

# WESTERN EUROPE A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

AP World History Notes: Chapter 10

# Catching Up



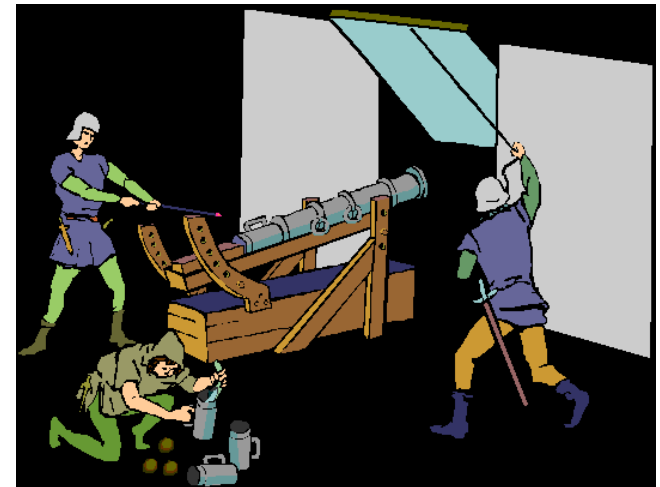
- Western Europe was much less developed than: the Byzantine Empire, China, India, and the Islamic world
  - Smaller cities
  - Politically weaker
  - Less international economy
  - Inferior technology

# Europe's Willingness to Borrow

From:	Received:
Arabs	Scientific ideas, business practices, goods like spices and sugar
Pagan Greeks	Philosophical and artistic ideas
India	Mathematical concepts, spices
China	Silks, porcelain, gunpowder, papermaking, compass, iron casting, nautical technology, a public postal service

# Europe's Own Breakthroughs

- In agriculture = new heavy wheeled plow that could handle the dense soils of Northern Europe
- In energy = non-animal sources = windmill, water-driven mill, complex gearing mechanisms, etc.
  - ▣ Revolutionized production in many industries
- In the military = 1<sup>st</sup> to use gunpowder in cannons



# Pluralism in Politics



- Political life in Western Europe became a system of competing states
  - Ex: France, Spain, England, Sweden, etc.
- Why no single European empire?
  - Geographic barriers
  - Ethnic and linguistic diversity
  - Shifting balances of power among the many states

# Pluralism in Politics

- Result of this type of political system:
  - ▣ Frequent warfare
  - ▣ Enhanced the role and status of military men
  - ▣ Drove the “gunpowder revolution”



# Pluralism in Politics

- 3-way struggle for power in western European states between: monarchs, high-ranking nobles, and church leaders
- As a result = most cities ended up making their own laws and appointing their own local officials
- In many cities → kings granted **charters** = allowed citizens to have their own courts, laws, and governments





# Paving the Way for the Future...

- Development of capitalism
- Development of representative institutions and parliaments
  - ▣ First parliaments represented “estates”
  - ▣ First estate = the clergy
  - ▣ Second estate = the landowning nobility
  - ▣ Third estate = Urban merchants



# Reason and Faith



- Rising tension in Europe between: human reason and faith
- Classical Greek philosophy  
→ Does it contradict religion? Or can it be used to help disclose the truths of Christianity

# Rise of European Universities

- Considered “zones of intellectual autonomy”
- Professors and students could pursue their studies with some freedom from political and religious authorities
- Guild of scholars organized
- Major universities in: Paris, Oxford, Cambridge



# Medieval Universities



Cambridge in England

University of Paris in France





# Medieval Universities



# Reason and Faith



- At these universities is where scholars and students began to examine faith and religion using reason and logic
- Example of a student's question = Can you prove that God exists based solely on reason, without the Bible or other source of divine revelation?

# Reason and Faith

- However, many scholars and students believed that reason could coexist with faith
  - ▣ Logic, philosophy, and rationality would operate in service to Christ





# Desire for Ancient Greek Texts



- Focus on reason and rationality = led scholars to seek out original Greek texts
- Especially those of Aristotle  
→ his writings became the basis for university education
- Many translated from Greek and Arabic into Latin



# Thomas Aquinas

- Helped develop scholasticism = type of learning that balances reason with religious teachings
- Integrated Aristotle's ideas into Christian doctrine
- Said reason was God's gift, given to us to answer philosophical questions

