

# Reading Essentials and Study Guide



## Medieval Kingdoms in Europe, 800–1300

### Lesson 3 The Growth of European Kingdoms

#### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS

*How can changes to political systems impact economic activities? How is society influenced by changes in political and economic systems?*

#### Reading HELPDESK

##### Academic Vocabulary

**challenge** a summons that is often stimulating, inciting, or threatening

**document** an original or official paper that gives proof of or support to

**estate** a landed property with a large house; one of the three classes into which French society was divided before the revolution: the clergy (First Estate), the nobles (Second Estate), and the townspeople (Third Estate)

##### Content Vocabulary

**common law** a uniform system of law that developed in England based on court decisions and on customs and usage rather than on written law codes; replaced law codes that varied from place to place

**Magna Carta** the “Great Charter” of rights, which King John was forced to sign by the English nobles at Runnymede in 1215

**Parliament** in thirteenth-century England, the representative government that emerged; it was composed of two knights from every county, two people from every town, and all the nobles and bishops throughout England

#### TAKING NOTES: *Identifying*

**ACTIVITY** As you read, use a table like the one below to identify important events during the High Middle Ages.

England	France	Holy Roman Empire

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#### IT MATTERS BECAUSE

The control of society by the nobility reached its high point between 1000 and 1300. This period was called the High Middle Ages. Kings and queens also began extending their power at the same time. The result was frequent conflict between kings and nobles.

#### England in the High Middle Ages

**Guiding Question** *How did society and the legal system in England evolve after 1066?*

Angles and Saxons were Germanic peoples from northern Europe. They had invaded England early in the fifth century. King Alfred the Great had united, or joined together, various kingdoms in the late ninth century. England had been ruled by Anglo-Saxon kings since then.

#### The Norman Conquest

On October 14, 1066, an army of heavily armed knights landed on the coast of England. They served under William of Normandy, also called William the Conqueror. William was the duke of Normandy, in northern France. The knights fought against King Harold, the Anglo-Saxon king, and his foot soldiers. The Anglo-Saxon army was defeated at the Battle of Hastings. William was then crowned king of England. The king gave his Norman knights land in England. They held the land as fiefs. King William made all nobles swear an oath of loyalty to him as the only ruler of England. The Normans now ruled England.

The Norman ruling class in England spoke French. The people in England spoke Anglo-Saxon, a Germanic language. The interactions between the Normans and the Anglo-Saxons, such as the marriage of Normans to Anglo-Saxon nobility, resulted in new language, English. The Normans also took over existing Anglo-Saxon institutions. One of these was the office of sheriff, a local official who enforced the law. William took a census, which became known as the Domesday Book. It was the first census taken in Europe since Roman times. It counted the people, manors, and farm animals in England. William also expanded the system of taxation and royal courts of justice that were begun by earlier Anglo-Saxon kings.

#### Henry II and the Church

After William's death in 1087, a number of his descendants ruled England. His great-grandson, Henry II, was king of England from 1154 to 1189. The power of the English monarchy grew during the reign of Henry II. He expanded the king's power by expanding the power of the royal courts. For example, Henry increased the number of criminal cases tried in the king's court. He also found a way to take property cases from local courts to the royal courts. Royal courts were found all over England, so a body of **common law** was created. Common law is law that was used everywhere in the kingdom. It began to replace local law codes, which varied from place to place.

Henry was less successful at imposing royal control over the Church. He claimed the right to punish clergymen in royal courts. Thomas à Becket was the archbishop of Canterbury, the highest-ranking member of the English clergy. Becket claimed that only Roman Catholic Church courts could try clerics. The angry king wanted to be rid of Becket. He publicly asked who would help him get rid of the priest, and four knights took the **challenge**. They went to Canterbury and murdered the archbishop in the cathedral. This made the public very angry, and Henry then backed down in his struggle with the Church.

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#### The Magna Carta

King John was the son of Henry II. Many English nobles did not like the growth of the king's power. They rebelled during the reign of King John. At Runnymede in 1215, John was forced by the nobles to put his seal on a document. This **document** was called the **Magna Carta**, or the Great Charter. Feudal custom had recognized that the relationship between king and vassals was based on shared rights and duties. The Magna Carta gave written recognition to that fact. It was used in later years to strengthen the idea that a monarch's power was limited, not absolute.

The **Parliament** emerged in the thirteenth century, during the reign of Edward I. It was important in the development of representative government, or government in which people have a voice. It became one of the basic institutions of modern democratic government. Parliament is the central institution of government in present-day Britain. In the thirteenth century, Parliament included two knights from every county, two people from every town, and all of the nobles and bishops throughout England. The Parliaments of Edward I agreed to taxes, discussed politics, and passed laws. Eventually, the knights and townspeople began to meet separately. Over the centuries, knights and townspeople formed the House of Commons. The nobles and clergy formed the House of Lords. These are the two houses of Britain's Parliament today.



#### Reading Progress Check

*Understanding Historical Interpretation* Why was 1066 a turning point in European history?

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#### France in the High Middle Ages

**Guiding Question** *Why was the reign of King Philip II Augustus a turning point in the French monarchy?*

In 843 the Carolingian Empire was divided into three sections. One of them, the west Frankish lands, formed the core of the kingdom of France. In 987 after the last Carolingian king died, the west Frankish nobles made Hugh Capet their king. This began the Capetian (kuh • PEE • shuhn) dynasty of French kings.

The Capetians had little real power even though they were called kings. The royal domain, or lands they controlled, included only the area around Paris. This area was known as the Ile-de-France.

Philip II Augustus ruled from 1180 to 1223, and his reign was a turning point in the French monarchy. The monarchy expanded its income and power. Philip fought wars against the English to take control of the French territories of Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Aquitaine. Philip's successors continued to add lands to the royal domain.

Louis IX, who reigned from 1226 to 1270, dominated much of the thirteenth century in France. Louis IX was deeply religious, and the Catholic Church later made him a saint. Louis was known for trying to bring justice to his people by hearing their complaints in person. His grandson, Philip IV, ruled from

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1285 to 1314. He was called Philip the Fair. He made the monarchy stronger by expanding the royal bureaucracy. France was the largest and best-governed monarchy in Europe by 1300. Philip IV also created a French parliament by meeting with members of the three **estates**, or orders. The First Estate included the clergy, the Second Estate was the nobles, and the townspeople and peasants were the Third Estate. The meeting was held in 1302. It began the Estates-General, the first French parliament.



#### Reading Progress Check

**Questioning** Why was the reign of Philip II Augustus important to the growth of the French monarchy?

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## The Holy Roman Empire

**Guiding Question** *Why did the lands of Germany and Italy not become united during the Middle Ages?*

The powerful dukes of the Saxons became kings of the eastern Frankish kingdom in the tenth century. This area came to be known as Germany. The best-known Saxon king of Germany was Otto I. Otto was a patron of German culture, and he brought the Church under his control. Otto I was crowned emperor of the Romans in 962 in return for protecting the pope. The title of emperor had not been used since the time of Charlemagne. Otto I created a new Roman Empire under the control of the Germans. This had long-range effects on the history of Europe.

As leaders of a new Roman Empire, the German kings tried to rule both German and Italian lands. Many German kings lost armies in Italy trying to build an empire. The two most famous members of one German dynasty prove this.

Frederick I and Frederick II tried to create a new kind of empire instead of building a strong German kingdom. Frederick I planned to get his money from Italy. He considered Italy the center of a “holy empire,” as he called it. This is how it came to be known as the Holy Roman Empire.

Frederick I’s attempt to conquer northern Italy led to major problems. The pope opposed him because he feared that Frederick wanted to include Rome and the Papal States as part of his empire. The cities of northern Italy had become used to their freedom, and were unwilling to become Frederick’s subjects. An alliance of these northern Italian cities and the pope defeated Frederick’s forces in 1176.

The main goal of Frederick II was to establish a strong, centralized state in Italy. He too was involved in a struggle with the popes and the northern Italian cities. Frederick II waged a bitter struggle in northern Italy, winning many battles but losing the war.

The struggle between popes and German emperors had terrible results for the Holy Roman Empire. The German emperors spent their time fighting in Italy and left Germany in the hands of powerful German lords. These lords ignored the emperor and created their own independent kingdoms. This made the German monarchy weak. It also made the German monarchy unable to keep a strong monarchical state.

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In the end, the German Holy Roman Emperor had no real power over either Germany or Italy. Neither Germany nor Italy created a national monarchy in the Middle Ages. Both Germany and Italy consisted of many small, independent states. It was not until the nineteenth century that these states finally became unified.



#### Reading Progress Check

**Making Connections** What is the origin of the term Holy Roman Empire?

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## Spain and the Umayyad Caliphate

**Guiding Question** *What was the impact of Muslim rule on Europe?*

Most of Spain had become a Muslim province after it was conquered by the Umayyad Caliphate in 725 A.D. This Muslim province was called Al-Andalus. Muslim rule over much of Spain would last for centuries. Because of Muslim rule, the Islamic caliphates had an impact on the social, cultural, and political development of this part of Europe.

Non-Muslim groups in the caliphate, which included Christians and Jews, were allowed to continue practicing their religions. They also had their own courts and could hold minor positions in government. However, Christians and Jews were ruled under the concept of *dhimmitude*. This meant they were subject to a special tax and other regulations meant to remind them that they lived under Muslim rule. Dhimmitude was also found elsewhere in the caliphate. Dhimmitude caused many people to convert to Islam. This was especially true in the southern part of Spain.

Islamic rule also greatly impacted Spanish culture. For example, modern-day Andalusia in the southernmost region of Spain gets its name from the Islamic term “Al-Andalus.” It has been believed that the Spanish language comes only from Latin. However, Arabic influence can be found in many words such as *algebra* or *azúcar*—meaning sugar. Islam’s architectural influence is the most recognizable influence on Spanish culture. The palace of Seville is a good example of this influence. Slender columns, cupolas, and open spaces characterized Moorish architecture.

Politically, the majority of Spain was under the rule of the caliphate or the Emir (Duke) of Córdoba for centuries. However, pockets of Christian resistance remained. This was very true in the northern regions of the Iberian Peninsula. Historians count the *Reconquista*, or the Christian re-conquest of Spain, as beginning as early as 718 A.D. This was when Christian forces won over the forces of the Umayyad Caliphate. By 929 A.D., Spain had divided into a collection of Christian kingdoms in the north and Muslim emirates in the south. The Reconquista would continue for another 500 years.

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#### Reading Progress Check

*Drawing Conclusions* What was the political impact of Islam on medieval Spain?

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## Central and Eastern Europe

**Guiding Question** *Which Slavic peoples formed new kingdoms in eastern and central Europe?*

The Slavic peoples were originally a single group in central Europe. Over time, they divided into three major groups. These groups were called the western, southern, and eastern Slavs.

### Slavic Europe

The western Slavs eventually formed the Polish and Bohemian kingdoms. German monks had converted both the Czechs in Bohemia and the Slavs in Poland to Christianity by the tenth century. The non-Slavic kingdom of Hungary was also converted to Christianity. The Poles, Czechs, and Hungarians (Magyars) all accepted Western Christianity, and they became part of the Roman Catholic Church and its Latin culture.

The eastern Slavs of Moravia were converted to Orthodox Christianity by two Byzantine missionary brothers, Cyril and Methodius. They began their activities in A.D. 863. They converted the eastern Slavic peoples of Moravia to Orthodox Christianity. The Slavic peoples had no written language. Cyril developed the Cyrillic alphabet. He did this so that he could create a Christian Bible and liturgy in the Slavic language.

The southern Slavic peoples included the Croats (CRO-ats), the Serbs, and the Bulgarians. Most of them accepted Eastern Orthodoxy. This was the form of the Catholic religion practiced in the Byzantine Empire. It did not accept the authority of the pope in Rome after 1054. The Croats, however, came to accept the Roman Catholic Church. The acceptance of Eastern Orthodoxy by many southern and eastern Slavic peoples meant that their cultural life was linked to the Byzantine state.

### Kievan Rus and Mongol Rule

Eastern Slavic peoples had also settled in what is now Ukraine and Russia. In the late eighth century, Swedish Vikings came into their lands in search of plunder and new trade routes. The Vikings eventually dominated the native peoples. The native peoples called the invaders “the Rus.” This is where the word “Russia” comes from.

A Viking leader named Oleg settled in Kiev (present-day Kyiv) at the beginning of the tenth century. He created the Rus state known as the Principality of Kiev. Oleg also opened trade with the Byzantines. This increased the prosperity of the Rus. His successors extended their control over the eastern Slavs and expanded Kiev. Soon the Rus controlled all the territory between the Baltic and Black Seas and the Danube and Volga Rivers. The Viking ruling class became part of the Slavic population over time by marrying Slavic women.

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The growth of the principality of Kiev attracted Byzantine missionaries. One Rus ruler, Vladimir, married the Byzantine emperor's sister and officially accepted Eastern Orthodox Christianity for himself and his people in 988. Orthodox Christianity became the religion of the state.

Kievan Rus reached its high point in the first half of the eleventh century. This was largely due to the prosperous trade route between the Baltic and Black Seas. However, civil wars and new invasions brought an end to the first Russian state in 1169.

The Mongols conquered Russia in the thirteenth century. They took over Russian lands and made Russian princes to pay tribute to them. One prince emerged as more powerful than the others. Alexander Nevsky, prince of Novgorod, defeated a German invading army in northwestern Russia in 1242. The khan, leader of the western Mongol Empire, rewarded Nevsky with the title of Grand Prince. His descendants became princes of Moscow and eventually leaders of all Russia.



#### Reading Progress Check

***Making Connections*** How was the Viking ruling class gradually assimilated into the Slavic population?

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