Unit 5
Middle Ages
C10—C15

CS

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Robert Spence, Angewandte Sprachwissenschaft, Universität des Saarlandes

<div style="text-align: right">5.1</div>

1   Places and people

A brief incursion into geography

- Whereabouts in the East Riding of Yorkshire is Stamford Bridge? `http://tinyurl.com/wheresstamfordbridge`
- Whereabouts in East Sussex is Hastings? `http://tinyurl.com/whereshastings`
- How quickly can you get from Stamford Bridge to Hastings?

<div style="text-align: right">5.2</div>

Who are these people and what are they doing?

- `http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/3/36/Tapestry_of_bayeux10.jpg`

<div style="text-align: right">5.3</div>

2 What might've happened if ...?

- Britain had never become part of the Roman Empire?
- Ireland had become part of the Roman Empire?
- Britain and/or Ireland had become part of the Roman Empire, but the Roman Empire had never ended?
- Britain had never been invaded by Angles, Saxons and Jutes?
- England and Ireland had never been invaded by Vikings?
- Harold Godwinson had lost against Harald Hardrada?
- Harold Godwinson had won against William of Normandy?

5.4

3 Timeline and dynasties

Timeline and dynasties
- 1066 Norman
- 1154 Plantaganet
- 1399 Lancaster
- 1461 York
- 1485 Tudor
- See the family tree on your handout.

5.5

Timeline and major wars
- 1066 Norman Conquest of England
- 1169–1172 Norman Invasion of Ireland
- 1283 Conquest of Wales
- 1337–1453 Hundred Years' War (England/France)
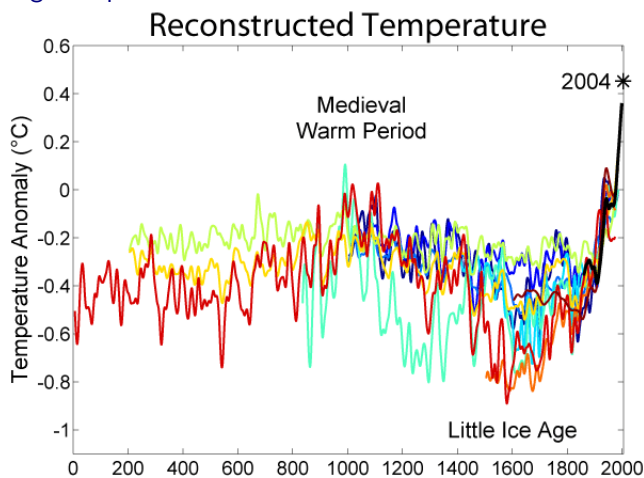- 1455–1485 Wars of the Roses

5.6

4 Climate

The mediaeval warm period
- The climate of the high middle ages in Europe was unusually warm.
- More successful agriculture.
- Increase in population (health + longevity = numbers) from about 1050 onwards.
- Economic, social, and cultural progress.

5.7

Average temperatures 1AD – 2000 AD

The Great Famine of 1315–1317

- Three years of nearly constant rain.
- Crop failures.
- Widespread starvation; population increase ended.
- Political instability, decreased authority of the Church.

`http://tinyurl.com/GreatFamine1315`   5.9

5   Musical interlude

Sumer is icumen in

- A famous canon from the middle ages.
- Generally considered to be the oldest canon.
- Text in Middle English (Mod. Engl., German: see handout)
- Click HERE to hear a rendition of it.

6   The nature of feudalism

The nature of feudalism

- The best way to explain the emergence of feudalism in Europe out of the ruins of the Roman Empire is ...
- to take an example from Japan, where feudalism lasted until the middle of the nineteenth century:
- Akira Kurosawa: The Seven Samurai (1954)

5.11

7 Overview of mediaeval society in England

Overview of mediaeval society in England (1)

- Anglo-Saxon communities originally consisted of families of free farmers
- living in villages
- with a very equitable system of land ownership.
- The Anglo-Saxons had hereditary kings
- but the normal succession could be overridden by the Witan (council of elders).
- In the course of the early middle ages, Anglo-Saxon societies became more complex,
- and debt often led to near-slavery.
- `http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2009-08-20-graeber-en.html`

Overview of mediaeval society in England (2)

- After the Norman conquest, England was the most highly centralized feudal society in Europe
- Unlike in France, the King had real power over virtually the whole country
- Lords were granted several smaller parcels of land if close to London (cf. Anglo-Saxon system at village level);
- and were only given really large estates on the borders of Wales and Scotland (military reasons)
- Place of the Church and of the towns in the feudal system
- Feudalism began its decline earlier in England than elsewhere
- Your handout contains an extract from the official textbook on British history used in the former GDR — a classic, if simplified, Marxist history of England in the Middle Ages.
- Note the passage from paying rent for farmland in the form of labour, to paying it in kind ("tithes"), to paying it in money.
- The Plague (1348-49) created a labour shortage and thus furthered the system of wage labour
- At the same time, there was a switch towards commodity production (esp. wool for export to Flanders).

Honi soit qui mal y pense

8 Some notes on mediaeval society in Ireland

- Having taken a Marxist description of mediaeval England, we shall now proceed to take ...
- an Anarchist description of mediaeval Ireland.
- Mediaeval Ireland differed from mediaeval England in that "protection was provided by non-geographical voluntary agencies".
- http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/culture/RyanFaulk/Anarchic_Ireland.pdf
- http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/culture/RyanFaulk/Stateless_Ireland_1.mp4
- http://www.spence.saar.de/courses/culture/RyanFaulk/Stateless_Ireland_2.mp4

5.15