

# Unit 4



## THE MIDDLE AGES AND EARLY MODERN WORLD, C. 500 TO 1750s

### Unit Introduction

*This unit discusses major themes in world history during the Middle Ages and the early modern period. This unit has seven sections: Middle Ages in Europe, Middle Ages in Asia, Development of Early capitalism, the Age of Exploration, Renaissance, Reformation and Industrial Revolution. Major points*

*and arguments are illustrated with examples and images to facilitate your learning and make it attractive to you. The unit closes with a summary of the main points of each lesson, followed by review questions that enable you to measure your achievements all through the unit.*

### Unit learning outcomes

At the end of this unit, learners will be able to:

- identify the major characteristics of European feudal society of the medieval period.
- examine the main features of the Byzantine Empire.
- discuss the rise and expansion of Islam during the period.
- explain the relationship between Europe and the Ottoman Turkish Empire.
- evaluate the major changes that took place during the medieval ages and the early modern times.



### Key Terms

- Middle Age
- Estates
- Knights
- Feudalism
- Early Modern World

## 4.1 The Middle Ages in Europe

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- describe the main features of the medieval period.
- analyse the components of medieval world civilisations.
- recognise the merits and demerits of the medieval period.

### 4.1.1 Dark Age

#### Brainstorming

- What was the Dark Age?

The “Dark Age” was a period of West European history from 500AD to 1000AD. It was called the Dark Ages because civilisation declined in Western Europe during this period. The Western Roman Empire was destroyed both by internal and external problems. Internally the empire suffered division and decay. Externally it was invaded, in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century AD, by the Anglo Saxons and Franks from the Germanic tribes, the Huns and the Magyars from the Asiatic tribes.

The invasions brought many changes in Western Europe. The Greco-Roman civilisation declined. The societies became rural, and cities declined. Feudalism became the socio-economic and political order. Churches, castles and palaces were built. Bishops and monks kept records; The Knights practiced chivalry. In addition, there was much war among rulers and lords in Europe, and even for ordinary people, there were murders and blood feuds. Nevertheless, by c. 1000AD, more stability was returning. Feudal society emerged from the Dark Ages.

### 4.1.2 Feudal Society

As Western Europe fell apart, the number of separate powerful lords and vassals increased. Thus, from 500 to 1500, a new socio-political system called feudalism emerged. The ruling class was made up of kings, nobles, knights (soldiers) and the higher clergy. The vassalage system relates a higher lord to a lower lord in feudalism. In this system, the higher lord gave fief to the lower lord. Then, the lower lord became a vassal of the higher one. Fief or feud is a piece of land. Thus, feudalism was a system of holding land and providing service in exchange.



**Figure 4.1** Hierarchy of feudal society, (source: google search)

The basic units of European feudalism were Manor (villages). Manorial lord exercised political, judicial and military power over peasants of his Manor in feudal Europe. The mass of the feudal society was made up of peasants, craftsmen and traders. They had no political and economic power. West European feudal society was exploitative.

During feudalism, the Church had authority over the ruling class and the ordinary people. The Roman Catholic Church-owned land. It was responsible not only for religion but also for education and culture.

### Acitvitiy 4.1



1. Explain the term feudalism.
2. Discuss the economic and social impacts of Feudalism.
3. Compare and contrast the tribute collection of feudal European society with the modern system. Explain the importance of tax for the development of society.

### 4.1.3 Byzantine Empire

The Byzantine Empire was the East Roman Empire which continued after the fall of the West Roman Empire. The capital of the Byzantine Empire was Constantinople (modern Istanbul). The official language of the Empire became Greek. The Orthodox Church was officially separated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1054. It became the national church of the Empire and supported the emperor.

The economic base of the Empire was agriculture, trade and crafts. Byzantine architecture made use of domes and beautifully colored glasses. The society was divided into estates: the emperor, the higher clergy, the nobility who owned land and the peasants who cultivated it. The Byzantine Empire was at the height of its territory and power under Emperor Justinian (r. 527-565).



**Map 4.1** Byzantine Empire, (source: Encyclopedia, Britannica)

The Seljuk Turks who began military occupation in Asia Minor in 1040AD challenged the Byzantine Empire. This event was followed by the crusades that began in the 1090s. The crusades waged wars of Christian Europe against Seljuk Turks to liberate Christian holy lands. There were seven Crusades, the first of which was started in 1096. The crusades failed to crush Muslim power in the holy lands but protected Western Europe from foreign invasions in the east. The Byzantine Empire suffered a disastrous defeat at the Battle of Manzikert in 1071. It lost most Asia Minor to Seljuk Turkish rulers and later to Ottoman Turks.

## 4.2 The Middle Ages in Asia

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- describe the main features of the medieval period in Asia.
- explain the rise and expansion of Islam throughout the world.

### Brainstorming

- How did Islam expand?

### 4.2.1 The Rise and Expansion of Islam

The rise of Islam in the early seventh century AD was a great event in the history of the world. Islam began in the Arabian Peninsula with the life and teaching of the Prophet Mohammed in Mecca around 610AD. The term Islam means “submission to the will of Allah (God)”. Islam is worship in Allah, and those who worship Allah are called Muslims.

Islam was vehemently opposed by the Quraysh Arabs, who began to persecute Prophet Mohammed and his followers. As a result, in 622AD Prophet Mohammed and his followers moved from Mecca to Medina. This travel is called Hejira, and it marked the beginning Year of the Islamic Calendar.



**Figure 4.2** Kaaba, Mecca, Surrounded by pilgrims during the Hajj, Saudi Arabia, (source: Islamic Monitor)

The Muslim Arabs changed the Near East and Middle East countries' political, religious, and social structures. Following the death of the Prophet, Muslims came under the Arab Caliphates of the Umayyad and Abbasid dynasties in the Middle Ages. The death of the Prophet was followed by the great Arab conquests establishing a Muslim Arab empire from North Africa and Spain in the west to Central Asia in the east.

The Seljuk and Ottoman Turk's military occupation in Palestine, Asia Minor, and Arabia contributed to Islam's expansion. They spread throughout the areas under their domain and other parts of the world.

### **4.2.2 The Expansion of the Ottoman Empire**

The Seljuk Turks began military occupation in Palestine, Asia Minor and Arabia in 1040. Ottoman Turks replaced the Seljuk Turks in the area by the end of the 13<sup>th</sup> C. The Ottoman Turks were named after their chief Osman or Othman.

The Ottoman Empire was centered in what is now Turkey. Thus it was called as Ottoman Turkish Empire. They seized Anatolia in 1336, which became their capital. At its heyday, the empire captured Adrianople (1356) and Salonika (1387). They defeated the Serbs in 1389 and the Bulgarians in 1393. So by the 15<sup>th</sup> century, the Balkan Peninsula, including Greece, was predominantly conquered.

The Ottomans conquered Constantinople in 1453, renamed it Istanbul and made it their capital. The Ottomans conquered Syria in 1516 and Egypt in 1517. In 1529, European forces successfully defended Vienna, the capital of Austria, from the Turkish attack.



The Turkish expansion in Europe was ended in 1571, when European fleets defeated the Turkish navy at the Battle of Lepanto, near Greece.



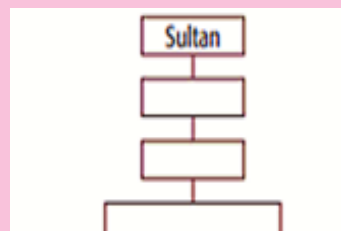
**Map 4.2** The Ottoman Turkish Empire

The Ottomans formed a group of highly trained soldiers called *janissaries*. They spread Islam throughout the empire. They also gained wealth from trade and controlled the trade route from Europe to Asia. They banned European merchants from going to the Far East. The Ottoman Turkish Society was divided into four social groups: Sultan, grand viziers (bureaucrats), janissaries (soldiers), occupational groups. The culture of the Ottoman Empire was that of the Islamic world.

### Acitvitiy 4.2



1. Explain the rise and expansion of Islam throughout the world.
2. Create a chart showing the structure of Ottoman society. List groups in order of importance.



### 4.2.3 Dynastic Cycle in China

#### Brainstorming

- What do you know about the dynastic cycle of China?

The Chinese created a great civilisation in the world. This civilisation greatly impacted other countries in East Asia, particularly Korea and Japan.

In politics, the Chinese accepted the idea of a “dynastic cycle”. This was as practiced in the following. When a new dynasty took power, it used to be strong, ruled well and had the support of the people. However, when it became corrupt and weak and lost the support of the people, it would lose the “mandate of Heaven”, meaning its authority and legitimacy to rule China. So it would be replaced by another new dynasty, probably founded by a rebel, and the cycle would be repeated. Nevertheless, there was a long succession of imperial dynasties ruling China from the Qin to the Qing dynasty, which was ended by a revolution in 1911/1912.

#### Activity 4.3



1. Do you think the ideas of the dynastic cycle and the “Mandate of Heaven” encouraged rebellion in China?

### 4.3 Development of Early Capitalism

#### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- explain the development of early capitalism.
- value the importance of early capitalist relations to the modern world

#### Brainstorming

- What do we mean by the concept of capitalist relations?

The development that distinguished capitalism from previous systems used accumulated capital to enlarge productive capacity rather than invest in economically unproductive enterprises, such as pyramids and cathedrals. This characteristic was encouraged by several historical events.

Most ancient cities and towns in Europe had been ruined following the collapse of the



Roman Empire. However, trade revived slowly, and old Roman cities were restored. The towns were the centers of production and exchange. Merchants learned how to buy raw materials, have workers do the manufacturing and sell finished products at the best prices. After the discoveries, the new long-distance international trade was important, and big profits could be made. However, trade problems were chiefly transport difficulties, insecurity caused by war and robbery, and heavy tolls (taxes) often charged on the transit of commodities.

### Activity 4.4



1. Discuss in groups the importance of early capitalist relation.

## 4.4 The Age of Explorations and Discoveries

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- draw a map showing the early routes of Explorations and Discoveries

### Brainstorming

- What do you know about the age of exploration and discoveries?

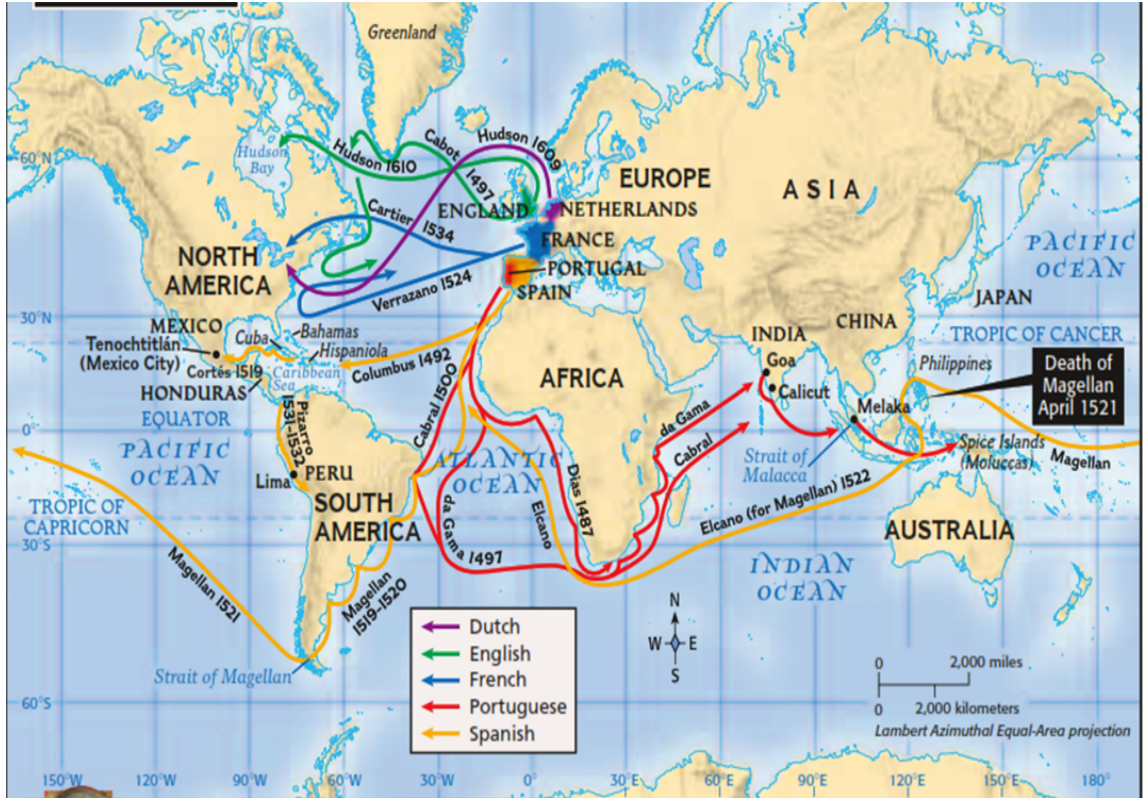
The age of European explorations and discoveries was in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The explorations were, in part, initiated by the need to bypass the Ottoman Turkish blockade of the old long-distance trade route from Europe to the Far East.

Factors that encouraged explorations and discoveries were:

- European interest in long-distance trade and new inventions like the compass.
- In addition, the development of better maps and ships and the growing interest in geographical knowledge fueled the idea of exploration.
- Prince Henry, the Navigator (1394-1460) of Portugal and Queen Isabella (1451-1504) of Spain, who supported the voyages of explorers, also inspired the exploration. They sponsored voyages for the sake of their economy, religion and glory. Spain and Portugal were the leaders in the exploration and discoveries in the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries. They were closely followed by Holland, Britain, France and Russia.

Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama discovered a new sea route to India and the Far East in 1498. Christopher Columbus was the first European explorer to reach America in 1492

while he was in service of Spain. Unfortunately, Columbus died without knowing that he had found new lands. The land found came to be known as America from the name of an Italian mapmaker called Amerigo Vespucci. The newly “discovered” areas also became known as the “New World”. The Portuguese, Ferdinand Magellan, circumnavigated the world between 1519 and 1522 in the service of Spain. The newly discovered lands were later conquered and became colonies of European powers.



**Map 4.3** European Voyages of Discoveries

### Acitvitiy 4.5



1. Map (4.3) above shows Magellan's route from Spain to the Philippines. If the voyage took about 20 months, how many miles each day, on average, did Magellan travel? (**Hint:** Search the internet or refer to library about the exact distance from Spain to the Philippines in miles)

There are economic impacts of the age of exploration and discoveries. Economically, Europeans gained huge profits from local trade networks, which enhanced the globalising process. Moreover, with the subsequent colonial conquest, the voyages promoted the faster development of capitalism.

### Activity 4.6



1. Why did the European rulers sponsor early explorers? Discuss their motives in a group

## 4.5 The Renaissance

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- compare and contrast the ideals of the renaissance on today's world thinking.

### Brainstorming

- What is Renaissance? Where does this idea come from?

Renaissance was an intellectual movement. The word renaissance indicates the “rebirth” of learning. It began in the 14<sup>th</sup> century and ended in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Renaissance began in Italy and spread to the rest of Europe, mainly to England, France, Germany, Spain and Holland.

First, Renaissance Italy was essentially an urban society. Second, the Renaissance was an age of recovery from the disasters of the fourteenth century. This revival affected both politics and art. Third, a new view of human beings emerged as people in the Italian Renaissance began to emphasise individual ability.

The Renaissance had the following characteristics:

- The study of ancient Rome and Greek languages, literature, arts and the use of reason.
- The support of freedom of thought and questioning mind.
- The use of the vernacular, or the national language such as the Italian and the English language rather than Latin in writing.



**Chart 4.1** Five characteristics of renaissance art that changed the world forever (source: theartist.me)

The outstanding persons of the Renaissance produced great works of literature, painting, sculpture, architecture and science. In literature: Divine Comedy was written by Italian Dante Alighieri; Utopia by Englishman Thomas More; Don Quixote by the Spaniard Cervantes; Holy Bible was translated into German by Martin Luther and various great plays by Englishman William Shakespeare. In arts: Italian Leonardo da Vinci painted Last Supper and Monalisa; Italian Michael Angelo painted the Creation of Adam and made statues of David, Moses and the Virgin & the dead Christ. In science, the Belgian Vesalius studied human anatomy. The Polish Nicholas Copernicus declared that the earth revolved around the sun. Previously, it was thought that planets revolved around the earth.

The Renaissance had a profound influence on the development of modern society culture, and since it is a natural extension of both, artistic expression. The Renaissance influence in the world brought about a new focus on humanism and, as a result, a subsequent turning away from the dominant ideas put forth by the church. The dawning recognition of human potential and scientific inquiry shaped the course of world history and still influences contemporary societies' culture today.

### Activity 4.7



1. Discuss the contributions of the renaissance to humankind?
2. How did the Renaissance influence the modern world?

## 4.6 The Reformation

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- compare and contrast the ideals of reformation with today's world thinking.

### Brainstorming

- What is Reformation? Where does this idea come from?

The Reformation was a religious movement that led to the emergence of Protestantism from the Catholic Church at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century. It began in Germany led by Martin Luther in 1517. The causes were: social, political, religious and economic. Look at the cause of the Reformation in the chart below.

Causes of the Reformation			
Social	Political	Economic	Religious
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Renaissance values of humanism and secularism led people to question the church.</li> <li>• The printing press helped to spread ideas critical of the church.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Powerful monarchs challenged the church as the supreme power Europe.</li> <li>• Many leaders viewed the pope as a foreign ruler and challenged his authority.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• European princes and kings were jealous of the church's wealth.</li> <li>• Merchants and others resented having to pay taxes to the church.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some church leaders had become corrupt.</li> <li>• Many people found church practices such as the sale of indulgences unacceptable.</li> </ul>

**Chart 4.2** Causes of Reformation

The Protestant reformers supported the principles of capitalism, individualism and nation-states. They established various Protestant Churches. For instance: French protestant Jean Calvin, who lived in Switzerland, established a Calvinist protestant church in Switzerland. The Calvinist followers in French were called Huguenots. The Scottish John Knox found his type of Calvinist Protestantism called Presbyterian in 1560. King Henry VIII and Queen Elizabeth I separated the English Protestant Church from the Roman Catholic Church in England. Nevertheless, the English Protestants managed to establish a national church which came to be called Anglican Church.

Protestantism enforced the Catholic Church into Counter-Reformation. The Catholic Church carried out the (Catholic) Counter-Reformation to reform itself in response to the Protestant challenge of the time. A missionary organisation called the Society of Jesus was formed in Spain by Ignatius Loyola in 1534 to reform Catholics in America, Asia and Africa. The members of the society were called Jesuits, were active in the Americas. Anti-Catholics were attacked and even were killed. The peasants' wars of Germany against Catholics were fought between 1524 and 1525. Reformation played an essential role in the Thirty Years' War (1618-1648). The Peace of Westphalia ended the war in Germany in 1648.



### Activity 4.8



1. Why did Protestant revolt against the Roman Catholics?
2. How did the Peace of Westphalia impact the Roman Empire? Relate this idea to contemporary society and discuss on the importance of settling disputes by peaceful means.

## 4.7 Industrial Revolution

### Lesson learning outcomes

At the end of this lesson, learners will be able to:

- define industrial revolution.
- list the contributions of the industrial revolution to the modern world.

### Brainstorming

- What is industrialisation?

The term Industrial revolution means the invention and use of machine in place of hard labour. Machine now did work done previously by hand with simple tools and equipment. Europe saw a shift from an economy based on farming and handicrafts to an economy based on manufacturing by machine in factories. It began in Great Britain in the 1780s and took several decades to spread to other Western nations.

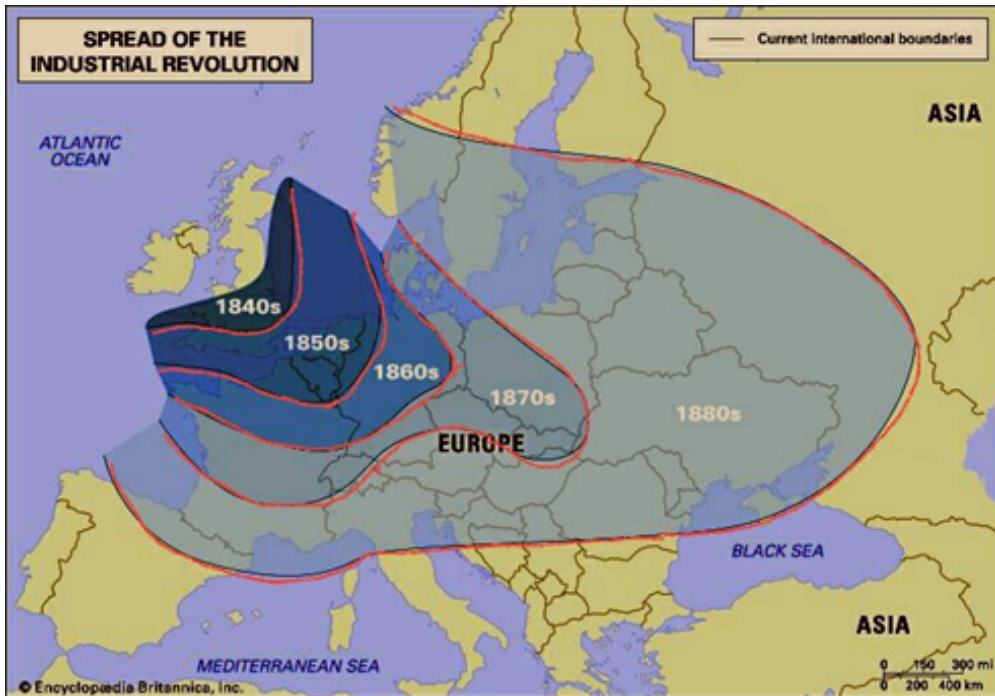
The machine of the Industrial Revolution was operated by a new form of power known as steam power, replacing the early wind and water power. Savary (1698) and Newcomer (c.1705-1711). James Watt (1782-84) improved the steam engines and adopted them for operating all kinds of machinery, including machine in factories.

Then the steam power was applied to transport, the first steamboat on the rivers and then steamships at sea. Finally, steam power was used to land transport in the form of railways. The first railways locomotive was built in 1804.

By the mid-nineteenth century, Great Britain had become the world's first and richest industrial nation. Its cotton industry alone in 1850 was equal in size to the industries of all other European countries combined.



The Industrial Revolution spread to the rest of Europe at different times and speeds. First to be industrialised in continental Europe were Belgium, France, and German.



**Map 4.4** Expansion of industrial Revolution, (source: Encyclopedia, Britannica)

The Industrial Revolution also occurred in the United States in 1800. Britain was the leading industrial nation in the early and mid-nineteenth century, but countries like the United States eventually surpassed Britain in industrial production.

### Activity 4.9



1. Who built the first steam locomotive?
2. Imagine that you have just heard about one of the industrial innovations during the Industrial Revolution, perhaps the process of making cloth, but you do not understand it. Write a letter of inquiry to the near by weavers (visit it with the help of your teacher).

**Unit Summary**

The Dark Ages were followed by feudal society in Europe when the Catholic Church and feudal lords-controlled land and people and therefore had power. The economy was dominated by agriculture with low but rising productivity.

At the same time, the Byzantine Empire, an Orthodox imperial autocracy, continued in part of Europe and Western Asia. It fell to the Ottoman Turks in 1453.

Islam arose in the Arabian Peninsula when the Arabs accepted the monotheist revelations of the Prophet Mohammed. Following the death of the Prophet, the Arabs expanded to create a great and powerful empire and civilisation under the Umayyad and then Abbasid Caliphs.

The Ottoman Sultanate continued this Islamic civilisation, and the Ottoman Empire was a superpower of the time.

Far away in China, the Chinese created their distinct civilisation. It was an imperial autocracy administered by officials who were highly educated Confucian scholars. Basic to Chinese understanding of history were the concepts of the dynastic cycle and the "mandate of Heaven".

In the early modern period, the mass of Europe's population lived in extreme poverty. These towns were the center of production and exchange. The crusades contributed to the revival of trade in the Middle Ages. City-states were the political, economic, and social life centres in Renaissance Italy. Martin Luther's religious reforms led to the emergence of Protestantism. The Discoveries enhanced the pace of globalisation among the world community.

## Unit Review Questionns



**Part I: Write true if the statement is correct and write false if the statement is incorrect.**

1. The Calvinist followers in French were called Presbyterian.
2. The Ottomans conquered Constantinople in 1453 and renamed it Istanbul.
3. The Byzantine Empire was the East Roman Empire, which continued after the fall of the West Roman Empire.
4. In the Discoveries, the Spanish were interested in conquest and plunder.

**Part II: Match major achievements of world civilisation under column "A" with peoples or areas under column "B"**

### A

1. Qin.
2. Leonardo da Vinci
3. Knights
4. Constantinople
5. Polytheism

### B

- A. Monalisa
- B. Istanbul.
- C. First Chinese imperial dynasty
- D. Medieval European soldiers
- E. Arabia before Islam

**Part III: Choose the correct answer from the given alternatives for the questions.**

1. The Byzantine Empire was:
  - A. an autocracy
  - B. a theocracy
  - C. a democracy
  - D. an oligarchy
2. In 1453, the Ottoman Turks captured
  - A. Constantinople
  - B. London
  - C. Paris
  - D. Hungary
3. Under the emperor, imperial China was administered by
  - A. Confucian priests.
  - B. elected councils
  - C. Feudal lords
  - D. civilian officials
4. In Britain, the followers of Protestants established their church during Reformation known as:
  - A. Lutherans
  - B. Jesuits
  - C. Presbyterian
  - D. Anglican
5. Which one of the following factors did not contribute to making Great Britain the starting place of the Industrial Revolution?
  - A. presence of abundant natural resources
  - B. large labour force to work in the new factories
  - C. The readiness of Britain to invest in the new industrial machine
  - D. None of the above

6. Which of the following explorers discovered America in 1492?
- A. Vasco Da Gama
  - B. Christopher Columbus
  - C. Ferdinand Magellan
  - D. Henry the Navigator

**Part IV. Fill in the blank spaces with the correct word or words.**

1. The infantry of the Ottoman army were the \_\_\_\_\_.
2. The 'Dark Age' was a period of West European history from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. The two leading European nations in exploration and discoveries during the 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> Century were \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Reformation was a religious movement that led to the separation of Protestant from the Catholic church at the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century by \_\_\_\_\_.

**Part V: Further Activity**

1. Discuss in groups the impact of Industrial Revolution on European women.