P. Fouracre, ‘The long shadow of the Merovingians’ in J. Story, Charlemagne: Empire and Society (Manchester, 2005)

- Shadow cast by Merovingian’s was a long one.


- In the Royal Frankish Annals, readers could learn how in a single year Charlemagne might fight Spaniards, Saracens, Saxons and Slav. In the Life his campaigns target separate peoples, and so the expansion of the kingdom of the Franks becomes a series of victories or treaties, suggesting strategy rather than a policy of plunder.33


- It was a period of remarkable efflorescence of culture, especially in the Frankish realm; Charlemagne’s patronage of learning was combined with a legislative programme of reform and renewal within the Frankish church and society.34
- Notker associated learning with the worship of the true god.35
- Number of books much greater than those created in the Merovingian era.
- Admonitio generalis of 789 and the De litteris colendis issued c.800 also place great emphasis on schools and education. The latter stressed that bishoprics and monasteries should not only devote themselves to the practice of the religious life and the observance of monastic discipline. It also should also cultivate learning and educate the monks and secular clergy so that they might achieve a better understanding of the Christian writings.36

R. Collins, Early Medieval Europe 300-1000 (New York, 1999)

- By the early 10th century, the ‘Programmatic Capitulary’ had made relatively harmless offences, such as moving a boundary marker on lands own by the emperor, acts of high treason and could be punishable by death because they were now seen as being breaches in the compact made between ruler and ruled that was created by the taking of the oath.37
- Charles could not rely on the notions of citizenship and legal obligations that had helped underpin the Roman Empire. Nor did he try to establish a political consensus around a reformed cultural common identity. Instead, he created ties of personal loyalty on the part of subjects towards their ruler, based on the sanctity of oaths, using a set of ideas that can be traced back to Rome and to the Christian writers of the fourth century. Though in practice this was no enough to hold together the heterogeneous group of peoples forced into political unity as a consequence of Charles’s campaigns.38

37 R. Collins, Early Medieval Europe 300-1000 (New York, 1999), p. 307
38 R. Collins, Early Medieval Europe 300-1000 (New York, 1999), p. 308