Lecture 8: Medieval Europe: The Early Middle Ages, 750 - 1000

Charlemagne’s Carolingian Empire
- **Charles Martel** defeats Saracens Tours/Pointers 732
  - Charles’ son Pepin III (Pippin the Short)
  - 747 First of Carolingian Dynasty
- **Charlemagne** as Emperor (768-814)
  - Conquers the Lombards, Bavarians, Avars
  - Basques will stop his foray into Spain
  - Tackles the Lombards in 773
  - Pope Leo III, 795-816 crowns him emperor on Christmas Day, 800

The Carolingian Renaissance
- Charlemagne zealously promoted education, agriculture, arts, manufactures and commerce
- Charlemagne introduces school at his palace in Aachen
- Scholars at the schools collected and copied ancient Roman manuscripts
- The fusion of Greco-Roman Culture with Christianity
- The creation of uniform religious practices

From Roman to Germanic Rule
- Europe had hardly any towns, trade, or industry
  - (1) the clergy - those who pray
  - (2) the nobility - those who fight
  - (3) the peasants - those who work
- The King ruled by moving around
- Charlemagne introduces Germanic custom: feudalism

The Slavic Peoples ca. 800
- **The Slavs**
- **Great Moravia** (Great Moravian Empire)
- Varangians (Swedish Vikings)

Vikings Invade Europe
- The Sack of *Lindisfarne* England
- "Swedish" Vikings and “Norwegian” Vikings
- Warriors, shipbuilders, and sailors
- Russia
- Iceland, Greenland, Newfoundland

Magyars Invade Europe
- 889 Arpad hired by Byzantium
• Pressure by Pechenegs Magyars move into the Danube Basin
• Magyars inherit old Avar Kingdom

Muslims Take Spain 711-1492
• 711 Moors invade Visigoth Spain
  – Roderic (Rodrigo), last king of the Visigoths (710-711)
• Umayyad dynasty falls to Abbasid dynasty
  – Umayyad caliph Abd al-Rahman (Saracens)
  – 756 Invade and conquer Spain
  – Muslims take Sicily in 827
• Umayyad capital from 929 to 1031 was Cordoba
  – Caliphate of al-Hakam II (961-976)
  – La Mezquita ("the Mosque")

Feudal Society (the Nobility)
• Practice of Vassalage derives from Germanic society
  – Powerful nobles take control
  – Military power comes from mounted knight
• Lord and vassal
  – The act of homage Comitatus (following a great chief)
  – Beneficium = fief
• Vassalage
  – System of mutual obligation
  – Military service was main priority
  – Taking on side in court was a close second
• Kingdoms
  – Loose confederation of powerful lords

The Manorial System
• The Manor of each lord was worked by Peasants
• Peasants free
• Serfs become bound to lords land
• Lord’s had obvious political, legal, and economic rights

Islam and Islamic Europe
• Abu-al-Abbas took power from the Umayyads in 750
• Their importance is as saviors of science
• Abbasids became figureheads to powerful lords much as in the west