RS Notes: The Growth of European Kingdoms

England in the High Middle Ages

* Increasing power of the monarchy
  + 1066-William of Normandy defeated King Harold of England at the Battle of Hastings
    - William was crowned king
    - Gave fiefs to Norman knights
      * The Normans and the English merged to create a new English culture
    - Created the 1st census (Domesday Book) and new system of taxation
  + Henry II (1154 to 1189)-enlarged the power of the English monarchy
    - Expanded the royal courts’ powers
    - This created **common law**- law common to the whole kingdom
      * Wanted the right to punish clergy in royal courts
        + **Thomas á Becket** (Archbishop of Canterbury) disagreed
        + Henry had 4 knights kill him
        + There was public outrage and Henry backed off the Church
* Many began to resent the monarch’s power
  + **1215 at Runnymede- King John was forced to agree to the Magna Carta (Great Charter)**
    - Recognized the feudal idea of mutual rights and obligations between lord and vassal
    - It paved the way for our current system of government
      * It was the original model of modern British democratic constitution
      * **It did not create Parliament, but gave people the right to**
  + Parliament emerged during the reign of Edward I
    - It granted taxes and passed laws
    - Composed of two knights from each county, two people from each town, and all of England’s nobles and bishops
    - Later-nobles and church lords formed the **House of Lords**
    - Knights and townspeople formed the **House of Commons**

The French Kingdom

* The last Carolingian king died in 987
  + Frankish nobles chose Hugh Capet as king
    - Established Capetian dynasty of French kings
    - Had very little power- only controlled area around Paris
      * Nobles were stronger
  + Power grew under Philip II Augustus
    - Took back the French territories of Normandy, Maine, Anjou, and Aquitaine from the English
      * Greatly increased the income and power of the French monarchy
  + Philip IV- greatly expanded the royal bureaucracy
    - Began the first French parliament-**Estates-General**
      * Made up of three estates (classes)
        + **1st (clergy), 2nd (nobility), 3rd (commoners)**

The Holy Roman Empire

* 10th Century- Saxon dukes became kings of the eastern Frankish kingdom
  + Best known- Otto I- became Roman Emperor after protecting the Pope
    - Tried to rule both German and Italian lands
  + Frederick I considered Italy the center of a “holy empire,” hence the name Holy Roman Empire
    - 1176-N. Italian states and the pope allied to defeat Frederick’s army
* When the emperor was gone to war, the German nobles created their own independent states
  + Unlike England and France, neither Italy nor Germany created a national monarchy
    - Consisted of small states and did not unify until the 19th century