Chapter 8

The Rise of Europe
(500–1300)
Chapter 8: The Rise of Europe (500–1300)

Section 1: The Early Middle Ages

Section 2: Feudalism and the Manor Economy

Section 3: The Medieval Church

Section 4: Economic Expansion and Change
• Why was Western Europe a frontier land during the early Middle Ages?

• How did Germanic kingdoms gain power in the early Middle Ages?

• How did Charlemagne briefly reunite much of Western Europe?
• From about 500 to 1000, Europe was a *frontier* land, a sparsely populated, undeveloped area on the outskirts of civilization.

• During this time, Europe was cut off from advanced civilizations in the Middle East, China, and India.

• Eventually, a new European civilization emerged that blended Greco-Roman, Germanic, and Christian traditions.
Chapter 8, Section 1

Invasions of Europe, 700–1000

Map: Viking Invasions, Magyar Invasions, Muslim Invasions, Areas of Viking settlement outside Scandinavia

Azimuthal Equal Area Projection
0  250  500 Miles
0  250  500 Kilometers
After the fall of Rome, Germanic tribes divided Western Europe into many small kingdoms.

The Germanic peoples
- were farmers and herders.
- had no cities or written laws.
- elected kings to lead them in war.
- rewarded warrior nobles who swore loyalty to the king with weapons and loot.

The Franks were the strongest of the Germanic tribes. Clovis, king of the Franks, conquered Gaul and then converted to Christianity, the religion of the people in Gaul. By doing so, he gained a powerful ally in the Christian Church of Rome.
Charlemagne helped Pope Leo III by crushing a rebellion in Rome.

In gratitude, the pope crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Romans.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**
By crowning a Germanic king successor to the Roman emperors, the pope revived the ideal of a united Christian community.

This action laid the ground for struggles between future Roman Catholic popes and German emperors.
Charlemagne tried to exercise control over his empire and create a united Christian Europe. He helped spread Christianity to the conquered people on the fringes of the empire.

Charlemagne revived Latin learning in his empire and strived to create a “second Rome.”
Chapter 8, Section 2

Feudalism and the Manor Economy

• How did feudalism shape medieval society?

• What was feudal life like for nobles and peasants?

• What was the basis of the manor economy?
In the face of invasions by Vikings, Muslims, and Magyars, kings and emperors were too weak to maintain law and order.

In response to this need for protection, a new political and social system called feudalism evolved.

**Feudalism** was a loosely organized system of rule in which powerful local lords divided their landholdings among lesser lords. In exchange, lesser lords, or **vassals**, pledged service and loyalty to the greater lord.
Serfs were bound to the land. They were not slaves, yet they were not free.

Serfs made up the majority of the population in medieval society.

Life was very harsh.

Warfare was a way of life.

Many trained from boyhood to be knights, or mounted warriors.
The manor, or lord’s estate, was the heart of the medieval economy.

Peasants and lords were bound by mutual obligation.

The peasant worked for the lord.

In exchange, the peasant received protection and a small amount of land to farm.
Under the feudal system, everyone had a well-defined place in society.
The Medieval Church

• How did the Church and its monks and nuns shape medieval life?

• How did the power of the Church grow?

• How did reformers work for change in the Church?

• What problems did Jewish communities face?
Chapter 8, Section 3

Spread of Christianity in Europe
The Church’s teachings and practices shaped the lives of the people of Europe.

- The church was a social center as well as a place of worship.
- Christian rituals and faith were part of the fabric of everyday life.
- Priests guided people on issues of values and morality.
- Monks and nuns cared for the poor and sick, set up schools for children, and gave food and lodging to travelers.
In the centuries after the fall of Rome, the Church became the most powerful secular, or worldly, force in medieval Europe.

- Medieval popes began to claim papal supremacy, or authority over all secular rulers.

- The medieval Church developed its own body of laws, known as canon law, as well as its own courts. Anyone who disobeyed canon law faced a range of penalties.

- The Church also had absolute power in religious matters.
Chapter 8, Section 3

Reform Movements

The success of the Church brought problems:
- As Church wealth and power grew, discipline weakened.
- Some clergy ignored their vows and lived in luxury.
- Some priests focused more on family than on Church duties.

A number of reform movements spread across Europe:
- Abbot Berno of Cluny revived the Benedictine Rule, under which monks and nuns took vows of obedience, poverty, and chastity.
- Pope Gregory VII outlawed marriage for priests and prohibited simony, the selling of Church offices.
- Frances of Assisi set up the Franciscan order to teach poverty, humility, and love of God.
- Dominic set up the Dominican order to teach official Roman Catholic beliefs.
Jewish communities existed across Europe.

In hard times, Christians persecuted the Jews, blaming them for economic problems, illness, and disasters.

Prejudice against Jews is called **antisemitism**.

In response to growing persecution, thousands of Jews migrated from Western to Eastern Europe.
Chapter 8, Section 4

Economic Expansion and Change

- How did new technologies spark an agricultural revolution?
- How did the revival of trade revolutionize commerce?
- How were guilds linked to the rise of towns and cities?
Chapter 8, Section 4

Agricultural Revolution

New farming technologies
- iron plow
- harness
- windmill
- three-field system

Increase in food production

Population explosion
Between 1000 and 1300, the population of Europe doubled.
Europe’s growing population needed goods that were not available to them.

As foreign invasions and feudal warfare declined, trade increased.
The revival of trade led to a revolution in commerce.

As trade revived, merchants needed money to buy goods. The reintroduction of money led European merchants to develop new business practices, such as

- setting up banks
- joining together to set up partnerships
- developing insurance
- adopting the bill of exchange
The commercial revolution not only transformed the medieval economy, it also reshaped medieval society.

The use of money undermined serfdom. Most peasants became tenant farmers or hired farm laborers.

In towns, a new middle class of merchants, traders, and artisans emerged.

The Church forbade Christians from becoming moneylenders. Since Jews were barred from other professions, many took on this role.
In medieval towns, merchants and artisans formed associations called **guilds**.

Merchant guilds appeared first. They dominated town life, passing laws, levying taxes, and making other important decisions.

A craft guild was made up of workers in a particular occupation. To prevent competition, only a certain number of people could work in any trade.

Becoming a guild member involved many years of hard work.