Rome after its Empire:

From the Germanic Middle Ages to the early Renaissance

A brief overview of major issues from 476 AD to 1400
GERMANIC INVASIONS

VISIGOTHS:
   410 Sack of Rome by Alaric the Visigoth
   Visigothic Kingdom in France and Spain

VANDALS (German Arians):
   429 invade Africa, besiege Hippo; 439 Carthage; attack Italy by sea, Kingdom lasts to 534
HUNS (central Asians) 4-5\textsuperscript{th} century invaders enter Europe 372 from Urals; 375 Danube; 451 Gaul; 452 Italy

ATILLA "the scourge of God": attacks Empire in east; invades western Empire

451 Troyes: Huns defeated by Aetius, last great Roman general (but note that Aetius' army is largely German)

452 invades Italy; Venice founded by Italians fleeing Huns

POPE LEO I persuades Attila to spare Rome; Attila dies 453

Huns eventually settle in Hungary (named for them)
476 AD FALL OF ROMAN EMPIRE IN THE WEST

deposition of Romulus Augustulus by Odoacer
(leader of the Huns but of mixed German/Hun ancestry)

OSTROGOTHIC KINGDOM (493-535): East Goths, Arians
first of "barbarian" or Germanic successor kingdoms

THEODORIC (493-526) King of the Ostrogoths
authorized by Eastern Roman Emperor to
march against Huns in Italy;

Theodoric slays Odoacer;
accepted by Senate & People of Rome (SPQR)
establishes court at Ravenna (Adriatic coast)
Arianism as major weakness of Ostrogothic Kingdom

Byzantine Emperors remain hostile to Arianism since Constantine’s Council of Nicea in 325

523 Imperial law pagans, Jews & heretics (Arians) excluded from public office:

insult to Theodoric (Arian, therefore heretic)

526 death of Theodoric
EMPEROR JUSTINIAN (527-565)
   Wars against Persia, Vandals, Goths

The Reconquest of Italy
   534 attacks Vandal Kingdom in Africa to regain Mediterranean

   535-554 disastrous, 20 year long Italian campaign

Gothic resistance led by Totila, enters Rome in 542

Justinian's wars as beginning of "Dark Ages" in Italy,
Imperial reunification short lived, Italy invaded again
The Byzantine Empire Under Justinian. Justinian’s reconquests of North Africa, Italy, and the coast of Spain severely strained the empire’s resources.
JUSTINIAN’S REIGN

Codification of Roman Law:
most important legacy of East to West

529 JUSTINIAN’S CODE
CORPUS IURIS CIVILIS (Body of Civil Law)

preserved in 2 vols throughout Middle Ages
influence of Roman law on Germanic legal codes
& canon (church) law in medieval Europe
Building projects under Justinian:

**Constantinople:**

  **Hagia Sophia** (Holy Wisdom)
  largest church in Christendom
  (became a mosque in 1453 after Ottoman conquest)

**Ravenna:**

outpost of Eastern Byzantine Empire in Italy
mosaics of Justinian and Theodora
Hagia Sofia -- Church of Holy Wisdom
Mosaic over side entrance: Justinian on left, Constantine on right
The Byzantine Empire Under Justinian. Justinian's reconquests of North Africa, Italy, and the coast of Spain severely strained the empire's resources.
RAVENNA CHURCH OF SAN VITALE
CHRIST AS PANTOKRATOR (Ruler of the World)
San Vitale Ravenna
Emperor Justinian, Bishop and retinue
Church of Sant’Apollinare in Classe, Ravenna 6th C.
LOMBARD KINGDOM in Italy 568-774:

Lombards: fierce Germanic tribe, invade Italy

military victory due to exhaustion of Roman Italy, plague, famine, following Justinian's wars

capital established at Pavia (northern Italy)
Exarchate of Ravenna: of Byzantine territory in Italy
POPE GREGORY THE GREAT: born 504
"Father of Medieval Papacy"
Justinian's Gothic wars, Lombard invasion
prefect of City of Rome, enters monastery
made ambassador to Imperial court in Constantinople

Papal reign 590-604:
directs civil administration of Rome: food supplies, military defense, courts; hospitals, schools
missionary activities for northern Europe, England:
597 Augustine to Anglo-Saxons
writings: Miracles of Italian Fathers,
Dialogues, saints' lives, eg St. Benedict
theory of religious art as
the “Bible of the poor” & the illiterate
LOMBARD KINGDOM in Italy 568-774: trigger for

FRANCO - PAPAL ALLIANCE: Papal motives include
Lombard military threat: 751 conquer Ravenna
753 Lombards threaten Rome;
no assistance from Byzantine Empire
754 Pope Steven II travels to Frankish Kingdom
anoints Pepin & sons at St. Denis outside Paris
given title of patricius romanorum = Roman patrician

755 Franks defeat Lombards in Italy,
DONATION OF PEPIN gift to Papacy of Italian lands
= PATRIMONY OF ST. PETER, start of Papal State
(Donation of Constantine possibly forged c. 750)
CHARLEMAGNE 768-814 Frankish King (son of Pepin III)

**Warrior King:** meets nobles each spring on "Field of Mars"  
774 campaign in Italy, deposes last of Lombard Kings  
takes title of "King of Franks & Lombards"  
campaigns against Moslems in Spain; Saxons - east Germany  
by 800 all Europe conquered except southern Italy, England  
southern Spain  

**Papal alliance:** reinstates Pope Leo III after revolt by Roman nobility;  

**800 Christmas Day:**  
crowned Emperor of Romans by Pope Leo in Rome
Equestrian statue of Charlemagne

Now in Louvre, Paris
Height 27 cm
less than one foot tall

Compare huge Roman statue of Marcus Aurelius

Next equestrian statue would be in Renaissance Italy over 500 years later.
Marcus Aurelius equestrian statue larger than life size
Crowning of Charlemagne by Pope

800 Christmas Day

Important theme for Papal art – showing superiority of the Papacy over Emperor
Coronation of Charlemagne in papal painting: in St Peter’s Basilica, Charlemagne kneeling, Pope grants crown
Raphael

Coronation of Charlemagne

In Vatican apartments
Above Right Insert shows division of that Empire among three grandsons: Eastern Kingdom became Germany, Western Kingdom became France, “Middle Kingdom of Lothar” was most prestigious since it included Rome but was ungovernable due to the Alps as barrier; became a source of wars into 20th C
DONATION OF CONSTANTINE:
letter of Constantine to Pope Silvester I, dated 315:

Imperial power in Rome & Western provinces of Empire granted to Pope becomes official basis for claims of secular power by Pope -

probably 8th C forgery (circa 750, modeled on actual Donation of Pepin) following Frankish invasion of Italy against Lombards

ROME: CHURCH OF SANTI QUATTRO CORONATI
(Four Holy Crowned Martyrs)
12th C. frescoes: story of Donation of Constantine by Pope Sylvester
Church of the Santi Quattro Coronati  (Four Holy Crowned Ones) on Caelian Hill
12th C.

Chapel

Frescoes
Constantine comes down with leprosy, cured by Pope Sylvester
Emperor
Constantine
With
Leprosy
Constantine is seen thanking the Pope for his cure by giving him control of Western Roman Empire
Constantine leaves for Constantinople and is seen kneeling before the Pope as he exits Roman city gate.
CHARLEMAGNE: Charles the Great (Carolus in Latin)
   King of the Franks and Lombards,
   800 Emperor of the Romans
   first of the Carolingian Emperors

Imperial ambitions: desire to rival Eastern Empire, to
   establish "New Rome" at Aachen (NE Germany)
   Treaty of Aachen 812:
      Eastern Empire recognizes his title
      after initial resistance, military conflict
      & failed efforts to marry Byzantine heiress

Carolingian Renaissance: scholars at court in Aachen, copying of
   manuscripts from ancient Rome
Charlemagne’s Capital at Aachen
Charlemagne’s Throne in Chapel at Aachen
MEDIEVAL ROME AS PILGRIMAGE CENTER

6-7th C. Moslem conquest of Christian Holy Lands
North Africa, Spain, forays into France
control of Mediterranean

Travel to Jerusalem becomes difficult

Rome as holiest place in Europe
Pilgrimage route to Rome from England, France and Germany
Map showing Christian churches on periphery or outside the Aurelian Wall
MAJOR MEDIEVAL EVENTS AFFECTING ROME (review slide)

568 Lombard invasion of Italy: most of Italian population enslaved or reduced to serfdom

Rise of Islam: 632 Mohammed establishes power in Arabia by 732 Moslem forces had conquered North Africa and Spain, sent raids into France

732 Battle of Tours:	Frankish King Charles Martel victory over Moslems
    Carolingian dynasty named for Charles (Carolus in Latin)

Rise of Carolingian dynasty: Kings of the Franks
    754 Franco Papal alliance against Lombards in Italy
    755 Donation of lands conquered by Pepin to Pope
        (basis for later Donation of Constantine, back dated to 315 AD)

Charlemagne, King of the Franks and the Lombards
    800 crowned Emperor of the Romans in St. Peters on Christmas Day
Aurelian Wall remains major defense of Rome throughout Middle Ages
Medieval fortifications of Aurelian wall Porta at Tiburtina
Medieval Fortified Bridge at Porta Nomentana
Map of Rome

Showing

Aurelian Wall

and

Borgo

at the left

(west side)
BORGO: (from German *burg*, or city):
area on west side of Tiber surrounding Vatican

846 raid by Saracen (Arab Moslem) pirates:
sack St. Peter’s and St. Paul’s outside the walls.

Walls of Pope Leo IV built 847-853 creates LEONINE CITY
area around Vatican becomes separately fortified compound

location of Borgo: protection from Roman mobs
and from any occupying power that might take over the city

Basilica of St. Peters
as medieval pilgrimage destination and tourist site
The bema, or transept, contained St Peter's shrine, within a baldacchino.

The transept opened centrally in a western apse, from which the bishop and high clergy emerged to officiate at services.

The vast nave and aisles were both a place of worship and a funereal hall and cemetery for those desiring burial near St Peter's shrine.

The narthex, or porch, gave access to the church through four doors opening into the nave and the four aisles.

The atrium, in which stood a canopyed campanile, or fountain, was approached by a flight of 35 steps.
Leonine Wall between Vatican and Castel Sant’Angelo with walkway
Mausoleum of Hadrian north of Nero’s circus (Vatican)
Wall and Walkway to Castel Sant’Angelo
Castel Sant’Angelo = Castle of the Holy Angel, formerly tomb of Hadrian
MEDIEVAL ITALY: independent city states

Republican city states: representative self-government
transfer of power from feudal rulers (Bishop, Counts)

COMUNE: Italian for Latin res publica (public thing or
“that which is held in common”)
association of free men collectively holding some public authority

CONSULS: permanent body of elected citizen executives
extension of authority over the contado (countryside)
Phases of the Italian commune:
11th C. Consular comune: dominated by noble families
Age of the Towers: built by noble families for urban warfare
12th C. Podestà outsider (nobleman with law degree)
brought as executive for specific period (1-2 years)
12-13th C. Rise of the popolo: guild regimes
San Gimignano, Tuscan hill town
Surviving towers

In San Gimignano
Towers in San Gimignano
Image of city of Bologna in 13th century (artist’s reconstruction of multiple towers)
Image of Rome as fortified city
Medieval Roman Tower
Tor dei Conti

(Tower of the Conti family)
14th C Roman house (in 19th C photo)
FRANCESCO PETRARCA ARETINO  1304-1374

Family: from Arezzo (= Aretino) ruled by Florence 
exiled from Florence in 1302 
Avignon: father notary at Papal court; 
Italy: patronage of northern rulers: 
   Visconti Dukes in Milan, Carrara in Padua

Poetry: Canzoniere, Rime  Italian poems, 
   including sonnets to Laura  (d. 1348) 
   Africa Latin epic poem about Scipio Africanus 
   republican hero of the Punic Wars

1341 crowned Poet Laureate on Capitoline Hill 
patronage of King Robert of Naples
RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

revival of classical literature and learning:
recovery of Latin texts  14th C
Greek texts (Plato) 15th C
social context: literate laymen, lawyers
notaries (legal documents, letter writing)

new curriculum: use classical texts for study of
human life, morality

* studia humanitatis:
study of things human (not divine, not natural)
curriculum: grammar, rhetoric, poetry,
history, moral philosophy

compare medieval scholastic curriculum
trivium: grammar, logic, rhetoric
quadrivium: arithmetic, geometry, music, astronomy

Humanism as guide to living:
classical Latin literature as moralizing, practical,
this-worldly virtues aim to teach good conduct,
responsibilities in social & political relationships
14th C. HUMANISM: revival of Latin literature

Petrarch as humanist
  manuscript hunting in monastic libraries
desire to go *ad fontes* (to the sources)

Latin edition of Livy's *History of Roman Republic*
*De Viris Illustribus (Concerning Illustrious Men)*:
  biographies of Romans as models of virtue
  humanist view of history

*Letters to Famous Men*: writes to classical authors
  Cicero, Socrates

*Familiar Letters* to contemporaries
  including Cola di Rienzo, Emperor Charles IV

*Secretum (Secret Book)*
  dialogue with St. Augustine internal struggle:
    pursuit of fame, love versus Christian goals
14TH CENTURY ROMAN POLITICS

Context: Papacy in Avignon 1305-1377
due to conflict of Pope Boniface VIII and
King of France over taxation of French clergy
**French Pope** elected 1305
establishes new court 1309

City of Rome:

**Commune** – republican city government
head quarters on Capitoline Hill

**Barons** - noble families (Orsini, Colonna)
struggle for power, fortify different areas
COLA DI RIENZO
Roman notary: studies classical history, archeology
1342: sent to Avignon by city of Rome
   Petrarch hears Cola speak before Pope

1347: ROMAN REPUBLICAN REVOLUTION
   Cola leads revolt, takes title of
   "Tribune of Freedom, Peace & Justice;
   Liberator of the Holy Roman Republic"
   calls council in Rome of Guelf city states:
      proclaims Roman jurisdiction over entire world
   1348 overthrown by Roman nobility,
   prisoner of Emperor, then Pope; escapes,
   returns to Rome as Senator; executed 1354

Petrarch’s correspondence with Cola:
   supports revival of Roman Republic
   poem: Spirito Gentil 1337-38
   lament on the decline of Rome
COLA DI RIENZO STATUE (19th century, foot of Capitol Hill became symbol for Italian nationalism)
O gentle spirit, that rules those members in which a pilgrim lives, a brave lord, shrewd and wise, now you have taken up the ivory scepter with which you punish Rome and her wrongdoers, and recall her to her ancient ways,

I don't know what Italy expects or hopes for, she seems not to feel her trouble, old, lazy, slow, will she sleep forever, no one to wake her? I should grasp her by the hair with my hand.
AVIGNON PAPACY
1305 election of first French Pope Clement V
1309 French Pope establishes seat in Avignon
1309-1378
   Popes actually living in southern France

GREAT SCHISM (1378-1414)
   after return from Avignon, French elect rival Pope
two Popes, one in Avignon and one in Rome

CONCILIARISM
   theory that highest authority in Church is
   General Council of Bishops, not Pope
   evolves to end Schism, but becomes a threat to idea of papal monarchy
CONCILIAR MOVEMENT: meetings of general councils of church

1409 Council of Pisa: elects new Pope,
   Avignon & Rome refuse to resign;
   now three papal lines (Rome, Avignon, Pisa)

1414-1417 Council of Constance: all three Popes deposed

1417 election of **Martin V Colonna**
   papal forces have to re-conquer central Italy to return to Rome

1420 new Pope enters Rome: start of Renaissance in Rome