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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From:</th>
<th>Received:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arabs</td>
<td>Scientific ideas, business practices, goods like spices and sugar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pagan Greeks</td>
<td>Philosophical and artistic ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>India</td>
<td>Mathematical concepts, spices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>China</td>
<td>Silks, porcelain, gunpowder, papermaking, compass, iron casting, nautical technology, a public postal service</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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 = 1st 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
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
Medieval Universities

Cambridge in England

University of Paris in France
Medieval Universities
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