

# Chapter 9 – The Early Middle Ages



## Section Notes

- 1 Geography of Europe
- 2 Europe after the Fall of Rome
- 3 Feudalism and Manor Life
- 4 Feudal Societies



## History Close-up

Life on a Manor



## Quick Facts

Feudal Society  
Comparing and Contrasting Europe and Japan  
Chapter 9 Visual Summary



## Video

The Legacy of the Feudal System in Europe



## Maps

Europe: Physical  
The Spread of Christianity  
Charlemagne's Empire  
Invasions of Europe, AD 800-1000



## Images

Geography and Living  
Medieval Market  
Samurai and Knights



# Geography of Europe



7.6.1

## **The Big Idea**

Because Europe has many types of landforms and climates, different ways of life have developed there.

## **Main Ideas**

- The physical features of Europe vary widely from region to region.
- Geography has shaped life in Europe, including where and how people live.

## Main Idea 1:

The physical features of Europe vary widely from region to region.

- Europe is a small continent, but it is very diverse. Many different landforms, water features, and climates can be found.
- **Topography** is the shape and elevation of land in a region.

# Regions of Europe

## Mountain Ranges

These ranges cover much of southern Europe. The Alps, with peaks 15,000 feet high, have large snowfields and glaciers.



## North of the Alps

The land is much flatter. It is covered with thick forests and fertile soil.



## Northern European Plain

This area has most of Europe's rivers, which are formed from the melting of snow.



## Far Northern Europe

Many rugged hills and low mountains cover this area.



# Climate

## Southern Europe

- Warm and sunny
- Drier with less rain

## Northwestern Europe

- Mild and cooler
- Wetter with more rain

## Scandinavia

- Freezing and cold
- Large amounts of snowfall



**Main Idea 2:  
Geography has shaped life in Europe,  
including where and how people live.**

The different types of climates and landforms made a difference in where people lived and what types of crops they could grow for food.

# Southern Europe

- Most people lived on coastal plains or in the valleys, where the land was flat enough to farm.
- Crops like grapes and olives were suited to this type of geography.
- Herds of sheep and goats were raised in the mountains.
- There were many peninsulas, so people didn't live far from the sea. Many people became traders and seafarers.

# Northern Europe

- Towns grew up along the rivers which had access to the sea.
- Rivers also provided protection from invaders.
- Farmers grew crops in the fertile fields that surrounded the towns.
- The lack of mountains was good for farming, but it made the towns easier to be invaded by enemies.



# Europe after the Fall of Rome



7.6.2

## The Big Idea

Despite the efforts of the Christians to maintain order, Europe was a dangerous place after the fall of Rome.

## Main Ideas

- Christianity spread to northern Europe through the work of missionaries and monks.
- The Franks, led by Charlemagne, created a huge Christian empire and brought together scholars from around Europe.
- Invaders threatened much of Europe in the 700s and 800s.

## Main Idea 1: Christianity spread to northern Europe through the work of missionaries and monks.

After the fall of Rome, groups moved into Europe and divided the lands among themselves. The leaders of these groups called themselves kings.

The creation of kingdoms marked the beginning of the **Middle Ages**, a period lasting from 500 to 1500. Another name for this age is the **medieval** period.

# Spread of Christianity

- The most powerful force that helped spread Christianity was the pope.
- The pope sent missionaries, people who try to convert others to a particular religion, to Europe.
- Some missionaries traveled great distances to spread Christianity.

# Monks

- **Monks** were religious men who lived apart from society in isolated communities.
- Monks were very dedicated to their faith and spent time in prayer, work, and meditation.
- Communities of monks, or **monasteries**, were built all over Europe.
- Most European monasteries followed the rules created by Saint Benedict, an Italian monk.

## Influence of Monks

- Although monks lived in isolated communities, they performed many services.
- The monks gave aid to the poor and needy.
- They ran schools and copied books.
- The monks collected and saved writings from Greece and Rome.
- Some monks served as scribes and advisers for local rulers.

## **Main Idea 2:**

**The Franks, led by Charlemagne, created a huge Christian empire and brought together scholars from around Europe.**

As Christianity spread, political changes also took place. In the 480s a powerful group called the Franks conquered Gaul. Their influence would extend far beyond Gaul in the coming years.

# Charlemagne

- **Charlemagne** came to power in the 700s.
- He was the leader of the Franks.
- Charlemagne was a fierce warrior and a strong king.
- As a warrior, he conquered many kingdoms.
- As a king, his reign included France, Germany, Austria, Italy, and northern Spain.

# Accomplishments of Charlemagne

- He led the Franks in building a huge empire.
- The pope crowned Charlemagne the king of the Holy Roman Empire.
- He was a great administrator of schools.
- Scholars were brought in during his reign to teach in his kingdom.



**Main Idea 3:  
Invaders threatened much of  
Europe in the 700s and 800s.**

Many groups posed new threats to Europe. Invaders began to attack settlements all over the continent.

# Invaders of Europe

## Muslims

- Muslim armies poured into southern France and northern Italy.

## Magyars

- Magyars were fierce warriors who swept into Europe, attacking towns and destroying fields.

## Vikings

- Vikings came from Scandinavia and raided Britain, Ireland, and western Europe.



# Feudalism and Manor Life



7.6.3

## The Big Idea

A complex web of duties and obligations governed relationships between people in the Middle Ages.

## Main Ideas

- Feudalism governed how knights and nobles dealt with each other.
- Feudalism spread through most of Europe.
- The manor system dominated Europe's economy.
- Towns and trade grew and helped end the feudal system.

## Main Idea 1: Feudalism governed how knights and nobles dealt with each other.

- To defend their lands, nobles needed soldiers. The best soldiers were **knights**, warriors who fought on horseback. Knights needed weapons, armor, and horses, so nobles gave land to the knights to support them.
- A knight who promised to support a lord in exchange for land was called a **vassal**.
- **Feudalism** was a system of promises that governed the relationships between lords and vassals.

# Lords

- Lords sent help to the vassals if they were attacked.
- They built castles to defend themselves against attack.
- The lords could not punish the vassals without good reason.
- If a lord failed to do what he was supposed to, the vassal could break all ties with him.

# Vassals

- Served their lords in times of war
- Gave money to their lords on special occasions such as weddings
- Gave their lords food and shelter whenever they came to visit.

## **Main Idea 2: Feudalism spread through much of Europe.**

- Feudalism was created by the Franks, but the system spread to other countries.
- Frankish knights introduced feudalism into northern Italy, Spain, and Germany.
- Feudalism then spread to eastern Europe and to England.

# William the Conqueror

- A French noble named William was the duke of Normandy when it decided to conquer England.
- The duke invaded England in 1066 and became known as **William the Conqueror**.
- William and his men defeated the English, and William declared himself king of England.
- He gave his knights land in return for their loyalty.
- This was the beginning of feudalism in England.



**Main Idea 3:  
The manor system dominated Europe's  
economy.**

When knights received land from their kings, they did not have time to farm it. At the same time, there were poor people who needed a way to grow food. The manor system was a way to take care of both problems.

# The Manor System

- A large estate owned by a knight or lord was called a **manor**.
- The manor included a large house or castle, pastures, fields, and forests.
- Most medieval lords kept one-half to one-third of the land for themselves.
- The rest of the land was divided among peasants and **serfs**, workers who were tied to the land on which they lived.

## Serfs and Peasants

- Although they were not slaves, they could not leave the land without permission.
- They spent most of their time working for the lord in exchange for a small piece of land.
- Farm labor was hard, and everyone worked, even children.
- The lords wanted people to produce everything they needed to live.

## Manor Lords

- The lords controlled everything that happened on their land.
- They resolved disputes and collected taxes from the people on their land.
- The lords lived more comfortably than the serfs and peasants, but they still had to worry about disease and warfare.

**Main Idea 4:  
Towns and trade grew and helped  
end the feudal system.**

During the Middle Ages, most people lived on farms, and towns were small. After about 1000 AD, things began to change, as some towns turned into big cities.

## Growth of Towns and Trade

- More people lived in Europe because more food was available.
- New technology, such as a heavier plow and the horse collar, meant that farmers could be more productive.
- Trade increased as the population grew and trade routes began to develop across Europe.
- People began to leave the farms and move to the towns in order to make more money.



# Feudal Societies

## The Big Idea

Although the feudal systems of Europe and Japan were similar, their cultures were very different.

## Main Ideas

- Feudal societies shared common elements in Europe and Japan.
- Europe and Japan differed in their cultural elements such as religion and art.

**Main Idea 1:  
Feudal societies shared common elements in  
Europe and Japan.**

Feudalism was not used only in Europe. There was also a very similar system in place in Japan.



## Lords and Vassals

- Kings and lords were like the emperors and daimyo, or landowners, of Japan.
- They controlled the lands and had warriors who helped them defend their property.
- In Europe the warriors were known as knights. In Japan they were known as samurai.

# Knights and Samurai

- Both knights and samurai swore their loyalty to their lords.
- Bushido was the code of honor for the samurai.
- **Chivalry** was the code of honorable behavior for the knights in Europe.
- Knights and samurai were both greatly admired by the people of their country.

**Main Idea 2:**  
**Europe and Japan differed in their cultural elements such as religion and art.**

Europe and Japan were similar in some ways, such as the feudal system. However, they also had cultures that were very different.

# Differences between Europe and Japan

## Art

European art was mainly about religion and depicting scenes from the Bible. Japanese art was about nature and beauty.



## Religion

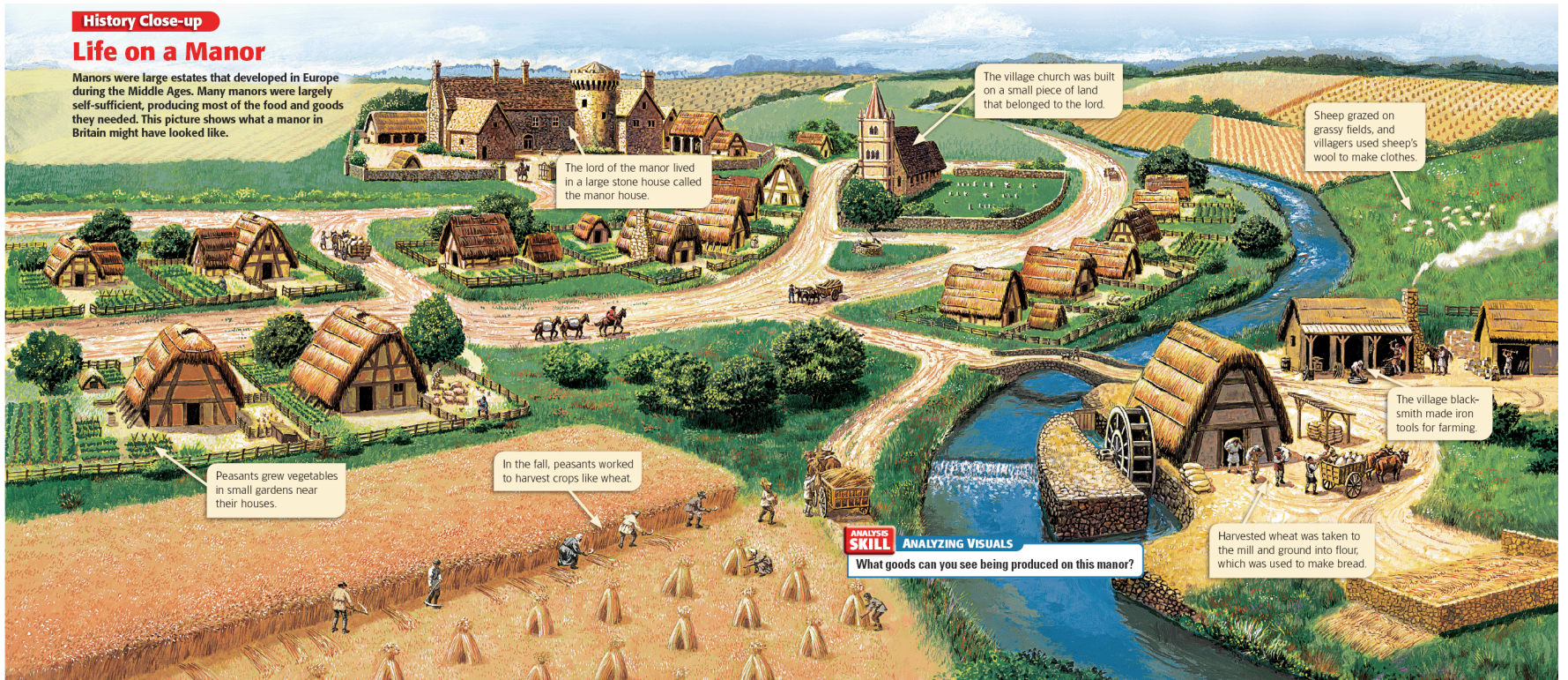
Nearly all Europeans were Christian. The Japanese blended elements of Buddhism, Shinto, and Confucianism.



**History Close-up**

**Life on a Manor**

Manors were large estates that developed in Europe during the Middle Ages. Many manors were largely self-sufficient, producing most of the food and goods they needed. This picture shows what a manor in Britain might have looked like.



The lord of the manor lived in a large stone house called the manor house.

The village church was built on a small piece of land that belonged to the lord.

Sheep grazed on grassy fields, and villagers used sheep's wool to make clothes.

Peasants grew vegetables in small gardens near their houses.

In the fall, peasants worked to harvest crops like wheat.

The village blacksmith made iron tools for farming.

Harvested wheat was taken to the mill and ground into flour, which was used to make bread.

**ANALYSIS SKILL** ANALYZING VISUALS

What goods can you see being produced on this manor?

## Geography and Living

Europe's geography has influenced the development of different ways of life. It has influenced, for example, what crops people have grown and where cities have developed.



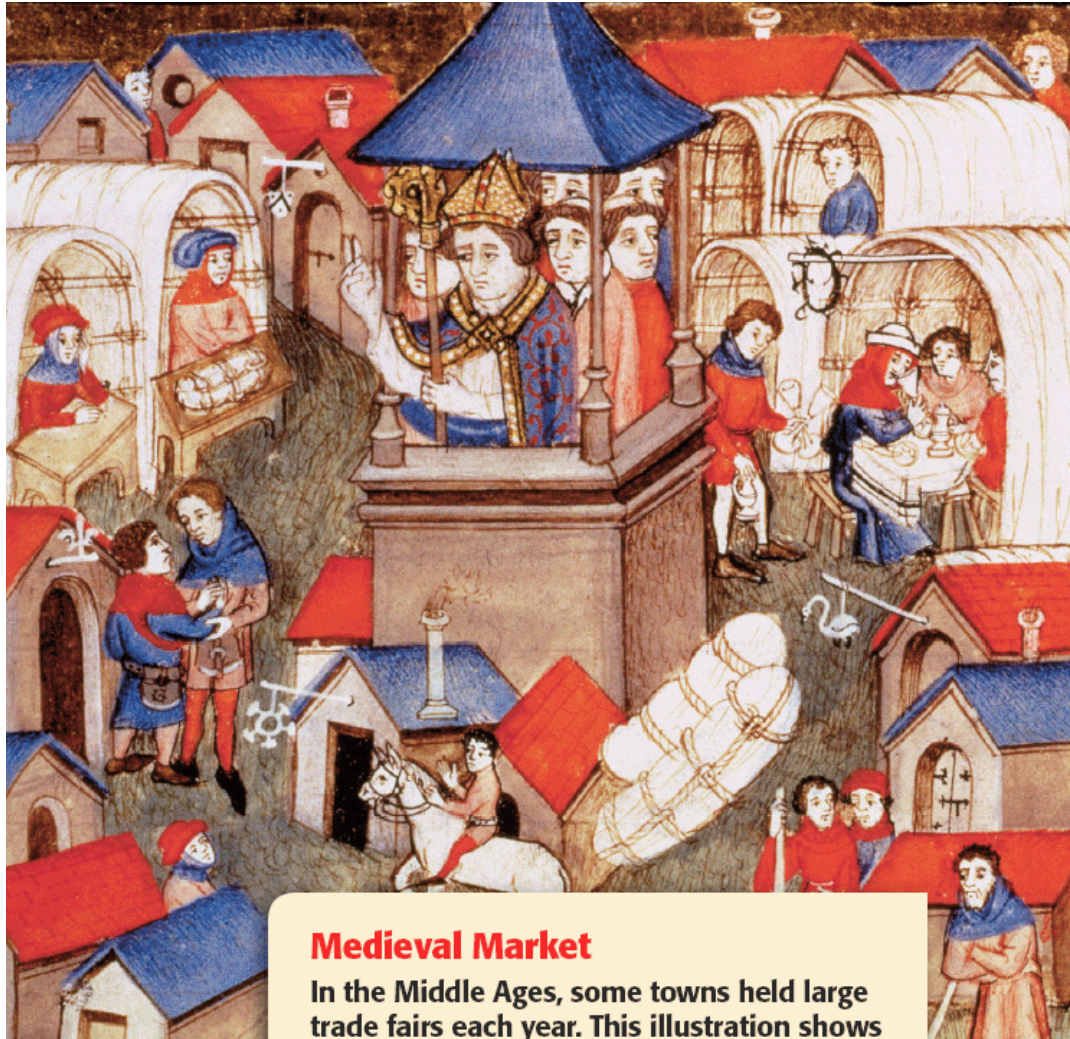
**1** Farmers have long grown olives and other hardy crops in the drier, warmer areas along the Mediterranean in southern Europe.



**2** Cities have grown along rivers such as the Rhine in Germany. Rivers have been routes for moving people and goods.



**3** Many people in cold, snowy Scandinavia have settled on the coasts, looking to the sea and lands beyond for the resources they need.



### **Medieval Market**

In the Middle Ages, some towns held large trade fairs each year. This illustration shows a bishop blessing a trade fair in France.

## Samurai and Knights

Although Japanese samurai and European knights never actually met, they had much in common. Both were the elite warriors of their time and place.



ANALYSIS  
SKILL

ANALYZING VISUALS

How are the samurai and knight similar? How are they different?

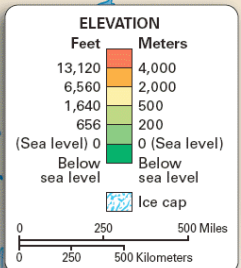


# Europe: Physical



**GEOGRAPHY SKILLS** INTERPRETING MAPS

- 1. Region** What four peninsulas do you see labeled?
- 2. Movement** How might the Alps have affected the movement of peoples?



# The Spread of Christianity



## BIOGRAPHY

### Saint Patrick

AD 400s

Patrick was a monk who helped convert the Irish to Christianity. As a teenager, Patrick was kidnapped in Britain and taken to Ireland, where he was forced to work as a shepherd. After six years, he escaped. But later he returned to Ireland to spread Christianity. According to legend, he won favor with the Irish by driving all of the snakes in Ireland into the sea. After Patrick died, he was declared a saint by the people of Ireland.

## GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

### INTERPRETING MAPS

**Place** How far north had Christianity spread by AD 600?

## Charlemagne's Empire

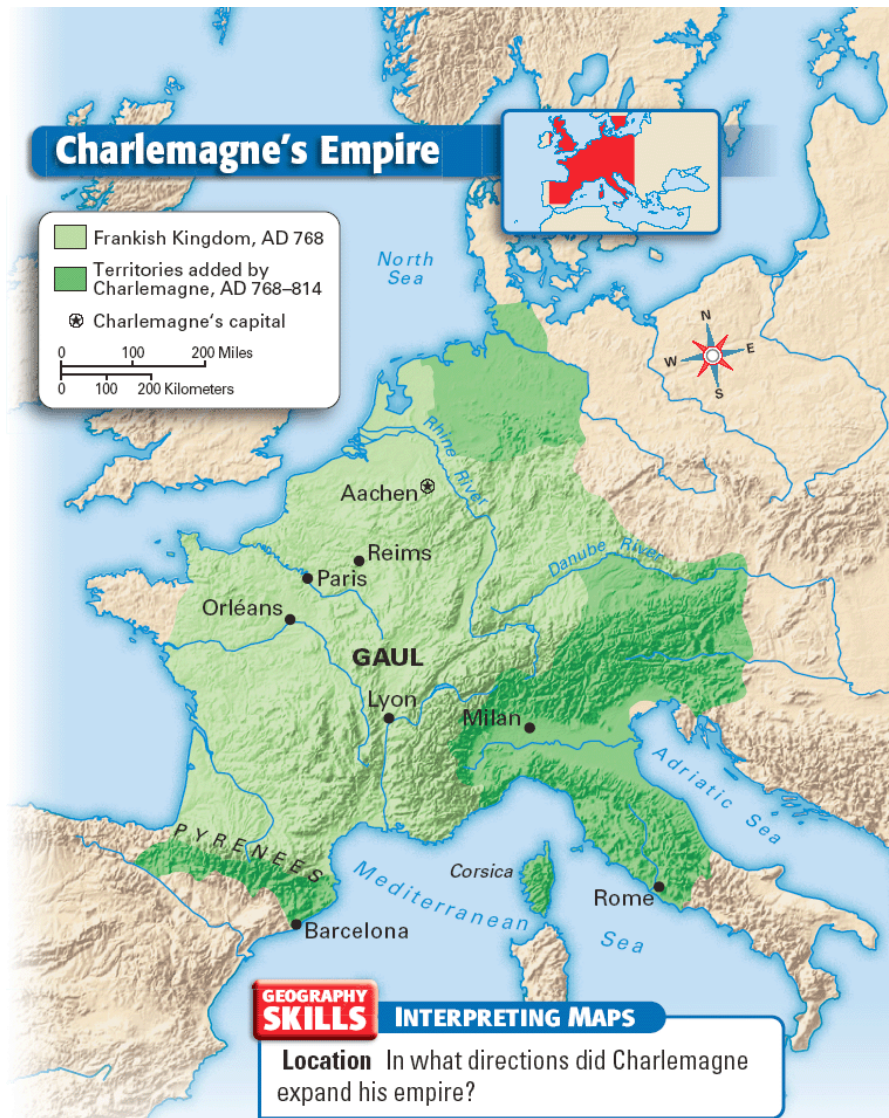


Legend:

- Light Green: Frankish Kingdom, AD 768
- Dark Green: Territories added by Charlemagne, AD 768–814
- ⊗: Charlemagne's capital

Scale:

0 100 200 Miles  
0 100 200 Kilometers



### GEOGRAPHY SKILLS

### INTERPRETING MAPS

**Location** In what directions did Charlemagne expand his empire?

# Invasions of Europe, AD 800–1000



**Settlements and Invasion Routes**

- Vikings
- Muslims
- Magyars

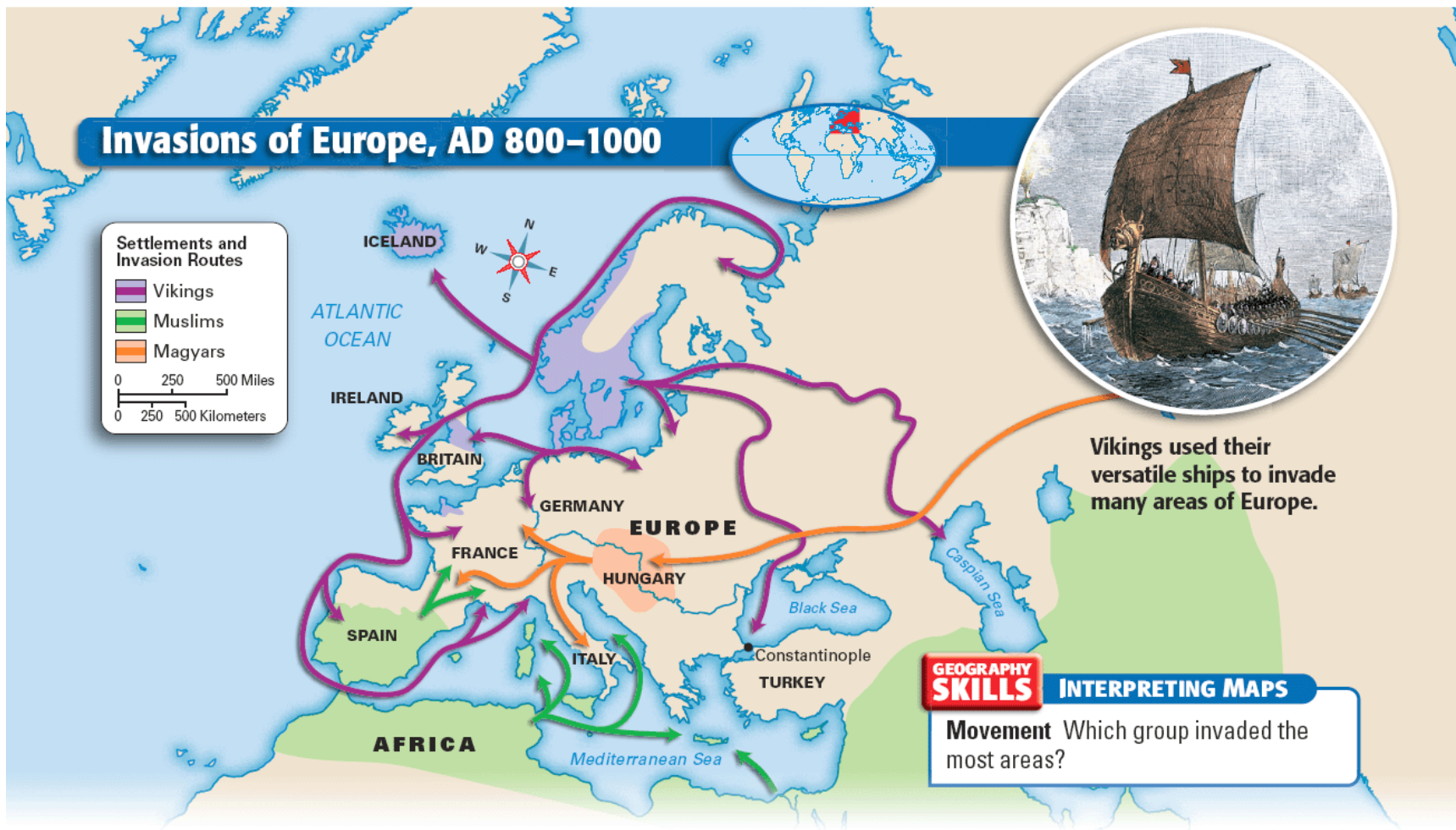
0 250 500 Miles  
0 250 500 Kilometers



Vikings used their versatile ships to invade many areas of Europe.

## **GEOGRAPHY SKILLS** INTERPRETING MAPS

**Movement** Which group invaded the most areas?



## Feudal Society

### QUICK FACTS



#### **Kings and Queens**

Kings and queens were the greatest lords of Europe, and all nobles and knights were their vassals.



#### **Nobles**

Nobles were vassals of kings and queens. Many were also lords of lower-ranking nobles and knights.



#### **Knights**

Knights served their noble lords in exchange for land.



#### **Peasants**

Peasants owned no land, so they were not part of the feudal system. But many peasants worked on land owned by nobles or knights.

#### **ANALYSIS SKILL** ANALYZING VISUALS

How could a noble be both a lord and a vassal?

## Comparing and Contrasting Europe and Japan

QUICK  
FACTS

### Feudal Europe

- Christianity
- Religious themes in art and literature

- Feudal government
- Royalty (kings and queens, emperor)
- Nobles (lords, daimyo)
- Warriors (knights, samurai)
- Warrior codes of honor (chivalry, Bushido)
- Peasants worked land

### Feudal Japan

- Buddhism, Shinto, Confucianism
- Nature themes in art and literature

# Visual Summary

Use the visual summary below to help you review the main ideas of the chapter.

