

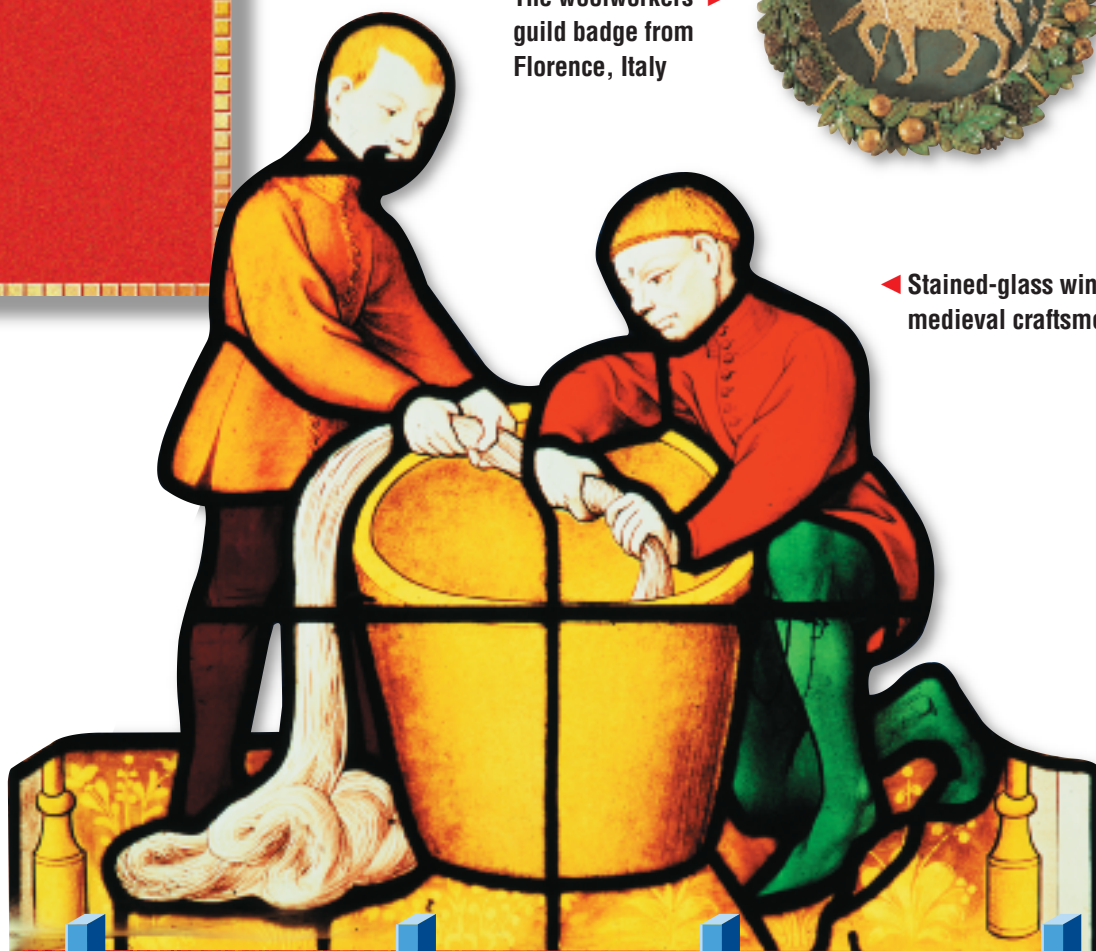
Rise of Trade and Towns

500 A.D.—1400 A.D.

The woolworkers' guild badge from Florence, Italy ▶



◀ Stained-glass window of medieval craftsmen



500s A.D.
Venice founded

1000s A.D.
Trade increases between
Europe and the Near East

1100 A.D.
Italian trading towns
drive Muslims from the
Mediterranean

1300 A.D.
Flemish develop
thriving trade
with England

Chapter Focus



Read to Discover

- How the growth of trade led to the rise of towns in the Middle Ages.
- What living conditions were like in medieval towns.
- Why guilds were formed and why they were later opposed.
- What cultural changes to civilization took place in Europe during the 1400s.



Terms to Learn

guilds
apprentice
masters
journeyman



People to Know

Dante
Geoffrey
Chaucer



Places to Locate

Venice
Flanders



Chapter Overview

Visit the *Human Heritage* Web site at humanheritage.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 26—Chapter Overviews** to preview this chapter.



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Why It's Important Beginning in the 1000s, the population of western Europe grew for the first time since the fall of Rome. Better ways of farming helped farmers grow more food. Many peasants left the fields to work in villages. They began to turn out cloth and metal products.

Western nobles, however, wanted such luxury items as sugar, spices, silks, and dyes. These goods came from the East. So, European merchants carried western products to the East to exchange for luxury goods.

SECTION 1 Trading Centers

The growth of trade led to the rise of the first large trading centers of the later Middle Ages. They were located on the important sea routes that connected western Europe with the Mediterranean Sea, Russia, and Scandinavia. Two of the earliest and most important trading centers were Venice and Flanders.

Venice Venice was an island port in the Adriatic (ā drē at' ik) Sea close to the coast of Italy. It was founded in the 500s by people fleeing from the Germans.



MAP STUDY

HUMAN SYSTEMS

Trade routes tied all parts of western Europe together. What was the most direct route merchants could take from Milan to Alexandria?

Since the land was not very fertile, the early Venetians had to depend on the sea for a living. They fished in the Adriatic and produced salt from the seawater. They exchanged their products for wheat from towns on the mainland of Italy. They also traded wheat, wine, and slaves to the Byzantines for fabrics and spices.

During the 1100s, Venice became a leading port and many of its citizens became fulltime merchants. Venetian merchants learned to read and write, use money, and keep records. In time, they developed an effective banking system.

Venice's prosperity soon spread to other parts of Italy. Towns on the Italian mainland began to make cloth, which was sent to Venice to be shipped to other areas. Before long, other Italian towns along the seacoast became shipping centers.

The navies of the Italian trading towns drove the Muslims from the Mediterranean, making it safe for Italian seafarers. As a result, the Italians opened the Near East to Europeans.

However, the Italian trading towns quarreled among themselves over profits and trade routes. While they were quarreling,

Medieval Towns and Trade Routes



towns along Europe's Atlantic coast developed trade routes. By 1500, these towns had become more powerful than those in Italy.

Flanders Flanders, which today is part of Belgium, was an area of small towns on the northwest coast of Europe. The Flemish (flem' ish) people raised sheep and used the wool to develop a weaving industry. The cloth they produced became famous for its quality and soon was in heavy demand.

Flanders became the earliest Atlantic trading center. Its rivers joined together before they emptied into the North Sea. Where the rivers met, the Flemish built harbors. From these harbors, they shipped their valuable woolen cloth to other lands.

Flanders became an important stopping place for ships traveling along the Atlantic coast from Scandinavia to the Mediterranean. It also became an important link in the trade route between Constantinople and the North Sea.

By 1300, the most important trading partner of Flanders was England. Flemish traders set up shop in the dockyards of London. They relied on English shepherds to supply them with wool to be made into cloth. The finished cloth was then shipped back to England. In this way, the Flemish developed an international industry.

Section 1 Assessment

1. What led to the growth and development of Venice's trade?
2. How did the location of Flanders help it become an important trading center?
3. How did the Flemish develop an international industry?

Critical Thinking

4. **Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment**
How effective do you think the Flemish

were in using geography to benefit their economy?

Graphic Organizer Activity

5. Draw this diagram, and use it to compare the trading towns of Italy and Flanders.

	Italy	Flanders
Location		
Trade Items		
Key Trade Routes		

SECTION 2 Merchants

As sea trade grew, so did overland trade. Italian towns began sending goods across the Alps to areas in the north. Soon, an overland trade route connected Italy and Flanders. From this route, other routes developed and spread across Europe.

Merchants became an important part of European life during the late Middle Ages. The first merchants were mostly adventurers who traveled from place to place. As protection



Reading Check

Who sponsored most medieval **fairs**?

Fun Facts

Wandering Musicians

In southern France, wandering poet-musicians called troubadours visited towns and nobles' courts, composing songs about love and the brave deeds of heroes. Some troubadours also traveled to parts of southern Spain, singing lyrics in Arabic, Hebrew, and Spanish.

against robbers, they traveled in armed groups. They carried their goods in open wagons pulled by horses.

Fairs Merchants traveling along the chief route through eastern France stopped to trade with each other at special gatherings called **fairs**. The fairs were sponsored by nobles who collected taxes on sales. Fairs were held once a year for a few weeks at selected places. Over time, they attracted merchants from as far away as England and Egypt.

At the fairs, merchants could buy and sell goods or settle debts. They set up booths to show *wares*, or things for sale, such as pots, swords, armor, and clothing. Before long, merchants began to pay for goods with precious metals instead of bartering. Italian money changers tested and weighed coins from many different lands to determine their value. From the *banc*, or bench, at which the money changers sat comes the English word “bank.”

The Growth of Towns After awhile, merchants grew tired of moving around. They began to look for places where they could settle permanently and store their goods. They generally chose places along trade routes near waterways or road crossings. They also tried to settle close to a castle or monastery. This helped protect them from robbers and fights between nobles. The merchants surrounded their settlements with high stake

MEDIEVAL MARKETPLACE

During the Middle Ages merchants set up permanent shops that eventually developed into towns. Medieval merchants in this painting sell shoes, cloth, and tableware. **Why did merchants try to settle near castles or monasteries?**



fences and moats. Most towns of the Middle Ages developed from these merchant settlements.

The Germans called castles *burgs* (bergs). Towns came to be called **burgs** because they were often near castles. The new towns grew steadily and attracted people from the surrounding countryside. Markets became centers of business and social life. Once a week, nobles and peasants sold food for goods they could not make on the manor. Artisans came from the villages to find work. Often they brought their families with them. Over time, the towns became more than just centers of trade. They became communities in which people lived.



Reading Check

How did **burgs** get their name?

Section 2 Assessment

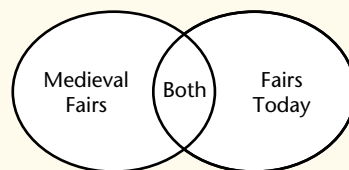
1. **Define:** fairs, burgs.
2. Why did nobles sponsor fairs?
3. Where did merchants set up their marketplaces?

Critical Thinking

4. **Making Generalizations** How did merchants contribute to the growth of towns?

Graphic Organizer Activity

5. Draw the diagram below, and use it to compare the activities at medieval fairs with the activities at fairs today.



SECTION 3 Living Conditions

By the 1200s, many towns were wealthy and large enough to have their fences replaced by walls and towers. Inside the walls, public buildings of stone and houses of wood were jammed close together. To save even more space, the houses had extra stories that extended over crooked narrow alleys.


The crowded conditions often made towns unhealthy places in which to live. Sewers were open, and there was little concern for cleanliness. People threw garbage out of windows onto the streets below. Rats were everywhere.

During the 1300s, diseased rats came to Europe on trading ships from the Middle East. They carried with them a plague called the “Black Death.” This disease swept through Europe, killing millions of people. Experts think that one out of three Europeans died in the plague. To escape it, people fled from the towns and settled in the countryside. Trading, farming, and war came to a temporary halt.

Burgher Life Merchants and artisans controlled a town’s business and trade. They hired workers from the countryside to

Then... & Now

Between 1348 and 1350, the Black Death claimed nearly 25 million lives. The epidemic stopped wars and slowed trade. Officials sealed off infected homes, suspended religious services, and made it illegal to meet in groups. It took almost 200 years for Europe to regain its pre-1348 level of population.

 **Reading Check**
At first, what groups were called burghers?

Fun Facts . . .

Manners Robert of Blois, a French poet, listed rules of correct conduct for daughters of burghers.

They included:

- A lady must walk straight and not trot or run.
- Take care: glances are messengers of love; men are prompt to deceive themselves by them.

make goods for them. At first, the merchants, artisans, and workers who lived in towns were all called **burghers** (ber' guhrz). Later the title was used to refer to rich merchants.

The daily life of burghers and their families started with prayers at dawn. The burgher hurried off to the docks and market to see how his products were selling. Then, he met with his business partners.

The burgher's wife kept house, managed servants, and cared for children. The family ate two large meals a day—one at ten o'clock in the morning and another at six o'clock in the evening. A typical meal consisted of eel, roast beef, lark pastry, and curded milk. About nine o'clock in the evening, the family went to bed.

Changing Ways Under the feudal system, the land on which towns were built was owned by kings, nobles, and bishops. They taxed the people in the towns and charged them

Linking Across Time

Health Care The unhealthy, overcrowded conditions of medieval cities encouraged the rapid spread of diseases such as measles, smallpox, polio, flu, and the "Black Death" (below). Today doctors know that most diseases are caused by bacteria and viruses. Many diseases common in medieval times have been wiped out or curbed through good health practices such as washing hands or receiving vaccinations like the polio shot (right). **What carried the "Black Death" through Europe in the 1300s?**



fees to use the marketplace. The burghers did not like this or the other restrictions placed on them. They resented having to get a noble's permission to marry, move around, or own land. They also did not like serving in the noble's army.

Many nobles viewed the rise of towns as a threat to their power. They resented the wealth of the burghers and began to use feudal laws to keep them in their place. The Church was also against the rise of towns. Its leaders feared that the making of profit would interfere with religion.

The burghers, however, resented feudal laws. They thought these laws were not suited to business. The burghers now had wealth and power. Thus, they began to depend less on nobles and bishops. Instead, they developed a sense of loyalty toward their town. They worked together to build schools, hospitals, and churches. They began to demand changes.

Communes and Charters In the 1100s, townspeople in northern Italy formed political groups called **communes** (kom'yūnz). Their purpose was to work against the nobles and bishops and for the people by establishing local self-government. The Italian communes were successful. Soon, the idea of communes spread to the towns of northern Europe. Some kings and nobles gave the townspeople **charters**, or documents allowing towns to run their own affairs.

The charters gave the townspeople the right to elect officials to run their towns. A council collected taxes and set charges for merchants who bought and sold goods in the town market. It also repaired streets, formed citizen armies, and ran hospitals, orphanages, and special homes for the poor.

The towns enforced their own laws and set up special courts. To reduce crime, the towns severely punished those who broke the law. Murderers were hanged. Robbers lost a hand or an arm. Those who committed minor crimes, such as disturbing the peace, were whipped or put in the *stocks*, or a wooden frame with holes in which a person's feet and hands were locked.



Student Web Activity

Visit the *Human Heritage* Web site at humanheritage.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 26**—**Student Web Activities** to find out more about the towns of the Middle Ages.



CLICK HERE



Reading Check

What was the purpose of **communes**?



Reading Check

What did **charters** allow townspeople to do?

Section 3 Assessment

1. **Define:** burghers, communes, charters.
2. What were some of the problems faced by medieval towns?
3. What changes did burghers want to make in feudal laws?

Critical Thinking

4. **Demonstrating Reasoned Judgment**
What laws or regulations would you

have written to further improve conditions in medieval towns?

Graphic Organizer Activity

5. Draw this diagram, and use it to show characteristics of towns in the late Middle Ages.



SECTION 4 The Rise of Guilds



Reading Check

Why did merchants, artisans, and workers form **guilds**?

Around the 1100s, merchants, artisans, and workers formed **guilds** (gildz). These were business groups that made sure that their members were treated equally. Each craft had its own guild, whose members lived and worked in the same area of town.

Craft guilds controlled the work of artisans such as carpenters, shoemakers, blacksmiths, masons, tailors, and weavers. Women working as laundresses, seamstresses, embroiderers, and maidservants had their own trade associations. Guild members were not allowed to compete with one another or to advertise. Each member had to work the same number of hours, hire the same number of workers, and pay the same wages.

Guilds controlled all business and trade in a town. Only members could buy, sell, or make goods there. Outsiders who wanted to sell their goods in the town market had to get permission from the guilds. The guild decided the fair price for a product or service, and all members had to charge that price. Guild members who sold poorly made goods or cheated in business dealings had to pay large fines. They could also be expelled from the guild.

Guilds were more than business or trade groups. If members became ill, other members took care of them. If members were out of work, the guild gave them food. When members died, the other members prayed for their souls, paid for funerals, and supported the families. Guilds were also centers of social life. Holy day celebrations, processions, and outdoor plays were sponsored by the guild. Close friendships often developed among guild members.



Reading Check

What was an **apprentice**? Who were the **masters** in a guild?

Job Training It was not easy to become a member of a guild. A person had to be an **apprentice** (uh pren' tis), or trainee, in a trade for two to seven years. Apprentices were taught their trade by **masters**, or experts. They had to live with and obey their masters until their training was finished.



Reading Check

How did a **journeyman** differ from an apprentice?

The next step was becoming a **journeyman** (jer' nē muhn), or a person who worked under a master for a daily wage. After a certain amount of time, journeymen took a test to become masters. The test was given by guild officials. Journeymen had to make and present a "masterpiece" to prove they had learned their craft. Those who passed the test were considered masters and could make their own goods. Often, they worked in the back of their houses and sold their goods in a shop in the front of the house.

By 1400, many merchants and artisans had begun challenging the control of the guilds. They felt the guilds kept them from

increasing their trade and profits. Then, too, apprentices disliked the strict rules set by guilds. It was getting harder and harder for apprentices to become masters. Many masters were grouping together and hiring unskilled workers instead of apprentices.

Section 4 Assessment

- 1. Define:** guilds, apprentice, masters, journeyman.
- 2.** What rules did guild members have to obey?
- 3.** Why did people begin to challenge guilds in the 1400s?

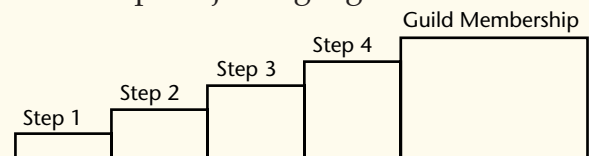
Critical Thinking

- 4. Analyzing Information** “The steps taken to become a master were too diffi-

cult.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Give reasons for your opinion.

Graphic Organizer Activity

- 5.** Draw this diagram, and use it to show the steps in joining a guild.



SECTION 5 Cultural Changes

During the 1400s, merchants, artisans, and bankers became more important than they had been in the past. Their growing power led to the decline of feudalism.

Many townspeople were as rich as, or richer than, the nobles. Bankers lent money to kings, nobles, and church officials for wars, building repairs, and entertainment. With their new wealth, merchants turned their homes into mansions. Some even bought castles from nobles who had lost their money. They began to set fashions. Women wore furs and gowns made of *brocade* (bro kād'), or a cloth woven with raised designs on it. Men dressed in colorful jackets, stockings, and feathered caps.

The townspeople had more leisure time and money to spend on their interests. Many hired private teachers to educate their sons. The sons later went to universities to study law, religion, and medicine. There was time to enjoy art and books, so townspeople began to support the work of painters and writers.

Most townspeople used such languages as German, French, and English. A scholar named Dante (dahn' tā) wrote the *Divine Comedy* in Italian. It is one of the most famous poems of the Middle Ages. Geoffrey Chaucer (jef' rē cho' suhr) wrote the *Canterbury Tales* in English. These tales are still popular today.

Townspeople began to think differently from nobles and peasants. The townspeople came to believe that they should be free to develop their talents and to improve their way of life. They wanted a strong central government. They began to look toward kings to provide leadership.

People in History

Geoffrey Chaucer
c. 1340–1400

English Poet

Chaucer's poems include the *Legend of Good Women*, an unfinished work about heroines from the past. His most famous poem is the *Canterbury Tales*, which tells the tales told by a group of travelers on their way to a shrine.

Section 5 Assessment

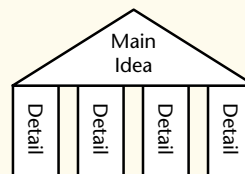
1. In what ways did the cultural life of townspeople change during the 1400s?
2. What did townspeople want government to do?

Critical Thinking

3. **Making Inferences** Why might nobles have disliked the success of merchants during the Middle Ages?

Graphic Organizer Activity

4. Draw this diagram, and use it to show details that support the following main idea: "The growing power of merchants, artisans, and bankers led to the decline of feudalism."



Chapter Summary & Study Guide

1. During the 1000s and 1100s, increased trade between Europe and the Near East led to the rise of trading centers, such as Venice and Flanders.
2. Venetian traders developed an effective banking system and, with the help of other Italian trading towns, drove the Muslims from the Mediterranean.
3. Flanders was the earliest Atlantic trading center, and, by 1300, it had developed a flourishing international trade with England.
4. The first medieval merchants traveled overland in armed groups and traded with each other at fairs.
5. After a while, merchants began to settle in towns known as burgs.
6. Most medieval towns were overcrowded, unhealthy places to live.
7. Artisans and rich merchants controlled the business and trade of towns.
8. Nobles and church officials viewed the rise of towns as a threat to their power and wealth.
9. Burghers resented feudal laws, and they resisted nobles and demanded charters for greater self-government.
10. Guilds set wages, prices, and working conditions, and helped members who were sick or out of work.
11. By the 1400s, many masters and artisans resented the control of guilds over profits, and they began to hire untrained workers instead of apprentices.
12. As townspeople grew richer and more powerful, they looked to kings for leadership, and feudalism declined.

HISTORY
Online

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Self-Check Quiz

Visit the *Human Heritage* Web site at humanheritage.glencoe.com and click on **Chapter 26—Self-Check Quiz** to assess your understanding of this chapter.

CHAPTER 26 Assessment

Using Key Terms

Imagine you are living in a town in western Europe during the late Middle Ages. Write a diary entry describing your life there. Use the following words in your diary.

fairs	burgs	burghers
communes	charters	guilds
apprentice	masters	journeyman

Understanding Main Ideas

1. What led to the development of trade between Europe and the Near East during the 1000s and 1100s?
2. What led to the decline of Italian trading centers?
3. How did fairs affect the development of banking?
4. What effects did the “Black Death” have on Europe?
5. How did a person become a master in a guild?
6. Why were nobles and church officials against the rise of towns?
7. How were the ideas of townspeople different from those of the nobles and peasants?

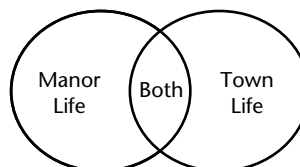
Critical Thinking

1. What would you have liked about being a merchant in the Middle Ages? Explain.
2. Would you have supported or opposed the position taken by Italian communes during the 1100s? Explain.
3. Would you have preferred to be a burgher or a noble during the Middle Ages? Explain.

4. Do you approve or disapprove of the rules established by the guilds? Explain.

Graphic Organizer Activity

Culture Create a diagram like the one below, and use it to compare life on a medieval manor with life in a medieval trading town.



Geography in History

Places and Regions Refer to the map on page 400. At what places do you think European trading ships could have been attacked by pirates? How would geographic features increase the possibility of an attack? Explain.

Using Your Journal

Review any details you may have noted about life during the late Middle Ages. Write a paragraph explaining what developments started in the towns of Europe during the Middle Ages that are evident in life today.