

Lesson 1 Conditions in Medieval Europe 1000 years roughly from 500 AD to 1500 AD

- A. Most folks lived as farmers on land which they did not own.- peasants
 1. poverty, poor diet (black bread, vegetables, very little meat, mostly fish), drank water if pure, drank beer (low alcohol content)
 2. hard work- relentless toil
 3. frustration because they could not improve their lives
 4. little freedom
 5. short lifespan, war, famine, disease, with little or no health care
 6. Poor housing timber framed houses with **wattle & daub walls, thatched roof**, animals lived in the house folks slept on hay, smoke filled, dirt floors- rats and fleas and flies
 7. Sanitation-used toilet outside in day and in a pot at night.
Human and animal wastes collected on dung heap.
 7. Ruling class lived much better. They had splendid clothing, and ate plenty of meats, drank wine and beer though good water was drunk in some places
- B. Cities were small by today's standards
 1. Crowded conditions
 2. Poor sanitation (human waste in open pits or in the streets) and polluted water
 3. filthy streets- manure both animal and human lead to flies which carry disease
 4. foul air
 5. disease- pandemic- black death 20 mil deaths
- C. Most folks lived in villages and farmed
 1. Serfs were bound to the land- not free to move (slaves) thralls
 2. Farmed small acres of land with fields long and narrow
 - a. Raised grain (wheat, rye, barley, oats) and vegetables
 - b. Used oxen to plow
 - c. Rotation 2 years in crops and one fallow year
for example: year one wheat, year two legumes (peas, lentils, fava beans),
year three fallow (allowed to grow up in grass and weeds for pasture)
 - d. Fertilizer human and animal manure (dung heap)
 - e. Animals- sheep- meat, wool, milk; cattle (one cow per village, oxen for plowing),
goats, chickens, geese (eggs, meat, feathers (down for insulation and wing feathers
for fletching arrows)
- D. Autocratic government
 1. Feudal system
 2. Highly stratified society
King (or Emperor), Nobles (Landed gentry such as Earls, Barons, Lords, etc.)
Craftsman (millers, weavers, potters, black smiths, coopers, bakers,
Peasants and slaves
 3. Military
 - a. Professional- Knights, rode horses, provided their own armor and weapons
Followed a code of chivalry
(1) see separate list on Lesson Two
for more <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AwMowoTOOI4>
 - b. Ordinary footmen, and bowmen
 4. Taxes to church, to lord, to the king
- F. Religion -Catholic Church

1. Complex hierarchy
Pope, Cardinals, Archbishops, Bishops, Priests
2. Importance of monasticism, preserved much knowledge, copied books, prayers for the living and the dead. Some made revenue by brewing beer, weaving cloth, or farming
3. Religion played a much more important part in peoples lives (people lived in fear of Purgatory)
4. Church calendar, saint days, fast days could not eat meat, feast days
5. Intolerance for religious dissent.
6. Influence of the Crusades. Attempts to take back Palestine (the Holy Lands) from the Muslim Arabs. Many men were exposed to goods from the far east. Stimulated desire for silk, cotton, spices, thus more trade. Stimulated the sense of adventure and discovery. Crusaders believed that they could earn merit with God, forgiveness of sins (absolution) and escape from Purgatory. Improvements in navigation instruments (compass and astrolabe).

G. Trade

1. Mostly local- markets and fairs (promoted and run by monasteries)
2. International- Wool from England, Flanders
European merchants traveled from Constantinople to India and China (along the Silk Road- between Europeans and Chinese). , Marco Polo traveled the Silk road to China and served the Mongolian emperor. He returned to Venice after almost 20 years. Captured in war, wrote The Travels of Marco Polo while in prison.
When Constantinople's fell (1453) Muslim Arabs stopped all Christian traders from using the Silk Road. They monopolized the road to get goods and traded with major Italian maritime republics. (Venice and Genoa) Prices for goods from the far east increased.

Lesson 2 Tuesday On Your Own

Draw a map showing the Silk Road and the Spice Road. Answer questions from WS Lesson 2. You may use the following resources.

<https://i.pinimg.com/originals/eb/30/9a/eb309a5d132fbfe8a56cae7c3a2319eb.jpg>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rb0HEtYaHw>

This link will give you a good background for medieval times. Read!

<http://www.discovermiddleages.co.uk/medieval-life-and-times/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/guides/zm4mn39/revision/6>

<https://www.lostkingdom.net/the-life-of-a-villager-during-the-middle-ages/>

Read the Code of Chivalry, and here

<https://www.medievalchronicles.com/medieval-knights/code-of-chivalry-knights/>