

Popes and Kings

If YOU were there...

You are 13 years old, the youngest child of the king of France. One day your father announces that he wants to make an alliance with a powerful noble family. To seal the alliance, he has arranged for you to marry one of his new ally's children. Your father wants you to be happy and asks what you think of the idea. You know the alliance will make your father's rule more secure, but it means leaving home to marry a stranger.

What will you say to your father?

What You Will Learn...

Main Ideas

1. Popes and kings ruled Europe as spiritual and political leaders.
2. Popes fought for power, leading to a permanent split within the church.
3. Kings and popes clashed over some issues.

The Big Idea

Popes and kings dominated European society in the Middle Ages.

Key Terms and People

excommunicate, p. 525
 Pope Gregory VII, p. 527
 Emperor Henry IV, p. 527



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TAKING NOTES

Use the graphic organizer online to help you keep track of the powers popes claimed and the powers kings claimed.

BUILDING BACKGROUND In the Middle Ages, kings were some of the most powerful men in Europe. Many kings, like the one described above, looked for ways to increase their power. But in their search for power, these kings had to deal with other powerful leaders, including popes. These other leaders had their own plans and goals.

Popes and Kings Rule Europe

In the early Middle Ages, great nobles and their knights held a great deal of power. As time passed, though, this power began to shift. More and more, power came into the hands of two types of leaders, popes and kings. Popes had great spiritual power, and kings had political power. Together, popes and kings controlled most of European society.

The Power of the Popes

In the Middle Ages, the pope was the head of the Christian Church in Western Europe. Since nearly everyone in the Middle Ages belonged to this church, the pope had great power. People saw the pope as God's representative on Earth. They looked to him for guidance about how to live and pray.

Because the pope was seen as God's representative, it was his duty to decide what the church would teach. From time to time, a pope would write a letter called a bull to explain a religious teaching or outline a church policy. In addition, the pope decided when someone was acting against the church.

If the pope felt someone was working against the church, he could punish the person in many ways. For serious offenses, the pope or other bishops could choose to **excommunicate**, or **cast out from the church**, the offender. This punishment was deeply feared because Christians believed that a person who died while excommunicated would not get into heaven.

In addition to spiritual power, many popes had great political power. After the Roman Empire collapsed, many people in Italy looked to the pope as their leader. As a result, some popes began to live like royalty. They became rich and built huge palaces. At the same time, they came into conflict with Europe's other political leaders, kings.

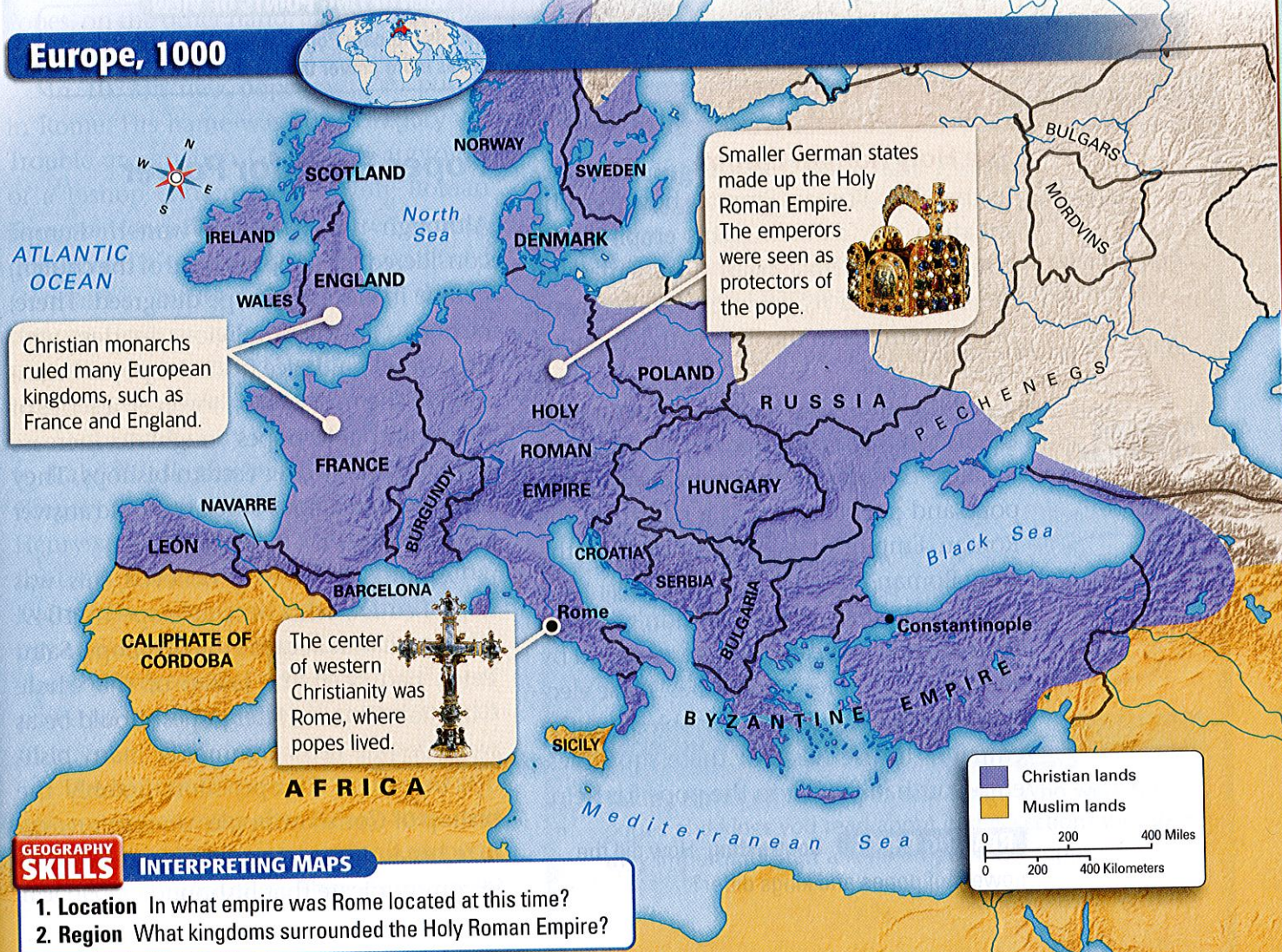
The Power of Kings

As you can see on the map below, Europe in 1000 was divided into many small states. Most of these states were ruled by kings, some of whom had little real power. In a few places, though, kings had begun to take firm control of their countries. Look at the map to find England, France, and the Holy Roman Empire. At this time, Europe's most powerful kings ruled those three countries.

THE IMPACT TODAY

Today, more than a billion people around the world consider the pope their spiritual leader.

In England and France, kings inherited their thrones from their fathers. At times, nobles rebelled against the kings, but the kings usually reestablished order fairly quickly. They maintained this order through alliances as well as warfare.



Primary Source

POINTS OF VIEW

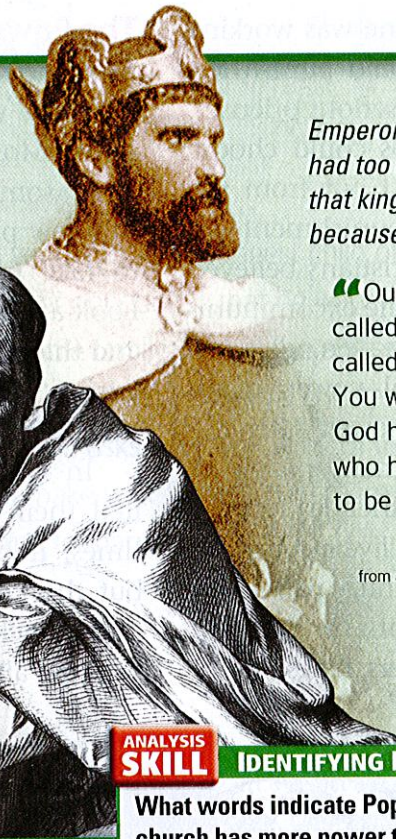
Views of Power

Pope Gregory VII thought popes should have the power to choose bishops. He believed popes—not kings—got their power from God.

“Who does not know that kings and princes derive their origin from men ignorant of God who raised themselves above their fellows by . . . every kind of crime? . . . Does anyone doubt that the priests of Christ are to be considered as fathers and masters of kings and princes and of all believers?”

—Pope Gregory VII,

from a letter to the Bishop of Metz, 1081, in *Readings in Medieval History*, ed. by Patrick Geary



Emperor Henry IV thought popes had too much power. He argued that kings should choose bishops because God had chosen the king.

“Our Lord, Jesus Christ, has called us to kingship, but has not called you to the priesthood . . . You who have not been called by God have taught that our bishops who have been called by God are to be [rejected] . . .”

—Emperor Henry IV,

from a letter to Pope Gregory VII, 1076, in *Readings in Medieval History*, ed. by Patrick Geary

ANALYSIS SKILL

IDENTIFYING POINTS OF VIEW

What words indicate Pope Gregory's view that the church has more power than monarchs do?

ACADEMIC VOCABULARY

authority power, right to rule

The Holy Roman Empire

In the Holy Roman Empire, however, the situation was different. This empire grew out of what had been Charlemagne's empire. As you read earlier, Charlemagne built his empire in the 700s with the pope's approval.

In the mid-900s, another emperor took the throne with the approval of the pope. Because the empire was approved by the pope and people saw it as a rebirth of the Roman Empire, it became known as the Holy Roman Empire.

Holy Roman emperors didn't inherit their crowns. Instead, they were elected by the empire's nobles. Sometimes, these elections led to fights between nobles and the emperor. In the worst of these squabbles, emperors had to call on the pope for help.

READING CHECK **Contrasting** How did the powers of popes and kings differ?

Popes Fight for Power

Although the people of western Europe considered the pope the head of the church, people in eastern Europe disagreed. There, bishops controlled religious matters with little or no guidance from the pope. Beginning in the mid-1000s, however, a series of clever and able popes sought to increase their **authority** over eastern bishops. They believed all religious officials should answer to the pope.

Among those who believed this was Pope Leo IX, who became pope in 1049. He argued that because the first pope, Saint Peter, had been the leader of the whole Christian Church, later popes should be as well. Despite Leo's arguments, many bishops in eastern Europe, most notably the bishop of Constantinople, wouldn't recognize his authority. In 1054, Leo decided to excommunicate that bishop.

Leo's decision created a permanent split within the church. Christians who agreed with the bishop of Constantinople formed the Orthodox Church. Those who supported Leo's authority became known as Roman Catholics. With their support, the pope became head of the Roman Catholic Church and one of the most powerful figures in western Europe.

READING CHECK **Generalizing** How did Leo IX try to increase popes' authority?

Kings and Popes Clash

As popes worked to increase their power, they often came into conflict with kings. For example, kings thought they should be able to select bishops in their countries. Popes, on the other hand, argued that only they could choose religious officials.

In 1073 a new pope came to power in Rome. His name was **Pope Gregory VII**. Trouble arose when Gregory disapproved of a bishop chosen by the Holy Roman **Emperor Henry IV**. Angry because the pope questioned his authority, Henry convinced Germany's bishops that they should remove Gregory as pope. In response, the pope excommunicated Henry. He called on the empire's nobles to overthrow Henry.

Desperate to stay in power, Henry went to Italy to ask the pope for forgiveness. Gregory refused to see him. For three days Henry stood barefoot in the snow outside the castle where Pope Gregory was staying. Eventually, Gregory accepted Henry's apology and allowed the emperor back into the church. Gregory had proven himself more powerful than the emperor, at least for that moment.

The fight over the right to choose bishops continued even after Henry and Gregory died. In 1122 a new pope and emperor reached a compromise. They decided that

church officials would choose all bishops and abbots. The bishops and abbots, however, would still have to obey the emperor.

This compromise did not end all conflict. Kings and popes continued to fight for power throughout the Middle Ages, changing lives all over Europe.

READING CHECK **Identifying Causes and Effects** What caused Gregory and Henry's power struggle?

SUMMARY AND PREVIEW In this section you read about the powers of popes and kings. In many cases, these powers led to conflict between the two. In the next section, though, you will read about popes and kings working together against a common enemy.

Section 1 Assessment

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ONLINE QUIZ

Reviewing Ideas, Terms, and People

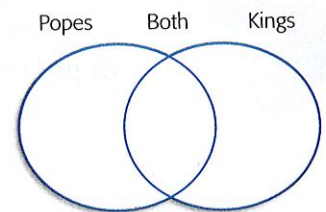
- a. Describe** What was the pope's role in the Roman Catholic Church?

b. Draw Conclusions How did cooperation with the pope help kings like Charlemagne and the early Holy Roman Emperors?
- Explain** Why did Pope Leo IX **excommunicate** the bishop of Constantinople?
- a. Identify** With whom did **Pope Gregory VII** clash?

b. Elaborate Why do you think the pope made **Emperor Henry IV** wait for three days before forgiving him?

Critical Thinking

- Comparing** Draw a diagram like the one shown here. Use it and your notes to compare the power of popes to the power of kings.



FOCUS ON WRITING

- Taking Notes on the Popes and Kings** Who were the popes and kings you read about in this section? Why were they important? Start a list of important people.