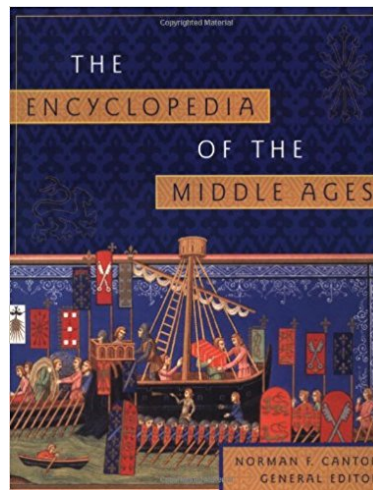


COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
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Cantor, N. (1999). *Encyclopedia of the middle ages*. New York: Penguin.

and confirmed the regulations of the Truce of God. (See PEACE OF GOD.) Urban was eager to find ways of regulating the bellicose knightly orders and seized the opportunity presented by a request made by the Byzantine emperor ALEXIUS I COMNENUS for aid in defending against the Muslims on his borders. In a rousing speech that marks a turning point in the history of the Middle Ages, Urban called for a crusade to recapture Jerusalem from the Muslims. Many who heard the speech were moved to take their vows to join the crusade right then and there, amid cries of *Deus volt* ("God wills it"), battle cry of the First Crusade.

CLOCKS

The clock as we know it today did not exist until after the Middle Ages, but its precursors made it possible for people to break the hours of the day into units of equal length. This was no small accomplishment. Although timekeeping devices had been in existence since ancient times, the "hour" was actually measured as one-twelfth of the total duration of daylight. The length of an hour thus varied according to season and latitude. The development of the first mechanical clocks made it possible to regulate time at night and regardless of geographical location.

Early attempts at keeping time included sundials, sand glasses, marked candles, and water clocks. Sundials, common today mainly as decorative garden objects, measured the shadow of the sun as it fell on the ground. (Astrolabes, which were like the more elaborate sundials, were used both to tell time and to calculate the position of stars for navigation). Sand glasses, precursors of the hourglass, marked off specific units of time by falling sand. Marked candles worked on the same principle: each section of the candle burned equaled one unit of time. The water clock, which originated in the Roman Empire, marked units of time by series of gears, weights, and axles that responded to a flow of water. As water filled a chamber of the clock, it would raise a floating object that would cause the weight to move and the axle to turn. Some water clocks, especially in Muslim lands, were quite elaborate; many had bells that sounded an "alarm" (most likely a call to prayer).

These clocks all had limited accuracy, and they were so large and cumbersome that they were found only in town squares or in churches. Most people still measured their days primarily by the number of hours in which there was sunlight. They rose at dawn, worked, finished at dusk, and went to bed at nightfall. There was no such thing as having a 3:15 appointment.

Although examples are found in tenth-century CHINA, practical mechanical clocks are first found in

Europe toward the end of the thirteenth century. Most of the mechanical clocks were placed in churches, and they counted only the hours; the minute hand would not be developed for another two centuries.

ENGLAND was the first place in which mechanical clocks took hold. Early clocks were less than precise, but despite this, they often came equipped with bells and elaborate figurines called jacquemarts to help mark the hours. Mechanisms were large and often constructed by blacksmiths rather than clockmakers. By the end of the Middle Ages, clockmaking had become a far more exacting and prestigious skill, and clockmakers used their talents to design increasingly smaller, more accurate, and costly timepieces.

CLOTHING AND COSTUME

The popular notion that medieval clothing was simple compared to modern dress is contradicted by a wealth of evidence. The simple robes of the clergy and the coarse clothing of the peasants were plain enough, but the costumes of the nobility could be quite colorful, intricate, and richly designed. Moreover, as travel became more commonplace, styles of one region influenced other regions.

Early Styles. In Europe, the styles of the Roman Empire carried into the Middle Ages. Both Byzantine and western European dress was based primarily on the Roman tunic. In colder northern Europe, heavier clothes made of animal skins were more common, but the basic tunic style was still evident. Even early Muslims wore clothes copied from the Roman styles.

Eventually, as cultural changes took place, so did changes in regional costumes. Travel between Europe, the Near East, and the Far East meant more variety of material—particularly expensive silks. The wealthy and powerful often adorned themselves lavishly in colorful outfits with expensive jewels. But while the increase in travel exposed more people to the fashions of many different regions, distinct regional modes of dress still developed in many areas.

Regional Styles. In the Byzantine Empire, access to the riches of the East meant clothing decorated with silk, jewels, and fur. Wealthy Byzantines, particularly in the royal courts, had gems sewn into the hems of their gowns. Over several layers of tunics, the rulers would wear a long embroidered scarflike piece of clothing called a loros studded with precious stones. Crowns were made of gold and encrusted with pearls. On a more practical level, the Byzantines adopted leggings for men and long sleeves from their neighbors who lived in intemperate northern climes.

In the Islamic world, the ostentatious display of wealth through ornate clothes was frowned upon at first, but styles became more resplendent in later Islamic periods. Rich embroidery became quite fashionable, and for special occasions a Muslim might wear a robe of honor, embroidered with royal inscriptions and passages from Islamic holy books.

In western Europe, Roman and Germanic styles gradually gave way to the Eastern influences, which came about through the CRUSADES and through trade. Knights returning from Eastern lands brought back materials and fashions that were greatly admired, particularly by nobles. Such materials as damask (a decorated cloth from DAMASCUS), baldachin (a mixture of silk and gold made in BAGHDAD), and velvet became common materials attiring European nobility. Sleeves became more elaborate, and colors more vivid.

Knights, of course, wore heavy armor designed to withstand the blows of arrows or daggers when they prepared to go into battle. When soldiers went from Europe to Islamic territories to fight in the Crusades, they found that the blazing sun turned their chain-mail armor suits into ovens. The answer was a surcoat, a cloth vestlike garment worn over the armor to deflect the sun's rays. Religious dress tended to be simple—

long, plain robes in somber colors. High-ranking clerics might wear ornate accessories, such as richly embroidered stoles.

Hats and head coverings were popular throughout the medieval world. Turbans, hoods, and brimmed hats were common, with certain styles more popular in different regions (such as the tall cone-shaped *qalansuwa* worn by Islamic men).

Restrictions. Peasants were usually less ornately attired than nobles, often because so-called sumptuary laws prohibited working-class people from wearing expensive clothing—even if they could have afforded it.

Foreigners were usually required to wear some sort of sign that they were from another country (often a cloth badge) unless their national dress was distinctive enough for others to place them. Non-Christians in Christian countries and non-Muslims in ARAB countries also had to wear some sort of identification. Jews, who had no home country, were required to wear some sort of symbolic apparel no matter where they lived. Sometimes this was by choice, as in the Byzantine Empire, where they wore the fringed garment known as *zizith*. But in other countries, Jews had to adapt local styles or otherwise wear some sort of identifying item of apparel. In ENGLAND

and FRANCE, they were required to wear small yellow symbols on their clothing. The blunt-pointed cap called a *Judenhut* was also used as a symbol of one's Jewish faith. (See ARMS AND ARMOR; WOOL TRADE.)



At right, a lawyer dressed in courtroom attire, wearing *poulaines* on his feet. Above (from a miniature in *Froissart's Chronicles*), the entrance of the royally attired Queen Isabeau of Bavaria into Paris. She is wearing a steeple hat, or *henin*, on her head, which first made its appearance in the 1420s.

