

Pre-Columbian Europe

Who were the people and cultures of pre-Columbian Europe?



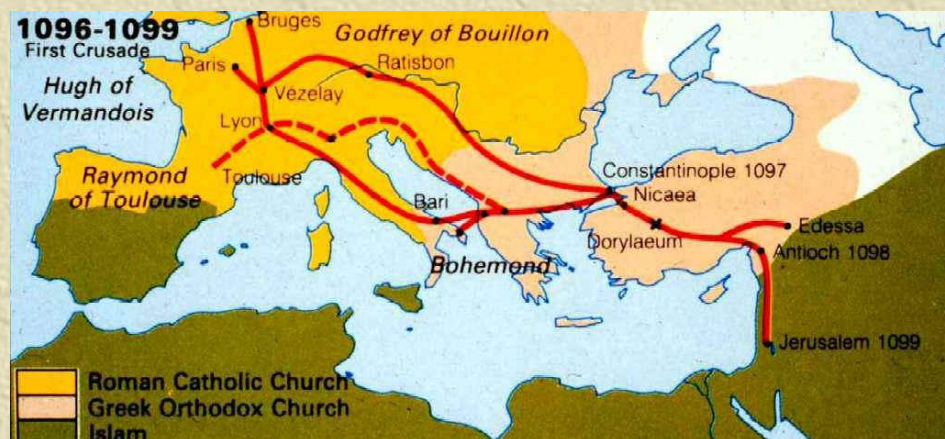
European Middle Ages

- ✦ AD476 = Fall of Rome
- ✦ Next one thousand years were called the Middle Ages or the Medieval times
 - ◆ The early years = Dark Ages
 - Low literacy
 - Poor conditions
 - Strong belief in Christianity and the hope that life in heaven would be better than life on earth.



The Crusades: The Reality

- ✦ The Crusades were fought between European Christians and Middle Eastern Muslims.
- ✦ The Crusades lasted approximately 600 years with about eight major wars
- ✦ From 1095 – 1570



The Crusades: Cause

- ✦ Christians wanted to capture the Holy Land (modern day Israel) from the Muslims.
- ✦ The Crusaders slaughtered non-Christians on the way, including thousands of Jews.
- ✦ Results... again and again:
 - ◆ Muslims retained control of the Holy Land.



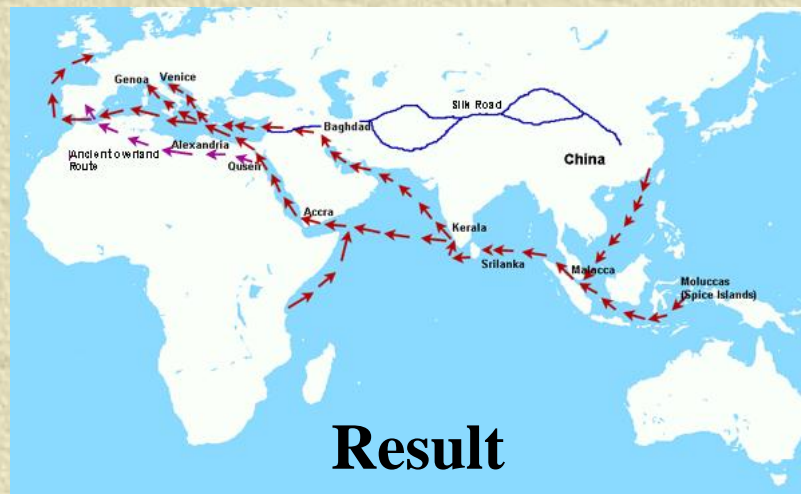
Saladin, the Muslim military leader, was born c. 1138 into a Kurdish family in Tikrit, Iraq.



The Crusades: Effects

MARCO - POLO”

- ✦ Europeans continue to demands for Asian products such as silks, spices, glassware, china, rice and oranges increased.
- ◆ European trade with Asia increased
- ◆ A new middle-man exist (Italian and Muslim traders)
- ✦ Higher cost + Diluted Products
- ◆ The search for new sea routes (Age of Exploration)



Social Inequalities

✦ A world with sharp inequalities

- ◆ Nobles and aristocrats earn 100's X more than peasants

✦ No strong leadership

- ◆ No strong centralized political authority (Roman Catholic Church was not political)
- ◆ Warrior lords ruled the lands
 - Provided land and protection for the lower classes at a cost

✦ A time of violence

- ◆ Constant violence and sudden death
 - Public executions were entertainment
 - Homicide, rape, a robbery occurred with great frequency
 - Innovation and change were highly feared



Simple survival



✦ Food shortages and famine

◆ Very fragile food supply

- Warfare, bad weather, poor transportation, and low grain yields
- Creation of a undernourished population
 - ◆ Causes large scale disease

◆ Life expectancy

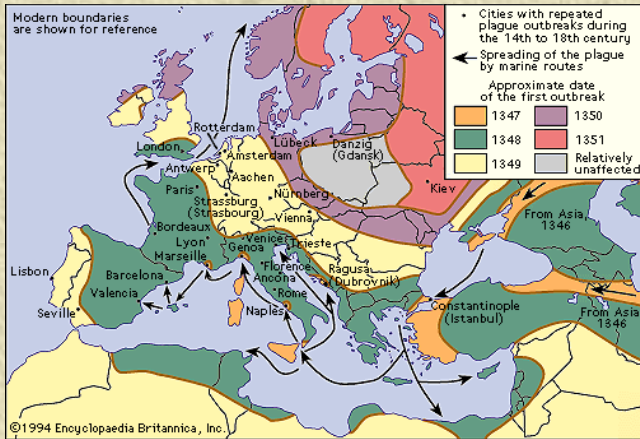
- Life was brutal, nasty, and usually short
 - ◆ $\frac{1}{4}$ of all children die by age 1
 - ◆ Living to 40 was extremely fortunate

Family Life

✦ Men and women married young

- ◆ Married by their mid-twenties
- ◆ Most children lost one or both parent by mid-childhood
- ◆ Parents installed toughness for basic survival instinct in their children
- ◆ Children lived away from home by ages 7 – 10
 - Schooling, military training, or apprenticeships as craftworkers or domestic servants

The Black Death

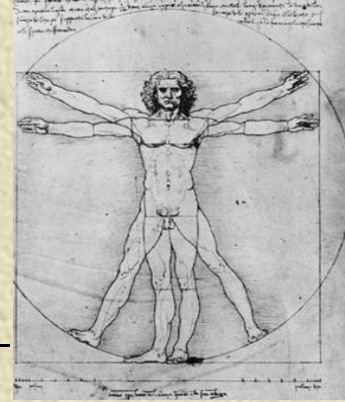


✦ 1347 – 1351

- ✦ 1/3 of Europe's population dies
- ✦ Causes disruptions in agriculture and commerce
 - Creates an economic depression till the 1400's
- ✦ Europe recovers in the 1500's
 - Wages increase due to scarcity of human resources
 - More land available for the smaller #'s of people
 - Prices of goods drop
 - The Black death creates a economic swing for Europe



The Renaissance – A Time of Hope?



✦ Europe enjoyed it's new wonders

◆ Michelangelo, da Vinci, Machiavelli...

✦ Reality of the times

◆ A European world riddled with war, disease, uncertainty, and over-population

◆ 90% of Europe's people worked farms; lived off the land – Feudal System (*see the cows)

- Not even 20% owned enough land to survive during bad times

Same Old Problem

✠ 15th century Europe

- ◆ To many people
 - Not enough land and food

✠ 16th century Europe

- ◆ The quality of life steadily declines
- ◆ Diets worsen, less land and work available, mass poverty, crime and begging increase
- ◆ “Price Revolution”
 - Hyper-inflation



America to the Rescue

✦ **The Age of Exploration and discovery of the Americas is an “Age of Hope”**

- ◆ **Hopes of bettering European life**
- ◆ **Need for better transportation**
- ◆ **A solution, or a relief, to the problem of overpopulation**
 - **Both food supply and land**
- ◆ **Created a new concept of ownership, wealth and freedoms**
- ◆ **GOLD, GOD and GLORY!!!**