

16: Medieval Society *Systemic Historical Change*

Overview

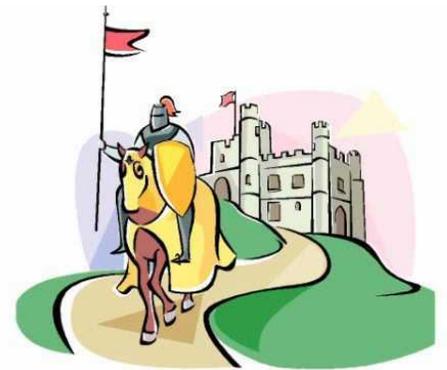
The Roman Empire changed radically, especially in much of Europe, after 300 CE. If you completed Unit 14 (Roman Culture Change), you investigated the origins of these changes—a combination of growing internal problems within the Empire, and invasions by outside “barbarian” fighters. From that unit (p. 8):

“Starting about 250 CE the Goths brought warriors across the Danube River, and attacked and devastated towns and cities in Roman territory.

“Besides the Goths, the empire was facing serious border attacks and raids during this period by other troops of “barbarians.” To their north: the Carpi (from what is now Romania), along with Vandals and Alemanni (from what is now Germany), mounted raids against Roman forces and settlements, attacking from across the Rhine and Danube Rivers. In the west, the Franks were a growing threat.”

In this unit, you’ll investigate the new kind of society that developed in Europe following the collapse of the Roman Empire in Western Europe.

Many people have a romantic view of the “Medieval” era—knights in shining armor, jousting matches, fair maidens needing to be rescued from moat-surrounded castles, and so on. We’ll see if those views survive a closer look at the era.



Investigation: System Change in Europe

Your task in this unit will differ somewhat from earlier units.

We’ll provide some rather miscellaneous information. ***With the Model in front of you, and working with others, study all the data, listing as you go what seems to fit in the Model’s categories, subcategories, and so on. If you can, draw inferences (e.g. “Going into battle, large groups of archers with longbows would have required hundreds, or even thousands of arrows. Arrow making must have been an important kind of work.”) Add your inferences to your lists.***

When that’s done, ***look for relationships between various parts of the Model-linked information you’ve collected (e.g. between the characteristics of particular settings and particular patterns of action, etc.)***

Finally, ***develop some generalizations about how and why European society changed from the era when the Roman Empire was dominant.***

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Tribes invading the Roman Empire were similar in many ways. A late Roman historian describes one tribe, the “Huns.” (Written about 390 CE):¹

The people called Huns, slightly mentioned in the ancient records, live beyond the Sea of Azov, on the border of the Frozen Ocean, and are a more savage race than any other.

...they wander about, roaming over the mountains and the woods, and accustom themselves to bear frost, hunger and thirst from their very cradles. Even when traveling, they never enter a house unless forced by extreme necessity. They don't think people under roofs are as safe as those outside.

...they are not well suited to infantry battles, but are nearly always on horseback, their horses being ill-shaped, but hardy; and sometimes they even sit upon them like women if they want to do anything more conveniently. There is not a person in the whole nation who cannot remain on his horse day and night. On horseback they buy and sell, they take their meat and drink, and there they recline on the narrow neck of their steed, and sleep so deeply that they have every kind of dream.

When any planning is to take place on an important matter, they meet on horseback. They are not under the authority of a king, but are satisfied with the informal command of their leaders, and under their lead they force their way through all obstacles.

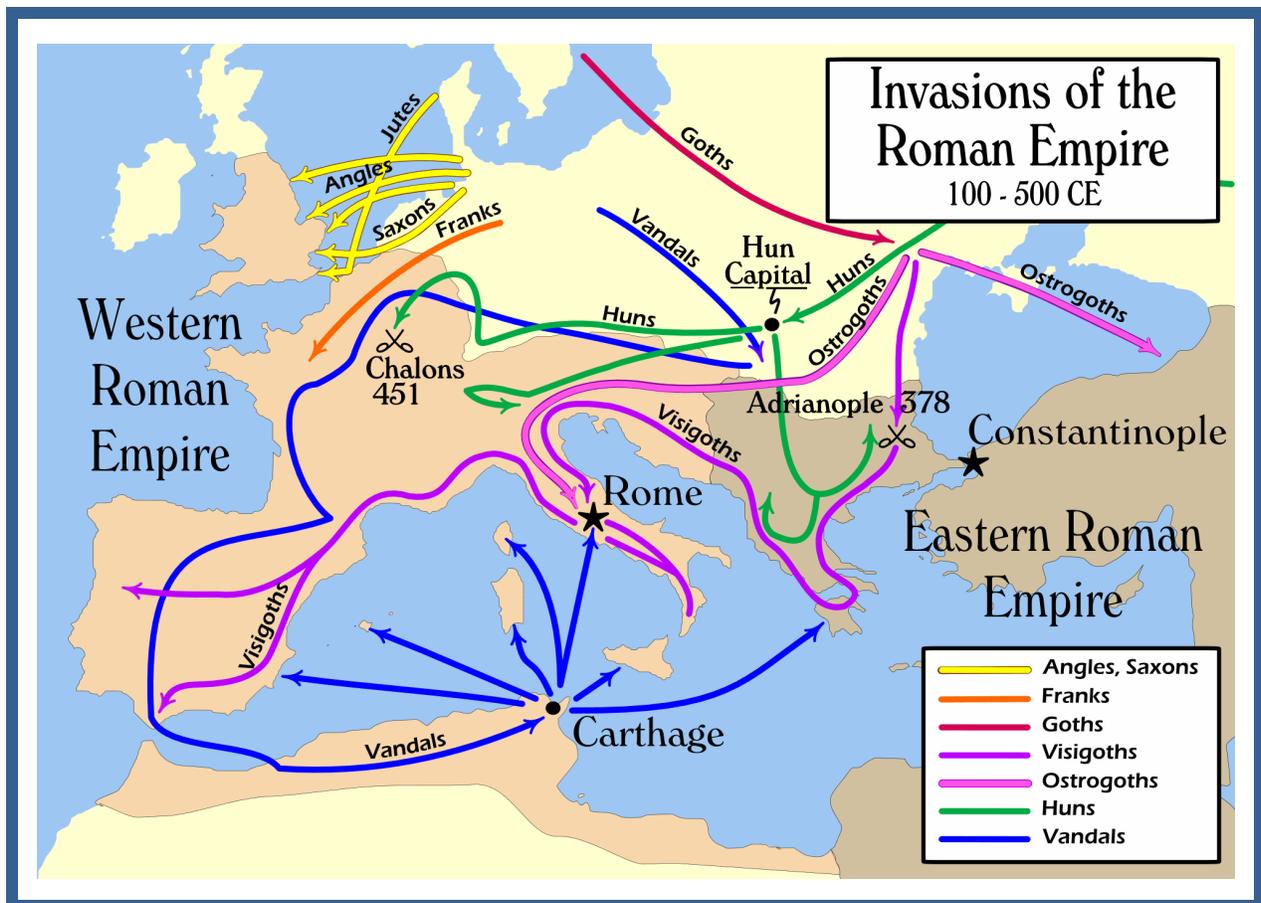
Sometimes, when provoked, they fight; and when they go into battle, they form in a solid body, and utter all kinds of terrible yells. They are very quick in their operations, moving rapidly, and are fond of surprising their enemies. To do this, they suddenly disperse, then reunite. Then, after having inflicted vast loss upon the enemy, they scatter themselves over the whole plain in irregular formations. They avoid forts and defensive trenches.

You may consider them the most formidable of all warriors. At a distance they use thrown spears of various kinds, tipped with sharpened bones instead of the usual points of javelins, and these bones are admirably fastened into the shaft of the javelin or arrow. When they are at close quarters they fight with the sword, without any regard for their own safety. Often while their opponents are warding off their blows they entangle them with twisted cords, binding the opponent's hands so they cannot ride or walk.

None of them plough, or even touch a plough handle; for they have no settled abode, but are homeless and lawless, perpetually wandering with their wagons, which they make their homes; in fact, they seem to be people always in flight. Their wives live in these wagons, and there weave their miserable garments; and here, too, they sleep with their husbands, and bring up their children till they reach the age of puberty...

This active and unconquerable race, being excited by an overwhelming desire to plunder the possessions of others, went on ravaging and slaughtering all the nations in their neighborhood till they reached the Alani...

¹Ammianus Marcellinus, *History of Rome from Constantine to Valens*, C. D. Yonge, tr. (London: George Bell and Sons, 1885) (adapted) http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/AmmHuns.html



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medieval_Corsica

Gregory of Tours 539-594 CE:¹

After this the Vandals left their own country and burst into the territory of the Gauls [what is now France] under king Gunderic. And when the Gauls had been thoroughly laid waste they made for the Spains. The Suebi (also called Alamanni), following them, seized Galicia [northwest Spain]. Soon a quarrel arose between the two peoples, since they were neighbors. When they had gone armed to the battle, and were ready to begin fighting, the king of the Alemanni said: "Why are all the people involved in war? Let our people, I pray, not kill one another in battle, but let two of our warriors go to the field in arms and fight with one another. Then he whose champion wins shall hold the region without strife." To this all the people agreed... And in the conflict of the champions the side of the Vandals was overcome, and, his champion being slain, Thrasamund promised to depart, and so, when he had made the necessary preparations for the journey, he left the territories of Spain.

¹ Gregory of Tours 539-594 CE, *History of the Franks*, Book II, Chapter 2.
<http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/basis/gregory-hist.asp#pref1>

The Roman Empire split in two after the capitol was moved east to Constantinople, and Roman governing of the western half gradually fell apart because of internal problems and raids from “barbarian” outsiders.

These raids from outside tribes, along with internal strife and wars, continued throughout medieval times. The growth of Islam led to Moorish invasion (from North Africa) of the Iberian Peninsula (now Portugal and Spain) beginning in 711. About 790, Vikings from Scandinavia began raiding Britain and many parts of Europe. Some Vikings eventually settled in and controlled part of what is now northern France, adopting local ways of life. In 1066 these Normans (“north men”) invaded and conquered Great Britain.

Below: Chepstow Castle, Chepstow, Wales, the oldest stone post-Roman construction in Great Britain. Construction started in 1067 CE. The water to the right is the Wye River.



<http://carneycastle.com/Chepstow/aerial.jpg>

Thousands of castles were built in continental Europe and Britain during Medieval times (4000 just in Switzerland!). ***What is the relationship between castle construction and conditions at the time?***

“Serfs” (in Britain called “Villeins”) were peasant workers, not quite slaves, who lived on and farmed property owned by a lord. They owed a portion of their services to the lord (as much as two days each week), working on the lord’s own farmland. This lord would either be a local ruler, or else a church official such as an abbot (in charge of a monastery). Additional land was assigned for the serf’s own use, to support his family. Serfs were attached to the land, and weren’t allowed to move to another lord’s territory. Status as a serf was usually inherited. In turn, for the service of the serf, the lord provided protection, justice, and certain property rights. One statement of their duties:¹

As to the tenant farmers, they either serve as serfs of the Church or make some kind of fixed payment: this is the agrarian tax according to the opinion of the steward. The steward (estate manager) sees to it that each gives according to what he has; out of thirty measures of grain he gives three measures, and each pays a pasture fee according to the custom of the district. He is to plough, sow, enclose, harvest, haul, and put away the crops from the regular enclosures—which are four ten-foot measuring rods in width and forty in length. He is to enclose, reap, gather, and put away one *arpent* in meadow. Every farmer ought to collect and put away grain to the value of a *triens* for seed. Each farmer must plant, enclose, dig up, extend, prune, and collect the harvest of the vineyards. They each pay ten bundles of flax. Four hens they must pay also. They provide riding-horses or go where they are ordered. They do carriage service with a cart up to fifty leagues; to go further is not expected. They are assigned to the estate-owned houses, haylofts, farms; they have a reasonable amount of land for earning the tax, and when necessary they pay it in a lump sum.

Reeve and serfs in medieval England:²



Not all the workers living near an estate were serfs or villeins. Many were “freemen” who owned their own property. Some well-off freemen owned large plots of land, but were required to pay taxes and provide some services to their local lord or abbot.

¹ Louis the Pious, “Duties of the Coloni,” 817 CE <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/817coloni.asp>

² <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Serfdom>

Book illustration, France, 13th century:



The three main divisions of society:
Those who pray,
those who fight,
those who work.

<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cleric-Knight-Workman.jpg>

Population Estimates (millions) ¹						
Area ▼	Year ►	500	650	1000	1340	1450
Greece/Balkans		5	3	5	6	4.5
Italy		4	2.5	5	10	7.3
Spain/Portugal		4	3.5	7	9	7
France/Low Countries		5	3	6	19	12
British Isles		0.5	0.5	2	5	3
Germany/Scandinavia		3.5	2	4	11.5	7.3
Eastern Europe		5.5	3.5	9.5	13	9.3

¹ <http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/pop-in-eur.asp>

Medieval illustration of the Battle of Crécy, 1346 CE, an important English victory over a larger army of the French in the Hundred Years War:



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_crecy_froissart.jpg

Note that almost everything shown here is a part of the Model element “setting.”

In this battle, the English longbow was more effective than the crossbow. (*Why?*)



<https://www.pinterest.com/fatchur1900/armour/>

Scholars estimate that each knight, fully equipped and providing service to a lord as a warrior, required three horses and the support of 100 workers.

Explain.

A knight was a “vassal,” generally sworn in a formal ceremony, near relics of saints held within a church or chapel, to support his lord:¹

Lord: “Do you wish, without any reservations, to become my man?”

Vassal: “I so wish.”

The lord clasps the hands of the vassal between his own, and the vassal kisses the lord.

Vassal: “I promise by my [Christian] faith that from this time forward I will be faithful to my lord, and will maintain toward him my total honor and duty against every man, in good faith and without any deception.”

The lord then touches the vassal with a stick, and announces that the vassal is officially sworn to duty [“invested”].

¹ Frances & Joseph Gies, *Daily Life in Medieval Times*, p. 27a, 2005, Kent, England, Grange Books edition (adapted)

1348 CE: The “black death,” in England, described by Henry Knighton, a leading priest (canon) at the abbey of St Mary of the Meadows, Leicester:”¹

The dreadful pestilence penetrated the sea coast by Southampton and came to Bristol, and there almost the whole population of the town perished, as if it had been seized by sudden death; for few kept their beds more than two or three days, or even half a day. Then this cruel death spread everywhere around, following the course of the sun. At Leicester in the small parish of St. Leonard more than 380 persons died, in the parish of Holy Cross, 400; in the parish of St. Margaret's, Leicester, 700; and so in every parish, a great multitude. Then the Bishop of London sent word throughout his whole diocese giving general power to each and every priest, regular as well as secular, to hear confessions and to give absolution to all persons with full Episcopal authority, except only in case of debt. In this case, the debtor was to pay the debt, if he was able, while he lived, or others were to fulfill his obligations from his property after his death. Likewise the Pope granted full remission of all sins to anyone receiving absolution when in danger of death, and granted that this power should last until Easter next following, and that everyone might choose whatever confessor he pleased.

The epidemic affected all of Europe, Asia and North Africa, killing at least 75 million people, and perhaps as many as 200 million. Recent DNA tests on the remains of victims have confirmed that the disease was bubonic plague. Over most of the affected area, an average of about one in three people died. The disease was spread by bites from fleas carried by rats. Black spots and raised pustules (buboes) typically appeared first in the underarms or groin of an infected person, then spread over the whole body. (Some of those infected recovered.) Sometimes (“pneumonic plague”) it spread by inhaling airborne mist (from coughing) from an infected person, almost 100% deadly.²

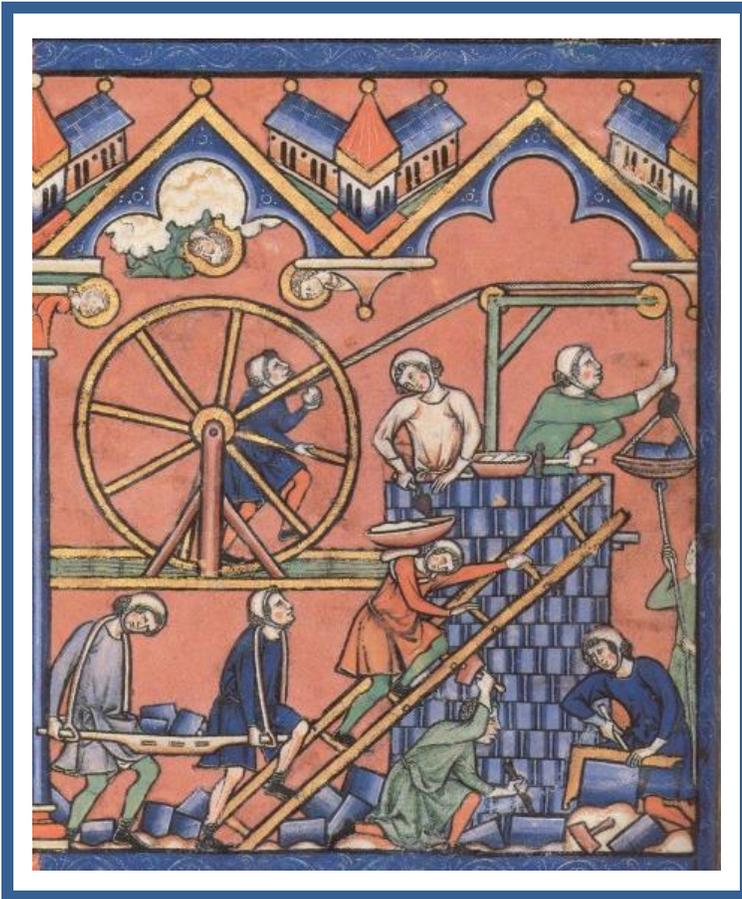


<http://www.geneticliteracyproject.org/2015/08/27/black-death-plague-back-correction-never-left-thanks-evolution/>

¹Chronicles, translated by Edith Rickert, in *Chaucer's World* (ed E. Rickert, C. C. Olson and M. M. Crow) Oxford University Press 1948. <http://www.mytimemachine.co.uk/blackdeath.htm>

² Plague is a present-day disease. See <https://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/000596.htm>.

Medieval technology:¹



<http://www.medievalists.net/2008/10/25/the-windmill-a-medieval-steam-engine/>



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_early_medieval_watermills



¹ "Treadmillcrane" by Marie Reed - Own work. Licensed under Public Domain via Commons - <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Treadmillcrane.jpg#/media/File:Treadmillcrane.jpg>

In early medieval times, members of the Carolingian family became rulers of the Franks, in what's now Germany and France. In 768, Charlemagne ("Charles the Great") became king in what is now Germany when his father died. He began expanding control into additional territory, taking over almost all of central Europe, including portions of what's now eastern France and northern Italy. In 800, the Pope crowned him emperor of what eventually became known as the "Holy Roman Empire," even though his domain wasn't a true successor to the original Roman Empire.

Charlemagne owned several estates in various parts of his empire, and required an annual inventory of each estate. One of these inventories (about 800 CE):¹

We found in the imperial estate of Asnapium a royal house built of stone in the very best manner, having three rooms. The entire house was surrounded with balconies and it had eleven apartments for women. Underneath was one cellar. There were two porticoes. There were 17 other houses built of wood within the court-yard, with a similar number of rooms and other fixtures, all well-constructed. There was 1 stable, 1 kitchen, 1 mill, 1 granary, and 3 barns. The yard was enclosed with a hedge and a stone gateway, and above was a balcony from which distributions could be made. There was also an inner yard, surrounded by a hedge, well arranged, and planted with various kinds of trees.

Of vestments: coverings for 1 bed, 1 table-cloth, and 1 towel.

Of utensils: 2 brass kettles; 2 drinking cups; 2 brass cauldrons; 1 iron cauldron; 1 frying-pan; 1 gramalmin; 1 pair of andirons; 1 lamp; 2 hatchets; 1 chisel; 2 augers; 1 axe; 1 knife; 1 large plane; 1 small plane; 2 scythes; 2 sickles; 2 spades edged with iron; and a sufficient supply of utensils of wood.

Of farm produce: old spelt from last year, 90 baskets which can be made into 450 weight of flour; and 100 measures of barley. From the present year, 110 baskets of spelt, of which 60 baskets had been planted, but the rest we found; 100 measures of wheat, 60 sown, the rest we found; 98 measures of rye all sown; 1,800 measures of barley, 1,100 sown, the rest we found; 430 measures of oats; 1 measure of beans; 12 measures of peas. At 5 mills were found 800 measures of small size. At 4 breweries, 650 measures of small size, 240 given to the prebendaries, the rest we found. At 2 bridges, 60 measures of salt and 2 shillings. At 4 gardens, 11 shillings. Also honey, 3 measures; about 1 measure of butter; lard, from last year 10 sides; new sides, 200, with fragments and fats; cheese from the present year, 43 weights.

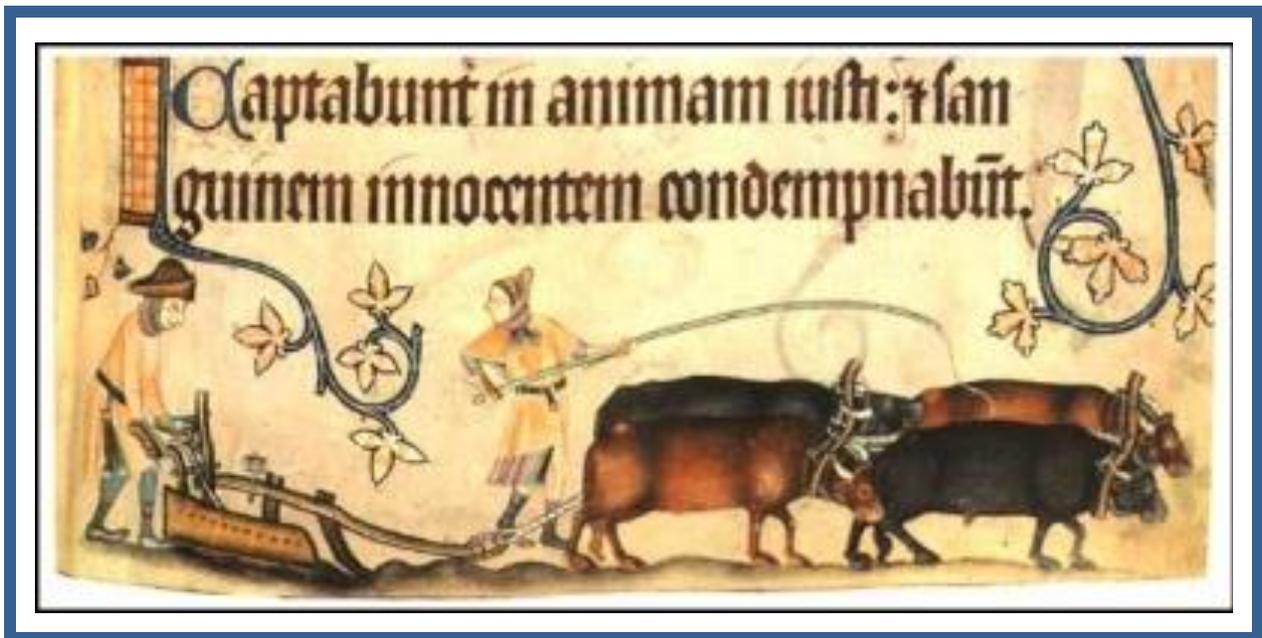
Of cattle: 51 head of larger cattle; 5 three-year olds; 7 two-year olds; 7 yearlings; 10 two-year old colts; 8 yearlings; 3 stallions; 16 cows; 2 asses; 50 cows with calves; 20 young bulls; 38 yearling calves; 3 bulls; 260 hogs; 100 pigs; 5 boars; 150 sheep with lambs; 200 yearling lambs; 120 rams; 30 goats with kids; 30 yearling kids; 3 male goats; 30 geese; 80 chickens; 22 peacocks.

(Continued)

¹ Frederic Austin Ogg, ed., *A Source Book of Mediaeval History: Documents Illustrative of European Life and Institutions from the German Invasions to the Renaissance*, (New York, 1907, reprinted by Cooper Square Publishers (New York), 1972), pp. 127-129. <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/800Asnapium.asp>

Also concerning the manors which belong to the above mansion. In the villa of Grisio we found domain buildings, where there are 3 barns and a yard enclosed by a hedge. There were, besides, 1 garden with trees, 10 geese, 8 ducks, 30 chickens. In another villa we found domain buildings and a yard surrounded by a hedge, and within 3 barns; 1 arpent of vines; 1 garden with trees; 15 geese; 20 chickens. In a third villa, domain buildings, with 2 barns; 1 granary; 1 garden and 1 yard well enclosed by a hedge.

We found all the dry and liquid measures just as in the palace. We did not find any goldsmiths, silversmiths, blacksmiths, huntsmen, or persons engaged in other services. The garden herbs which we found were lily, putchuck, mint, parsley, rue, celery, libesticum, sage, savory, juniper, leeks, garlic, tansy, wild mint, coriander, scullions, onions, cabbage, kohlrabi, betony. Trees: pears, apples, medlars, peaches, filberts, walnuts, mulberries, quinces.



<http://medievalnews.blogspot.com/2013/01/how-heavy-plough-changed-world.html>

Follow-Up: Defense Here and Now

The need for defense against raiders helped shape medieval society. The need for defense against various dangers continues today.

Identify what you believe to be the greatest threat to the life, liberty or situation of yourself and people important to you. Then identify and analyze the effectiveness of whatever systems are in place to counteract the threat. Note that the threat may not come from a particular group, but from other forces (e.g. nature, as in violent storms, earthquakes or disease). Prepare a report (paper, verbal, or other) on your conclusions.

For Teacher/Mentor—Overview:

Medieval society evolved from a combination of Roman influences and “barbarian” culture, but the major changes came in response to three sources, (1) loss of centralized control by Roman authorities, (2) the pressures exerted by a wide variety of raiders—many of them nomads or former nomads on horseback similar to those investigated in Unit 9 (Persian Empire), and (3) the influence of Christianity and the church.

The obvious (to this day) changes resulting from these influences were in setting—castles, churches, and abbeys. Castles were invented as the logical way to defend and maintain control of territory against raiders, allowing a small group of warriors to withstand attack from a far larger transient force.

The Medieval era (500-1500 CE) is one of considerable technological advancement. Historians Frances and Joseph Gies, authors of several authoritative books on medieval society:

“Today we recognize that one of the great technological revolutions took place during the medieval millennium with the disappearance of mass slavery, the shift to water- and wind-power, the introduction of the open-field system of agriculture, and the importation, adaptation, or invention of an array of devices, from the wheelbarrow to double-entry bookkeeping, climaxed by those two avatars of modern Western civilization, firearms and printing.”¹

Learners who have completed previous units in this series will have developed investigative methods and conceptual tools to let them move into this activity with an increased level of autonomy. **The objective of this unit is to enhance learners’ abilities to do what they’ll be doing for the rest of their lives--organizing miscellaneous “raw” data to make the most-possible sense of it, discover knowledge-expanding relationships between various aspects of reality, and speculate about the dynamics and direction of change.**

Introduction to the unit:

As an introduction, we recommend using “Stirrups and Medieval Society,” an activity from *Connections: Investigating Reality* (unless learners have done that investigation recently). **Student materials for this investigation are on the next page, along with a copy (following page) of the expanded Model from Unit 9, which will be helpful for the main unit investigation.**

For a recent critical analysis of the possible relationships between stirrups and the rise of feudalism, see:

<https://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/med/sloan.asp>

However, this article doesn’t invalidate relationships between stirrups and a whole cascade of changes associated with armor, knights, and other societal changes in medieval times, as pointed up by the investigation.

¹ Frances and Joseph Gies, *Cathedral, Forge and Waterwheel, Technology and Invention in the Middle Ages*, 1st ed., 1994, New York, HarperCollins Publishers, Inc. p. 15

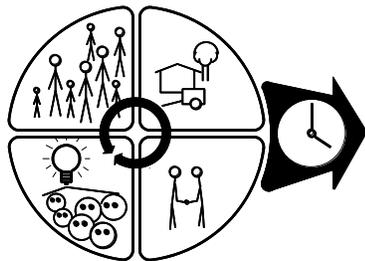
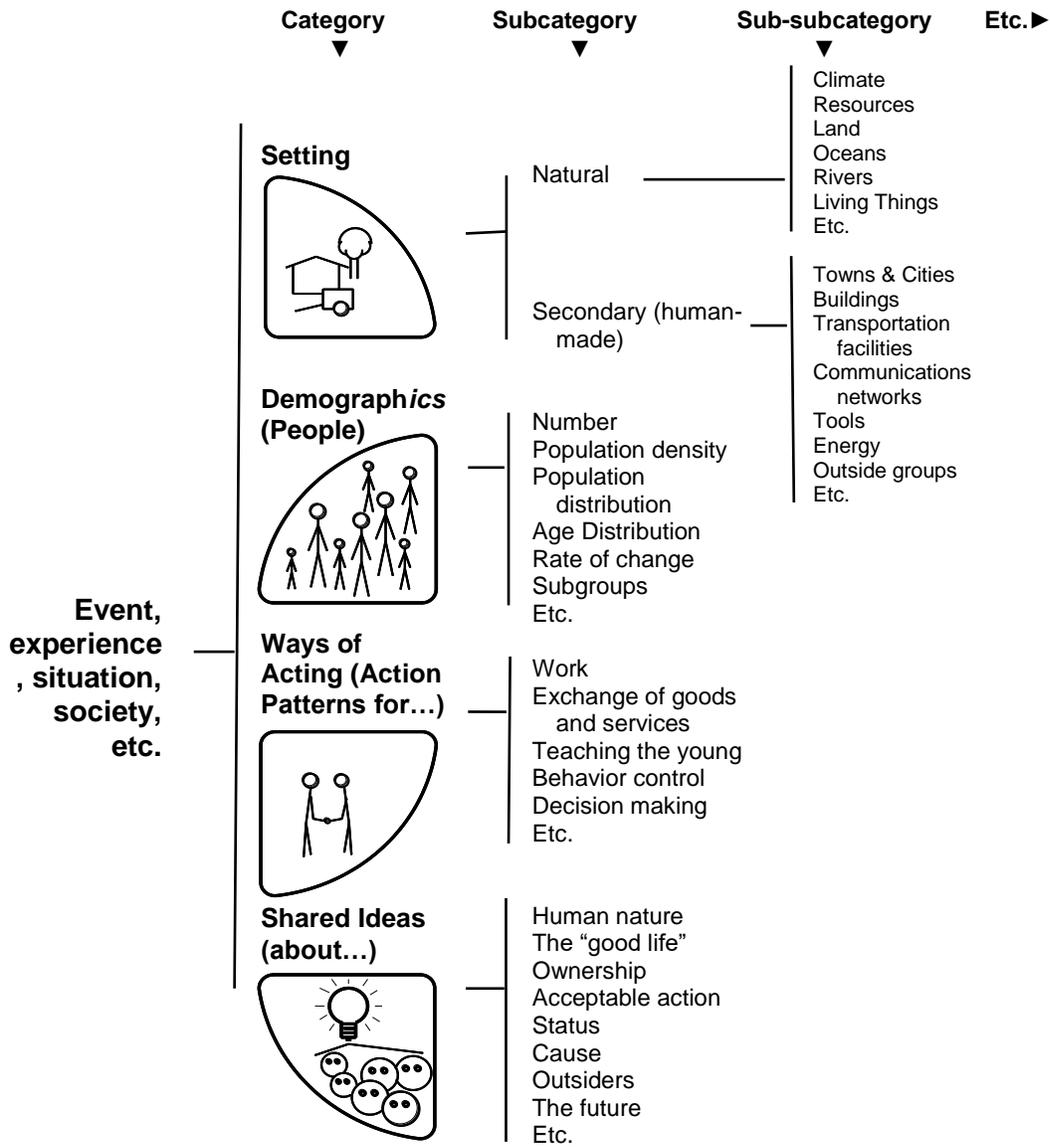
Investigation: Stirrups and Medieval Society

Before the middle Ages in Europe, armies of Greece and Rome mostly fought on foot. Some light cavalry (soldiers on horses) was used, and some “barbarian” horse-mounted troops fought effectively against Greek and Roman forces. However, cavalry troops became much more powerful after they adopted stirrups (which were probably invented in Asia). The change was so significant that it was one element bringing a new age to Europe.

Below, in random sequence, is a list of 14 changes that followed the invention of stirrups. Rearrange the list to show as many direct cause-effect relationships as you can. (Copying the 14 items on slips of paper or Post-It Notes® may make them easier to shuffle and arrange.) Show the changes in a diagram.

- Horse saddles with stirrups
- Improvements in metallurgy and metal-working skills
- Armor for men and horses
- Increase in need for grain
- Increased social class and wealth differences
- Increase in cost of fighting
- Greater stability on horseback
- Help in donning armor, mounting, care of horses
- Need for bigger, stronger horses, and more of them
- More land under cultivation
- Taxation of farmers and peasants
- Bridge construction
- More effective use of lance and battle axe
- Advances in animal husbandry and breeding

The Model: History and System Change



Time & Systemic Relationships:
 In every situation, each category (and sub-category) is affected by many others. Changes across time can occur in every category, triggering other changes.

Investigation: System Change in Europe

Images and primary sources, along with a bit of background, illustrate (1) some of the forces shaping medieval society, and (2) data for various aspects of that society. The main task of learners is to identify relationships, over and over, between the elements depicted in the data. The main task of the teacher or mentor is to keep them focused on these relationships, and making sure learners are linking them together systemically, moving toward answers to the main guide activity: ***Develop some generalizations about how and why European society changed from the era when the Roman Empire was dominant.***

Learners should be encouraged to “mine” as much information as possible from each data selection. For example, the detailed illustration of the Crécy battle should be analyzed in detail to identify and list all the technology shown, starting with the castle in the upper left. Each item of technology implies skilled craftsmen of various sorts, and these could be inferred and listed. This could raise questions about where the craftsmen did their specialized work. Many (crossbow makers, for example) probably didn’t reside on the estate of the lord sponsoring the soldier using the crossbow, but probably followed their craft in a town, contracting to sell their products regionally.

The fundamental relationship between threat of raiders and the design of castles is the focus of the early data in the unit. In addition to illustrating aspects of medieval society such as relative status, evidence suggesting the influence of the Church on medieval society is in data on pages 5, 6, 8, 9 and in the comments on page 11. Data suggesting the necessary self-sufficiency of the medieval estate is in the inventory on Page 11. The inventory includes some unfamiliar words, which students may wish to research, but the general nature of the inventory should be apparent to most readers. One interesting question: Which items in the inventory were probably NOT produced on the estate?

The data in this unit are inadequate to give a complete picture of medieval society. We’ve chosen to exclude some information to avoid making the learner’s tasks too complex. For example, warming climate change, peaking in the 11th and 12th centuries, moved northern Europe out of the “little ice age,” extending the growing season. This change is no doubt significant for the northern increase in population and change in culture. We’ve included no data for the growth of commerce, towns and fairs during this period, an essential aspect of medieval life. Data for the innovation of Gothic church architecture during the late Middle Ages was also excluded to reduce complexity. Some may wish to add additional data to investigate one or more of these subjects. One source:

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/Halsall/sbook.asp>.

Additional information on the Black Death plague is at

http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/plague/perspectives/de_mussi.php and <http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/boccaccio2.asp>.

The Black Death population decline resulted in an insufficient supply of workers, which tended to drive up wages. An official attempt to counteract this:

<http://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/seth/ordinance-labourers.asp>

Some learners may choose to focus on technology (for which there is much data), some may focus on differences between Roman and Medieval societies, some on other aspects

of the medieval social system. Data for social status and stratification of various subgroups is scattered throughout the unit, and provides a possible focus for student investigation.

Much of the data deals with one or another aspect of setting (which includes technology). One element of setting is “outside groups.” Outsiders threatened, of course, leading to defensive reactions, but also were the source for new elements of culture (e.g. stirrups, the rigid horse collar for draft horses, and other kinds of technology diffused from Asia).

The extreme type of cavalry represented by the armored knight may not have been the best possible response to the dangers posed by raiders. Knights were expensive warriors, costly to equip. They required a great deal of logistical support, primarily to maintain and feed their horses under battle conditions, when grazing was impossible. In spite of their armor, they were vulnerable to certain kinds of attack. For example, the well-trained Swiss infantry equipped with pikes and halberds were effective against mounted and armored knights, and much less expensive than knights to maintain in the field—hence their popularity as mercenary soldiers at the end of medieval times.

However, the impressive appearance of the armored knight, along with the associated status, mystique and élan of knighthood were no doubt enticing to both the knight and his sponsoring lord—and this may help explain the prevalence of this form of warrior.

Carroll Quigley, on this subject:

“...Germanic and Frankish cavalry, under Charlemagne, Otto the Great, and others, had saved Western culture from numerous pagan threats. Methods of fighting from horseback had become well established, almost formalized, and had begun to assume those chivalric embellishments that contributed so much to the institutionalization of this method of warfare. Noble youths, as we all know, spent years in jousting and tournaments to achieve the skill considered necessary for success on the field of battle.

“The supremacy of the medieval knight was still unquestioned in the early decades of the fourteenth century. The defeat of French chivalry at the hands of bourgeois infantry before Courtrai in 1302 was dismissed by the losers as an inexplicable and unrepeatable accident. On the Celtic fringe of Britain, similar defeats at the hands of lower-class longbow men were more readily recognized for what they were, a new and successful tactic, and bowmen were incorporated into the English armies. By means of this innovation, English mercenary armies were able to inflict a series of disastrous defeats on French feudal forces in the century following the opening of the Hundred Years’ War in 1338. The inability of the French knights to analyze their defeats is one of the best examples we have of the reactions of an institutionalized force to weapons innovation. Of the numerous blinders on their eyes, the most significant perhaps was their inability to conceive that men of low birth could kill men of noble blood from a distance. A similar inability, in the same period, made it impossible for the noble cavalry of Burgundy and of the Hapsburgs to analyze their defeats at the hands of Swiss pikemen.”¹

¹ Carroll Quigley, *The Evolution of Civilizations*, second edition, 1979, Indianapolis, IN, Liberty Fund, pp. 104-5

Some learners may choose to move beyond the data within the unit to identify other sources of information about medieval society, in a library or on the Internet. This course hasn't dealt significantly with the issue of source validity, but it may be worthwhile to caution them about possible bias and error in outside resources.

Crusades: As an expansion for older or more advanced classes, investigation of the ideas and actions of the Crusades will add traditional content, along with additional chances to expand skills in processing historical data. A wide collection of primary sources are available on the Internet, for example at <http://sourcebooks.fordham.edu/sbook1k.asp> and http://www.shsu.edu/~his_ncp/Cruslet.html.

Follow-Up: Defense Here and Now

This is designed as an individual activity, but could be done as a group activity by having learners identify their threats, then grouping those with the same or similar threats together. It could be expanded by having learners survey people with whom they have contact to identify their perceptions of threats.

(HLB) October 2015