Chapter 10

A New Civilization Emerges in Western Europe

I. Introduction

A. Middle Ages – Medieval

1. Gradual recovery from Rome’s collapse

2. Growing interaction with other societies

B. Spread of religious beliefs

1. Most polytheistic converted from Christianity

2. Some continued to believe in magic/supernatural spirits

C. Knowledge from trade/invaders

1. Tools for new crops

2. European paper factory

3. Arabs – math, science, philosophy

D. Took more from other nations than contributed – one-sided trade

E. Two Images

1. Prejudice toward Europe – big, smelly, hairy lugs

a. Newer to civilization

b. Economy less advanced

c. Manners less polished

2. Flashes of brilliance

a. Thomas Aquinas – sum up knowledge of man, God, nature

II. Stages of Postclassical Development

1. Rome’s decline affected
   1. Italy fragmented
   2. commerce shrinking
   3. Spain in hands of Muslims
   4. Frequent invasions – Viking raids
   5. Weak rulers
   6. Subsistence agriculture
   7. Literacy restricted to hierarchy/monasteries
      1. No additions, merely copied old manuscripts
      2. Couldn’t understand a lot of the philosophy they copied
2. The Manorial System: Obligations and Allegiances
   1. Manorialism – economic/political relation between lord and peasants
   2. Serfs
      1. lived on self-sufficient manors
      2. received protection/justice from lords

i. Military force

* + 1. gave part of goods/crops to lord
    2. worked monthly on lord’s land
    3. some could escape

i. move to city/become wanderers

* + 1. production low – limited equipment

1. Moldboard – curved metal

ii. Three-fold system – fallow

* 1. Obligations
     1. For labor and land received

1. ownership of houses

ii. pass property rights to children

C. The Church: Political and Spiritual Power

1. Only solid, stable organization in Western Europe

a. Copied structure of Roman Empire

1. Pope – Rome – top authority

2. Regional bishops

3. Supervised local priests

2. Role of pope

a. regulate doctrine

b. beat back heresies

c. sponsored missionary activity

3. Conversions of leaders oftentimes to legitimate authority

4. Monasteries

a. prayer/religious discipline

b. developed monastic rules – Benedict of Nursia

c. Helped improve cultivation of land

d. Provided some education/promoted literacy

D. Charlemagne and His Successors

1. Northern France – Carolingians overtook Franks

a. Charles Martel – Battle of Tours 732 – pushed back Muslims/stopped Spain

b. Charles the Great – Charlemagne

1. Substantial empire in France/Germany

2. Restored church-based education

3. Intellectual activity gradually restored

4. Upon death, split empire among 3 grandsons

a. Successors useless

2. Political history from here became regional monarchies

a. no single language

1. Separate languages led to national identities - difference

b. cultural unity around Church

3. Holy Roman Emperors for German/Italian section

a. Rule hollow, means little, regional lords still controlled

E. New Economic and Urban Vigor

1. New sources of strength

a. new agricultural techniques

1. three-field

2. moldboard plow

3. horse collar – almost as cool as the world famous Chinese ox collar

b. dominance of lord/knights – horse collar and stirrups

c. Viking raids slowed down

1. Christianized

2. Regional government stronger

2. All led to population growth

a. Led to new markets

b. Look to eastern lands not previously converted to agriculture

c. Loosen bonds of serfdom

d. trade with others led to new crops

3. Growth of towns

a. Literacy spread

b. Professional entertainers – new songs, tricks – the lovely bear-baiting

c. Monastic schools/hospitals

d. Merchant activity/craft production

4. Improved cultural life

a. Universities next to cathedrals

b. Taught philosophy and theology

F. Feudal Monarchies and Political Advances

1. Feudal relationships

a. Military elites

1. Could afford horses/iron weaponry/training

b. Greater lords then controlled vassals and then they controlled lesser vassals

c. These feudal relationships could be expanded

d. Charlemagne took to next level, granted land for allegiance

2. Bad - Inhibited strong central states

a. Good - Reduced regional warfare

3. Kings used feudalism to build power – administration/bureaucracy would follow

a. France – 14th century – king had Church pay tax

1. Previously Church was exempt from tax on property

4. William the Conqueror – 1066- England had unique form of feudalism

a. great lords tied to king

b. Royal officials called Sheriff – think Robin Hood

c. Bureaucracy filled with urban business/professional people

G. Limited Government

1. Power of Church limited political claims

2. Aristocrats – powerful independent voice

a. Magna Carta – nobles forced King John in 1215 to sign rights

b. Led to creation of Parliament

1. House of Lords - nobles

2. House of Commons – wealthy businessmen

3. Held power of taxation – could prevent/enable King warfare

3. Parliaments elsewhere represent Three Estates – church, nobles, urban leaders

4. Saw war as key to settling problems – Hundred Years War prime example

H. TheWest’s Expansionist Impulse

1. Causes

a. Population growth

b. Missionary impulse

c. Righteous zeal provided by Christianity

2. Expulsion of Muslims in 1492

3. Germanic knights pushed east – Germany and Poland

4. Pushed to Greenland, Canada

5. Crusades

a. Pope Urban II – indulgences – fight for God, reclaim holy land

1. forgiveness of sins

2. ensured entry to heaven

3. spoils from rich Arabs

4. Thirst for excitement

5. facilitate Christian pilgrim’s visits

6. Venice – save commercial rites

7. attacking Jews

b. Opened to economic/cultural influence of Middle East

I. Religious Reform and Evolution

1. Church started to focus on landholdings/political interests

2. Reform Movements

a. Franciscans poverty/service

b. St. Clare of Assisi – represented new spirit of purity/dedication

c. Pope Gregory VII

1. insisted on holy character of priesthood

2. priests stay unmarried

3. free Church from state control

a. Avoid investiture – state appointment of bishops

4. Church wanted to control/judge heresies

J. High Middle Ages

1. High mark 12th and 13th centuries

2. Dominance of Christianity vs. vitality/diversity of university life

3. Agricultural existence vs. growing cities/merchants

III. Western Culture in the Postclassical Era

A. Theology: Assimilating Faith and Reason

1. Dark Ages – knowledge was gathering quotes, little creativity

2. 1000 forward – attempt to prove God’s existence

3. Also…attempt to prove errors of church leaders

a. Peter Abelard – defiant attitude – logical contradictions of faith

1. Bernard of Clairvaux – monk – faith alone is enough

2. Relied heavily on faith of Bible, like Muslims and Qur’an

B. New Universities

1. Intellectual vitality – university education led to higher jobs

a. Unlike China, success not tied into bureaucratic system directly

2. Students actually paid teachers directly sometimes

C. Thomas Aquinas

1. Faith came first

2. Through reason, humans could find order

3. His Summas used logic to eliminate objections

a. Scholasticism – logic to absurd degrees – can you prove anything logically?

1. Consider Zeno’s paradox – nothing new

D. Emphasis on previous learning, but some exceptions

1. Roger Bacon – optics – added to Muslim learning

a. Eyeglasses

E. Popular Religion

1. Little known of how people actually practiced

2. Religious devotion expanded

a. City religious groups formed

b. Veneration of Mary – merciful side of Christianity

c. worship of saints

3. But…continued to believe in magical rituals

a. Pagan festivals

b. Even…dancing and merriment

F. Religious Themes in Art and Literature

1. Christian art reflected popular outlook and formal religious theology

a. Goal – serve the glory of God

b. Depicted saints

c. Used stylized figures

d. Medieval life as backdrops

e. Stained glass designs for churches

2. Gothic Architecture

a. Combined Muslim design and Western engineering

b. Gothic

1. Soaring spires

2. Tall arched windows – cast to heavens

c. Proved

1. Growing technical skill

2. Ability to tax, central gov’t

3 Patient labor

3. Medieval Literature

a. Mostly Latin, but vernacular writing emerged

1. Similar to India – Sankrit, but the people read Hindi

b. Oral sagas, adventure stories

c. Showed conflict

1. Christian values vs. richness/coarseness of life

d. Love became first new value pursued

e. Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales* – has naughty stories that poke fun at institutions

IV. Changing Economic and Social Forms in the Postclassical Centuries

A. West became a commercial zone

1. Italian merchants actively sought cloth from North

2. Northern cities became centers for Western exchange/markets for exotic products

B. New Strains in Rural Life

1. Most nobles disproved of commerce/some embraced

2. Lord want better conditions, tax higher

a. Some serfs can get paid

b. Led to conflicts – peasant uprisings

1. Frustration over gap between lord and peasant

C. Growth of Trade and Banking

1. Urban growth

a. specialized manufacturing

b. increased commercial activities

c. greater trade

d. banking introduced

2. Rising trade

a. Wanted luxury goods

b. Wanted spices – flavor, preservation, medicinal value

c. Timber/grain from N. Europe to mfg goods from S. Europe

e. Hanseatic League – Scandinavian cities

3. Jewish businessmen became money lenders

4. Trade, bankers, merchants all pushed for capitalism

a. Jacque Coeur – famed merchant – made a ton, lost a ton

5. Merchants

a. Not as wealthy/adventuresome as Muslims

b. But…because of weak govts they had more power

1. Developed rather independently from gov’t

6. Guilds – relatively independent from state – like labor unions today

a. limit membership

b. control apprenticeships

c. discouraged new methods of mfg – goal security not innovation

d. guaranteed quality

e. members had status in local affairs

f.statutes/rules enforced by municipal gov’ts

7. Clock making – technology, schedule of church services

8. Most people peasants though, some moved to city – year and a day rule

9. Economic values – still what’s best for group

D. Limited Sphere for Women

1. Christian religion

a. Equality of souls

b. Women’s monastic groups – convents

c. Veneration of Mary, religious saints

d. But…Eve as cause of original sin

2. Compared to Islam

a. less confined to household

b. less segregated in church services – but couldn’t lead

3. Urban women had role in commerce

a. Could operate/run guilds

4. Literature stressed women as docile/supportive/chivalry

V. Decline of the Medieval Synthesis

A. End of Medieval Era

1. Monarchies consolidated holdings – combined

2. Hundred Years’ War

a. Futility of military methods

1. Paid armies better than knights

2. Ordinary archers better/cheaper

3. Castles ridiculous to gunpowder

b. Futility of feudalism

3. Sources of vitality ending

1. Agriculture can’t keep up with population growth

a. lands used up

b. no new technology

c. led to several famines

2. Series of devastating plagues

a. Black Death

3. Social disputes – peasant uprisings

4. But…manufacturing and mining increases

B. Signs of Strain

1. Land owning aristocracy fading

a. But still keeping ceremony and chivalry – looks silly though

2. Church losing power

a. Church focused on political involvement/loses spiritual side

b. Gov’ts gain power, start taxing Church

3. Breakdown of intellectual/artistic synthesis

a. Now when people speak, it could be called heresy

b. Art now focuses on human figures, less spiritual

C. The Postclassical West and Its Heritage

1. Improvements after 900

a. population

b. trade

c. cities

d. intellectual activity

e. universities

f. Gothic art

g. government based on feudal/Church relations

2. Imitation of surrounding regions – especially Islam

3. Divided rule resembled feudal Japan and feudal Africa

VI. Global Connections

A. Early part – danger of invasions – Vikings

B. Fear of Islam, threat – considered dangerously false religion

C. Problem…much to be learned from this “threat”

D. Europe tried to benefit from this knowledge exchange, while reducing threat