

The Middle Ages in Europe

World History
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In this unit...

- ...you'll learn about Europe after the fall of Rome. In the East, the Roman Empire continued as the **Byzantine Empire**. In the West, Europe experienced centuries of turmoil as different groups invaded and political authority was frequently challenged by outbreaks of violence. Eventually, a new political, social, and economic order emerged, known as **feudalism**.

The Byzantine Empire

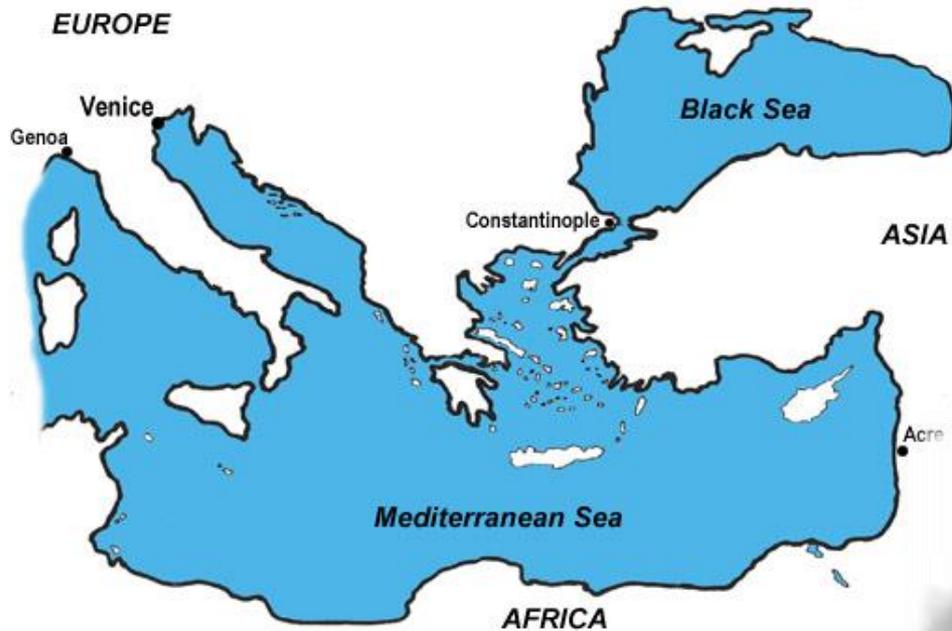
(330-1453)

- In 330 A.D., Emperor Constantine moved the capital of the Roman Empire from Rome to Byzantium, a Greek city in the eastern part of the empire.
- He renamed this city Constantinople.



- The city was located along land routes that connected Europe and Asia. The city was also strategically located on the Bosphorus, a waterway connecting the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.
- Constantinople was surrounded on three sides by water, and the city had thick walls, making it almost invulnerable to attack.

Constantinople

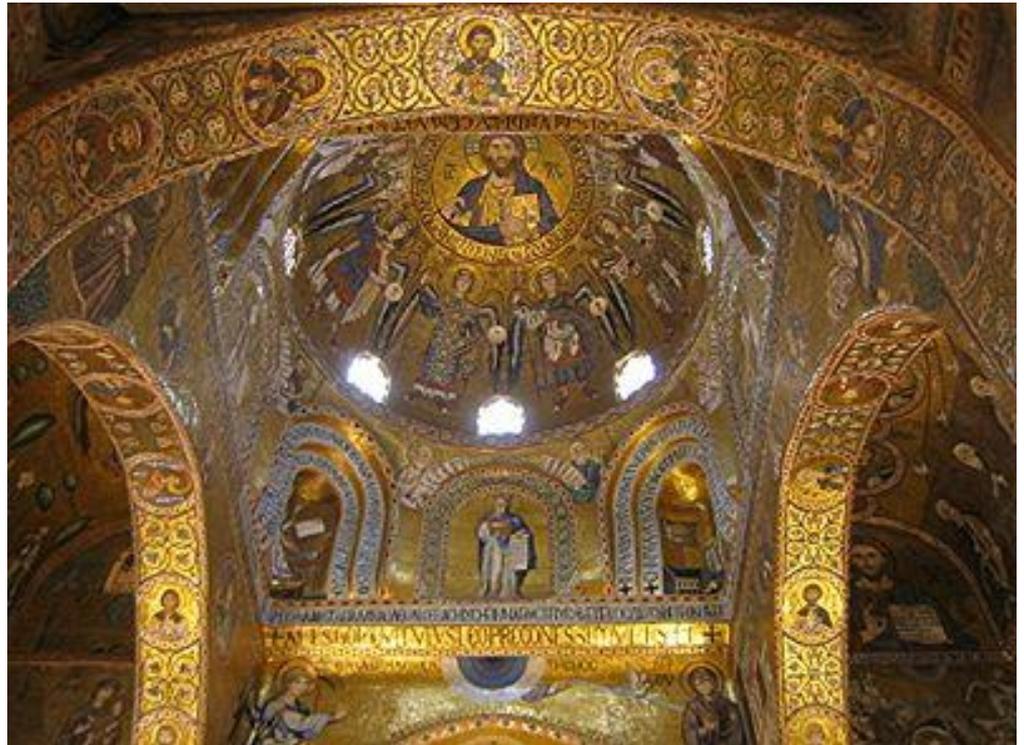


A Byzantine Culture Emerges

- While the Western half of the Roman Empire collapsed in the 5th century, the eastern half of the empire survived for another thousand years.
- The Byzantines saw themselves as simply continuing the Roman Empire. Like the emperors of Rome, the Byzantine emperors continued to be all-powerful.
- They maintained an imperial system of government over a diverse population. Because Constantinople was in the East, most of its merchants and other residents spoke Greek.
- At first, the official language of government remained Latin, but it also eventually was replaced by Greek.

Byzantium, cont'd

- The Byzantines were also united by their own form of Christianity – **Eastern Orthodoxy** – which was separate from the Catholic Church.
- Orthodox Christians did not recognize the Pope as the head of their church. Instead, they had their own **Patriarch**.



Byzantium, cont'd

- Orthodox Christians decorated their churches with **icons** – images of Jesus and the saints..



- There were also other differences, such as views on the Trinity and the shape of the cross they displayed in their churches.



Reasons for the Survival of the Byzantine Empire

- **Classical Cultures** –

Byzantium benefited from a rich infusion of Greek, Roman, Christian, and Middle Eastern cultures.

- **Location** –

At the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Constantinople was a major center for trade. Silks and spices from the East, furs from Russia, and grains, olives, and wines from the empire itself brought great wealth.

Reasons for the Survival of the Byzantine Empire ,cont'd.

- **Strong Central Government –**

Byzantium was ruled by a series of powerful emperors with strong centralized administration and a single set of laws.

- **Large Army –**

The Byzantine central government taxed merchants and peasants to support a large standing army.

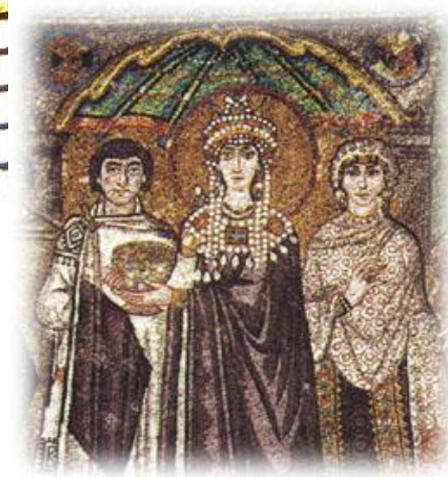
Byzantium, cont'd



- The Byzantines developed a vibrant culture. They built the **Church of Hagia Sophia** with its giant dome and tall spires.

Byzantium, cont'd

- Schools taught Ancient Greek texts.
- Byzantine artists used precious materials – gold, silver, and ivory – to display classical images. They were specifically known for their colorful icons and mosaics (*pictures made with pieces of cut stone and glass*).



Byzantium, cont'd

- The size of the Byzantine Empire varied over time. In its early centuries, it ruled over the Balkan Peninsula, the Middle East, and parts of Italy. Under **Justinian** (527-565), it re-conquered much of the old Roman Empire.

Byzantium, cont'd

- One of the greatest achievements of the Byzantine Empire was the **Code of Justinian**. Emperor Justinian collected all of the existing Roman laws and organized them into a single code. The code listed all the laws and opinions on each subject.
- Justinian's Code also had special laws relating to religion. It required that all persons in the empire belong to the Eastern Orthodox Christian faith.

Decline

- The late Byzantine Empire continuously battled the **Slavs** and **Avars** to the north, the **Persian Empire** to the east and the spread of **Islam** in the south.
- In the 600s, Muslim Arabs took most of the empire's territory in the Middle East.

Decline

- The empire declined further in the 11th century. The **Seljuk Turks**, originally from Central Asia, defeated the Byzantine army in 1071 and took possession of most of Asia Minor.
- **Crusaders** attacked the city in 1204.
- **City-states in Italy** began to compete with Constantinople for Mediterranean trade. Yet the Byzantines still controlled the Balkan Peninsula and survived for another 400 years.

Decline



Crusaders attack Constantinople during the 4th Crusade

Decline

- Their empire eventually unraveled from continuous attacks on all sides. By the 1440s, the Byzantine Empire was reduced to a small area just around the city of Constantinople itself.
- In 1453, Constantinople was finally conquered by the **Ottoman Turks**.

*(It was during this time that Vlad **Dracula** lived in Romania and was also fighting the Ottoman Turks! ...wanna know more?)*

Byzantine Empire



Byzantine Empire

Movie by CroPETROforever

Dracula



Vlad Tepes, known to history as Dracula, lived in Wallachia, Romania during the later part of the Byzantine Empire and helped hold back the invading Turks from Christian Europe. Romanians consider him a national hero and a fair ruler.

Influence on Russia

- One place that was greatly influenced by Byzantium was **Russia**. Russia emerged as a state in the 9th century, in the forest lands between the Baltic and Black Seas.
- **Viking** raiders organized Slavs in the region into a kingdom centered in Kiev.

Influence on Russia, cont'd

- Other Russian cities, such as Moscow and Novgorod, developed to the north.
- Early Russian cities carried on brisk **trade** with the Byzantine Empire. Contact with the Byzantines affected Russia in many ways.
- Byzantine **culture** – especially **Orthodox Christianity**, the **Cyrillic alphabet**, and Byzantine **crafts and products** – was introduced into Russian society.
- The Byzantines also converted other Slavic peoples and the Bulgars to Christianity, leaving a permanent legacy in Eastern Europe.

The Byzantine Legacy

- **Preserved Ancient Cultures –**

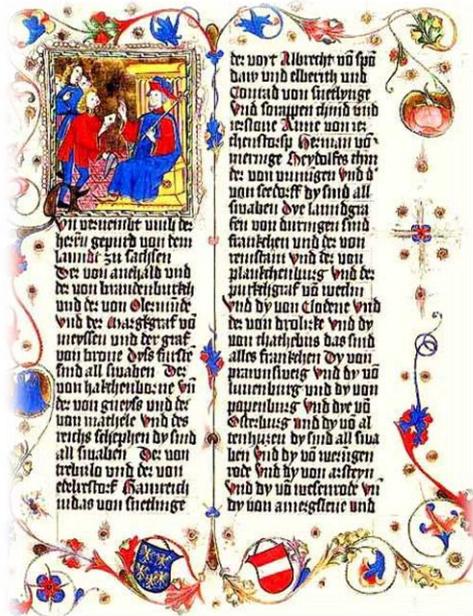
The Byzantines preserved the rich cultural heritage of classical civilization, including Greek philosophy and science and Roman engineering. Copies of Ancient texts were saved despite the destruction of the West.



The Byzantine Legacy

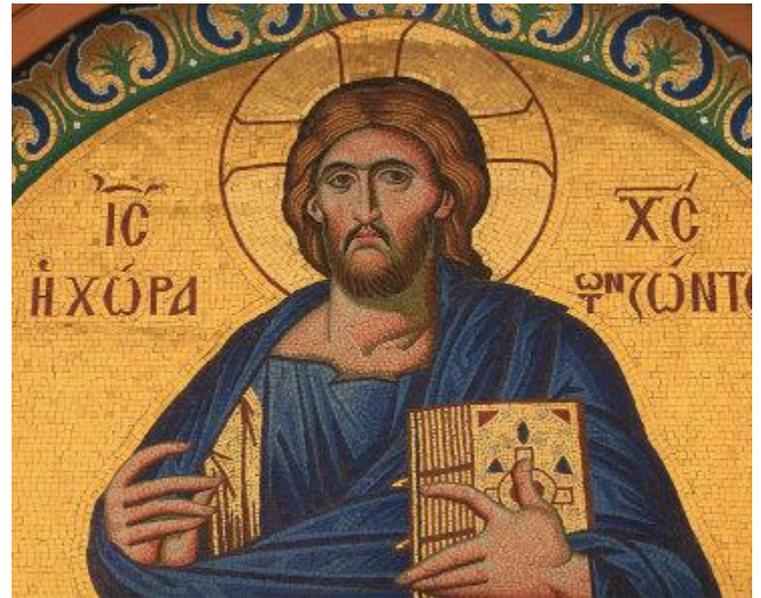
- Code of Justinian –

Emperor Justinian consolidated Roman laws into a single code which served as a guide on most legal questions. It greatly influenced later Western legal systems.



The Byzantine Legacy

- **New Form of Christianity –** Eastern Orthodox Christianity was led by the Patriarch and the emperor in Constantinople, rather than the Pope in Rome.



The Byzantine Legacy

■ The Arts –

The Byzantines were renowned for their mosaics, painted icons, gold jewelry, and silks.

Constantinople's cathedral, **Hagia Sophia**, is considered one of the world's most beautiful buildings.



Western Europe in Turmoil

- While the Byzantine Empire survived as a center of classical culture, important changes were taking place in Western Europe.
- Historians sometimes refer to this period of history, from the fall of Rome in 476 A.D. to the 1400s, as the “**Middle Ages**” or medieval period – the period between ancient and modern times.

The Barbarian Invasions

- Beyond Rome's frontiers lived Germanic tribes like the Goths, Vandals, Lombards, Burgundians, and Franks.
- The Romans considered these peoples to be uncivilized "barbarians." The Romans considered anyone to be a barbarian who came from a foreign, non-Roman culture.

The Barbarian Kingdoms



The Barbarian Invasions

- In the 4th century, a war-like tribe known as the Huns moved from Central Asia to Europe. As the Huns moved into Europe, they forced the Germanic tribes to move westward.
- These Germanic tribes in turn pushed forward into the Roman Empire.



The Barbarian Invasions

- The Visigoths were permitted by the Romans to enter the empire to escape the Huns.
- Later, the Visigoths turned against the Romans.
- The Visigoths defeated the Roman army and sacked the city of Rome in 410 A.D.
- They were assisted in defeating the Romans by the many Germanic slaves inside the city.

The Barbarian Invasions



Alaric, King of the Visigoths who sacked the city of Rome

The Barbarian Invasions

- After a period of invasions, Germanic tribes then established their own kingdoms in many parts of the former Roman Empire:
 - Angles and Saxons invaded England.
 - Visigoths moved westward to Spain.
 - Lombards occupied northern Italy.
 - Franks took Gaul (*present-day France*).

The Barbarian Invasions

- The **constant warfare** of this period **disrupted** trade across Europe. Travel became unsafe because of **violence**. Bridges and roads fell into **disrepair**. Cities and towns were **abandoned**. **Bandits** roamed freely. Life became increasingly rural and **unsafe**. Wealthy families moved out of towns to the safety of **fortified homes** in the countryside. People **gave up** their interest in **learning**. **Shortages** of food and goods grew. Churches and monasteries became *the only places* where people could read and write.

The Rise of the Franks

- The **Franks** established the largest of the new Germanic kingdoms in what is now France.
- **Charles Martel**, a powerful nobleman, helped unite the Franks.
- In 732, at the **Battle of Tours**, Martel stopped the advance of Islam from Spain into France.



The Rise of the Franks

- In 751, his son, Pepin (*also known as Pepin the Short*) seized power and became King of the Franks. With the support of the Pope, Pepin marched across the Alps and took control of Northern Italy.
- Frankish Kings created a powerful army by granting lands to their nobles in exchange for service in the kings army with their knights.

The Reign of Charlemagne

- Pepin's son, **Charlemagne**, became king in 768. Charlemagne expanded the practice of giving land to his nobles in exchange for their promises of loyalty and service.
- At the same time, his nobles gave land to their knights in exchange for similar promises.
- Peasants gave up their rights to the local lords for better security. They offered services "in kind," providing firewood, livestock, and crops.

The Reign of Charlemagne

Charlemagne enlarged his kingdom to include France, Germany, Holland, Belgium, and Northern Italy.



The Reign of Charlemagne

- Charlemagne established a new capital at Aachen, which he turned into a center of learning.
- He constructed a beautiful palace in imitation of the imperial court of Rome.



- He used riches from his conquests to attract scholars to his palace school for children of the nobility.

The Reign of Charlemagne

- At the request of the Pope, Charlemagne was crowned “**Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire**” in 800.
- This step announced to the World that Western Europe was now **independent** from the Byzantine emperor.
- The coronation of Charlemagne also signified the new **political and religious unity** of Western Europe under the concept of **Christendom**.
- After Charlemagne’s death, his empire was divided among his sons.

The Reign of Charlemagne



Europe Faces New Threats

- The division of Charlemagne's empire occurred just as Europeans were facing new threats. From the East, Slavs and Magyars invaded the lands of Germany, France, and Italy. From North Africa, Muslims attacked Southern Italy.
- The greatest threat came from the Vikings – fierce warriors and sailors from Scandinavia in Northern Europe. They sailed south in search of trade, loot, and land.

Europe Faces New Threats

- Between 800 and 1000, the Vikings launched repeated assaults on the coasts of Western Europe, often committing brutal atrocities.
- Although spreading fear and destruction, the Vikings also created new trade routes.
- Their longboats were easy to maneuver and could sail in heavy seas or close to the land.
- In many places, they created new settlements – such as the Danelaw in Northern England, Normandy in France, and their own communities on the island of Sicily.

Vikings



Feudal Society

- To protect themselves from violence and to provide for basic economic needs, people throughout Western Europe adopted the system introduced by the Franks.
- Kings offered nobles a grant of land, known as a feud or fief, in exchange for loyalty and service. The noble man, known as the vassal, gave **homage** (*allegiance*) to the king.

Feudalism

- This new order, known as **feudalism**, helped people survive the breakdown of central government and order.
- Feudalism in Europe was characterized by a number of key social, political, and economic relationships.

Feudalism -- Social

- A major characteristic of feudal society was the development of a strict class structure based on the control of land and military power. People born as serfs, knights, or lords could not change their social position. Local **lords** (*nobles*) were given land by their rulers in exchange for military service. These lords had their own small armies of **knights** – armed warriors on horseback.

Feudalism -- Political

- Under the Feudal system, the leading nobles controlled political life. They built large castles for their own protections, often rivaling those of the king in size. They surrounded themselves with armed knights.



Feudalism -- Knight

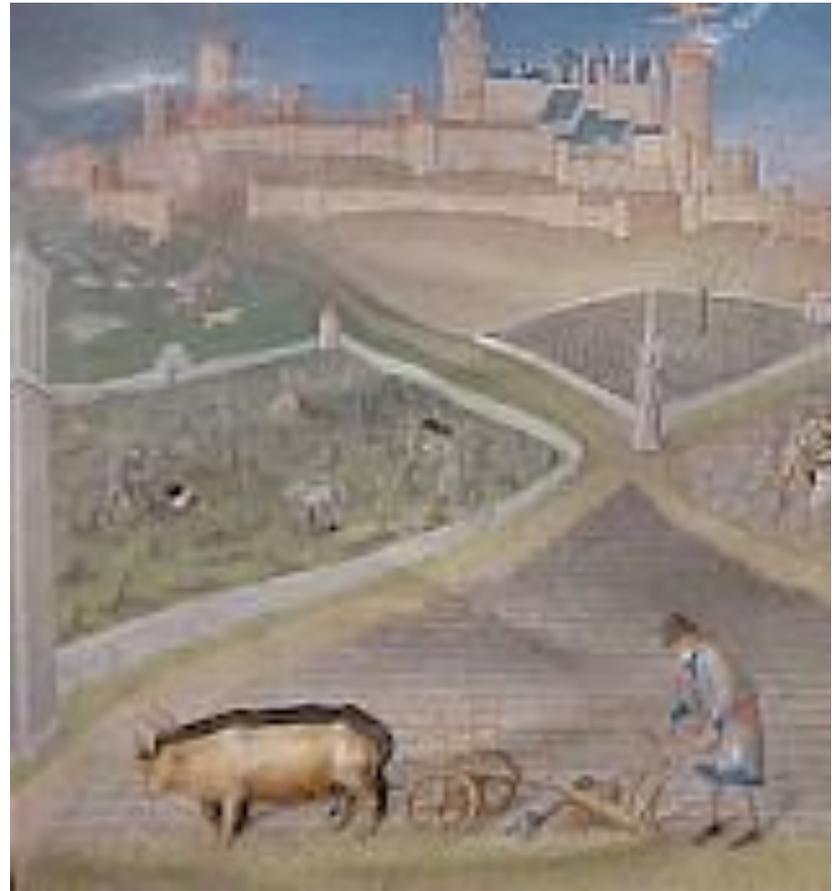


Feudalism -- Political

- The king relied on his nobles for his own army, and the nobles often fought amongst themselves or challenged the king's authority. Civil wars were frequent, and powerful nobles often grabbed land for themselves.

Feudalism -- Economic

- During feudalism, most people lived on manors. A **manor** consisted of the lord's house and the peasants living in the surrounding territory. This aspect of the feudal system is also sometimes known as **manorialism**.



Feudalism -- Economic

- Each manor produced its own food, clothing, and shelter. Manors varied in size, depending on their lord's wealth..

Every noble had at least one manor, but some powerful or wealthy nobles had many manors. For example, in England, there were more than 9,000 manors



Feudalism -- Economic

- Peasant farmers known as **serfs** gave their lord part of their harvest in return for the use of land and other services. The lord protected the serfs from attacks by outsiders. Each lord had almost complete power over the serfs who lived on his manor. The lord could pass laws, require labor, and act as a judge. Serfs were bound to the land and had no voice in most matters.

Feudalism -- Economic

- **Farming in the Middle Ages:**

Farmers lacked specific knowledge of how to enrich the soil or rotate crops. Each year, only two-thirds of the land was usually cultivated, letting the other third remain fallow (*uncultivated*), so that it could recover its fertility. This was known as the **three-field system**. One field was devoted to winter crops, a second to summer crops, and a poor harvest could lead to famine and death. For example, during the Great Famine of 1315 – 1322, large numbers of people across Europe died.

Feudalism -- Economic

- **Peasant Life-Styles:**

Peasant farmers produced the food used by medieval society. Most worked long hours to grow enough food to survive each year. Although most peasants were farmers, some were millers, blacksmiths, and tavern owners. Life revolved around the agrarian calendar. Most of the time was spent working the land. Church feasts marked sowing and reaping days. Peasants lived in small towns or nearby farms on their lord's manor.

Feudalism -- Economic

A typical peasant home was a two-room cottage with walls of dried mud, plastered branches and straw. The cottage often had a roof of thatch. Rooms had earthen floors and a few furnishings, such as a stool, table, and a chest to hold clothes. Stacks of straw served as beds for the entire family. Water was drawn from a nearby well or stream. Ventilation was poor. Pigs and other farm animals often lived inside the house.

Complete the graphic organizer below by describing the effects of feudalism on Western Europe

FEUDALISM

Political

Economic

Social

Women in the Middle Ages

- During the Middle Ages, the role of women was determined by the attitudes of the Catholic Church and the nobility. Women were supposed to be obedient to men. Women's inferior status was often blamed on the biblical status of Eve's disobedience in the Garden of Eden.

Women in the Middle Ages



Women in the Middle Ages

- Medieval people lived in **extended families**. Nobles maintained large households; related peasants lived close to one another. Women of all social classes gave birth to a large number of children, but many children died in infancy.

Women in the Middle Ages

- Women's lifestyles varied according to their social status. Noble women spent most of their time in prayer and in domestic chores such as sewing and embroidery. Among the nobility, only a handful of women received an education. Among the peasants, a close partnership often existed between a husband and wife. Both worked side-by-side in the fields. Women ran the home and looked after the livestock.

Women in the Middle Ages



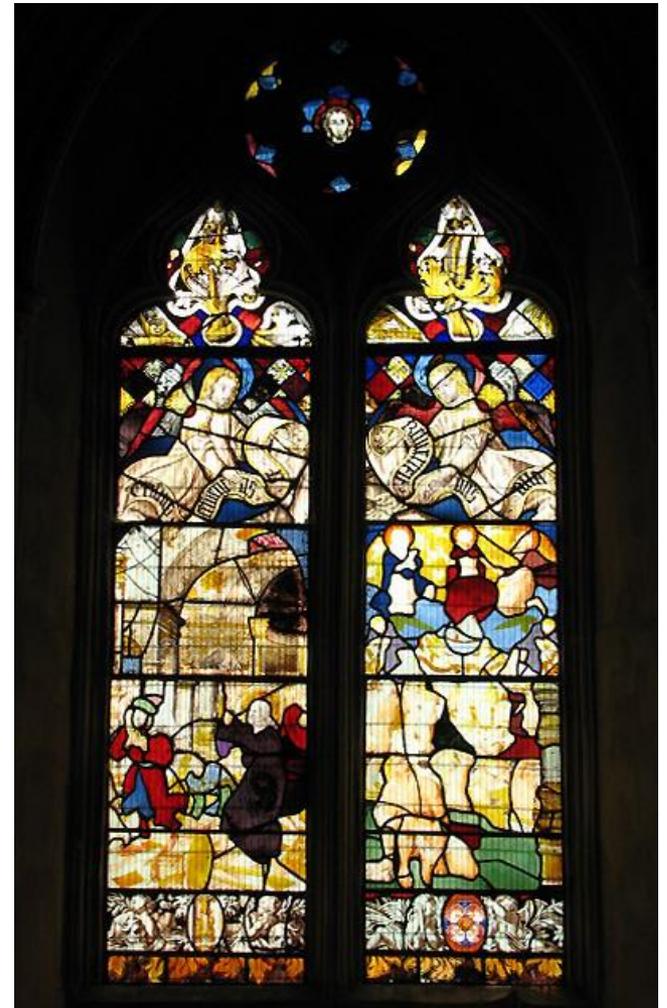
The Age of Faith

- During the Middle Ages, the Roman Catholic Church remained the single most powerful organization in Western Europe. There were many reasons for this:



Reasons for the Church's Power

- **The Role of Faith:**
People were very religious. They believed the Church represented God and held the power to send a person to Heaven or Hell. Most felt united by their common faith.



Reasons for the Church's Power

- **Power and Wealth:** Many nobles left land to the Church when they died, hoping to gain entry into Heaven. The Church became Europe's largest landowner. Church wealth also increased through **tithes** (*church taxes*).



Reasons for the Church's Power

- **Center of Learning:**

The Church was the main center of learning. Church officials were usually the only people who could read and write.



Rulers often relied on Church officials, since they were the most educated people.

The Age of Faith

- The head of the Catholic Church was the **Pope** in Rome. The Pope was regarded as the successor of St. Peter, leader of the apostles after the death of Jesus. Catholics believed the Pope had inherited the role of Peter in running the Church. The Pope governed the church with help of the cardinals, bishops and other church officials.



The Age of Faith

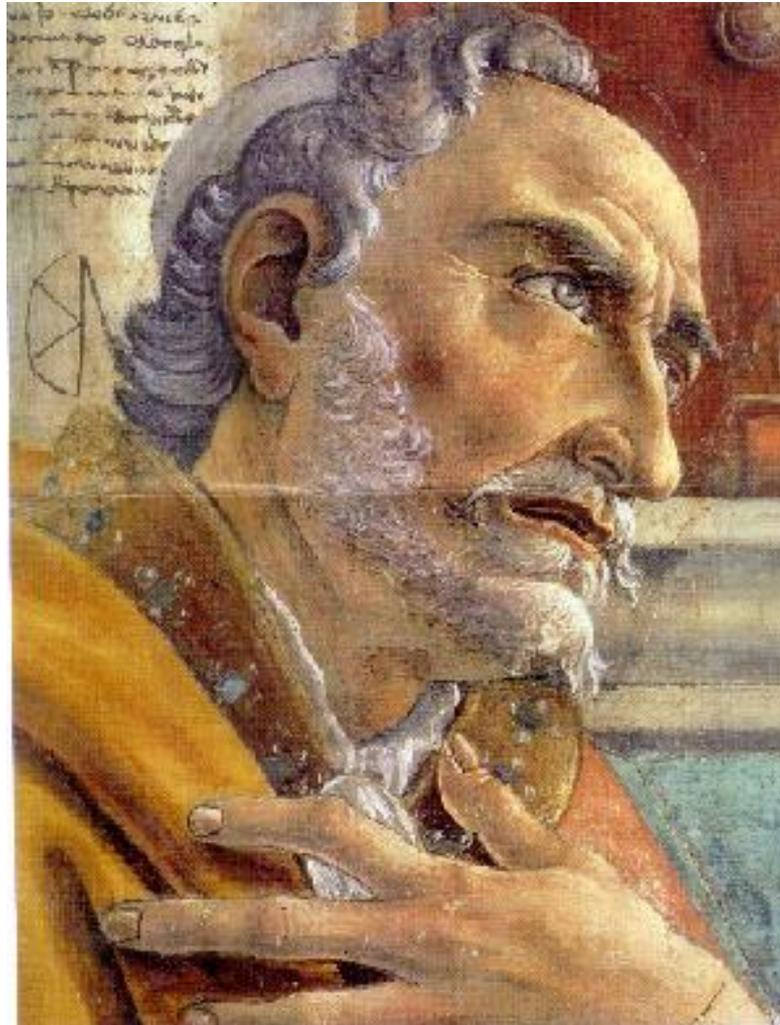


- The Church controlled enormous amounts of land throughout Europe. The Church also possessed **monasteries, abbeys, and Convents**, where monks and nuns spent their lives devoted to prayer.

Two Christian Thinkers

- Two Christian thinkers who had a great influence on the Middle Ages were St. Augustine and Thomas Aquinas.
- **St. Augustine** (354-430) lived at the time of the fall of Rome. In *The City of God*, Augustine asks why God is letting barbarians destroy the Christian civilization of Rome. He concludes that no earthly city, like Rome, can last forever. Only the “City of God” in Heaven is eternal. Because our understanding is limited, he said we must put our faith in God, who will reward us in the afterlife.

St. Augustine (354-430)



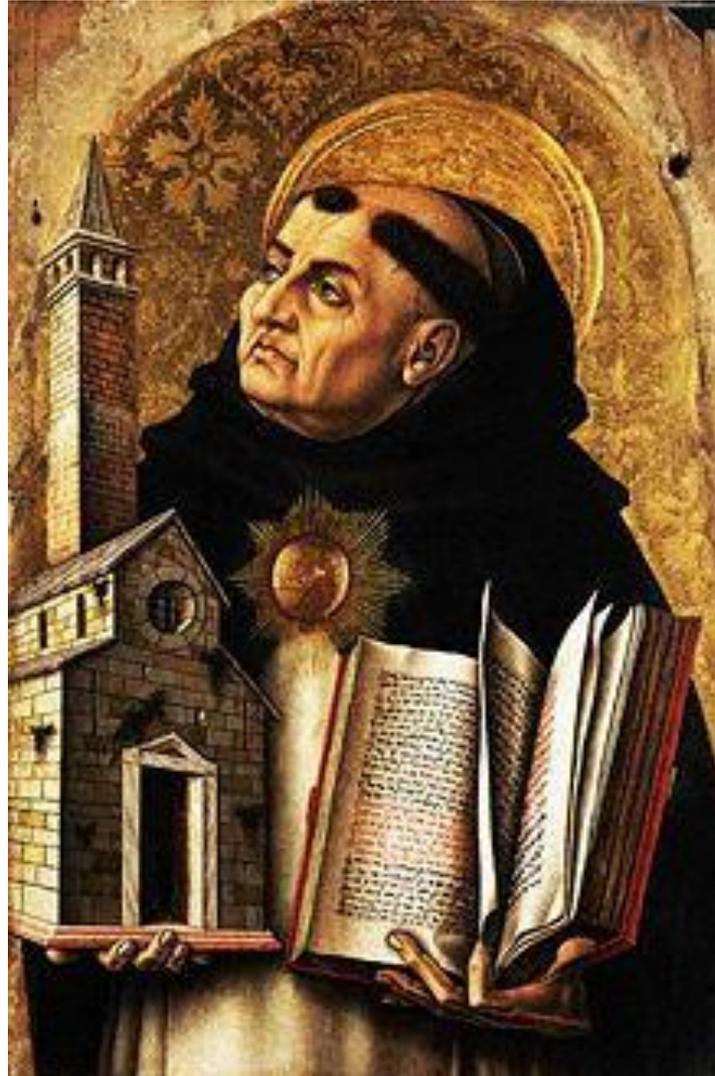
Two Christian Thinkers

- **St. Thomas Aquinas** (1225-1274) lived 800 years after St. Augustine. His most famous book, *Summa Theologica*, provided a summary of Christian beliefs. Aquinas wrote at a time when Muslim and Jewish scholars had just discovered lost works by Aristotle. Some Christian scholars felt such pre-Christian thinkers had no value. Aquinas showed how these works by Aristotle were compatible with Christian teachings. Aquinas said that God had given man the power of reason to help him explain and interpret the world. Therefore, we should trust reason as well as faith.

Two Christian Thinkers

- Aquinas also believed in the existence of “natural law” – universal laws independent of any laws passed by government. These laws are based on reason. Our reason tells us what we must do in order to “do good and to avoid evil.” Aquinas believed that we can use our understanding of natural law to evaluate the laws of governments. If a human law conflicts with natural law, it is not a law and we do not have to obey it. “Laws of this kind are acts of violence rather than laws.” Aquinas believed that citizens even have the right to remove rulers who continually enact unjust laws. Although Aquinas thought a ruler’s power came from God, he felt this power came from God *through the people*.

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)



The Crusades



The Crusades

- The power and influence of the Catholic Church in the Middle Ages can be seen in its ability to carry out a “holy war” against Muslims. For hundreds of years, Christian pilgrims had regularly visited Jerusalem, where the sacred events depicted in the Bible were believed to have taken place. However, in the 11th century, the Seljuk Turks took control of the “Holy Land” and drove out Christian pilgrims.

The Crusades

- **The Call to Free the Holy Land**

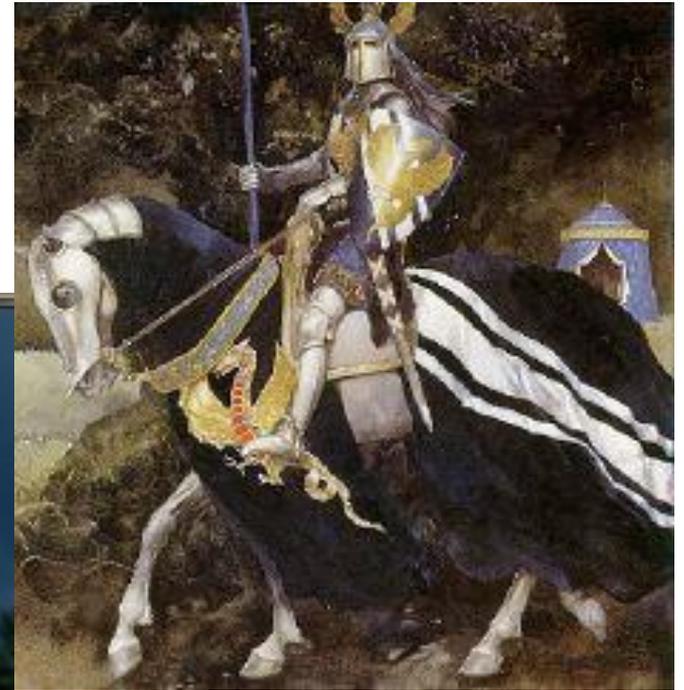
In 1095, **Pope Urban II** received a plea from the Byzantine Emperor in Constantinople for help against the threat of a Muslim invasion.

Shocked and angered at the possibility of Constantinople's falling to the Muslims, Urban II called on all Christians in Europe to unite and fight a holy **Crusade** – a war to recapture the holy land from its Muslim rulers. The Church promised salvation to all who participated.

The Crusades

- The word "Crusade" meant "war of the cross." Crusaders fought under the banner of a red cross against a white background. The Crusades brought rulers and nobles from different parts of Europe together in a common cause. Pilgrims, wives, and children of many knights accompanied the Crusader army on its long journey from different parts of Europe to Constantinople and then southward to the Holy Land. Many of the participants died of hunger or disease along the way. Several Crusades were fought over the next two centuries.

The Crusades



The Crusades

- Although the Crusades never achieved more than a temporary control of Jerusalem, the Crusades had many important effects:



The Effects of The Crusades:

- **New Ideas and New Products**

Europeans had greater exposure to new ideas, such as the use of zero in mathematics, and to foreign products, such as silk, rice, spices, coffee, perfumes, cotton cloth, raisins, and glass mirrors.

The Effects of The Crusades:

- **Increased Trade**

The European demand for foreign products, like spices, sugar, lemons, and rugs eventually led to increased trade with the Middle East as well as with other parts of the world.

The Effects of The Crusades:

- **Growth of Intolerance**

The Crusades led to the Christian persecution of the Jews and Muslims, as well as to the Muslim persecution of the Christians.

The Crusades



Complete the graphic organizer below by describing the influence of the Catholic Church during the Middle Ages

Role of the Church

Power

Learning and Art

Crusades

The Later Middle Ages

- During the later Middle Ages, Europe underwent gradual changes. Trade first revived when merchants displayed their goods at fairs, often inside a castle's walls. Trade slowly increased and cities along trade routes grew. The Crusades increased interest in luxury goods from the East.



The Later Middle Ages

- A new merchant class arose in towns. Merchants and craftsmen organized into powerful associations known as **guilds**.



New inventions, like better watermills, windmills, and mechanical clocks, improved life. Cities like Bologna and Paris founded the first universities.

The Later Middle Ages

- Throughout the Middle Ages, important towns had often competed to build the largest church or cathedral. The later Middle Ages saw the introduction of a new art style. The first Gothic church was built in France in 1231. Its pointed arches, high spires, and beautiful stained glass windows were designed to give worshippers the feeling that they were being transported to another world.

The Later Middle Ages



Stained glass
- Sens Cathedral, France



Canterbury Cathedral, England

English Political Traditions

- In the Middle Ages, England developed traditions of liberty and limited self-government that were unique in Europe.

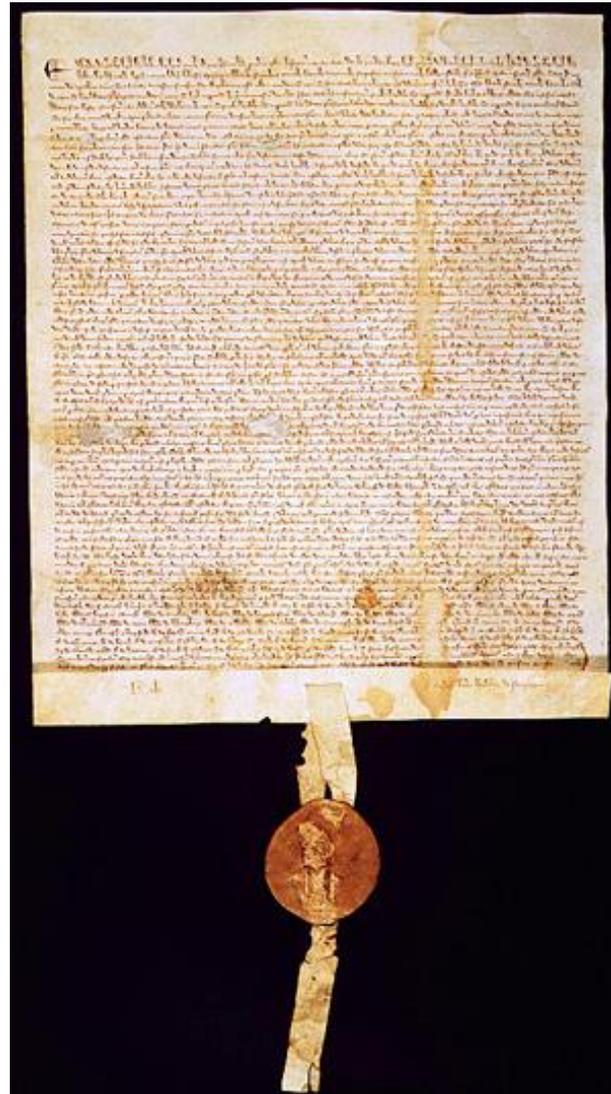


English Political Traditions

- **Magna Carta.**

In 1215, the English nobles (known as barons) rebelled against the taxes and forced loans being collected by **King John**. They were helped by the Church and towns. John was forced to sign an agreement promising not to take away any free man's property or imprison any free man without following procedures established by the laws of the land. The **Magna Carta** guaranteed all free men the right to a trial by jury, and further forced the king to obtain the consent of a council of nobles for most new taxes.

English Political Traditions



English Political Traditions



- **Parliament.** Later English kings summoned nobles and representatives of the towns to grant them new taxes. This led to the origins of Parliament.