

From early in the second millennium BC, Crete played host to the highly developed Minoan culture, whose rulers built impressive palaces such as that at Knossos. By the 15th century BC, however, the Cretan palaces were destroyed, by natural disasters or invasion. Until the 12th century BC, the Aegean was dominated by a culture from the Greek mainland, that of the Mycenaeans map right.

The Aegean, 2500-1200 BC

frontiers of Mycenaean world c. 1300 BC

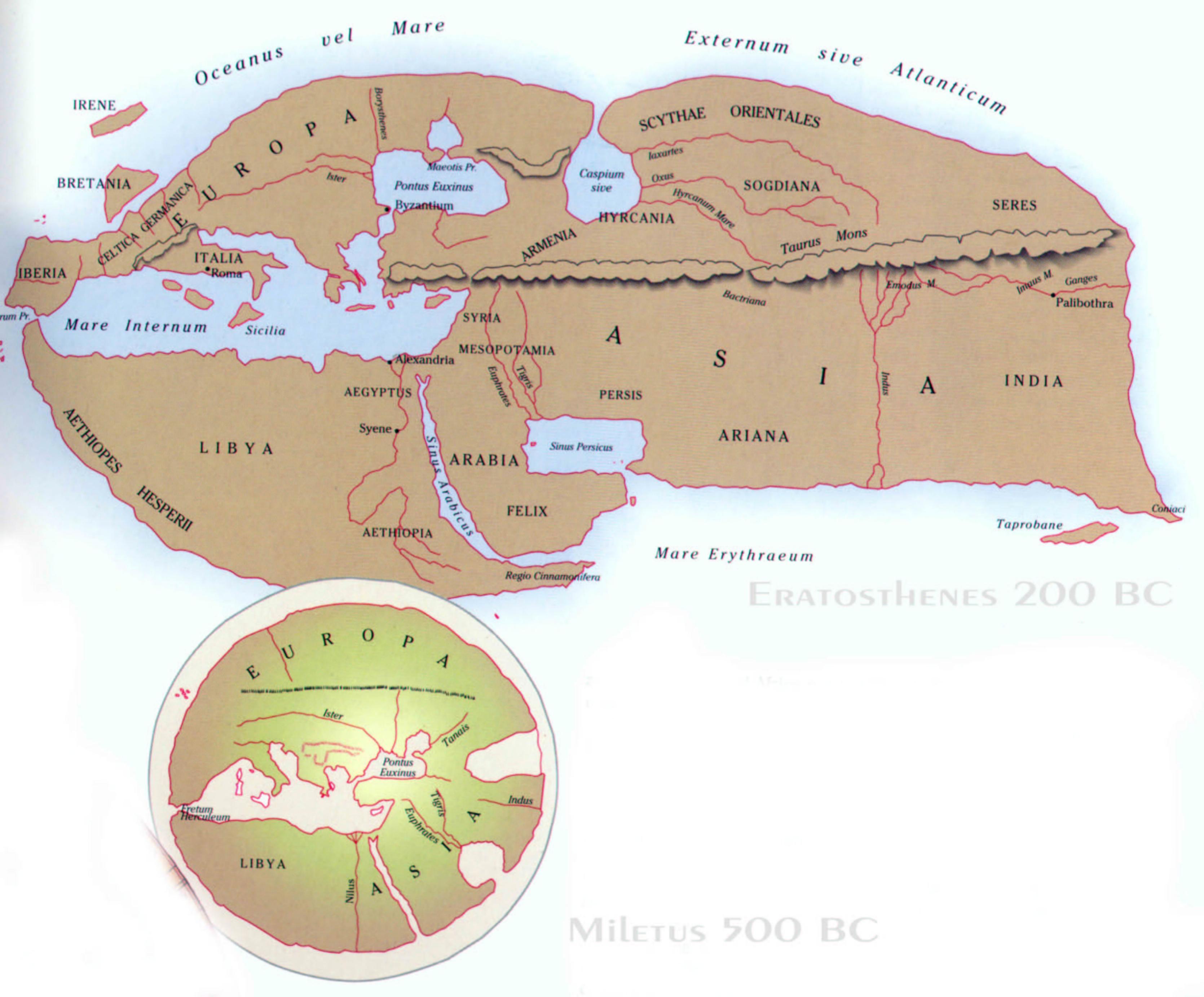
- major Mycenaean palaces (c. 1500-1200)
- major Minoan palaces
- smaller Minoan palaces
- other Minoan settlements
- core area of the Minoan civilisation
- maximum extent of Minoan cultural influence

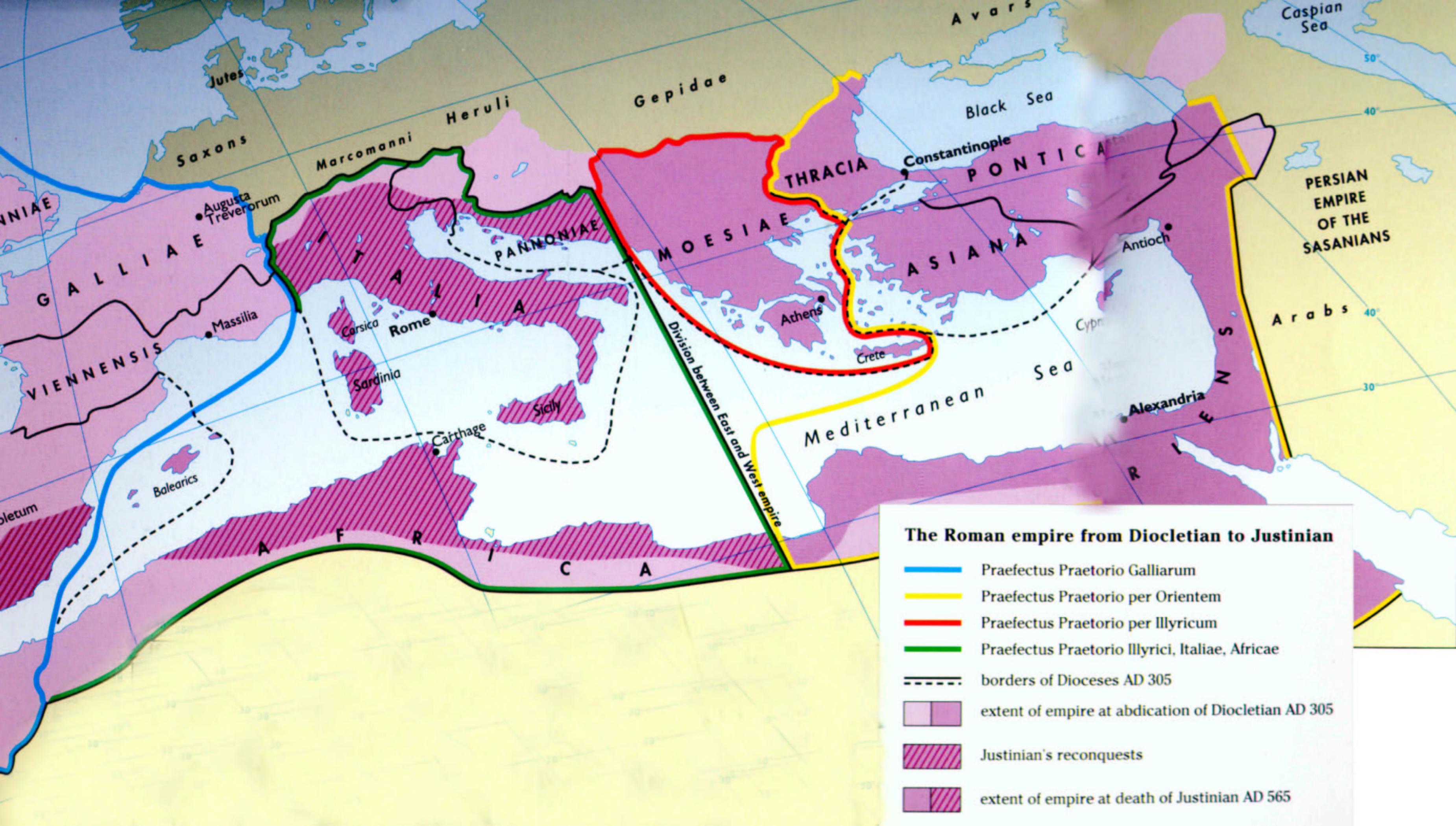


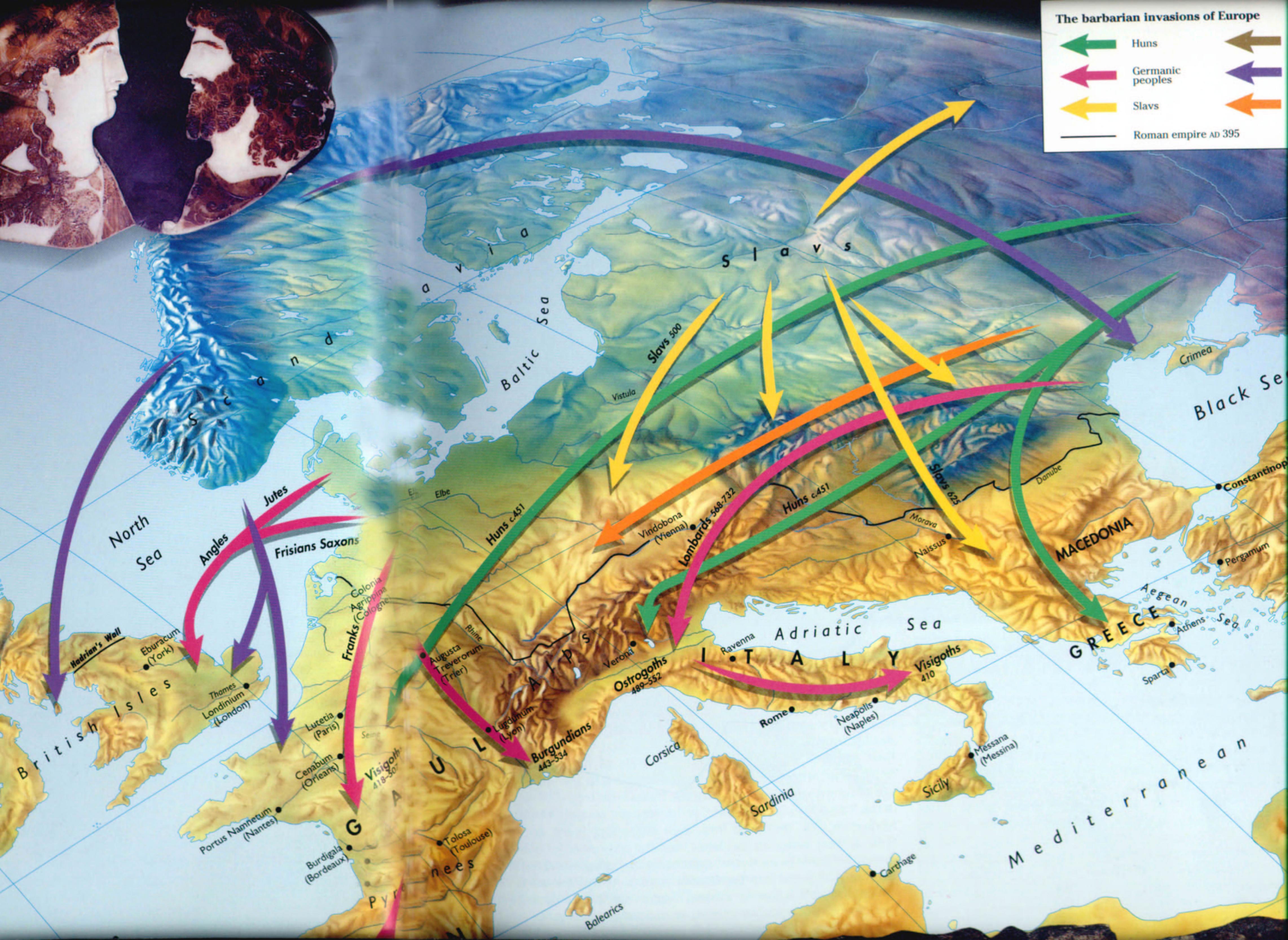




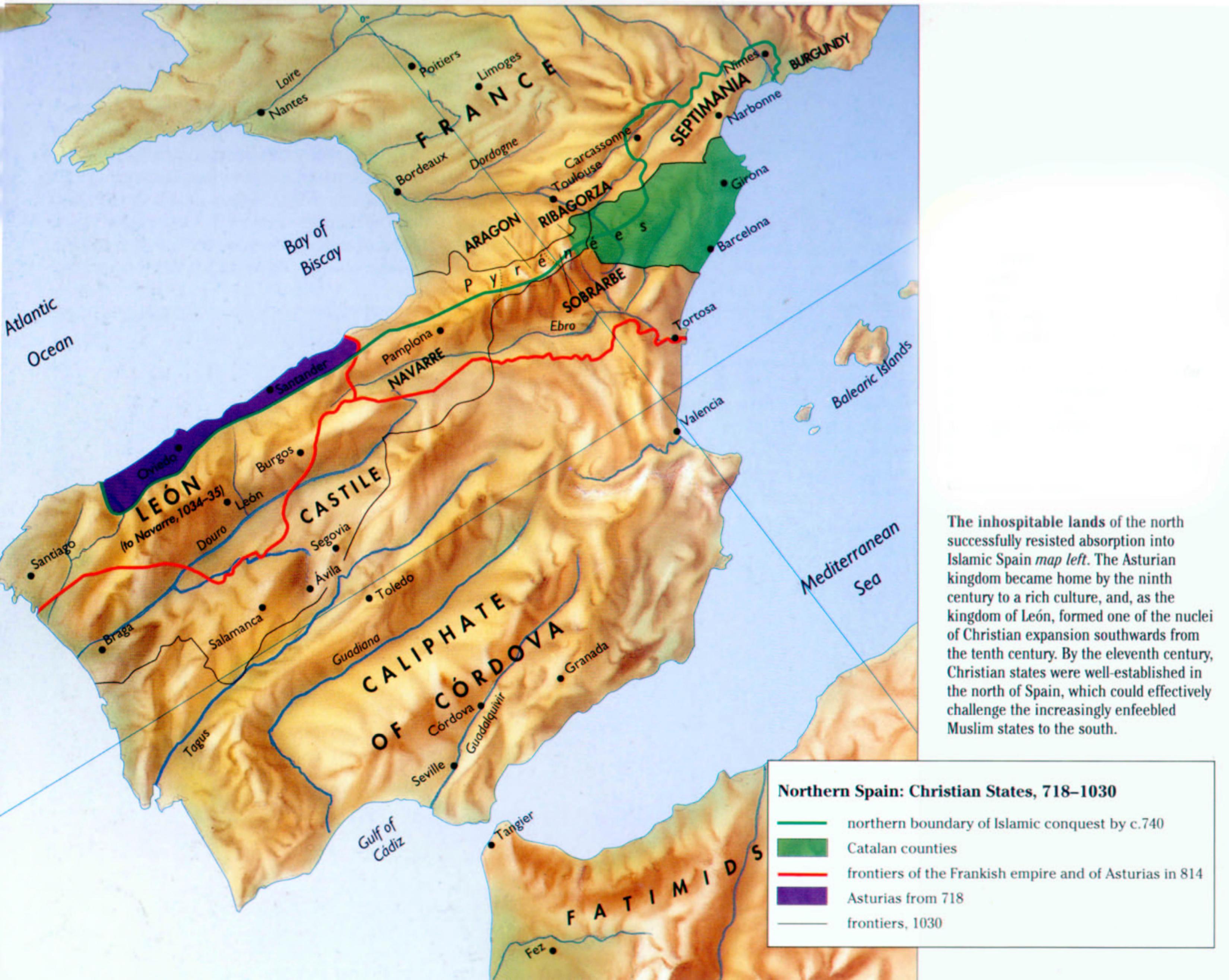


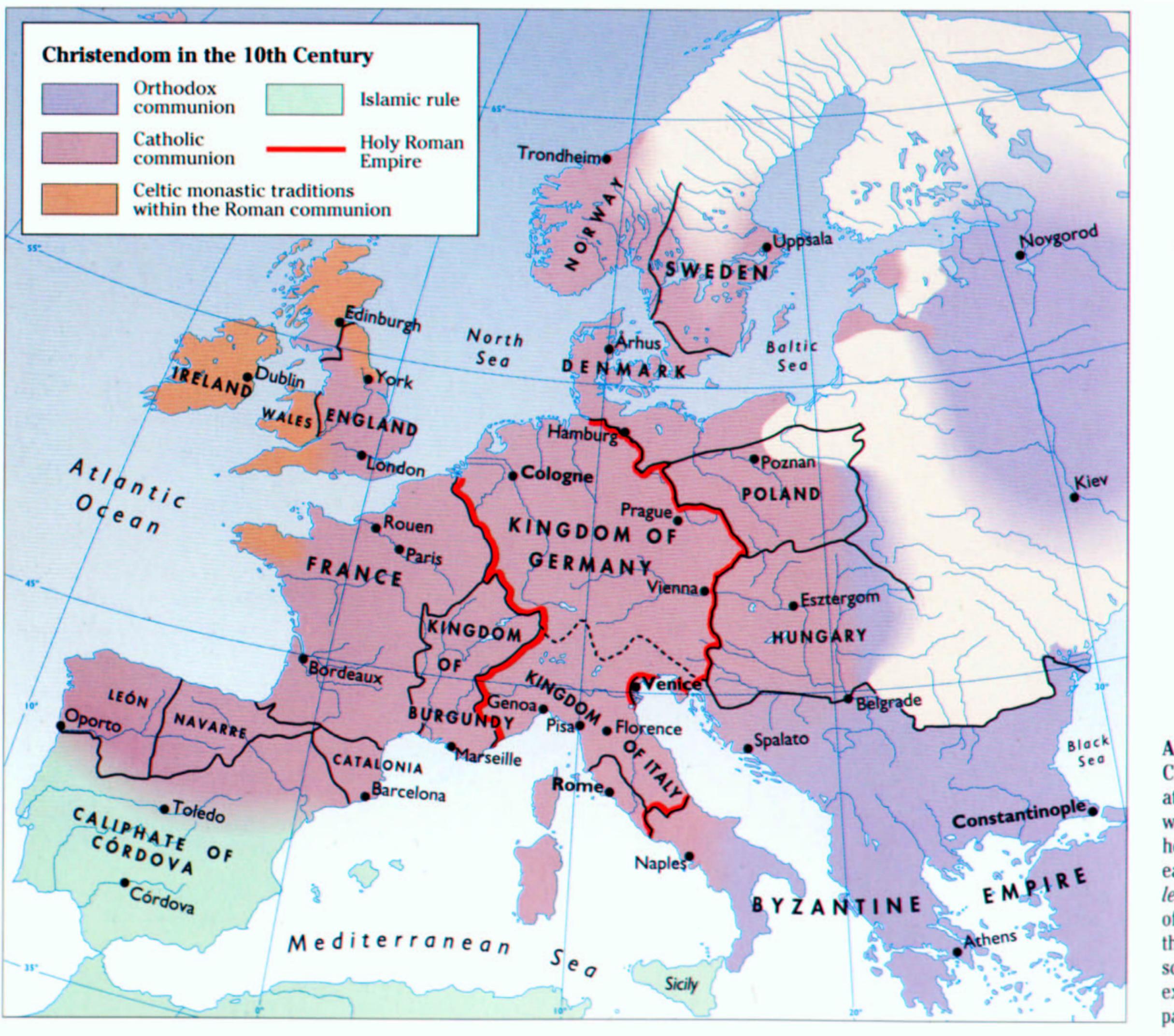




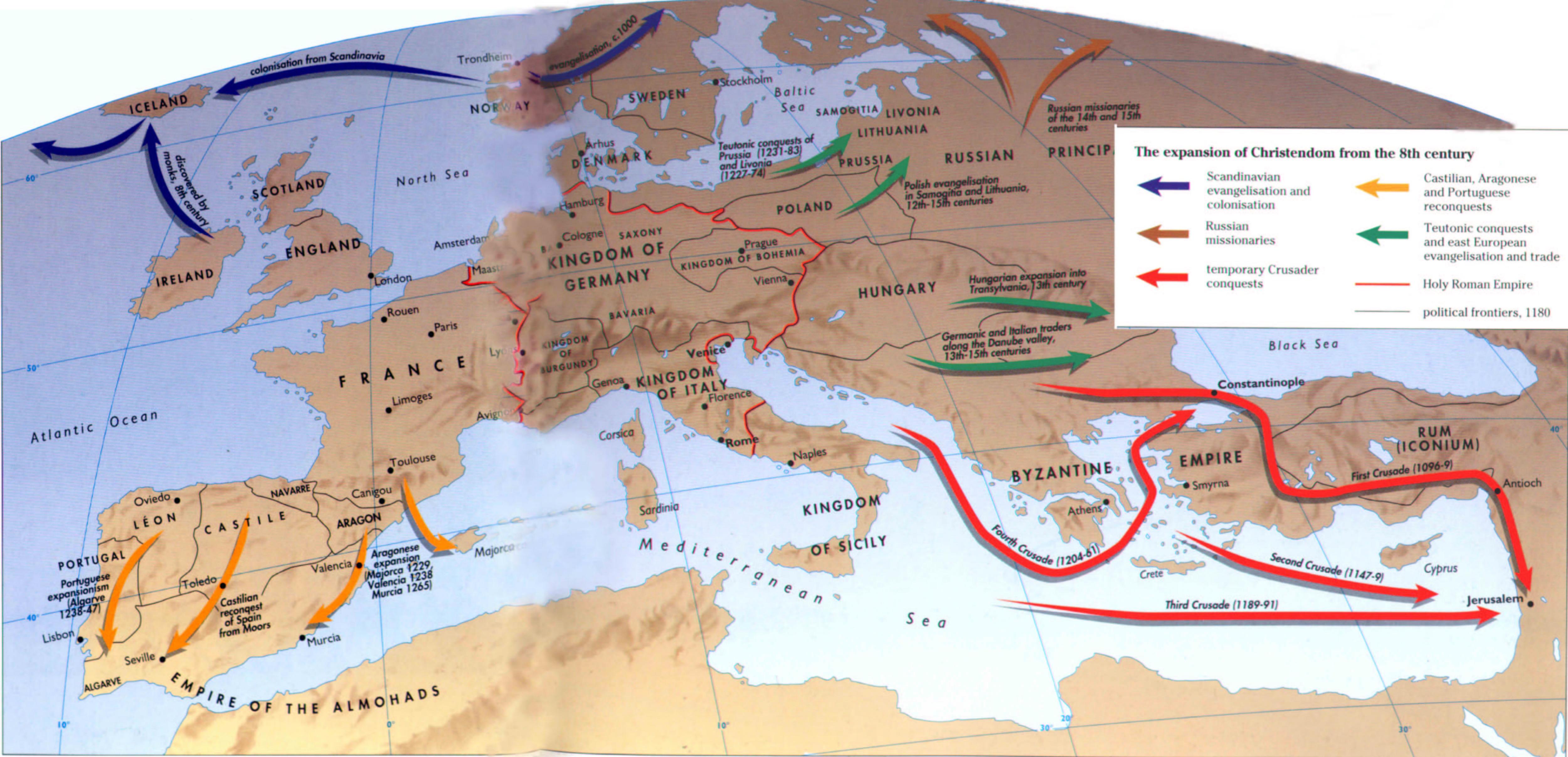


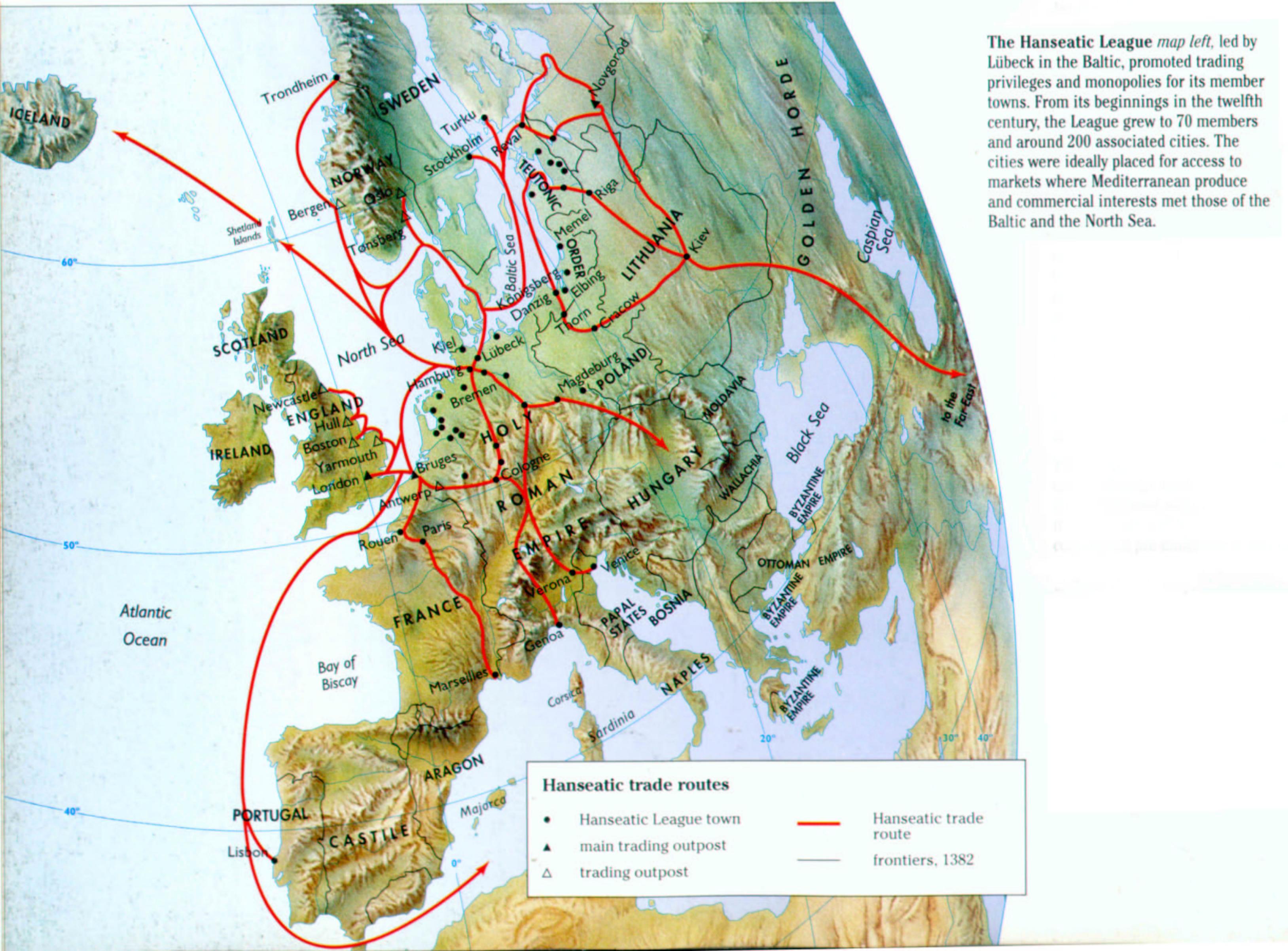




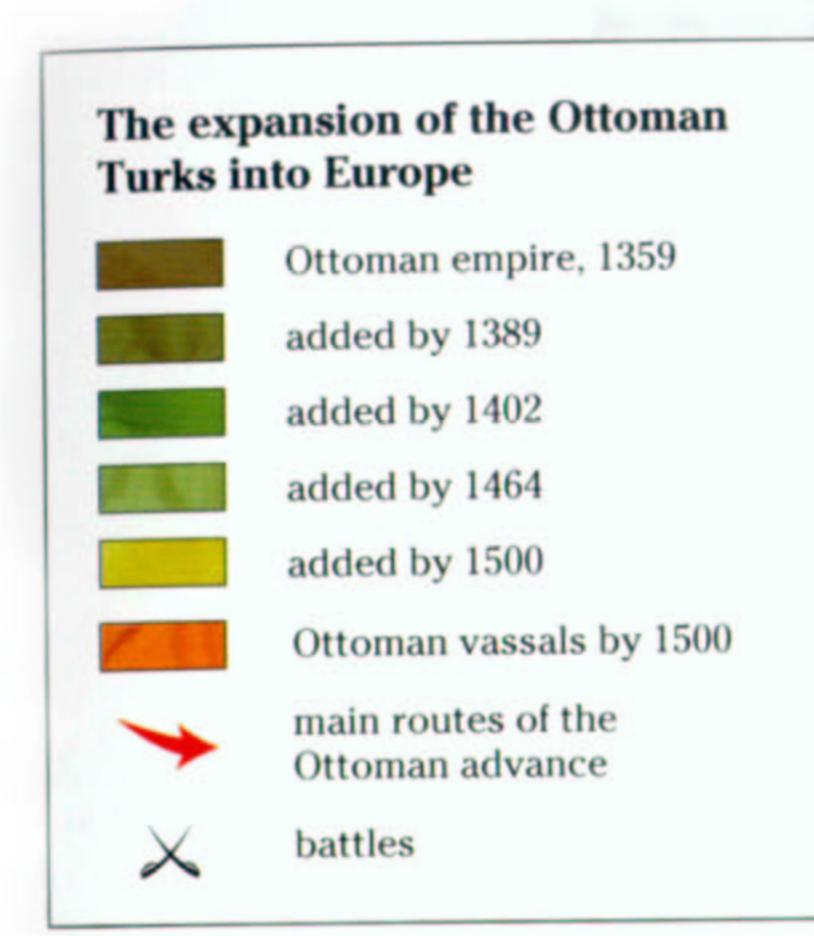


Although by the eleventh century
Christendom seemed to be making gains at the expense of the Muslims and pagans who had previously threatened to engulf her, the church remained divided between eastern and western communions map left. Bitter competition for the allegiance of the Balkans was exacerbated by theological differences. In 1054 a formal schism occurred, with the excommunication of the orthodox patriarch by a papal legate.





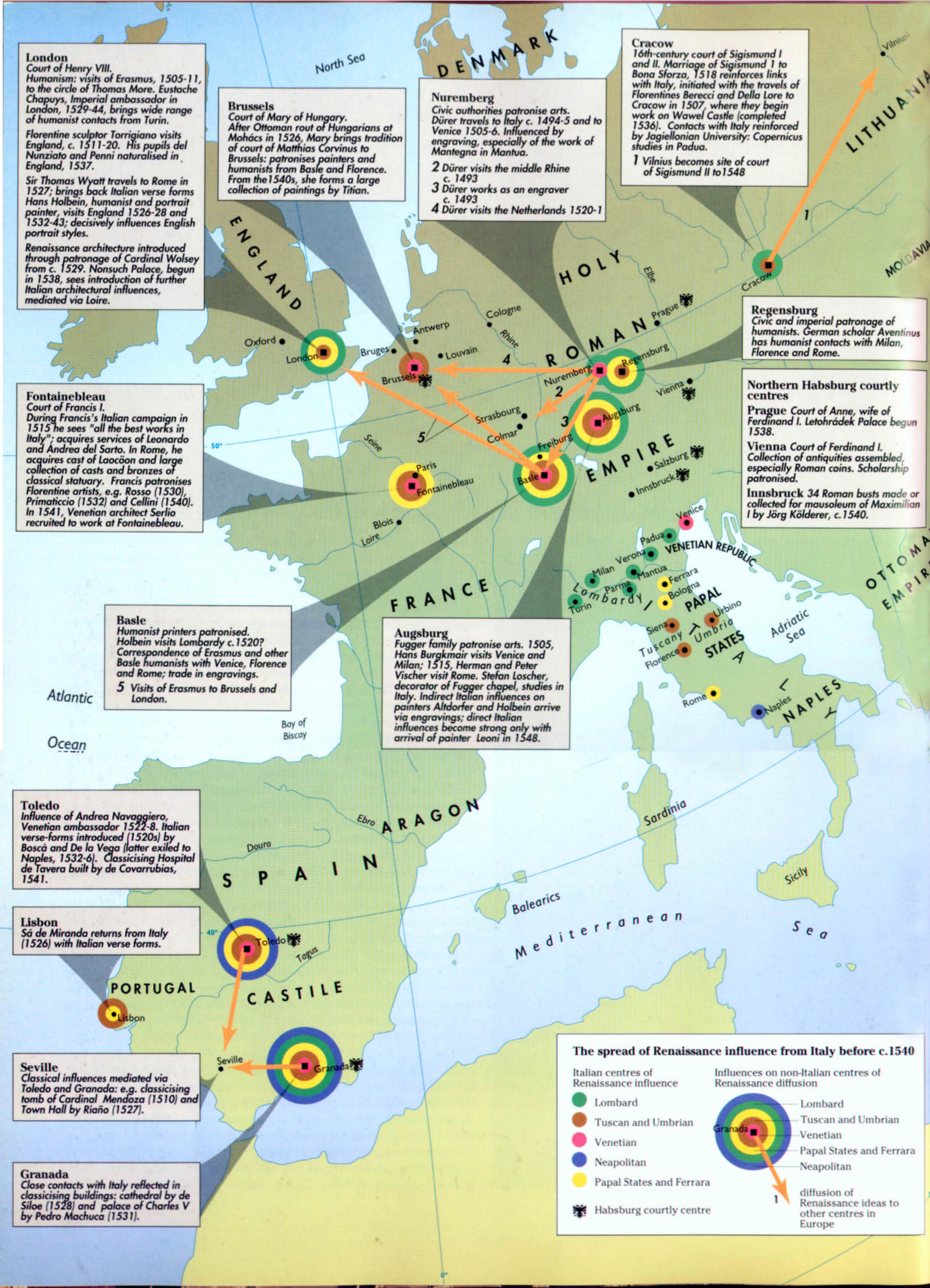




Turkish raiders first devastated, then occupied large tracts of the Byzantine empire in Asia Minor from the midthirteenth century, crossing over into Europe from the mid-fourteenth. This 16th-century fresco left depicts the results of one such raid in 1352: the monks of the monastery of Saint Simon are martyred by the turbanned invaders. The expansion of the Ottoman Turks into the Balkans map right would take them as far as the gates of Vienna by the early sixteenth century.





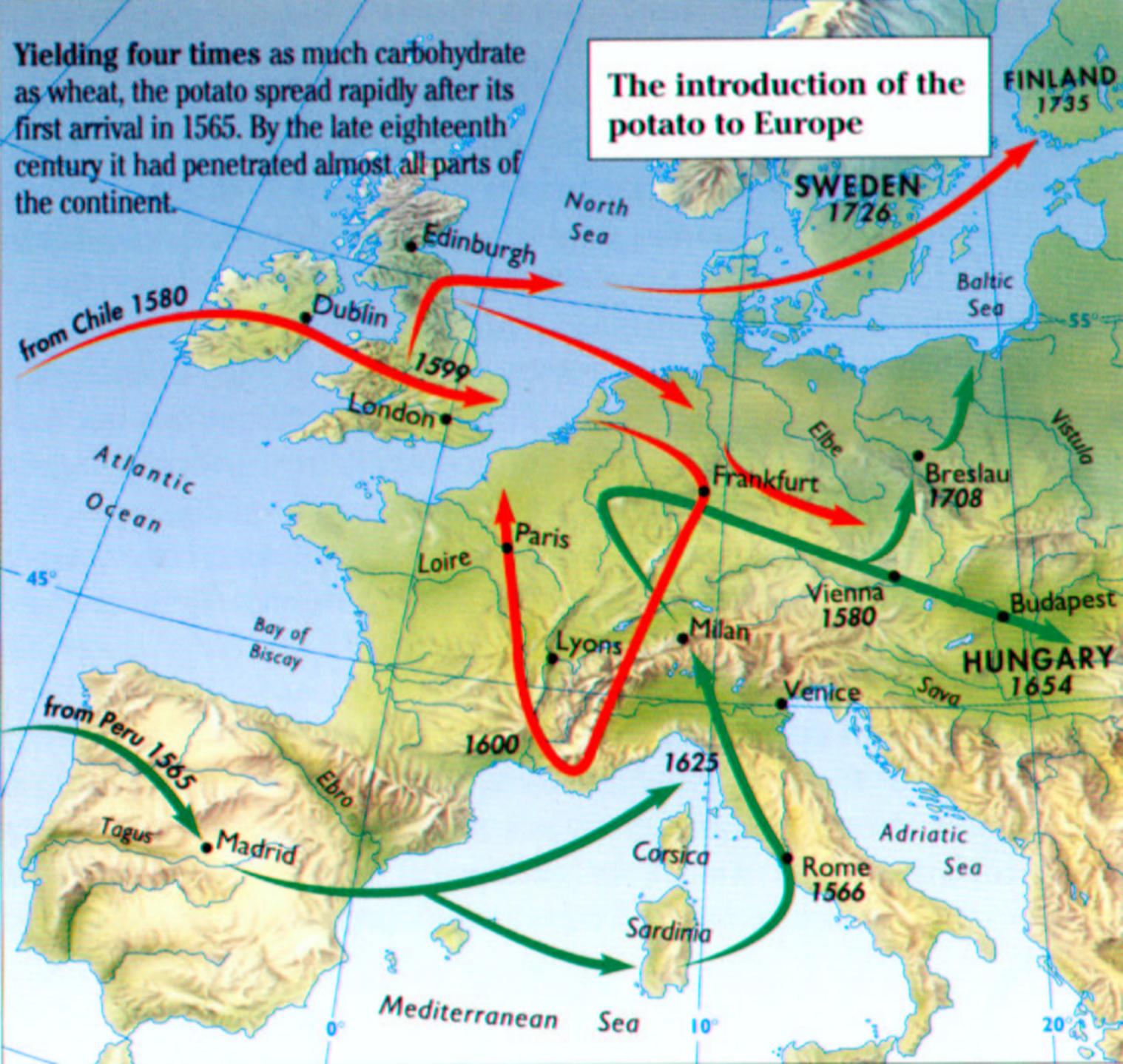


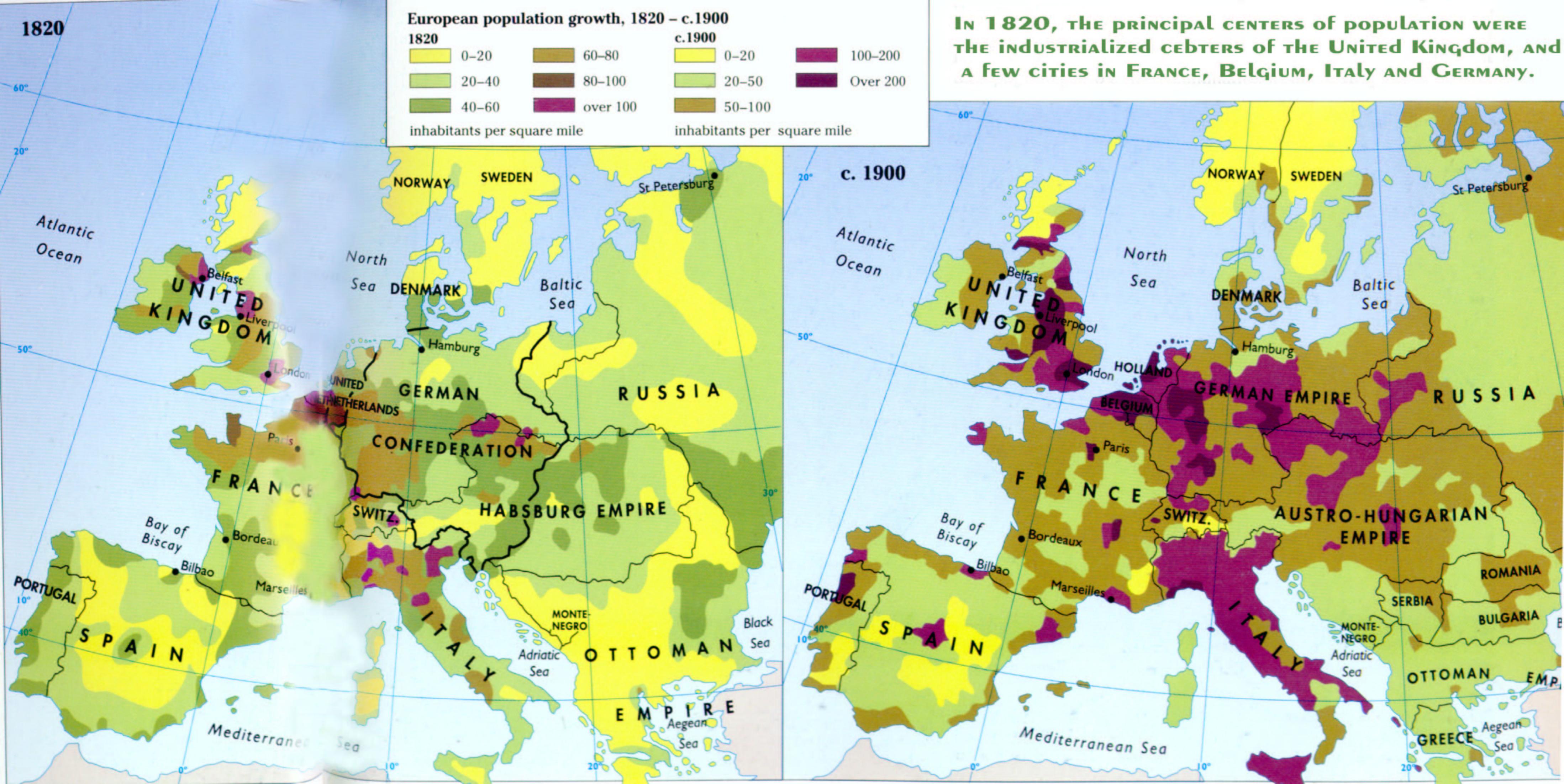








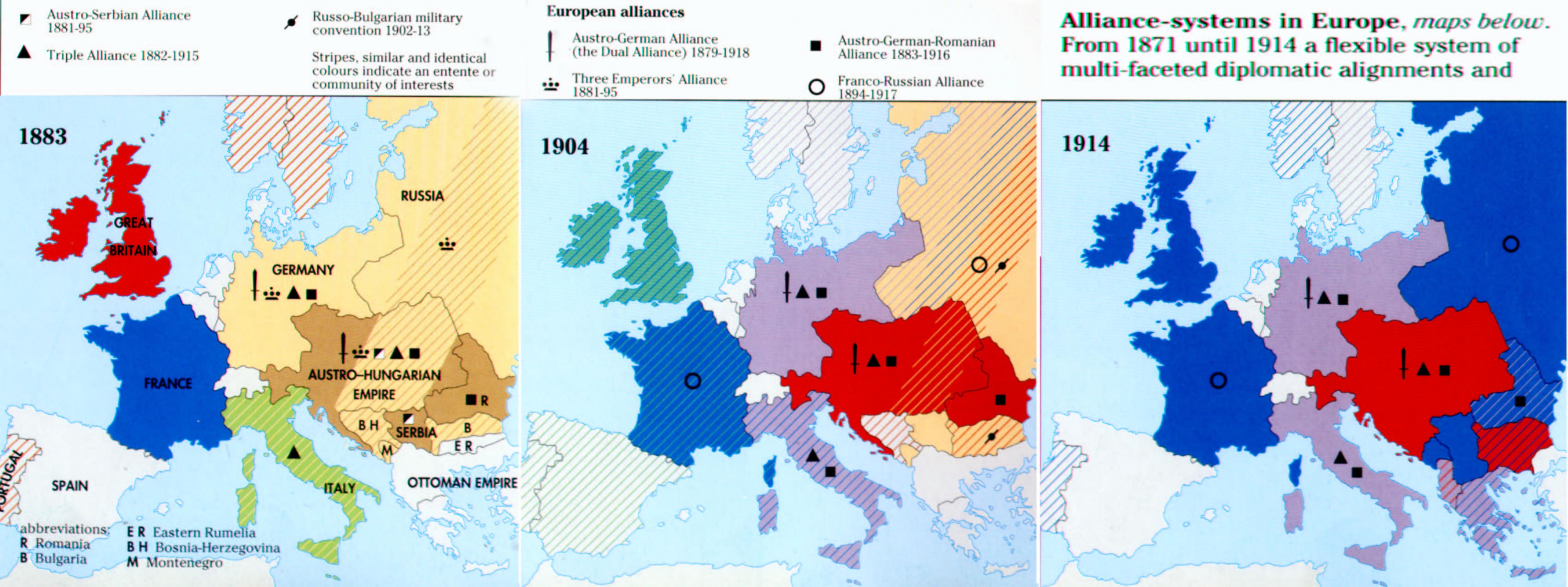






















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Reprint of first edition – author's note:

Some typographical errors have been corrected and, within the limits allowed by the format of the work, a number of passages which needed revision – especially in Part III – have been rewritten to incorporate material not duplicated in other, overlapping works of mine. I am grateful to Bill Rosen, Thomas Cussans and Philip Parker for help in identifying these.

Felipe Fernández-Armesto December 1995