

UNIT

6

The Middle Ages



Learning Objectives

- To learn about the empires of China during the reign of Tang, Sung and Yuan dynasties
- To understand the evolution of Japanese society under the Fujiwara Family and Kamakura Shogunate
- To trace the background of the birth of Islam
- To acquire knowledge of Arab and Ottoman Empires and their contribution to the spread of Islamic culture
- To analyse the characteristics of Feudalism in the Middle Ages
- To understand the relationship between the State and the Church in the Middle Ages



Introduction

Historians call the period between the end of the Roman Empire in 476 A.D. (C.E.) and the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 A.D. (C.E.) as the Middle Ages. The Middle Ages has been further classified as early, central or high and later. In the early Middle Ages (approximately fifth to tenth century), Christianity, followed by Islam, began to establish themselves as dominant religions of continental Europe. The central or high Middle Ages witnessed rapid development, marked by territorial expansion, demographic and urban

growth, and the restructuring of secular and religious institutions.

The history of Arab civilisation that began a little later than the history of Byzantium covers a period roughly from 630 A.D. (C.E.) to 1300. Known as Saracenic civilisation it was the centre of a new religion and its impact on Christian Europe was responsible for revolutionary social and intellectual changes.

Seljuq Turks were a tribe of Tartars from Central Asia. They established a powerful empire in Persia. Their reign was one of great