

# Aula 4

## THE MIDDLE AGES: HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION

### **META**

Apresentar, de forma panorâmica e esquemática, o contexto sócio-histórico do período medieval inglês..

### **OBJETIVOS**

Ao final da aula o(a) aluno(a) deve ser capaz de:  
Compreender o período medieval inglês como um resultado de processos políticos, econômicos, mas também de acordos e conflitos dinásticos, os quais acabaram por provocar as guerras mais duradouras da Europa.  
Compreender os primórdios da formação do estado nacional inglês como o resultado dos conflitos e acordos políticos e dinásticos.

### **PRERREQUISITOS**

Conhecimento histórico sobre o período anglo-saxônico.

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## INTRODUÇÃO

In this class, we are going to learn something about the medieval period in England. It will be necessary to review some basic information about the Middle Ages in Europe. That is why, in a summarized and objective way, we decided to describe in few words what the historians had agreed upon some controversial and deep themes and aspects of the Middle Ages. We included some boxes with information about the most important historical character, as well as an extensive glossary with the definition and/or explanation of some important historical events of the period. At the end of the class, we introduced a timeline for the kings of England of the Anglo-Saxon and the medieval periods.

## THE IDEA OF ENGLAND

The Middle Ages in England are generally dated from the end of the 5th century until 1485, encompassing thus two literary periods: the Anglo-Saxon period and the Medieval Period. As we could see in previous classes, after the fall of the Roman Empire there were several centuries of Germanic immigration and new identities and cultures began to merge and emerge. The Anglo-Saxons converted to Christianity in the 7th century and in the 8th and 9th centuries England faced the Viking attacks, after which Wessex was established as the most powerful kingdom, being chosen by the historians, centuries later, to promote the growth of a proto English identity. Despite the crises caused by succession and a Danish seizure of power, England, in the beginning of the 11th century, was powerful and centralized.

During the Middle Ages, for the first time, we have the idea of England, the idea of “protonationalism”, in the terms of Eric Hobsbawm. This period is marked by the Norman Invasion in 1066, led by William, the Conqueror. This marks the beginning of a new era, according to the literary historians, because power was centralized, and, instead of a group of small kingdoms, we have now a great kingdom called England. The English language, in turn, passes through another process of variation and the Old English becomes Middle English.

We cannot talk about the middle Ages and the Norman invasion without mentioning the Crusades. With the Crusades, for the first time, we have the idea of Europe. So, the union of those Christian kings gave birth to the idea of Europe. Why? Because they, in the name of Christendom, decided to unite their forces in order to fight against the common enemy, and this view of the “Other” gave them their sense of identity. So, the idea of Europe was already created, although it was not called Europe yet. They saw in the Muslims an enemy and a “difference”: an ethnic difference, a linguistic difference, and, most important of all, a religious difference.



The Crusades were military campaigns sanctioned by the Latin Roman Catholic Church during the High Middle Ages and Late Middle Ages. In 1095, Pope Urban II proclaimed the First Crusade with the stated goal of restoring Christian access to holy places in and near Jerusalem. Following the First Crusade there was an intermittent 200-year struggle for control of the Holy Land, with seven more major crusades and numerous minor ones. In 1291, the conflict ended in failure with the fall of the last Christian stronghold in the Holy Land at Acre, after which Roman Catholic Europe mounted no further coherent response in the east.

### THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES (1066-1272)

In 1066, **William**, Duke of Normandy, took advantage of the English succession crisis to invade the island. With an army of Norman followers and mercenaries, he defeated **Harold** at the Battle of Hastings and occupied the south of England. As soon as he got the power, William used a kind of network of castles to control the major (ex) kingdoms, confiscating the land of the saxon lords and distributing them among his Norman followers. After suppressing some later revolts, he established complete control over territories like York and North Wales. By the time of William's death in 1087, England formed the largest part of an Anglo-Norman empire, ruled by a group of noble proprietors in England, Normandy and Wales



Harold II (or Harold Godwinson; Old English: Harold Godwinson; Latin: Haroldus; c. 1022 – 14 October 1066) was the last Anglo-Saxon King of England. Harold reigned from 6 January 1066 until his death at the Battle of Hastings on 14 October, fighting the Norman invaders led by William the Conqueror during the Norman conquest of England. His death marked the end of Anglo-Saxon rule over England.



William I (Old Norman: Williame I; c. 1028 – 9 September 1087), usually known as William the Conqueror and sometimes William the Bastard, was the first Norman King of England, reigning from 1066 until his death in 1087. Descendant of Viking raiders, he had been Duke of Normandy since 1035. After a long struggle to establish his power, by 1060 his hold on Normandy was secure, and he launched the Norman conquest of England in 1066. The rest of his life was marked by struggles to consolidate his hold over England and his continental lands and by difficulties with his eldest son.



The Battle of Hastings was fought on 14 October 1066 between the Norman-French army of Duke William II of Normandy and an English army under the Anglo-Saxon King Harold II, beginning the Norman conquest of England. It took place approximately 7 miles (11 kilometres) northwest of Hastings, close to the present-day town of Battle, East Sussex, and was a decisive Norman victory. Picture: **Harold Rex Interfectus Est**: “King Harold was killed”. Scene from the Bayeux Tapestry depicting the Battle of Hastings and the death of Harold.

Historians say that Norman rule was unstable. The successions to the throne were contested. William II, who inherited the throne, faced a series of revolts and attempts to replace him with his older brother, Robert, or his cousin Stephen of Aumale. However, when he died he was replaced by his younger brother, Henry. As a consequence, a civil war was initiated in England and Normandy. The problem was solved **Matilda's** son, Henry, finally agreed to a peace settlement at Winchester and succeeded as king in 1154.



Empress Matilda (c. 7 February 1102 – 10 September 1167), also known as the Empress Maude, was the claimant to the English throne during the civil war known as the **Anarchy**. The daughter of King Henry I of England, she moved to Germany as a child when she married the future Holy Roman Emperor Henry V. She travelled with her husband into Italy in 1116, was controversially crowned in St. Peter's Basilica, and acted as the imperial regent in Italy. Matilda and Henry had no children, and when he died in 1125, the crown was claimed by Lothair II, one of his political enemies.

Ver glossário no final da Aula

Henry II was the first of the Angevin rulers of England, so-called because he was also the Count of Anjou in Northern France. He had also acquired the huge duchy of Aquitaine by marriage, making England a key part of a group of lands spread across Western Europe, named by some historians the **Angevin Empire**. Henry tried to re-establish royal authority, claiming power in Ireland and promoting the Anglo-Norman colonisation of the country. He strengthened England's borders with Wales and Scotland and used the country's wealth to fund a long war with his rivals in France. Even so, many revolts broke out, led by Henry's sons. After a final confrontation with Henry, his son Richard succeeded to the throne in 1189.

Tradition says that Richard spent most of his time protecting his possessions in France and fighting in the Third Crusade. His brother, John, inherited England in 1199, but lost Normandy and most of Aquitaine after a series of conflicts with France. John became famous because of the signing of the **Magna Carta**, agreed by King John of England at Runnymede, near Windsor, on 15 June 1215. It was first drafted by the Archbishop of Canterbury to make peace between the unpopular king and a group of rebel barons, promising the protection of church rights, protection for the barons from illegal imprisonment, access to swift justice and limitations on feudal payments to the Crown, to be implemented through a council of 25 barons. The charter was annulled by Pope Innocent III, leading to the **First Barons' War**.

After John's death, the regency government of his young son, Henry III, reissued the document in 1216, stripped of some of its more radical content, in an unsuccessful attempt to build political support for their cause. At the end of the war, in 1217, it formed part of the peace treaty agreed at Lambeth, where the document acquired the name Magna Carta, to distinguish it from the smaller Charter of the Forest which was issued at the same time. Short of funds, Henry reissued the charter again in 1225 in exchange for a grant of new taxes. His son, Edward I, repeated the exercise in 1297, this time confirming it as part of England's statute law. It is important to know that England remained unstable at the outbreak of the **Second Barons' War** in 1264. Edward defeated the rebels between 1265 and 1267, restoring his father to power.

### THE LATE MIDDLE AGES

Edward defeated the native Welsh and initiated a programme of English colonisation and castle building across the region. He fought in wars in Flanders and Aquitaine and in campaigns in Scotland, but could hardly avoid a civil war. Edward II inherited the war with Scotland. The **Despenser War** of 1321–22 was followed by an instability which generated the curious stories about English monarchy, this one ending up with the possible murder of Edward in 1327 at the hands of his French wife, Isabella,

and a rebel baron, Roger Mortimer. Isabella and Mortimer's regime lasted only a few years, before Isabella's son, Edward III, seized the power in 1330.

During the reign of Edward III, **the Black Death** arrived in England. Meanwhile, the king was under pressure from France in Aquitaine and made a challenge for the French throne. Over the next century, English forces fought many campaigns in a very long conflict that became known as the **Hundred Years' War**. Edward's military successes brought an influx of plundered wealth to many parts of England and enabled substantial building work. Many members of the English elite, including Edward's son, **the Black Prince**, were heavily involved in campaigning in France and administering the new continental territories.

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**Edward of Woodstock** (15 June 1330 – 8 June 1376), called the Black Prince, was the eldest son of King Edward III and Philippa of Hainault, and the father of King Richard II of England. He was the first Duke of Cornwall (from 1337), the Prince of Wales (from 1343) and the Prince of Aquitaine (1362–72). He was called “Edward of Woodstock” in his early life, after his birthplace, and since the 16th century has been popularly known as the Black Prince. He was an exceptional military leader, and his victories over the French at the Battles of Crécy and Poitiers made him very popular during his lifetime. In 1348 he became the first Knight of the Garter, of whose order he was one of the founders. Edward died one year before his father, becoming the first English Prince of Wales not to become King of England. The throne passed instead to his son Richard II, a minor, upon the death of Edward III.

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Edward's grandson, Richard II, also faced political and economic problems resulting from the Black Death, including the **Peasants' Revolt**, which occurred in the south of England in 1381. In 1399, **Henry of Bolingbroke** seized the throne with the support of parliament in 1399. Ruling as Henry IV, he exerted power through a royal council and parliament, in an attempt to enforce political and religious conformity. His son, **Henry V**, reenforced the war with France and came close to success shortly before his death in 1422. Henry VI became king at the age of only nine months and both the English political system and the military situation in France provoked a series of bloody civil wars, later termed the **Wars of the Roses**, which finally broke out in 1455. Edward IV, leading a faction known as the Yorkists, removed Henry from power in 1461 but by 1469 the conflict restarted as Edward, Henry, and Edward's brother George, backed by leading nobles and powerful French supporters, fought for power. By 1471 Edward was triumphant and most of his rivals were dead. On his death, power passed to his brother Richard of Gloucester, who initially ruled on behalf of the young Edward V, before seizing the throne himself as Richard III. The future Henry VII, aided by French and Scottish troops, returned to England and defeated Richard at the battle of Bosworth in 1485, bringing an end to the majority of the fighting, although lesser rebellions against his Tudor dynasty would continue for several years.



**Henry IV** (15 April 1367 – 20 March 1413) was King of England and Lord of Ireland from 1399 to 1413. He was the 10th King of England of the House of Plantagenet and also asserted his grandfather's claim to the title King of France. He was born at Bolingbroke Castle in Lincolnshire, hence his other name, Henry of Bolingbroke /'bɒlɪŋbrʊk/. His father, John of Gaunt, was the third son of Edward III, and enjoyed a position of considerable influence during much of the reign of Henry's cousin Richard II, whom Henry eventually deposed. Henry's mother was Blanche, heiress to the considerable Lancaster estates, and thus he became the first King of England from the Lancaster branch of the Plantagenets. Picture: Monument to King Henry IV and Queen Joan, Canterbury Cathedral, north side of Trinity Chapel.





Henry V (9 August 1387 – 31 August 1422) was King of England from 1413 until his death at the age of 35 in 1422. He was the second English monarch who came from the House of Lancaster. After military experience fighting the Welsh during the revolt of Owain Glyn Dwr, and against the powerful aristocratic Percys of Northumberland at the Battle of Shrewsbury, Henry came into political conflict with his father, whose health was increasingly precarious from 1405 onward. After his father's death in 1413, Henry assumed control of the country and embarked on war with France in the ongoing Hundred Years' War (1337–1453) between the two nations. His military successes culminated in his famous victory at the Battle of Agincourt (1415) and saw him come close to conquering France. After months of negotiation with Charles VI of France, the Treaty of Troyes (1420) recognized Henry V as regent and heir-apparent to the French throne, and he was subsequently married to Charles's daughter, Catherine of Valois (1401–37). Following Henry V's sudden and unexpected death in France two years later, he was succeeded by his infant son, who reigned as Henry VI (1422–61, 1470–71).

## TIMELINE OF ENGLISH KINGS

Source: <http://www.historic-uk.com/HistoryUK/KingsQueensofBritain/>

### SAXON KINGS

#### EGBERT 827 - 839

Egbert (Ecgherht) was the first monarch to establish a stable and extensive rule over all of Anglo-Saxon England. After returning from exile at the court of Charlemagne in 802, he regained his kingdom of Wessex. Following his conquest of Mercia in 827, he controlled all of England south of the Humber. After further victories in Northumberland and North Wales, he is recognised by the title *Bretwalda* (Anglo-Saxon, "ruler of the British"). A year before

he died aged almost 70, he defeated a combined force of Danes and Cornish at Hingston Down in Cornwall. He is buried at Winchester in Hampshire.

**AETHELWULF 839-856**

King of Wessex, son of Egbert and father of Alfred the Great. In 851 Aethelwulf defeated a Danish army at the battle of Oakley while his eldest son Athelstan fought and beat the Danes at sea off the coast of Kent, in what is believed to be the first naval battle. A highly religious man, Athelwulf travelled to Rome with his son Alfred to see the Pope in 855.

**AETHELBALD 856 – 860**

The eldest son of Aethelwulf, Æthelbald was born around 834. He was crowned at Kingston-upon-Thames in southwest London, after forcing his father to abdicate upon his return from pilgrimage to Rome. Following his father's death in 858, he married his widowed stepmother Judith, but under pressure from the church the marriage was annulled after only a year. He is buried at Sherbourne Abbey in Dorset.

**AETHELBERT 860 - 866**

Became king following the death of his brother Æthelbald. Like his brother and his father, Aethelbert (pictured to the right) was crowned at Kingston-Upon-Thames. Shortly after his succession a Danish army landed and sacked Winchester before being defeated by the Saxons. In 865 the Viking Great Heathen Army landed in East Anglia and swept across England. He is buried at Sherborne Abbey.

**AETHELRED I 866 - 871**

Aethelred succeeded his brother Aethelbert. His reign was one long struggle with the Danes who had occupied York in 866, establishing the Viking kingdom of Yorvik. When the Danish Army moved south Wessex itself was threatened, and so together with his brother Alfred, they fought several battles with the Vikings at Reading, Ashdown and Basing. Aethelred suffered serious injuries during the next major battle at Meretun in Hampshire; he died of his wounds shortly after at Witchampton in Dorset, where he was buried.

**ALFRED THE GREAT 871 - 899 - son of AETHELWULF**

Born at Wantage in Berkshire around 849, Alfred was well educated and is said to have visited Rome on two occasions. He had

proven himself to be a strong leader in many battles, and as a wise ruler managed to secure five uneasy years of peace with the Danes, before they attacked Wessex again in 877. Alfred was forced to retreat to a small island in the Somerset Levels and it was from here that he masterminded his comeback, perhaps 'burning the cakes' as a consequence. With major victories at Edington, Rochester and London, Alfred established Saxon Christian rule over first Wessex, and then on to most of England. To secure his hard won boundaries Alfred founded a permanent army and an embryonic Royal Navy. To secure his place in history, he began the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles.

#### **EDWARD (The Elder) 899 - 924**

Succeeded his father Alfred the Great. Edward retook southeast England and the Midlands from the Danes. Following the death of his sister Aethelflaed of Mercia, Edward unites the kingdoms of Wessex and Mercia. In 923, the Anglo-Saxon Chronicles record that the Scottish King Constantine II recognises Edward as "father and lord". The following year, Edward is killed in a battle against the Welsh near Chester. His body is returned to Winchester for burial.

#### **ATHELSTAN 924 - 939**

Son of Edward the Elder, Athelstan extended the boundaries of his kingdom at the Battle of Brunanburh in 937. In what is said to be one of the bloodiest battles ever fought on British soil, Athelstan defeated a combined army of Scots, Celts, Danes and Vikings, claiming the title of King of all Britain. The battle saw for the first time individual Anglo-Saxon kingdoms being brought together to create a single and unified England. Athelstan is buried in Malmesbury, Wiltshire.

#### **EDMUND 939 – 946**

Succeeded his half-brother Athelstan as king at the tender age of 18, having already fought alongside him at the Battle of Brunanburh two years earlier. He re-established Anglo-Saxon control over northern England, which had fallen back under Scandinavian rule following the death of Athelstan. Aged just 25, and whilst celebrating the feast of Augustine, Edmund was stabbed by a robber in his royal hall at Pucklechurch near Bath. His two sons, Eadwig and Edgar, were perhaps considered too young to become kings.

#### **EADRED 946 - 955**

The son of Edward the Elder by his third marriage to Eadgifu, Eadred succeeded his brother Edmund following his premature

death. He followed in the family tradition of defeating Norsemen, expelling the last Scandanavian King of York, Eric Bloodaxe, in 954. A deeply religious man, Eadred suffered a serious stomach ailment that would eventually prove fatal. Eadred died in his early 30s, unmarried and without an heir, at Frome in Somerset. He is buried in Winchester.

### EADWIG 955 - 959

The eldest son of Edmund I, Eadwig was about 16 when he was crowned king at Kingston-upon-Thames in southeast London. Legend has it that his coronation had to be delayed to allow Bishop Dunstan to prise Eadwig from his bed, and from between the arms of his "strumpet" and the strumpets' mother. Perhaps unimpressed by the interruption, Eadwig had Dunstan exiled to France. Eadwig died in Gloucester when he was just 20, the circumstances of his death are not recorded.

### EDGAR 959 - 975

The youngest son of Edmund I, Edgar had been in dispute with his brother concerning succession to the throne for some years. Following Eadwig's mysterious death, Edgar immediately recalled Dunstan from exile, making him Archbishop of Canterbury as well as his personal advisor. Following his carefully planned (by Dunstan) coronation in Bath in 973, Edgar marched his army to Chester, to be met by six kings of Britain. The kings, including the King of Scots, King of Strathclyde and various princes of Wales, are said to have signalled their allegiance to Edgar by rowing him in his state barge across the River Dee.

### EDWARD THE MARTYR 975 - 978

Eldest son of Edgar, Edward was crowned king when aged just 12. Although supported by Archbishop Dunstan, his claim to the throne was contested by supporters of his much younger half-brother Aethelred. The resulting dispute between rival factions within the church and nobility almost led to civil war in England. Edward's short reign ended when he was murdered at Corfe Castle by followers of Aethelred, after just two and half years as king. The title 'martyr' was a consequence of him being seen as a victim of his stepmother's ambitions for her own son Aethelred.

### AETHELRED II THE UNREADY 978 - 1016

Aethelred was unable to organise resistance against the Danes, earning him the nickname 'unready', or 'badly advised'. He became king aged about 10, but fled to Normandy in 1013 when Sweyn Forkbeard, King of the Danes invaded England.

Sweyn was pronounced King of England on Christmas Day 1013 and made his capital at Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. He died just 5 weeks later.

Aethelred returned in 1014 after Sweyn's death. The remainder of Aethelred's reign was one of a constant state of war with Sweyn's son Canute.

#### **EDMUND II IRONSIDE 1016 – 1016**

The son of Aethelred II, Edmund had led the resistance to Canute's invasion of England since 1015. Following the death of his father, he was chosen king by the good folk of London. The Witan (the king's council) however elected Canute. Following his defeat at the Battle of Assandun, Aethelred made a pact with Canute to divide the kingdom between them. Edmund died later that year, probably assassinated.

#### **CANUTE (CNUT THE GREAT) THE DANE 1016 - 1035**

Canute became king of all England following the death of Edmund II. The son of Sweyn Forkbeard, he ruled well and gained favour with his English subjects by sending most of his army back to Denmark. In 1017, Canute married Emma of Normandy, the widow of Aethelred II and divided England into the four earldoms of East Anglia, Mercia, Northumbria and Wessex. Perhaps inspired by his pilgrimage to Rome in 1027, legend has it that he wanted to demonstrate to his subjects that as a king he was not a god, he ordered the tide not to come in, knowing this would fail.

#### **HAROLD I 1035 - 1040**

Also known as Harold Harefoot, in recognition of his speed and skill as a hunter. Harold was the illegitimate son of Canute, he claimed the English crown on the death of his father whilst his half-brother Harthacanute, the rightful heir, was in Denmark fighting to protect his Danish kingdom. Harold died three years into his reign, just weeks before Harthacanute was due to invade England with an army of Danes. He was buried in Westminster Abbey before Harthacanute had his body dug up, beheaded, and thrown into the Thames. His bits were later gathered and re-buried at St. Clement Danes in London.

### HARTHACANUTE 1040 - 1042

The son of Cnut the Great and Emma of Normandy, Harthacnute sailed to England with his mother, accompanied by a fleet of 62 warships, and was immediately accepted as king. Perhaps to appease his mother, the year before he died Harthacnute invited his half-brother Edward, Emma's son from her first marriage to Aethelred the Unready, back from exile in Normandy. Harthacnute died at a wedding whilst toasting the health of the bride; he was aged just 24 and was the last Danish king to rule England.

### EDWARD THE CONFESSOR 1042-1066

Following the death of Harthacnute, Edward restored the rule of the House of Wessex to the English throne. A deeply pious and religious man, he presided over the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey, leaving much of the running of the country to Earl Godwin and his son Harold. Edward died childless, eight days after the building work on Westminster Abbey had finished. With no natural successor, England was faced with a power struggle for control of the throne.

### HAROLD II 1066

Despite having no royal bloodline, Harold Godwin was elected king by the Witan (a council of high ranking nobles and religious leaders), following the death of Edward the Confessor. The election result failed to meet with the approval of one William, Duke of Normandy, who claimed that his relative Edward had promised the throne to him several years earlier. Harold defeated an invading Norwegian army at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire, then marched south to confront William of Normandy who had landed his forces in Sussex. The death of Harold at the Battle Of Hastings meant the end of the English Anglo-Saxon kings and the beginning of the Normans.

### NORMAN KINGS

#### WILLIAM I (The Conqueror) 1066- 1087

Also known as William the Bastard (but not normally to his face!), he was the illegitimate son of Robert the Devil, whom he succeeded as Duke of Normandy in 1035. William came to England from Normandy, claiming that his second cousin Edward the Confessor had promised him the throne, and defeated Harold II at the Battle of Hastings on 14th October 1066. In 1085 the Domesday Survey was begun and all of England was recorded, so William knew exactly what

his new kingdom contained and how much tax he could raise in order to fund his armies. William died at Rouen after a fall from his horse whilst besieging the French city of Nantes. He is buried at Caen.

#### **WILLIAM II (Rufus) 1087- 1100**

William was not a popular king, given to extravagance and cruelty. He never married and was killed in the New Forest by a stray arrow whilst out hunting, maybe accidentally, or possibly shot deliberately on the instructions of his younger brother Henry. Walter Tyrrell, one of the hunting party, was blamed for the deed. The Rufus Stone in The New Forest, Hampshire, marks the spot where he fell.

#### **HENRY I 1100-1135**

Henry Beauclerc was the fourth and youngest son of William I. Well educated, he founded a zoo at Woodstock in Oxfordshire to study animals. He was called the 'Lion of Justice' as he gave England good laws, even if the punishments were ferocious. His two sons were drowned in the White Ship so his daughter Matilda was made his successor. She was married to Geoffrey Plantagenet. When Henry died of food poisoning, the Council considered a woman unfit to rule and so offered the throne to Stephen, a grandson of William I.

#### **STEPHEN 1135-1154**

Stephen was a very weak king and the whole country was almost destroyed by the constant raids by the Scots and the Welsh. During Stephen's reign the Norman barons wielded great power, extorting money and looting town and country. A decade of civil war known as The Anarchy ensued when Matilda invaded from Anjou in 1139. A compromise was eventually decided, under the terms of the Treaty of Westminster Matilda's son Henry Plantagenet would succeed to the throne when Stephen died.

#### **PLANTAGENET KINGS**

#### **HENRY II 1154-1189**

Henry of Anjou was a strong king. A brilliant soldier, he extended his French lands until he ruled most of France. He laid the foundation of the English Jury System and raised new taxes (scutage) from the landholders to pay for a militia force. Henry is mostly remembered for his quarrel with Thomas A Becket, and Becket's subsequent murder in Canterbury Cathedral on 29th December 1170. His sons turned against him, even his favourite John.

#### **RICHARD I (The Lionheart) 1189 - 1199**

Richard was the third son of Henry II. By the age of 16, he was leading his own army putting down rebellions in France. Although crowned King of England, Richard spent all but 6 months of his reign abroad, preferring to use the taxes from his kingdom to fund his various armies and military ventures. He was the leading Christian commander during the Third Crusade. On his way back from Palestine, Richard was captured and held for ransom. The amount paid for his safe return almost bankrupted the country. Richard died from an arrow-wound, far from the kingdom that he so rarely visited. He had no children.

#### JOHN 1199 -1216

John Lackland was the fourth child of Henry II. Short and fat, he was jealous of his dashing brother Richard I whom he succeeded. He was cruel, self-indulgent, selfish and avaricious, and the raising of punitive taxes united all the elements of society, clerical and lay, against him. The Pope excommunicated him. On 15th June 1215 at Runnymede the barons compelled John to sign Magna Carta, the Great Charter, which reinstated the rights of all his subjects. John died - from over-eating - a fugitive from all his enemies. He has been termed "the worst English king".

#### HENRY III 1216 -1272

Henry was 9 years old when he became king. Brought up by priests he became devoted to church, art and learning. He was a weak man, dominated by churchmen and easily influenced by his wife's French relations. In 1264 Henry was captured during the rebellion of barons led by Simon de Montfort and was forced to set up a 'Parliament' at Westminster, the start of the House of Commons. Henry was the greatest of all patrons of medieval architecture and ordered the rebuilding of Westminster Abbey in the Gothic style.

### MONARCHS OF ENGLAND AND WALES

#### EDWARD I 1272 - 1307

Edward Longshanks was a statesman, lawyer and soldier. He formed the Model Parliament in 1295, bringing the knights, clergy and nobility, as well as the Lords and Commons together for the first time. Aiming at a united Britain, he defeated the Welsh chieftains and created his eldest son Prince of Wales. He was known as the 'Hammer of the Scots' for his victories in Scotland and brought the famous coronation stone from Scone to Westminster. When his first wife Eleanor died, he escorted her body from Grantham in Lincoln-



shire to Westminster, setting up Eleanor Crosses at every resting place. He died on the way to fight Robert Bruce.

#### EDWARD II 1307 - deposed 1327

Edward was a weak and incompetent king. He had many 'favourites', Piers Gaveston being the most notorious. He was beaten by the Scots at the Battle of Bannockburn in 1314. Edward was deposed and held captive in Berkeley Castle in Gloucestershire. His wife joined her lover Mortimer in deposing him: by their orders he was murdered in Berkeley Castle - as legend has it, by having a red-hot poker thrust up his anus! His beautiful tomb in Gloucester Cathedral was erected by his son, Edward III.

#### EDWARD III 1327 - 1377

Son of Edward II, he reigned for 50 years. His ambition to conquer Scotland and France plunged England into the Hundred Years War, beginning in 1338. The two great victories at Crecy and Poitiers made Edward and his son, the Black Prince, the most renowned warriors in Europe, however the war was very expensive. The outbreak of bubonic plague, the 'Black Death' in 1348-1350 killed half the population of England.

#### RICHARD II 1377 - deposed 1399

The son of the Black Prince, Richard was extravagant, unjust and faithless. In 1381 came the Peasants Revolt, led by Wat Tyler. The rebellion was put down with great severity. The sudden death of his first wife Anne of Bohemia completely unbalanced Richard and his extravagance, acts of revenge and tyranny turned his subjects against him. In 1399 Henry of Lancaster returned from exile and deposed Richard, becoming elected King Henry IV. Richard was murdered, probably by starvation, in Pontefract Castle in 1400.

### HOUSE OF LANCASTER

#### HENRY IV 1399 - 1413

The son of John of Gaunt (third son of Edward III), Henry returned from exile in France to reclaim his estates previously seized by Richard II; he was accepted as king by Parliament. Henry spent most of his 13 year reign defending himself against plots, rebellions and assassination attempts. In Wales Owen Glendower declared himself Prince of Wales and led a national uprising against English rule. Back in England, Henry had great difficulty in maintaining

the support of both the clergy and Parliament and between 1403-08 the Percy family launched a series of rebellions against him. Henry, the first Lancastrian king, died exhausted, probably of leprosy, at the age of 45.

### HENRY V 1413 - 1422

The son of Henry IV, he was a pious, stern and skilful soldier. Henry had honed his fine soldiering skills putting down the many rebellions launched against his father and had been knighted when aged just 12. He pleased his nobles by renewing the war with France in 1415. In the face of tremendous odds he beat the French at the Battle of Agincourt, losing just 400 of his own soldiers with more than 6,000 Frenchmen killed. On a second expedition Henry captured Rouen, was recognised as the next King of France and married Catherine, the daughter of the lunatic French king. Henry died of dysentery whilst campaigning in France and before he could succeed to the French throne, leaving his 10-month old son as King of England and France.

### HENRY VI 1422 - deposed 1461 Beginning of the Wars of the Roses

Gentle and retiring, he came to the throne as a baby and inherited a losing war with France, the Hundred Years War finally ending in 1453 with the loss of all French lands except for Calais. The king had an attack of mental illness that was hereditary in his mother's family in 1454 and Richard Duke of York was made Protector of the Realm. The House of York challenged Henry VI's right to the throne and England was plunged into civil war. The Battle of St Albans in 1455 was won by the Yorkists. Henry was restored to the throne briefly in 1470. Henry's son, Edward, Prince of Wales was killed at the Battle of Tewkesbury one day before Henry was murdered in the Tower of London in 1471. Henry founded both Eton College and King's College, Cambridge, and every year the Provosts of Eton and King's College lay roses and lilies on the altar which now stands where he died.

### HOUSE OF YORK

#### EDWARD IV 1461- 1483

He was the son of Richard Duke of York and Cicely Neville, and not a popular king. His morals were poor (he had many mistresses and had at least one illegitimate son) and even his contemporaries disapproved of him. Edward had his rebellious brother George, Duke of Clarendon, murdered in 1478 on a charge of treason. During his

reign the first printing press was established in Westminster by William Caxton. Edward died suddenly in 1483 leaving two sons aged 12 and 9, and five daughters.

#### **EDWARD V 1483 - 1483**

Edward was actually born in Westminster Abbey, where his mother Elizabeth Woodville had sought sanctuary from Lancastrians during the Wars of the Roses. The eldest son of Edward IV, he succeeded to the throne at the tender age of 13 and reigned for only two months, the shortest-lived monarch in English history. He and his brother Richard were murdered in the Tower of London - it is said on the orders of his uncle Richard Duke of Gloucester. Richard (III) declared the Princes in the Tower illegitimate and named himself rightful heir to the crown.

#### **RICHARD III 1483 - 1485 End of the Wars of the Roses**

Brother of Edward IV. The ruthless extinction of all those who opposed him and the alleged murders of his nephews made his rule very unpopular. In 1485 Henry Richmond, descendant of John of Gaunt, father of Henry IV, landed in west Wales, gathering forces as he marched into England. At the Battle of Bosworth Field in Leicestershire he defeated and killed Richard in what was to be the last important battle in the Wars of the Roses. Archaeological investigations at a car park in Leicester during 2012 revealed a skeleton which was thought to have been that of Richard III, and this was confirmed on the 4th February 2013. His body is due to be reinterred at Leicester Cathedral in early 2014

### **THE TUDORS**

#### **HENRY VII 1485 - 1509**

When Richard III fell at the Battle of Bosworth, his crown was picked up and placed on the head of Henry Tudor. He married Elizabeth of York and so united the two warring houses, York and Lancaster. He was a skilful politician but avaricious. The material wealth of the country increased greatly. During Henry's reign playing cards were invented and the portrait of his wife Elizabeth has appeared eight times on every pack of cards for nearly 500 years.

### CONCLUSÃO

The Norman invasion of England in 1066 led to the defeat and replacement of the Anglo-Saxon elite with Norman and French nobles and their supporters. William the Conqueror and his successors took over the existing state system, repressing local revolts and controlling the population through a network of castles. The new rulers introduced a feudal approach to governing England, eradicating the practice of slavery but creating a much wider body of unfree labourers called serfs. The position of women in society changed as laws regarding land and lordship shifted. England's population more than doubled during the 12th and 13th centuries, provoking an expansion of the towns, cities and trade, helped by warmer temperatures across Northern Europe. Monasteries and friaries were established, while ecclesiastical reforms led to tensions between successive kings and archbishops. Despite developments in England's legal system, the constant conflicts against France led to the loss of Normandy. During the 14th century, England saw the Great Famine, The Great Famine of 1315-1317, which was the first of a series of large-scale crises that struck Europe in that period, and the Black Death, events that killed around half of England's population. Social unrest followed, in the form of the Peasants' Revolt of 1381. English kings in the 14th and 15th centuries laid claim to the French throne, resulting in the Hundred Years' War. More social unrest broke out, followed by the Wars of the Roses, fought between rival factions in the English nobility. Henry VII's victory in 1485 marks the end of the Middle Ages in England and the start of the Early Modern period.



### RESUMO

The medieval period is marked, in England, by the Norman invasion in 1066 and goes on until the fifteenth century, but there is a controversy about the end of the second period of English literature. According to some authors, it ends up with the death of Geoffrey Chaucer, who is the most important writer of the period. According to some others, this period takes place from 1066 until the War of the Roses, which is another important episode in the English history and takes place in the fourteenth and fifteenth century. But the fact is that this period takes place before the Elizabethan age, which is the third period of English literature and which is also the period which the English language comes to be the language we know nowadays, the Shakespearean English, or modern English.



## ATIVIDADES

Based on what you read in this class, answer the questions below:

Can we talk about the beginnings of the English nation during the medieval period? The answers can be given in English or in Portuguese

### COMENTÁRIO SOBRE AS ATIVIDADES

A intenção desta atividade é fazer com que o aluno reflita criticamente sobre alguns conceitos que serão fundamentais nas próximas aulas e que dão base e sustentação a todo o discurso nacionalista, entre eles o de identidade nacional.



## PRÓXIMA AULA

Medieval Literature

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## GLÓSSARIO

**The Anarchy** was a war in England and Normandy between 1135 and 1154, characterised by a breakdown in law and order. The conflict originated with a succession crisis towards the end of the reign of Henry I, when the king's only legitimate son, William Adelin, died aboard the White Ship in 1120. Henry's attempts to install his daughter, the Empress Matilda, as his successor were unsuccessful and on Henry's death in 1135, his nephew Stephen of Blois took power as Stephen, King of England with the help of his brother, Henry of Blois, also known as Henry of Winchester. Stephen's early reign was marked by fierce fighting with English barons, rebellious Welsh leaders and Scottish invaders. Following a major rebellion in the south-west of England, Matilda invaded in 1139 with the help of her half-brother, Robert of Gloucester.

**The term Angevin Empire** (/ˈændʒəvɪn/; French: L'Empire Plantagenêt) describes the collection of states once ruled by the Angevins of the House of Plantagenet. The Plantagenets ruled over an area stretching from the Pyrenees to Ireland during the 12th and early 13th centuries. This "empire", originally established by Henry II of England, Count of Anjou and Duke of Normandy, extended over roughly half of medieval France, all of England, and parts of Ireland and Wales. However, despite the extent of Plantagenet rule, Henry's son, John, King of England was defeated in the Anglo-French War (1202–14) by Philip II of France of the House of Capet, which left the empire split in two, John having lost many French provinces, including Normandy and Anjou. This defeat, after which the ruling Plantagenets retained only their British territories and the French province of Gascony, set the scene for the Saintonge War and the Hundred Years' War.

**The First Barons' War** (1215–17) was a civil war in the Kingdom of England in which a group of rebellious barons, led by Robert Fitzwalter and supported by a French army under the future Louis VIII of France,

made war on King John of England. The war resulted from the king's refusal to accept and abide by the Magna Carta he had sealed on 15 June 1215, and from the ambitions of the French prince, who dragged the war on after many of the rebel barons had made peace with John. **The Second Barons' War** (1264–1267) was a civil war in England between the forces of a number of barons led by Simon de Montfort against Royalist forces led by Prince Edward (later Edward I of England), in the name of Henry III.

**The Despenser War** (1321–22) was a baronial revolt against Edward II of England led by the Marcher Lords Roger Mortimer and Humphrey de Bohun. The rebellion was fuelled by opposition to Hugh Despenser the Younger, the royal favourite. After the rebels' summer campaign of 1321, Edward was able to take advantage of a temporary peace to rally more support and a successful winter campaign in southern Wales, culminating in royal victory at the battle of Boroughbridge in the north of England in March 1322. Edward's response to victory was his increasingly harsh rule until his fall from power in 1326.

**The Black Death** was one of the most devastating pandemics in human history, resulting in the deaths of an estimated 75 to 200 million people and peaking in Europe in the years 1346–53. Although there were several competing theories as to the etiology of the Black Death, analysis of DNA from victims in northern and southern Europe published in 2010 and 2011 indicates that the pathogen responsible was the *Yersinia pestis* bacterium, probably causing several forms of plague.

**The Hundred Years' War** was a series of conflicts waged from 1337 to 1453 between the House of Plantagenet, rulers of the Kingdom of England, against the House of Valois, rulers of the Kingdom of France, for control of the latter kingdom. Each side drew many allies into the war. It was the most notable conflict of the Middle Ages, wherein five generations of kings from two rival dynasties fought for the throne of the largest kingdom in Western Europe. The war saw both the height of chivalry and its subsequent decline, and the development of strong national identities in both countries.

**The Peasants' Revolt**, also called Wat Tyler's Rebellion or the Great Rising, was a major uprising across large parts of England in 1381. The revolt had various causes, including the socio-economic and political tensions generated by the Black Death in the 1340s, the high taxes resulting from the conflict with France during the Hundred Years' War, and instability within the local leadership of London. The final trigger for the revolt was the intervention of a royal official, John Bampton, in Essex on 30 May 1381. His attempts to collect unpaid poll taxes in Brentwood ended in a violent confrontation, which rapidly spread

across the south-east of the country. A wide spectrum of rural society, including many local artisans and village officials, rose up in protest, burning court records and opening the local gaols. The rebels sought a reduction in taxation, an end to the system of unfree labour known as serfdom and the removal of the King's senior officials and law courts.

(9) The Wars of the Roses were a series of dynastic wars for the throne of England. They were fought between supporters of two rival branches of the royal House of Plantagenet, the houses of Lancaster and York. They were fought in several sporadic episodes between 1455 and 1487, although there was related fighting before and after this period. The conflict resulted from social and financial troubles that followed the Hundred Years' War, combined with the mental infirmity and weak rule of Henry VI, which revived interest in the alternative claim to the throne of Richard, Duke of York. The final victory went to a claimant of the Lancastrian party, Henry Tudor, who defeated the last Yorkist king, Richard III, at the Battle of Bosworth Field. After assuming the throne as Henry VII, Henry Tudor married Elizabeth of York, the eldest daughter and heiress of Edward IV, thereby uniting the two houses. The House of Tudor ruled England and Wales until 1603.