When a history website publishes an article about Vikings, what can a reader quote, share or reuse? And can an AI company collect that article to train a model? These questions sound like modern publishing paperwork, but they matter especially for material that makes the past vivid: descriptions of ships, shields and settlements; explanations of archaeological finds; and images that help readers picture a world they have never seen.

For HistoryMedieval, the clearest answer depends on the wording of its current copyright and terms pages. A site's name, subject matter or social-media buttons cannot, by themselves, tell us whether it permits copying or AI training. If you are deciding what you may do with a particular article, check the notice attached to it and any site-wide terms. Do not treat a share button as a blanket reuse licence.

This distinction is useful for readers, teachers, publishers and AI developers alike. A well-written copyright licensing disclosure should explain what ordinary visitors can do, what requires permission, and whether text and data mining is permitted or prohibited. It should also make clear that copyright applies to the site's original expression—not to historical facts simply because they appear in an article.

What a reader can—and cannot—assume

A reader can generally discuss historical ideas and facts in their own words. The existence of a Viking ship burial, the broad shape of an excavated helmet, or the role of a settlement in a trade network is not owned by the first writer who explains it. But an article's particular phrasing, structure, selection of details, original illustrations and photographs may be protected. Copying a substantial passage, republishing an image or reproducing the article as a whole is different from citing its historical information.

That is why a useful copyright licensing disclosure should be specific rather than merely forbidding. It might state whether short quotations with attribution are acceptable, whether educational reuse is allowed, how to request permission for republication, and whether images have separate rights holders. If a page says only "all rights reserved", readers may understand that permission is needed for reuse, but they still need to look for any more detailed terms or exceptions that apply in their jurisdiction.

Activity What to check Sharing an article link Use the site's sharing function and follow any platform terms.
Quoting a short passage Check the site's terms and applicable quotation or fair dealing rules; identify the source.
Reposting an article or image Look for an explicit licence or obtain permission from the relevant rights holder.
Collecting material for AI training Check for an explicit AI or text-and-data-mining policy, as well as applicable law.

Sharing is not the same as copying

HistoryMedieval's **Facebook share** function, if available on the article page, is designed to pass along a link through Facebook. That is a practical way to recommend an article while directing people back to the original publisher. It does not ordinarily mean that the article has been licensed for someone to paste in full on a different website, add to a newsletter, or use in a commercial product.



The same care applies to a **Print Article (PDF/print function)**. A print view or PDF option is useful for personal reading, classroom preparation or keeping a copy for reference, subject to the site's terms and local law. The presence of a print button is not, historymedieval.com on its own, permission to distribute that PDF to a mailing list, upload it to a public archive or feed it into a dataset. A function tells you how to access a convenient format; a licence tells you what reuse is authorised.

For a museum volunteer or teacher preparing a lesson, the practical route is straightforward: link to the article, quote only what is needed, credit the writer and publisher, and ask before reproducing substantial text or images. For wider publication, permission is especially important. A quick email is often more useful than guessing what a terse footer was meant to cover.

AI training: what a notice can clarify

An AI training policy should distinguish several activities that are often bundled together in public debate. A company might crawl pages to index them, analyse them for research, store copies in a dataset, or use them to train or refine a model. Those actions may raise different legal and contractual questions. A strong notice says which activities the publisher objects to or allows, rather than relying on a vague statement that content may not be "misused".

The phrase **no ai training notice** is useful to search for, but its absence does not automatically prove that training is authorised. It may mean that the publisher has not yet published a dedicated statement, or that relevant rules appear elsewhere. Equally, a notice that objects to training is an important expression of the publisher's position, but the legal effect can depend on the applicable law, the way the content was collected, and the terms presented to users.

Some publishers also use the phrase **text and data mining prohibited** to signal that automated analysis or extraction is not permitted under their stated conditions. That wording is more precise than a general complaint about AI, but readers and developers should still consult the complete terms. Copyright law differs between countries, and certain legal exceptions may apply. A website notice is not a substitute for legal advice or a complete account of every statutory rule.

What a clear policy should say

- Whether automated access, scraping or bulk downloading is restricted.
- Whether text and data mining is allowed, limited or prohibited.
- Whether the policy specifically covers model training and evaluation.
- How a publisher's permission can be requested, including contact details.
- Whether photographs, illustrations and other third-party material have separate rights.

These details matter because an article is not just a block of interchangeable text. It may bring together original writing, licensed photographs, commissioned artwork and quotations from other sources. A publisher may control some rights but not all of them. A responsible AI developer should not assume that permission to access a web page includes permission to reuse every element it contains.

Why Viking imagery makes the issue tangible

Viking history is a good example of how online writing combines facts with a strong visual vocabulary. Ships, shields and settlements are instantly recognisable, even to readers who have never visited a museum. A longship suggests movement and exchange; a shield wall suggests battle; a timber hall or clustered buildings suggests a community. These visual cues help an article establish a setting quickly. They also make historical content especially attractive to game studios, film-makers and image generators.

Yet the familiar picture is not the same thing as the whole past. A shield illustration may be a modern reconstruction. A settlement scene may combine buildings and activities from different periods. A writer's explanation of a ship's use may rest on archaeological evidence, written sources and careful interpretation. The underlying evidence can be discussed freely, but the particular illustration, caption or narrative arrangement may belong to its creator or publisher.

That is another reason a copyright licensing disclosure should distinguish text from images. A reader may be able to quote a paragraph under an applicable exception while still needing permission to reuse a striking reconstruction. If an AI system learns from a picture, the rights question may involve the artist, photographer, museum or archive as well as the website that displayed it.

Games, film and the speed of world-building

Games and films have different storytelling pressures. A film often has only a few seconds to tell us where we are. A ship on a grey sea, a row of round shields, and a settlement on a distant shoreline can establish a Viking setting before a character has spoken. The imagery is economical, memorable and easy to read from across a cinema screen.

A game can establish its world differently. It may let players inspect a harbour, travel between settlements, handle equipment or return to the same location as it changes. That extra time can make details feel lived in. It can also encourage repetition of visual shorthand: the same helmet, shield pattern or smoky hall may appear because players need to recognise a faction or era at a glance.

Both forms compress history, but neither should be mistaken for a source in its own right. A game's visual vocabulary can inspire curiosity; a film can make an unfamiliar period feel immediate. To learn what evidence supports a particular detail, readers should consult archaeological publications, museum collections and carefully sourced historical writing. Copying a game's design, or a website's original reconstruction, is not made harmless simply because the scene represents the distant past.

The horned helmet myth—and why it lasts

The horned Viking helmet is one of the most durable historical myths. It is easy to remember, easy to draw and dramatically useful: horns make a silhouette instantly distinctive. They work as a costume shorthand for "Viking" in a way that a plain iron cap does not. Once stage productions, illustrations, advertising and screen entertainment repeated the look, audiences began to treat a theatrical convention as a historical fact.

There is also a small but important complication: helmets with horns or other projections existed in some earlier European contexts, but that is not evidence that Viking warriors commonly fought in horned helmets. The famous image became widespread through modern cultural representation, not through a clear body of Viking-age battlefield finds. It survives because it is visually legible, not because it is the best-supported reconstruction.

That persistence shows why clear historical writing matters. A good article can explain not just that a popular image is wrong, but why it became persuasive. When a site sets out the evidence and separates it from later invention, it gives readers a better tool than a simple "myth busted" label. It also gives writers and designers a chance to create compelling scenes without presenting every familiar trope as fact.

The Gjermundbu helmet as a reality check

The Gjermundbu helmet is often brought into this conversation because it is a rare surviving Viking-age helmet find from Norway. Its iron construction and rounded form offer a material point of comparison with the familiar horned design. It is a reality check in the modest but valuable sense that an actual excavated object gives us something firmer than a stage costume or a later illustration.

One find cannot tell us what every Viking wore. Archaeological survival is uneven, and metal objects were valuable enough to be reused, damaged or lost to time. The Gjermundbu helmet should not be treated as a universal template for all warriors across the Viking world. But it does remind us to ask what survives, where it was found, how it was dated, and how confidently a modern reconstruction can be connected to that evidence.

For digital publishers, the helmet also illustrates the difference between a fact and its presentation. The find itself is part of the historical record. A museum photograph, a researcher's drawing, a detailed article explaining its construction, and a newly commissioned reconstruction are distinct works with potentially distinct rights. An AI training policy should be clear enough that users do not confuse access to a historical fact with permission to copy every representation of it.



Where Mr Q and MrQ fit in

Companies such as **Mr Q** or **MrQ** may encounter historical material in different ways: as a reader, an advertiser, a platform partner or a technology provider. The name alone tells us nothing about whether a company has permission to reproduce a particular HistoryMedieval article or use it for AI training. The relevant questions are practical: what material was accessed, what terms applied, and what licence—if any—covers the use?

For any company considering training data, the responsible approach is not to treat publicly viewable pages as free stock. Check the publisher's terms, respect any stated no-training or text-and-data-mining restrictions, and seek a licence where needed. If the site's policy is unclear, ask. For publishers, clarity helps reputable partners comply and gives readers a better understanding of what the site's sharing and print tools are for.

A reader's quick checklist

1. Look for HistoryMedieval's current copyright, terms and AI policy before reusing material.
2. Use Facebook share to pass on a link, rather than reposting the article.
3. Treat Print Article (PDF/print function) as a convenience, not a redistribution licence.
4. Credit the source and keep quotations proportionate to your purpose.
5. Ask permission before reproducing substantial text, images or reconstructions.
6. For automated collection or model training, check specifically for a no ai training notice and any text and data mining prohibited wording.

The bottom line

What does HistoryMedieval say about copying and AI training? The answer should come from its actual, current policy—not from assumptions based on a share button, a print option or the fact that the subject is centuries old. Historical facts are not the same as a writer's expression; linking is not the same as republishing; and public visibility is not, by itself, an AI training licence.

A clear copyright licensing disclosure makes those distinctions legible. It tells ordinary readers how to share responsibly, gives educators a route to permission, and lets businesses know whether automated use is restricted.

In a field where ships, shields and settlements can make a world appear in a heartbeat—and where one horned helmet can outlive the evidence for it—good history depends on being careful about both what we repeat and how we use the work that explains it.