

# The Carolingian world

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HIST 330 Lecture 11




Map 8.3  
*The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures: A Concise History, Second Edition*  
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# Diplomacy

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- Byzantium
  - Empress Irene: proposed marriage of Constantine V to Rotrud, daughter of Charlemagne—but falls through
  - Imperial title only recognized by Michael I Rhangabe 812
- Caliphate
  - Exchange of missions w/ Harun al-Rashid
  - Elephant Abul-Abbas (dies ☹)
- Britain
  - Correspondence w/ Northumbria and w/ Offa of Mercia
- Also Denmark, Umayyads (Spain), Abodrite Slavs...



# Charlemagne's administration

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- Marchfield
  - Annual assembly of Frankish aristocracy/army
  - Called on to approve legal rulings
- Counts
  - Administrators/judges appointed over regions
- Dukes
  - Controlled border areas
- Missi dominici
  - Sent out from court to carry out specific missions, audit administration and enforcement of law
- Capitularies
  - Collections of legal rulings published irregularly
- Regulation of trade and currency



# Charlemagne's court

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- Mobile court
  - Feasting, drinking and hunting
- Small group of administrators
  - Mostly clerics: e.g. role of *capellarii* (chaplains)
  - Key role in administration: source of *missi*, authors of laws
- New sites developed
  - Paderborn
  - Frankfurt
  - Aachen
- Succession of dominant figures
  - Paul the Deacon
  - Alcuin of York
  - Theodulf of Orleans



Reconstruction views of the  
Carolingian palace at Aachen

L: exterior of palace complex

R: interior of throne hall





Aachen Cathedral w/  
Capella Palatina



# Religious and cultural policies

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- Latin
  - Focus on correct grammar and spelling
  - Insular influence?
- Church reform
  - Lay piety and reform of monks, clergy
  - Rising influence of Benedictine rule
- Carolingian Renaissance
  - Patronage of scholarship: court as focus for learning
  - *Renovatio imperii*: classical concept in new context

# Popes and Carolingians

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- Zachary (741-52)
  - Sanctioned end of Merovingian dynasty, consecration of Pippin III the Short as king
- Stephen II (752-57)
  - To Pippin III at Paris: invade Italy, protect papacy from Lombards
  - Re-consecrated Pippin king at Rome 754
- Adrian I (772-795)
  - Got Charlemagne to defeat Lombard Desiderius
- Leo III (795-816)
  - Appeals to Charlemagne for rescue from Roman rivals
  - “Miraculously” recovers from attempted blinding, tongue
  - Crowns Charlemagne emperor Christmas Day 800



# Charlemagne and Leo III

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- ❑ Leo III needed Charlemagne's protection from his own people
- ❑ 799 Leo nearly assassinated in Rome, flees to Paderborn
- ❑ December 1, 800 assembly of Frankish, Italian bishops at Rome agreed to proclaim Charlemagne "Emperor"
- ❑ Anointed Emperor, Rome, Christmas Day, 800


# Charlemagne as emperor


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- Charlemagne's self-understanding vs. pope's original intention
  - Demand for recognition from the East—satisfied 812, emperor Michael I Rhangabes
- Peculiar titulature
  - “Emperor Governing the Roman Empire”
  - Remains “King of the Franks and of the Lombards”
- Emperor of the Christian people
  - Title as carrying religious significance
  - Added impetus to administrative/church reforms
  - Hereditary or personal title?

# Carolingians



Charles I the Great   
 King of Francia 768-814  
 Roman Emperor   
 800-814




Louis I   
 the Pious  
 Emperor  
 814-840


  
 Charles of  
 Franconia  
 d.811

  
 Pepin  
 King of  
 Italy  
 781-810


Lothar I   
 King of Italy  
 818-855  
 Francia   
 Media    
 Emperor  
 840-855

  
 Pepin I  
 King of  
 Aquitaine  
 817-838  
 Pepin II  
 King of   
 Aquitaine  
 838-864


Charles II  
 the Bald    
 West Francia  
 843-877  
 King of Italy  
 & Emperor   
 875-877  
 west Lorraine  
 870-877

  
 Louis II  
 the German  
 East  
 Francia  
 843-876  
 east  
 Lorraine  
 870-876

  
 Bernard  
 King of  
 Italy  
 810-818

Eberhard   
 of Friuli — m — Gisela

  
 Lothar II  
 King of  
 Lotharingia  
 /Lorraine  
 855-869


  
 Charles  
 King of  
 Burgundy  
 855-863

  
 Louis II  
 King of  
 Italy &  
 Emperor   
 Burgundy  
 863-875

  
 Berengar I  
 of Friuli  
 King of  
 Italy  
 888-891 &  
 905-922  
 Emperor   
 915-924  
 d.924

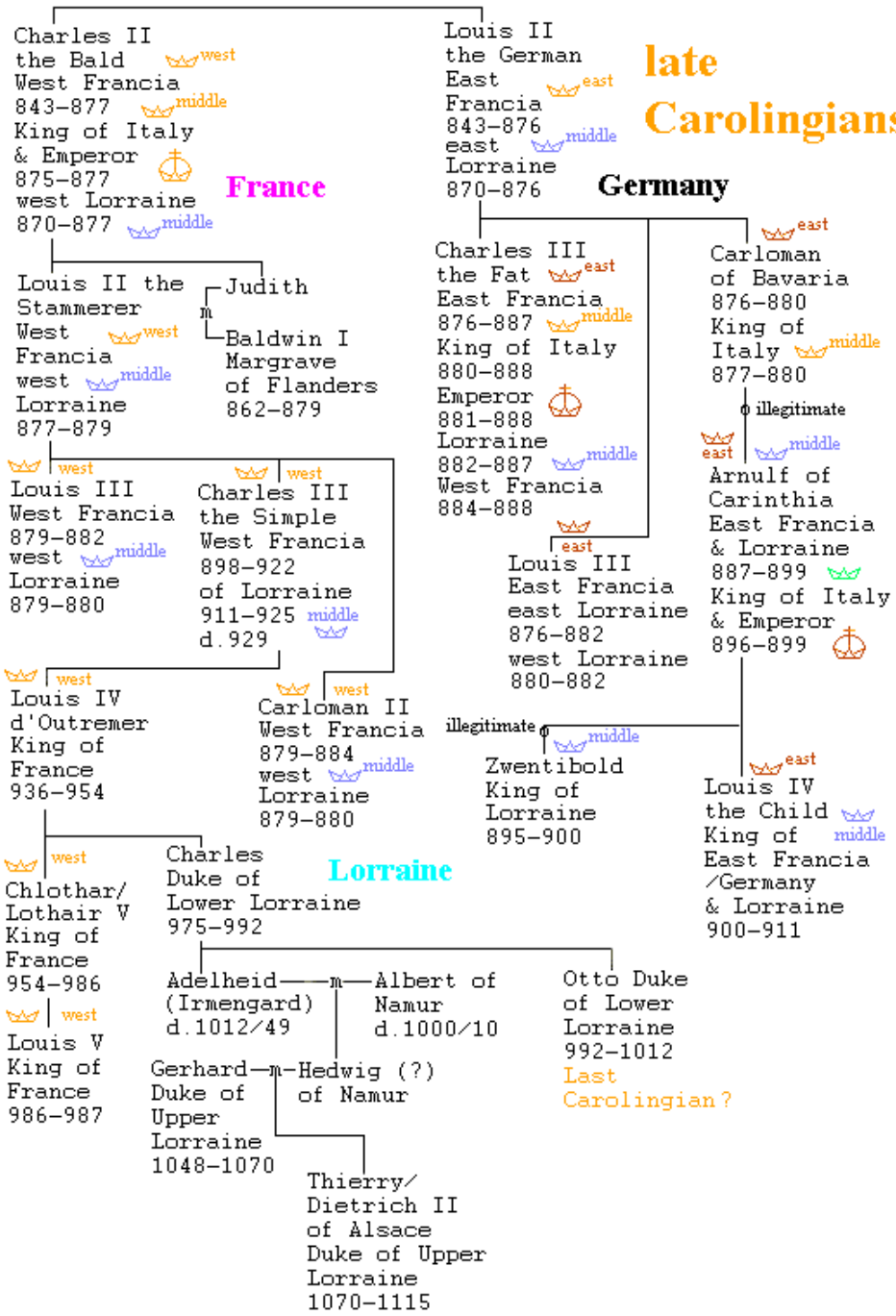
  
 Charles III  
 the Fat  
 East Francia  
 876-887  
 King of Italy  
 880-888  
 Emperor   
 881-888  
 Lorraine    
 882-888  
 West Francia  
 884-888

Lambert II — m — Rothilde  
 Count of Nantes  
 d.852

  
 Boso — m — Irmingard/  
 King of Ermengarde  
 Lower  
 Burgundy/  
 Provence  
 879-887



# late Carolingians



# Louis the Pious

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- King of Aquitaine from age 3
- Sole surviving son of Charlemagne
- Made co-emperor by his father 813
- Experienced and serious ruler, w/ one fatal flaw
- Planned division of empire among his sons backfires
  - Changes division to include Charles, youngest son by second wife
  - Deposed by coalition of 3 eldest sons led by Lothar—  
“Field of Lies”



Portrait of Louis the Pious, made ca. 840

Leaf from the *De laude sancte crucis*



# Treaty of Verdun

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- Divided empire between Louis's three sons
  - Charles the Bald: West Francia
    - Ancestor of France
  - Louis the German: East Francia
    - Ancestor of Germany/Holy Roman Empire
  - Lothar: Middle Kingdom/Lotharingia
    - Ancestor of Low Countries, Alsace-Lorraine
- Origins of political layout of modern Europe





Map 8.3 inset

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# The heirs of Louis the Pious

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- Louis the German
  - Inherits East Frankish realm
- Charles the Bald
  - Inherits West Francia
  - Has to deal w/ Vikings
- Lothar
  - Inherits “Middle Kingdom,” imperial title

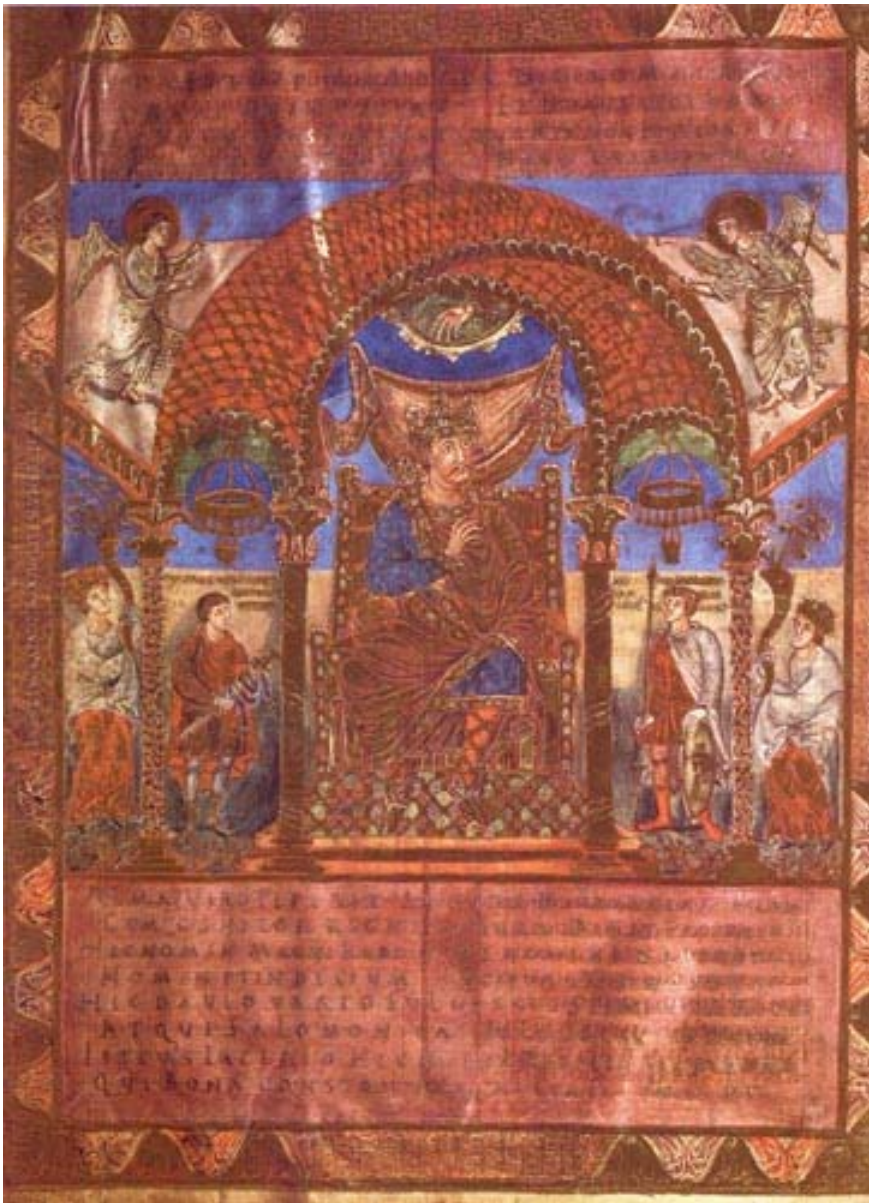


Charlemagne  
with Popes  
Gelasius I and  
Gregory I, 9<sup>th</sup> C



Charles the Bald  
receives a book

First Bible of  
Charles the Bald,  
ca. 846



Charles the Bald enthroned (L); the Lamb of the Apocalypse (R)  
Codex Aureus of St. Emmeram, 870



# The last of the Carolingians

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- Charles the Fat (d. 888)
  - Gradually inherits entire empire of Charlemagne
  - Then dies, having done little
- Louis the Child (d. 911)
  - Magyars invade from 900 on—major Frankish defeat 910
  - Last Carolingian in the East
- Charles the Simple (deposed 923)
  - Rules W Francia
  - Cedes territory to Viking Rollo in Normandy