



# MEDIEVAL WESTERN EUROPE

Okay, so maybe it's a little dark.



# EARLY MIDDLE AGES

ca. 500 to 1000 CE

# Early Middle Ages: Political Order and Disorder

- **Medieval** = Period between **the fall of Western Rome** and the **Renaissance** (which we'll talk about next unit)
- Following the collapse of Rome, Western Europe **fragments into German successor states**
  - Relatively **small kingdoms/states** with no real political unity
  - Significant kingdoms developing in Gaul (the **Franks**) and Britain (the **Anglo-Saxons**)





# THE FRANKS AND THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

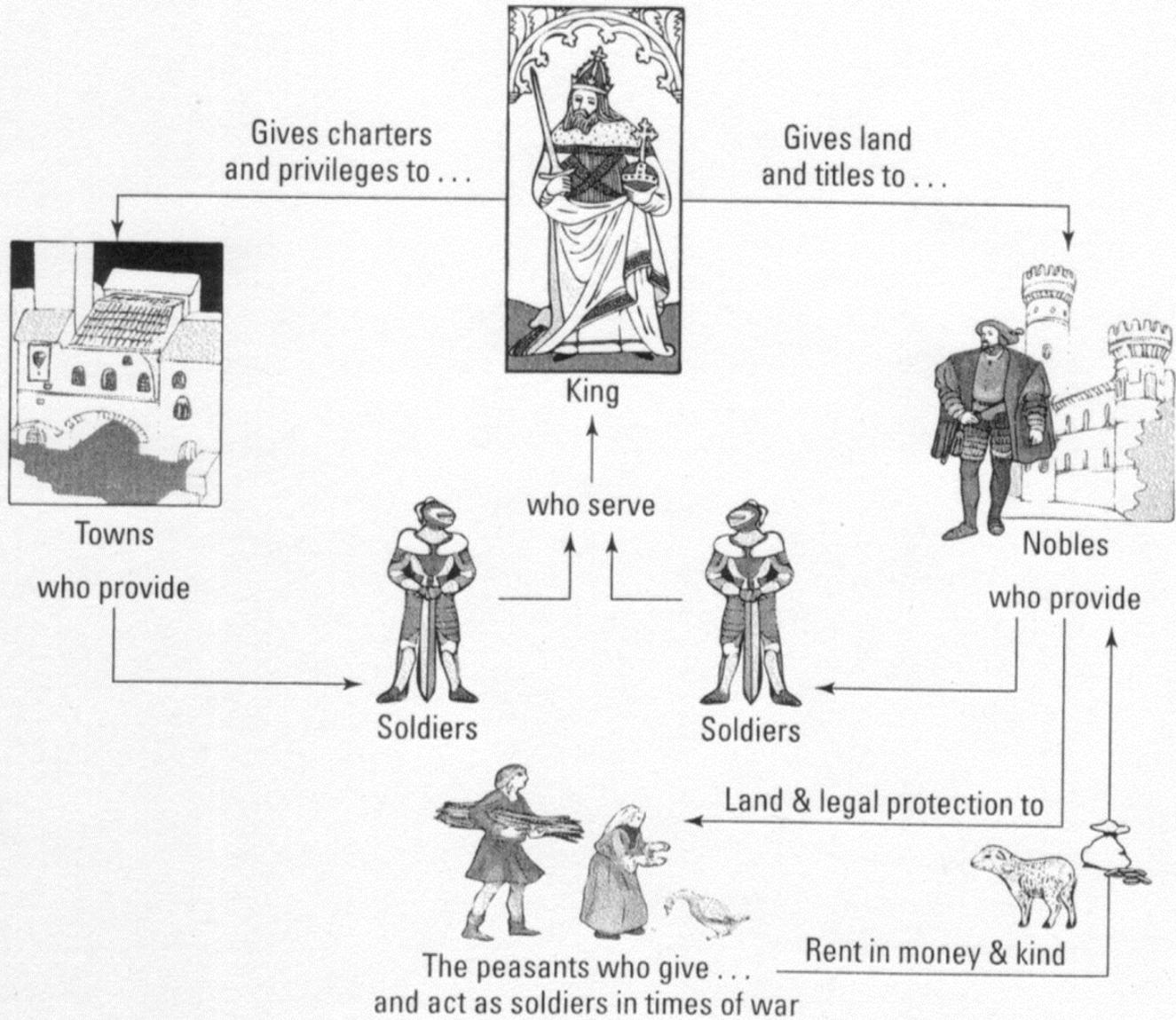
Not holy, not Roman, and not much of an empire.

# Early Middle Ages: The Franks

- In Gaul:
  - Franks led by **Clovis** (ca. 466 to 511 CE) → military campaigns against other Germanic peoples, created **first Frankish kingdom**
  - Many Germanic peoples practiced early forms of Christianity (**Arian**), but not the Franks
    - Clovis converted to Roman Catholicism → **alliance between the Franks and the Roman Church**
- Beginning of the **Carolingian dynasty**:
  - **Charles Martel** (r. 714 to 752 CE) defeated the Umayyad caliphate at the **Battle of Tours** in 732 CE
  - **Charlemagne** (Charles the Great) fought on behalf of the Pope against other Germanic, non-Catholic groups, named **Holy Roman Emperor** by Pope Leo III in 800 CE
    - Promoted **education and literacy**
    - Expanded control to **NE Spain, Bavaria, and N Italy**
    - Ruled by **missi dominici**– intermediaries between the king and local authorities → **FEUDALISM**



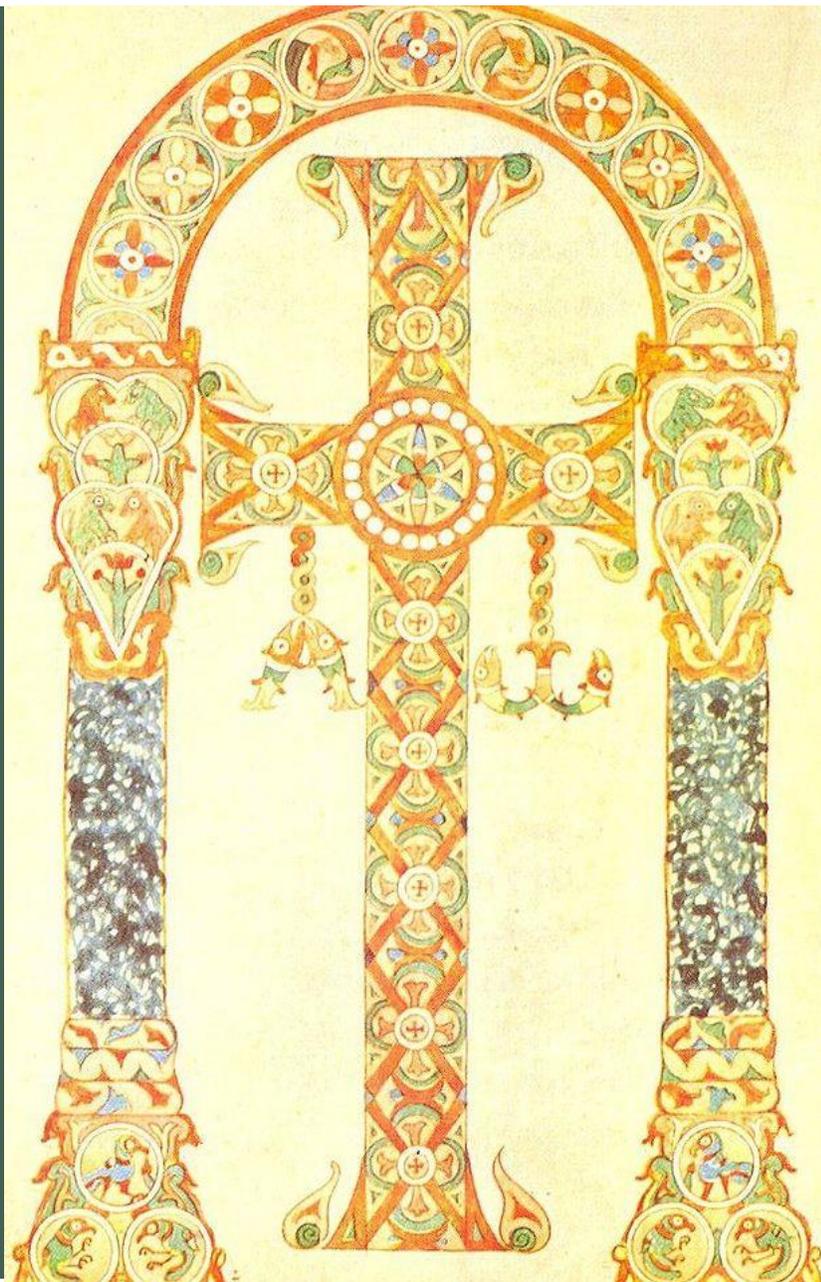




**Figure 7-1:**  
The feudal system.

## How Feudalism Works

- Monarchs give **fiefdoms** to **vassals**
- Vassals therefore owe the king:
  - Total **allegiance**
  - **Knights** for battle
  - **Service** in the court
  - **Food and lodging** if the king visited
  - **Funds for ransom** if the king was taken in battle
- Why put up with it?
  - Because unless you were a peasant, **you could extract services and loyalty from those lower than you**



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ATLANTIC OCEAN

IRELAND

NORTH SEA

### CHARLEMAGNE'S EMPIRE

At his accession, 768

At his death, 814

Partitioning of empire, 843



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ENGLISH KINGDOMS

EAST  
Magdeburg

FRANKS

WEST  
Paris

FRANKS

KINGDOM OF CHARLES

KINGDOM OF LOUIS

KINGDOM OF LOTHAIR

UMAYYAD EMIRATE OF CORDOVA

PYRENEES  
SPANISH MARCH

CORSICA

SARDINIA

BYZANTINE

EMPIRE

TRIBUTARY

SLAVIC STATES

EAST MARCH

AVARS

KHANATE OF BULGARIA

Constantinople

Athens

MEDITERRANEAN SEA

SICILY

Carthage

Ravenna

Rome

Aix-la-Chapelle (Aachen)

Verdun

Strasbourg

St. Gall

Lyons

Bordeaux

Toledo

Cordova

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Tours

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# Early Middle Ages: The Franks

- Not long after Charlemagne's death, the HRE **split into three separate parts**
  - Further **invasions** by Muslim armies, Magyars, and the **Vikings** will dismantle the HRE's authority
- **The Viking Age** (800 to 1000 CE):
  - **Population pressures** force seafaring warriors and settlers out front Scandinavia, following rivers and sea lanes → reputation for **violence and raiding**
  - Results in **intensification of feudalism**, as centralized power fractures due to invasions





# VIKINGS



CCWH  
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TRADING & RAIDING

# Early Middle Ages: The Church



- The Franks and the Church:
  - Frankish rulers saw themselves as **protectors of the papacy**
  - Charlemagne used conquest and **forced conversion to spread Catholicism** into northern territories
  - By ca. 1000 CE, all of Western Europe had adopted Roman Catholicism
- While the Church was happy to have powerful leaders like Clovis and Charlemagne convert and serve/defend the Church, **disputes between the popes and Holy Roman Emperors increased**
  - Who held the ultimate power over bishops in the HRE? The Pope or the Emperor?
  - **Lay investiture** = a king appointing bishops/archbishops (huge point of contention)

# Middle Ages: The Church

- Church Structure:
  - **Secular clergy** (Church officials who live amid normal society)
    - **Pope** (leader of all Catholic clergy– and maybe kings/emperors?)
    - **Archbishops** (leader of Catholic clergy in a particular country)
    - **Bishop** (leader of Catholic clergy in a region)
    - **Priest** (head of specific church or parish)
  - **Regular Clergy** (live apart from society in **monastery** or **convent**)
    - **Monks** (lead by an **abbot**)
    - **Nuns** (lead by an **abbess**)
- Church provided all sorts of **spiritual, social, educational, and economic services**
  - Acted as schools, hospitals, support for the poor, provided salvation/grace, religious sacraments



# Early Middle Ages: The Church

- According to **Pope Gregory VII** (1073 CE):
  - The pope can be judged by no one but God
  - The Roman Catholic Church **never erred and never will err** until the end of time (**Papal Bull of Infallibility**)
  - The pope alone can depose and restore bishops
  - Pope can depose emperors
  - Pope can absolve subjects from their allegiances

Potential for conflict a-plenty, yes?

(Fun fact: Gregory VII excommunicated Henry IV (HRE) THREE TIMES for trying to tax church lands and appoint bishops.)





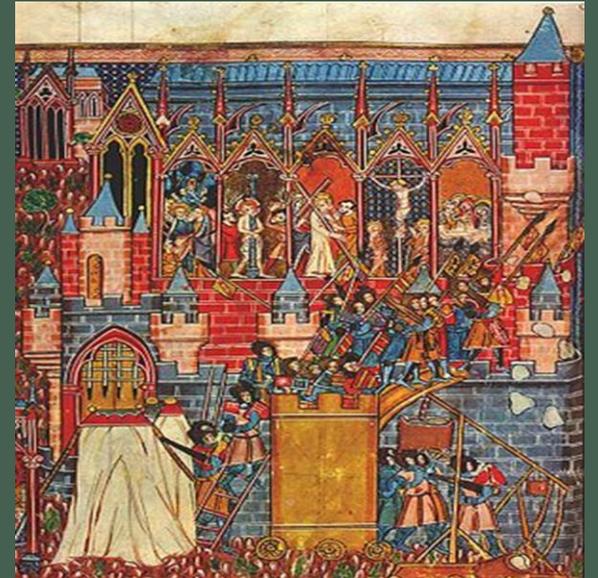
# THE CRUSADES (AND ALSO THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES)

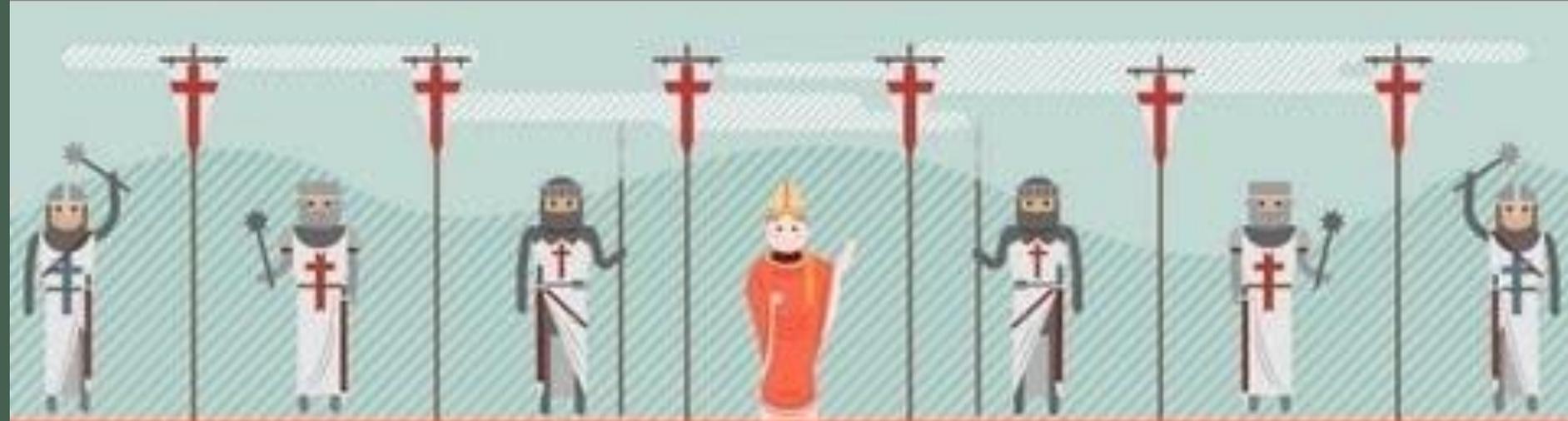
Don't get excited. These are awful. Bad ideas all around.

1000 CE to 1250 CE

# The Crusades: In the Beginning...

- Ongoing battles between **the Byzantines and the Seljuk Turks** result in the Byzantine emperor writing to the Pope for assistance (awkward, much?)
- Christian **pilgrimages** to the Holy Land (esp. Jerusalem) had been interrupted by the Seljuk Turks conquest of Jerusalem and the surrounding areas in the early 1000s CE
- This results in Pope Urban II calling for (Roman Catholic) Christians to take up arms against the “infidel” Muslim Turks
  - Allows for further **spreading of Roman Catholicism** (Great Schism?)
  - **Demonstrate supremacy** over growing secular power in Western Europe

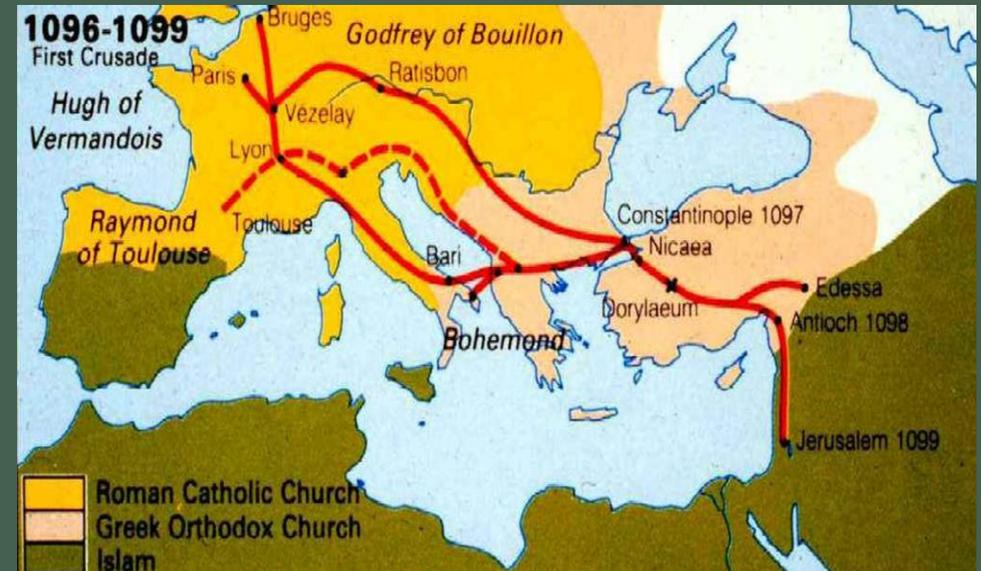




# THE CRUSADES

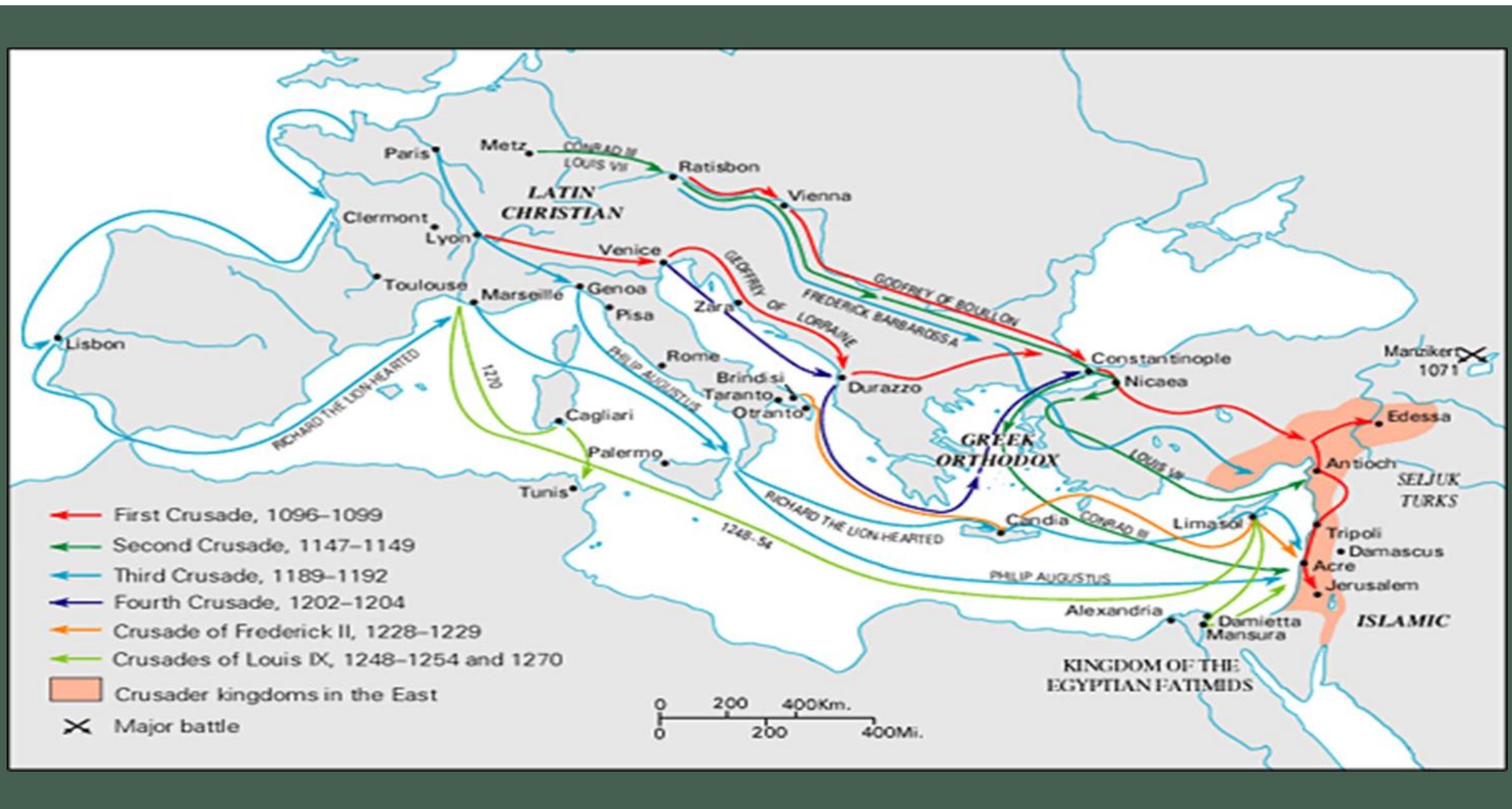
# High Middle Ages: Crusades

- **First Crusade** (1096 – 1099 CE):
  - Three major armies (mostly French) leave for Constantinople to provide **support against the Seljuk Turks**, ultimate goal of retaking Jerusalem
  - **Armies were undisciplined**, attacking non-Catholics along the way for plunder, etc.
    - **Demonstrates a rise in anti-Semitism**
  - Forces reach Jerusalem in 1099, retake the city after a two month siege
  - Some crusaders stay behind in the Levant after, establish “**crusader kingdoms**” in the Levant



# High Middle Ages: Crusades

- **Second Crusade** (1147 – 1149 CE)
  - Crusader kingdoms retaken by Egyptian Muslim armies, the pope called for a second crusade to regain the cities
  - **Dismal failure**; King Louis VII of France and Conrad II the HRE bickered constantly, leading to defeat
- **Third Crusade**, “The Crusade of Kings” (1189 – 1192 CE)
  - Muslim armies led by the general **Saladin** captured Jerusalem in 1187 CE
  - Three W. European kings decide to retake the city:
    - **Richard I of England**, King Philip August of France, and HRE Frederick Barbarossa
  - Frederick Barbarossa dies on the way to the Holy Land & his army disbands
  - Philip August bails before reaching Jerusalem, leaving Richard I to fight Saladin
  - Richard I and Saladin **sign a peace treaty**, leaving Jerusalem in Muslim hands but allowing Christians access to the city for pilgrimage



- ➔ First Crusade, 1096–1099
- ➔ Second Crusade, 1147–1149
- ➔ Third Crusade, 1189–1192
- ➔ Fourth Crusade, 1202–1204
- ➔ Crusade of Frederick II, 1228–1229
- ➔ Crusades of Louis IX, 1248–1254 and 1270
- ▭ Crusader kingdoms in the East
- ✕ Major battle

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# High Middle Ages: Crusades

- **Fourth Crusade** (1202 – 1204 CE)
  - After Saladin's death, the pope calls for a new crusade to retake Jerusalem
    - The crusaders, working with leaders from Venice, **decide to attack Constantinople instead?**
- End results of Crusades:
  - Increase in **trade within Europe** (particularly good for Italian city-states of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa)
  - Increased **power of individual monarchs, loss of power for the Pope, decrease in the use of feudalism**
  - Increased **tensions between Christians, Jews, and Muslims** (extreme rise in anti-Semitism)
  - **Weakening of the Byzantine Empire**



# ENGLAND AND THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES

Lots of Williams and Henrys and Richards (and one John).

# High Middle Ages: England

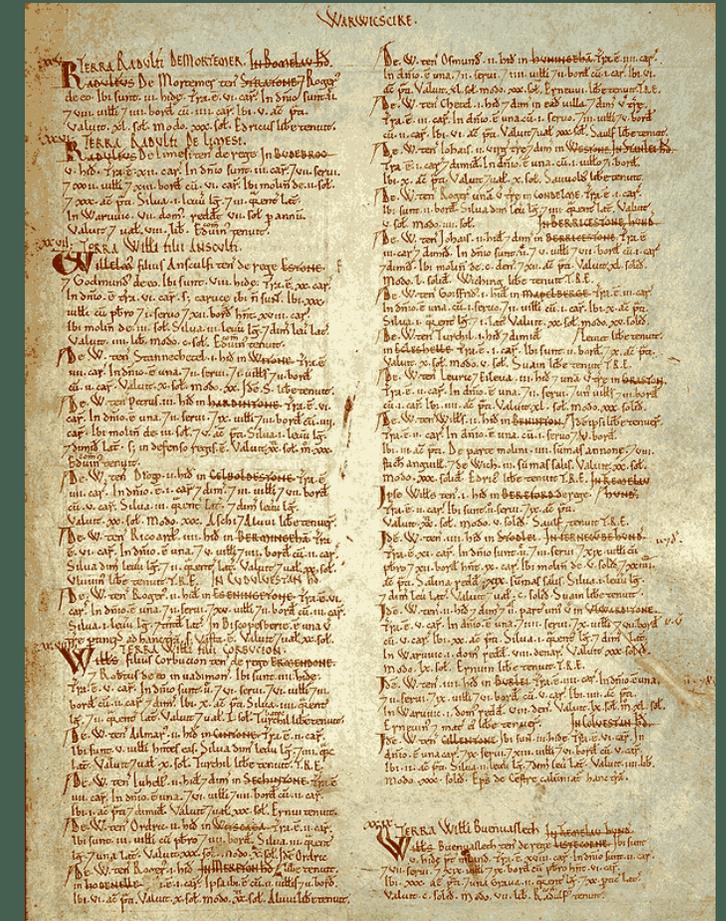
- England ruled by a series of **Anglo-Saxon regional monarchs** from 871 to 1066 CE
  - After Edward the Confessor's death in 1066, **Harold Godwinson** was elected king by Anglo-Saxon nobles
- Norman Invasion and Conquest
  - **William, the Duke of Normandy** (coastal northern France) was a cousin to Edward the Confessor and felt he had a claim to the English throne
  - Was a **vassal of the French king**
- **Battle of Hastings** (1066 CE)
  - William brings 6000 soldiers (and horses!) across the English Channel, becomes the new English King



# High Middle Ages: England

- William the Conqueror
  - Introduces the **French feudal system** to England
  - Takes land from Anglo-Saxon lords, gives it to Norman lords
  - Establishes a **census and centralized system of taxes** (“Doomsday book”)
  - **Kept his fiefdom in France**
    - Effectively, this meant that the kingdom of England included parts of northwestern France, too
    - In theory, this also meant that the **English king was (maybe?) a vassal of the French king!**

(This is going to result in some nasty wars in a bit.)



# High Middle Ages: England

- **Henry II** (1154 to 1189 CE) and Eleanor of Aquitaine
  - Established England's court system, idea of Common Law (applies to whole kingdom)
    - Grand Jury and Petit Jury
  - Tried to exert power over the Catholic Church, culminating in the death of the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Becket.
- Eleanor was powerful in her own right– probably the wealthiest single person in Europe, owned Aquitaine in France
  - Former wife of French king, got bored with him, demanded an annulment, and married the king of England.







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# High Middle Ages: England

- Important limits on the power of English kings:
  - **Magna Carta** (1215 CE) signed by John I
    - John was unpopular, vindictive, lost lands in France, **increased taxes, jailed enemies without charge**
    - Forced to sign the Magna Carta, which:
      - Guaranteed **trial by jury**
      - Established the legal precedent of ***habeas corpus***
  - Parliament established as a representative legislative body in 1295 CE
    - By 1400 CE, Parliament is bicameral:
      - House of Lords
      - House of Commons

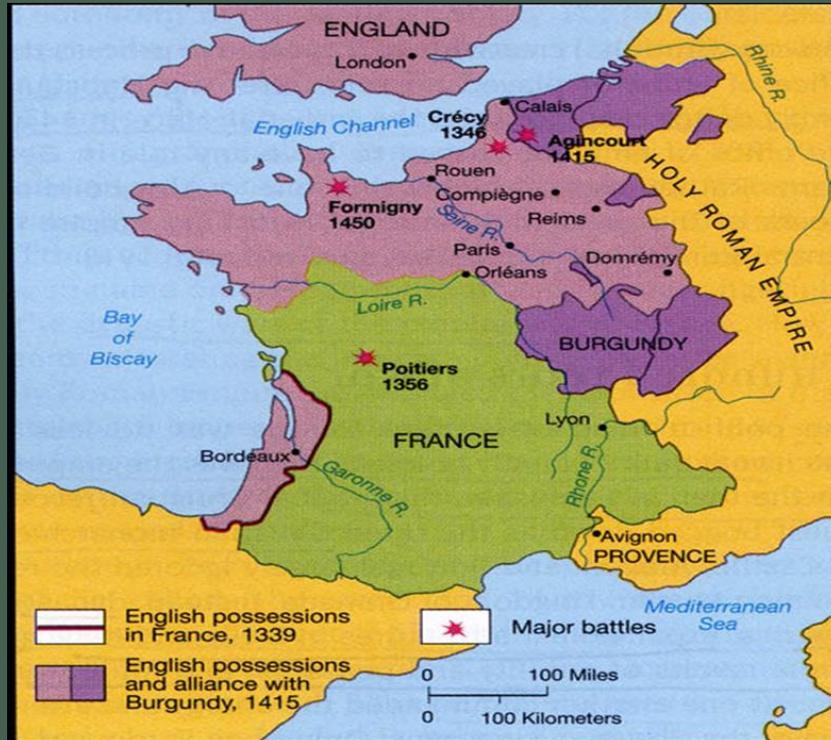
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# High Middle Ages: Hundred Years' War



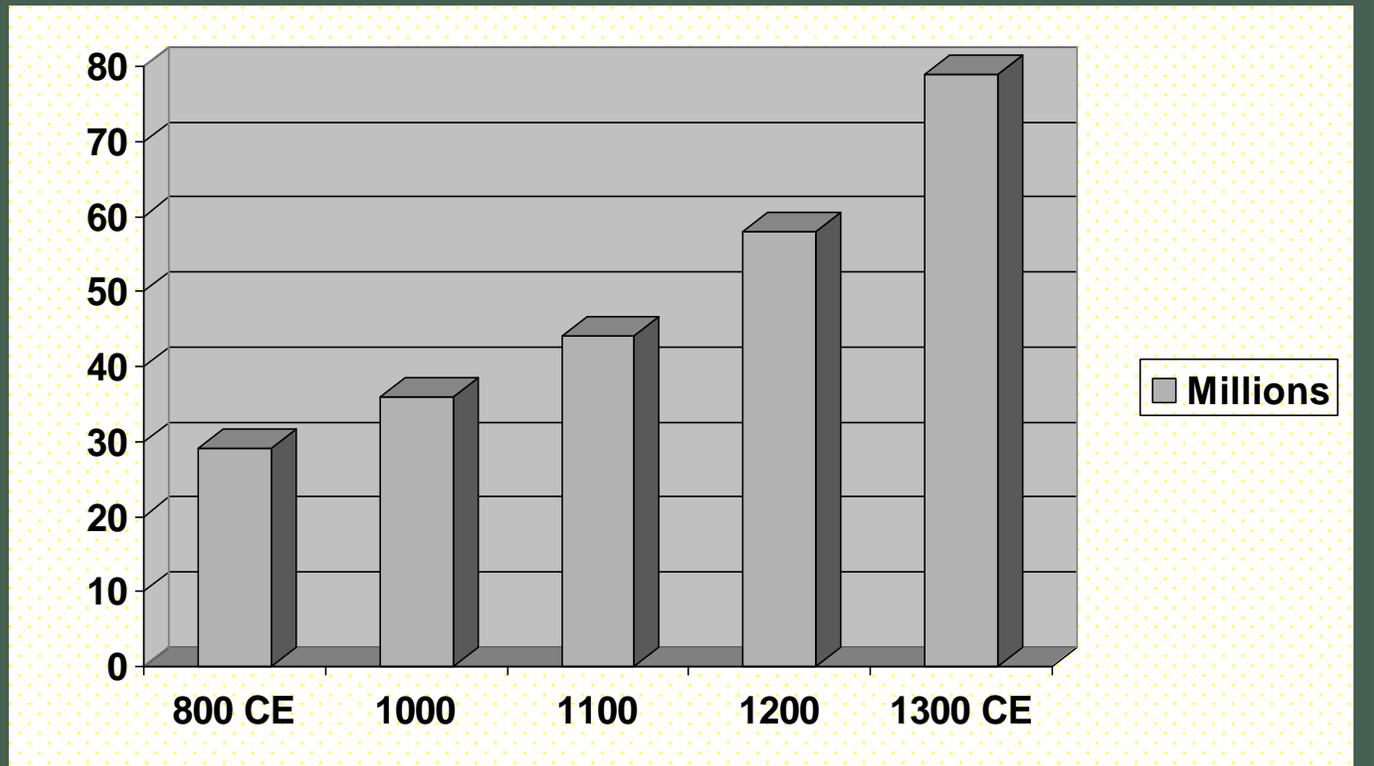
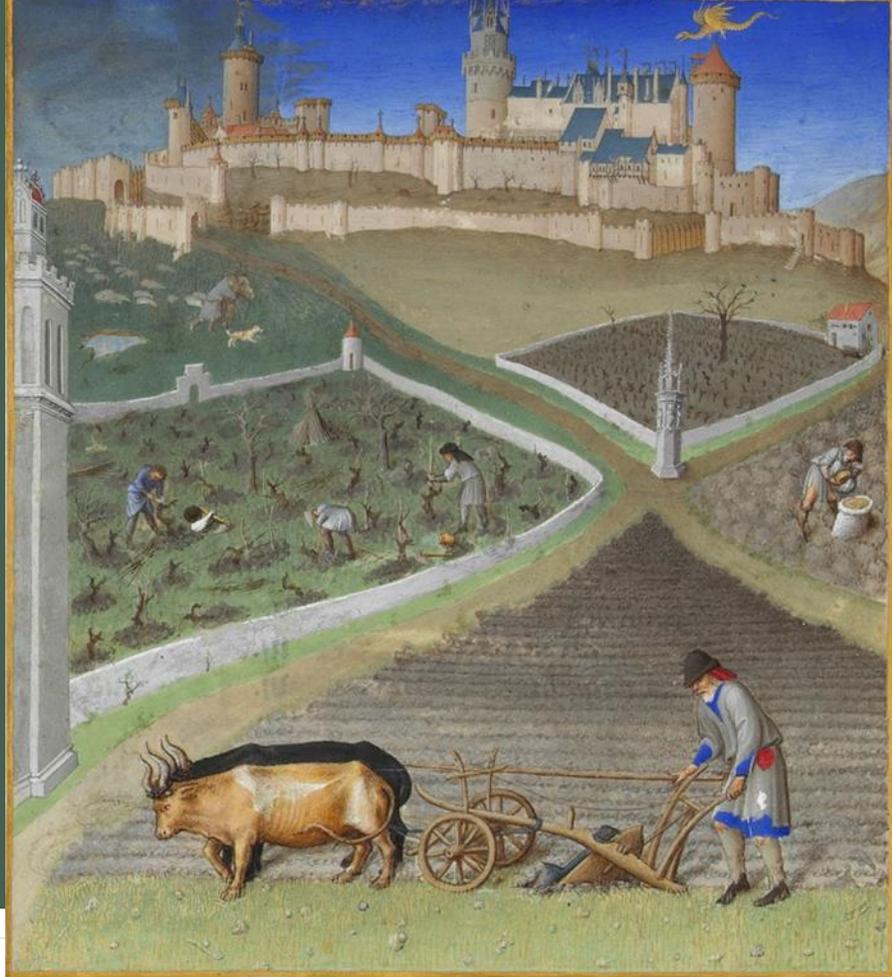
- **Hundred Years' War** (1337 to 1453 CE)– on and off war between England and France

- Conflict over who controls the coastal region of northern France, dating back to William the Conqueror's claim over Normandy
- Introduces new technologies: longbows (England) which make plate armor less important, and cannons by the early 1400s, making castles less useful
- By 1453, France retook all French territory, leaving England with only the city of Calais



# High Middle Ages: Economics

- 1000 to 1250 CE saw significant improvements to the **agricultural economy** and **trade** in Europe
  - Fewer invading groups → better harvests
  - Clearing of swamps and forest for more arable lands
  - Better agricultural techniques
    - **Crop rotation** (three field system)
    - New crops like beans (nitrogen fixers)
    - Use of horseshoes, horse collars (horses worked faster than oxen and were easier to drive)
  - More food, fewer wars → growing population





# DISEASE

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DISEASE IN HUMAN HISTORY

