

Era 5: Part 1 - The Emergence of Europe

The Middle Ages in Europe

The Crusades Hastened the Decline of the Medieval Church

- A. The church advocated poverty and discouraged profit for the laity; the church enriched itself in economic ventures and spiritual practices.
- B. The failure of the Crusades to secure the Holy Land weakened the pope's credibility.
- C. Loyalty shifted from the church to the nation.
- D. The "Great Schism" split the church between two popes—one in Rome and one in Avignon, France.
- E. New knowledge began to challenge the beliefs of the church.

The Crusades Expanded the Commercial Activity of Europe

- A. Expanded Trade Routes
 - 1. Italian merchants entered the commercial trade as middlemen between Europe and the Orient; became a virtual monopoly (Venice, Pisa, Genoa)
 - 2. Principal trade routes
 - a. Southern water route:
 - b. Central route:
 - c. Northern land route:
- B. Markets (meeting places for traders and townspeople) and fairs (regional and international markets and trade shows) erupted throughout Europe.
- C. Money and banking evolved to meet the expanding needs of increased trade
 - 1. Barter no longer able to handle the business of the markets. Lords and town minted their own coins, but the value differed from place to place. Carrying large quantities of coin became hazardous.
 - 2. Banks developed to evaluate the currencies of different regions, to exchange money for merchants, and to store money for customers. The word comes from the Italian "banca", meaning "bench" in reference to the table of the money changer.

The Crusades Weakened the Feudal Structure of Europe

- A. Townspeople Gained Basic Freedoms through the charter (a document granted by a feudal lord that outlined the rights and freedoms of the townspeople)

1. Granted free status to residents
 2. Exempted people from the manorial obligations
 3. Permitted them to administer their own town justice
- B. Merchants and Craftsmen Established Guilds (trade organizations to regulate the business activity of a town) and Trade Associations (alliances between towns for commerce and protection , e.g. the Hanseatic League)
1. Apprentice : ages 10-15; lived with master craftsman; worked in exchange for food and lodging
 2. Journeyman : worked for pay under supervision of the master; studied and honed craft on his own
 3. Master : took oral exam and produced a " master piece " for the approval of and admission to the guild
- C. Beginnings of a " middle class ". The middle class of merchants, bankers, craftsmen, skilled laborers weakened the nobility's social status and challenged the nobility's political position.
- D. Emergence of National States. A nation is a group of people who think of themselves as one and act in history as a unit .
1. The Hundred Years War (1337-1453) between England and France illustrated the hazards of cross-cultural kingdoms . The highlights of the war include 1) the transition from heavy, mounted knights of the French to the lightly armed long bow men and peasant army of the English, 2) the leadership of Joan of Arc who, after receiving visions, led the French to many victories—she was captured and tried and burned as a witch —and 3) the use of gunpowder in cannons. The war strengthened nationalism in both England and France.
 2. The Reconquista of the Iberian Peninsula expelled the Moors (Spanish Muslims) and created the kingdoms of Portugal and Spain. Governing councils, called cortes , were composed of nobles, clergy, and representatives of the cities.
 3. Political disunity between the papal states, powerful cities, and independent kingdoms ended imperial authority in Germany. The nobles continued to expand their control by participation in the diet (the equivalent of a parliament).

The Crusades Opened New Horizons to the People

- A. A Revival of Learning
1. Improving political and economic conditions produced favorable atmosphere for intellectual and cultural pursuits
 2. Contact with the Byzantine and Arab civilizations exposed Europe to new ideas

3. Growth of the middle class in the towns generated money for schooling and prompted explorations into the unknown

B. The Universities Became the Centers of Learning. They began as educational guilds with students traveling to instructors. They established a curriculum of liberal arts: grammar; rhetoric; logic; arithmetic; music. Major European universities developed in Bologna, Paris, and Oxford.

C. Philosophy and Learning

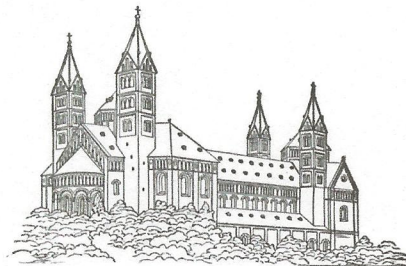
1. **Scholasticism** (an attempt to reconcile Greek philosophy and the writings of the church) began to bring church doctrine into question. Studies in science emphasized the physical world and de-emphasized the spiritual world.
2. Examples
 - a. Peter Abelard: truth comes through inquiry (*Sic et non*)
 - b. Thomas Aquinas: understanding truth requires reason and faith (*Summa Theologica*)
 - c. Roger Bacon: advocated observation and experimentation rather than accepting superstition or unreliable authority

D. Language and Literature

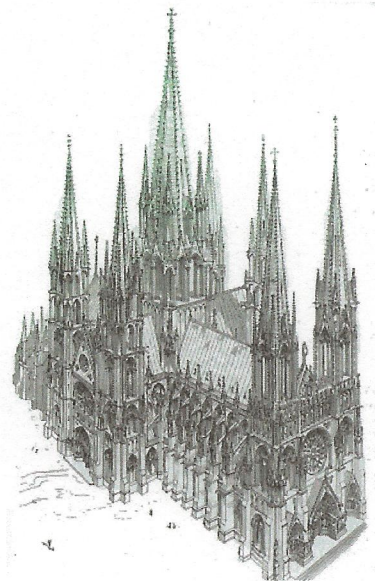
1. Writing in the vernacular (the common spoken tongue)
2. Heroic epics (long narrative poems celebrating the adventures of legendary heroes) paralleled the rising sense of nationalism. Examples: England *Beowulf*; France *Song of Roland*; Germany *Song of the Nibelungs*; Spain *El Cid*
3. Literature to instruct (Dante's *Divine Comedy*) and to entertain (Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*)

E. Art and Architecture

1. Subjects were primarily religious in nature as a means of teaching illiterate parishioners
2. Styles imitated the Romanesque model (basilica, thick walls, rounded arches, heavy columns, dark and gloomy interiors) but introduced the Gothic model (external—flying—buttresses, high ceilings, stained-glass windows, spacious and lofty interiors)



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