

WORLD HISTORY MIDDLE AGES THE DARK AGES

CAUSES OF THE DARK AGES

- * Barbarian invasion brought down the Roman Empire
- * Roman Empire was already in decline militarily, economically, socially, politically

ABSENCE OF CIVILIZATION

- * 5 key traits of civilization (Writing; advanced technology; Specialization of workers; Growth of Cities; Complex Institutions;)
 - o Writing and learning suffered
 - o Barbarians destroyed much of existing literature
 - o Christians strongly supported that the only acceptable literature was the Bible
 - o as a result, almost all education took place in church schools and monasteries
 - o Technology
 - o with absence of learning supported by lack of reading materials, few would have the knowledge required to make improvements
 - o with most learning centered in the church, little interest in technological improvement
 - o Specialization of Workers
 - o With the absence of large trading centers (cities) there was little need for specialization and strong need of self-sufficiency (many skills required).
 - o Cities
 - o Barbarians destroyed many of the largest cities
 - o Lack of Government and Trade meant there was little need to rebuild them
 - o Complex Institutions
 - o Barbarians destroyed the existing government
 - o lack of large cities meant little need for larger organizations
 - o Only significant institution left was the church
 - o this led to the church gaining significant power throughout Europe

GOVERNMENT

- * Family ties and personal loyalty replace government as the force holding people together
 - o Warriors banded together in groups of 15-30
 - o Pledged loyalty to one leader in each group. Lived under their leader's roof
- * German kingdoms begin to spring up throughout Europe
- * German warriors would not follow unfamiliar kings. They would only be loyal to their clan leader.
- * All of this combined to make larger government virtually impossible