

**AN OUTLINE OF THE
HISTORY OF
WESTERN EUROPE**

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An Outline of the History of Western Europe by Norman Maclaren Trenholme & Carl Conrad Eckhardt

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NORMAN MACLAREN TRENHOLME & CARL CONRAD ECKHARDT

AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF WESTERN EUROPE

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OF
WESTERN EUROPE

BASED ON ROBINSON'S INTRODUCTION
TO THE HISTORY OF WESTERN
EUROPE

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PREFACE.

This outline has been prepared primarily as a guide to members of the Kansas City Teachers' Club in their study of Professor J. H. Robinson's well-known and scholarly work entitled "An Introduction to the History of Western Europe." With the aim in view of aiding the student as much as possible, the chapters, and especially the more difficult ones, have been very carefully and fully outlined and no essential features of development omitted. In certain parts, however, it has been necessary to summarize several pages in one brief sentence and in such cases the student is usually referred to the pages in the book dealing with the question. For other references and collateral reading recourse should be had to the notes and bibliographies in the book itself. It is hoped that on the whole those who use the outline will find it helpful and stimulating to further study within the period with which it deals.

The writer has himself prepared Part I of the outline and has revised Part II, which was kindly prepared for him by his assistant, Mr. C. C. Eckhardt, so that the two parts are practically uniform.

N. M. Trenholme.

University of Missouri, Columbia, Mo.

January 7, 1905.

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AN OUTLINE OF THE HISTORY OF WESTERN EUROPE.

PART I.

I. INTRODUCTORY: THE HISTORICAL POINT OF VIEW.

1. **European History and what it should include:**
 - a. The broad scope of history illustrated.
 - b. Professor Robinson's object "to give an account of the chief changes in western Europe" since the fall of the Roman Empire. Necessity of condensation.
 - c. What should be studied in European history is the evolution of the present from the past.
 - d. Sympathy and consideration necessary in the study of the history of the past.
2. **Periods of History and the Unity and Continuity of History:**
 - a. No sharply defined periods in history. Changes occur very gradually and slowly. Examples.
 - b. The unity and continuity of history are terms employed to denote the regularity of historical evolution and the connection of events with each other in historical sequence.
3. **The meaning and significance of the term "Middle Ages:"**
 - a. Indefiniteness in regard to beginning of Middle Ages.
 - b. Middle Ages start roughly with the barbarian invasions of the 5th century. Earlier history of the Germans and their relations with Rome.
 - c. Survival of Roman civilization into the mediaeval period and its influence on Europe.
 - d. In present outline term Middle Ages will be used as signifying roughly the period 400 to 1300 A. D.
 - e. The so-called "dark ages" (400-1100 A. D.) not "stagnant and unproductive" as often considered.

II. WESTERN EUROPE BEFORE THE BARBARIAN INVASIONS.

1. **The character and extent of the Roman Empire:**
 - a. Roman Empire included all western Europe except Germany. Rhine and Danube frontiers.
 - b. Many diverse nations and peoples under Roman rule. Rome a great world state.
 - c. Bonds of union holding together the Empire:
 - (1) The well-organized Imperial Government guarding and regulating every interest in life.
 - (2) The common worship of the Emperor, compulsory on every citizen of pagan Rome.
 - (3) The splendid system of Roman Law, alike in every part of the Empire, and just and humane.
 - (4) Good roads; uniform money, weights and measures; common civilization.
 - (5) A common system of education due to Roman teachers but modelled on Greek culture.
 - d. Idea of permanence of Roman state during first four centuries of Christian Era.
2. **The Decline of the Empire and its causes:**
 - a. Loss of energy and self-reliance by Romans and decline in prosperity, due to:
 - (1) Oppressive and frequent taxation for the support of the Emperor and officials. The land tax and method of collecting it.
 - (2) The growth of slavery and general use of slave labor on farms and estates (villas). The various classes and conditions of slaves. "Coloni."
 - (3) Decline in population as economic evils multiplied.
 - (4) Great infiltration of Germans as "coloni" and as soldiers. Effect of this was to weaken the Imperial tradition and system of government.
3. **Culture, Morals and Religion in the later Roman Empire:**
 - a. Art and Literature change for worse. Tacitus (d. 120) last great Roman writer. Compendiums and manual take the place of classics and hold ground until the Renaissance.
 - b. Upward trend in morals and religion. Higher pagan ideals. Epictetus and Marcus Aurelius. Preparation for Christian beliefs.
 - c. Christianity's broad appeal. New ideas as to future life. Christian and pagan beliefs unite. Boethius (d. 524) and "The Consolations of Philosophy."

4. The Christian Church: Its organization, and its relations with the Empire:

- a. Character of the primitive or apostolic church; bishops, presbyters, and deacons instituted.
- b. Need of greater organization for the Catholic ("universal") church. Cyprian (d. 256) and his work "The Unity of the Church" (see Robinson, p. 20).
- c. Further church organization archbishops, bishops, priests, deacons, sub-deacons, church councils.
- d. Constantine and the Church. The Edict of Milan (313). The Council of Nicea (325).
- e. The Church in the Theodosian Code (438). Recognition of its liberties and privileges. Christianity the state religion.
- f. The Catholic church survives the Roman Empire and absorbs the new Germanic nations. It carries on Latin learning and Roman civilization.

5. The Eastern and Western Divisions of the Empire:

- a. The cause and meaning of the founding of Constantinople (330).
- b. Theory of unity of Empire in spite of division of territory.
- c. The survival of the Roman Empire in the east until 1453.
- d. Eastern Empire Greek and Oriental in character. Constantinople, largest and wealthiest city of mediaeval Europe. Her art and learning important.

III. THE GERMAN INVASIONS AND BREAK-UP OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE.

1. The Romans, Visigoths and Huns:

- a. The Visigoths forced across the Roman frontier by the Huns. Eastern Emperor Valens defeated at Adrianople (378).
- b. The Visigoths in the Empire. Alaric's revolt.
- c. Alaric in Italy. Capture of Rome (410). Alaric's death.
- d. The West Goths in Gaul and Spain (419).
- e. Dismemberment of the Roman Empire of the West.
- f. Attila, the "Scourge of God," and the Hunnish peril. Defeat of Huns at Chalons (451). The founding of Venice.

2. Italy under Theodoric the Ostrogoth (493-526):

- a. The Germans in Italy: Odoacer and the end of the imperial title (476).

- b. Conquest of Italy by Theodoric the Ostr (493), and the establishment of the East Gothic kingdom.
 - c. Position of Theodoric as ruler of Italy. Seizure by the Ostrogoths of Italian lands. Maintenance of Roman laws and customs in Italy.
 - d. Death of Theodoric (526). Weak point in Ostrogothic state was Arian religion. Theodoric's tolerance.
- 3. Condition of Politics and Culture in Europe in 6th Century:**
- a. The Germanic kingdom of Western Europe. Alliance between rulers of different peoples.
 - b. Rapid decline in science, art, and literature. Boethius (d. 525) and Cassiodorus (d. 575).
 - c. The dark ages of culture. Disappearance of libraries and schools. General illiteracy exemplified by Gregory of Tours (d.594).
- 4. The Imperial reaction under Justinian. The Lombards:**
- a. Belisarius' conquests the Vandals and Ostrogoths.
 - b. Italy held by the Eastern Empire, 553-566.
 - c. The Lombards conquer Italy. Character of their occupation. Conquest not a complete one. Lombard rule lasts two hundred years.
- 5. The Franks and Western Europe:**
- a. Why the Franks are important. Permanence of their kingdom and their influence in Europe.
 - b. Early location of Franks along lower Rhine. Their method of expanding. Retention of strength.
 - c. Clovis (486-511), and his conquests in Gaul and Germany. His conversion to orthodox Christianity (486) and its importance.
 - d. Gregory of Tours' picture of Clovis. The union of the Franks under one king.
 - e. The successors of Clovis. Growth of Frankish power in spite of civil wars and murders.
 - f. Extent of Frankish territory by 555; Neustria, Austrasia and Burgundy. Union under Dagobert (628-638), the last strong Merovingian.
 - g. Danger to Frankish unity through increase in the power of nobles as petty magnates.