

## SUMMARY

For more than 500 years—from the 5th to the 10th centuries—Europe experienced a succession of invasions. First, the Germanic tribes poured across the borders of the Roman Empire, contributing to its collapse. In the former Roman provinces, German leaders set up small, warring kingdoms.

For a brief time, Charlemagne succeeded in reuniting many of the lands once ruled by Rome. During his rule, a revival of learning known as the Carolingian Renaissance brought new life to the fading cultural traditions of the ancient world and helped lay the foundations for medieval civilization. On Charlemagne's death, however, his empire collapsed as his heirs quarreled and divided up his land.

The collapse of the Carolingian Empire was hastened by three new waves of invasions: the Vikings from the north, the Moslems from the south, and the Magyars from the east. By the time these threats had ended late in the 10th century, western Europe was devastated and a new way of life based on the need to resist invaders had developed.

## QUESTIONS

- 1 What impact did the Germanic migrations of the early Middle Ages have on the Roman Empire in the West?
- 2 Describe the origins, organization, and decline of the Carolingian Empire. How did Charlemagne reflect both ancient and medieval traditions?
- 3 How does the Carolingian Renaissance refute the old notion that the period between the fall of Rome and the Renaissance was the "Dark Ages"?
- 4 Why do you think the Viking invasions were so widespread?
- 5 On a map of Europe, trace the invasions of the Vikings, Moslems, and Magyars in the 9th and 10th centuries. In what part of Europe would you have chosen to live at that time?
- 6 Describe how the invasions of the 9th and 10th centuries completed the process of destruction begun in the 5th and 6th centuries.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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