

FRAMEWORK FOR MEDIEVAL HISTORY

We have emphasized the importance of breaking history down into periods which allow us to study key personalities, developments, and ideas with greater ease. Our goal is to periodize, generalize, and characterize the key elements in the mainstream of human experience to give us a broad overview of the past. That is the purpose of our survey course in Western Civilization!

The periodization of medieval history, our next area of concentration, has been carefully worked out by historians. This chronological breakdown is presented very concisely in the introduction of William F. Cantor's fine text Medieval History — the Life and Death of a Civilization (Macmillan, 1969). As presented below (with some editing), Cantor gives a broad, three-part breakdown, and then a more detailed nine section periodization.

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Medieval history can readily be divided into three distinct periods . . . . . This division has now become universally accepted and traditional among historians:

(1) 300-1050 — The first of these periods is the very long era from the decline of the Roman Empire to the middle of the 11th century. It is the era in which a distinctive western civilization emerged out of the background — one might almost say the clash — of Christian, Graeco-Roman, and Germanic institutions and ideas. . . .

The early middle ages is the "springtime" of western civilization . . . , a period marked by great chaos and turbulence as western Europe was racked by internal disunity and frequent invasion from without by alien peoples . . . . Largely due to the guidance of the church, this incipient European civilization struggled first of all to develop its distinctive ideals; then it faced the more difficult task of developing the necessary institutions to embody and activate these ideals in everyday life.

(2) 1050-1325 — These aims were basically achieved by the end of the 11th century. The result was the remarkable flowering of European art, literature, and philosophy during the 12th and 13th centuries, which together comprised what historians call the high middle ages. More and more research discloses that this extremely fruitful, mature, and stable period was very short-lived, and certainly by the second half of the 13th century the conflict between old ideals and new practices — which gives evidence of a disintegrating civilization — had made its appearance.

(3) 1325-1500 — The result of the dichotomy between ideals and actuality is shown in the 14th and 15th centuries which historians today call the later middle ages and tend to view as the autumn and winter of medieval civilization. In this period western Europe is racked by disorder, pessimism, economic and political decline, until finally at the end of the 15th century the characteristic ideals and institutions of the modern world, based upon the sovereign state, nationalism and individualism, pushes to the fore.

The study of medieval history therefore provides us with an excellent case study of the rise, flowering, and disintegration of a civilization. In the case of medieval Europe such a study is better documented than the history of any other civilization whose evolution has been completed and whose whole pattern of growth, maturity and decay is evident to the student of society and culture.

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Then Cantor gives his more detailed, nine-period breakdown of medieval civilization:

(1) 300-400. The first period includes the disintegration of the Mediterranean civilization and the rise of the Christian church. This is the period of the Latin and Christian foundations of medieval civilization.

(2) 400-725. In this period a new, distinct medieval society and government emerged. Included are the Germanic foundations of European civilization and the impact of the Moslem expansion.

(3) 725-900. Cantor characterizes this period as an age of great promise, not entirely fulfilled. This is an era of the coming into existence of the first synthesis of Latin, Christian and Germanic sources to form the First Europe. The characteristics of this First Europe must be examined in comparison with its two competitors among the civilizations of the time, the bordering civilizations of Byzantium and Islam.

(4) 900-1050. The failures of the First Europe are avoided in this successful period of equilibrium and progress. During this era many characteristic European institutions begin to take shape.

(5) 1050-1130. During these next few decades, however, the early medieval equilibrium breaks down largely as a result of a crisis of conscience on the part of several church leaders. The great struggles of this age of the Gregorian reform must be understood as the key turning point in medieval history.

(6) 1130-1200. No sooner had the participants in this struggle given way to a new generation when a new era emerged marked by fantastic expansion in all aspects of life, especially in the areas of piety, humanism, and secular power. These achievements and the remarkable men of the high middle ages who led these advances should be studied in detail.

(7) 1200-1270. By 1200 the consequences of the expansion and acceleration of the 12th century were evident, and a desperate attempt now had to be made by the leaders of European thought and action to bring discordant and conflicting tendencies into a new equilibrium and synthesis. This period was the great age of summing up and organization, rather than creativity.

(8) 1270-1325. The strenuous efforts to avoid crisis and conflict failed, resulting in the disastrous and violent controversies of this next period. Now times were out of joint, and the process of decline and failure was evident.

(9) 1325-1500. The concluding period of medieval history was marked by war, pestilence, economic depression, bitter religious and intellectual controversies, and also by the foreshadowing of the modern world. (Doesn't this sound strangely familiar — like the end of ancient Rome and our modern world today!?? Is it worthwhile to study history . . . . ?)

What you should do is to set aside one sheet of paper for each of these nine periods, and then, as you read the Mainstream text, jot down the key individuals and developments of each of them as you confront them in your study.

This outline is meant to serve you as a guide. Use it!!

## THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

In the section "Invaders of the West" (Langer, page 157 new edition, col. one; page 142 old edition, col. two) he has about half a column summarizing 2000 years of history, in actuality! At this point we should refer back to volume two of the Compendium and get much more of a picture than is given here. Sometime later I need to put in the whole archaeological background of this. We need to actually correspond the whole history of Western Europe with the archaeology to get the full story.

At any rate, it is the story of the beginning of a movement in the German-speaking world. It starts out in the German-speaking and I use the term "German-speaking" because not all German-speaking peoples were the same stock. The Anglo-Saxons who went to the British Isles were Germanic-speaking. We could say also that the Franks were. Certainly the Germans were; the Gothic people were. The Norwegians, Danes and Swedes are all Germanic-speaking to this day. And here you have a rather extensive group of people, in reality, of diverse characteristics nationally and culturally speaking. And we have numerous stocks that have lost this identity. Thus the Visigoths in Spain, a certain element in modern Spain, doesn't speak Germanic any longer; the Suevi in Portugal that once were German-speaking do not speak German any longer. Many things have taken place—a language group has lost, due to movement of tribes (like the Lombards in Italy), their background and speak some other language today.

Much of the struggle of the Germanic peoples was between the Huns on the east and the Goths in the central region (the Russian steppes). And the Ural-altaic speaking Huns drove the Germanic-speaking Goths pell-mell into the Roman world. Now here we are actually dealing with a remarkable thing that has never been fully perceived; that is, the extent to which the Huns ultimately joined with the western Germans very heavily, and the Goths joined with the Roman Empire, which was the deciding factor whether the concept of government, organization, culture, and everything that should survive the collapse of Rome would be ROMAN or would be GERMAN! As it turned out, the pattern was ultimately to be ROMAN; but the people who should carry on the pattern or the system were to be GERMAN. This is true because when you look at the struggle, ultimately the Roman Empire was confronted with the dilemma of either having to swallow the German people or to be swallowed by them. And as it happened, the Roman world was ultimately swallowed by the Germans who, when they did so, geographically, became Romanized. Thus, when the Germans swallowed up the Roman world and settled in it, they settled within a cultural Roman area. And the Germans have gradually become Romanized. Therefore we have quite a difference today from the original, ancient German traditions and customs.

The Biblical record very plainly shows that the system of government that should continue to our time was not to be Russian or Chinese or the old tribal German, but was to go right down from Babylon through Persia, Greece, and Rome, and the various continuities of the Roman kind of thinking. That's exactly what ultimately has molded continental Europe. In fact, essentially outside of the English-speaking world we find that all governments in Europe use Roman Law! This is an interesting study in itself. You should read a little something on the subject of ROMAN LAW. You discover that ROMAN LAW is the basis of ALL nations of Europe outside of the common law, English-speaking realm!! Now there may be some that have absorbed a little of the common law concept, but this is the basic pattern.

There is a very interesting book which I would like to recommend called The Blind Eye of History. This is a book well worth your reading. It shows the fact that the nations which have a common law system have invariably had a police force that up to the present has had the respect of the people; where we could have an FBI, and its British counterpart, that is the servant of the state, whereas wherever Roman Law is there is a form of a Gestapo where you have to have some secret police force. This latter is in reference to the modern world; in times past the army was itself used. The Romans had no true POLICE FORCE: When there was civil disobedience, the Romans sent in the army which stamped it out! When trouble broke out, the army moved in and established solitude!—otherwise known as Pax Romana! Notice various episodes in the Book of Acts. The Blind Eye of History by Charles Reith, London, 1952. It is a remarkable summary of an area, a blind spot in history, that most have not been aware of!

This material is in relationship to the police force, the state, and the nature of law; and why it is, for instance, that the English people in the British Isles could have a police force where men didn't even have to go around with guns to protect themselves! One of the most remarkable things in the history of any nation!

Back to our main subject: The story, of course, ultimately resolves itself in the collapse of the first German attempt, <sup>to organize</sup> under the HUNS, all Germans in northern Europe to take over the Roman world. There were Germans on both sides: Thus it was a question whether the Frankish Germans and the Goths and the Romans should survive; or whether it would be the non-Frankish Germans—Huns and their allies (Sarmatians and the rest)—who would dominate. And, ultimately, it is interesting to see that those German tribes which conquered Germany—that is, organized the whole thing—were, first of all, the Romanized tribes along the Rhineland; that is, the days of Charlemagne—Gaul and on the Rhine, and then the ultimately Romanized Saxons that spread elsewhere.

We discover that in the end it was Roman culture, Roman tradition, the Roman pattern (which the Germans themselves recognized) that formed the basis for the people that were to carry it on. After the defeat of the Assyrian Empire in the east (612 B.C.) it passed to these other nations, but the people who were ultimately to carry it on; finally, when you analyze it, have been the Germans in the West. And this is certainly what Bible prophecy indicates: Wherever this system is it's a Babylonian system. It may involve Chaldeans as a people, but you constantly have the emphasis on ASSHUR or the ASSYRIAN in the latter days!

This is easily demonstrated in looking at the various revivals of the system: Whether it was the Austro-Hungarian Empire it was Germanic dominated; whether it was the old German Holy Roman Empire; whether it was Charlemagne's empire—all were GERMAN dominated! The only real exception was Justinian whose empire was really a continuity of the Roman system reborn in the East. All the others have been dominated by the Germans. The only exception was when both the German realms went under directly—that is, first the German, then the Austrian—and it passed to a Frankish-German union, the 5th revival under Napoleon. But, in reality, it would never have survived, Napoleon could never have done what he did if the Rhineland states had not joined in the system. Mussolini tried it (the 6th resurrection) but he had to have a Hitler to get anywhere. And ultimately, though there will be ten nations in the 7th and final revival in Europe, we're going to see that whatever will be pulled off (and I'm quite sure the Germans will do it on their own), the others are going to discover that they have to go along with it because there is nothing else now economically or militarily they can do!

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Most Americans have learned this Frankish history from French writers and they have never, never realized to what extent the empire of Charlemagne was essentially German and used France as its base, and the Rhineland German states! That's why in German he is called Karl der Grosse. And the capital, Aachen, was in Germany itself which is a surprise to most people who have not made a study of it. They assume it was Paris, but it was not.

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A basic question should be considered: Why were Hitler and Mussolini not crowned by the Pope? Since they were not, how could they represent a true restoration of the Roman system?

The crowning of a ruler by the Pope in former times was due to the fact that the form of government then of the nation was from the top down; and the authority did not come through an election by the people. Therefore, no one was in office unless someone who had authority put him in office! And the only one who claimed the authority and exercised it was the Pope! And he transmitted the authority not by having an election but by putting the crown on a man.

We live in a world, since Napoleon who was not elected by everybody, but in the case of Hitler and Mussolini we have a remarkable change—in other words, since the

beginning of the 19th century in its development—where the idea is that the source of authority is vested in the people and the people elect the ruler—who then are their representatives. Hitler was elected by a certain percentage of the people, and therefore he derived his authority from the people. Now, you see, the Pope has a choice: Either to say all elections are invalid, or that he approves whoever the people elect. Thus the office has been derived from the people and all the Pope has to do is sign a CONCORDAT which recognizes that the elected ruler is in authority—whereas before these men had to be crowned by the Pope who was the one who placed them in office. It's a situation now where there are so many people on earth that the people demanded the right to have their own say-so, and thus the concept of general elections developed. You can't actually say that Mussolini started out with a regular election necessarily but, in reality, he was ultimately approved even in Italy by the Pope—but it was one of those sudden revolutions. Hitler didn't reach the top quite that way. But they ultimately derived it from the consent of the people directly or the consent of some form of parliament which gave its authority to the man who became the Dictator. (As Hitler said, "Give me four years and you will never recognize Germany"—which was right! That was one time he told the truth!)

## THE FRANKS AND CHARLEMAGNE

After Justinian's empire withered away the Frankish Kingdom arose (new edition of Langer, pp. 160-161). This Frankish Kingdom was made up of two kinds of Franks: Those who dwelt by the sea—the Salians—and those who dwelt by the riverbank—the Ripuarrians. (They got these names later. Undoubtedly there were other origins and names for the two.)

Interestingly enough, this two-fold division ties in directly with what has happened in history since: The SALLIAN Franks became FRENCH and the RIPUARIAN Franks became GERMAN. Thus the city of Frankfurt in Germany means "the fort of the German Franks." And the Rhineland is full of German Frankish tribes. Then there is area called Franconia just east of the Rhine. Note that the name "Frank" was preserved in "France" as distinct from the term "Gaul" whereas the name Frank was lost in Germany.

The Pope, in the days of Clovis, chose the Franks of Western Europe to bear the umbrella of civilization when Byzantium shrivelled up to the east. The problem that the Pope did not foresee at the time was this: When he chose the Franks of the West, he was choosing two peoples who at that time were united but who later came to quarrel! He did not choose one people but it looked like it because they all basically spoke the same language. Actually there were two distinct people—two distinct people! And this created quite a problem later on. This is the origin of the struggle between Germany and France to represent civilization in Western Europe! When the Pope chose the Franks, did he choose only the Germans or only the French or both? The French would say, "How could he have chosen both because we're better!" And the Germans, of course, look at it the other way: "How could he have chosen both?—we are the Master Race!" And this, in a nutshell, is the struggle as to who should represent, and who was really chosen, in the original decision when the Pope designated the Franks as the heirs of the Empire in the west.

What we probably have, in part, is that the German Franks certainly represent a number of Assyrian colonies that anciently were in Asia Minor, the Franks or the ancient Phrygians from Asia Minor who came into southeastern Europe after the Third Trojan War and we have their whole history in volume two of the Compendium from that time on. And the Salian line of kings that ruled France (that were the long-haired kings) are, I would suspect, more likely Jewish, and even the bulk of the Franks that went into France, than they are of Reuben. Now there indeed may have been Reubenites but I have stated before that we can easily prove that the House of Judah had gone to Troy, and the Trojan line was Jewish; and the Salian kings were of the same line by literal descent. So the Salian House was Jewish—the royal Salian House was Jewish!! (Called the Merovingians.)

The Ripuarrian Franks were made up of German Hessians or "Hatti"—so-called German Hittites—and other peoples. And these were Assyrian colonies directly out of Asia Minor. Whether, though, there were also Reubenites who had settled along the coast I don't know. I don't know the answer to that because we have no direct history pertaining to it. I would suspect, however, that many Franks are, in fact, Reubenites. But to say that we could prove it other than an indication that they came from the area of the salt sea—hence the word "salian" is applied to them—and how they got there, we don't know the train of events in history.

Now I would draw your attention to pages 162-163 (pp. 148-149 in the old Langer). Here is a story that most are unaware of: The division of the Franks east and west into Austrasia and Neustria. Now, the Eastern Franks represent what we essentially would call the Germanic people as distinct from the French. Here is the House of the Merovingians in the chart on p. 162. A book that is well worth your

The story of Charlemagne's Empire is then covered (beginning page 167—153 old Langer), and a picture of how it expanded in Europe. You will discover here quite a story of how the German Franks and the French Franks combined to conquer the region of Austria, much of northern Italy, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia, most of Germany, and how long they warred against the Saxons—"a costly and bitter struggle of 30 years" (pp. 167-168; bottom of 153 old edition)—many of the Saxons being Germanic and some, of course, being an Israelite remnant. In many cases you have the story of the various German divisions becoming separate, and many of these Germanic tribes wanting to remain separate. Bavaria submitted readily—no problem there; also the Allemanni. The only ones who held out against the Roman system were the Saxons! Interestingly enough, the Saxons were those who were least influenced by the Roman culture from antiquity. They are the ones later who come to dominate most of Germany; this occurred under the Saxon king Otto who restored the Roman Empire (page 174; 160 in old edition).

Now the rule to follow in studying history—something very interesting in the story of human experience—is as follows: Babylon fell to Persia and Media because, interestingly enough, when Babylon overthrew Assyria she could not do it without Media and Persia (Media especially). When any nation has to combine with another, the usual rule is this: When you have to have another nation as an ally, sooner or later that nation is going to take over you! The Persians couldn't conquer Greece, but the Greeks finally conquered Persia! Then the Greeks conquered everything but Alexander didn't live long enough to conquer the West—so finally Rome conquered all the East! In the end, in the West there developed this Frankish realm that had grown and grown and grown at the expense of Rome—Justinian's restoration did not include most of France. The Franks were separate and Justinian couldn't take over Gaul; he could take over North Africa, a coastal portion of Spain, all of Italy and a little corner of southern Gaul (see the map on page 187; 171 in old Langer). Inevitably the Franks came to prominence!

Later the Franks sought to organize all Germany and barely were able to bring the Saxons in but, at best, they were merely a semi-incorporated people within the realm of Charlemagne's Empire. They finally submitted, but they submitted on terms of near equality! Thus, when the Frankish realm drops to insignificance as a result of splits within it, the interesting thing is that the next House that takes it over is the Saxon House—the one that produced the greatest resistance to the Franks! The origin of the new, Germanic Holy Roman Empire was the House of Otto the Great. So that in the end the Saxons ultimately dominate but in a different kind of unity; their realm didn't include most of France but the central portion of Europe. So we see that the ones who the Franks took so long to conquer ultimately became the dominant element; and they began to spread east and eventually took over Prussia. (Comments on Prussia at this point left out.)

The crowning of Charlemagne by the Pope is mentioned on page 169 (p. 155 old edition). This famous event took place on Xmas Day in 800 A.D. at St. Peter's in Rome. \* \* \* \* \* The end of the Carolingian line directly seems to occur in 877 with Charles the Bald, the Emperor, whose reign ended in 877. Students often ask when the Empire of Charlemagne began and when it ended: It began in 800 and it seems directly to have ended in 877 after which there was "anarchy and interregnum in the empire" (page 170; 157 old)—the period 877-881. After this point we have only separate divisions or remnants of the Empire in the West. But 877 officially ended its continuity; I think that's the proper ending date for it.

The story continues on page 174 (160 old) with Otto the Great (936-973) who was "crowned and anointed at Aachen, Charlemagne's capital." His coronation banquet of Roman origin included Franconia, Swabia, Lorraine and Pavia; along with Saxony. Otto's area, we have the five major areas of Germany represented! The coronation by the Pope is given on the next page. (Then note p. 227—213 old—1254-73, THE GREAT INTERREGNUM, end of medieval Holy Roman Empire.)

"Both the French and the German peoples claim Charlemagne as their own and consider him to have been one of their greatest leaders." The reason most of us have the impression he was French is that we have been influenced by French writers!

"Charlemagne was a grandson of Charles Martel who...drove the Moors out of France at the Battle of Tours (732)."

"The name Charlemagne is French but in his lifetime the great king was known by the German name Karl. He was completely German in speech, dress, and ways of living, and he ruled a people almost as completely German as himself."

"The fiercest enemies that Charlemagne ever had to contend with were the Saxons who lived in the northern part of Germany between the Rhine and the Elbe rivers... The Saxon wars went on for more than thirty years....Many treaties were made, but there was no power among the Saxons to make all the tribes follow any agreements. After this had gone on for many years Charlemagne determined to punish the independent Saxons in a manner which all could understand. He ordered that 4500 prisoners be put to death in a single day! This terrible mass murder was the worst thing Charlemagne ever did. Worse still, it did not break the will of the Saxons to go on fighting for their independence." (Now are there any doubts that this man was a German??!!)

Charlemagne was crowned on Xmas Day by the Pope in 800 A.D. while kneeling in prayer before the altar in St. Peter's. Some say this was a complete surprise to him.

Color slide of Charlemagne's Empire: "Charlemagne's empire included all of present-day France, Belgium, Holland and Switzerland. It also included the western part of Germany, Poland, and Czechoslovakia. Except for most of Spain and the southern half of Italy, Charlemagne ruled over all the territory of the Western Roman Empire in Europe. Moreover, he ruled large areas north of the Danube and east of the Rhine which were never conquered by the Romans."

Charlemagne (742-814). "The man who led the Franks to victory and so created modern Europe was Charles the Great. In the last resort it is true that national developments are independent of the individual's effort. But without Charles, and the legend of Charles, Europe would have had a different history and a different character. Her civilization would have been more tardily matured, and would have lacked some important elements which it now possesses. Rightly did the cathedral builders of the Middle Ages blazon the exploits of the great emperor upon those buildings which symbolized their highest beliefs and aspirations. Rightly did the Catholic Church inscribe his name in the roll of those who had been foremost in building up the Kingdom of God upon earth [and Catholic prophecies say another Charles will do it in the end!]. Nor did the popular tradition err when it saw in him the originator of the Crusading policy which made Christendom the armed camp of the Church militant; when it traced back to him the beginnings of feudalism, of central power hostile to feudalism, of national no less than of imperial aspirations, of the union between State and Church, of the wise jealousy of the state towards the Church. In his policy all these diverse tendencies were co-ordinated and harmonized." From One Hundred Great Lives by Derieux, page 351 (London, 1956), a summary written by H. W. C. Davis.

"The coronation of Charles is not only the central event of the Middle Ages, it is also one of those very few events of which, taking them singly, it may be said that if they had not happened, the history of the world would have been different." From James Bryce, The Holy Roman Empire (London and New York, Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1897), page 50.)