European Middle Ages, 500-1200

Charlemagne unites the Germanic kingdoms, the feudal system emerges, and the Church strongly influences the lives of people in Europe.
Chapter 13

European Middle Ages, 500-1200

SECTION 1  Charlemagne Unites Germanic Kingdoms
SECTION 2  Feudalism in Europe
SECTION 3  The Age of Chivalry
SECTION 4  The Power of the Church
Charlemagne Unites Germanic Kingdoms

Many Germanic kingdoms that succeeded the Roman Empire are reunited under Charlemagne’s empire.
Charlemagne Unites Germanic Kingdoms

Invasions of Western Europe

Effects of Constant Invasions and Warfare

• Germanic invaders overrun western Roman Empire in 400s
• Fighting disrupts trade and government; people abandon cities
• Marks the beginning of the Middle Ages—period from 500 to 1500

The Decline of Learning

• As cities are abandoned, level of learning declines
• Knowledge of Greek language and culture is almost completely lost

Loss of a Common Language

• Introduction of German language changes Latin; dialects develop
Germanic Kingdoms Emerge

**Years of Upheaval Between 400 and 600**
- Germanic kingdoms replace Roman provinces
- Continual wars change borders between kingdoms
- The Church provides order and security

**The Concept of Government Changes**
- Germans held together by family ties and loyalty, not government
- Small communities are governed by unwritten rules and traditions
- Germanic warriors pledge loyalty to their chief; live in lord’s hall
Germanic Kingdoms Emerge \textit{continued}

**Clovis Rules the Franks**

- Germanic people called \textbf{Franks} hold power in Roman province of Gaul
- Clovis, leader of the Franks, converts to Christianity in 496
- Leads warriors against other Germanic armies
- Unites Franks into one kingdom with Church’s help by 511
Germans Adopt Christianity

How the Church Spread

- Frankish rulers convert Germanic peoples to Christianity
- Missionaries travel to convert Germanic and Celtic groups

Monasteries, Convents, and Manuscripts

- Church builds monasteries—where monks live to study and serve God
- Italian monk, Benedict, writes rules that govern monastic life
- His sister Scholastica adapts rules for nuns living in convents
- Monks establish schools, preserve learning through libraries

Continued . . .
Germans Adopt Christianity \(\text{continued}\)

**Papal Power Expands Under Gregory I**

- In 590, Gregory I, also called Gregory the Great, becomes pope
- Under Gregory, Church becomes *secular*—a political power
- Pope’s palace becomes center of Roman government
- Uses Church money to raise armies, care for poor, negotiate treaties
- Establishes a Christendom—churchly kingdom fanning out from Rome
An Empire Evolves

Europe’s Kingdoms

- The Franks control largest and strongest of Europe’s many kingdoms
- By 511, Frankish rule extends over what is now France

Charles Martel Emerges

- Most powerful official in kingdom is major domo—mayor of the palace
- In 719, major domo Charles Martel becomes more powerful than king
- Defeats Muslims from Spain at Tours in 732; becomes a Christian hero
- Son, Pepin, begins Carolingian Dynasty—family that ruled 751–987
Charlemagne Becomes Emperor

From Pepin to Charlemagne

• Pepin dies in 768, leaves kingdom to two sons; in 771 one son dies
• Second son, Charlemagne (Charles the Great), rules kingdom

Charlemagne Extends Frankish Rule

• Charlemagne’s armies reunite western Europe, spread Christianity
• In 800, Charlemagne travels to Rome to protect Pope Leo III from mobs
• Pope crowns Charlemagne emperor; gives him title, “Roman Emperor”
• Germanic power, Church, heritage of Roman Empire now joined together
Charlemagne Becomes Emperor {continued}

Charlemagne Leads a Revival
- Charlemagne limits nobles’ power by governing through royal agents
- Encourages learning and orders monasteries to open schools

Charlemagne’s Heirs
- Charlemagne dies in 814; his son, Louis the Pious, rules poorly
- Louis’s three grandsons fight for control of empire
- In 843 they divide empire into three kingdoms; sign Treaty of Verdun
Feudalism, a political and economic system based on land-holding and protective alliances, emerges in Europe.
Section 2

Feudalism in Europe

Invaders Attack Western Europe

The Vikings Invade from the North

- Warlike Vikings raid Europe from Scandinavia—Denmark, Norway, Sweden
- Viking long ships sail in shallow water, allowing raids inland
- Eventually, many Vikings adopt Christianity and become farmers

Magyars and Muslims Attack from the East and South

- Magyars (Hungarian nomads) invade western Europe in late 800s
- Muslims strike north from Africa, attacking through Italy and Spain
- Viking, Magyar, Muslim invasions cause widespread disorder, suffering
A New Social Order: Feudalism

Feudalism Structures Society

- 850 to 950, feudalism emerges—political system based on land control
- A lord (landowner) gives fiefs (land grants) in exchange for services
- Vassals—people who receive fiefs—become powerful landholders

The Feudal Pyramid

- Power in feudal system much like a pyramid, with king at the top
- Kings served by nobles who are served by knights; peasants at bottom
- Knights—horsemen—defend their lord’s land in exchange for fiefs
A New Social Order: Feudalism

Social Classes Are Well Defined

- Medieval feudal system classifies people into three social groups
  - those who fight: nobles and knights
  - those who pray: monks, nuns, leaders of the Church
  - those who work: peasants
- Social class is usually inherited; majority of people are peasants
- Most peasants are serfs—people lawfully bound to place of birth
- Serfs aren’t slaves, but what they produce belongs to their lord
Manors: The Economic Side of Feudalism

The Lord’s Estate

- The lord’s estate, a manor, has an economic system (manor system)
- Serfs and free peasants maintain the lord’s estate, give grain
- The lord provides housing, farmland, protection from bandits

A Self-Contained World

- Medieval manors include lord’s house, church, workshops, village
- Manors cover a few square miles of land, are largely self-sufficient
Manors: The Economic Side of Feudalism {continued}

The Harshness of Manor Life

- Peasants pay taxes to use mill and bakery; pay a tithe to priest
- **Tithe**—a church tax—is equal to one-tenth of a peasant’s income
- Serfs live in crowded cottages with dirt floors, straw for beds
- Daily grind of raising crops, livestock; feeding and clothing family
- Poor diet, illness, malnutrition make life expectancy 35 years
- Serfs generally accept their lives as part of God’s plan
The code of chivalry for knights glorifies combat and romantic love.
Chapter 13

World History: Patterns of Interaction

The Warrior’s Role in Feudal Society

• By 1000s, western Europe is a battleground of warring nobles
• Feudal lords raise private armies of knights
• Knights rewarded with land; provides income needed for weapons
• Knights’ other activities help train them for combat

The Age of Chivalry

Section 3

Knights: Warriors on Horseback

The Technology of Warfare Changes

• Leather saddle and stirrups enable knights to handle heavy weapons
• In 700s, mounted knights become most important part of an army
Knighthood and the Code of Chivalry

The Code of Chivalry

- By 1100s knights obey code of chivalry—a set of ideals on how to act
- They are to protect weak and poor; serve feudal lord, God, chosen lady

A Knight’s Training

- Boys begin to train for knighthood at age 7; usually knighted at 21
- Knights gain experience in local wars and tournaments—mock battles

Brutal Reality of Warfare

- Castles are huge fortresses where lords live
- Attacking armies use wide range of strategies and weapons
The Literature of Chivalry

Epic Poetry
- Epic poems recount a hero’s deeds and adventures
- The Song of Roland is about Charlemagne’s knights fighting Muslims

Love Poems and Songs
- Knights’ duties to ladies are as important as those to their lords
- Troubadours—traveling poet-musicians—write and sing short verses
- Most celebrated woman of the age is Eleanor of Aquitaine (1122–1204)
- Eleanor’s son, Richard the Lion-Hearted, also wrote songs and poems

http://www.history.com/topics/british-history/eleanor-of-aquitaine
Women’s Role in Feudal Society

**Status of Women**
- According to the Church and feudal society, women are inferior to men

**Noblewomen**
- Can inherit land, defend castle, send knights to war on lord’s request
- Usually confined to activities of the home or convent

**Peasant Women**
- Most labor in home and field, bear children, provide for family
- Poor, powerless, do household tasks at young age
Section 4

The Power of the Church

Church leaders and political leaders compete for power and authority.
The Power of the Church

The Far-Reaching Authority of the Church

The Structure of the Church

- Power within Church is organized by status; pope is supreme authority
- **Clergy**—religious officials—includes bishops, priests, and others
- Bishops supervise priests, settle Church disputes

Religion as a Unifying Force

- Religion important in Middle Ages; shared beliefs bond people
- Clergy administers the **sacraments**—rites to achieve salvation
- Village church is place of worship and celebration
The Far-Reaching Authority of the Church  \textit{continued}

**The Law of the Church**

- The Church has system of justice to guide people’s conduct.
- All medieval Christians expected to obey \textit{canon law}—Church law.
- Canon law governs marriages and religious practices.
- Popes have power over political leaders through threat of
  - excommunication—banishment from Church, denial of salvation.
  - interdiction—king’s subjects denied sacraments and services.
- Kings and emperors expected to obey pope’s commands.
The Church and the Holy Roman Empire

Otto I Allies with the Church

• Otto I (Otto the Great) is crowned king of Germany in 936
• Limits strength of nobles with help of clergy
• Gains support of bishops and abbots (heads of monasteries)
• Invades Italy on pope’s behalf; pope crowns him emperor in 962

Signs of Future Conflicts

• Otto’s German-Italian lands become Holy Roman Empire
• Holy Roman Empire is the strongest European power until about 1100
The Emperor Clashes with the Pope

Emperor Henry IV and Pope Gregory VII

- Pope Gregory VII bans *lay investiture*—kings appointing Church officials
- Henry IV orders pope to resign; Gregory VIII excommunicates Henry

Showdown at Canossa

- Henry goes to Canossa, Italy, to beg Gregory for forgiveness
- Gregory forgives Henry, but lay investiture problem is not solved

Concordat of Worms

- Concordat of Worms is 1122 compromise in Worms, Germany
- Compromise: pope appoints bishops, emperor can veto appointment
Disorder in the Empire

The Reign of Frederick I

- In 1152, Frederick I becomes king; dominates German princes
- Disorder breaks out whenever he leaves Germany
- Frederick invades Italy, meets defeat at Legnano In 1176
- Empire collapses after Frederick’s death in 1190

German States Remain Separate

- German kings after Frederick try to revive empire
- German princes, who elect kings, prefer to keep them weak
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