

# Charlemagne and the Carolingian Renaissance



Image: Imperial Coronation of Charlemagne, Germany, 1861

# Carolus Magnus

- Carolus = Charles
- Magnus, a, um (adj.) = great, large

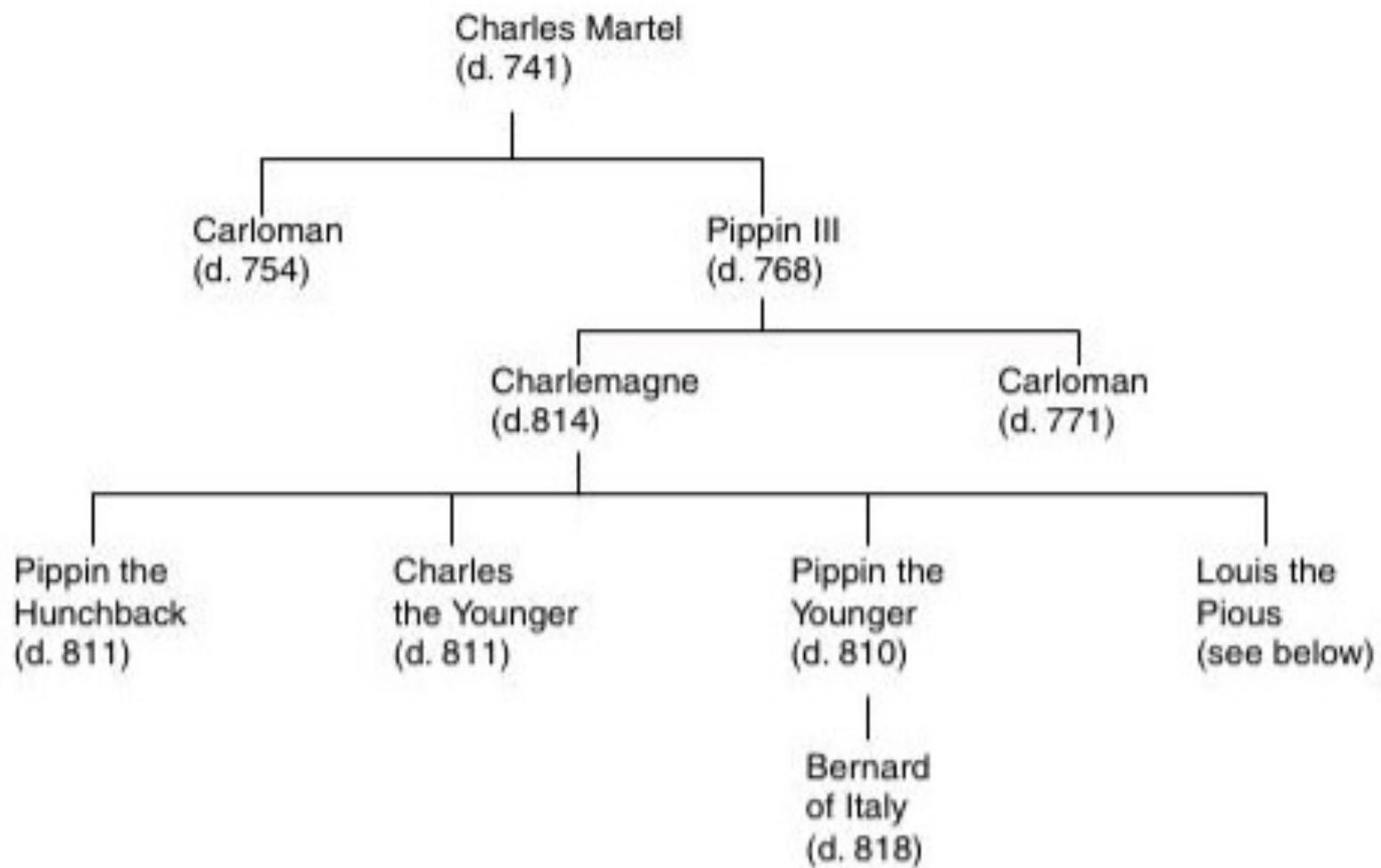
Charlemagne (French) = Carolus Magnus  
(Latin)

“Charles, by the grace of God and the gift of His mercy, king and ruler of the kingdom of the Franks, devout defender and humble supporter of the holy church, give greetings of lasting peace and beatitude to all grades of the ecclesiastical order and to all ranks of the secular power, in Christ our Lord, eternal God.”

*Admonitio Generalis (789)*

128  
Aquisgranense Conc. sub  
Carolo m. celebratum An.  
Dni (ut sic habetur) 789.  
omib;

**R**egnante dño nro ihū xpō in perp̄tuum: ego carolus  
gratia dī eiusq; misericordia donante rex & rector  
regni francorum & deuotus sc̄ae ecclae defensor hum  
lisq; adiutor omnibus ecclesiasticae pi&atis ordinib;  
seu secularis potentiae dignitatibus: in xpō dño dōs̄er  
no perp̄tuae pacis & beatitudinis salutem. Conside  
rant pacifico pio mentis intuitu una cum sacerdotib;  
& consiliariis nr̄is abundantem in nos nr̄inq; popu  
lum xp̄i regis clementiā & quā necessarium ē non  
solum toto corde & ore eius pi&ēcti agere gratias  
incessanter: sed & iam continua bonorū operū ex  
estitacione eius insistere laudibus: quatenus qui  
nr̄o regno tantor contulit honores sua p̄tectione  
nos nr̄inq; regnum in & ērnū conseruare dignū  
Qua propter placuit nobis ur̄am rogare solles & accm  
o pastores ectarum xp̄i & ductores gregis eius: & di  
uissima mundi luminaria. ut uigili cura & sedula  
ammonitione populum dī per pascua uite & eterna  
ducere studeatis: & errantes oues bonorū exem  
plorum seu ad hostationum humeris intra



# Merovingians, 639-751

Major domus  
Commendation  
Vassalage



# Charles Martel as Major Domus

---

- Charles Martel (688-741)
- Sons Carloman (d. 754) and Pippin (d. 768)
- Monk Boniface

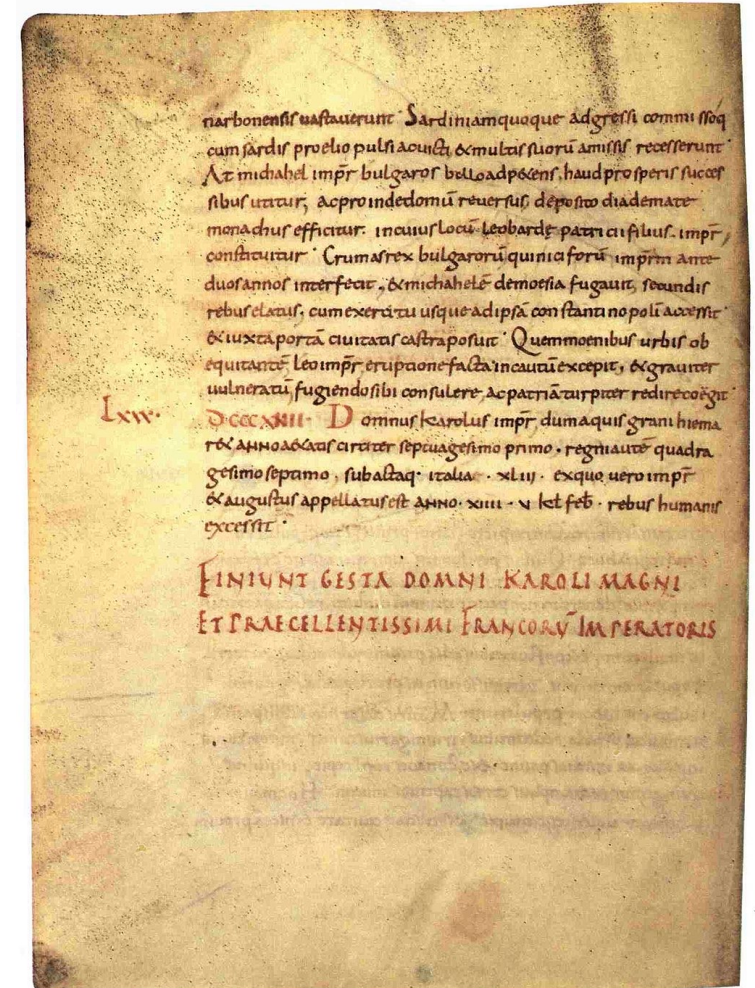


# Carolingian Legends: Crowning of Pippin III

Legend #1: Pippin (III) sought assistance of Pope Zacharias

“in accordance with the command of the Pope, he was called King of the Franks, and he was anointed to the dignity of this honour... by the hand of Boniface... and, as is the custom of the Franks, was raised on to the throne...”

--*Annals regni Francorum* (Royal Frankish Annals), late 8<sup>th</sup> to early 9<sup>th</sup> century



# Carolingian Dynasty as the “most Christian kings”

Letters between Pippin III and Pope Stephen II, 755-756

- How would you characterize the relationship between Pope Stephen and King Pippin?
- What is the Pope asking Pippin to do?
- Why St. Peter?



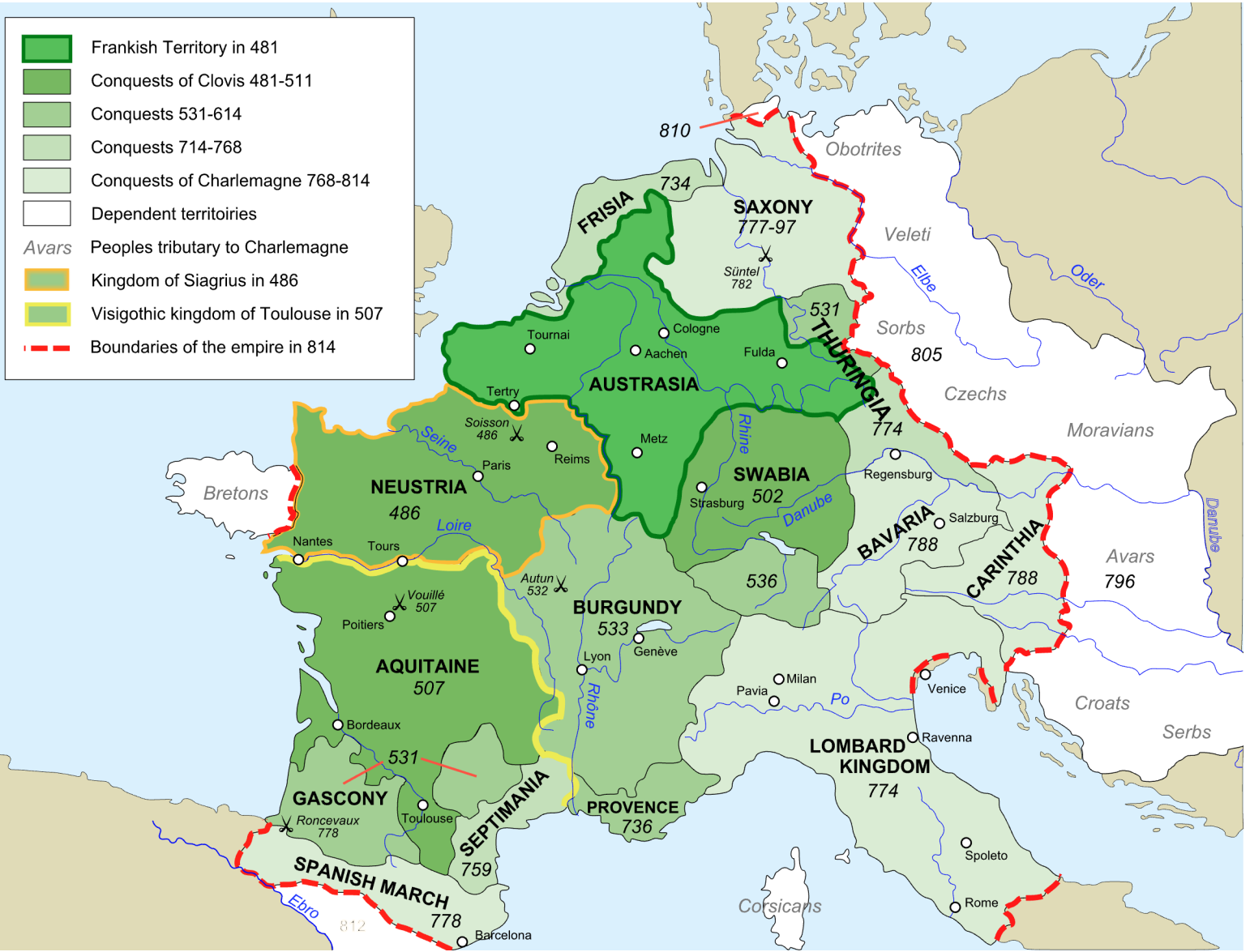
Image: Crowning of Pippin III, 15<sup>th</sup> c.



Quia domus dei domus orationis debet esse. non spelunca  
latronum. & Intentos habeant animus ad deum. quando  
ueniunt ad missarum solemnia. & ut non exeat  
ante completionem benedictionis sacerdotale. xi. Cap  
sacerdotibus sed & hoc flagitamus utramque almitatem ut  
almitat  
ministri altaris dei sui ministerium bonis moribus  
ornant. seu & ab aliis canonici obseruantia ordinis uel  
monachi propositi congregationis obsecramus ut bona  
& probabilem habeant conuersationem. Si enim ipse dominus  
in euangelio precepit. sic luceat lux uestra coram homi-  
nibus ut uideant opera uestra bona & glorificent  
patrem uestrum qui in celis est. ut eorum bonam conuersa-  
tionem multa protrahantur ad seruiciu dei & non solu  
seruili conditionis in infantos. sed etiam in genuorū  
filios ad gregant sibi que sociant. & ut scilicet legon-  
tium fiant psalmus notas cantus con potius grama-  
ticus per singula monasteria uel opiscopia & libeca-  
tholicus bene emendate qui a sepe dum bene alii qui  
de his copis rogare cupiunt. sed per in emendatos libros  
male rogant. & pueros uros non sine te eos uel logon-  
do uel scribendo corrumpere. & si opus est. euangelium  
psalmisterium & missale scribere per factas aetatis  
hominis scribeant cum omni diligentia. xii. Cap  
sacerdotibus. Semel & hoc rogare curauimus omnes

## Admonitio Generalis (789)

- If this is the only document we had about the behaviour of the clergy in this period, how are they characterized?
- What does this tell us about the authority of kings in their realms?



# Carolingian Religious Reforms

New church appointments

Support and establish monasteries

Marriage reforms

- Charlemagne: discredit divorce
- Louis the Pious: laws against concubines and children, need for parental consent for marriage (plus property and bride gift)

# Crowning of Charlemagne in Rome, 800

---

- Biographer Einhard “he declared he would not have set foot in the church the day it was conferred, although it was a great feast day, if he could have foreseen the Pope’s [Leo III] design.”
- Charlemagne as “Holy Roman Emperor”



# Carolingian Renaissance

---

- Emphasis on education
- Teaching reading and writing at monasteries
- Revise liturgical books
- Adoption of *Benedictine Rule* for all monasteries
- Creation of intellectual elite at Aachen

berentur homines credere. non autem quod est  
s& uerum. certissima ratione docerentur.  
In hoc libro dixi. in quibus tam legis preceptis  
atq; mandatis. quibus nunc christianos uti fas non  
est. quale uel sabbatum est uel circūcisio.  
uel sacrificia. & siquid huiusmodi est. tanta

Caroline Script

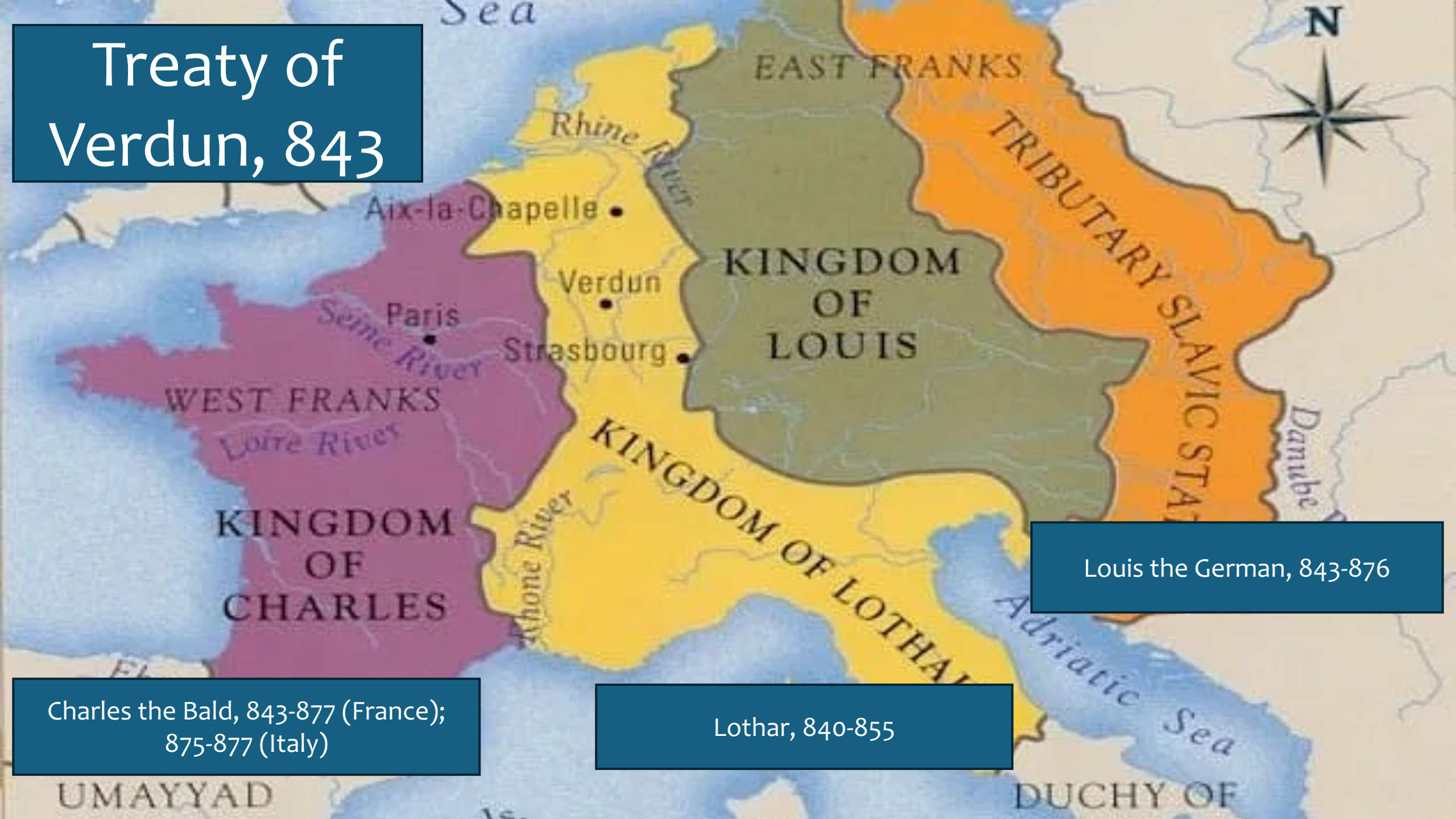
non megeris pascuntur up capton bus. lue com.  
debecas & luenis oponeb ammi. Et quod encessum  
suec occidebecas. gregon cu dmm dem. non par  
cebecas. quod in hys m i faret non dnt folu de qer  
tece qd am. non fecerit. quod l s ucc d m qd  
non allegerit. Et quod ab l eum qd non ualu  
gerit. quod p qerit non quacqerit. salcum cur  
qerit am lmparib uas qd. Et cum p qerit. Et d r  
p f e b u n t q u e s m e a e. Et quod non esse p qerit.

Merovingian Script

Dhuoda,  
Countess of  
Septimania,  
*Liber Manualis*  
(841-843)

LUDOVICI CONDAMI IMPERII . II . **KLS** Duxem  
bri . SCA ANDREAE missa . In adventu Sca dñi  
adventu ; ; ; Finis . offertur ~~offertur~~ ~~offertur~~  
do . . . III . **NNS FBRII** Iustificacionis  
sca seipq . uirginis MARIAE . xpo ppitio  
Regnante . & Regnante in que ds de  
derit sperante . Qui legit . o lappe scripta  
**D VODANE** . Si meritis xpm uidere . in qñ  
felicitate . **FINI THIC DO GAIS LIB**  
**MANUALIS WILELMI** . in eo qd ait  
aug<sup>u</sup> . eliu ; Consumatum e . S T

# Treaty of Verdun, 843



Charles the Bald, 843-877 (France);  
875-877 (Italy)

Lothar, 840-855

Louis the German, 843-876