

7.4

Economic Expansion & Change: The Crusades & After



As a Young Historian, I will be able to...

- Summarize how new technologies sparked an agricultural revolution, and the revival of trade led to the growth of towns and cities.
- Explain how a commercial revolution changed society and how guilds led to the rise of the middle class.
- Explain the causes and effects of the Crusades.
- Summarize how Christians in Spain carried out the Reconquista.

Changes in Agriculture

Iron plows were critical in agriculture & the development of the horse harness allowed a growth in agriculture

The new idea of rotating crops in a 3-field system allowed for better growing conditions

Peasants began to clear forests & drain swamps for their lords & the population of Europe tripled

Trade Expands & Towns Grow

Trade grows as the demand for iron, fine wool & furs, & spices grows.

Traders begin to form merchant companies that travel via armed caravans for safety to the Middle East & Asia

Constantinople serves as the center of all this trade & people barter for goods with local resources

The advent of fairs allowed people to meet to trade goods, this also allowed events & entertainment.

Trade & Expansion

As settlements & fairs attracted people, the first medieval cities arose

Merchants would ask the lord or king for a **charter**, a written document that sets out the rights & privileges of a town.

As cities grew, walls were built to protect those living within. People would live outside the walls as well

Towns were often loud, filthy, & disease ridden. Fire was also a major danger.

Economic Changes

As trade grew, coin money began to appear. Capital, money for investment, grew.

Groups of merchants would join together in **partnerships**, joined efforts to pool money & resources together to have a large-scale venture

Most Europeans would take the concept of bills of exchange & credit from Muslim countries

Most peasants become **tenant farmers**, people who pay rent for their land.

Merchants, traders, & artisans would form a **middle class**, a group of people between nobles & peasants

A New Middle Class

In medieval towns, the middles class formed associations of merchants & artisans called **guilds**

In time, guilds would become more specialized

When a child turned 7 or 8 they would become an **apprentice**, trainee, to a guild master

Few would become guild masters, most worked for **journeymen**, salaried workers

Women engaged in the same work as their fathers & had their own successful guilds

Middle class people would buy food from markets & would send boys to school

The Crusades

1096 started the **Crusades**, a series of wars between the Christians & Muslims for the holy lands

The **Holy Lands**- lands where Christians & Muslims believed preachers, such as Jesus, lived & preached.

Pope Urban II- Declares war & sends knights to help the Byzantine Empire fight the Muslims

People sought land, wealth, & adventure in the war for the Holy Lands, few would return

Crusaders Head East

Crusaders would divide captured lands into small states called crusader states

After a series of 4 crusades, the Muslim armies overran crusader states & pushed the Christians out.

This would leave a bitter legacy of religious hatred, especially in the middle east.

The Crusades did allow for major economic & political changes

Growing Demands

The Crusades help grow a demand in trade of fabrics, spices, & perfumes & trade expanded.

The Crusades also helped increase the power of monarchs giving them the power to levy taxes

Europeans would begin to explore India & China in pursuit of new trade, such as [Marco Polo](#).

The Byzantine Empire, weakened by the Crusades, would eventually fall.

The Reconquista

Spain was held by the moors, Muslims, & several small Christian kingdoms sought to remove them

This campaign became known as the **Reconquista**, or reconquest.

The marriage of **Ferdinand & Isabella** allowed a unified Spain to push out the Muslims.

The Spanish church then created the **Inquisition**, a church court to set up & try new people accused of heresy