Chapter 11

The Later Middle Ages: Crisis and Disintegration in the Fourteenth Century

Learning Objectives

In this chapter, students will focus on:
- The Black Death, and its impact on European society
- The major problems faced by European states
- The reasons for the decline of authority and prestige of the papacy
- The major developments in art and literature
- The effect of adversities on urban life and medical practices
- Climate and disease as factors in economic, social, and political change

Lecture Outline

I. A Time of Troubles: Black Death and Social Crisis
   A. “Little Ice Age”
      1. Small drop in average temperatures
   B. Famine
      1. Heavy rain (1315 – 1317) led to food shortages
   C. Population growth up to 1300 put pressure on food supply

II. The Black Death
   A. Most devastating natural disaster in European History
   B. Bubonic Plague
      1. Rats and Fleas
      2. Yersinia Pestis
   C. Spread of the Plague
      1. Originated in Asia
      2. Arrived in Europe in 1347
      3. Mortality reached 50 – 60 percent in some areas
      4. Wiped out between 25 – 50 percent of European population (19 – 38 million dead in four years)
      5. Plague returns in 1361 – 1362 and 1369

III. Life and Death: Reactions to the Plague
   A. Plague As a Punishment from God
   B. The Flagellants
   C. Attacks Against Jews
   D. Violence
IV. Economic Dislocation and Social Upheaval
   1. Labor Shortage + Falling prices for agricultural products = Drop in aristocratic incomes
   A. Statute of Laborers (1351) sought to limit wages
   B. Social Mobility
   C. Peasant Revolts
      1. Jacquerie in France (1358)
      2. English Peasants’ Revolt (1381)
   D. Revolts in the Cities
      1. Ciompi Revolt in Florence (1378)
V. The Hundred Years’ War
   A. Causes
      1. Entanglement of French and English royal families
      2. King Edward III (1327 – 1377) claims French crown
      3. French seize duchy of Gascony (1337) sparking war
   B. Conduct and Course of the War
      1. Differences in the armies
      2. Battle of Crecy (1346)
      3. Henry V (1413 – 1422)
         a. Battle of Agincourt (1415)
      1. Charles the Dauphin (heir to the French throne)
      2. Joan of Arc (1412 – 1431)
         a. Siege of Orleans
         b. Captured by allies of the English in 1430
         c. Burned at the stake (1431)
      1. Gunpowder
      2. War ends with French victory (1453)
VI. Political Instability
   A. Breakdown of Feudal Institutions
      1. Scutage
   B. New Royal Dynasties
   C. Financial Problems
      1. Parliaments gain power
VII. The Growth of England’s Political Institutions
   A. Edward III (1327 – 1377)
      1. Parliament
         a. House of Lords
         b. House of Commons
   B. Richard II (1377 – 1399)
      1. Aristocratic factionalism
   C. Henry IV (1399 – 1413)
      1. Deposed Richard II
VIII. The Problems of the French Kings
   A. Weakness of the French Monarchy
B. Estates-General
   1. 1357 meeting
C. Charles VI (1380 – 1422)
   1. Competition between the dukes of Burgundy and Orléans to control Charles

IX. Germany & Italy
   A. The German Monarchy
      1. Breakup of the Holy Roman Empire
      2. Hundreds of States
      3. Elective Monarchy
         a. The Golden Bull (1356)
         b. Weak kings

X. The States of Italy
   A. The States of Italy
      1. Lack of centralized authority
      2. Republicanism to Tyranny
      3. Development of regional states
         a. Milan
         b. Florence
         c. Venice

XI. The Decline of the Church
   A. Boniface VIII and the Conflict with the State
      1. Boniface VIII (1294 – 1303)
         a. Conflict with Philip the Fair of France
         b. Unam Sanctam (1302)
         c. Captured by French at Anagni
      2. Clement V (1305 – 1314)
   B. The Papacy at Avignon (1305 – 1377)
      1. Stay at Avignon leads to a decline in papal prestige
      2. Captives of the French monarchy
      3. New sources of revenue
      4. Catherine of Siena (c. 1347 – 1380)

XII. The Great Schism
   A. Papacy returns to Rome in 1378
   B. Rival popes elected
      1. Pope Urban VI
      2. Pope Clement VII
   C. The Great Schism divides Europe
   D. Calls for systematic reform
      1. Marsiglio of Padua (c. 1270 – 1342), Defender of the Peace
   E. Conciliarism
      1. Council of Pisa (1409)
         a. Deposed both popes and elected a new pope
         b. Popes refuse to step down
c. Results in three popes
2. Council of Constance (1414 – 1418)
3. End of the Schism
4. Pope Martin V (1417 – 1431)

XIII. Popular Religion
A. Trends
  1. Mechanical paths to salvation

B. Mysticism and Lay Piety
  1. Meister Eckhart (1260 – 1327)
  2. Modern Devotion
    a. Gerard Groote (1340 – 1384) and the Brothers of the Common Life

C. Unique Female Mystical Experiences

XIV. Changes in Theology
A. Challenges to Scholastic Thought
B. William of Occam (1285 – 1329)
  1. Nominalism
  2. Consequences of William’s ideas

XV. The Development of Vernacular Literature and New Directions in Art
A. Dante (1265 – 1321)
  1. *The Divine Comedy*

B. Petrarch (1304 – 1374)
  1. Sonnets

C. Boccaccio (1313 – 1375)
  1. *Decameron*

D. Chaucer (c. 1340 – 1400)
  1. *The Canterbury Tales*

E. Christine de Pizan (c. 1364 – 1430)
  1. *The Book of the City of Ladies*

F. Art and the Black Death
  1. Giotto (1266 – 1337)
  2. Morbidity of late fourteenth-century art

XVI. Change & Invention
A. Changes in Urban Life
  1. Greater Regulation
  2. Marriage
  3. Gender Roles
    a. Male: active and domineering
    b. Women: passive and submissive
  1. Medieval children

B. New Directions in Medicine
  1. Hierarchy
  2. Trends
C. Inventions and New Patterns
   1. The mechanical clock
      a. New conception of time
   2. Gunpowder and cannons

Lesson Plan

AP Standards
1. Intellectual and Cultural History
   - Changes in religious thought and institutions
   - Major trends in literature and the arts
   - Developments in social, economic, and political thought, including ideologies characterized as “-isms,” such as socialism, liberalism, and nationalism
   - The diffusion of new intellectual concepts among different groups
   - Developments in elite and popular culture: religion, family, work, and ritual

2. Political and Diplomatic History
   - Political elites, and the development and ideologies of political parties
   - The extension and limitation of rights and liberties
   - Forms of political protest, reform, and revolution
   - War and conflict: origins, developments, technology, and consequences

3. Social and Economic History
   - The character of, and changes in, agricultural production and organization
   - Urbanization: transformation of cultural values and social relationship
   - The shift in social structures, and changing distribution of wealth and poverty
   - Influence of sanitation and health care: food, famine, and disease
   - Changing definitions and attitudes toward social groups, classes, races, and ethnicities within and outside Europe
   - Gender roles and their influence on work, social, and family structure

Suggested Time
4 traditional classes or 2 blocks — The entire chapter covers AP material.

Assessment
See Tutorial Quiz for Chapter 11 at www.academic.cengage.com/history/spielvogel.
## Glossary

**Black Death:** the outbreak of plague (mostly bubonic) in the mid-fourteenth century that killed from 25 to 50 percent of Europe’s population.

**Conciliarism:** a movement in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century Europe that held that final authority in spiritual matters resided with a general church council, not the pope; emerged in response to the Avignon papacy and the Great Schism and used to justify the summoning of the Council of Constance (1414–1418).

**Condottieri:** leaders of mercenary soldiers who sold the services of their troops to the highest bidder.

**Grandi:** patrician class of nobles that dominated Italian cities and towns.

**Great Schism:** the crisis in the late medieval church when there were first two and then three popes; ended by the Council of Constance (1414–1418).

**Jacquerie:** mid-fourteenth century peasant revolt in northern France caused by economic and social disorder as a result of the Black Death and the Hundred Years’ War.

**Mysticism:** the immediate experience of oneness with God.

**Pogroms:** organized massacres of Jews.

**Popolo grasso:** literally the “fat people”; the wealthy merchant-industrialist class of Florence who expanded their political influence during the fourteenth century.

**Popolo minuto:** the small shopkeepers and artisans of the Italian city-states.

**Purgatory:** according to the church, the place where souls went after death to be purged of punishment for sins committed in life.

**Scutage:** monetary payments in lieu of military service; increasingly popular among monarchs during the fourteenth century.

See interactive Flashcards for Chapter 11 at [www.academic.cengage.com/history/spielvogel](http://www.academic.cengage.com/history/spielvogel).

## Lecture and Discussion Topics

1. Disease and History: The Example of the Black Death.
2. The Impact of War on Medieval Society: Example of the Hundred Years' War and Subsequent Peasant Revolts.

3. The Decline of Papal Authority and Its Impact on Church-State Relations.

4. The Great Schism and Its Socio-political and Socio-cultural Repercussions.

5. The Impact of Technology: Medieval Inventions and Their Effect on European Beliefs and Values.

6. Joan of Arc: Mysticism, Royal Credulity, Dynastic Politics, and the Formation of France

**Group Work Suggestions and Possible Projects**

1. Have students do a short paper on the different ways people in the Middle Ages reacted to the Black Plague.

2. Students could trace the development of the English Parliament from the time of the Great Council through the end of the 13th century.

3. Venice became a rich Italian city-state during the late Middle Ages. Have students write a short history of the great Italian city-state.

4. Joan of Arc was a fascinating woman, and there are several good books on her. Have students do a report on Joan.

5. Have students find evidence of medieval popular religion and mysticism in modern religious movements.

6. Assign students to examine the social and economic conditions and the subsequent actions of the peasant unrest that erupted in much of Europe after the Black Death. They might role-play and meet to discuss the issue involved in an advocacy proceeding such as a mock court setting or a debate between peasant leaders and royal officials.

See online simulations and At the Movies activities in the Western Civilization Resource Center at [www.wadsworth.com/history](http://www.wadsworth.com/history).

**Media Menu**

See Resource Integration Guide for Chapter 11.
Handout Masters & Black Line Transparency Masters

See Multimedia Manager and Instructor’s Resource CD-ROM with ExamView® Computerized Testing.

Test Bank

For an online Test Bank, see Chapter 11 in Instructor Resources at www.academic.cengage.com/history/spielvogel.

Suggested Readings

See comprehensive list of suggested readings at the end of Chapter 11.

Web Exercises

See Internet Exercises for Chapter 11 at www.academic.cengage.com/history/spielvogel.

Document Based Questions

Chapters 7 through 11: A Review of Medieval Europe

Directions: The following question is based on the listed documents, available on the corresponding pages in your textbook. Some of the documents have been edited or excerpted. You will be graded based upon the Advanced Placement European History standards for Document Based Questions (DBQs). According to the College Board, DBQs are designed to test your ability to:

…understand some of the principal themes in modern European history, analyze historical evidence and historical interpretation, and express historical understanding in writing.

Part A: Answer the questions that pertain to each document. The questions are designed to help build your understanding of the documents and develop your ability to analyze documents during the beginning of the course. Some of the questions ask you to utilize knowledge outside of the documents. Although you are not required to use outside knowledge on the exam, outside historical context may earn you a higher score. The Advanced Placement examination and DBQs in later chapters will not contain these questions.
Part B: The Advanced Placement examination will require you to write an essay based on a series of documents. You will see the following instructions on the examination:

Write an essay that:
- Has a relevant thesis and supports that thesis with evidence from the documents.
- Uses a majority of the documents.
- Analyzes the documents by grouping them in as many appropriate ways as possible.
- **Does not simply summarize the documents individually.**
- Takes into account both the sources of the documents and the authors’ points of view.

You may refer to relevant historical information not mentioned in the documents.

**Question:** Using the documents and illustrations, compare early medieval society with late medieval society. To what extent was the late medieval period a time of dramatic political, economic, and social change?

**Background:** After the Fall of Rome, life in Europe became to a large extent politically decentralized, economically isolated and increasingly focused on the Catholic Church. Toward the late medieval period, however, certain changes created great shifts in Europe’s political, economic, and social structures, laying the groundwork for modern Europe.

**Part A Questions**

**Chapters 7 through 11: A Review of Medieval Europe**

A. Document: Germanic Customary Law: The Ordeal (Ch. 7)
- What is the source of the argument in this passage?
- How is the argument resolved?
- Which elements of this resolution have their origin in Germanic custom? What influence did Christianity have on this custom?

B. Document: Lords, Vassals, and Fiefs (Ch. 8)
- What did lords grant to their vassals?
- What did the lords expect in return?

C. Map 8.3: A Typical Manor (Ch. 8)
- In what way is the economic system on the manor self-sufficient?
D. Document: The Elimination of Medieval Forests (Ch. 9)
   - Why does Abbot Suger encounter difficulties in finding tall beams for the building of a new church?
   - For what purposes are the forests being cleared?

E. Map 9.1: Medieval Trade Routes (Ch. 9)
   - What areas are producing wine and silk, linen, and other cloth?
   - Which cities are at the center of several trade routes? How can you account for this?

F. Document: The Value of Money (Ch. 9)
   - According to the author, what can money do?
   - According to the author, what are the private and public attitudes of the clergy toward money?
   - What is the author’s opinion on the clergy?

G. Document: Murder in the Cathedral (Ch. 10)
   - Why did the knights kill Becket?
   - According to the author, why did Becket say he was willing to die?
   - What bias might this author have?

H. Document: Magna Carta (Ch. 10)
   - What rights does the king grant the barons in this document?
   - In what ways does this change the medieval relationship between a lord and his nobles?

I. Document: Pope Urban II Proclaims a Crusade (Ch. 10)
   - Why, according to Pope Urban II, should his audience take Jerusalem back from the Muslims?
   - Given Pope Urban’s description of Jerusalem, what other motivations might the Europeans have for the Crusades?
   - What does Pope Urban promise his audience if they go on a Crusade?

J. Map 11.1: Spread of the Black Death and Document: The Black Death (Ch. 11)
   - Based on the map, where and how did the plague enter Europe?
   - According to Boccaccio, where did the plague originate?
   - What attempts did the residents of Florence make to combat the plague?
K. Document: A Revolt of French Peasants (Ch. 11)
   • Against whom did the French peasants revolt?
   • What reasons might they have had for revolting?
   • To what extent did the plague contribute to revolts like this?
   • According to Froissart, what was the revolt like? What bias might this author have?

L. Document: The Hundred Years’ War (Ch. 11)
   • In what ways did combat change during the Hundred Years’ War?
   • According to Froissart, how did the English treat noncombatants? What bias might this author have?
   • What were the causes of the Hundred Years’ War?

M. Illustration: Giotto, Pietà (Ch. 11)
   • In what way did Giotto depict the human figure?
   • How is this a departure from earlier medieval art?

N. Illustration: A Medical Textbook (Ch. 11)
   • What medical techniques do these illustrations depict?
   • In what ways are these techniques a departure from the focus of early medieval medicine?