

CONSTANTINE AND CHARLEMAGNE



CONSTANTINE THE GREAT

THE ROMAN EMPEROR CONSTANTINE I

- **Dates:** Feb. 27, c. 272/273 - May 22, 337
- Parents:** Constantius I Chlorus and Helena
- Place of Birth:** Naissus, Moesia Superior
- Name:** Flavius Valerius Aurelius Constantinus Augustus
- Wife:** Minervina, Fausta
- Children:** Crispus; Constantine II, Constantius II, Constans, Constantine, Helena
- Occupation:** Roman Emperor (A.D. 306-337)

CONSTANTINE'S IMPORTANCE: CHRISTIANITY

Constantine was the first Roman emperor to support Christianity and become Christian. From the time of Constantine, Christianity became an accepted Roman religion, with a temporary setback when his nephew Julian tried to reinstate the old Roman polytheistic beliefs, which we refer to as paganism. In the late fourth century, the Roman Emperor Theodosius I finally put an end to popular pagan practices.

SYMBOLISM

Constantine was victorious against Emperor Maxentius at the Milvian Bridge, which was significant for its Christian symbolism.

TOLERANCE

Constantine proclaimed the Edict of Milan, in 313, granting religious freedom to all. This was a departure from previous emperor's persecutions of the Christians.

BUILDING A NEW ROME

Constantine created a new Christian capital for the Roman Empire at Byzantium (named Constantinople for him [and later, Istanbul]). To make "New Rome" a truly alternative capital, he installed a second senate there.

"He erected all the needed edifices for a great capital---a hippodrome, fountains, porticoes and other beautiful adornments. He named it Constantinople and New Rome---and established it as the Roman capital for all the inhabitants of the North, the South, the East, and the shores of the Mediterranean, from the cities on the Danube and from Epidamnus and the Ionian Gulf to Cyrene and Libya."

~ Sozomen (d. c. A.D. 450) *Ecclesiastical History*, II.3

In contrast to what may seem (to many) like advances brought about by Constantine are the downsides:

ROME'S DECLINE

The once great city of Rome was firmly on a decline in terms of power within the Roman Empire. In 286, Diocletian had moved the capital from Rome and established the capital of the western part of the Roman Empire at what we now call Milan (then, Mediolanum), but at least it was still at the heart of Roman territory, in Italy. This was the city in which Constantine issued that document of religious toleration. Establishing a competing capital in the East put another nail in Rome's figurative coffin.

LOSS OF CULTURAL IDENTITY

Since its founding, Roman civic events had been linked to religious rituals. The Vestal Virgins, priestesses of the Goddess Hestia, were thought to hold the fortune of Rome in their hands. New cults were started and temples built to the gods to ensure military victories. Religion suffused life. With the acceptance by even the emperor of the foreign cult of the Christians, Rome was doomed to radical, irreversible change.

Much controversy exists over the relationship between Constantine, Paganism, and Christianity. Positions range from the idea that he was never a Christian to the idea that he was a Christian before the death of his father. How far he went to sanction Christianity in the Empire is another, perhaps slightly less contentious issue.

FAMILY AND BIRTH OF CONSTANTINE:

Flavius Valerius Constantinus, who became the Emperor Constantine the Great, was born on February 27, c. 280, in Naissus, in the province of Moesia Superior (Serbia) [see [map of Macedonia, Moesia, Dacia, and Thracia](#)]. Constantine's mother was named Helena, described as a barmaid, and his father was a military officer named Constantius. Constantius would become the Emperor Constantius I (Constantius Chlorus) and Constantine's mother would become famous as the canonized [St. Helena](#). Helena is thought to have found a portion of the cross of Jesus.

Constantine had for siblings, three half-sister and three half-brothers, the products of his father's marriage to a second woman of less shady background than Helena's.

By the time Constantius became governor of Dalmatia, he required a pedigreed wife, Theodora (Flavia Maximiana Theodora). She was a daughter of Maximian [see [Tetrarchy Emperors](#)]. Constantius then shuffled his son Constantine and Helena off to the eastern emperor, [Diocletian](#), in Nicomedia. [Paul Stephenson's *Constantine*; New York: The Overlook Press (2010).]

Constantine married twice. By the 1st, he had a son Crispus. By the 2nd, Constantine II, Constans, and Constantius II.

In Hoc Signo Vinces':

The story goes that Constantine had a vision of the words "in hoc signo vinces" ('in this sign you will conquer', but in Greek: *εν τούτῳ νίκα*) upon a cross and that this vision prompted Constantine to pledge to convert should he actually win the battle at the Milvian Bridge. Since Constantine was the victor, the vision led to his conversion to Christianity. Constantine probably experienced his great "in hoc signo vinces" vision in 312. On December 25, 323, Constantine exempted Christians from pagan lustration rites [Stephenson], a move thirteen years later, in the direction of Christianizing the empire.

CONSTANTINE THE GREAT RULES ALONE:

Constantine had ruled jointly with Licinus, who was married to Constantine's half-sister Flavia Julia Constantia, but Constantine defeated Licinus, who was based on the Sea of Marmara, in 324. Licinus said Constantine had violated treaty terms with the Sarmatians, whom Constantine had fought, in 323, applying the title of Sarmatian conqueror (Sarmaticus Maximus) to himself.

The first battle between Constantine and Licinus, on July 3-4 of 324, was at Adrianople, in Thrace. Constantine won. Next they fought at sea, in the Hellespont. Constantine's son Crispus was victorious in this encounter with Licinius' admiral Amandus. Licinus surrendered at Chrysopolis on the 18th of September.

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Constantine created Constantinople on the site of Byzantium to celebrate his victory. [Stephenson]

CONSTANTINE ON HERESY

Constantine was not yet a baptized Christian (although T.G. Elliot argues that he didn't need to convert to become a Christian since he already may have been one) when he settled matters of Christian dogma and the Arian Controversy at the First Nicene Council (First Council of Nicaea), which ended on August (or July) 25, 325. As a result of his initial decision against the Arians, Constantine exiled his friend Eusebius for holding an heretical position. Constantine later revised his opinion and recalled Eusebius.

It was from 325 that Constantine enjoyed sole reign in the Roman empire, having defeated and executed his co-emperor Licinius, who had reneged on the Edict of Milan.

DEATH OF CONSTANTINE:

Constantine died in 22 May, 337 at Nicomedia, shortly after his baptism by the Arian bishop, his friend Eusebius of Nicomedia.

CONSTANTINE AND CHRISTIANITY:

Most people consider Constantine a Christian from the Milvian Bridge in 312, but he wasn't baptized until a quarter century later. Today, Constantine wouldn't count as a Christian in many forms of Christianity without the baptism, but it's even less clear in the period of Classical Christianity.

CHARLEMAGNE

Charlemagne, also known as Charles the Great (German: *Karl der Große*, Latin: *Carolus* or *Karolus Magnus*) or Charles I, was the King of the Franks from 768, the King of Italy from 774, and from 800 the first emperor in western Europe since the collapse of the Western Roman Empire three centuries earlier. The expanded Frankish state he founded is called the Carolingian Empire.

The oldest son of Pepin the Short and Bertrada of Laon, Charlemagne became king in 768 following the death of his father. He was initially co-ruler with his brother Carloman I. Carloman's sudden death in 771 under unexplained circumstances left Charlemagne as the undisputed ruler of the Frankish Kingdom. Charlemagne continued his father's policy towards the papacy and became its protector, removing the Lombards from power in northern Italy, and leading an incursion into Muslim Spain. He also campaigned against the peoples to his east, Christianizing them upon penalty of death, at times leading to events such as the Massacre of Verden. Charlemagne reached the height of his power in 800 when he was crowned "emperor" by Pope Leo III on Christmas Day at Old St. Peter's Basilica.

Called the "Father of Europe" (*pater Europae*), Charlemagne united most of Western Europe for the first time since the Roman Empire. His rule spurred the Carolingian Renaissance, a period of cultural and intellectual activity within the Catholic Church. Both the French and German monarchies considered their kingdoms to be descendants of Charlemagne's empire.

Charlemagne died in 814, having ruled as emperor for just over thirteen years. He was laid to rest in his imperial capital of Aachen in what is today Germany. His son Louis the Pious succeeded him.

By the 6th century, the western Germanic Franks had been Christianised, and Francia, ruled by the Merovingians, was the most powerful of the kingdoms that succeeded the Western Roman Empire. Following the Battle of Tertry, however, the Merovingians declined into a state of powerlessness, for which they have been dubbed the *rois fainéants* ("do-nothing kings"). Almost all government powers of any consequence were exercised by their chief officer, the mayor of the palace.

AQUITANIAN REBELLION

An inheritance in the countries formerly under Roman law (ius or iustitia) represented not only a transmission of the properties and privileges but also the encumbrances and obligations attached to the inheritance. Pepin at his death had been in process of building an empire, a difficult task:

"In those times, to build a kingdom from an aggregation of small states was itself no great difficulty ... But to keep the state intact after it had been formed was a colossal task ... Each of the minor states ... had its little sovereign ... who ... gave himself chiefly to ... plotting, pillaging and fighting."

IMPERIUM

In 799, Pope Leo III had been mistreated by the Romans, who tried to put out his eyes and tear out his tongue. Leo escaped and fled to Charlemagne at Paderborn, asking him to intervene in Rome and restore him. Charlemagne, advised by scholar Alcuin of York, agreed to travel to Rome, doing so in November 800 and holding a council on 1 December. On 23 December Leo swore an oath of innocence. At Mass, on Christmas Day (25 December), when Charlemagne knelt at the altar to pray, the Pope crowned him *Imperator Romanorum* ("Emperor of the Romans") in Saint Peter's Basilica. In so doing, the Pope was effectively nullifying the legitimacy of Empress Irene of Constantinople:

"When Odoacer compelled the abdication of Romulus Augustulus, he did not abolish the Western Empire as a separate power, but cause it to be reunited with or sink into the Eastern, so that from that time there was a single undivided Roman Empire ... [Pope Leo III and Charlemagne], like their predecessors, held the Roman Empire to be one and indivisible, and proposed by the coronation of [Charlemagne] not to proclaim a severance of the East and West ... they were not revolting against a reigning sovereign, but legitimately filling up the place of the deposed Constantine VI ... [Charlemagne] was held to be the legitimate successor, not of Romulus Augustulus, but of Constantine VI ..."

Charlemagne's coronation as Emperor, though intended to represent the continuation of the unbroken line of Emperors from Augustus to Constantine VI, had the effect of setting up two separate (and often opposing) Empires and two separate claims to imperial authority. For centuries to come, the Emperors of both West and East would make competing claims of sovereignty over the whole.

Einhard says that Charlemagne was ignorant of the Pope's intent and did not want any such coronation:

He at first had such an aversion that he declared that he would not have set foot in the Church the day that they [the imperial titles] were conferred, although it was a great feast-day, if he could have foreseen the design of the Pope.

A number of modern scholars, however, suggest that Charlemagne was indeed aware of the coronation; certainly he cannot have missed the bejeweled crown waiting on the altar when he came to pray; something even contemporary sources support when thoroughly analysed.^[49]

In any event, Charlemagne used these circumstances to claim that he was the renewer of the Roman Empire, which had apparently fallen into degradation under the Byzantines. In his official charters, Charles preferred the style *Karolus serenissimus Augustus a Deo coronatus magnus pacificus imperator Romanum gubernans imperium* ("Charles, most serene Augustus crowned by God, the great, peaceful emperor ruling the Roman empire") to the more direct *Imperator Romanorum* ("Emperor of the Romans").

IMPERIAL DIPLOMACY

EUROPE AROUND 814

The iconoclasm of the Byzantine Isaurian Dynasty was endorsed by the Franks.^[51] The Second Council of Nicaea reintroduced the veneration of icons under Empress Irene. The council was not recognized by Charlemagne since no Frankish emissaries had been invited, even though Charlemagne ruled more than three provinces of the old Roman empire and was considered equal in rank to the Byzantine emperor. And while the Pope supported the reintroduction of the iconic veneration, he politically digressed from Byzantium.^[51] He certainly desired to increase the influence of the papacy, to honour his saviour Charlemagne, and to solve the constitutional issues then most troubling to European jurists in an era when Rome was not in the hands of an emperor. Thus, Charlemagne's assumption of the imperial title was not a usurpation in the eyes of the Franks or Italians. It was, however, seen as such in Byzantium, where it was protested by Irene and her successor Nicephorus I — neither of whom had any great effect in enforcing their protests.

The Byzantines, however, still held several territories in Italy: Venice (what was left of the Exarchate of Ravenna), Reggio (in Calabria), Brindisi (in Apulia), and Naples (the *Ducatus Neapolitanus*). These regions remained outside of Frankish hands until 804, when the Venetians, torn by infighting, transferred their allegiance to the Iron Crown of Pippin, Charles' son. The *Pax Nicephori* ended. Nicephorus ravaged the coasts with a fleet, initiating the only instance of war between the Byzantines and the Franks. The conflict lasted until 810, when the pro-Byzantine party in Venice gave their city back to the Byzantine Emperor, and the two emperors of Europe made peace: Charlemagne received the Istrian peninsula and in 812 the emperor Michael I Rhangabes recognised his status as Emperor, although not necessarily as "Emperor of the Romans".

DEATH


In 813, Charlemagne called Louis the Pious, king of Aquitaine, his only surviving legitimate son, to his court. There Charlemagne crowned his son with his own hands as co-emperor and sent him back to Aquitaine. He then spent the autumn hunting before returning to Aachen on 1 November. In January, he fell ill with pleurisy. In deep depression (mostly because many of his plans were not yet realized), he took to his bed on 21 January and as Einhard tells it:

He died January twenty-eighth, the seventh day from the time that he took to his bed, at nine o'clock in the morning, after partaking of the Holy Communion, in the seventy-second year of his age and the forty-seventh of his reign.

He was buried the same day as his death, in Aachen Cathedral, although the cold weather and the nature of his illness made such a hurried burial unnecessary. The earliest surviving planctus, the Planctus de obitu Karoli, was composed by a monk of Bobbio, which he had patronised. A later story, told by Otho of Lomello, Count of the Palace at Aachen in the time of Otto III, would claim that he and Emperor Otto had discovered Charlemagne's tomb: the emperor, they claimed, was seated upon a throne, wearing a crown and holding a sceptre, his flesh almost entirely incorrupt. In 1165, Frederick I re-opened the tomb again and placed the emperor in a sarcophagus beneath the floor of the cathedral. In 1215 Frederick II re-interred him in a casket made of gold and silver.

Charlemagne's death greatly affected many of his subjects, particularly those of the literary clique who had surrounded him at Aachen. An anonymous monk of Bobbio lamented:

From the lands where the sun rises to western shores,
people are crying and wailing ... the Franks, the Romans, all
Christians, are stung with mourning and great worry ... the
young and old, glorious nobles, all lament the loss of their
Caesar ... the world laments the death of Charles ... O
Christ, you who govern the heavenly host, grant a peaceful
place to Charles in your kingdom. Alas for miserable me.



He was succeeded by his surviving son, Louis, who had been crowned the previous year. His empire lasted only another generation in its entirety; its division, according to custom, between Louis's own sons after their father's death laid the foundation for the modern states of Germany and France.

ADMINISTRATION

As an administrator, Charlemagne stands out for his many reforms: monetary, governmental, military, cultural, and ecclesiastical. He is the main protagonist of the "Carolingian Renaissance."

It has long been held that the dominance of Charlemagne's military was based on a "cavalry revolution" led by Charles Martel in 730s. However, the stirrup, which made the "shock cavalry" lance charge possible, was not introduced to the Frankish kingdom until the late eighth century.^[59] Instead, Charlemagne's success rested primarily on novel siege technologies and excellent logistics.^[60]

However, large numbers of horses were used by the Frankish military during the age of Charlemagne. This was because horses provided a quick, long-distance method of transporting troops, which was critical to building and maintaining such a large empire.


ECONOMIC AND MONETARY REFORMS

Charlemagne had an important role in determining the immediate economic future of Europe. Pursuing his father's reforms, Charlemagne abolished the monetary system based on the gold sou, and he and the Anglo-Saxon King Offa of Mercia took up the system set in place by Pippin. There were strong pragmatic reasons for this abandonment of a gold standard, notably a shortage of gold itself.

The gold shortage was a direct consequence of the conclusion of peace with Byzantium, which resulted in ceding Venice and Sicily to the East and losing their trade routes to Africa. The resulting standardisation economically harmonized and unified the complex array of currencies which had been in use at the commencement of his reign, thus simplifying trade and commerce.

Charlemagne established a new standard, the livre carolinienne (from the Latin libra, the modern pound), which was based upon a pound of silver—a unit of both money and weight—which was worth 20 sous (from the Latin solidus [which was primarily an accounting device and never actually minted], the modern shilling) or 240 deniers (from the Latin denarius, the modern penny). During this period, the *livre* and the *sou* were counting units; only the *denier* was a coin of the realm.

Charlemagne instituted principles for accounting practice by means of the Capitulaire de villis of 802, which laid down strict rules for the way in which incomes and expenses were to be recorded.



Early in Charlemagne's rule he tacitly allowed the Jews to monopolize money lending. Then lending money for interest was proscribed in 814, being against Church law at the time, Charlemagne introduced the Capitulary for the Jews, a prohibition on Jews engaging in money-lending due to the religious convictions of the majority of his constituents, in essence banning it across the board. A reversal of his earlier recorded general policy.^[61] In addition to this macro-oriented reform of the economy, Charlemagne also performed a significant number of microeconomic reforms, such as direct control of prices and levies on certain goods and commodities.

His Capitulary for the Jews, however was not representative of his overall economic relationship or attitude, toward the Frankish Jews and certainly not his earlier relationship with them, which had evolved over his lifespan. His paid personal physician for example was Jewish,^[62] he employed at least one Jew for his diplomatic missions,^[63] Isaac was his personal representative to the Muslim caliphate of Baghdad. Letters have been credited to him as well inviting Jews to settle in his kingdom, for economic purposes, generally welcoming them through his overall, progressive policies.

Charlemagne applied this system to much of the European continent, and Offa's standard was voluntarily adopted by much of England. After Charlemagne's death, continental coinage degraded, and most of Europe resorted to using the continued high-quality English coin until about 1100.


EDUCATION REFORMS

A part of Charlemagne's success as warrior and administrator and ruler can be traced to his admiration for learning and education. His reign and the era it ushered in are often referred to as the Carolingian Renaissance because of the flowering of scholarship, literature, art, and architecture which characterize it. Charlemagne, brought into contact with the culture and learning of other countries (especially Visigothic Spain, Anglo-Saxon England, and Lombard Italy) due to his vast conquests, greatly increased the provision of monastic schools and scriptoria (centres for book-copying) in Francia.

Most of the presently surviving works of classical Latin were copied and preserved by Carolingian scholars. Indeed, the earliest manuscripts available for many ancient texts are Carolingian. It is almost certain that a text which survived to the Carolingian age survives still.

The pan-European nature of Charlemagne's influence is indicated by the origins of many of the men who worked for him: Alcuin, an Anglo-Saxon from York; Theodulf, a Visigoth, probably from Septimania; Paul the Deacon, Lombard; Peter of Pisa and Paulinus of Aquileia, Italians; and Angilbert, Angilram, Einhard, and Waldo of Reichenau, Franks.

Charlemagne took a serious interest in scholarship, promoting the liberal arts at the court, ordering that his children and grandchildren be well-educated, and even studying himself (in a time when even leaders who promoted education did not take time to learn themselves) under the tutelage of Peter of Pisa, from whom he learned grammar; Alcuin, with whom he studied rhetoric, dialectic (logic), and astronomy (he was particularly interested in the movements of the stars); and Einhard, who assisted him in his studies of arithmetic.



His great scholarly failure, as Einhard relates, was his inability to write: when in his old age he began attempts to learn—practicing the formation of letters in his bed during his free time on books and wax tablets he hid under his pillow—"his effort came too late in life and achieved little success", and his ability to read – which Einhard is silent about, and which no contemporary source supports—has also been called into question.

In 800, Charlemagne enlarged the hostel at the Muristan in Jerusalem and added a library to it. He certainly had not been personally in Jerusalem.

CHURCH REFORMS

Unlike his father, Pippin, and Uncle, Carloman, Charlemagne expanded the reform program of the church. The deepening of the spiritual life was later to be seen as central to public policy and royal governance. His reform focused on the strengthening of the church's power structure, improving the skill and moral quality of the clergy, standardizing liturgical practices, improvements on the basic tenets of the faith and moral, and the rooting out of paganism. His authority was now extended over church and state. He could discipline clerics, control ecclesiastical property and define orthodox doctrine. Despite the harsh legislation and sudden change, he had grown a well-developed support from the clergy who approved his desire to deepen the piety and morals of his Christian subjects.

WRITING REFORMS

During Charles' reign, the Roman half uncial script and its cursive version, which had given rise to various continental minuscule scripts, were combined with features from the insular scripts that were being used in Irish and English monasteries. Carolingian minuscule was created partly under the patronage of Charlemagne. Alcuin of York, who ran the palace school and scriptorium at Aachen, was probably a chief influence in this.

The revolutionary character of the Carolingian reform, however, can be over-emphasised; efforts at taming the crabbed Merovingian and Germanic hands had been underway before Alcuin arrived at Aachen. The new minuscule was disseminated first from Aachen and later from the influential scriptorium at Tours, where Alcuin retired as an abbot.



POLITICAL REFORMS

Charlemagne engaged in many reforms of Frankish governance, but he continued also in many traditional practices, such as the division of the kingdom among sons.

ORGANIZATION

The Carolingian king exercised the bannum, the right to rule and command. He had supreme jurisdiction in judicial matters, made legislation, led the army, and protected both the Church and the poor. His administration was an attempt to organize the kingdom, church, and nobility around him. However, the effort was heavily dependent upon the efficiency, loyalty, and support of his subjects.

Historians have debated for centuries whether Charlemagne was aware of the Pope's intent to crown him Emperor prior to the coronation (Charlemagne declared that he would not have entered Saint Peter's had he known), but that debate has often obscured the more significant question of *why* the Pope granted the title and why Charlemagne chose to accept it once he did.

Roger Collins points out "[t]hat the motivation behind the acceptance of the imperial title was a romantic and antiquarian interest in reviving the Roman empire is highly unlikely."^[71] For one thing, such romance would not have appealed either to Franks or Roman Catholics at the turn of the ninth century, both of whom viewed the Classical heritage of the Roman Empire with distrust. The Franks took pride in having "fought against and thrown from their shoulders the heavy yoke of the Romans" and "from the knowledge gained in baptism, clothed in gold and precious stones the bodies of the holy martyrs whom the Romans had killed by fire, by the sword and by wild animals", as Pippin III described it in a law of 763 or 764.

Furthermore, the new title—carrying with it the risk that the new emperor would "make drastic changes to the traditional styles and procedures of government" or "concentrate his attentions on Italy or on Mediterranean concerns more generally"—risked alienating the Frankish leadership.

For both the Pope and Charlemagne, the Roman Empire remained a significant power in European politics at this time, and continued to hold a substantial portion of Italy, with borders not very far south of the city of Rome itself—this is the empire historiography has labelled the Byzantine Empire, for its capital was Constantinople (ancient Byzantium) and its people and rulers were Greek; it was a thoroughly Hellenic state. Indeed, Charlemagne was usurping the prerogatives of the Roman Emperor in Constantinople simply by sitting in judgement over the Pope in the first place:

By whom, however, could he [the Pope] be tried? Who, in other words, was qualified to pass judgement on the Vicar of Christ? In normal circumstances the only conceivable answer to that question would have been the Emperor at Constantinople; but the imperial throne was at this moment occupied by Irene. That the Empress was notorious for having blinded and murdered her own son was, in the minds of both Leo and Charles, almost immaterial: it was enough that she was a woman. The female sex was known to be incapable of governing, and by the old Salic tradition was debarred from doing so. As far as Western Europe was concerned, the Throne of the Emperors was vacant: Irene's claim to it was merely an additional proof, if any were needed, of the degradation into which the so-called Roman Empire had fallen.

—John Julius Norwich, *Byzantium: The Early Centuries*, pg. 378

For the Pope, then, there was "no living Emperor at the time" though Henri Pirenne disputes this saying that the coronation "was not in any sense explained by the fact that at this moment a woman was reigning in Constantinople." Nonetheless, the Pope took the extraordinary step of creating one. The papacy had since 727 been in conflict with Irene's predecessors in Constantinople over a number of issues, chiefly the continued Byzantine adherence to the doctrine of iconoclasm, the destruction of Christian images; while from 750, the secular power of the Byzantine Empire in central Italy had been nullified.

FAMILY MARRIAGES AND HEIRS

Charlemagne had eighteen children over the course of his life with eight of his ten known wives or concubines. Nonetheless, he only had four legitimate grandsons, the four sons of his fourth son, Louis. In addition, he had a grandson (Bernard of Italy, the only son of his third son, Pippin of Italy), who was born illegitimate but included in the line of inheritance. So, despite eighteen children, the claimants to his inheritance were few.

The background features a solid black field. At the top, there is a decorative, wavy, translucent shape that transitions through colors from yellow and orange on the left to green and blue on the right, resembling a stylized horizon or a liquid surface.

Thank You !!!