**Medieval Europe Vocabulary (600-1450)**

1. Charlemagne: King of the Franks (r. 768-814); emperor (r. 800-814). Through a series of military conquests he established the Carolingian Empire, which encompassed all of Gaul and parts of Germany and Italy. Though illiterate himself, he sponsored a brief intellectual revival.

2. Medieval: Literally "middle age," a term that historians of Europe use for the period ca. 500 to ca. 1500, signifying its intermediate point between Greco-Roman antiquity and the Renaissance.

3. Byzantine Empire: Historians' name for the eastern portion of the Roman Empire from the fourth century onward, taken from "Byzantium," an early name for Constantinople, the Byzantine capital city. The empire fell to the Ottomans in 1453.

4. Black Death: Bubonic plague pandemic occurring in Western Eurasia and North Africa from 1346 to 1353. It is the most fatal pandemic recorded in human history, causing the deaths of 75-200 million people, peaking in Europe from 1347 to 1351. Increased Eurasian trade during Mongol rule led to its rise and it was spread by fleas on rats.

5. Schism: A formal split within a religious community.

6. Manor: In medieval Europe, a large, self-sufficient landholding consisting of the lord's residence (manor house), outbuildings, peasant village, and surrounding land.

7. Serf: In medieval Europe, an agricultural laborer legally bound to a lord's property and obligated to perform set services for the lord.

8. Fief: In medieval Europe, land granted in return for a sworn oath to provide specified military service.

9. Vassal: In medieval Europe, a sworn supporter of a king or lord committed to rendering specified military service to that king or lord.

10. Papacy: The central administration of the Roman Catholic Church, of which the pope is the head.

11. Holy Roman Empire: Loose federation of mostly German states and principalities, headed by an emperor elected by the princes. It lasted from 962 to 1806.

12. Investiture controversy: Dispute between the popes and the Holy Roman Emperors over who held ultimate authority over bishops in imperial lands.

13. Monasticism: Living in a religious community apart from secular society and adhering to a rule stipulating chastity, obedience, and poverty. It was a prominent element of medieval Christianity and Buddhism. Monasteries were the primary centers of learning and literacy in medieval Europe.

14. Horse collar: Harnessing method that increased the efficiency of horses by shifting the point of traction from the animal's neck to the shoulders; its adoption favors the spread of horse-drawn plows and vehicles.

15. Crusades: (1095-1204) Armed pilgrimages to the Holy Land by Christians determined to recover Jerusalem from Muslim rule. The Crusades brought an end to western Europe's centuries of intellectual and cultural isolation.

16. Pilgrimage: Journey to a sacred shrine by Christians seeking to show their piety, fulfill vows, or gain absolution for sins. Other religions also have pilgrimage traditions, such as the Muslim pilgrimage to Mecca and the pilgrimages made by early Chinese Buddhists to India in search of sacred Buddhist writings.

17. Caesaropapism: A political theory in which the head of state, notably the emperor, is also the supreme head of the church and the supreme judge on religious matters.

18. Three-field System: A rotational system for agriculture in which two fields grow food crops and one lies fallow.

19. Chivalry: Combination of qualities expected of an ideal knight in Medieval Europe, especially courage, honor, courtesy, justice, and a readiness to help the weak.

20. Hanseatic League: An economic and defensive alliance of the free towns in northern Germany, founded 1241 and most powerful in the 14th century.

21. Guild: In medieval Europe, an association of men (rarely women), such as merchants, artisans, or professors who worked in a particular trade and banded together to promote their economic and political interests.

22. Gothic Cathedrals: Large churches originating in 12th century France; built in an architectural style featuring pointed arches, tall vaults, and spire, flying buttresses, and large stained-glass windows.

23. Renaissance: A period of intense artistic and intellectual activity, said to be a “rebirth” of Greco-Roman culture.

24. Scholasticism: A philosophical and theological system, associated with Thomas Aquinas, devised to reconcile Aristotelian philosophy and Roman Catholic theology in the 13th century.

25. Humanists: European scholars, writers, and teachers associated with the study of humanities (grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history, languages, and moral philosophy), influential in the 15th century and later.

26. Magna Carta: Charter of rights agreed to by King John of England in 1215 that promised the protection of church rights, protection for the barons from illegal imprisonment, access to swift justice, and limitations on feudal payments to the Crown

27. Great Western Schism: A division in Latin (Western) Christian Church between 1378 and 1415 which rival claimants to the papacy existed in Rome and Avignon

28. Hundred Years’ War: Series of campaigns over control of the throne of France, involving English and French royal families and French noble families.

29. New Monarchies: Historians’ term for the monarchies in France, English, and Spain from 1450 to 1600. The centralizing of royal power was increasing within more or less fixed territorial limits.

30. Reconquest of Iberia: Beginning in the 11th century, military campaigns by various Iberian Christian stakes to recapture territory taken by Muslims. In 1492 the last Muslim ruler was defeated and Spain and Portugal emerged as united kingdoms.