Medieval Europe Essay, Research Paper

The Middle Ages was a period between 476 and 1300 in which there was great change and there was evidence of the first forms of modern civilization. European society gradually transformed from a Europe that was in anarchy during the Dark Ages to several national states. There were several signs of the roots of modern civilization forming. The power that once lay solely upon kings was no longer completely theirs but had to be shared with local rulers.

European society began to look back to classic ancient cultures of Rome, Greece and also the Islamic cultures.

Men began to emphasize scholasticism and universities, schools of thought and forgotten Roman principles. The Romance and Germanic languages began to flourish and had their own literature. Architecture moved away from Romanesque and towards Gothic building. The Church was the most influential force in Europe and was somewhat of a government because the majority of Europeans had it in common. In the Middle Ages the first signs of the declining power of the Church and Papacy. The rise of cities, towns and large centers of trade and commerce emerged. With this, the business class gained power as nobles lost it. All these changes would be the roots of modern civilization.

Most modern governments have a system in which the central figure in the government, be it a monarch or elected official has to share power with other branches of government. This first began because the feudal lords in Europe became too powerful for the king to dominate so he was forced to compromise and distribute power among nobles. This was the beginning of the sharing of power in governments that is put into practice nowadays.

Modern civilization puts emphasis on education and scholasticism that was reintroduced into everyday life when Europe brought back the teachings of Roman law and built universities to get back to studies and learning which had been nonexistent during the Dark Ages. Today, schools of thought and universities are everywhere due to the thinkers of the Middle Ages.

The languages that are spoken today in Europe and in which literature is written went through a quick evolution during the Middle Ages because of barbarization. Literature was mostly written in Latin or Germanic languages soon turned into the vernacular. Barbarization is what helped give birth to many of the languages spoken in the world today.

Architecture changed drastically from Romanesque to Gothic in the Middle Ages which has similarities to the tall, skinny buildings that exist today.

Probably one of the most important developments of the Middle Ages was that of the declining power that the Papacy and the Church had over governments. Even though the lives of the people still revolved around the Church and it still had influence to fight the Crusades but the governments of different nations were not bowing to the wishes of the Church as easily as they had done before. This would be the foundation to countries separating Church and State because of the influence that the Church had on society.

These changes in government, society and culture was not

noticeable during the Middle Ages because people could not see its effects across Europe and the events that occurred were not seen as indications of a different future. Historians today can look back in history and see that the Middle Ages were the roots of modern civilization.