

# Thematic Timelines: European Civilization

## Period 1 – 1200 CE – 1450 CE

- Byzantine power and influence grew substantially, flourishing until losing a large portion of its empire to Arab caliphates in the 8th century, but continued well into the 15th century
- **East West Schism** of 1054 CE split the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) with the new **Eastern Orthodox Church** (EOC), kept within the boundaries of the Byzantine Empire (roughly the Balkans and Hungary and all Europe east of those points into Anatolia) **Caesaropapism** was initially used to rule the EOC, but problems arose with the emperor functioning as the political and religious leader
- EOC adopted the **Patriarch of Constantinople** instead, functioning as the pope in Rome did for the RCC, with a similar structure of cardinals, bishops, and priests
- EOC missionaries spread throughout Eastern Europe, and were responsible for the conversion of the **Kievan Rus** (later Ukraine and Russia)
- **Feudalism** was established as the form of social structure in response to the loss of protection from Rome, and the threat of invaders (Huns, Germanic tribes, Vikings, etc)
- Feudal peasants pledged fealty to knights and lords, who pledged fealty to kings
- Kings and lords funded their own armies through agricultural production on common land, and kings asked lords for additional funds and soldiers when necessary
- **Viking Age** (785-1100 CE) brought long boats, trade, and conquest to northern Europe, enhancing trade, enriching the Kievan Rus (traded between Vikings and Byzantines), and discovered the Americas in 1000 CE, but kept discoveries to themselves
- **Mongols** in Eastern Europe and the **Golden Khanate** conquered the growing Kievan Rus, stopping at the borders of the Byzantine Empire and were bought off

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- France grew immensely under **Charlemagne**, becoming the dominant power in Western Europe
- The HRE functioned as a relatively weak entity, with power based on the cooperation of local feudal kings, princes, and lords who pledged fealty to the elected **Holy Roman Emperor**
- Starting in the 1000s and 1100s, Italy became the dominant region of Europe, with trade cities such as Venice functioning as the trade gateway to the world through the Muslim caliphates
- Venice banking and naval power grew substantially, as Venice and other Italian states control MOTN trade, connecting Northern Europe to the rest of the world
- Three-crop rotation and peasant agriculture were the dominant economic and agricultural tactics
- **Marco Polo** explored the world, through China and the Silk Road, offering Europeans their first glimpse of Asia and its vast cultures and civilizations in the 13th century
- Mongols and Islamic caliphates bring gunpowder, printing / paper tech, and classical texts to Europe in the 14th and 15th centuries, initiating European innovation and the **Renaissance**
- **The Black Death** plagues Europe in the 14th century, brought along trade routes from China / Central Asia, killing almost half of all Europeans, causing a labor shortage and an increase in wages
- Catholic coalitions formed against the threat of Muslim Ottoman conquest in Europe, mostly between Spain, Venice, the Holy Roman Empire, and Poland-Lithuania
- Ottoman Empire defeated twice at Vienna (1529 and 1683) by Catholic coalition, and at sea (Lepanto – 1571)