

Chapter 1 Study Guide: The Middle Ages & The Evolution of the European Worldview

INTRODUCTION – OUR WORLDVIEWS

Worldview – is a collection of values (a moral standard of behavior) and beliefs (something accepted as true) about life that is common to a group. In other words, the basis for the way you act, way your react and way you feel about the world.

Society - a group of people linked by common activities or interests and sharing a location; a group of humans defined by mutual interests, shared institutions and a common culture

Western world – societies that are based on the worldview that developed in Western Europe

Example: A worldview of people in the western world:

- All people are treated equals
- Individual rights and freedoms are valued
- We must make the most of our lives on earth
- Basic education should be available to all
- Everyone has the right to access primary needs such as food, shelter, clothing and water
- If opportunity arises to improve our quality of life we take it
- Democracy
- Money / wealth is important to maintain a good quality of life

As Canadians we have common values and beliefs in our approaches, ie. Medical care, education, religion, arts, etc. that is different from worldviews from other countries.

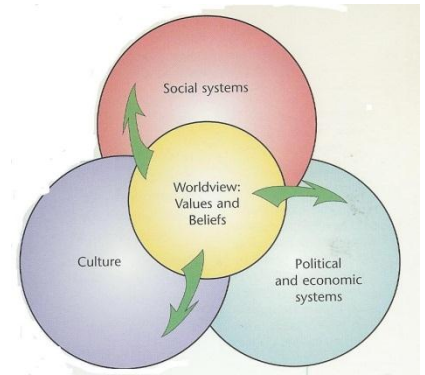
Due to Canada's size, our worldview may change slightly if you live on the East Coast, West Coast, Ontario or Prairie Provinces. It may be slightly different again if you are aboriginal (oral traditions, ties to the land) vs. francophone (religion, language and education rights) vs. Anglophone.

Canada is multicultural and immigrants bring their worldview with them to Canada, as they become part of Canadian society, they begin to understand and adopt our values and beliefs.



ELEMENTS OF SOCIETY AFFECTED BY WORLDVIEW

Social systems – organization and relationships among people, such as the types of education, medical and social services a society provides



Political and economic systems

- political system relates to the way government is organized, the role of citizens in gov't, and rights given to citizens
- economic systems relate to methods by which people produce and distribute goods and services they need

Culture – way of life of a group of people, including language, rules of behaviour, religion, spirituality, arts, literature, sciences, traditions, and other everyday aspect of life

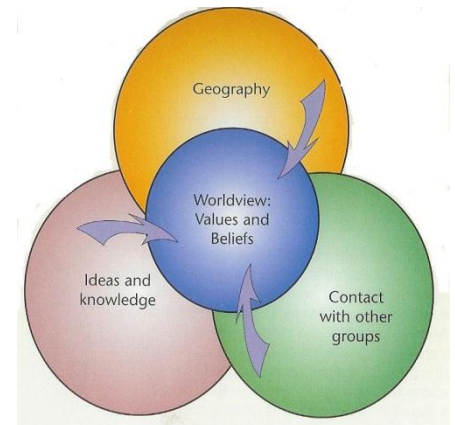
1. **What are the elements of society affected by worldview:**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

FACTORS AFFECTING WORLDVIEW

Different factors influenced and caused changes in the societies and their worldview:

Geography – where a group of people live, the climate, land formations, plants and animals, bodies of water, and natural resources



Ideas and knowledge – what a group knows; scientific, intellectual, technological, artistic, and spiritual knowledge

Contact with other groups – contact and interactions between societies and between different groups in a society

Worldview is usually a gradual change over time based on the above factors but it also can be unexpected, earth shattering event that shakes society and causes citizens to examine their worldview. Example: twin towers, BSE

2. **What are the factors affecting worldview**

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

**HOW DID THE SOCIAL, POLITICAL, ECONOMIC STRUCTURE DURING
THE MIDDLE AGES REFLECT THE
WORLDVIEW OF THE TIME?**

Social / Political Quality of Life

- A very high percentage of the population lived in rural villages. They were socially isolated; they had very little contact with the outside world.
- Feudal system well established
- Monarchs granted land to nobles in return for military support
- Wealthy/powerful landholding nobles formed alliances from diplomacy to support monarch
- Land subdivided to lesser nobles/knights (taxes, supplies)
- Serf/peasants (90%) were property of nobles and worked land for them, provided military labor – nobles in return offered them protection from invaders
- Never moved outside of your class, you were born into your position and couldn't move out of it due to belief that God decided your fate. To deny your fate was to deny God.
- People believed their situation was God's will and his will was not to be questioned
- Nobles lived in castles and manor homes and peasants in huts

Economic Quality of Life

- To satisfy their economic need for food, shelter, clothing they worked the land. Agriculture and farming was primarily used to meet their needs.
- Sometimes farmers would barter and trade goods amongst one another for needs.
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Spiritual Quality of Life

- Most Christians believed that God was the Centre of human existence, the beliefs of the poor were they had a .harsh, short life on earth, they would be rewarded after death
- If you were a wealthy person in the middle ages you could be assured a spot in heaven if you paid money to the Roman Catholic Church
- Religion was the central point of their beliefs; no one disagreed with the church as you then couldn't get into heaven, church then was prosperous and rich.
- You couldn't talk to god yourself but had to go through the priest, therefore paying money you would be assured your message got through
- Art and architecture therefore were heavily influence by religion, as the church hired, thinkers and artists to work for them
- Priest were send as God's chosen representative
- Pope was extremely powerful, ruling both the church and the money, he influenced kings, kingdoms and people's beliefs and actions – power struggles happened between kings and the pope

3. **Match the following words with their definition.**

Definitions:

_____ **Urbanization**

_____ **Worldview**

_____ **Papacy**

_____ **Republic**

_____ **Despot**

_____ **Oligarchy**

_____ **Sovereignty**

_____ **Aristocracy**

_____ **Guild**

_____ **Middle Age**

_____ **Feudal System**

_____ **City State**

- a. pope and the gov't of the Roman Catholic Church
- b. the nobility or those with inherited titles
- c. actions of a group based on a person's individual values and beliefs
- d. a historical period in Europe stretching from the 4th century to the 14th century
- e. an organization of craftsmen or merchants
- f. a supreme power and authority; the freedom of a country or political unit from outside control
- g. leader with unlimited power; a tyrant or oppressor
- h. the movement of population away from the countryside and into cities
- i. a rigid hierarchical political economic class system of landholding dividing the lower and upper class
- j. a state in which power is held by the people or their representatives
- k. a form of government in which a few people have the power
- l. a city that governs itself and the countryside surrounding it

HOW DID THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND KNOWLEDGE DURING THE RENAISSANCE SHAPE THE WORLDVIEWS OF THE WESTERN WORLD?

The Silk Road

- interconnected series of ancient trade routes through various regions of the Asian continent mainly connecting [China](#), with [Asia Minor](#) and the [Mediterranean](#)
- extends over 8,000 km (5,000 miles) on land and sea
- trade on the Silk Road was a significant factor in the development of the great [civilizations](#)
- it helped to lay the foundations for the modern world
- traded exotic goods: silks, glassware, paper, spices (pepper/cinnamon), apples/oranges, etc.
- trade went both ways from china to Mediterranean and back
- consumers demands increased the size and links of the trade route both for profit and new businesses
- ideas and knowledge, understandings of religion, science, technology, philosophy, music, math passes from society to society also on the route – sharing worldviews.
- inventions such as irrigation waterwheels also moved along the trade route
- Diseases also passed through the route (ie. black death or plague)



4. What is the Silk Road and what role did it play in the development of the Renaissance? Include at least 5 points.

Role of Islamic Civilization

- Islamic faith spread from the Arabian area to other areas east to Spain and west to Indonesia
- Centre of Islamic world was at crossroads of Silk road
- Muslim became the middlemen for the Silk road and became very wealthy
- Muslim empire also became the centre of learning during the middle ages
- Scholars collected knowledge, documents, took math ideas from the far east and refined them into the understanding of numbers known today
- Invented aids to help with navigation, such as the astrolabe
- Medical textbooks were written based on studies of disease

5. Islamic civilization impacted the renaissance. In what ways did it impact? Include at least 3 points.



The Crusades

- Europe tried to recapture areas of Middle East under Muslim control
- Jews, Christians and Muslims considered these areas holy
- Sanctioned by the pope, crusades originally had the goal of recapturing Jerusalem and the Holy land from Muslim rule
- Campaigns against pagans or heretics and people who had been excommunicated for a mixture of religious, economic, and political reason
- Exposed Europeans to more cultures and ways of life
- Thousands of religious pilgrims traveled to these sites to seek god's favor
- Travelers on these pilgrims brought back new ideas and attitudes that led to new ways of thinking about their own lives and society

6. Define crusade:

The Black Death:

- also known as the bubonic plague
- a serious, highly contagious, untreatable, and fatal illness
- it thrived in the unhygienic conditions aboard merchant trading ships on the Black Sea.
- This illness appeared in 1347 and reappeared 6 times in Europe until its final outbreak in 1410.
- It was swiftly transmitted amongst the population by rats and lice.
- Victims suffered symptoms such as painful black lumps under their armpits and in their groin area that would ooze with pus and blood. Internal bleeding would cause their skin to look bruised. The smell of their breath, sweat, blood, urine and excrement was horrible and most would die within 3 to 5 days of contracting the illness.
- Each outbreak lasted 4 – 6 months; it emerged in the spring time and disappear in the winter
- It wiped out entire villages and cities, rich and poor alike, diminishing the population by 90%.
- Some believed the cause was a result of the alignment of planets, others believed that it was a punishment from God, and even more people believed that it was witchcraft or sent by the devil.
- those who survived were forced to abandon their former way of life, leaving their farmlands in the country to move into cities to make ends meet (urbanization)



Changes to the Spiritual Social Political and Economic structure of society due to the Plague:

- Because everyone was affected by the plague, even those who strictly believed and practiced the teachings of the Church. This caused them to question whether or not it was necessary to follow the Church without question.
- The hierarchy of the feudal system could no longer function as it once did as there were far too few peasants left to cultivate Noble land.

- Without the work of the peasants and serfs, the Nobles lost money and power, and because there was a shortage of workers, the peasants skills and knowledge was in demand, so if the peasants and serfs weren't treated well by their noble lord, they could go work elsewhere and get access to more benefits than what they originally made
- It motivated people to move to cities where they were exposed to people and exchanged knowledge and beliefs.
- The deterioration of the Feudal system allowed the peasants and serfs to learn that they were not limited in opportunities and could move on to other places and occupations to improve their quality of life.

HOW DID THE GROWTH OF CITIES CONTRIBUTE TO A CHANGING WORLDVIEW?

Urbanization

- Florence, Genoa, Venice and Milan became very powerful cities due to success in commercial centers of banking, trade, commerce and industry

Italian city-states prospered for the following reasons:

- Mountains to north help protect Italy from northern invaders and water around Italy helped protect it
- Italy had been involved in the trade routes since 10th century
- Feudal system was not strong due urban lifestyle and lack of agricultural land
- Power of Roman Catholic Church of Italian city-states weakened when they move the papacy to Avignon South France. Pope and top clerics were French.
- Italian city governed themselves without much interference from church.
- Many city-states organized themselves into republics (a group of citizens, rather than a monarch, governs the state)
- By 14th century most city-states had failed and were usually ruled by despots and oligarchies.
- Warfare among city-states over territory and trading routes was common
- City-states of Florence, Venice, Milan and Naples signed a Treaty of Lodi 1454 which brought stability to area – basically no city-state was allowed to become powerful enough to overthrow any other city-state. This allowed those cities to focus on improving trade and amassing huge wealth.
- Around 15th century, city-states sent ambassadors to foreign courts/states to keep in touch with allies and enemies
- These alliances were achieved through diplomacy and marriages

7. Why was trade so important in the growth of the city-states?

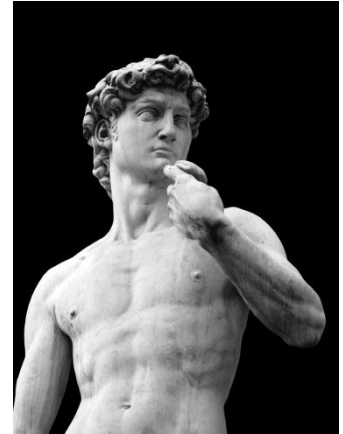
Increased Trade

- European wanted more exotic spices, silks, etc.,
- Merchants hired to open new trade routes to all parts of known world (North Africa, Middle East, India and China)
- New trade routes began a revival in business and shipping
- Increase contact with traders from Islamic societies
- Merchants and traders grew wealthy in Europe and a new class outside of the feudal system was forming
- Increase trading meant increase in city growths (ie. Paris, Florence, Venice, population of at least 100,000 each)
- Increase population meant demand for foods and products and led to change in way people lived:
 - Establishment of new business
 - Industries began to form (textile, furniture, handicrafts, etc.)
 - Workers finding jobs and less dependent on nobles
 - Communities became prosperous/powerful in trade, industry and banking and formed city-states(a city that governs itself and the countryside surrounding it)
 - Individuals began to feel sense of belonging to a community (citizens) vs serf belonging to a local lord

HOW DID THE CITY-STATE OF FLORENCE REFLECT THE RENAISSANCE WORLVIEW?

Political and Economic Systems

- Built on Arno River, trade route before renaissance period
- During renaissance time trade increased and became centre of successful bankers, silk and wool merchants
- Hilly terrain was not good for farming but perfect for sheep
- Bankers supported pope and pope gave bankers papacy financial business
- So rich bought surrounding cities (Aresso, Lucca, etc)
- Started as a republic, many to power struggles among groups ending in Medici family taking control of city



Social Systems

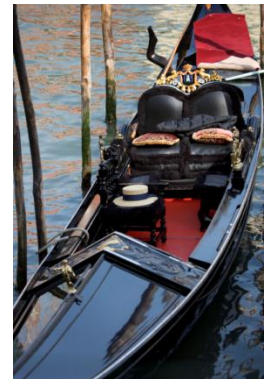
- Florence based on class system but merchant class people moved up the social ladder
- Merchant class people were call the *popolo grasso* (fat people)
- Merchant class people organized into guilds (silk manu, wool manu., bankers, etc.)
- Workers and shopkeepers called *popolo minuto* (little people), peasants from the country, not allowed to belong to the guilds
- Nobles still owned land and live on estates outside of city

Culture

- Florence became major center of Renaissance culture under Medici family control
- Medici family support arts, architects and scholars developing the city
- Ideas of citizenship were promoted
- Catherine de Medici married to King of France to form alliances, she was also niece of the Pope at that time

HOW DID THE CITY-STATE OF VENICE CONTRIBUTE TO THE ITALIAN RENAISSANCE?

- Well established in trading since 5th century
- Controlled most of the ports in Adriatic Sea and Eastern Mediterranean



Class System

- 3 social classes
 - aristocracy, original noble families who controlled Venice and vote for government
 - *Cittadini Originarii* or “original citizens” of republic who could hold public office but not vote
 - Common people, some rights, apply for some gov’t positions

Government

- Aristocracy rule they could only vote for doge (head of government) and belong to government
- 2% of population made up oligarchy that ruled Venice
- “Original Citizens” bought positions in the aristocracy if wealthy enough
- government or great council made decisions and doge was elected for life but was overshadowed in the government by the great council members

Scuole

- Citizens of Venice implemented new social institutions during Renaissance out of civic duty
- Scuole assc. met for prayer and masses , collected money for good causes
- Scuole developed from fear of punishment in the afterlife for sins committed
- Donations and good deeds lessened the punishment after death
- Rich and poor donated money to support the sick, elder, widows etc.
- This was the precursor to employment insurance

Venice Gains Importance because:

- Stable form of government
- Successful sea trade (shipyards, naval base, armory)
- Merchant class support the arts
- First city-state to use mechanical printing press and you could get books
- Created university to promote science, medicine and law

HOW DID THE CITY-STATE OF GENOA HELP SHAPE THE RENAISSANCE WORLDVIEW?

- Port city surrounded by high walls to protect inhabitants from invaders
- Major city of trade and commerce
- Played strong role in crusades for transporting crusading armies to the Holy Land
- Genoa citizens paid well for this service
- Genoa's traders quickly developed markets at key ports on the Black sea and trade flourished as did the navy, shipbuilders, traders
- Venice and Genoa were rivals and fought to gain control of lucrative trading posts

Government and Social System

- A republic governed by rival clans or families
- Families agreed to a truce in 13th century and split the city into sections each could control
- Genoa's strength declined to loss of key port (Constantinople) by the Black Sea
- Genoa experienced the Renaissance in art and architecture later in 15th century

8. List 3 points for each of the city states (Florence, Venice and Genoa) why they were important in shaping the renaissance worldview?

	Florence	Venice	Genoa
1.			
2.			
3.			

HOW DID THE RENAISSANCE BEGIN?

Renaissance Introduction

- Renaissance is a French word *renaitre*, meaning "rebirth" or "to be born again"
- It began in the Italian city states in the year 1350, marking the end of the Middle Ages and lasted until the year 1600.
- Many advanced ideas of the Greek and Romans had been lost or ignored in Europe for 1000 years.
- European scholars rediscovered classical documents and discovered new ideas and ways of looking at the world
- It was an era defined by the discovery of new knowledge and ideas that gave birth to a new worldview, a new perspective on life, new cultures, lifestyles and perspectives.
- The Renaissance began as a result of a number of events including the oppression of the people by the Church and Feudal system, increased interaction and the sharing of new ideas and knowledge of different cultures made possible by such events as the opening of the Silk Road, the Crusades, urbanization as a result of the Black Death and increased trade. Another cause was the resurfacing of ancient literature that had been hidden for thousands of years after the fall of the Roman Empire.