

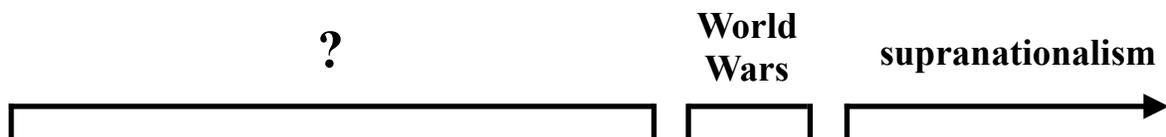
### **III. European History 1.0**

#### A. The Simple Answer

1. Why is modern Europe a culture of *supranationalism*? The explanation can only be found in its history.
2. The simple answer is: *the World Wars*.
3. The *World Wars* were two contests between rival nations, with the major ones all possessing or seeking to establish empires.
4. When the exaggerated *nationalism* of these rivals led to terrible wars, European culture was faced with the challenge of redefining itself. Seeking a way to avoid wars between its nations, its leaders decided to try to create a set of cultural values to override nationalism. That set of values is *supranationalism*.

#### B. The Question That Follows

1. The simple idea that *supranationalism* was adopted as a way to counteract *nationalism* after the *World Wars* is fine as far as it goes. However, *all* the world's major cultures experienced the *World Wars* in one way or another. Why was Europe the only one that chose *supranationalism*? The explanation is found deeper in European history.
2. Another way to put the question is: how did Europe become the kind of culture that would almost destroy itself in the *World Wars*, leading to *supranationalism*?
3. This question can be represented in the form of a diagram:

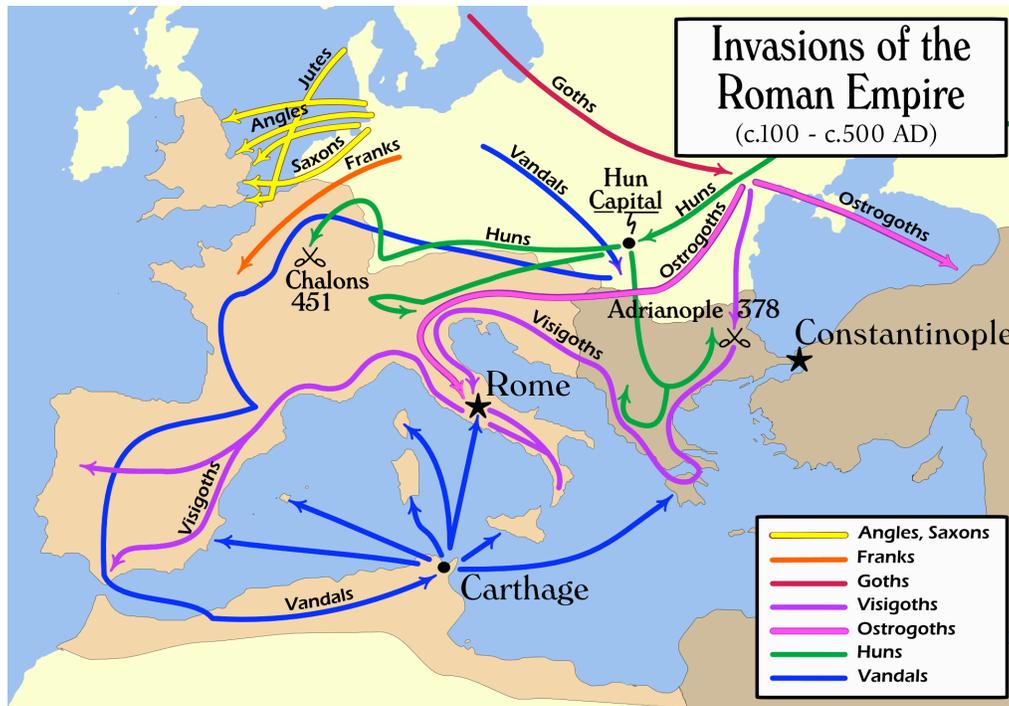


#### C. The Origin of European Civilization

1. To understand how Europe ended up the way it did, we have to go back to the beginning.
2. The beginning of Europe is the *Fall of Rome*.
3. The Roman Empire was a vast empire that included much, but not all of Europe. It began in ancient times, and lasted until it was destroyed by “Germanic” barbarians.
4. It took about a century for the Roman Empire to collapse, but it is useful to choose a particular year to mark its “death.”
5. In the year **476 AD**, the last Roman leader to call himself an “emperor” in Rome was deposed (kicked off the throne). His name was Romulus Augustus.

6. In 476, Romulus had no real power left. Rome’s territory was overrun by tribes that could not be controlled.
7. A barbarian leader named Odovacar decided that there was no point in pretending that the Romans deserved any more respect.
8. He took Romulus’s crown, and both of them disappeared in the chaos of the “Dark Ages.”

C. The Era of Musical Kingdoms



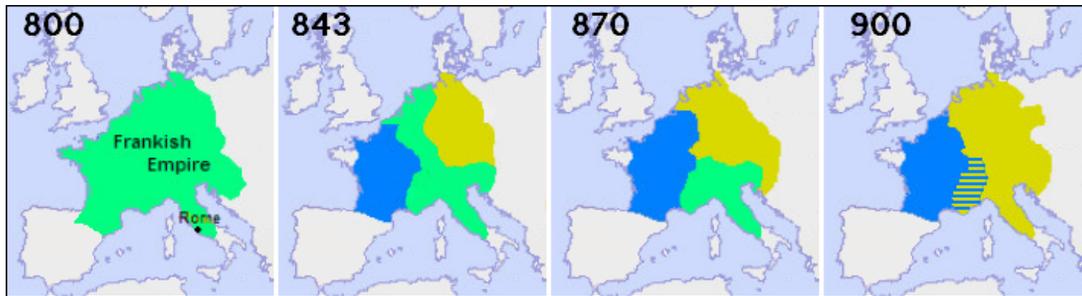
During the “Dark Ages,” barbarian tribes migrated continually and fought one another for control over the carcass of the Roman Empire.

1. I like to call the period after the **Fall of Rome** “The Era of Musical Kingdoms,” because it resembles a giant game of musical chairs.
2. When the game came to an end, one tribe—the Franks—had achieved primacy, and one leader—Charlemagne—had become the undisputed leader of a newly united Europe (sitting on the only chair left: his throne!)
3. Having united what are France and Germany, and everything in between, Charlemagne entered Italy and helped the leader of the Roman Catholic Church, the pope, against another barbarian tribe. Here was rewarded with the title “Emperor of the Romans” in **800 AD**.



Charlemagne - the first emperor of a European union, c.800 AD.

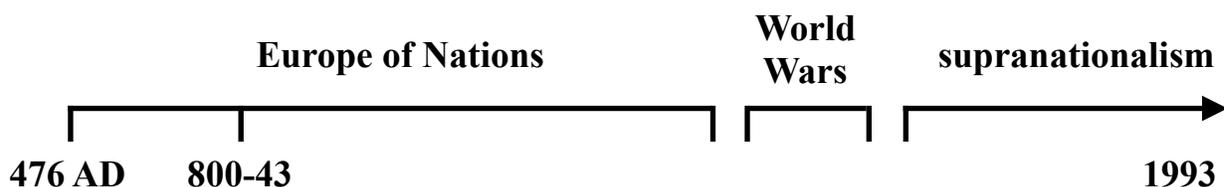
4. Charlemagne’s empire did not last, however. His was a charismatic monarchy, meaning a monarchy powered by his “charisma” (an undefinable “gift” of leadership ability).
5. After Charlemagne died, his own son passed on the empire to *three grandsons*. It was a Frankish tradition that the king passed on his land to *all* his male heirs, not just the oldest. The result in **843 AD** was the breakup of a united Europe into at first three kingdoms, and then after wars between the brothers, just two: *essentially France and Germany*.



The evolution of the Frankish empire from its peak, under the rule of Charlemagne—through to its disintegration under his heirs into separate French and German domains.

#### D. A Story of Nations

1. In the time of Charlemagne, there were no nations yet. It would take centuries for them to form, as the borders between various countries became fairly permanent, and the people within separate kingdoms developed communities closed off from each other, living in an isolated way within those communities.
2. The story of each of the separate nations is complicated, and we will learn it carefully through the year. For now, the most important thing to understand is that the separate nations of France and Germany begin with the **Failed Frankish Union (800-43 AD)**.
3. France and Germany are the countries at the heart of the story of the *Europe of Nations*, the two great rivals in the *World Wars*, and the two indispensable partners that make up the **European Union** today. The story of Europe is the way it is because of events that happened long ago.
4. We can call the outcome of our first pass through history “European History 1.0,” which can be represented by the following diagram.



### E. Putting It All Together

1. The final step in taking this sweep through European history and turning it into a powerful foundation for learning is to learn to read it *as a single sentence*.
2. To read it, you start at the end, go back to the beginning, and then read it “forward” to the end again. Here’s an example:

*“The Europe of today is the European Union, which emerged only after the long history of the Europe of Nations ended in the World Wars, which led to supranationalism.”*