The word "tribe" comes from the Latin word "tribus," which referred to one of the three political and social divisions of the Roman state. Each tribe was composed of a group of people who shared a common ancestry or geographic origin, and who were organized around a set of customs, beliefs, and social practices. Over time, the term "tribus" came to be used more broadly to refer to any group of people who shared a common identity or culture, whether or not they were organized into a formal political or social entity. The word was later adopted into English in the late Middle Ages, where it has continued to be used to describe various groups of people who share a common cultural, linguistic, or historical heritage.