A procession of flagellants at Tournai in Flanders in 1349, marching with the crucified Christ and scourging themselves in imitation of his suffering. © ARPL/HIP/The Image Works

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1

The Late Middle Ages: Social and Political Breakdown (1300–1453)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

What were the social and economic consequences of "The Black Death"?

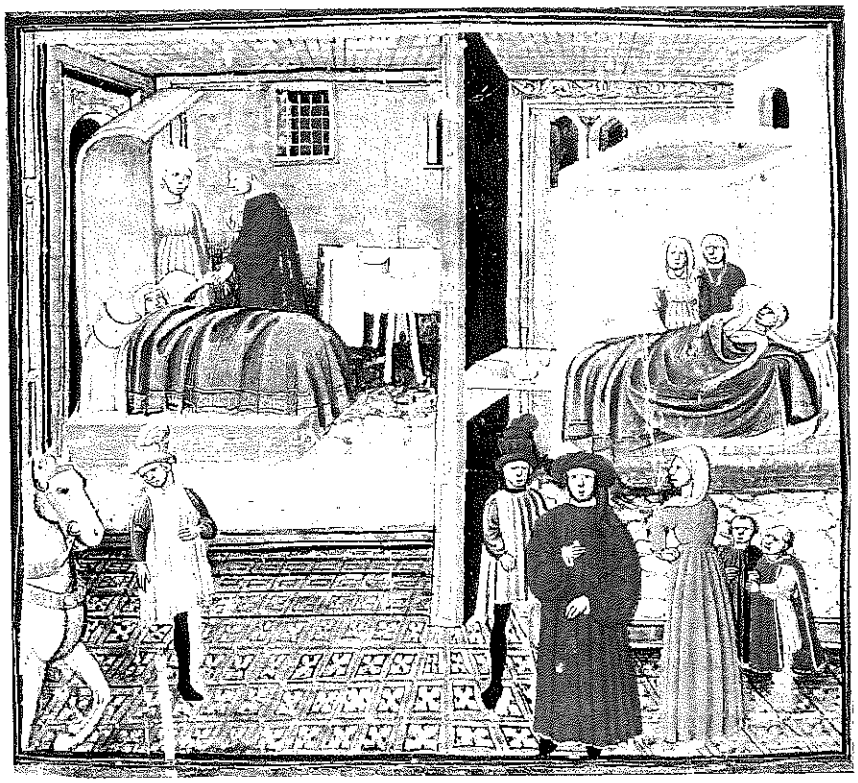
How did the Hundred Years' War contribute to a growing sense of national identity in France and England?

How did secular rulers challenge papal authority in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries?

How did Mongol rule shape Russia's development?

DURING THE LATE Middle Ages epidemic plagues contributed to almost unprecedented political, social, and ecclesiastical calamity. Sweeping over almost all of Europe, the great pandemic that struck between 1346 and 1353 left two-fifths of the population dead. No one then, however, called it "The **Black Death**," a term invented in the sixteenth century. In these same years, France and England grappled with each other in a prolonged conflict known as the Hundred Years' War (1337–1453). In the war's later stages, mutual, willful self-destruction was made even more horrible by the introduction of gunpowder and the invention of heavy artillery. If those two events were not calamity enough, a great Schism erupted in the Church (1378–1417), creating the spectacle of three elected competing popes and colleges of cardinals.

Black Death The bubonic plague that killed millions of Europeans in the fourteenth century.



This illustration from the *Canon of Medicine* by the Persian physician and philosopher Avicenna (980–1037), whose Arabic name was Ibn Sina, shows him visiting the homes of rich patients. In the High Middle Ages, the *Canon of Medicine* was the standard medical textbook in the Middle East and Europe. Biblioteca Universitaria, Bologna, Italy. Scala/Art Resource, NY

In 1453, the Turks marched invincibly through Constantinople into the West. As political and religious institutions buckled, disease, bandits, wolves, and Islamic armies gathered on the borders. Confronting overwhelming calamities Europeans beheld what seemed to be the imminent collapse of their civilization. These centuries saw rulers resist wisdom, nature strain mercy, and the clergy turn its back on its flock.

▼ The Black Death

Preconditions and Causes of the Plague

The virulent plagues struck Europe at a time of overpopulation and malnutrition. Nine-tenths of the population lived and worked in the countryside. Over time, the three-field system of crop production increased the amount of arable land and with it the food supply. As the latter grew again, so did the population, now estimated to have doubled over the two centuries between 1000 and 1300. Now again there were more people than there was food to feed them and jobs to employ them.

The average European could then face the probability of extreme hunger at least once in an expected thirty-five-year lifespan. Between 1315 and 1317, crop failures produced the greatest famine of the Middle Ages. Densely populated urban areas, such as the industrial towns of the Netherlands, suffered the most. Decades of overpopulation, economic depression, famine, and bad health weakened Europe's population, leaving it highly vulnerable to a bubonic plague that struck with full force in 1348. The description of the plague as "The Black Death" referenced the discoloration of its victims. Riding the backs of rats, plague-infested fleas from the Black Sea area boarded the sailing ships on the trade routes from Asia to Europe, thereby planting the plague in Western Europe. Appearing in Constantinople in 1346 and in Sicily a year later (1347), it entered Europe through the ports of Venice, Genoa, and Pisa by 1347, sweeping rapidly through Spain and southern France into northern Europe. (See Map 1–1.)

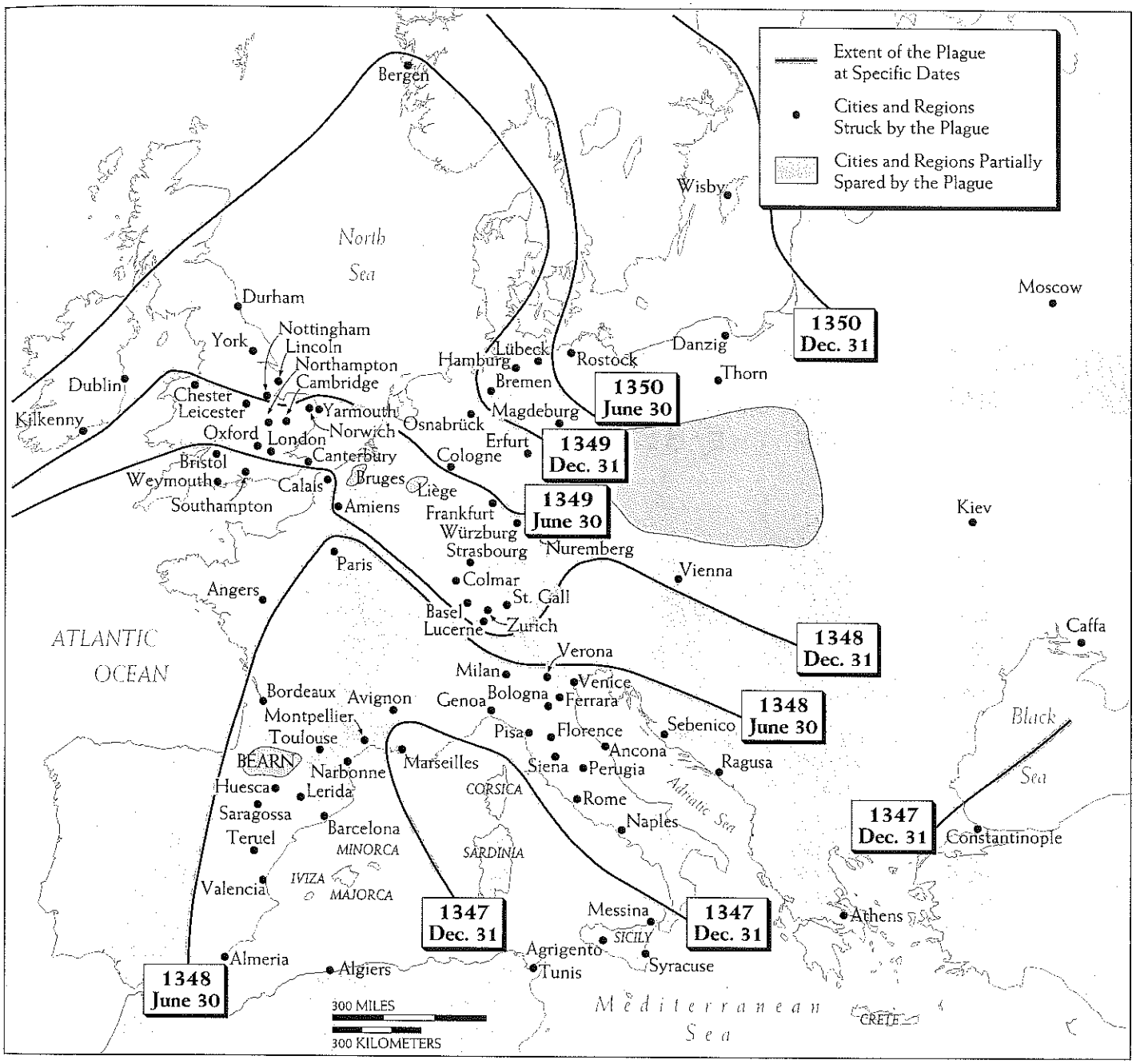
What were the social and economic consequences of "The Black Death"?

Watch the Video "Video Lectures: The Plague" on MyHistoryLab.com

Popular Remedies

Plague reached many a victim's lungs during the course of the disease. The sneezing and wheezing of victims spread the plague by direct contact from person to person. Despite the plague's power, physicians, academics, and educated laypeople found effective ways to cope with and defend themselves against the plague. The advice literature described the plague as punishment for sin and recommended penance as the best resolution. Physicians had numerous guidelines to health. They applied natural, herbal medications in good conscience and often to good effect. There were also "green" measures, such as fumigating rooms and aerating city spaces with herbs and smoke, a remedy that lowered the number of fleas. Other measures were washing and cleansing with scented waters.

Read the **Document** "University of Paris Medical Faculty, Writings on the Plague" on **MyHistoryLab.com**



Map 1–1 **SPREAD OF THE BLACK DEATH** Apparently introduced by seaborne rats from Black Sea areas where plague-infested rodents had long been known, the Black Death brought huge human, social, and economic consequences. One of the lower estimates of Europeans dying is 25 million. The map charts the plague's spread in the mid-fourteenth century. Generally following trade routes, the plague reached Scandinavia by 1350, and some believe it then went on to Iceland and even Greenland. Areas off the main trade routes were largely spared.

Popular speculation held that corruptions in the atmosphere caused the plague. Some blamed poisonous fumes released by earthquakes, which moved many to seek protection in aromatic amulets. Eyewitness Giovanni Boccaccio, an Italian, recorded the different reactions to the plague in a famous collection of tales of the plague, titled *The Decameron* (1358). Some of the afflicted sought an escape in moderation and a temperate life, while more fatalistic minds gave themselves over entirely to their passions. In the stricken areas, sexual promiscuity ran high. "The best remedy perhaps," wrote Boccaccio, "was flight and seclusion, migration to non-infected lands, and keeping faith."

Read the **Document** "Flagellants Attempt to Ward Off the Black Death, 1349" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

One extreme reaction was the procession of flagellants, religious fanatics who beat themselves in ritual penance in the belief that it would bring divine help. More likely, their dirty, bleeding bodies both increased the terror and spread the disease. So socially disruptive and threatening did they become that the church outlawed all such processions. In some places Jews were cast as scapegoats, the result of centuries of Christian propaganda that bred hatred toward Jews, as did also their own role as society's moneylenders. Pogroms occurred in several cities, sometimes incited by the flagellants.

Modern DNA studies of plagues past are shedding new light on the medieval epidemics. The exploration of ancient burial pits across Europe confirm the bacterium, *Yersinia pestis*, to have been the cause of the plague, while research continues to study unknown strains of the bacterium. The debate today continues over whether bubonic plague was the sole lethal agent. Were there more disease agents in the

Document

BOCCACCIO DESCRIBES THE RAVAGES OF THE BLACK DEATH IN FLORENCE

The Black Death provided an excuse to the poet, humanist, and storyteller Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375) to assemble his great collection of tales, The Decameron. *Ten congenial men and women flee Florence to escape the plague and pass the time telling stories. In one of the stories, Boccaccio embeds a fine clinical description of plague symptoms as seen in Florence in 1348 and of the powerlessness of physicians and the lack of remedies.*

What did people do to escape the plague? Was any of it sound medical practice? What does the study of calamities like the Black Death tell us about the people of the past?

In Florence, despite all that human wisdom and forethought could devise to avert it, even as the cleansing of the city from many impurities by officials appointed for the purpose, the refusal of entrance to all sick folk, and the adoption of many precautions for the preservation of health; despite also humble supplications addressed to God, and often repeated both in public procession and otherwise, by the devout; towards the beginning of the spring of the said year [1348] the doleful effects of the pestilence began to be horribly apparent by symptoms that [appeared] as if miraculous.

Not such were these symptoms as in the East, where an issue of blood from the nose was a manifest sign of inevitable death; but in men and women alike it first betrayed itself by the emergence of certain tumours in the groin or the armpits, some of which grew as large as a common apple, others as an egg, some more, some less, which the common folk called gavoccioli. From the two said parts of the body this deadly gavoccioli soon began to propagate and spread itself in all directions indifferently; after which the form of the malady began to change, spots black or livid making their appearance in many cases on the arm or the thigh or elsewhere, now few and large, now minute and numerous. And as the gavoccioli had been and still were an infallible token of approaching death, such also were these spots on whomsoever they shewed themselves. Which maladies seemed to set entirely at naught both the art of the physician and the virtues of physic; indeed, whether it was that the disorder was of a nature to defy such treatment, or that the physicians were at fault . . . and, being in ignorance of its source, failed to apply the proper remedies; in either case, not merely were those that recovered few, but almost all died within three days of the appearance of the said symptoms . . . and in most cases without any fever or other attendant malady.

From *The Decameron of Giovanni Boccaccio*, trans. J. M. Rigg (New York, 1930), p. 5.

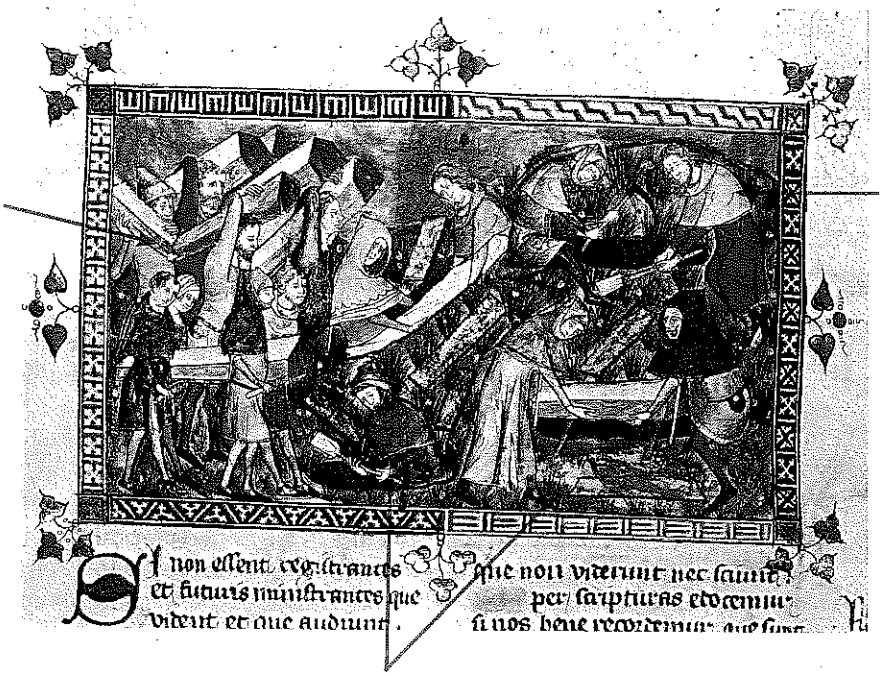
A Closer LOOK

View the **Closer Look** on **MyHistoryLab.com**

A BURIAL SCENE FROM THE BLACK DEATH

ORIGINATING IN ASIA, the Black Death reached Europe around 1347. Raging for close to four years in some areas, the disease affected every class in European society and destroyed between a quarter to a third of the population. This illustration, *The Burying of Plague Victims in Tournai*, is from a 1349 manuscript entitled *Annals of Gilles de Muisit*. Tournai was a thriving trading center in Belgium at the time of the plague. The entire image is filled with those burying the dead and the many that wait to be buried. Approximately 7500 people died from the disease every day.

Children were especially vulnerable. Jean de Venette, a Carmelite friar in Paris, noted that many men "left many inheritances and temporal goods to churches and monastic orders, for in many cases they had seen their close heirs and children die before them."



There was often a shortage of coffins, and it was impractical to wait until they could be built before burying the deceased. As a result, large, makeshift graves were common.

Snark/Art Resource, NY

This image illustrates the necessity of a quick burial, and there seems to be little to no orderliness in the process. The objective was to dispose of bodies as quickly as possible in order to prevent the spread of the disease. In the rush to bury the dead, graves were dug with little attention to detail or ritual.

How does this rendition depict the enormity of the disease? How did the plague impact towns such as Tournai?

What might be deduced about the spiritual and emotional toll the pandemic took on the population of Europe?

ENCOUNTERING THE *Past*

DEALING WITH DEATH

DEATH WAS ALL too familiar in the late Middle Ages, and not just in the time of the plague, when both princes and the simple folk buried their children in the same communal pits. In popular art and literature, the living and the dead embraced in the "Dance of Death," reminding rich and poor, young and old, of their mortality. In the fourteenth century, death divided the Middle Ages from the Renaissance: On one side of the divide was an overpopulated medieval society devastated by the four horsemen of the Apocalypse. On the other side, a newly disciplined Renaissance society learned to forestall famine, plague, war, and conquest by abstinence, late marriage, birth control, and diplomacy.

Yet death rates in the past were three times those of the modern West and life expectancy only half as long. Life was a progressive dying, and death a promise of everlasting life. In sixteenth-century Florence, fully a third of newborns died in infancy. In seventeenth-century England, infant mortality was 2 percent on the day of birth, 4 percent at the first week, 9 percent by the first month, and 13 percent at the end of the first year. By their teens and adulthood almost everyone had suffered from some chronic illness (tuberculosis), debilitating condition (arthritis, gout), and/or life-threatening infection (streptococci).

Death and the Physician, from the series Dance of Death. Death leads an old man to a physician and, standing between physician and patient, hands the physician a urine sample for examination. This 1545 woodcut by Hans Lützelburger, after Hans Holbein the Younger, can be seen as a commentary on the futility of the medical profession in its attempts to ward off the inevitable.

In Renaissance Italy, Lorenzo de' Medici, duke of Urbino (d. 1519), was plagued with leg ulcers and syphilis in his early twenties. At twenty-five, he received a head wound that was treated by trephination (i.e., the boring of holes in his skull). The poor man also developed an abscessed foot that never healed. At twenty-six, he fell prey to chills, fever, diarrhea, vomiting, joint pains, and anorexia, and was dead at twenty-seven. His physicians identified the cause of death as a catarrhal phlegm, or "suffocation of the heart."

Looking ahead, in Reformation Germany, at the age of sixty-two Saxon Elector Frederick the Wise of Saxony (d. 1525), who was Martin Luther's protector, spent the last year of his life enclosed in his favorite residence. When his strength permitted, he rolled about the castle on a specially made stool with wheels. Cursed with kidney stones, he died from septic infection and kidney failure when the stones became too many and too large to pass through his urethra. An autopsy discovered stones "almost two finger joints long and spiked."

Those who suffered from such afflictions found themselves, in the words of a sixteenth-century merchant, "between God and the physicians," a precarious position for the chronically ill in any age. The clergy and the physicians profited greatly from the age's great mortality. People feared both dying and dying out of God's grace. Together, the physician and the priest prepared the way to a good temporal death, while the priest guided the dead through purgatory and into heaven, assisted by the laity's purchase of indulgences and commemorative masses. Like the physicians' bleedings and herbal potions, the church's sacraments and commemorations exploited and eased the passage into eternity that every Christian soul had to make.

Sources: Bruce Gordon and Peter Marshall, eds. *The Place of the Dead: Death and Remembrance in Late Medieval and Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2008), chaps. 2, 14; Ann C. Carmichael, "The Health Status of Florentines in the Fifteenth Century," in M. Tetel et al., eds. *Life and Death in Fifteenth-Century Florence* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), chap. 3.

How do illness and death shape history and culture?

How well prepared were the physicians and the clergy to address and heal the stricken?

Were the afflicted only wasting their time with herbal remedies and prayers?

Name some contemporary medicines and procedures that might have given the afflicted at least some relief, comfort, and hope.

mix, such as anthrax, typhus, smallpox, dysentery, or an ebola-like virus? Still to be resolved is the question of how the bacillus, the fleas, the rats, and humans interacted at the various temperatures, humidity, and geographical locations to spread the epidemic across Europe.

Social and Economic Consequences

Whole villages vanished in the wake of the plague. Among the social and economic consequences of such high depopulation were a shrunken labor supply and a decline in the value of the estates of the nobility.

Farms Decline As the number of farm laborers decreased, wages increased and those of skilled artisans soared. Many serfs chose to commute their labor services into money payments and pursue more interesting and rewarding jobs in skilled craft industries in the cities. Agricultural prices fell because of waning demand, and the price of luxury and manufactured goods—the work of skilled artisans—rose. The noble landholders suffered the greatest decline in power. They were forced to pay more for finished products and for farm labor, while receiving a smaller return on their agricultural produce. Everywhere rents declined after the plague.

Peasants Revolt To recoup their losses, some landowners converted arable land to sheep pasture, substituting more profitable wool production for labor-intensive grains. Others abandoned the farms, leasing them to the highest bidder. Landowners also sought to reverse their misfortune by new repressive legislation that forced peasants to stay on their farms while freezing their wages at low levels. In 1351, the English Parliament passed a Statute of Laborers, which limited wages to pre-plague levels and restricted the ability of peasants to leave their masters' land. Opposition to such legislation sparked the English peasants' revolt in 1381. In France the direct tax on the peasantry, the ***taille***, was increased, and opposition to it helped ignite the French peasant uprising known as the Jacquerie.

View the **Map** "Map Discovery: The Spread of the Black Death and Peasant Revolts" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

taille (TIE) The direct tax on the French peasantry.

Cities Rebound Although the plague hit urban populations hard, the cities and their skilled industries came in time to prosper from its effects. Cities had always protected their own interests, passing legislation as they grew to regulate competition from outside rural areas and to control immigration. After the plague, the reach of such laws extended beyond the cities to include the surrounding lands of nobles and landlords, many of whom now peacefully integrated into urban life.

The omnipresence of death also whetted the appetite for goods that only skilled industries could produce. Expensive clothes and jewelry, furs from the north, and silks from the south were in great demand in the decades after the plague. Initially this new demand could not be met. The basic unit of urban industry, the master and his apprentices (usually one or two), purposely kept its numbers low, jealously guarding its privileges. The first wave of plague turned this already restricted supply of skilled artisans into a shortage almost overnight. As a result, the prices of manufactured and luxury items rose to new heights, which, in turn, encouraged workers to migrate from the countryside to the city and learn the skills of artisans. Townspeople profited coming and going. As wealth poured into the cities and per capita income rose, the prices of agricultural products from the countryside, now less in demand, declined.

New Conflicts and Opportunities

By increasing the demand for skilled artisans, the plague contributed to social conflicts within the cities. The economic and political power of local artisans and trade guilds grew steadily in the late Middle Ages, along with the demand for goods and

services. The strong merchant and patrician classes found it increasingly difficult to maintain their traditional dominance and only grudgingly gave guild masters a voice in city government. As the guilds won political power, they lobbied for restrictive legislation to protect local industries. The restrictions, in turn, caused conflict between master artisans, who wanted to keep their own numbers low and expand their industries at a snail's pace, thereby denying many a journeyman a chance to rise to the rank of master.

After 1350, the results of the plague put the two traditional "containers" of monarchy—the landed nobility and the Church—on the defensive. Kings now exploited growing national sentiment in an effort to centralize their governments and economies. At this same time, the battles of the Hundred Years' War demonstrated the superiority of paid professional armies over the old noble cavalry, thus bringing the latter's future role into question. The plague also killed many members of the clergy—perhaps one-third of the German clergy fell victim as they dutifully attended to the sick and the dying. The reduction in clerical ranks occurred in the same century that saw the pope move from Rome to Avignon in southeastern France (1309–1377) and the Great Schism (1378–1417) divide the Church into new warring factions.

How did the Hundred Years' War contribute to a growing sense of national identity in France and England?

▼ The Hundred Years' War and the Rise of National Sentiment

Medieval governments were by no means all-powerful and secure. The rivalry of petty lords kept lands in constant turmoil, allowing dynastic rivalries to plunge entire lands into war, especially when power was being transferred to a new ruler. This doubled the woes of the ruling dynasty that failed to produce a male heir.

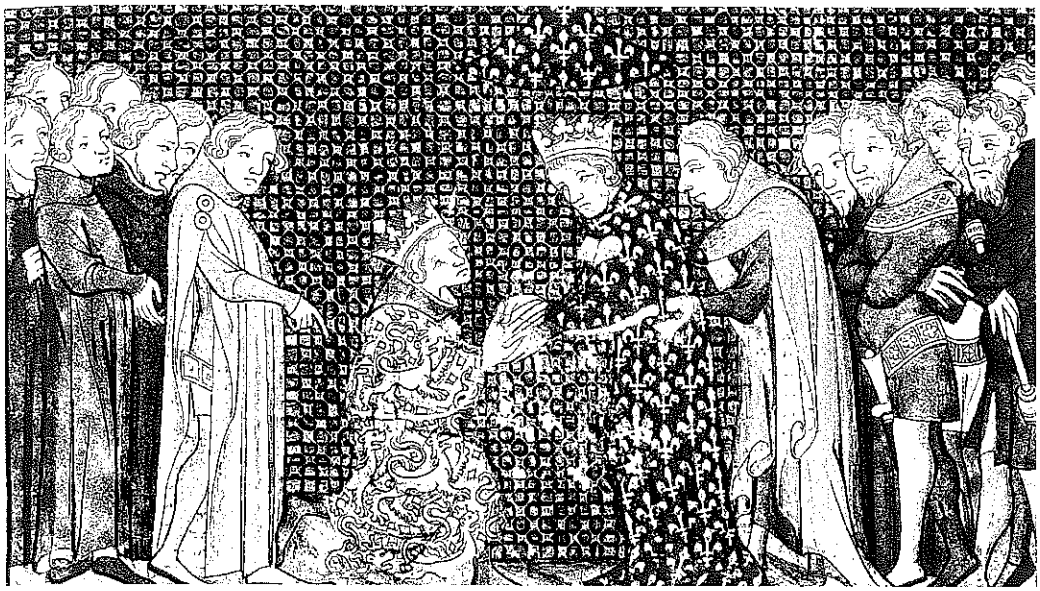
To field the armies and collect the revenues that made their existence possible, late medieval rulers depended on carefully negotiated alliances among a wide range of lesser powers. Like kings and queens in earlier centuries they, too, practiced the art of feudal government, but on a grander scale and with greater sophistication. To maintain the order they required, the Norman kings of England and the Capetian kings of France fine-tuned traditional feudal relationships by stressing the sacred duties of lesser powers to higher ones, and the unquestioning loyalty noble vassals owed to their king. The result was a degree of centralized royal power unseen before in these lands, accompanied by a growing national consciousness that prepared both France and England for a prolonged, international war.

The Causes of the War

View the Map "Interactive Map: The Hundred Years' War" on MyHistoryLab.com

The great conflict came to be known as the Hundred Years' War because it began in May 1337 and extended off and on to October 1453. English king Edward III (r. 1327–1377), the grandson of Philip the Fair of France (r. 1285–1314), may have started the war by asserting his claim to the French throne after the French king Charles IV (r. 1322–1328), the last of Philip the Fair's surviving sons, died without a male heir. The French barons had no intention of placing the then fifteen-year-old Edward on the French throne. They chose instead the first cousin of Charles IV, Philip VI of Valois (r. 1328–1350), the first of a new French dynasty that would rule into the sixteenth century.

There was of course more to the war than just an English king's assertion of a claim to the French throne. England and France were then two emergent territorial powers in close proximity to one another. Edward, a vassal of Philip VI, actually controlled several sizable French territories as fiefs from the king of France, a relationship dating back to the days of the Norman conquest. English possession of any French land was repugnant to the French because it threatened the royal policy of centralization. The two lands also quarreled over control of Flanders, which, although a French fief, was subject to political influence from England because its principal



Edward III pays homage to his feudal lord Philip VI of France. Legally, Edward was a vassal of the king of France. Archives Snark International/Art Resource, NY

industry, the manufacture of cloth, depended on supplies of imported English wool. Compounding these frictions was a long history of animosity between the French and English people, who constantly confronted one another on the high seas and in ports. Taken altogether, these factors made the Hundred Years' War a struggle for national identity as well as for control of territory.

French Weakness France had three times the population of England, was far the wealthier of the two lands, and fought on its own soil. Yet, for most of the conflict before 1415, the major battles ended in often stunning English victories. [See Map 1–2, page 44.] The primary reason for these French failures was the internal disunity brought on by endemic social conflict. Unlike England, fourteenth-century France was still struggling to make the transition from a splintered feudal society to a centralized "modern" state.

Desperate to raise money for the war, French kings resorted to such financial policies as depreciating the currency and borrowing heavily from Italian bankers, which aggravated internal conflicts. In 1355, in a bid to secure funds, the king turned to the **Estates General**, a representative council of townspeople, clergy, and nobles. Although it levied taxes at the king's request, its independent members exploited the king's plight to broaden their own regional sovereignty, thereby deepening territorial divisions.

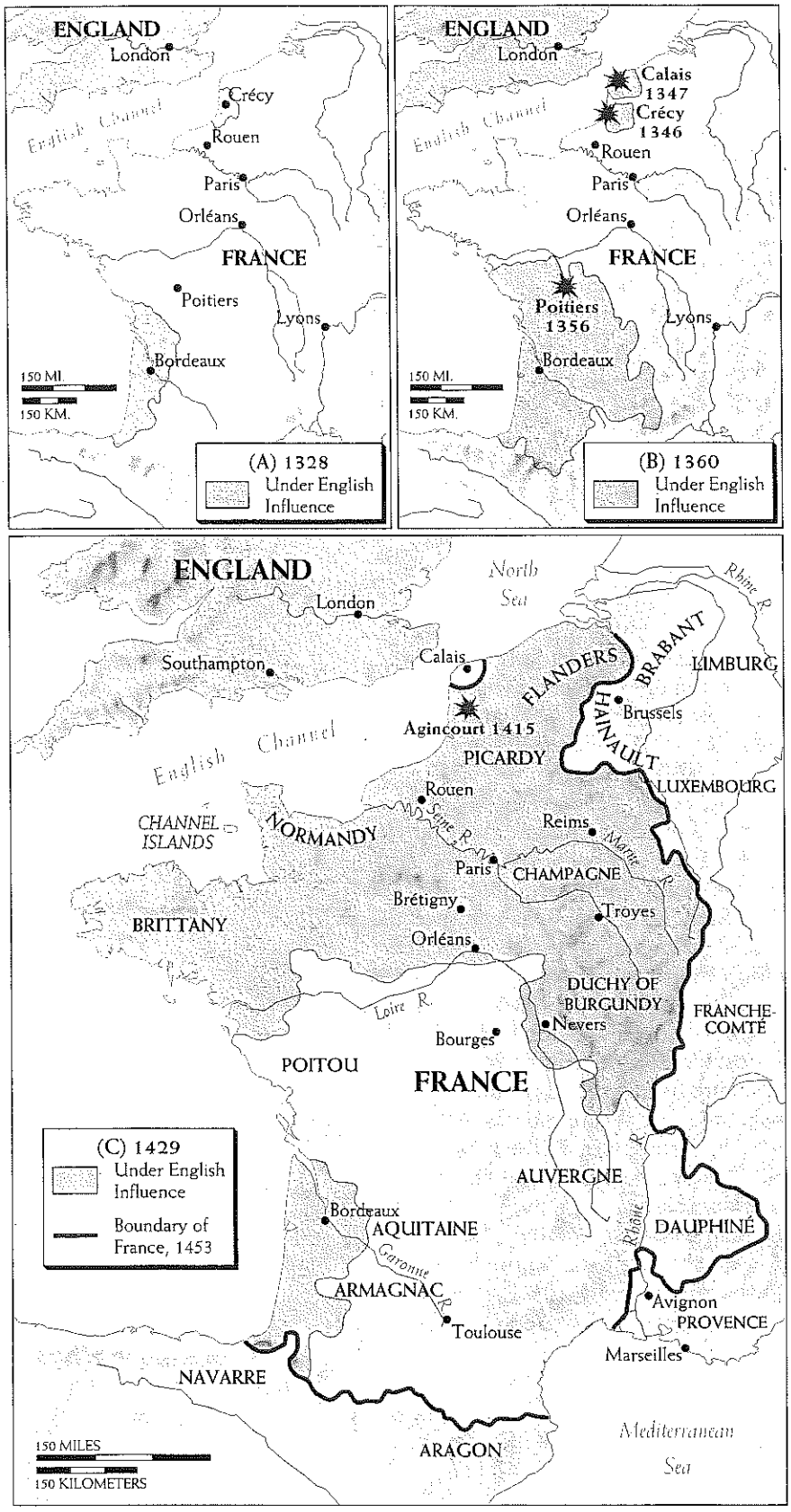
Estates General The medieval French parliament. It consisted of three separate groups, or "estates": clergy, nobility, and commoners. It last met in 1789 at the outbreak of the French Revolution.

France's defeats also reflected English military superiority. The English infantry was more disciplined than the French, and the English archers mastered a formidable weapon, the longbow, capable of firing six arrows a minute with enough force to pierce an inch of wood or the armor of a knight at two hundred yards. French weakness during the long war was also due in no small degree to the mediocrity of its rulers. The English kings were far the shrewder in state building.

Progress of the War

The war had three major stages of development, each ending with seemingly decisive victory by one side or the other.

The Conflict During the Reign of Edward III In the first stage of the war, Edward embargoed English wool to Flanders, sparking urban rebellions by merchants and the trade guilds. Inspired by a rich merchant, Jacob van Artevelde, the Flemish cities,



Map 1–2 **THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR** The Hundred Years' War went on intermittently from the late 1330s until 1453. These maps show the remarkable English territorial gains up to the sudden and decisive turning of the tide of battle in favor of the French by the forces of Joan of Arc in 1429.

led by Ghent, revolted against the French and in 1340 signed an alliance with England acknowledging Edward as king of France. On June 23 of the same year, in the first great battle of the war, Edward defeated the French fleet in the Bay of Sluys, but his subsequent effort to invade France by way of Flanders failed.

In 1346, Edward attacked Normandy and after a series of easy victories culminating in the Battle of Crécy, he seized the port of Calais. Exhaustion on both sides and the onset of the Black Death forced a truce in late 1347, as the war entered a brief lull. In 1356, the English won their greatest victory, routing the French cavalry and taking the French king captive back to England after a complete breakdown of the political order in France.

Power in France now lay with the Estates General. Led by the powerful merchants of Paris, that governing body took advantage of royal weakness, demanding and receiving rights similar to those Magna Carta had granted to the English privileged classes. Yet, unlike the English Parliament, which represented the interests of a comparatively unified English nobility, the French Estates General was too divided to be an instrument for effective government.

To secure their rights, the French privileged classes forced the peasantry to pay ever-increasing taxes and to repair their war-damaged properties without compensation. This bullying was more than the simple folk could bear, and they rose up in several regions in a series of bloody rebellions known as the **Jacquerie** of 1358. The name was taken from the peasant revolutionary known popularly as Jacques Bonhomme, or "simple Jack." The nobility quickly put his revolt down, matching the rebels atrocity for atrocity.

On May 9, 1360, another milestone of the war was reached when England forced the Peace of Brétigny-Calais on the French. This agreement declared an end to Edward's vassalage to the king of France and affirmed his sovereignty over English territories in France. Such a partition was unrealistic, and sober observers on both sides knew it could not last. France struck back in the late 1360s and, by the time of Edward's death in 1377, had beaten the English back into their coastal enclaves.

French Defeat and the Treaty of Troyes During the reign of Richard II (r. 1377–1399), England had its own version of the Jacquerie. In June 1381, long-oppressed peasants and artisans joined in a great revolt of the underprivileged classes led by John Ball, a secular priest, and Wat Tyler, a journeyman. As in France, the revolt was brutally crushed within the year, and the country divided for decades.

England recommenced the war under Henry V (r. 1413–1422), whose army routed the French at Agincourt on October 25, 1415. In the years thereafter, the Burgundians closed ranks with French royal forces, another coalition promising to bring victory over the English, only to see the dream shattered in September 1419, when the duke of Burgundy was assassinated.

France was now Henry V's for the taking, at least in the short run. The Treaty of Troyes (1420) disinherited the legitimate heir to the French throne and proclaimed Henry V successor to the French king, Charles VI. When Henry and Charles died within months of each other (1422), the infant king Henry VI of England was proclaimed king of both France and England in Paris. Therein, Edward III's dream set the great war in motion, the goal of making the ruler of England also the ruler of France.

The story did not end here because the son of Charles VI now became, upon the death of his father, King Charles VII to most French people, who ignored the Treaty of Troyes. Displaying unprecedented national feeling inspired by the remarkable Joan of Arc, Charles VII now rallied to his cause and put together a victorious coalition.

Jacquerie (jah-KREE) Revolt of the French peasantry.

Read the Document "Peasant Revolt in England: The John Ball Sermon, 1381" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

Joan of Arc and the War's Conclusion Joan of Arc (1412–1431), a peasant from Domrémy in Lorraine in eastern France, presented herself to Charles VII in March 1429, declaring that the King of Heaven had called her to deliver the besieged city of Orléans from the English. Charles was skeptical, but being in retreat from what seemed to be a hopeless war, he was willing to roll the dice to reverse French fortunes. The deliverance of Orléans, a key city that controlled the territory south of the Loire River, would indeed be a godsend for him. So King Charles's desperation overcame his skepticism, and he gave Joan his leave.

Circumstances worked perfectly to her advantage. The English force was exhausted by a six-month siege and at the point of withdrawal when Joan arrived with fresh French troops. After driving the English from Orléans, the French enjoyed a succession of victories popularly attributed to her. She did indeed deserve much credit, but not because she was a military genius. She gave the French soldiers something military experts could not: a proud, enraged sense of national identity and destiny. Within a few months of the liberation of Orléans, Charles VII received his crown in Rheims, ending the nine-year "disinheritance" prescribed by the Treaty of Troyes.

The new king forgot his liberator (Joan) as quickly as he had embraced her. When the Burgundians took her captive in May 1430, he could have secured her release, but chose to do little to help her. The Burgundians and

A contemporary portrait of Joan of Arc (1412–1431). Anonymous, 15th century. "Joan of Arc." Franco-Flemish miniature. Archives Nationales, Paris, France. Photograph copyright Bridgeman-Giraudon/Art Resource, NY

THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR (1337–1453)

1340	English victory at Bay of Sluys
1346	English victory at Crécy and seizure of Calais
1347	Black Death strikes
1356	English victory at Poitiers
1358	Jacquerie disrupts France
1360	Peace of Brétigny-Calais recognizes English holdings in France
1381	English peasants revolt
1415	English victory at Agincourt
1420	Treaty of Troyes recognizes the English king as heir to the French throne
1422	Henry VI proclaimed king of both England and France
1429	Joan of Arc leads French to victory at Orléans
1431	Joan of Arc executed as a heretic
1453	War ends; English retain only Calais

the English wanted her publicly discredited, believing this would also discredit King Charles VII and demoralize French resistance.

In the end, Joan was turned over to the Inquisition in English-held Rouen. The inquisitors broke the courageous "Maid of Orléans" after ten weeks of interrogation. She was executed as a relapsed heretic on May 30, 1431. Twenty-five years later, in 1456, Charles reopened her trial, as the French state and church moved to get on history's side. She was now declared innocent of all the charges against her. In 1920, the Roman Catholic Church declared her a saint. In 1435, the duke of Burgundy made peace with Charles, allowing France to force the English back. By 1453, the war now ended, the English held only their coastal enclave of Calais.

The Hundred Years' War saw sixty-eight years of nominal peace and forty-four of hot war, and left lasting political and social consequences. It devastated France, but it also awakened French nationalism, which in turn hastened the transition of France from a feudal monarchy to a centralized state. The outcome also made Burgundy a major European political power.

How did secular rulers challenge papal authority in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries?

▼ Ecclesiastical Breakdown and Revival: The Late Medieval Church

At first glance, the popes may appear to have been in a favorable position in the latter thirteenth century. Frederick II had been vanquished and imperial pressure on Rome had been removed. The French king, Louis IX, was an enthusiastic supporter of the church, as evidenced by his two disastrous Crusades, which won him sainthood. Although it would last for only seven years, a reunion of the Eastern and Roman churches was proclaimed by the Council of Lyons in 1274, after the Western Church took advantage of Byzantine Emperor Michael VII Palaeologus's (r. 1261–1282) request for aid against the Turks. Despite these positive events, Rome's position would turn out to be less favorable than it appeared.

The Thirteenth-Century Papacy

As early as the reign of Pope Innocent III (r. 1198–1216), when papal power had reached its height, there were ominous developments. Innocent elaborated the doctrine of papal *plenitude of power* and on that authority declared the Church's saints, disposed benefices to clergy, and created a centralized papal monarchy with a strong political mission. His transformation of the papacy into a great secular power weakened the church spiritually even as it strengthened it politically. Thereafter, the church as a papal monarchy increasingly parted company with the church as the "body of the faithful."

What Innocent began, his successors perfected. Under Urban IV (r. 1261–1264), the papacy established its own court, the *Rota Romana*, which tightened and centralized the church's legal proceedings. The last half of the thirteenth century saw a new elaboration of the system of clerical taxation. Although a reform that had begun in the twelfth century as an emergency measure to raise funds for the Crusaders, it instantly became a fixed institution. In this same period, the papal power to determine all appointments to major and minor church offices—the so-called "reservation of *benefices*"—was greatly broadened. By the thirteenth century the papal office had

become a powerful, political institution governed by its own laws and courts and serviced by an efficient international bureaucracy, thoroughly preoccupied with secular tasks and goals.

Papal centralization of the church undermined both diocesan authority and popular support. Rome's interests, not local needs, controlled church appointments, policies, and discipline. Discontented lower clergy turned to Rome to address the lax discipline of local bishops. In the second half of the thirteenth century, bishops and abbots protested undercutting of their powers. To its critics, the church in Rome was hardly more than a legalized, fiscalized, bureaucratic institution. As early as the late twelfth century, heretical movements of Cathars and Waldensians had appealed to the biblical ideal of simplicity and separation from the world. Other reformers who were unquestionably loyal to the church, such as Saint Francis of Assisi, also protested perceived materialism in official religious garb.

Political Fragmentation More disturbing than internal religious quarreling was the spiritual undermining of the thirteenth-century church. The demise of imperial power meant the papacy in Rome was no longer the leader of anti-imperial (Guelf, or pro-papal) sentiment in Italy. Instead of being the center of Italian resistance to the emperor, popes now found themselves on the defensive against their old allies. That was the ironic price the papacy paid to vanquish the Hohenstaufen rulers. Now having a large stake in Italian politics, rulers directed intrigue formerly aimed at the emperor toward the College of Cardinals.

Boniface VIII and Philip the Fair

Boniface came to rule when England and France were maturing as nation-states. In England, a long tradition of consultation between the king and powerful members of English society evolved into formal parliaments during the reigns of Henry III (r. 1216–1272) and Edward I (r. 1272–1307), and these meetings helped create a unified kingdom. The reign of the French king Philip IV the Fair (r. 1285–1314) saw France become an efficient, centralized monarchy. Philip was no St. Louis, but a ruthless politician. He was determined to end England's continental holdings, control wealthy Flanders, and establish French hegemony within the Holy Roman Empire.

Boniface had the further misfortune of bringing to the papal throne memories of the way earlier popes had brought kings and emperors to their knees. Painfully he discovered that the papal monarchy of the early thirteenth century was no match for the new political juggernauts of the late thirteenth century.

Pope Boniface VIII (r. 1294–1303), depicted here, opposed the taxation of the clergy by the kings of France and England and issued one of the strongest declarations of papal authority over rulers, the bull *Unam Sanctam*. This statue is in the Museo Civico, Bologna, Italy. Statue of Pope Boniface VIII. Museo Civico, Bologna. Scala/Art Resource, NY

The Royal Challenge to Papal Authority France and England were on the brink of all-out war when Boniface became pope in 1294. Only Edward I's preoccupation with rebellion in Scotland, which the French encouraged, prevented him from invading France and starting the Hundred Years' War a half century earlier. As both countries mobilized for war, they used the pretext of preparing for a Crusade to tax the clergy heavily. In 1215, Pope Innocent III had decreed that the clergy were to pay no taxes to rulers without papal consent. Viewing English and French taxation of the clergy as an assault on traditional clerical rights, Boniface took a strong stand against it. On February 5, 1296, he issued a bull,

Clericis laicos, which forbade lay taxation of the clergy without papal approval and revoked all previous papal dispensations in this regard.

In England, Edward I retaliated by denying the clergy the right to be heard in royal court, in effect denying them the protection of the king. Philip the Fair struck back with a vengeance: In August 1296, he forbade the exportation of money from France to Rome, thereby denying the papacy the revenues it needed to operate. Boniface had no choice but to come to terms quickly with Philip.

Boniface was at this time also under siege by powerful Italian enemies, whom Philip did not fail to patronize. A noble family (the Colonnas), rivals of Boniface's family (the Gaetani) and radical followers of Saint Francis of Assisi (the Spiritual Franciscans), were seeking to invalidate Boniface's election as pope on the grounds that Celestine V had been forced to resign the office. Charges of heresy, simony, and even the murder of Celestine were now hurled against Boniface.

Boniface's fortunes appeared to revive in 1300, a so-called "Jubilee year." In such a year, all Catholics who visited Rome and fulfilled certain conditions had the penalties for their unrepented sins remitted. Tens of thousands of pilgrims flocked to Rome, and Boniface, heady with this display of popular religiosity, reinserted himself into international politics. He championed Scottish resistance to England, for which he received a firm rebuke from an outraged Edward I and the English Parliament.

But again a confrontation with the king of France proved too costly. Seemingly eager for another fight with the pope, Philip arrested Boniface's Parisian legate, Bernard Saisset, whose independence Philip had opposed. Accused of heresy and treason, Saisset was tried and convicted in the king's court. Thereafter, Philip demanded that Boniface recognize the royal process against Saisset, something Boniface could do only if he was prepared to surrender his jurisdiction over the French episcopate. Unable to sidestep this challenge, Boniface acted swiftly to champion Saisset as a defender of clerical, political independence within France. Demanding Saisset's unconditional release, he revoked all previous agreements with Philip regarding clerical taxation, and ordered the French bishops to convene in Rome within a year. A bull, titled *Ausculta fili*, or "Listen, My Son," was sent to Philip in December 1301, pointedly informing the French king that "God has set popes over kings and kingdoms."

***Unam Sanctam* (1302)** Philip now unleashed a ruthless antipapal campaign. Two royal apologists, Pierre Dubois and John of Paris, rebutted papal claims to the right to intervene in temporal (secular) matters. Increasingly placed on the defensive, Boniface made a last-ditch stand against state control of national churches. On November 18, 1302, he issued the bull *Unam Sanctam*. This famous statement of papal power declared royal, temporal authority to be "subject" to the spiritual power of the church. On its face a bold assertion, *Unam Sanctam* was, in truth, a desperate act of a besieged papacy. (See "Compare and Connect: Who Runs the World: Priests or Princes?," pages 50–51.)

Read the Document "*Unam Sanctam* (1302) Pope Boniface VIII" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

After *Unam Sanctam*, the French and their allies moved against Boniface with force. Philip's chief minister, Guillaume de Nogaret, denounced Boniface to the French clergy as a heretic and common criminal. In mid-August 1303, his army surprised the pope at his retreat in Anagni, beat him up, and almost executed him before an aroused populace returned him safely to Rome. The ordeal, however, proved to be too much, and Boniface died in October 1303.

Boniface's immediate successor, Pope Benedict XI (r. 1303–1304), excommunicated Nogaret for his deed, but there was to be no lasting papal retaliation. Benedict's successor, Clement V (r. 1305–1314), was forced into French subservience. A former archbishop of Bordeaux, Pope Clement had declared that *Unam Sanctam* should not be understood as in any way diminishing French royal authority. He released Nogaret from excommunication and pliantly condemned the Knights Templars, whose treasure Philip thereafter seized.

In 1309, Clement moved the papal court to Avignon, an imperial city on the southeastern border of France. Situated on land that belonged to the pope, the city

maintained its independence from the French king. In 1311, Clement made it his permanent residence to escape a strife-ridden Rome and further pressure from Philip. There the papacy would remain until 1377.

After Boniface's humiliation, popes never again seriously threatened kings and emperors, despite continuing papal excommunications and political intrigue. The relationship between church and state now tilted in favor of the state, and the control of religion fell into the hands of powerful monarchies. Ecclesiastical authority now became subordinate to larger secular political policies.

The Avignon Papacy (1309–1377)

The Avignon papacy was in appearance, although not always in fact, under strong French influence. Under Pope Clement V, the French dominated the College of Cardinals, testing the papacy's agility politically and economically. Finding itself cut off from its Roman estates, the papacy had to innovate to get needed funds. Clement expanded papal taxes, especially *annates*, the first year's revenue of a church office, or *benefice*, bestowed by the pope. Clement VI (r. 1342–1352) began the practice of selling *indulgences*, or pardons, for unrepented sins. To make the purchase of indulgences more compelling, church doctrine on purgatory—the place of punishment where souls would atone for venial sins—developed enterprisingly during this period. By the fifteenth century, the church had extended indulgences to cover the souls of people already dead, allowing the living to buy a reduced sentence in purgatory for deceased loved ones. Such practices contributed to the Avignon papacy's reputation for materialism and political scheming and gave reformers new ammunition against the Church.

Pope John XXII Pope John XXII (r. 1316–1334), the most powerful Avignon pope, tried to restore papal independence and return to Italy. This goal led him into war with the Visconti, the powerful ruling family of Milan, and a costly contest with Emperor Louis IV (r. 1314–1347). John challenged Louis's election as emperor in 1314 in favor of the rival Habsburg candidate. The result was a minor replay of the confrontation between Philip the Fair and Boniface VIII. When John obstinately and without legal justification refused to recognize Louis's election, the emperor declared him deposed and put in his place an antipope. As Philip the Fair had also done, Louis enlisted the support of the Spiritual Franciscans, whose views on absolute poverty John condemned as heretical. Two outstanding pamphleteers wrote lasting tracts for the royal cause: William of Ockham, whom John excommunicated in 1328, and Marsilius of Padua (ca. 1290–1342), whose teaching John declared heretical in 1327.

In his *Defender of Peace* (1324), Marsilius stressed the independent origins and autonomy of secular government. Clergy were to be subjected to the strictest apostolic ideals and confined to purely spiritual functions, and the pope was denied all power of coercive judgment. In the clerical judgment of kings, so wrote Marsilius, spiritual crimes must await an eternal punishment. Transgressions of divine law, over which the pope held jurisdiction, were to be punished in the next life, not in the present one, unless the secular ruler should declare a divine law also a secular law. This assertion directly challenged the power of the pope to excommunicate rulers and place countries under interdict. The *Defender of Peace* depicted the pope to be a subordinate member of a society over which the emperor ruled supreme and in which temporal peace was the highest good.

Pope John XXII made the papacy a sophisticated international agency and adroitly adjusted it to the growing European money economy. The more the **Curia**, or papal court, mastered the latter, the more vulnerable it became to secular criticism. Under John's successor, Benedict XII (r. 1334–1342), the papacy became entrenched in the city of Avignon. Seemingly forgetting Rome altogether, Benedict began to build the great Palace of the Popes from which he attempted to reform both papal government and the religious life. His high-living French successor, Pope Clement VI (r. 1342–1352), placed papal policy in lockstep with the French. In this period the cardinals became barely more than lobbyists for policies their secular patrons favored.

Curia (CURE-ee-a) The papal government.

COMPARE AND CONNECT

Who Runs the World: Priests or Princes?

Read the **Compare and Connect** on **MyHistoryLab.com**

IN ONE OF the boldest papal bulls in the history of Christianity, Pope Boniface VIII declared the temporal authority of rulers to be subject to papal authority. Behind that ideology lay a long, bitter dispute between the papacy and the kings of France and England. Despite the strained scholastic arguments from each side's apologists, the issue was paramount and kingdoms were at stake. The debaters were Giles of Rome, a philosopher and papal adviser, and John of Paris, a French Dominican and Aristotle expert. Quoting ecclesiastical authorities, Giles defended a papal theocracy, while John made the royal case for secular authority.

QUESTIONS

1. **Are the arguments pro and con logical and transparent?**
2. **How is history invoked to support the opposing sides?**
3. **Which of the two men have the better authorities behind his arguments?**

I. Giles of Rome, *On Ecclesiastical Power* (1301)

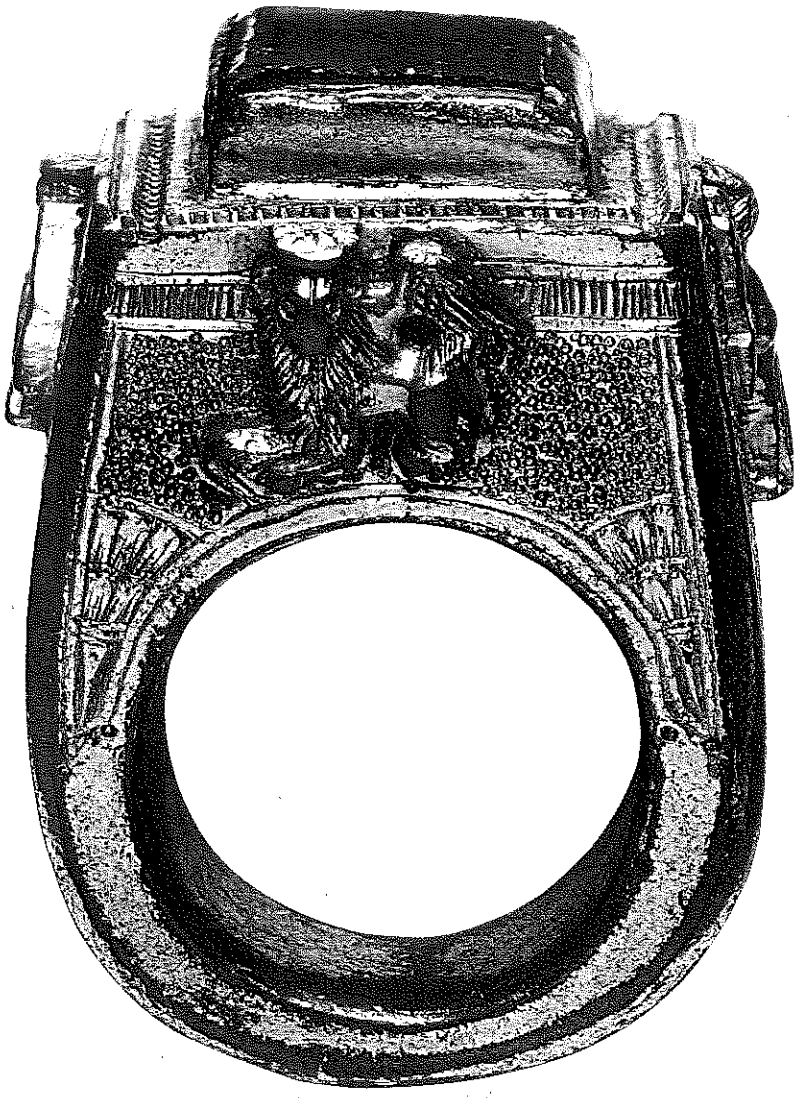
Hugh of St. Victor . . . declares that the spiritual power has to institute the earthly power and to judge it if it has not been good. . . . We can clearly prove from the order of the universe that the church is set above nations and kingdoms [Jeremiah 1:10]. . . . It is the law of divinity that the lowest are led to the highest through intermediaries. . . . At Romans 13 . . . the Apostle, having said that there is no power except from God, immediately added: "And those that are, are ordained of God." If then there are two swords [governments], one spiritual, the other temporal, as can be gathered from the words of the Gospel, "Behold, here are two swords" [Luke 22:38], [to which] the Lord at once added, "It is enough" because these two swords suffice for the church, [then] it follows that these two swords, these two powers and authorities, are [both] from God, since there is no power except from God. But, therefore they must be rightly ordered since, what is from God must be ordered. [And] they would not be so ordered unless one sword was led by the other and one was under the other since, as Dionysius said, the law of divinity which God gave to all created things requires this. . . . Therefore the temporal sword, as being inferior, is led by the spiritual sword, as being superior, and the one is set below the other as an inferior below a superior.

It may be said that kings and princes ought to be subject spiritually but not temporally. . . . But those who speak thus have not grasped the force of the argument. For if kings and princes were only spiritually subject to the church, one sword would not be below the other, nor temporalities below spiritualities; there would be no order in the powers, the lowest would not be led to the highest through intermediaries. If they *are* ordered, the temporal sword must be below the spiritual, and [royal] kingdoms below the vicar of Christ, and that by law . . . [then] the vicar of Christ must hold dominion over temporal affairs. ■

II. John of Paris, *Treatise on Royal and Papal Power* (1302–1303)

It is easy to see which is first in dignity, the kingship, or the priesthood. . . . A kingdom is ordered to this end, that an assembled multitude may live virtuously . . . and it is further ordered to a higher end which is the enjoyment of God; and responsibility for this end belongs to Christ, whose ministers and vicars are the priests. Therefore, the priestly power is of greater dignity than the secular power and this is commonly conceded . . .

But if the priest is greater in himself than the prince and also greater in dignity, it does not follow that he



Papal ring: gold with an engraving on each side and set with a square stone. Dorling Kindersley Media Library. Geoff Dann © The British Museum

is greater in all respects. For the lesser secular power is not related to the greater spiritual power as having its origin from it or being derived from it as the power of a proconsul is related to that of the emperor, which is greater in all respects since the power of the former is derived from the latter. The relationship is rather like that of a head of a household to a general of armies, since one is not derived from the other but *both* from a superior power. And so the secular power is greater than the spiritual in some things, namely, temporal affairs, and in such affairs it is not subject to the spiritual power in any way because it does not have its origin from it, but rather both have their origin immediately from the one supreme power, namely, the divine. Accordingly the inferior power is not subject to the superior in all things, but only in those where the supreme power has subordinated it to the greater. [For example] a teacher of literature or an instructor in morals directs the members of a household to a very noble end, namely, the knowledge of truth. [That] end is more noble than [that] of a doctor who is concerned with a lower end, namely, the health of bodies. But who would say therefore that the doctor should be subjected to the teacher in preparing his medicines . . . ? Therefore, the priest is greater than the prince in spiritual affairs and, on the other hand, the prince is greater in temporal affairs. ■

National Opposition to the Avignon Papacy As Avignon's fiscal tentacles probed new areas, monarchies took strong action to protect their interests. The latter half of the fourteenth century saw new legislation restricting papal jurisdiction and taxation in France, England, and Germany. In England, Parliament several times passed statutes that restricted payments and appeals to Rome along with the pope's power to make high ecclesiastical appointments.

In France, the so-called Gallican, or "French liberties," regulated ecclesiastical appointments and taxation. These national rights over religion had long been exercised, and the church legally acknowledged them in the *Pragmatic Sanction of Bourges* in 1438. This agreement recognized the right of the French church to elect its own clergy without papal interference, prohibited the payment of *annates* to Rome, and limited the right of appeals from French courts to the Curia in Rome. In Germany and Switzerland local city governments also limited and overturned traditional clerical privileges and immunities.

John Wycliffe and John Huss

Lollards (LALL-erds) Followers of John Wycliffe (d. 1384) who questioned the supremacy and privileges of the pope and the church hierarchy.

Hussites (HUS-Its) Followers of John Huss (d. 1415) who questioned Catholic teachings about the Eucharist.

The popular lay religious movements that assailed the late medieval church most successfully were the **Lollards** in England and the **Hussites** in Bohemia. The Lollards looked to the writings of John Wycliffe (d. 1384) to justify their demands, while moderate and extreme Hussites turned to those of John Huss (d. 1415), although both men would have disclaimed the extremists who revolted in their names.

Wycliffe was an Oxford theologian and a philosopher of high standing. His work initially served the anticlerical policies of the English government. He became within England what William of Ockham and Marsilius of Padua had been for Emperor Louis IV: a major intellectual spokesman for the rights of royalty against the secular pretensions of popes. After 1350, English kings greatly reduced the power of the Avignon papacy to make ecclesiastical appointments and to collect taxes within England, a position Wycliffe strongly supported. His views on clerical poverty followed original Franciscan ideals and, more by accident than by design, gave justification to government restriction and even confiscation of church properties within England. Wycliffe also argued that the clergy "ought to be content with food and clothing."

For Wycliffe, personal merit and morality, not rank and office, was the true basis of religious authority. The allegedly good people rightly deserved the money and power of the allegedly immoral people. This was a dangerous teaching for all governments because it raised allegedly pious laypeople above allegedly corrupt ecclesiastics regardless of their official stature. It directly threatened civic-secular dominion and governance, as well as that of the church. At his posthumous condemnation by the pope, Wycliffe was accused of the ancient heresy of **Donatism**—the teaching that the efficacy of the church's sacraments did not only lie in their true performance but also depended on the moral character of the clergy who administered them. Wycliffe also anticipated certain Protestant criticisms of the medieval church by challenging papal infallibility, the sale of indulgences, the authority of Scripture, and the dogma of transubstantiation.

Donatism The heresy that taught the efficacy of the sacraments depended on the moral character of the clergy who administered them.

The Lollards were the English advocates of Wycliffe's teaching. They preached in the vernacular, disseminated translations of Holy Scripture, and championed clerical poverty. They also joined with the nobility and the gentry in confiscating clerical properties. After the English peasants' revolt of 1381, an uprising filled with egalitarian notions, Lollardy was officially viewed as subversive. Opposed by an alliance of church and crown, the heresy became a capital offense in England in 1401.

Read the Document "The Lollard Conclusions, 1394" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

Heresy was less easily brought to heel in Bohemia, where it coalesced with a strong national movement. The University of Prague, founded in 1348, became the center for both Bohemian nationalism and a new religious reform movement. The latter began within the bounds of orthodoxy. It was led by local intellectuals and preachers, the most famous of whom was John Huss, the rector of the university after 1403.

The Czech reformers supported vernacular translations of the Bible and were critical of traditional ceremonies and alleged superstitious practices, particularly those accompanying the sacrament of the Eucharist. They advocated lay communion with cup as well as bread, which had traditionally been reserved for the clergy as a sign of their spiritual superiority over the laity. The Hussites taught that bread and wine remained bread and wine after priestly consecration, and they questioned the validity of sacraments performed by priests in mortal sin.

Wycliffe's teaching appears to have influenced the movement early. Regular traffic between England and Bohemia had existed since the marriage of Anne of Bohemia to King Richard II in 1318. Bohemian students studied at Oxford and returned home with Wycliffe's writings.

John Huss became the leader of the pro-Wycliffe faction at the University of Prague. In 1410, his activities brought about his excommunication, and Prague was placed under papal interdict. In 1414, Huss won an audience with the newly assembled Council of Constance. He journeyed to the council eagerly under a safe-conduct pass from Emperor Sigismund (r. 1410–1437), naïvely believing he would convince his strongest critics of the truth of his teaching. Within weeks of his arrival in early November 1414, he was accused of heresy and imprisoned. He died at the stake on July 6, 1415, and was followed there less than a year later by his colleague Jerome of Prague.

A portrayal of John Huss as he was led to the stake at Constance. After his execution, his bones and ashes were scattered in the Rhine River to prevent his followers from claiming them as relics. This pen-and-ink drawing is from Ulrich von Richenthal's *Chronicle of the Council of Constance* (ca. 1450). CORBIS/Bettmann

The reaction in Bohemia to the execution of these national heroes was a fierce revolt. Militant Hussites and Taborites set out to transform Bohemia by force into a religious and social paradise under the military leadership of one John Ziska. After a decade of belligerent protest, the Hussites won significant religious reforms and control over the Bohemian church from the Council of Basel.

The Great Schism (1378–1417) and the Conciliar Movement in the Church to 1449

Pope Gregory XI (r. 1370–1378) reestablished the papacy in Rome in January 1377, ending what had come to be known as the "Babylonian Captivity" of the church in Avignon, a reference to the biblical bondage of the Israelites. The return to Rome proved to be short lived, however.

Urban VI and Clement VII On Gregory's death, the cardinals, in Rome, elected an Italian archbishop as Pope Urban VI (r. 1378–1389), who immediately announced his intention to reform the Curia. The cardinals, most of whom were French, responded by calling for the return of the papacy to Avignon. The French king, Charles V (r. 1364–1380), wanting to keep the papacy within the sphere of French influence, lent his support to what came to be known as the **Great Schism**.

View the Map "Map Discovery: The Great Schism" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

Great Schism The appearance of two and at times three rival popes between 1378 and 1415.

Document

PROPOSITIONS OF JOHN WYCLIFFE CONDEMNED AT LONDON, 1382, AND AT THE COUNCIL OF CONSTANCE, 1415

Wycliffe was the leading scholar of the University of Oxford, where he spent most of his life. One of the most notable points in his teaching was the theory of "dominion by grace"—that is, lordship, spiritual or temporal, was derived directly from God, as opposed to the feudal conception of derivation through intermediaries, which was paralleled by the conception of grace derived through the Pope and the church hierarchy.

Does the Bible really sanction all of the propositions of Wycliffe? Are certain teachings of Wycliffe brazenly anarchic? Do so-called "good people" rightly deserve the money and power of "immoral people"?

That the material substance of bread and . . . wine remain in the Sacrament of the altar.

That Christ is not in the Sacrament essentially . . . in his own corporeal presence.

That if a bishop or priest be in mortal sin he does not [effectively] ordain, consecrate, or baptise . . .

That it is contrary to Holy Scripture that ecclesiastics should have possessions.

That any deacon or priest may preach the word of God apart from the authority of the Apostolic See, or a Catholic bishop.

That no one is a civil lord, or a prelate, or a bishop when he is in mortal sin.

That temporal lords can at their will take away temporal goods from the church, when those who hold them are habitually sinful.

That the people can at their own will correct sinful lords.

That tithes are mere alms, and that parishioners can withdraw them at their will because of the misdeeds of their curates.

That friars are bound to gain their livelihood by the labor of their hands, and not by begging.

That . . . the ordination of clerics [and] the consecration of [holy] places are reserved for the Pope and bishops on account of their desire for temporal gain and honor.

That the excommunication of the Pope or any prelate is not to be feared, because it is the censure of antichrist.

It is fatuous to believe in the indulgences of the Pope and the bishops.

From *Documents of the Christian Church*, ed. Henry Bettenson (New York: Oxford University Press, 1947).

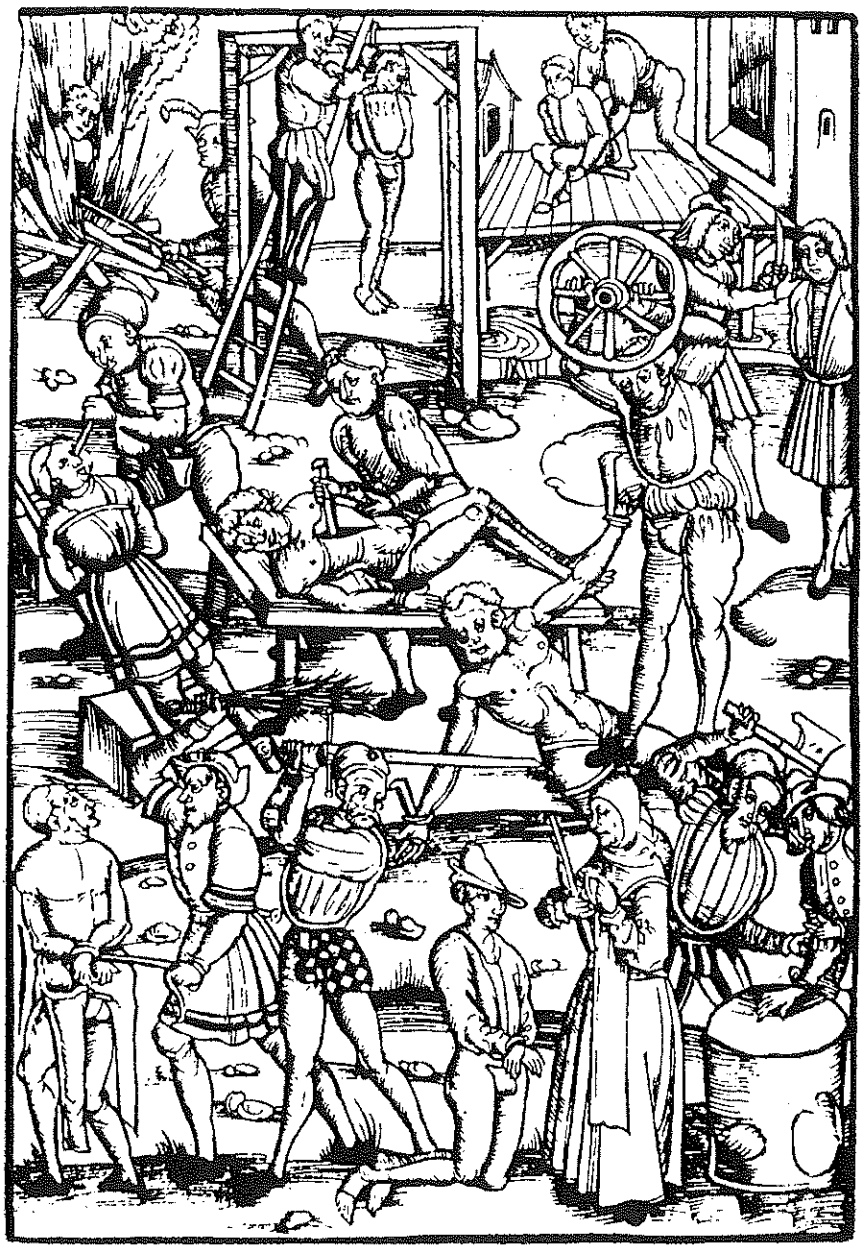
On September 20, 1378, five months after Urban's election, thirteen cardinals, all but one of them French, formed their own conclave and elected Pope Clement VII (r. 1378–1397), a cousin of the French king. They insisted they had voted for Urban in fear of their lives, having been surrounded by a Roman mob demanding the election of an Italian pope. Be that as it may, the papacy had now become a "two-headed thing" and a scandal to Christendom. Allegiance to the two papal courts divided along political lines. England and its allies acknowledged Urban VI, while France and its orbit supported Clement VII. Subsequent church history has recognized the Roman line of popes as legitimate.

Two approaches were initially taken to end the schism. The first attempted to win the mutual cession of both popes, thereby clearing the way for the election of a new one. The other sought to secure the resignation of the one in favor of the other. Both approaches failed. Each pope considered himself fully legitimate, and too much

was at stake for either to make a magnanimous concession. Only one way remained: a special church council empowered to depose them both. Legally, only a pope could convene and dissolve a church council, and the competing popes were not about to summon a council they knew would depose them both. Also, the removal of a legitimate pope against his will by a council of the church was as serious as the deposition of a monarch by a representative assembly.

The correctness of a conciliar deposition of a pope was debated a full thirty years before any action was taken. Advocates of the **conciliar theory** sought to fashion a church in which a representative council could effectively regulate the actions of the pope. To that end the conciliarists defined the church as the whole body of the faithful, of which the elected head, the pope, was only one part. The sole purpose was to maintain the unity and well-being of the church—something the schismatic popes were far from doing. The conciliarists argued that a council of the church acted with greater authority than the pope alone. In the eyes of the pope(s), such a concept of the church threatened both its political and religious unity.

On the basis of the arguments of the conciliarists, cardinals representing both popes convened another council on their own authority in Pisa in 1409. There they deposed both the Roman and the Avignon popes, and elected a singular pope, Alexander V. To the council's consternation, neither pope accepted its action, and Christendom suddenly faced the spectacle of three contending popes. Although most of Latin Christendom accepted Alexander and his Pisan successor John XXIII (r. 1410–1415), the popes of Rome and Avignon refused to step down.



Justice in the late Middle Ages. Depicted are the most common forms of corporal and capital punishment in Europe in the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance. At top: burning, hanging, drowning. At center: blinding, quartering, the wheel, cutting of hair (a mark of great shame for a freeman). At bottom: thrashing, decapitation, amputation of hand (for thieves). Herzog August Bibliothek

The intolerable situation ended when Emperor Sigismund prevailed on John XXIII to summon a new council in Constance in 1414, which the Roman pope Gregory XII also recognized. In a famous declaration entitled *Sacrosancta*, the council asserted its supremacy and elected a new pope, Martin V (r. 1417–1431), after the three contending popes had either resigned or been deposed. The council then made provisions for regular meetings of church councils, within five, then seven, and thereafter every ten years.

conciliar theory The argument that General Councils were superior in authority to the pope and represented the whole body of the faithful.

The Council of Basel (1431–1449) Conciliar government of the church peaked at the Council of Basel (1431–1449), when the council directly negotiated church doctrine with heretics. In 1432, the Hussites of Bohemia presented the *Four Articles of Prague* to the council as a basis for negotiations. This document contained requests for (1) giving the laity the Eucharist with cup as well as bread; (2) free, itinerant

preaching; (3) the exclusion of the clergy from holding secular offices and owning property; and (4) just punishment of clergy who commit mortal sins.

In November 1433, an agreement among the emperor, the council, and the Hussites gave the Bohemians jurisdiction over their church. Three of the four Prague articles were conceded: communion with cup, free preaching by ordained clergy, and similar punishment of clergy and laity for mortal sins.

The exercise of such powers by a council did not please the pope, and in 1438, he upstaged the Council of Basel by negotiating a reunion with the Eastern church. Although the agreement, signed in Florence in 1439, was short lived, it restored papal prestige and signaled the demise of the conciliar movement. Having overreached itself, the Council of Basel collapsed in 1449. A decade later, Pope Pius II (r. 1458–1464) issued the papal bull *Execrabilis* (1460) condemning appeals to councils as "erroneous and abominable" and "completely null and void."

A major consequence of the short-lived conciliar movement was the devolving of greater religious responsibility onto the laity and secular governments. Without effective papal authority and leadership, secular control of national or territorial churches increased. Kings asserted their power over the church in England and France, while in German, Swiss, and Italian cities, magistrates and city councils reformed and regulated religious life. The High Renaissance did not reverse this development. On the contrary, as the papacy became a limited, Italian territorial regime, national control of the church ran apace. Perceived as just one among several Italian states, the Papal States could now be opposed as much on grounds of "national" policy as for religious reasons.

How did Mongol rule shape Russia's development?

▼ Medieval Russia

In the late tenth century, Prince Vladimir of Kiev (r. 980–1015), then Russia's dominant city, received delegations of Muslims, Roman Catholics, Jews, and Greek Orthodox Christians, each of which hoped to persuade the Russians to embrace their religion. Vladimir chose Greek Orthodoxy, which became the religion of Russia, adding strong cultural bonds to the close commercial ties that had long linked Russia to the Byzantine Empire. Here, we find the late Byzantine centuries after their magnificent earlier reigns, now to be only a shadow of what had been, and still a potent force among the cultures of the world after the passage of almost a century.

Read the **Document** "Vladimir of Kiev's Acceptance of Christianity (989)" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

Politics and Society

Vladimir's successor, Yaroslav the Wise (r. 1016–1054), developed Kiev into a magnificent political and cultural center, with architecture rivaling that of Constantinople. He also pursued contacts with the West in an unsuccessful effort to counter the political influence of the Byzantine emperors. After his death, rivalry among their princes slowly divided Russians into three cultural groups: the Great Russians, the White Russians, and the Little Russians (Ukrainians). Autonomous principalities also challenged Kiev's dominance, and it became just one of several national centers. Government in the principalities combined monarchy (the prince), aristocracy (the prince's council of noblemen), and democracy (a popular assembly of all free adult males). The broadest social division was between freemen and slaves. Freemen included the clergy, army officers, **boyars** (wealthy landowners), townspeople, and peasants. Slaves were mostly prisoners of war. Debtors working off their debts made up a large, semifree, group.

boyars The Russian nobility.

Mongol Rule (1243–1480)

In the thirteenth century, Mongol, or Tatar, armies swept through China, much of the Islamic world, and Russia. These were steppe peoples with strongholds in the south, whence they raided the north, devastating Russia and compelling the

obedience of Moscow for a while. Ghengis Khan (1155–1227) invaded Russia in 1223, and Kiev fell to his grandson Batu Khan in 1240. Russian cities became dependent, tribute-paying principalities of the segment of the Mongol Empire known as the *Golden Horde* (the Tatar words for the color of Batu Khan's tent). Geographically, the Golden Horde included the steppe region of what is today southern Russia and its capital at Sarai on the lower Volga. The conquerors stationed their own officials in all the principal Russian towns to oversee taxation and the conscription of Russians into Tatar armies. The Mongols filled their harems with Russian women and sold Russians who resisted into slavery in foreign lands. Russian women—under the influence of Islam, which became the religion of the Golden Horde—began to wear veils and lead more secluded lives. This forced integration of Mongols and Russians created further cultural divisions between Russia and the West. The Mongols, however, left Russian political and religious institutions largely intact and, thanks to their far-flung trade, brought most Russians greater prosperity. Princes of Moscow collected tribute for their overlords and grew wealthy under Mongol rule. As that rule weakened, the Moscow princes took control of the territory surrounding the city in what was called "the gathering of the Russian Land." Gradually the principality of Moscow expanded through land purchases, colonization, and conquest. In 1380, Grand Duke Dimitri of Moscow (r. 1350–1389) defeated Tatar forces at Kulikov Meadow, a victory that marked the beginning of the decline of the Mongol hegemony. Another century would pass, however, before Ivan III, the Great (d. 1505), would bring all of northern Russia under Moscow's control and end Mongol rule (1480). Moscow replaced Kiev as the political and religious center of Russia. After Constantinople fell to the Turks in 1453, the city became, in Russian eyes, the "third Rome."

Genghis Khan holding an audience. This Persian miniature shows the great conqueror and founder of the Mongol empire with members of his army and entourage as well as an apparent supplicant (lower right). © Sonia Halliday Photographs/Alamy

View the **Closer look** "A Mongol Passport" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

View the **Map** "Interactive Map: The Rise of Moscow" on **MyHistoryLab.com**

In Perspective

Plague, war, and schism convulsed much of late medieval Europe throughout the fourteenth and into the fifteenth centuries. Two-fifths of the population, particularly along the major trade routes, died from plague in the fourteenth century. War and famine continued to take untold numbers after the plague had passed. Revolts erupted in town and countryside as ordinary people attempted to defend their traditional communal rights and privileges against the new autocratic territorial regimes. Even God's house seemed to be in shambles in 1409, when three popes came to rule simultaneously.

There is, however, another side to the late Middle Ages. By the end of the fifteenth century, the population losses were rapidly being made up. Between 1300 and 1500,

education had become far more accessible, especially to laypeople. The number of universities increased from twenty to seventy, and the rise in the number of residential colleges was even more impressive, especially in France, where sixty-three were built. The fourteenth century saw the birth of humanism, and the fifteenth century gave us the printing press. Most impressive were the artistic and cultural achievements of the Italian Renaissance during the fifteenth century. The later Middle Ages were thus a period of growth and creativity, as well as one of waning and decline.

KEY TERMS

Black Death (p. 35)
boyars (p. 56)
conciliar theory (p. 55)
Curia (p. 49)
Donatism (p. 52)
Estates General (p. 43)
Great Schism (p. 53)
Hussites (p. 52)
Jacquerie (p. 44)
Lollards (p. 52)
taille (p. 41)

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What were the underlying and precipitating causes of the Hundred Years' War? What advantages did each side have? Why were the French finally able to drive the English almost entirely out of France?
2. What were the causes of the Black Death, and why did it spread so quickly throughout Western Europe? Where was it most virulent? How did it affect European society? How important do you think disease is in changing the course of history?
3. Why did Pope Boniface VIII quarrel with King Philip the Fair? Why was Boniface so impotent in the conflict? How had political conditions changed since the reign of Pope Innocent III in the late twelfth century, and what did that mean for the papacy?
4. How did the church change from 1200 to 1450? What was its response to the growing power of monarchs? How great an influence did the church have on secular events?
5. What was the Avignon papacy, and why did it occur? How did it affect the papacy? What relationship did it have to the Great Schism? How did the church become divided and how was it reunited? Why was the conciliar movement a setback for the papacy?
6. Why were kings in the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries able to control the church more than the church could control the kings? How did kings attack the church during this period?