

The influence of charlemagne on european history

[Parts of the World](#), [Europe](#)



Charlemagne, also known as Charles the Great, is one of the most prominent political figures in Roman history. From 774 until his death in 814, Charlemagne was recognized as king of the Franks, king of the Lombards, and emperor of the Romans. Over this period, He became the first Roman emperor to rule from western Rome in over 300 years. His wide ranging powers allowed him to create the Carolingian dynasty, which is arguably the most impactful empire in ancient history. In this essay, I will discuss Charlemagne's influence over Roman culture and how his rule changed the course of European history.

While Charlemagne accomplished many things during his time as Roman emperor, his most important achievement was him uniting Western Europe for the first time since the Classical Era. This earned Charlemagne the nickname " Pater Europae" which can be translated to " father of Europe". By uniting almost the entirety of Western Europe, Charlemagne's power was recognized by parts of Europe that had never been under Roman or Frankish rule. Charlemagne's unification of the Frankish people was particularly impressive due to his predecessors history as conquerors. This meant that the group Charlemagne was able to unify was particularly diverse both politically and culturally. The fact that his kingdom was so wide ranging and diverse forced Charlemagne to utilize all of his leadership skills. Depending on what was required, Charlemagne could be anything from a fierce warrior chief leading his men into battle, to a peaceful diplomat making friends over a banquet table. This flexibility is what allowed him to please the majority of the the people he ruled over.

The early stages of Charlemagne's reign were dominated by extensive military campaigns. These campaigns were very necessary for several different reasons. The most important two reasons were the need to defend his new found kingdom, and his urge to spread Christianity across Europe. Charlemagne's early military successes provided optimism for the Frankish people that they would soon become a force outside their normal range of power. The most important military conquest Charlemagne undertook came against the Saxons, who were natural enemies of the Franks because of both their geographic location and their refusal to accept Christianity. Ultimately, Charlemagne and the Franks, were able to conquer the Saxons as well as the Frisians, who were were Saxon allies along the North Sea. In a way, the conquering of the Saxons initiated the vast and relatively rapid spread of Charlemagne's empire.

While being a warrior came natural to Charlemagne, I believe the diplomatic side of leadership was less of an inherited trait. In order to assist him in this aspect of his role as king, Charlemagne selected a large group called his palatium consisting of family members and acquaintances. This group was very necessary to have in place to handle the variety of responsibilities that came with ruling such a large portion of Europe. These duties included, creating law, enforcing laws, holding religious services, and overseeing Charlemagne's military campaigns. One of Charlemagne's most important political objective revolved around him attempting to bridge the gap between his palatium and the general public. Charlemagne held great value to the notion that showing more respect to the people he ruled over would eventually pay dividends for him. He did this by holding public forums where

he would listen and evaluate any complaints or suggestion that were brought forth to him. Charlemagne's approach to his diplomatic endeavors was very advanced and unlike anything that had been seen in ancient times. The group of people he surrounded himself can easily be compared to a modern day president's cabinet and his public forum resembles the democratic system that countries like the United States use at a larger scale. Both militarily and diplomatically, Charlemagne should be consider one of the most influential rules in recorded history.

Charlemagne used his military and diplomatic prowess to carry his out his goal of religious reform throughout his empire. In a time where religion was rarely agreed on from territory to territory, Charlemagne was able to successfully clarify the powers of the church and still have them remain on his side. Charlemagne's aggressive reform attempts were unprecedented in time where empires usually preferred to separate the powers of church and state. He dismissed this normality by taking on the responsibilities of disciplining clerics, controlling the churches activities, and spreading Christianity. This ability to maintain control over all aspects of society while remaining in good standing with the church was another reason Charlemagne was so successful as a ruler.

Charlemagne's political and religious reform opened the door for him to begin a cultural revival throughout Rome. His initial and simplest goal of this cultural renaissance was to improve Latin literacy which prompted him to order the creation of new books as well as an improved education system. In addition to this, a new writing system was founded in the hopes of improving

literacy amongst the Roman people. The church backed these initiatives because the more people who could read and write, the more people who could successfully practice religion in their eyes. Once this reform began to take place, it opened the door for an increased number of schools with a far more advanced curriculum, and the opening of libraries across the empire. These advancements that were made by Charlemagne created a legacy that can rival any ruler of any era. The educational reform that he undertook put Rome on a successful path that continued for centuries and influenced many European countries in later years.

In conclusion, Charlemagne left a legacy of political, military, and cultural reform that well surpassed his lifetime and cemented himself as one of the most important historical rulers of all time. His unification of the entirety of Rome paved the way for the complete European unification we see today. The religious reforms he created brought just about all of Europe under one church which was almost impossible based on the amount of religious tension that was prevalent at that time. His ability to lead a military allowed for him and his people to establish themselves as a strong power early in their dynasty and slash down all challenger. Despite all these successes, I think his most impressive contribution was his education reform where his improvement of schools and libraries changed the future of Europe forever. These aspects of his rule made Charlemagne a vital figure in European history and a leader that was well ahead of his time in how he treated all aspects of society.