

TWENTY CENTURIES

A Survey of Church History



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THE EIGHTH CENTURY

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- Major Events of the 8th Century
- The Frankish Kingdom
- The Carolingian Dynasty
- Viking Incursions against British Monasteries
- The Iconoclastic Controversy

Major Events



704: Byzantine Emperor Justinian II allies with Bulgar king to reclaim Constantinople. Makes Bulgarian king Terval a Caesar.

718: Bulgars and Romans check Arab advance at siege of Constantinople.

728: Lombard king “donates” land outside Rome to the pope.

731: Venerable Bede completes “Ecclesiastical History of the English.”

732: Charles Martel defeats Arabs at Battle of Tours (southern France).

757: Offa of Mercia unifies a Christian Anglo-Saxon southern England.

768: Charlemagne crowned King of the Franks, begins conquest of eastern Germany.

781: Nestorian Tablet erected in Chinese capital.

800: Charlemagne crowned Holy Roman Emperor.

The Frankish Kingdom



- **Merovingian & Carolingian Dynasties**
 - Original Frankish rulers the Merovingians (5th c.), became weak and isolated by 8th c.
 - Carolingians were stewards of the royal house who assumed power. Sought to expand power by converting tribes in Netherlands and Germany to Christianity. Allied themselves to and supported the bishops of the church.
 - Charles Martel defeated the Moors in 732, Battle of Tours.
 - Carolingian rulers supported English missionaries who came with zeal to convert the Germans.

The Frankish Kingdom



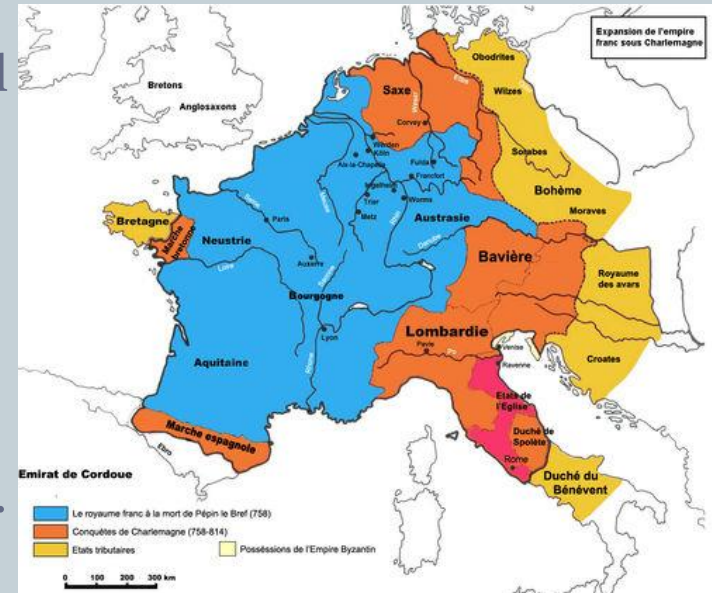
- English Missionaries

- Willibrord (658-740), of Northumbria. Labored for 50 years among the Frisians of the Netherlands. Went with 12 disciples to establish monastery. Sent out teams of 13 to preach and convert.
- Winfrid (680-754), of Wessex. Known as Boniface (“doer of good”). Follower of Willibrord, established mission among Hessians in central Germany. Established monastic outposts, spreading the gospel and culture among the Germans.
 - ✦ “He was one of the truly outstanding creators of the first Europe, as the apostle of Germany, the reformer of the Frankish church, and the chief fomentor of the alliance between the papacy and the Carolinian family.”
 - ✦ Made “missionary archbishop” without a church.
 - ✦ Martyred by Frisian pagans in 754.
- Alcuin of Kent (735-804). Leading scholar/teacher of the Carolingian court. Launched “Carolingian Renaissance. Key advisor to Charlemagne. Opposed forced baptisms.

The Carolingian Dynasty

- **Carolingian Rulers of the Franks**

- *Charles “the Hammer” Martel* (686-741), Mayor of the Palace and Prince of the Franks. Brilliant general, developer of feudal knighthood. Allied with the learning of British monasteries and Papal authority.
- *Pepin the Short* (d. 768). Coerced pope into granting him title of king in payment for defending papacy from the Lombards. Crowned king by Pope Stephen II. Established “papal states” in Northern Italy. Further developed heavy cavalry knighthood.
- *Charles “the Great” (Charlemagne; 742-814)*. King of the Franks (768); Holy Roman Emperor (800). Combined military power, religious prestige, and cultural advances. Protector and ally of the papacy. Modeled reign on King David.



The Carolingian Dynasty



- **Carolingian Dynasty becomes the basis for European Christendom**
 - Alliance between church and state (*potentias* and *autoritas*).
 - Military-religious romantic culture (knighthood, aristocracy, monasteries) + serfdom
 - Unified Christian bulwark against Muslims in Spain and North Africa
 - Formal transfer of sphere of papacy from the Eastern Empire and church to the Frankish Empire.
 - Provided the Papacy with large, wealthy lands in Italy.
- **The Donation of Constantine**
 - Claimed to be a letter from Constantine the Great to Pope Sylvester I (mid 4th c).
 - Claimed that Sylvester had cured Constantine of leprosy; in response Constantine had professed supremacy of church over the state
 - Claimed to grant to the papacy the city of Rome and all imperial territory in Italy and France.
 - Proved to be a forgery in 1440, but for 700 years built up papal claims.

Viking Invasions and the Fall of Lindisfarne



● Viking Incursions

- Four Anglo-Saxon kingdoms vied for control: Wessex, Mercia, East Anglia, and Northumbria.
- By the 790's raids from Scandinavia were the scourge of the British monasteries
- Viking raids ended the European outreach of English monasteries, as they turned inward for protection.
- Vikings were drawn by high standard of living, culture and reports of great wealth.
- In 793 Lindisfarne sacked; in 795 Iona sacked.
- Marked the end of the era of expansionist British monasteries and heralded future Danish invasions to Saxon Britain.

The Iconoclastic Controversy



- Questions over the Use of Pictures and Images in Worship
 - Works of art increasingly pictured biblical scenes and especially Christ (plus Mary)
 - Pictures became objects of veneration (adoration and worship)
 - In part a response to the barbarism of the Germans; a sign of Roman culture in the church.
 - Many churches in the East became adorned with images and icons as a sign of their holy status.

The Iconoclastic Controversy



- **The Iconoclastic Controversy**

- In 718, Emperor Leo III defended Constantinople from Muslims. Ordered destruction of images, in part to appease Muslims and in part for theological reasons.
- Argument was that to depict Christ as a man would downplay his deity. “A human representation of Jesus was in effect a separation of his two natures.”
- Leo’s stance led to iconoclasm: the practice of image-breaking. Condemned by Pope Gregory II.
- Ultimately became a debate between church and state. Emperor against images; pope for images.
- Leo employed violent force to uphold his ban on images. A council in Constantinople in 754 persecuted those who revered images.
- To address the controversy, the Second Council of Nicaea was convened in 787. Decreed that
 1. It is unlawful to worship images.
 2. It was permissible to venerate images (treat them with special attention & respect).
- Illustrates a pattern for Christendom:
 - ✦ The church in the Middle Ages was departing from the Bible. The biblical position would be more often upheld by the political leaders. Charlemagne outlawed images in the West in 794.
 - ✦ When religious/theological controversy brought public uproar, a compromise was usually mandated