

Unit 9: Early Middle Ages

Standard(s) of Learning:

WHI.9 – The student will demonstrate knowledge of Western Europe during the Middle Ages from about 500 to 1000 AD in terms of its impact on Western Civilization by

- a) Sequencing events related to the spread and influence of Christianity and the Catholic Church throughout Europe
 - b) Explaining the structure of feudal society and its economic, social, and political effects
 - c) Explaining the rise of Frankish kings, the Age of Charlemagne, and the revival of the idea of the Roman Empire
 - d) Sequencing the events related to the invasions, settlements, and influence of migratory groups, including Angles, Saxons, Magyars, and Vikings
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Locate Europe on the map – Color it RED

WHI.9c – The Middle Ages & The Rise of the Franks



What are the Middle Ages?

- Dates: 500 – 1500 AD
- Period between the end of the classical age and the beginning of the modern age
- Also known as the Medieval Period or the Dark Ages because it was a period of social and cultural decline

Early Middle Ages

- Dates: 500 – 1000 AD
- During this time a new society began to emerge in Western Europe with roots in:
 - The classical heritage of Rome
 - The beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church
 - The customs of various Germanic tribes

Decline of Western Europe

- During the 5th century, the repeated invasions by Germanic tribes and constant warfare caused a series of changes that altered the economy, government, and culture of Western Europe

Economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Trade was disrupted by invasions and constant warfare• Businesses collapsed and money became scarce• European cities were no longer economic centers
Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cities were abandoned and no longer political centers• No strong leadership – led to a breakdown in government
Society	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Large portions of the population left the cities for the country• Population became largely rural

Decline of Learning

- Germanic invaders who stormed Rome could not read or write
- Education declined as people moved to the country
- Few people except priests and other church officials were literate
- Led to a decline in cultural, scientific, and technological advancements

Loss of a Common Language

- As German-speaking peoples mixed with the Roman population Latin changed
- Different dialects developed and communication became more difficult
- By the 800s, languages such as French and Spanish had evolved from Latin
- Led to the further breakdown of a once unified empire

The Rise of the Franks



- Between 400-600, the Franks – a Germanic people – used military power to establish kingdoms and expand their territory
- These kingdoms were ruled by a chief and personal loyalty to the chief rather than to the state made it difficult to establish an orderly government for a large territory

Clovis

- Leader of the Franks in Gaul (modern day France)
- Began the Merovingian Line of kings
- Brings Christianity to the region when he converts – begins an alliance between the Frankish kings and the Church
- Used military power to expand territory, and by 511 Clovis had united all the Franks into one kingdom

Charles Martel

- Known as “The Hammer”
- Expanded the Frankish Empire
- Became a Christian hero when he defeats the Moors at the Battle of Tours in 732

Pepin III

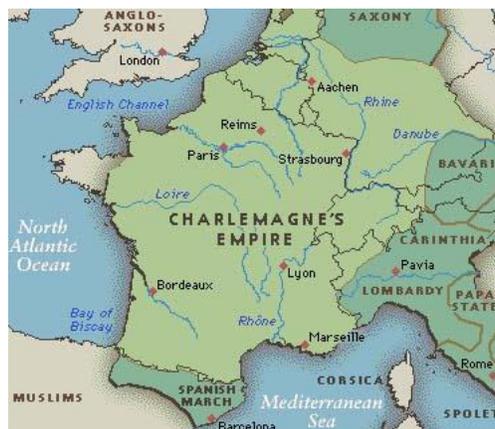
- Charles Martel’s son – known as “The Short”
- Begins the Carolingian Line
- Defeats the Lombards for the Pope
- Gave the land around Rome to Pope – The Donation of Pepin – which established the Papal States (The Vatican)

The Age of Charlemagne (768-814 AD)

- Also known as Charles the Great
- Expanded the Frankish Kingdom and spread Christianity
- In 800 AD, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne emperor of the Holy Roman Empire – which helped establish the power of the church in political life – emperors were crowned or chosen by the Pope

Revival of the “Roman Empire”

- Franks emerged as a force in Western Europe – most of Western Europe was included in the new empire
- Charlemagne limited the power of the nobles and used royal agents – missi dominici – to help oversee the empire
- Roman culture was re-established and reinterpreted
- Churches, roads, and school were built to unite the empire



End of the Age of Charlemagne

- Charlemagne died in 814 AD
- His son – Louis the Pious – became emperor, but he was a very ineffective ruler
- Charlemagne’s grandsons fought for control and in 843 they signed the Treaty of Verdun, which split the kingdom into three parts



WHI.9 d – Migratory Groups



- Invasions by Angles, Saxons, Magyars, and Vikings disrupted the social, economic, and political order of Europe.

Angles & Saxons

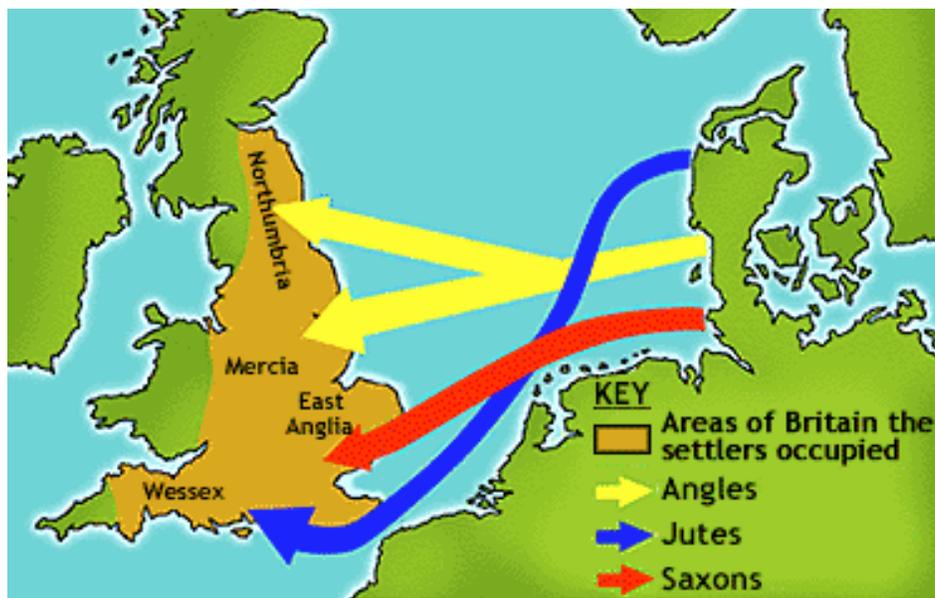
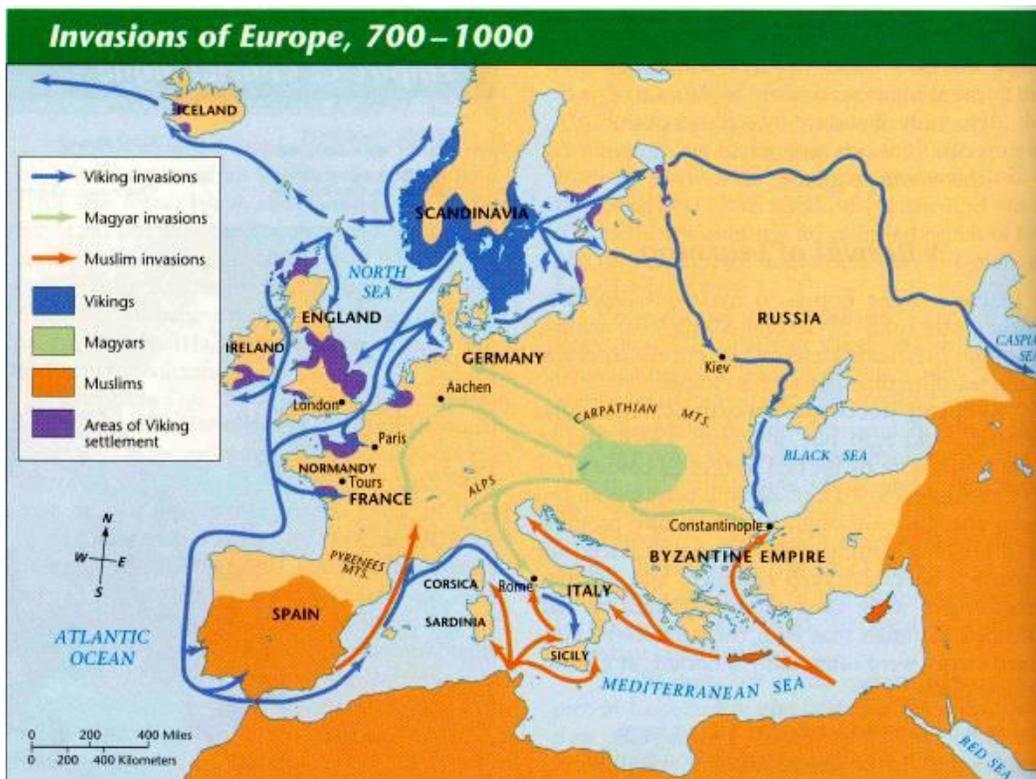
- Migrated from continental Europe to England
- Formed several independent kingdoms including: Northumbria, Merica, and Wessex

Magyars

- Migrated from Central Asia to Hungary
- Terrorized Europe for about 50 years before they were defeated

Vikings

- Migrated from Scandinavia into Europe and Russia
- Also known as Norsemen or Danes
- Originally lived as farmers and fishermen, however population increases and land scarcity caused many to leave their homes and become sailors and soldiers
- Vikings were known for their fast and unexpected raids – Viking means “pirate”
- Excellent sailors and navigators known for their longships – wooden ships up to 90 feet long that held about 50 warriors



Influence of Invasions

- Invasions disrupted trade, caused the decline of cities, and population shifts
- Manors with castles provided protection from invaders which helped to establish and reinforce the feudal system

WHI.9 b – Feudalism



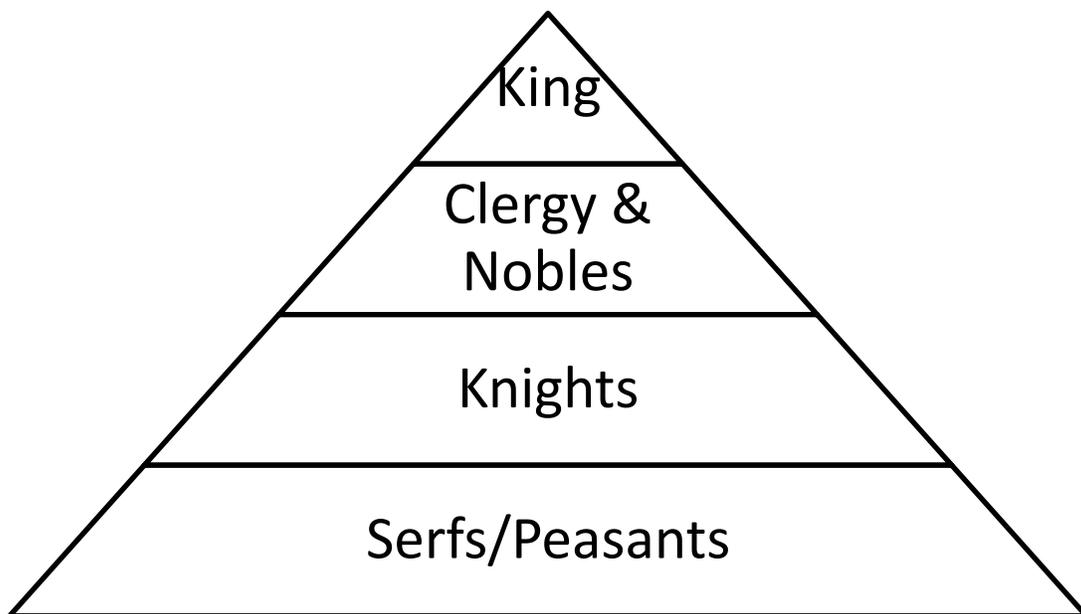
- The decline of Roman influence in Western Europe left people with little protection against invasion, so they entered into feudal agreements with landholding lords who promised them protection.

Feudalism

- Political system - based on the ownership of land
- Social system - based on rights and obligations
- Economic system – manors

Social Structure

- Under the king, there were three classes:
 - Those who fought – nobles and knights
 - Those who prayed – clergy
 - Those who worked – peasants and serfs
- Status was based on prestige and power
- Social class was usually inherited and well defined



King

- Legally owned all the land in the kingdom
- King (acting as a lord) granted land (fiefs) to nobles (who became vassals) for use and maintenance
- In exchange for the fief (land), nobles (vassals) would pledge loyalty to the king and provide military services

Clergy

- Church officials who performed religious services
- The majority of the literate population were members of the clergy

Nobles

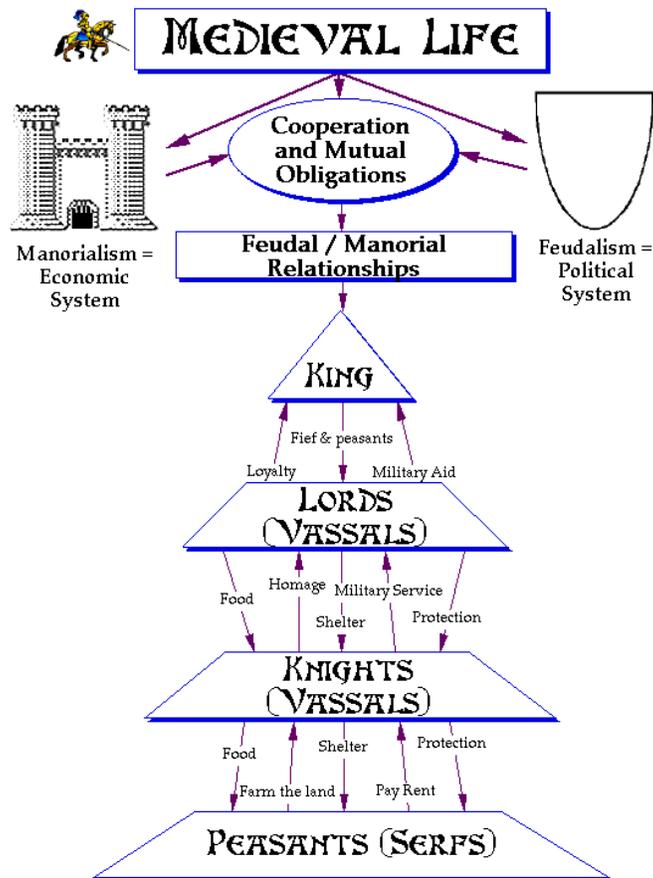
- Pledged their loyalty and military services to the king in exchange for land – making them vassals
- Nobles lived on large estates called manors and controlled the land and the serfs who lived and worked on the land
- Nobles often granted part of their land (making them lords) to lesser nobles, such as knights, in exchange for loyalty and security

Knights

- Mounted soldiers who pledged to defend their lord's lands in exchange for fiefs (this makes them vassals)
- Began training at the age of 7 by serving as a page – servant to a lord
- At 14, a page became a squire – servant to a knight
- At around 21, the squire became a knight
- Knights lived by the code of chivalry, which emphasized loyalty, bravery, and courtesy

Serfs

- Laborers who made up the majority of the population
- Exchanged their labor for protection from knights and lords
- Could not leave manor or marry without their lord's permission – most never traveled more than 25 miles from their manor
- Ate simple diets – not allowed to hunt on lord's lands
- Spent most of their time working and lived in small, crowded cottages
- Paid taxes to the lord and church
- Illness and malnutrition led to low life expectancies (about 35 years old)



Manors: The Economic Side of Feudalism

- Based on a set of rights and obligations between a lord and his serfs
- Lords provided the serfs with housing, farmland, and protection
- Serfs tended the lord's lands, cared for animals, and performed other tasks to maintain the estate

Manors

- Manors were self-sufficient communities – had to raise/produce everything they needed
- Medieval manors varied in size and consisted of:
 - Manor house or castle – where the lord and his family lived
 - Village Church – site of religious services and public meetings
 - Peasant cottages
 - Fields – owned by the lord and worked by the peasants
 - Peasant Crofts – gardens belonging to peasants
 - Mill – water powered mill for grinding grain
 - Pastures – area for grazing animals
 - Woodland – forests for hunting and wood for building and fuel

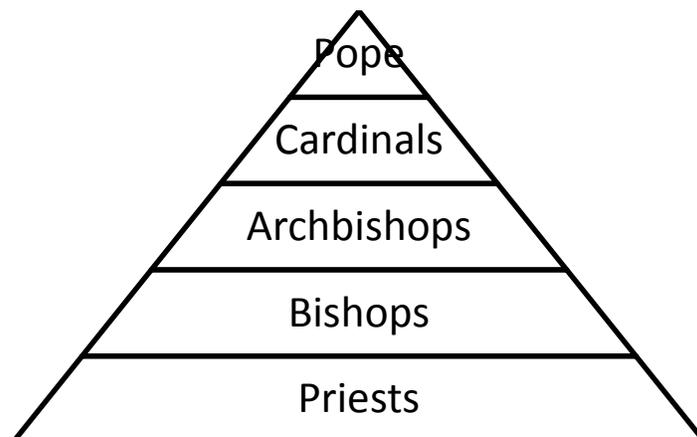
WHI.9 a – The Church



- The Roman Catholic Church grew in importance after Roman authority declined. It became the unifying force in Western Europe – The Age of Faith
- During the Middle Ages, the Pope anointed the Emperors, missionaries carried Christianity to the Germanic tribes, and the Church served the social, political, and religious needs of the people.

Church Hierarchy

- Parish Priests
 - Lived in the local communities and served the religious and social needs of the people
 - Could perform 5 sacraments: baptism, Holy Communion, penance, matrimony, and the anointing of the sick and dying
- Bishops
 - Chosen by king or powerful nobles
 - Appointed parish priests and oversaw groups of parishes called diocese
 - Could perform all 7 sacraments, including confirmation and the taking of holy orders
- Archbishops
 - Oversaw the bishops and groups of diocese called archdiocese
- Cardinals
 - Advised the Pope on legal and spiritual matters
 - Elected the new Pope
- Pope – supreme authority in the Church



Church Law

- Canon Law (Church Law) – system of justice to guide people’s conduct
- All medieval Christians were subject to canon law – including kings
- Church established courts to try people accused of violating canon law
- Punishments included excommunication – banishment from the Church – and interdict – prohibited many sacraments and religious services from being performed on the king’s lands
- People feared these punishments because they denied salvation
- Church also had the power to collect taxes called tithes = 1/10 of a Christian’s income

Monasticism

- Religious communities of individuals who withdrew from the outside world to devote themselves to spiritual lives
 - Monks (men) lived in monasteries
 - Nuns (women) lived in convents
- Monasteries followed the Benedictine Rules created by Benedict – these rules were later adopted for convents by Benedict’s sister, Scholastica
- Monasteries became centers of learning
 - Monks opened schools and maintained libraries
 - Monks preserved Greco-Roman cultural achievements by copying books and creating illuminated manuscripts
- Missionaries carried Christianity and the Latin alphabet throughout Europe – such as St. Patrick who brought Christianity to Ireland in 432 AD

Conflicts with the Church

- The wealth, power, and influence of the Church led to some conflicts
 - Some emperors resented the wealth and influence of the church
 - Church officials resented limits on their powers such as lay investiture – where kings and nobles appoint church officials (later banned by Pope Gregory VII)
 - Practices such as simony – buying of high positions within the church hierarchy – led to corruptions within the church