

Palmer Chapter 1 Study Guide

A History of the Modern World:

Chapter 1: The Rise of Europe

1. Ancient Times: Greece, Rome, and Christianity (pp. 11-17)

A. Introduction

1. "Whatever their backgrounds, and willingly or not, all peoples in the twentieth century are caught up in the process of modernization or "development" which usually turns out to mean acquiring some of the skills and powers first exhibited by Europeans."
2. Factors continuing to effect relationships among nations include:
 - a. interdependence, based on science and technology on one lever trade and finance on another
 - b. drive for equality, as nations seek to "arouse the energies and support of their populations."
 - c. questioning of old ways and old values--and the negative reaction by conservative factions
 - d. demand for individual liberation
 - e. revolution of rising expectations

B. GREEKS

1. "The Greeks proved to be as gifted a people as mankind has ever produced, achieving supreme heights in thought and letters. They absorbed the knowledge of the, to them, mysterious East....They added immediately to everything they teamed. It was the Greeks of the fourth and fifth centuries BC who first became fully conscious of the powers of the human mind, who formulated what the Western world long meant by the beautiful, and who first speculated on political freedom.
2. The Greeks lived in small city-states, independent and frequently at war. "Politics were turbulent. Democracy alternated with aristocracy, oligarchy, despotism, and tyranny. From this rich fund of experience was born systematic political science as set forth in the unwritten speculations of Socrates and in the Republic of Plato and the ~ Politics of Aristotle in the fourth century before Christ. The Greeks were the first to write history as a subject distinct from myth and legend....Thucydides, in his account of the wars between Athens and Sparta, presented history as a guide to enlightened citizenship and constructive statecraft."
3. They prized and defined "classical" virtues: order, balance, symmetry, clarity, and control. "Their statues revealed their conception of what man ought to be--a noble creature, dignified, poised, unterrified by life or death, master of himself and of his feelings. Their architecture, as in the Parthenon, made use of exactly measure angles and rows of columns...." The same sense of form led to the production of epic poems, lyrics, drama, history, and philosophic dialogues, each with rules and principles of composition--and they long remained the forms used by Western men to express their thoughts.
4. Greeks created myths, but they "looked for rational or natural explanations of what was at work behind the variety and confusion they saw." They observed that sickness was the result of natural conditions which could be understood; they saw the universe as composed of atoms (designated as earth, air, fire, water). Some believed change to be an illusion, while others saw it as the only reality. Others, like Pythagoras, found the only reality in mathematics. The final great codifier of Greek thought on virtually all subjects was Aristotle, who lived in Athens from 384-322 BC.
5. Greek influence spread widely and rapidly in the Mediterranean world. The greatest of the later Greeks came from Alexandria in Egypt--Strabo in geography, Galen in medicine, and Ptolemy in astronomy --in the first and second centuries A.D.

C. ROME:

Although ruthless conquerors, the Romans were civilizing agents, transmitting a significant portion of earlier cultures to the Western Mediterranean. The Romans allowed cities and city-states a good deal of autonomy, but maintained control through a pyramid of imperial officials and provincial governors. "The Empire kept peace, the Pax Romana, and even provided a certain justice as between its many peoples....Roman law came to hold that no custom is necessarily right, that there is a higher or universal law by which fair decisions may be made, and that this higher, universal, or 'natural' law, or 'law of nature,' will be understandable or acceptable to all men since it arises from human nature and reason....They also held that law derives its force from being enacted by a proper authority....*maiestas*, or sovereign power, and they attributed it to the emperor." Thus law was not custom, nor was it capricious. It was formed by enlightened intelligence and was consistent with the nature of things, and its was associated with official power. Roman law did favor the state, or the public interest as seen by the government, rather than the interests or liberties of individual persons.

D. CHRISTIANITY:

1. "The Christian teaching spread at first among the poor...who had the least to delight in or hope for in the existing world." But it soon spread; following a half century of heavy persecution (240-290 AD), Constantine became a

Christian and legalized Christianity. By the fifth century, the Roman world was Christian and tolerated no other religions.

2. Christianity brought "an altogether new sense of human life....Christians explored the soul, and they taught that in the sight of God all souls were equal, that every human life was sacrosanct and inviolate, and that all worldly distinctions of greatness, beauty, and brilliancy were in the last analysis superficial." Love took on overtones of sacrifice and compassion; Greek and pagan pride was replaced by ideals of humility and the brotherhood of man.
3. The problem was reconciling the place of religion in an all-powerful state where the ruler was regarded as a god. Jesus solved this dilemma: render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's. This dualism was systematically expressed by one of the greatest early Christian thinkers, **St. Augustine** of Hippo, in his book, *The City of God*. The "city of Man" was Rome, the domain of state and political authority and obedience; but this "state was not absolute; it could be judged, amended, or corrected. It was...subordinate to the higher, spiritual authority of the City of God." Yet was this "City of God" only spiritual, or a spirit of idealism which dwelt in all crude human approximations of the divine, or was it the institution of the Church in the world? No clear answer was forthcoming, but one result was clear: **Caesaropapism** (e.g., the control of both church and state by the same individual--as Byzantine or Russian emperors or the Ayatollah Khomeini) was NOT to become a permanent part of Western Civilization. Church and state were separate and, in spite of the strong efforts of the medieval and Renaissance Popes, would remain separate.

2. THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES: THE FORMATION OF EUROPE (pp. 17-26)

A. Disintegration of the Roman Empire:

Rome was split in two halves, with Rome and Constantinople as administrative centers of a Latin (West) and Greek (East). Rome had fought "barbarians" on its frontiers for nearly a thousand years: Celts in northern Britain, Germans in central Europe, Parthians in Asia Minor, and Arabs in the desert. Rome had tried building great walls, but about 400 AD it tried recruiting barbarian tribes to fight other tribes--a concept that was to backfire dramatically. Moreover, the rulers and bureaucracy had decayed, becoming a great parasite on the body of the Empire, draining off heavy taxes but providing decreased services. The once powerful army became increasingly self-serving and politicized, and military expenses were a great drain on the economy. Finally, evidence for a change in long-term weather patterns is strong. A period of longer, harder winters that reduced crops and diminished trade, bringing a weakened people suffering from plagues and famines, an administration less able to deal with crises. The weather patterns also brought Attila the Hun, "Scourge of God" from the East, in raids that sent panicked German tribes across the borders into the Empire. Between 410 and 476, Rome was inundated:

The **Visigoths** sacked Rome in 410 and then conquered Spain. The **Vandals** pillaged the province of North Africa, and then crossed to sack Rome about 430. The **Anglos** and the **Saxons** overran Britain by 450. The **Franks** brought Gaul under their control by 450. The **Lombards** took northern Italy. In 476, the last Roman emperor was deposed by a German chieftain; Rome had fallen.

B. The Byzantine World, the Arabic World, and the West about 700 A.D.

1. **Byzantine Empire:** "Its people felt themselves to be the truest heirs both of early Christianity and of the Greeks of the golden age. Art and architecture, trades and crafts, commerce and navigation, thought and writing, government and law, while not so creative or flexible as in the classical age, were still carried on actively. . . ." [till 1453]
2. **Arabic/Islamic:** By 640, the Arabs had conquered Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, and Egypt; old Roman Africa fell by 700, and shortly thereafter the Visigothic kingdom of Spain. Muslims saw Christians as infidels, but were tolerant. They adapted the civilization they conquered, learning from Graeco-Roman thought and in many cases surpassing it. Arab geographers, mathematicians, and doctors produced a culture worthy of their predecessors.
3. **Germanic:** The German invasions of the fifth century AD initially brought chaos, with only local government surviving under warriors who subdued the local farmers. But these warriors created the new Western Europe. They were organized into small tribes, and their strong sense of tribal kinship dominated their ideas of law and government. All free, arms-bearing men held councils and often elected kings. They had a strong sense of loyalty to persons, but little sense of loyalty to large or general institutions. "They had no sense of the state--of any distant, impersonal, and continuing source of law and rule." Warriors captured villages and took them under their protection; "thus originated a new distinction between lord and servant, noble and commoner, martial and menial class. Life became local and self-sufficient....Trade died down, the cities became depopulated, money went out of circulation...."

C. **The Papacy:** The Church remained the one West European institution with ties to the civilized past; its network of dioceses remained intact. Monasteries, most adopting the rule of **St. Benedict** which required prayer but also practical work (in fields and libraries) and avoidance of unnecessary asceticism, became islands of peace and learning. The Bishop of Rome (especially **St. Gregory the Great**) ran Rome and kept contacts with bishops and sent out missionaries to the Germans. The Franks were converted about 500, the English (St. Augustine of Canterbury and St. Columba) and the Irish

(St. Patrick) by about 600. All these new Christians in the West accepted the authority of the Bishop of Rome, and the power of the Papacy steadily increased. Popes began to claim pre-eminence in the Church based on the idea that Peter, first of the apostles, had founded Rome. Peter had been granted special powers by Jesus (see *Matthew*, 16, xviii-xix).

D. Charlemagne: In 800 AD, the great Frankish warrior Charlemagne joined in a Partnership with the Pope. The Pope crowned Big Charles as Emperor of the West, in hopes of restoring the Roman Empire and peace. Charles conquered the Lombards of Italy, conquered and converted the Saxons along the Elbe River, moved down the Danube into Bohemia, and fought the Moslems along the Pyrenees. But his great empire was not Roman; its capital was in Aachen along the Rhine, and his people remained divided into Franks, Germans, and Italians, divided by language and custom. But briefly learning was advanced in Latin and using a new script, from which our small letters are taken.

E. Ninth-Century Invasions

1. A second great wave of barbarians now struck northern Europe. They, too, were to be converted and incorporated into Western civilization in time. They were the Magyars, who settled in Hungary; the Norsemen, who raided widely and established states in Russia (Kiev), France (Normandy), and the "Danelaw" of England; and the Saracens Arab raiders of the Mediterranean who occupied Sicily--to become a bridge of ideas from Islam to the West.
2. An important result of these invasions was the increasing split between East and West. The Greek patriarchs at Constantinople saw the Pope as a kind of Western barbarian and refused to accept his claims to primacy in the Church. The Pope equally rebutted Eastern claims. The result was the Great Schism of 1054, formally splitting the Latin or Roman Catholic West from the Greek Orthodox East.
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3. THE HIGH MIDDY AGES: SECULAR CIVILIZATION (pp. 26-35)

A. Changes after A.D. 1000: The population expanded greatly, largely due to a series of developments in agriculture: a heavy, wheeled plow able to effectively till the rich, heavier soil of the north; use of horses, made possible by the use of horse shoes and a new harness; and the development of the three-field system of crop rotation, bringing higher productivity and improved nutrition (growing oats and legumes such as beans).

- B. 1. Feudalism** had also developed as a means of carrying on government on a local level when no organized state existed. Basically, a count (lord) gained authority over lesser lords, who were termed his vassals. The lord protected his vassals and the vassals promised to serve the lord as a warrior and provide a variety of other services and fees. England never fully developed feudalism; kings and their central officials retained a degree of power not found on the continent.
2. Basically, feudalism was mutual or reciprocal, and no one was sovereign. In Rome, the emperor had been all-powerful; in medieval Europe, nobles were joined to the king by a contract with mutual obligations. Constitutional government is derived from this concept.
 3. Serfs lived under separated rules called **manorialism**, the system of the manor. Serfs were bound to the soil, unable to leave without permission. Each had his own land, which no one could take; the lord protected the serf and gave him justice, and the serf in return worked the lord's fields and paid him rent. As productivity rose after 1000, peasants could raise a surplus for sale and gain a measure of independence; as they were less needed on the land, they could emigrate to the new towns.

C. The Rise of Towns and Commerce

1. Roman towns virtually disappeared as invasions began. The first to recover were Venice (plus Genoa and Pisa) based on trade with the Byzantine Empire, plus Bruges in what is now Belgium based on trade in woolens. Silks, cottons, gems, and spices were especially desired, especially following the experiences of the crusaders after 1095. Merchants began to travel to disseminate these goods, often setting up headquarters in old Roman towns; craftsmen moved from manors to serve these growing centers, and a busy trade developed to satisfy local needs.
2. These towns became politically important because they were able to free themselves from feudal control and establish their own law, courts, and judges. Larger towns, especially in northern Italy (Venice, Genoa, Milan, Florence), on the upper Danube or Rhine Rivers (Frankfurt, Nuremberg, Hamburg), in Flanders (Bruges), and on the Baltic coast became virtually independent city-states. Towns formed leagues, like the important Hanse which dominated trade in the North Sea and Baltic for three centuries. Cities like London and Paris received special charters of liberties, but their attempts to form leagues were prevented by strong kings. The creation of strong commercial towns in Germany and Italy was an important reason for the failure of these areas to unify as nations until the late nineteenth century.
3. Towns won collective liberties; residents did not gain individual rights. Towns were walled and defended by citizen militias. Neighboring peasants had to sell produce in the town, and crafts had to be practiced in the town only. Merchants and craftsmen formed associations called guilds which set standards and established a career framework--apprentice, journeyman, master. The basic spirit of the town was to prevent competition and

individualism. Risk, adventure, speculation were not wanted. Almost no one thought it proper to work for profit. The few who did, big merchants trading over large areas, met with suspicion and disapproval wherever they went.

4. But towns did have a liberating impact: serfs could escape manors, and the increased demand for foods led to clearing of new lands with lords offering better terms. Serfs could obtain money by selling produce in town, and lords were often willing to allow them freedom in exchange for money rents. By the fifteenth century, serfdom had virtually disappeared in Western Europe, though the outward forms of manorialism often remained: the peasant owed fees and dues, and he was still under the lord's legal jurisdiction.

D. National Monarchies

1. Monarchy became hereditary; kings, especially in England, tried to gain control over the citizens. Using royal officers called sheriffs, kings asserted royal legal jurisdiction in competition against noble and church courts. They also asserted their taxing power. "In the feudal scheme each person was responsible only for the customary fees which arose on stated occasions. The king, like other lords, was supposed to live on his own income--on the revenue of manors...or the occasional fees paid to him by his vassals. No king, even for the best of reasons, could simply decree a new tax and collect it." As money returned to use, the kings found two sources: money Payment in lieu of military or other service and payments from towns in exchange for royal charters.
2. Kings strove to enlarge their collections; for example, King John needed money for military expeditions. But his foreign adventures were failures, leading the nobles to rise against him. The result was the **Magna Carta** of 1215 in which the great barons, joined by the great churchmen and representative of London, forced John to guarantee their "historic liberties"--especially their right to approve new taxation. Councils for approving new taxes became institutionalized in the 14th century as Parliament, with a House of Lords (high nobles and churchmen) and a House of Commons (knights of the shire and burghers of cities like London). Similar institutions began in most of Europe, but virtually all were still-born. But in England Parliament gradually gained the right to present the king "bills"--grievances they wished redressed by the king in exchange for granting him new taxes.

4. THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES: THE CHURCH (pp. 35-45)

A. The Medieval Church and Papacy

1. During the Dark Ages the Church had been fragmented and localized like other institutions. The clergy was the only literate class, but many priests were illiterate. Christian belief was mixed with pagan magic and superstition, monasteries were in ruins or corrupt, priests often lived in a concubinage that was generally condoned, and many married. Lords dominated the election of bishops, knights controlled selection of priests. Popes were controlled by unruly Roman nobles and were also frequently corrupt.
2. Reform began from secular nobles, who reformed their own domains, and Holy Roman Emperors who sought to reform the popes by controlling their election. Serious Christians founded a reform monastery at Cluny in France to purify monastic life and set a higher ideal. In Rome, several popes moved to eliminate control by nobles and in 1059 set the precedent that popes should be elected by cardinals --at that time entirely the priests of Rome and the bishops of nearby towns. Pope Gregory VII dreamed of a reformed and reinvigorated Europe under the guidance of the Church. Gregory's vision was of a society whose leaders were the clergy, to which all educated persons belonged. The most important public officials were bishops, the chief public building were churches, abbeys, and cathedrals. Secular interests, those of kings and dukes, merchants and artisans, were earth-bound at shortsighted. The chief concern of all was preparing their souls for eternal life.
3. Henry IV was the Holy Roman Emperor, and the center of his domain was Germany. There, great bishops and abbots possessed much land--which they held and governed for the emperor as feudal magnates. Under the system of lay investiture, the emperor gave new bishops the ring and staff, symbols of their spiritual authority, and thus signified his control over them. Gregory VII now prohibited lay investiture. In a complex struggle, Henry was excommunicated, greatly reducing his political power; he was forced to beg forgiveness of Gregory in order to regain the support of his vassals. Henry proceeded to isolate and finally exile Gregory, but the struggle continued for the next century. Emperors lost power and Germany remained fragmented; Italian cities likewise were able to remain independent, and in the absence of strong political forces the Papacy grew strong.
4. The height of the medieval papacy came under Innocent III (pope, 1198-1216). So powerful was he that he was able to sit in judgment over kings. Huge revenues began to flow to Rome, and an enormous bureaucracy grew to deal with the business of the papal court. Innocent and his successors worked to repress heresy (doctrine at variance with that of the church); in a great church council of 1215, Innocent virtually ended ordeals and trials by battle, moved to control the superstitious traffic in relics, declared the sacraments to be the channel of God's grace and defined them authoritatively, and promulgated the dogma of transubstantiation (in the Mass the priest converts the substance of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ).

B. Intellectual Life: The Universities and Scholasticism

1. Great universities were founded in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, with Salerno (medicine), Bologna (law), and Paris (theology), followed soon by Oxford and Cambridge. By 1300 there were a dozen; by 1500 almost a hundred. Universities were chartered communities possessing specific liberties. They gave courses and lectures, held examinations, and awarded degrees--which were licenses to teach.
2. Medieval scholars began to reflect on their beliefs: St. Anselm attempted to rationally explain the role of Christ. Peter Abelard, founder of the U. of Paris, wrote *Sic et Non* in which he roused the ire of the Church by providing diametrically opposing answers to key questions based on the writings of early Church Fathers like St. Augustine. Like Socrates, he asked youths to doubt in order to find truth, and like Socrates he could not be tolerated. But soon after a flood of Greek and Arabic learning began entering the West through Sicily and Spain. Early Christian thought had been based on Plato's ideals; what now should be done with the challenging flood of Aristotelian thought?
3. The answer was provided by St. Thomas Aquinas in his immense *Summa Theologica*, a work stemming from Aristotle that was a survey of all knowledge. Aquinas, as a leader of the Scholastics, showed that faith and reason could never truly conflict. "He taught a hierarchic view of the universe and of society, of which God was the apex, and in which all things and all men were subordinated to God in a descending order, each bound to fulfill the role set by its own place and nature." He argued that the general idea is more "real" than any particular individual, thus enabling medieval man to believe steadfastly in the Church while freely attacking individual churchmen, and to accept the mystery of transubstantiation. This new thinking, called Scholasticism, tended to weaken natural science and led to arid arguments--as the famous "How many angels can sit on the head of a pin?" Yet is also called for disciplined thought, and even more importantly made the world safe for reason. Reasoning about faith, many said, was a form of weakness, but Thomas' doctrine that faith could not be endangered by reasons allowed freedom of thought.
4. The Crusades: Pope Urban II in 1095 called on all Christians to take up the cross against Islam --partly to drain off bellicose younger knights in an age of peace, and partly to build up the prestige of the papacy. They finally failed conclusively, but they were a sign of the emergence of Europe: the development of Italian city-states, of the feudal monarchies, and of a sense of common purpose. A party of Normans reconquered Sicily, and Iberian Christians launched the Reconquista in Spain that was to be completed in 1492. The Teutonic knights began a drive against the heathens of the Baltic. Europe survived the assault of the Tatars under Genghis Khan in the thirteenth century, though the rise of the Ottoman Turks was to prove more disconcerting in the fifteenth.
5. **Conclusion:** By 1300, Europe finally had risen and had its own civilization, at best perhaps the equal of the Islamic, Byzantine, Indian, and Chinese civilizations. But Europe was enterprising and restless; it featured no all-embracing empire. Conformity was not a primary virtue. Questions of what one should do with one's life were less dependent on political powers. "Europe was disorderly and full of conflict--rivalries and wars between kings and their barons, disputes between church and state, clashes between lords and their peasant workers. In such disorder there was a kind of freedom, and a dynamism which promoted change."