

THE MIDDLE AGES

MUSIC

During the Middle Ages (also called the *Medieval Period*), the Roman Catholic church was the most powerful influence in European life. The church's music was a collection of ancient melodies called *plain-song* or *chant*, sung in unison (single line) with Latin words. The chants were organized in about 600 AD by Pope Gregory, and these official versions are known as *Gregorian chant*. Later, simple harmonies were added, and eventually the harmony parts became independent melodies sung with the main tune. This is called *polyphony*. Church music was written down using *neumes*, or square notes.

Outside the churches, traveling entertainers called *troubadours* or *minstrels* would sing songs about life and love in the language of the common people. This music was more lively and would often be accompanied by a drum, a wooden flute or an early form of the guitar called a *lute*.



400 AD

600

800

1000

1200

1400

• Plainsong

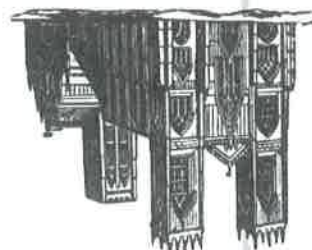
• Gregorian Chant

• Harmony

• Polyphony

• Troubadours

ART & LITERATURE



400 AD

600

800

1000

1200

1400

• Dante, author
(*The Divine Comedy*)

• Chaucer, author
(*Canterbury Tales*)

• Donatello,
artist (David)

• Romanesque architecture

• Gothic architecture

WORLD EVENTS

• Fall of Roman Empire (476 AD)

• Muhammad, prophet of Islam faith

• Hindu-Arabic numbers developed

• Gunpowder, compass, paper invented (China)

• Mayan civilization

• Rise of European universities

• Joan of Arc executed (1431)

• The Magna Charta (1215)

• The Black Death
(bubonic plague)

• Charlemagne, Holy Roman Emperor

• First Crusade begins (1096)

• Aztecs establish
Mexico City (1327)

• Genghis Kahn rules Asia

• Marco Polo travels to China

• Incan
and Aztec
civilizations