

WHAT'S THE SIGNIFICANCE?

Aztec Empire: Major state that developed in what is now Mexico in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; dominated by the seminomadic Mexica, who had migrated into the region from northern Mexico.

Seizure of Constantinople (1453): Constantinople, the capital and almost the only outpost left of the Byzantine Empire, fell to the army of the Ottoman sultan Mehmed II “the Conqueror” in 1453, an event that marked the end of Christian Byzantium.

European Renaissance: A “rebirth” of classical learning that is most often associated with the cultural blossoming of Italy in the period 1350–1500 and that included not just a rediscovery of Greek learning but also major developments in art, as well as growing secularism in society.

Fulbe: West Africa’s largest pastoral society, whose members gradually adopted Islam and took on a religious leadership role that led to the creation of a number of new states. (*pron.* FULL-bay)

Igbo: People whose lands were east of the Niger River in what is now southern Nigeria in West Africa; they built a complex society that rejected kingship and centralized statehood and relied on other institutions to provide social coherence. (*pron.* EE-boh)

Inca Empire: The Western Hemisphere’s largest imperial state in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries; built by a relatively small community of Quechua-speaking people (the Inca), the empire stretched some 2,500 miles along the Andes Mountains, which run nearly the entire length of the west coast of South America, and contained perhaps 10 million subjects.

Iroquois League of Five Nations: Confederation of five Iroquois peoples in what is now New York State; the loose alliance was based on the Great Law of Peace, an agreement to settle disputes peacefully through a council of clan leaders. (*pron.* IR-oh-kwoy)

Malacca: Muslim port city that came to prominence on the waterway between Sumatra and Malaya in the fifteenth century C.E.; it was the springboard for the spread of a syncretic form of Islam throughout the region. (*pron.* mah-LAH-kah)

Ming dynasty: Chinese dynasty (1368–1644) that succeeded the Yuan dynasty of the Mongols;

noted for its return to traditional Chinese ways and restoration of the land after the destructiveness of the Mongols.

Mughal Empire: One of the most successful empires of India, a state founded by an Islamized Turkic group that invaded India in 1526; the Mughals’ rule was noted for their efforts to create partnerships between Hindus and Muslims. (*pron.* MOO-guhl)

Nezahualcoyotl: A poet and king of the city-state of Texcoco, which was part of the Aztec Empire (1402–1472). (*pron.* nes-ah-wahl-koh-YOHT-l)

Ottoman Empire: Major Islamic state centered on Anatolia that came to include the Balkans, the Near East, and much of North Africa.

Paleolithic persistence: The continuance of gathering and hunting societies in substantial areas of the world despite millennia of agricultural advance.

pochteca: Professional merchants in the Aztec Empire whose wealth often elevated them to elite status. (*pron.* poch-TAY-kah)

Safavid Empire: Major Turkic empire of Persia founded in the early sixteenth century, notable for its efforts to convert its populace to Shia Islam. (*pron.* SAH-fah-vid)

Songhay Empire: Major Islamic state of West Africa that formed in the second half of the fifteenth century. (*pron.* song-GAH-ee)

Timbuktu: Great city of West Africa, noted in the fourteenth–sixteenth centuries as a center of Islamic scholarship. (*pron.* tim-buk-TOO)

Timur: Turkic warrior (1336–1405), also known as Tamerlane, whose efforts to restore the Mongol Empire devastated much of Persia, Russia, and India. (*pron.* tem-EER)

Zheng He: Great Chinese admiral (1371–1433) who commanded a fleet of more than 300 ships in a series of voyages of contact and exploration that began in 1405. (*pron.* jung huh)