Chapter 1
The Rise of Europe

Chapter Summary

In order to understand the history of the modern world, we must not only examine Europe and its rise to ascendancy, but also the influences of other cultures and civilizations upon Europe. Convention dictates that modern times began around 1500, yet ancient civilizations like the Greeks and Romans exercised tremendous influence on what would become Europe through contributions to philosophy, science, law, and government. The spread of Christianity, which began in the Roman Empire and continued into the early Middle Ages with the conversion of barbarian tribes and the peoples of eastern Europe, gave Europe a common religion. The growth of the church and the increasing power of the papacy laid the groundwork for an ongoing struggle between secular and religious power. In the Early Middle Ages, Europe underwent social, economic, and political transformations as agricultural innovations encouraged population growth, towns and commerce flourished, and feudal relations laid the foundations for the growth of national monarchies. By about the year 1300, Europe had become a recognizable geographic, cultural, and political entity among the Mediterranean civilizations into which the Greco-Roman world had divided.

Chapter Outline

1.1. Ancient Times: Greece, Rome, and Christianity
   a. The Greek World
      i. Greek cultural accomplishments
      ii. Classical Greek virtues (a golden mean, balance, symmetry, clarity, and control)
      iii. Spread of Greek civilization
b. The Roman World
   i. From Republic to Empire (Consul, Senate, Assembly)
      - Greek culture highly influential, despite Roman prejudice toward Greeks
        o Roman gods identified with Greek equivalents
        o Education: Greeks introduce humanitas: language, literature, philosophy; broad intellectual training vs. vocational training
   ii. The pax Romana
      - Hierarchy of imperial officials and provincial governors
      - The empire kept peace and justice ➔ homogenization
c. The Coming of Christianity

i. Emergence and spread of Christianity
   - Jesus
   - Evangelism
   - Organization
     - Christian communities were notable for the way each member of the community took care of one another.
     - Christian customs included baptism, agape (love feasts), and Eucharist (Thanksgiving).
     - Churches gradually grew in power and bishops kept order in the community.

ii. Christian beliefs
   - equality of the soul
   - life was sacrosanct
   - worldly distinctions were superficial

iii. Persecution of Christians
   - monotheistic
   - did not worship Caesar ➔ not true Roman
   - were seen as incendiaries

iv. Triumph of Christianity
   - Christians were persecuted and made scapegoats for much of the first three centuries C.E. In 311, Galerius issued the Edict of Toleration, permitting Christian worship.
   - Constantine made Christianity the official religion of the Empire.
• Doctrinal battles within Christianity created much conflict in the future.

iv. St. Augustine
• Two cities ➔ Man and God
  • **Man**: domain of the state, empire, political authority, political obedience ➔ no divine character; the state was not absolute and could be judged
  • **God**: eternal more enduring and important; a system of ideal values and justice

v. Caesaropapism
• Christian dualism ➔ one person holds both political (ruler) and spiritual (pontiff) powers
• Defined later political struggles between church and state
• Differences between the Eastern and Western Churches

1.2. The Early Middle Ages: The Formation of Europe

a. The Disintegration of the Roman Empire
  i. Founding of Constantinople
  ii. Decline in the West
  • disintegration of the “empires” left the West behind
  • together with the invasions by 500 CE Western Europe broke up into localized villages but also ceased to have habitual exchanges across the Mediterranean and the East (something that Byzantium kept and flourished)
  iii. Barbarian invasions

b. The Byzantine World, the Arabic World, and the West about 700
  i. Byzantine Empire
  ii. Arabic world

c. The Church and the Rise of the Papacy
  • The only stable institution in Western Europe
  i. Growth of monasteries
    • One of the first orders was the St. Benedict order ➔ *pax, ora et labora*
  ii. Papal authority
    • Western Church ➔ from Jesus designated Peter the head of the Church and gave him the “power of the keys”, which then were passed onto the Bishops of Rome
    • Eastern Church ➔ (Allegedly) Constantine gave the bishop (the Donation of Constantine) the key to the city

d. The Empire of Charlemagne, 800–814
Palmer, A History of Europe in the Modern World, 11e

Chapter 1

i. Charlemagne

- The political intricacies between the emerging Frankish King and the needy Western Church was one of utility → they both needed each other
- This marriage of convenience resulted in
  1) The conversion of grand part of Western Europe to Christianity
  2) The pope got his Holy Roman Empire (800 and 962) → although not very happy on the means of his acquisition
- Sought to foster commerce by creating a new and more reliable coinage
- Sent ambassadors to Baghdad and Constantinople

iii. Revival of learning

- Centuries of violence had destroyed education and systematic learning
- Charlemagne (could hardly read/write) revived learning and education at least among the clergy and monasteries became the center of this revival

e. Ninth-Century Invasions; Europe by 1000

i. Second wave of invaders

- Over expansion of the empire and weak government institutions led to the gradual disintegration (the usual dilemmas of empires)
- Magyars (Hungarians) from the East
- New Germanic tribes from the north (Norse, Vikings, Danes)
- Moorish/Arabs from the South (coast of France and Southern Italy)

ii. “Great Schism of East and West” of 1054

- By the year 1000 Christianity permeated Western Europe under the auspices of the Latin Church (i.e., of Rome)
- But the two churches kept on drifting apart
  - **East:** refused to recognized the primacy of the Roman bishops
  - **West:** refused to recognized the political ambitions of Byzantium
- In 1054 three centuries of frictions made the separation complete
  - Latin or Roman Catholic and the Greek Orthodox churches

iv. Emerging Europe

- By the year 1000 Western Europe, including Scandinavia, England, and Ireland were under the Latin Church.
- Eastern Slavic, Balkans, and Russian were all converted to
Chapter 1

Greek Orthodox by Byzantine missionaries

- The West however was very backward compared to Byzantium or Baghdad
1.3. The High Middle Ages: Secular Civilization

- The 1050 to the 1200 was a time of change and growth.
- This period was marked by increased outputs, population growth and rapid progress in nonreligious or “secular” matters.

a. Agriculture and the Feudal System after 1000

i. Agriculture and population growth

- With the end of foreign invasions agriculture and progress began to improve
- New tools, techniques, and farming machineries allowed for increase in output:
  - Heavier plow could cut deeper furrows
  - New harness could allow for two horses to pull the plow (multiplying horse power)
  - Windmills in the Low Countries also provided new sources of energy and power
  - Three-field system where arable land was divided into 3 parts (1 and 2 with different crops, the 3 lie follow)

iii. Feudalism

- Filled the vacuum, at a local level, of an absent organized state
- At the end of the Carolingian Empire land fell into the hands of local nobility known as Counts ➔ he kept control over lesser lords within his county (they became is vassals); he oftentimes did not have a direct relation with central royal power (never met or distrust)
- Eventually the counts fell under the auspices of the Duke (then Archduke and usually next in line to the throne) and became his vassal

v. The manor and serfs

- Feudalism strictly applied mainly to the military and noble class
- Below the feudal lord lay the vast mass of the peasantry
- The manor represented the village and surrounding farmlands
- In the 11th century most people of the manor were serf ➔ “bound to the land”

b. The Rise of Towns and Commerce

- In the peak of the High Middle Ages in Western Europe long-distance trade networks were very precarious if not non-existent in many parts of the region
- Jewish traders became the connecting link between Western Europe and
the rest of the world

i. Long-distance trade

- Long-distance trade was the first economic activity to revive and develop
- Some of the most important trading ports were
  - Venice – Eastern goods imported through the Adriatic into Europe
  - Flanders – Southern/North trade connecting northern Europe with the south
  - Genoa and Pisa – Eastern goods imported through the Mediterranean into Europe

iv. Corporate liberties

- The emergence of free cities led to the creation of corporate liberties – liberties afforded to Bürger (legally recognized inhabitant of a city) but the individual

vi. Guilds

- Within each town merchants and craftsmen formed associations called “guilds”, whose masters supervised the affairs of a specific trade or craft – women were excluded
  - They provided a public purpose – quality of work
  - Provided vocational training
  - It allowed some to improve their social mobility
  - It allowed for collective protection and bargaining

vi. Towns and the decline of serfdom

C. The Growth of Monarchies and Government Institutions

i. Changes in monarchical rule

- More and more became hereditary
- Asserted their jurisdiction through executive officers (e.g., sheriff in England)

ii. Taxation

- Royal taxation began to emerge but it met with resistance
- It eventually became the most direct example of royal authority

1.4. The High Middle Ages: The Church

a. The Development of the Medieval Church and Papacy

i. The church in crisis

- The Catholic Church in the 10th century was vastly fragmented
- It was not until the 11th century that the institution of the church was created and finalized
- Reforms efforts concentrated in strengthening the Roman pontiff and to separate church and state in the sense preventing outside
interference with the “politics” of the church (e.g., election of popes)

b. Intellectual Life: The Universities, Scholasticism
   i. The founding of universities
      - focusing on medicine, law, and theology
   ii. Theology
      - the intellectual study of religion and was the queen of the sciences.
   iii. Arabic and Greek learning
   iv. Thomas Aquinas
      - influenced by Aristotle he combined Aristotelian knowledge with Christian faith where all things and people were subordinated to God
   v. Scholasticism
      - It called for disciplined thinking and for reason – later influencing “freedom to think”

c. The Crusades; New Invasions; Europe by 1300
   i. Crusades to the Holy Land
      - They began in 1095 and went on intermittently for about 200 years
   ii. Other crusades
      - Other crusades included the Normans invasion of Sicily, reclaiming the island from the Arabs in 1100.
      - And the Reconquista of Spain from the Moors, which by 1250 the only Moorish enclave left on the peninsula was Granada, which fell in 1492
   iii. The “rise of Europe”
      - Although by the 1300s Europe had transformed into a civilization of its own it was not comparable to other great cultures such as Islamic, Byzantine, Indian, and Chinese;
         - Far-reaching trade networks
         - Greater industrial and agricultural outputs
         - Higher population and larger urbanization
         - Centralized and complex government
         - Complex economies (paper money and checks)
         - Specialized bureaucracy
         - Support of the arts and sciences
      - So why didn’t these other civilizations become what Europe later became? One explanation is Europeans were moving out of Europe exploring and absorbing much of the foreign-made knowledge and technological innovations, while other stagnated in their status quo.