



From the desk of Pierre Beaudry



INSIGHTS INTO THE LIFE OF CHARLEMAGNE

by Pierre beaudry, 2/12/2011



1. THE DONATION OF CHARLEMAGNE.

The relationship between Charlemagne and the Papacy represents a fascinating series of colorful events; in fact, one could even go as far as to say, without disrespect for the dignities involved, that this relationship was an amazing series of *quid pro quo*. The truth of the matter is that this relationship reflected the eternal conflict, within the Catholic Church, between temporal power and spiritual power; a conflict that has endured inside of the Church of Rome ever since the appearance of the false “Donation of Constantine”(Fourth Century AD), and is still alive today within the Spanish Integrist movement of *Civita Catholica*.



Figure 2. The False Donation of Constantine.

The mosaic of the False Donation of Constantine in the original palace of Latran shows on the left, the Roman Pope Sylvester 1st as the beneficiary of the false donation, and on the right the Emperor Constantine I. The so-called donation granted to Pope Sylvester and his successors the territories of Judea, Greece, Italy and all of the former western parts of the Roman Empire.

The strained relation between Charlemagne and Pope Hadrian, for example, began when the Pope wrote a letter to remind the King that the donation of those territories had historical precedents in which “*other God-fearing emperors and princes*” had already given these rights of ownership to former popes “*for the remission of their sins and the salvation of their souls.*” This veiled threat was taken up as a welcome challenge by Charlemagne and the events that followed stand as a good example of how Charlemagne had to solve disproportionate states of imbalance between power and reason not only with pagans, but with Christians as well. Here is how Hadrian offered Charlemagne to become the new Emperor Constantine of his time. Unfortunately, the written answer of Charlemagne did not survive.

“And since the time when the Blessed Sylvester, Pope of the Holy, Catholic, Apostolical and Roman Church, was elevated and exalted by the great and most pious Emperor Constantine, and was judged worthy of receiving the power over these western regions; similarly, for these happy times, in which you and I live, the Holy Church of God, that is the one of the Blessed Apostle Peter, should grow and be exalted always further more so that all of the nations that hear this will say: Lord, preserve the King and grant us on the day when we would have invoked you, because a new and most Christian Constantine Emperor has come to us, through which God has decided to give his Holy Church of the Blessed Peter, prince of the apostles, everything that is worthy of receiving.” (Codex Carolinus, no. 60. Collection of 96 letters written to Pepin and Charlemagne by popes Stephen II, Stephen III and Hadrian.)

To make a long story short, the way Charlemagne treated this fallacy of composition was with a grain of salt and a dash of irony. As discretely as possible, the result was the absorption of Italy within the Frankish State, which happened very quickly and without bloodshed, on Easter Sunday, April 15, 781, when Pope Hadrian held the youngest son of Charlemagne over the baptismal fonts to change his name from Carloman to that of Pepin, and, by putting a small crown on his head, anointing the four year old boy, King of the Franks. Without missing a beat, Charlemagne, who was the only King of the Franks, officially and with similar pomp declared: *“By the will of God, behold the new King of Italy!”* The issue of the donation was resolved there and then, and Charlemagne gave Hadrian a new King and a *“soft domination”* of Italy instead. As for the lesson in Carolingian diplomacy, the reader should remember that there are ironical moments in the history of mankind where the power of faith must kneel to the power of reason; and, the Baptism of Charlemagne’s youngest son, Pepin, was one of those special moments.

However, in order to assure the security of the Papal State, Charlemagne was benevolent and restored to the Papacy the territory of the Sabina region which had been a thorn on the eastern flank of the Duchy of Rome. Therefore, during this 781 visit to the eternal city, Charlemagne made Hadrian happy on this point. Politically speaking, Charlemagne had made a wise decision, because he judged that the Italian people would have been better protected under the leadership of his son Pepin who immediately took residence there under the wise tutelage of his advisor, Adalhard, rather than under the leadership of the Papacy. Charlemagne had made the right decision. In the conclusion of this ironic chapter, Kleinclausz reported: *“This is how Italy, held by a firm hand without the appearance that anything had been changed in its institutions, came to be located inside of the Frank State. Owing to the energy with which the ancient laws had been applied and new dispositions introduced by recent capitularies, justice and order reigned without disruption.”* (Kleinclausz, Op. Cit., p. 120)

2. THE TRUTH BEHIND THE SO-CALLED VERDEN MASSACRE.

In July of 782, after the affairs of Italy had been settled to his satisfaction, Charlemagne returned back home to take care of the Saxon problem that had been festering like an ulcer during three years on

the eastern flank of Francia. Immediately upon his arrival, he held a council of several days to prepare for a military expedition into Saxony. The reader should know that when he was returning from Spain in 779, Charlemagne was informed that the Westphalian Saxons, led by the Pagan Widukind, had taken advantage of his absence in order to invade the territory of Francia, where he burnt down Karlsburg, and massacred the civilian population of Franc villages along the right bank of the Rhine River all the way to the Moselle River. This situation was a very serious matter, but the affairs of Italy being more important strategically at the time; Charlemagne had to postpone settling the Saxon intervention for a few years.

Although Charlemagne had created the beginning of an administration in Saxony and had delegated his authority to several trustworthy Saxon Counts, the Pagan leader, Widukind, had initiated a revolt that was undermining the entire civilizing process to the point where Charlemagne found himself before a veritable insurrection that was putting in jeopardy the entire Christian mission inside of Saxony. Churches were being burnt to the ground and priests were being chased out of Saxony. The population that had agreed to be baptized a few years before began to revert back to their former pagan practices.

Confronted with that horrifying situation, Charlemagne had to act quickly, decisively. He was more and more convinced that he could not win over the souls of the vanquished populations simply by their accepting baptism, or worse, by having baptism imposed on them by force. He had to create a circumstance in which, the oath that the Saxons had pledged to the King and to Christ had to be respected and that anyone who broke that sworn oath was to be punished by death as the most outraged crime of infidelity that could be committed. But, why was Charlemagne so ruthless?

Charlemagne realized that this was not merely a question of his prestige, but that the entire process of civilization was hanging in the balance. The issue was not revenge or even a question of ordinary warfare. The Saxons had started a mutiny against the principle of truthfulness, against the human mind itself. So, Charlemagne had to wage his war on a higher terrain, the terrain of epistemological warfare. The objective was to create a circumstance whereby people could make the difference between living by truth and living by lie. In other words, Charlemagne had to establish that to be Franc meant to be truthful, and that this had to become the law of the land, and no one had the right to betray that law under penalty of death, be they Christians, Pagans, or anything else for that matter.

So, although the season was well advanced, Charlemagne called upon his Christian Saxon leaders to form a new military expedition, and he travelled to the heart of Saxony at the confluence of the Weser and Aller Rivers, just south of where Bremen is located today, and there, he summoned the Saxon Leaders to come to him and to identify by name all of those who were responsible for the revolt and who had participated in the mutiny. It was learned that the leading organizer of the revolt, Widukind, had fled to Denmark, but, 4,500 mutineers were identified, assembled, brought to Verden, and executed for treason against the King. Such was Charlemagne's ruthless justice. As Kleinclausz reported:

“In violating one more time “following their bad habit” the pact that linked them with Charlemagne, the Saxons had lied in their sworn faith to Christ and to the King and had committed a crime of infidelity; they were among those who, like Egginhard wrote, ‘believed they could transgress without dishonor both divine and human laws.’ ” (Egginhard, Vita Karoli, 7)

That was another way to say, those Saxon rebels had become complete barbarians. Charlemagne's decision to execute summarily 4,500 Saxons was a very grave decision indeed, under any circumstance; however, very few historians have understood why Charlemagne made such a horrific decision. The point, here, is not to debate whether it was right or wrong, but to look at the situation clinically and to understand the reason why Charlemagne had to make that decision. The issue touches on the degree of degeneration of an entire people after suffering from a long period of collapse in civilization.



Figure 3. Charlemagne (742-814) receiving the submission of Widukind at Paderborn in 785. By Ary Scheffer (1795-1858)

In fact, the decision pertains to something that is perceivable only through the sixth sense. In the Saxony case, the degeneracy had reached a point at which the dominating characteristic behavior of the people had been so low, that they could only defend themselves by way of a massive amount of lying. Lying had become the new way of life and everybody was induced to cowardly go along with it. Lying had become the social principle of their degenerate life-style. So, Charlemagne understood that, if he was to let the scourge of that social behavior become the dominant characteristic of the Saxon people, European civilization as a whole would have become completely destroyed within only a few decades.

This was the threat that Charlemagne saw when he contemplated Saxony in 782. A few years later, in 785, Charlemagne met with the leader of that revolt, Widukind, who accepted to be baptized, and ironically, Charlemagne chose to be his godfather.

In 1935, Heinrich Himmler had a pagan memorial built in commemoration of the 4,500 Saxons executed by Charlemagne in Verden. The *Sachsenhain* (*Grove of the Saxons*) is a monument allegedly made up of 4,500 stones gathered from 4,500 villages of Lower Saxony. That was a bold face lie of course. The event is today further commemorated by a “heavy-metal” album of rock music titled, *Charlemagne By the Sword and the Cross*, released in 2010 by the well known Satanist-British actor, Sir Christopher Lee. Lee was knighted by Queen Elisabeth in 2009 for his outstanding contribution to British lying.

3- THE CHARLEMAGNE PRINCIPLE OF CIVILIZING PAGAN PEOPLE.

In 791, after the Avars had been provoked by the Venetians to league themselves with renegade forces from among the Bavarians, the Saxons, and the Lombards against Charlemagne, and after they had caused hostilities in the Bavarian region during the previous few years, Charlemagne finally went to Ratisbonne, as he said, “*in order to take measures that would permit him to protect, with the help of God, his borders against the Avars.*” (*Annales regni Francorum et remaniement*, 782. Quoted by A. Kleinclausz, *Charlemagne*, Librairie Hachette, Paris, 1934, p. 164.)

The Avars were a nomadic and pagan Mongolean people that had invaded both shores of the Danube River in the Hungarian plains during the 6th century AD and who had penetrated as far west as Bavaria by the 8th century AD. The conquering of the Avars by Charlemagne was strategically important in order to have the Jewish Radhanite Merchants gain access to the Black Sea, and from there to the Khazar Kingdom and to the Abbasid Caliphate of Baghdad.

So, as a matter of general policy at the beginning of the last decade of the eighth century and after having secured his Jewish and Islamic ecumenical experiment in Narbonne, the time had come for Charlemagne to begin expanding the same ecumenical outlook with other peoples, throughout the interior of the continent, and for the benefit of the peoples living there. This meant changing the political axis of the entire civilized world by causing a shift away from the imperial control of sea-lanes in favor of continental-routes controlled by local kingdoms and dukedoms. Charlemagne had to create a broader ecumenical economic platform with the new peoples of the East. In doing that, Charlemagne was creating an interesting historical anomaly by the fact that his wars were not oriented toward killing those new populations, but rather paradoxically increasing their general relative population density. That was the purpose of his canal building in 793.

The understanding of this anomaly is crucial in order to avoid any false underlying assumptions concerning Charlemagne’s civilizing mission. The mission of Charlemagne was to advance civilization

by bringing down the walls of paganism and establishing the rule of the three religions of the Book based on reason. His primary goal was to unify the nation of Gaul under that Christian ecumenical outlook by forcing the submission of pagan regions such as Aquitaine, Alemania, Bavaria, Thuringia, Saxony, Bohemia, the Abodrites, the Sorabes, and the Wilzes. Beyond that, Charlemagne had to also conquer the Avars and the southern Slavic peoples who populated the eastern Alpine region of Carinthia, Carniola, Istria, and Dalmatia, as well as Croatia and Serbia in the Balkan Peninsula. (See accompanying map.)



Figure 1. “CHARLEMAGNE IN CENTRAL EUROPE. Bavaria with its slavic annex, Corinthie (check English spelling) and the state of the Avars represent the main conquests of Charlemagne in that part of Europe, but in the south, Carniola, Croatia-Liburnie and Serbia also represent a contested territory where the Franks and the Lombards from the Friul region were often in conflict with the local Iougo-Slaves who live there.” (Source, Kleinclausz, *Charlemagne*, 1934.)

Charlemagne’s strategy of winning over to his side the pagan tribes on the borders of his Kingdom was to civilize the closest people first by assimilating them to his Principled Christian doctrine and recruit them to fight against the next layer of pagan population living beyond their borders. For example, he used the Franks and the Alemans to civilize the Saxons; then, he organized the Eastern Franks and the Thuringians to civilize the Bavarians, and the Lombards to civilize the Greeks. Later, he used the Provencauxs, the Septimanians, and Bourguignons to keep the Arabs from spilling over from Spain. Similarly, he used the Franks and the Saxons to civilize the Slavs in the same manner that he used the Lombards and the Bavarians to civilize the Avars. Charlemagne would not normally use more than about 5,000 soldiers for each conquest and he provided the same number of personnel to service the troops. Therefore, 10,000 people was the maximum that Charlemagne would mobilize for any major

military expedition that was always mobilized in the spring. It was Charlemagne who decided when and where a war was going to take place, not his opponent. Thus, he was able to consolidate his entire domain and have it protected by trustworthy allies who could move quickly at the lowest possible cost to protect their own borders without having to raise a large army of Franks from his western headquarters of Aachen.

Charlemagne created a second historical anomaly by using a higher humanist principle on the basis of which he forged an ecumenical alliance with the Baghdad Caliphate of Haroun al-Raschid and the Jewish Kingdom of Khazaria. By doing that Charlemagne shifted the power axis of civilization away from the Venetian controlled Mediterranean Sea into the interior of the Eurasian continent with a policy of nation building. Such a shift in power corresponded to a proportional shift to universal reason as the basis of policy making for the entire civilized world at the time. This was undoubtedly one of the greatest lessons to be learned from Charlemagne's political leadership, because the reason why these continental water projects were built after his death were designed to immortalize the same power of reason as a universal physical principle of proportionality that Gottfried Leibniz (1671) later advocated as the form of harmony necessary for the creation of the Republic; that is to say, "***a proportion between reason and power, which in this life is also the foundation of the justice, the order, and the merits, and even the form of the Republic, that each may understand of what he is capable, and be capable of as much as he understands.***" (Leibniz G. W. 1671. *Outline of a Memorandum: On the Establishment of a Society In Germany for the Promotion of the Arts and Sciences (1671)*, quoted from *The Political Economy of the American System*, Executive Intelligence Review, Washington D.C., 1996, p. 215.) This was the dynamics of the Charlemagne civilizing principle.

Charlemagne's policy was, therefore, aimed at creating the first Eurasian Land Bridge based on the power of reason as the basis for national cultures to flourish and to collaborate among each other between the East and the West, a scheme that was aimed at eliminating the imperial Venetian overlords and at keeping them out of the self-development process of nation building in Europe, Asia, and Africa. For the first time in history, therefore, the power of reason understood properly as a principle of harmony and proportionality established the basis for an eleemosynary form of economic development which later became the policy of the Peace of Westphalia, as expressed by the principle of "***the advantage of the other***" against the Venetian market outlook of "***taking advantage of the other.***" The time has now come for us to restore that same principle of proportionality between reason and power, worldwide today.

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