

**The Early Middle Ages****Lesson 2**

# Early Russia

**Key Terms and People**

**Slavs** people from the forests north of the Black Sea

**Vladimir** grand prince of Kiev; he converted to Orthodox Christianity in the 980s and made it the state religion

**Yaroslav the Wise** son of Vladimir; as Russian ruler he helped Kiev gain further power and wealth

**Alexander Nevsky** Russian prince who gained power by working with the Mongols

**Ivan III** Moscow prince who led rebellion against Mongol rule; under his rule, Russia became an empire

**czar** Russian emperor

**Before You Read**

In the last lesson, you read about the establishment and decline of the Byzantine Empire.

In this lesson, you will read about the emergence of Russia.

**As You Read**

Use a chart to organize ideas and details about the effects of Byzantine culture in Russia.

**RUSSIA'S BIRTH****Who were the Slavs?**

The Slavs lived in what is today eastern Russia. The area was bounded by the Ural Mountains and the Black Sea on the south and the Baltic Sea on the north.

The Slavs lived in the forest areas. They worked as farmers and traders. In the 800s, some Vikings called the Rus came from the north. They built forts along the rivers and blended with the Slavic people. They founded the cities of Novgorod and Kiev and became the rulers of the land. They began to trade in Constantinople. The Vikings brought

furs, timber, and Slavs who had been enslaved. They sold these people as slaves. In fact, the word *slave* comes from *Slav*.

Over time, the Vikings adopted the culture of the Slavs. Divisions between Vikings and Slavs disappeared. In 957 Princess Olga of Kiev converted to Christianity. Her grandson, **Vladimir**, also converted to Byzantine Christianity. He was the ruler of Russia. He ordered all of his subjects to adopt this religion. Now more than trade linked Russia to the Byzantine Empire.

Russia also looked to Constantinople for religious leadership. Teachers from

Lesson 2, *continued*

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the empire gave the Russian people instructions in the new religion. The king liked the idea that the ruler of the empire was also the head of the church.

1. How did Olga and Vladimir influence the Slavic people?

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**KIEV'S POWER AND DECLINE*****What caused Kiev's rise?***

Under the influence of Byzantine culture, Kiev grew to be a large, wealthy, and cultured city. It continued to grow as Vladimir took land to the west and to the north. His son, **Yaroslav the Wise**, came to power in 1019. He proved to be an able ruler as well. Under him, Kiev grew even more wealthy through trade and alliances made with western nations.

Then the state centered in Kiev began to have problems. After Yaroslav's death in 1054, his sons fought one another for control of the land. Trade declined, cutting the wealth of Kiev.

2. What caused Kiev's decline?

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**THE MONGOL INVASIONS; RUSSIA BREAKS FREE*****How did the Mongol invasions change Russia?***

In the middle 1200s, the Mongols reached Kiev. They quickly overran the Russian state, killing many people. The Mongols held control of the area for more than 200 years.

The Mongols had been fierce conquerors, but they were not harsh rulers. As long as the Russian people did not rebel, the Mongols let them keep

their customs, including their Eastern Orthodox religion.

The Mongols made the Russians pay tribute, a sum of money that was owed every year. They used Russian nobles to collect the tribute. One of those nobles, **Alexander Nevsky**, gained power. His heirs became princes of Moscow. They later used this city as their base of power.

Control by the Mongols had important effects on Russia. It isolated the Russians from western Europe. Russian society developed in its own way. Rule by the Mongols also united many different areas of Russia under one central authority. Mongol rule also led to the rise of Moscow, which had a good location near three major rivers—the Dnieper, the Don, and the Volga.

Prince Ivan I increased the influence of Moscow. He convinced a leading bishop to move to the city, connecting Moscow closer to the Church. Ivan and his successors also added to the land that Moscow controlled. In the late 1400s, under **Ivan III**, Russia was freed from Mongol rule and grew to be an empire. Ivan III called himself **czar**—the Russian version of Caesar.

3. Name three effects of Mongol rule on Russia.

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**Lesson 2, *continued***

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As you read about the Byzantine culture that developed in Russia, take notes to answer the questions in the box.

<p><b>1. What ties linked Kiev to Byzantium?</b></p>	<p><b>2. How did Vladimir and his son Yaroslav contribute to the power of Kiev?</b></p>
<p><b>3. What factors brought about Kiev's decline?</b></p>	<p><b>4. How did the Mongols treat the Russian people?</b></p>
<p><b>5. What were some effects of Mongol rule on Russia?</b></p>	<p><b>6. What events marked the beginning of an independent Russian Empire?</b></p>

**The Early Middle Ages****Lesson 3**

# Charlemagne Unites Germanic Kingdoms

**Key Terms and People**

**Middle Ages** period of European history from 500 to 1500, also called the medieval period

**Franks** Germanic people who held power in the Roman province called Gaul

**monastery** religious community of men (monks) devoted to worship and prayer

**secular** concerned with worldly rather than spiritual matters

**Carolingian Dynasty** dynasty of Frankish rulers, lasting from 751 to 987

**Charlemagne** powerful Frankish ruler (768 to 814) who built a huge empire

**Before You Read**

In the last lesson, you read about the development of Russia.

In this lesson, you will read about changes in western Europe.

**As You Read**

Use a chart to note important events in the unification of western Europe during the Middle Ages.

**INVASIONS OF WESTERN EUROPE****How did invasions by Germanic groups change Europe?**

The slow decline of the Roman Empire marked the beginning of a new era in European history called the **Middle Ages**. It lasted from around 500 to 1500.

By 500, various Germanic groups invaded the Roman Empire in the west. These invasions led to a series of changes. Trade was halted. Moving goods from place to place became unsafe. Cities were no longer centers of trade and government. Many people

fled to the countryside and returned to rural ways of life. People also became less educated.

As Germanic groups settled in different areas, many kinds of dialects developed. Europe no longer had Latin as the single language.

1. Name three effects of the Germanic invasions.

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Lesson 3, *continued***GERMANIC KINGDOMS EMERGE;  
GERMANS ADOPT CHRISTIANITY*****How did Christianity spread?***

As Rome's power faded, a new kind of government appeared. Warring Germanic groups carved out kingdoms. The borders of these kingdoms changed often because of warfare. There was no central rule. Family ties and loyalty to a local leader bound Germanic peoples together. Europe was in chaos. The Church provided a sense of order, though.

The **Franks**, a Germanic people, established a large kingdom. It was located in the Roman province of Gaul. In 496, Clovis, the king of the Franks, and his warriors became Christian. From then on, the pope in Rome supported Clovis.

Other Frankish rulers helped spread Christianity. The Church also tried to convert people. It set up religious communities called **monasteries**. There Christian men called monks devoted their lives to God. Nuns were women who led this religious way of life. Monasteries became centers of learning. Their libraries preserved some writings of ancient Rome.

The Church grew in importance when Gregory I became pope in 590. He made the pope the guardian of the spiritual lives of all Christians. He also made the pope a worldly, or **secular**, power in governing part of Italy. His influence in politics grew.

2. What role did monasteries play during this period?

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**AN EMPIRE EVOLVES;  
CHARLEMAGNE BECOMES  
EMPEROR*****What did Charlemagne achieve?***

The kingdom of the Franks covered much of modern France. By the 700s, the most powerful official was the mayor of the palace. He made laws and controlled the army.

In 719, Charles Martel became mayor of the palace. He expanded the lands controlled by the Franks. He also won a battle in 732. He defeated a Muslim force moving north from Spain. This victory ended the Muslim threat to Europe.

His son, Pepin, was crowned king. Pepin began the reign of the Frankish rulers called the **Carolingian Dynasty**. One of Pepin's sons, **Charlemagne**, became king of the whole Frankish kingdom in 771.

Charlemagne had great military skill. He made his kingdom larger than any other known since ancient Rome. By 800, he had united most of western Europe. Pope Leo III crowned him emperor. This event marked the joining of Germanic power, the Church, and the heritage of the Roman Empire.

Charlemagne cut the power of the nobles in his empire and increased his own. He traveled throughout his lands, visiting the people and judging cases. He revived learning. However, Charlemagne's empire fell apart soon after his death.

3. What was important about Charlemagne's being crowned as emperor?

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**Lesson 3, continued**

As you read this section, take notes to answer questions about the unification of western Europe after the fall of the Roman Empire.

Between 400 and 600, small Germanic kingdoms replaced Roman provinces.

<p>1. What role did the Church play in helping Clovis conquer other Germanic peoples?</p>	<p>2. What role did Pope Gregory I play in spreading the idea of a vast, unified kingdom?</p>
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Clovis's successors extended Frankish rule.

<p>3. What was important about Charles Martel's victory in 732?</p>	<p>4. How did Pepin the Short strengthen the Frankish kingdom?</p>
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Charlemagne reunited western Europe and spread Christianity throughout his lands.

<p>5. What was the importance of Charlemagne's coronation as emperor?</p>	<p>6. How did Charlemagne govern his unified kingdom?</p>
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