

EUROPE: THE EARLY MIDDLE AGES

We have a map on page 168 in the new edition of Langer showing Charlemagne's Empire. Though this map does not show us everything we might desire to see, it is nevertheless adequate to illustrate the general picture of the restoration of the Roman Empire during this period.

The Roman Empire Revived

Sometimes people have argued that mistakes have been made, that this is not a revival of the Roman Empire because once you had the Roman Empire and then you have a "Holy" one. I want to bring out this difference in definition. I don't care what they call it, whether they call it holy or not, it's essentially the same system. The "Holy Roman Empire" was not so designated until what we would call the "high" Middle Ages--the 12th century and later [note page 223 under Frederick I Barbarossa]. It was not so designated even under Charlemagne.

The map that is here shows to what extent the original area had its kingdom extend from the Pyrenees well into the Low Countries and much of Germany, and did not include Saxony. The capital was at Aachen as mentioned before. Then it spread to include the Avars in part in the east in Pannonia. The major areas of struggle were in the regions of Saxony.

I want to point out here significant historical parallels to the Frankish struggles with the Saxons. Babylon never did take over Persia and Media--the two had an alliance; and this was the power that ultimately arose to overthrow Babylon! The Greeks were always able to resist the Persians; the Persians could not permanently subdue the Greeks even though they overran the country! In the same way, the Greeks never conquered Rome because Alexander died too soon. And, in turn, it was Rome that absorbed Greece! Then the problems of Rome: The barbarians that lay to the north, the barbarians that lay outside the Roman Empire, in one way or another--whether we think of it as the Arabs who swallowed up the east and the south, whether we think of it as the Germanic people as a whole that swallowed up the north--the Roman Empire was destroyed by those nations that were never absorbed into the Empire, that always had to remain on the periphery because the surrounding world was just too big!

Now when we look at the West, Charlemagne's restoration, interestingly enough, had its greatest warfare with the Saxon Germans. That is, up to this time, remember, the whole Germanic west was divided as to whether it would be pro-Roman or anti-Roman. The Germanic world was divided into these two parts. Remember? One part sided with the Huns, the other part sided with Rome, in the Battle of Chalons in 451 at which time the Huns were defeated (see page 135). The question was this: Shall Germans be Roman or shall they be German in the traditional sense? This was the great problem that divided the country for many years!

At this point the vast area of France, which had been Romanized anyway for a long time, and most of the country in Germany that had also been Romanized became the basis of Charlemagne's realm! Look at the map on page 168. Notice the area that is cross-hatched--how similar it is, not altogether so, but how similar this is to the dimensions of the old Roman Empire as it had existed in this same region. We're not talking about the stippled area where Germanic settlements were much lighter--but if you look in the north, the regions of Bohemia and Saxony were as a whole not ever consistently within the Roman Empire.

So you see that the story of Charlemagne and the Franks who settled within this western portion of the original Roman Empire is really nothing but the story of the Romanized Germans and Gauls! Then there was their expansion into Italy and into the area to the east of Gaul below the Danube—all of this was clearly a part of the old Roman realm. (Spain now, of course, had become Moslem so this was another situation altogether.) But the other areas—Bavaria and Salzburg and the rest—all that was absorbed as a part of the conquests of the realm.

But then there was the struggle centered in the north involving the Saxons! Now these struggles in the north were very important because they showed that sooner or later that area would have to become Romanized or the Germans would be permanently divided. Charlemagne was able to Romanize them (pp. 167-168) but, nevertheless, the area of strength and resistance was always there (just like the strength and resistance to Persia was always in Greece).

The two great powers here are France and Germany; then there is the area in between that is neither French nor German, the countries (peoples) always victimized by the wars between the two big powers. When the realm of Charlemagne broke up into 3 parts, for example, this three-way difference was vividly revealed: One was on the German side, the other on the French side, and the third was in the middle (discussed on page 170 in Langer). It is this middle part that has never been fully understood; it is made up of Holland, Belgium, Luxembourg, Alsace-Lorraine, Switzerland, and then Italy--that strip in there--made up of people who are, if you please, neither French nor German! (Look at any historical atlas or history text showing the break-up of Charlemagne's Empire.) The French and the Germans have never wanted to recognize this Israelitish "buffer area" between them, but have always wanted to divide up the parts of it between them--you know, the Dutch part can go to Germany while the French want the Belgian part!

The German Empire

When the realm of Charlemagne was divided, out of this Saxon area we have the revival of a truly German Empire (pp. 174, 176). We could say that though Charlemagne was German in his background, the royal family was partly Judaic in the sense of having come from intermarriages with the Trojan line; there were all kinds of inter-relationships just as the Kaiser was related to the royal family of England at the time of World War I and vice-versa.

The point is that up to this time the basic area had been France or Gaul. But beginning with the revival of Otto the Saxon, we could say that the Holy Roman Empire thereafter took on wholly the characteristic of a German language area whereas previous to this it had been a dual language area--Gallic and Germanic. All during the Middle Ages, till the breakdown in the 13th century, it was Germany which was the central core of the Empire. Thereafter it was Austria which was the center. Not until Napoleon did the Holy Roman Empire cease to be essentially centered in a German-speaking area. The whole region had become ultimately Romanized.

Impact of Northern Europe

So, in looking once again at the map on page 168, we see that the Holy Roman Empire now spreads eastward. After this it will cease to be in the regions of Aquitaine and Neustria but will tend to be centered where the stippled area is, and the eastern part of the cross-hatched area, and go into the northern region toward Poland; and then, of course, we will have the story of the Teutonic knights and the

conquest of the region of Estonia, Courland and others (see map on p. 332) so that the German realm will tend to ultimately be centered on the Baltic. And when it is finally concluded, most of the major cities of the Holy Roman Empire will be cities of the Hanseatic League on the Baltic.

Thus the whole source of political power now becomes centered in northern Europe. This is the same time in Scandinavian history that you have the Vikings going east (pp. 185 and 217 fd.). Charlemagne represented the southern power in the 800's while at the same time in the north will be the tremendous expansion of Scandinavia into Iceland, Greenland, ultimately the New World, expansion into Russia with the founding of the Russian state in 859-62 A.D. (see pp. 258-9 in Langer)—all out of Scandinavia! And then there was the coming of the Normans, the revival of the Holy Roman Empire in the 900's, and the expansion of all the cities along the Baltic. The Mediterranean, after all, had been somewhat cut away because the Arabs and the Seljuk Turks controlled most of it having come in from the east. The Mediterranean, by this time, is no longer the center—it is the Baltic and the North Sea, the British Isles if you please; indeed, the North Atlantic where the arms are reaching out, and also toward southern Siberia and into Asia /a reference to Scandinavian expansion—see the summary in column 2 on p. 185/. The climate was excellent. That's why this entire region profited. Later on, however, it became dampened as a result of the "Little Ice Age" of the 13th century (note page 84 of vol. two of the Compendium) when Scandinavia lost contact with the New World. The Scandinavians were driven out of Russia as a result of the rise of the Russian state and the coming of the Tartars from the east. And then there will be a tendency in the Holy Roman Empire to seek a new out through the Arabic world—contact with the east through the Crusades.

Shifts in the Center of Power

Hence instead of Saxon Germany being the dominant center of the Holy Roman Empire, you later will find it shifting much further south into either Prague, which was the capital, or some area in Austria. In other words, later in the Middle Ages when northern Europe ceases to be as dominant, it will shift to Austria. (I'm going way ahead here to give you the overall picture.) And after some period of time in Austria it shifts to the Iberian Peninsula which was under control of the Hapsburgs. Branches of the Hapsburg family will be there; and they will by-pass the north; they will also by-pass the Mediterranean, and will be able to use the Atlantic going to the New World or going around Africa. /For material on the Hapsburg domination see pp. 323-7 and 415-416. Note also the genealogical charts on pp. 324, 427, 721. There are Hapsburg heirs still alive today./

So you have these major shifts in the center of power over the course of history: From the Roman Mediterranean to Gaul and Germany; then from northern Germany, and hence the center of Europe, all the way to the north; and then centering further down in the center of Europe again; then out in the Iberian Peninsula; and then finally in the British Isles and the French coast—which has continued, if you please, until the Second World War; and now it has split so that the center of power has shifted completely out of this region—one in the New World in the United States and the other in the Soviet Union—and presently Western Europe is just a political pawn, a role it will not put up with much longer!

Germanic Push to the East

Now an area that it would be well for you to look into, though good material on it is hard to find, is the story of the expansion of the Holy Roman Empire eastward through Germany toward Poland and into the Baltic—the complete destruction of all

tribes in this region that opposed the expansion of the Holy Roman Empire, the settlement of tens of thousands of people from Germany east—and this is the beginning of the famous expression Drang nach Osten, that is, the push toward the east (note page 220, column one in Langer). As a result of the devastation that hit the Roman Empire, many people—Germanic, Gothic, others—kept coming west and filled in the desolate remains of the Empire (as a result of disease most of the cities had broken down). And then the area began to re-expand, and now the push is east instead of west for some lengthy period of time. And, in fact, it has been east until the end of the Second World War. . . .

France

The expansion of the Holy Roman Empire of the German Nation will normally be found to include the regions of eastern and northeastern France—Alsace-Lorraine and Burgandy. Not until the Thirty Years' War of 1618-48 was this area so completely devastated that, generally speaking, the French moved into the region and it became linguistically a totally French area. Consequently, as a result of that war in the 17th century, the German realm in Europe shrivelled.

But you really need to understand how much of Europe will be different in this time—regions will be settled by people who do not remain there because they are destroyed in war or migrate in different directions. Hence you will see on the continent that the one nation that continues to increase in size steadily will be France. France will continue to increase in size. In the early days the Holy Roman Empire was the most populous area. By 1780 certainly France was the most populous nation in this part of the world. This explains why France could dominate as she did under Napoleon!

----- Early Britain

Beginning on page 175 we have a section on "The British Isles." Let me summarize it briefly by saying that much of the story is in volume one of the Compendium in the relationship of Ireland and England. There was the Roman occupation and then the withdrawal of Roman troops in the early 400's (p. 179). This left England open to the ravages from the north out of Scotland. The natives soon called on the Anglo-Saxons to aid the British against the Scottish and especially against the Picts. It turned out that the Anglo-Saxons took it over and drove the Scots and Picts north and drove the Britons out as a whole into Brittany across the Channel (map on p. 209) and scattered them over much of western Europe.

What is important is the expansion out of Denmark into much of England and the formation of the area known as the Danelaw seen on the map on p. 180). Remember, the Angles and Saxons came out of Schleswig-Holstein. I think we shall see that, in fact, not all of them did; certainly not all of the Saxons. And very, very likely many of the people called "Danes" who entered into the Danelaw in England proper were not really Danes as we know them. In other words, the Danes as we know them who stayed behind in Denmark were different from the Danes who, though living in the area, subsequently moved to England itself. I would suspect that the majority of the people who came into England at this time were actually Angles who had still been remaining in Denmark proper. They tend to settle in this area in England where the Angles had originally been anyway. And many of them will then be driven northward into Scotland and will mix with the Ulster Scots, go into northern Ireland, and from there even to the New World (America).

The Scottish people refer to the English as Saxons, they do not refer to them as Angles—I would call this to your attention—even though the land is called the

Angles (England) today. The fact that the Scottish people do not refer to the English as Angles but as Saxons indicates that very likely the Angles gave their name to New England in America because, in reality, the Angles in England were the primary people who came to America; and they gave their name to England and also to New England. And the people who stayed behind and kept the old name and are now called English are really basically the descendents of the Saxons. This is undoubtedly the indication from history. The overwhelming portion of people in the United States came from such areas as East Anglia which included Norfolk and Suffolk Counties (the "North Folk" and the "South Folk"), Northumbria, and then from Scotland itself.

Justinian's Empire

Now we should take a look at the map on page 186 briefly. This is the Byzantine Empire under Justinian. Remember that in history this is an episode that dates almost 300 years before Charlemagne. Notice that Justinian's restoration out of the east included the absorption of the Bulgars and, of course, Italy; the exclusion of the Visigoths and the Franks; and the occupation only of southern Spain and North Africa; also the exclusion of the Moors who later poured into Spain. So you see, that the Roman Empire at this period in the West hardly touched either Spain or France or Germany. They are left out of this restoration!

When the Roman Empire breaks up after Justinian's death in 565 the Lombards—a pagan, German-speaking tribe out of Czechoslovakia will pour into Italy. This, in fact, resulted in a change in much of the character of northern Italy; it explains why most of northern Italy became a part of the Holy Roman Empire for many, many centuries until the Lombards—after maybe 500 or 600 years—were ultimately absorbed in the Italian linguistic groups. It explains the difference between north and south Italy, the Germanic character of the north. In fact, as many Italians have said, the north Italians and the south Germans are more alike than the north Italians are with the south Italians.

In the West, the only Catholic state that will begin to develop will be the Franks. All the other tribes will be absorbed sooner or later, but they were all Arian! Clovis and the Franks were Catholic—the traditional date of Clovis' conversion to Catholicism is 496 (note page 161, col. two, top). Now this means that when the pagan Lombards came into Italy, the purpose of the Church was to find some power in the West to support the Church because the Byzantine Empire in the East was now too weak! (For background on the developing relationship between the Franks and the Papacy, see pp. 164-67.) So the Church, in fact, ultimately promoted and encouraged the reestablishment of the Roman Empire in the West and had Charlemagne crowned.

The Two Legs of the Image

The crowning of Charlemagne in the West made the emperor in the East at Constantinople very jealous. He wanted to be both legs of the image, so to speak! (For the rulers of this other "leg" of the image see pp. 1306-7 in the Appendix, II. "Byzantine Emperors".) But Charlemagne always acknowledged the eastern ruler as the Emperor of the East, and in the West he ruled. It was the old idea of Rome split into two parts, east and west, as begun by Diocletian about 300 A.D. (refer again to page 131) so that there were always these two branches.

We're going to see this duality far more than I think we realize. The various revivals will represent the revivals that strike the West. In the East the Byzantine Empire continues as the Eastern half while—well, it was also the Western half under

Justinian--but after Justinian it continues as Byzantine in the East and as Charlemagne's realm in the West, then as Byzantine in the East and as the Roman Empire (Saxon House) under Otto in the West--the two legs continuing on down!

Not until later do we have the revival in the West under the Austrians--at which time we are confronted with a significant distinction. The Eastern Empire was ultimately occupied by the Crusades linking the West with the East. But the West thereafter becomes, if you please, when we look at it, split into two parts: One was the Holy Roman Empire, the other being the Hapsburg dynastic lands--most of which lay outside the Holy Roman Empire. So although the Hapsburgs ruled both, there was an empire which was ruled by the Hapsburgs that was called the Empire (yet the Hapsburgs themselves only ruled a tiny portion of that by heredity), but they ruled a large portion of Europe (including Austro-Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Spain) by heredity! Most people are unaware of this continuing duality! (See, for example, a political map of Europe for 1648.)

In the same way, when Napoleon ultimately conquered the Holy Roman Empire and the Hapsburgs, he divided the realm and expanded it and linked up France, the seat of power, with the German states that were his allies. Thus you had two areas, and all maps will show the union of France with the German Rhineland states. (See a map of Europe for 1812.) In the same way later, Italy and Germany were united!

Almost invariably this system has TWO PARTS!! It is a strange thing, but this is just the way it is. There are two parts to it.

The Future

On the basis of this historic-prophetic principle, we could speculate how this duality might be reflected in the coming U. S. of Europe. We do not know exactly how this will develop in the immediate future. We at least know there is going to be iron and clay! And it's very likely that there will be a kind of division even in this coming revival of the Empire that will be obvious and significant. Whether there will be in fact specifically ten nations in one part and other nations joined to it economically by association--this is the way the Common Market is developing--we shall see. We're not told. It may be that, strangely enough, there will only be six in the heart and core; and there may be four others linked by association--making ten in all in the Biblical sense, but still in two parts! I never thought of that before, it just occurred to me now. But in some way there has to be this division, you can see it all through history. That's why the legs are always separate.

Now, maybe, there will be a slight alteration. I don't mean to put any credence on this unless there is a reason: You know, there are five toes on each foot! Just how it will work out or what will happen to Luxembourg--whether there'll be a kind of union there, what's going to happen to the region of Holland and Belgium. There are many struggles occurring right now in Belgium that might split the country. It is very possible that the country could split up if the king should lose power. Then I think the country would. The only thing that's holding Belgium together today is the royal family. If it splits up the one part is linguistically Dutch, the other French. They would almost certainly stay separate--though I don't think they would go along with the French because the Belgians don't like the French. They think the French are lazier than they are! Everybody wants to have somebody to look down upon!

Whatever the case, with this historical background in mind we can watch what happens in Europe. The Holy Roman Empire will be revived!

NOTES ON ERASMUS

From page 75 of The Norton History of Modern Europe (six authors, 1971):

Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466-1536) applied . . . critical techniques to the Bible. In his Latin translation of the New Testament, published with his famous edition of the Greek text in 1516, he omitted the verse . . . in the First Epistle of John that is the scriptural basis of the doctrine of the Trinity. Both in the Vulgate (the Latin translation by St. Jerome, c. 340-420, which was authoritative in the Middle Ages and in the Roman Church) and in the King James version, the text of I John 5:7-8 reads as follows: "And there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one. And there are three that bear witness in earth, the spirit, and the water, and the blood: and these three agree in one." Erasmus proved the first of these verses to be apocryphal. He found it in no Greek manuscript. It was missing in several of his oldest Latin manuscripts. He discovered that it was unknown to any Christian writer before the fourth century. He argued, with perfect cogency, that if the text had existed, it would surely have been quoted by orthodox writers in a period when the doctrine of the Trinity was the center of theological controversy; and he concluded—modern scholarship confirms him—that the text must have been interpolated into the New Testament after the Council of Nicaea (325) in order to give biblical sanction to the Trinitarian formula adopted there.

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And from Chapter One of The Cambridge History of the Bible (England, 1963):

. . . Erasmus cannot be considered a great textual critic. He used only a few manuscripts for his edition of the Greek New Testament, and did not correctly evaluate those employed. But his contribution is not to be minimized, for it was he who first made universally accessible any text whatsoever of the New Testament in the original tongue. The first edition came from the press of Froben in 1516. Cardinal Ximenes rendered the same service for the Old Testament in the Complutensian Polyglot published in 1522, though it had been printed earlier by the Jews. These publications disclosed discrepancies from the Vulgate, in some instances not because the original had been misunderstood but because the same text had not been employed

In the case of the New Testament Erasmus shocked contemporaries by omitting the famous proof text for the Trinity in I John 5:7. Erasmus could not find this spurious addition [about 'the Father, the Word, and the Spirit'] in any Greek manuscript, and therefore omitted it. Such was the outcry that he rashly promised to insert the reference to the heavenly witnesses could it be found in any Greek manuscript. One was discovered at Dublin, late and worthless. Erasmus, having sworn to deliver the head of John the Baptist, made the insertion in his second edition in 1519. Happily Luther in his translation did not follow him at this point. But others did, including the King James Version. As late as 1897 the Sacred Congregation of the Holy Office, with the endorsement of Pope Leo XIII, declared the passage to be authentic. Forty years later this decision was reversed. In general it may be said that the 16th century became aware of textual problems but made no great stride toward their solution.