

CHAPTER
12

Section 4

GEOGRAPHY APPLICATION: MOVEMENT *The Ainu People*

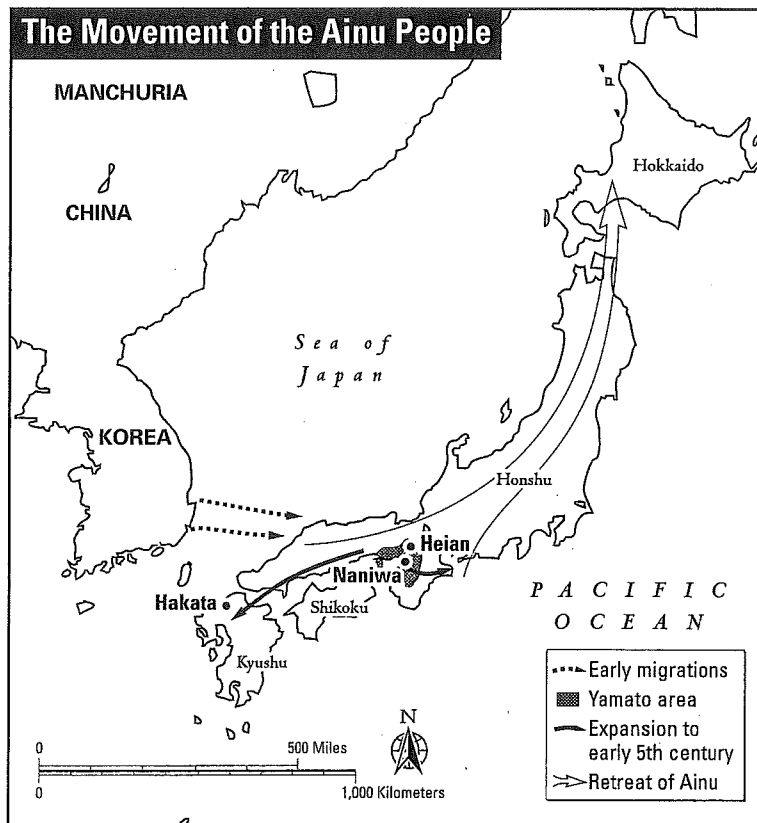
Directions: Read the paragraphs below and study the map carefully. Then answer the questions that follow.

Before settlers from mainland Asia began migrating to Japan, a people known as the Ainu had already existed in Japan. This situation is similar to that of North America, where an original people, the Native Americans, already lived when European settlers arrived. Today's Japanese call the Ainu the "Hairy People" because they had long wavy hair, thick beards, and hair covering their bodies.

The people migrating from mainland Asia formed clans, blending and assimilating into a fairly homogeneous population by about first century A.D. Around 400 years later, the Yamato clan established itself as the chief clan. In the formation of a new Japanese culture, the clans forced the Ainu further north on Honshu and to Hokkaido, remote areas of Japan.

As time progressed and the population of Japan increased, the new Japanese discriminated against the Ainu, preventing them from practicing their rituals and traditions. They suppressed Ainu religion and language and forced the children of the Ainu to attend Japanese schools. Furthermore, like Native Americans, today's Ainu suffer from a high rate of alcoholism.

In the process of assimilation, the Ainu have also lost many of their unique physical characteristics, including their European-like faces. One anthropologist who examined 19th-century photographs of Ainu described them as resembling "fierce, black-bearded Norwegians."



Interpreting Text and Visuals

1. What body of water did the people of Asia need to cross in order to migrate to Japan?

2. At its longest point, how many miles is the Yamato core area? _____

3. What are the names of the four primary islands that consist of present-day Japan? _____

4. How many miles separate Honshu and Korea at its closest point? _____

5. What is the greatest number of miles that the Ainu might have been forced to move by the Japanese? _____

6. Explain how the situation of the Ainu people is similar to that of the Native Americans in North America. _____

7. What might have been some of the reasons that the Japanese discriminated against the Ainu?

