultures of antiquity (ancient Greece and Rome). Today's Italy was then a region where trade was booming and patrons were emerging. The movement then spread to other parts of Europe. It fostered creative thinking and new ways of looking at the world. It also created a thirst for knowledge and learning.

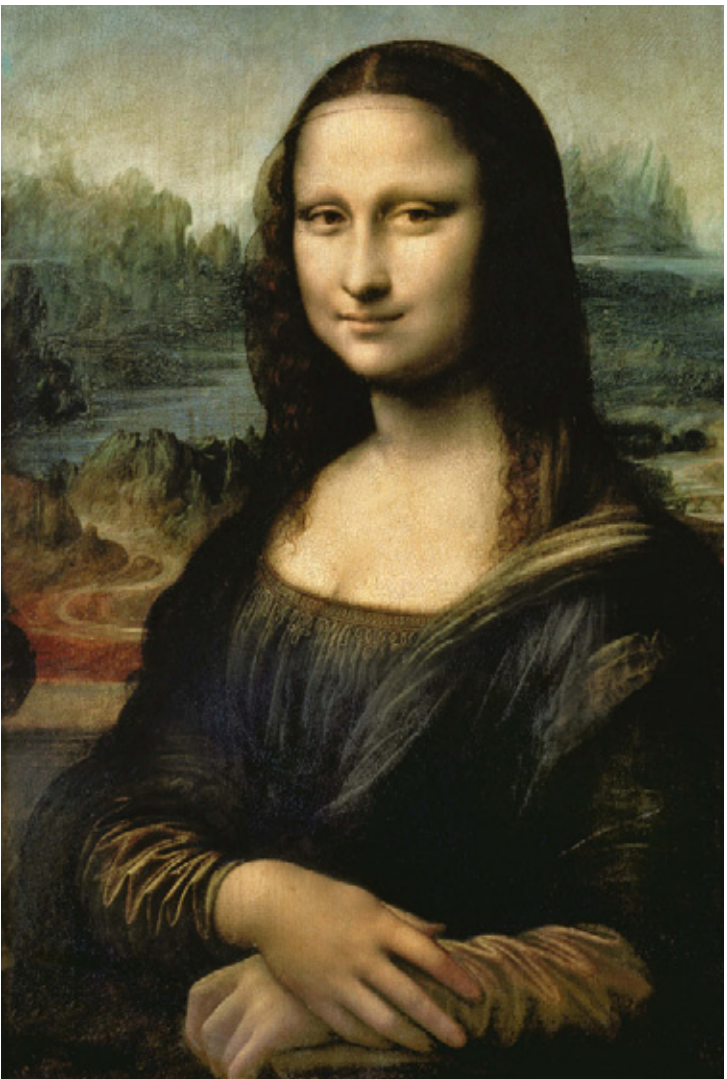
New ideas in the arts

Painting and sculpture styles changed in Europe to become more life-like and detailed. In all forms of art, there was a greater focus on people and their daily lives. By contrast, early medieval art was two-dimensional and focused on recreating religious scenes.

The Renaissance also saw sculptures and artworks of nude people. Such works had not been seen since antiquity, as the Church frowned upon them.

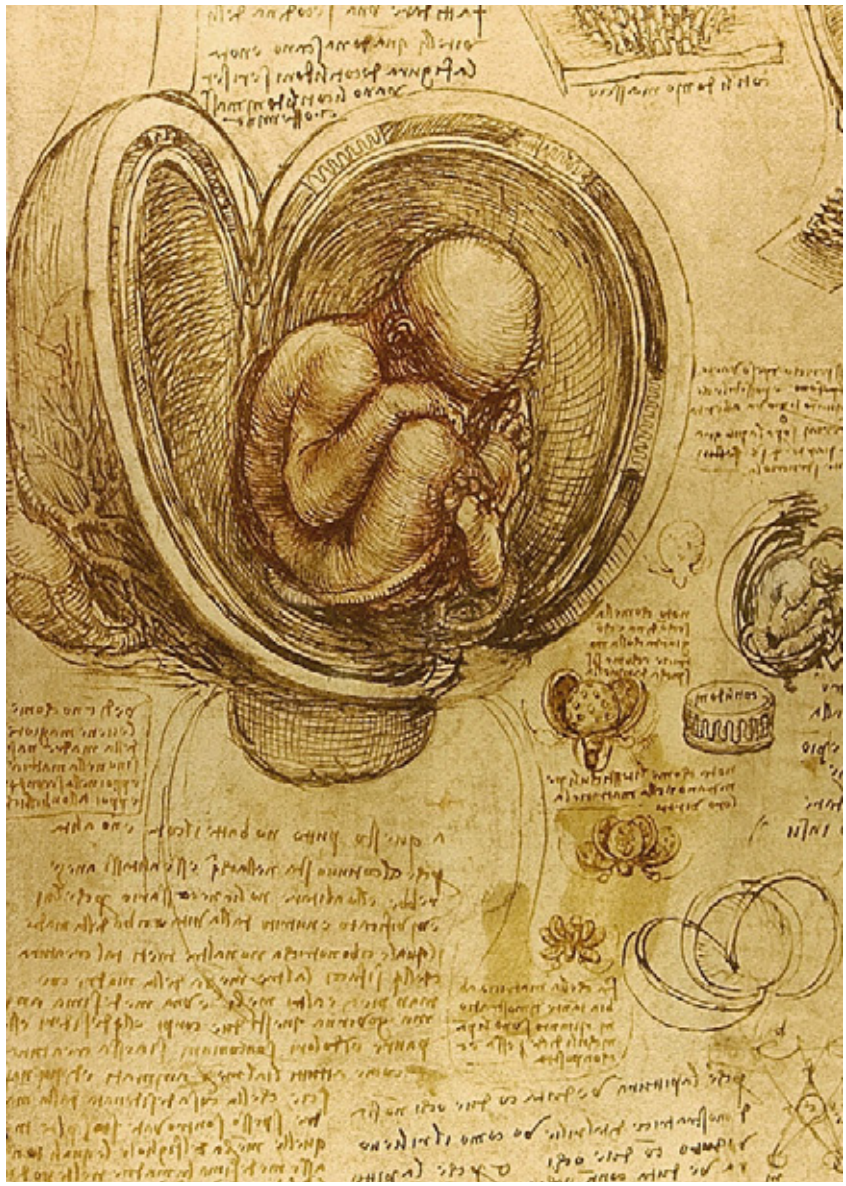
Source 1.65 Michelangelo's statue of the Biblical character Moses

Source 1.66 Leonardo da Vinci's famous painting, *Mona Lisa*



Two leading Renaissance artists

The Renaissance artist Michelangelo (1475–1564) produced many fine sculptures, often of Biblical characters. He also completed a painting that covers the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome. The gifted Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) produced the artwork *Mona Lisa* among others. He also advanced knowledge of anatomy, wrote music, sculpted, and drew maps (then uncommon). His other achievements included early concepts for a helicopter, a plane and solar power. As well, he produced countless sketches of his observations, particularly of natural things. In this respect he was demonstrating a key principle of the scientific method—a new way of viewing and thinking about the world.



Source 1.67 Da Vinci's sketches and notes from his anatomy studies

Development of Humanism

Throughout much of the period of study, it was the Christian Church that guided much of what people in Europe believed. **Humanism** developed as a new way to think about the world and people's place in it. It put more emphasis on human actions, feelings, achievements and responsibilities.

The Reformation

Martin Luther was a devout Christian, but also a Humanist thinker. Luther, and other Humanist scholars such as Erasmus (1466–1536), studied the Bible in the original languages it was written in. They wanted to go back to the *source* of information, not simply to what someone told them.

Martin Luther attacked the Church practice of selling **indulgences** (an indulgence reduced the amount of time someone would spend in **Purgatory** after death, necessary to make up for the sins they had committed in life). In 1517, Luther nailed a list of 95 objections to Church teachings and practices to the door of a cathedral in Wittenberg. He was **excommunicated** by the Pope for refusing to withdraw his remarks.

Supporters of Martin Luther, who protested against the Church, became known as Protestants. By 1550, Christians in Europe were divided into two groups, Catholics and Protestants. A century of religious wars between them was about to begin.

Check your learning

1. Interest in which two ancient cultures was revived during the Renaissance?
2. Explain two ways in which styles for art and sculpture changed during the Renaissance.
3. Leonardo da Vinci is often called 'the Renaissance man'. Why do you think this is so?
4. What was Humanism?
5. Today Christian groups are commonly divided as Roman Catholics and Protestants. Explain how Protestants came to be called 'Protestants'.

Source 1.68 A portrait of Martin Luther

Source 1.69 An artist's impression of Andreas Vesalius about to begin a dissection of a human corpse printed in 1859

Scientific Revolution

For a long time in medieval Europe, scholars relied on the scientific explanations from the ancient world—in particular, thinkers of ancient Greece and Rome. Towards the end of the medieval period in Europe, there was a renewed interest in learning and knowledge, making the knowledge of antiquity inadequate.

During the 16th and 17th centuries, this led to the development of the 'scientific method'. The scientific method, combined with advances in technology, saw new theories emerge in areas such as medicine, biology and astronomy. This spread of knowledge and ideas was greatly helped by Gutenberg's invention of the printing press in 1436. Soon after, colleges and academies were also set up to focus on scientific research.

Up until this time, the Church taught that the Earth was the centre of the universe. The discovery by Galileo Galilei (1564–1642) that this was not true caused a lot of controversy because it was such a radical idea. So too were the findings of Johannes Kepler (1571–1630) and Isaac Newton (1643–1727). Kepler discovered that the orbits of the planets were not a perfect circle as once thought. Newton's ground-breaking discovery was that it is the Sun's gravity that keeps the planets on course.

Although Christian scholars had been carrying out medical research for many years and set up a number of medical schools across Europe, during the **Scientific Revolution** Europeans such as Andreas Vesalius (1514–64) wanted to further develop medical understanding of the human body. Their work dissecting and investigating the human body added to insights about anatomy and blood flow. By comparison, standards of medicine in the Arab and Indian worlds were significantly more advanced than in early medieval Europe.

Check your learning

1. The word 'renaissance' comes from a French word. Find out what it means. Do you agree that the definition is a good way to describe what happened in Europe at this time?
2. Use the Internet to find a medieval painting from the early 11th-century. Compare it with Source 1.69. What things are similar and what things are different?
3. Find out, through research, why Leonardo da Vinci is sometimes called 'the Renaissance man'. Present your findings in any way you choose.
4. What were some of the new ideas put forward by thinkers and researchers as part of the scientific revolution?

The Enlightenment

The **Enlightenment** was the name given to a movement in Europe during the 18th century. It emerged from the ideas and trends of the Scientific Revolution. Supporters argued that reason, not superstition and ignorance, should drive societies. They also argued that justice and tolerance should dominate people's behaviour.

The Enlightenment thinkers were philosophers opposed to any person (or organisation) ruling with total authority. They often spoke out against rulers they regarded as dictators.

A new world of inventions

New ideas saw the creation of a wide range of inventions during the Enlightenment. The printing press was one of the most significant. Others included reading glasses (see Source 1.70), portable clocks, microscopes, telescopes, even a submarine.

In addition, cartographers (map makers) discovered techniques that allowed them to accurately represent maps of the world on flat surfaces. This had been impossible till then.

Source 1.70 Saint Augustine wearing reading glasses (painted about 1498)

Source 1.71 An artist's impression of an attack on a medieval castle in the early 15th century. Castle walls were no match for gunpowder-fired cannons.

Source 1.72 This Hindu temple in Puri, India, was built in the 1200s. It was built using 239 iron beams.

In medieval Europe, pendulum clocks and above-ground toilets were changing lifestyles. Microscopes were revealing a new world for scientists, as were telescopes for those who studied the heavens.

The Chinese were sailing further with the aid of one of their inventions, the magnetic compass. By the mid 11th century, they had invented a printing system with movable type. Another of their inventions, the abacus, greatly improved the lot of those who did calculations. Gunpowder was invented during China's Tang Dynasty (618–907), with its formula first published in 1044. The social impacts of this invention were enormous. For a start, it helped to end the age of castles in Europe (see Source 1.71).

Indians, meanwhile, were developing their skills in working with metals. By the 1100s, iron parts were being used in buildings (see Source 1.72). Within another 200 years, steel was being produced. An open-air iron column near the mosque built by the founder of the Delhi sultanate has stood for 1600 years without rusting. By the 16th century, India was also making the world's heaviest guns. These industrial advances boosted India's industries and influenced other societies with which they traded.

bigideas

1.4 Which significant people, groups and ideas from the period have influenced the world today?

Remember

1 Why was Mali's University of Sankore in Timbuktu so remarkable in the 1100s?

2 Name an invention of the Chinese that greatly assisted their sea travel.

3 How did Gutenberg's invention assist in promoting knowledge and ideas?

4 Name three inventions in Europe that followed the Renaissance.

Understand

5 How did the ideas presented by Humanism and by the philosophers of the Enlightenment vary from the broad ideas put forward by the Church?

6 Explain the broad contributions made by Kepler and Newton in advancing scientific ideas about Earth and its place in the universe.

7 Conduct additional Internet research to help you to complete a copy of this table in your notebook.

You may want or need to conduct further research about these people. Use resources such as your school library and the Internet.

Name of scholar	Key actions and/or discoveries	Significance of those actions/ discoveries
Nicolaus Copernicus		
Andreas Vesalius		
William Harvey		

8 Describe two ways in which knowledge, skills and ideas were used in India to work with iron.

Apply

9 The steps in the scientific method are these (in order): ask a question, do some research, develop a hypothesis (opinion) based on what you find out, test your hypothesis with an experiment, review your results, report your results if your hypothesis is proved, or repeat the process with a new hypothesis if it is not. Use the scientific method to think about what you would do to investigate something in or around your home.

Analyse

10 Write a biography of either Voltaire, Luther, Gutenberg or Galileo. Conduct research to find out some key events in their lives (from birth to death). Then describe their lives in the order in which things happened. Refer, in particular, to the ideas they put forward.

Evaluate

11 Which inventions, events or developments over the last 50 or so years do you think have most changed (or are most changing) societies? In groups, or as a class, create a Top 10. Indicate for each whether you think this represents an advance for humankind and its environment or a backward step.

Create

12 Create a paper or digital 'scrapbook' (text, images, maps, diagrams, etc.) of five people from the ancient to modern period (from any society) that you think (from the legacies they left) have significantly influenced the world today. They may or may not be people mentioned in this textbook.

depth study

The Western and Islamic world

From *c.* 650 to *c.* 1750 CE, societies and civilisations across the Western and Islamic world went through a period of rapid change. Religions were spreading and battles were fought in the name of those religions. People started moving away from their small regions to fill towns and cities, and with the movement of people came conflicts over land and other resources. Also accompanying the movement of people was the spread of disease. In spite of the negative effects of these changes, positive changes resulted. There were new inventions and new ways of thinking about the world and people's place in it.

In this depth study, you will have the choice of studying ONE of the following options:

- The Ottoman Empire [obook only]
- Renaissance Italy [obook only]
- The Vikings
- Medieval Europe.

As Source A1 indicates, the Western and Islamic world stretched from the Scandinavian countries in the north, across Europe and as far east as Turkey. From their homelands, Vikings hungry for new land and trading opportunities set sail in their longships. Medieval Europe, including Renaissance Italy, grew out of the ruins of the Roman Empire, and the Ottoman Empire developed into one of the largest and longest-lasting empires in the world.

Source A1 The Western and Islamic world

THE WESTERN AND ISLAMIC WORLD
N
W
E
S
VIKING HOMELAND
Novgorod
Don River
Kiev
WORLD
Danube River
Duchy of Ferrara
Republic of Lucca
Republic of Florence
Rome
ADRIATIC SEA
Kingdom of the two Sicilies
BLACK SEA
Constantinople
ISLAMIC WORLD
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Jerusalem
Nile River
AFRICA

The Western and Islamic world: a brief overview

The Western world of medieval Europe and the Eastern (or Islamic) world experienced broad historic changes that marked the end of the ancient and the beginning of the modern period (*c.* 650 CE–*c.* 1750 CE). These pages are designed to:

- help you to understand the broad patterns of historical change
- make links to—and between—the depth studies
- consolidate your understanding of the period.

How did societies change from the end of the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?

The Ottoman Empire [obook only]

- Arab societies forming the Ottoman Empire grew out of the traditions of ancient Greece and the Middle East. They were more advanced than medieval European societies in many ways.
- Commerce was strong and the empire possessed great wealth, allowing it to gain control of much of the territory of the Byzantine Empire and expand into Europe, Africa and Asia.

Renaissance Italy [obook only]

- Renaissance Italy was divided into several **city-states**, two kingdoms, a papal state and the republics of Florence and Venice. They fought with one another. Over time, the balance of power shifted to allow some families to become dominant.
- The city-states formed the centre of culture, art and learning allowing Renaissance Italy to be a leader in these areas, far ahead of the rest of Europe.
- Unlike most Europeans, Italians tended to live in cities. Also, Italy had a highly developed merchant class, who grew very rich and assumed power in the region.

The Vikings

- The early Vikings lived in small communities or tribes that were led by a warrior leader/king. Slaves were used widely, but as the society grew richer (through raids and exploration) this social class disappeared and society became less structured.
- Vikings' knowledge of the sea and navigation techniques allowed them to trade with neighbouring countries. Once they began to raid and explore more distant lands, they settled and adopted the languages, customs and beliefs of the people in those lands.

Medieval Europe

- Early medieval European society shared many of the customs of ancient Rome. Once Rome fell, a different form of social organisation, known as **feudalism**, developed.
- Feudalism was a system in which each person had a specific role and place within society. The Church was powerful and had a lot of influence on society.
- The Black Death caused the deaths of 20—30 million people. This pandemic resulted in the breakdown of feudalism across Europe. Societies were no longer based on farming and agriculture. Instead, towns and cities grew, and new industries and a money-based economy developed.
- New inventions, exploration and scientific discoveries weakened the power and control of the medieval Church, allowing for increased trade, exploration, and the spread of new ideas.

Check your learning

1. Using Source A1, explain the importance of the geographical location of each of the societies.
2. On what foundations were these societies built? How did the social customs and traditions help them to grow and change over time?
3. Why do you think some societies were more successful than others?

What key beliefs and values emerged and how did they influence societies?

The Ottoman Empire [obook only]

- Islam, founded by the Prophet Muhammad, was the religion of the Ottoman Empire.
- The conquest of Constantinople (1453 CE) by the Ottoman leader, Sultan Mehmed II, resulted in the Christian Byzantine emperor calling for assistance from the West. The Christian Crusades began.
- The Ottoman Empire and the Islamic faith spread from Asia into Africa and Europe, challenging the Christian belief system of medieval Europe.
- Islam encouraged all learning, so writings on astronomy, mathematics and medicine were translated into Arabic and taken to the rest of the medieval world. This led to a revival of learning in medieval Europe, especially in Italy.

Renaissance Italy [obook only]

- The Roman Catholic Church controlled every aspect of life, and the Pope acted as its spiritual leader.
- Italian city-states and their powerful merchant class were focused on money and trade. Although the people were still very religious, the established Church and its teachings began to be questioned and lost some relevance for people.
- **Humanism** was started in Italy by Francesco Petarch (1304–1374 CE). This movement tried to free intellectual thought from religion and led to a more liberated and enlightened attitude towards the Church.

The Vikings

- Traditionally, Vikings believed in many gods, but Charlemagne (Holy Roman Emperor and King of the Franks) regarded such beliefs as pagan.
- Charlemagne ordered the Vikings to become Christians. Some historians believe that this was one of the reasons why the Vikings raided the monastery on the island of Lindisfarne.
- Over time, Viking settlements in Greenland and Iceland became Christian. Churches were built and Vikings abandoned more traditional burials (like the burning of the longship) in favour of Christian burials.

Medieval Europe

- The medieval Church was based on Christian beliefs and was highly organised and powerful.
- Holy Wars (known as the **Crusades**) were fought against Muslims, and Christianity became focused on saving souls and fighting for what was considered 'right' and 'Christian'.
- The **Scientific Revolution,** the **Enlightenment**, the **Renaissance**, and eventually the **Reformation** changed and reduced the power and influence of the Church.

Check your learning

1. What role did religion play in each of these societies?
2. Why do you think that the beliefs of the Western and Islamic worlds differed so greatly?
3. Do you think religion helped or hindered the progress of these societies from ancient to more modern times? Give examples to support your view.

What were the causes and effects of contacts between societies?

The Ottoman Empire [obook only]

- The Ottoman Empire played an important part in cultural, religious and economic exchanges with other peoples for many centuries.
- Cities and marketplaces were established along trade routes that linked India, the Mediterranean region, Egypt and Arabia.
- The fall of the Byzantine capital of Constantinople to Ottoman forces in 1453 CE led to the West having to find new trade routes. This brought about the age of exploration.
- Inventions from across the Ottoman Empire (such as the compass, together with mathematical and astronomical knowledge) made a great contribution to the expansion of the medieval world.

Renaissance Italy [obook only]

- Italian city-states were centres of trade, commerce and culture and, as such, interacted with many different cultures of medieval Europe and the Islamic world.
- Italy became the banking capital of medieval Europe and its merchant class grew rich and powerful.
- The enlightened thinking, art and architecture of the Italian Renaissance period was admired throughout the medieval world. Scholars and artists came to Italy to learn and enrich their understanding and develop their art.

The Vikings

- The Viking economy was based mainly on agriculture, but trade was also needed to provide a wider variety of goods. Trade was also important because it added to the wealth and power of the leader.
- As a result of this increased wealth and power, some leaders became kings. The larger Viking kingdoms of Norway, Denmark and Sweden were formed.
- Some significant leaders in medieval Europe were Vikings. For example, Rollo (846–931 CE) was the ruler of the Viking principality, which later became Normandy (France). Rollo's descendants became the dukes of Normandy and played an important role in English history.

Medieval Europe

- Early medieval society was based on feudalism. The effects of population loss from the Black Death, however, meant that people began moving to towns and cities over time.
- An important and powerful merchant class arose. They traded throughout the Western and Islamic world exchanging ideas, information and learning.
- Trade and banking made merchants wealthy and increased contact between the Western world and the Islamic world.

Check your learning

1 Identify three factors that connected these four societies.

2 Most people think about the Black Death as a terrible thing. However, disease can sometimes bring about good changes in society. Do you agree? Give reasons for your response.

3 What positive contributions did the Islamic world bring to the Western world? How do you think these contributions actually helped the Western world to become more powerful than the Islamic world?

Which significant people, groups and ideas from the period have influenced the world today?

Suleiman was born at Trebizond, Turkey, in 1494. He was the tenth and longest-reigning sultan of the Ottoman Empire. He died during the siege of Szigetrar, Hungary, in 1566. He was 72 years old.

Suleiman ruled the Ottoman Empire at the height of its political and military power.

He promoted the growth of Islamic faith.

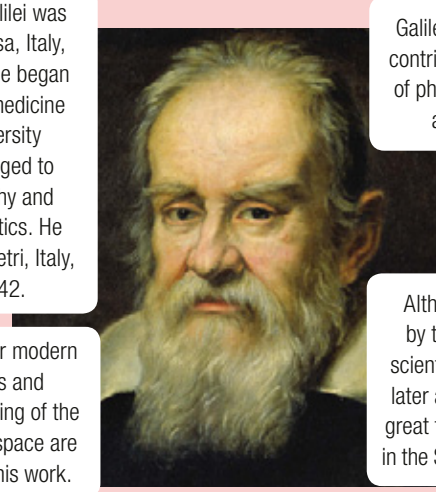
His rule heralded a golden age of art, learning and building.

Ottoman Empire [obook only]

Suleiman the Magnificent

1494–1566

Galileo Galilei was born in Pisa, Italy, in 1564. He began to study medicine at university but changed to philosophy and mathematics. He died in Arcetri, Italy, in 1642.



Galileo made significant contributions to the study of physics, mathematics and astronomy.

Many of our modern theories and understanding of the Earth and space are based on his work.

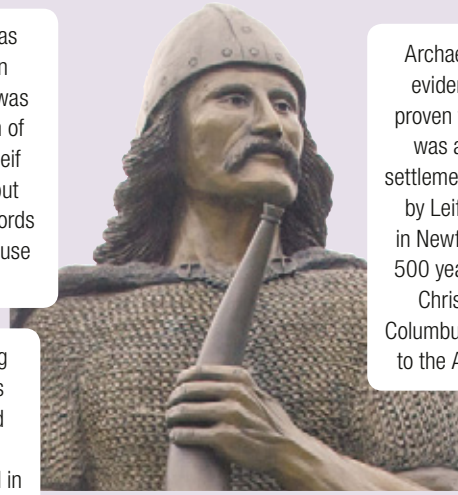
Although condemned by the Church for his scientific beliefs, he was later acknowledged as a great thinker and a leader in the Scientific Revolution.

Renaissance Italy [obook only]

Galileo Galilei

1564–1642

Leif Ericson was born in 970 in Greenland. He was the second son of Erik the Red. Leif died in 1020 but there are no records revealing the cause of death.



Archaeological evidence has proven that there was a Viking settlement founded by Leif Ericson in Newfoundland 500 years before Christopher Columbus' voyages to the Americas.

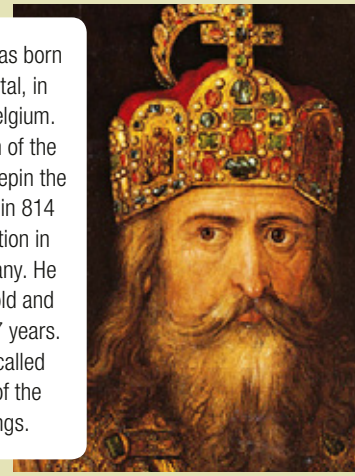
He was a Viking explorer who is widely believed to be the first European to land in North America.

The Vikings

Leif Ericson

970–1020

Charlemagne was born in 740 at Herstal, in modern-day Belgium. He was the son of the Frankish king, Pepin the Short. He died in 814 of a lung infection in Aachen, Germany. He was 74 years old and had ruled for 47 years. He has been called the greatest of the medieval kings.



He was a leading thinker, who introduced many political and social reforms, encouraged literature, building and the visual arts.

He ensured that the Church would become an important part of Western civilisation.

Medieval Europe

Charlemagne

740–814

Check your learning

1. These significant people achieved greatness in different ways. What characteristics do you think they shared?
2. What changes did these significant people introduce to their societies?
3. Do you believe that the discoveries and inventions of a thinker like Galileo are more important than those of an explorer like Leif Ericson? Give reasons for your view.

depth study option

The Vikings
(*c.*790–*c.*1066)

Norse people (people from the north) drifted into what we know as Scandinavia around 10 000 years ago. Much later, they became known as Vikings. The meaning of this word is uncertain but it may be based on the Norse words for 'voyagers'.

The era of Viking raids began in about 790 CE. For the next two centuries, these sea voyagers were feared by peoples beyond their Scandinavian shores as fierce plunderers who made lightning raids in warships. Monasteries were common targets because of the large stores of money and precious metals found there, as were coastal and river settlements in Europe. Many settlements were ransacked, and countless killed or taken prisoner.

By around 1000 CE, however, Vikings began settling in many of the same places they had formerly raided. Some Viking leaders were given areas of land by rulers in exchange for a promise to stop the raids. Most abandoned the worship of Norse gods and became Christians. Some cities and towns we know today began as Viking settlements: York (England), Dublin (Ireland) and Kiev (Ukraine).

Key inquiry questions

2.1 How was Viking society organised?

2.2 What developments and achievements led to Viking expansion?

2.3 How did Viking conquests change other societies?

A Viking picture stone showing a longboat

2

bigpicture

The Vikings

Because the Viking Age only lasted around 200 years—from the very late 700s CE to about 1000 CE—records left of this period are very limited. In fact, much of what we know relies on what others wrote about them.

Most of the remaining ***sources*** *were recorded by Christian monks in the lands Vikings invaded. They include the* **Anglo-Saxon** Chronicle. *This 100 000-word document is thought to have been started about 890 CE and was added to for another 250 years. There are also the writings of the 10th-century Arabic traveller Ibn Fadlan (among others) and the Icelandic* ***sagas*** *(written after the Viking Age).*

There are, however, many Viking burial mounds and ***runestones****. There are also* ***artefacts*** *such as ornate wood carvings, jewellery and weapons, and the remains of their boats and settlements. These sources tell us a great deal about the way in which the Vikings lived.*

CE

793
Vikings raid St Cuthbert's monastery at Lindisfarne, in Britain; two years later, raids begin in Ireland

The remains of the monastery at Lindisfarne, in north England

799
Raids begin in France

Viking raiders arriving at coastal France in their longships

***c.* 834**
A Viking longship called the *Oseberg* is buried as part of a Viking funeral in modern-day Norway

862
A Viking named Ulrich becomes ruler of Novgorod (in Russia); it was later the capital of the Rus Vikings (who had sailed there from today's Sweden via the major Russian rivers)

867
Viking invaders (from today's Denmark) settle in northern England (around York)

870
First Viking settlement in Ireland

878
Alfred the Great (King of Wessex) makes a treaty with Danish Vikings; they are given control of an area of eastern Britain in which to settle and trade (known as the Danelaw)

Artist's impression of the Battle of Hastings, showing the Norman cavalry advancing on the Saxons. Harald Godwineson, thought by many to have died when an arrow pierced his eye, is depicted in the foreground.

1066
In England, King Edward dies. Harald Godwineson is appointed king. Another contender, William of Normandy, defeats Godwineson at the Battle of Hastings (Hastings was known at the time as Senlac Hill) and becomes King of England.

1042
The son of Aethelred, Edward the Confessor, becomes King of England

1035
King Cnut dies

1015
Danish chief Cnut invades England; he becomes King of England (and later of Denmark and Norway)

991
English king Aethelred pays Danish Vikings the first of many tax payments known as the Danegeld (Danes' gold) in a bid to stop them continuing to invade England

***c.* 950**
Christian missionaries move into Denmark; the king, Harald Bluetooth, is converted 10 years later

930
First *Althing* (Norse parliament) held in Iceland

911
The King of France makes a treaty with invading Vikings led by Rollo; Vikings are given a tract of land, which becomes the Duchy of Normandy

***c.* 985**
Erik the Red banished from Iceland for three years for murder; he sails west and discovers Greenland

***c.* 1001**
Leif Ericson, son of Erik the Red, sails east from Greenland to reach Labrador in North America. A small settlement is set up there, but abandoned by 1015.

Modern statue of the explorer Leif Ericson, in Greenland

Source 2.1 Timeline of some key events in the history of the Vikings

Source 2.2 Longhouses like this one were home to the Vikings. Sometimes earth was piled along walls and over the roof. Viewed from the front, longhouses would look like a grassy hill with a door built into it.

2.1 How was Viking society organised?

Many factors influenced the organisation of Viking ***society*** *and lifestyle. Social divisions, for example, determined who had the wealth and power. These divisions also determined who did the hard work. Social roles even determined what people did from day to day. Most men, for instance, were farmers (when not on raids!). But there were also merchants, boat builders, weavers and blacksmiths, among others. Other factors that shaped the way Vikings lived included their law, their economic system and their beliefs and values.*

Social divisions

At the start of the so-called 'Viking Age', the society was made up of a number of independent tribes. Each was typically ruled by a *konungr* (king), though not a king as we understand it. Some were just warrior chieftains. Within each community were the social groups listed in Source 2.3. Rulers depended on the support of the *jarls* (earls).

Source 2.3 The social divisions in Viking society

Social class	Members	Comments
Jarls	Powerful noblemen (the heads of influential families, often interlinked through marriage)	Wealthy; wore fine clothes and elaborate jewellery; lived in large, well-appointed longhouses
Karls	Farmers and craftsmen such as silversmiths, boat builders, merchants (many karls became warriors for a raid)	'Free' people who made up most of the population; loyal to, and paid taxes to, either a jarl or to the king directly
Thralls	Slaves (prisoners of war); criminals; the poorest of the poor	Did most of the hard work (e.g. farm labour, cutting wood and stone); had no rights under the law, but most were treated well

Women and children

As a result of their repeated raids, Vikings secured a base camp in many foreign lands. Some men took their families to live in these places as they continued to fight. But women who were left behind when their men went raiding or trading had to manage on their own. This might mean taking on farm chores, tending to and butchering animals and overseeing slaves.

As a result, Viking women were quite self-reliant. Their social and economic independence was unique among women in Europe at the time. Women could, for example, pick a husband, start divorce action, buy land or finance the building of a bridge.

A woman's main role (whether their men were at home or not) was to look after children and manage the home. While a man's world lay outside the home, the women were in charge inside the home; the door threshold marked the boundary in terms of social roles.

Common tasks for all but the wealthiest (who might have the help of slaves) included spinning and weaving, collecting firewood, and preparing food stores for the winter. Daughters helped their mothers in the home, just as sons helped their fathers on the farm or in workshops.

What little education there was took place in the home (perhaps with the help of educated slaves) for there were no schools. For boys, learning to stay fit, to skate, to wrestle, to use swords and to ride horses was more important, especially during the Viking Age.

focus on ...

evidence: dress styles

Social divisions were evident in the way people dressed. Peasant men wore belted knee-length tunics over long trousers. While chieftains and nobles had clothes of a similar style, they were more finely made, and more colourful.

Women typically wore a buttonless, floor-length tunic (perhaps with a belt) covered by a calf-length apron. The apron was fixed with two large brooches near each shoulder. The writing of the 10th-century Arab traveller Ibn Fadlan provides evidence of different metals being used by Rus Vikings (from Sweden) for these brooches (such as gold, silver and bronze). His view was that the kind of metal used reflected a woman's wealth.

Source 2.4 A reconstruction of clothing found in a chief's grave in today's Denmark provides evidence of the use of embroidery, fur trims and ornate metal belt ends.

Source 2.5

> *Each woman wears on either breast a box of iron, silver, copper or gold; the value of the box indicates the wealth of the husband. Each box has a ring from which depends [hangs] a knife. The women wear neck rings of gold and silver, one for each 10 000 dirhems [a unit of money] which her husband is worth; some women have many. Their most prized ornaments are beads of green glass of the same make as ceramic objects one finds on their ships.*
>
> Translated extract from the writing of Ibn Fadlan

Social roles

"I'm Skardi the Weary, and, like most Viking men, I'm a farmer when I'm not raiding. Farming is not an easy life. Winters are long and bitterly cold. We lose stock—some animals starve, others freeze to death. There's not much good land either: too many mountains, fjords [long, narrow inlets] and bogs! I grow a kind of wheat we call spelt, and have cattle and a few pigs and goats. My neighbour is a sheep farmer. Our farm animals give us meat, skins and milk. My wife uses some of the milk to make cheese and buttermilk. We sometimes drink the whey, sweetening it with honey."

"I'm Olaf the Tall. I'm heading off now in a longboat for a raid; should be back in time to harvest my crop of rye. More glory and loot for me! I have here my prized sword and shield. I also have an iron-headed axe. I want these weapons buried with me when I die. See the metal boss [a knob or stud] on my wooden shield? It protects my hand, which is holding a handle on the other side. We Vikings don't wear uniforms when we fight. I have a chain mail tunic and iron helmet only because I am wealthier than some of my fellow warriors."

"I'm Hrodgeir the Lucky—a merchant. I've spent my life trading, as my father did. I have sailed many times across what you call the Mediterranean and Baltic seas, and down many rivers in Europe. Once I sailed the entire length of the mighty Volga River, then on to Constantinople (you know it as Istanbul). My ships carry out goods to trade, such as jewellery, combs made from deer antlers, decorated swords, furs, and sometimes slaves. What I bring back includes wheat, salt, silver and gold, and spices."

"I'm Gudrun, Hrodgeir's wife. I'm often on my own, as you would expect. When not looking after the children, cooking, or chopping wood, I'm spinning and weaving, mostly wool. Sometimes Hrodgeir brings me back a piece of silk. I use it to make my underwear. I also make dresses, aprons, jackets and hats, sometimes decorated with animal fur. My sister, Solveig, spends her spare time helping her husband make silver jewellery. Beautiful work they do!"

"I'm a boat builder—have been all my life. Ingvar the Old, that's me! My sons help me when they're not raiding. We use iron axes and adzes (another wood-shaping tool) to make keels from a single tree trunk. The oak planks of the hull (which we join with iron rivets) are green wood that is freshly cut, making the wood easier to bend. We use curved branches or roots to carve curved sections. For waterproofing, we use wool soaked in tree sap. A carved figurehead at the bow (front) and stern (back), often of a dragon, is the finishing touch. Our boats can be rowed or sailed."

Source 2.6 Some social roles of the Vikings

Check your learning

1. Draw a labelled diagram to explain the way in which Viking society was organised.
2. Explain why Viking women were typically independent people.
3. To which social division did captured prisoners of war belong? Why?
4. Name two ways in which social divisions were reflected in what people wore.
5. Use information collected on the Internet to design a 'very best' outfit for either a Viking man or woman.
6. Select any three characters profiled on these pages. With two classmates, write a short dialogue they might have on meeting in the marketplace. Your dialogue will reflect their different social roles and lifestyles. Your teacher may ask you to perform it for the class.

Source 2.7 The interior of a reconstructed longhouse

Source 2.8 The simple and typical diet of Vikings

Home, smelly home

Viking villages were often located near water—on a coastline or beside a river, making it easier to load and unload ships. Among the cluster of pitched-roof **longhouses** (see Source 2.2) might be a barn to smoke fish, the workshops of village craftsmen, perhaps a sauna, and an open area where markets were held.

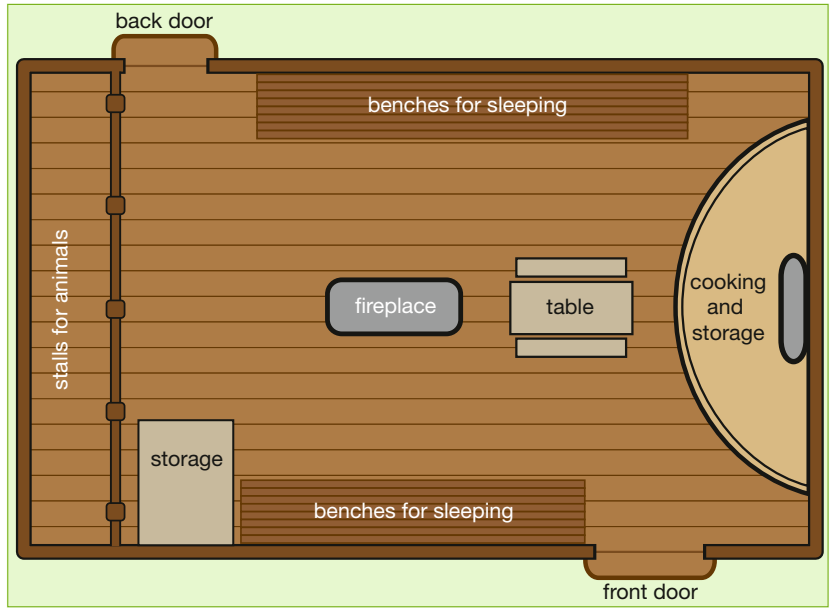
The ruler's home (or hall) was the biggest of all longhouses and the most elaborately decorated. There might be an array of carved furniture, silver utensils, oil lamps and colourful tapestries inside. Noisy feasts were held here after a successful raid, with men getting drunk for days on mead (a drink made from honey) or ale. Entertainment might include music (using animal horns and a type of fiddle) and dancing. As a special event, a poet might recite his latest work.

Longhouses were generally dark, smelly places. There was a dirt floor and no windows. The only opening, besides doors, was a small hole in the roof. Mixed with the smell of smoke, newly baked bread, sweat, sour milk, and the aroma of cooked onions, cabbages, fish, horsemeat and mutton was the stink of animal manure. An animal pen was often built at one end. Toilets were holes in the ground outside. But in the case of very bad weather, human waste might temporarily add to the stench inside.

In the centre, underneath the roof opening, was a fireplace (sometimes more than one). It provided warmth and some light as well as a means to cook. A big cauldron typically hung above it, sometimes hooked over a roof beam.

Furniture

The longhouses of most Vikings were sparsely furnished, perhaps with no more than a roughly made table and benches. Low platforms, built along the sides, doubled as beds and places to sit for those who chose not to squat. These benches were typically covered in skins, furs or cloth 'bags' filled with feathers or down. (The word 'doona' comes from the Norse word meaning feather down— *dunn*.)



Source 2.9 The floorplan of a typical Viking longhouse

Check your learning

1 Explain why a Viking longhouse might potentially be *each* of the following: cosy, smelly, noisy.

2 What link does the feather doona you might have on your bed have to a Viking longhouse?

3 Make a labelled sketch showing a modification you would make to the longhouse shown in Source 2.7 to make its interior more suitable as the hall of a local Viking ruler.

Source 2.10 Viking homes were ideally built near the water, such as shown in this reconstruction of a Viking village in Denmark

examining**evidence**

Viking lifestyles

Mention the word 'Viking' to most people and they will imagine hordes of bloodied warriors, wreaking havoc wherever they go and striking fear into the hearts of innocent villagers unlucky enough to be in their path.

This was certainly true on occasion, and there is no doubt they were fierce warriors. But there was another side to the Vikings. They were also accomplished craftspeople, fashioning not only items necessary for war (such as the helmet seen in Source 2.11 and the various weaponry they would have required in their raids) but also fine jewellery (see Source 2.12) and other luxury items.

Vikings were also skilled boat builders (see Source 2.14), which allowed them to travel far and discover foreign lands. Their encounters with other cultures ensured their development as skilled traders, exchanging many of their own well-made goods (such as leathers, furs and woollens) for foreign foods and luxurious items.

Source 2.11 A Viking helmet. Viking helmets did not have horns or wings, as is commonly depicted in movies, comics and art (see Source 2.41).

Source 2.12 A silver armlet, featuring a spiral design common in Viking work

Armour

A helmet such as this was worn by a Viking warrior chieftain or wealthy noble. It is evidence that the Vikings knew how to work with iron. Poorer fighters wore leather caps, or hats rimmed with fur. Neither offered much protection against a savage chop from an axe or sword. A wealthy Viking might also wear a chain mail tunic; poorer warriors wore leather vests or padded jackets.

Jewellery

Jewellery was another way in which Vikings demonstrated their social standing and wealth. Sometimes the silver coins and candlesticks seized on raids were melted down to make jewellery such as this. This piece, among a great many others, is evidence of the artistic flair and skilled workmanship of many Viking silversmiths.

Source 2.13 The Runestone of Rök

Runestones

The **Runestone** of Rök was carved with runes (the letters of the Norse alphabet) in the 9th century CE. It is the longest inscription of runes ever found. Many regard it as the earliest example of literature in Sweden. Scholars contest its precise translation. They also contest why it was created. Was it a tombstone for a dead son, or a 'call to arms' to avenge his death? Or was it to record bits of local myths and events? Some say its purpose may have been to honour the man who had it built. There is no clear answer. What is clear is that this runestone is evidence that the Vikings had a written language.

Source 2.14 A copy of a Viking ship, called the *Oseberg*, which was found in a burial mound in 1903

Ships

The *Oseberg* was nearly 22 metres long, and had 30 oar holes (15 on each side). It was built as a burial ship (rather than for sailing) about 1000 years ago. Yet, even as a ceremonial ship, its design shows evidence of the great skill of Viking boat builders. Note its low, curved hull made of evenly bent planks and its elaborately carved prow (front) and stern (back). The discovery of the *Oseberg* provided even more evidence of Viking burial practices: it held the remains of two women (one probably a noble's wife), two oxen and many horses.

Check your learning

1 Explain how social divisions were evident among a band of raiding Vikings.

2 With a partner, study Source 2.11 carefully. Discuss how you think it was made.

3 Think about some of the silver bracelets made today. Rate the jewellery shown as Source 2.12 against modern jewellery in terms of its design and workmanship. What do you conclude?

4 Consider what you have found out about the *Oseberg*.
   - **a** Why do you think it was necessary to make a copy of the *Oseberg*?
   - **b** What evidence did the discovery of this ship provide about *each* of the following: Viking shipbuilding skills, Viking burial practices?

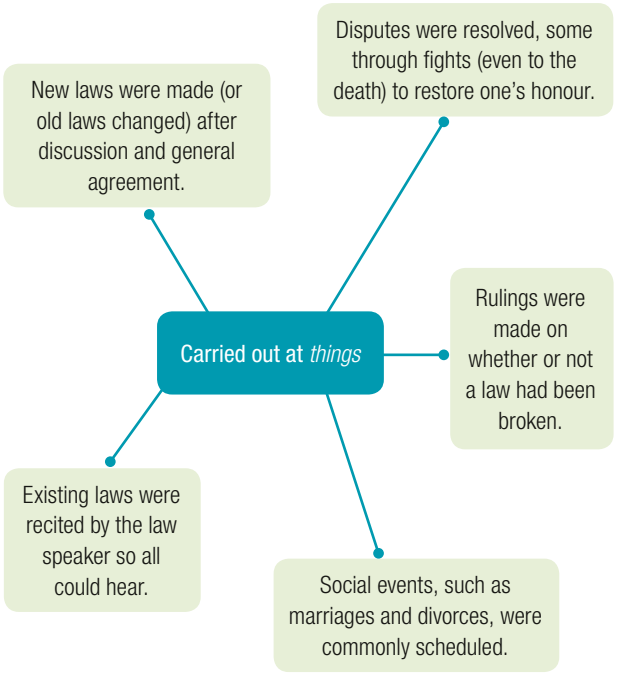
5 Look at Source 2.13.
   - **a** What are runes?
   - **b** Why is the Runestone of Rök significant?
   - **c** Explain why its discovery has been contentious.

Viking laws

By about the mid 11th century, the areas we know as Denmark, Sweden and Norway today were each ruled by one king. Before this time, political assemblies known as ***things*** played an important role in the governing of Viking communities. The *thing* was held once a year in each community. All 'free men and women' could attend and speak. Its main purposes were to make and change laws, and to judge when they had been broken.

Until the 12th century, Viking laws were not written down. Instead, they were preserved in the memory of a law speaker. He recited them loudly at each *thing*.

The Vikings respected their law. This is partly because an individual's reputation was important to them. It was also partly because some punishments were very harsh. If, for example, an individual was found guilty of breaking the law by the *thing*, and did not pay the required fine to the person harmed, the punishment was death. Another harsh punishment was to be made a full outlaw. This meant being banished (sent away) for life, with a large bounty (reward) on one's head.



Source 2.15 Some typical activities at *things*

focus on ...

continuity and change: the Althing

Iceland was the only Viking community to have a national *thing*: the ***Althing***. It was the first parliament in the world. It met for the first time on the Plains of Thingvellir in 930 CE. Like *things*, it was held once a year, in June. People from different communities travelled long distances to get there, setting up temporary camps. Its format was similar to that of *things*, even if the reality was that it was dominated by a small number of powerful families.

Its focal point was the Lögberg (Rock of the Law). Here the law speaker stood to proclaim the laws. Today, it is a grassy mound, changed over time by natural forces. The Icelandic flag flies there now to mark the spot.

Since that first meeting there have been changes to the *Althing*; it was even abandoned for a time. But even now, 1000 years later, it continues to be the name of Iceland's Parliament. Icelanders continue to gather at the Lögberg on 17 June each year to commemorate the *Althing* decision (in 1944) to create the Republic of Iceland.

Source 2.16 The Oxara River, with the plains of Thingvellir beyond. This area, rich in natural resources, including fresh water, was an ideal location for a large gathering of people.

Viking economy

Traditionally, the Viking economy was based on agriculture. But good farming land was in limited supply, as much of the landscape of Scandinavia is mountainous or thickly forested, and winters can be harsh. Trade helped to meet people's needs (such as for grain), particularly as the population grew.

Viking merchants plied their trade in boats across seas and down rivers. Stashes of foreign coins found in Sweden are evidence that Swedish Vikings (known as the Rus) were trading in today's Russia and central Asia. In fact, they reached as far east as Constantinople and Jerusalem, in order to meet up with traders who had travelled the **Silk Road**. (Some Rus were later paid to set up an elite squad, known as the Varangian Guard, to protect the **Byzantine** emperor.) Viking merchants sometimes carried their boats between rivers or rolled them on logs. Once they reached their destination, they might travel on horseback or camel, dragging goods in carts.

Source 2.17 Major Viking trade routes

Trade

Items the Vikings carried for trade included timber, leather shoes and bags, smoked fish, amber, fur, **artefacts** carved from walrus tusks and whale bones, jewellery and slaves (particularly once their raids started). These were exchanged for goods such as wheat, iron, silverware, wine, spices, silks, salt, weapons and glassware. At first, the trade was conducted through **barter**; later, it was for coins. Many towns the Vikings later colonised—such as York (England), Kiev (Ukraine) and Dublin (Ireland)—became busy centres of trade.

Viking men, who on average were taller than other Europeans, groomed, bathed and washed their clothes regularly. The abbot John of Wallingford noted this in his writings, stating that when Vikings moved into **Anglo-Saxon** territory the women there found them more appealing than the grubbier, smellier Anglo-Saxon men.

Source 2.18

I have never before seen such perfect bodies; they were tall like palm trees, blond, with a few of them red ... every one of them brings with him an axe, a sword and a knife. They never leave these things ...

Translated extract about the Rus from the writings of the 10th-century Arab traveller Ibn Fadlan

Source 2.19 An artist's impression of a bare-chested Viking trader selling a female slave to Persian merchants

Check your learning

1. What were the *thing* and the *Althing*? Give examples of how each affected Viking society.
2. List three goods the Vikings typically exported and three their merchants imported.
3. Use Source 2.17 and an atlas to list five modern countries with which the Vikings traded.
4. Find out what amber is. Write a paragraph on your findings.
5. Based on information in this section (including sources), suggest why the Byzantine emperor might have chosen to pay the Rus Vikings to be his personal bodyguards.

Source 2.20 Odin traded an eye for wisdom. His spear never missed. He watched over the cosmos (helped by two wolves and the sharp eyes of two ravens), while travelling on an eight-legged horse, Sleipnir.

Source 2.21 Thunder was the sound of Thor's chariot rumbling across the sky, pulled by two goats. Lightning was the path his hammer took when he tossed it. His belt gave him the strength of ten.

Viking beliefs and mythology

Compared with many other civilisations, we know very little about the beliefs and religious practices of traditional Vikings. We do know that the Vikings had their own religion, and they worshipped many different gods, but these old beliefs died out after Vikings became Christians.

The traditional stories Vikings told about gods, giants and monsters are known as Viking mythology. Many of these stories tell of the creation of the world, and were recorded in a collection of stories known as the Viking **sagas**. In traditional Viking mythology, there were 'nine worlds'. Each is connected to the other by the 'world tree' known as *Yggdrasil* (see Source 2.23).

When people died, their bodies were **cremated** (burned) and the remains were buried. Often, people were buried with a few items that were important to them during their life. It was believed that they could take these items into the next world. Some Viking chieftains were given ship-burials, with treasure and weapons. Often, their favourite dogs and horses were buried with them. Sometimes, chieftains were even buried with human sacrifices.

Like the ancient Greeks, the Vikings didn't really have a positive or negative view of the afterlife. Many believed that the dead travelled to a place called *Hel*, which lay underground. *Hel* is the origin of the modern word 'hell'. *Hel* was thought of as a cold and damp place where the spirits of the dead continued to live in a dreamlike form, a kind of eternal sleep.

Vikings who were extremely brave, or lived exceptional lives, were believed to travel to *Asgard* after they died. *Asgard* was the home of the gods, where people would spend the afterlife feasting and living in large halls.

Vikings believed that a warrior killed in battle went to *Valhalla*, a splendid hall in *Asgard,* where dead heroes feasted at long tables. Odin sent his warrior-maidens, the Valkyries, riding through the skies to bring these warriors to *Valhalla* (or 'Hall of the slain').

Viking gods

Many of the Viking gods were responsible for different areas of daily life. There were gods that watched over the successful harvest of crops, others that looked over love, health, family and fertility. Of course, there were also gods that looked over success in battle and wars.

Source 2.22 Some important Viking gods

Viking god	Role/relationships
Odin (also known as Woden)	King of the gods in Viking mythology. He was the god of magic, poetry and war. His wife, Frigg, was the goddess of women and the home.
Freya	Goddess of beauty and love. She rode a chariot drawn by two cats.
Freyr	God of fertility, peace and harvests. He was the twin brother of Freya.
Thor	God of storms and thunder. The Vikings believed he rode a chariot across the skies creating the sound of thunder. Thor also caused lightning with his magic hammer.

Source 2.23 In Viking mythology there are 'nine worlds' each connected by the 'world tree' known as *Yggdrasil*.

Asgard
Home of the Norse gods, full of halls and palaces. The most splendid was *Valhalla*, the hall of slain battle heroes. They were taken there by beautiful women on horseback: the Valkyries, Odin's messengers.

Alfheim
Home of the Light Elves, where the god Freyr lived

Vanaheim
Home of the Vanir gods, an older group of gods who, for a time, battled the gods of *Asgard*

Midgard
The Earth, the world of humans; a rainbow 'bridge' linked it to *Asgard*

Svartalheim
Home of the Dark Elves, who live underground

Nidavellir
Home of the Dwarfs, who also live underground, and were talented craftspeople

Jotunheimr
Home of the rock giants, who threatened both humans and the *Asgard* gods; their king was Thrym, a frost giant

Muspelheim
Home of the fire giants. Its ruler, Surt, will set *Yggdrasil* on fire at Ragnarok and kill Freyr.

Hel
The cold, misty underworld, where everyone except heroes went after death. For people who broke laws, it was a place of punishment.

focus on ...

continuity and change: days of the week

The days of the week in English have their roots in older European cultures. Sunday, as you may already know, is named for the Sun, and Monday for our Moon. Saturday is frequently the same in many cultures as well—Saturn's day—which points to its roots in ancient Roman culture.

The days Tuesday to Friday, however, have different names depending on the culture of the region and the language in use. (In France, for example, Tuesday is called *mardi*, which means 'Mars' day', and was named for Mars, the Roman god of war.)

In English culture, many of the names of the days of the week have their roots in Norse and Old English culture (see Source 2.24). Tuesday, for example, is named for the god of war Tiwes, and his day was *Tiwesdæg*—our Tuesday. Similarly, Wednesday was named for Odin (or Wodin), which gave us *Wodnesdæg* (and now you know why Wednesday is spelled the way it is!). Thursday was named for the god Thor, and Friday was named for Freya, Odin's wife.

Source 2.24 The names of the days of the week have roots in Viking culture

English	Norse	Meaning
Sunday	*Sunnandæg*	Sun's day
Monday	*Monandæg*	Moon's day
Tuesday	*Tiwesdæg*	Tiw's day
Wednesday	*Wodnesdæg*	Wodin's day
Thursday	*Ðunresdæg*	Thor's day
Friday	*Frigedæg*	Freya's day
Saturday	*Sæterdæg*	Saturn's day

Check your learning

1 Write down three points that interest you about Odin and three points that interest you about Thor.
2 Why might Viking people have been reassured by the sound of thunder?
3 How do Norse Viking myths compare with any other creation stories that you have studied?

focus on ...

perspectives:
brutal barbarians ... or not?

The Vikings were a more complex people than you might have read about in comics, or seen in films. Certainly, primary text sources indicate that they could be fierce and merciless warriors. (It has to be remembered that these accounts were recorded mostly by Christian monks, who were typical victims of Viking attacks.) Other accounts describe coarse behaviour and unhygienic habits.

But other primary sources demonstrate that they were also skilled silversmiths, poets, wood and ivory carvers, jewellery makers, weavers and musicians—not qualities normally associated with 'brutal barbarians'. As with any historical analysis, the 'reality' of who the Vikings were as a people lies among a range of different perspectives revealed through available sources. Consider the sources on this page, for instance. What different perspectives do they provide about the Vikings?

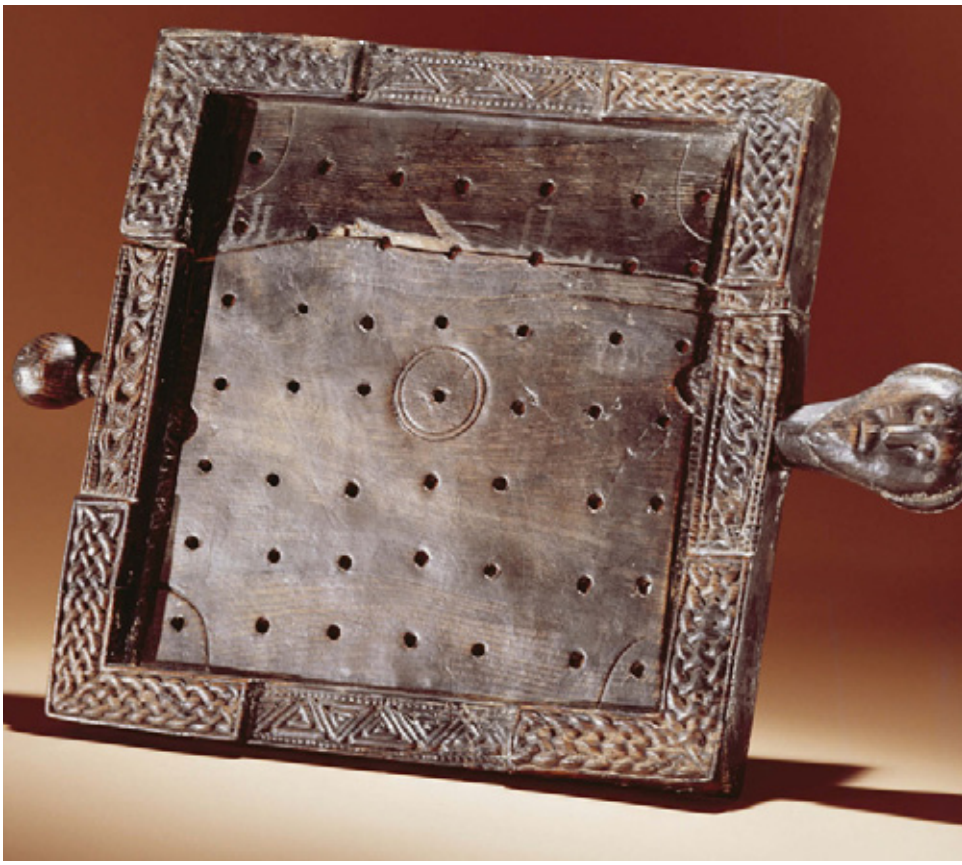
Source 2.25 Perspective on a Viking named Svein Asleifarson, who lived on one of the Orkney Islands around the time of the Viking raids. Note the matter-of-fact tone of the account.

> *Winter he would spend at home on Gairsay, where he entertained some 80 men at his own expense ... In the spring he had ... a great deal of seed to sow ... Then when that job was done he would go off plundering in the Hebrides and in Ireland ... then back home just after mid summer, where he stayed until the cornfields had been reaped and the grain was safely in. After that he would go off raiding again, and never came back till the first month of winter was ended.*
>
> Translated extract from the *Orkneyinga Saga*, an Icelandic saga written in the 1100s

Source 2.26

> *[The Vikings] ... came to the church of Lindisfarne [in north-eastern England], laid everything to waste with grievous plundering, trampled the holy places with polluted steps, dug up the altars and seized all the treasures of the holy church. They killed some of the brothers [monks], took some away with them in chains, many they drove out naked and loaded with insults, some they drowned in the sea ...*
>
> Translated extract from *Historia Regum* by the 12th-century English monk Simeon of Durham. It was said to be a careful copy of a lost version of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*

Source 2.27 An exact copy of a carefully carved metal container made by a Viking artisan. The heads of birds and animals decorate the lid.



Source 2.28 A wooden playing board thought to have been used by the Vikings to play the strategic game *hnefatafl* (a bit like chess; it involved protecting the king)

freshideas

Think, pair, share

Being the fastest in the class to answer a question is not always a good thing. You may speak before you think. Unless the question is very simple, it is better to take the time to consider your answer. There will often be a number of issues that you need to consider.

Here's one way to practise this thinking behaviour:

1. Pair off with another classmate.
2. Each jot down thoughts about the question you are given on a piece of paper. Brainstorm as many thoughts as you can, even if only loosely relevant.
3. After about a minute (your teacher will decide), spend a few minutes discussing the points you have noted with your partner. This will help you to sort out what's important among your thoughts, and what's not. Take turns to speak. Listen to what your partner has to say, and then he/she will listen to you. There will probably be some things you agree on, and others you don't. Identify any major points of agreement and disagreement.
4. With this discussion in mind, decide on a response to the question you can both 'live' with. (This may be a view that strongly agrees or disagrees with the statement because you each feel the same way. Or it may be one that partly agrees or disagrees, with qualifications. This is more likely if you have different viewpoints.) Identify which points helped to sway your agreed response the most.
5. When asked, one of you will share your response with the rest of the class.

Try this thinking approach for the following question: 'Living in a Viking society in Scandinavia during the Viking Age would have been a very harsh and miserable existence for most people.'

Source 2.29 An artist's impression of a Viking fleet at sea

bigideas

2.1 How was Viking society organised?

Remember

1 Explain the difference between a *thrall*, *jarl* and *karl* in Viking society.

2 Viking children did not go to school as you do.
   a What did their education involve?
   b Who might teach a privileged few (in reading the runes, for instance)?

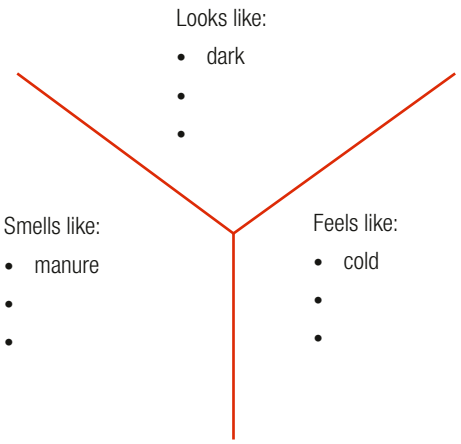
3 What were *things*? What could you compare these to today?

4 Why were Viking women usually so independent?

Understand

5 Refer to Source 2.6. With a partner, create and role-play a conversation between either Olaf the Tall and Ingvar the Old, or Hrodgeir the Lucky and Gudrun, his wife. Your script will clearly distinguish between their different social roles.

6 Copy a larger version of the following Y chart into your notebook. Complete it with as many entries as you can think of. Use this information to sum up your opinion on what it would be like to live in a Viking longhouse. One entry has been added in each segment to get you started.



7 Explain why the *Althing* is an example of continuity and change.

8 Breaking an oath (or a promise) was a very bad thing to do in Viking society. What does this suggest about their values?

9 Explain how people's beliefs would have influenced the way Viking people reacted to *each* of the following: a thunderstorm, a very good harvest, a rainbow.

Apply

10 In small groups, use Sources 2.2, 2.7 and 2.9 to build a model of a longhouse interior. Present it to the class, sharing the task of explaining its key features.

Analyse

11 Source 2.30 below is an extract from a translation of the *Saga of Grettir the Strong*. Grettir was an outlaw. Read the extract and then answer the following questions:

- **a** What was the punishment for those outlawed in Viking society?
- **b** What did Grettir do to survive?
- **c** What did he fear most? Given Viking beliefs, can you suggest why?
- **d** What had Grim been promised for killing Grettir?
- **e** Why might this have been a strong motivation for Grim?
- **f** What was the outcome of Grim's attempt to murder Grettir?
- **g** What did Grettir learn from this experience?
- **h** Explain why such incidents would have added to the hardships of an outlaw's life.

Source 2.30

Grettir went up to the Arnarvatn Heath and built himself a hut ... he got himself a net and a boat and went out fishing to support himself. It was a weary time for him in the mountains because of his fear of the dark ...

There was an outlaw from the North named Grim. This man was bribed by those of Hrutafjord to kill Grettir. They promised him pardon and money if he succeeded. He went to visit Grettir ... [who] took him in. Grim ... watched Grettir closely, but it seemed no easy matter to attack him, for Grettir was suspicious ...

One morning Grim came home from fishing ... Grettir lay still ... [Grim] ... took [the sword hanging above Grettir's head] and raised it to strike ... Grettir sprang up ... and killed him. He learned from this what it was to take in a forest-man.

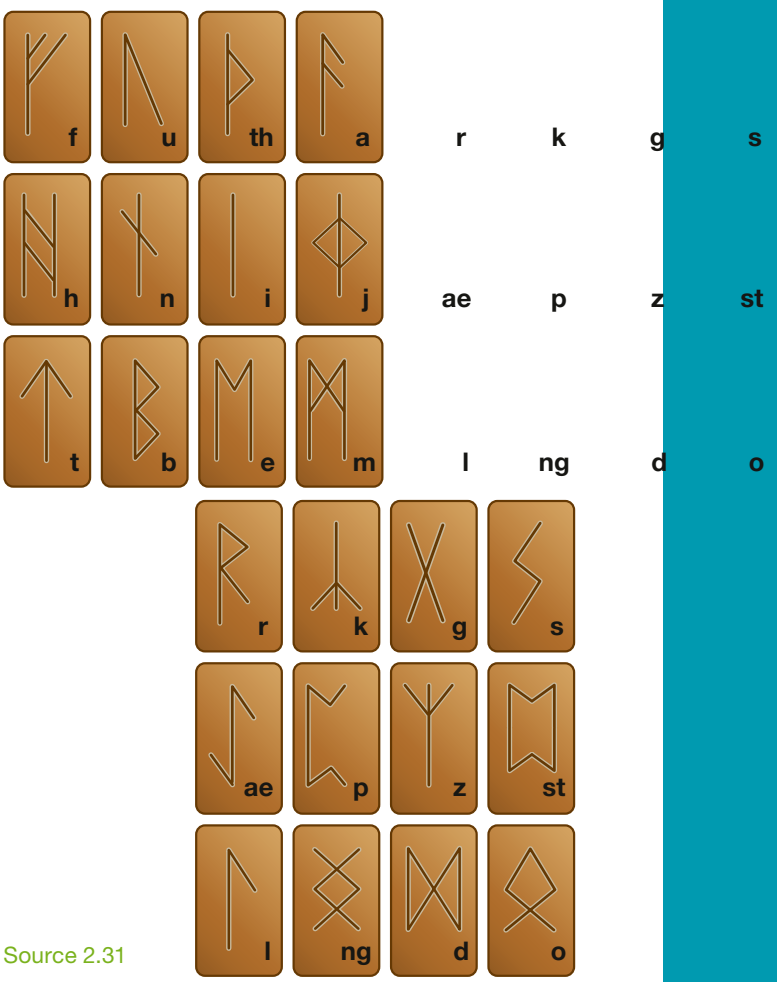
From *Saga of Grettir the Strong*, Section LV

Evaluate

12 Decide on what you consider are the five things (in order of importance) you think a time traveller from 21st-century Australia would need to know and do to blend into the traditional Viking society during the Viking Age (assume they could speak the language). Justify the point you selected as most important.

Create

13 Source 2.31 matches rune characters with letters in our alphabet. Use this to create a tombstone message. Ask a partner to translate it.



Source 2.31

Source 2.32 A common landscape in many parts of Scandinavia. Note the relatively small area of coastal flatland.

2.2 What developments and achievements led to Viking expansion?

*Viking **society** changed significantly in the late 8th century. Before this time, they had only been known as traders outside their homeland. From this point on, however, the Vikings became a source of great fear as they pushed outward from their homeland to expand their territory. For almost two centuries, they terrorised villages, towns and monasteries in surrounding lands with 'lightning raids'.*

Raids were often timed to take victims by surprise (such as just before dawn). Part of the terror for victims was that Vikings continued to trade during this time. If approaching ships were spotted, those on shore might not know, until it was too late, whether the Vikings were coming to trade or attack. In this chapter we will explore the developments that led to Viking expansion.

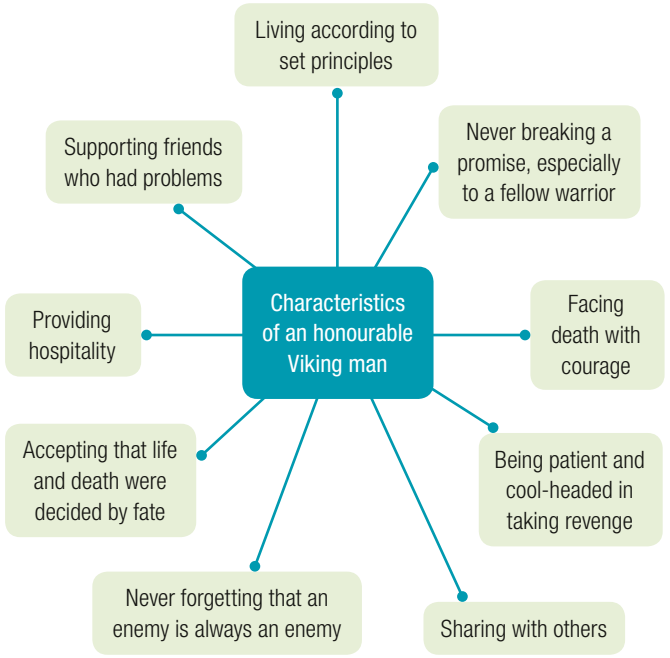
Possible reasons for Viking raids

Historians still argue today about what motivated the Vikings to change from honest traders into violent raiders. A range of reasons are offered. One of the most basic is that they were only doing what they had to do to survive in a harsh land with an unforgiving climate. In a region such as Scandinavia, day-to-day living was a huge challenge.

There was only limited coastal farming land in the Viking homeland (see Source 2.32). As the population grew, the pressure on such land would have increased. Winters can also be severe in this part of the world, especially further north. Summer brings long hours of daylight, and winters are mostly dark and bleak.

Awareness through trade

Through their sea trade and the reports brought home by their merchants, many Vikings would have been familiar with the landscapes of some surrounding regions. They would also have known about the riches held by some settlements in these places (and their defences). By the 8th century, their navigational skills and shipbuilding abilities were highly advanced.



Source 2.33 Characteristics of a Viking man of honour

Desire for wealth and glory

Another reason for the change in Viking behaviour, according to scholars, was that raids offered the chance for quick and easy wealth. A leader could use stolen goods to reward (and therefore keep or increase) his support base. This would then strengthen his influence and power at home.

Some argue that the desire for glory and adventure was also a factor. For example, a man's reputation was very important to a Viking. To lose honour or respect was a disgrace. Raids may have been the way for some dishonoured Vikings to redeem themselves, returning as warriors who had fought bravely. Viking warriors also believed that they would go straight to *Valhalla* if they died fighting bravely in battle.

Source 2.34 Medieval churches and monasteries were attractive targets for plundering Vikings. This interior, from the medieval Chapel of St Sernin, in Toulouse, France, is an example of why Vikings would have searched far and wide for such easy pickings.

Source 2.35 Detail from a 9th-century bronze statue of Charlemagne, Holy Roman Emperor

Source 2.36 A Norwegian shipbuilder carving a stern post in the same way that his Viking ancestors did

Revenge or exploitation?

Another possible reason why Vikings started to carry out violent raids on nearby lands was a desire for revenge. Charlemagne (*c.* 742–814), King of the Franks and later the **Holy Roman Emperor**, fought for around 40 years to bring most of western and central Europe under his control. As part of his military efforts, he ordered those he regarded as **pagans** (including some Vikings) to become Christians. Any who refused were killed. Early Viking raids on Europe took place during the later years of Charlemagne's reign, and the raiders may have been motivated by a want to get back at Christians, as well as by greed.

Other scholars have suggested that the Vikings were just taking advantage of what they saw as weak and divided rule in surrounding regions at the time (such as England and Charlemagne's European empire in the late 8th and early 9th centuries).

Check your learning

1 You are a Viking who farms in the coastal region shown in Source 2.32. The population is increasing. Why would you be tempted to leave your homeland?

2 Why might tales merchants told of churches and monasteries similar to that shown in Source 2.34 have tempted some Viking tribal rulers to raid such places to get rich? How would such wealth benefit them as rulers?

3 Why do some historians take the view that early Viking raids on Europe were revenge missions? What evidence would you be looking for to help to confirm this view?

Shipbuilding

The Vikings were expert shipbuilders, with ready access to the timber of Scandinavia's forests. They built trade ships, ferries, rowing boats, fishing vessels and ceremonial boats such as the *Oseberg* (see p. 73). By the end of the 8th century, they had also been sailing as merchants for some time. They were skilled at navigating, using the sun and stars, weather patterns, bird-flight trails and coastal features as guides. In other words, they were well placed to be either sea traders or sea pirates.

Their strong navigational and shipbuilding skills gave them all the expertise they needed to make and sail efficient warships. These included the **longships** they used for lightning raids. The Vikings called them *drakkar* (which means dragon).

Source 2.37 The remains of a Viking longship on display at the Viking Ship Museum, Oslo

Longships

Longships were up to twice as long as trade ships (up to about 37 metres in length), with a leaner hull. They could carry up to 100 warriors (68 of whom were oarsmen, 34 on each side). In a good wind, the sail provided for a fast sea or ocean crossing. Rowing was necessary to navigate a river or if there was no breeze. Longships could sail in very close to shore, allowing men to wade in quickly for a surprise attack.

The huge square sails (made from pieces of woollen or linen fabric, stitched together) were commonly dyed blood red. Together with the dragon heads at the prow (front) and stern (back), this helped to heighten the terror for raid victims. Vikings also believed that these dragon heads would frighten away any evil spirits or monsters during sea crossings.

Check your learning

1 Brainstorm the tasks that would have faced Vikings in establishing a settlement in one of Scandinavia's mountainous forest regions. Share your thoughts with a partner.

2 Draw a concept map to list some factors scholars suggest might have motivated Vikings to start raiding.

3 Explain why the Vikings' skills as shipbuilders and sailors made it easy for them to be effective sea pirates.

Source 2.39 Some Viking weapons

Weapons

Weapons were very important to the Vikings. For a start, they were essential for hunting animals for food. They were also traditional symbols of a man's wealth and power. For example, a sword, usually double-edged, might have a decorated hilt (handle) of silver, copper or bronze if it was the sword of a rich man. The **sagas** record that some weapons (particularly swords) were so highly valued that they were given 'pet' names (see Source 2.38). A man's sword was usually buried with him when he died.

When the Viking Age began, Viking warriors were well equipped to arm themselves heavily. As raids became more a part of the Viking lifestyle, weapon makers were kept busy forging arrow, spear and axe heads from iron, and sharpening the steel edges of iron swords. The Vikings were highly skilled metalworkers. This is also evident in their jewellery (see Source 2.12).

Armour

Wealthy Vikings could afford metal armour, including helmets with nose bridges and **chain-mail** armour (see Source 2.40). By the time William the Conqueror (whose ancestors were Vikings) invaded England in 1066, chain-mail armour was worn by most soldiers.

Source 2.38 Some weapon 'pet' names recorded in Viking sagas

Weapon and Norse name	Translation
Sword — *Fótbítr*	Foot biter
Sword – *Gunnlogi*	Battle flame
Sword – *Leggbítr*	Leg biter
Sword – *Saetarspillar*	Peace breaker
Axe – *Himintelgja*	Heaven scraper
Axe – *Rimmugýgr*	Battle hag
Coat of chain mail – *Full-trúi*	Old faithful

focus on ...

contestability: horned helmets

Most people think that the helmets of Viking warriors had large horns. However, there is no evidence at all to support this. Our popular culture—movies, comics, books, games—perpetuates this image of Vikings with horned helmets, which is historically inaccurate.

Think about it—horns on helmets would have made them easier to knock off, leaving the head bare, and making Viking warriors defenceless against a blow from a sword or an axe.

Source 2.40 Viking armour at a reconstructed battle in Finland

Check your learning

1. How did some Vikings display their wealth and social position through their weapons and armour?
2. Use Source 2.38 as inspiration to create Norse names for the items displayed in Source 2.39.
3. Why were many Viking swords such lethal weapons?

Source 2.41 An image of a Viking in popular culture

focus on ...

empathy: Viking *berserkers*

As raiders, the Vikings were feared by the people in the villages they attacked. Most feared of all were the *berserkers* (which means 'bear coats'), who were what could be considered the Viking 'shock troops'. *Berserkers* fought with a frenzy, clad in the skins of bears or wolves. They seemed not to fear death, injury or pain. Today, one legacy of the Viking past is the word 'berserk', which in modern English describes violent rage.

Source 2.42 is the translated writing of the 12th-century Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus. Scholars today regard his view of *berserkers* as perhaps more reliant on imagination than fact.

Source 2.42

> *When Hardbeen heard this, a demonical frenzy suddenly took him; he furiously bit and devoured the edges of his shield; he kept gulping down fiery coals; he snatched live embers in his mouth and let them pass down into his entrails; he rushed through the perils of crackling fires; and at last, when he had raved through every sort of madness, he turned his sword with raging hand against the hearts of six of his champions.*

Extract from a 1905 translation of *The Nine Books of the Danish History*, by the 12th-century Danish historian Saxo Grammaticus

Source 2.43

> *Men saw that a great bear [berserker] went before King Hrolf's men [King Hrolf (known as Kraki) was a warrior chieftain in today's Denmark around the 6th century CE], keeping always near the king. He slew more men with his forepaws than any five of the king's champions. Blades and weapons glanced off him and he brought down both men and horses in King Hjorvard's forces, and everything which came in his path, he crushed to death with his teeth ...*

From *Erik the Red and Other Icelandic Sagas*, Gwyn Jones (ed.), Oxford, 1961, p. 313

Source 2.42 tells us who the *berserkers* were and what they did. Empathy requires us to be more interested in their motives: why did they do this? For, without such understanding, it would be very easy to judge such figures as lunatics.

Different opinions have been expressed about *berserkers*, including that they worked themselves into a frenzy before a battle on hallucinogenic drugs or alcohol. If this is so, their motive may well have been to put themselves beyond personal fear to, say, protect their king (as Source 2.43 suggests).

Significantly, *berserkers* were often linked with the Viking god Odin. It was Odin who was believed to give them (through rituals such as drinking animal blood) the power and fury of wild animals.

A Viking king going into battle would no doubt be reassured to have a few *berserkers* close by as he would see it as Odin's protection. The behaviour of *berserkers* on the battlefield—though to us that of out-of-control madmen—would have been welcomed as a sign that Odin was 'with them'.

Considering aspects such as these helps us to have historical empathy. It helps us to better understand why *berserkers* might have acted as they did.

Source 2.44 A stone carving from 6th-century Sweden, showing one man with a helmet adorned with the heads of birds. The other shows the head of a wolf or bear. (Bear skins were typically worn by a *berserker*.)

bigideas

2.2 What developments and achievements led to Viking expansion?

Remember

1 What major change happened during the 'Viking Age'?

2 What type of weapons were the weapons nicknamed 'foot biter' and a 'heaven scraper'? Suggest why each might have been named in this way.

Understand

3 List some goods Viking merchants imported through trade. Select three of these. With a partner, discuss how you think each might have changed Viking society.

4 Consider what you have learned about *berserkers*.
   - a Where does the English expression 'going berserk' come from?
   - b How does knowing there was a link between *berserkers* and Odin help us to better understand the motives for the behaviour of the Vikings?

5 Discuss this statement as a class: The Vikings may never have become sea pirates if they had not already developed such strong navigational and shipbuilding skills for trade.

Apply

6 In groups, discuss how and why you think Australian society has changed during your lifetime. Identify key events and developments you believe helped to cause this. Predict how you think these and other factors may influence our society over the next decade. A spokesperson will report the group's conclusions to the class.

Analyse

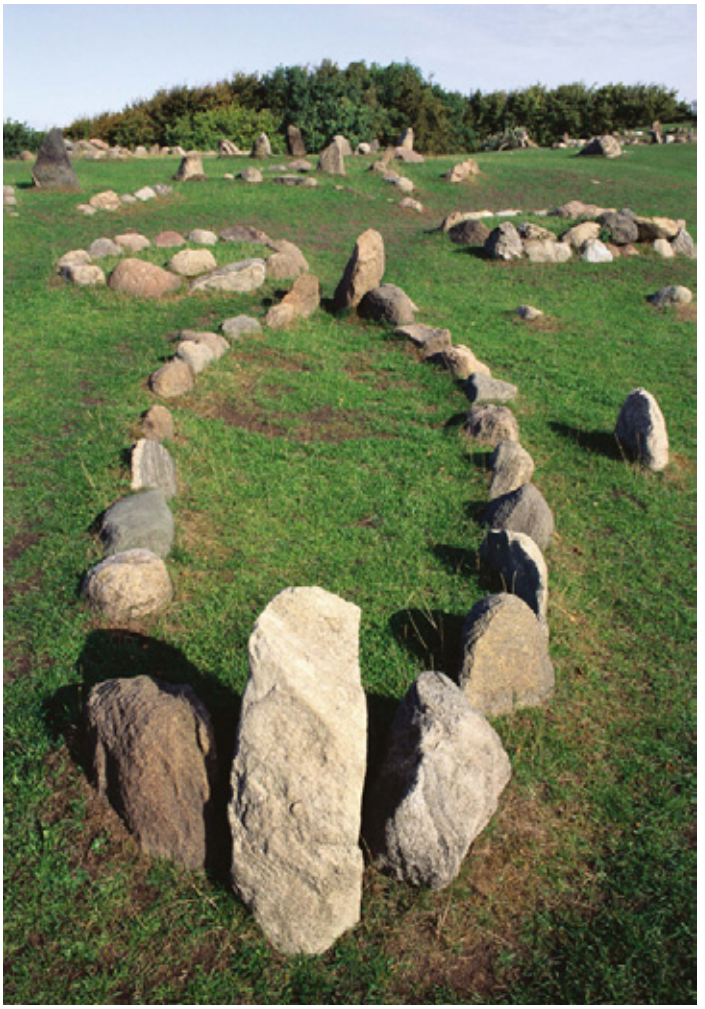
7 Source 2.45 is a photograph of a Viking cemetery. Look at its elements carefully. What do you observe? How does this compare and contrast with a typical Australian cemetery?

Evaluate

8 Consider what you have read, in general, about Vikings.
   - a Which two factors mentioned in this text do you think most contributed to the changes to Viking society that took place during the Viking Age?
   - b Frame one research question for each factor that you think would best help you to decide with more certainty.

Create

9 The discussion to this point has focused on why Viking society changed during the Viking Age. Building on this, draw a concept map that records why you think societies that came in contact with the Vikings during this time might have changed. Compare your finished concept map with that of a partner.



Source 2.45 A Viking cemetery

Source 2.46 A scene from the Bayeux Tapestry showing the army of William, Duke of Normandy, crossing the English Channel to attack England. William was a descendant of Viking settlers in northern France.

2.3 How did Viking conquests change other societies?

The Viking Age meant frequent voyages for Viking men as they embarked on their plundering raids. The loot they brought back helped to change political and economic systems in their homeland. In due course, many left to settle in the places they or their ancestors had raided. Others left to discover new lands.

The societies that Vikings came in contact with were also changed. Deals were struck between Viking leaders and the rulers of places they raided. Some of these deals involved payments of money, others involved grants of land. In time, the language, customs and beliefs of Viking settlers mixed with those of the locals, changing both societies.

Changes caused by conflict

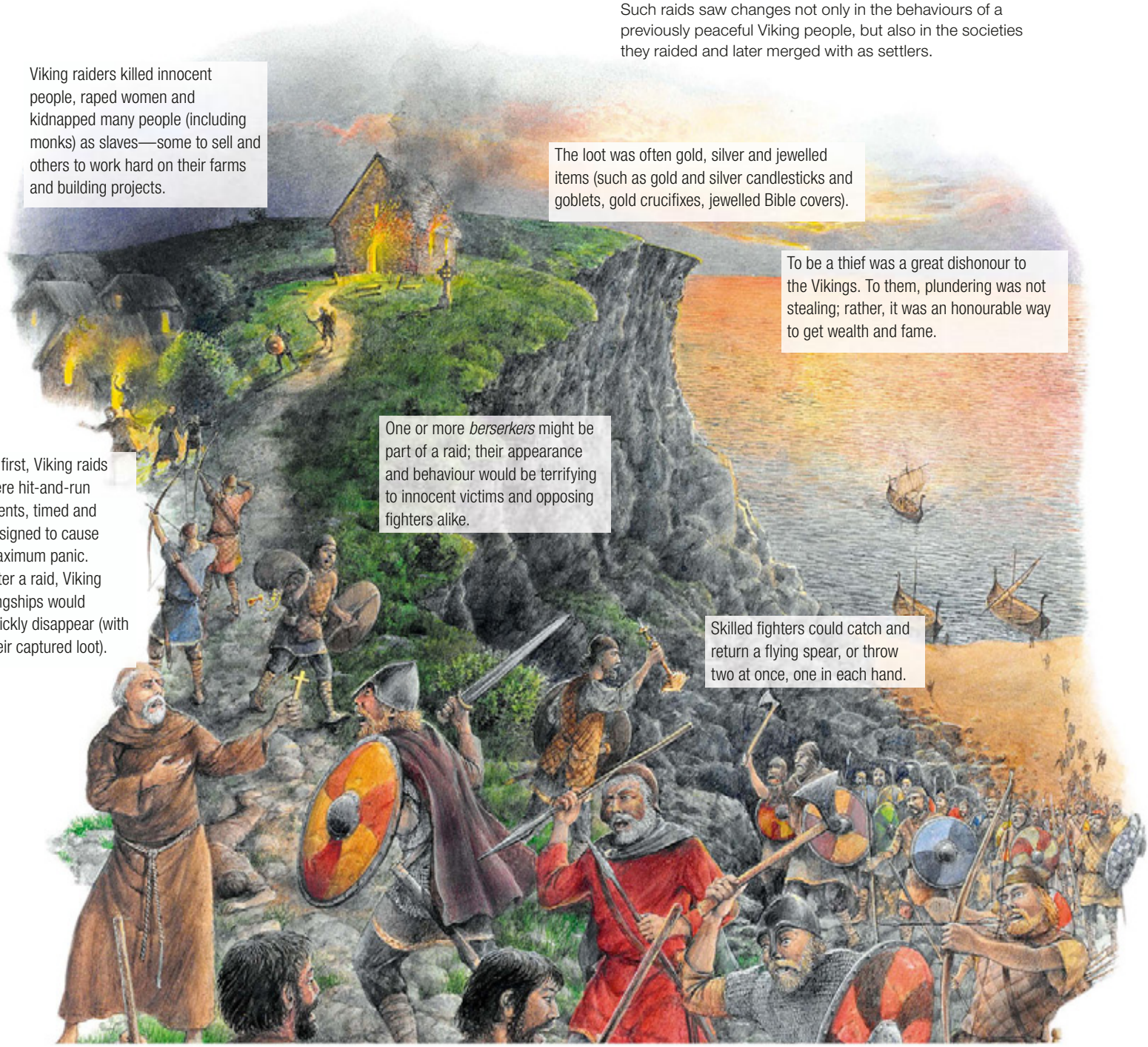
The *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* records 787 CE as the year of the first Viking attack. Three ships manned by Danish Vikings came ashore in southern England. A royal official met them, assuming they were merchants. He intended to escort them to the king's town to pay the needed taxes. Instead, they murdered him.

focus on ...

significance: the raid on Lindisfarne

On 6 January 793, a fleet of Viking longships attacked the monastery of St Cuthbert at Lindisfarne, in north-eastern England. This significant event began almost 200 years of uncertainty and terror for many monasteries and settlements in lands around the Viking homeland. Around 70 years later, in 865, Britain was invaded by a huge Viking army. By then, the Viking aim was to conquer, not just raid and plunder.

Source 2.47 An artist's impression of a Viking raid. Such raids saw changes not only in the behaviours of a previously peaceful Viking people, but also in the societies they raided and later merged with as settlers.



focus on ...

contestability: the Blood Eagle

People's views are influenced by their personal experiences. A man who suffers greatly during a war, for example, may hold a grudge against the people he fought, long after the war ends. That view may or may not be shared by others who did not have his experience. It may not be a fact.

Most records about the Vikings during the Viking Age were left by those they often attacked—Christian monks. To what extent these accounts were coloured by the monks' horror, fear and beliefs we will never know. To them, the Vikings were vicious, cruel barbarians. The sight of *berserkers* (see p. 88) would have only reinforced this perception.

One Viking practice was said to be the Blood Eagle. This method of execution involved cutting a person's ribs and spreading them out at the back like an eagle's wings, before pulling out the lungs. The wound was then said to be salted. Horrific! But did it really happen? Some scholars claim it did. They point to text references as evidence and to carvings on Viking picture stones on Gotland, an island in the Baltic Sea. Some say it was a sacrifice to Odin.

Norse **sagas** (such as the *Orkneyinga Saga*) and poems—all written after the Viking Age—refer to this practice. It was, some say, the death ordered by the Viking leader Ivar the Boneless for the King of Northumbria in 867. This king's death is mentioned in the *Anglo Saxon Chronicle*, but not how he was killed. An Old Norse poem, written nearly 200 years later, refers to an eagle cut in relation to this king's death, but no more.

Scholars who contest the reality of this execution method argue that the sagas and poems misinterpreted, or carelessly translated, Norse symbols in earlier texts. In Norse mythology, the eagle was a symbol of death. Tales may have been spread, too, by the Christian community to represent the Vikings as being more horrifying and repulsive than they actually were.

Source 2.48 A Viking picture stone on the island of Gotland, Sweden

Stop the raids!

The first Viking raids were on English coastal monasteries and settlements. In time, Viking attacks along rivers pushed deeper into Europe and Asia. They also extended their plundering missions into modern-day Wales, Scotland and Ireland. Their attacks were swift, noisy and usually unexpected. By all accounts, they were often brutal affairs.

Source 2.49

> *The number of ships grows: the endless flood of Vikings never ceases to grow. Everywhere Christ's people are the victims of massacres, burnings and plunderings. The Vikings conquer all in their path and nothing resists them.*
>
> Translation from the writing of the Frankish monk Ermentarius of Noirmountier, 860 CE

The end of Viking raids in Britain

In 865, Britain was invaded by a huge Viking army from Denmark. This time the motive was conquest, not plunder. Within a year, Vikings controlled the Northumbrian city of Jorvik (York). By 870, they had ended the rule of every **Anglo-Saxon** kingdom except Wessex. The Wessex king (from 871 to 899) was a man called Alfred (later Alfred the Great).

King Alfred fiercely resisted Viking attacks. By 878, he had forced the Viking leader, Guthrum, to surrender—and to become a Christian.

As part of the peace treaty the two men drew up, Alfred agreed to the Danish Vikings having an area in England they could regard as their own—it became know as the **Danelaw** (see Source 2.51). Over the next 100 years or so, Viking traditions, beliefs and language took hold in the former Anglo-Saxon community, influencing the history of England.

Viking raids continued, on and off, beyond Alfred's rule. In 1016, the council that appointed English kings asked the then King of Denmark, Cnut, to become England's king. King Cnut ruled England wisely and well until his death in 1035. His reign largely ended the era of Viking raids for England. They stopped altogether with William the Conqueror's victory at the Battle of Hastings in 1066 (see p. 65). English society would then be changed again, in a different way, when William became King of England—he would introduce **feudalism**.

The end of Viking raids in Gaul

A similar situation happened in Gaul (part of today's France). A Viking leader known as Rollo had repeatedly attacked settlements along the Seine River (including Paris). In 911 CE he was at last defeated by the army of the Frankish king, Charles the Simple. Till then, the Franks had been paying heavily (in silver, crops and livestock) to stop Viking attacks, without success. As you have learned, these payments were also made in England. There, they were called the *Danegeld* (Dane gold). In 1007 CE alone, the English paid a *Danegeld* of nearly 13 500 kilograms of silver. The payments put a crushing load on the economies of Gaul and England.

This time, the king gave Rollo an area of land—a **fief**. Rollo became a **vassal** of the king, and a Christian. The land he was given was called Normandy. Around 150 years later (in 1066), a duke from Normandy, William (see above), would invade Britain.

Check your learning

1. Develop a concept map to explain how you think villagers living near Lindisfarne (who would have heard about the attack on the monastery) might have felt and acted. Think how this event might have changed their lifestyle.
2. What does Source 2.49 reveal about how some felt about Viking attacks?
3. Explain why making Rollo a vassal was a clever move on the part of the Frankish king.
4. Go to the Internet to find information about 'Erik Bloodaxe'.
   a. Write down five facts about the life of this prominent Viking.
   b. Frame one question to guide your research into what most interests you about this man.

Source 2.50 An artist's impression of the Viking attack on Paris of 885 CE

Source 2.51 The area of the Danelaw, 878 CE

significant**individuals**

Leif Ericson

Vikings were already living in North America 500 years before Christopher Columbus reached close to its shores. The first explorers to actually land in North America were Leif Ericson and his crew, who landed in what is now Greenland and Canada. This significant event was recognised in 1964 when the US president declared 9 October as 'Leif Ericson Day'.

Leif's early life

Leif was born (most probably) in Iceland around 970 CE, the second of Erik the Red's three sons. As a boy, he was educated and taught life skills by Thyrker, a man Erik the Red had taken prisoner on an earlier raid in Europe. For four years, until he was 12, Leif lived in Thyrker's house.

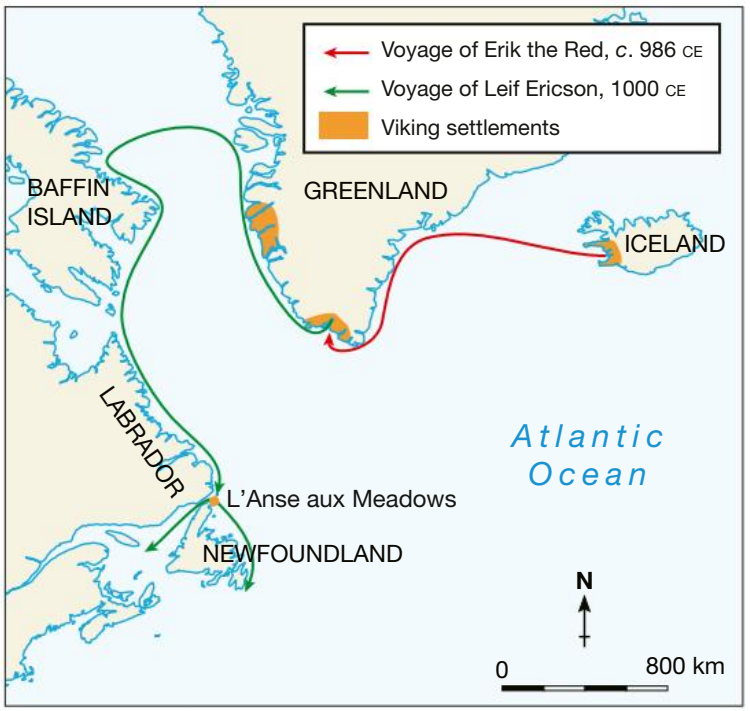
In around 985 CE, Erik the Red was banished from Iceland for killing a man. (He had earlier been banished from Norway, too.) So he set out in a boat with his family, slaves and supplies, and headed west. He called the land he found Greenland. There he settled, later encouraging other Icelanders to join him.

Finding North America

Historians contest how Leif found North America. It depends which saga is used as evidence. According to *Eiríks Saga* (*Saga of Erik the Red*), Leif visited Norway in 999 CE with gifts for the king, Olaf I Trygvasson. He stayed for a year, becoming a Christian (as was the king). He returned with the intent of carrying out the king's request to convert Greenlanders to Christianity. However, he was blown off course, ending up in today's Newfoundland.

The *Groenlendinga Saga* (*Greenlanders Saga*) is generally considered to provide the more reliable evidence. (Like the *Saga of Erik the Red*, it was written 200 to 300 years after the events occurred.) It states that Leif's discovery was far from accidental. In 986 CE, Bjarni Herjólfsson, a Norwegian explorer, arrived in Greenland, looking for his father (who had

Source 2.52 An artist's impression of Leif Ericson and his crew landing in Newfoundland, Canada, in 1001 CE



Source 2.53 A map showing the routes of Erik the Red and, later, his son Leif

shortly before emigrated from Iceland with Erik the Red). Along the way, Bjarni got lost. He reported that he saw a wooded, hilly place. But it was more than a decade before Leif Ericson acted on this news.

Leif bought Bjarni's boat. In around 1000 CE, he set off (with a crew that included Thyrker) to find the land Bjarni said he had seen. Before he landed at a grassy place he named Vinland, he named two others: Helluland (Land of Flat Rocks, possibly Labrador or Baffin Island) and Markland (Land of Woods, possibly Newfoundland). Leif set up camp at Vinland, returning to Greenland after a year.

Where did Leif settle?

Historians contest the location of Leif's settlement. Most think it was at a place now called L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland. There, archaeologists have located the remains of dwellings with walls of thick turf. Also found was a dress pin and a device used to spin wool.

Later visits

After Leif returned to Greenland, his brother and other family members made trips to the settlement he had established. Leif, though, never returned and died in 1020. The new Viking settlement remained for a few years, but faced increasingly hostile attacks by the Indigenous people who were the ancestors of the modern Inuit. The Vikings called them *skraelings*. Eventually these attacks forced the Vikings to abandon the settlement and return to Greenland.

Source 2.54 The heritage-listed site of L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland, Canada (with its reconstructed dwellings)

Source 2.55 A statue (created 1930) of Leif Ericson in Hallgrimskirkja, Iceland

Check your learning

1. Explain how and why Leif Ericson ended up in Greenland.
2. Refer to the map and the sagas to complete the following:
   - a. Draw two flow charts, each showing how Leif discovered North America according to the two different sagas.
   - b. Which version do most scholars think is most reliable?
3. Use Source 2.53, Google Earth and Internet photo libraries such as Corbis and Getty (search for them on Google) to create a travel diary of what Leif might have seen on his journey from Greenland to Vinland.
4. Explain why some scholars think L'Anse aux Meadows is probably the site of Leif's settlement.
5. What eventually ended the Viking settlement in North America?
6. How do you think the 'discovery' of North America affected the Viking society in Greenland? Give reasons for your opinion.
7. Create a timeline for Leif Ericson's life, using data from the *Greenlanders Saga*.

Political change in the Viking homeland

Warriors returned 'home' from their raids with large stores of plundered loot (including prisoners taken as slaves). In time, these goods made some local Viking rulers very wealthy. Some became so influential that they no longer needed the support of *jarls*. Local tribes began to group together, forming larger **kingdoms**. Within about 200 years, there were three dominant kings. These monarchs ruled areas we know today as Norway, Sweden and Denmark.

Economic change in the Viking homeland

After they began raiding, the Vikings developed an economy based on the value of different precious metals and their weight. Silver was most commonly used. Much of this silver was obtained through plunder or forced payments. Silver items would be broken into smaller pieces until they matched the weights needed to trade.

The Vikings also collected taxes (often coins) in some places they colonised. The penalty for non-payment in Ireland during the 8th century was a slit nose! Some coins they obtained through trade from parts of Europe, Afghanistan and some Arabian countries.

Eventually, the Vikings developed an economy based on money—one where a particular coin had a particular value. This is similar to the way our currency works. Most of the places the Vikings raided had similar economies. In many cases, Vikings copied the designs of coins used in the regions they colonised. By the late 10th century, the kings of the emerging kingdoms of Sweden, Norway and Denmark were all issuing their own currencies.

Source 2.56 A Viking hoard found in a field in Harrowgate (Yorkshire, England) in 2007, one of many treasures that have been uncovered. The stash, buried for over 1000 years, includes 617 silver coins.

Check your learning

1. How did raids change the status and influence of some Viking rulers?
2. Explain why Viking society changed from an agricultural economy to a money (monetary) economy in the 8th century.
3. Where do you think the English expression 'to pay through the nose for something' came from?
4. As a class, discuss why the Vikings might have converted to a monetary economy.
5. Examine Source 2.56. Besides the coins, what do you think the other items in this stash were used for?

focus on ...

cause and effect:
Christianity and the Vikings

One of the factors that changes societies is belief systems. Viking society, for instance, changed significantly when it adopted Christianity.

The towns, villages and monasteries that Vikings raided were usually Christian settlements. Many of the places in which they later settled were in Christian lands (the people of the settlements often encouraged the Vikings to stay in order to stop their raids). As well, around 1000 CE, Christian missionaries were travelling to parts of the Viking homeland. These factors, among others, eventually caused the Viking people to change their beliefs. This affected many aspects of their social behaviour. For example:

- Attacks on Christian communities stopped altogether.
- Burial practices changed from the rituals of a Viking **cremation** (the burning of corpses) to traditional Christian burials; human sacrifices stopped as did driving a stake through the heart of the dead person to 'stop them' returning to take revenge.
- A large number of Christian churches were built.
- Many Vikings gave former slaves their freedom.
- Some traditional values of Vikings were changed (e.g. the belief that being disgraced required a revenge killing).
- New Christian festivals were celebrated; in some instances, though, the rituals were a mix of Christian and pagan traditions.

Source 2.57 is a recount of a traditional Viking burial practice before Christianity was adopted. It describes the burial of a chieftain in which a female slave is sacrificed to accompany him into the afterlife. Horses were forced to run until exhausted, before being cut to pieces. Their body parts were thrown into the boat, along with sacrificed chickens.

Source 2.57

> *The dead chieftain was put in a temporary grave that was covered for ten days until new clothes were prepared for him. They asked which of his thrall [slave] women wanted to join him in the afterlife and one of the girls volunteered ... When the time had arrived for cremation, his longship was pulled ashore and put on a platform of wood. On the ship, a bed was made for the dead chieftain. Soon after, an old woman named the 'angel of death' put cushions on the bed. She was an old witch, stocky and dark. She would be responsible for the ritual and would be the one to kill the thrall girl.*
>
> Extract from an account of a human sacrifice at a Viking funeral, by the Arab traveller Ibn Fadlan

Source 2.58 An artist's impression of a Viking cremation. A boat would be filled with goods, slaughtered animals—even sacrificed slaves—and set on fire. It was then covered with a mound of earth. Runestones might be erected at the site.

bigideas

2.3 How did Viking conquests change other societies?

Remember

1 What was the *Danegeld*?

2 Explain how Vikings raid helped to change the way people were ruled in the Viking homeland.

3 What was the Danelaw? What broad influence did it have on societies in England?

4 Explain why Leif Eriksson is a significant individual in Viking history.

Understand

5 Draw a simple flow chart to explain how the economy of Viking society changed during the Viking Age.

6 Vikings took many prisoners (including monks). How would these captives have benefited Viking society?

7 Explain why Christian monasteries and churches were common targets for Viking raiders.

8 Use a dictionary to find five words in the English language (besides 'berserk') that we have 'inherited' from the Vikings. For example, 'egg' and 'window' are two. Look for entries that end with: Origin – Old Norse.

9 Explain in a paragraph how conversion to Christianity changed burial practices of the Vikings.

10 Re-read Source 2.57.

- a Suggest why the *thrall* woman Ibn Fadlan describes might have been willing to volunteer for such a horrible death.
- b What perspective do you think a Christian monk may have had on this?

11 Use an atlas to identify five English towns that were once part of the Danelaw.

12 English society was changed in 1066 by the introduction of feudalism by its new king, William I. Explain what link this had to the Viking Age.

Apply

13 The Viking attacks on often defenceless communities created great fear, perhaps even revulsion and hate, among those they attacked. Think now about the world today. Discuss as a class how you think societies today react towards those they perceive as attacking them—either directly through warfare, or by attacking their values and way of life. What do you conclude?

14 Have you heard the term 'urban myth'? It is a story that may have started with a grain of truth that gets passed around by word of mouth, perhaps exaggerated along the way—always described as a 'true story'. You may even know some. Suggest how the account of the Blood Eagle might have been helped along as an urban myth among Christian communities.

Analyse

15 Study Sources 2.59 and 2.60, together with Source 2.47. Use the information provided to list as many points as you can identifying why a Viking raid would have terrified an unsuspecting community.

Evaluate

16 Organise a class debate on this topic: The Vikings were no more than dishonourable thieves.

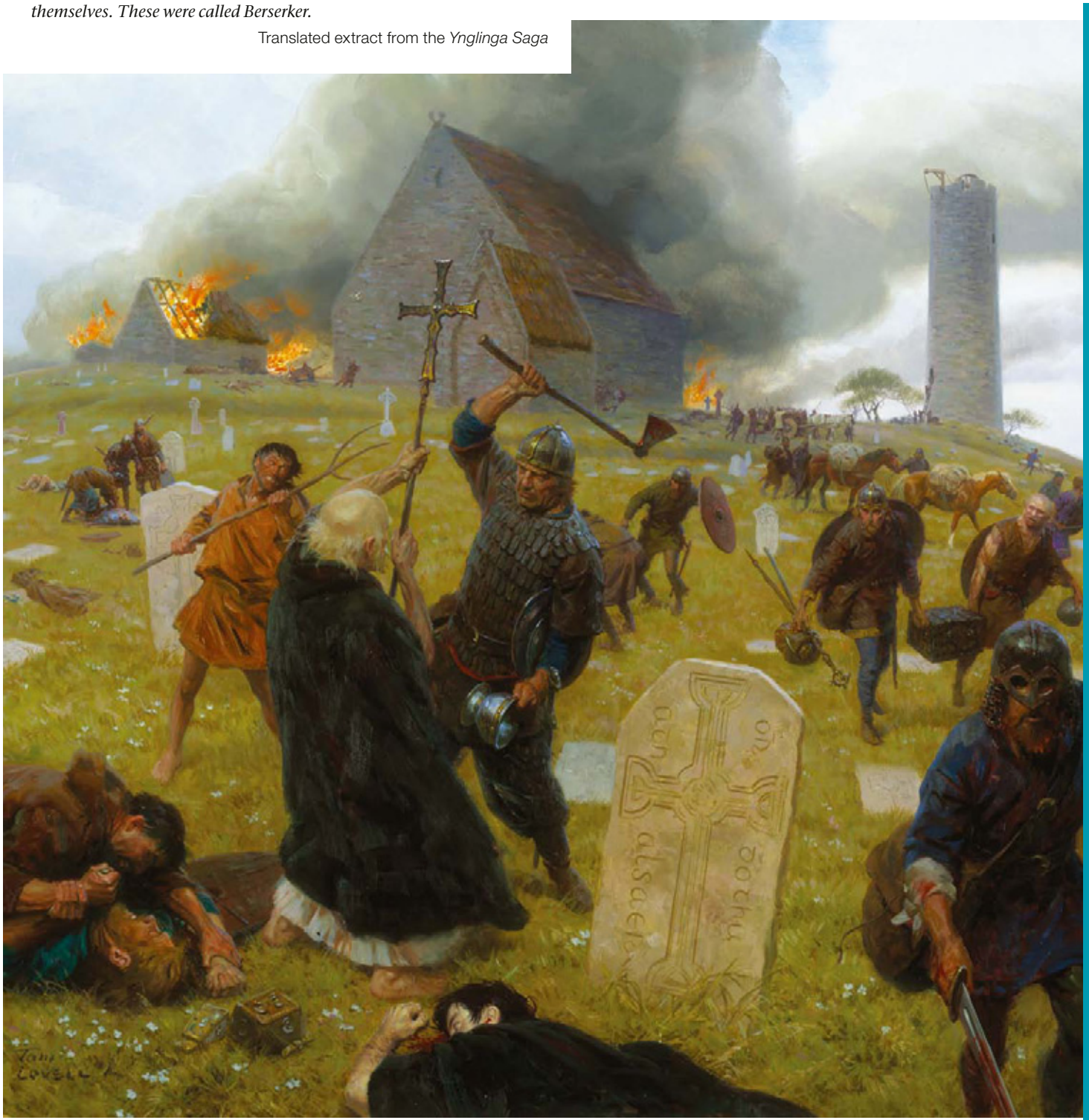
Create

17 Excavations in the English city of York have uncovered evidence of the Viking settlement of Jorvik. A reconstruction of this settlement has been built on the site that captures not only what the settlement looked like in 975 CE, but even how it smelt. Find information about the Jorvik settlement site on the Internet. Use this information to empathise with life as a Jorvik Viking. Write a diary entry of a typical day in this settlement, from a Viking's point of view.

Source 2.59

Odin could make his enemies in battle blind, or deaf, or terror-struck, and their weapons so blunt that they could no more but than a willow wand; on the other hand, his men rushed forwards without armour, were as mad as dogs or wolves, bit their shields, and were strong as bears or wild bulls, and killed people at a blow, but neither fire nor iron told upon themselves. These were called Berserker.

Translated extract from the *Ynglinga Saga*



Source 2.60 An artist's impression of a Viking raid

connectingideas

Legacies of the Vikings

For about 200 years, the Vikings were best known to the rest of the world as fierce plunderers. Yet, as you have seen, they were far more than that. Their contribution to modern society was considerable. They developed and advanced shipbuilding and sailing techniques, and their language and customs have affected the people of many societies around the world.

Reputation was very important to the Vikings. A translated Norse text says: 'Wealth dies, kinsmen die. Cattle die and the wheat too. But this thing never dies: word fame [reputation].' One way that a Viking preserved his 'word fame' after death was by having a runestone erected over his grave. The message carved on it in runes might declare the person's name, what they owned, or what they built or achieved.

1 Do you think reputation is valued in today's Australian society? Give reasons for your response.

2 In what ways are people today remembered and respected after they die?

3 Compare and contrast the tombstones shown here, in shape and purpose, with the stones shown in Source 2.45.

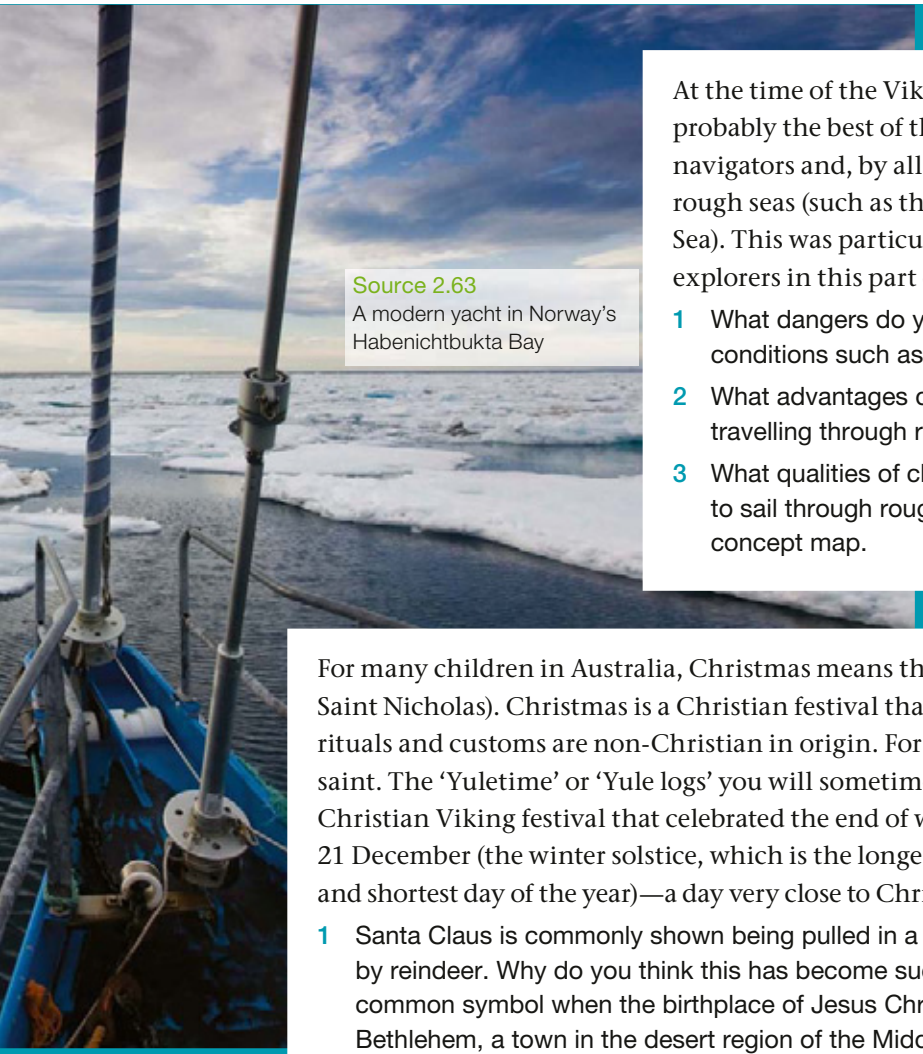
Source 2.61 Modern tombstones

A very popular book (and movie series) today is JRR Tolkien's novel *The Lord of the Rings*. Many of his characters—dwarves, elves, trolls, dragons and monsters—were inspired by his interest in Norse mythology. The final battle, with its hordes of non-human and human participants, is similar to battles in Norse sagas. The turf-covered homes of Middle Earth are like the turf-insulated Viking longhouses.

1 Why do you think fantasy writers today so often find Norse mythology a source of inspiration?

2 Create a character inspired by Viking mythology and history that you could feature in a fantasy story. Either describe your character in a few detailed paragraphs, or draw and label a sketch.

Source 2.62 A battle scene from the movie *The Lord of the Rings*



Source 2.63
A modern yacht in Norway's Habenichtbukta Bay

At the time of the Viking Age, the Vikings were extremely good sailors, probably the best of their time. They were skilled shipbuilders and navigators and, by all accounts, not frightened to cross cold and often rough seas (such as the Arctic Ocean and the upper reaches of the North Sea). This was particularly so for the Vikings from Norway who were explorers in this part of the world and beyond.

1 What dangers do you think faced Vikings who might have been sailing in conditions such as those depicted in Source 2.63?
2 What advantages do you think the design of Viking boats provided when travelling through rough seas? Can you suggest any disadvantages?
3 What qualities of character do you think the Vikings would have needed to sail through rough and unknown seas? Display your response as a concept map.

For many children in Australia, Christmas means the arrival of Father Christmas (or Santa Claus or Saint Nicholas). Christmas is a Christian festival that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ, but many of its rituals and customs are non-Christian in origin. For example, historically, St Nicholas was a Christian saint. The 'Yuletime' or 'Yule logs' you will sometimes see on Christmas cards are linked to a non-Christian Viking festival that celebrated the end of winter and the return of the sun. It was held on 21 December (the winter solstice, which is the longest night and shortest day of the year)—a day very close to Christmas Day.

1 Santa Claus is commonly shown being pulled in a sleigh by reindeer. Why do you think this has become such a common symbol when the birthplace of Jesus Christ was Bethlehem, a town in the desert region of the Middle East?
2 Why did Viking winter solstice rituals in the northern hemisphere come to be linked so much with the Christian festival of Christmas?
3 Can you think of another Christian festival that has become linked with non-Christian traditions over time?

Source 2.64 An artist's impression of Santa Claus in his sleigh

Q

Think about what would happen if, in about 500 years, Australia as a nation ceased to exist but parts of its culture remained. What legacies of Australia might be evident to people in the future? Using pictures and text found in books and on the Internet, create a record of three cultural artefacts (such as a household item, a written account of a footy game, a photograph of a car) that the mysterious and fascinating 'Australians' of today might leave for the people of the future.

depth study option

Medieval Europe

(*c.*590–*c.*1500)

*Europe's medieval period (also called the **Middle Ages**) is commonly regarded as starting in the late 6th century CE. It lasted about 1000 years. A number of factors influenced the societies of medieval Europe. The most important were **feudalism**, **manorialism**, and the spread of Christianity. These factors helped to preserve social order and stability for many centuries.*

By the start of the second millennium (1000 CE), the barbarian raids common in the earlier part of the medieval period had largely ended. Things began to change. Towns sprang up and grew rapidly. Trade grew, increasing a desire for more knowledge of distant lands, and more of their exotic goods. In time, the desire was for the conquest of new territories.

These trends would eventually help to end medieval Europe's longstanding systems of feudalism and manorialism. They would also help to spread the **Black Death** pandemic, and, later, the ideas and attitudes of movements such as the **Renaissance**, the **Reformation** and the **Scientific Revolution**.

Key inquiry questions

3.1 How was society in medieval Europe organised?

3.2 What developments and achievements influenced life in medieval Europe?

3.3 How and why did society in medieval Europe change?

Part of a stained glass window from the Chartres Cathedral, in France, mostly built during the early 13th century

3

bigpicture

Medieval Europe

Medieval Europe once made up the bulk of the Western Empire of ancient Rome. The barbarian raids that helped to end the former empire continued on and off until about 1000 CE. With Rome's army gone, people had to find other ways to protect and sustain themselves during this uncertain time. Feudalism and manorialism provided solutions.

Christianity became ancient Rome's official religion in the 4th century CE. Most people in Europe then (and certainly later) were Christians. Christian beliefs and values had many positive effects on daily life, architecture, the arts and the justice system. However, they also provided motivations for war, and justifications for some people's prejudices and fears.

Social change in Europe was helped by a number of significant events and trends. These included the rapid growth of towns and trade, the Christian–Muslim wars known as the ***Crusades*** *and the devastating Black Death. The discoveries of explorers, together with new ways of thinking and new inventions contributed greatly too. By 1500 CE, Europeans saw themselves and their place in the world differently.*

CE

476
Last Western Roman emperor forced to give up his rule

715
Muslim conquest of Spain concluded

Interior of a mosque in Cordoba (Spain), one legacy of the region's former Islamic rule

800
Charlemagne crowned by the Pope as emperor of the Holy Roman Empire

Source 3.1 Some key events and developments in the history of medieval Europe, *c.* 590 CE – *c.* 1500

An illustration from the Toggenburg Bible (*c.* 1411) of two victims of the plague known as the Black Death

1347
Pandemic known as the Black Death arrives in Sicily (the 'gateway' to Europe)

1381
The Peasants' Revolt in England; peasants revolt against strict rules imposed on wage rises and working conditions, following the acute labour shortages caused by the Black Death

***c.* 1400**
Johannes Gutenberg invents the printing press

1096
Start of the First Crusade, the first of eight wars fought between Christians and Muslims over the next 175 years

1163
Building work starts on the Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris

1187
Under the leadership of Saladin, Muslim forces capture Jerusalem, providing a motive for the Third Crusade

***c.* 1271**
Venetian Marco Polo begins a 25-year exploration of eastern countries (with time spent at the court of the Mongol ruler Kublai Khan)

1337
Start of the One Hundred Years War between England and France

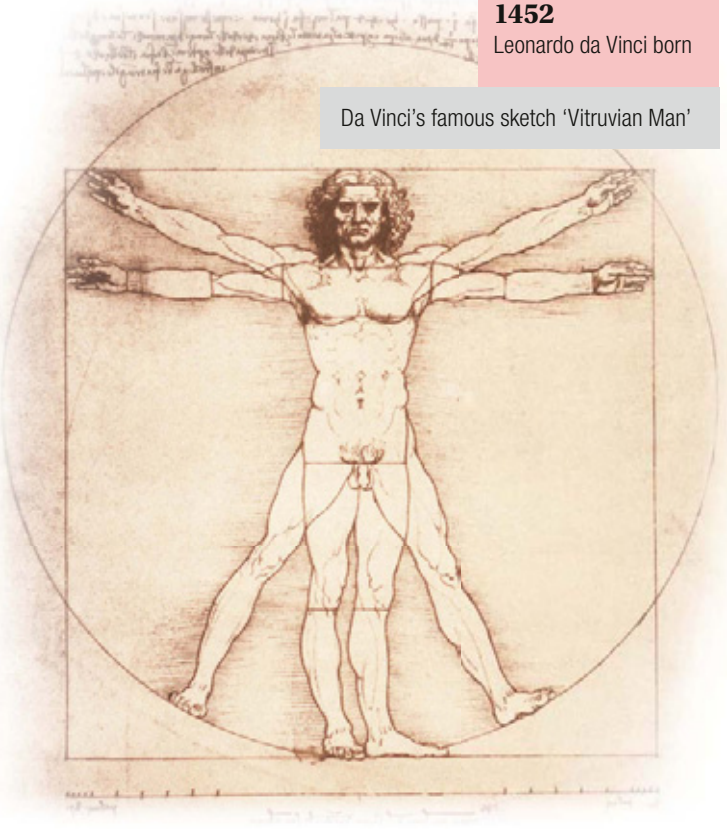
1389
Medici family become prominent in the rule of Florence

1452
Leonardo da Vinci born

1491
Henry VIII crowned King of England

1066
William of Normandy invades England and is crowned King William I of England

Scene from the Bayeux Tapestry depicting Norman cavalry troops disembarking for their battle with Saxon forces at Hastings in England



Da Vinci's famous sketch 'Vitruvian Man'

Source 3.2 A medieval artist's impression of life on a feudal manor

3.1 How was society in medieval Europe organised?

During the 6th century, a new way of organising ***society*** *emerged in Europe. This system later became known as* ***feudalism****. It would prove to be very important across medieval Europe. Its origins lay in the legacies of the Roman Empire, the spread of Christianity, and in the settlement of a number of new peoples in Europe—most importantly, Germanic tribes who arrived during the early medieval period. The focus of this chapter is on the medieval societies of western, southern and central Europe. These areas include the modern countries of France, the United Kingdom, Italy, Spain and Germany.*

The influence of new arrivals

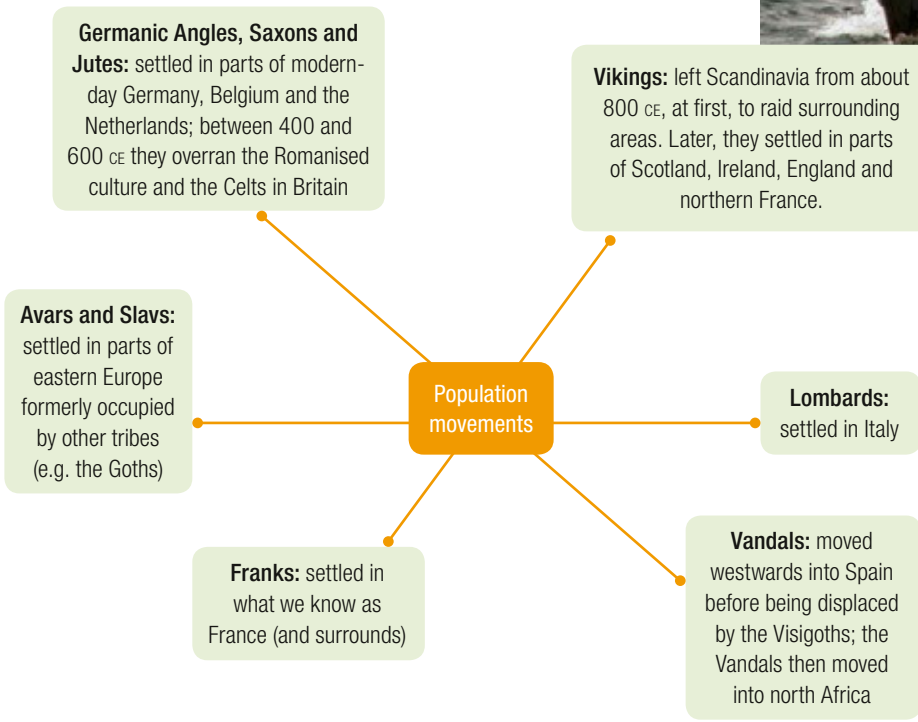
Tribal peoples began moving into western Europe during the 4th century CE (see Source 3.3). Some of these tribes (for instance, the Huns) pushed another tribe out of the land it then occupied. The overall migration tended to be westwards. The ancient Romans called these people moving towards its empire **barbarians** (meaning 'people from outside our borders').

At first, Romans generally accepted these people. Many immigrants found work in Roman towns and on country villas. In time, however, the ongoing waves of barbarians helped to end Rome's Western Empire. Some of these tribal people were warlike and aggressive. They made the region (western Europe) a dangerous place. The system of feudalism that developed began partly as a response to the threats posed by these invaders.

The influence of Christianity

One of the most lasting legacies of ancient Rome for Europe was Christianity. At first, Roman rulers made every effort to stamp out Christianity across the empire. But during the 4th century CE, Christianity was declared the official religion of ancient Rome. Like Jews and Muslims, Christians believe in one God. Christians base their beliefs on the teachings of Jesus Christ (and his disciples). They regard Christ, though born a Jewish man, as the son of God.

So, Christianity was well established in Europe when the Western Empire ended. Its ongoing force and relevance was kept alive by the Western Church, today described as Roman Catholic. Christianity influenced feudalism and **manorialism**, as well as the arts, building styles and warfare. It also impacted on medieval Europe's relationships with other societies.



Source 3.3 Some movements of tribal peoples into and around medieval Europe

Check your learning

1. Who were the people whom the ancient Romans called 'the barbarians'?
2. Where did the tribal people known as the Franks settle?
3. Who were the Vikings, and how did they affect medieval Europe?
4. Explain why most people living in western Europe during the medieval period were Christians.

focus on ...

significance: the Western Church

The Western Church (later the Roman Catholic Church) was a very significant institution in medieval Europe. Its head was the Pope. Seen as God's representative on Earth by believers, the medieval Pope had great religious and political authority, even influencing kings. For example, it was a Pope:

- who declared William the Conqueror's invasion of England in 1066 a Holy Crusade
- who encouraged Europeans to go to war against the Muslims in what is now called the First Crusade.

One of the powers of the Pope was to **excommunicate** (expel from the church forever) wrongdoers—a punishment that medieval Christians greatly feared. An excommunicated person could no longer go to church; his or her soul was doomed to live in hell.

The Western Church played a dominant role in the life of medieval Christians from birth to death. Its many religious festivals and feasts filled the calendar. Many people were named after Christian saints and martyrs (people who died in the name of their religion). People's lives typically revolved around the activities of the village or town church.

People learned from childhood how the Church expected them to behave, and what they should believe. Obeying the Church's teachings helped to preserve the social order in medieval Europe.

Influence of changing populations and settlements

The exact population of medieval Europe is not known, as records are scarce. Scholars generally agree that it remained fairly constant until about the 10th century. From this time onwards it increased rapidly, boosted by the growth of towns and, possibly, the warmer weather. (Between about 950 and 1250, the weather in Europe was warmer than it had been before. It is known as the Medieval Warm Period.)

Source 3.4 St Peter's Basilica, the heart of the Roman Catholic Church both in medieval times and today

Then, in the mid 14th century, the **Black Death** struck. It killed about 25 million people, about a quarter (or more) of the population. This rapid rise and fall in the population over about 300 years would have affected society in terms of demand for food and shelter, jobs and the available labour force.

Rural settlements

Most of medieval Europe's population lived in small farming villages and settlements sprinkled around the countryside. The focus of these was usually the castle or manor house of a feudal lord, or a Christian **monastery**. Forests or stretches of open country typically separated these settlements. As the population increased, these areas in between were often cleared and converted into farmland.

Towns and cities

During Europe's early medieval period, there were very few big cities. Rome was probably the largest city; London and Paris were much smaller. By around 1500, the population of Paris was about 200 000. Medieval towns and cities were mainly centres of trade.

Source 3.5 The Holy Roman Empire in medieval Europe *c.* 1000 CE

Source 3.6 A medieval woodcut of the European town of Pisa, Italy. Note the fortified wall around the city.

Check your learning

1. The population of Europe fell dramatically in the mid 14th century.
   - a Explain one of the main reasons why this happened.
   - b What impact do you think such a massive loss of life might have had on the society? Think, for example, how it might have affected families, life, trades and professions, religious centres, jobs and farms. Draw a concept map to outline your thinking.
2. What was the main function (or activity) of most medieval towns and cities?
3. Look closely at Source 3.6. If you were a person living in Pisa in the Middle Ages, describe in a diary entry what you might see in a day's walking.
4. Compile a fact sheet on the religious order of monks known as Benedictines. You will need to do some research. Your fact sheet can include illustrations.

Source 3.7 Medieval portraits of former Visigoth kings in Spain

Source 3.8 An artist's impression of Pepin the Short, the father of Charlemagne and Carloman I

Influence of medieval monarchies

Monarchies were another significant factor in organising the society of medieval Europe. The monarch (generally called a king or queen) inherited the right to rule through birth. Monarchs owned all the land in the kingdom. They also decided how it would be distributed and used by the people. Christian monarchs were seen to rule by divine right (that is, with the will of God).

The tribal peoples who settled in Europe after the fall of the Western Roman Empire formed small **kingdoms**. A number of Visigoth kingdoms, for instance, were set up in what we know as Spain and Portugal. The Franks set up their kingdom in what we know as France.

Kingdom of the Franks

The kingdom of the Franks was one of the most important kingdoms in medieval Europe's early history. During the 8th and 9th centuries, it was dominated by the Carolingian kings. They were a powerful military force in the region. They also had a close relationship with the Western Church.

Source 3.9 The Carolingian kings

King	Period of rule
Pepin the Short	752–768
Carloman I	768–771
Charles I (Charlemagne)	768–814
Louis the Pious	814–840

The Carolingian kings came to power at a time of great instability in the region. They created a single kingdom out of much of western Europe and played a key role in converting tribes such as the Saxons to Christianity. The Carolingian monarchy was at its most powerful during the reign of Charlemagne.

New kingdoms

The Carolingian monarchy did not last long after Charlemagne's death. His son, Louis the Pious, and grandson, Charles the Bald, ruled an empire increasingly at war with itself. By 887, the Frankish Empire had largely been reduced to a number of small kingdoms. These laid the foundations of what we know today as France, Germany and Italy.

Charlemagne's descendants remained in power in what is now France until 987. Charlemagne's heirs also established their own kingdoms in Italy and Germany.

Arrival of the Vikings

The decline of the Carolingian monarchy was helped by the arrival of the Vikings, between about 850 and 1050. Initially, they came to raid, attacking coastal centres and monasteries in England, Ireland, Scotland and coastal France. In time they settled in the areas they had previously attacked. They built new towns, like Dublin, the capital of Ireland, and set up their own kingdoms, such as the **Danelaw** in England (see Source 2.51).

Source 3.10 An artist's impression of the Viking attack on Paris in 885 CE

significant**individuals**

Charlemagne

Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, (742–814 CE) was one of the most important kings in medieval Europe. The son of Pepin the Short, he and his brother Carloman inherited the Frankish kingdom when their father died. After Carloman's death in 771, Charlemagne reigned in his own right.

He was active in overseeing his kingdom and regularly travelled throughout it. He also set up a network of messengers to report back to him on what was happening. Under his rule, his kingdom rose to dominate western Europe.

Source 3.11 An artist's impression of Charlemagne

Charlemagne, the man

Much of what we know about Charlemagne was written by Einhard, a member of Charlemagne's close inner circle. Einhard's account was written at the request of Charlemagne's son sometime between 817 and 836.

Source 3.12 Some of the things Einhard said about Charlemagne

> *[Charlemagne] was large and strong, and of lofty stature ... the upper part of his head was round, his eyes very large and animated, nose a little long, hair fair, and face laughing and merry. Thus his appearance was always stately and dignified, whether he was standing or sitting ...*
>
> *... was temperate [measured] in eating, and particularly so in drinking, for he abominated [hated] drunkenness in anybody ... While at the table, he listened to reading or music.*
>
> *... had the gift of ready and fluent speech, and could express whatever he had to say with the utmost clearness. He was not satisfied with command of his native language ... [he] was such a master of Latin that he could speak it as well as his native tongue.*
>
> *... cherished [valued] with the greatest fervour [passion] and devotion the principles of the Christian religion, which had been instilled into him from infancy.*

Charlemagne, the conqueror

Charlemagne engaged in many wars. His victories expanded the territory under his control. He was helped by the armies of his loyal supporters. Charlemagne had earlier given many of these men grants of land, as was a common practice of Germanic tribal chiefs. This was done partly so they could support themselves, and equip themselves to help Charlemagne in battle. It also encouraged their ongoing loyalty and support.

Source 3.13 Some of Charlemagne's major campaigns and victories

Year/s	Military campaign and/or outcome
772	Begins campaigns against the Saxons
773–774	Defeats the Lombards
788	Defeats the Bavarian kingdoms
789	Campaigns against the Slav kingdoms
790s and beyond	Campaigns against the Muslim Moors in Spain
796	Defeats the Avars
804	Defeats the Saxons
811	Draws up a peace treaty with the Danes

Source 3.14 An artist's impression of Charlemagne leading his troops over the Alps on a military conquest

Charlemagne, the leader

Charlemagne did not just lead in battle. He was also a leading thinker, introducing many political and social reforms. For example, he set up a common system of currency, reintroducing coins as the means of exchange. He also encouraged the arts and education. So important was this contribution that the period of Charlemagne's rule is often described as the Carolingian Renaissance. His leadership encouraged many new developments in literature, building and the visual arts.

Charlemagne, the Holy Roman Emperor

Charlemagne had always had a close relationship with the Western Church. In 799, he came to the aid of Pope Leo III. The Pope, accused of adultery, had fled Rome. His accusers had threatened to gouge out his eyes and cut off his tongue. Charlemagne escorted the Pope back to Rome and forced his reinstatement.

Pope Leo III was understandably grateful to Charlemagne. But the Pope also wanted the Church to be a strong force in Europe (as the Roman Empire had been). This was especially so given the tensions and divisions in Europe at the time.

On Christmas Day in 800, the Pope crowned Charlemagne as Holy Roman Emperor. This act blended the legacy of ancient Rome with the Germanic model of sacred kingship and with Christianity. It also confirmed Charlemagne's status as the most powerful king in the Christian world.

Charlemagne's death

In 813, Charlemagne crowned his son Louis the Pious co-emperor. Shortly after, according to Einhard, Charlemagne died on 28 January. He had ruled for 47 years.

Source 3.15 A medieval bust of Charlemagne, Holy Roman Emperor

1. Consider Einhard's account of Charlemagne (see Source 3.12). Why might you need to be cautious about the truth of Einhard's account?
2. Explain who each of the following were: Charlemagne's father, his brother, his son.
3. Decide on three reasons why you think Charlemagne deserves to be considered a significant individual.
4. How did giving grants of land to his closest supporters benefit Charlemagne?
5. Why do you think the Pope decided to crown Charlemagne as the Holy Roman Emperor?
6. Find out which modern European countries were once part of the Holy Roman Empire. (*Hint*: Refer to Source 3.5, and compare it with a map in a modern atlas.)

Source 3.16 A scene from the embroidered linen panel called the Bayeux Tapestry (made around 1080) showing the Norman cavalry attacking Saxon foot soldiers

The Normans

In France, the Vikings also established a strong base. In 911, their leader Hrolf defeated Charles the Simple (a descendant of Charlemagne), forcing the Franks to pay heavy penalties. But the Frankish king reached an agreement with Hrolf. He gave him a **fief** (a grant of land), in a region of Western France. It was called Normandy, the land of the Northmen. In return, Hrolf promised to stop raiding, and to convert to Christianity. He also changed his name to Rollo. And so Rollo became the first Duke of Normandy, a **vassal** of the Frankish king.

In their new kingdom, the Vikings adopted and refined some of the political and cultural practices of the Franks. This included the language, and customs such as granting of fiefs. By the early 11th century, the Normans had carved out another kingdom in southern Italy.

The Normans in England

The Normans also had a long-standing interest in England. Emma, the sister of Richard II of Normandy (970–1026), had married Ethelred II, the then English king. Their son, Edward the Confessor, born in 1005, became King of England in 1042. During his reign, many Normans became involved in English politics.

When Edward died in 1066, a number of people wanted to rule. One contender, Harold Godwinson (son of Godwin, the powerful Saxon Earl of Wessex) declared himself king. Some sources claim that Edward might have promised Harold the throne on his deathbed.

William, Duke of Normandy (another contender), was not happy. Later that year, he invaded England. His army defeated Godwinson's army at the Battle of Hastings. King Harold was killed, shot in the eye with an arrow. William (often now known as William the Conqueror) was then declared King William I of England.

focus on ...

contestability: Edward's heir

Some medieval sources say that Edward the Confessor was such a devoted Christian that he chose not have sex when he married in 1045. Therefore, there was no natural heir.

Other scholars contest this. They say he always planned to have a child with his wife, Edith, until he argued with the Earl of Godwin in 1051. Their dispute was triggered by a disagreement over who should be appointed as the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Some argue that Edward always intended that William of Normandy (his relative through marriage) would be his heir, and that he had said so in 1051. Others say his rightful heir was Edgar Aethling, the grandson of Edward's half-brother Edmund Ironside (*c.* 990–1016). (Edmund had been England's king for six months in 1016.) Yet barely a mention is made of Edgar in English history.

In the end, the dispute over who should be king of England when Edward died was settled by William of Normandy with his decisive victory at the Battle of Hastings in 1066.

Source 3.17 An 18th-century artist's portrait of William, Duke of Normandy

After 1066, King William I and his Norman nobles began imposing their rule on the English. Many of the former **Anglo-Saxon** nobility fled to Denmark, Scotland and Wales. William claimed their lands, giving some to the Church and some to his loyal followers as a reward.

The Normans built castles in their new kingdom to protect their territory and help to enforce their rule. They also introduced the system of feudalism already common across mainland Europe.

focus on ...

evidence: the *Domesday Book*

Much of what historians know today about medieval England soon after the arrival of the Normans is based on evidence from the *Domesday Book*.

The *Domesday Book* is actually two books. They are now held in London's National Archives. The *Domesday Book* documents information collected after King William I ordered a survey (in 1085) of all the land in England. He wanted to know its value so he could work out what taxes he could collect from the people. Details of over 13 400 separate sites are listed in the book.

Information was gathered about:

- the extent of land and who owned it
- who lived on it (e.g. vassals, peasants)
- its natural resources (e.g. fish-stocked rivers, forests)
- its built resources (e.g. buildings, mills, farm equipment).

The books were written in Latin, the language then used for all official documents in both mainland Europe and England. (The everyday language of England's Norman rulers was an early form of French.) The scribes who prepared and copied the *Domesday Book* were monks, highly skilled at speaking and writing Latin.

Source 3.18 One of the volumes of the *Domesday Book*

Source 3.19

In the vill [tiny village] in which St Peter's Church is situated the abbot (the head of an order of monks) of the same place holds 13½ hides [between about 250 and 800 hectares]. There is land for 11 ploughs. To the demesne [land owned by the lord] belongs 9 hides and 1 virgate [a quarter of a hide], and there are 4 ploughs. The villeins [peasants who could choose, or not, to work on a land's manor] have 6 ploughs ... [There is] meadow [grazing land for animals and where hay was often grown] for 11 ploughs, pasture [where cattle and sheep grazed] for the livestock of the vill, woodland for 100 pigs, and 25 houses of the abbot's knights ...

Translated extract from the *Domesday Book* for the land of St Peter of Westminster

The influence of feudalism

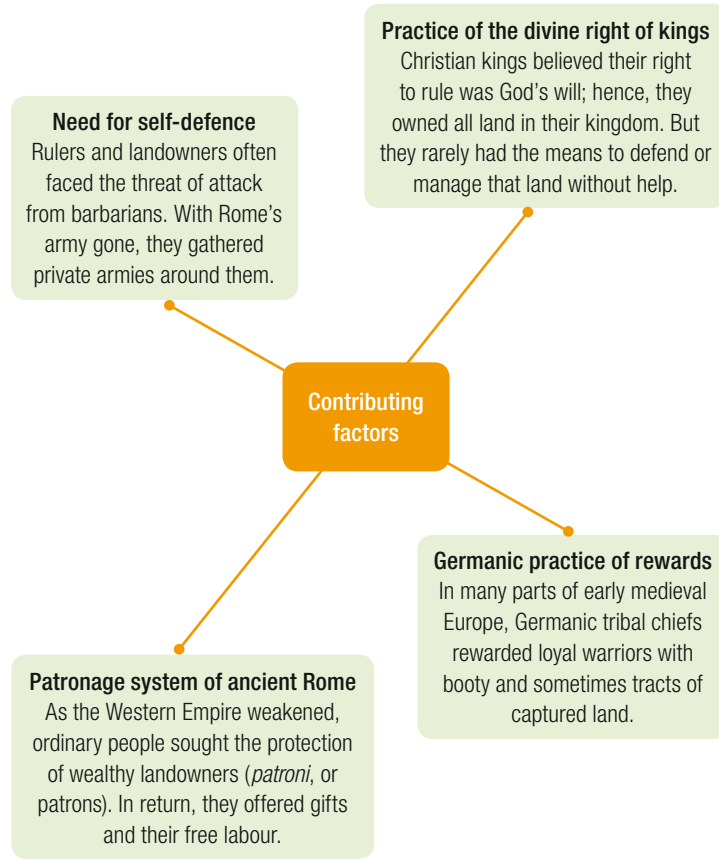
Feudalism was necessary in medieval times because of several factors (see Source 3.20). During a time of great instability, a system of mutual obligations ensured that everyone was taken care of and that society was stable and safe.

Feudalism was a way of organising a society through a hierarchy. A hierarchy is any system that classifies members of that system from top to bottom. In a feudal society, everyone from the king to the poorest peasant had specific duties and obligations (obligations are required actions and behaviours). Every relationship was between a **lord** and a vassal: a person socially above another was lord to the vassals beneath him, and each vassal served the lord above.

How feudalism worked

It is important to remember that feudalism was not simply a top–down structure, where the people at the top could tell the people below what to do. Obligations were two-way (or mutual). For example, a king, as lord, had an obligation to the people directly below him (the vassals). He provided land (known as a fief) to the nobles below him. Each noble also had an obligation to the king to provide military support and loyalty. The nobles, in turn, had obligations to their knights below them, and so on. See Source 3.22, which illustrates the typical organisation of a feudal manor and the roles of its inhabitants.

In Australia, people can change their social positions relatively easily. You might choose to go to university and become a doctor, or you may choose to have a trade and become an electrician. If you do well in your education and training, chances are you will live well. In a feudal system, however, a person could almost never change social position. People died in the same social position they were born into. If a man was born at the bottom of the social pyramid, he could not move up. A peasant, for instance, could not become a noble, no matter how hard he worked or how intelligent he was. See Source 7.3 which illustrates the feudal hierachy.



Source 3.20 Some factors that led to the rise of feudalism in Europe

Check your learning

1. Explain how the Normandy region in northern France came to be ruled by the Vikings.
2. Why might the following people have thought they were legitimate contenders for the English throne in 1066: William of Normandy, Harold Godwinson, Edgar Aethling?
3. Explain how feudalism, a European system, came to be introduced into England.
4. Why is the *Domesday Book* such a historically significant document?
5. List some of the information the *Domesday Book* documented about the land of St Peter of Westminster.
6. In your own words, explain the relationship between a vassal and a lord.
7. Based on the information provided, draw a diagram to depict how you think feudalism worked.
8. What was a fief?
9. What is hierarchy? Do we have hierarchies of any kind in Australia today? Explain.

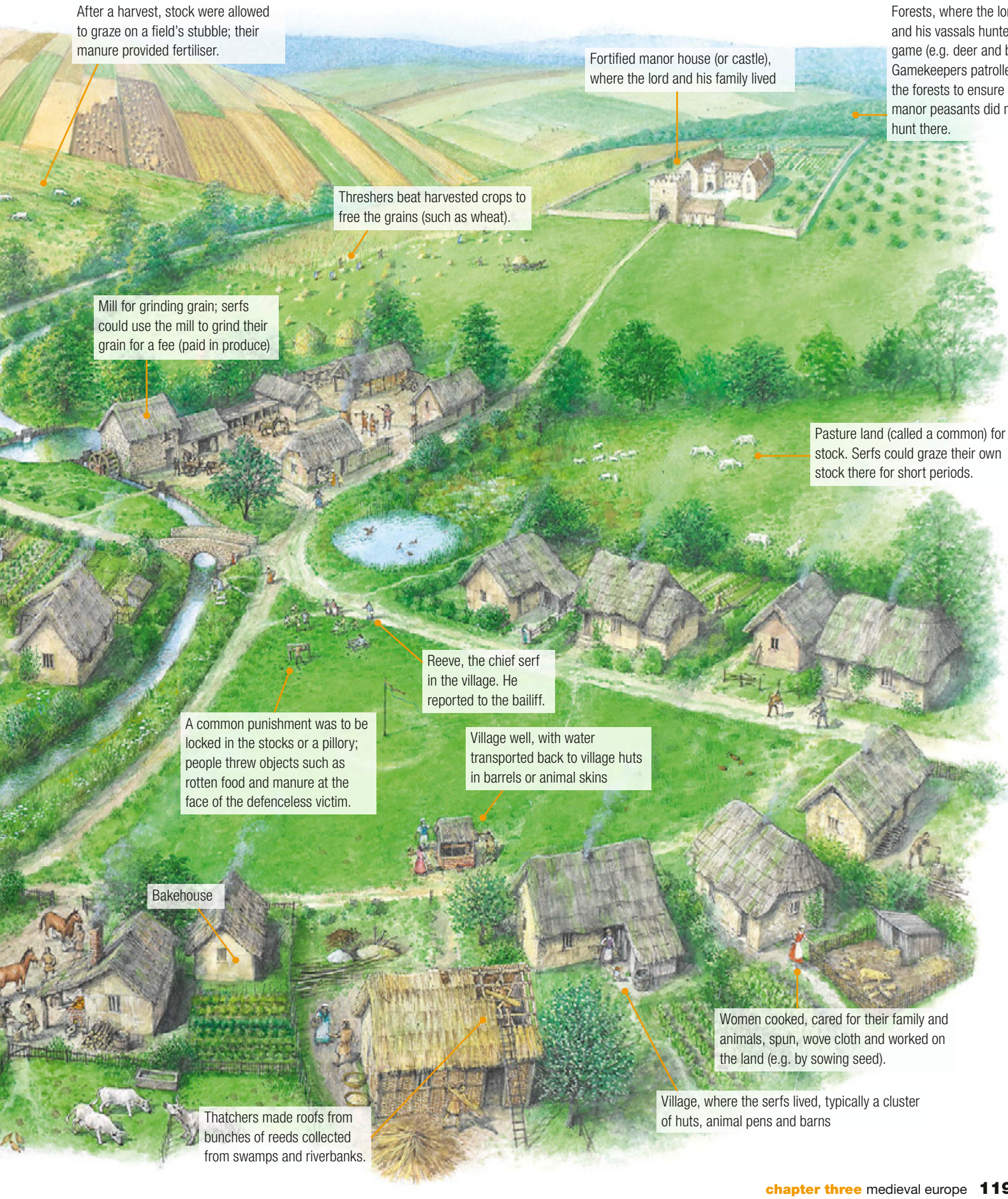
Source 3.21 A 12th-century artist's impression of a knight swearing allegiance as a vassal to his lord in return for favours such as a fief

The feudal manor

Under feudalism in Europe, land not belonging to the ruler or the Church was mostly divided into manor lands. Each manor was owned by a noble or knight who might have been given it by his lord as a fief. Manor lands were made up of the demesne (the lord's land) and the land **serfs** farmed to meet their own needs.

Manorialism was the economic system that supported feudalism. Under this arrangement, the lord of a manor provided serfs on his estate with a place to live and the means to survive. In return, they provided him with their free labour. They also provided taxes (a portion of what they produced on the small strips of land they farmed themselves). Most serfs were not free to leave the estate and had to have the lord's permission to do many everyday tasks.

Source 3.22 A modern artist's impression of a typical medieval manor


After a harvest, stock were allowed to graze on a field's stubble; their manure provided fertiliser.
Forests, where the lord and his vassals hunted for game (e.g. deer and boars). Gamekeepers patrolled the forests to ensure that manor peasants did not hunt there.
Fortified manor house (or castle), where the lord and his family lived
Threshers beat harvested crops to free the grains (such as wheat).
Mill for grinding grain; serfs could use the mill to grind their grain for a fee (paid in produce)
Pasture land (called a common) for stock. Serfs could graze their own stock there for short periods.
Reeve, the chief serf in the village. He reported to the bailiff.
A common punishment was to be locked in the stocks or a pillory; people threw objects such as rotten food and manure at the face of the defenceless victim.
Village well, with water transported back to village huts in barrels or animal skins
Bakehouse
Women cooked, cared for their family and animals, spun, wove cloth and worked on the land (e.g. by sowing seed).
Village, where the serfs lived, typically a cluster of huts, animal pens and barns
Thatchers made roofs from bunches of reeds collected from swamps and riverbanks.

Source 3.23 A medieval artist's impression of a banquet at a manor house

Those who worked

Peasants made up the largest single group in medieval European society. They undertook the bulk of the physical work, most of which was related to farming. Their labour produced the food and other goods needed by the wealthy (such as furniture and armour). They also provided much of the income of the rich through the rents and taxes they paid. Peasants lived hard lives that were usually short.

Farm work was difficult. Everything had to be done by hand, and tools were basic. These included sickles and scythes, which are large, curved, sharp-edged knives used to cut down hay and long grass and to harvest grain crops.

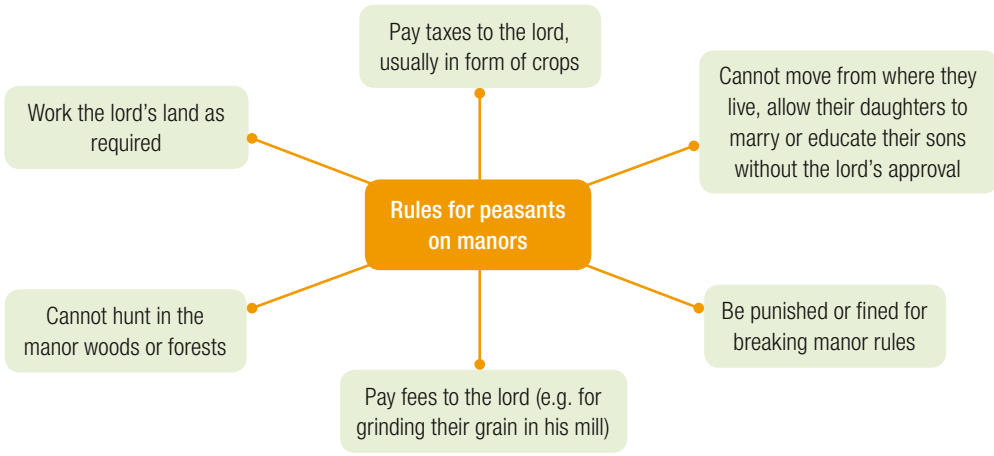
People went to bed early and woke up at dawn. For the peasants, there were few human comforts, especially when the weather was bad. Survival depended on working hard and staying healthy. Little time was left for leisure.

Those who prayed

The Pope and the Western Church (hereafter called **the Church**) were supported by a large network of Christian workers, including cardinals, archbishops, bishops, deacons, abbots, monks, nuns, village priests and friars. Some of these people (abbots for instance) were often given fiefs by a monarch. By acquiring land and by collecting the tithes (payments) from the people, the Church became very wealthy. It did not have to pay taxes.

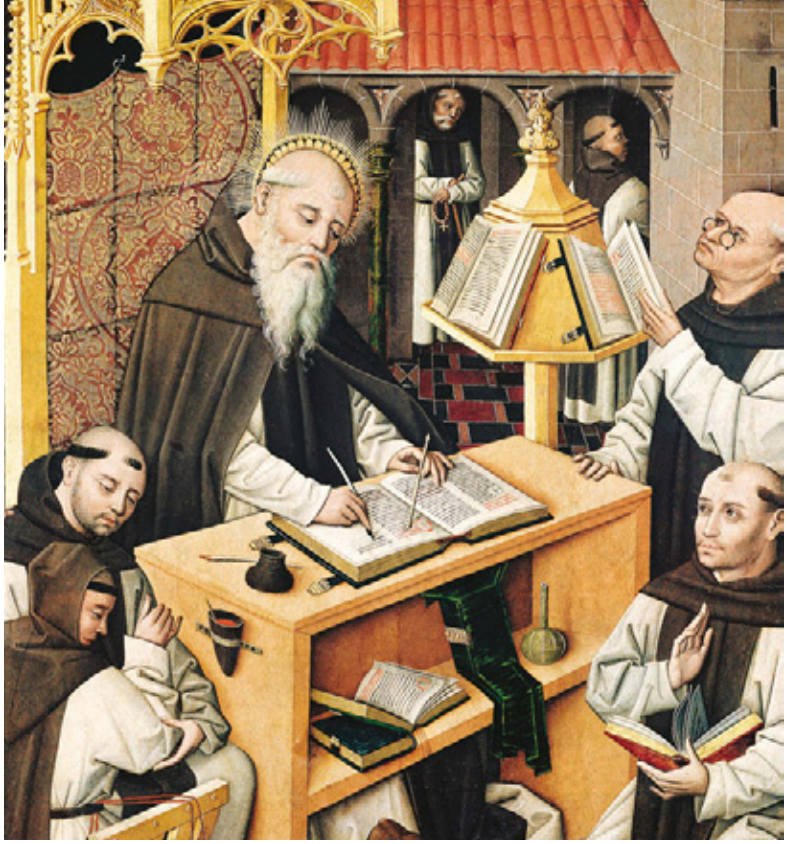
Monks and nuns

Devout Christians in medieval Europe often chose to serve God as monks or nuns. Their lives were controlled by their vows of chastity (no sexual relationships), obedience and poverty. They devoted their lives to serving God and their superiors. This meant praying many times a day (including late at night and early in the morning), caring for the poor and sick, attending to their religious duties and living a simple life. To help them keep their vows and show their devotion, monks and nuns lived apart from the community. Monks lived in monasteries and nuns in nunneries.



Source 3.24 Rules for peasants working on manors

Source 3.25 A medieval artist's impression of the life of a manor peasant (from top left through to bottom right, representing the 12 months of the year)



Source 3.26 A 16th-century artist's impression of monks creating manuscripts

The legacy of medieval monks

In medieval society, monks were usually the only people who could read and write. Some were historians. Others kept control of important documents for feudal lords. Many others copied and/or translated important manuscripts such as Arabic medical texts and the Bible. They played a very important role in preserving ancient documents and texts that would otherwise have been lost to us today.

Those who fought

As a group, knights made up only a small percentage of the population. In feudal society, though, they played a particularly important role. Through the feudal arrangement, many were given grants of land (for example by their lord, who was sometimes the monarch). With that came the responsibility to protect the people. For that, they would receive income in the form of food and supplies. They were also expected to provide the monarch with military support.

focus on ...

continuity and change: becoming a knight

The tradition of being knighted continues in Britain today, although many aspects of the ceremony have changed. Medieval **knights** were typically knighted for their military bravery. British knights these days might be recognised for their achievements in business, politics or entertainment. (For instance, the musician Mick Jagger of the Rolling Stones is a knight.) As in medieval times, knights are called 'Sir'; their wives are called 'Lady'.

The knighting ceremony, today as in medieval times, is called an investiture. Today's monarch taps the person to be knighted on each shoulder with a sword, as was typically done in medieval times. However, instead of being given spurs and a sword to mark the occasion, modern knights receive a medal. Unlike medieval knights, modern knights do not have prepare for 24 hours by praying and fasting (called a vigil). There is another change, too: women can now also receive this honour. They are called 'dames'.

Source 3.27 A man being knighted by Queen Elizabeth II

Check your learning

1 Refer to Source 3.25. The 12 months of the year are depicted, in order, in the panels, reading from left to right and from the top row down. Based on this source, what might be a task that a European peasant typically did in each of the following months: February, July, December?

2 How did their Christian beliefs influence how monks and nuns typically lived their lives?

3 Explain why being knighted is an example of continuity and change.

Living conditions

In the medieval world, the lives of the wealthy and the poor were very different. These differences reflected the divisions in society at the time.

Home life of the wealthy

The rich included kings and queens and their extended families, feudal lords and their ladies and the families of knights. The Church, too, had great wealth. When not fighting wars, the wealthy led mostly comfortable lives, often in manor houses and castles (see Source 3.29).

In peace time, castles were the settings for feasts (see Source 3.23), workshops, markets, romance, raising and entertaining children, crafts and music. They were also the focal point for military training, the day-to-day running of the manor and for administering justice.

Source 3.28 The restored bedroom of the French king Henri III in the Château de Blois. Often, the beds of the wealthy had blankets, sheets, feather pillows, fur covers and linen curtains. Tapestries covered up draughty cracks in the stone walls of castles.

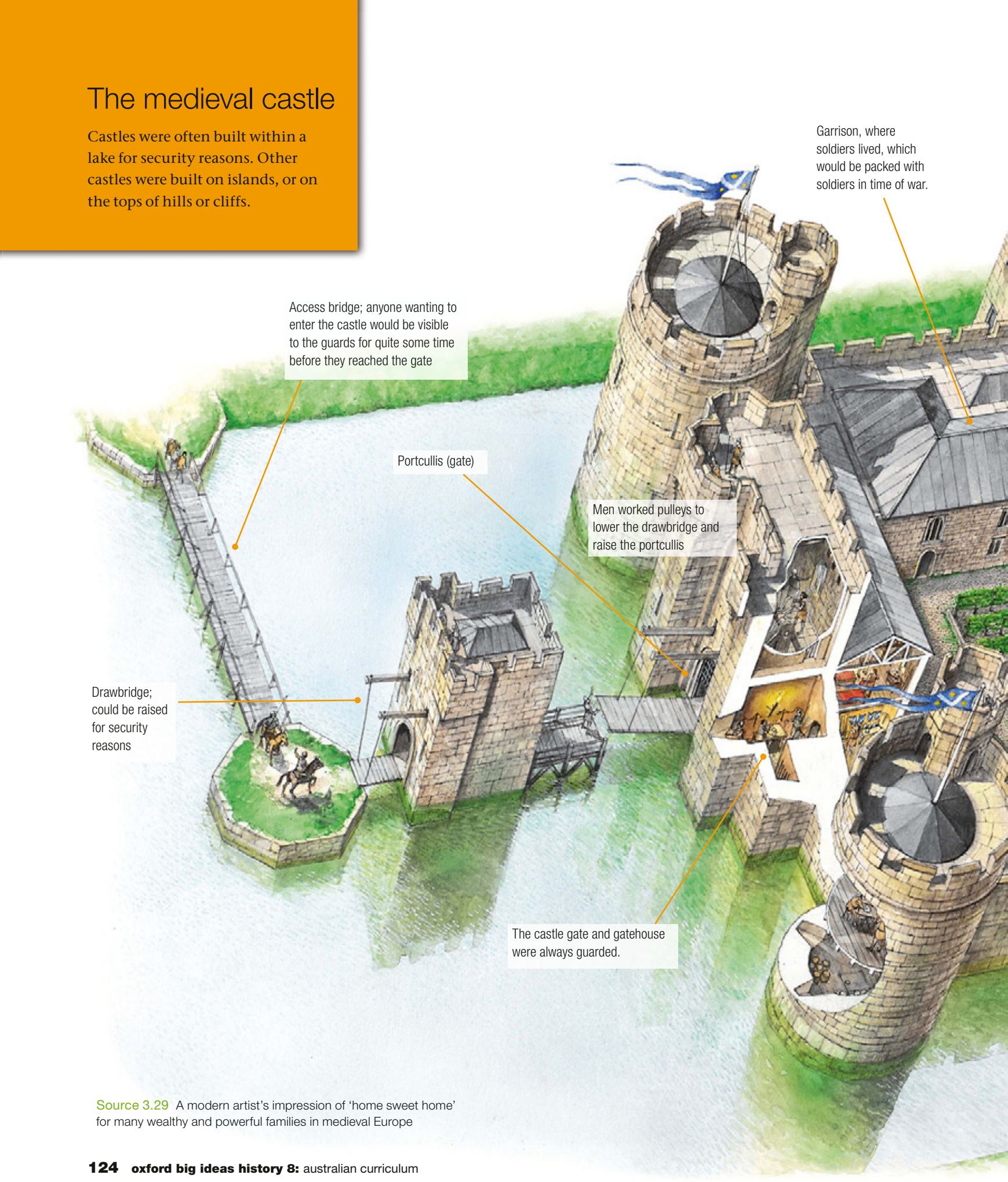
Typical day for a wealthy family

A typical day for the lord's family began when the sun rose. By then, servants were preparing meals and had lit the fires in the kitchen and great hall (see Source 3.29). The noble family would wash in tubs (often with the help of servants), dress and complete their toiletries. They would visit the cold and breezy garderobe (toilet seat that opened directly above a stinking cesspit or moat below). The chamberpot kept in the bedroom was typically used for toilet visits during the night. Strips of torn fabric were used as toilet paper.

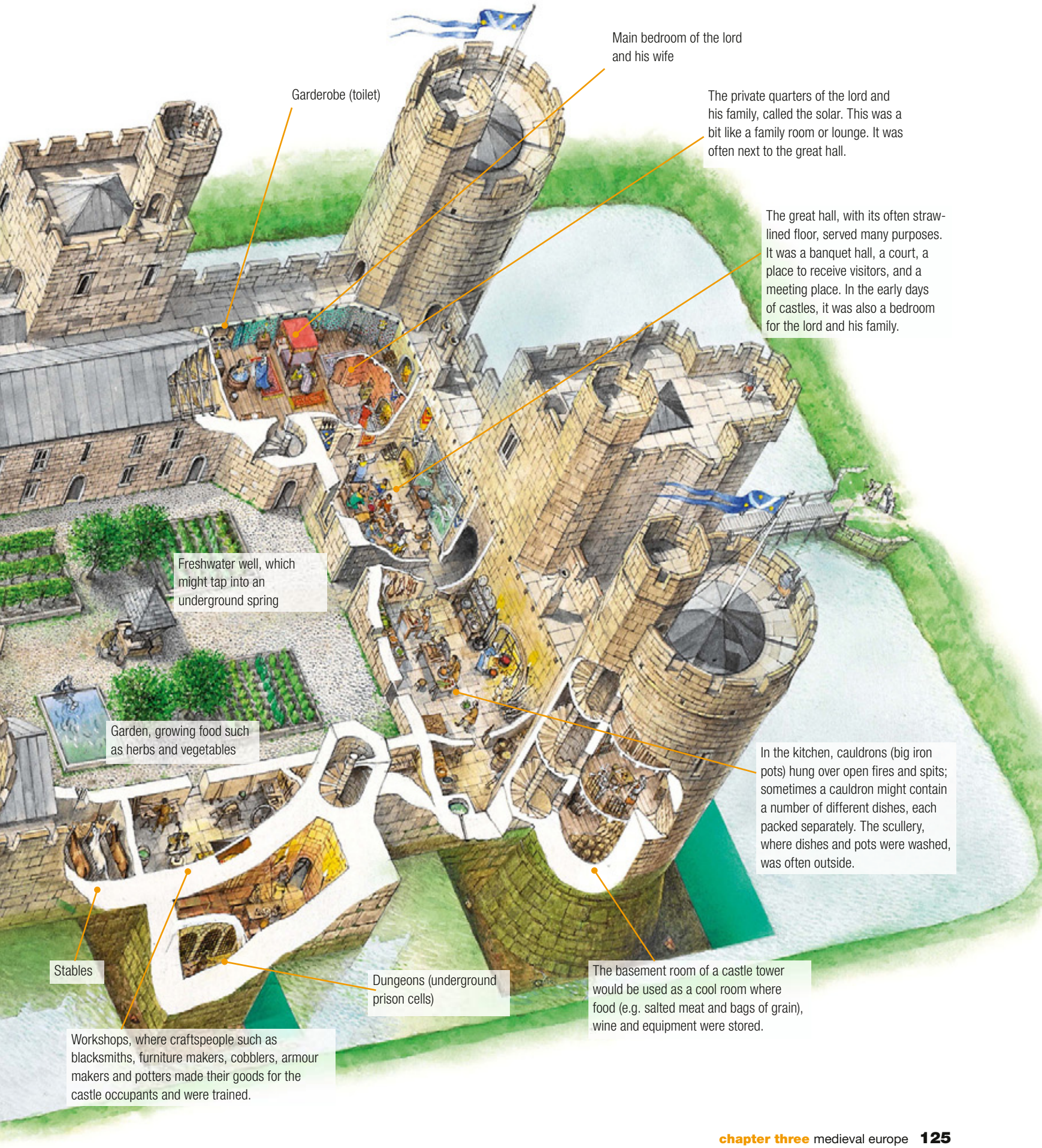
After breakfast, the lord and lady would usually visit their private chapel. The lord's tasks for a day might include making decisions about the manor, receiving rents, presiding over a manor court and planning to visit another castle he owned. At night, there might be a feast for an important visitor (another lord or even the king!) or to celebrate something special, such as the end of a **tournament**.

The medieval castle

Castles were often built within a lake for security reasons. Other castles were built on islands, or on the tops of hills or cliffs.



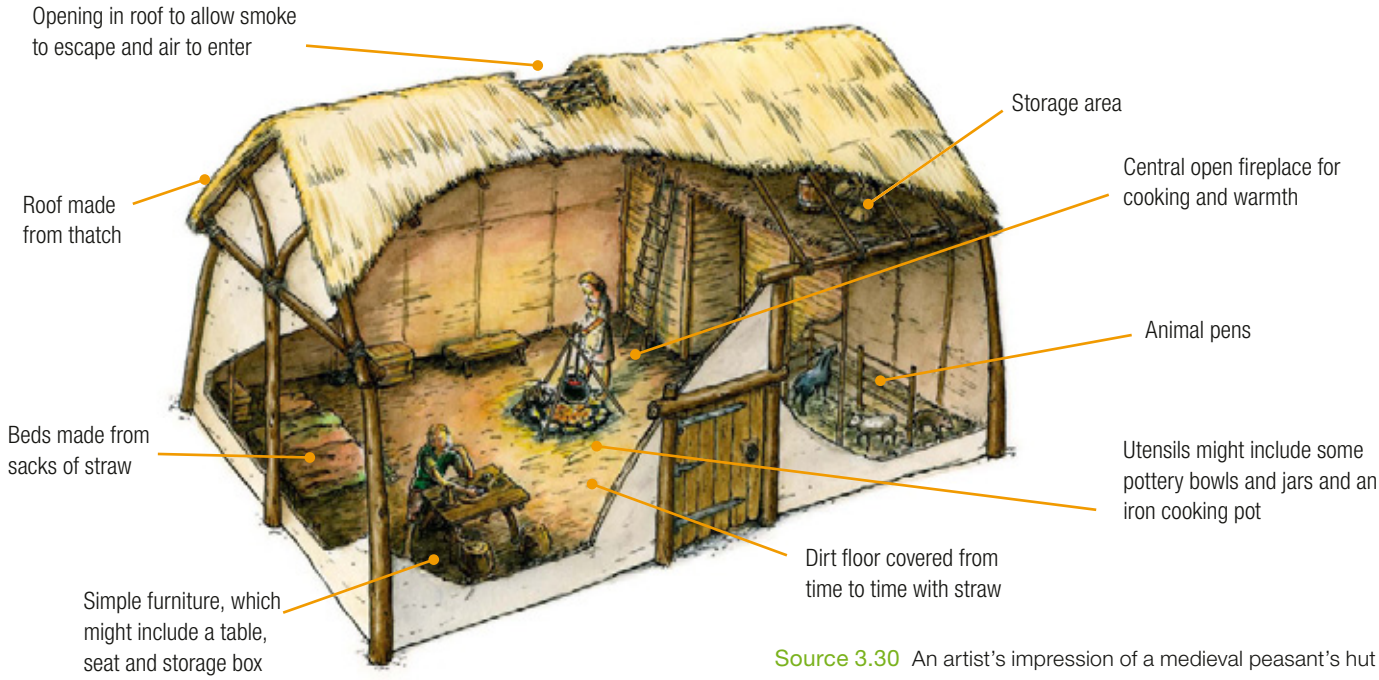
Source 3.29 A modern artist's impression of 'home sweet home' for many wealthy and powerful families in medieval Europe


Main bedroom of the lord and his wife
Garderobe (toilet)
The private quarters of the lord and his family, called the solar. This was a bit like a family room or lounge. It was often next to the great hall.
The great hall, with its often straw-lined floor, served many purposes. It was a banquet hall, a court, a place to receive visitors, and a meeting place. In the early days of castles, it was also a bedroom for the lord and his family.
Freshwater well, which might tap into an underground spring
Garden, growing food such as herbs and vegetables
In the kitchen, cauldrons (big iron pots) hung over open fires and spits; sometimes a cauldron might contain a number of different dishes, each packed separately. The scullery, where dishes and pots were washed, was often outside.
Stables
Dungeons (underground prison cells)
The basement room of a castle tower would be used as a cool room where food (e.g. salted meat and bags of grain), wine and equipment were stored.
Workshops, where craftspeople such as blacksmiths, furniture makers, cobblers, armour makers and potters made their goods for the castle occupants and were trained.

Home life of the poor

Home for peasant farm workers was a one- or two-roomed hut shared with domestic animals such as chickens and pigs (see Source 3.30). It might typically be one of a number of such huts on a feudal manor (see Source 3.22). The hut was usually dirty, sooty, smelly and dark. Walls were mostly a mixture of mud, manure and sticks (called wattle and daub). They might be painted white with lime. Roofs were made from thatch. Windows were narrow openings that could be boarded up in winter. The toilet was a hole in the ground outside.

Conditions for peasants who lived in the cramped houses of medieval towns were not much better than those of peasant farmers. Those peasants who worked as servants in manor houses and castles lived in more secure and pleasant surroundings. However, their daily lives were hard like those of other peasants, with few personal comforts.



Source 3.30 An artist's impression of a medieval peasant's hut

Town life

Towns were usually small, with populations of only a few hundred. Some grew into larger cities. The wealthy townspeople might live in larger houses, often towards the centre. The poor lived in dirtier, more cramped quarters. Narrow cobbled or dirt streets separated the rows of wooden buildings with thatched roofs. The buildings were serious fire risks: they were made of highly combustible material and people lit fires and candles in them for warmth and light.

Check your learning

1 Write a short definition for each of these terms: garderobe, solar, garrison, portcullis, cauldron, thatch, wattle and daub.

2 Work with a partner. Write a short account of a typical day in the life of either a wealthy family living in a castle, or a poor family living in a manor village. Compare your accounts.

3 You are a tourist operator who is able to go back in time (with the people on your tour coach!) to visit the working medieval castle shown as Source 3.29. Decide the order in which you will show people around. Write the outline of the script you will use in showing them around.

Fashions and toiletries

By the 11th century in Europe, there were great differences between the clothing worn by the rich and the poor. In fact, laws were passed to enforce this difference. Gold and silver material and purple silk could be worn only by royalty. Only noblewomen could wear elegant veils and have dresses made from satin and velvet. Only the rich could afford toiletries, perfumes and incense.

The clothes of the wealthy were custom-made by tailors. Although there was a range of fashion trends during the Middle Ages, women typically wore long, trailing garments, often with elaborate sleeves and ornate headgear. Wealthy men commonly wore tunics, stockings, decorated cloaks and fancy hats. The clothes of the poor were, by contrast, drab and dull in colour. They were crudely cut, and made from coarse cloth woven by peasant women from hand-spun wool or linen.

The body beautiful

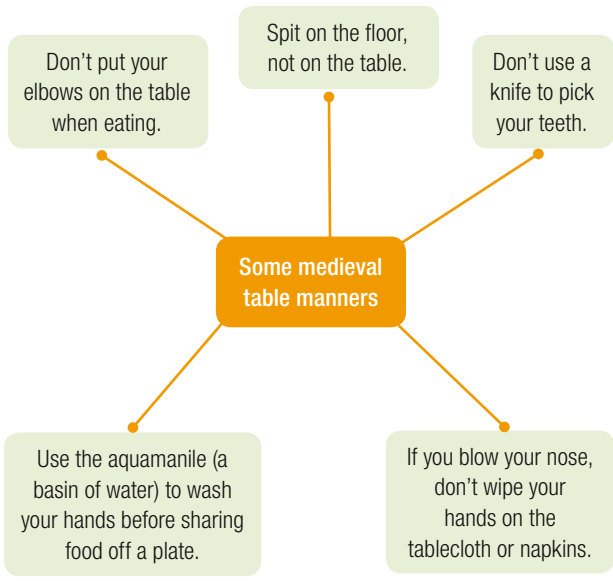
Cleanliness was valued by medieval people, even though they did not understand the health reasons for keeping clean. For the poor, personal hygiene might mean washing in a dish of cold water. Wood was a scarce resource for peasants and it was not to be wasted on unnecessary heating. On special occasions, peasant women might freshen up their hair and clothes with the scent of flowers.

Only the wealthy could afford the luxury of a long, hot bath, called a 'stew'. Scented oils, rose petals or herbs such as rosemary and spearmint were added to the water. The wealthy could also afford to pamper their bodies. Costly perfumes were imported from places such as Arabia. Oils were extracted locally from plants such as jasmine, blackcurrants, apricot kernels, roses and violets. Dried herbs such as mint, rosemary and cinnamon were burnt to purify and sweeten the air. Source 3.34 describes a preparation for sweet-smelling hair for medieval ladies.

Source 3.31 An artist's impression of a range of garments worn by rich and poor—including the king—in 11th-century England

Source 3.32 An artist's impression of a medieval man enjoying a 'stew'

Source 3.33 A medieval-style soup, such as might have been seen at a medieval wedding or special feast



Source 3.35 Some medieval table manners

Source 3.34

Take some dried roses, clove, nutmeg, watercress and galangal [a root plant a bit like ginger]. Let all these, powdered, be mixed with rose water. With this water let her sprinkle her hair and comb it with a comb dipped in this same water so that [her hair] will smell better. And let her make furrows in her hair and sprinkle on the above-mentioned powder, and it will smell marvellously.

Translated extract from the 12th-century writings of Trotula di Ruggiero, the most significant female physician of the Middle Ages

Eating the medieval way

There were no supermarkets, refrigerators or ovens in medieval times. People killed their own animals and preserved meat by salting, smoking or pickling it. Spices were used to disguise the taste of rotten meat. (Sometimes, too, dogs were used to 'test' it.) Vegetables were commonly dried or pickled. Grain was ground into flour to make bread. People used spoons, knives or their fingers to eat; most ate off thick slices of bread called trenchers. Table manners were basic (see Source 3.35)

Eating habits of the rich

The rich ate the meat of both domestic and game animals (such as deer, wild boars, larks, pheasants). There was also fish, fruit, soft cheese, eggs, coloured jellies, vegetables, sauces and soups, salads, white bread, pies and tarts, and ornate sweet dishes called subtleties. Food was washed down with ale, wine or mead.

Banquets were held on important religious feast days, and to mark events such as marriages, coronations, special birthdays, tournaments and the arrival of important guests. The important people (that is, members of the lord's family and/or guests) sat at a higher table than other diners. Feasts often lasted for hours. In between the many courses, diners were entertained by acrobats, **minstrels**, **troubadours**, storytellers, jugglers and **jesters**. Any leftover food was given to the poor who waited expectantly at the castle gates.

Eating habits of the poor

The poor ate a simpler and less varied diet than the rich. It included grainy bread, seasonal vegetables and fruit (for those with access to gardens and fruit trees), milk, hard cheese, porridge made from oats or barley and perhaps some nuts from the forests. Most peasants ate their main meal for the day while working in the fields. They ate little meat, as they were too poor to own many animals, and hunting for game in the lord's forests was forbidden. If they lived near the sea or streams, there might be some fish. One of the simple joys for peasants in towns was to gather at the tavern for a few ales after a day's work.

Check your learning

1. Describe one way in which a woman after the 11th century in Europe might 'advertise' that she was wealthy in the way she dressed.
2. List some ways in which wealthy women and poor women might have kept themselves smelling sweet.
3. Compare and contrast the diets of the rich and poor. Which diet do you think was healthier? Justify your view.
4. Most people in medieval Europe could not read. Prepare an illustrated manual on table manners that diners attending a medieval banquet could check.

Medieval entertainment

Many pastimes in medieval Europe were the privilege of the wealthy. These included the multi-course banquets and, for the men, activities such as hunting, falconry and playing chess. Wealthy women might embroider, stitch tapestries or listen to minstrels.

Hunting and falconry

The wealthy obtained their meat by hunting with dogs (usually on horseback) or with falcons. Both activities showed off their social privilege. Hunts were typically conducted in the woods and forests of manor estates, forbidden to the poor. Sometimes, women, riding side-saddle, would be part of the hunting party. The poor hunted for rabbits and birds in the fields.

Falconry, or hawking, involved using trained birds such as eagles, falcons and hawks to catch prey such as pigeons and hares. The type of hunting bird used indicated a person's status: eagles, for example, were only owned by kings. Appearing in public with a bird of prey on a leather-strapped wrist was a sign of a person's wealth and social status.

Source 3.36 This 16th-century painting by Brueghel (Pieter the Elder) depicts a wide range of games played by medieval children

Entertainment for the poor

For the poor, entertainment might include the public spectacles of **jousts** and tournaments. There were special feasts (such as at harvest time) put on by the lord of the manor. There also were the processions, ceremonies and holy day feasts and festivals associated with events of the Church calendar .

Other entertainments included dancing (including the popular *carole*), dice throwing, ball games, wrestling and hammer throwing. Many of the games played by medieval children (such as hopscotch and hide-and-seek) are still played today.

bigideas

3.1 How was society in medieval Europe organised?

Remember

1 In your own words, define each of the following terms: feudalism, manor, vassal.

2 Look at Source 3.1. How many *full* decades were there between the start of the One Hundred Years War and the year in which King Henry VIII was crowned King of England?

3 How did the waves of various tribal people who migrated into Europe before about 1000 CE affect the society (in general terms)?

4 Consider how people worked in medieval Europe.
   a Who did most of the work?
   b What sort of work did the majority of these people do?

Understand

5 Explain the relationship between the Battle of Hastings in 1066 and the beginnings of a feudal system in Britain.

6 How do you think a medieval ruler's position might have been strengthened by giving fiefs to those who provided loyalty and support?

7 Look at Sources 3.22, 3.25 and 3.30. Based on these (and what you have read), write down ten reasons why you think that a medieval serf would typically have had a hard life.

8 What did 'having a stew' mean in medieval times? What social class might engage in this activity? Why?

9 Decide on three questions you would ask a medieval monk or nun to help you understand better why they chose to live the lives they did.

Apply

10 Think about all the factors that have helped to make you who you are. Think about how these factors help to control your behaviour and your social roles. Think, too, about how they are related. Represent these thoughts in a concept map.

11 Work in groups to construct a model of either the hut of a poor medieval family or the bedroom of a wealthy medieval noble or king. Share responsibilities, including research, preparing materials, assembling the diorama and presenting it to the class.

12 Look carefully at Source 3.22. If you were one of those collecting information for the *Domesday Book*:
   a what information would you record for this manor, based on what you can see (estimate approximate dimensions)?
   b what questions would you ask the lord of the manor in order to gather information on things that are not evident?

Analyse

13 With a partner, identify as many medieval games and activities as you can in Source 3.36. These might be those that you recognise as a set game, or ones that you can only describe by what you observe.

Evaluate

14 Decide what you think would be the two best and two worst things (in each case) about living in a castle and living in a medieval town.

15 Based on what you have learned so far about the society of medieval Europe, conduct a class debate (sharing all tasks involved in research, preparing for and delivering the debate) on the following topic: that living as part of the society of medieval Europe was, overall, a better way of life than living in today's Australian society.

Source 3.37 Artist's impression of a medieval hawking expedition. Small hoods were placed over the heads of hunting birds to keep them calm until they were released for the hunt.

Create

16 Refer to Source 3.31. Design your own version of a new outfit to be worn by one of the representatives of the society of 11th-century England shown in this illustration. Your finished garment needs to be in the same general style.

17 Use either Source 3.37 or 3.38 to inspire your account of a day spent hunting or hawking in medieval times. Your account might be one of the following:

- a letter you write to someone about your experience
- a poem or song that reflects on your experience
- a series of labelled sketches (comic-book style) that detail the key events of the day.

Source 3.38 This 15th-century illustration shows the end of a hunt for a wild pig or boar. Dogs of different breeds were used, hunting for prey such as deer, wolves, bears and foxes—as well as wild pigs.

Source 3.39 Canterbury Cathedral—significant not only for its impressive architecture but also for the vital role it played in the lives of medieval Christians

3.2 What developments and achievements influenced life in medieval Europe?

Medieval Europe experienced great changes, both good and bad. Although the arts such as music and architecture flourished, religious wars and devastating plagues took their toll. It was also a time of social changes that affected the entire structure of ***feudal*** *society. At times, it may have seemed to the people of medieval Europe as if their world had been turned upside down.*

Medieval buildings

One enduring (and more obvious) feature of Europe's medieval society is its architecture. Most European cities and towns that began during the medieval period still have buildings that date back hundreds of years. These buildings include castles, churches, cathedrals and **monasteries**. As you can see from Source 3.39, some of these structures were very large, often the biggest building in a town or city. Spires and bell towers, if included, added greater height.

Gothic style

Many medieval buildings are examples of Gothic architecture. As a style, it became prominent in modern France, England, Germany and Italy from about 1100. While each region had slight differences in their architecture, there were many common features, especially with churches. It is significant that many Christian churches in Australia still incorporate these features. They include:

- a cross-shaped floor plan, called a cruciform (a symbol of the cross on which Jesus Christ was killed)
- arches and windows that come to a sharp point at the top
- flying buttresses, a supporting structural feature that enabled the buildings to be built to a great height (some flying buttresses look a bit like giant insect legs)
- stained glass windows that, together with sculptures, provided religious education for a people who could mostly not read or write.

Source 3.40
A page from an illuminated manuscript created in the 15th century, which records the New Testament gospel of John

Medieval writings

Relatively few people in medieval Europe could read or write: those who could write were mostly priests and monks, and a few nuns. Among these nuns were the French writer and scholar Héloïse d'Argenteuil (*c.* 1100–1164) and the German abbess Hildegard of Bingen (1098–1179). All documents were written by hand (until the printing press was invented in the early 1400s). This was a very time-consuming process. Hence, medieval writings, especially in the early medieval period, were significant and valuable works.

Religious **manuscripts** included copies of the Christian Bible, prayer books and guides to religious life. Other medieval manuscripts detailed laws, or administrative details about a kingdom or a landholding. Some rulers arranged for others to write their communications or, sometimes, accounts of their lives or those of their ancestors. It was very rare for the common people to write anything, including diaries and letters. This fact greatly limits our knowledge of how the poor lived in medieval Europe.

Illuminated manuscripts

Illuminated manuscripts are written works with highly decorated illustrations, often of scenes associated with the text. Sometimes the artwork was to fill a space, decorate the first letter of a word, or to provide a border for the text.

Illuminated manuscripts were significant historical documents. For a start, they were very valuable. Many materials and skilled craftspeople were needed to make them. They were generally written on parchment or on vellum (made from the skin of sheep, cows or goats). Paints were made from plants, ground-up semi-precious stones, charcoal and spices. Sometimes even earwax and urine were used to create colours. Gold and silver were also prepared so they could be painted onto manuscripts.

The *Book of Kells*

The *Book of Kells* is a version of the four New Testament gospels over 300 pages long. It is believed to have been written in Ireland about 1000 years ago. The monks who wrote and illustrated the *Book of Kells* used quills and special inks, some made from materials not found in Ireland. It is a religious work, and so was written in Latin, the language of medieval Christianity.

It combines local Celtic designs with illustrations of animals, and of the life of Jesus Christ and his disciples.

Medieval legends

Many medieval legends have provided inspiration throughout the ages for writers, poets and, more recently, filmmakers. Two of the more enduring of these—and hence the more significant—are the legends of Beowulf (one of the oldest surviving epic stories in English literature) and of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table.

Source 3.41 An illustration of St Matthew from the *Book of Kells*

Check your learning

1. List three of the characteristic features of Gothic architecture.
2. Suggest reasons why the building shown in Source 3.39 is such a significant building.
3. Consider what you know about illuminated manuscripts.
   - a In your own words, explain what an illuminated manuscript is.
   - b List some of the materials used when painting an illuminated manuscript.
   - c Why might such documents be thought of as significant?
4. Write down three facts about the *Book of Kells.*
5. Explain why the tale of King Arthur is a significant medieval legend.
6. Describe two aspects of the reported story of King Arthur that suggest his tale is a fantasy, not fact.
7. Name three ancient British texts that provide evidence that a ruler named Arthur existed.
8. Consider what you know about the legend of King Arthur. Who first mentioned Camelot and the Holy Grail?

focus on ...

evidence: King Arthur—did he exist or not?

There are many variations in the details of the story of King Arthur. The story goes that Arthur was a Celtic king, the son of the ruler Uther Pendragon. Arthur led his people against the invading Saxons, around the 5th or 6th century CE. A wizard named Merlin taught him as a boy.

Men came from far away to serve King Arthur. His most brave and noble knights sat at a round table to show their equality. They were renowned for their courage and honour and went on many quests, including the search for the **Holy Grail**. The **code of chivalry** they lived by made it a great shame that the knight Arthur most valued, Sir Lancelot, fell in love with Arthur's wife, Guinevere.

Arthur was killed fighting his ambitious son, Mordred, at the Battle of Camlan. As he was dying, he asked that his magical sword, Excalibar, be thrown into a nearby lake. It was grabbed by a hand that shot up from the water. Arthur was buried on the magical island of Avalon.

Many later English kings claimed descent from King Arthur, whom they called the 'one true King of the Britons'. This helped them to 'prove' their lawful right to the thrones of both Wales and England.

Medieval music

Music formed an important part of many medieval celebrations. It marked the end of harvests, provided entertainment in kings' courts, and was an important part of religious life.

Most of the popular music of the day has been lost. However, traces of tunes that peasants sang and danced to can be found in folk and traditional music. More evidence is available of music created for formal settings (e.g. church services and coronations). It is significant that Western music was first written down during this period.

Musical instruments

Many instruments used today in Western music trace their origins to the medieval period (some even earlier). These included various types of drum; stringed instruments such as lutes, mandolins, harps and early violins; and wind and wood instruments such as flutes, recorders and types of bagpipes.

Source 3.44 A stringed medieval instrument called a dulcimer

Source 3.42 *La Morte d'Arthur* [The Death of Arthur] by James Archer (1824–1904)

Geoffrey of Monmouth wrote *A History of the Kings of Britain* in 1136, compiled in part from texts written by other monks. It describes Romanised Britain, and the reign of a ruler named Arthur (and the small empire he created).

In the mid 1100s, Chrétien de Troyes translated Geoffrey of Monmouth's book into French. His version mentions Camelot, the Round Table, Sir Lancelot and the Holy Grail quest for the first time.

An 8th-century text, *Annales Cambriae*, refers to two battles fought by a king named Arthur: the Battle of Mount Badon (*c.* 517) and the Battle of Camlan.

An inscription among the ruins of Tintagel Castle (Cornwall) translates as: *Artognou, father of a descendant of Coel, made this.* Artognou is an old-English form of 'Arthur'. Tintagel is said to be Arthur's birthplace. Welsh records describe a Celtic leader *(c.* 5th or 6th century) called Coel the Old.

A Welsh monk Nennius in his book *The British History* (*c.* 830) mentions a king's name—Arthur—and 12 battles that he fought.

In 1191, the monk Gerald of Wales reported seeing human remains at Glastonbury Abbey (in Somerset, England) and an inscription which translates as: *Here in the Isle of Avalon lies buried the renowned King Arthur, with Guinevere his second wife.*

Source 3.43 Some sources of evidence for the possible existence of King Arthur

Minstrels and troubadours

Minstrels were medieval entertainers. They sang, played instruments, told stories and recited poems. They sang about everyday things such as love. Others recited lengthy ballads about famous figures or events.

Some minstrels were part of the household of a king or a noble. Hundreds of them might be employed for a special event, such as a royal wedding or coronation. Some towns and cities employed minstrels for public events. Some minstrels simply wandered around the countryside, performing at fairs and community gatherings.

Some minstrels came to be known as **troubadours**. Troubadours were musicians who wrote many of their own works. This is significant, as it provided us with evidence of their musical style and lyrics. They became prominent in the late medieval period.

Music and religion

Music was a very important part of church life. Hymns and religious songs were often part of services in churches and monasteries. Religious songs were frequently sung without instruments. This so-called chanting was typically performed by choirs of monks and boys. Significantly, it has continued as a feature of Catholic life to the present day.

Source 3.45 An artist's impression of three wandering minstrels

Check your learning

1 How was a troubadour different from a minstrel?

2 Why is the medieval form of singing known as chanting a significant legacy of medieval Europe?

Religious warfare—the Crusades

The **Crusades** were a series of religious wars fought in today's Middle East in the first part of the 11th century. Basically, the wars were fought between Christians and Muslims to gain control over key religious sites in and around Jerusalem. Although historians argue about the total number of wars that were fought, most agree that eight major crusades took place between 1096 and 1270 (see Source 3.47).

The Crusades were significant events that had a great impact on Europe. Christian soldiers (called 'crusaders') from all over Europe took part in the wars. Common people, including youths, were also caught up in the desire to travel far away to fight in the name of Christianity. The movement of many people caused great changes—both good and bad.

For more information about the start of the Crusades, see the Focus on feature below.

focus on ...

cause and effect: the start of the Crusades

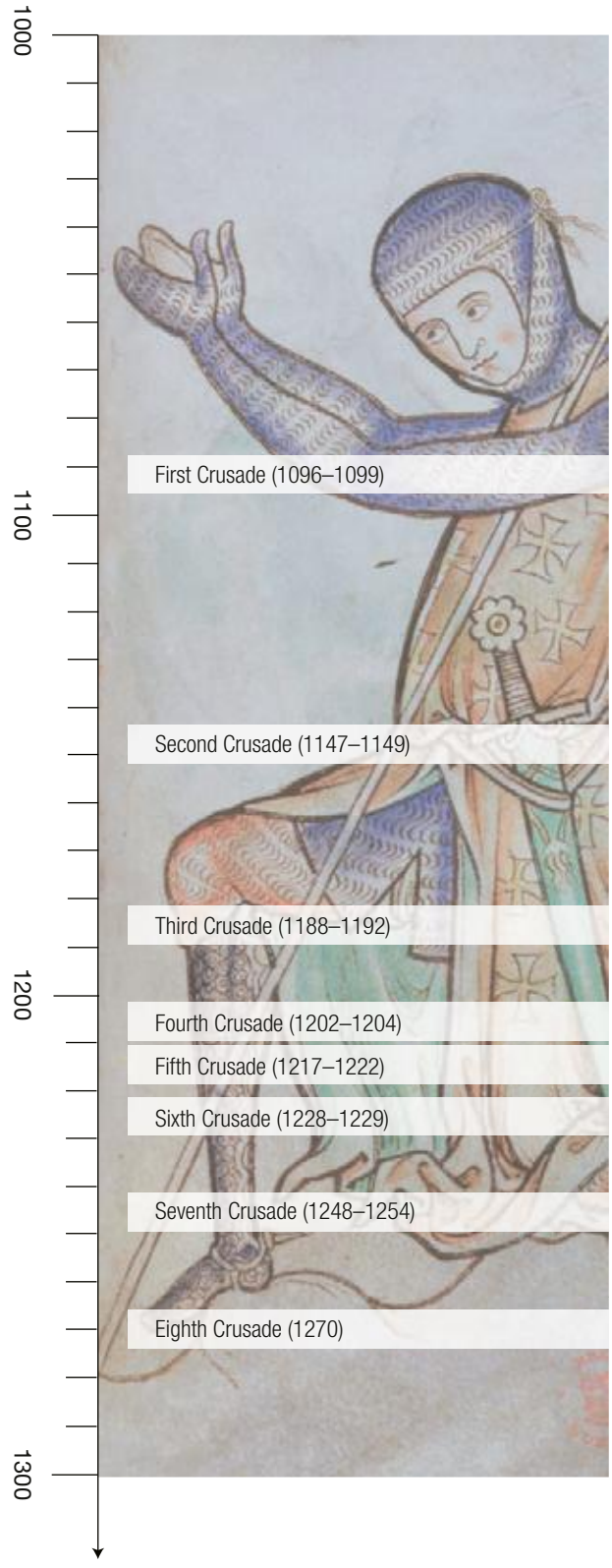
Jerusalem had been under Muslim control since 637 CE (when it was absorbed into the growing Islamic Empire). After this time, Christian pilgrims and merchants had peacefully lived with Muslims in the region for centuries. Then, in the mid 11th century, things changed.

In 1050, a more militant Islamic group, the Seljuk Turks, expanded their territory and took control of Jerusalem. This new Islamic regime committed many serious offences against Christian traders and pilgrims in the region and cut off access to important religious sites. They also threatened the city of Constantinople, capital of the Christian **Byzantine** Empire. This growing threat caused the Byzantine emperor to send a plea for support to Pope Urban II in 1096. This request, in turn, motivated the Pope's response (see Source 3.46). The effect, or consequence of his response, was the start of the First Crusade.

Source 3.46

> *You must hurry to help your brothers in the East, who need your help ... For the Turks, a Persian people, have attacked them. I urge you with passionate prayer—not I, but God—that, as messengers of Christ, you urge men of all ranks ... to move quickly to get rid of these awful people from the lands of your brothers. Christ commands it. And if any who go there should die on the way by land, or in crossing the sea, or in fighting these non-Christians, their sins shall be forgiven ... Let those of you who have been fighting your brothers and relatives now fight these barbarians.*

Translated extract from Pope Urban II's response in 1096 to the Byzantine emperor



Source 3.47 The dates of the eight major Crusades, 1096–1270

Who were the Crusaders?

A range of people from all walks of life—from kings to young peasants—decided to join the Crusades. Although the primary motivation for most people who joined the Crusades was the desire to fight for Christianity, many people also chose to go to the **Holy Land** for adventure, to escape from the miserable life of a peasant, or simply to get rich.

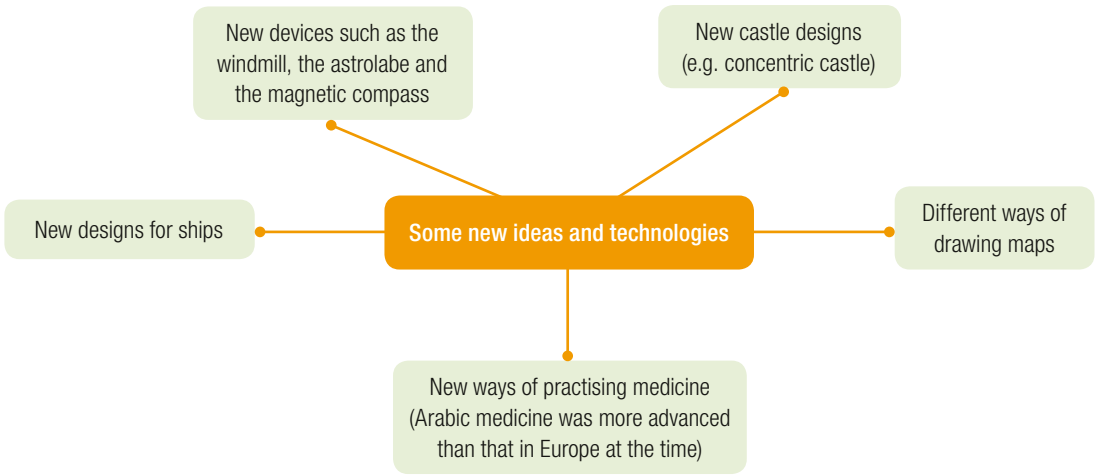
During this deeply religious time, most Christians believed that taking part in the Crusades would be a sure way of gaining entrance into Heaven when they died. Many teenage peasants who took part in the Crusades were encouraged by their local priests to join the fight. They believed that their youth and lack of 'sin' would make them more successful than older Crusaders.

In spite of some battles that were won, overall, the Crusades failed to meet their main objective. The Holy Lands were not regained by the Christians and many Crusaders never returned home at all. Some were killed in the fight for the Holy Land. Others died of disease or injuries. And others were sold as slaves, never to see their homes and families again.

The Crusades did, however, benefit Europe and its peoples in many ways. Trade with eastern regions was increased. With the growth in trade came the need for more and further excursions to unknown lands. This, in turn, brought about new ideas, greater knowledge and more inventions. People's lives in general improved; they were healthier and better educated. And, with the end of feudalism, they became more independent.

Source 3.48 The key cities at the time of the Crusades, and the approximate route taken by the first Crusaders

Source 3.49 A scene from the film *Kingdom of Heaven*, depicting one of the sieges of Jerusalem during the Crusades



Source 3.50 Some of the new ideas and technologies Crusaders brought back to Europe from the Holy Land

bigideas

3.2 What developments and achievements influenced life in medieval Europe?

Remember

1 List three reasons why the Crusades were a significant event for the society of medieval Europe.

2 Consider what you have learned about medieval manuscripts.
   a Why were medieval manuscripts generally regarded as works of significance?
   b What was so special about illuminated manuscripts?
   c List two examples of religious manuscripts produced in medieval Europe.

Understand

3 Conduct some research to find out more about Hildegard of Bingen. Based on what you find:
   a Why do you think she is regarded as a significant individual in medieval European history?
   b List three works that she wrote. Suggest for each why you think it might have been a significant work at the time.

4 Why do we know so much more of the music and lyrics written by troubadours than we do about the songs and tunes of simple peasant folk?

5 Given that tastes and fashions change over time, suggest why the story of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table has remained such an enduring legend for writers, poets, artists, filmmakers and television producers, even up to the present day? What aspects of this tale make it so significant?

Apply

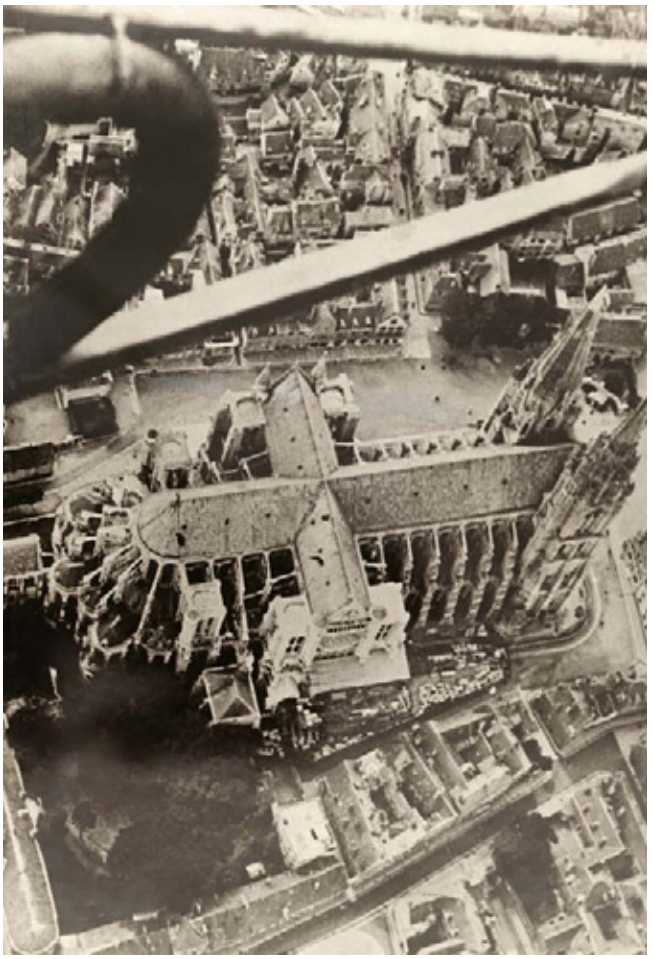
6 In small groups, brainstorm aspects of our Australian society today you think are noteworthy enough (for whatever reason) for historians some 1000 years from now to decide that they were significant features of our society. A group spokesperson will present a summary of the group's findings to the class.

Analyse

7 Refresh your memory on some of the key features of Gothic architecture. See if you can locate at least one example of each in the following photographs of gothic cathedrals (Sources 3.51, 3.52 or 3.53). In your notebook, identify a feature that is visible in each source and draw a rough sketch to represent that feature.

Source 3.51 Notre Dame Cathedral, France

Source 3.52 A window of Notre Dame des Fleurs Chapel, France



Source 3.53 An aerial view of Cathedral of Our Lady of Chatres, France

Evaluate

8 Consider what you have read in this chapter about the takeover of Jerusalem in 1050 CE.
   - a What was the immediate effect on the Middle East region of Jerusalem's takeover by a more militant Islamic group?
   - b What do you think might have been the effect on the Middle East region and surrounds if this had not happened?
   - c Predict what might have happened in 1096 if the Pope of the day had told the Byzantine emperor who wrote to him 'that he was on his own' in dealing with the Seljuk Turks.

9 Listen to some examples of medieval music. (Your teacher might arrange for this.) Rate what you hear according to a set of criteria (aspects against which you judge something). It is important that you decide on these criteria before you listen to the music.

Create

10 Design your own Gothic cathedral (on paper or using ICT tools). Be inspired by illustrations and relevant information provided in this section. Include a plan view (as seen from directly above) and close-up sketch of two important features.

Source 3.54 An artist's impression of jousting knights

3.3 How and why did society in medieval Europe change?

All societies change over time, even if this change is very gradual. New developments, such as changing technology or ideas, or contact with other societies usually have a major influence. Social change is rarely due to just one factor. When change does occur, it does not mean that some older traditions do not continue.

This was certainly the case in medieval Europe. In the late medieval period, there were changes that weakened the **feudal** and **manorial** systems and, to some extent, reduced the authority of **the Church**. The process of change from Europe's medieval society into early modern society took several hundred years. Even then, traces of earlier traditions continued.

Options

How continuity and change were reflected in Europe's medieval society is discussed in respect to the topic areas listed below. Choose one of these:

- towns, cities and commerce
- crime and punishment
- military and defence systems.

A time of change

During the 14th century, there were three major events in Europe that rapidly reduced the population:

The Great Famine of 1315–1317: This famine mainly affected northern Europe (including England). The poor suffered greatly. A monk described how 'plump dogs were stolen ... men and women in many places secretly ate their own children'.

The Hundred Years War: This war was fought between England and France between 1337 and 1453. The English were driven out of Normandy, ending their claim to the crown of France. A young woman, Joan of Arc, was burned at the stake for her role in uniting the French.

The Black Death: This pandemic arrived in Europe in 1347, reducing the population by about a third. Its most common form was the bubonic plague. It is caused by a bacterium found in the blood of the rat flea. Medieval Europeans knew nothing about germs, and paid little attention to hygiene.

Short-term impacts of these changes

The events listed above dramatically changed the society of medieval Europe. France's population alone was halved during the 14th century. Peasants fled, creating huge labour shortages. Those prepared to stay (on manors or in skilled jobs in towns) often demanded higher wages to do so. Suddenly, they had more bargaining power because their services were in demand. In towns, it also led to outbreaks such as the **Peasants' Revolt** of 1381.

focus on ...

cause and effect: the Peasants' Revolt

The Peasants' Revolt took place in mid-1381 in England. This revolt, which involved separate but related uprisings by serfs, eventually led to the end of serfdom in England.

The lower classes under the feudal system in place were not well treated. They lived in great poverty and were virtual slaves as they were permanently 'attached' to the land. In spite of their great poverty, serfs were required to pay taxes to support King Richard II's military exploits.

Also, the Black Death had severely reduced the population, but the King passed a law to ensure that workers could not ask for better employment terms (such as higher wages or freedom to travel). When some peasants near London refused to pay taxes, an attempt was made to stop their protests through fines or by placing men in the stocks as punishment. But the discontent was felt in many places, and the uprising swelled throughout London and beyond. The leader of the revolt, Wat Tyler, was killed by the Mayor of London.

Although the demands for better working and living conditions were not immediately met, the upper classes did begin to realise that they could not rule over the peasants as they had in the past. They also realised that large groups of workers could be a significant political force to reckon with, and that some changes had to be made.

Source 3.55 An illustration of Richard II and the killing of Wat Tyler during the Peasants' Revolt

Source 3.56 A magnetic compass; its needle points to magnetic south-southeast

Source 3.57 An astrolabe was used to chart the movements of planets and stars.

Source 3.58 A reproduction of Johannes Gutenberg's printing press. It used movable type, arranged within wooden frames, to print a page of text.

Long-term impacts of these changes

Social systems such as feudalism and manorialism, together with belief systems such as Christianity had helped to sustain the society of medieval Europe and keep it stable. The changes forced on society, increasingly so from the 13th century onwards, made people more aware of the world around them.

This led, in time, to movements that questioned some aspects of the Church (the **Reformation**), the place of humans in the scheme of things, and their potential (the **Renaissance**), even to cherished ideas long held about religion (the **Scientific Revolution**).

Some of these new ways of looking at things were helped by new inventions such as the compass, the astrolabe and the printing press (invented by Johannes Gutenberg around 1400).

The magnetic compass, invented by the Chinese, seems to have been first used in Europe in the late 12th century to help sailors navigate the English Channel.

The astrolabe was an ancient navigation tool used across the European and Islamic world. Together with the magnetic compass, the astrolabe enabled European sailors to travel across oceans to claim new lands.

The printing press revolutionised people's access to the written word. Books could now be produced quickly and cheaply. Most importantly, new ideas could spread rapidly.

Towns, cities and commerce

Medieval Europe was an agricultural society. Its various kingdoms were largely divided into feudal landholdings. From about 900 CE onwards, especially after 1000, things started to change. More towns began springing up as the threat of barbarian raids began to reduce. This trend increased over time. Some towns grew into cities.

By about 1200, there were around 600 cities in Europe, three times as many as there were 50 years earlier. Many cities also had cathedrals, so they attracted Christian pilgrims as well as merchants.

Town populations

Town populations included people who had left manors. Some of these peasants went on to earn a living as **artisans** or skilled workers. Those who worked in the same craft or specialist occupation (such as butchers or carpenters) started banding together to form **guilds**. They commonly met in guildhalls to discuss quality standards, conditions of work, fair pay and prices; and to set up apprenticeships.

The growing strength of town populations meant loyalties began to change. The one-time bond to the manor lord became weaker as townspeople became more independent. This trend continued as towns became richer through trade and commerce.

New markets, new goods and booming commerce

Not all those who drifted from country manors settled down immediately in towns. Some moved around as wandering 'salesmen'. The goods they offered for sale were often cheap and basic.

The best profits came from selling goods from faraway places. The risks in getting these goods, though, were high: pirates, rough terrain, extreme weather and predators. Nonetheless, some merchants were prepared to take these risks. Some of those who did made huge profits.

Marketplaces and fairs

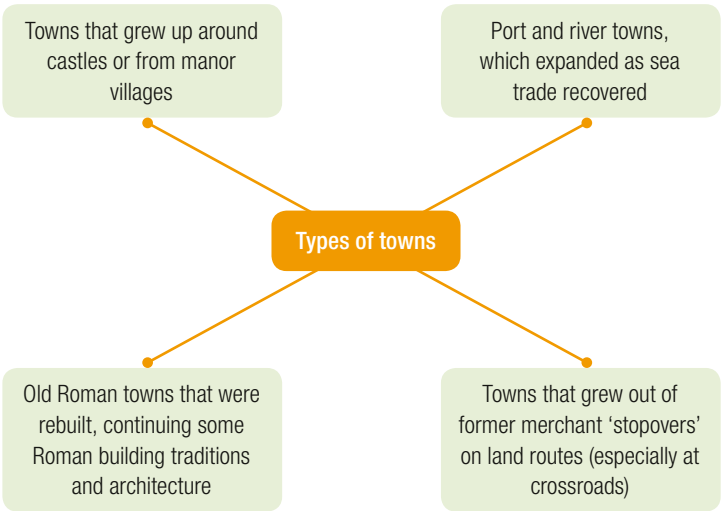
Merchants sold their goods in marketplaces and, commonly, at huge open-air fairs held each year in Europe. Buyers flocked to these displays. Purchases were often made in bulk and taken away on carts.

Once travelling merchants had made their wealth, they might then opt to settle in towns. Merchant communities formed, particularly in Italian cities. This led to the rise of merchant guilds, which controlled a town's retail industry. Business partnerships developed, too, between merchants.

Moneylending and financial records

As commerce continued to flourish, moneylending and financial record keeping became more common in Europe. Using money and issuing loans were established practices among Islamic merchants in the Holy Land.

Many of these practices were brought back to Europe by the Crusaders in the 12th and 13th centuries. Loans enabled



Source 3.59 Some types of towns that developed in medieval Europe

Source 3.60 The medieval city of Fribourg, in Switzerland. Many of its medieval buildings still remain, including St Nicholas Cathedral.

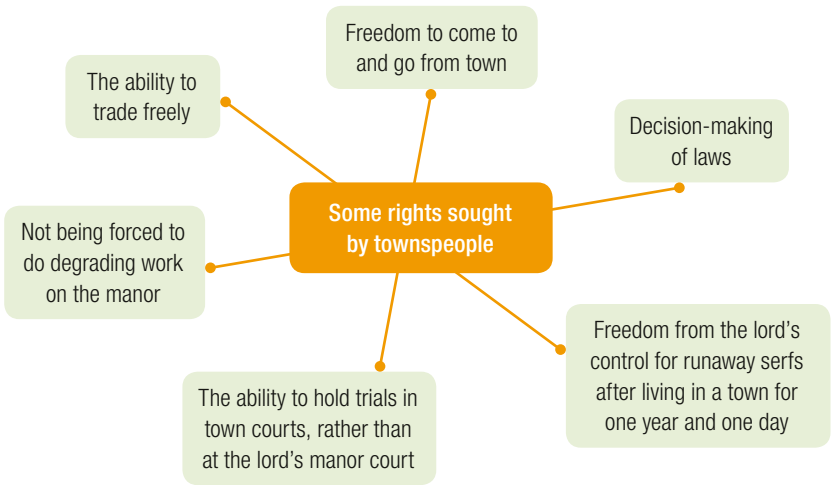
Source 3.61 A 15th-century artist's impression of a covered medieval European marketplace

more goods to be purchased; this extra financial activity boosted town economies. Some merchants' families became so wealthy they lent money even to monarchs. Many also invested in prestigious public works in their town or city.

Growing independence of towns

With changes in town wealth and population came another push for change. Townspeople wanted more independence from feudal restrictions and more rights. At this time, the lord typically 'owned' the town/s within his realm and expected dues to be paid by the people in money rather than in produce from the farm, as had happened on the manor.

A town might present a petition to a lord setting out their demands for such freedoms. In return for payment, some towns were given what they asked for. A **charter** set out what had been agreed by the lord and town spokespeople.



Source 3.62 Some of the rights sought by townspeople

Check your learning

1 Europe began a period of change from around 1000 CE onwards, causing towns to form and grow.
   a What change encouraged the growth of towns?
   b How did some of these early towns form, and where?
   c Explain why the rebuilding of some old Roman towns was an example of continuity and change.

2 Where could ordinary Europeans buy many of the goods merchants brought back from distant markets?

3 Explain broadly how many medieval towns were changed by:
   a people abandoning manors
   b growing numbers of people in the same occupations or crafts
   c the public investments of very wealthy merchants
   d a growing desire for independence from feudal lords.

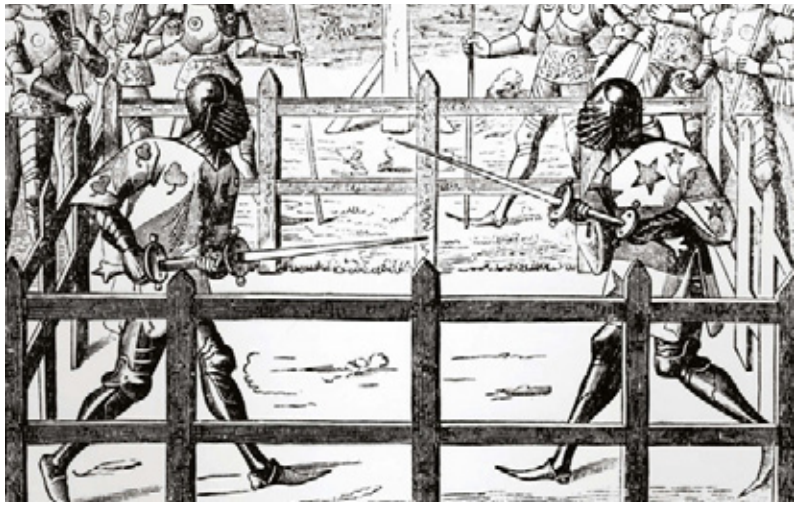
Source 3.63 This painting shows a woman trying to prove her dead husband was innocent of a crime against the king by holding a red-hot iron in one hand and her husband's head in the other.

Crime and punishment

Under the early feudal system, different courts dealt with different types of offences. Minor matters (such as a nagging wife) were heard by village courts; a woman found guilty might have to wear a scold's bridle. A manor court heard slightly more serious matters, for example a charge that a serf's son was being educated without the lord's permission. In such cases, the serf might be fined.

More serious charges were dealt with in the Church courts (for charges such as **heresy**) and the king's court (for charges of **treason**).

By modern standards, punishments for crimes handed down by most courts was severe. Confessions for such crimes were frequently obtained through torture (through the use of thumbscrews and other devices). People could be executed by being burnt or skinned alive. Traitors were frequently executed by being hanged, drawn and quartered. This last puishment involved first hanging a person, cutting him down while still alive, then pulling out his intestines while he watched, and finally attaching each of his hands and legs to a horse and having the horses pull him apart.



Source 3.64 An artist's impression of medieval trial by combat

Trial by ordeal and combat

The legal system of early medieval Europe required those accused of crimes to prove their innocence. They did this by swearing an oath before God. Witnesses might also swear oaths to support the accused or the accuser. Sometimes, the oath of the accused was tested using trial by ordeal. There were two types of ordeal:

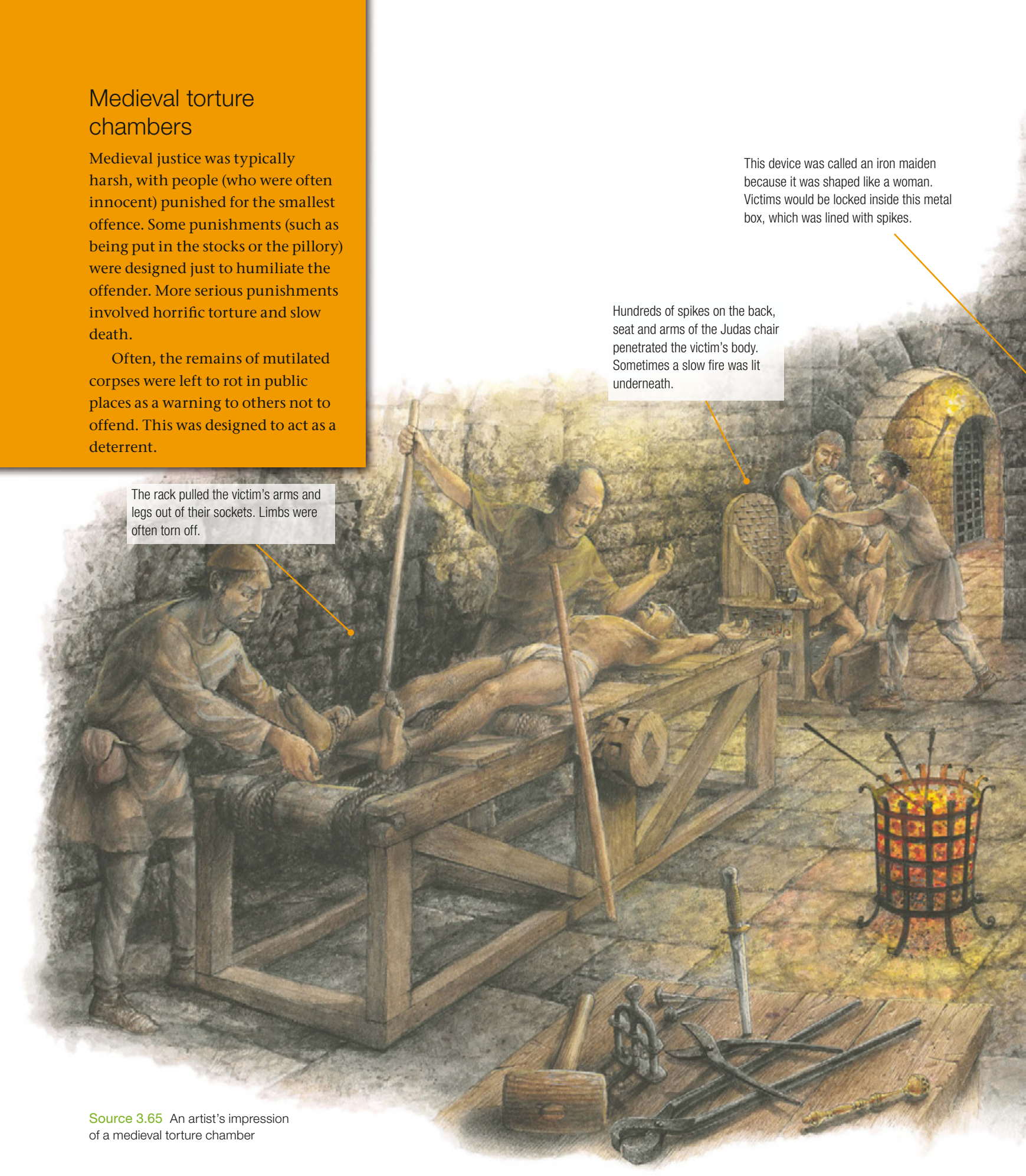
- Ordeal by fire—The accused held a red-hot iron for some time (see Source 3.63), put an arm in a fire or walked across burning coals. If, after three days, the burn was not healing, they were seen to be guilty.
- Ordeal by water—The accused placed an arm in boiling water and checked three days later to see if the burns had healed. If not, they were seen to be guilty. They also could be bound and tossed into a river. If their body floated, they were seen to be guilty. If they sank, they were innocent but dead!

Another trial commonly used for members of upper classes was trial by combat, where the accused fought the accuser. Sometimes a champion (e.g. a strong knight) fought on behalf of a weaker party. The winner (or whoever they represented) was innocent; God was believed to ensure this. Guilty people were punished or killed. They might have ears or hands cut off, or worse.

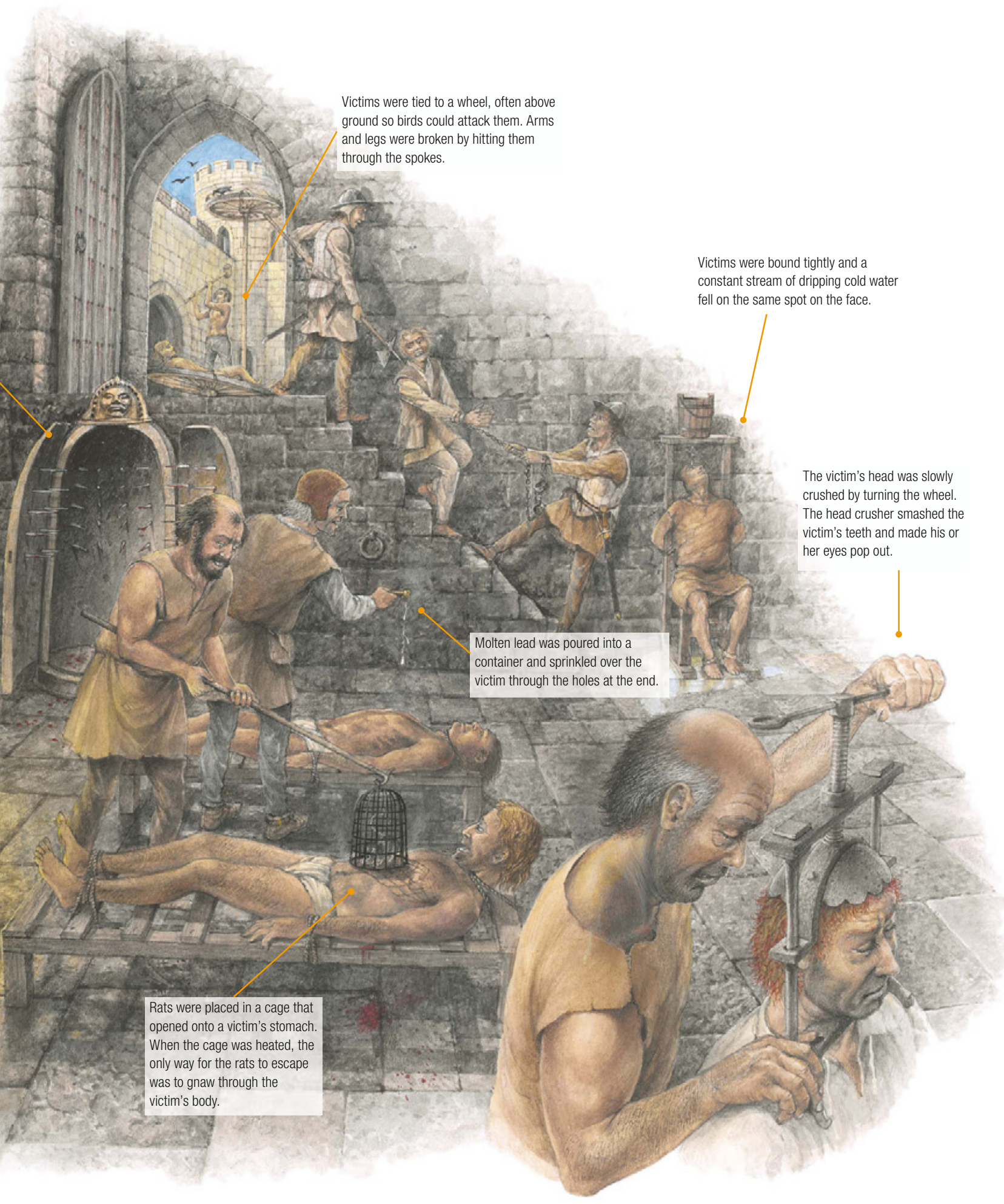
Medieval torture chambers

Medieval justice was typically harsh, with people (who were often innocent) punished for the smallest offence. Some punishments (such as being put in the stocks or the pillory) were designed just to humiliate the offender. More serious punishments involved horrific torture and slow death.

Often, the remains of mutilated corpses were left to rot in public places as a warning to others not to offend. This was designed to act as a deterrent.



Source 3.65 An artist's impression of a medieval torture chamber


Victims were tied to a wheel, often above ground so birds could attack them. Arms and legs were broken by hitting them through the spokes.
Victims were bound tightly and a constant stream of dripping cold water fell on the same spot on the face.
The victim's head was slowly crushed by turning the wheel. The head crusher smashed the victim's teeth and made his or her eyes pop out.
Molten lead was poured into a container and sprinkled over the victim through the holes at the end.
Rats were placed in a cage that opened onto a victim's stomach. When the cage was heated, the only way for the rats to escape was to gnaw through the victim's body.

Changes to the medieval justice system

In 1154, King Henry II became king of England. The types of courts mentioned earlier continued to exist during his reign. But Henry II also wanted all his subjects to have access (if they desired) to royal justice. So he and his court (king's court) travelled around the land, hearing cases. Judges began recording court decisions.

Over the centuries, this initiative continued to be refined. It set the basis for today's common law, as practised in England and Australia (where judges' decisions are based on those made for similar trials in the past). Another initiative of King Henry II was trial by jury. It, too, continues to this day as a key part of the Western justice system.

The *Magna Carta*

By the early 13th century, King John was England's king. He was not popular. He had raised taxes, fought a series of unsuccessful wars and upset the Pope. The Pope was so angry that he had banned religious services in English churches.

The nobles decided to act. They negotiated with King John, forcing him (reluctantly) to agree with much of what they put in their charter. The ***Magna Carta*** marked a significant legal change in England: the monarch would be subject to the will of others, not just God. No longer could he rule exactly as it suited him. This is seen as one of the first steps towards the development of legal and political rights for 'the people' and the start of modern democracy. King John did go back on some of his agreements, but the momentum for change continued.

The charter, the *Magna Carta*, was agreed at Runnymede in 1215. King John's royal seal was affixed to it. Among its provisions was a significant change for medieval justice: trial by ordeal would be abolished. No more could people be condemned, tortured or killed on the grounds of suspicion or rumour.

Some other key aspects of the *Magna Carta* included:

- a description of the position of the Church in England
- an outline of feudal responsibilities and obligations
- a promise of fair laws, and for all to have access to the courts
- guidelines on how the charter would be enforced.

Source 3.66 A barrister addressing the jury—a modern legacy of changes introduced in England by King Henry II

Check your learning

1 England's King Henry II introduced a number of initiatives.
   a Name two that produced significant change in medieval England's legal system.
   b Why are these examples of continuity and change?
2 How was the medieval practice of trial by ordeal changed by the *Magna Carta*?
3 The words '*Magna Carta*' mean 'Great Charter' in Latin. Do you agree that it was 'great' (however you define the word)? Discuss as a class.
4 Do you think that trial by ordeal was fair? Give reasons for your view.

Medieval warfare

Warfare was one of the most important ways a medieval kingdom in Europe could become powerful (either by fighting to expand its territory or to defend itself). The focus was often on capturing the enemy's stronghold, usually a castle. Castles were typically built in places that were easier to defend: on top of a cliff or hill, on an island, or jutting out into a lake.

Castle fortresses

In times of peace, a castle was home for a ruler (or feudal **lord**), his family, servants and **vassals** (see Source 3.29). Only a small band of soldiers was needed as guards. In war, the castle became a hive of military activity as the lord called on his vassals to supply him with foot soldiers, armour, weapons, and often horses.

Changing castle design

Castle designs changed and developed through the feudal era, improving on weak features and continuing those that worked.

Motte and bailey castles

Early fortresses were called motte and bailey castles. The motte was a raised area (such as a hill) on which a wooden fortress was built. Below it was an open area called the bailey, where barns, workshops and stables were located. Both the bailey and motte were encircled by a gated timber palisade (fence-like barrier, made of logs), a ditch (sometimes filled with water) and an earth bank.

Stone castles with keeps

By the late 10th century, stone structures (called keeps) were starting to replace the wooden fortress in the motte and bailey design. These keeps, usually rectangular and up to four storeys high, were fitted out to withstand a siege. Thick stone walls replaced the palisade and a wide moat replaced the ditch. Access to the castle was by drawbridge.

Concentric castles

Some 200 years later, a new type of castle design emerged in Europe: the concentric castle. It was based on designs Crusaders had seen in the Holy Land. This stone and/or brick castle had two outer walls (with battlements) to provide an extra barrier against attack. The outermost wall was often curved. The wall closest to the centre was the highest. There was a greatly reinforced gatehouse, but no keep.

Source 3.67 Fenis Castle in Italy; note the protective outer wall (with its battlements) and the multi-storey keep inside the walls

Source 3.68 Krak des Chevaliers in today's Syria, once occupied by Crusader knights, is a concentric castle; note the much higher inner wall.

Source 3.69 A modern recreation of a knight practising his jousting skill with a quintain (a post to act as an opponent for practice). Medieval knights used a quintain to help them perfect the accuracy of their lance blows.

Source 3.70 A medieval artist's impression of a tournament

Castle warriors

War in medieval Europe meant knights were obliged to provide their lord with their own fighting services and those of others they recruited. Some recruits were professional soldiers, men of the upper social class. They might be the younger sons of noble families, wanting to improve their standing through military service. (The eldest son inherited the father's entire estate then.) Such soldiers were often called men-at-arms.

Other fighting recruits were commoners (peasants). These men, often called up straight from the fields or towns, fought as foot soldiers (often archers) as they could not afford horses. Their weapons and armour were much simpler than those of knights and men-at-arms.

Military training

To stay fit and trained for war, knights fought jousts. Often these were public spectacles. Heavily armoured knights charged each other on horseback holding wooden lances ahead of them. Sometimes a long wooden fence, called a tilt, separated the charging horses. The idea was to knock an opponent off his horse.

Sometimes the contest was not between two knights but hundreds of fighters (knights on horseback and foot soldiers). These events were called tournaments (see Source 3.70). They were mock battles, similar in principle to today's military training exercises. By the 13th century, tournaments had become colourful spectacles that created great excitement among medieval communities.

Heraldry

It was common for noble medieval families to adopt a badge, or coat of arms. This practice was called **heraldry**. Each son in a family added a specific symbol to the family's coat of arms (for example, a five-point star for a third-born son). A knight's coat of arms was featured prominently, on clothing, shields and on their horses' coats. This meant a knight could be identified on a battlefield, whether fighting or among the piles of the dead.

Coats of arms were usually colourful and sometimes highly decorative. Design features included crosses, checks, stripes, wavy lines and symbols such as crowns, lions, battlements, weapons and the *fleur-de-lys* (a simplified image of a lily).

Changes in medieval warfare

Source 3.71 Remains of a medieval fighter's chain mail armour

Until about the 12th century, armour was made of chain mail (small hoops of iron linked together, which was fashioned into a knee-length tunic (see Source 3.71). A coat of cloth was usually worn over the tunic.

From about 1300 onwards, metal plate armour became more common. Its design would change further so it eventually protected the whole body. Whole-body armour made a shield less necessary.

When using a shield, the fighter had only one hand for his sword. So, early sword designs were for one-handed use. As armour changed, so did designs of swords: they were larger and made for two-handed use. The aim of these weapons was not so much to cut as to bash. Two free hands meant that weapons such as the mace (an iron club), morning stars (a metal ball attached to a chain and handle), flails and war hammers could be more easily used.

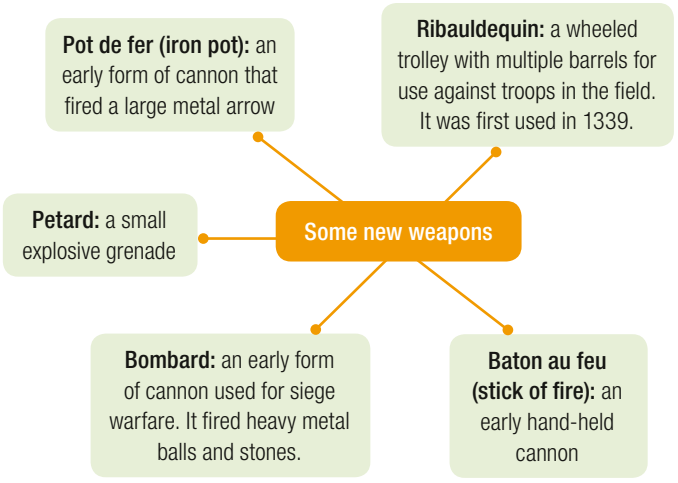
Gunpowder

Gunpowder reached Europe during the 13th or 14th centuries from China (where it was first developed some 400–500 years earlier). It was another factor that helped to end Europe's feudal system. It did so by changing how wars were fought.

It was first used effectively during the Hundred Years War between France and England. Now castle walls could be more easily broken down: sappers could blow them up or gunpowder could be used in weapons fired at them. By about 1350, forms of cannon were becoming commonplace.

The use of firearms in warfare gradually reduced the importance of knights on horseback. Early cannons could be filled with metal fragments and fired at the enemy. Early firearms also increased the distance between fighting armies. Plate armour could deflect the early 'bullets' and grapeshot, but it meant that all soldiers in battle now required armour. The increased expense of so equipping an army shifted the responsibility for this onto kings, not feudal nobles. And so the importance of knighthood began to diminish. In place of knights, new types of professional soldiers emerged who led new types of troops.

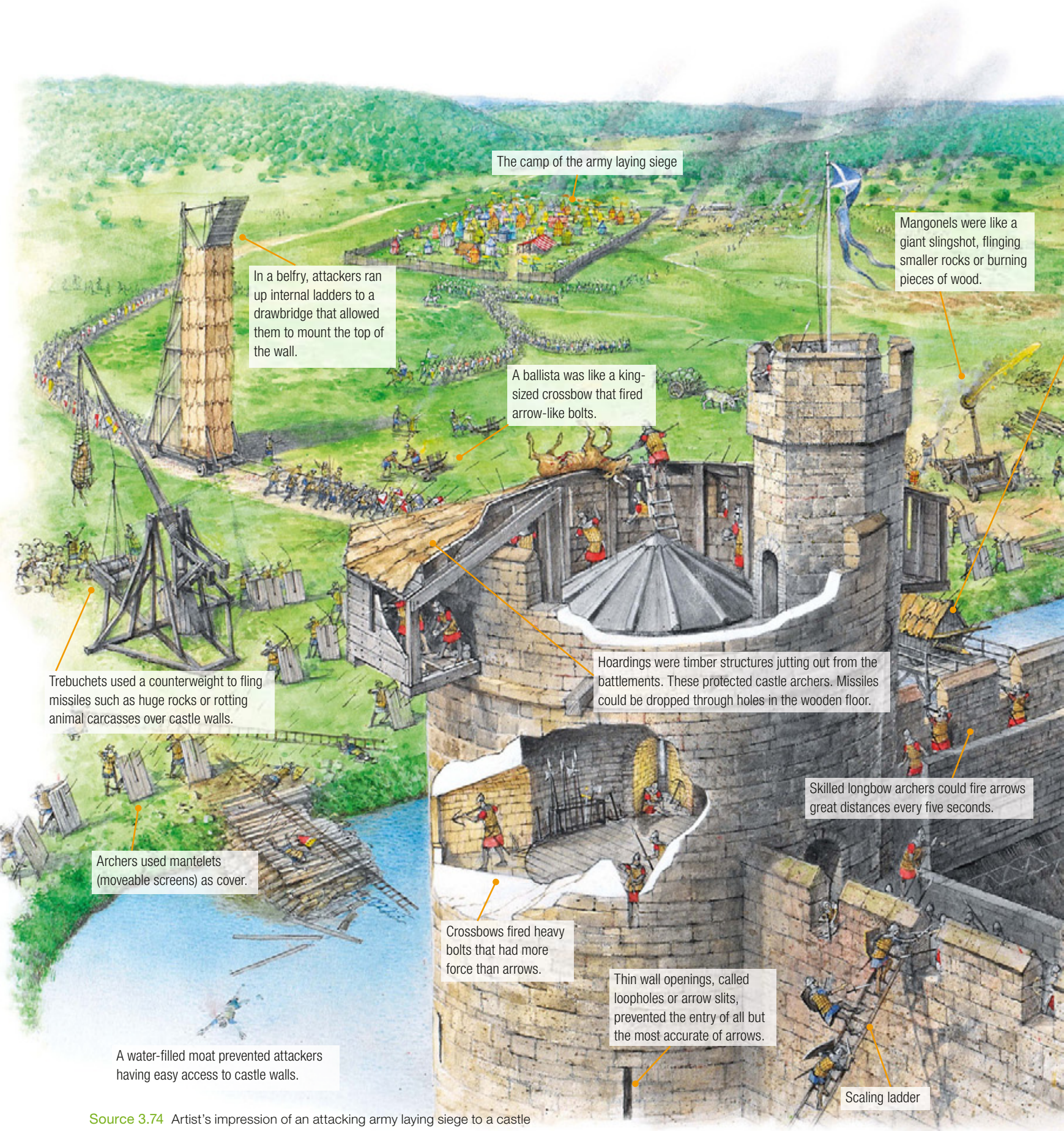
Source 3.72 A medieval fighter's full plate armour (made in the 15th century for the Count of Tyrol, Archduke Sigismund of Austria)



Source 3.73 New weapons in the age of gunpowder

Check your learning

1. Name three places in which a castle might commonly be built for security.
2. What two main purposes did castles serve in feudal Europe?
3. Explain briefly how both castle design and armour design changed over time. Where relevant, explain what aspects of each continued (even if in another form).
4. Study Source 3.74, which follows.
   a. List three ways of defending a castle under attack.
   b. List three tactics or items an attacking army might use to force the surrender of a castle.
5. Draw a flow chart to show some of the ways gunpowder changed medieval warfare, both in the short and longer term.

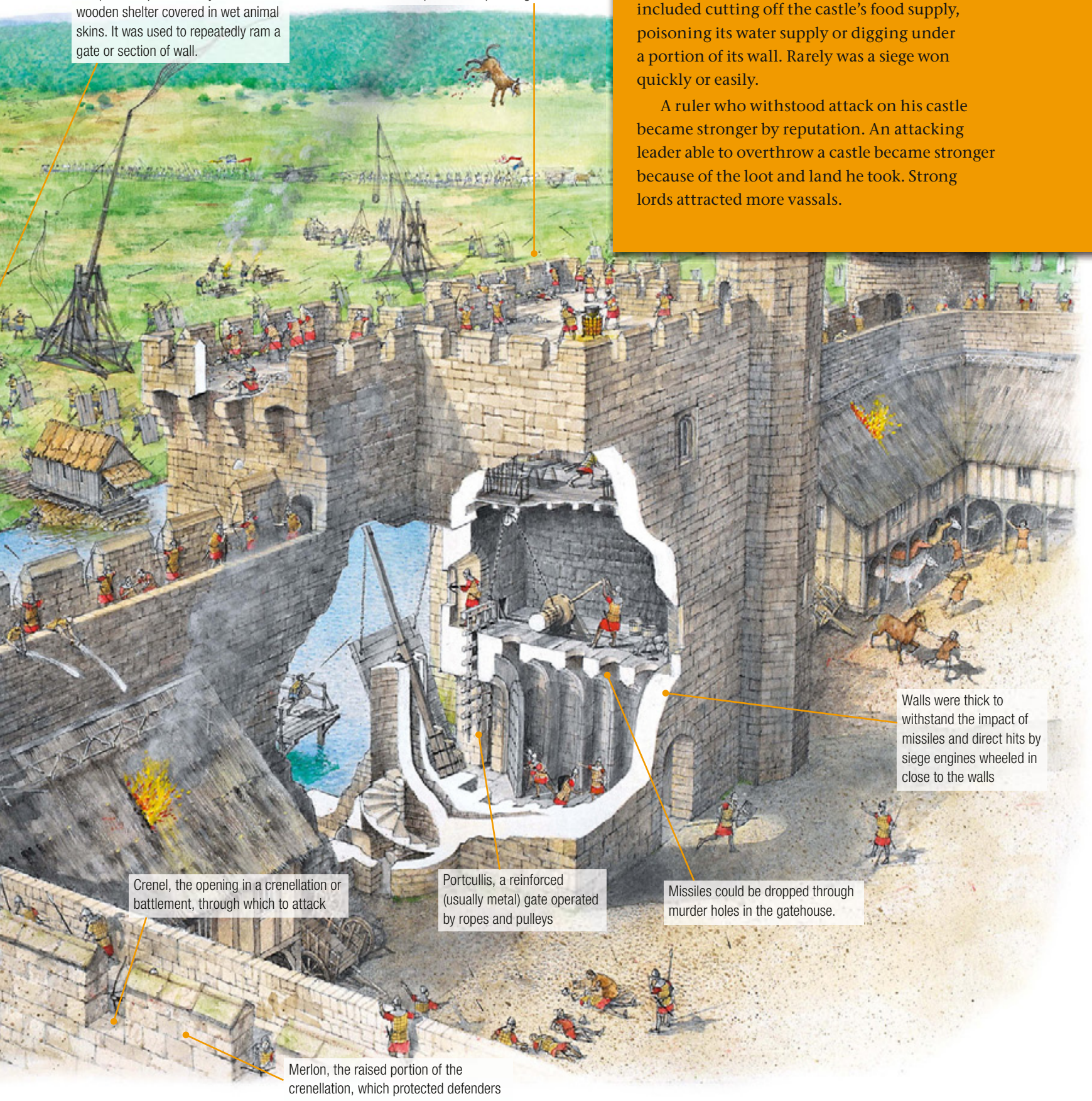


Source 3.74 Artist's impression of an attacking army laying siege to a castle

Castle siege

Besides directly attacking a castle, siege tactics included cutting off the castle's food supply, poisoning its water supply or digging under a portion of its wall. Rarely was a siege won quickly or easily.

A ruler who withstood attack on his castle became stronger by reputation. An attacking leader able to overthrow a castle became stronger because of the loot and land he took. Strong lords attracted more vassals.



bigideas

3.3 How and why did society in medieval Europe change?

Remember

1 Write short definitions in your own words for the following terms:

For Option A (towns, cities and commerce): charter, guild

For Option B (crime and punishment): heresy, treason

For Option C (military and defence): men-at-arms, heraldry.

2 In your own words, define the word 'barbarian' as the Romans used the term.

3 What religious institution played a dominant role in most people's lives in medieval Europe?

4 Who was known as the Holy Roman Emperor?

Understand

5 Use a concept map to explain why the 14th century was such a period of change in medieval Europe. Include in it some of aspects you have covered in your option study for this section. Think, too, about how some of the changes you list impacted on existing systems such as feudalism, manorialism and Christianity.

6 Explain how *each* of the following helped to bring about change in medieval Europe: magnetic compass, astrolabe, printing press.

Apply

7 In your notebook, complete the following table, which asks you to identify modern roles in Australian society with roles in medieval Europe under feudalism (Source 3.22 will come in handy as a reference for you).

Medieval Europe	Australia today
Lord	
Monk	
Peasant	
Steward	
Hayward	
Reeve	

8 Is there any relationship today in Australia that is similar to the relationship between a lord and a vassal? Explain your answer, giving examples.

9 What do you think is the most significant change that has occurred in your community in the last five years? Explain why you think it occurred and how you think it will affect your community in the short and longer term.

Analyse

10 For the option you studied in this section, identify:

- **a** in what way/s it saw change introduced for the society of medieval Europe
- **b** what aspects of it (directly or indirectly) have continued through to the present day
- **c** the causes and consequences of any changes (consider any impacts on such things as daily life, social structure, the environment, belief system and so on). Present your findings in a form of your choice (such as an essay, a role-play discussion with others, an extended concept map, a visual display, a series of storyboards and so on).

Evaluate

11 In a class brainstorm, predict what might have happened in the society of medieval Europe if factors causing change in your optional study had not happened.

12 In small groups, discuss the concept of knighthood today. How is it similar to medieval knighthood and how is it different? Do you think knighthood is still relevant today? You should provide reasons and examples to support your answers.

13 Why do you think the Church was so powerful in medieval Europe? In what ways did the Church hold power over people, both physically and mentally?

14 Look at Source 3.74 and note the various protective elements of the castle and the ways in which the castle is being attacked. With a partner, complete the following table to assess the defences of the castle and determine the effectiveness of those features, as well as how they could be improved to combat the weapons of the enemy.

For bonus points, add another column to this table and suggest how the enemy's weapons could also be improved to be more effective against the design of the castle.

Feature	Assessment of effectiveness	Suggested improvements
Portcullis		
Drawbridge		
Murder holes		
Crenels		
Moat		

Create

15 Complete one of these activities:

Option A: Role-play *either* a discussion at a guildhall meeting about a topic of concern (choose a trade or occupation) *or* the representations senior townspeople make to a feudal lord for more independence for their town.

Option B: Scenes such as those shown in Source 3.65 were everyday practice for a long time in medieval Europe. Discuss with a partner to what extent you agree that aspects of such behaviour still continue in some parts of the world today.

Option C: Write a dialogue (based around some aspect of the attack shown, and medieval warfare) between two or more characters in Source 3.74.

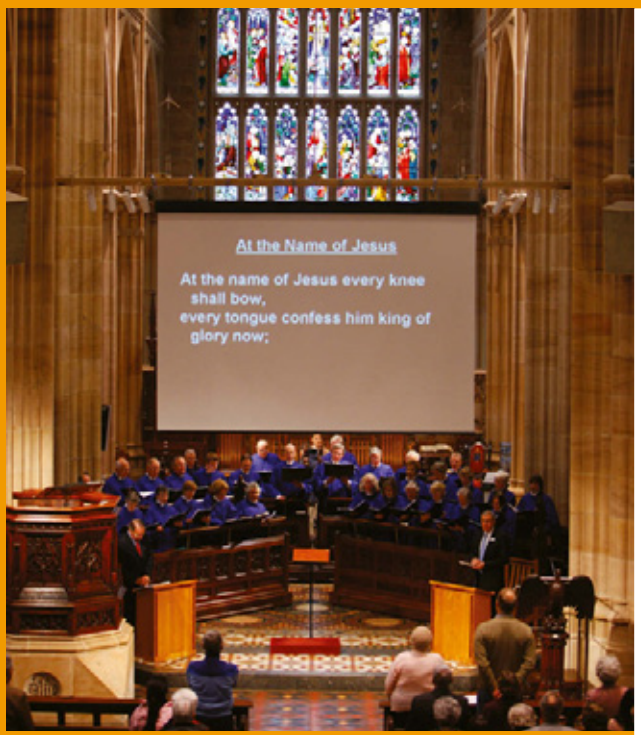
16 Design and create a coat of arms for your own family similar to those shown in the banners below. Select colours and symbols that you think say something about your family's ancestors and achievements (you may want to conduct some research first to find out what the various parts of a coat of arms means). Most importantly, come up with an appropriate motto (a saying that you think has some significance for your family).

When you have completed the coat of arms, label each feature, explaining its meaning and significance.

connectingideas

Medieval Europe

Heart of the Western world

You will have seen or heard references in the media and elsewhere to terms such as 'the Western world', 'the West' and 'Westernisation'. Australia, for instance, is a Western country with a Western culture, as is the United States, Canada, Norway and so on. All Western countries share a cultural heritage and historical traditions that originated in western Europe. That heritage draws on the culture and traditions of medieval Europe and ancient Rome (of which it was once a part). In turn, ancient Rome had, before that, absorbed much from ancient Greece.

Source 3.75 This church service, held within St Andrew's Cathedral in Sydney, continues a tradition set in medieval Europe.

Christianity

Christianity dominated the history of medieval Europe. Its teachings influenced behaviours, value systems and ideas about justice and punishment. Its workers—mostly monks—preserved a great many ancient and medieval documents. Its traditions greatly influenced art, architecture and music.

Australia's first white settlers were from Britain, bringing their 'western Europe' traditions and beliefs with them. Since that time, Australia has changed. It now has a multicultural population and growing links with Asia.

1 What debt does Australia's classification as a Christian nation owe to medieval Europe?

2 As a class, discuss why Australia today is an example of continuity and change in respect to its status as a 'Western' country.

3 Locate an example, in each case, of how Christianity has influenced architecture, public behaviour, art and music in this country.

Source 3.76 The scientific (Latin) name of the koala is *Phascolarctos cinereus*.

Source 3.77 A meeting of Australia's upper house of parliament—the House of Representatives

Language

Latin was the official language of the ancient Romans. It became the language used in medieval Europe for official documents and Church services. Until recent times, it was still the language commonly used in many Roman Catholic Church services. Latin is the basis of a great many English words we use today. Scientists use Latin words to classify areas of their study.

1 Why might it benefit students in Australia today who want to become botanists if they have studied Latin?

2 The origin of English words in a dictionary is identified at the end of each entry. Find ten English words with Latin origins.

3 The Viking invaders who later settled in parts of medieval Europe introduced their language: Norse. English words such as 'window', 'egg', 'kick' and 'ugly' have Norse origins. Use a dictionary to find five more.

System of government

Meetings of parliament in Australia can be traced back to men who advised the king, later called the Great Council. England's King John, in signing the *Magna Carta* in 1215, promised that the law would be important in the country's rule, not just the will of the monarch. This led to meetings of both nobles and ordinary people to talk about important matters.

The Great Council was expanded to include more ordinary people. In 1350, when it became known as a parliament, it was broken into two groups. The nobles (lords) met in one place and the ordinary people (commoners) in another. This arrangement later developed into Britain's upper house of parliament, the House of Lords, and its lower house, the House of Commons. Australia inherited this governing system.

1 The word 'parliament' comes from the French word *parler*, meaning 'to talk'. How relevant do you think this word is to both the governing system in Australia and England's medieval arrangements?

2 Think back to what you have learned about the history of medieval Britain. Why might its governing body be called a parliament, based on a French word?

3 What important principle did the *Magna Carta* set out that allowed ordinary people to have more say in the rule of their country?

Q Today, Australia's debt to the legacy of medieval Europe is still strong, though weakening in some areas. Decide, through group discussion, what sort of country you think Australia will be in 100 years time. How do you think it will have changed? To what extent do you think it will then be defined as a Western society?

depth study

The Asia–Pacific world

During 8th and 9th centuries, territorial expansion, empire-building and military superiority resulted in a number of different societies and civilisations in the Asia–Pacific region rising to prominence. Over time, a combination of internal and external factors, such as conflicts over resources, changing beliefs, environmental pressures, and attacks from outside their borders, caused many of these civilisations to change. Some disappeared forever, while others adapted in new ways in order to survive and thrive.

In this depth study you will have the choice of studying ONE of the following options:

- The Khmer Empire
- Japan under the shoguns
- The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [obook only].

As shown in Source B1, the Asia–Pacific world consisted of the broad triangle of Polynesian islands in the east-central and southern Pacific Ocean; the vast Khmer Empire, which at its peak controlled much of South-East Asia; and the islands of Japan. The stone temples of the Khmer Empire, the rich traditional cultural beliefs of the Pacific Islanders and the religious and cultural traditions of Shinto and Bushido were legacies of these ancient societies.

Source B1 The Asia–Pacific world

THE ASIA-PACIFIC WORLD
PACIFIC OCEAN
THE AMERICAS
Hawaiian Islands
Line Islands
Tuvalu
Cook Islands
Samoa
Society Islands
Tonga
Tahiti
Cook Islands
POLYNESIA
Pitcairn
Easter Island (Rapa Nui)
New Zealand
KEY
The Khmer Empire
The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific
Japan under the shoguns

The Asia–Pacific world: a brief overview

The ancient societies of the Asia–Pacific world were rich in cultural diversity but they were not widely known to the rest of the world until the Age of Exploration in the 15th century. The following pages are designed to:

- help you to understand some broad patterns of historical change
- make links to—and between—the depth studies
- consolidate your understanding of the period.

How did societies change from the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?

The Khmer Empire

- The Khmer Empire was built on the cultivation and export of rice. An extensive irrigation system, developed as a response to favourable climatic and environmental factors, ensured good harvests for many years.
- The urban settlements that developed at Angkor, on the flood plain of the Tonle Sap Lake, were the largest pre-industrial cities in world history.
- The most obvious sign of the wealth and power of the Khmer Empire are the many magnificent temples built to worship and thank the gods who were believed to be responsible for the prosperity of the Khmer people.
- A number of factors such as war, changing weather patterns and even plague may have contributed to the decline of the power and prosperity of the Khmer Empire by the 15th century CE.

Japan under the shoguns

- During the 3rd and 4th centuries, migration from Korea and China established the basis of ancient Japanese society, but people had lived in Japan from around 30 000 BCE.
- Clans developed and fought each other to gain land and power. Symbolic and spiritual power rested with the emperor who was believed to be descended from the sun goddess.
- A warrior class known as *samurai* arose during the 10th and 11th centuries. In 1192, the first *shogun* (military leader), Yoritomo, came to power. The shoguns ruled Japan for over 700 years.
- In the late 15th century, **feudalism** was established. The relative peace of the Tokugawa period (1600–1867) saw an end to Japan's feudal era.

The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [obook only]

- Between 3000–1000 BCE, Polynesians began migrating from modern-day Taiwan. They travelled in double-hulled canoes using their knowledge of the wind, stars, tides and bird migration patterns. By 1000 BCE, the settlement of Easter Island and New Zealand completed the area known as the Polynesian triangle.
- During the 15th century, Europeans exploring the Pacific region found small, isolated island communities based on agriculture and fishing that had existed since the Stone Age.
- Because of the dominance of the West, traditional Pacific island societies had to cope with, and adapt to, different values and beliefs, and the introduction of new diseases in order to survive.

Check your learning

1. What factors contributed to the rise of the Khmer Empire?
2. What factors contributed to the decline of the Khmer Empire by the 15th century?
3. How long do historians believe people have been living on the islands that now make up Japan?
4. What were members of the Japanese warrior class referred to as? When did this class become a part of Japanese society?
5. When did Polynesians begin migrating across the Pacific? Where do historians believe they set out from?
6. What were some of the changes that took place in Polynesian societies as a result of contact with the West?

What were the key religious beliefs and how did they influence society?

The Khmer Empire

- People across the Khmer Empire followed the Indian religions of Hinduism and Buddhism.
- Between 800 CE and 1200 CE temples were built to honour Hindu gods. Khmer kings were also regarded as living gods.
- In late 13th century, King Indravarman II adopted the beliefs of Theravada Buddhism, which did not recognise the king as a living god. This reduced the number of temples built to honour the king, and changed the way in which society was organised.

Japan under the shoguns

- The Indigenous people of Japan worshipped nature and *kami* (divine spirit). These beliefs developed into the Shinto religion and Shinto shrines were built across Japan. The emperor of Japan was worshipped as a god.
- In the 5th century, Buddhism was introduced to Japan from China. Shintoism and Buddhism coexisted. In the 8th century, Buddhism became the state religion and Buddhist temples were constructed.
- Between the 6th and 9th centuries, Confucianism and Taoism were introduced from China. Confucianism had a positive impact on ethics and politics. Taoism introduced the calendar and fortune-telling to Japan.
- Christianity was brought to Japan in 1549 by Christian missionaries such as Francis Xavier. At first Christianity was tolerated but later it was banned. It reappeared in 1859 and promoted social reform and justice.

The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [obook only]

- Each community and family in ancient Polynesia societies had its own gods.
- Priests performed rituals, such as human sacrifice, to ensure the protection of the gods.
- Western Christian missionaries transformed all aspects of Polynesian culture to make it more 'civilised', and in many cases destroyed traditional cultures.

Check your learning

1. Which belief system did the people of the Khmer Empire and Japanese society both adopt?
2. What role did religion play in the three societies discussed on this page?
3. What were the effects of introducing Christianity to shogunate Japan and Polynesia?

What were the causes and effects of contacts between societies?

The Khmer Empire

- The Angkor region was a centre for trade between India and China before the 4th century CE.
- The Hindu and Buddhist religions spread from India and were adopted by early Khmer kings. Society was organised around these religions. Temples were built to honour Hindu gods and the king (who was also regarded as a god). In the late 13th century, Theravada Buddhism from India was introduced and the king was no longer worshipped as a god. The construction of temples ceased.
- Much of the history of the Khmer Empire has been lost, so the writings of Zhou Daguan, a Chinese ambassador who lived with the Khmer people during the 13th century, are very valuable in providing information about how people lived.
- During the period 1000–1200 CE, expansion and warfare resulted in the Khmer Empire reaching its peak. After this time, neighbouring societies strengthened their armies and became more of a threat to the empire.

Japan under the shoguns

- Japan's history is one of migration and settlement. Its original inhabitants came from the Korean peninsula, Siberia and areas of present-day China and South-East Asia from around the 3rd century.
- In 607 CE, Prince Shotuku (574–622 CE) sent representatives into China to study their culture . They returned with a knowledge of Chinese language, Buddhism, art and political ideas. These ideas became the basis of Japan's first constitution.
- Mongol invasions in the 13th century led to a rise in Zen Buddhism and forced the *samurai* to examine their methods of fighting. This strengthened Japan's military culture.
- During the Tokugawa (Edo) period (1600–1867), foreigners were expelled from Japan and a policy of isolation was enforced. The Dutch eventually gained trading privileges and brought knowledge of European advances in medicine and technology. Japan entered a period of peace but was separated from the rest of the world until 1853 when the Americans (under the command of Commodore Perry) arrived in Japan. In 1867, the *shogun* returned power to the emperor.

The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [obook only]

- Polynesian societies were fragmented and communities developed in isolation from each other.
- From the late 14th century, European explorers began mapping the Pacific region. They introduced Christianity, new trading systems and diseases to the traditional island communities. Polynesians had to adapt quickly in order to survive.

Check your learning

1 What forms of contact were there between:
   - The Khmer Empire and India?
   - Japan and China?

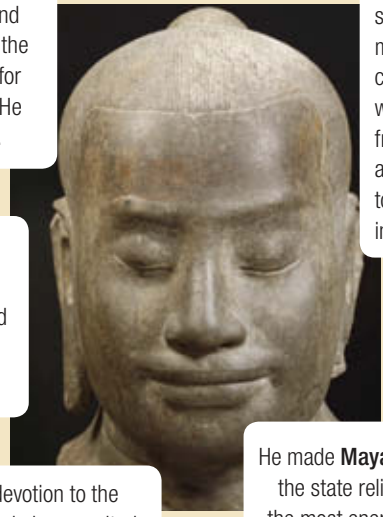
2 Both the Khmer Empire and Japan under the rule of the shoguns tried to limit contact with the outside world at different stages in their history. Choose ONE of these societies and decide whether this policy was successful in assisting in the development and security of the society.

3 There is evidence to suggest that the kumara (sweet potato) was grown and eaten by Polynesians before their contact with Europeans. Conduct some research on how this native plant of South America may have found its way to the Pacific Islands.

What significant people, groups or ideas from this period influenced the rest of the world?

Jayavarman VII was born in 1120 and ruled as king of the Khmer Empire for over 30 years. He died in 1215.

He was a successful military commander whose campaigns freed his people and helped them to regain their independence.



During his long rule, the Khmer Empire expanded to its greatest extent.

He made **Mayahana Buddhism** the state religion and began the most energetic program of temple building. He established a new capital at Angkor Thom.

His apparent devotion to the needs of his people has resulted in him being regarded as a hero in Khmer history.

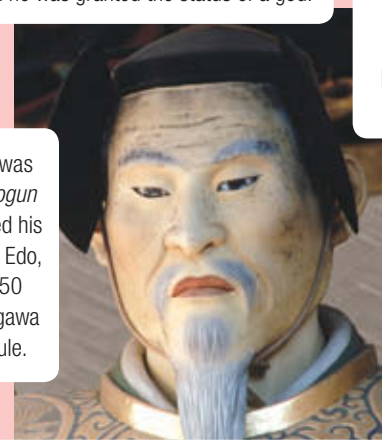
The Khmer Empire

Jayavarman VII

c.1120–c.1220

Tokugawa Ieyasu was born in Okazaki Castle in Mikawa in 1543 and died from cancer in 1616. After his death he was granted the status of a god.

At the Battle of Sekigahara in 1600, Ieyasu defeated the supporters of the warlord Hideyori, bringing all Japan under his control.



By 1603, he was appointed *shogun* and established his government in Edo, beginning 250 years of Tokugawa Shogunate rule.

He employed the British seafarer William Adams to build ships and promoted foreign trade with England and Holland. The society created by Ieyasu eventually enabled Japan to enter the modern age.

Japan under the shoguns

Tokugawa Ieyasu

1543–1616

Hongi Hika was born near Kaikohe, in northern New Zealand in 1772. He died from a bullet wound received during tribal fighting at Whangaroa in 1828.

He befriended early Christian missionaries and helped them to introduce Christianity to the Māoris. In return, he received food and iron tools.

He was the first Māori to obtain European guns (muskets) and started the Musket Wars (a series of over 500 battles between various Māori tribes).

He travelled to England to meet King George IV and assisted in the making of a Māori dictionary to preserve the language.

The Polynesian expansion across the Pacific [obook only]

Hongi Hika

1772–1828

Check your learning

1. King Jayavarman VII is remembered in modern-day Cambodia as a national hero. Why might this be?
2. What actions taken by Tokugawa Ieyasu during his reign led to Japan being able to enter the modern age?
3. Within the warlike Māori culture, Hongi Hika gained the reputation as a great leader mainly because of his victories over other tribes. In what ways did he use the European settlers and missionaries to his own advantage?

depth study option

The Khmer Empire

(*c.* 802–*c.* 1431)

The Khmer Empire prospered and declined over a period of 500 years (c. 802–1327 CE). Fragments of its history can be found in the remains of the great temples and cities built during this period.

The Khmer **Empire** at its height included parts of modern-day Laos, Thailand, Vietnam, Mynamar (sometimes also referred to as Burma), Malaysia and Cambodia. The Empire was ruled by Kings who associated themselves closely with their gods. The first king, Jayavarman II, declared himself *Chakravartin* or 'ruler of the world' in 802 CE. The end of the period of Khmer power and prosperity may be dated to the invasion by the Thai kingdom of Ayutthaya in 1431.

The power and prosperity of the Empire was possible because of a combination of geographical features and good weather. These environmental factors were harnessed by the Khmer. They built extensive irrigation and water management systems to ensure that they could produce large amounts of rice. This meant they had significant surpluses that could be used for trade. This trade made the Khmer people prosperous and powerful.

Some of the Khmer kings exploited this wealth and power to build an extensive empire across South-East Asia. They displayed their wealth at Angkor by building great cities and temples to their gods.

Key inquiry questions

4.1 How did the Khmer Empire rise to power and what were its greatest achievements?

4.2 How was society organised during the Khmer Empire?

4.3 How and why did the Khmer Empire come to an end?

A section of wall from the Ta Prohm temple at Angkor, with overgrowth of tree roots

4

bigpicture

The Khmer Empire

Like all empires, the Khmer Empire had periods of varying power and prosperity. Often it was the personality of the king which determined the extent of the Empire's power and prosperity. Great kings like Suryavarman II (ruled 1113–1150) and Jayavarman VII (ruled 1181–c.1220) used conquests and diplomacy to extend and secure the Empire.

After the decline of the Empire, the cities of Angkor, along with many of the temples and remains of the cities, were reclaimed by the rainforest. The great temple of Angkor Wat continued to be used by the local people, but it was not until the 19th century that the ruins of the Khmer Empire were rediscovered by Europeans.

CE

790
Jayavarman II becomes king

802
Jayavarman II declares himself *Chakravartin* (ruler of the world)

877
Preah Ko temple is built—one of the first temple mountain buildings; Eastern Baray (reservoir) is also established

889
Yasovarman I establishes the capital Yasodharapura

944
Rajendravarman II becomes king; Champa (a rival kingdom to the east of Angkor, now part of Vietnam) is attacked and plundered

968
Jayavarman V becomes king; Banteay Srei, a temple built to honour the Hindu god Shiva, is constructed

1002
Civil war breaks out in Angkor

1006
Suryavarman I expands the empire through several military conquests

1066
Angkor divided as several contenders struggle for the throne

1113
Suryavarman II becomes king; Angkor Wat is built

Thai mercenaries (paid fighters) in the army of Suryavarman II

Preah Ko temple

Source 4.1 Timeline of the Khmer Empire

Detail from the Bayon Temple wall at Angkor Thom showing a battle with the Cham

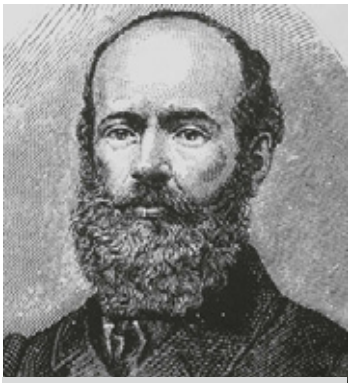
1177
The Cham (from Vietnam) defeat the Khmer, plundering and burning part of Angkor

***c.* 1200**
Angkor Thom (the Magnificent City) is established by Jayavarman VII

1243
Jayavarman VIII becomes king

1296
Chinese traveller and writer Zhou Daguan visits Angkor and records daily life in the kingdom

1431
Angkor abandoned after a further invasion by the Ayutthaya (from Thailand)

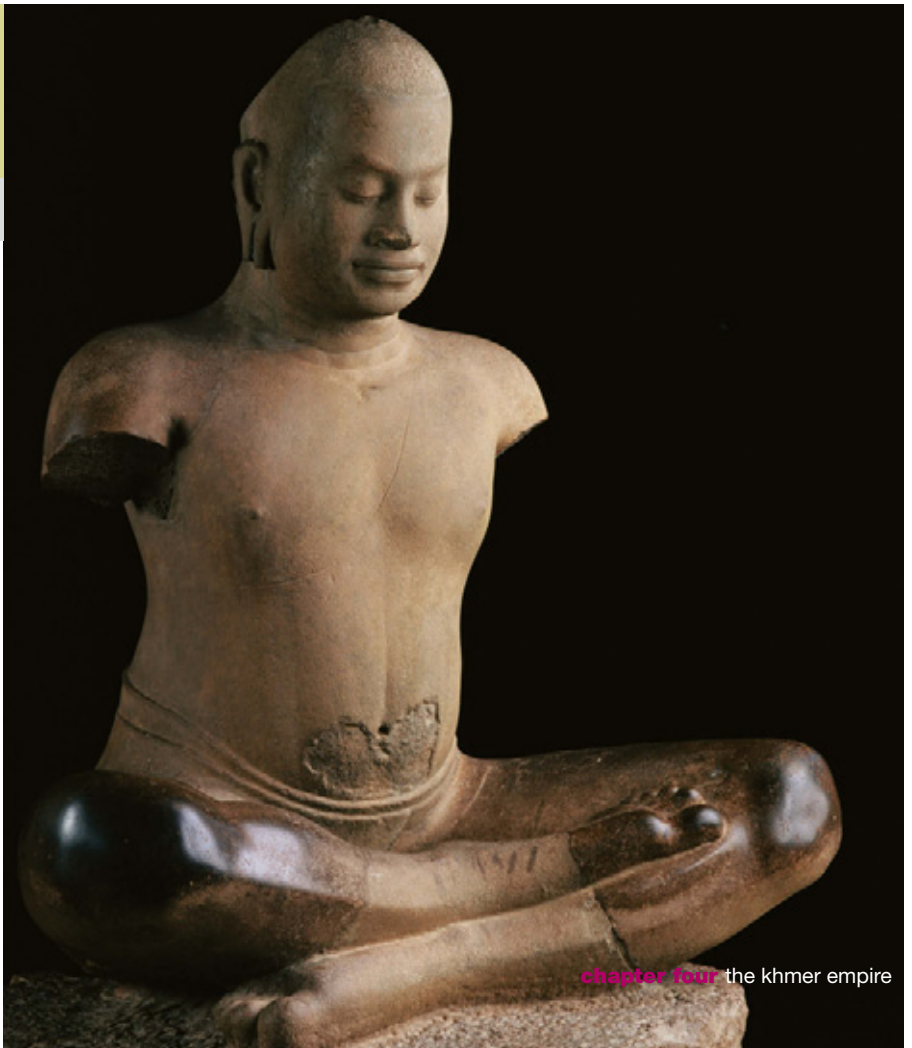


Henri Mouhot

1860
Angkor rediscovered by the French archaeologist Henri Mouhot

1181
Jayavarman VII becomes king; the Cham are defeated and expelled; the road system develops rapidly

A sculpture of Jayavarman VII



Source 4.2 An aerial view of Angkor Wat

4.1 How did the Khmer Empire rise to power and what were its greatest achievements?

Every society has features that are distinctive. These features make one society or civilisation stand apart from others. The formation of the Khmer Empire was made possible because of a combination of geographical features and environmental factors, but it took the initiative and hard work of the Khmer people to exploit these factors in order for their society to grow and become more powerful.

The exploitation and management of natural resources made the Khmer Empire both powerful and prosperous. The power of the Empire was expressed in its conquest of other civilisations. Their prosperity can be seen today in the magnificent temples that were built to honour their gods.

Source 4.3 A modern map of South-East Asia showing Cambodia and its regional neighbours

Geographical features: Tonle Sap Lake and the Mekong River

Tonle Sap Lake acted like a giant **reservoir** for the Mekong River (see Source 4.12). Settlements in Angkor would eventually be established on the north-west shore of this lake, close to the rice fields. The lake provided the growing population with a steady supply of fish, and people were able to build floating houses and villages there.

Its waters also allowed access to trade along the upper reaches of the Mekong River. Downstream, the Mekong connected the empire to the outside world via the Gulf of Thailand.

Although the river made Tonle Sap and the settlements around it accessible, that access could also be cut off if necessary. The Mekong was a good defence because of its many sand bars, changing currents and courses. Local knowledge was needed to navigate it, and that is exactly what the empire's naval forces had.

Even though successive kings moved the site of the kingdom's capital or seat of power regularly, they were all found near the fertile agricultural area of Tonle Sap. These capitals included Hariharata, Yasodharapura, Jayendanagari, Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom. Some of these were very close together—only one or two kilometres apart, as are Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom.

Source 4.4 The village of Chong Kneas on Tonle Sap Lake

Source 4.5 The village of Phtour on Tonle Sap Lake

Source 4.6 A reservoir constructed in the 11th century, known as the West Baray, Angkor

Source 4.7 A rice field in modern-day Cambodia

When the king moved the capital some distance away, he surrounded himself with a new set of courtiers (people who held key positions in his court) who were rewarded with packages of land and powerful official positions. In return, the people gave part of what they produced back to the king as taxes, and to the temples as offerings to the gods of that time.

Agriculture and water management

The Khmer people used agriculture to produce food both for survival and trade. The heart of their system was Tonle Sap Lake, which provided water for rice production. It was also the centre of the fishing industry. Even today, freshwater mangroves surround the lake, which is filled by the Mekong River during the May to October wet season. During the dry season it is a shallow lake, only one to two metres deep, but its depth increases to between nine and eleven metres during the wet season. The lakes and water systems were a significant and vital part of the empire.

Reservoirs, canals and irrigation systems

There were very few roads for trade and transport until late in the Khmer Empire's existence. Instead, it was the ability of the Khmer people to exploit, direct and control the waters of the Mekong River, and other water bodies, that lead to their economic prosperity. They established a series of reservoirs, canals and irrigation systems that ensured three or four harvests of the rice per year, when other regions could produce only one or two.

When the Mekong flooded, which it often did during the wet season, the water of Tonle Sap Lake was directed into a network of dams and tributaries so that it could be used at other times of the year. The people of the Khmer Empire created reservoirs (***barays***) fed by the surrounding rivers, which guaranteed and controlled the water flow. This in turn assured good harvests of the empire's main crop, rice. To the Khmer, the Mekong's power was god-like, and archaeological discoveries suggest that the water provided by the great river and the rains was considered sacred.

Water for decoration, drinking and transport

The water was used not only to grow rice crops but also to fill **moats** that surrounded Khmer temples and royal buildings, such as those at Angkor Wat. In addition, water was sent to **aqueducts** that supplied the growing population that had moved into the Angkor area to assist in the temple-building work and to create the city. This supply of regular water increased not only the size of local rice crops but also led to more water transport. In turn, this led to increased trade, which made the empire wealthier and enabled the kings to build even more religious monuments.

Source 4.8 A detail on a stone carving showing a market scene from the Bayon Temple

Source 4.9 Rice production continues today in Cambodia, much as it did during the Khmer Empire.

The reservoirs (*barays*) were fed water through a series of dams and channels (see Source 4.6). Often these *barays* were constructed before the creation of temple, which then became central to the water-works area. Modern archaeologists are using ground-penetrating radar to locate the channels and moats that have been covered by the jungle or have been built over by later generations.

Rice cultivation

People had developed what we recognise as rice from wild grasses; once cultivated, it became the main food of South-East Asia. The best rice crops grew in shallow, slow-moving water.

At the peak of the Khmer Empire, it is thought that farmers planted over 50 million fields of rice. As mentioned earlier, there were three or four harvests each year. The hydraulic (water) system was vital to the growth of these crops. The Angkor region could at times suffer from drought so it was vital to maintain a constant supply of water to keep the crops growing. Fish could be allowed into this water system, which meant that a plentiful supply of fresh fish was easily available in the rice-growing areas. This created a thriving **aquaculture** at Tonle Sap Lake and in the surrounding rice fields.

Historians have argued about how important the *barays* and irrigation systems were for the Khmer Empire, but certainly the crops relied on the supply of water from Tonle Sap Lake, and the water was an important part in both the daily and religious life of the Khmer people.

Check your learning

1. How did the Khmer people control the waters of the Mekong River as well as the water that fell as rain during the monsoons?
2. Why were reservoirs (*barays*) created?
3. How are modern archaeologists discovering where the *barays* and channels were built?
4. How did the building of temples and *barays* lead to the establishment of large cities?
5. When is the wet season?
6. Explain the effect of the wet season on Tonle Sap Lake.
7. Why do you think the Mekong River was important to the people of the Khmer Empire?
8. What is aquaculture and why was it important in the Khmer Empire?

Origins of the Khmer kingdoms

Before 790 CE, there were several groups of small Khmer **kingdoms** in the lower area of the Mekong River basin. Different leaders emerged because they were either great warriors or great religious leaders or both. However, their influence did not seem to last beyond their time in power.

Ancient Chinese historians often called this area of the Mekong River basin Funan, which comes from the Khmer word Phnom, meaning 'hill'. We do not know what the local people called themselves or their area. Source 4.10 shows the location of this supposed kingdom in what are now Vietnam, Cambodia and Thailand.

Source 4.10 A map of Funan in the 3rd century CE

Source 4.11 A map of Funan and what would become known as Chenla around 440 CE

Source 4.12 A map of the Khmer Empire around 960 CE

Royal dynasty of Funan

Legend has it that the royal dynasty of Funan (Khmer's first **dynasty**) was founded by an Indian ***Brahmin*** called Kaundinya and his wife, Liv Yi. Liv Yi had been the ruler in the region before Kaundinya invaded and defeated her army in battle. It is said that he agreed to live like a Khmer, accepting that descent and the right to rule came through the female side of the family. The Khmer were then living in a **matrilineal** society. This means that descent was traced through the female line and property went from mothers to daughters.

Certainly, there was evidence of the influence of Indian culture on the Khmer. India was then a highly developed society and its merchants travelled great distances to trade. They brought with them not only their goods but also their culture, philosophies and religion. This included their caste system, which ordered society into a number of social groups depending on birth. Each group had set roles and restrictions. The *Brahmins* were the highest caste.

Funan's success was due mainly to two things:

- successful agriculture based on advanced drainage systems that produced abundant quantities of rice
- the location of its main port and trading centre, Oc Eo, at the junction of several Mekong tributaries and opposite the Isthmus of Kra on the Malay Peninsula—a key centre on the trade route between China and India (see Source 4.10).

However, Oc Eo's importance began to decline in the 4th century when the Chinese developed other sea routes, via the Straits of Malacca, to new trade centres in Java. Chinese ships no longer stopped at Oc Eo. Trade therefore dwindled. At the same time as this change, new leaders emerged, and the interests and trade of the Khmer people shifted to focus on rice production further north in the Mekong basin.

In the 6th century, Funan was absorbed by a neighbouring kingdom or empire known to the Chinese as Chenla (see Source 4.11). This laid the real foundation for the Khmer Empire.

focus on ...

significance: Jayavarman I

Jayavarman I is considered the first king of a Khmer kingdom that developed in the 7th century near Tonle Sap Lake. *Jaya* means victorious and *varvan* means protector or king. Stone inscriptions record him as a great warrior who set up a new system of government and established an army of 1000 warriors. His significant achievement lay in being able to control the new kingdom for over 40 years, from 657 CE to approximately 700 CE.

Jayavarman's kingdom was in the area of what is now Kampong Thom province. Its capital lay at Sambo Prei Kuk, which he renamed Ishanapura; this now sits in the middle of modern-day Cambodia. The kingdom did not survive after his death. Chinese historians named the first Khmer Empire Chenla, and they wrote of two kingdoms: upper Chenla and lower Chenla (or land and water Chenla). It is believed that the Javanese gained control of lower Chenla and stayed there until the rise of Jayavarman II in the 9th century.

Source 4.13 A map showing part of South-East Asia, indicating the location and boundaries of the Khmer Empire at its greatest extent

Check your learning

1 Look at Source 4.11.
   - a What name did the Chinese give to the Khmer region?
   - b According to legend, who was the first leader of this region?

2 Reflect on the origins of the Khmer kingdoms.
   - a Which leader founded a Khmer kingdom in the 7th century?
   - b Where was his capital and what was it called?

3 Which group of people controlled lower Chenla until the rise of Jayavarman II?

4 Look at Source 4.10.
   - a Locate the Isthmus of Kra, the Straits of Malacca, Java and Oc Eo.
   - b From this map, describe how the changing of Chinese trade routes would have affected the people of Oc Eo and Funan.

5 Using Google Earth, locate Thoai Son District in An Giang Province in Vietnam, and then locate the site known as Oc Eo.
   - a Zoom in on the network of grid-like lines in the surrounding area. Explain what you think these are.
   - b Make other observations about the Oc Eo site and its surroundings. Suggest how these features might have affected the early Khmer settlements.

significant**individuals**

Jayavarman II

Jayavarman II is considered by many historians to be the founder and first king of the Khmer Empire. No documents exist from the time of Jayavarman II, so a lot of what we know is based on legend and suggestion from later Khmer kings. Stone inscriptions about him are from later periods. The best known of these is at the temple of Sdok Kok Thom in modern-day Thailand. This temple, dedicated to the Hindu god Shiva, was built by a prominent family. Inside the temple was a stone slab inscribed in 1052 CE with an account of the family's service to the Khmer court and kings for over two centuries. Among other things, it tells how Jayavarman II returned from Java to create the kingdom in about 790 CE. Upon his return he quickly conquered some territory halfway up the Mekong, setting up his first capital at a place called Indrapura and later moving to Hariharalaya and, finally, Amerendrapura.

By the time Jayavarman II rose to power, his kingdom was known as Kambuja, and its centre was near Tonle Sap Lake. The kingdom of Jayavarman II would become the heartland of the Khmer Empire, and its geography and climate would influence the way the empire was organised.

Source 4.14 Sdok Kok Thom, a temple in Thailand, tells us much of what we know about Jayavarman II's early rule.

The most significant thing Jayavarman II did was to have himself declared king at a special ceremony in the hills north of Angkor. At Mahendrapura, he proclaimed himself universal sovereign and established the worship of himself as god-king. At the ceremony, all previous pledges or oaths of loyalty were overturned. This ceremony took place in about 802 CE, the date used to mark the start of the Khmer Empire. Again, the evidence for this is carved on the temple at Sdok Kok Thom and another inscription found near Ba Phnom. Jayavarman II left no inscriptions himself.

Jayavarman II is believed to have died in 850 CE when his son became the next king. How new kings were selected is unknown but it was not necessarily by birth. More likely it was the man's ability as a soldier that made him suitable as a leader.

Another very significant action Jayavarman II took was to establish a system of officials and courtiers (people who serve the king in administrative roles) who were rewarded with land and political positions. This system helped maintain the empire—it was tied closely to the temples and was designed to control the workers in the rice fields.

Source 4.15 How we know about the Khmer Empire

What exists?	What hasn't been found?
Archaeological excavations and oral traditions (stories passed down by word of mouth)	Documents—although the Khmer Empire was a highly literate society, all written records have been lost or destroyed
Stone inscriptions, particularly on the temples. These were written in Sanskrit, Khmer or, in later years, Pali, the sacred language of the Theravada Buddhists.	Buildings other than the stone temples, as they were all built of wood
Stone carvings found on temple walls	Personal writings
Reports and chronicles of foreign travellers such as Zhou Daguan	Portraits or images of the early kings

1. Where is Jayavarman II thought to have come from?
2. Suggest why the act of Jayavarman II proclaiming himself as god-king would have been significant.
3. What motives prompted Jayavarman II to establish a set of officials and courtiers?
4. Explain how his actions towards his officials would have helped to maintain the empire.

Trade and warfare

Trade in rice and fish were a key part of the Khmer Empire's economy. Use of the Mekong River allowed trade both north and south of the empire. As the empire grew and developed, its trading partners grew in number as well. By around 1100, trade routes to the south Indian ports were established, and inland routes to South-East Asia were developed. The economy of the Khmer Empire became stronger and better than that of its rivals in the upper parts of the Malay region. It was probably at this time that the first contact happened between the Khmer Empire and the West, even though there are no records of it in the Western world.

Occasionally, trade with the north became difficult due to political instability. At such times, raids and wars developed with the people from the area known today as Myanmar (also known as Burma), who were attempting to control the key inland routes. An example of this can be seen in the 1160s, when trade in elephants was blocked and the Burmese did not allow access to the Angkor area.

The Khmer peoples' response was to go to war, and their temples received a lot of the plunder. This seems to indicate that the agricultural base of the economy was still strong and that the kings did not need to boost their own treasuries through warfare. Rice supplied enough wealth, so warfare might have been carried out more for the image and honour of particular kings.

Source 4.16 The Khmer Empire at its greatest extent, *c.* 1200

Warrior culture

The Khmer Empire was a warlike society. Throughout the temples, stone carvings show battles and great feats of bravery. The Khmer clashed often with the Cham, the Khmer's closest neighbours. Near the end of the empire they were also in regular disputes with the Ayutthayans, a kingdom of people in what is now Thailand. The armies used weapons such as spears, swords, bows and arrows. They are also depicted using **catapults** and elephants in battle.

Officers in the Khmer army rode horses but the majority of soldiers went into battle on foot. The Khmer were also famous as a strong naval force, defeating their enemies and throwing their opponents off the ships to be eaten by the crocodiles in the rivers and lakes.

Another aspect of this warrior culture was the development of their own martial art, *bokator.*

Source 4.17 A stone carving of a Khmer battle scene

Source 4.18 A stone carving of the Khmer army in battle

Check your learning

1. What were the major trade items of the Khmer Empire?
2. Why was trade to the north often difficult?
3. Which ports did the Khmer Empire trade with?
4. Explain how and why the Burmese interfered with Khmer trade.
5. What benefits did the Khmer Empire gain from warfare?
6. Analyse Sources 4.15 and 4.16 carefully. Make observations about the following:
   - a the dress styles of warriors
   - b anything unusual about their appearance
   - c weapons evident
   - d how animals were being used in warfare.

focus on ...

continuity and change: *bokator*

Like many Asian nations, the Khmer developed a form of martial arts that was used by its armies and the modern-day equivalent to police. It was called *bokator*, which translates to 'pounding the lion'. *Bokator* was a form of martial arts that drew its ideas from nature, copying or imitating the movements or ways of trees and animals. References to it can be seen on the walls of temples and communal villages such as Banteay Chmar (see Source 4.19). It used elbow and knee strikes, shin kicks and weapons such as bamboo staffs and short sticks.

This form of martial arts was closely linked to religious thought and was guided by its rules. The Khmer felt that the right hand came from Brahma and that the left hand was linked to Buddhism, as Buddhism taught peaceful ways, it was the right hand that should be used to strike after blocking with the left hand at least three times.

The martial arts traditions of the Khmer Empire were almost wiped out during the latter part of 1970s. Cambodia was then ruled by a communist party called the Khmer Rouge, which carried out ruthless genocide in their efforts to purge the country of unwanted people. This period in Cambodian history gave rise to the term 'the killing fields'; in fact, a movie of that name was made in 1984. Experts in the martial arts were killed, along with hundreds of thousands of others.

Yet this dramatic change did not end the martial arts tradition entirely. Khmer boxing still continues today (see Source 4.20) and is now Cambodia's national sport. People more commonly associate this sport with Thailand: Thai kick boxing. But its roots lay in the traditions of the ancient Khmer. Modern Khmer boxing involves punching and kicking, as did the ancient traditions, as well as striking one's opponent with knees and elbows.

Source 4.19 A stone carving of a Khmer *bokator* fighter

Source 4.20 Modern-day *bokator* fighters in Cambodia

Expansion of the empire

The kings who ruled after Jayavarman II continued to extend the territory of the empire. This took place mostly through fighting their neighbours, but sometimes without warfare.

Suryavarman I (1002–1050) made several military conquests. He extended the empire west into the modern Lopburi in Thailand and south to the Isthmus of Kra.

Suryavarman II (1113–1150) made further conquests west in the Mon kingdom of Haripunjaya (in modern Thailand) and in modern Myanmar (Burma), and further south in the Malay Peninsula in what is now Nakhon Si Thammarat. He also invaded parts of Champa, and in the north west as far as modern Laos.

When Jayavarman VII became king in 1181, he had fought a battle against the Cham, who had overtaken Angkor. He finally defeated them in 1203 and took much of their territory (see Source 4.16).

However, after the 12th century, it appears that the Khmer kings began to focus inwards on their kingdom, rather than on conquering territory and expanding trade routes. This allowed the surrounding nations to become stronger, placing the Khmer Empire at risk of invasion.

Temples

Temples are the last remaining evidence of the great Khmer Empire. Modern Cambodian people are very proud of their Khmer heritage—at the centre of the Cambodian flag is an image of Angkor Wat. Despite being the biggest, Angkor Wat is not the only temple built during the time of the Khmer Empire. There are, in fact, hundreds of temples in the area north and east of modern-day Siem Reap, particularly in the Tonle Sap Lake area.

The Khmer temples were dedicated to one or both of the two Hindu gods, Shiva and Vishnu, or to the sect of **Mahayana Buddhism**. At the same time, they recognised the king as a god-king (*devaraja)*. The temples that can still be found are thought to be only some of the many that once covered the empire.

Source 4.21 Angkor Wat temple

examining**evidence**

Angkor Wat

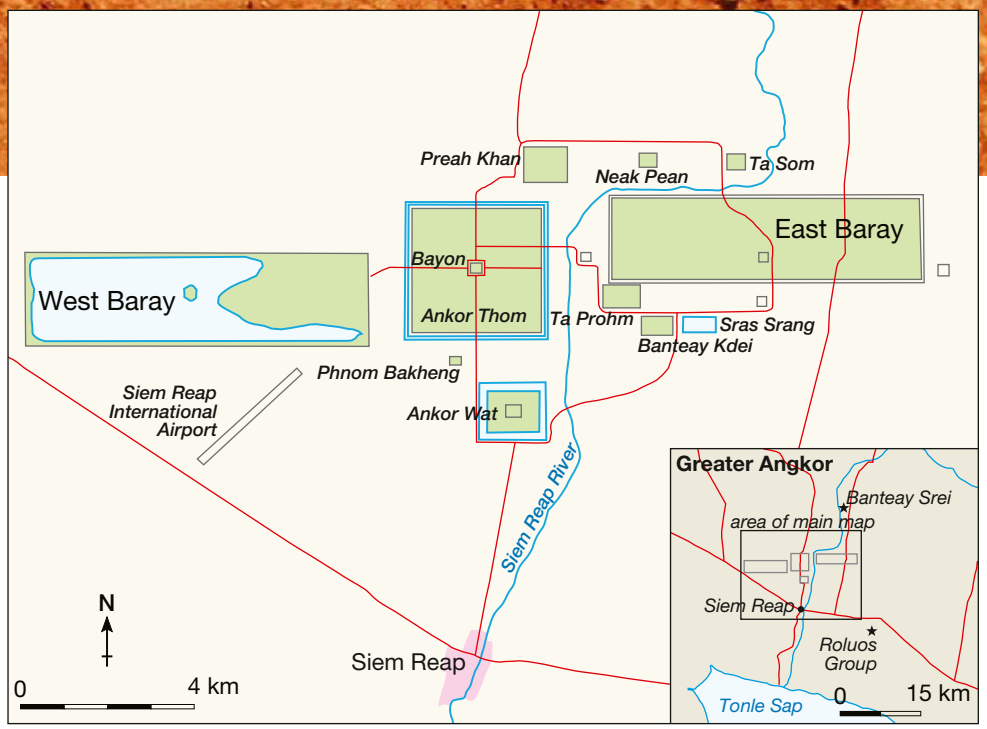
Angkor Wat (which means 'city temple') is probably the Khmer Empire's most significant and lasting achievement. Many historians believe it to be the masterpiece among the Khmer temples. It was created at the peak of Khmer architecture, during the kingship of Suryavarman II in the first half of the 12th century. Suryavarman II was a great king and conqueror, according to his own inscriptions. He was devoted to the Hindu god, Vishnu, and it was this belief that influenced Angkor Wat's design.

Source 4.22 An aerial view of Angkor Wat

The site of the temple, south-west of Yasodharapura, may have been selected so that water could be diverted to it from the Siem Reap canal. Angkor Wat covers roughly 200 hectares. The rectangular area was surrounded by a wide moat from which residents could draw water. It was built as a temple 'mountain', with three terraces leading to the top of a pyramid. It is built almost entirely of sandstone, with laterite used only in hidden parts and in the outer wall.

Angkor Wat is filled throughout with decorations and stone carvings that were added once the building was complete. There are many images of gods (*devatas*) and nymphs (*apsaras*), as well as many other figures. The walls and columns are decorated with leaves, rosettes and pendants, while at the end are the crocodiles (or, in some cases, dragons). There are also mythological and historical scenes throughout the temple.

Source 4.23 A detail of a decoration showing the myth of 'The Churning of the Sea of Milk', Angkor Wat



Source 4.24 The location of some key temple complexes in Angkor

focus on ...

contestability: why was Angkor Wat built?

Historians contest whether Angkor Wat was built as just a temple, a tomb, an observatory or as all three.

First, the temple faced west, unlike other temples in the area, which usually faced east. This fact might indicate that it had a different purpose. Also, its stone carvings progress in an anticlockwise direction instead of the more usual clockwise. This anticlockwise direction was associated with Brahmin funeral rituals in Khmer culture. Finally, a container was found in the central tower that may have been used to store the remains of the god-king. For these reasons, some experts say that Suryavarman II intended Angkor Wat to be his tomb.

However, the temple clearly also honours Vishnu, and the narratives in its stone carvings tell the story of the king's reign, often symbolised as struggles between Vishnu and Krishna. Angkor Wat was built in the same overall style and pattern of other Khmer temples. Some experts say the fact that the temple faces west is to do with Vishnu, who is associated with the west.

Finally, there is the argument that Angkor Wat was built as an observatory. If you stand at its western gate on the summer solstice before dawn, for example, you will see the sun rise directly over Angkor Wat's central tower. In addition, some archaeologists have taken careful measurements of the temple city and found that the most common measurements relate to things like the exact length of the solar year. Moreover, Suryavarman's name means 'protector (shield) of the sun'.

In the late 13th century, Angkor Wat ceased to be dedicated to the Hindu gods and became a Theravada Buddhist site.

Check your learning

1. During which king's reign was Angkor Wat built?
2. How did Angkor Wat differ from most other Khmer temples?
3. How were stories about the king's reign told in the temple carvings?
4. What is a mausoleum? Conduct some research to find out the origins of this word.
5. Why was Angkor Wat called a temple mountain?
6. 'Historians contest whether Angkor Wat was built as just a temple, a tomb, an observatory or as all three.' In your own words, describe the evidence to support each of these claims? Which do you think is most convincing?
7. Why do you think that Angkor Wat could be both a temple and an observatory?

bigideas

4.1 How did the Khmer Empire rise to power and what were its greatest achievements?

Remember

1 What was the name of the Khmer martial art and what does this name mean?

2 In what way was this Khmer martial art linked to:
- **a** nature and the environment
- **b** religion?

3 What is a *baray*? Why were *barays* so important for the Khmer Empire?

4 Why was Jayavarman II an important leader of the Khmer people?

5 Look at Source 4.1. How many years elapsed between Jayavarman II's founding of the Khmer Empire and the fall of Angkor?

Understand

6 What do you think was the most important crop for the Khmer people? What evidence did you use to reach this decision?

Apply

7 Look at Sources 4.17 and 4.18.
- **a** Based on these carvings, what types of weapons were commonly used by Khmer warriors in battle?
- **b** List the names of at least two rival civilisations that the Khmer may be shown going to war with.
- **c** What animals can you see being used in war? Why do you think they were used?

8 In what ways do you think the Khmer people's ability to direct, control and store water led to its economic prosperity and power? Use the labels at right to complete the cause-and-effect flowchart in your notebook:

Tonle Sap Lake provides fresh drinking water, fish and water for crops, but only during the wet season.

↓

[ ]

Barays are constructed so that water can be stored during the wet season.

↓

[ ]

Larger numbers of people in Angkor results in a greater workforce to build temples, and brings more trade to the area.

↓

[ ]

A series of canals and irrigation systems are established so that stored water can be used during the dry season.

↓

[ ]

Increased supplies of rice leads to population increases and movement of people to Angkor.

↓

[ ]

Constant water supply allows for three to four harvests per year, when other regions can only produce one or two.

↓

Increased trade makes the empire wealthy and powerful, and in turn increases the king's ability to build more temples.

9 Use Sources 4.3 and 4.12 to complete the tasks below:

a In your notebook, list the names of the states/civilisation that bordered the Khmer Empire and the countries that border Cambodia today.

Name of country/ civilisation surrounding the Khmer Empire	Name of country surrounding Cambodia

b Would having so many states/civilisations sharing the region have made it difficult for the Khmer kings to maintain the empire? Why?

Analyse

10 Look at the national flag of Cambodia, below. What temple appears on it? Why do you think this symbol was chosen?

11 Why was the temple of Angkor Wat built? Who was it built by?

12 Were there other temples built during the Khmer Empire? Give one example, together with the name of the king who commissioned it.

Evaluate

13 What were the main materials used to build many of the temples across Angkor?

14 Using information in this book and material you find online, select one temple and prepare a tourist brochure or poster that tells visitors:

- when it was built and who built it
- why it is an interesting and important site to visit.

Create

15 You have been asked by a Cambodian tour company to create a short video (or PowerPoint) presentation for its customers planning a visit to Angkor. Plan your presentation by first creating a list of bullet points of important/interesting facts for tourists. Next, write a script of your tour presentation, providing information on how people lived at the time of the Khmer Empire. Include photographs (even video) of present-day Cambodia to show what daily life was like. When you have finished, show your work to the class.

Source 4.25 A stone carving showing female dancers, Angkor Wat

4.2 How was society organised during the Khmer Empire?

Different societies develop different ways of organising their government and influencing the daily lives of their population. Geography and climate are major influences on resources, on potential trading partners and on who your neighbours and enemies might be.

The Khmer Empire was centred on a great low density city that spread at least 1000 square kilometres across the flood plain of the Tonle Sap Lake and beyond. The city population is estimated at about 750 000 people. This was the largest pre-industrial city in human history.

Satellite mapping of this area has shown clusters of house mounds and ponds around temples and shrines. The Chinese diplomat Zhou Daguan suggested that three families were able to be supported by each pond. The families planted rice and raised fish as the staples of their diet. The temples were the focus of their work and worship. This was the general pattern across the landscape.

Khmer social structure

Khmer society, like many older cultures, was hierarchical. This means that everyone had their place and was looked down upon or looked up to depending on who they were.

Khmer society was strictly based around the king and the temples. We have already seen that this social structure (after the rule of Jayavarman II) was closely tied into a regard for the ruler as a god-king (*devaraja*).

Political and economic decisions, and actions taken, were all based around the village temple. The local aristocracy administered their land and their resources through these village temples, often managing the land in the temple's name. The temple collected most of the produce of the land and acted as a storehouse. This economic power then reflected on the aristocracy who had made the initial donation.

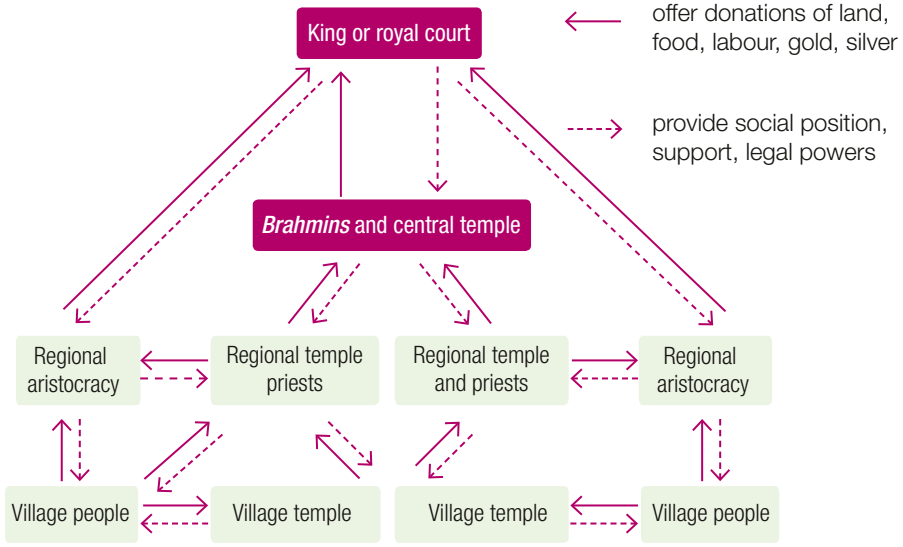
These village temples, in turn, then owed allegiance to regional temples and, ultimately, to a greater or central temple linked to the king and the court (see Source 4.26).

The god-king

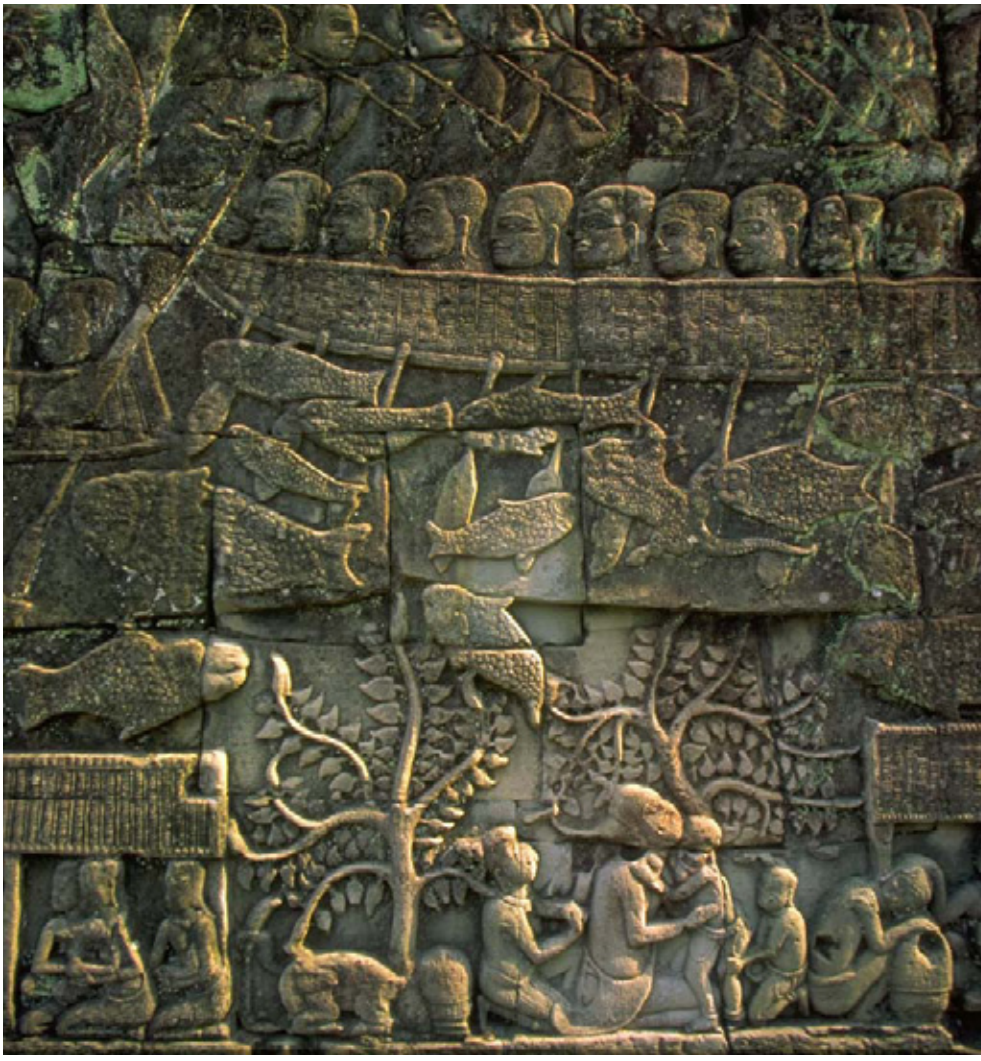
Like the pharaohs of ancient Egypt, the Khmer rulers were believed to have the powers of both gods and kings. They were the source of all legal and religious power. The nobility and military leaders swore an oath of loyalty to the king. There was the threat of eternal punishment if they broke this oath.

The king was viewed as the main force behind the creation of public buildings and works. These were carried out to guarantee the prosperity of the country and to show the power of the king and the empire. Temples were generally dedicated to Hindu gods, such as Vishnu, and it was good for the king's image if he was associated with these gods.

The kings were seen as Hindu gods on earth, full of life, energy and creativity. While the king controlled the temples, the nobility and his people, he was still expected to respect his people and their social positions, and to acknowledge the local powers within his realm.



Source 4.26 Khmer social and political structure



Source 4.27 A depiction of Khmer society, in a stone carving at the Bayon Temple

Nobility and the royal court

Much of what we know about the nobility or aristocracy and the court of the Khmer Empire comes from the writing of Zhou Daguan, a 13th-century Chinese diplomat who visited the empire and wrote down many of his observations.

Source 4.28

> *The royal palace ... face[s] east ... The tiles of the main building are made of lead; all the other tiles are made of yellow clay. The beams and pillars are huge, and are all carved and painted with images of the Buddah. The rooms are really quite grand-looking, [with] long corridors and complicated walkways ... In the place for doing official business there is a gold window, with rectangular pillars to the left and right of the crosspieces. About forty or fifty mirrors are arrayed on either side of the upper part of the window; the lower part is made of images of elephants.*
>
> Zhou Daguan, *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and its People*, translated by Peter Harris, Silkworm Books, 2007, p. 49

Source 4.29 A statue of a female figure at Angkor showing clothing and headgear typical of the period

Source 4.30

> *When serving wine they do so with a pewter pot, though poor people use a clay jug. In the great houses and wealthy homes, silver or even gold is used for everything. In the palace they often use receptacles of gold, different from the others in style and shape ... On the ground they lay out grass mats from Mingzhou, or rattan matting, or the pelts of tigers, leopards, muntjaks, deer and so on. Lately people have started using low tables, about a foot high ... At night there are a lot of mosquitoes, so they use cloth nets. In the king's quarters the nets are made of fine silk with gold filigree work, all of them the gifts of seafaring merchants.*
>
> Zhou Daguan, *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and its People*, translated by Peter Harris, Silkworm Books, 2007, p. 77

Monks and the temples

Priesthood in Angkor was hereditary. This means that a person had to inherit the role. Priests, or *Brahmins*, were an elite class who lived very comfortably and were separated from the general population. Their power and position were great because they were linked through the temple to the king. The *Brahmins* came to the region well before the time of the Khmer Empire, and they retained their power and position until **Theravada Buddhism** spread throughout the Empire. This new belief system allowed any person to become a monk.

Peasants

Some evidence about the lives of ordinary Khmer peasants has come from carvings on temples. The largest sector of the population of the Khmer Empire must have been the farmers or peasants who worked for the aristocrats or for the temples. Temple inscriptions refer only to large landowners or aristocrats, so we do not know if there were small landowners or not. We do know that the general population had to work for the temples or aristocrats for at least part of their working life.

Women

We saw earlier that the Khmer were originally a matrilineal society (that is, a society that traces ancestors and decendants through the women). Zhou Daguan commented on the strength and position of Khmer women, and their social freedoms. He observed that they could inherit land and property and that some held political posts, including positions as judges. The king's personal bodyguards were women, for instance, as it was believed that women were more trustworthy and loyal.

The wife of King Jayavarman VII, Queen Indira Devi, was a teacher and scholar. In fact, several inscriptions on buildings from this king's rule refer to her as the king's chief teacher.

focus on ...

contestability: slaves

Historians debate some aspects of who were the slaves in Khmer society. One group portrayed in the inscriptions were clearly slaves: those captured as prisoners during war, together with those Khmer people who could not pay money they owed to the aristocrats, temple priests or the king.

The category of slaves that historians contest is that of the 'temple slaves'. Some argue these were not slaves at all, but servants who worked in the temple. Others contend that they were slaves only in the sense that Khmer priests were also slaves; priests were called 'slaves only to the gods'.

Source 4.32 The simple home of an ordinary family in today's Cambodia. Its construction matches Zhou Daguan's descriptions of homes during the Khmer Empire

Everyday life

Any written records kept by the Khmer people about life in the empire have today been lost or destroyed. The only written records that are still in existence are those written by Zhou Daguan. From his writings we can learn not only about the kings and aristocrats but also about the ordinary people.

Zhou Daguan wrote that both men and women went bare-breasted and barefoot. Their clothing was simple: a cloth wrapped around their waists. Although ordinary women wore no hair ornaments, they could wear jewellery such as golden rings and bracelets. If women were particularly beautiful, they might be sent to the court to serve the king or the royal family.

Source 4.31

From the king down, the men and women all wear their hair wound up in a knot, and go naked to the waist, wrapped only in a cloth. When they are out and about they wind a larger piece of cloth over the small one ... Although cloth is woven domestically, it also comes from Siam [Thailand] and Champa ... Among ordinary people, only the women can dye the soles of their feet and the palms of their hands. The men do not dare to ... Junior officials and no others can wear cloth with a two-flower design. Among the ordinary people, only women can wear cloth with this design.

Zhou Daguan, *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and its People*, translated by Peter Harris, Silkworm Books, 2007, pp. 50–1

Homes for ordinary people

From Zhou Daguan we also get some insights into the way ordinary people lived in their homes in Angkor.

Source 4.33

At the lowest level come the homes of the common people. They only use thatch for their roofs, and dare not put up a single tile. Although the sizes of their homes vary according to how wealthy they are, in the end they do not dare emulate the styles of the great houses ...

Ordinary families have houses but nothing else by way of tables, chairs, jars, or buckets. They use an earthenware pot to cook rice in, and make sauce with an earthenware saucepan. For a stove they sink three stones into the ground, and for spoons they use coconut husks ... When serving rice they use earthenware or copper dishes from China; sauce comes in a small bowl made from the leaves of a tree, which doesn't leak even when it is full of liquid. They also make small spoons from the leaves of the nypa palm, which they spoon liquid into their mouths with, and throw away after using.

Zhou Daguan, *A Record of Cambodia: The Land and its People*, translated by Peter Harris, Silkworm Books, 2007, pp. 50, 76

Check your learning

1. Explain the role that temples played in Khmer society.
2. How was the ruler expected to behave as the society's god-king?
3. Describe the role and status of the Brahmin.
4. Create a table to compare the differences in lifestyle between the rich and the poor in Khmer society. List four examples in each column.
5. What is a matrilineal society?

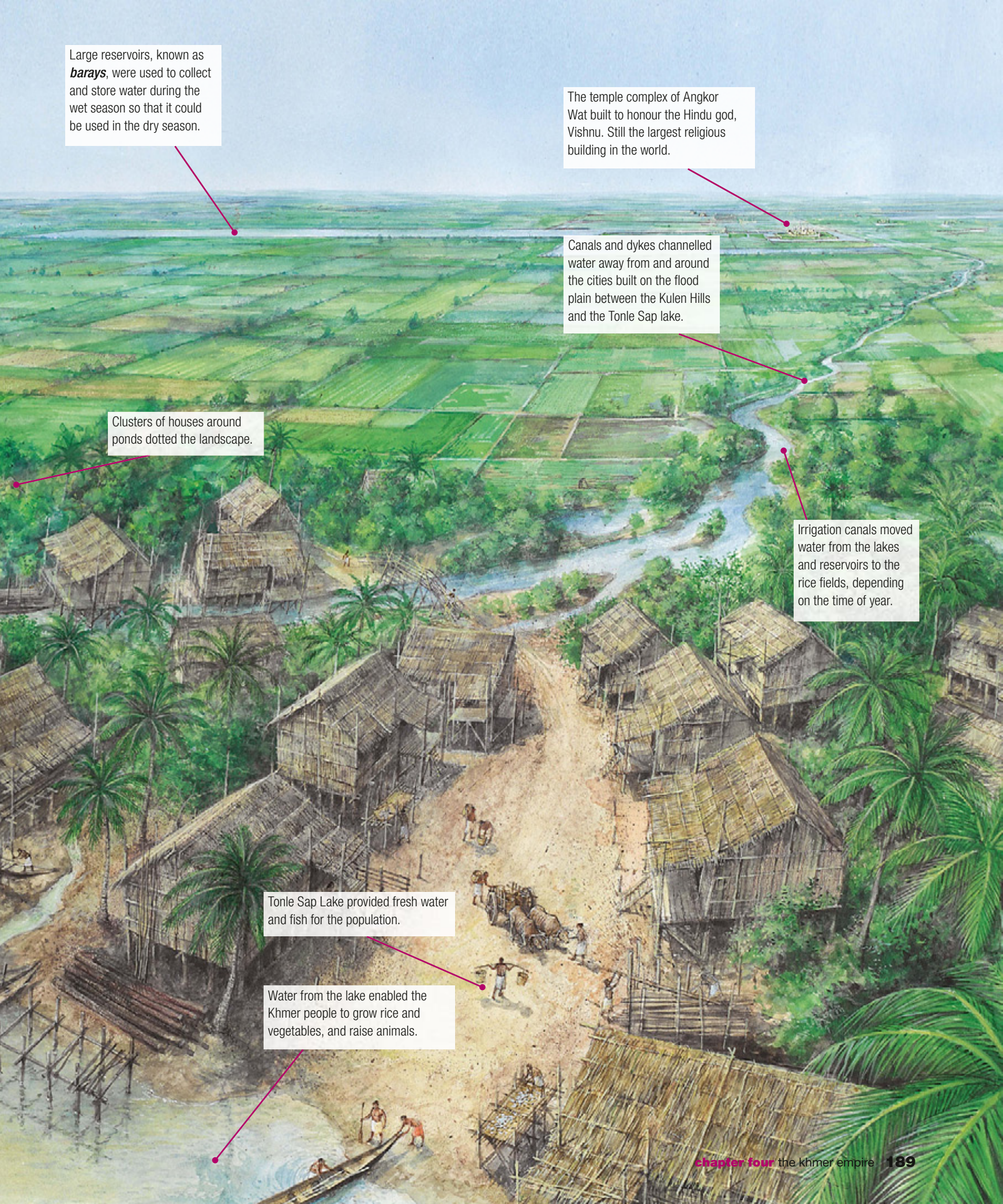
Village life in Angkor

This artist's impression shows a village on the banks of Tonle Sap Lake during the Khmer Empire. A large part of what we know about village life in Angkor comes from the writings of a Chinese diplomat called Zhou Daguan, who visited the empire in 1296. According to his writings, the weather influenced daily life in Angkor dramatically. For six months of each year it rained every day (wet season); for the other six, it had no rain at all (dry season). These weather patterns encouraged the Khmer people to become experts in water storage and irrigation. Large reservoirs, barays, stored water in the wet season for use in the dry season. The Khmer also stored flood water from the Mekong River and dug a network of irrigation channels.

Tonle Sap Lake was an essential part of life for the Khmer people. The water level of the lake could rise to 11 metres during the wet season. During the dry season, it could fall to as low as one metre. This meant that houses built on the edge of the lake had to be built on stilts to be above the water level during the wet season.

For peasants and farmers daily life consisted of fishing on the lake, in house ponds, tending to animals and the rice fields.

Source 4.34 An artist's impression of life on Tonle Sap Lake


Large reservoirs, known as ***barays***, were used to collect and store water during the wet season so that it could be used in the dry season.
The temple complex of Angkor Wat built to honour the Hindu god, Vishnu. Still the largest religious building in the world.
Canals and dykes channelled water away from and around the cities built on the flood plain between the Kulen Hills and the Tonle Sap lake.
Clusters of houses around ponds dotted the landscape.
Irrigation canals moved water from the lakes and reservoirs to the rice fields, depending on the time of year.
Tonle Sap Lake provided fresh water and fish for the population.
Water from the lake enabled the Khmer people to grow rice and vegetables, and raise animals.

How the rich and poor lived in Angkor

Source 4.35 An artist's impression of how the rich (top) and the poor (bottom) lived in Angkor

skill**drill**

Draw conclusions about the usefulness of sources

The diplomat Zhou Daguan came to Angkor in August 1296 and stayed at the court of King Indravarman III. He kept a record of his time there until July 1297. This record tells us a lot about the lifestyle of people of the court and temples, and that of the general population. When he returned to China, he had his chronicle published. It was later translated intro French, and then into English. Look back through this chapter and you will find a number of translated extracts from this chronicle.

Zhou Daguan provided an outsider's view of the empire. His perspective provided modern historians with a picture of daily life that was not covered by the inscriptions (or the stone reliefs) on the temple surfaces.

As a young historian, you will come across countless writings about the past by a great many people. Your task, when researching, will be to decide what is important among the materials you read and what is not. Here are some tips to help you make that decision:

- What relevant information or insights does it reveal about the topic?
- Is it a **primary** or a **secondary source**? Why is this source helpful (or not)?
- What particular insights might the writer have had because of his or her particular social position, training, skills etc.?
- What aspects might the writer have been unaware of, or denied access to, because of his or her social position, restrictions, limitations etc.?
- Who wrote it, and why? What was the writer's perspective? Was the writer an eyewitness to what was recorded? Are the writer's motives or **biases** evident?
- Why is the particular text important for historians? For example, is it very old? Does it present an insight not evident in other sources? Does it present a rare insight into what is being discussed? Has it generated interest outside the circle of readers for whom it was originally intended, and why might that be so?

Source 4.36 Emperor Temur Oljeitu, for whom Zhou Daguan was a diplomat

Check your learning

A number of translated extracts from Zhou Daguan's chronicle have been included in this chapter so far. Read each of them carefully again. For each:

1. Use concept maps, notes or tables to record the information each extract reveals about the daily life of the Khmer people.
2. Use the 'tips' above to analyse each document. Record your answers in a table for each document.
3. Write 5–10 lines to explain how useful you think Zhou Daguan is as a source for data on Khmer daily life?

focus on ...

continuity and change: housing

The stonework of the temples and religious complexes in Angkor are all that remain of the Khmer Empire. While we know a lot about these temples and the Khmer religion from the inscriptions and stone carvings many of them feature, information about other buildings and about the lifestyle of the people who lived in them is difficult to locate.

Most other buildings of the Khmer Empire were created from wood and straw. Because these materials have disintegrated and rotted away over time, we have no archeological evidence of what they looked like or how they were built. Even the king's palaces were often built from wood.

However, it is believed that modern-day Cambodian village homes, built in a traditional style, look much the same as homes did in the past. Source 4.37 gives us some idea of what the housing may have looked like when clustered together around a lake edge. Source 4.32 also provides more detail of how some of the simpler houses might have appeared.

Source 4.37 Modern-day wooden housing on Tonle Sap Lake

Source 4.38 A Khmer statue of the Hindu god Vishnu

Religion in Khmer society

The area that became the Khmer Empire had long been on the trade routes of Chinese and Indian traders, who brought their religions with them. From the 9th to the 12th century, the Indian religion of Hinduism became the main religion of the Khmer Empire.

Hinduism

Hinduism may have seemed attractive to the Khmer people because the Indians who visited Kambuja were prosperous and had an advanced culture. Perhaps the Khmer people thought that the Hindu gods protected the Indians and ensured their prosperity. We cannot be sure of their reasoning, but we do know that the Khmer people began to build temples to the Hindu gods, while still worshipping their local deities.

The Khmer beliefs focused particularly on a group of three Hindu gods, Shiva, Vishnu and Brahma, however, many others were also worshipped (see Source 4.40).

- Shiva (the most prominent god) is the destroyer but is seen also in a positive light because rebirth follows each destruction.
- Vishnu is the god that protects, bringing order and harmony to the land (see Sources 4.38 and 4.39).
- Brahma, the creator.

Further evidence of Indian and Hindu influences can be seen in stone temple inscriptions. They were often written in **Sanskrit**—a language that came from north-west India (and was the language of Hinduism). Sanskrit inscriptions were used to talk to the gods or to praise the king, the nobility or the *Brahmins*. They were written as poems, in very extravagant and pretentious language.

Source 4.39 A stone carving of Vishnu reclining, on a temple at Angkor

Influence of Hinduism on Khmer society

Hinduism had a significant influence on Khmer society. The famous Khmer temples were all built for the Hindu gods. The Brahmins who surrounded the king and gave him advice were part of the Hindu priesthood. The whole concept of the god-king (*devaraja*) came from Hinduism, and gave the Khmer rulers absolute power and authority. They were like heroes in a Hindu mythic story, and the people looked up to them and carried out their wishes.

Mahayana Buddhism

At the end of the 12th century, Hinduism began to give way to **Mahayana Buddhism** across the Khmer Empire. This religion also came by way of India and was also probably brought by traders to the Angkor area. The fact that Jayavarman VII adopted Mahayana Buddhism probably ensured its adoption by the Khmer population.

Source 4.40 A Khmer statue of elephant-headed Hindu god Ganesh

Check your learning

1. Name the lake that was so important to the Khmer Empire.
2. Name two things that the lake provided for the Khmer people.
3. Why was the Mekong River important to the Khmer Empire?
4. Explain how the religion of Hinduism came to the Khmer Empire.
5. What was the language of Hinduism?
6. What was a *devaraja*?

The Temple Complex

During the Khmer Empire, temples were not places for people to meet and worship. Rather, a temple was a palace for a god to live, usually in the form of a statue. A big temple would be home to several gods, so it would contain many linked shrines, with the most important god at the centre.

The design of each temple represented the universe surrounded by ocean, in the form of a moat. Mount Meru, a sacred mountain for both Buddhists and Hindus, was at its centre and around it were several mountains, in the form of other enclosures.

Temples were made up of a series of quadrangles. At the centre was the sanctuary tower (*prasat*), which represented Mount Meru. This might then have other, lesser *prasats* beside it. The main *prasat* was usually taller and it was decorated more elaborately than the other towers. The further away from the centre one goes, the less decoration there is.

Source 4.41 Ta Prohm temple, one in a network of temples in Angkor

Source 4.42 Prasat Him Phimai temple

Source 4.43 Detail of architectural sculpture at Baphuon temple

Source 4.44 This gateway at Angkor Thom is an example of a corbel arch.

Source 4.45 Decorative columns at Angkor Wat

The god was usually a statue in the middle of the shrine but not always. Shiva was more often represented by the *linga*, a post of polished stone.

Because temples were not places for people to congregate, they do not contain large interior rooms with high ceilings, as a European cathedral might. However, they do have large open-air areas linked by galleries, or walkways.

Building techniques

The main materials used in building temples were sandstone, brick and a kind of clay called laterite. Timber was also used occasionally for roofs and ceilings.

The earlier temples tended to be built from brick, as this was a simple product that was easy to make. Bricks were made of clay that had been fired to make them hard. When they were laid, they were held together with a kind of vegetable glue. This glue made the brickwork very strong. Sometimes the brick was carved, but more often any decoration was done in stucco—a kind of plaster that can be moulded and shaped.

The use of sandstone increased over time, so it is seen more in the later temples. Much skill was required to cut and decorate the sandstone, and it required extra people to quarry it in the Kulen mountains just north of Angkor. From there, they would transport it to the temple sites.

Sandstone was also more expensive than brick. At first, it was just used for decorative elements around doors and other features. Only the most important temples were made totally of sandstone, and only those from the 10th century on. This was because the builders had to find a way to use it without the building collapsing, as the sandstone was so heavy. Sandstone blocks were stacked on top of each other without mortar. The advantage of sandstone was that it was a very easy material to carve and decorate.

The other chief building product, laterite, was a special kind of clay rich in iron. When it was formed into blocks and exposed to the air it hardened and became particularly rigid, without firing. Like sandstone, laterite blocks were not held together with any kind of mortar or glue. They tended to be used in foundations of buildings because they could not be carved or decorated easily. Where laterite was used in more visible parts of a building, stucco had to be applied if any decoration was needed.

Many temple roofs would have had clay tiles or even lead tiles. Zhou Daguan mentioned that the palace, for example, had a lead roof. Some other Khmer temples had timber roofs, which have mostly perished. Others have stone roofs, which can be a problem too, owing to the way they are constructed (see corbel arches below). Without maintenance, these can easily collapse.

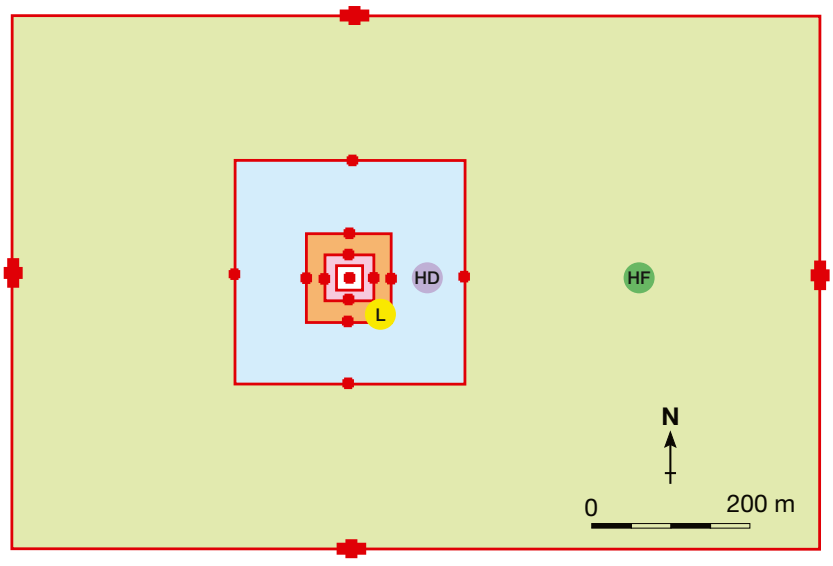
Corbel arches and other features

The Khmer builders knew how to make arches, but they were not keystone arches like the Romans built, which are very strong. Instead, the Khmers used the corbel arch (see Source 4.44). A corbel arch is built by stacking two columns of stone on either side of an opening. At a certain point, each new layer of stone is offset so that it juts out a little more than the last one, until the whole structure meets in the middle. This is not a very strong arch (especially without mortar) and it needs quite a lot of weight resting on top of it to remain stable.

Other typical features in a temple are its entrance building, decorative lintels (horizontal stone beams over a doorway, see Source 4.45) and pediments (triangular stone shapes over a lintel).

As we know, and as illustrated in the photographs in this chapter, Khmer temples were covered in detailed stone carvings. What is not commonly known is that the temples were also painted. We know this because of the traces of paint that have been found at Angkor Wat and other temples. So what we now see as plain stone may once have been very colourful.

Source 4.46 Vegetation has overgrown the temple of Ta Prohm.



Source 4.47 A plan of Ta Prohm, showing later, additional shrines

Source 4.48 A stone carving of a dancing figure, in the ruins of the Hall of Dancers, Ta Prohm temple, Angkor

Ta Prohm temple complex

Ta Prohm was a temple and a monastery that now creates great excitement because of the trees that grow through its ruins. Strangler figs and silk cotton trees grow through and around the ruins of this city that was once home to 12 640 people, according to the temple inscription.

Ta Prohm was started in the reign of Jayavarman VII, and was finished and enlarged by Indravarman II. It was created to honour the king's mother. The principal goddess, Prajnaparamita, was carved to represent her. It was initially known as the royal monastery.

This temple, located in eastern Angkor, has been deliberately left unrestored. It was chosen to show how Angkor looked when the French rediscovered it in the 19th century. Work was carried out to protect it, and trees and other vegetative growth were removed to allow entry but no further change was made.

The outer area and enclosures of the temple formed a full city that was supported by 3140 villages and 79 365 people. Within the walls (which ran for one kilometre from east to west, and 650 metres from north to south), an additional 12 640 people were housed.

The temple itself took up one hectare of land—one-sixtieth of the total space. There were three concentric enclosures inside a moat. In front of these were four courtyards called the Hall of Dancers. To the north and south are two satellite temples. To the west there are two towers.

The site was used by designers for the game *Tomb Raider*. Its overgrown, crumbling structures provided an intriguing setting for the video game, creating mystery and suspense.

Check your learning

1. How might we know how many people lived in or around the Ta Prohm temple?
2. Look carefully at the detailed plan of Ta Prohm temple, Source 4.47. What can you say about the complex and the reasons it was built?
3. While the vegetation in the temple continues to grow, it does cause damage. Tree roots push walls apart, and as trees fall they cause the buildings to collapse. Do you believe that the temple should be left as it is, or that the trees and growth should be cleared? Justify your viewpoint.
4. What do you believe the temple tells us about life and beliefs in Angkor at the time of Ta Prohm's creation?

bigideas

4.2 How was society organised during the Khmer Empire?

Remember

1 Who were the Brahmin and where did they originally come from?

2 Who were the god-kings and why were they called that?

3 What role did temples play in the lives of the Khmer?

4 What are our sources of evidence for the everyday life of the Khmer?

5 When did Zhou Daguan publish his writings about his time in the Khmer Empire?

Understand

6 It was said that a king could not break a religious law. Why do you think the Khmers believed this?

7 Describe the link between the king and the temple priests.

8 Source 4.12 is a map indicating the location of the Khmer Empire. Why don't we know more about the empire?

9 Why is it that we know so little about Zhou Daguan, when his writing is so important in our understanding of the Khmer Empire?

10 Why was the concept of slavery to the temple different from real slavery?

Apply

11 Design a poster that shows the growth and development of the Khmer Empire.

12 During the Khmer Empire, women occupied many important social positions. Property and wealth passed from mothers to daughter and the king's personal bodyguards were women. Working in small groups, design a picture that could be used as the basis for a stone carving on the wall of Angkor Wat. Your design should show one aspect of life for women in Angkor. Be sure to pay attention to the clothing and headgear worn by women at the time. Use Source 4.50 to assist you.

13 In small groups, write and present a role play of Zhou Daguan reporting to the Chinese emperor about Khmer society on his return to China.

Analyse

14 Describe what you believe your life would have been like had you been a Khmer king during the time of the empire.

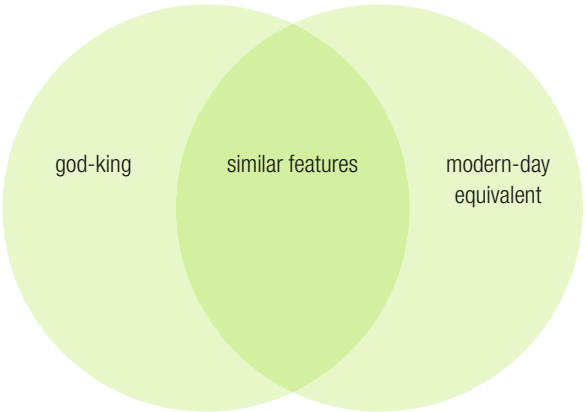
15 Look at Source 4.34 and answer the following questions:

- **a** What is a *baray*?
- **b** What do you think a typical meal in Angkor would have consisted of?
- **c** Why do you think that the Khmer people built their houses out of wood, but built their temples out of stone?
- **d** Why were some houses designed to float?
- **e** Why was the weather so important to the Khmer people? Do you think weather patterns are as important for Australians today? Give reasons for your responses.

Evaluate

16 Little has been said about women in Khmer society. Carry out some research to see what the lifestyle and position of women was in the Khmer Empire.

17 Is there anyone in the world today who you think fills a role similar to the god-king in Khmer society? Who is this person and how is the role similar? How is the role different? Place this information in a Venn diagram (see Source 4.49).



Source 4.49

18 Examine Source 4.35 along with some of the photographs in this chapter of modern-day Cambodia and its people. Recreate and fill in this table in your notebook, noting how life in this region is similar to what it was like during the Khmer Empire. How has it changed?

	Similarities	Differences
housing		
food		
lifestyle		

Create

19 Write a short response 5–10 lines to explain why the power of the king was so closely tied to religion. How did this help to hold the Khmer Empire together?

Source 4.50 A stone carving of a Khmer market showing women at work

Source 4.51 The ruins of Ta Prohm temple at Angkor

4.3 How and why did the Khmer Empire come to an end?

Throughout history we see evidence of the rise and fall of once mighty empires. Changes within the Khmer Empire were a response to many factors that most likely combined to cause its decline.

Many climate scientists today would argue that the Khmer Empire rose to power during a period of very favourable weather between 950–1250 CE. This period is known as the 'Medieval Warm Period'. Scientists often point to another weather pattern to explain the decline of the empire – namely the 'Little Ice Age' – a period of unstable weather from 1350–1850 CE.

In addition to changes in weather, it is possible that temple construction placed too great a strain on the economy of the empire. This probably had a political impact as well and might explain the religious changes that occurred late in the reign of the empire. There may also have been some lasting impact from wars and the Black Death, a deadly plague that struck South-East Asia in the 14th century.

All these factors need to be considered when investigating the decline of the once great Khmer Empire.

Changes in weather patterns

Recent scientific studies have helped to partly explain why the Khmer Empire ended when it did. Researchers have carried out **dendrochronology** (tree-ring dating) looking at the growth-rings in tree trunks. These show the history of the trees and what has happened to them over hundreds of years. Each year every tree adds a new ring. In a good year, when the tree receives a steady supply of water, the ring is thick; in a bad year, such as a drought year, the ring is thin. Trees studied from the region indicate that a lengthy period of drought occurred during the 13th century, perhaps lasting for decades. While the study was mainly conducted in Vietnam, the researchers recognised that the times matched those when the Khmer Empire failed.

This drought would have greatly affected the empire, which relied on a constant water supply to maintain its irrigation systems and to grow its crops. If the water supply decreased, the canals would have dried up and been damaged. This, along with other events such as war and social change, would have meant there were fewer people available to repair and maintain the canals, and the canals would have slowly failed. In the following source, a research scientist explains.

Source 4.52

> *The climate factor was seldom mentioned among the causes of Angkor's collapse. The society was already under stress and had very limited strategy to manage a vast and complicated water system that was impossible to rework. They found themselves under [subject to] climate variability that far exceeded their ability to cope.*
>
> Brendan Buckley, quoted in *Deccan Herald*, 28 December 2010, 'Climate change doomed Khmer Empire' by Kalyan Ray, 30 March 2011

Breakdown of the water management system

Another possible factor in the decline of the Khmer Empire was the deterioration of the water management system. Water was crucial to trade, travel and irrigation of rice crops. Near the end of the empire, it appears that ecological changes, such as the removal of forests, affected the water that was collected in the system. When forests are cut down, there is more water run-off but the water carries off a great deal of soil as well. The canals and irrigation ditches would therefore have started silting up. This would have increased the growth of waterweeds in the silt, which would have depleted the oxygen supply in the water and killed fish. If these factors were combined with changing weather patterns, the water management system across the empire would have been placed under great pressure.

At around the time that the water management system began to decline, it is noted that the number of rice crops were reduced. Previously, three or even four harvests of rice had taken place per year. After this fewer crops could be produced. As a result, the prosperity of the country and population would in turn have declined.

Source 4.53 Growth-rings indicate the history and age of trees. This study is known as dendochronology

Check your learning

1. What is another possible reason scientists have put forward to explain why the Khmer Empire might have ended?
2. Why is the size of the tree ring important in the prediction of when droughts happened?
3. What is the name of the scientist who put forward this idea and when did he make his idea public?
4. Does the scientist say that this is the only reason for the end of the empire?

Check your learning

1. Why did the canals begin to silt up?
2. Why would waterweeds become a problem in the canals? What did the weeds do to the canals and the water in them?
3. How would fewer rice harvests decrease the prosperity of the country?

Religious change

Another change in Khmer society that probably influenced its decline was the shift that occurred in people's religious beliefs. This may have occurred when King Indravarman II adopted **Theravada Buddhism** as his religion in the late 13th century, or it may have been due to greater interaction with the Thai-speaking and Mon-speaking people of central Thailand, who were also Theravada Buddhists.

Theravada Buddhism was quite different from **Mahayana Buddhism** and caused a lot of change across the Khmer Empire, as it meant the end of kings being regarded as 'god-kings'. Unlike the Hindu religion, Theravada Buddhism viewed the king as just another human being who needed to strive for goodness by way of a simple and peaceful life – one free from war and violence.

As a result, temple building decreased, because there was no need to recognise the kings and the achievements of their reign.

This new religion taught all people to seek enlightenment and to abandon unnecessary worldly items, so grand displays and opulent buildings such as the temples were not needed. Buddhist monks carried out rites in small shrines for all the people. There was no need for impressive temples and priests.

Unexpected consequences may also have resulted from this religious change. Up to this time, workers had been tied to the temples and to the god-kings. With the change in the king's position, the belief in royal authority may have decreased, and workers may have felt less obliged to work for the king and the temple.

Source 4.54 Buddhist monks at Angkor Wat

Check your learning

1. What was the main aim in life for a Theravada Buddhist?
2. Why did temples come to be seen as less important in Khmer society with the arrival of Theravada Buddhism?
3. What was the name of the king who adopted Theravada Buddhism?
4. How was the peaceful nature of Buddhism different to what the Khmers had believed in in the past?

Plague

The bubonic plague, or **Black Death**, is believed to have first appeared in China around 1345. Many historians believe it then spread rapidly through South-East Asia. Although it is difficult to prove, it's likely that the Khmer Empire was affected. As in other countries, the pandemic would have struck quickly, devastating the society by killing large sections of the population. Harvests and trade would have suffered. There would not have been enough workers to sow or harvest the crops, or to ship them, so trade in Angkor would certainly have declined.

Check your learning

1 Where is it thought that the Black Death first appeared in the world?

2 How would the plague have made its way to Angkor?

War with Champa and Ayutthaya

Source 4.55 An artist's impression of Ayutthayan war elephants in battle

As the Khmer Empire became weaker, the Cham and the Khmer people fought each other more often. In 1177, the Cham successfully attacked, using the Mekong River and Tonle Sap Lake to launch a water-based invasion that resulted in Angkor being captured and looted. Jayavarman VII was to spend a large part of his reign attacking and then finally driving off the invading Cham.

He continued his fight against them as king from 1181 until, in the 1190s, Champa became a Khmer province. Jayavarman VII was the last truly strong Khmer king, but after his death in around 1220 the Cham regained their independence.

The Khmer Empire also developed a new enemy to the north, known as the Ayutthayans. These people had previously been under Khmer control but developed their own kingdom and challenged Khmer authority.

Source 4.56 A stone carving of Khmer troops preparing for their battle with the Cham fighters

They attacked the Khmer Empire in 1335 and 1353, capturing Angkor for a short period. It is thought that during these attacks they damaged the irrigation system in Angkor. They certainly carried off many Khmer as slaves, leaving fewer people to maintain the irrigation system and to plant and harvest the rice crops. One result of this was that trade and commerce became a source of wealth, rather than agriculture; thus, traditional systems and patterns changed.

In 1431, the Ayutthayans attacked again, this time capturing and looting Angkor and repeatedly driving the Khmer away to the south-east, until its capital was reduced to the state it had been in seven centuries earlier. The conquering king looted the temples, removing statues of Buddha. The royal court, on the whole, deserted cities such as Angkor Thom and moved to the old capitals on the Mekong River.

Check your learning

1. The Khmer fought two main civilisations. Who were they?
2. How many times was Angkor attacked and sacked by the enemies?
3. How was the commercial system of the Khmer Empire altered by the enemy attacks?
4. When was the Angkor region abandoned?
5. Where did the Khmer people establish their capital once they left the Angkor region?

Source 4.57 Henri Mouhot

Rediscovery of Angkor

Khmer society began to decline in the 13th and 14th centuries, weakened by wars, new religious values, a decaying water system, drought and plague. Finally, in 1431, Angkor was again invaded by the Ayutthayans and people left the area in droves. Although the Angkor region was never completely deserted, its large population declined greatly. The irrigation system and Tonle Sap lost their significance in the economy of the Khmer people. The area became much less important, and the surrounding jungle overtook some temples, though Buddhist monks continued to live and worship at Angkor Wat. The royal court also briefly re-established itself in Angkor after King Barom Reachea drove off the Ayutthayans during his reign (1566–1576), but this was not to last. The capital moved to Phnom Penh, away from the traditional Angkor heartland.

Europeans came across the temples and the region in 1860 when a French explorer called Henri Mouhot made his way to the area. He encouraged French exploration through the *École Française d'Extrême-Orient*, a French institute dedicated to the study of Asian societies. Their work raised world awareness in the Angkor region and encouraged modern Cambodians to be aware and proud of their past.

Check your learning

1. Who was the first European to study the temples located in the Angkor region?
2. Which king attempted to re-establish the capital of the Khmer Kingdom at Angkor and when did he do this?
3. Were the buildings and temples truly lost to the Khmer people and history for a period of time?

bigideas

4.3 How and why did the Khmer Empire come to an end?

Remember

1 List at least three events or occurrences that may have contributed to the decline of the Khmer Empire.

2 How has scientific research into trees helped us to understand the history of the empire?

3 Name two groups that the Khmers fought against.

4 How did increased growth of weeds damage the canal system and the number of crops that could be harvested in a year?

5 Which king tried to re-establish the capital in the Angkor region and how long did it stay there?

6 What potential impact would the Black Death have had on the Khmer Empire?

Understand

7 Why would something like the plague affect the Khmers' ability to maintain their irrigation system?

8 Why was the flooding of Tonle Sap Lake each year important for both aquaculture and the growth of rice crops?

Apply

9 Explain how the study of tree rings offers a possible explanation for the decline of the Khmer Empire.

Analyse

10 List the reasons given for the decline of the Khmer Empire and explain how they were related to each other.

Evaluate

11 What can the modern world learn from the Khmer Empire?

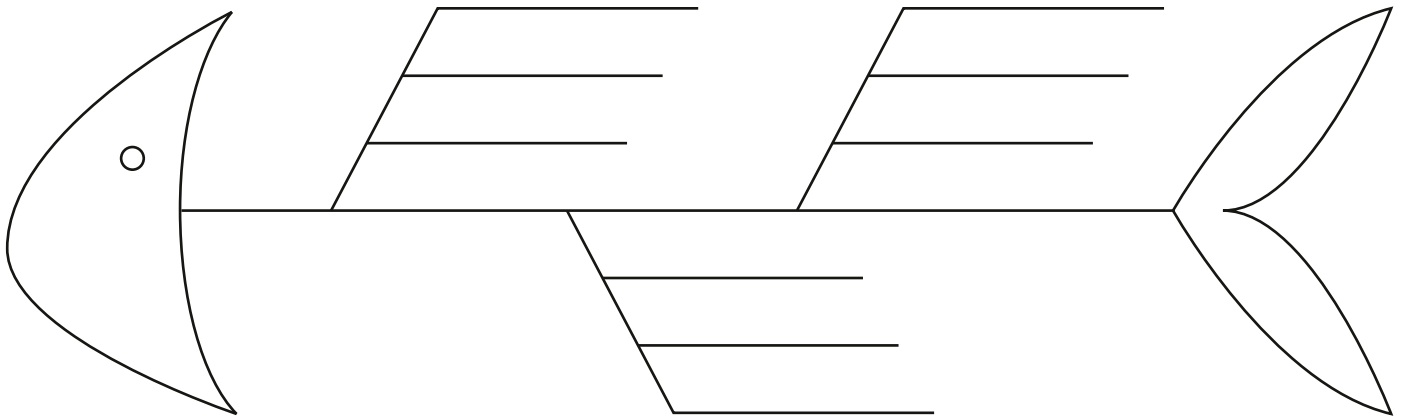
12 Compare the effect of the recent drought in Australia to the alleged period of drought in the Khmer Empire. What are the similarities and differences?

13 Why is it important for the Western world to learn about the fact that empires such as the Khmer Empire existed in the past? How significant is it that they did so without much knowledge of the outside world?

Create

14 Complete the following tasks using information in this section of the chapter:

- **a** Construct a 'fishbone' chart showing the possible causes that contributed to the decline of the Khmer Empire. List the causes on the main ribs of the fish shown in Source 4.58 and the eventual effect on the head.
- **b** Which of the possible causes you have listed do you think is most responsible for the eventual decline of the Khmer Empire. What leads you to think this?



Source 4.58 A 'fishbone' chart

connectingideas

Why water matters

The ability to manage and control water was an essential part of the Khmer Empire. They understood the importance of the Mekong River, and knew that it would rise and fall during the year. They learned to control water through an extensive set of reservoirs, canals and irrigation systems. Tonle Sap Lake became the centre of a water management system that enabled the Khmer people not only to survive, but to dominate the surrounding area.

Water management in Angkor

Rice is the staple food throughout much of Asia, and its cultivation is believed to have started in China about 12000 years ago. By the time Angkor was reaching its peak, rice was the main food crop of Asia. The Khmer were able to control and store the floodwaters of the Mekong River to ensure good rice harvests. This was essential to support the population. The elaborate system of water management captured the wet season floods in Tonle Sap Lake. The water was then directed into a series of dams and irrigation ditches that meant water could be used throughout the year. Along with reservoirs fed by local rivers, this system ensured water, and therefore rice, throughout the year.

1 Where is it thought the cultivation of rice started?

2 Which river provided the main floodwater for the Khmer people to store?

Source 4.59 Tonle Sap Lake continues to provide water for the population today.

Source 4.60 This cotton crop in Wee Waa, New South Wales, requires water for irrigation.

Cotton needs water

To successfully grow cotton, you need sunshine, moderate rainfall and reasonably heavy soil. Australia's cotton industry has developed in drier areas, but cotton relies on irrigation to provide the necessary water. The experience of Angkor indicates that even the most efficient water management systems can fail in times of drought. The major river system in Australia, the Murray–Darling, was threatened because it was being drained for irrigation. Governments have tried to manage the distribution of water to ensure the health of Australia's river systems. For Angkor, any failure in water management meant less food, and ultimately the fall of any society dependent on it.

1 What is irrigation? Why is it necessary in Australia?

2 Do you think water should be used for cash crops, such as cotton, rather than food crops? Give reasons for your response.

Source 4.61 A seawater desalination plant in Kwinana, Western Australia

Water and the future

As the experience of the Khmer at Angkor has shown us, if water management breaks down, societies can fall apart, and civilisations crumble. In 1993, the United Nations made 22 March World Water Day. Each year there has been a different emphasis to draw attention to the importance of water preservation. In a dry continent like Australia, urbanisation has placed pressure on water supplies. One solution has been to develop desalination plants that allow sea water to be turned into fresh drinking water. Currently, Australia has three functioning desalination plants in Western Australia, Queensland and New South Wales. Three more in Western Australia, Victoria and South Australia are nearing completion. The three functioning plants can produce 505 megalitres of fresh water a day.

1 Why is Angkor a warning about water management?

2 What has Australia turned to as a solution for water shortages?

Q What lessons can 21st-century Australia learn about water management from the Khmer Empire?

depth study option

Japan under the shoguns

(*c.* 794–1867)

Although Japan has officially been ruled by emperors since around 700 CE, for a large part of this time the country was controlled by military leaders, called shoguns. Over time, the shoguns became more powerful than the emperor himself, even though this was not officially acknowledged.

The word *shogun* comes from the Japanese words *sho* (meaning 'commander') and *gun* (meaning 'troops'). Minamoto no Yoritomo, a military leader, was named the first *shogun* by the emperor in 1192. He set up his own capital city in Kamakura, far to the east of the emperor's capital in Kyoto.

For almost 700 years after that (until 1867), Japan was ruled mainly by a succession of shoguns who held all the political and military power. The title *shogun* was often passed on from father to son. Sometimes the *shogun's* family would become weak, and a rebel leader would seize power from them. This would start a new ruling family of shoguns.

The final shoguns came from the Tokugawa clan who ruled from 1603 until 1867. Tokugawa Ieyasu, the founder of the dynasty, built a new capital in Edo, the city that is now Tokyo.

Key inquiry questions

5.1 What was life in Japan like before the rise of the shoguns?

5.2 How did the rise of the shoguns change the way Japanese society was organised?

5.3 How did life change under the rule of the shoguns and why did this period come to an end?

Matsumoto Castle, built in 1504

5

bigpicture

Japan under the shoguns

During their time in power, the shoguns imposed a strict class system or social ***hierarchy*** *similar to the* ***feudal*** *system in medieval Europe. At the top of the social hierarchy were the emperor and the* shogun *himself. Under the* shogun *were lords called* **daimyo** *who each controlled different regions of Japan. Under each* daimyo *were warriors known as* **samurai**, *followed by farmers, craftsmen and merchants. Together with the values of Confucianism and Buddhism, this social hierarchy in feudal Japan helped to keep the society stable and unified. The Tokugawa Shogunate remained in firm command of the government during this period.*

In 1868, the 15th Tokugawa shogun *was overthrown by rival clans and forced to give up his position. Power was finally returned to the emperor, and the capital of Japan was once again moved—this time to the city of Edo. The emperor's new government removed most of the systems of government established under the shoguns' rule and the modernisation of Japan began.*

CE

794–1185 Heian period

794
The royal court moves from Nara to Kyoto. The emperor wanted to restrict the political influence of Buddhist monks at the old capital.

Nara Palace

An artist's impression of a *samurai*

1185
Minamoto clan seizes power in the emperor's name. Minamoto no Yoritomo becomes *shogun*, and establishes his own capital city in Kamakura.

1232
'Goseibai Shikimoku' legal code establishes guidelines for military government

1274
Mongol army lands on the island of Kyushu but is defeated

1333
Emperor Go-Daigo overthrows the Kamakura government (*bakufu*) military; imperial government is re-established

1336
Start of period of rival northern and southern emperors, supported by Go-Daigo and the Ashikaga clan respectively. It lasted until 1392.

1603
Tokugawa Ieyasu becomes *shogun*, based in Edo (later known as Tokyo). The Tokugawa shogunate rules Japan for the next 260 years.

Statue of Tokugawa Ieyasu

1573–1603 Azuchi–Momoyama period

1603–1868 Tokugawa (Edo) period

1185–1333 Kamakura period

1333–1573 Muromachi period

1633
The *sakoku* period of isolation begins.

1867
The last *shogun*, Tokugawa Yoshinobu, steps down and the imperial regime is restored.

1378
Shogun Ashikaga Yoshimitsu brings the military government back to Kyoto

1543
Firearms arrive in Japan brought by Portuguese traders

1467
Start of the Warring States period; Japan is plunged into a century-long civil war between rival *samurai* warlords. It lasted until 1573.

1854
Convention of Kanagawa opens up trade with America (end of *sakoku* period)

1281
The *samurai* defeat a second Mongol invasion of Kyushu

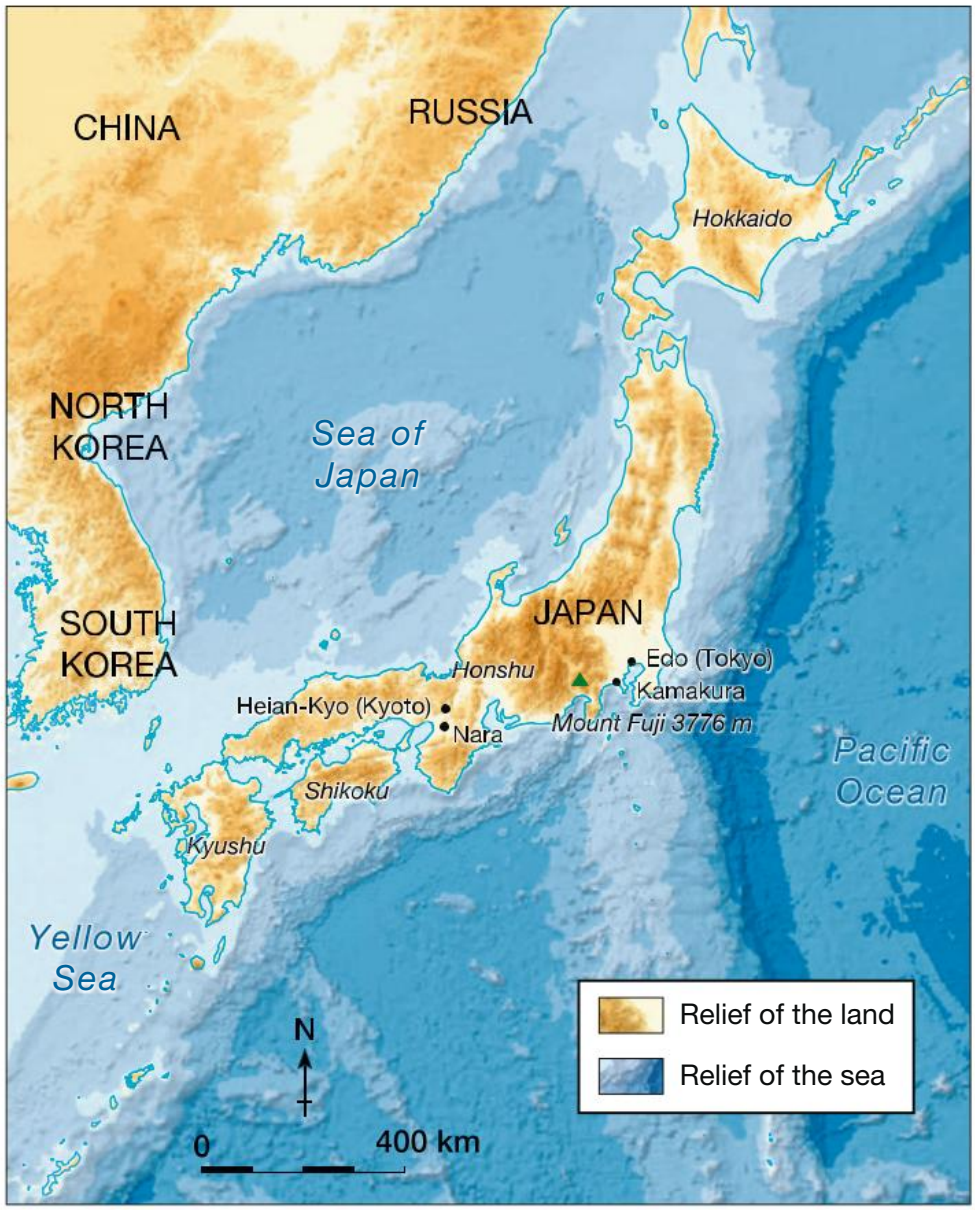
An artist's impression of Japanese repelling Mongol invasion

Source 5.1 A timeline of key events in shogunate Japan

Source 5.2 Japan's mountainous landscape left little flat land for farming. *Fujisan* (Mount Fuji) is the large conical mountain in the background.

5.1 What was life in Japan like before the rise of the shoguns?

The first historical mention of Japan is in a Chinese account written in 280 CE. It mentions the eastern island of Wa, which contained some 30 'warring countries'. It was thought these 'countries' would have been separate clans—groups of families related by blood or marriage. Each clan honoured a particular god considered to be the ancestor of all clan members. The most direct line to the ancestor kami *(god, or deity) was the clan leader. Each clan was led by a group of warriors. These warrior chiefs protected the people in return for a share of the rice harvest. The clans fought each other for land and power.*



Source 5.3 Japan is a chain of islands. The peaks of underwater mountain ranges form these islands on the surface of the Pacific Ocean.

Geography

Japan has more than 3000 islands, but most Japanese live on the four largest islands of Honshu, Shikoku, Kyushu and Hokkaido. Japan's rugged terrain means that only 15 per cent of the land can be farmed. Throughout Japan's history, local clans (family groups) fought over fertile land or what little there was.

The mountainous landscape encouraged many Japanese to look to the sea for a living. Early Japanese settlers fished from coastal villages. To this day, seafood remains an important part of the Japanese diet. Merchants travelled along the coastline, visiting villages with goods to trade. The sea surrounding Japan separated its people from Asia and, as a result, Japan developed its own unique religion, arts and social structures.

Check your learning

1 Look at Source 5.3. What body of water separates Japan from the Asian mainland?
2 How did Japan's location affect the way it developed as a society?
3 What impact did Japan's mountainous terrain have on the development of society?

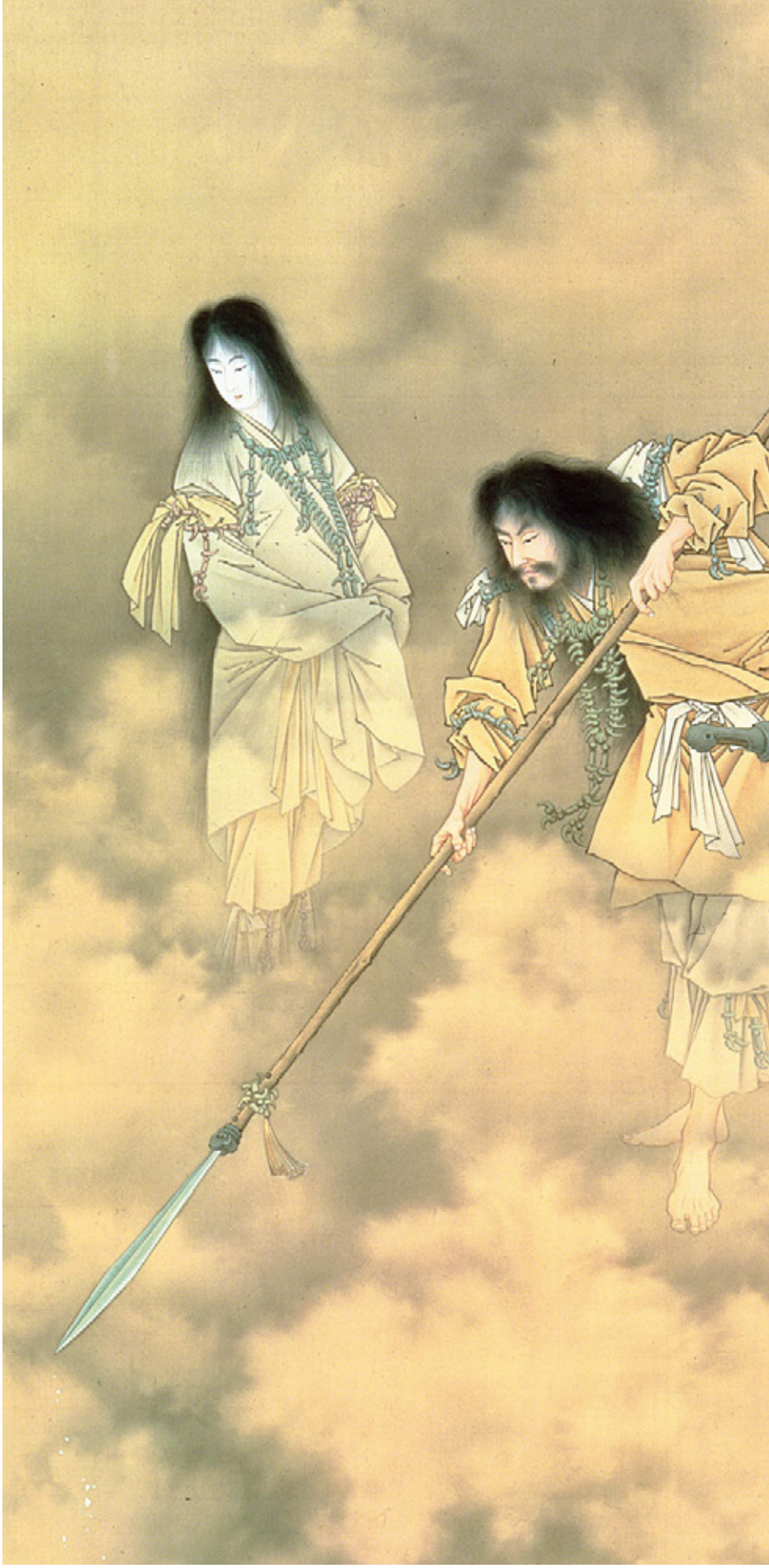
Shintoism

The roots of Japan's traditional **Shinto** religion (meaning 'the way of the gods') were laid down thousands of years ago. Shintoism is a religion that is still practised today. Followers believe that the gods are sacred spirits known as *kami*. Like many other ancient peoples, the early Japanese believed that all natural things were alive. The *kami* took the form of things and concepts important to life, such as the sun, hills, lakes, mountains, rivers, trees and fertility. The Sun goddess Amaterasu was considered Shinto's most important *kami*. People are also believed to become *kami* after they die and are worshipped by their families.

Source 5.4 Fortune-telling *omikuji* papers are found at Shinto shrines, like this one in Kyoto. After making a small donation, a person randomly chooses an *omikuji* paper, hoping the resulting fortune will be good. Paper brings luck because the word for paper in Japanese is also *kami*.

Shinto beliefs and rituals

Shintoism is a belief system that has a positive, uplifting view of life on Earth. People are considered to be basically good. Evil spirits are seen to be responsible for the bad things that happen. Consequently, many Shinto rituals are aimed at warding off evil spirits through purification, prayers and offerings to the *kami*. Shrines for worshipping *kami* are found throughout Japan, even in homes, where small family altars hold offerings of *sake* (rice wine) and food.



Source 5.5 Shinto gods Izanagi and Izanami

Source 5.6 The 'Wedded Rocks' in the sea off Futami represent the union of Izanagi and Izanami, the ancestors of Japan's gods and emperors. The large rock features a *tori*, a gateway marking the entrance into a sacred site. The rocks celebrate the union in marriage of man and woman.

A Japanese creation myth

According to a Shinto creation myth, in the beginning there were two gods called Izanagi and Izanami (his wife). They placed a spear into the ocean and as they brought it out, water drops falling from the spear formed into the islands of Japan.

Izanami had many children, but died while giving birth to Kagu-Tsuchi, the god of fire. Izanagi followed her into Yomi, the Land of the Dead, to bring her back. By doing so, he brought impurities back with him that affected the Earth. These impurities cause human wrongdoing. He washed himself and the water drops that fell from his body became other gods. These included Susanowo, the storm god, and Amaterasu, the Sun goddess. Amaterasu's grandson, Jimmu, was said to be the ancestor of the emperors of Japan.

Check your learning

1. Who are the *kami* and why are they important in the Shinto religion?
2. Create a facts chart on what you have learned in this section about Shintoism.
3. Look at Source 5.4.
   - a Why do you think *omikuji* papers are located at Shinto shrines?
   - b What is the Japanese word for 'paper'? What link does this have with Shintoism?
4. Look at Source 5.5.
   - a Who are the characters in the image and what are they doing?
   - b How are these characters thought to have been connected to the emperors?
5. Draw a simple comic strip (use simple stick figures if you like) to retell the myth of Japan's creation and what happened to the gods involved.
6. Look at Source 5.6.
   - a Why do you think a *tori* has been placed on top of the Wedded Rocks?
   - b What do you think is the significance of the knotted rope?

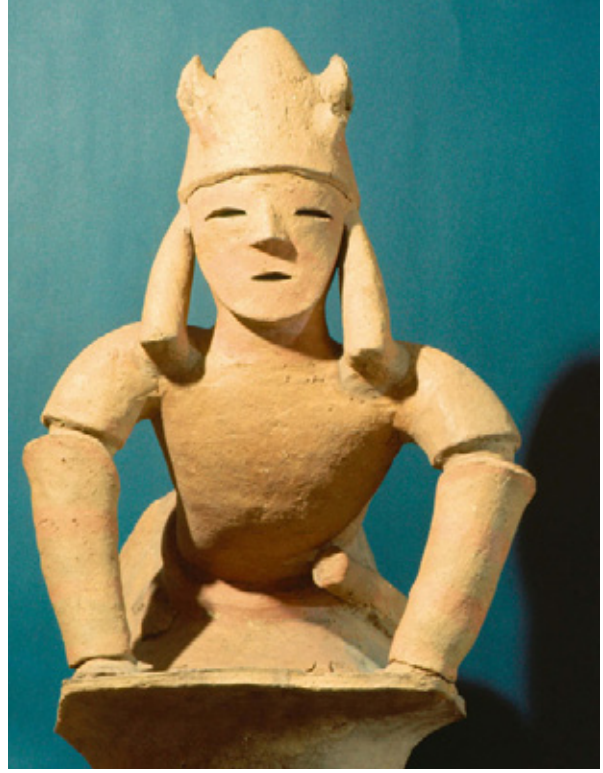
Beginnings of social order

Despite their power, clan leaders needed help to protect their lands and enforce the law. So they called on men from Japan's lower social ranks. Over time, these men came to be known as the ***samurai*** 'those who serve'. By around the 12th century, the *samurai* had developed into a highly trained and skilled warrior class who were masters of martial arts.

Yamato clan

Around this time, the Yamato clan grew to control much of southern Japan, developing great military power in order to protect its territory. Other clans still held their own lands, but had to promise their loyalty to the Yamato chief. The Yamato chief's territory was divided into a series of provinces that were controlled by the junior clan chiefs. Each of these chiefs ensured that the supreme leader was obeyed and that taxes were collected.

The Japanese modelled their system on neighbouring China but continued to be independent. Even though the country consisted of a series of **warlords**, a system developed that recognised the leader (known, after the 7th century, as the emperor) as the spiritual and symbolic head of the country. The clan chiefs paid him homage (acknowledgement of superiority) and tribute (a payment to acknowledge his status).



Source 5.7 A fired clay statue, from the burial mound of a junior Yamato chief. It was made in the mid 500s.

The imperial court

It was believed the emperor communicated with the gods and had magical powers. Therefore, he did not involve himself in the day-to-day running of his country. Special advisors and ministers were appointed to carry out these functions. The emperor was removed from his people, living in an isolated, but beautiful, imperial court. It was a place of luxury and privilege for a select few. The reality of life did not come inside.

The imperial court was dedicated to fine arts and learning. Music and writing were encouraged and poetry was a vital part of the court's life. Both men and women were encouraged to write. Men used a form of writing called *kanji* that had originated in China. Women used a simpler form of writing called *kana* with fewer characters. A woman's education in the royal court included calligraphy, poetry and playing a musical instrument. The court ladies dressed in elegant kimonos, made from silk and often composed of up to 16 layers.

Men who belonged to the court had little contact with the outside world unless they were appointed as a governor of a domain. It was more important to them to be a good poet than it was to be a good administrator. The court was often entertained through poetry or music contests, or through scrolls of picture stories. Physical activities included archery and *kemari*, where the players had to kick a leather ball to each other without letting it touch the ground.

In the early 700s CE, Japan's emperors built a new capital city called Nara. In 794, Emperor Kammu moved to yet another new capital called Heian-Kyo. Both Nara and Heian-Kyo were modelled on the Chinese city of Chang'an. Heian-Kyo (now called Kyoto) remained the official capital of Japan for the next 1000 years.

focus on ...

contestability: the role of the emperor

Yamato chiefs claimed that they were descended from the Sun goddess Amaterasu, and therefore had a right to rule Japan. Japanese legend states that a Yamato leader named Jimmu, the 'grandson' of Amaterasu, was the first 'emperor', although the word was not used in Japanese until a thousand years after he was supposed to have lived. He is thought to have united a series of clans under his reign from 660 BCE to 585 BCE.

Some think that Jimmu is a mix of characters, both real and imagined. Historians contest whether or not he existed. The 13 emperors who came after him are known as 'legendary emperors', as their existence is also based on legend rather than on solid historical evidence. Whether Jimmu was fact or fiction, his is the first name on a family tree of rulers in Japan that extends all the way to Akihito, Japan's current emperor.

The emperor in Japan was at the top of the social ladder. 'Born of heaven', he is regarded by the people as a god on earth. The gods supposedly passed on three sacred objects that symbolised the ruling emperor's power:

- a mirror
- a sword from the belly of an eight-headed serpent
- a curved jewel.

Source 5.8 A Japanese legend tells of the Sun goddess Amaterasu hiding in a cave. She is lured out by a sacred dance, and restores light to the world.

Source 5.9 US President Barack Obama bows as he meets Japanese Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo in 2009.

Check your learning

1 What were the clans and how were they organised?
2 How were the clans linked to Japanese religious beliefs?
3 Why did the clans fight?
4 Explain how the Yamato clan changed the way society operated.
5 Look at Source 5.7.
   a What can we tell about the Japanese people during the Yamato period from this burial statue?
   b Who does this statue represent, and why is the person kneeling?
6 Look at Source 5.8. Who was Amaterasu and why do you think she was an important goddess?
7 How were emperors believed to be connected to the gods?
8 Why do you think that historians contest the existence of Jimmu?

significant**individuals**

Prince Shotoku

Prince Shotoku was a Yamato prince born in 573 CE—the second son of Emperor Yomei. Around 593, Shotoku began his rule on behalf of his aunt, the Empress Suiko. Shotoku planned to strengthen imperial authority by building a strong government based on China's example. He created a new constitution, outlining his plans for government. Shotoku's constitution gave all power to the emperor, who had to be obeyed by the Japanese people. Control was centralised and all rice cultivation was brought under the control of the emperor's court. Independent farmers were obliged to pay tax on their rice production and to offer military service for their right to hold land.

Shotoku also created a **bureaucracy** and gave the emperor the power to appoint all the officials. The constitution listed rules for working in the government and set out a social system where people were promoted through 12 ranks based on their ability rather than their birth. The rules were taken from the ideas of Confucius, a Chinese scholar and teacher.

Source 5.10

> *Harmony is to be cherished, and opposition for opposition's sake must be avoided as a matter of principle ... When an imperial command is given, obey it with reverence. The sovereign is likened to heaven, and his subjects are likened to earth.*
>
> *With heaven providing the cover and earth supporting it, the four seasons proceed in orderly fashion, giving sustenance to all that which is in nature. If earth attempts to overtake the functions of heaven, it destroys everything. Cast away your ravenous desire for food and abandon your covetousness for material possessions. If a suit is brought before you, render a clear-cut judgement ... Punish that which is evil and encourage that which is good.*

Translated extract from *The Seventeen-Article Constitution* created by Shotoku

Shotoku had studied with two Buddhist priests and became devoted to Buddhism. Buddhism is a religion that sees life as a cycle; you are born, die and then are reborn in a new form. Depending on your lifestyle, you can come back as a better or worse thing or person. Buddhists try, in their lives, to work towards reaching nirvana, the perfect state from which there is no need to be reborn. They do this by observing certain guidelines and behaviours in the way they live.

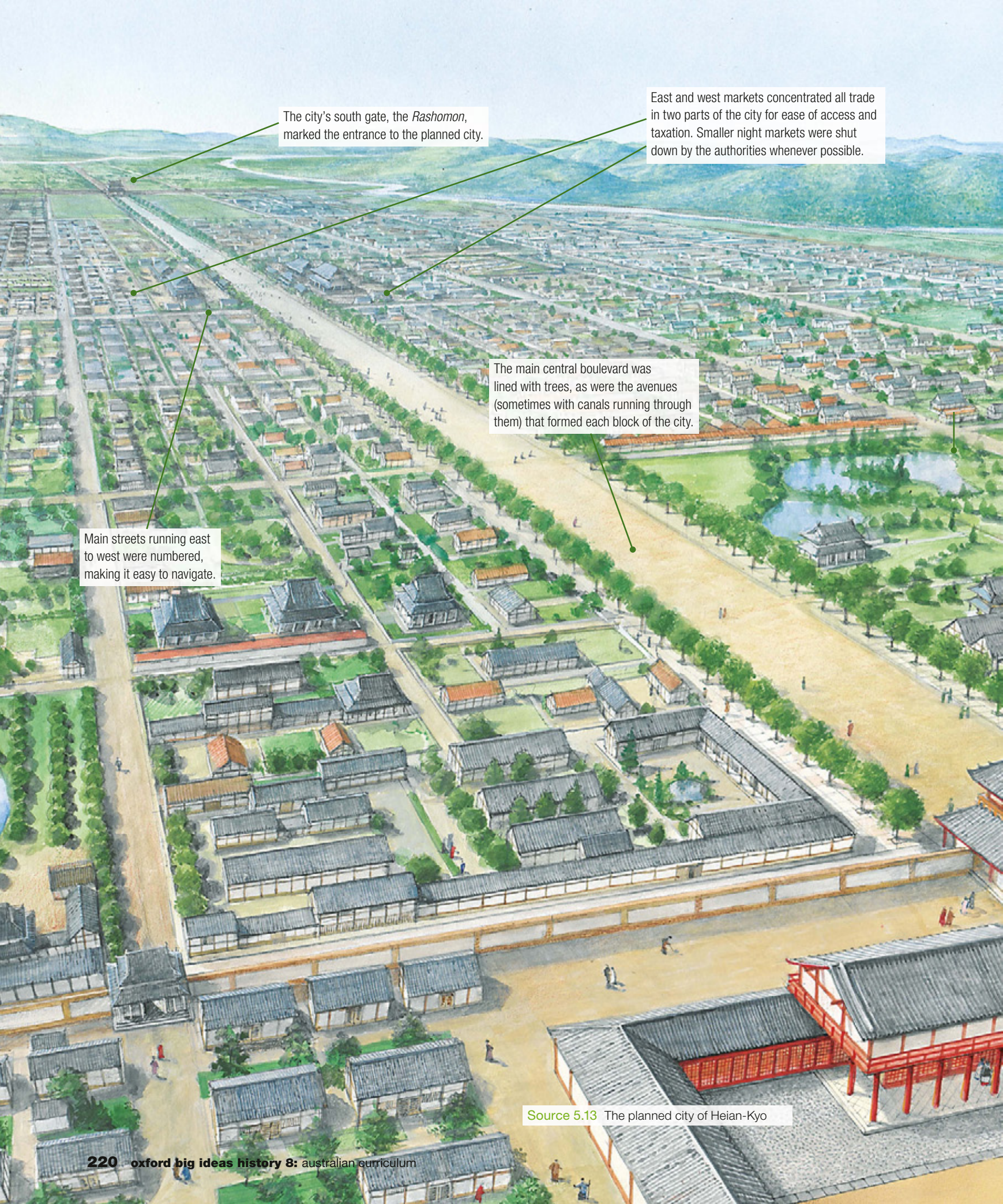
Shotoku sent officials to China to study Buddhist teachings, but also to learn about Chinese art, medicine and philosophy. He also ordered Buddhist temples to be built throughout Japan.

After Shotoku's reign, the emperors continued to assert their authority. All land in Japan came under the emperor's control. In 646 CE, the emperor divided Japan into provinces run by officials who reported to the emperor. The officials took part of the farmers' harvest in taxes for the emperor. Clan leaders could no longer collect taxes.

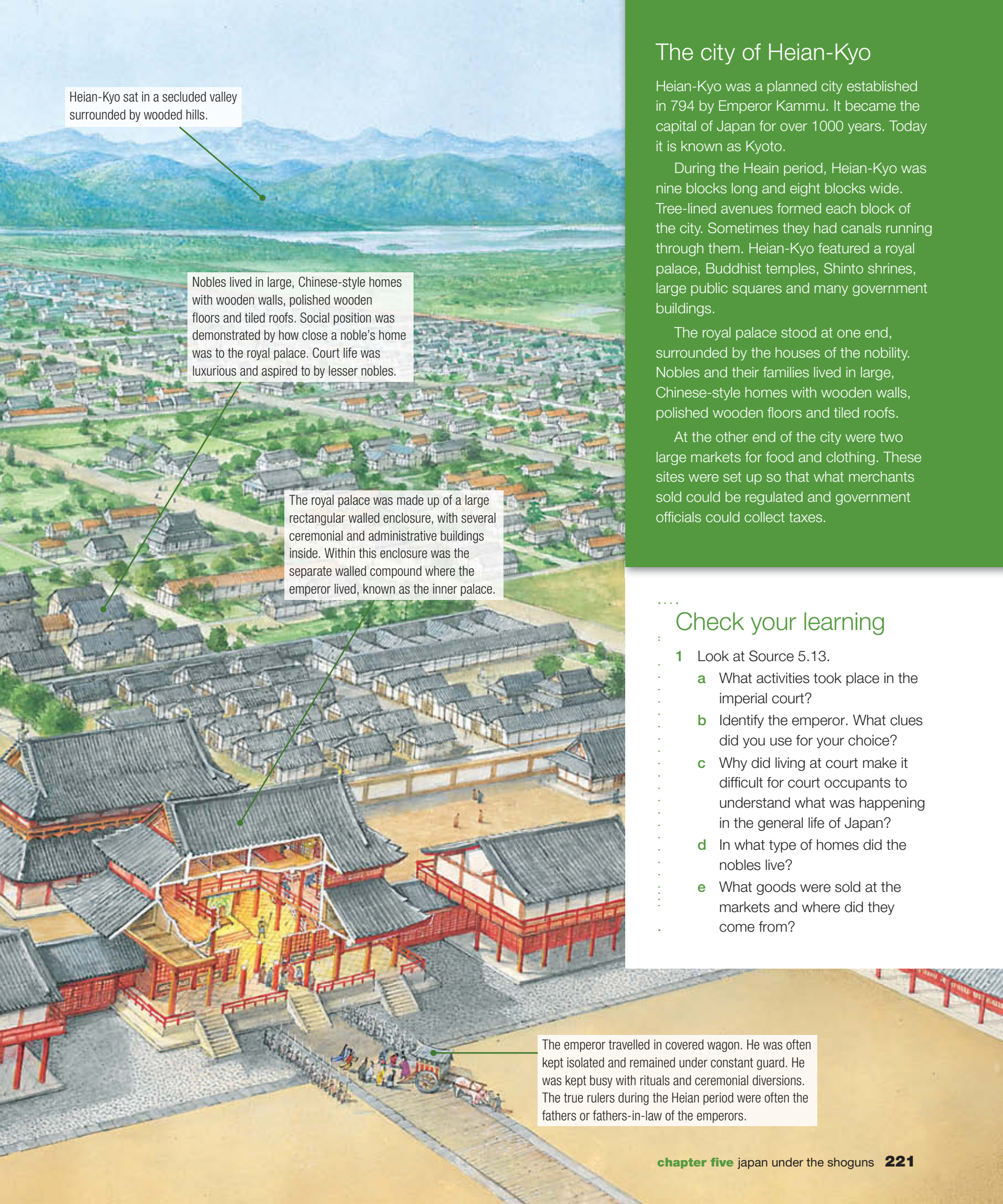
Source 5.11 An artist's impression of Prince Shotoku (573–621 CE)

Source 5.12 The Horyuji Buddhist temple in Nara was completed in 607 CE and still stands today. It is Japan's oldest temple and one of the world's oldest surviving wooden buildings.

1 According to Shotoku's constitution, who held all the power in Japan?
2 What were the rules for law and order laid out in the constitution?
3 Which religion was worshipped in the temple shown in Source 5.12? Why did that religion become important during Shotoku's reign?
4 Use Source 5.11 to describe Prince Shotoku's appearance, as depicted by this artist.



Source 5.13 The planned city of Heian-Kyo



The city of Heian-Kyo

Heian-Kyo was a planned city established in 794 by Emperor Kammu. It became the capital of Japan for over 1000 years. Today it is known as Kyoto.

During the Heain period, Heian-Kyo was nine blocks long and eight blocks wide. Tree-lined avenues formed each block of the city. Sometimes they had canals running through them. Heian-Kyo featured a royal palace, Buddhist temples, Shinto shrines, large public squares and many government buildings.

The royal palace stood at one end, surrounded by the houses of the nobility. Nobles and their families lived in large, Chinese-style homes with wooden walls, polished wooden floors and tiled roofs.

At the other end of the city were two large markets for food and clothing. These sites were set up so that what merchants sold could be regulated and government officials could collect taxes.

Check your learning

1 Look at Source 5.13.
   - **a** What activities took place in the imperial court?
   - **b** Identify the emperor. What clues did you use for your choice?
   - **c** Why did living at court make it difficult for court occupants to understand what was happening in the general life of Japan?
   - **d** In what type of homes did the nobles live?
   - **e** What goods were sold at the markets and where did they come from?

bigideas

5.1 What was life in Japan like before the rise of the shoguns?

Remember

1 What were the *kami* and why were they important to the people of Japan?

2 Why did the Japanese pay a great deal of respect to their ancestors?

3 Explain why clans typically fought one another.

4 In two to three sentences, describe what life would have been like for a lady in the emperor's court.

5 What did the capital cities of Nara and Heian have in common?

6 Copy the following table into your notebook. Draw lines to connect the entries in the left-hand column with those in the right-hand column to make complete and accurate sentences.

The ancestor of the emperors of Japan was said to be …	*kemari*
The name of the Japanese sun god was …	*kami*
The form of writing used by men in the imperial court was …	Izanami
A game played at the imperial court involving kicking a ball so it did not touch the ground was called …	*kanji*
Shintoists believed that the gods were sacred spirits called …	Jimmu
Izanagi's wife's name was …	Amaterasu

Source 5.14

Understand

7 Imagine you are a European visitor in Japan during its early history. Write a letter home describing the way Shinto is practised in Japan and its importance to the Japanese people. Your perspective (as a European) will influence some of your comments.

8 List two influences that China had on Japanese society.

9 Explain the importance and position of the Japanese emperor in Japanese religion and society.

10 Refer to Source 5.14. Explain where this woman might have lived (based on her appearance) and the activities she might have undertaken. What evidence in the image led you to this conclusion?

11 Look at Source 5.9 and notice the heights of the two men. Why do you think the US President is bowing so low?

Apply

12 Compare and contrast the Japan creation story with another that you may be familiar with (or conduct research about one if you do not know of one). In what ways are they similar?

Analyse

13 Read Source 5.10 carefully. Using a bulleted list, identify the rules for law and order that were laid out in Shotoku's constitution.

14 Look at Source 5.8. Make four observations about what this image depicts. What does each each point you have observed suggest about early Japanese society?

Evaluate

15 During the Heian period, literature was dominated by women's writing. The most important piece of writing was *The Tale of Genji*, written by Murasaki Shikibu in the early 11th century. Some have argued that this is the world's first true 'novel'. The story recounts the life of Genji, the son of a Japanese emperor. His mother dies when he is three years old, and the emperor takes Lady Fujitsubo as one of his wives. For political reasons, Genji is reduced to commoner status. He starts a career as an imperial officer. Later, he falls in love with his stepmother and she bears his child. Everyone except the lovers thinks the father of the child is the emperor. The boy becomes the crown prince and Lady Fujitsubo becomes the empress, but Genji and Lady Fujitsubo keep their secret.

- **a** How is *The Tale of Genji* similar to novels written today?
- **b** What clues do you get from the overview of part of *The Tale of Genji* about the role of the emperor and the status of men and women?
- **c** Think about the morals and values this story conveys. For example, think about how Genji is treated as a boy and his later deceit. Do you think that things have changed much today?

Create

16 Use the various illustrations and text references in this section to design an outfit suitable for an emperor or his wife. Justify your design choices.

Source 5.15
An illustration from the earliest surviving scroll (12th century) of *The Tale of Genji*

Source 5.16 *Samurai* protecting a royal carriage during a disturbance in 1159. Detail from a 13th-century scroll painting of *The Burning of the Sanjo Palace*

5.2 How did the rise of the shoguns change the way Japanese society was organised?

In time, the imperial court of Japan's emperor became too big to manage. As a result, some government officials were released from their obligations to the emperor. Some of them went on to become managers of Japan's various provinces. They sold the crops they grew, and collected taxes; many became wealthy and powerful people. New ***clans*** *formed around these ruling families, and conflicts broke out among them. These civil wars would see the rise of shoguns that would go on to control Japan.*

The rise of the *shogun*

Civil war between various Japanese clans was common. The Taira and Minamoto people, two of the most important clans, became particularly powerful by supporting factions (interest groups) at the emperor's court.

In 1185, Minamoto no Yoritomo formed a military government at his base in the town of Kamakura. It was known as the Kamakura *bakufu*. A *bakufu* is a 'tent government'—in other words, it was meant to be temporary. In 1192, Yoritomo asked the imperial court to recognise his position with the title *Seii Tai-shogun* ('Barbarian-subduing great general'). The deal meant that the emperor would keep his symbolic position and receive some protection. Since the ***shogun*** supposedly spoke for the emperor, the other nobles now had to obey him.

Feudal system strengthened

Using the power of the imperial court, Yoritomo then appointed military governors in the provinces. The emperor tried to question their authority but, he was quickly challenged, and the *bakufu* kept its hold on power. Minamoto no Yoritomo strengthened the Japanese feudal system by rewarding his supporters with land. They, in turn, gave parts of this land to their warriors in return for their support. For the next 700 years, shoguns from several clans would rule Japan while the emperor and his court remained in isolation with no real power.

Source 5.17 Japanese warlord Minamoto no Yoritomo, shown in this artist's impression, was the first of the Kamakura shogunate, ruling from 1192 until his death in 1199.

Check your learning

1. Look at Source 5.16. Who do you think is inside the carriage? Who do you think is on top of carriage?
2. What were the roles of the *samurai* in society?
3. What were the Taira and the Minamoto? Which ultimately gained control in Japan?
4. What demands did Minamoto no Yoritomo make on the emperor?
5. What was the name of Yoritomo's shogunate and how was it organised?

External challenges—the Mongol invasions

In the last part of the 13th century, the Mongols controlled Korea and northern China. They then turned their attention to Japan. They were led by Kublai Khan, the grandson of the great Mongol leader Genghis Khan. For the first time, the Japanese had to unite to fight an external enemy rather than fighting among themselves. A threatening letter sent to the emperor from the leader of the Mongols, Kublai Khan, urged the Japanese to surrender their land and become part of the Mongol Empire.

Source 5.18

> *Cherished from Mandate of Heaven, the Great Mongol emperor sends this letter to the King of Japan. The sovereigns of small countries, sharing borders with each other, have for a long time been concerned to communicate with each other and become friendly. Especially since my ancestor governed at heaven's command, innumerable countries from afar disputed our power and slighted our virtue. Goryeo (Korea) rendered thanks for my ceasefire and for restoring their land and people when I ascended the throne. Our relation is feudatory like a father and son. We think you already know this. Goryeo is my eastern tributary. Japan was allied with Goryeo and sometimes with China since the founding of your country; however, Japan has never dispatched ambassadors since my ascending the throne. It is horrifying to think that the Kingdom is yet to know this. Hence we dispatched a mission with our letter particularly expressing our wishes. Enter into friendly relations with each other from now on. We think all countries belong to one family. How are we in the right, unless we comprehend this? Nobody would wish to resort to arms.*
>
> Translated letter from Kublai Khan, sent with ambassadors to Japan, 1266

The emperor suggested that Japan should surrender out of fear. But his regent (person acting in the ruler's place), Tokimune, ignored the emperor's wishes. Tokimune, who was part of the Kamakura shogunate, was the actual ruler of Japan at this time. He then ordered ***samurai*** to secure all potential landing points and wait for the Mongol attack. The Japanese knew that the Mongol fleet would seek the shortest and quickest route from the mainland. They were sure it would leave Korea and land somewhere in Kyushu, probably at Hakata Bay. Accordingly, the *samurai* were able to fortify in advance. The emperor and the imperial court prayed for victory.

Source 5.20 An illustration of the Mongol attack on Japan

First Mongol attack

In the first attack in 1274, the Mongol force numbered 23 000 soldiers and up to 800 ships. Many of the soldiers were recruited from China and Korea, countries already conquered by the Mongols. The Mongols attacked as soon as they had their horses unloaded from their ships. Unlike the *samurai*, they went through no ceremony to indicate that battle should begin; they also used poisoned arrows.

The Mongol invasions exposed the *samurai* to a different fighting style. The *samurai* believed it was inferior to theirs. This difference is outlined in the *Hachiman Gudokum* (Source 5.19).

Source 5.19

> *According to our manner of fighting we must first call out by name someone from the enemy ranks, and then attack in single combat. But the Mongols took no notice at all of such conventions. They rushed forward all together in a mass, grappling with any individuals they could catch and killing them.*
>
> Hachiman Gudokun

Source 5.21 An artist's impression of the Japanese fighting off Mongol invaders

The noise of the Mongols' drums and war cries frightened the Japanese horses. As well, their powerful crossbows and catapults shot arrows and exploding bombs before the Japanese were close enough to return fire. The Japanese were fighting a losing battle. At just this time, a huge storm developed. It destroyed some of the Mongol fleet and forced the rest to retreat.

During the battle, Tokimune was overcome with fear. He asked his Zen Buddhist master, Bukko, to help him. Bukko's response was to ask how he was going to overcome it. Tokimune bellowed, '*Katsu!*' (Victory!). Bukko then said, 'It is true that the son of a lion roars as a lion!'

Tokimune was only a teenager at the time of the first Mongol invasion, and does not seem to have had a better plan. After the failed invasion, Kublai Khan sent ambassadors to Japan, demanding surrender. Tokimune had them beheaded. Kublai Khan sent another group of ambassadors in 1279. They were also beheaded. Expecting another invasion, the imperial court ordered all temples and shrines to pray for victory over the Mongols. The Kamakura shogunate (*bakufu*) prepared for another attack. But this time, it had improved the organisation of the *samurai* on the southern island of Kyushu, where the Mongols were expected to land, and had built forts and walls, including a two-metre-high wall at Hakata Bay.

Source 5.22 A tomb statue of a Mongol horseman, made around the time of the Mongol invasions of Japan

Second Mongol invasion

In 1281, the Mongols sent 140 000 troops on more than 4000 vessels to again invade Japan. The first fleet sailed into Hakata Bay, on the southern island of Kyushu, but was attacked by the Japanese in boats before it landed. This battle lasted seven weeks with attempted landings and successful defences. Then a second Mongol fleet appeared and the Japanese forces were overpowered. Defeat seemed highly likely. But the next day, a huge typhoon struck. It destroyed the Mongol fleet. Some of the Japanese came to believe that their gods had decided to save them. The typhoon was then known as a ***kamikaze*** or 'divine wind'.

Source 5.23 The defensive wall at Hakata Bay

Powerful storms, rather then good leadership, enabled the Japanese to defeat the Mongols in both their attempts to invade Japan. The Mongol invasions had some significant impacts on society and warfare in Japan. From a military perspective, it was one of the few times where the *samurai* would fight foreign troops rather than each other. They also had to adapt their fighting style to face different fighting styles and weapons. As news spread of the victory, some priests and courtiers began to claim that their prayers had caused the storm. This led to a rise in the status of Zen Buddhism.

Previously, *samurai* had been rewarded for their military service with loot or land from their enemies. But the defeated Mongols left nothing behind, only increasing tensions among the *samurai*. In 1333, Emperor Go-Daigo was able to gain the support of discontented *samurai* warriors who felt their elders had not been rewarded properly for their fight against the Mongols. They overthrew the Kamakura shogunate, claiming that they would be more loyal to the emperor's wishes. In the emperor's name, Japan suffered a long period of civil war after this, until final victory went to the warlord Tokugawa Ieyasu (1542–1616). In 1603, Ieyasu received the title of *shogun* from the emperor. The Tokugawa family would fill the role of *shogun* until 1868.

Check your learning

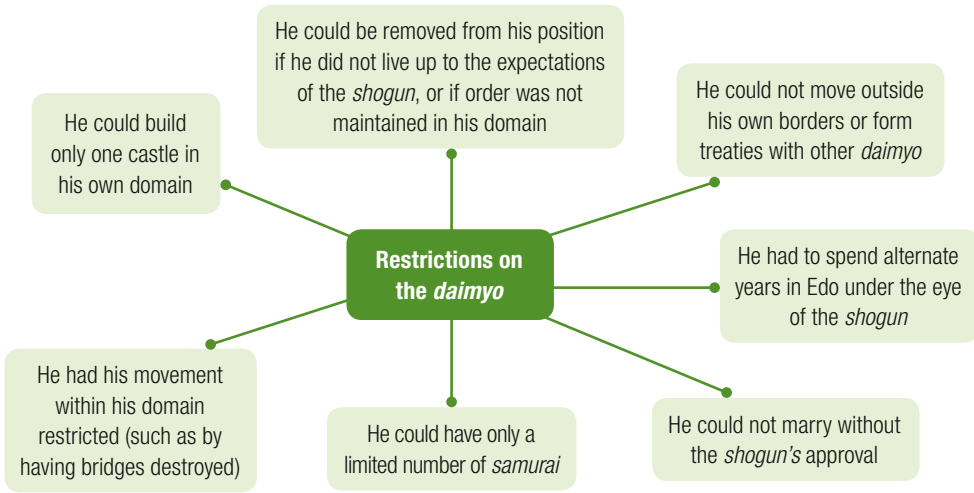
1 For the first time the Japanese had to unite against a common enemy. Whom did they fight?
2 How did the enemy's fighting style differ from that of the *samurai*?
3 Look at Source 5.18. What threats were made by Kublai Khan in an attempt to make the Japanese surrender to his authority?
4 How did the regent Tokimune respond to the Mongol ambassadors who were sent to Japan to demand its surrender? Was he brave or just unbelievably lucky? Justify your view.
5 What evidence does Source 5.22 provide about Mongol horsemen?
6 Look at Source 5.23. What action did the Japanese take to defend themselves between the first and second Mongol invasions?
7 How much larger were the Mongol forces in the second attack in 1281?
8 What did the Japanese call the stormy winds that saved them from defeat in 1281?
9 Why did the Mongol invasions help to spread Zen Buddhism in Japan?
10 Look at Source 5.20.
   a What impressions do you get about the warfare between the Japanese and the Mongols?
   b Is this a primary or a secondary source? What does this mean for your answer to (a)?

The feudal system

From 1603, the new *shogun* Tokugawa Ieyasu set about strengthening his position. He made it clear to the emperor that the *shogun* had the right to approve all court appointments. **Feudalism** became strong under Ieyasu. It was a system of favours in return for loyalty (a system that was also prominent in medieval Europe).

In Japan, regional landowners known as ***daimyo*** ('big names') were allowed to rule domains in return for providing the *shogun* with support. The *shogun* controlled a quarter of the land, while the remaining three-quarters was divided into domains ruled by 275 *daimyo*. The *shogun's* authority depended on the loyalty of the daimyo. The power of the *daimyo*, in turn, depended on the loyalty of their warriors (*samurai*) and the labour, taxes and military assistance of peasants in their domain.

A wealthy *daimyo* with his *samurai* posed a threat to the *shogun*, so Ieyasu placed a number of restrictions on the *daimyo*. Some of these are detailed in Source 5.24.



Source 5.24 Some of the restrictions on the *daimyo*

Check your learning

1 What is feudalism?
2 How was the feudal system organised in Japan?
3 What favours did the *daimyo* receive from the *shogun*, and what loyalty did he give in return?
4 How was the *shogun* able to limit the power of the *daimyo* and in some ways control their ability not to become too powerful a force?

The *samurai*

All *daimyo* had armies of *samurai*. The *samurai* played a key role in the Tokugawa period. They were the top-ranking class in society under the *daimyo*.

The word '*samurai*' means 'one who serves'. A *samurai* warrior was expected to live and die by the rules that established their lifestyle. By the Tokugawa period, the rites and training began at the age of six. Under the control of special teachers, the young *samurai* learned fighting and military skills as well as reading, writing, calligraphy, etiquette and public service. By the age of 15, the *samurai* had finished his training. This was recognised at a ceremony called *genbuku*.

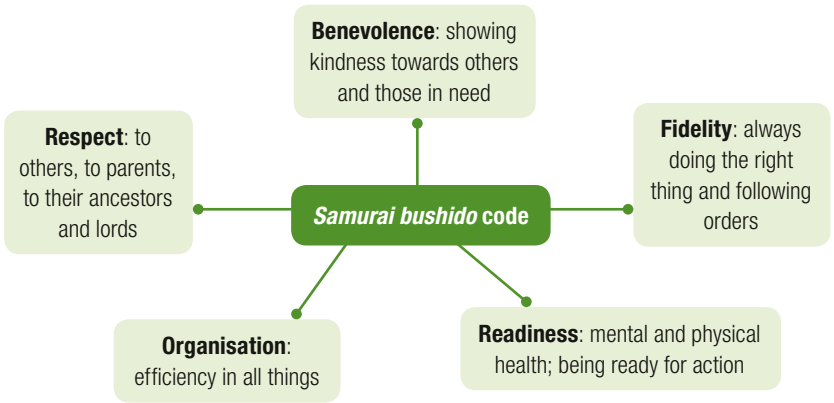
The *samurai* were now a warrior class. However, they had nobody to fight, so their martial codes became increasingly refined. Some suggested that a *samurai* should develop qualities as shown in Source 5.25.

The *samurai* were expected to live and die by their strict code. If they fought incorrectly, lied or cheated, it was expected that they would end their life. Loss of honour was only overcome by the act of *seppuku*—suicide by disembowelling.

Warfare

Warfare took place in the open. Castle defenders were expected to come out and fight, not stay inside the walls. There were strict rules of warfare. The opposing sides would agree where and when the battle was to take place. Once the armies were lined up facing each other, a single *samurai* would move forward from each side to issue a challenge. They talked of their strength and of the power of their ancestors. They then fired an arrow at each other.

It was only then that the *samurai* moved into attack. A *samurai* would cut off the heads of those he killed on the battlefield and carry them back to his camp after the battle. The heads were washed and carefully mounted on a board. The more heads collected, the greater a warrior the *samurai* was. In later wars, *samurai* stopped removing enemy heads, and simply collected noses, as they were easier to carry.



Source 5.25 Qualities needed by the *samurai*

Source 5.26 An artist's impression of a *samurai* on horseback, wearing armour and horned helmet and carrying a bow and arrow

Weapons and armour

Samurai armour was created by lacing together small pieces or scales of pointed iron using silk thread. The armour was flexible and easy to fight in and weighed just ten kilograms. It was decorated so that people would be aware of who was wearing it. The helmet had horns or frightening images on it to both scare opponents and identify the wearer. The *samurai's* head was shaved at the top, with remaining hair tied into a knot on the top of the head.

The *samurai* had both a long and a short sword. Swords were special, as no other warrior was allowed to own one. If a *samurai* lost his sword, it was considered a great loss of honour. Most *samurai* also carried bows and arrows. The long sword was used in fighting, while the shorter sword was used to remove an enemy's head (or nose). If the *samurai* was in dishonour, he used the long sword to commit *seppuku*.

Source 5.27 The *samurai's* sword became the symbol of his military position.

Check your learning

1. What was *bushido*? Give three examples of what was required under this code.
2. What action would a *samurai* take if he lost his honour?
3. Sketch the *samurai* shown in Source 5.26. Add labels to show his weapons and armour.
4. Imagine you are training a young *samurai*. In a short piece of writing, briefly describe what you would say to explain the rules of battle to him.

Castles and towns

Most buildings in Japan were made of lightweight wood. The material was easily available and was safer to use in an earthquake-prone area. Internal walls were typically screens made of paper or light wood, and rooms were divided by sliding doors. Initially, towns and castles were surrounded by simple moats or wooden fences, but more complicated structures began to appear from the 14th century.

By 1615, over 200 castles had been built to reflect the wealth and power of the *daimyo*. These castles were surrounded by the homes of the *daimyo*. He and his soldiers would retreat into the castle when attacked. When not under attack, many would live in the areas around the outer walls in more comfortable homes.

Himeji Castle, also known as White Heron Castle, is about 50 kilometres west of Kobe and about 650 kilometres west of modern Tokyo. It is built of wood and is covered in white plaster. It sits at the top of a hill, 45.6 metres above sea level. The central tower stands another 46.4 metres above the ground. It has a complicated defence system, as the castle is like a maze. When it was built, it incorporated the most up-to-date military technology of the period.

Check your learning

1. Why were Japanese buildings, on the whole, built from wood?
2. How did the Japanese make their wooden castles sturdy enough to sustain an attack?
3. Look carefully at Source 5.28.
   a. How was attack on the *donjon* made difficult?
   b. List three further defence mechanisms built into the castle.
   c. Create a table to explain the different types of housing enjoyed by *daimyo*, *samurai* and peasants.

The *donjon* (central tower) is connected by three corridors to three smaller towers that enclose a courtyard. To approach this, you have to weave your way through a series of twisting gates, walls and others towers.

The plaster on the walls was a flame retardant.

The castle is surrounded by a complex of moats, walls and gates.

Slots were built into the walls to allow arrows or guns to be fired out.

Several switchback gates were included to prevent easy approach to the central compound.

Source 5.29 The central tower (*donjon*) of Himeji Castle today

Source 5.28 Artist's impression of Himeji Castle

Social position

Social rank was determined at birth and was strictly defined. *Samurai* swore oaths of allegiance to their lord and had a duty to obey the code of *bushido*. People knew what was expected of them. The values of Confucianism and Buddhism were also controls on conduct. Together, these factors helped to keep the society stable and unified.

Samurai were expected to set an example. They wore plain, dark clothes bearing a clan crest so they could be easily identified. They wore their famous armour only on special occasions. Men wore two swords denoting their warrior status. Women would also train in martial arts such as archery.

Peasants (and artisans) were valued for providing vital elements of the economy—particularly food. They dressed simply, partly out of necessity because they were usually very poor. Their clothes were functional, reflecting the realities of muddy rice paddies, or fishing in the sun. When it rained, they would wear raincoats made of a grass-like plant called sedge, which made the peasants look like haystacks.

Source 5.30 The social structure of Japan under the shoguns

Traders and merchants were ranked below peasants because, according to Confucian thought, they were not as valued as other members of society. This was because they did not make or produce anything. In the extended peace of the Tokugawa period, many of these people became rich. They wore clothes reflecting their wealth. The *geisha* (performing artists) wore wooden or ivory pins in their hair, and elaborate multilayered *kimono*.

At the bottom of the social ladder were two outcast groups. The *eta* ('much filth') were involved in tasks such as butchery, leatherwork, or burials that involved the handling of dead people or animals. The *hinin* ('non-persons') were undesirables including street-cleaners, ex-convicts and actors.

focus on ...

continuity and change: the shoguns

Source 5.31 *The Tokugawa Shoguns*, 1603–1867, by the artist Yoshitoshi

In 1875, the artist Yoshitoshi drew an image that displayed all the Tokugawa shoguns, from the *samurai* warlord Ieyasu down to his distant descendant, the bureaucrat Tokugawa Yoshinobu. Yoshitoshi's illustration shows the great changes that came about during the 260-year rule of the Tokugawa clan. The earliest rulers are shown in armour or carrying weapons. Later shoguns from the 1700s onwards are shown wearing the drab, severe clothes of serious statesmen. The most recent shogun depicted (second figure from the left, at the bottom) has the clothes and hairstyle of a 19th-century British gentleman, demonstrating the growing influence of Western fashions on Japan.

Two of the shoguns depicted are boys. Ietsuna (1641–1701) was only ten when he became *shogun*. Ietsugu (1709–16) was only four years old when he gained the post, and died when he was seven. Although the *shogun's* job was supposedly a military post, these young boys were given the position to keep it in the Tokugawa family. So although the *shogun* ruled in the emperor's name, 'advisers' ruled, in the name of the child-*shogun*.

The *shogun* reclining in the centre and front, with a dog at his side, is Tsunayoshi (1646–1709), also known as the 'Dog *Shogun*'. This was because he decreed that no dog could be harmed in his realm. During his reign, dogs were treated like royalty, as demonstrated by the happy pet he is playing with.

Check your learning

1 Reorganise this list in order from highest to lowest social status in Japan: *samurai*, *daimyo*, *eta*, emperor, peasants, *shogun*.

2 What jobs were performed by the 'much filth'?

3 Why were peasants ranked above traders and merchants in Japanese society?

4 Why was a strict social order thought to be important?

5 If you were born into one class, could you change to another?

6 If a *shogun* was a military leader, how could a child be a *shogun*?

7 Look at Source 5.31. Identify the following shoguns:
   a those who ruled at the end of the civil war period
   b those who ruled during the long, peaceful *sakoku* period
   c those who ruled during the final days of Western influence.

bigideas

5.2 How did the rise of the shoguns change the way Japanese society was organised?

Remember

1 What title did Minamoto no Yoritomo demand when he took control of Japan in 1185?

2 Many Japanese buildings were made of wood.
   a Explain why wood was used.
   b How were castles fire-proofed?

3 Why would the White Heron castle be difficult to attack and capture? List as many reasons as you can.

Understand

4 A *shogun* had a military role. If there were 'no more wars' in Japan, why do you think the *shogun* did not simply resign and hand power back to the emperor?

5 Draw a diagram to explain the feudal system in Japan, using an example that shows the connection between the emperor, the *shogun* and the *daimyo*.

6 How were the Tokugawa able to limit the power of the *daimyo*?

7 Create a table to explain the different types of housing enjoyed by *daimyo*, *samurai* and peasants.

8 Look at Source 5.32. What is being done here during the battle? Why was this action taken?

Source 5.32 A *samurai* battle scene

Apply

9 Develop a week-long training program for a young *samurai*.

Analyse

10 There is another type of warrior in Japanese stories: the *ninja* assassins. These spies were supposedly drawn from the peasant class, and hence not allowed to join the *samurai*. They specialised in sneak attacks and trickery, using disguises to gain information. They wore black to be invisible at night. They were notorious for using special weapons such as the sharp 'throwing stars'.

However, there is no historical evidence for the *ninja*. Of course, if a *samurai* used dirty tricks, this would be dishonourable, so some people assumed that murders, betrayals and thefts were the work of a secret society. Most of the stories about *ninja* date from the 20th century, particularly the period after the World War II, when *samurai* fell out of favour. Authors began to tell stories about a spy class never mentioned in the history books, who had no sense of *samurai* 'honour'. In Japanese theatre, a man wearing black is officially 'invisible', so naturally these 'invisible' warriors were shown wearing black clothes.

   a Why do you think *ninja* were not allowed to learn the way of the *samurai*?
   b Suggest two reasons why *ninja* are usually shown wearing black.
   c Why would historians assume that dirty tricks were not the work of *samurai*? How might these relate to creating stories about a new 'type of warrior'?

Evaluate

11 List three ways in which the Japanese feudal system controlled the way society worked. How effective do you think these were for organising society?

Create

12 Look carefully at the design of the castle in Sources 5.28 and 5.29. Produce a design for your own Japanese castle that improves protection for one of these castles, using only the technology of medieval Japan.

Source 5.33 This view from the Imperial Palace in Tokyo (formerly known as Edo) shows how the country has rapidly modernised from 1867

5.3 How did life change under the rule of the shoguns and why did this period come to an end?

The Tokugawa shogunate, based in Edo, began its rule in 1603 by ending the conflict of the previous four centuries. The Tokugawa (or Edo) period brought 250 years of stability to Japan. The shoguns had national authority and the **daimyo** *had regional authority. There was a new emphasis on education, towns sprang up, merchants and trade became more and more important.*

The Tokugawa were determined to modernise Japan. *Shogun* Ieyasu began a rapid period of public building in his new headquarters in the castle town of Edo. Canals were built to deliver clean water and to drain marshland. Extensive road networks were built to support the constant travel of *daimyo* and their *samurai* to and from the new centre of society (although Kyoto, where the emperor lived, was still officially the capital). Towns and businesses grew along the roads. By 1721

the feudal town of Edo had become the largest city in the world, with over one million residents (see Source 5.34). Today, Edo is known as Tokyo, which is one of the largest cities in the world, with a population of 35 million people.

In agricultural regions, small farming groups were guaranteed land to cultivate. More land became available for farming as water projects delivered water for irrigation, and solutions to control flooding. Rice production began to move from survival to commercial levels.

The new military government, the Tokugawa *bakufu* (temporary government), collected income from rice production, mining, the selling of trading rights to merchants, and through their control of the major cities. Commercial trade in handicrafts grew, as did trade, in goods such as silk, cotton and pottery.

Source 5.34 A map of the city of Edo (with Edo Castle shown in the centre), drawn around 1844

Source 5.35 A satellite image of the Tokyo Imperial Palace (formerly Edo Castle) today

Check your learning

1. List some ways in which the Tokugawa shogunate modernised in Japan.
2. How did rice production change?
3. What do you think the person who created Source 5.34 would say if they could see Source 5.33?

Maintaining natural forest resources

During the Edo period, Japan developed an advanced forest management policy. Wood had always been a primary building material and a primary fuel in Japan. It had been used extensively in temples, shrines, castles, houses and shipbuilding. The huge growth in the size of cities led to increased demand for timber resources, which caused widespread deforestation. This, in turn, resulted in floods and soil erosion. Around 1666, the *shogun* introduced a policy to reduce logging and increase the planting of trees. From then on, only the *shogun* and *daimyo* could authorise the use of wood.

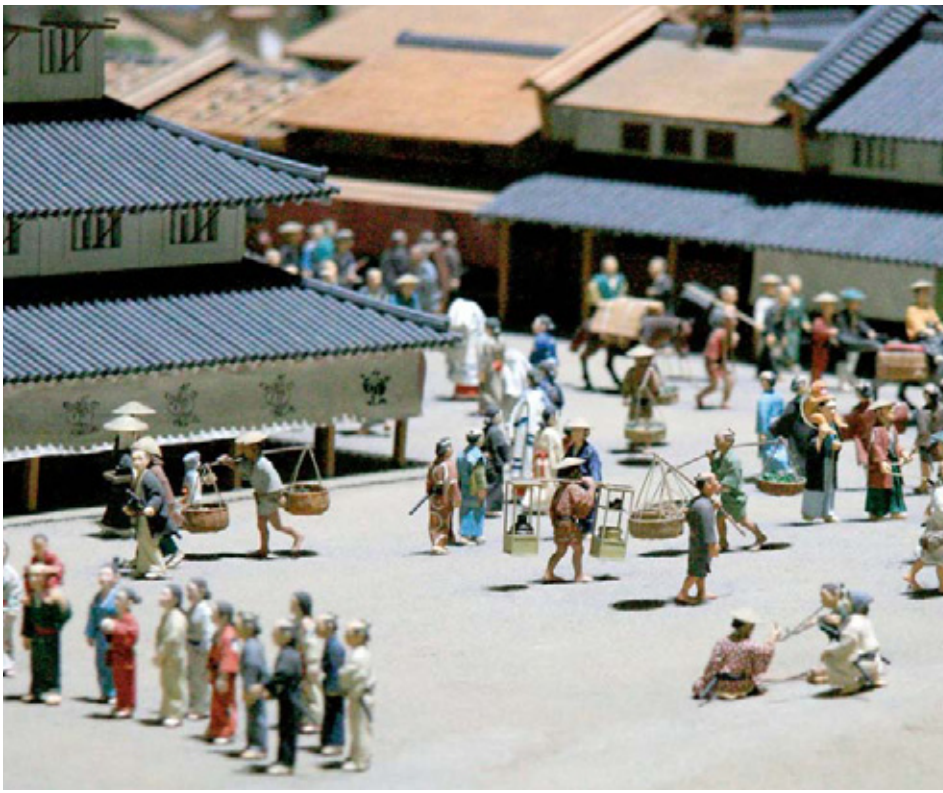
The Tokugawa established a policy of planting Japanese cedar trees and controlled who could own land in forest areas. The Tokugawa banned individual ownership of forested land, and limited

access to forests by the *daimyo*. Communities were encouraged to plant trees on common land. Local villages managed the forests by planting seedlings, cutting trees selectively and patrolling forest areas to stop the illegal removal of timber.

By 1724, timber harvesting had declined by 60 per cent. It remained at low levels for the next 30 years to allow for a recovery in Japan's forests.

Check your learning

1. Write a paragraph to explain, in broad terms, the impact the Tokugawa shogunate had on Japan.
2. Why were more roads required around Edo as the city modernised?
3. Look at Source 5.34. What do you think the thin blue lines surrounding and passing through Edo are, and why do you think they were important?
4. How did the Tokugawa shogunate raise money to help fund their building works?
5. Why was timber such an important resource in medieval Japan?
6. What environmental policies to protect forests were introduced to change the way timber was harvested?



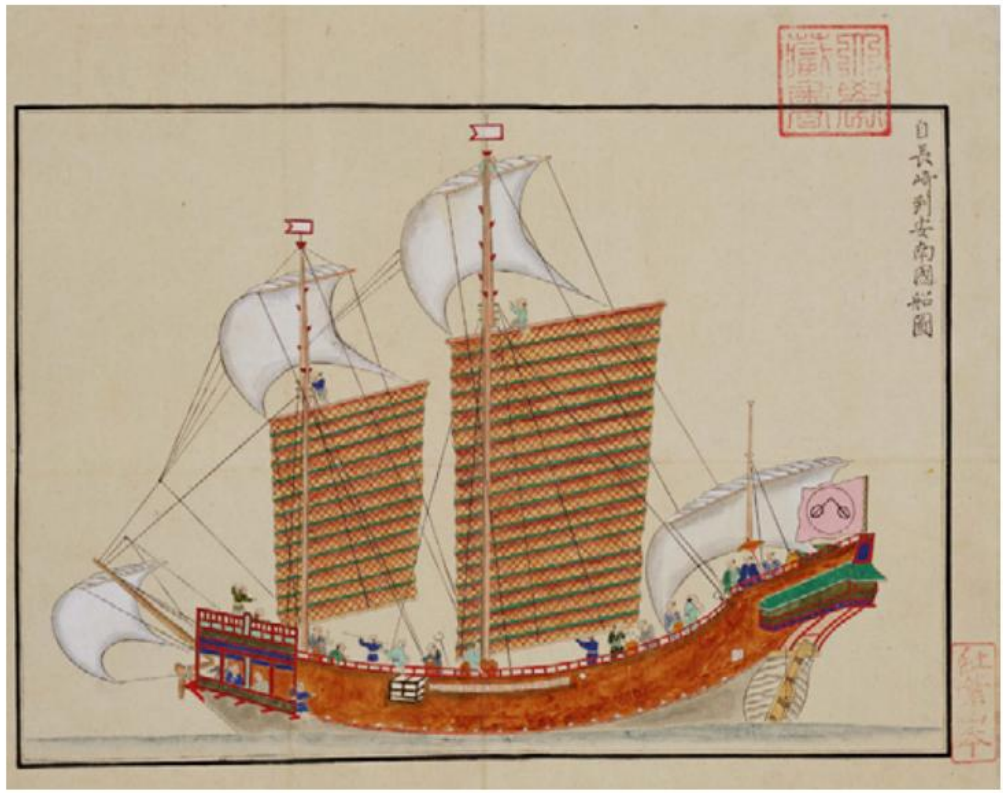
Source 5.36 This model of the old city of Edo (in the Edo-Tokyo Museum) shows how most of the buildings in Japan were constructed of wood.

Source 5.37 Japanese cedar forests were strictly managed in the Tokugawa period.

Foreign affairs and trade

Foreign affairs and trade were directed by the shogunate but for much of the Tokugawa period, Japan was almost closed to the outside world. Between 1603 and 1635, *shogun* Tokugawa Ieyasu issued 350 red-sealed permits for armed merchant ships destined for South-East Asian ports. He issued these permits to his favourite *daimyo* and to key merchants who were interested in foreign trade. Besides Japanese traders, 12 European and 11 China-based traders are known to have received permits.

The *shogun's* seal guaranteed the protection of the ships. He vowed to pursue any pirate or nation who would violate it. Japanese merchants mainly exported silver, copper, diamonds, swords and **artefacts**. Japan imported silk from China, and sugar and deerskins from South-East Asia.



Source 5.38
A 1634 painting of a red-seal ship

The pepper and spice trade was of limited interest to the Japanese who had a mainly vegetarian diet because of their Buddhist beliefs.

Based in Hirado, the Matsuura clan were among the first of the Japanese to trade with foreigners. Source 5.39 recounts their first meeting with the Dutch.

Source 5.39

In Keicho 2 [1597] on the 4th day of the 5th moon under the reign of lord Hoin, the Hollanders' ships came to Hirado for the first time to do trade. They brought rare things including: sapanwood (growing in a bucket), cloves (same), lychee (a fruit which dispels bad fevers), stone fire-arrow rockets, bottle-nosed rockets, hand-grenades, explosive jars.

From the records of the Matsuura clan

Check your learning

1. Why was the red seal so keenly sought by traders?
2. What products were imported into Japan when it started opening up to the outside world?
3. Reread Source 5.39. What kind of trouble might some of these foreign imports have caused?
4. Look at Source 5.40. From which Japanese port did most trade operate?

Source 5.40 Japanese trade routes during the 17th century

focus on ...

significance: William Adams and his influence

William Adams was a significant figure in the history of Japan. He was an Englishman who sailed on a Dutch ship. In 1598, he anchored off the coast of Kyushu. After a long and difficult voyage, only nine of his crew were fit enough to land. The crew were imprisoned when Portuguese Jesuits on the island claimed that they were pirates. Adams was questioned by the future *shogun* Ieyasu and struck up a relationship with him. In 1604 Adams was ordered by Ieyasu, now the *shogun*, to help build Japan's first ship based on Western design. The following year a second ship was constructed.

By 1608, Adams was acting for the *shogun*, helping to establish relationships with the Philippines. As trust in him grew, he gained a Japanese name, Miura Anjin ('the pilot from Miura'). He became a personal advisor to the *shogun*. He was given a good income and a large land estate. However, he was not allowed to leave Japan.

Adams helped to establish a Dutch trading base in Hirado, Japan. He also encouraged the English in Indonesia to trade with Japan, helping establish the British East India Company in 1613. The English gained a red seal that gave them the right to live, buy, sell and trade in Japan.

When Ieyasu died, Adams lost some of his influence but continued to trade regularly in South-East Asia. Adams died and was buried near Nagasaki in 1620; the English trade with Japan collapsed three years later. James Clavell immortalised this Western samurai in his novel *Shogun*.

Source 5.41 Navigator William Adams (standing), was the first Englishman to visit Japan in 1598. He was at first put in prison as a pirate, but was freed after building two ships for *shogun* Ieyasu (seated, second from left).

Check your learning

1. Why was William Adams able to influence the *shogun*?
2. What skills and technology did the Japanese learn from Adams?
3. Look at Source 5.41. What evidence does this source present that Adams was well treated and that the Japanese attitude towards the outsiders was changing?
4. How did Adams help to open up trade with Indonesia?

Tokugawa restriction on contact

The *daimyo* all wanted contact with foreigners, as they felt it would enable them to buy weapons and other products from Portuguese traders. Western guns were imported, as well as military and naval technology. The arrival of foreigners also broadened the learning of the Japanese. They were exposed to new ideas and to new ways of thinking about science, the arts and politics. One key new idea, Christianity, was to bring about great change in Japan.

Spread of Christianity

Christianity spread rapidly. By 1570, over 30 000 Japanese had become converts, even though those who became Christians had been persecuted from 1633 onwards.

Though Christianity was allowed to grow until about 1620, Tokugawa Ieyasu soon began to see it as a real threat to the stability of the shogunate. It threatened Japanese society on several levels. For instance, it called for loyalty and obedience to an entity outside Japan. Christian church congregations also allowed links between different social groups. This was frowned upon under the feudal system.

A new isolation

By 1633, there was a complete change of attitude from earlier years: *shogun* Iemitsu imposed a policy of isolation on Japan. This was called ***sakoku*** ('the locked country'). It was an attempt to limit Western influences—including philosophies and technologies—on Japanese people. Western books were banned, and Christians started to be persecuted.

The government refused to take part in any form of commerce or trade. Any Japanese person who moved outside the borders of the country and tried to return was punished by death. Limited contact was retained with China and the Netherlands through the port of Nagasaki. The *sakoku* policy was to remain in place until 1853 with the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry (See Source 5.51).

Check your learning

1. Why were some *daimyo* initially keen on contact with foreigners?
2. Why did Christianity come to be considered a threat to Japanese society by 1620?
3. Look at Source 5.42, and focus on the way the people are represented. Why do you think some characters are drawn much taller than others?
4. What was *sakoku* and why was it introduced?
5. What impact did *sakoku* have on Christians in Japan?

Source 5.42
This painting shows Portuguese missionary Francis Xavier and his entourage arriving in Japan in 1547. He converted over a thousand people to Christianity. Local *daimyo* allowed his work, as they wanted access to foreign ideas and trade.

A new focus on the arts

During the Edo period and especially during the *sakoku*, there was much cultural growth in Japan. The *samurai* educated themselves in areas such as literature, philosophy and the arts. They were expected to be as skilled in writing poems as they were in fighting. Townspeople also adopted a new focus on the arts—literature, theatre and crafts. The arts were expressions of learning and education.

focus on ...

continuity and change: gardens

Japanese gardens are considered to be art forms. Designers today, as they have done in the past, create unique areas that reflect the wealth, importance and social standing of the garden owner. Each feature has a special meaning, usually tied to religious beliefs. Gardens have been seen as miniature worlds. They do not have features such as statues but are trees set around with mosses and rocks. Water and rocks are used to create places where they inspire quiet meditation. Rocks, sand and water are used to divide areas and create a sense of balance. The shape of the garden represents mountains, islands and other natural features. Moss is used as a groundcover to create an impression of land covered by forest.

Source 5.43 A Zen Buddhist monk rakes gravel into wavelike patterns in the Zen garden at Zuiho-in temple in Kyoto, Japan. Zen priests also practise this raking to help their concentration.

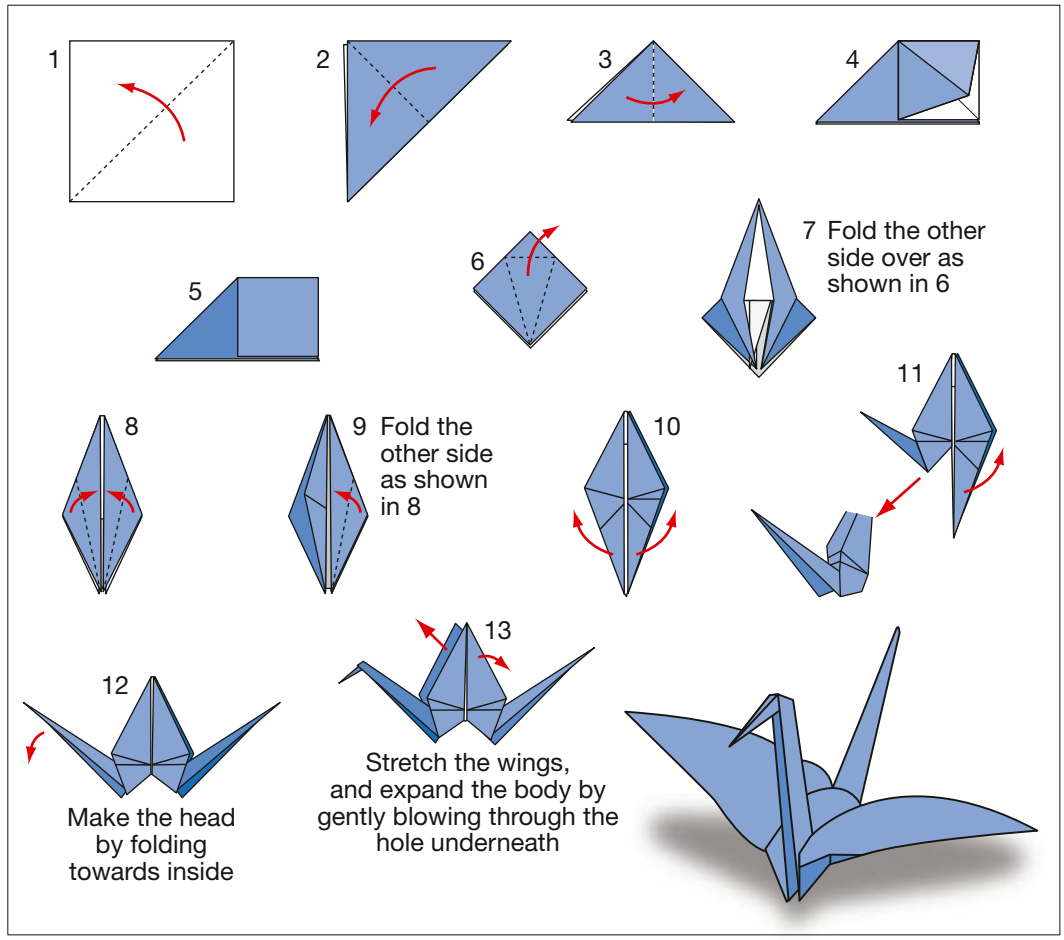
Source 5.44 This 550-year-old bonsai pine tree was pruned by *shogun* Tokugawa Iemitsu.

Bonsai

During the Kamakura period (1185–1333) when Zen Buddhism was spreading into Japan, imperial courtiers and Buddhist students returned with souvenir plants from China known as *penjing* (tray scenery). *Bonsai* or 'tray planting' still remains popular in Japan today. *Bonsai* are living plants grown in shallow ceramic trays. The roots and branches are continually trimmed to make the trees look as natural as possible. For example, a beech tree that might grow to 30 metres in the wild can be kept as small as 30 centimetres. One of the oldest known living *bonsai* trees is a pine tree pruned by *shogun* Tokugawa Iemitsu (see Source 5.44).

Origami

The Japanese word ***origami*** is made up of two smaller Japanese words: *ori*, meaning to fold, and *kami*, meaning paper. Japanese *origami* began in religious ceremonies after Buddhist monks carried paper from China to Japan during the 6th century. During the Edo period (1600–1868) *origami* became a popular form of entertainment for the merchant classes and the common people. It is now also a popular art form with children around the world.



Source 5.45 How to make a paper crane, using *origami* techniques

focus on ...

evidence: poetry

The Japanese created distinctive forms of poetry to capture the beauty of nature, and the joy and sadness of life.

Primary evidence of these art forms remain. One of the oldest forms of Japanese poetry is the unrhymed poem called a *tanka*. Source 5.46 is an example.

Source 5.46

On autumn nights
the dew is
colder than ever—
in every clump of grasses
the insects weep

Tanka from the Kokinshu (author unknown)

From *tanka* poetry, *renga* and *haiku* poetry formed. *Renga* poetry was written by many poets, working together. There were sometimes hundreds of stanzas. The opening stanza of the *renga* became what we now know as the *haiku*. *Haiku* became very popular in the 17th century. The *haiku* is composed of 17 syllables (single sound units) divided into three parts—one with 5 syllables, one with 7 syllables and another with 5 syllables. The most famous poet of the Edo period in Japan was Matsuo Basho. His *haiku* poems, such as Source 5.47, captured the feeling of a scene in a few simple words.

Source 5.47

furu ike ya / kawazu tobikomu / mizu no oto

an ancient pond / a frog jumps in / the splash of water

Matsuo Basho, 1686

Theatre

Japan is known for a stylised form of theatre called *Noh*. It began in the 14th century as a dramatic way of presenting Shinto and Buddhist beliefs. It came to be used for non-religious themes as well. *Noh* plays were performed on a bare stage. The actors and chorus were all male, and even performed the parts of women. The actors wore masks along with detailed costumes. They chanted poetry, and danced and gestured to the music of drums and flutes.

Newer types of theatre developed during the Tokugawa era. *Kabuki* theatre involved spectacular scenery and costumes with dramatic actions. It initially included female performers until they were banned in 1629. *Bunraku* is a form of traditional Japanese puppet theatre, founded in 1684. In *bunraku* theatre, large puppets perform to a story chanted by a narrator. Unlike human actors, puppets could be beheaded on stage, or undertake actions impossible for humans.

Source 5.48 A modern *bunraku* performance

Martial arts

Samurai felt that Zen Buddhism would help them to develop their minds and body, so that these would act as one when required. Weapons would become an extension of their mind so that they could fight without fear or undisciplined thought. Followers of Zen Buddhism learned to control their bodies through martial arts or combat sports.

Jujutsu

Jujutsu ('the gentle art') was used to train for close combat. The aim of *jujutsu* is to use the opponent's energy against him, rather than directly opposing it. This is achieved through holds and techniques to throw an opponent off-balance.

Kenjutsu

Kenjutsu ('the art of the sword') involved the practice of swordsmanship. During the Edo period, the development of the bamboo practice sword and protective armour allowed full sparring with reduced risk of harm. This came to be known as *kendo* ('the way of the sword').

Sumo wrestling

Sumo wrestling, an ancient temple ritual, became a form of professional sporting entertainment during the Edo period. It is still a national sport today. The original professional wrestlers were probably *samurai* who needed another form of income. A *sumo* tournament is lengthy, and can go on for 15 days. During that time, the *sumo* wrestler will carry out matches against opponents using many of the 70 possible categories of moves. A *sumo* fighter is usually very big, with a large belly, around which he wears a *mawashi* belt that indicates his rank. As the wrestling bout starts, salt will be thrown into the ring before the referee enters carrying his paddle. Salt purification dates back to the days when *sumo* was used in the Shinto religion.

Source 5.49 *Kendo* is a modern martial art based on the practice of *kenjutsu* used by *samurai*.

Source 5.50 *Sumo* tournament in Tokyo in 2009

Check your learning

1. *Samurai* were essentially warriors. How did life change for them during periods of stability and isolation in Japan?
2. How did Japanese gardens show a connection with nature?
3. How did the Chinese practice called *penjing* change gardening in Japan?
4. Zen Buddhism had a strong connection with Japanese art forms. List three artistic forms related to Zen Buddhism.
5. Which significant person pruned the *bonsai* tree shown in Source 5.44?
6. What is *haiku*?
7. a What role did women play in Japanese theatre?
   b How did this change for a time when *kabuki* theatre was introduced?
8. The martial arts illustrated on this page were all important training techniques for which group in society?
9. Which martial art developed into a professional sport still popular in Japan today?

Japan opens up

In the mid 1800s, countries around the world began to push for Japan's restrictions of foreign trade to be lifted. One such country was the United States of America.

On July 8, 1853 four black ships commanded by Commodore Matthew Perry of the United States Navy anchored at Edo Bay (now Tokyo Bay). Commodore Perry had arrived in Japan to persuade the Japanese to open up their borders and trade with Japan. He carried with him a letter from the President of the United States to the Emperor of Japan.

Because Japan had been cut off from the outside world for so long, the Japanese had never seen steamships before. They thought the ships were 'giant dragons puffing smoke' and were shocked by the size of the ships and the number of the guns they carried. In total, the four ships carried around 1000 men and 61 guns.

Commander Perry was an experienced naval officer who, at the age of 60, had enjoyed a long and distinguished career. He knew that this mission to Japan would be one of his most significant assignments. After dropping anchor in Edo Bay, Perry waited. He refused to receive low-ranking diplomats, instead insisting on seeing only the most senior representatives of the emperor.

Source 5.51 An artist's impression of the 'black ships' entering Edo Bay (now Tokyo Bay)

Perry refused demands made by the Japanese to leave, and threatened them by fixing his weapons on the capital. The Japanese government realised that their country was in no position to defend itself against a foreign power, and Japan could not retain its isolation policy without risking war.

On 31 March 1854, after weeks of diplomatic talks, Perry received what he had been working towards: a treaty with Japan known as the Convention of Kanagawa. It was signed by Perry and the Tokugawa shogunate. In the years that followed, Japanese ports began opening up to American trade. After more than 200 years of isolation, Japan began opening up to the world.

The decline of the shoguns

Many Japanese people resented the increased power and position of the Westerners that followed Perry's arrival. The *daimyo* warlords began to lose faith in the *shogun* who was, after all, supposed to suppress 'foreign barbarians'. There was talk of forcing his resignation. As a result, the power of the *shogun* decreased. In 1867, *shogun* Tokugawa Yoshinobu handed back power to Emperor Meiji.

On 3 January 1869, after a brief war between rival supporters, Emperor Meiji formally declared the restoration of his power.

The handing over of power from the *shogun* to the emperor and the moving of the imperial court to Edo from Kyoto represented the return of imperial rule. Edo was renamed Tokyo ('Eastern Capital'). The new emperor quickly made his mark by establishing Shinto as the state religion. This enforced his power, as under Shinto he was viewed as a living god. In 1871, it was declared that all domains were now to be returned to the emperor. The 300 domains were reduced to 75 and turned into areas known as prefectures under the control of a state-appointed governor.

Modernising and Westernising Japan

The emperor moved rapidly to modernise Japan. Western fashions and ideas were quickly adopted, often at the cost of traditional beliefs. The military was strengthened, with the adoption of Western weapons and a modern navy. The government instituted nationwide military conscription (mandatory military service) in 1873, ordering that every male would serve for four years in the armed forces upon turning 21. *Samurai* were no longer allowed to walk about town bearing swords; many became officers in the newly modernised army and navy.

Japan began to aggressively expand overseas, winning wars with China in 1894–95 and with Russia in 1904–05. Japan gained the island of Taiwan from China in 1895, and annexed Korea in 1910, becoming a powerful new force in the region.

A new constitution was written under the guidance of Prince Ito Hirobumi. It was adopted in 1889. A period of rapid modernisation and industrialisation followed.

Check your learning

1. Why was Commodore Perry successful in gaining trading rights in Japan?
2. Look at Source 5.51. What impression do you think Perry's ships gave to the Japanese?
3. What rights did the Convention of Kanagawa give to the United States of America?
4. What impact did the Convention of Kanagawa have on Japan's period of isolation from the rest of the world?
5. How do you think the Japanese reaction would have been to the Americans' attitude?
6. How did the *shogun* 'lose face' when Perry arrived and demanded to speak to the emperor?

The industrialisation of Japan required a huge increase in production capabilities. Shipyards, iron smelters and spinning mills were built. Coal was in heavy demand to power factories, trains and ships. Industrial centres grew quickly with the migration of workers from the countryside. A national railway system connected industrial regions with ports, and trade developed rapidly through a series of treaties created with the Western nations.

Source 5.52 Coal production in Japan, 1875–1913

Year	Coal production (metric tonnes)
1875	600 000
1885	1 200 000
1895	5 000 000
1905	13 000 000
1913	21 300 000

Source 5.53 Length of train tracks laid in Japan, 1872–1914

Year	Track (kilometres)
1872	29
1883	386
1887	1 030
1894	3 380
1904	7 564
1914	11 426

Source 5.54 An artist's impression of the Tokyo terminus of the new Tokyo–Yokohama railway, built in 1872 with the aid of foreign engineers

Check your learning

1. Why do you think the imperial court moved from Kyoto to Edo?
2. List two things Emperor Meiji did to quickly demonstrate his authority?
3. How did the role and status of the *samurai* change under Emperor Meiji?
4. How did Japan expand through military engagements?
5. Explain why coal became important in the industrialisation of Japan.
6. Look at Source 5.52. Coal production in Japan increased eightfold between 1885 and 1895. How many years did it take for coal production to quadruple?
7. Why do you think the development of the rail system was important for trade?

bigideas

5.3 How did life change under the rule of the shoguns and why did this period come to an end?

Remember

1 What record did Edo hold by 1721?
2 What is the name of Edo today?
3 What was special about the red-seal ships?
4 Why did *shogun* Iemitsu isolate Japan during the *sakoku* period?
5 Explain what Commander Perry did to ensure that he would be able to open up trade for the United States of America.

Understand

6 How did Francis Xavier help to change Japanese society?
7 What happened to Christians during the *sakoku* period?
8 What influence did Buddhism have on the martial arts?
9 What influence did Shintoism have on sumo wrestling?
10 What measures were introduced during the Tokugawa shogunate to help offset the demand for Japan's favoured building material?
11 Explain why William Adams was a historically significant figure.

Apply

12 You have seen in this section how Japanese society was changed by the introduction of such practices as *bonsai*, *origami*, new forms of theatre and martial arts. What factors (either from outside or within) do you think have most changed Australian society in the last 100 years?

Analyse

13 What changes occurred in Japanese society as a result of Western trade and Western ideas? Use examples of people such as William Adams, to show the influence that the West had on Japanese lifestyle and thought.

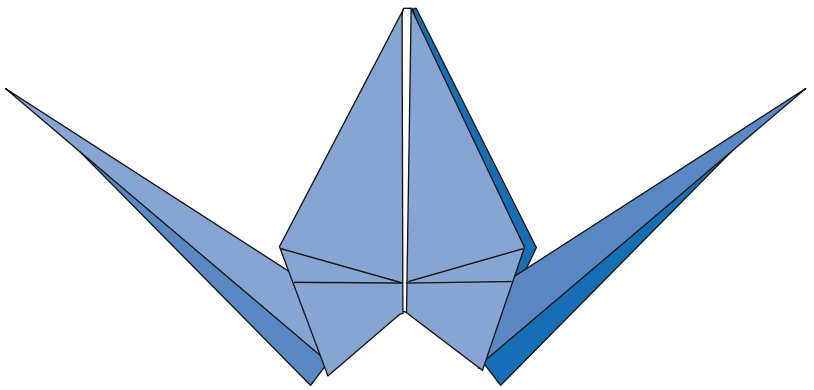
Evaluate

14 Think about what you have learned about the shogunate in Japan. Overall, do you think it was a period that produced gains for Japan, or one that slowed down its development? Give reasons for your response.

Create

15 Select one art form from Japanese culture that particularly interests you. Investigate it further by doing *one* of the following:

- making a model
- performing a role play
- making an oral presentation (with examples)
- preparing a facts chart
- something of your choice (with your teacher's approval).



connectingideas

Legacies of the shoguns

Soon after the period of isolation ended in 1853, Japan began a dramatic transformation into one of the world's wealthiest industrial nations. It quickly learned from the West and became a leader in technology and industry. In the 20th century, the Japanese became global leaders in the manufacture of electronics, motor vehicles and many other goods. The customs and principles developed in the ordered society of the shoguns underlined the development of modern Japanese society.

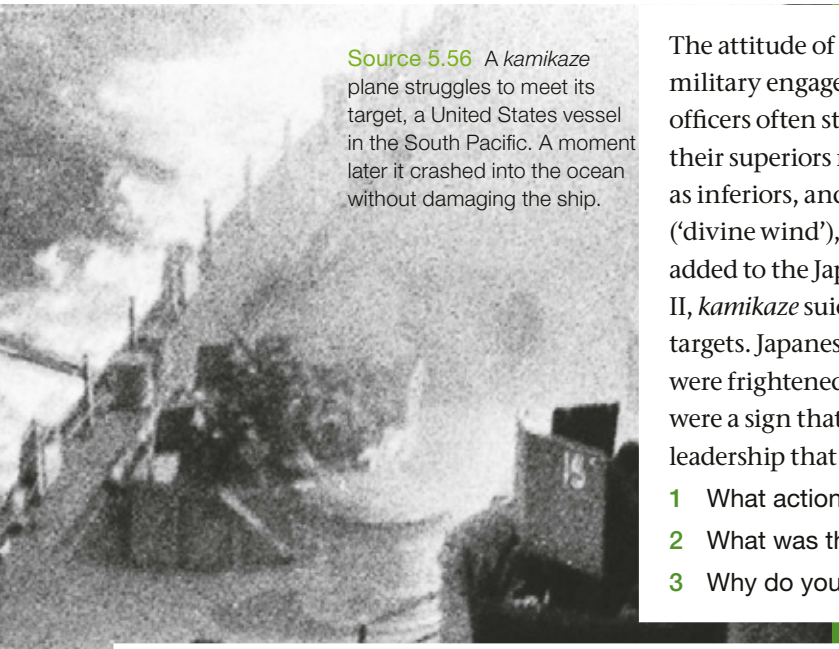
Source 5.55 When accepting a business card from a Japanese person, do so with both hands with the writing face up. Read it, nod and place it in your wallet.

The codes of behaviour established between the *daimyo* and *samurai* are still an important part of Japanese society today. Japanese workers are renowned for their loyalty to their companies and dedication to work. In the 1920s, major Japanese corporations began to function in a similar manner to that of the *daimyo–samurai* relationship. In return for lifetime job security, employees were expected to work hard and demonstrate loyalty to the firm. The Japanese exchange business cards on first meeting, partly to determine who is the superior in any interaction.

1 What echoes are there of the feudal system in Japan today?

2 Do you think the same system applies in Australian businesses?

3 What do you think the scene in Source 5.55 tells us about the importance of loyalty to a company?



Source 5.56 A *kamikaze* plane struggles to meet its target, a United States vessel in the South Pacific. A moment later it crashed into the ocean without damaging the ship.

The attitude of the *samurai* became a continuing feature of Japanese military engagements, particularly in the 1930s and 1940s. Over-eager young officers often started conflicts out of a sense of 'loyalty' to what they believed their superiors might want. Japanese soldiers in Asia treated conquered peoples as inferiors, and regarded surrender as 'dishonourable'. The idea of the *kamikaze* ('divine wind'), which described the typhoon that ended the Mongol invasions, added to the Japanese belief that they could not be defeated. During World War II, *kamikaze* suicide pilots flew planes loaded with extra fuel and explosives into targets. Japanese war propaganda described them as brave warriors, but many were frightened youths who did not dare disobey orders. The suicide missions were a sign that Japan was already on the brink of defeat, but with a military leadership that refused to 'lose face' by admitting it.

1 What action did *samurai* take if they committed a dishonourable act?
2 What was the *kamikaze* and how did it stop the Mongol invasion?
3 Why do you think *kamikaze* pilots were willing to take the action they did?

The emperor of Japan is called *Tenno* or 'heavenly sovereign' in Japan. However, in 1947, under pressure from the Allies after World War II, he officially decreed that he was not a living god. The emperor is the head of the Japanese imperial family and the head of the Shinto religion. The role of the emperor of Japan has historically alternated between a ceremonial role and that of an active ruler. Up until 1945, the emperor had the power to declare war and undertake treaties, but in the 1947 constitution the emperor is referred to as 'the symbol of the state and the unity of the people'. The Japanese monarchy is the oldest continuing hereditary monarchy in the world.

1 Does Emperor Akihito play a direct role in government today or a ceremonial one? Explain.
2 What does Emperor Akihito have in common with Queen Elizabeth II?
3 What role did the emperor play throughout the shogunate period in Japan?
4 Emperor Meiji played a more controlling role. What action did he take?

Source 5.57 Queen Elizabeth II presents a gift to Emperor Akihito and Empress Michiko of Japan at Buckingham Palace. Both monarchs are also heads of their respective state religions.

Q

People in shogunate Japan showed great respect for elders in families and clans and for their emperors and shoguns. What is your view on how we treat older people in Australian society and what respect do we show to important Australian officials such as the prime minister? Are we similar to or different from the Japanese with regard to respect? Discuss as a class.

depth study

Expanding contacts

The period from 1200 to 1500 CE was one of exploration and expansion. Mongols advanced from their Asian homeland to conquer vast areas; a deadly epidemic of bubonic plague (known as the **Black Death**) spread along trade routes from Asia to Africa and Europe; and Spanish explorers crossed the Atlantic to discover new worlds. Some societies grew and changed as a result of expanding contacts while others vanished forever.

In this depth study you will have the choice of studying ONE of the following options:

- Mongol expansion
- The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa
- The Spanish conquest of the Americas [obook only].

As shown in Source C1, the period between 1200 and 1500 CE saw the expansion of empires, and the spread of disease across land and sea boundaries.

Source C1 The world's experience of expanding contacts

EXPANDING CONTACTS
London
EUROPE
Paris
BLACK SEA
SPAIN
Cadiz
Rome
Constantinople
Tunis
MEDITERRANEAN SEA
Damascus
Baghdad
Cairo
PERSIAN GULF
ARABIA
AFRICA
Nile River
MONGOLIA
TIBET
ASIA
Ganges River
Peking
CHINA
Yangtze River
INDIA
Calcutta
SOUTH CHINA SEA
Equator
INDIAN OCEAN
NEW HOLLAND (AUSTRALIA)
KEY
Mongol homeland
Mongol expansion
Spanish voyages
The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

Expanding contacts

Between *c.* 1206 and *c.* 1368, the Mongol Empire expanded into Asia and Western Europe. Although they did not realise it, its armies helped spread a disease known as bubonic plague. By 1346 CE an epidemic called the Black Death, reached Europe where it killed about one-third of the people. As Europe recovered from the Black Death, the search for new trade routes and the promise of riches encouraged European navigators to sail across uncharted oceans. By the early 15th century, an age of exploration and discovery had begun. The following pages are designed to:

- help you to understand some broad patterns of historical change
- make links to—and between—the depth studies
- consolidate your understanding of the period.

How did societies change from the ancient period to the beginning of the modern age?

Mongol expansion

- Genghis Khan (1162–1227 CE) united Mongol tribesmen and other nomadic peoples. His fierce armies conquered areas of land throughout Asia, and southern Russia to the Mongol Empire.
- A strict legal system was set up and written records were kept.
- Capital cities became administrative centres. Tribes and peoples that had previously been at war followed the law and lived together in peace.

The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

- The Black Death caused a dramatic fall in populations of Asia, Europe, north Africa and the Middle East.
- The Black Death resulted in social and economic changes within society. For a time, trade, manufacturing and food production declined but eventually survivors had better lives.
- Artists and writers focused on recording the effects of the Black Death and there was a renewed interest in science. The search for new sources of goods contributed to an age of exploration and discovery.

The Spanish conquest of the Americas [obook only]

- The Inca Empire of South America developed during the 12th century. The Aztecs were warriors who settled in Central America during the 13th century. Their capital, Tenochtitlan, was home to over 200 000 people.
- In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed from Spain seeking a passage to Asia. He landed in the area known as the Bahamas, beginning the Spanish conquest of the Americas.
- Between *c.* 1492 and *c.* 1500, diseases, hunger and brutal treatment had reduced the native population from 30 million to 6 million.
- Hernando Cortés and his **conquistadors** attacked and destroyed Tenochtitlan, killing 40 000 natives in 1519.

Check your learning

1. Using Source C1, describe the major changes that occurred during the period c.1200–c.1500.
2. The Mongols were known as fierce and frightening warriors but the society they created was a peaceful and productive one. In small groups, conduct some research to discover how this was achieved.
3. Choose either the Black Death or the Spanish conquest of the Americas. What were some of the immediate and long-term effects of these events?

What were the key religious beliefs and how did they influence society?

Mongol expansion

- Nomadic Mongol tribes worshipped the earth and sky, a belief system known as shamanism. Spiritual leaders were important members of society.
- Tibetan Buddhism was introduced from India in the 4th century. It became the most important religion for the Mongols. In the 7th century, Christian missionaries and Islamic traders brought their religions to the Empire. Confucian scholars and Tibetan Buddhist monks acted as court advisers.
- Because trade, cultural exchange and social interaction were all considered to be of great importance under the law, all religions were tolerated and coexisted peacefully.

The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

- The Church was seen by many as having failed to protect society from the Black Death. Many people turned away from the strict rules of the Church. They gambled, drank and feasted. Other people became even more devoted to the Church. They whipped themselves to atone for their sins. They were known as flagellants.
- Divisions within the Catholic Church resulted in a weakening of its power and influence. Education was no longer tied to the Church and new schools and centres of higher learning were established.
- Jews were persecuted in some parts of France, Switzerland and Germany. Many Christian communities unfairly blamed them for causing the plague. To escape, many Jews migrated to Poland and Russia.

Spanish conquest of the Americas [obook only]

- The Incas believed that their ruler was the direct decendant of the Sun god Inti. He had absolute power over his subjects. Aztec priests carried out terrible rituals, including human sacrifices, in specially built temples and pyramids. They believed that unless the gods were satisfied, the world would come to an end.
- The Spanish considered both the Aztecs and Incas to be pagans. They brought their very strict and severe Catholic beliefs to the Americas and set about converting the natives. Missionaries built permanent settlements to educate the natives and save their souls. Some Spanish missionaries saw how terribly native peoples were being treated and called for an end to slavery.

Check your learning

1. The Mongols practised religious tolerance. What does this mean? Give examples. Why might this have helped the Mongols to create a mighty empire?
2. During the Black Death, many people stopped believing in the power of religion and the Church. Why do you think this might have happened?
3. Some Catholic missionaries complained to the Spanish king about the cruel treatment of the Indigenous people of the Americas. What things might they have told him?

What were the causes and effects of contacts between societies?

Mongol expansion

- Under the leadership of Genghis Khan, Mongol armies extended the empire from the east coast of China through to the eastern borders of Europe.
- Mongol rulers encouraged trade and travel within the empire. Merchants, craftsmen, ambassadors and missionaries were guaranteed safe passage along the network of roads that linked different parts of the empire.
- Cultural exchange was encouraged and an open attitude towards foreigners promoted the flow of products, ideas and learning between Europe and Asia. Skilled craftsmen produced fine textiles and Mongol rulers were **patrons** of the arts.
- After Genghis Khan's death, Mongol rulers continued to expand the empire. By the 14th century, it had been divided into four administrative regions known as *khanates*, but Mongol trade routes were in decline and they had no control over expanding sea trade. The high cost of running the empire weakened it, and eventually its territories were lost.

The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

- There are many theories about how the Black Death spread, but the most common theory suggests that the bubonic plague originated in China around 1334 and was carried along land and sea routes (such as the Silk Road) to North Africa, the Middle East and Europe.
- Many historians believe it was carried by Mongol warriors as their empire expanded.
- Infected fleas living on rats spread the disease to humans. It was then spread by person-to-person contact. Because little was known of hygiene and there was no proper medical treatment, the bubonic plague soon developed into a pandemic.

The Spanish conquest of the Americas [obook only]

- In 1492, Christopher Columbus sailed west seeking a shorter and safer passage to Asia. The Spanish king funded the voyage hoping to gain control of the spice trade.
- On his first voyage, Columbus discovered the area now known as the Bahamas, beginning the Spanish conquest of the Americas. Spanish colonists settled and farmed sugar cane using native slave labour. They introduced diseases like smallpox and measles, which killed thousands of the native people.
- Permanent trade routes and settlements were established in the colonies of the New World in order to bring gold and silver back to Spain.
- New species of fruits, vegetables and animals were also brought back from the new colonies and were introduced to Europe. Spanish settlers also took horses, pigs and cattle to the New World, along with crops such as wheat and citrus fruits.
- The native population was converted to Catholicism and the ancient societies and beliefs of the Incas and Aztecs largely disappeared.

Check your learning

1 How did trade and territorial expansion during the period *c*.1200–1500:
   a create the Mongol Empire?
   b help spread the Black Death from Asia to the West?
   c change the ancient cultures of the Aztec and Incas?

What significant people, groups or ideas from this period influenced the rest of the world?

In his youth he was known as Temujin. His reputation as a warrior and military leader grew. In 1206, he was renamed Genghis Khan (Great Khan) and elected leader of all the Mongol tribes. He brought organisation, unity and discipline to the already skilled and fierce Mongol warriors.

He was open to new ideas and promoted peaceful coexistence between all races and religions. He was interested in the arts and learning. He created a system of administration and laws and actively promoted the growth of safe trade routes and cultural exchange between Europe and Asia.

Genghis Khan was born around 1170. He was injured in battle and died in 1227.

Mongol expansion

Genghis Khan

1170–1227

Michel de Nostredame, more commonly known as Nostradamus, was born in 1503 and died in 1566.

He is one of the most famous plague doctors. His methods were different from those of other plague doctors. He recommended patients use clean bedding, breathe fresh air and drink only boiled water.

In his later years, his interest in astrology and paranormal events led him to write his famous prophesies.

As a student, his reputation as a healer spread and he continued his medical studies. He lost his own wife and son to the plague in 1537.

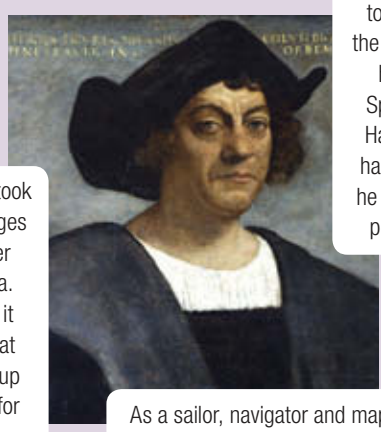
The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

Nostradamus

1503–1566

Christopher Columbus was born in Genoa, Italy in 1451. He died in 1506.

In 1492, he set sail on his voyage of exploration. His route took him through the Bahamas (which he claimed for Spain), Cuba and Haiti. Thinking he had reached India, he called the native peoples Indians.



Columbus undertook three more voyages to find a shorter passage to Asia. After his death it was realised that he had opened up the New World for colonisation.

As a sailor, navigator and map-maker, he tried to find a shorter and safer passage to Asia by sailing west (avoiding the trade routes on land dominated by the Ottoman Empire).

The Spanish conquest of the Americas [obook only]

Christopher Columbus

1451–1506

Check your learning

1. Genghis Khan is remembered as a fierce and ruthless warrior whose armies conquered vast territories. What leadership skills did he then employ to ensure that his empire flourished?
2. Nostradamus was said to be ahead of his time in his treatment of plague sufferers. Explain what he did to assist the sick. Why might his methods have been more successful than those used by other plague doctors?
3. History credits Christopher Columbus with the discovery of the Americas. Do you think he would be surprised to know this? Why?

depth study option

Mongol expansion

(*c.* 1206–*c.* 1368)

The Mongol Empire grew out of a territory that stretches from modern-day Kazakhstan to China. The sparsely populated grassland area has an extreme climate and very few trees. Summers are brief and hot, and winters are long and very cold. The people were nomadic herders who moved with their horses, cattle and sheep, following seasonal food sources.

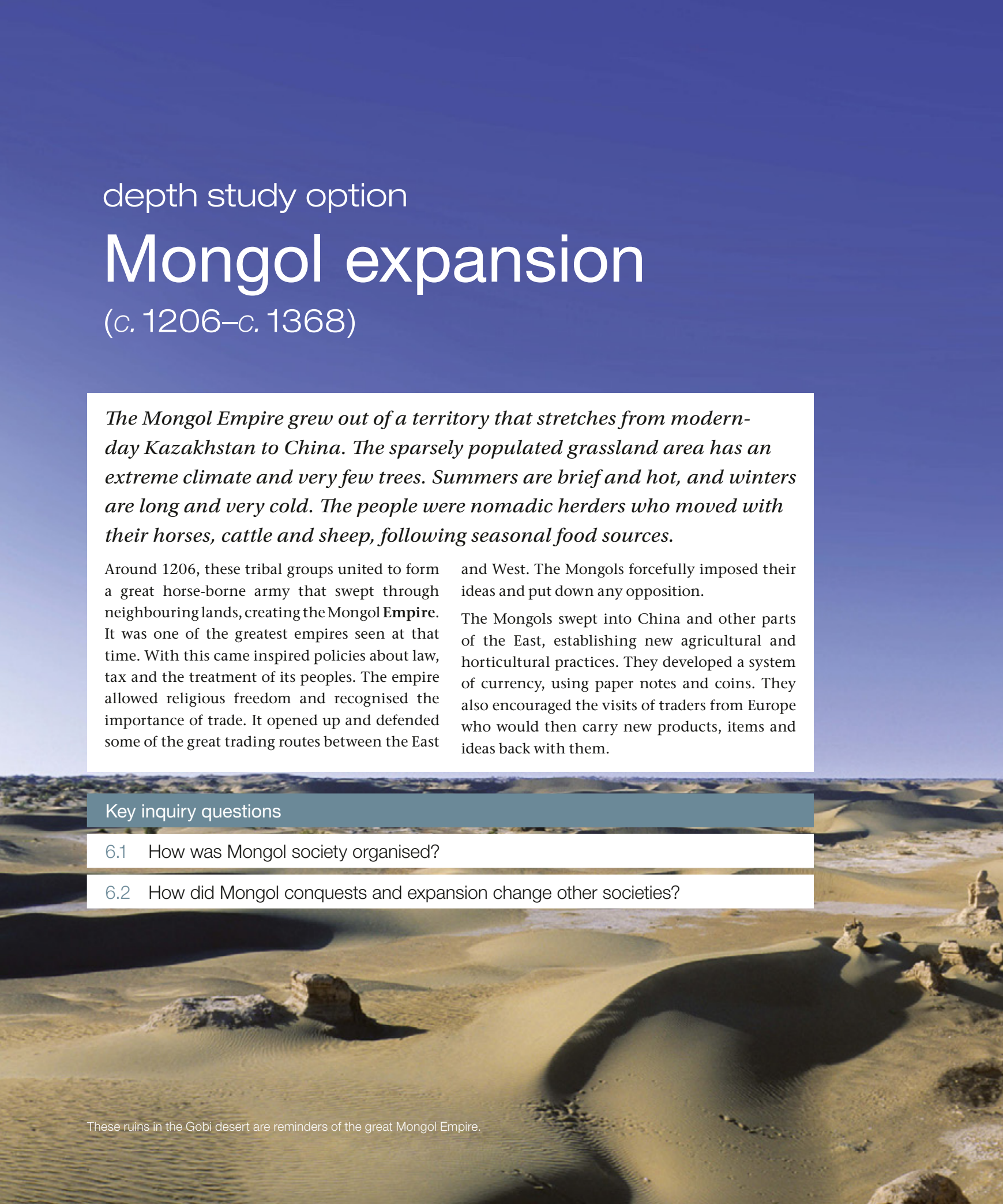
Around 1206, these tribal groups united to form a great horse-borne army that swept through neighbouring lands, creating the Mongol **Empire**. It was one of the greatest empires seen at that time. With this came inspired policies about law, tax and the treatment of its peoples. The empire allowed religious freedom and recognised the importance of trade. It opened up and defended some of the great trading routes between the East and West. The Mongols forcefully imposed their ideas and put down any opposition.

The Mongols swept into China and other parts of the East, establishing new agricultural and horticultural practices. They developed a system of currency, using paper notes and coins. They also encouraged the visits of traders from Europe who would then carry new products, items and ideas back with them.

Key inquiry questions

6.1 How was Mongol society organised?

6.2 How did Mongol conquests and expansion change other societies?



These ruins in the Gobi desert are reminders of the great Mongol Empire.

6

bigpicture

The Mongol Empire grew from the leadership of Temujin, later known as Genghis Khan. He united all the Mongol, Kerait, Merkit, Naiman and Tatar tribes, which lived in the area known as the Eurasian ***steppe****, into a powerful force that rapidly established an empire. The empire spread throughout Asia and into Europe. The Mongol Empire became the largest land-based empire known in history.*

CE

1190
Temujin (Genghis Khan) becomes king of the Mongols

1206
Genghis Khan unites all Mongol and **Tatar** tribes

1215
Mongols capture Beijing by way of the Great Wall of China

1218
North China is conquered and the Mongols spread towards Turkestan, Persia and Russia

1227
Genghis Khan dies

1229
Ogodei, Genghis Khan's third son, becomes Great Khan

1235
Karakorum is established as the Mongol capital on the River Orkhan

1236
The Khanate of the Golden Horde is established

1241
A combined force of Poles, Czechs and Germans attempt to halt the Mongol invasion of Europe at the Battle of Liegnitz (Legnica, Poland); the Great Khan Goodei dies

1251
Mongke Kahn elected as Great Khan

1264
Kublai Khan's rule begins

1271
Kublai Khan establishes the Yuan Dynasty, claiming to be the ruler of all China

An artist's impression of Genghis Khan

Yurts (portable homes made of felt) on the Mongolian steppe

An artist's impression of Mongol army attacking Liegnitz, 1241

1368
The Mongols are driven out of Beijing by the founders of the Ming dynasty

1353
End of Ilkhan (Mongol) rule in Persia

1294
With the death of Kublai Khan, the empire begins to break apart

1281
Second invasion of Japan fails

1276
Marco Polo arrives in Khanbalikh (modern Beijing)

1274
Attempted invasion of Japan prevented because of a storm

An artist's impression of Marco Polo at the court of Kublai Khan

Source 6.1 Timeline of some key events in the Mongol expansion

Source 6.2 A re-enactment of a 13th-century Mongol army expedition

6.1 How was Mongol society organised?

*The Mongols were a tribe who lived on the great Eurasian **steppe**, a large area of grassland stretching from the Ukraine in eastern Europe to China. This area has short, hot, dry summers (with temperatures reaching 40 degrees Celsius) and bitterly cold winters. The soil is poor, so agriculture never developed. Grasslands were good only for the grazing of limited numbers of animals. The river valleys provided water and sheltered areas where trees would grow; other areas had very few trees.*

Traditional Mongol society and lifestyle

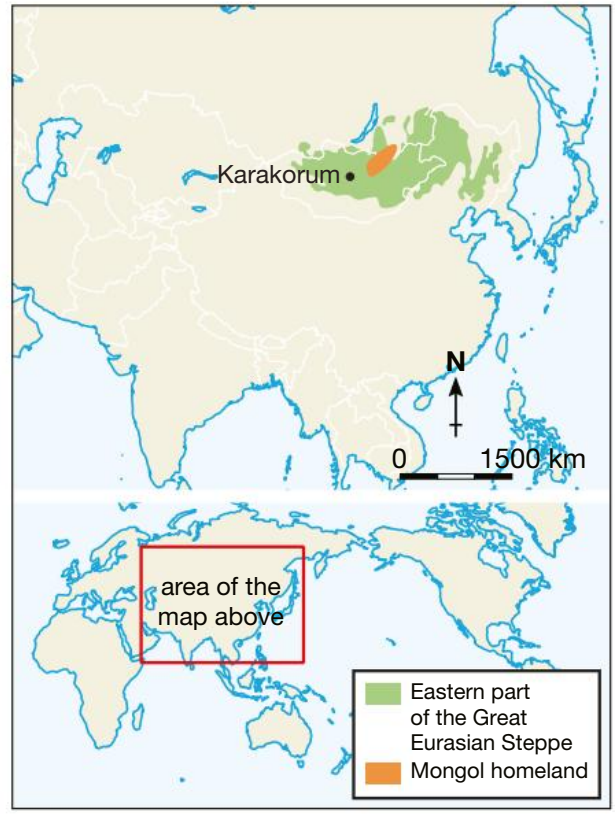
The Mongols were one of several steppe tribes. Other such tribes were the **Tatars** (also spelled Tartars), who lived, like the Mongols, in eastern Mongolia; the Keraits, who lived in the centre; the Merkits to the north of them; and the Naimans to the west. These tribes were nomads who long ago had learned to tame and ride the wild horses of the region. The Mongols traded with more settled societies to the south

for materials they could not provide for themselves, such as grain and metals for their weapons. On the whole, though, they were self-sufficient when it came to food.

The Mongols moved around the steppe, following the seasons. They took their sheep to the plains in the summer months, and then into the shelter of the valleys to avoid the bitter winters.

The Mongols lived in large, portable, circular tents called ***yurts*** or *gers* (see Source 6.4). Inside the yurts, Persian carpets covered the floor. A hole (which could be covered over in bad weather) was left at the top to let smoke escape from the fires used for cooking and heating (see Source 6.5).

Their animals provided most of the Mongols' needs. Sheep provided skin and wool for clothing; bones for arrowheads; wool for the felt *yurts*; mutton, milk and cheese; and dung for fuel. Horses provided transport and enabled the Mongols to hunt. The horses' milk, when fermented, provided the staple alcoholic drink of the Mongols, called *airag* or *koumiss*. Less important, but still an essential part of the steppe economy, were camels and oxen. These were transport animals used to pull carts full of goods as the Mongols travelled the steppe.



Source 6.3 A map of the Mongol homelands

Source 6.4
Yurts on the Mongolian steppe

Yurts

Yurts (still used today by the people of the steppes) were portable circular tents. A rounded wooden frame was covered in felt made from sheep's wool. The felt coverings were often colourfully decorated. The frame was extremely precious and as there were few trees, the timber for it could be obtained only by trading. It was tied together with rope and then the felt was laid over it. In some cases canvas was then placed over the felt to protect it. The frame had several separate wall sections, a door section, and poles that supported a roof or crown. The *yurt* was designed so that it could be easily transported and reassembled.

The crown (or centre of the roof) of the *yurt* was often passed on from father to son (see Source 6.5). Its importance is recognised today by the representation of it on the flag of Kyrgyzstan. The crown and the colourings of the *yurt* fit symbolically into the Buddhist culture that developed in Mongolia.

Shamanic religion

The Mongols kept images of their ancestors in their *yurts*, believing that the images would keep them safe and help them connect to the spirit world. The particular kind of ancestor worship that the Mongols practised is sometimes called **shamanism** (see Source 6.6). A shaman was a holy man who acted as a mediator between humans and the spirit world. The shaman's role was to speak with the spirits on behalf of people, bless the herds and young children, and foretell the future. Creating prophecies involved burning the shoulder blade of a sheep and then examining the cracks in the bone that resulted.

Shamans held a senior position in society and could be either male or female. Female shamans were called *idugan* and male shamans *boege*. They dressed in white and rode special white horses.

The Mongols were not limited in their spiritual beliefs to shamanism. They were willing to embrace the other teachings they encountered as their empire expanded: some adopted Islam from Persia, others Buddhism from Tibet. Some of the Mongol tribes even followed an early version of Christianity called Nestorianism.

Role and position of women

Mongol women held a strong social position but with no real authority. All Mongolian leaders were men. Women were seen to possess wisdom, so it was common for men to have older wives. A woman's job was to advise and guide her husband; it was considered unmanly if a husband did not listen to his wife.

Genghis Khan (also known as Temujin) is said to have listened carefully to his wife Yesui. When she advised him that he should nominate a successor in case he was killed in battle, he is reported to have said: 'Even though she is only a woman, what Yesui says is quite right.'

Source 6.5 Interior of a *yurt*, showing the roof opening

Source 6.6 Shaman initiation

Temujin's mother also had a great influence over him. His career and leadership were inspired by her. His first wife Borte helped him to decide to break his alliance with his blood-brother, Jamuka. They were linked with a spiritual tie called ***anda***, seen as more binding than a family tie. She also helped him to decide that the shaman Kokochu Teb Tengri should be executed when he tried to assume power. It was not unknown for women to receive military training, and at times they fought beside the men in battle.

Rules on marriage and property

The law was harsh on women: once married, they could be executed for having an affair. This same law applied to men during the period of Genghis Khan. In the area of property, though, things were a little better. Mongol women could inherit property and became the head of the family when their husband died.

Marriages were often arranged when the marriage partners were still children. The shaman decided if the marriage was suitable. Men could have more than one wife, but if the husband died the woman was not forced to remarry. Mongol women could also divorce their husbands.

Source 6.7 Mongolian woman pouring horse's milk into buckets for fermenting

focus on ...

evidence: abilities and strengths of Mongol women

At times, women in the Mongol Empire exercised political power and strength. When Ogodei was ruler (1227–1260), his wife, Toregene, gradually assumed power because he was often drunk. On Ogodei's death, Torogene became **regent**. She appointed her own ministers, including a woman called Fatima who was her close confidante.

Other powerful women also ruled Mongolia. These included Sorghaghtani, the widow of Genghis's son Tolui, who ruled northern China and eastern Mongolia; and Ebuskun, the widow of Genghis's son Chaghatai, who ruled Turkestan. Both these women were Mongol only by marriage.

Source 6.8

> *[Genghis Khan] ordered women accompanying the troops to do the work and perform the duties of the men, while the latter were absent fighting.*
>
> George Vernadsky, *The Mongols and Russia*, p. 105

Source 6.9

> *Girls and women ride and gallop as skilfully as men. We even saw them carrying quivers and bows, and the women can ride horses for as long as the men; they have shorter stirrups, handle horses very well, and mind all the property. The Tartar [incorrect term for Mongols] women make everything: skin clothes, shoes, leggings, and everything made of leather. They drive carts and repair them, they load camels, and are quick and vigorous in all their tasks. They all wear trousers, and some of them shoot just like men.*
>
> Giovanni Di Plano Carpini (1182–1252), a European who lived for a time at the court of the Great Khan, Ogedei (in *The Story of the Mongols Whom We Call Tartars*, p. 54)

focus on ...

significance: Temujin (Genghis Khan)

It is believed that Temujin was born sometime between 1155 and 1167. He was one of five sons of Yesugei, a minor Mongol chieftain who had been poisoned by a neighbouring Tatar tribe. In the past, Yesugei had led raids against this tribal group, so the poisoning was an act of retaliation. Temujin took up his father's position because he was the eldest son, although he was only nine at the time. The other members of the clan did not want such a young leader, so they left Temujin with his mother Ho'elun and other children. They had to move to the upper reaches of a river between the plain and the steppe, where they survived on berries and roots as well as small wild animals.

Other Mongol clans feared the potential of young Temujin as he became a teenager. One group decided to capture him, putting a large wooden collar around his neck. He was placed in a cage and could not even feed himself, as his hands were tied. Nevertheless, Temujin escaped and was helped by a man from the clan who took pity on him. He took off the wooden collar and gave Temujin a horse so that he could return to his family.

Temujin builds up a following

In Mongol society it was possible for a successful young nomad warrior to build up a following of his own, and this is what Temujin began to do. He believed that he had survived his misfortunes because he was destined for greatness. Influential shamans supported him, and one named Kokuchu, the son of Yesugei's old servant, claimed that he had ascended into heaven in a trance and had been given the message that Temujin and his sons would one day rule the whole world.

Temujin becomes the *khan*

In 1185, when Temujin was about 18, he was chosen as the ***khan*** (leader) of his tribe. He immediately began to organise and train an army, dividing them into heavy and light cavalry and making them into a formidable fighting force.

He created alliances with anti-Tatar groups such as the Kerait. Their *khan*, Toghrul, had been a blood brother of Yesugei and was happy to align with Temujin. Their attacks against the Tatars were helped by a change in attitude by the Jin Dynasty, a Manchurian tribe that had conquered northern China a century previously. They had worked with the Tatars but now feared their strength, so the Jin formed an alliance with Temujin and Toghrul to defeat the Tatars.

Source 6.10 Genghis Khan

Defeat of the Tatars

In 1202, at the battle of Dalan-nemurges, Temujin's tightly controlled, well-trained and disciplined mounted army defeated the Tatars, even though Temujin's forces were outnumbered. They killed and captured thousands. The days that followed were given over to mass exterminations. The women and young males were taken into slavery, while every male Tatar who stood taller than a wagon axle was put to death.

Source 6.11 Scene from 2004 movie *Genghis Khan*

The rise of Temujin

In the summer of 1204, Temujin rode out against the Naiman tribe and the followers of Jamuka. Jamuka had been a boyhood friend who had been so close to Temujin that they had formed an *anda* relationship. However, Jamuka had grown envious of Temujin. At the battle of Chakirma'ut, Temujin was heavily outnumbered but again the superior organisation of his army brought him success. Jamuka escaped from the battlefield with a few followers and hid in the Tannu mountains. A year later he was betrayed and executed.

Temujin also fell out with Toghrul, his father's old blood-brother, who also felt threatened by the younger man's rise. When Temujin attacked his camp the older man fled. The way now lay open for Temujin to assume control of all the Mongol tribes.

At about 40 years of age Temujin had become the undisputed leader of central Asia. In 1206, a Great Council (known as a *kuriltai*) was summoned beneath the sacred mountain at the source of the River Onon. Tens of thousands of Mongols attended. They selected Temujin as their *khan* (or king).

A new title … and a bigger dream

The Mongols gave Temujin a new title. They believed that at the dawn of time the world had emerged at the centre of four oceans. They used the word for ocean to express the idea of a universe. The new name they gave to Temujin probably meant the Oceanic King—Genghis Khan.

Genghis was now the ruler of about one million people living in an area the size of western Europe. Not content with this, however, he soon began the real expansion of his empire.

Check your learning

1. List some instances in which some Mongol women were able to exercise considerable power.
2. Draw a flow chart to describe how a *yurt* was constructed.
3. Who was Temujin? By what name is he more commonly known?
4. What was an *anda*? Suggest how it would have helped to order some aspects of Mongol society.
5. What role did shamans play within Mongol society?

Expansion of the empire

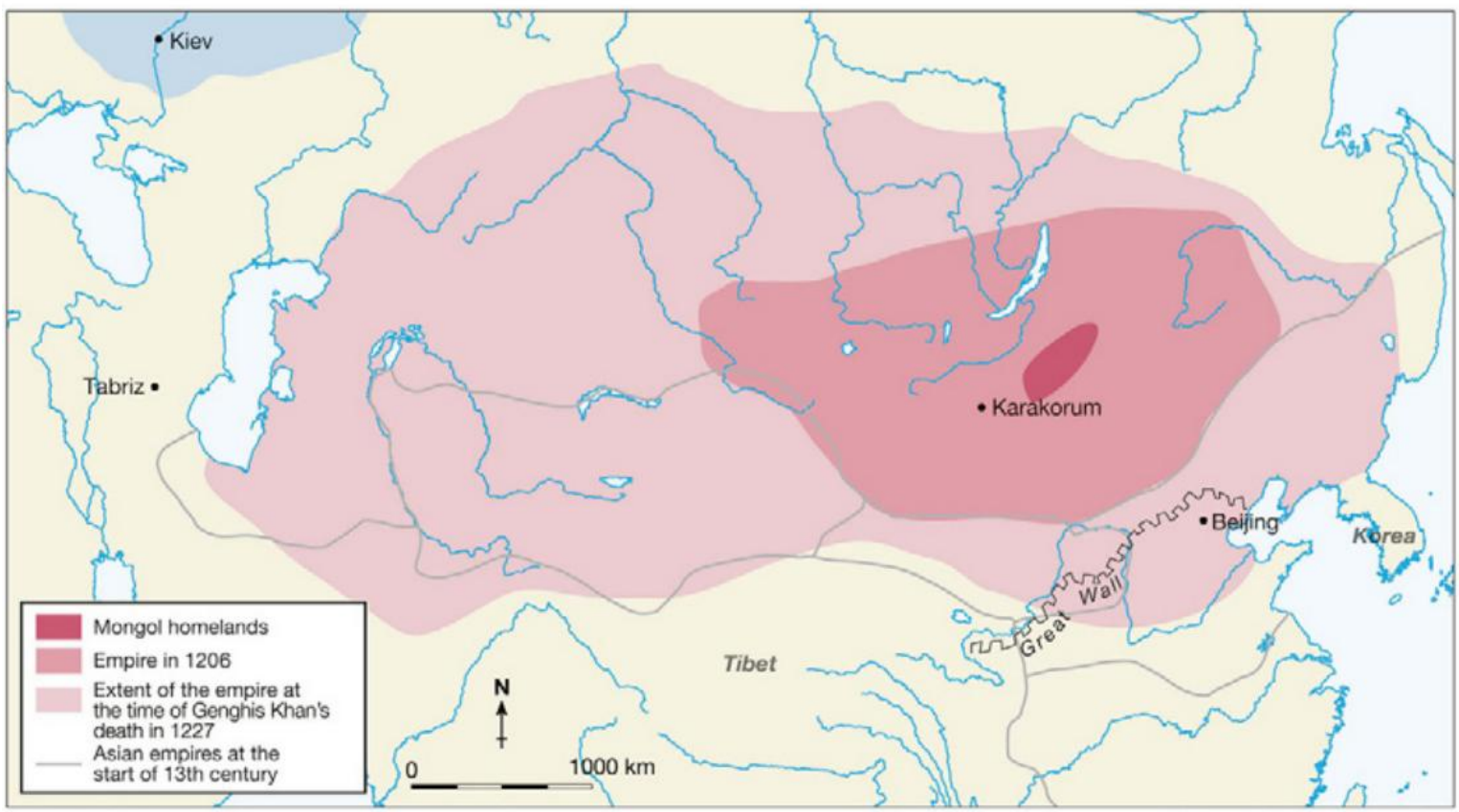
The Mongols began extending their territory into China in about 1206, when Genghis Khan crossed the Great Wall of China, attacking and defeating Chinese forces in northern China. He then moved on to Beijing, in 1215. In Beijing, some local people welcomed the Mongols as liberators from the Jin, who had conquered them a century earlier. Genghis Khan was able to increase his army with many Chinese conscripts. They brought with them their knowledge of new weapons and explosives, siege engines and ships.

Genghis then moved towards Persia in 1218. Northern India and Afghanistan were also brought into the empire. The Russians and the Bulgarians challenged the Mongols but both of these armies were defeated.

By the time of Genghis Khan's death in 1227, he controlled an empire that stretched from China's Yellow River (the Huang He) to the Dnieper River in Russia. He divided the territory into four parts. Three sections were given to his sons—Ogodei, Chaghadai and Tolui. The fourth part was given to the family of his recently dead eldest son, Jochi. On Genghis Khan's death, Ogodei became Great Khan.

Source 6.12 The location of Mongol lands within Asia

Source 6.13 Genghis Khan's empire in 1227



bigideas

6.1 How was Mongol society organised?

Remember

1 What were the names of other steppe tribal groups that Genghis Khan united under his leadership?
2 Why did the Jin Dynasty stop supporting the Tatars and support Genghis Khan instead?
3 What is the term 'Genghis Khan' thought to mean?
4 Who succeeded Genghis Khan when he died? What was his relationship to Genghis Khan?
5 What was the *kuriltai*?
6 What colour horse did a shaman ride?

Understand

7 Women had a subordinate role in Mongol society.
   a What rights did they have that helped to strengthen their position?
   b Based on evidence, list three adjectives (describing words) that you think best capture your impression of Mongol women.
8 Look carefully at Source 6.1. How long after Genghis Khan became king of the Mongols was it before:
   a Mongol rule ended in Persia?
   b the Mongols were driven out of Beijing?
9 Discuss this statement as a class, giving reasons for your views: 'The Mongols lived a sustainable lifestyle.'

Apply

10 Using the life of Genghis Khan as a model, discuss the following questions in small groups. A group spokesperson will report conclusion to the class:
   a What qualities does a person need to become a powerful leader in a society?
   b What conditions within a society helps to enable one person to become powerful enough to take control of it?

Analyse

11 Study Source 6.14 carefully. List what evidence this source provides about Mongol women.

Evaluate

12 On a scale of 1 (very weak) to 5 (very strong), rate Ghengis Khan as a clever leader. In a paragraph, explain your rating.

Create

13 Make a model of a *yurt*. If necessary, consult Internet sites to find out more about the detail of their construction.

Source 6.14

Aigiarn [Shining Moon] was so strong that she surpassed every male Mongol warrior in physical strength and skill. Consequently, she accompanied her father on his campaigns and took great pleasure in the thrills of fighting. This powerful beauty declared that she refused to marry any man save for him who possessed such skill and power that he could beat her in wrestling. According to the story, she ruled that any suitor must come bringing 100 horses as forfeit. Over time, this remarkable princess had [beaten] 100 strong men and collected 10 000 horses. At last a handsome young prince of extraordinary prowess arrived. He had never met his match among any people in the world, and his self-confidence was so strong that he at once promised to bring a thousand horses with him ... Shining Moon was however adamant, and stated: 'I will be his wife only if he can master me'. The parties agreed upon a day, and soon the princess and her suitor locked in a wrestling match of colossal proportions. For a long time the two wrestled, and it seemed that no one could vanquish the other. Then, in the end Shining Moon's feminine endurance won the day, and the Mongolian princess of boundless beauty and peerless strength threw her suitor. In great bewilderment, the vanquished wooer rose and hurried away with all his attendants, leaving the one thousand horses behind.

The Travels of Marco Polo, Dorset Press, 1987, pp. 417–19

Source 6.15 A modern reconstruction of Genghis Khan's mausoleum

6.2 How did Mongol conquests and expansion change other societies?

The Mongol Empire expanded for many reasons. A strong and powerful leader such as Genghis Khan, for example, can bring about significant social changes. Likewise, the death (or defeat) of such a leader can also bring about change. Changes within a particular social group can also have a major impact (directly or indirectly) on other societies. All of these factors were important in changing societies that were part of, or influenced by, the Mongol Empire.

Life in the Mongol Empire

Under Genghis Khan's leadership, the Mongol Empire expanded rapidly. It grew to be bigger than the empire of ancient Rome. To survive, it needed organisation and stability. Genghis Khan had to introduce new measures rapidly. The traditional nomadic lifestyle of the Mongols had to change to one more suited to the ongoing expansion and administration of an empire.

Creating the Mongol army

The Mongol army was a cavalry, meaning that all its soldiers were horsemen. All men aged under the age of 60 could be called up for service; therefore, armies were often very large. But it was the character, not their size, of these armies that helped them to win battles.

Genghis Khan was determined to break the old tribal loyalties. He did this by emphasising the soldier's loyalty to his military unit. Beyond that, loyalty was to the house of the khan himself. Genghis also created an imperial guard (*keshig*), composed at first of his original and most faithful followers. By 1206, its membership was 10 000 strong. Recruits came from all tribes, and membership was regarded as a supreme honour. The imperial guard also provided Genghis Khan with the people needed to organise and administer his empire. It became the training ground of the new empire's ruling class.

Fighting tactics

The army was divided into the light and the heavy cavalry. In battle, the light cavalry galloped back and forth in front of the enemy, showering them with arrows. Then it broke off, and the heavy cavalry, waiting behind, charged through. A favourite tactic was to attack, then pretend to retreat. This would draw the enemy forward into an arc of waiting archers.

As attackers, the Mongols were often extremely cruel. They often wiped out entire cities and armies. During Mongol rule, between 80 and 150 million people died in the wars fought.

Once the Mongols were in control, however, things changed. They allowed the defeated enemy to become part of the empire's administration. They also permitted freedom of religion. But revolt was not tolerated. A revolt in Baghdad, for example, saw the city's ***caliph*** beaten to death, and thousands of citizens slaughtered.

Source 6.16 A re-enactment of Mongol army battle

Weapons and equipment

The light cavalry were mainly archers. They carried two bows, and two quivers full of arrows. The Mongols could string and fire their arrows in the saddle at full gallop, timing their release so precisely that the jolt of galloping hooves did not affect their aim.

The light cavalry also carried two or three javelins, and the heavy cavalrymen, a battle-axe and a four-metre hooked lance. All soldiers typically carried swords, a wicker shield covered in leather, and a lasso.

The Mongols used a much shorter stirrup than European horsemen at the time (a bit like that used by professional jockeys today). This helped them to balance better on a galloping horse, and to stand in the saddle to shoot their arrows.

Clothing

All Mongol horsemen wore baggy trousers, long coats (fur-lined in winter) and cone-shaped caps with thick fur brims. Their long, laced-up leather boots had no heels. Every horseman carried a large waterproof saddlebag, which could be inflated into a crude flotation device for crossing rivers.

Source 6.17 The walls at Karakorum, the ancient Mongol capital

Horsemanship and horses

Mongol horsemen were renowned for their riding skills. So central to their lives was horse-riding that children began riding at three or four years of age (and still do so today). A rider and his horse (a breed known as ***takhi***) could cover about 130 kilometres per day.

Mongol horses are tough and are used to living in the harsh conditions of Central Asia—cold in winter and hot in summer. Their lives with people added to the harshness: the horses were a vital part of battles and were ridden long distances at one stretch.

The horse also played a role in the diet of Mongols. The milk of a female horse, often mixed with some of the horse's blood, was an important food for the people. However, a horse was never killed for its meat. A horse that had outlived its usefulness was often put out to pasture to spend the rest of its days grazing.

The Mongol state

Whenever new territory was conquered, the *khan* introduced immediate changes. A **census** was conducted; new laws and new arrangements for taxation were set in place; and a highly efficient communications system, called the *yam*, was installed. These are described in more detail on page 275. Whenever new territory was conquered, the ***khan*** quickly established the new laws and carried out a census. In fact, there were three measures that followed the conquest of each new territory: a census, the imposition of tax, and the extension of the *yam* (communication) network.

Censuses

Every new territory quickly had a census carried out to establish the population of the land and the holdings of the people. This meant that the *khan* knew details of the population and value of his empire.

Legal system

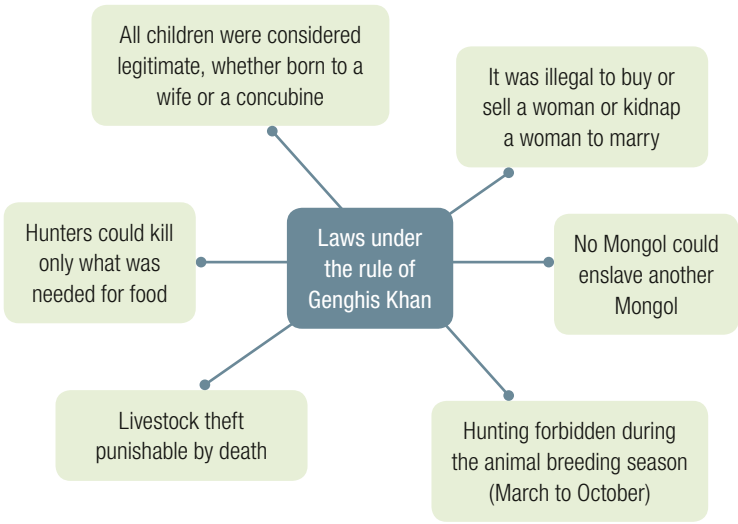
Before Genghis Khan, the Mongols had had no uniform body of laws, and so Genghis Khan created a legal system that would apply across the lands he controlled. This system was known as the *Yasa*. Since the Mongols had no written language or alphabet, the *khan's* commands were recorded by the former chief minister of the Naiman clan, a Uighur called Tata-tonga. Tata-tonga adapted the ancient Uighur script to write Mongolian. When he was not writing the laws, Tata-tonga gave reading and writing lessons to all the princes of imperial blood.

Source 6.18

> *I will rule them by fixed laws so that rest and happiness shall prevail in the world.*
>
> Genghis Khan

Source 6.19

> *If the great, the military leaders and the leaders of the many descendants of the ruler who will be born in the future should not adhere strictly to the Yasa, then the power of the state will be shattered and come to an end, no matter how they seek Genghis Khan, they shall not find him.*
>
> Genghis Khan



Source 6.20 Some of the laws imposed under Genghis Khan's rule

Taxation arrangements

Genghis Khan selected a former Jin Dynasty minister named Yelu Chucai as one of his key advisors. Yelu Chucai created an effective, efficient administration and a taxation scheme for the whole empire.

Whenever new territory was taken over, a *darugha* (a ruler of a colony within the empire) was appointed who was usually a Mongol. A *darugha* they had seniority over the local governor, and he could charge taxes as he wished. A *darugha* would usually impose taxes of one per cent on herds, and up to five per cent on commercial transactions.

Yam: communication system

Genghis Khan and his successors developed a complex communications system called the *yam*. It was capable of carrying messages from one side of his empire to the other at nearly 200 kilometres a day. This was done by setting up a series of staging posts every 40 kilometres—the distance that a good horse could cover at a gallop without pausing. Each post, guarded by at least ten men, contained food, shelter and horses.

Couriers wore thick leather belts covered with bells. This alerted people at the staging posts to the oncoming rider, and ensured that horses were saddled and waiting on arrival for a quick changeover. Each courier carried a silver or bronze tablet of authority to identify himself.

The army was responsible for the security of the system and its messengers. Over time, the guarded paths of the *khan's* couriers became commercial routes for travelling merchants, and the staging posts became safe overnight shelters. In the second half of the 12th century, when the first European ambassadors and merchants travelled to the east to the court of the *khan*, they reported with awe that unescorted travellers were safer in the *khan's* empire than in any other kingdom on earth.

Check your learning

1. Read Sources 6.18 and 6.19. What do you think Genghis Khan is implying in what he said about the importance of the law in his empire?
2. Why would the *yam* have been a vital part of the Mongol Empire?
3. In the Mongol Empire, religious leaders (of all faiths) were exempt from taxation and did not have to carry out any public service. Successive *khans* allowed places of worship to be built for many different religions. Suggest how this religious tolerance would have benefited the Mongol Empire.
4. Look at Source 6.20. Why you think each of these laws would have helped to bring about peace and security?

Source 6.21 The Mongol Empire and its *khanates*

Expansion of the Mongol Empire

In preparation for his death, Genghis Khan made some more changes. He divided the empire into four ***khanates*** under the rule of a Great Khan (see Source 6.21). Ogodei, Genghis Khan's third son, was selected as his heir, and continued the expansion of the empire.

Source 6.22 An artist's impression of Ogodei receiving gifts

Ogodei

Ogodei was confirmed as Great Khan in 1229 (see Source 6.22). The main achievements of his reign were the:

- invasion of Russia and eastern Europe
- establishment of the Golden Horde—a vast Mongol territory that stretched from the Danube River, across the top of the Black and Caspian seas, into Siberia
- completion of the conquest of the Jin Empire in north China and modern Manchuria.

Ogodei turned the settlement of Karakorum into the first Mongol capital, giving it a city wall in 1235 (see Source 6.17). It was not an impressive city. This was not surprising as the Mongols were not natural city dwellers. Under the rule of Ogodei, new regulations were also introduced across the empire to encourage and develop trade. These included the standardisation of weights and measures and the introduction of paper money (an idea borrowed from the Chinese). Paper money was easier to carry on long journeys than gold and silver.

Renewed expansion of empire

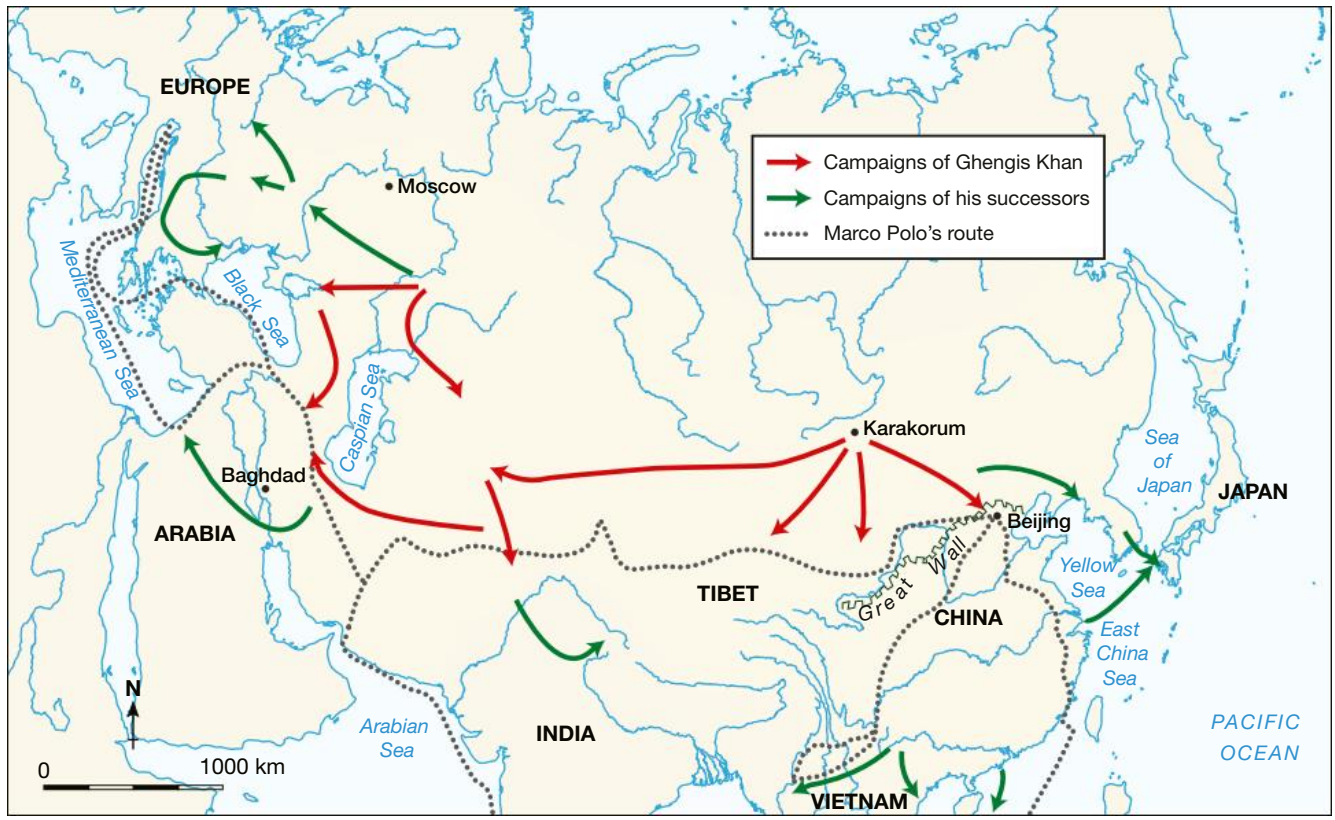
Under Ogodei's leadership, the empire continued to grow. In 1235, after conquering the Jin Empire, Ogodei decided to expand the Mongol Empire westwards. The first stage of the assault, beginning in 1237, was directed against the Bulgars on the River Volga. A series of campaigns against the Russians followed between 1237 and 1240, under the leadership of Batu Khan, Ogodei's nephew.

Eastern Europe was invaded in 1241 in a two-pronged attack. The smaller force attacked through Poland and headed towards eastern Germany. It defeated a combined European army in 1241 at Legnica (also known as Liegnitz). The larger Mongol army attacked Hungary and crushed the Hungarian army at Mohi, near the Sajo River, two days after Legnica. Hungary was occupied and it seemed that the Mongols were going to incorporate it into their empire.

The Mongol advance continued to the west as far as Austria. At this point the Mongols seemed on the verge of conquering western Europe. But in December 1241, the Great Khan Ogodei died in Mongolia. Mongol forces withdrew to return to their homeland to decide on the next leader.

Power struggles

When Ogodei died in 1241 it was difficult for the Great Council to meet to appoint a new Great Khan. Ogodei's widow, Torogene, became regent. She wanted her son, Guyuk, selected. But Batu Khan did not want this and refused to come from Europe to the Great Council (*kuriltai*). He said that it was too dangerous for him to leave. There were already signs that the empire was splitting into several interest groups, based on the areas that certain *khans* had conquered (see Source 6.24).



Source 6.23
Mongol attacks by Ghengis Khan and his successors

There was a stalemate for four years. Then Batu Khan gave in and sent a delegate to the Great Council (*kuriltai*). At the following meeting, Guyuk was selected, although Batu never accepted or acknowledged this. Guyuk died while travelling to see Batu in order to force him to acknowledge the election. Once again, there was a period of regency. This time, Batu accepted Mongke, Guyuk's cousin, and in 1251 he was elected as Great Khan.

The Blue Horde, under Batu Khan, and the White Horde, under Orda Khan: These would merge to become the Golden Horde, with Batu as *khan* over what is now western Russia.

The Il-Khanate in Persia: This would be ruled by Hulagu Khan and his descendants.

The Mongol homeland, controlled by Tolui Khan: His son Kublai would conquer China; his youngest son, Arigh Boke, would cling to the Mongolian heartland.

Central Asia, such as the areas now known as Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan: This was under Chaghadai Khan and his descendants.

Source 6.24 The Mongol Empire would eventually split up into several areas, including these four regions.

Source 6.25 Mongke Khan

Mongke Khan

Mongke quickly carried out a series of imperial reforms. Some of the more important of these are detailed in Source 6.26.

Military campaigns

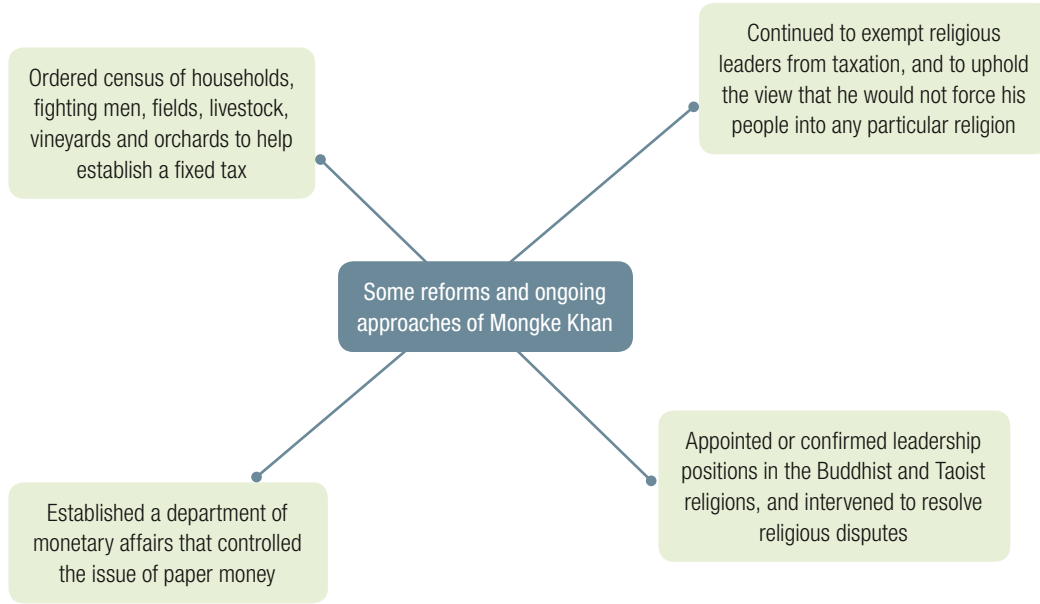
Mongke continued to expand his domains in the east. He sent his brother Kublai to take Dali (south-west China) in 1254. He established it as the province of Yunnan ('South of the Clouds'), a name it still has today. He sent other generals to attack Annam (Vietnam), and the area surrounding it. He continued to push into Tibet, India and parts of the Middle East. He eventually reached the Egyptian border.

Mongke appointed another brother, Hulagu Khan, to look after Persia. In the 1250s, the army of Hulagu attacked and destroyed the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad. It then moved into Palestine.

Meanwhile, Kublai was ordered to supervise north China while Mongke renewed his assault on South China. Mongke took command of the army personally in October 1257, attacking Sichuan and taking Paoning in 1258. On 11 August 1259, at a siege near Chongqing, Mongke died of either dysentery or cholera.

When this happened, Hulagu was just about to invade Egypt. Hulagu retreated to Persia. He had to return to Karakorum to help decide who the next Great Khan would be.

A four-year struggle for power beweeen Kublai Khan and Arigh Boke followed Mongke's death. This broke up the united Mongol Empire, which remained divided until 1304. At this time, once again a single Great Khan—Kublai's successor, Temur—was acknowledged.



Source 6.26 Some reforms and ongoing approaches adopted by Mongke Khan as ruler

significant**individuals**

Kublai Khan

Kublai Khan, born in 1215, was a grandson of Genghis Khan. He became the first Mongol emperor of China. He ruled as the 'Great Khan' from 1264 until 1294. He is known to the Western world primarily through the writings of the traveller Marco Polo.

None of his descendants had his abilities, however. As a consequence, his death was followed by periods of civil war and leadership struggles. Within a century, the dynasty he established in China—the Yuan Dynasty—would be gone. It had been resisting large-scale revolts since the 1340s. It was finally replaced, in 1368, by the Ming Dynasty. A former rebel leader, Zhu Yuanzhang, became the first emperor of this new Chinese dynasty.

Source 6.27 A Western artist's interpretation of Kublai Khan's coronation

Conquest of southern China

Kublai Khan continued the war on China's Song Empire that was begun by Mongke Khan. The Song Empire was already then a state of great cities. Kublai Khan's army took the Song capital, Hangzhou, in 1275, wiping out the remains of any resistance by 1279. Kublai was still the Mongol Great Khan. But he was also now the emperor of China.

He declared himself the founder of a new imperial dynasty (the Yuan Dynasty) and renamed his base Dadu (meaning 'great capital'). From its roots grew the city we know as Beijing.

Governing China

Kublai Khan understood agriculture and appreciated city life. So destruction in southern China was kept to a minimum (unlike the way earlier *khans* had treated China's north). In the south, landowners who surrendered to Mongol rule were allowed to keep their estates. This move helped to ensure their loyalty to the new regime.

The Mongols adopted any institution, and employed any servant (even foreigners) that would provide effective government as long as nothing was done to endanger Mongol military supremacy. The large amounts of money the Mongols earned from taxes suggests that this policy worked.

Chinese junior civil servants were allowed to keep their positions. However, Kublai preferred to appoint administrators from other parts of the Mongol Empire for the highest offices. For example, he put a Muslim governor in charge of Yunnan and a Tibetan in charge of temple renovation in Hangzhou. He also gave a number of official posts to the European Marco Polo.

Chinese civilisation and culture thrived under Yuan rule (not so much because the new Mongol rulers encouraged it as that they did not overly interfere in the lives of their Chinese subjects). Landscape painting and drama flourished, for instance.

Military campaigns

One effect of shifting the Mongol centre of power towards Dadu was that the regions of central Asia became more difficult to oversee. These gradually slipped from Kublai's direct control.

Source 6.28 A detail from a 12th-century artist's impression of life during the Song Dynasty

Source 6.29 A copy of a banknote first issued by Kublai Khan in China

Source 6.30 An artist's impression of Marco Polo (and his father and uncle) meeting Kublai Khan

Kublai, though, was more intent on spreading Mongol influence further into South-East Asia, with expeditions even reaching Java (in modern Indonesia.)

Kublai's campaigns against the Song Dynasty had introduced him to ships. Now with ships of his own, the Mongols launched two expeditions against Japan—in 1274 and in 1281. Both attempts to conquer Japan were disastrous, largely due to bad weather. The Japanese named the stormy typhoon winds that ended the larger expedition of 1281 the *Kamikaze* (Divine Wind).

Meeting Marco Polo

In 1271, a 17-year-old Venetian named Marco Polo accompanied his father and uncle on a trip through Asia—to return 24 years later. Five years after leaving Venice, he was in Dadu, where he met Kublai Khan. He described what he saw and did (including his diplomatic duties for the Kublai Khan) in his book *The Travels*.

End of the Yuan Dynasty

The weakening of Mongol control in China that followed Kublai's death was made worse by a series of natural disasters: extensive flooding of the Yellow River and outbreaks of disease. In fact, the outbreak of disease in 1353–1354, which killed huge numbers of people in the region, was probably **bubonic plague**. Many scholars believe Mongol traders then carried this disease throughout Asia, into Europe, leading to the outbreak of what is commonly known as the **Black Death**.

1 What is the primary source of evidence Western historians have for the life and times of Kublai Khan?

2 Describe some of the practices Kublai Khan followed, after securing control in China, to encourage the support of those he ruled.

3 Mongol rulers and officials in China could often not read or write the language of the Chinese people. How do you think this might have encouraged Chinese literature at the time to flourish?

4 Draw a concept map to reflect on some of the factors that helped to end Mongol rule in China.

5 Kublai Khan and Marco Polo came from quite different cultures.
   a What do you think might have been the reaction (and thoughts) of Marco Polo on meeting Kublai Khan?
   b What might have been the reaction (and thoughts) of Kublai Khan in meeting Marco Polo and family members?
   c With a partner, create and perform a script that reflects these different perspectives.

examining**evidence**

The writings of William of Rubruck and Marco Polo

Much of what Western historians know about the Mongol Empire and some of its significant people comes from evidence provided by two written works. These are:

- the journal written by William of Rubruck
- the book, *The Travels*, said to have been a recorded statement of the travels of Marco Polo.

William of Rubruck (*c*.1210–1270) was a Franciscan monk. He had heard about the Mongols while fighting in the Crusades with King Louis IX of France. He wanted to gain the support of the Mongols in fighting the Muslims in the **Holy Land**, so he undertook a three-year journey to the Mongol capital of Karakorum, travelling through the lands of the Golden Horde to get there.

Marco Polo (*c*.1254–1324) spent 16 years in the service of Kublai Khan as described earlier. On his return to Venice, he brought back jewels and gold. Many in Italy refused to believe his stories: his accounts of 'paper money' and of 'burning rocks' seemed quite unlikely.

The writings of William of Rubruck

The journal of William of Rubruck describes the Mongol capital (Karakorum) and its people. It also provides insights into the Nestorian Christians and other communities he encountered in his travels eastwards along the **Silk Road**.

Source 6.31

> *The Tartars have adopted [the Uighurs'] letters. They begin the writing at the top, and run the line downward; and in like manner they read it, and they make the lines to follow each other from left to right. They make great use of drawings and letters for their sorcery, so their temples are full of short sentences ... hung up there.*
>
> *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55*, Hakluyt Society, 1900, p. 52

Source 6.32

> *All the priests (of the idolaters [unbelievers]) shave their heads, and are dressed in saffron [orange] colour, and they observe chastity from the time they shave their heads, and they live in congregations [groups] of one or two hundred. On the days when they go into the temple, they place two benches, and they sit in the region of the choir but opposite the choir, with books in their hands, which they sometimes put down on the benches; and they keep their heads uncovered as long as they are in the temple, reading in silence and keeping silence.*
>
> *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55*, Hakluyt Society, 1900, p. 51

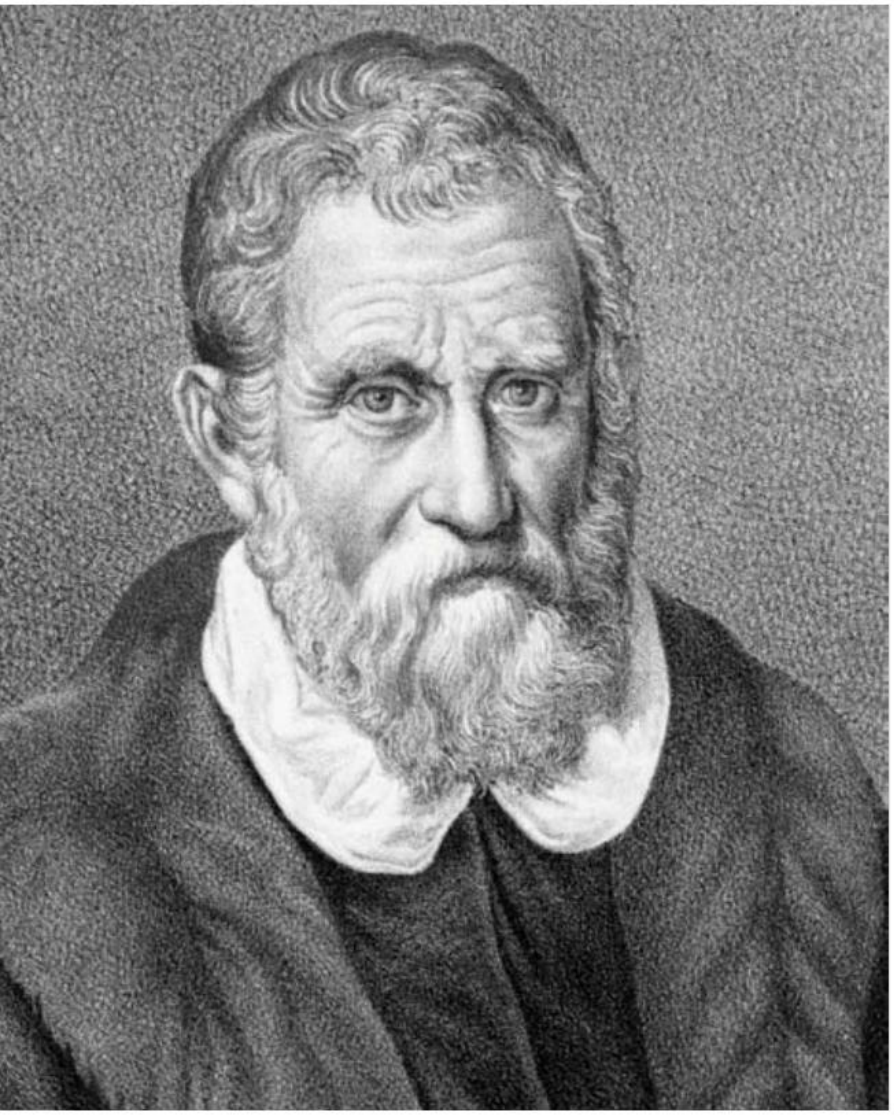
Source 6.33

> *As to their marriages, you must know that no one has a wife unless he buys her, so it sometimes happens that girls are well past marriageable age before they marry, for their parents always keep them until they sell them ... Among them, no widow marries, for the following reason: they believe that all those who serve them in this life will serve them in the next, so as regards a widow they believe that she will always return to her first husband after death. Hence this shameful custom prevails among them that sometimes a son takes to wife all his father's wives, except his own mother ...*
>
> *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253–55*, Hakluyt Society, 1900, p. 23

The writings of Marco Polo

Soon after Marco Polo's return from the east, he was taken prisoner by the Genoese. While in jail, he met a fellow prisoner called Rustichello; it is thought that Marco Polo told his story to Rustichello and this became *The Travels*. The book describes Marco Polo's journey to and from, and within, China and the time he spent in the court of the *khan*. It offered one of the first histories of the Mongol Empire and also described in detail many aspects of Chinese life under the Mongol occupation.

The use of paper money (see Source 6.29) was permitted by the early *khans* when they reached China. Marco Polo reported on the use of this paper money in his writings.



Source 6.34 An artist's impression of Marco Polo

Source 6.35

I believe it was God's will that we should come back, so that men might know the things that are in the world, since, as we have said in the first chapter of this book, no other man ... has explored so much of the world as Marco, son of Messer Niccolo Polo, great and noble citizen of the city of Venice.

Marco Polo, *The Travels*

Source 6.36

They drink mare's [a female horse's] milk subjected to a process that makes it like white wine and very good to drink. It is called koumiss.

Marco Polo, *The Travels*

Source 6.37

With these pieces of paper they can buy anything and pay for anything. And I tell you that the papers that [represent] ten bezants [coins] do not weigh [as much as] one.

Marco Polo, *The Travels*

Source 6.38

It is a fact that throughout the province of Cathay [South China] there is a sort of black stone, which is dug out of veins in the hillsides and burns like logs. These stones keep a fire going better than wood. I assure you that if you put them on a fire in the evening and see that they are well alight, they will continue to burn all night, so that you will find them still glowing in the morning ... these stones, being very plentiful and very cheap, effect a great saving of wood.

Marco Polo, *The Travels*

1 What evidence does Source 6.31 provide about the writing style of the *Tartars*?

2 What evidence do Sources 6.32 and 6.33 provide about some of the customs that William of Rubruck observed on his journey?

3 What evidence is there to suggest that Marco Polo believed his journey was part of a divine plan?

4 Examine Sources 6.37 and 6.38. What did Marco Polo report that created such surprise among his European readers? What does this suggest about Europe at the time?

focus on ...

cause and effect: changes to Mongol society

The expansion of the Mongol Empire brought about massive change to the societies that it conquered. The effects of this change were far-reaching.

Motivated to create a large territory that he could control, Genghis Khan united several Mongol tribes and other peoples into one group. But this group would only last and succeed if its people were organised. The people who made it up were prepared to give up their **nomadic** culture, and to establish cities and provinces. Capital cities became centres of administration. Many, such as Beijing, went on to become major modern centres.

A legal system was set up to govern over 100 million people at the empire's peak. There was also an attempt to introduce a writing system for the empire.

Religious legacy

Mongol rulers encouraged religious freedom. Kublai Khan, for instance, never proclaimed his belief in any one religion. Such an approach helped to ensure support among the many religious groups in the empire. As a consequence, both Buddhists and Muslims became favoured workers in the Mongol administration.

The descendants of the empire stayed in the areas that had been united and often adopted their religious practices. For instance, in the eastern *khanates*, Buddhism flourished; in the western *khanates*, Islam became the dominant religion.

Trade and contact

As the empire expanded, the Mongols developed many trade and political contacts. Ambassadors were sent from the West to report back on, and to seek alliances with, the Mongols.

The effect of making these contacts was that trade grew rapidly. This was particularly so given the tight controls that the Mongols had introduced to create a safe and profitable trading route along the Silk Road. Under the rule of Ghengis Khan, all traders were assured of their safety while on the road. Genghis Khan valued them as sources of information and used some as diplomats for his empire. In turn, the traders supplied the royal palaces with rare and precious goods.

The decline of the Mongol Empire directly affected the prosperous Silk Road trade. By the 1400s, it had stopped being a major trade route, particularly for silk. As sea trade networks became more important (over which the Mongols had little control), the popularity of land routes such as the Silk Road declined.

Source 6.39
The legacy of the Mongols: a cavalry re-enactment to mark the 800th anniversary of the founding of the Mongol Empire by Genghis Khan in 1206

The impact of the Mongol expansion on other societies

The Mongols are remembered in history as fierce and successful fighters. Stories of the atrocities of the early Mongols could sometimes make their enemies surrender without a fight. There is no doubt that they killed millions of people when setting up their empire. If a city resisted, it could expect no mercy from Mongol invaders. In Persia alone, it is thought that the population decreased from 2 500 000 to 250 000 because of a mass extermination between 1220 and 1260. Even today the successful military tactics of Genghis Khan are studied in military circles.

New dynasties

Genghis Khan and his successors founded **dynasties** in several other parts of the world. Their descendants ruled Korea and southern Russia for 100 years, founding the Ilkhanate in Iran and the great Moghul Dynasty in India. Kublai Khan's Yuan Dynasty in China also lasted for 100 years.

Impact on trade

The Mongols established, enhanced and protected trade routes stretching from the Chinese coast to the fringes of Europe. They encouraged trade and thus helped to spread knowledge in the medieval world.

Impact on China

The most significant achievement of the Mongols in Asia was the reunification of China. The northern and southern Chinese had grown apart in previous centuries, but under the Yuan Dynasty they rediscovered each other. One thing that helped reunite north and south physically was the Grand Canal. Built by the Yuan Dynasty, it was 1760 kilometres long, stretching from Hangzhou to Dadu. This huge waterway enabled the transport of the vast quantities of rice needed to feed the new capital.

The initial effect that the Mongols had on China was negative. They took as much from it as they could, sending Chinese soldiers off to die in Mongol wars, and imposing foreign officials on the Chinese.

But these foreigners also brought enriching ideas, such as new building techniques and technologies from Arabia, western Asia and Mongolia. Foreign administrators, particularly Muslims from inner Asia, often got the blame for unwelcome taxes and policies that were actually instituted by the Mongols.

The influence, good and bad, of foreign officials on China diminished drastically in 1315 when the old imperial civil service examinations, which had been suspended in the 1270s, were reinstated. Only the Chinese stood a chance of passing these examinations. As a result, the Chinese were already largely in charge of their own affairs again by the time of the fall of the Yuan Dynasty in 1368.

Although the Mongols were an occupying force, they united China for the first time in centuries. They established a single political entity that would largely endure to modern times.

Source 6.40
The Holy Face by Rublev and others, a 14th-century icon

The Black Death

An accidental legacy of the Mongol Empire for the rest of the known world was the spreading of the bubonic plague, or Black Death. Many scholars think that it originated in the Gobi desert and spread through China, India and then into Europe and the Middle East along the established trade routes of the Mongol Empire. The Black Death, carried by rats and fleas, decimated the populations of all societies with which it came into contact. All were linked by the common contact with the trade and communication routes of the Mongol Empire.

Impact on Russia

Between the 9th and 13th centuries, there was a region in eastern Europe known as 'the land of the Rus'. It covered parts of what we now call western Russia, Ukraine and Belarus. In numerous raids during the 1230s, the Mongols defeated individual princes of Rus, creating, as they gained control of all the territory, a united entity. As they advanced, the Mongols caused havoc, destroying cities, slaughtering people and looting. Their actions brought about changes in art, religion, political entities and government.

Art

Great art in Russia seemed to develop despite the presence of the Mongols. The Russian people could express the importance of their religion through the development of icons (religious paintings and carvings) and fresco painting (painting on fresh, wet plaster). It was under Mongol rule that Theophanes the Greek carried out some of his most important work on churches in Moscow and Novgorod. One of his students, Rublev, continued this vital work (see Source 6.40).

Orthodox Church

The Russian Orthodox Church, after recovering from initial Mongol attacks and looting, became a guide to the Russians. As the church recovered, its leaders spread their work to the Finns and encouraged colonisation of areas to the north. They began to provide the political leadership that had been lost with the defeat of the Rus princes. Mongke Khan assisted the Church by exempting it from taxation and allowing clergy to be exempted from conscripted labour and military service.

The Church became a power in its own right. It gained land and was not required to pay any charges on that land or its produce. It used its new strength to convert the '**pagans**' that still existed. Church leaders travelled Russia, which strengthened the Church and the administration, and ensured that parishes were operating correctly. The centre of the Church was moved from Kiev to Moscow, making Moscow a more important city.

Regional administrators

The Mongols set up regional administrators in Russia. These acted as expert advisers to the Khan of the Golden Horde, giving information on the Rus and how to handle them. They also carried out the census every two to three years, even after the Mongols had left in the 1480s—something not seen in other parts of Europe for another 120 years. This again strengthened the idea of firm and strong central government: perhaps *too* firm, as Russia retained a harsh form of 'oriental despotism', influenced by the Mongol experience.

These same administrators also controlled and ran the *yam*. This continued once the Mongols left, initially as a good communication system and later developing into a postal system, something that a large empire like Russia greatly needed.

Rise of Moscow

The rise of Moscow was perhaps one of the greatest effects of the Mongols in Russia. The Moscovite princes worked with, rather than against, the Mongols, even helping to prevent an uprising against the Mongol army in 1327. The reward for Prince Ivan Kalita was the right to raise and collect taxes for the *khan*. This lifted the city's status and power, until Moscow had sole responsibility for this role. Moscow grew wealthy and it exercised power over other cities and principalities.

As Mongol power declined, the power of Moscow grew until it was able to overthrow Mongol control 250 years after their initial conquering of Rus. Russia, like China, ended as a more unified country with a strong political and administrative centre based less on the old democratic ideas of the *veche* (town assembly) and more on the central control model of the Chinese.

Impact on Europe

The advances of the Mongol Empire, and European interaction with the empire, brought Europe out of its isolated view of the world. Through threat of invasion and diplomatic contact, Europeans became more aware of the east and of the riches and knowledge that existed there.

Travellers such as Marco Polo and William Rubruck developed an interest in the learning and wealth of the east. The safety of the Silk Route and the prospect of excellent trade attracted Europeans to build trade and political contacts.

Some church and political leaders wanted to fight alongside the Mongols in order to maintain their position in the Holy Land, but the Mongol Empire was too big a threat. It had proven this in its moves to the West and really had not been stopped by Western forces but rather by timely deaths of Mongol leaders.

The opening of the Europeans' eyes to the riches of the East encouraged them to develop areas of trade there. Nations such as Spain and Portugal recognised the possibilities and were able to develop sea trade routes that avoided the Mongols and their land-based routes.

The use of promissory notes (notes promising future payment), and the development of paper currency came about in Europe because of the influence of the Mongols. Europe's knowledge of the known world was greatly increased by the information brought back by ambassadors and merchants. Columbus, for example, sailed in 1492 on a mission to reach Japan, because of the 'great riches' there that Kublai Khan had promised his men, and which Marco Polo had, in turn, written about.

Source 6.41 St Basil's Cathedral in Moscow shows the strong Eastern traditions in its architecture.

Check your learning

1. In what ways did the Mongol Empire open European eyes to the rest of the world?
2. List some of the benefits of Mongol rule in China.
3. Why did Moscow grow in importance under the Mongols?
4. Why is the spread of the Black Death blamed on the Mongol Empire?
5. Why did the Mongols carry out censuses?
6. Kublai Khan did not ever see Japan for himself. Why do you think he told his men there were 'great riches' there?

freshideas

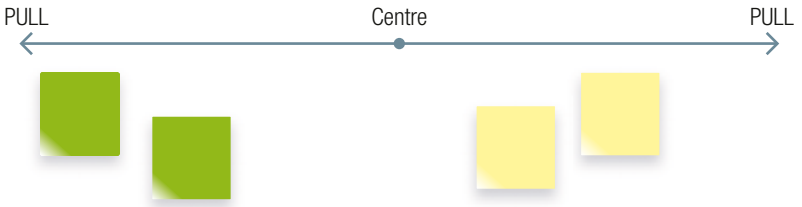
Argument tug of war

In this exercise you will work in groups to develop arguments around the statement: 'The Mongol Empire caused more harm than good in the years that it existed.'

In your group, look at all the possible arguments that could be made for either side (for or against) and then place them on the tug-of-war line. The strongest arguments will be your anchors and the weaker arguments will be spread along the rope towards the centre or balance point.

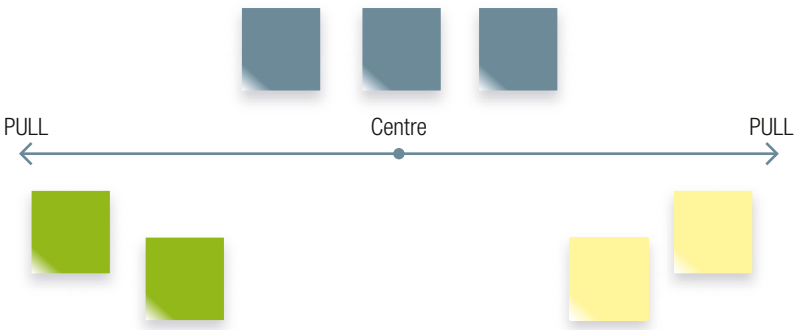
Tug-of-war line

You can use sticky notes to list these arguments so that you can move them as you believe you come up with a stronger point. You could use sticky notes of different colours for each end of the argument.



Tug-of-war line with sticky notes placed strategically

As you develop your views on both ends of the argument, there may be questions that arise. These should be written on a sticky note of a third colour and placed above the tug-of-war line.



Tug-of-war line with questions above

Once you have completed the exercise, bring the ideas formed in your groups together for discussion as a class.

As you do this, you might find that some of the questions you posed have been answered by other groups, or that other questions you did not consider have arisen.

The object of the exercise is to identify the strength of arguments and how effective they are.

(This idea was raised at a discourse exercise run by Dr Ron Ritchhard, Harvard University)

bigideas

6.2 How did Mongol conquests and expansion change other societies?

Remember

1 Who was William of Rubruck and what diplomatic mission did he have?

2 How many people were believed killed by the Mongols in their attacks on cities and in the massacres that occurred afterwards?

3 What effect did the creation of the empire have on the way in which Mongols lived?

Understand

4 What was the name of the dynasty set up by the Mongols in China?

5 What was the Grand Canal? Why was it so important for China?

6 What benefits did the Mongols bring to China and Russia?

Apply

7 In this depth study option you have learned about the rapid growth of the Mongol Empire. Do you believe that the benefits it brought to Europe and the rest of the world outweigh the costs incurred by the nations it captured? Copy and complete the table below in your notebook.

Analyse

8 Conduct some research into the development of money. How did the Mongol adoption of paper money in China affect the rest of the world?

9 Do you believe that the Mongol Empire was destined to break down? Give reasons to support your arguments.

Evaluate

10 What do the written descriptions provided by William of Rubruck and Marco Polo, tell us about the European perceptions and understandings of the Mongols (see Sources 6.31 and 6.38)?

Create

11 Create a PowerPoint presentation on the changes that took place in China as a result of the Mongols' influence.

12 Create a poster about the Silk Road. Include a map showing the route and the goods that were traded along it, east to west and west to east.

13 Write a role play that shows the discussion that went on before the final decision that Ogodei should be replaced by Guyuk as Great Khan.

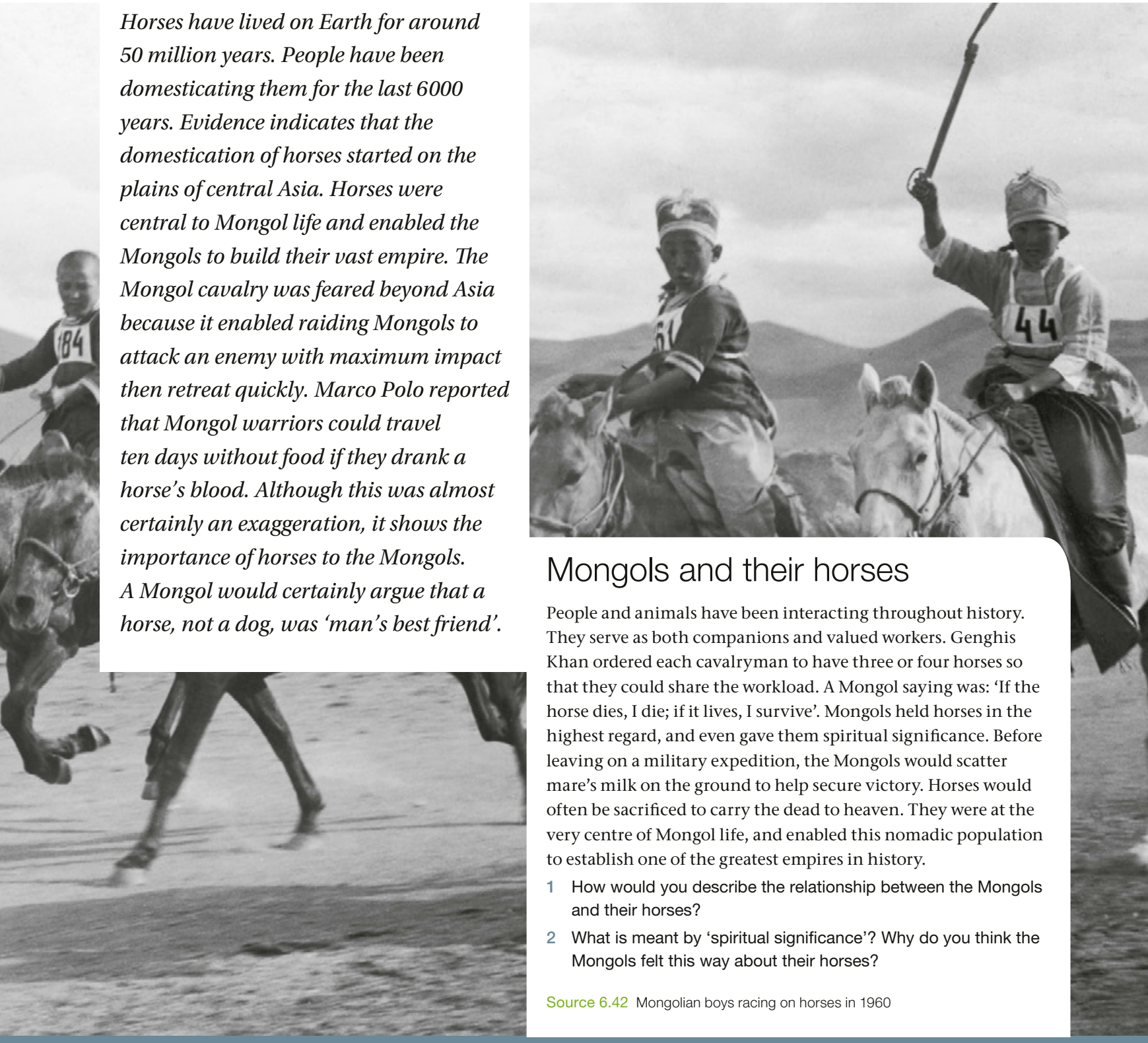
Benefits and costs of the Mongol Empire expansion

Benefits to Europe and the world	Costs incurred by conquered peoples and societies

connectingideas

Our best friend?

Horses have lived on Earth for around 50 million years. People have been domesticating them for the last 6000 years. Evidence indicates that the domestication of horses started on the plains of central Asia. Horses were central to Mongol life and enabled the Mongols to build their vast empire. The Mongol cavalry was feared beyond Asia because it enabled raiding Mongols to attack an enemy with maximum impact then retreat quickly. Marco Polo reported that Mongol warriors could travel ten days without food if they drank a horse's blood. Although this was almost certainly an exaggeration, it shows the importance of horses to the Mongols. A Mongol would certainly argue that a horse, not a dog, was 'man's best friend'.



Mongols and their horses

People and animals have been interacting throughout history. They serve as both companions and valued workers. Genghis Khan ordered each cavalryman to have three or four horses so that they could share the workload. A Mongol saying was: 'If the horse dies, I die; if it lives, I survive'. Mongols held horses in the highest regard, and even gave them spiritual significance. Before leaving on a military expedition, the Mongols would scatter mare's milk on the ground to help secure victory. Horses would often be sacrificed to carry the dead to heaven. They were at the very centre of Mongol life, and enabled this nomadic population to establish one of the greatest empires in history.

1 How would you describe the relationship between the Mongols and their horses?

2 What is meant by 'spiritual significance'? Why do you think the Mongols felt this way about their horses?

Source 6.42 Mongolian boys racing on horses in 1960

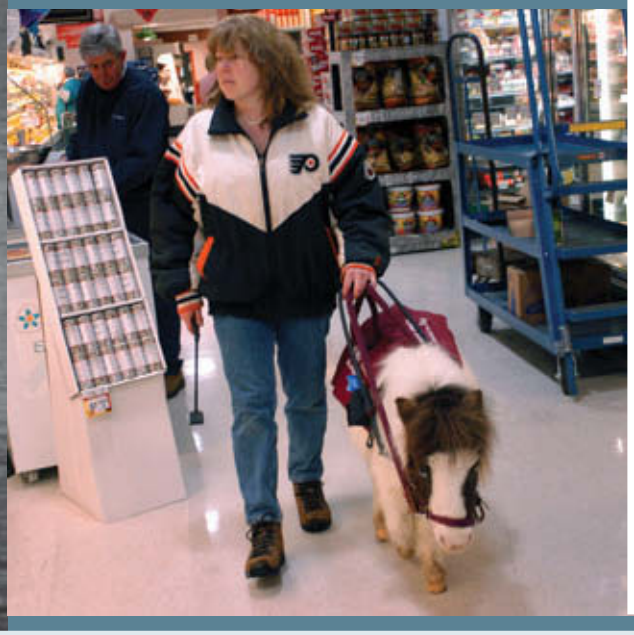
The Mongolian horse

The breed of horse (known as Przewalski's Horse) used by Mongols is a genuine wild animal that has never been fully domesticated, and has only been used successfully by the Mongols. The horse has been described as small, but very strong and reliable. By the start of the 20th century, it was in real danger of extinction. By the end of the 1950s, it was thought there were only 12 Prze walski's Horses left. The breed has survived because it was kept in zoos and reserves. By 1992, 16 of the horses were reintroduced into Mongolia, where the breed has started to re-establish itself. It is the only truly wild species of horse left on Earth. The rebreeding program has been so successful that, during the 21st century, Przewalski's Horse has moved from 'extinct in the wild,' to 'critically endangered', to 'endangered' in 2011.

1 Who are the only people who have been able to use the Mongolian wild horse?

2 What lessons can we learn from the Mongolian wild horse?

Source 6.43 Przewalski's Horses grazing in Mongolia



Guide horses

Throughout 6000 years of domestication, people and horses have developed close relationships. Horses are used today in farming, transport, entertainment and recreation. Research has revealed horses to be intelligent and trainable. Nowhere is their intelligence more apparent than in their use as guide horses for visually impaired people. The Guide Horse Foundation was established in the USA in 1999, and is proving a success. Guide horses have been reported as showing excellent judgement in keeping people safe, as well as being caring and not easily distracted. They also have a longer lifespan than guide dogs, which allows for a stable relationship between person and horse.

1 Why do you think horses and people have established such a strong relationship?

2 What are the advantage to using guide horses? What do you think the drawbacks might be?

Source 6.44 This small guide horse serves the same function as a guide dog for visually impaired person

Q As a class, debate the topic: 'The horse is the most important animal in human history'.

depth study option

The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

(14th century plague)

*During the 14th century, a **pandemic** spread across Asia, Europe and Africa— it became known as the **Black Death**. Scientists and historians think merchants introduced it to Europe in 1347. They were returning home from the East, where the pandemic is thought to have started. Within three years, it had spread through most of Europe, Asia and into north Africa. A lack of medical knowledge, filthy living conditions, superstitions and fear helped the disease to spread quickly.*

The most common form of the Black Death was the **bubonic plague**. The disease is found in the blood of fleas that are carried by rats. It enters the body through the bite of a flea. Within a week, the victim has a fever, a headache and severe vomiting. Soon after, glands in the groin, armpits and neck swell into large blackish bulges called **buboes**. They leak a foul pus if they burst. Death in severe cases occurs within 48 hours.

The impact of the Black Death on Europe was very significant. In Europe alone, 25 million people—one-third of the population—died.

Key inquiry questions

7.1 How were societies organised at the time of the Black Death?

7.2 How did the Black Death spread and what were its effects?

The Dance of Death, painted by Johannes de Castuo *c.* 1490, shows victims of the Black Death being escorted to an open coffin by skeletons.

7

bigpicture

The Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa

The Black Death swept through Asia, Europe and Africa in the 14th century, killing between 50 and 90 per cent of those who contracted it. The effects of the disease had significant consequences for Europe in particular. Trade and commerce virtually stopped. This caused a rapid rise in the prices of goods. Some people believed they were being punished by God and sought forgiveness; others looked for someone to blame. Social unrest developed as workers who survived pushed for better living standards and higher wages. This development affected ***feudalism*** *and* ***manorialism*** *in Europe.*

The Black Death was not the first outbreak of the plague, but it was the most deadly. The number of deaths from the Black Death slowed during winter (when fleas were dormant) and broke out again with the warmth of spring. It had largely run its course by 1353, although outbreaks of bubonic plague continued into the 1600s. Today, there are still isolated outbreaks all over the world.

CE

541
Plague breaks out in the Eastern Roman Empire, killing some 10 000 people daily in Constantinople; it had largely died out by 750

1339
Nestorian Christian community in Central Asia wiped out

1333
Plague breaks out in north-eastern China, killing five million people that year

It is thought that the plague initially infected rodents like this black rat.

Source 7.1 A timeline of some key events related to the medieval Black Death pandemic

People known as **flagellants** flogged themselves (as shown in this 15th-century woodcut), until they bled, in the hope of obtaining God's forgiveness.

The hand of a victim of septicaemic plague, the rarest (and deadliest) form of the plague

1346
Plague reaches the Crimea (and Genoan trading city of Kaffa); Genoan merchants return to Sicily, spreading the disease

1347
Plague spreads rapidly to Cyprus and then into modern-day Italy; it reaches Venice as well as Alexandria in Egypt

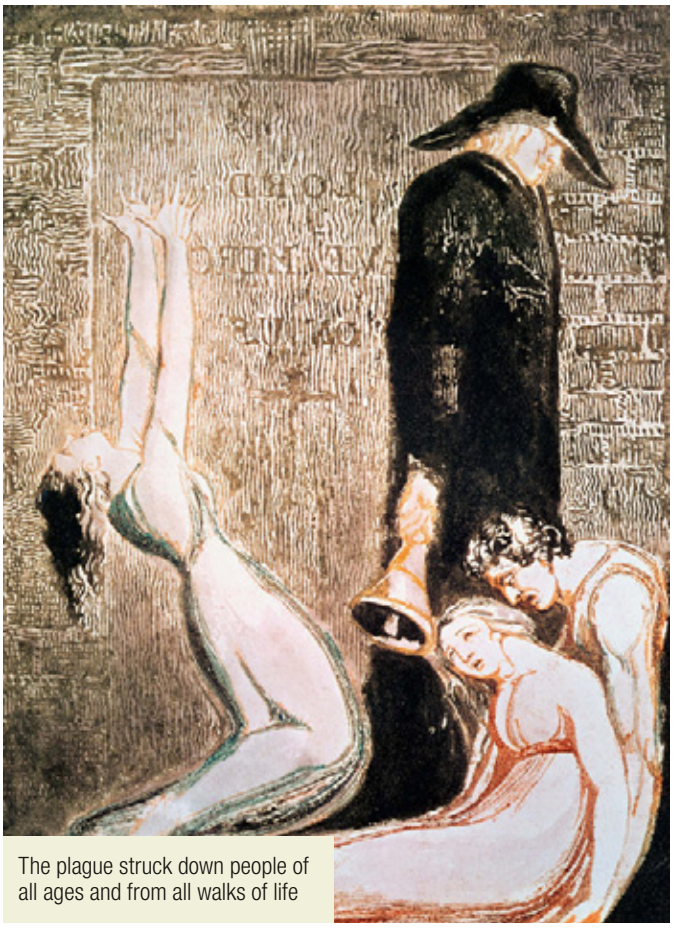
1348
Plague reaches Paris, Marseilles and then England. It moves along the Rhine River and into modern-day Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. Outbreaks occur in Cairo and Gaza; serious persecution of Jews starts

1349
Widespread persecution of Jews, with thousands burned to death; plague reaches Aswan in Egypt and the entire Islamic world is now affected

1350
Plague has largely run its course in the Mediterranean basin

1351
Plague reaches Russia

1353
Some 35 million deaths from the plague recorded in China since 1333



The plague struck down people of all ages and from all walks of life

Source 7.2 A medieval painting of a typical town in Italy

7.1 How were societies organised at the time of the Black Death?

The 14th century CE was a time of change for many societies across China, the Mongol Empire, northern Africa, the Middle East and Europe. ***Barbarian*** *raids that marked the latter half of the first millennium CE in today's Europe had largely ended by the middle of the 11th century. Many towns and cities were growing quickly. Most were walled, with their entrances guarded by gateways. By the early 1200s, there were about 600 cities in Europe, three times as many as there were only 50 years earlier.*

A time of change

In Europe, merchants and soldiers returning home from the **Crusades** (wars fought in today's Middle East region between Christian and Muslim forces), brought with them new goods and new ideas. Many towns became wealthy and prosperous. Some town communities began pushing for more independence from feudal restrictions.

New ideas about the arts, politics and the place of religion were emerging in Europe, beginning first in modern-day Italy. These would lead, in time, to a cultural 'rebirth'—the **Renaissance**—and to a wave of exploration and new discoveries that would change the world.

Furthermore, a new social group—the middle class—began to emerge in Europe as feudalism declined. It was made up of wealthy traders, **artisans** and businessmen. This group began to exert its influence in the governing of towns and cities, and in the politics of the day.

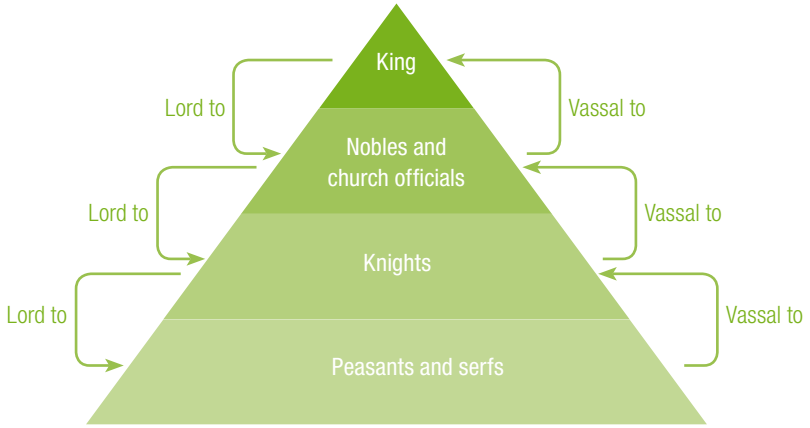
What was feudalism?

In 1066, the Duke of Normandy (in today's France) was crowned King William I of England after his victory at the Battle of Hastings. One of his early decisions as king was to introduce **feudalism**, a system that was already well established across much of Europe.

Here's how feudalism worked: a king or ruler would offer land, say, to a noble in exchange for that noble's sworn loyalty and military support. The king or ruler became the noble's **lord**; the noble became the king or ruler's **vassal**. Nobles, in turn, did the same thing with their **knights**. This time the noble was the lord and the knight his vassal.

An economic system called **manorialism** allowed feudalism to work effectively. It also involved mutual obligations—this time between the manor lord and the peasants (called **serfs**) who worked his land. The lord depended on the serfs to work his estate (by planting and harvesting crops and tending animals) and to provide him with dues. Dues could be paid with labour, products grown on the farm or money. In turn, the serfs depended on the lord for their livelihood and protection.

To work, feudalism depended on things always staying the same. It required people to understand and honour their obligations to each other. Feudalism began to break down in Europe as new ideas, new inventions, new social challenges, new discoveries and new goods and processes began to influence how people lived and thought. The changes caused by the **Black Death pandemic** just meant that the end of feudalism came sooner.



Source 7.3 Mutual obligations sustained the society of feudal Europe.

Source 7.4 Medieval illustration of serfs working a lord's manor fields

Check your learning

1. What was the name of the most common form of the Black Death?
2. Explain in a paragraph how European society was organised under feudalism.
3. What impact did the Black Death have on feudalism? Explain.
4. With a partner, draw a concept map exploring some of the hardships you think that those living in early medieval towns might have faced. Think how these hardships might have affected family life, health, lifestyle, employment and life span.

Growth of trade and commerce

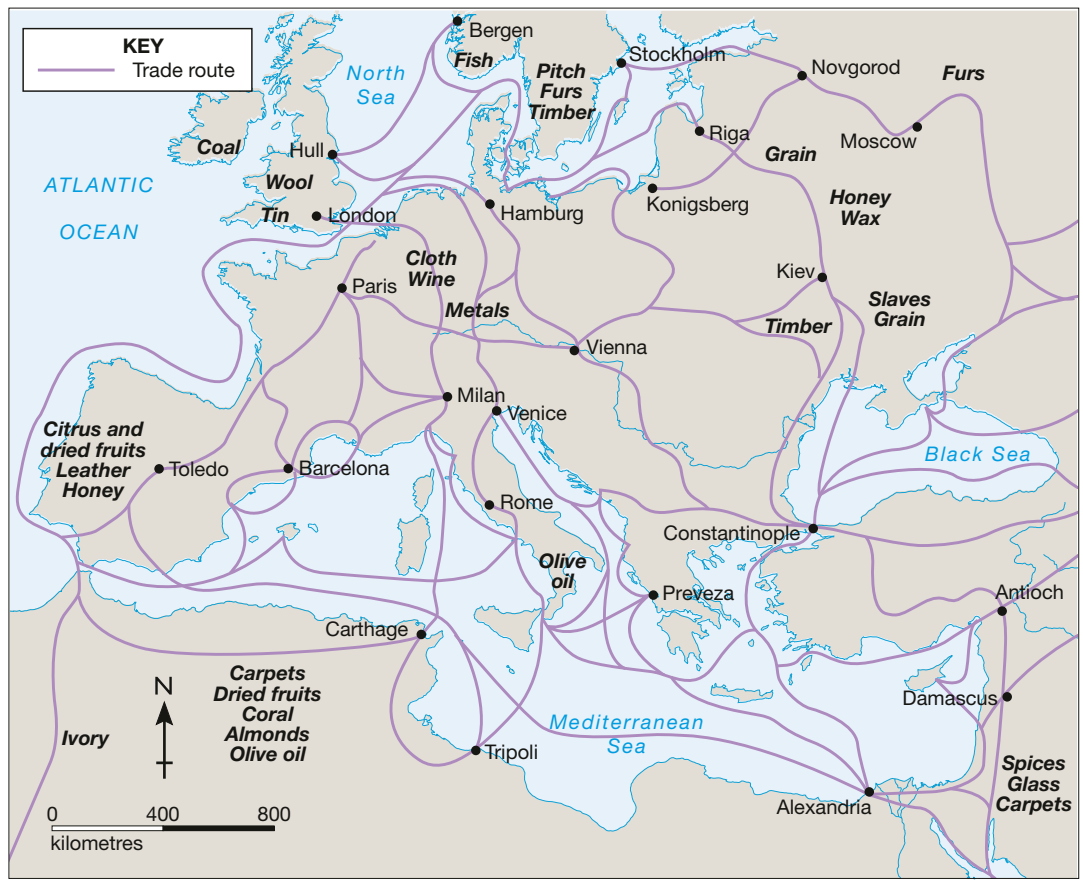
The explorations of Europeans such as Marco Polo (1254–1324) opened up the 'world of the East' to Europe. Marco Polo spent many years travelling in China and Mongolia, among other parts of Asia.The luxury goods he and other merchants brought back included spices, semi-precious stones and silks. Wealthy Europeans were eager for more—and eager for knowledge about this, till then, unknown part of the world.

Trade was also beginning to boom between European towns and places such as Constantinople, Damascus, Moscow and north Africa's Alexandria. Goods were carried back and forth along a network of land and sea trade routes (see Source 7.6), often to be sold in huge open-air markets.

Some merchants in Europe began their working lives as peasants, labouring on the lands of feudal manors. Their first job, after drifting into towns, may have been to trade as wandering 'salesmen'. In time, many of these new merchants became wealthy, settling down in impressive homes in towns and cities. Merchant communities began to form. This led to the rise of merchant **guilds**, which controlled a town's retail industry. Business partnerships developed, too, between some wealthy merchants, where investments—and risks—were shared.

Source 7.5 Some luxury goods imported by medieval European merchants

Type of good	Region or country of origin
lapis lazuli (blue semi-precious stone)	Central Asia
spices	India
gold and ivory	Africa
fine damask cloth	Damascus, said to be the oldest inhabited city in the world, and now the capital of Syria
silk	China
carpets, furs, lemons, mirrors and cotton	Middle East and central Asia



Source 7.6
Some key trade routes of medieval merchants and the goods that were traded

focus on ...

cause and effect:
the growing independence of towns

Some merchants became so rich that they became bankers, lending money even to kings. Their wealth and influence gave them a great deal of political power.

The rapid growth of towns saw a growing push by many influential townspeople (often merchants) for greater independence. This trend was caused by a desire to have more say in how people in towns lived.

At first, European feudal lords held control over the developing towns within their realm, in terms of taxes and certain freedoms of the townspeople. As towns became bustling centres of commerce and social activity, things began to change. The emerging middle class was becoming more influential, politically and economically.

The push by influential townsfolk for more control over their towns was achieved by means of a **charter**. A charter set out the freedoms and rights agreed upon between the lord and the town representatives. (This was a bit like contracts today, where two parties agree on the conditions they will both observe for some arrangement.) New rights for town residents might include being allowed to leave and enter the town at will, and to elect a town mayor.

Source 7.7 Medieval illustration showing two early banking scenes: (top) the counting and recording of money and (bottom) queuing customers

New visions and new borders

Much early medieval trade between West and East took place along the **Silk Road**. By the mid 1200s, this network of dirt tracks—stretching from China in the east, westwards to the Mediterranean Sea—was controlled by the Mongol Empire. Mongol protection meant safer passage and more reliable delivery of goods.

But this reliance on the Silk Road for trade would not last. New ways to reach markets faster and more cheaply would be sought. This would eventually change the balance of power between the East and West and weaken the authority of the Mongols.

Looking for sea routes

Countries such as Portugal and Spain led the push in Europe to discover new sea routes to eastern markets—and to claim lands in the **New World** (the Americas). What were there motives? Perhaps a combination of curiosity and a desire to impose their culture on others they thought of as primitive. Most of all, they had a desire for wealth.

The European sailors of the late 1400s and beyond pushed further and further into unknown waters. Many sailors died at sea looking for new lands and trading partners,

Source 7.8 A dusty, rugged road in today's Pakistan, once a part of the Silk Road

Source 7.9 New vegetables (such as potatoes, tomatoes and chillies) were introduced to Europe, Asia and Africa through contact and trade with the Americas.

but eventually new lands in the East and elsewhere were reached by sea. This opened the door for the exchange of many new products that significantly changed societies.

Not only were these new sea routes faster than land travel but they also made it possible to transport greater volumes of cargo. There were many risks; including being shipwrecked on rocks, facing wild storms at sea, and being attacked by pirates. However, as ship design improved and navigational skills strengthened, some risks were reduced.

Growing empires

Trade and exploration meant that the empires of India, Asia, Africa, the Middle East and Europe started interacting. Existing boundaries were challenged, and they were often changed. New 'colonial' empires would emerge as different powers claimed new territory as their own.

Trade—the good and the bad

Trade was the key link between medieval societies. It encouraged many people to think differently, and to share knowledge. It also was the trigger cause of the spread of the Black Death in Europe and beyond. Many merchants unknowingly carried the disease, spreading it from China, through the Mongol Empire and eventually into Europe and Africa.

Check your learning

1 Explain why Marco Polo's adventures created such interest in Europe on his return.

2 Many medieval people took great risks in the interests of trade, even exploring unknown seas.
   - **a** Why do you think they were prepared to do this?
   - **b** Do you think that people today also take risks for the same reasons? Justify your view.

3 Why might the Silk Road have helped to spread the Black Death pandemic?

4 With a partner, brainstorm a list of communicable diseases (diseases that are spread from person to person).

Medieval towns

People living in medieval towns and cities included both the very wealthy and the very poor. Rich people might live in castles or manor houses on the outskirts of the town, or in tall, impressive homes in the town itself.

Source 7.10 Florence in the early 1300s

> *The city was well laid out within, and constructed with many beautiful houses ... Buildings were improved to make them comfortable and elegant, and fine examples of all sorts of improvements were sought from outside the city.*

Translated extract from the writings of Florence-based writer and banker, Giovanni Villani (*c.*1275–1348)

Source 7.11 Part of a medieval European town, still standing today, with some modern additions

The poor part of town

Home for the poor in medieval towns was often just one or two rooms in one of the shabby multi-storeyed buildings clustered around a market area. Many of these buildings were joined together in a similar way to modern apartment blocks. The family business was typically run from the ground floor (often a dirt floor) of the building. Floors on upper levels were often covered with straw. Over time, this floor covering became a stinking squashed mat of rotting food, bones, bodily wastes and grease. Bathing was not seen as a daily routine in those days. In fact, some people thought that washing was bad for the health! The poor and rich alike lived with lice and fleas and scurrying rats.

Source 7.12
A modern artist's impression of a medieval European town around the mid 1400s. Note the busy marketplace.

Rubbish, manure ... and rats

Town centres were dirty and smelly. Rotting food scraps and sewage typically blocked the drains. Each day, household rubbish and the contents of chamber pots (used for going to the toilet) were tossed out of windows. It was common to see animals such as pigs and chickens roaming the streets and alleyways. The smell of animal manure and human waste was constant and the streets were a thriving environment for rats and other vermin.

Narrow stone or dirt streets separated the rows of what were, at first, mostly wooden buildings with thatched or shingled roofs. These flammable materials made these buildings major fire risks.

Market activity

Medieval towns and cities were noisy, crowded places. At the centre of many towns, there was a marketplace where goods were bought and sold. Festivals were also held there. One might hear animals bleating, the clatter of cart wheels, the cries of merchants as they carried out their trade, the songs and music of wandering **minstrels**, and the yells of running children.

Rise of guilds

In medieval towns, merchants, artists, bankers, and other professionals formed business associations known as guilds. The guilds controlled the way in which trade was conducted in every town. They were formed for a number of different reasons — they protected the working conditions and rights of individual members, helped to ensure that quality standards of products were consistent, regulated apprenticeships, and kept prices and wages regular. To become a member of a guild, merchants and craftsmen were required to pay a fee.

In addition to this, guilds played a major role in the lives of people. Some guilds paid for the funeral expenses of poor members, helped with the construction of buildings such as churches, and took turns patrolling and policing the streets. As a result, guild members became very powerful. The members of the guilds also became involved with civic duties and were appointed to important positions in the community. For example, in London, the chief spokesman of the guilds became the mayor and the representatives of the guilds became the important council members.

In many ways, guilds ran medieval towns and controlled commerce and trade. Each guild had its own hall and coat of arms, but there was also the guildhall where selected members of all the various guilds met.

Some common medieval guilds included:

- armourers and brasiers (armour-makers and brass metalworkers)
- bakers
- carpenters
- chandlers (candle makers)
- farriers (shoers of horses)
- barbers (who also served as surgeons and dentists).

Source 7.13 The guild house in the Brussels marketplace

bigideas

7.1 How were societies organised at the time of the Black Death?

Remember

1 Why was the Black Death such a significant event for many medieval societies?

2 The 14th-century outbreak of the plague is thought to have started in China. How do scholars think it got to Europe?

3 Which group of people became the new middle class in medieval cities? Explain why.

4 Name the two countries that led Europe's expansion into the 'New World' via sea exploration.

5 What was manorialism? How did it help to organise some medieval societies?

6 a Who elected the Mayor of London after 1215?
  b In what building did London mayors conduct their business?
  c What other purpose was this building used for?

Understand

7 Why were towns and cities—especially the poorer parts—such 'fertile' areas for the spread of the plague?

8 Use a 'design a crossword' program you locate with an Internet search to design a crossword to cover some of the things you have learned in this section. (You will also need to write the clues.) Swap a copy of your finished crossword with a partner to complete.

9 Look at Source 7.5. Suggest how the daily lives of some people in medieval societies might have been changed by the introduction of luxury goods such as these.

10 Why do you think medieval peasants, working under systems such as feudalism and manorialism, might have been attracted by town life?

11 With a partner, write a script for a conversation a peasant farmer might have had with his wife to persuade her to leave the manor and go with him to live in a nearby town.

12 Look at Source 7.14, painted during the time of Europe's Black Death. What are these people doing? How do you think they are feeling? What evidence does this source provide about the beliefs of at least some elements of the society?

Source 7.14 A painting created during the time of the Black Death

Deux flagellants agenouillés by Lorenzo di Pietro (1412–1480), photographed by René-Gabriel Ojéda, ©RMN Chantily Musée Condé

Apply

13 Divisions in medieval societies helped to create living conditions in some towns and cities that were a breeding ground for disease. Think about the town or city in which your school is located. As a class, discuss:

- How are social differences reflected in the layout and appearance of your town or city?
- What health risks and social problems might be posed by some areas of your town or city? Why?
- What measures have already been taken to improve this situation? Can you suggest others?

Analyse

14 Source 7.15 is an artist's impression of a manor after the Black Death. Analyse it carefully and answer these questions:

a What is the condition of the farmland? What clues help to determine your answer?

b Why might the farmland be like this?

c What do you think each of the men shown in the artwork is doing? How might their efforts benefit the manor?

d Peasant workers such as these once worked on the manor for free in exchange for protection and support. How did the Black Death change working arrangements for many people such as these survivors?

Evaluate

15 Which of the following options do you think would have been the *most* terrifying thing about the onset of the plague in medieval societies?

- its cause
- the speed with which it killed people
- its symptoms

Explain how you think the answer you choose might have influenced the behaviour of some different members of an affected society.

Source 7.15 A painting of life on a manor soon after the plague ended

Create

16 You are a medieval person with a nice house and four children. The Black Death has arrived, and you are deciding whether or not to abandon your family. In your notebook or on a separate piece of paper, create a table with the following headings: 'Benefits of staying' and 'Benefits of fleeing'. Fill in the columns of the table and, on the basis of what you have written, what do you decide to do?

Source 7.16 Medieval artist's impression of merchants conducting their trade. It was medieval traders, many say, who were responsible for spreading the pandemic.

7.2 How did the Black Death spread and what were its effects?

*Medieval societies were significantly changed by the **Black Death**. As indicated earlier, town populations were devastated, trade virtually stopped and many manor lands and businesses were ruined. Family and social relationships were ruined, for both the rich and the poor. Some people became devoutly religious, others became suspicious enough to kill or torture those they thought were responsible. Yet others defiantly celebrated, certain that they would soon die. In the longer term, the pandemic would help play a part in ending **feudalism** in Europe.*

Where did the Black Death start?

Most scientists and historians think an especially lethal version of the plague broke out in the Yunnan area of southern China around 1333. This area had been under the control of the Mongols since 1256. Some think that the disease was first carried westwards by Mongols travelling between occupied Yunnan and their capital—Karakorum, in the Gobi Desert.

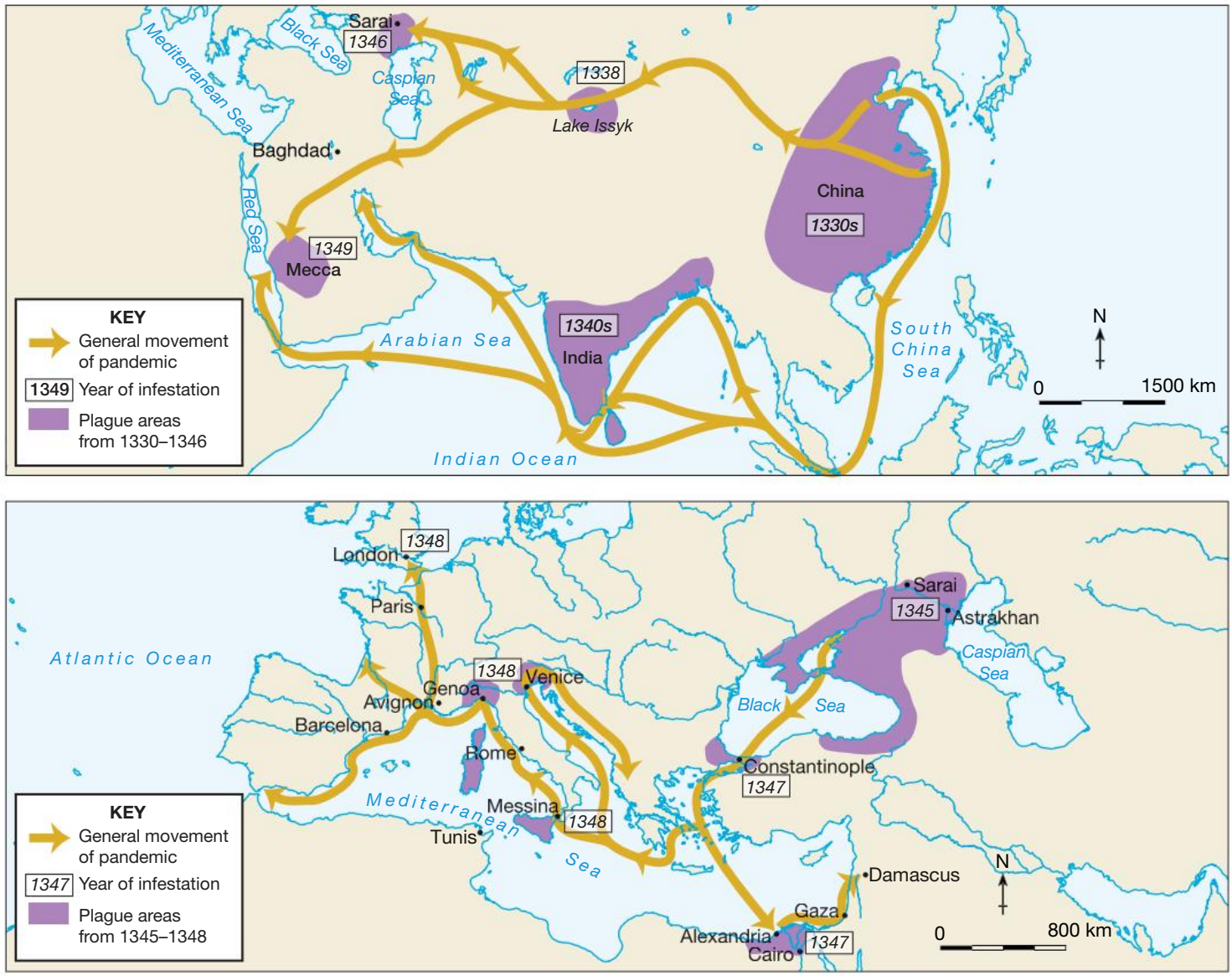
In 1347, the **pandemic** eventually reached a Genoan (Italian) trading city called Kaffa, in what is now the Ukraine. At that time, Muslim Turks (called **Tatars**) were

attacking Kaffa, a port on the Black Sea. A 14th-century Italian writer described how the Tatars 'ordered dead corpses [of their men] to be placed in **catapults** and lobbed [thrown] into the city in the hope that the intolerable stench would kill everyone inside. What seemed like mountains of dead were thrown'. The Tatar attack began to break up as the disease spread rapidly among their troops. The Genoans took the opportunity to flee to their boats.

The Genoans, however, were now carrying the disease. On the way home, they infected those they came in contact with, including merchants in Constantinople (who, in turn, carried the plague further). When the ships reached their home port, crowds flocked to greet the Genoan merchants. The survivors introduced the disease to their homeland via their own infection and the rats on board (which jumped ship).

The plague had reached Germany and England by 1348. From there, ships carried it to areas such as Norway, which was infected by 1350. Clearly merchants played a part in helping to spread this terrible disease.

Source 7.17 The westward sweep of the plague in the mid 14th century



focus on ...

contestability: origins of the plague

While *most* scholars think the Black Death pandemic began in China, not *everyone* does. Someone who contests this view is Beijing-based Professor Wu Hou. He is a contemporary infectious disease specialist and has expert knowledge of diseases such as HIV/AIDS and the **bubonic plague**. He disagrees with the theory that the Black Death began in China.

Archaeological studies conducted in 2004 in north Africa concluded that the plague had its origins in ancient Egypt, not in the East. This hypothesis was published in a later issue of the *Journal of Biogeography.*

Moving west

Many scholars who do believe that the plague began in China argue that it was pushed west (by land and sea) by merchants trading along the Silk Road, up the Volga River and across waterways such as the Black Sea.

Others contest this. They say that environmental change, not trade, was the key reason for this westward movement. Climate scientists confirm that there was a change in world wind patterns between about 1250 and the early 1300s. These winds from the hot Sahara swept up into central Asia, causing a shortage of pasture for herdsmen in the area. This caused the herdsmen to move west in search of better grazing land and water.

By 1339, a number of people near Lake Issyk Kul near modern-day Kyrgyzstan were dying or dead from the plague. By late 1347, the pandemic had reached Cyprus. Fear and panic were becoming widespread. By October that year, it had reached Messina in Sicily, the gateway to western Europe.

Source 7.18 This detail, called 'Suffering man', from a work painted by Matthias Grunewald (*c.* 1480–1528) provides evidence of why this terrible disease caused such fear and horror.

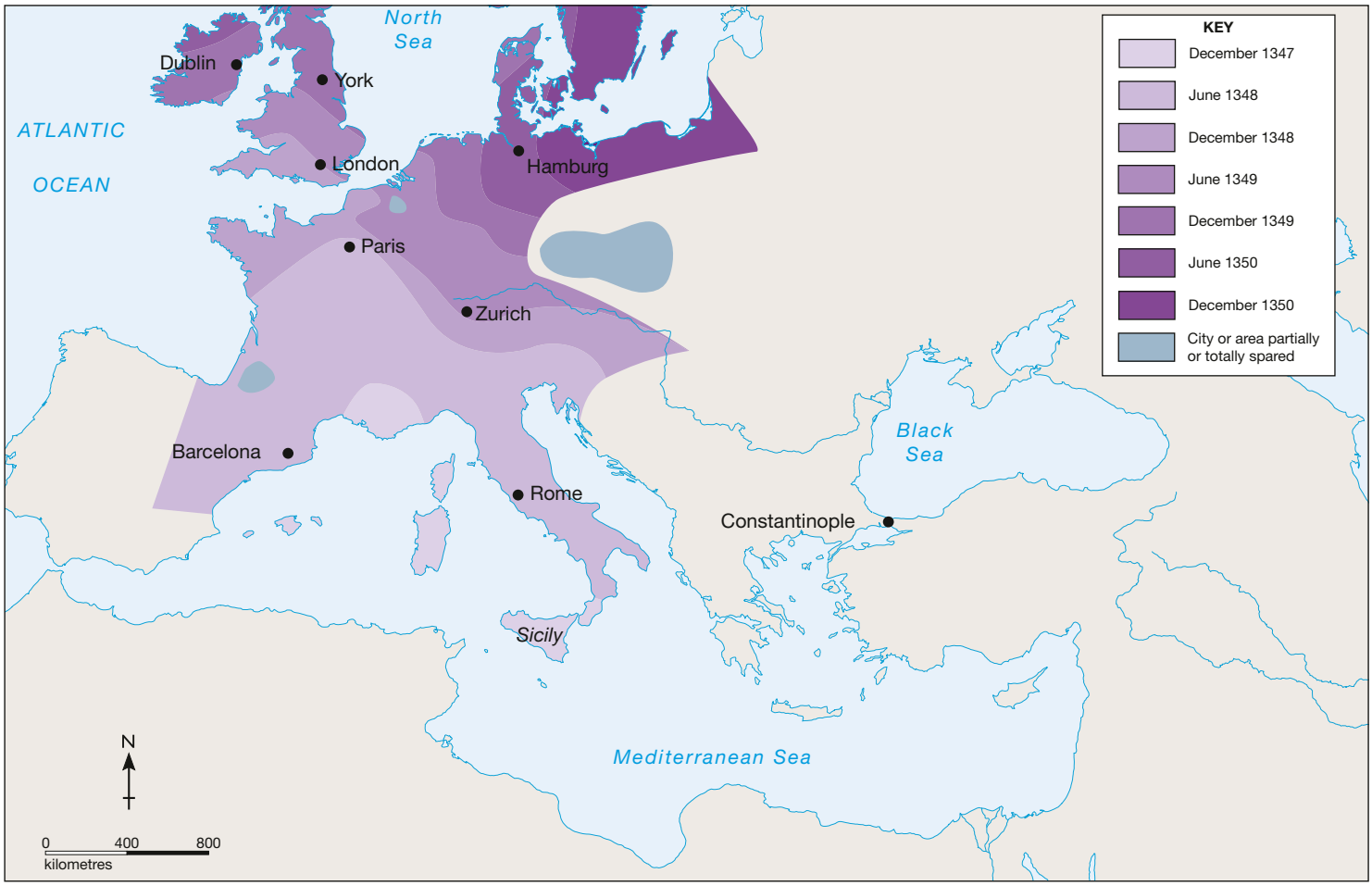
Rapid spread of the Black Death

Societies can be changed by internal or external forces. Internal factors include such tings as new attitudes or values that develop among people within a society. For example, they might start feeling differently about religion or the expected roles of women. External factors include events such as wars, invasions and the spread of serious diseases.

One of the reasons why many medieval societies were changed by the Black Death was that it spread very quickly. Once it had moved westwards from Asia, it raced through Europe (see Source 7.19). By the end of 1347, all Mediterranean islands (except for Cyprus and Sicily) were infected. Many Mediterranean seaports were also infected. By 1348, the Black Death was in Avignon and, then, other cities in the south of France. From there, it moved into Spain and further into Italy.

Spread into Africa

Europe was not the only area devastated by the Black Death. By 1347, it reached Alexandria in north Africa, carried by infected travellers on ships. An Arab writer described the arrival there of a slave ship that had set out to sea from Constantinople with over 330 people on board. By the time it arrived in Alexandria, there were only three survivors.



Source 7.19 Map showing the rapid spread of the pandemic through Europe

Into Egypt, and beyond

By early 1348, up to 1000 people were dying per day in Alexandria. In fact, Alexandria's population did not return to what it was before the plague until hundreds of years later.

In other villages of the Nile delta, the death rate was so high that towns were abandoned, fishing almost stopped and law courts were closed. In Bilbeis, for example, bodies were reported to be piled up in mosques and shops. Roads were littered with rotting corpses—which were eaten by dogs and rats.

The southward spread of the plague from Alexandria saw it travel up the Nile Valley (again, mostly through infected boat passengers). About 200000 people died in Cairo alone—37 per cent of the city's population. By February 1349, the Black Death had reached Aswan, 1000 kilometres south of Cairo.

To the west of Egypt, the plague's advance followed the north African coastline. It reached Tunis in April 1348. From there it pushed into today's Algeria and Morocco. Interestingly, **nomadic** Arabs (who lived in tents, moving from place to place) were not struck down by the plague.

Into the Middle East

The Black Death spread to Yemen in the east by 1351. The King of Yemen, and his attendants and courtiers, carried the disease to their home country after their release from a Cairo prison.

Three years earlier, in April 1348, the plague had already reached Gaza. From there it spread to Palestine and Syria. Less than a year later, it had killed 50 000 people in Damascus—roughly half the population. Eventually, the whole of the Islamic world was affected, especially those living in towns or cities.

The plague also pushed from the north-east into the area we now know as the Middle East. An army led by the fierce Mongol–Turk Tamerlane (1336–1405) besieged the town of Tabriz (in modern-day Iran) in 1385. The next year, he captured Baghdad. His men, who carried the disease, were unknowingly infecting others.

Source 7.20 A section of the painting *Triumph of Death* by the Flemish painter Jan Brueghel (1568–1625). It symbolises how widespread the deaths were.

focus on ...

perspectives: who's to blame?

Even though Muslim pilgrims carried the plague to Mecca in 1348, it did not spread to the nearby city of Medina. This was seen by believers as a miracle.

The outbreak in Mecca was seen by Muslims as evidence of Allah's anger that there were unbelievers (Jews) in the city. They viewed the Jews as scapegoats (those blamed for the event).

Europeans also saw Jews as scapegoats, but had a different perspective from that of the Muslims. Most medieval Europeans were Christians; some viewed the Jews negatively for crucifying Jesus Christ. This made Jews ready targets for the fears of those Christians threatened by the plague. Jews were charged with bringing about this health crisis by poisoning freshwater wells. Many innocent Jews were tortured and killed.

Source 7.21 A medieval artist's impression of the fate of some innocent Jews who were blamed by Muslims and Christians alike (but for different reasons) for causing the plague.

Check your learning

1 The Black Death caused immense changes to societies when it arrived.
   - **a** Write down as many reasons as you can to explain why the Black Death had such a significant impact on medieval societies.
   - **b** Imagine a similar plague broke out today (for which there was no cure). Discuss as a class how you think it would affect the modern world.

2 The origins of the Black Death are contested. Explain what this means and give an example.

3 Create a timeline that lists key events in the spread of the pandemic from east to west. Include key dates for Asia, the Middle East, Africa and Europe.

4 Source 7.18 is an artist's impression of a victim of the Black Death. Explain why the sight of someone in this physical condition would create such horror and fear.

5 Often, even today, when something bad happens in a community, people look to particular social groups to blame.
   - **a** Explain the different perspectives Muslims and European Christians had about the Jews regarding responsibility for the Black Death.
   - **b** Why is it, do you think, when something bad happens (like a serious disease outbreak) many feel the need to find someone to blame? Discuss as a class.

Source 7.22 *Yersinia pestis* bacteria

Medical understanding and practices

Today we know a lot more about many health conditions and diseases than medieval people did. At the time, those suffering from the Black Death in the 14th century had little idea why they were dying. They knew nothing about germs or bacteria. The cause —the bacterium *Yersinia pestis* (see Source 7.22)—was not discovered until the late 1800s. This lack of medical knowledge was another reason why the Black Death changed medieval societies so dramatically. People did not know what caused it, so they did not know how to stop it.

focus on ...

empathy: leprosy

People still contract **leprosy** today. It is caused by a bacterium that infects the nerves, particularly in extremities such as fingers, toes and the nose. It leads to a loss of sensation in body tissue. Sufferers do not feel anything (for example, the pain of burns or cuts) parts of the body can be easily injured, and often lost. Fortunately, today leprosy can be cured with antibiotics.

In medieval times, victims of leprosy were seen as cursed. They were social outcasts to be avoided at all costs. They were condemned to live in colonies on remote islands or in caves.

This might seem very unjust to us, knowing what we know today about the disease, but we need to exercise our historical empathy to understand how medieval people felt. Think for a moment how someone who did not understand what caused leprosy would react to a sight like that shown in Source 7.23. The treatment of lepers in medieval times was motivated by fear and ignorance.

Source 7.23 This man with leprosy has lost most of his fingers.

Source 7.24 Procession of flagellants, painted by the Spanish artist Goya between 1815 and 1819

Looking for answers

People in medieval times had no real idea about what caused the Black Death. They also did not understand why infections would spread in waves. Some believed that it meant the world was about to end.

As we have seen, some people blamed the Jews. Some Europeans believed that the plague was God's punishment for wrongdoing. They used stories from the Old Testament of the Bible to support their views. They believed that if they went on pilgrimages or used holy relics (such as a piece of the body of a dead saint) they could be saved. Many people flocked to churches to pray.

Some people thought that if they punished themselves, God would stop punishing their community. These people, known as **flagellants** (see Source 7.24), would walk around, often from town to town, singing hymns and flogging themselves or each other until their bare backs were scarred and bleeding. Despite this, people continued to die in their thousands.

Clues in the heavens

A few people looked to the skies for answers (see Source 7.25). In medieval times, astronomical events to do with the planets, and the Sun and Moon were then often believed to trigger events on Earth.

One such event occurred on 20 March 1345: the planets of Jupiter, Saturn and Mars were aligned closely in the night sky (at least to the naked eye). This unusual event was considered by certain people to have caused a toxic cloud to form over India. As this cloud drifted on, it was said to infect people below with the plague.

Smells

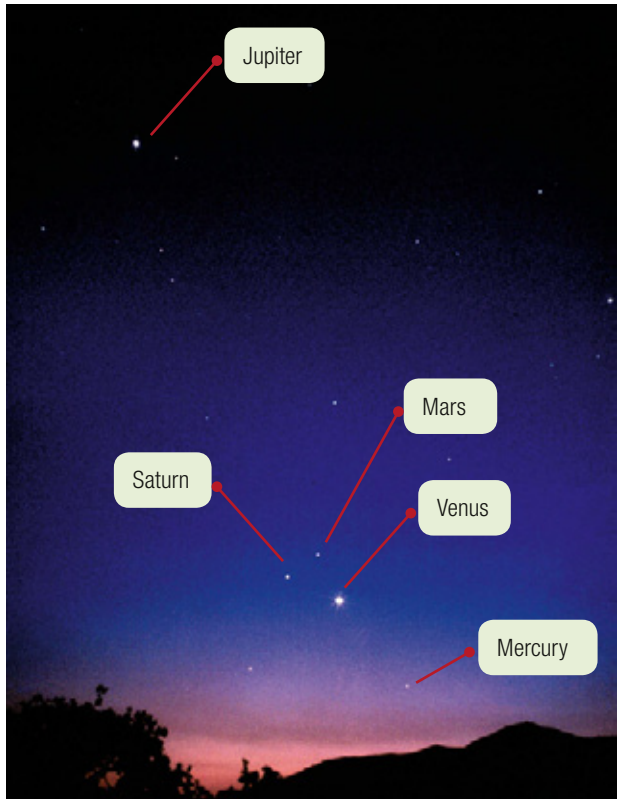
Bad smells were considered by many people to be the cause of disease. To counteract the odours, people carried small bunches of flowers or parcels filled with fragrant herbs, spices or flowers. Vinegar and human faeces were sniffed too. Green wood (such as from the rosemary plant) was also burned in the home to give off a fragrant smoke. People were encouraged by doctors not to sleep on their backs—it was believed that bad smells could slip too easily up their nostrils.

Source 7.26

> *[You are to remove] ... the human faeces and filth lying in the streets and lanes ... with all speed to places far distant, so that no greater cause of mortality (death) may arise from such smells.*
>
> Comment made by King Edward III (1312–1377) to London's mayor on observing the state of the city

Other risks

When a lack of medical knowledge was combined with the unhygienic conditions in which many medieval people lived, it is not surprising that so many people died young, and that the Black Death took hold so quickly and killed so many people. Life expectancy in Europe at that time was between 30 and 40 years. One in every two babies died before they were five. About one in five women died in childbirth. Most women had at least six children, and complications during or after childbirth were common.



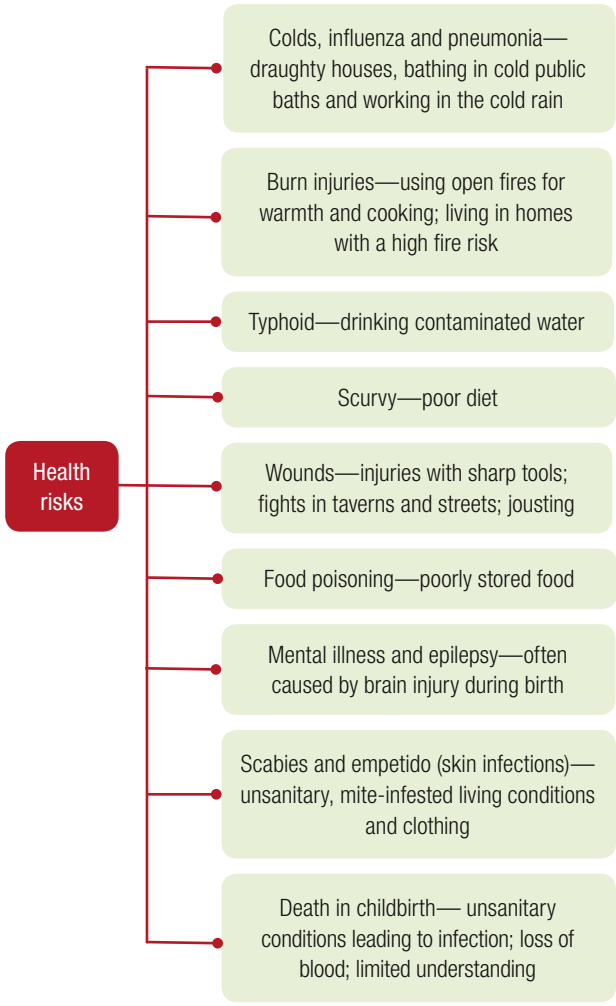
Source 7.25 A close alignment of planets on 5 May 2002, which will next occur in 2060. Such a sight in 1345 (for three of these planets anyway) had medieval people talking!

Check your learning

1. What bacterium causes the bubonic plague?
2. Brainstorm this question as a class: Why does ignorance so often cause fear?
3. Use historical empathy to think like a medieval person who is confronted by the leprosy sufferer shown in Source 7.23. Compose a statement they might make to their family. Think about what might have motivated them to react that way. Don't superimpose your own views.
4. Describe two actions that some medieval people took to seek what they believed would be God's forgiveness.
5. Medieval people did not know what caused the plague, but they did have some ideas. Describe two possible causes put forward.

Medieval ‘health workers’

By today’s standards medical care was very primitive during the time of the Black Death. There were some university-trained doctors in medieval Europe (almost all of them men), but only the wealthiest people in society could afford to visit them. One of these doctors would diagnose the problem, prescribe a treatment and then possibly refer the patient to a surgeon.



Source 7.27 Some health risks faced by medieval people

focus on ...

evidence: plague doctors

Plague doctors were specialist physicians hired by towns and cities to fight the Black Death, but they were not always well trained. Most could do little for victims, except separate them from people who had not yet contracted the plague and burn their clothing. They also prayed for them.

Source 7.28 provides evidence of how plague physicians typically dressed. Heavy floor-length coats extended up the back of the head. A hat was worn, and a bird-like beak, which was filled with strong-smelling items such as mint, spices, garlic, flowers or vinegar. Such garb, it was hoped, would protect them from contracting the plague and from coming into contact with its associated bad smells.

Source 7.28 A 17th-century illustration of a typical plague doctor. Earlier medieval plague doctors were similarly dressed.

Doctors for the poor

Poorer people received medical attention from monks or nuns (in their local monastery or convent), or healers in their community. Often healers were older women, respected for their knowledge of illness. Many risked being regarded with suspicion as witches, however kind and gentle they might have been.

Herbs were commonly prescribed by monks, nuns and local healers in the same way that pills and medicines are today. Some treatments required people to eat the herbs; other times, herbs were mixed with other ingredients and applied to the skin.

focus on ...

continuity and change: herbal medicine

People in the medieval period relied on herbs both for cooking and medicines. Many herbs were grown in monasteries or convents, and some were introduced into Europe by men returning from the Crusades. Sage, for instance, was used to treat epilepsy, and coriander to treat fever. Both cumin and anise were used to treat digestive problems. Rosemary was believed to keep nightmares—and the plague—at bay.

Source 7.29

> *If a depression caused by various fever attacks causes a person headaches, he should take mallow and twice that amount of sage, crush these into a pulp in a mortar and pour a bit of olive oil on it ... He should then apply it over the skull from the forehead to the neck and wrap a cloth over it.*
>
> Translated extract from *Liber Compositae Medicinae* by Hildegard of Bingen

While attitudes towards the benefits of some herbs have changed over time, some herbs are still used today to treat health conditions. For example, garlic is used today, as it was in medieval times, to help keep colds and flu at bay. It is also now thought to assist with cholesterol control. Chamomile is still used to calm the body and ease stress headaches, as it was in medieval times. Parsley continues to be used to freshen breath. And cumin is still used for digestive problems.

Source 7.30 Some herbs are still used today for medicinal reasons, as well as for food.

Check your learning

1. Explain why use of herbs for medical reasons is an example of continuity and change.
2. Who might the very wealthy go to see about a medical condition? Who might the very poor go to see? Why?
3. Design and make a mask that meets the requirements needed by a specialist plague physician. Share your creations with the class, explaining how you made it.
4. Conduct some research about how some herbs were used as medicine in medieval times. Document your findings in a table.

Medical treatments

Besides taking or using herbs, one of the most common medical treatments was blood letting. **Blood letting** was believed to cure illness and prevent disease such as the Black Death. Leeches were sometimes used to suck out blood; or a person's vein was cut and a set volume of blood was collected in a dish. Often this procedure was done in a barber's shop—and the person who did it was the barber (see the Focus on feature below).

Other medical procedures included forcing a patient to vomit or bringing about severe sweating or diarrhoea. Some doctors treated the **buboes** of plague victims by cutting them open to release blood. Then a mixture made from crushed dried toads and dried human faeces was spread over the open pus-filled wound.

Source 7.31 A 15th-century illustration of blood letting

focus on ...

continuity and change: bloody barber poles

If you have ever had your hair cut at a barber's shop (or just walked past one), chances are you will have seen a red-and-white striped pole out the front of the shop. Striped poles like these have been used for hundreds of years to advertise barber shops, but have you ever wondered why?

In the Middle Ages, hair was not the only thing that barbers cut. They also performed a number of different medical and dental procedures. The most common medical procedure was known as blood letting.

Originally, barbers poles were used during blood-letting procedures. The brass pole had a bowl at the top to hold leeches and another at the bottom to catch the blood. Patients held onto the pole tightly during the operation so their veins popped out and were easier to cut. The pole also helped them stay upright!

After each operation, bandages were used to stop the bleeding. They were often hung out to dry on poles and would twist together in the wind forming the spiral pattern. Over time, the stripes came to represent the bandages used in these operations. Red for the bandages stained with blood during the operation and white for the clean bandages. Today, this has been replaced by a glass or wooden pole.

Source 7.32 Today's barber poles are a reminder of one of the original services barbers provided.

Surgeons

Compared with modern-day medicine, understanding of human anatomy in Europe at the time of the Black Death was a very limited. Source 7.33 shows an illustration which appeared in a number of surgical texts during the Middle Ages. It offered advice on how to best treat a range of injuries that might be suffered during battle, but gives an idea the general level of medical understanding and expertise at the time.

Although a number of medical schools had been set up across Europe during this time (most of which were connected to universities established by the Church), medical knowledge was still very limited and surgeons were in short supply. Because demand for surgical procedures was so great, many untrained individuals operated on the sick. Barbers, for example, also worked as 'surgeons' when they were not cutting people's hair and beards.

Source 7.33 This illustration, called *The wound man*, was used by many medieval surgeons as a manual or 'procedures guide'.

Source 7.34 Artist's depiction of a medieval surgeon treating a broken leg; the pain of such treatments simply had to be endured.

In most cases, the skill or experience of the surgeon made little difference for those infected with the Black Death. For many, the time between the first plague symptoms and death could be as short as a few hours, and there was no cure.

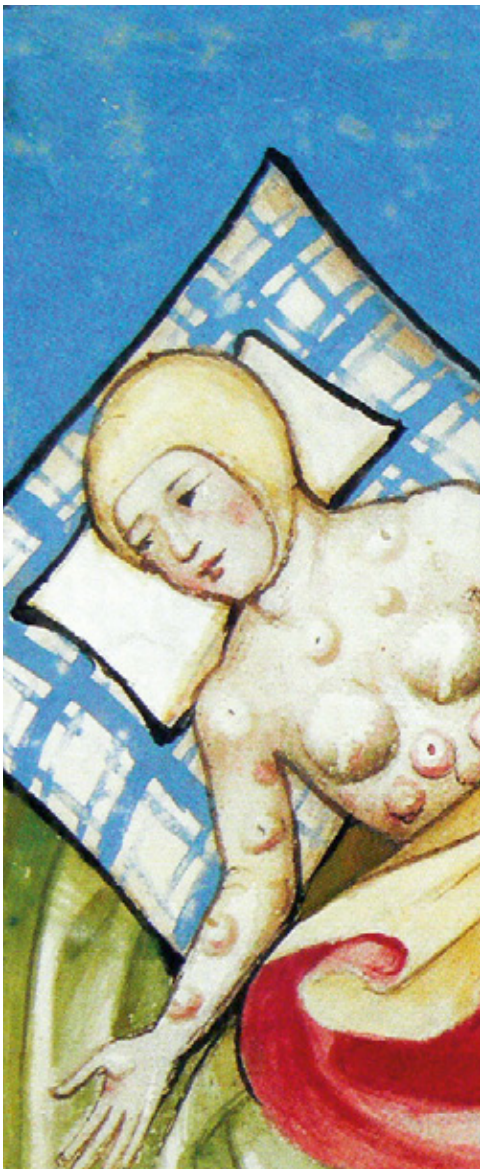
Tools and treatments

Medieval operating tools included saws, knives, hot irons and sharp instruments for blood letting. None of these were sterilised, and operations were often carried out in the open—even major procedures such as amputations and trepanning (a procedure that involved removing part of the skull with a drill to operate on the brain). The success rates for major surgery were, unsurprisingly, very low.

Anaesthetics

By our standards today, anaesthetics did not exist in medieval Europe, so the pain of surgery or other treatments just had to be endured. People might be given a piece of wood to bite on. Sedating drugs might be alcohol laced with opium or the mandrake plant. According to legend, when the root of the mandrake is dug up it screams, killing those who hear it. In reality though the mandrake contains naturally occuring properties that numbed those who ate it.

Another sedative called dwale was potentially lethal. Besides opium, lettuce juice, vinegar and the bile of a castrated wild pig, dwale also contained the poisonous plant hemlock.



Check your learning

1. Write a diary entry from the point of view of a medieval barber in Europe. Write about your very busy day!
2. Why did medieval surgeons know so little about anatomy?
3. What evidence does Source 7.33 provide of the sorts of wounds medieval surgeons might expect to treat?
4. Describe two different methods used by medieval surgeons to control pain during surgery. How effective do you think each might have been?

The effects of the Black Death

The effects of the Black Death across many parts of the world were very significant. Populations declined rapidly, and economies were changed forever. Waves of fear and superstition were created that were continually reinforced whenever there was a new outbreak of the disease.

Some of the impacts on medieval society were immediate and obvious, such as bodies lying in the streets and abandoned houses. Other impacts were longer term, affecting societies both economically and politically. Some of these changes irreversibly altered the way societies functioned. We will look at these impacts in the rest of this depth study.

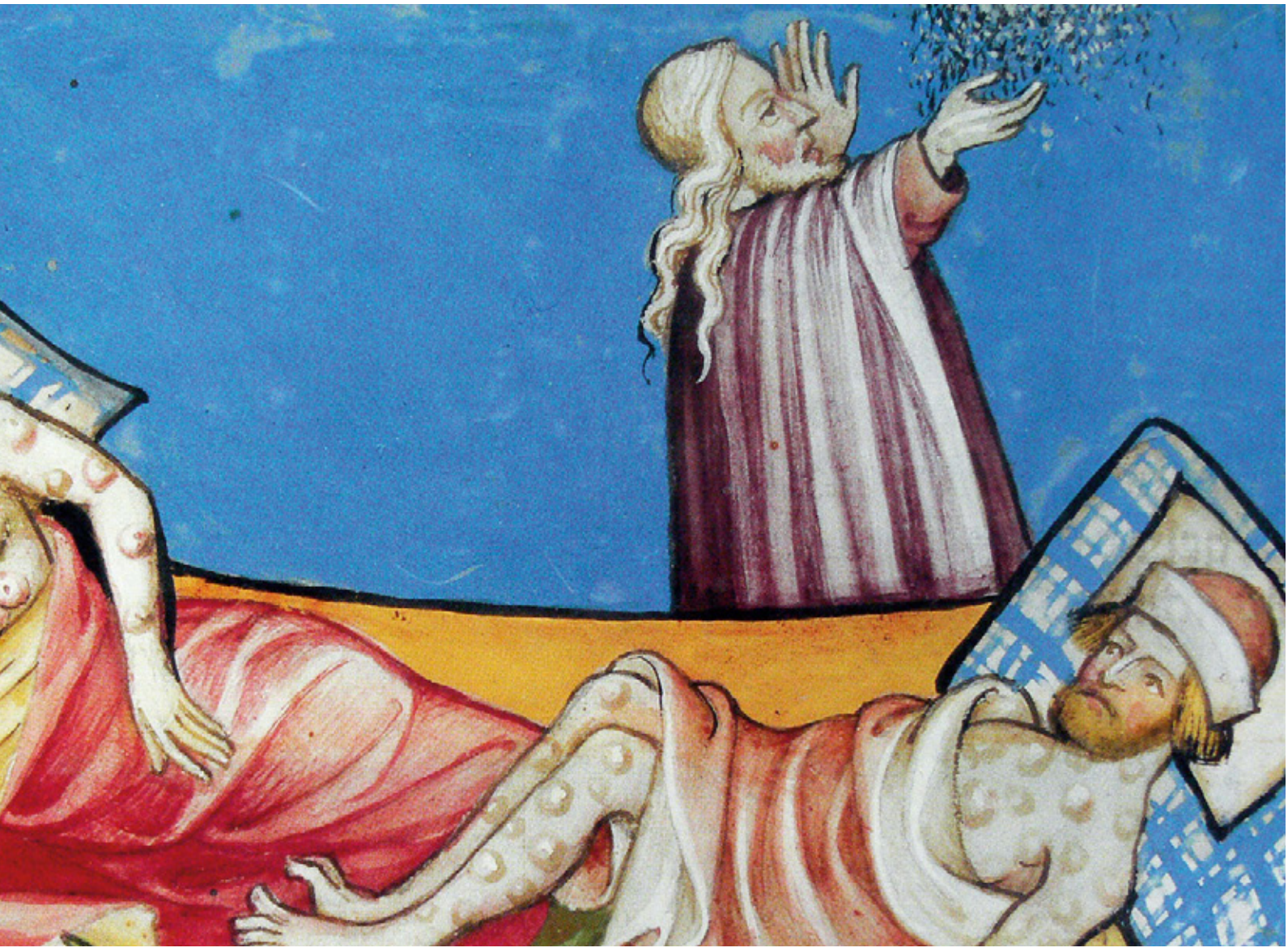
focus on ...

evidence: *The Decameron*

One of the most significant primary sources of evidence for an insight into how the Black Death affected societies is *The Decameron*. It was written by Giovanni Boccaccio in the 1350s. Although it was written as entertainment (it consists of a number of lively stories told by young people who flee Florence to escape the plague), it provides key information about life in plague-affected communities.

Source 7.36

> *Such fear and fanciful notions [imagined fears] took possession of the living that almost all of them adopted the same cruel policy, which was entirely to avoid the sick and everything belonging to them ...*



Source 7.35 A medieval illustration of a couple with the plague. Events such as this would have had immediate impacts on the daily lives of communities, especially where dying parents left young children behind.

Some thought that moderate living and the avoidance of all superfluity [excesses] would preserve them from the epidemic ... they shut themselves up in houses where there were no sick, eating the finest food and drinking the best wine very temperately [moderately], avoiding all excess, allowing no news or discussion of death and sickness ... others thought just the opposite. They thought the sure cure for the plague was to drink and be merry, to go about singing and amusing themselves, satisfying every appetite they could, laughing and jesting [joking] at what happened ...

Many others adopted a course of life midway between the two just described. They did not restrict their victuals [food] so much as the former, nor allow themselves to be drunken, and dissolute [self-indulgent] like the latter ... they did not shut themselves up, but went about, carrying flowers or scented herbs or perfumes in their hands, in the belief that it was an excellent thing to comfort the brain with such odours; for the whole air was infected with the smell of dead bodies, of sick persons and medicines.

... brother abandoned brother, and the uncle his nephew, and the sister her brother, and very often the wife her husband. What is even worse and nearly incredible is that fathers and mothers refused to see and tend their children ... Since the sick were thus abandoned ... a habit sprang up which had never been heard of before. Beautiful and noble women, when they fell sick did not scruple [hesitate] to take a young or old-man servant ... with no sort of shame, expose every part of their bodies to these men as if they had been women ... this, perhaps, was a cause of looser morals in those women who survived.

From *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375), vol. I, translated by Richard Aldington, 1930

The end of the world?

This labelled illustration briefly presents some of the impacts of the Black Death on medieval society.

The Black Death caused a huge labour shortage in towns and on the farms. Many feudal manors were largely deserted, either because workers had died or run away.

An estimated 25 million people died in a few years, possibly up to one-third of the European population.

Source 7.37

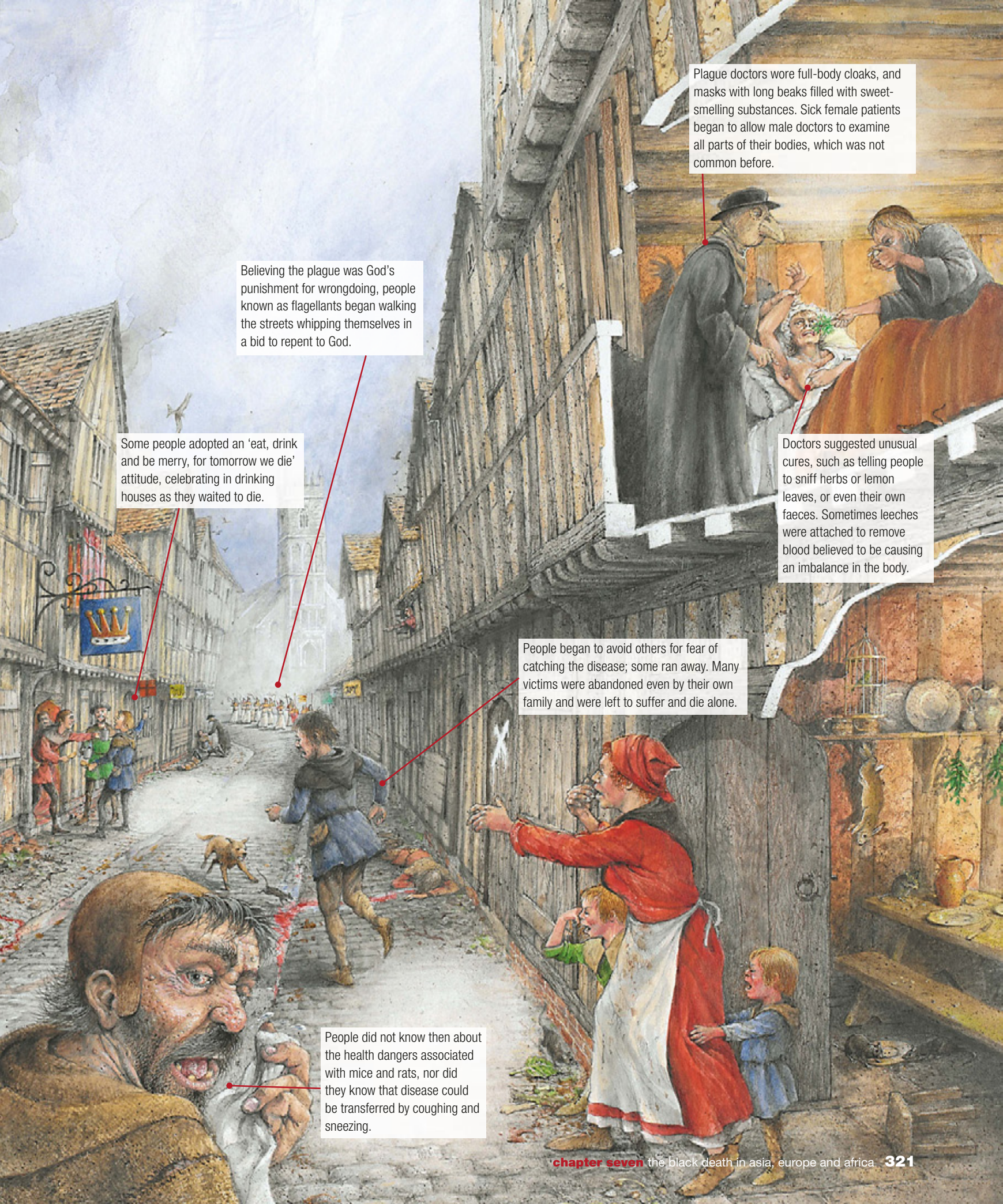
[The people] sickened by the thousands daily, and died unattended and without help. Many died in the open street, others dying in their houses, making it known by the stench of their rotting bodies. Consecrated churchyards [those blessed by the priests] were not enough for the burial of the vast multitude of bodies, which were heaped by the hundreds in vast trenches like goods in a ship's hold, and covered with a little earth.

Translated extract from *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio

Source 7.38 A modern artist's impression of the impact of the plague on a medieval town

There were so many dead bodies (in the streets and houses) they had to be buried in mass pits. Bodies were collected and put on carts that travelled the streets.

The plague caused some people to question their beliefs. Many priests died too, causing some to think that the Church was powerless to stop this terrible epidemic.


Plague doctors wore full-body cloaks, and masks with long beaks filled with sweet-smelling substances. Sick female patients began to allow male doctors to examine all parts of their bodies, which was not common before.
Believing the plague was God's punishment for wrongdoing, people known as flagellants began walking the streets whipping themselves in a bid to repent to God.
Some people adopted an 'eat, drink and be merry, for tomorrow we die' attitude, celebrating in drinking houses as they waited to die.
Doctors suggested unusual cures, such as telling people to sniff herbs or lemon leaves, or even their own faeces. Sometimes leeches were attached to remove blood believed to be causing an imbalance in the body.
People began to avoid others for fear of catching the disease; some ran away. Many victims were abandoned even by their own family and were left to suffer and die alone.
People did not know then about the health dangers associated with mice and rats, nor did they know that disease could be transferred by coughing and sneezing.

Source 7.39 An artist's impression of a mass burial during the 14th century plague in Florence, Italy

Short-term impacts on society

Many of the immediate impacts of the Black Death on society were the result of death on a massive scale. People from all walks of life, all trades and professions were affected, as were all types of families.

The chaos of towns

Rubbish and raw sewage in the streets of medieval towns was a common sight, even before the plague, but once the plague struck, this filthy situation became even worse. Abandoned houses were left dirty and untended, and muck in the streets piled up. There were few people to tend to the disrepair, even if they had wanted to. Tradesmen and craftsmen died along with cleaners, magistrates and officials.

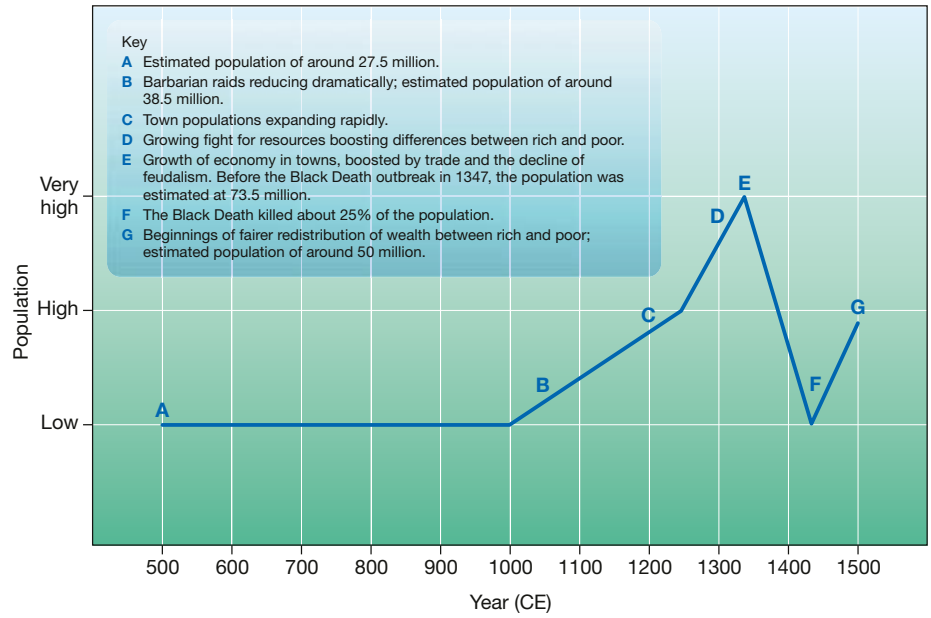
Burial of the dead

People were dying so quickly, and in such large numbers, that there was no time for proper burials, or religious ceremonies. In fact, some Christian priests began refusing to bury victims for fear of contracting the disease. Mass burials became common, with corpses shovelled into large pits and covered with earth.

Persecution

As the Black Death spread through Europe, rumours circulated that Jews had poisoned drinking water. Massacres of Jews began in the spring and summer of 1348, starting in France. Persecution grew more intense after a Jewish doctor in Switzerland confessed to poisoning the drinking water. However, he was tortured to obtain his 'confession'. That month all Jews in the town of Basel (in today's Switzerland) were rounded up and burned alive.

Jewish persecution began in Germany in November 1348 and continued for the next nine months. Some Jews managed to escape to Poland where they were offered protection by King Casimir III. Many then moved on to Russia where large Jewish communities were established.



Source 7.40 Population trends in medieval Europe; graph based on estimated population statistics from Josiah C. Russell, 'Population in Europe', in Carlo M. Cipolla, ed., *The Fontana Economic History of Europe,* Vol. 1: The Middle Ages (Glasgow: Collins/Fontana, 1972)

Long-term impacts on society

It is often only with the passage of time that the long-term effects of a devastating event become clear. The long-term impact of the Black Death was significant.

Depopulation

The Black Death reduced the populations of affected towns, villages, cities and manors dramatically. The populations of whole villages were wiped out, leaving behind near-empty towns. Europe would not recover until the 1500s.

Economic impact

The massive drop in population drastically affected medieval trade and manufacturing, as well as the production of food on the land. Skilled labourers and craftsmen were now in short supply. Survivors who had been trained in different trades were highly valued by employers. They had more bargaining power and, hence, more social status.

Breakdown of feudalism and manorialism

In time, this situation helped to break down the already weakened systems of feudalism and manorialism. Instead of providing their labour free in return for a lord's protection and support, knights and manor workers could now demand money for their services. In towns, workers could demand higher wages.

New wealth for survivors

The wealth available to survivors of the Black Death is believed to have been at least five times more than it was before the plague struck. Spending increased in towns and cities, increasing the power and social position of surviving members of the middle class. Prices also began to increase in some areas.

Regulation of wages

Concerned by the increase in wages being demanded (and paid), some rulers tried to introduce the regulation of wages. They also tried to stop the rising cost of food, then being forced up by black market trading and piracy.

In England, the Statute of Labourers was introduced in 1351. This law made it illegal for employers to increase workers' wages (to attract new workers). It also made it illegal for workers to travel to other areas for better wages. This law upset many peasant workers. Indeed, it created some of the unrest that led to the Peasants' Revolt of 1381.

Source 7.41 An artist's impression of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. The peasants' representative, Wat Tyler, was wounded during the meeting between peasants and the English king, Richard II. Later, Tyler was dragged from his hospital bed and had his head chopped off.

Source 7.42 A section of the medieval painting called *The Grim Dance* (or *Danse macabre,* in French)

Impact on religion

The spread of the Black Death across Europe caused many to examine their faith. For many Christians, the event strengthened their faith and devotion to God, others became so depressed and disillusioned by what had happened during the Black Death that they gave up caring about religious or moral things entirely.

Without the strict moral guidance and teaching of the Church, some people began to show wild and careless behaviour. Spending all day drinking, laughing, singing and dancing took people's minds off their fear, and eased some of their pain. This mix of emotions (fear and celebration) is well captured in the medieval painting called *The Grim Dance* (see Source 7.42).

Source 7.43 Many people in medieval times worked tirelessly to treat the sick, including plague victims, as shown in this medieval painting. It shows nuns caring for the sick at the Hôtel-Dieu (Hospital of God) in Paris. In fact, this is how many nuns and monks contracted the plague—by helping others.

This loss of interest in the Church throughout Europe was made worse by divisions in the Roman Catholic Church at the time. There was a **papacy** based in Avignon, France (because cardinals in France refused to accept the Italian Pope), as well as the papacy in Rome. This split troubled many believers, with some losing respect for the Church.

Many monks, nuns and priests died as a result of the Black Death. Although many were infected while caring for the ill and dying (see Source 7.43), some people saw this as proof that the lifestyles of these religious people had displeased God. A few religious centres, such as monasteries, were accused of improper conduct and greed, rather than being places devoted to God. Some priests and other religious figures fled, abandoning their parishioners because they feared becoming infected. Those who replaced them were often poorly trained. Some did not even live in the parishes they were meant to oversee. This added to the disappointment and anger of many ordinary people.

Foundations of the Renaissance

Many wealthy survivors of the Black Death in Europe chose to invest in art or literature as a means of expressing their gratitude to be alive. Some became **patrons**. They funded talented individuals to create paintings, build churches and other public buildings, and to write literature. Some encouraged scientific research, hoping that answers might one day be found to what caused the Black Death. These developments added to the cultural rebirth in Europe at the time. This would later become known as the **Renaissance** (which means 'rebirth' in French).

Impacts on Asian societies

The effects of the Black Death on Eastern societies are not understood as well as they are in Europe. It is believed that in China alone the population dropped from 125 million to 90 million. It is known that the plague spread into other regions of Asia besides China, including the Khmer region and India. A writer from the period is reported as saying: 'India was depopulated; Tartary, Mesopotamia, Syria, Armenia were covered with dead bodies; the Kurds fled in vain to the mountains. In Caramaria and Caesaria (in modern-day Turkey) none were left alive.'

Impacts on African societies

The plague spread rapidly through Egypt (along the Nile River) after entering Alexandria in the north. It killed large proportions of the population and severely interrupted trade. From there it was only a short time before it spread to the Middle East.

One long-term effect on African society was the start of the slave trade. Africans from the Sahara region began to be taken as slaves in the 14th century, at first to boost Europe's greatly reduced labour force.

Source 7.44 Detail from the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome, painted by Michelangelo (1475–1564)—one of the more significant works of art from Renaissance Europe

Source 7.45 A stone relief sculpture of Africans being taken into slavery. Europeans began taking slaves from Africa from the 14th century.

Check your learning

1. The Black Death affected European society significantly.
   - a List at least two immediate and two longer term effects.
   - b Explain how these effects were evident.
2. What did the outbreak of the plague have to do with Jewish settlements being set up in Russia?
3. What evidence is there to suggest that the plague had a devastating effect on the population of India at the time?
4. Explain why the plague, and other factors, helped to undermine the confidence some medieval Christians had in their religion, and in the Church in particular.

bigideas

7.2 How did the Black Death spread and what were its effects?

Remember

1 How did the plague change the way people on the island of Cyprus treated their Muslim prisoners?

2 The Statute of Labourers was introduced in 1351.
   a How did it change conditions for workers in England?
   b What did this law have to do with the plague?

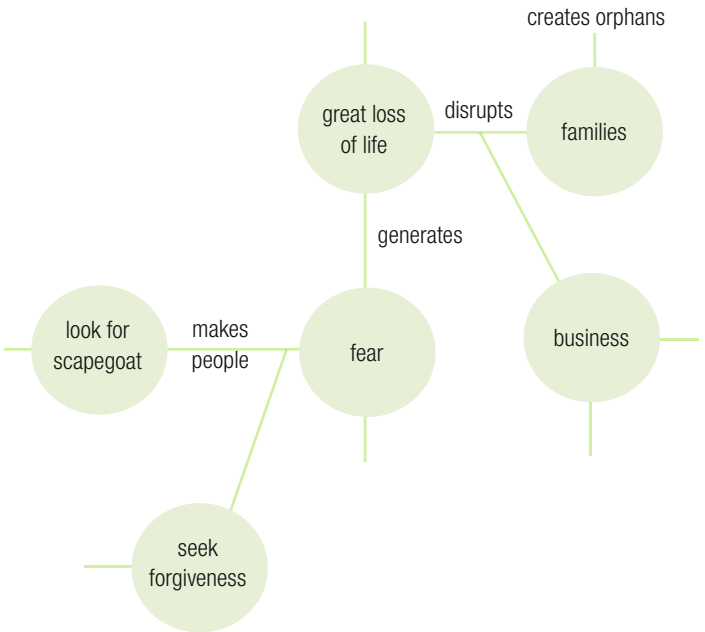
3 How did some survivors of the plague help the spread of Renaissance thinking in Europe?

4 Create a sentence for each of the following 'p' words showing that you understand their meaning in the context of the Black Death pandemic: pandemic, persecution, pilgrimage, physician, papacy.

Understand

5 What evidence does the detail from the painting *The Grim Dance* (see Source 7.42) reveal about how many medieval people were thinking at the time of the plague?

6 Below is the start of a concept map detailing some of the impacts of the plague on the residents of a medieval town. In your notebook, copy and complete it, adding as many entries as you can.



7 Write a diary entry you might compose as a medieval leper, which gives some insights into the fears, ignorance and prejudices of many people in medieval societies.

8 Explain why some Europeans lost their religious beliefs, or their confidence in the Church, as a result of the Black Death pandemic.

9 In small groups, discuss how you think that a lack of medical knowledge helped to increase the spread of the Black Death.

10 Create a storyboard to assist someone making a short documentary film about the impact of the Black Death on medieval society, based on the information contained in Source 7.38.

11 Write or compose a chant or song that might have been suitable for flagellants to call out as they walked around whipping themselves.

12 Why would massive depopulation impact so badly on a society? Brainstorm reasons in small groups.

Apply

13 In March 2011, many parts of Japanese society were destroyed by a tsunami. Like the Black Death, this disaster caused great loss of life and economic and psychological problems. Conduct some research to find out how this disaster affected Japanese society. Then, with a partner, construct a Venn diagram on an A3 sheet of paper to compare and contrast its effects with those of the medieval Black Death.

Analyse

14 Read Source 7.47 carefully. It was written in the 14th century by the chronicler Matteo Villani (son of a respected merchant family in Florence). Then answer the questions that follow.
   a How did the writer think the pandemic should have influenced society?
   b Find out what the phrase 'virtuous and catholic' means.
   c What, in fact, was the reality about how people reacted?
   d According to the writer, how did the personal circumstances of many survivors change?

Source 7.46 Japanese soldiers recovering the body of one of the many who died during the tsunami

Source 7.47

It was thought that the people ... having seen the extermination [death] of their neighbours and of all the nations of the world ... would become better, humble and virtuous and catholic, avoiding iniquities and sins and overflowing with love and charity for one another ... The opposite happened. Men, finding themselves few and rich by inheritances and successions of earthly things, forgetting the past as if it never was, gave themselves to the most disordered and sordid behaviour than ever before.

Evaluate

15 Write an essay of 500 words explaining what you believe was the most important change in the society of medieval Europe as a result of the repeated outbursts of the 14th-century plague.

Create

16 In small groups, role-play for the class an interchange between survivors of the Black Death and either their former lord of the manor or their former employer in a medieval town. Your conversation will focus on how things have changed (for both parties concerned) and will reflect the values and knowledge of the times.

connectingideas

The Black Death

Ignorance, fear … and prejudice

The Black Death spread rapidly because people did not know what caused it. Consequently, they had no idea how to avoid it. 'Cures' and defences were adopted, and reasons put forward to explain what was happening. People were found to blame. When none of these strategies stopped people dying, fear grew more intense. It was not until centuries later—the 1890s—that it was discovered that the fleas on rats were the problem. More specifically, bacteria they carried were the cause. Had people known this in the 14th century, millions of lives might have been saved, and a great many spared needless pain and fear.

The AIDS virus has killed more than 25 million people since the early 1980s. It has damaged many communities, particularly in developing countries. At first, many infected victims unknowingly passed the virus on. When people started dying, certain groups—drug users and homosexual men—were blamed, as the disease was most common among these groups. In a similar way to the Black Death, HIV/AIDS has now spread to people from all walks of life. At first, the rapid death rate and lack of knowledge about HIV/AIDS caused great fear. People who became infected—even young children—tended to be treated without compassion or understanding.

1 Conduct some research on the current situation with HIV/AIDS worldwide. Are social attitudes towards this disease changing? Suggest reasons for your view.

2 Based on what you know about the Black Death, suggests reasons why:
   - a HIV/AIDS initially caused such great fear
   - b some people found the need to blame certain groups of society
   - c some people went out of their way to avoid victims, or to prevent them from living as ordinary members of a community.

3 Look at Source 7.48. In what way is this condition like and unlike the buboes of a plague victim? Why do you think such physical evidence, in both cases, is so frightening?

Source 7.48 The skin of an AIDS sufferer, with a cancerous side infection (known as Kaposi's sarcoma) commonly contracted by people with HIV/AIDS

Source 7.49 Isabelle Dinoire, the world's first person to receive a partial face transplant. Her own face had been seriously mauled by a dog.

As medical skills improve and new knowledge is acquired, more can be done to save lives and improve the quality of life. Stem-cell research, for instance, has raised the hopes of many that treatments might one day be found for incurable illness and conditions.

Organ transplants have also given many recipients the chance for a longer (or better) life. Since 1965, around 30 000 Australians have benefited from such transplants.

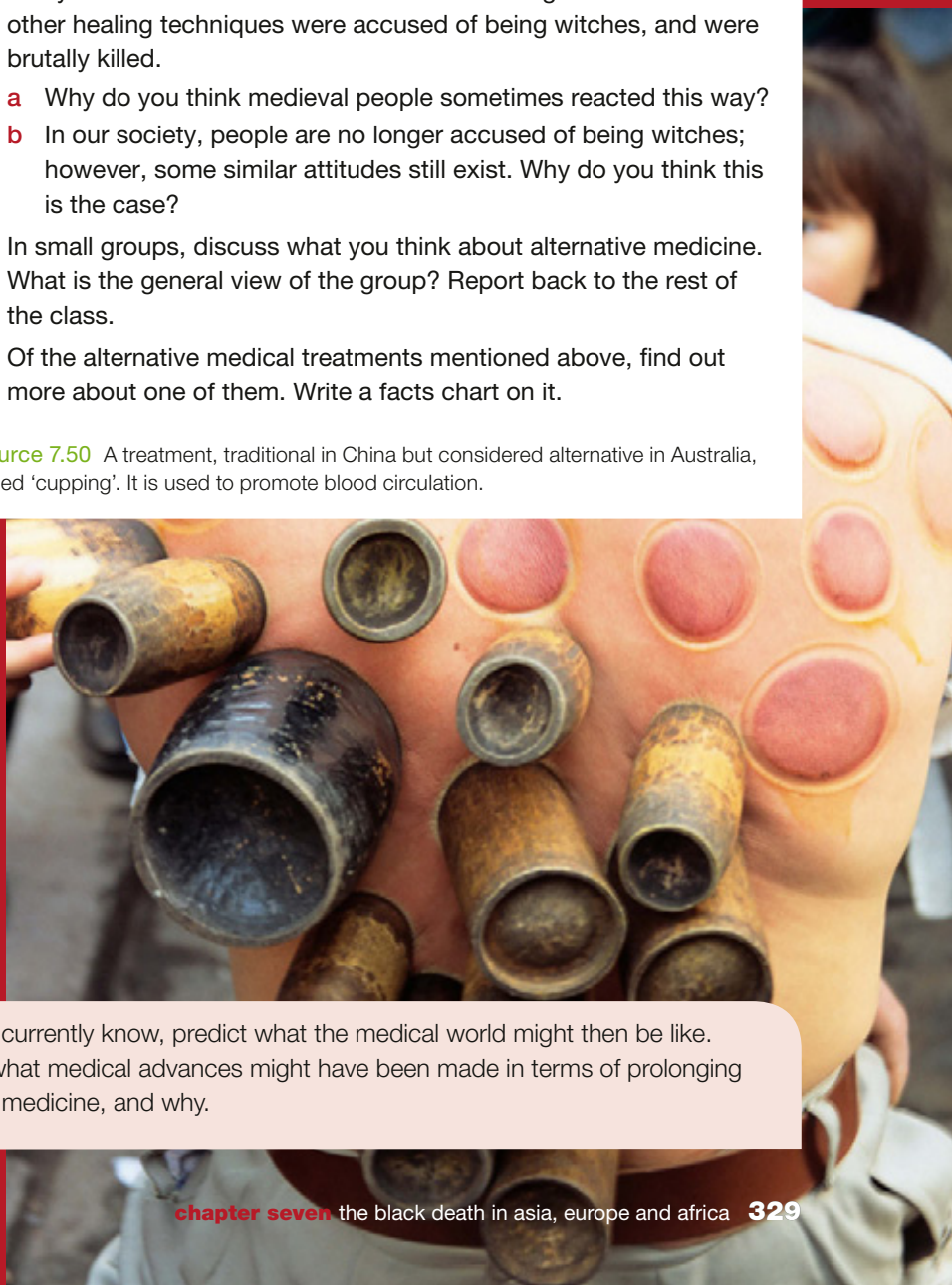
Others choose to donate their whole body to science. They give permission for their body to be dissected and examined in the interest of advancing medical knowledge.

1 While many scientists support these developments, not all community groups or individuals do. Some religious groups and experts in ethics have expressed concerns about some of them. As a class, discuss why you think this might be the case.
2 Do you think similar concerns were discussed when the medieval Church refused to allow body dissections for medical reasons? Give reasons for your opinion.
3 What are your personal views about organ donation? Express these in some imaginative way—a poem, a piece of music, an artwork or sculpture.

Most people in our society visit a doctor if they are sick or injured; however, some prefer to try alternative medicines. Alternative therapies include acupuncture, cupping, homeopathy, massage, herbal or vitamin remedies, spiritual healing, 'mind over matter' healing, yoga and meditation. Some traditional doctors support alternative medical techniques. There is still prejudice in the minds of many that alternative medicine is a bit like the treatments offered by women healers in medieval times.

1 Many medieval women who used their knowledge of herbs and other healing techniques were accused of being witches, and were brutally killed.
   a Why do you think medieval people sometimes reacted this way?
   b In our society, people are no longer accused of being witches; however, some similar attitudes still exist. Why do you think this is the case?
2 In small groups, discuss what you think about alternative medicine. What is the general view of the group? Report back to the rest of the class.
3 Of the alternative medical treatments mentioned above, find out more about one of them. Write a facts chart on it.

Source 7.50 A treatment, traditional in China but considered alternative in Australia, called 'cupping'. It is used to promote blood circulation.



Q Fast-forward to the year 2100. Based on what you currently know, predict what the medical world might then be like. Think about what diseases might be curable, and what medical advances might have been made in terms of prolonging life. Predict what public attitudes might be towards medicine, and why.

glossary

A

Althing the name given to the ***thing*** held in Iceland; the first parliament in the world

anda (pronounced *AHN•da*) a pact between two men who swear to behave towards one another as brothers

Angkor Thom the last capital city of the Angkor/Khmer Empire, built on the orders of King Jayavarman VII in the late 1100s CE; the city is enclosed by walls and a **moat** and has five gated entrances.

Angkor Wat the world's biggest religious building, initially a Hindu centre and later, Buddhist. This massive temple complex was built in the early 1100s CE for the Khmer king Suryavarman II as his state temple and capital city.

Anglo-Saxon a term describing a Germanic people who settled in Great Britain in the 400s CE; they drove the local Celtic people to the land's extremities

aquaculture the organised farming of animals (e.g. fish, eels, shellfish) and plants that live in water

aqueduct a human-made channel for transporting water for irrigation and other uses

artefact an object, small or large, made or changed by people

artisan a skilled worker who makes something by hand

B

bar mitzvah a Jewish ceremony that formally recognises a Jewish boy's coming of age at 13 (girls have a *bat mitzvah* at age 12); it recognises they are now responsible for their own actions (in the community and in respect to the Jewish faith).

baray a reservoir of water (like a pool or artificial lake)

barbarian a term used by ancient Romans to describe someone living outside their borders

barter an exchange of goods or services between people (typical of trade before the use of money) where both parties agreed that what was exchanged was of roughly equal value

Bayeux Tapestry a 70-metre long tapestry made in Bayeux, some think on the orders of Bishop Odo (the half-brother of William the Conqueror). It depicts scenes leading up to, during and following the Battle of Hastings in 1066 between **Anglo-Saxons** forces and Norman invaders.

bias a pre-set view about someone or something that is not altered by the presentation of facts and opinions to the contrary

Black Death a term used to describe an outbreak of plague (mostly the **bubonic plague**) that swept through Europe from Asia and Africa in the mid 14th century CE; about 25 million people died in Europe alone within only a few years

blood letting the deliberate cutting of someone to cause bleeding; this medieval practice, often performed by barbers, was seen as a treatment and cure for illness

Brahmin (pronounced *BRA•min*) a member of the highest of the four castes seen to make up Hindu society; *Brahmins* were typically priests, often wealthy and powerful

buboes the blackened, swollen, pus-filled lymph nodes evident on the body of someone with the **bubonic plague**

bubonic plague an infectious disease caused by a bacterium carried by the fleas of rats and mice, and which quickly kills those who contract it. Visible symptoms include **buboes**.

Buddhism a belief system (or way of life) founded by the then Indian prince Siddharta Gautama (Buddha) in the mid 6th century BCE. A Buddhist works towards spiritual enlightenment (Nirvana) through repeated cycles of **reincarnation**.

bureaucracy a body of government officials (who are not elected) that administer various systems of government (e.g. tax system)

bushido (pronounced *bu•SHE•do*) the code of behaviour of the Japanese ***samurai*** warrior that required honour, loyalty (even to death), good living, thrift and martial arts skill

Byzantine describes the empire (and aspects of its culture and society) that was the eastern half of the ancient Roman empire, formed in 330 CE; the Byzantine empire ended in 1453 CE when overthrown by the Ottoman Turks

C

caliph (pronounced *kal•EEF*) the civil and religious head of a caliphate (i.e. a Muslim community ruled by Shari'ah law); *caliphs* continued the religious and political systems established by the prophet Muhammad.

caste system a social system in which people are born into a social group (or caste); in India, there are four main castes: ***Brahmins*** (priests), Kshatriyas (kings, leaders, administrators, warriors), Vaishyas (merchants, bankers) and Shudras (farmers, labourers, craftspeople).

catapult a weapon that worked like a giant slingshot. It hurled large rocks and sometimes the infected bodies of people and animals over the wall of a city an army might be laying siege to.

cause and effect a key concept in history: the link between what causes an action, or what motivates someone to act a certain way, and the outcome of that action

census a 'head count' or audit of the number of people living in a particular place at a particular time; information collected during a census can often include age, occupation, income, etc.

chain-mail a form of armour (like a long T-shirt) made up of hundreds of interlinking metal rings

charter a formal document in which someone in authority (e.g. medieval **lord**) states that certain rights or responsibilities are granted to others

Christianity a belief system that began at the start of the first millennium CE based on the teachings of Jesus Christ, a Jew, who claimed to be the son of God

Church, the the medieval Roman Catholic Church, which began in 394 CE when the ancient Roman emperor Constantine made Christianity the empire's official religion

city-state an independent settlement made up of an inner fortified city, surrounded by houses; this built centre was surrounded by farmland that supported (e.g. with food) the urban centre.

civilisation typically described as a society with large-scale urban settlements, with a defined system of government, social organisation and religion, and sophisticated technologies

clan a group of people linked and united in their aims and behaviours by the knowledge (or a belief) that they share common ancestors.

code of chivalry the code of practice for a medieval **knight**; he was expected to be honest, moral, courteous, brave, dignified, help others in distress, be generous to those less fortunate and uphold a lady's reputation.

Confucianism a code of behaviour founded by the Chinese thinker K'ung Ch'iu (known as Confucius) in the early 5th century BCE; Confucius believed his ideas would help maintain order and respect within families, relationships and the society itself

conquistador (pronounced *con•KEES•ta•dor*) a Spanish word for soldier or conqueror

contestability a key concept in history: where different scholars use available evidence to come up with a view about some aspect of history that may be contested (challenged) by others. There is rarely a 'right' view or interpretation, but some views are more warranted than others.

continuity and change a key concept in history: the recognition that while many things change over time (some quite drastically), other continue, even if in modified forms

cremation the ceremonial burning of a person's body once they have died

Crusades eight wars fought by Christian and Muslims between 1096 and 1291 CE over control of the Holy Land

culture the sum total of a people's behaviours, language, beliefs, art forms and **values**

D

daimyo (pronounced *DIME•yo)* a Japanese warlord

Danelaw an area in north-east England (which includes the city of York) that the then king of the Kingdom of Wessex, King Alfred, gave to the Vikings in exchange for stopping their raids of the region

dendrochronology a dating method based on counting the rings in the cross-section of tree trunks

dynasty a period of rule by successive members of one extended family

E

empathy a key concept in history: the ability to understand what happened in the past from the **perspective** of the people living at the time

emperor someone who rules an **empire**, namely a group of countries and/or areas probably speaking different languages and having different cultures, but centrally ruled

empire a group of countries and/or areas, probably having different languages and cultures, ruled by a central power or leader

Enlightenment a school of French-inspired thinking that spread through Europe in the 18th century; its view was that reason, tolerance and equality should replace superstition, cruelty and injustice

evidence a key concept in history: the information or clues discovered by asking specific questions about a historical **source**

excommunication a religious punishment that involved someone being cut off from being part of the church community and all that this entailed from a spiritual point of view (e.g. being able to participate in communion, confession)

F

feudalism a set of legal and military customs that served to organise the society of medieval Europe; under feudalism, a **lord** gave a **fief** to a **vassal** in exchange for loyalty and support

fief (pronounced *feef*) under **feudalism**, usually a plot of land granted to a **vassal** by a **lord** in return for the vassal's loyal support

flagellants people who whipped themselves until they bled in the hopes of gaining forgiveness from God

G

guild group of people all working in the same trade (e.g. butchers, tailors, cobblers) who band together for their common interests

H

heraldry the practice of deciding on and granting coats of arms to families/individuals

heresy doing or saying something regarded by the medieval Catholic Church (and by some other faiths) in serious conflict with its teachings

hierarchy a way of organising people or groups of things so that the most important is at the top, with the others ranked underneath in decreasing order of importance

Hinduism the belief system of the earliest people of India; among its many gods are three creators: Brahma (the supreme god), Shiva (the destroyer) and Vishnu (the preserver); other features of Hinduism are the **caste system**, a belief in **reincarnation**, and the requirement to make pilgrimages to holy places

Holy Grail a religious relic, said to be the container that Jesus Christ ate/drank from at the last supper with his disciples before he was crucified; the search for this relic has been the topic of many legends and stories

Holy Land the territory in today's Middle East now mostly made up of Israel and parts of Palestine

Holy Roman Empire an empire in central Europe founded in 800 CE by Charlemagne and which ended in 1806 CE

Humanism a school of thought that regards people of primary importance, rather than gods or supernatural matters

I

icon an important religious symbol or sacred image

Indigenous a term used to describe someone or something (e.g. a plant) that is native to a particular area

indulgence in Catholic religious teaching, the removal of punishment for sins that have been forgiven on Earth; the 'price' for this may involve doing good deeds, giving to the poor, saying certain prayers; if not fully paid during life, the 'price' continues to be paid in **Purgatory**

Islam a religion founded in Arabia in the early 7th century CE by the Prophet Muhammad; Islam proclaims that there is one god (Allah) and Muhammad is his messenger; followers of Islam are known as Muslims

J

jester a medieval comedian who joked and 'played the fool' at occasions such as banquets and fairs; he typically wore a multi-pronged floppy hat with bells on it

joust a contest between two heavily armed **knights** who would charge one another on horseback with long lances extended frontwards. The object was to use the lance to knock the other rider off his horse.

Judaism the belief system of Jews; it was the first of the world's major religions to worship one god

K

kamikaze (pronounced *KA•me•KA•zee*) a Japanese term meaning 'divine wind'; a name given to the storms that saved the Japanese from Mongol invasions in the 13th century; during World War II, Japanese *kamikaze* pilots deliberately crashed their planes into Allied ships

khan (pronounced *carn*) the title given to a leader of a Mongolian community (and during the 13th century, to the head of the Mongol Empire)

khanate (pronounced *CARN•ate*) the region ruled by a khan (i.e. the leader of a Mongolian tribe or community)

kingdom a region ruled by a king or queen

knight a medieval warrior of Europe, who typically pledged his services to a **lord** (sometimes the king) in exchange for a **fief**

L

leprosy an infectious disease, transmitted by a bacterium, that affects the skin, nerves, eyes and upper respiratory tract. Because those with leprosy can lose sensation in parts of the body (especially fingers, toes, noses) these can be easily damaged and sometimes fall off.

longhouse a Viking house, characterised by its long shape; often built into mounds of earth (for insulation); it sheltered the extended family and their animals.

longship a type of ship used by the Vikings to transport warriors on attack-and-raid missions; longships had shallow hulls, making them speedy and easy to manoeuvre; they were often decorated with mythical creatures

lord a wealthy monarch or noble; under **feudalism**, one who exchanged **fiefs** for the sworn loyalty of **vassals**

M

Magna Carta a document signed in 1215 by England's King John and his barons; they forced him to sign it as he was abusing his power towards his people; it meant that the king would thereafter be expected to rule according to feudal law

Mahayana Buddhism a branch of Buddhism that emerged in the 1st century CE. It has a more liberal view of Buddhism than **Therevada Buddhism**, which is seen to apply only to those who are or want to be monks or nuns. Mahayana Buddhists believe it is possible to reach Nirvana in a single life.

manorialism a system in **feudal** Europe whereby the **lord** of a manor allowed peasants to live on his land in return for their free labour and the payment of taxes

manuscript in the medieval sense, a document written by hand (usually by monks)

matrilineal describes a society within which people trace back their line of descent through the mother

Mecca a city in Saudi Arabia where Muhammad (the founder of **Islam**) was born. Muslims regard it as the holiest of all Islamic cities to which all able-bodied followers must make a pilgrimage at least once in their lives.

Middle Ages the period of time in European history between around 1000 CE and 1500 CE (though historians often disagree about the exact dates)

minstrel a medieval singer and musician who typically wandered around the countryside performing at events (often as part of a small group); unlike **troubadours**, minstrels did not necessarily create the music and songs they performed.

moat a wide band of water surrounding a built structure such as a castle. It provided some protection in case of attack; access across the moat was via a drawbridge, which was drawn up in case of attack.

monarchy a type of government ruled by a monarch (king or queen)

monastery a place where monks lived, worshipped and worked

N

New World a term that started being used by Europeans in the late 1400s for the new lands (the Americas) being discovered

nomads a society of people who do not live in a set place but wander around, usually in search of food and shelter and good pasture for their animals (adjective: nomadic)

O

origami a Japanese art form that involves folding paper into delicate and intricate shapes

P

pagan (pronounced *PAY•gun*) a term sometimes used by Christians, Muslims and Jews to describe those who do not share their beliefs

pandemic a term used to describe the spread of an infectious disease across an entire country, a large region, or even worldwide; an epidemic on a much larger scale

papacy the term used to describe the authority, office and administrative support of the Pope (head of the Roman Catholic Church)

patron someone who devotes some of their wealth, time and interest to developing the skills of others (usually in the arts); medieval patrons played a significant role in fostering the movement in Europe between the 13th and 16th centuries known as the **Renaissance**.

Peasant's Revolt a term used to describe a number of peasant uprisings and revolts that took place in England in 1831; eventually these revolts lead to the end of **feudalism**

perspectives a key concept in history; the way that a person or particular people view some aspect of the past. Some perspectives will reflect one's prejudices, fears or uncertainties; others, their age, gender or education.

pilgrimage a journey made by someone who travels to a place of religious significance in the hope this will see prayers answered or sins forgiven

plague doctor someone who tried to treat victims of the **Black Death** in medieval Europe; these doctors typically dressed in black robes and wore beak-shaped masks (filled with fragrant herbs and flowers)

primary source source of historical evidence that existed or was created at the time being studied

Purgatory in Catholic religious teaching, a state after death in which the souls of those who die in God's grace are purified of their sins by suffering

R

Reformation a movement that began in Europe in the 16th century when the scholar–monk Martin Luther publicly challenged the Catholic Church; it shifted the balance of power in Europe away from dominant control by **the Church**

regent a person who rules in place of the monarch who is temporarily absent from the country (maybe fighting a war), or who is too young or sick to rule

reincarnation the process of being born again; to live life again in another body (human or animal); a belief central to many religions

Renaissance a period in Europe's history between the late 12th and 16th centuries that saw a revival of culture and learning

reservoir a structure either built or existing naturally that holds a large volume of water for use by people (drinking, irrigation etc.)

runestone a large monumental rock on which a message was carved in runes (the 'letters' of the Viking alphabet)

S

saga a long story (sometimes mixed with poetry) about heroes (mainly from today's Scandinavia and central Europe) who achieved great things and fought noble battles. Most were written soon after the Viking Age, in the language of Old Norse. They are often a mix of real events, legends and myths.

sakoku (pronounced *sa•KO•koo*) the name given to Japan's foreign policy during the Tokugawa Shogunate (1633–1853) that forbade any Japanese person leaving Japan, or any foreigner entering it. The penalty for disobeying was death.

samurai a Japanese medieval warrior

Sanskrit an ancient language of India and the language used in documenting the holy books of Hinduism

Scientific Revolution a change in thinking among 16th and 17th century European scholars that placed a new focus on the laws of the natural world (rather than on a world dominated by religious belief)

secondary source source of historical evidence made or written after the time in history being studied

seppuku (pronounced *SEP•oo•koo*) a ritual suicide common among Japanese ***samurai*** who felt they had been dishonoured. This involved self-disembowelling (cutting open the belly).

serf a medieval peasant who worked on the manor of a **feudal lord**

shamanism (pronounced *SHA•man•ism*) the term often used to describe a set of ancient spiritual beliefs and practices, originating in Mongolia and Siberia; they involve communicating with the spirits that inhabit the natural world

Shinto a belief system of the early Japanese people that involved purification rituals, calling on the ancient spirits and making offerings at shrines

shogun (pronounced *SHOW•gun*) a title given to Japan's top military rulers between the 12th and 19th centuries CE

significance a key concept in history; something or someone who is either important to people in the past, or who deeply affected a large number of lives; it also describes something relevant discovered about someone or something that sheds new light on an issue.

Silk Road the trade route stretching west from China to the Mediterranean Sea; it was the main means by which silk was introduced to the West.

society a group of people who organise themselves to best survive in their environment

source an item of historical evidence of any sort

steppe (pronounced *step*) an expansive stretch of grassland (without trees) typically found in places such as Siberia

sumo (pronounced *SOO•mo*) a traditional Japanese sport in which wrestlers attempt to force their opponent out of the circular ring or to touch the ground with any part of their body (except the soles of their feet)

T

takhi (pronounced *TAK•hee*) a type of wild horse

Taoism a belief system founded in China by Lao-Tzu in the 6th century BCE; to live forever believers must become one with the life force (the 'Tao'), balancing the yin and yang (opposite) forces that make up everything in the universe

Tatar (also spelled Tartar) (pronounced *TAH•ter*) a member of an ethnic group whose members can be found today in countries such as Turkey, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Ukraine and Azerbaijan

Therevada Buddhism (pronounced *TERRA•va•da BOOD•izm*) the branch of Buddhism that bases its beliefs and practices on the *Tipitaka*, a document generally thought to be the earliest surviving record of the teachings of Buddha

thing a meeting of a tribe or local community of Vikings where business was conducted, social practices (e.g. marriage) observed, and where laws were read out aloud and punishments of offenders decided

timeline a graphical representation of events over a set period of time, arranged in the order in which they occurred

tournament mock battle between medieval **knights**

treason the act of betraying one's own country or ruler

troubadour a medieval musician and poet who both wrote and performed songs that were typically about romantic love

V

values the principles and ideas that a person, a group or a society hold dear; values help to shape human behaviour by instilling a sense of a right and a wrong way to act

vassal under **feudalism**, a person who offered his loyalty and service to a **lord** in return for his protection and the granting of a **fief**

W

warlord someone who both rules a society (or local community) and heads up its military operations

Y

yurt a Mongolian circular tent, with a wooden frame and felt walls

index

A

abacus 54

Adams, William 242

Africa, developments in 49

African slaves, transportation of 41

African societies, effect of Black Death 325

agriculture in Angkor/Khmer Empire 186–188

Althing, Viking 74

Americas, Spanish conquest of 256–259

anaesthetics 317–318

ancient to modern world, timeline of key events 4–5

Angkor Thom, stone carvings at 2–3

Angkor Wat
- carvings at 179, 186, 188, 193, 194
- site and temple layout 194–195
- temple 21, 170, 191, 201
- temple wall 166–167, 193
- village supporting 182–183

Angkor/Khmer Empire
- agriculture 186–188
- boundaries 171, 175, 191
- brief overview 162
- causes and effects of contacts 164
- collapse 20–21
- decline 200–204
- expansion 190–191
- key religious beliefs 163
- rediscovery of buildings 204
- society structure 177–180
- temples 191–197
- timeline 168–169
- Tonle Sap lake 174
- trade and warfare 188–191

Anglo-Saxons in Britain 16

armour
- in medieval Europe 153
- in shogunate Japan 230–231
- of Vikings 72, 86

Arthur, King 134–135

arts
- in Russia 286
- in shogunate Japan 244–247

Asian societies, effect of Black Death 325

astrolabe 144

Attila the Hun 14

Ayutthaya, war with Angkor/Khmer Empire 202

Aztecs, conquest by Cortés 24, 31, 39

B

Badr, Battle of 40

bakufu 225

banking in medieval Europe 299

barbarian tribes
- attack Rome 11
- migration 13–15

barber poles 316

Battle of Hastings 18

Bayeux Tapestry 114

beliefs and values of Western and Islamic world 59

beliefs of Vikings 76–77

berserkers, Viking 88

Black Death pandemic
- in Angkor/Khmer Empire 204
- arrival in 1347 143
- in Asia, Europe and Africa 256–259
- effects 318, 320–321
- legacies 328–329
- long-term impacts 323–325
- medical understanding and practices 311–313
- and Mongol Empire 286
- Muslim persecution over 310
- origins 308
- plague doctors 314
- short-term impacts 322
- spread into Africa 308–309
- spread into Middle East 310
- spread through wars 42
- start and movement 306–310
- timeline of key events 294

Blood Eagle of Vikings 92

blood-letting 316

Boccaccio, Giovanni 318–319

bokator fighting 190

bonsai 24

Book of Kells 134

Breughel, Jan 310

Britain
- Anglo-Saxons in 16
- changes 31
- end of Viking raids 92–93

bubonic plague *see* Black Death pandemic

Buddhism, key features of 30

building techniques in Angkor/Khmer temples 192–193

buildings in medieval Europe 133

bunraku theatre 246

burials during Black Death pandemic 322

bushido code 230

Byzantine Empire 137

C

Cambodia
  martial arts in 190
  modern 171
canals in Angkor/Khmer Empire 187
Canterbury Cathedral 132
Carolingian kings 110–111
castle warfare in medieval Europe 152–155
castles
  laying siege to 154–155
  in medieval Europe 124–125, 151
  in shogunate Japan 232–233
censuses in Mongol empire 274
Champa, war with Angkor/Khmer Empire 202
Charlemagne
  achievements 112–113
  influence 61
  portrait 14–15
  statue 84
China
  conquest by Mongols 280
  developments 49
  effect of Mongols 285
Christianity
  effect on daily life 31
  influence on medieval Europe 107
  key features 27
  in shogunate Japan 242
  spread 19
  and Vikings 97
cleanliness in medieval Europe 127–128
climate change, effect on Angkor/Khmer Empire 202–203
clothes
  in medieval Europe 127
  of Mongol horsemen 273
Columbus, Christopher 259
commerce in medieval Europe 145–146, 298
conflicts 18
Confucianism 27
Constantine 11
Constantinople, decline 38
contact between societies
  effect on Mongols 284
  effects 256–259
contact between Western and Islamic worlds, causes and effects 60
corbel arches 193
Cortés, Hernando 24, 31, 39
Crusades 18, 137–139
cultures, effect of war 41

D

da Vinci, Leonardo 51
daimyo, restrictions on 229
Danelaw 93
days of week, origin of names 77
dentists, in medieval Europe 317–318
depopulation due to Black Death 323
Diocletian 10–11
disease, wars and spread of 42
Domesday Book 115–116
dress styles of Vikings 67
dulcimer 135
dynasties, location of 8–9

E

eating in medieval Europe 128
economic impact of Black Death 323
economy of Vikings 75
Edo 238–239
Edward the Confessor 114–115
Egypt, spread of Black Death into 309
emperor, role in shogunate Japan 217
empires, location 8–9
England, conquest by Normans 114–115
The Enlightenment 54
entertainment in medieval Europe 129
Eriksson, Leif 61, 65, 94–95
eta in shogunate Japan 235
Europe
  changes in 31
  impact of Mongol empire 287
everyday life in Angkor/Khmer Empire 179

F

falconry in medieval Europe 129–131
feudal manor 118–119
feudalism
  breakdown due to Black Death 323
  emergence 20
  in medieval Europe 116, 297
  in shogunate Japan 225, 229
financial records in medieval Europe 145–146
foreign affairs in shogunate Japan 240–241
forest resources in shogunate Japan 239–240

Franks 15
Franks, Kingdom of 110
Funan, royal dynasty 172
furniture of Vikings 71

G

Galilei, Galileo 53, 61
gardens in shogunate Japan 244
Gaul, end of Viking raids 93
Genghis Khan
  influence 259
  rise 268–269
geography of Japan 213
god-king in Angkor/Khmer society 177
gods of Vikings 76–77
Goths 11
Goya, Francisco 312
Great Famine (1315-1317) 143
guilds in medieval Europe 303
gunpowder 54
gunpowder and new weapons 153
Gutenberg, Johannes, printing press 144

H

haiku 245
Hanseatic League 46
Hastings, Battle of 18
health risks to medieval people 314
Heian-Kyo, planned city in shogunate Japan 220–221
helmets of Vikings 87
heraldry 152
herbal medicine 315
Hinduism
  key features 28
  in Khmer society 174–175
hinin in shogunate Japan 235
Holy Roman Emperor, Charlemagne as 113
Holy Roman Empire in medieval Europe 109
homes
  in Angkor/Khmer empire 178, 180, 197
  in medieval Europe 123–126, 301
  in Mongol society 266
  of Vikings 66, 70–71
Hongi Hika 165
horsemanship and horses in Mongol Empire 274
housing *see* homes
Humanism in the Renaissance 52
Hundred Years War (1337–1453) 143
Huns 14–15
hunting in medieval Europe 129–131

I

illuminated manuscripts 133
immigrants, influence on medieval Europe 106–107
imperial court of shogunate Japan 217
India, changes in 33
'the Indies', sea routes to 45
industrialisation of shogunate Japan 250
inventions during the Enlightenment 54
irrigation in Angkor/Khmer Empire 187
Islam
  key features 28
  spread 19
Islamic Empire, extent of by 8th C 40
isolation policy of shogunate Japan 243

J

Japanese gardens 244
jarls 67
Jayavarman I 172
Jayavarman II 176
Jayavarman VII 165, 202
jewellery, Viking 72
Jews, persecution due to Black Death 322
Judaism, key features 29
jujutsu 246
justice system in medieval Europe 150

K

kabuki theatre 246
kami spirits 214
karls 67
kenjutsu 246
Kepler, Johannes 53
Khmer kingdoms, origins 171–173
Khmer society, religion in 174–175
knights
  as castle warriors 152
  in medieval Europe 122
Kublai Khan, achievements 280–281

L

land, wars fought for 37, 39
legal system in Mongol empire 275
legends in medieval Europe 134
leprosy 312
Lindisfarne, Viking raid on 91
living conditions in medieval Europe 123–126
longhouses, Viking 66
longships, Viking 85
Luther, Martin 52

M

Magna Carta 150
magnetic compass 144
Mahayana Buddhism in Khmer society 175
manorialism
  breakdown due to Black Death 323
  emergence 20
marketplaces in medieval Europe 145, 302–303
marriage and property laws in Mongol Empire 267
martial arts
  in Cambodia 190
  in shogunate Japan 246–247
Matsumoto Castle 208–209

medical treatments in medieval Europe 316
Medici, Lorenzo de' 46
medieval Europe
beliefs and values 59
brief overview 58
buildings 133
changes 142–146
Christianity 120–122
contacts between societies 60
crime and punishment 146–150
the Crusades 137–139
growth of trade and commerce 298
influences on society 106–119
knights 122
legacies 158–159
lifestyles 127–131
living conditions 123–126
music 135–136
peasants 120–121
population trends 322
timeline of key events 104–105
towns 301–303
towns, cities and commerce 144–146
writings 133–134
medieval 'health workers' 314–315
merchant bankers 46
merchants in shogunate Japan 235
Michelangelo 51
Middle East, spread of Black Death into 310
military campaigns
of Kublai Khan 280–281
of Mongke Khan 279
military training in medieval Europe 152
Minamoto no Yoritomo 225
minstrels 136
Mona Lisa (painting) 51
monarchies, influence on medieval Europe 110–111
moneylending in medieval Europe 145–146
Mongke Khan, reforms and military campaigns 279
Mongol Empire
changes to society 284
effect of expansion on other societies 285–287
expansion 256–259, 270, 276–277
invasions of shogunate Japan 226–229
Kublai Khan 280–281
power struggles within 277–278
rise of Genghis Khan 268–269
society and lifestyle 264–267
timeline of key events 262–263
writings of William of Rubruck and Marco Polo 282–283
Mongols, conflict and wars 22–23
monks in medieval Europe 121–122, 324
monks and temples in Angkor/Khmer empire 179
Moscow, rise of 287
mosques in Ottoman Empire 34
music in medieval Europe 135–136
Muslim persecution over Black Death 310
mythology
of Shinto creation 215
of Vikings 76–77

N

Newton, Isaac 53
nobility in Angkor/Khmer Empire 179
Noh theatre 246
Norman conquest of England 114–115
North America, discovery by Eriksson 94–95
Nostradamus 259
Notre Dame Cathedral 140
nuns in medieval Europe 121, 324

O

Ogodei 276
origami 245
Orthodox Church in Russia 286
Oseberg (Viking ship) 73
Ostrogoths 11, 15
Ottoman Empire
beliefs and values 59
brief overview 58
contacts between societies 60
important mosques 34
overview of Western and Islamic worlds 58

P

patrons 46
peasants
in Angkor/Khmer Empire 179
in medieval Europe 120, 121, 126
in shogunate Japan 234
Peasants' Revolt 143, 323
people, effects of wars on 41
persecution of Jews due to Black Death 322
personal hygiene in medieval Europe 127–128
plague *see* Black Death pandemic
plague doctors 314
poetry in shogunate Japan 245
Polo, Marco
meeting with Kublai Khan 281
writings 43, 282–283
Polynesia
key religious beliefs 163
migration of peoples 21
Polynesian expansion
brief overview 162
causes and effects of contacts 164
population movements, effect on medieval Europe 107, 108–109
printing press of Gutenberg 144
public health, lack in medieval towns 302, 314

R

The Reformation 52
regional administrators in Russia 286–287
religion
  impact of Black Death 324
  in Khmer society 174–175
religions
  Shintoism 214–215
  spread 19
religious change in Angkor/Khmer Empire 201
religious legacy of Mongols 284
religious warfare, the Crusades 137–139
The Renaissance
  and the arts 50–51
  and the Black Death 325
Renaissance Italy
  beliefs and values 59
  brief overview 58
  contacts between societies 60
renga 245
reservoirs in Angkor/Khmer Empire 187
resources, wars fought for 37, 39
rice-growing in Angkor/Khmer Empire 187–188
Roman Empire, collapse of 10–11
royal court in Angkor/Khmer Empire 179
runestones, Viking 72
Russia, impact of Mongols on 286–287
Russian Orthodox Church 286

S

sagas, Viking 76
sakoku policy in shogunate Japan 243
samurai
  armour 22–23
  bushido code 230
  social position 234
Sanskrit inscriptions in Khmer temples 175
scientific method 51
scientific revolution during Renaissance 53
sea routes, search for 299–300
Seppuku 32
settlements in medieval Europe 108–109
shamanism in Mongol Empire 266
Shinto, key features 30
Shintoism 214–215
ships
  American in Japan 248
  Viking 73, 79, 84–85
shogunate, decline of 249–250
shogunate Japan
  brief overview 162
  castles and towns 232–233
  causes and effects of contacts 164
  feudal system 229
  forest resources 239–240
  geography 213
  Heian-Kyo city 220–221
  key religious beliefs 163
  legacies 252–253
  Mongol invasions 226–229
  new ideas 23
  opening 248–250
  Prince Shotoku 218–219
  restrictions on contact 242–243
  rise of *shogun* 225
  samurai 230–231
  Shintoism 214–215
  social order 212, 216, 234–235
  timeline of key events 210–211
  Tokugawa *shogun* 236
  warfare 230–231
Shotoku, Prince 218–219
siege of castle 154–155
significant periods c.550-1750CE, location 8–9
Silk Road and trade with Europe 43
skilled workers 46
slaves
  African 41
  in Angkor/Khmer Empire 180
social divisions in Viking society 66–67
social order in shogunate Japan 212, 216
social position in shogunate Japan 234–235
social roles in Viking society 68–69
social structures
  in Angkor/Khmer society 177–183
  effects of war on 41
South-East Asia, changes in 33
Spanish contact in Americas 39, 256–259
Suleiman the Magnificent 61
sumo wrestling 246–247
Supper at Emmaus (painting) 50
surgeons in medieval Europe 317–318

T

Ta Prohm temple complex 177, 196–197, 200
Taj Mahal 42–43
tanka 245
Taoism, key features 29
Tatars 264, 268
taxation in Mongol Empire 275
temples in Angkor/Khmer Empire 191–196
Temujin *see* Genghis Khan
The Decameron 318–319
Theodoric the Great 15
Theravada Buddhism 201
things, Viking 74
thralls 67
timeline
  of Angkor/Khmer Empire 168–169
  of effect of changes on societies 7
timeline of key events
  in ancient to modern world 4–5
  in Black Death pandemic 294–295
  in history of medieval Europe 104–105
  in Mongol expansion 262–263
  in shogunate Japan 210–211
  in Viking history 64–65
Tokugawa Ieyasu 165
Tokugawa *shogun* 236

Tonle Sap lake 174
torture chambers in medieval Europe 148–149
town populations in medieval Europe 144
towns
in medieval Europe 296, 301–303
in shogunate Japan 232–233
towns and cities in medieval Europe 108–109, 146
trade
in Angkor/Khmer Empire 188–189
by Mongol Empire 284, 285
contacts through 43–45
effects of 46
growth in medieval Europe 298
in shogunate Japan 240–241
trade routes
of medieval merchants 298
of shogunate Japan 241
of Vikings 75
traders in shogunate Japan 235
trading empires 45
Treaty of Tordesillas 45
trial
by combat 147
by ordeal 146–147
Triumph of Death (painting) 310
troubadors 136
Tyler, Wat 143, 323

V

Vandals 11
Vesalius, Andreas 53
Viking homeland, political and economic change 96
Vikings
arrival in medieval Europe 111
beliefs and mythology 76–77
beliefs and values 59
brief overview 58
characteristics 78, 83
and Christianity 97
contacts between societies 60
economy and trade 75
effects of raids on other societies 90–93
homes 66, 70–71
laws 74
legacies 100–101
lifestyle 72–73
population movements 15
raids by 83–87, 99
ships and shipbuilding 84–85
social divisions 66–67
social roles 68–69
and spread of religions 22
timeline of key events 64–65
weapons and armour 86, 87
Visigoths 11
Visigoth kings 110

W

wage regulation due to Black Death 323
warfare
in Angkor/Khmer Empire 188–189, 202
in medieval Europe 151
in Mongol Empire 273–274
in shogunate Japan 230
wars
Battle of Badr 40
Battle of Hastings 18
causes 37, 39
contact through 37
the Crusades 18, 137–139
effects 41–42
water management in Angkor/Khmer Empire 186–187
water system breakdown in Angkor/Khmer Empire 203–204
weapons
in Mongol armies 273
in Shogunate Japan 230–231
of Vikings 86
weekdays, origin of names 77
Western Church
significance 108
support systems for 120–122
wet rice culture in Angkor/Khmer Empire 187–188
William, Duke of Normandy 115
William of Rubruck, writings 282
women
in Angkor/Khmer Empire 180
in Mongol society 266–267
women and children in Viking society 67
workers in medieval Europe 120, 121
writing in medieval Europe 133–134

Y

yam communication system in Mongol empire 275
Yamamoto clan 216
Yersinia pestis 311
Yuan Dynasty, end of 281
yurts 266

Z

Zhou Daguan 179–181

acknowledgements

The author and the publisher wish to thank the following copyright holders for reproduction of their material.

Photos: **123rf**/ Sam D'cruz, Source 5.36; **AAP Image**/ AP Photo/ Alan Porritt, Pool, Source 3.78/ PA/ Anthony Devlin, Source 3.27/ AP Photo/ Fiona Hanson, Source 5.57; **AKG Images**, Sources 1.6, 1.71, 3.25, 3.31, 5.20, 6.1 (1241), 6.22, 6.30, 7.12, 7.15, 7.20, 7.42, 7.43, 7.7, p. 58/ PictureContact, Sources 4.24, 4.9/ British Library, Source 7.4/ Cameraphoto, Source 3.23/ Hervé Champollion, p. 188 top, Sources 4.25, 4.34/ IAM, p. 257 right/ IAM/ World History Archive, Source 7.41/ Jérôme da Cunha, Source 7.16/ Erich Lessing, p. 165 top left, Sources 2.46, 3.36, 3.72, 5.14/ Interfoto, Source 3.73/ Werner Forman, p. 59 centre, Source 2.14, 2.44, 5.9/ François Guénet, Source 4.1 (1860); **Alamy**/ Franck Fotos, p. 61 (eriksson); **Author**, Source 2.61; **Bibliothèque Nationale de France**, Source 6.25/ Bayerische Staatsbibliothek Munchen, Source 3.71, p. 157; **Corbis**, pp. iii, iv-v, Sources 1.24, 3.1 (1347), 4.29, 6.40, 7.35/ Pierre Colombel, Source 6.28/ Alessandro Di Maio/ Demotix, Source 1.32/ Alfredo Dagli Orti/ The Art Archive, Source 1.58/ Alinari Archives, p. 59 right, Source 1.27/ Alison Wright, Source 1.35/ Angelo Hornak, Source 3.40/ Araldo de Luca, Source 1.65/ Arctic-Images, Source 2.40/ Asian Art & Archaeology, Inc., Sources 5.1 (1185), 5.31, 5.54/ A Stock, Source 6.15/ B.S.P.I., Source 5.43/ Barry Lewis/ In Pictures, Sources 6.16, 6.2/ Bertrand Gardel/ Hemis, Source 3.51/ Bertrand Rieger/ Hemis, Source 3.28/ Bettmann, p. 61 (charlemagne), Sources 1.1 (793), 1.11, 1.12, 1.2, 2.1 (1066), 2.1 (799), 3.1 (1452), 6.10, 7.28, 7.34, 7.39/ Blue Lantern Studio, Sources 2.64, 6.1 (1276)/ Bob Krist, pp. 2-3/ Bruno Morandi/ Robert Harding World Imagery, Source 4.10/ Bruno Morandi/Hemis, Source 4.2/ Burstein Collection, Sources 1.62, 5.16, 5.32/ Carsten Rehder/ dpa, Source 2.7/ Charles & Josette Lenars, Source 1.72/ Chen Jianli/ XinHua/ Xinhua Press, Source 7.46/ Christie's Images, Source 1.7 right/ Christophe Boisvieux, Source 2.45/ Christophe Loviny, Sources 4.44, 7.23/ CHU Amiens/ epa, Source 7.49/ David Appleby/ Twentieth Century/ Bureau L.A. Collection, Source 3.49/ David Lees, Source 7.2/ David Samuel Robbins, Source 7.8/ Davide Erbetta/ SOPA, Source 3.60/ Dean Conger, Sources 6.5, 6.7/ Dennis Kunkel Microscopy, Inc./ Visuals Unlimited, Sources 4.59, 7.22/ Dietrich Rose, Source 4.57/ Doug Pearson/ JAI, Source 2.2/ Douglas Peebles, p. 163 right/ Everett Kennedy Brown/ epa, Source 5.1 (794)/ Floris Leeuwenberg, Source 1.34/ Francis G. Mayer, Source 1.70/ Franz-Marc Frei, Source 3.33/ George Steinmetz, pp. 260-1/ Gianni Dagli Orti, Sources 3.15, 3.32/ Gilbert Iundt/ TempSport, Source 5.49/ Hamid Sardar, Source 6.39/ Hans Georg Roth, Source 1.56/ Hemis, Source 3.52/ Hemis/ Bertrand Rieger, Source 2.32/ Heritage Images, p. 257 left, Sources 1.1 (1492), 1.18, 2.29, 3.41, 7.1 (flagellants)/ Historical Picture Archive, Sources 1.59, 3.6, 3.61, 3.7/ Hulton-Deutsch Collection, Source 6.34/ Image Source, p. 80 bottom/ Jacques Langevin/ Sygma, Source 4.11/ Jan Butchofsky, Source 1.25/ Jens Büttner/ dpa, Source 3.58/ Jim Reed/ Science Faction, p. 80 top/ Jim Zuckerman, Source 4.47/ Joel W. Rogers, Source 1.41/ Jonathan Blair, Source 3.70/ Kenneth Garrett/ National Geographic Society, Source 1.26/ Keren Su, Source 7.50/ Kevin R. Morris, Source 4.50/ Lebrecht Music & Arts, Source 7.21/ Liu Liqun, Source 6.1 (yurts)/ Luca I. Tettoni, Sources 1.30, 4.1 (1181), 4.7, 4.8, 4.41, 4.47, 4.53/ Macduff Everton, Source 4.33/ Massimo Ripani/ Grand Tour, Source 3.68/ Michael Freeman, Sources 4.1 (1113), 4.1 (1177), 4.14, 4.45/ Michael Nicholson, Sources 1.43, 3.11, 3.45/ Michael S. Yamashita, Source 5.48/ Michel Setboun, Sources 6.11, 6.4/ Michele Falzone/ JAI, Source 1.21/ Moodboard, Source 4.49/ National Cancer Institute - digital version copyright Science Faction, Source 7.48/ National Geographic Society, Sources 2.19, 2.58, 2.52, 2.60, pp. 94-95/ Nik Wheeler, Sources 2.55, 3.1 (1066), 3.16/ Ocean, pp. 163 centre, 92 left, Sources 1.8, 4.52/ Orban Thierry/ Corbis Sygma, Source 4.21/ Pascal Deloche / Godong, Source 3.76/ Patrick Ward, Source 3.44/ Paul Souders, Source 2.63/ Peter Essick/ Aurora Photos, Source 1.23/ PoodlesRock, Source 1.67/ Radius Images, pp. 166-7, Sources 4.1 (877), 4.30, 5.2/ Ric Ergenbright, p. 165 top right, Source 5.1 (1603)/ Robert Glusic, p. 80 centre/ Rolf Hicker/ All Canada Photos, Source 2.54/ Ryan Pyle, Source 1.33/ Sakamoto Photo Research Laboratory, Source 5.23/ Sandro Vannini, Sources 1.19, 1.63/ Scott Barrow, Source 2.23/ Sean White/ Design Pics, Source 4.31/ Stapleton Collection, Source 3.8/ Stefano Bianchetti, Sources 2.50, 3.10/ Syed Jan Sabawoon/ epa, Source 1.44/ Sylvain Sonnet, Sources 1.29, 2.34/ Ted Spiegel, Sources 1.1 (1066), 2.16, 2.36, 2.37, 2.48, 2.8, 3.3/ The Art Archive, Source 7.24/ The Gallery Collection, pp. vii bottom right, 259 top left, Sources 1.64, 1.66, 1.68, 2.39, 3.26, 6.1 (1190), 7.1 (plague victims)/ Tim Pannell, Source 3.66/ Underwood & Amp Underwood/ National Geographic Society, Source 3.53/ Werner Forman, Sources 1.16, 2.12, 2.27, 3.57/ Yadid Levy/ Robert Harding World Imagery, Sources 2.1 (1001), 1.42/ Yahya Arhab/ epa, Source 1.31/ Yasushi Akimoto/ AmanaimagesRF, Source 5.33; **Getty Images**, Source 6.42/ Bruno Morandi, Source 6.6/ Gallo Images, Source 7.45/ Sven Hagolani, Source 5.55/ AFP, Source 4.36/ After Johann Moritz Rugendas, Source 1.51/ Art Wolfe, Source 6.43/ Claver Carroll, Source 4.61/ Dea / G. Dagli Orti, Source 1.47/ Dejan Patic, Source 4.42/ Eric SA House – Carle, p. 259 bottom/ EyesWideOpen, Source 4.60/ Gamma-Rapho, Source 4.55/ Guenter Guni, Source 4.32/ Henry Guttmann, Source 5.41/ Hulton Archive, Source 4.58/ Jack Hollingsworth, Source 1.28/ Ken Gillham, Source 7.13/ Leemage, pp. 61 (suleiman), 259 top right, Source 1.10/ Michael S. Yamashita, Source 5.37/ Nicole Duplaix, Source 7.11/ Patrice Coppee, p. 163 left/ RedChopsticks, p. 256/ sbk_20d pictures, Source 4.16/ William Thomas Cain, Source 6.44/ WIN-Initiative, Source 7.9/ AFP, Source 5.8; **iStockphoto**/ Floortje, Source 7.30/ Josef Muellek, Source 4.35/ Oleg Kozlov, Source 7.1 (rat)/ Steven Wynn, Source 6.27; **Newspix**/ Colin Murty, Source 4.62; **Niels Elswing, the National Museum of Denmark**, Source 2.4; Copyright **©National Land Image Information** (Color Aerial Photographs), Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism, Source 5.35; **Photo Scala, Florence**/ Museo Civico, Bologna, Source 1.61; **Photolibrary**/ Alamy/ David Ball, Source 3.39/ Alamy/ David Robertson, pp. xi, 292-3/ Alamy/ Ivan Vdovin, Source 5.12/ Alamy/ M Stock, Source 7.32/ Alamy/ Shibo Yang, Source 2.10/ Anna Watson, Source 5.4/ Bjorn Svensson/ SPL, Source 2.13/ CDC, Source 7.1 (hand)/ Deddeda, p. 190 bottom, Source 4.39/ Ellen Rooney, Source 4.40/ FWagner Fwagner, Source 6.17/ J-L. Klein & M-L. Hubert, Source 3.77/ James Montgomery, Source 5.6/ John Sanford, Source 7.25/ Look and Learn, Source 1.1 (1278)/ Roger Coulam, Source 2.1 (793)/ Sylvain Grandadam, Source 3.69/ Tibor Bognár, Source 4.13/Alamy/ Chris Hellier, Source 4.54; © **RMN** (Domaine de Chantilly)/ René-Gabriel Ojéda, Source 7.14; © **KhProd1**. This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 License., Source 4.37; **Shutterstock**/ Anilah, Source 3.4/ Atlaspix, p. 198/ Barone Firenze, Source 3.1 (715)/ Frank Jr, Source 3.56/ Gian Corrêa Saléro, Source 2.41/ J. Henning Buchholz, Source 5.50/ Luca Moi, pp. 102-3/ Maria Gioberti, Source 1.40/ Markrhiggins, Source 7.44/ Martin Mette, Source 5.29/ Mnoor, Source 1.1 (610)/ Neale Cousland, pp. 208-9/ Nickolay Stanev, Source 1.53/ Psamtik, Source 6.41/ William Attard McCarthy, p. 59 left; **The Art Archive**/ British Library, Sources 3.55, 3.2, 5.51/ Musée du Château de Versailles/ Gianni Dagli Orti, Source 3.14/ Private Collection Paris / Gianni Dagli Orti, Source 5.11/ Victoria and Albert Museum London/ Eileen Tweedy, Source 5.7/ Gunshots, Source 5.27 **The Bridgeman Art Library**, pp. 61 (Galileo), 62-63, Sources 2.28, 2.35, 3.64, 1.45, 6.29/ Alecto Historical Editions, London, UK, Source 3.18/ Musee Conde, Chantilly, France, Source 3.38/ Peter Newark Pictures, Source 1.39/ The Stapleton Collection, Source 1.13/ © AISA, Source 2.11, 5.15/© British Library Board. All Rights Reserved, Sources 3.47, 7.33/ Ancient Art and Architecture Collection Ltd, Source 5.21/ Archives Charmet, Sources 1.36, 7.31/ Giraudon, Source 3.63/ Ken Welsh, Source 3.21/ Look and Learn, Sources 1.54, 3.54/Musee des Beaux-Arts, Marseille, France, Source 1.69/ Musee Guimet, Paris, France, Source 5.42/ Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Source 5.5/ National Geographic Image Collection, Source 3.37/Photo © Philip Mould Ltd, London, Source 3.17/ Photo © The Maas Gallery, London, Source 3.42/ Haynes Fine Art at the Bindery Galleries, Broadway, Source 1.20/ Musee d'Unterlinden, Colmar, France, Source 7.18; **The Kobal Collection**/ Dreamworks/ Universal/ Buitendijk, Jaap, Source 1.7 left/ New Line / Saul Zaentz/ Wing Nut Films / Vinet, Pierre, Source 2.62; **The Steno Museum**/ Kristian Frost, front cover; **The Trustees of the British Museum**, Source 2.56; **Tomoki Yamada**, Source 5.44; **Wikimedia Commons**/ Public Domain, p. vi top, Sources 4.28, 5.1 (1281), 5.17, 5.26, 5.34, 5.38.

Every effort has been made to trace the original source of copyright material contained in this book. The publisher will be pleased to hear from copyright holders to rectify any errors or omissions.

Reconstruction of a typical plague doctor's costume from The Steno Museum in Aarhus, Denmark. Plague doctors were special medical physicians who saw victims in times of plague epidemics. In the 17th and 18th centuries, some plague doctors wore beak-like masks designed to protect them from the putrid air believed to be the cause of infection. A plague doctor's chances of survival during times of plague were slim.

– The Steno Museum/ Photographer: Kristian Frost

OXFORD
UNIVERSITY PRESS
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

ISBN 978-0-19-557109-7

visit us at: **oup.com.au** or
contact customer service: **cs.au@oup.com**