

## Chapter I

### THE MEDITERRANEAN

THE Roman Empire, at the end of the third century, had one outstanding general characteristic: it was an essentially Mediterranean commonwealth. Virtually all of its territory lay within the watershed of that great land-locked sea; the distant frontiers of the Rhine, the Danube, the Euphrates and the Sahara, may be regarded merely as an advanced circle of outer defenses protecting the approaches.

The Mediterranean was, without question, the bulwark of both its political and economic unity. Its very existence depended on mastery of the sea. Without that great trade route, neither the government, nor the defense, nor the administration of the *orbis romanus* would have been possible.

As the Empire grew old this fundamentally maritime character was, interestingly enough, not only preserved but was still more sharply defined. When the former inland capital, Rome, was abandoned, its place was taken by a city which not only

served as a capital but which was at the same time an admirable seaport—Constantinople.

The Empire's cultural development, to be sure, had clearly passed its peak. Population decreased, the spirit of enterprise waned, barbarian hordes commenced to threaten the frontiers, and the increasing expenses of the government, fighting for its very life, brought in their train a fiscal system which more and more enslaved men to the State. Nevertheless this general deterioration does not seem to have appreciably affected the maritime commerce of the Mediterranean. It continued to be active and well sustained, in marked contrast with the growing apathy that characterized the inland provinces. Trade continued to keep the East and the West in close contact with each other. There was no interruption to the intimate commercial relations between those diverse climes bathed by one and the same sea. Both manufactured and natural products were still extensively dealt in: textiles from Constantinople, Edessa, Antioch, and Alexandria; wines, oils and spices from Syria; papyrus from Egypt; wheat from Egypt, Africa, and Spain; and wines from Gaul and Italy. There was even a reform of the monetary system based on the gold *solidus*, which served materially to encourage commercial operations by giving them the benefit of an excellent currency,

universally adopted as an instrument of exchange and as a means of quoting prices.

Of the two great regions of the Empire, the East and the West, the first far surpassed the second, both in superiority of civilization and in a much higher level of economic development. At the beginning of the fourth century there were no longer any really great cities save in the East. The center of the export trade was in Syria and in Asia Minor, and here also was concentrated, in particular, the textile industry for which the whole Roman world was the market and for which Syrian ships were the carriers.

The commercial prominence of the Syrians is one of the most interesting facts in the history of the Lower Empire. It undoubtedly contributed largely to that progressive orientalizing of society which was due eventually to end in Byzantinism. And this orientalizing, of which the sea was the vehicle, is clear proof of the increasing importance which the Mediterranean acquired as the aging Empire grew weak, gave way in the North beneath the pressure of the barbarians, and contracted more and more about the shores of this inland sea.

The persistence of the Germanic tribes in striving, from the very beginning of the period of the invasions, to reach these same shores and to settle

there is worth special notice. When, in the course of the fourth century, the frontiers gave way for the first time under their blows, they poured southward in a living flood. The Quadi and the Marcomanni invaded Italy; the Goths marched on the Bosphorus; the Franks, the Suevi, and the Vandals, who by now had crossed the Rhine, pushed on unhesitatingly towards Aquitaine and Spain. They had no thought of merely colonizing the provinces they coveted. Their dream was rather to settle down, themselves, in those happy regions where the mildness of the climate and the fertility of the soil were matched by the charms and the wealth of civilization.

This initial attempt produced nothing more permanent than the devastation which it had caused. Rome was still strong enough to drive the invaders back beyond the Rhine and the Danube. For a century and a half she succeeded in restraining them, but at the cost of exhausting her armies and her finances.

More and more unequal became the balance of power. The incursions of the barbarians grew more relentless as their increasing numbers made the acquisition of new territory more imperative, while the decreasing population of the Empire made a successful resistance constantly less possible. Despite the extraordinary skill and deter-

mination with which the Empire sought to stave off disaster, the outcome was inevitable.

At the beginning of the fifth century, all was over. The whole West was invaded. Roman provinces were transformed into Germanic kingdoms. The Vandals were installed in Africa, the Visigoths in Aquitaine and in Spain, the Burgundians in the Valley of the Rhône, the Ostrogoths in Italy.

This nomenclature is significant. It includes only Mediterranean countries, and little more is needed to show that the objective of the conquerors, free at last to settle down where they pleased, was the sea—that sea which for so long a time the Romans had called, with as much affection as pride, *mare nostrum*. Towards the sea, as of one accord, they all turned their steps, impatient to settle along its shores and to enjoy its beauty.

If the Franks did not reach the Mediterranean at their first attempt, it is because, having come too late, they found the ground already occupied. But they too persisted in striving for a foothold there. One of Clovis's earliest ambitions was to conquer Provence, and only the intervention of Theodoric kept him from extending the frontiers of his kingdom as far as the Côte d'Azur. Yet this first lack of success was not due to discourage his successors. A quarter of a century later, in 536, the Franks made good use of Justinian's offensive

against the Ostrogoths and wrung from their hard-pressed rivals the grant of the coveted territory. It is interesting to see how consistently the Merovingian dynasty tended, from that date on, to become in its turn a Mediterranean power.

Childebert and Clotaire, for example, ventured upon an expedition beyond the Pyrenees in 542, which, however, proved to be ill-starred. But it was Italy in particular that aroused the cupidity of the Frankish kings. They formed an alliance, first with the Byzantines and then with the Lombards, in the hope of setting foot south of the Alps. Repeatedly thwarted, they persisted in fresh attempts. By 539, Theudebert had crossed the Alps, and the territories which he had occupied were reconquered by Narses in 553. Numerous efforts were made in 584-585 and from 588 to 590 to get possession anew.

The appearance of the Germanic tribes on the shore of the Mediterranean was by no means a critical point marking the advent of a new era in the history of Europe. Great as were the consequences which it entailed, it did not sweep the boards clean nor even break the tradition. The aim of the invaders was not to destroy the Roman Empire but to occupy and enjoy it. By and large, what they preserved far exceeded what they destroyed or what they brought that was new. It is

true that the kingdoms they established on the soil of the Empire made an end of the latter in so far as being a *State* in Western Europe. From a political point of view the *orbis romanus*, now strictly localized in the East, lost that ecumenical character which had made its frontiers coincide with the frontiers of Christianity. The Empire, however, was far from becoming a stranger to the lost provinces. Its civilization there outlived its authority. By the Church, by language, by the superiority of its institutions and law, it prevailed over the conquerors. In the midst of the troubles, the insecurity, the misery and the anarchy which accompanied the invasions there was naturally a certain decline, but even in that decline there was preserved a physiognomy still distinctly Roman. The Germanic tribes were unable, and in fact did not want, to do without it. They barbarized it, but they did not consciously germanize it.

Nothing is better proof of this assertion than the persistence in the last days of the Empire—from the fifth to the eighth century—of that maritime character pointed out above. The importance of the Mediterranean did not grow less after the period of the invasions. The sea remained for the Germanic tribes what it had been before their arrival—the very center of Europe, the *mare nostrum*. The sea had had such great importance in

the political order that the deposing of the last Roman Emperor in the West (476) was not enough in itself to turn historical evolution from its time-honored direction. It continued, on the contrary, to develop in the same theater and under the same influences. No indication yet gave warning of the end of that commonwealth of civilization created by the Empire from the Pillars of Hercules to the Aegean Sea, from the coasts of Egypt and Africa to the shores of Gaul, Italy and Spain. In spite of the invasion of the barbarians the new world conserved, in all essential characteristics, the physiognomy of the old. To follow the course of events from Romulus Augustulus to Charlemagne it is necessary to keep the Mediterranean constantly in view.

All the great events in political history are unfolded on its shores. From 493 to 526, Italy, governed by Theodoric, maintained a hegemony over all the Germanic kingdoms, a hegemony through which the power of the Roman tradition was perpetuated and assured. After Theodoric, this power was still more clearly shown. Justinian failed by but little of restoring imperial unity (527-565). Africa, Spain, and Italy were reconquered. The Mediterranean became again a Roman lake. Byzantium, it is true, weakened by the immense effort she had just put forth, could neither finish nor

even preserve intact the astonishing work which she had accomplished. The Lombards took Northern Italy away from her (568); the Visigoths freed themselves from her yoke. Nevertheless she did not abandon her ambitions. She retained, for a long time to come, Africa, Sicily, Southern Italy. Nor did she loose her grip on the West—thanks to the sea, the mastery of which her fleets so securely held that the fate of Europe rested at that moment, more than ever, on the waves of the Mediterranean.

What was true of the political situation held equally well for the cultural. It seems hardly necessary to recall that Boëthius (480-525) and Cassiodorus (477-c.562) were Italians as were St. Benedict (480-534) and Gregory the Great (590-604), and that Isidorus of Seville (570-636) was a Spaniard. It was Italy that maintained the last schools at the same time that she was fostering the spread of monachism north of the Alps. It was in Italy, also, that what was left of the ancient culture flourished side by side with what was brought forth anew in the bosom of the Church. All the strength and vigor that the Church possessed was concentrated in the region of the Mediterranean. There alone she gave evidence of an organization and spirit capable of initiating great enterprises.

An interesting example of this is the fact that Christianity was brought to the Anglo-Saxons (596) from the distant shores of Italy, not from the neighboring shores of Gaul. The mission of St. Augustine is therefore an illuminating sidelight on the historic influence retained by the Mediterranean. And it seems more significant still when we recall that the evangelization of Ireland was due to missionaries sent out from Marseilles, and that the apostles of Belgium, St. Amand (689-693) and St. Remade (c. 668), were Aquitanians.

A brief survey of the economic development of Europe will give the crowning touch to the substantiation of the theory which has here been put forward. That development is, obviously, a clear-cut, direct continuation of the economy of the Roman Empire. In it are rediscovered all the latter's principal traits and, above all, that Mediterranean character which here is unmistakable. To be sure, a general decline in social activity was apparent in this region as in all others. By the last days of the Empire there was a clearly marked decline which the catastrophe of the invasions naturally helped accentuate. But it would be a decided mistake to imagine that the arrival of the Germanic tribes had as a result the substitution of a purely agricultural economy and a general stag-

nation in trade for urban life and commercial activity.<sup>1</sup>

The supposed dislike of the barbarians for towns is an admitted fable to which reality has given the lie. If, on the extreme frontiers of the Empire, certain towns were put to the torch, destroyed and pillaged, it is none the less true that the immense majority survived the invasions. A statistical survey of cities in existence at the present day in France, in Italy and even on the banks of the Rhine and the Danube, gives proof that, for the most part, these cities now stand on the sites where rose the Roman cities, and that their very names are often but a transformation of Roman names.

The Church had of course closely patterned the religious districts after the administrative districts of the Empire. As a general rule, each diocese corresponded to a *civitas*. Since the ecclesiastical organization suffered no change during the era of the Germanic invasions, the result was that in the new kingdoms founded by the conquerors it preserved intact this characteristic feature. In fact, from the beginning of the sixth century the word *civitas* took the special meaning of "episcopal

<sup>1</sup> A. Dopsch, *Wirtschaftliche und soziale Grundlagen der europäischen Kulturentwicklung*, Vienna, 1920, Vol. II, p. 527, takes issue strongly with the opinion that the Germanic invasions put an end to Roman civilization.

city," the center of the diocese. In surviving the Empire on which it was based, the Church therefore contributed very largely to the safeguarding of the existence of the Roman cities.

But it must not be overlooked, on the other hand, that these cities in themselves long retained a considerable importance. Their municipal institutions did not suddenly disappear upon the arrival of the Germanic tribes. Not only in Italy, but also in Spain and even in Gaul, they kept their *decuriones*—a corps of magistrates provided with a judicial and administrative authority, the details of which are not clear but whose existence and Roman origin is a matter of record. There is to be noticed, moreover, the presence of the *defensor civitatis*, and the practice of inscribing notarized deeds in the *gesta municipalia*.

It is also well established that these cities were the centers of an economic activity which itself was a survival of the preceding civilization. Each city was the market for the surrounding countryside, the winter home of the great landed proprietors of the neighborhood and, if favorably situated, the center of a commerce the more highly developed in proportion to its nearness to the shores of the Mediterranean. A perusal of Gregory of Tours gives ample proof that in the Gaul of his time there was still a professional merchant class

residing in the towns. He cites, in some thoroughly characteristic passages, those of Verdun, Paris, Orleans, Clermont-Ferrand, Marseilles, Nimes, and Bordeaux, and the information which he supplies concerning them is all the more significant in that it is brought into his narrative only incidentally. Care should of course be taken not to exaggerate its value. An equally great fault would be to undervalue it. Certainly the economic order of Merovingian Gaul was founded on agriculture rather than on any other form of activity. More certainly still this had already been the case under the Roman Empire.

But this does not preclude the fact that inland traffic, the import and export of goods and merchandise, was carried on to a considerable extent. It was an important factor in the maintenance of society. An indirect proof of this is furnished by the institution of market-tolls (*teloneum*). Thus were called the tolls set up by the Roman administration along the roads, in the ports, at bridges and fords, and elsewhere. The Frankish kings let them all stay in force and drew from them such copious revenues that the collectors of this class of taxes (*telonearii*) figured among their most useful functionaries.

The continued commercial activity after the disappearance of the Empire, and, likewise, the

survival of the towns that were the centers thereof and the merchants who were its instruments, is explained by the continuation of Mediterranean trade. In all the chief characteristics it was the same, from the fifth to the eighth centuries, as it had been just after Constantine. If, as is probable, the decline was the more rapid after the Germanic invasions, it remains none the less true that there is presented a picture of uninterrupted intercourse between the Byzantine East and the West dominated by the barbarians. By means of the shipping which was carried on from the coasts of Spain and Gaul to those of Syria and Asia Minor, the basin of the Mediterranean did not cease, despite the political subdivisions which it had seen take place, to consolidate the economic unity which it had shaped for centuries under the imperial commonwealth. Because of this fact, the economic organization of the world lived on after the political transformation.

In lack of other proofs, the monetary system of the Frankish kings would alone establish this truth convincingly. This system, as is too well known to make necessary any lengthy consideration here, was purely Roman or, strictly speaking, Romano-Byzantine. This is shown by the coins that were minted: the *solidus*, the *triens*, and the *denarius*—that is to say, the *sou*, the *third-*

*sou* and the *denier*. It is shown further by the metal which was employed: gold, used for the coinage of the *solidus* and the *triens*. It is also shown by the weight which was given to specie. It is shown, finally, by the effigies which were minted on the coins. In this connection it is worth noting that the mints continued for a long time, under the Merovingian kings, the custom of representing the bust of the Emperor on the coins and of showing on the reverse of the pieces the *Victoria Augusti* and that, carrying this imitation to the extreme, when the Byzantines substituted the cross for the symbol of that victory they did the same. Such extreme servility can be explained only by the continuing influence of the Empire. The obvious reason was the necessity of preserving, between the local currency and the imperial currency, a conformity which would be purposeless if the most intimate relations had not existed between Merovingian commerce and the general commerce of the Mediterranean. In other words, this commerce continued to be closely bound up with the commerce of the Byzantine Empire. Of such ties, moreover, there are abundant proofs and it will suffice to mention merely a few of the most significant.

It should be borne in mind, first of all, that at the start of the eighth century Marseilles was



still the great port of Gaul. The terms employed by Gregory of Tours, in the numerous anecdotes in which he happens to speak of that city, make it seem a singularly animated economic center. A very active shipping bound it to Constantinople, to Syria, Africa, Egypt, Spain and Italy. The products of the East—papyrus, spices, costly textiles, wine and oil—were the basis of a regular import trade. Foreign merchants, Jews and Syrians for the most part, had their residence there, and their nationality is itself an indication of the close relations kept up by Marseilles with Byzantium. Finally, the extraordinary quantity of coins which were struck there during the Merovingian era gives material proof of the activity of its commerce. The population of the city must have comprised, aside from the merchants, a rather numerous class of artisans.<sup>2</sup> In every respect it seems, then, to have accurately preserved, under the government of the Frankish kings, the clearly municipal character of Roman cities.

The economic development of Marseilles naturally made itself felt in the hinterland of the port. Under its attraction, all the commerce of Gaul was oriented toward the Mediterranean. The most

<sup>2</sup> It is impossible, in fact, not to infer that at Marseilles there was a class of artisans at least as important as that which still existed at Arles in the middle of the sixth century. See F. Kiener, *Verfassungsgeschichte der Provence*, Leipzig, 1900, p. 29.

important market-tolls of the Frankish kingdom were situated in the neighborhood of the town at Fos, at Arles, at Toulon, at Sorgues, at Valence, at Vienne, and at Avignon. Here is clear proof that merchandise landed in the city was expedited to the interior. By the course of the Rhône and of the Saone, as well as by the Roman roads, it reached the north of the country. The charters are still in existence by which the Abbey of Corbie (Department of Pas-de-Calais) obtained from the kings an exemption from tolls at Fos on a number of commodities, among which may be remarked a surprising variety of spices of eastern origin, as well as papyrus. In these circumstances it does not seem unwarranted to assume that the commercial activity of the ports of Rouen and Nantes, on the shores of the Atlantic Ocean, as well as of Quentovic and Duurstede, on the shores of the North Sea, was sustained by the ramifications of the export traffic from far-off Marseilles.

But it was in the south of the country that this effect was the most appreciable. All the largest cities of Merovingian Gaul were still to be found, as in the days of the Roman Empire, south of the Loire. The details which Gregory of Tours supplies concerning Clermont-Ferrand and Orleans show that they had within their walls veritable colonies of Jews and Syrians, and if it was so with

those towns which there is no reason for believing enjoyed a privileged status, it must have been so also with the much more important centers such as Bordeaux or Lyons. It is an established fact, moreover, that Lyons still had at the Carolingian era a quite numerous Jewish population.

Here, then, is quite enough to support the conclusion that Merovingian times knew, thanks to the continuance of Mediterranean shipping and the intermediary of Marseilles, what we may safely call a great commerce. It would certainly be an error to assume that the dealings of the oriental merchants of Gaul were restricted solely to articles of luxury. Probably the sale of jewelry, enamels and silk stuffs resulted in handsome profits, but this would not be enough to explain their number and their extraordinary diffusion throughout all the country. The traffic of Marseilles was, above all else, supported by goods for general consumption such as wine and oil, spices and papyrus. These commodities, as has already been pointed out, were regularly exported to the north.

The oriental merchants of the Frankish Empire were virtually engaged in wholesale trade. Their boats, after being discharged on the quays of Marseilles, certainly carried back, on leaving the shores of Provence, not only passengers but return freight. Our sources of information, to be sure, do

not tell much about the nature of this freight. Among the possible conjectures, one of the most likely is that it probably consisted, at least in good part, in human chattels—that is to say, in slaves. Traffic in slaves did not cease to be carried on in the Frankish Empire until the end of the ninth century. The wars waged against the barbarians of Saxony, Thuringia and the Slavic regions provided a source of supply which seems to have been abundant enough. Gregory of Tours speaks of Saxon slaves belonging to a merchant of Orleans, and it is a good guess that this Samo, who departed in the first half of the seventh century with a band of companions for the country of Wends, whose king he eventually became, was very probably nothing more than an adventurer trafficking in slaves. And it is of course obvious that the slave trade, to which the Jews still assiduously applied themselves in the ninth century, must have had its origin in an earlier era.

If the bulk of the commerce in Merovingian Gaul was to be found in the hands of oriental merchants, their influence, however, should not be exaggerated. Side by side with them, and according to all indications in constant relations with them, are mentioned indigenous merchants. Gregory of Tours does not fail to supply information concerning them, which would undoubtedly have

been more voluminous if his narrative had had more than a merely incidental interest in them. He shows the king consenting to a loan to the merchants of Verdun, whose business prospers so well that they soon find themselves in a position to reimburse him. He mentions the existence in Paris of a *domus negociantium*—that is to say, apparently, of a sort of market or bazaar. He speaks of a merchant profiteering during the great famine of 585 and getting rich. And in all these anecdotes he is dealing, without the least doubt, with professionals and not with merely casual buyers or sellers.

The picture which the commerce of Merovingian Gaul presents is repeated, naturally, in the other maritime Germanic kingdoms of the Mediterranean—among the *Ostrogoths* of Italy, among the Vandals of Africa, among the Visigoths of Spain. The Edict of Theodoric contained a quantity of stipulations relative to merchants. Carthage continued to be an important port in close relations with Spain, and her ships, apparently, went up the coast as far as Bordeaux. The laws of the Visigoths mentioned merchants from overseas.

In all of this is clearly manifest the vigorous continuity of the commercial development of the Roman Empire after the Germanic invasions. They did not put an end to the economic unity of

antiquity. By means of the Mediterranean and the relations kept up thereby between the West and the East, this unity, on the contrary, was preserved with a remarkable distinctiveness. The great inland sea of Europe no longer belonged, as before, to a single State. But nothing yet gave reason to predict that it would soon cease to have its time-honored importance. Despite the transformations which it had undergone, the new world had not lost the Mediterranean character of the old. On the shores of the sea was still concentrated the better part of its activities. No indication yet gave warning of the end of the commonwealth of civilization, created by the Roman Empire from the Pillars of Hercules to the Aegean Sea. At the beginning of the seventh century, anyone who sought to look into the future would have been unable to discern any reason for not believing in the continuance of the old tradition.

Yet what was then natural and reasonable to predict was not to be realized. The world-order which had survived the Germanic invasions was not able to survive the invasion of Islam. 伊新商海

It is thrown across the path of history with the elemental force of a cosmic cataclysm. Even in the lifetime of Mahomet (571-632) no one could have imagined the consequences or have prepared for them. Yet the movement took no more than fifty

years to spread from the China Sea to the Atlantic Ocean. Nothing was able to withstand it. At the first blow, it overthrew the Persian Empire (637-644). It took from the Byzantine Empire, in quick succession, Syria (634-636), Egypt (640-642), Africa (698). It reached into Spain (711). The resistless advance was not to slow down until the start of the eighth century, when the walls of Constantinople on the one side (713) and the soldiers of Charles Martel on the other (732) broke that great enveloping offensive against the two flanks of Christianity.

But if its force of expansion was exhausted, it had none the less changed the face of the world. Its sudden thrust had destroyed ancient Europe. It had put an end to the Mediterranean commonwealth in which it had gathered its strength.

The familiar and almost "family" sea which once united all the parts of this commonwealth was to become a barrier between them. On all its shores, for centuries, social life, in its fundamental characteristics, had been the same; religion, the same; customs and ideas, the same or very nearly so. The invasion of the barbarians from the North had modified nothing essential in that situation.

But now, all of a sudden, the very lands where civilization had been born were torn away; the

Cult of the Prophet was substituted for the Christian Faith, Moslem law for Roman law, the Arab tongue for the Greek and the Latin tongue.

The Mediterranean had been a Roman lake; it now became, for the most part, a Moslem lake. From this time on it separated, instead of uniting, the East and the West of Europe. The tie which was still binding the Byzantine Empire to the Germanic kingdoms of the West was broken.

## Chapter II

## THE NINTH CENTURY

THE tremendous effect the invasion of Islam had upon Western Europe has not, perhaps, been fully appreciated.

Out of it arose a new and unparalleled situation, unlike anything that had gone before. Through the Phoenicians, the Greeks, and finally the Romans, Western Europe had always received the cultural stamp of the East. It had lived, as it were, by virtue of the Mediterranean; now for the first time it was forced to live by its own resources. The center of gravity, heretofore on the shore of the Mediterranean, was shifted to the north. As a result the Frankish Empire, which had so far been playing only a minor rôle in the history of Europe, was to become the arbiter of Europe's destinies. 命星 三平 遊乃 by clavis

There is obviously more than mere coincidence in the simultaneity of the closing of the Mediterranean by Islam and the entry of the Carolingians on the scene. There is the distinct relation of cause and effect between the two. The Frankish Empire

was fated to lay the foundations of the Europe of the Middle Ages. But the mission which it fulfilled had as an essential prior condition the overthrow of the traditional world-order. The Carolingians would never have been called upon to play the part they did if historical evolution had not been turned aside from its course and, so to speak, "de-Saxoned" by the Moslem invasion. Without Islam, the Frankish Empire would probably never have existed and Charlemagne, without Mahomet, would be inconceivable. 得教士的侵略 更改

This is made plain enough by the many contrasts between the Merovingian era, during which the Mediterranean retained its time-honored historical importance, and the Carolingian era, when that influence ceased to make itself felt. These contrasts were in evidence everywhere: in religious sentiment, in political and social institutions, in literature, in language and even in handwriting. From whatever standpoint it is studied, the civilization of the ninth century shows a distinct break with the civilization of antiquity. Nothing would be more fallacious than to see therein a simple continuation of the preceding centuries. The *coup d'état* of Pepin the Short was considerably more than the substitution of one dynasty for another. It marked a new orientation of the course hitherto followed by history. At first glance there

seems reason to believe that Charlemagne, in assuming the title of Roman Emperor and of Augustus, wished to restore the ancient tradition. In reality, in setting himself up against the Emperor of Constantinople, he broke that tradition. His Empire was Roman only in so far as the Catholic Church was Roman. For it was from the Church, and the Church alone, that came its inspiration. The forces which he placed at her service were, moreover, forces of the north. His principal collaborators, in religious and cultural matters, were no longer, as they had previously been, Italians, Aquitanians, or Spaniards; they were Anglo-Saxons—a St. Boniface or an Alcuin—or they were Swabians, like Einhard. In the affairs of the State, which was now cut off from the Mediterranean, southerners played scarcely any rôle. The Germanic influence commenced to dominate at the very moment when the Frankish Empire, forced to turn away from the Mediterranean, spread over Northern Europe and pushed its frontiers as far as the Elbe and the mountains of Bohemia.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The objection may be raised that Charlemagne conquered in Italy the kingdom of the Lombards and in Spain the region included between the Pyrenees and the Ebro. But these thrusts towards the south are by no means to be explained by a desire to dominate the shores of the Mediterranean. The expeditions

In the field of economics the contrast, which the Carolingian period shows to Merovingian times, is especially striking. In the days of the Merovingians, Gaul was still a maritime country and trade and traffic flourished because of that fact. The Empire of Charlemagne, on the contrary, was essentially an inland one. No longer was there any communication with the exterior; it was a closed State, a State without foreign markets, living in a condition of almost complete isolation.

To be sure, the transition from one era to the other was not clear-cut. The trade of Marseilles did not suddenly cease but, from the middle of the seventh century, waned gradually as the Moslems advanced in the Mediterranean. Syria, conquered by them in 633-638, no longer kept it thriving with her ships and her merchandise. Shortly afterwards, Egypt passed in her turn under the yoke of Islam (638-640), and papyrus no longer came to Gaul. A characteristic consequence is that, after 677, the royal chancellery stopped using papyrus.<sup>2</sup>

against the Lombards were provoked by political causes and especially by the alliance with the Papacy. The expedition in Spain had no other aim than the establishing of a solid frontier against the Moslems.

<sup>2</sup> Imports, however, had not completely ceased at that date. The last reference we know to the use of papyrus in Gaul is in 737; see M. Prou, *Manuel de paléographie*, 3rd edit., p. 17. In Italy, it was continued to be used up to the eleventh century; see A. Giry, *Manuel de diplomatique*, p. 494. It was imported there either from Egypt or, more probably, from Sicily (where, the Arabs had in-

The importation of spices kept up for a while, for the monks of Corbie, in 716, believed it useful to have ratified for the last time their privileges of the *tonlieu* of Fos. A half century later, solitude reigned in the port of Marseilles. Her foster-mother, the sea, was shut off from her and the economic life of the inland regions which had been nourished through her intermediary was definitely extinguished. By the ninth century Provence, once the richest country of Gaul, had become the poorest.

More and more, the Moslems consolidated their domination over the sea. In the course of the ninth century they seized the Balearic Isles, Corsica, Sardinia, Sicily. On the coasts of Africa they founded new ports: Tunis (698-703); later on, Mehdia to the south of this city; then Cairo, in 973. Palermo, where stood a great arsenal, became their principal base in the Tyrrhenian Sea. Their fleets sailed it in complete mastery; commercial flotillas transported the products of the West to Cairo, whence they were redispached to Bagdad, or pirate fleets devastated the coasts of Provence and Italy and put towns to the torch after they had been pillaged and their inhabitants

produced its manufacture) by the shipping of the Byzantine cities of the South of the Peninsula, or by that of Venice, which will be discussed in Chap. III.

captured to be sold as slaves. In 889 a band of these plunderers even laid hold of Fraxinetum (the present Garde-Frainet, in the Department of the Var) not far from Nice, the garrison of which, for nearly a century thereafter, subjected the neighboring populace to continual raids and menaced the roads which led across the Alps from France to Italy.

The efforts of Charlemagne and his successors to protect the coasts from Saracen raiders were as impotent as their attempts to oppose the invasions of the Norsemen in the north and west. The hardihood and seamanship of the Danes and Norwegians made it easy for them to plunder the coasts of the Carolingian Empire during the whole of the eleventh century. They conducted their raids not only from the North Sea, the Channel, and the Gulf of Gascony, but at times even from the Mediterranean. Every river which emptied into these seas was, at one time or another, ascended by their skilfully constructed barks, splendid specimens whereof, brought to light by recent excavations, are now preserved at Oslo. Periodically the valleys of the Rhine, the Meuse, the Scheldt, the Seine, the Loire, the Garonne and the Rhône were the scene of systematic and persistent pillaging. The devastation was so complete that, in many cases indeed, the population itself disap-

peared. And nothing is a better illustration of the essentially inland character of the Frankish Empire than its inability to organize the defense of its coasts, against either Saracens or Norsemen. For that defense, to be effective, should have been a naval defense, and the Empire had no fleets, or hastily improvised ones at best.

Such conditions were incompatible with the existence of a commerce of first-rate importance. The historical literature of the ninth century contains, it is true, certain references to merchants (*mercatores, negociatores*),<sup>3</sup> but no illusion should be cherished as to their importance. Compared to the number of texts which have been preserved from that era, these references are extremely rare. The capitularies, those regulations touching upon every phase of social life, are remarkably meagre in so far as applies to commerce. From this it may be assumed that the latter played a rôle of only secondary, negligible importance. It was only in the north of Gaul that, during the first half of

<sup>3</sup> A. Dopsch, *Die Wirtschaftsentwicklung der Karolingerzeit*, Vol. II, pp. 180 ff., has, with very great erudition, cited a number of them. We must, however, bear in mind that many among them belong to the Merovingian period and that many others are far from having the significance which he attributes to them. See also J. W. Thompson, "The Commerce of France in the Ninth Century," *The Journal of Political Economy*, 1915, Vol. XXIII, p. 857.

the ninth century, trade showed any signs of activity.

The ports of Quentovic (a place now vanished, near Etaples in the Department of Pas-de-Calais) and Duurstede (on the Rhine, southwest of Utrecht) which under the Merovingian monarchy were already trading with England and Denmark, seem to have been centers of a widely extended shipping. It is a safe conjecture that because of them the river transport of the Friesians along the Rhine, the Scheldt and the Meuse enjoyed an importance that was matched by no other region during the reigns of Charlemagne and his successors. The cloths woven by the peasants of Flanders, and which contemporary texts designate by the name of Friesian cloaks (*pallia fresonica*), together with the wines of Rhenish Germany, supplied to that river traffic the substance of an export trade which seems to have been fairly regular up to the day when the Norsemen took possession of the ports in question. It is known, moreover, that the *deniers* coined at Duurstede had a very extensive circulation. They served as prototypes for the oldest coins of Sweden and Poland, evident proof that they early penetrated, no doubt at the hands of the Norsemen, as far as the Baltic Sea. Attention may also be called, as having been the substance of a rather extensive



trade, to the salt industry of Noirmoutier, where Irish ships were to be seen. Salzburg salt, on the other hand, was shipped along the Danube and its affluents to the interior of the Empire. The sale of slaves, despite the prohibitions that were laid down by the sovereigns, was carried on along the western frontiers, where the prisoners of war taken from among the pagan Slavs found numerous purchasers.

The Jews seem to have applied themselves particularly to this sort of traffic. They were still numerous, and were found in every part of Francia. Those in the south of Gaul were in close relations with their coreligionists of Moslem Spain, to whom they are accused of having sold Christian children.

It was probably from Spain, or perhaps also from Venice, that these Jews obtained the spices and the valuable textiles in which they dealt. However, the obligation to which they were subjected of having their children baptized must have caused a great number of them to emigrate south of the Pyrenees at an early date, and their commercial importance steadily declined in the course of the ninth century. As for the Syrians, they were no longer of importance at this era.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> The ingenious attempt of Mr. J. W. Thompson to prove the contrary, in his work cited in note 3 above, raises philological

It is, then, most likely that the commerce of Carolingian times was very much reduced. Except in the neighborhood of Quentovic and Duurstede, it consisted only in the transport of indispensable commodities, such as wine and salt, in the prohibited traffic of a few slaves, and in the barter, through the intermediary of the Jews, of a small number of products from the East.

Of a regular and normal commercial activity, of steady trading carried on by a class of professional merchants, in short, of all that constitutes the very essence of an economy of exchange worthy of the name, no traces are to be found after the closing off of the Mediterranean by the Islamic invasion. The great number of markets (*mercatus*), which were to be found in the ninth century, in no way contradicts this assertion. They were, as a matter of fact, only small local market-places, instituted for the weekly provisioning of the populace by means of the retail sale of food-stuffs from the country. As a proof of the commercial activity of the Carolingian era, it would be equally beside the point to speak of the existence of the street occupied by merchants (*vicus mercatorum*) at Aix-la-Chapelle near the palace of Charlemagne, or of similar streets near certain

difficulties which prevent our adopting it. The Greek origin of the work *Cappi*, upon which it is based, cannot be accepted.

great abbeys such as, for example, that of St. Riquier. The merchants with whom we have to do here were not, in fact, professional merchants but servitors charged with the duty of supplying the Court or the monks. They were, so to speak, employees of the seignorial household staff and were in no respect merchants.

There is, moreover, material proof of the economic decline which affected Western Europe from the day when she ceased to belong to the Mediterranean commonwealth. It is furnished by the reform of the monetary system, initiated by Pepin the Short and completed by Charlemagne. That reform abandoned gold coinage and substituted silver in its place. The *solidus* which had heretofore, conforming to the Roman tradition, constituted the basic monetary unit, was now only nominal money. The only real coins from this time on were the silver *deniers*, weighing about two grams, the metallic value of which, compared to that of the dollar, was approximately eight and one-half cents. The metallic value of the Merovingian gold *solidus* being nearly three dollars, the importance of the reform can be readily appreciated. Undoubtedly it is to be explained only by a prodigious falling off of both trading and wealth.

If it is admitted, and it must be admitted, that the reappearance of gold coinage, with the florins of Florence and the ducats of Venice in the thirteenth century, characterized the economic renaissance of Europe, the inverse is also true: the abandoning of gold coinage in the eighth century was the manifestation of a profound decline. It is not enough to say that Pepin and Charlemagne wished to remedy the monetary disorder of the last days of the Merovingian era. It would have been quite possible for them to find a remedy without giving up the gold standard. They gave up the standard, obviously, from necessity—that is to say, as a result of the disappearance of the yellow metal in Gaul. And this disappearance had no other cause than the interruption of the commerce of the Mediterranean. The proof of this is given by the fact that Southern Italy, remaining in contact with Constantinople, retained like the latter a gold standard, for which the Carolingian sovereigns were forced to substitute a silver standard. The very light weight of their *deniers*, moreover, testifies to the economic isolation of their Empire. It is inconceivable that they would have reduced the monetary unit to a thirtieth of its former value if there had been preserved the slightest bond between their States and the Medi-

terranean regions where the gold *solidus* continued to circulate.

But this is not all. The monetary reform of the ninth century not only was in keeping with the general impoverishment of the era in which it took place, but with the circulation of money which was noteworthy for both lightness and inadequacy. In the absence of centers of attraction sufficiently powerful to draw money from afar, it remained, so to speak, stagnant. Charlemagne and his successors in vain ordered that *deniers* should be coined only in the royal mints. Under the reign of Louis the Pious, it was necessary to give to certain churches authorization to coin money, in view of the difficulties, under which they labored, of obtaining cash. From the second half of the ninth century on, the authorization to establish a market was almost always accompanied by the authorization to establish a mint in the same place. The State could not retain the monopoly of minting coins. It was consistently frittered away. And that is again a manifestation, by no means equivocal, of the economic decline. History shows that the better commerce is sustained, the more the monetary system is centralized and simplified. The dispersion, the variety, and in fact the anarchy which it manifests as we follow the course of the ninth

century, ends by giving striking confirmation to the general theory here put forward.

There have been some attempts to attribute to Charlemagne a far-seeing political economy. This is to lend him ideas which, however great we suppose his genius to have been, it is impossible for him to have had. No one can submit with any likelihood of truth that the projects which he commenced in 793, to join the Rednitz to the Altmühl and so establish communication between the Rhine and the Danube, could have had any other purpose than the transport of troops, or that the wars against the Avars were provoked by the desire to open up a commercial route to Constantinople. The stipulations, in other respects inoperative, of the capitularies regarding coinages, weights and measures, the market-tolls and the markets, were intimately bound up with the general system of regulation and control which was typical of Carolingian legislation. The same is true regarding the measures taken against usury and the prohibition enjoining members of the clergy from engaging in business. Their purpose was to combat fraud, disorder and indiscipline and to impose a Christian morality on the people. Only a prejudiced point of view can see in them an attempt to stimulate the economic development of the Empire.

We are so accustomed to consider the reign of Charlemagne as an era of revival that we are unconsciously led to imagine an identical progress in all fields. Unfortunately, what is true of literary culture, of the religious State, of customs, institutions and statecraft is not true of communications and commerce. Every great thing that Charlemagne accomplished was accomplished either by his military strength or by his alliance with the Church. For that matter, neither the Church nor arms could overcome the circumstances in virtue of which the Frankish Empire found itself deprived of foreign markets. It was forced, in fact, to accommodate itself to a situation which was inevitably prescribed. History is obliged to recognize that, however brilliant it seems in other respects, the cycle of Charlemagne, considered from an economic viewpoint, is a cycle of regression.

The financial organization of the Frankish Empire makes this plain. It was, indeed, as rudimentary as could be. The poll tax, which the Merovingians had preserved in imitation of Rome, no longer existed. The resources of the sovereign consisted only in the revenue from his demesnes, in the tributes levied on conquered tribes and in the booty got by war. The market-tolls no longer contributed to the replenishment

of the treasury, thus attesting to the commercial decline of the period. They were nothing more than a simple extortion brutally levied in kind on the infrequent merchandise transported by the rivers or along the roads. The sorry proceeds, which should have served to keep up the bridges, the docks and the highways, were swallowed up by the functionaries who collected them. The *missi dominici*, created to supervise their administration, were impotent in abolishing the abuses which they proved to exist because the State, unable to pay its agents, was likewise unable to impose its authority on them. It was obliged to call on the aristocracy which, thanks to their social status, alone could give free services. But in so doing it was constrained, for lack of money, to chose the instruments of power from among the midst of a group of men whose most evident interest was to diminish that power. The recruiting of the functionaries from among the aristocracy was the fundamental vice of the Frankish Empire and the essential cause of its dissolution, which became so rapid after the death of Charlemagne. Surely, nothing is more fragile than that State the sovereign of which, all-powerful in theory, is dependent in fact upon the fidelity of his independent agents.

The feudal system was in embryo in this contradictory situation. The Carolingian Empire would have been able to keep going only if it had possessed, like the Byzantine Empire or the Empire of the Caliphs, a tax system, a financial control, a fiscal centralization and a treasury providing for the salary of functionaries, for public works, and for the maintenance of the army and the navy. The financial impotence which caused its downfall was a clear demonstration of the impossibility it encountered of maintaining a political structure on an economic base which was no longer able to support the load.

That economic base of the State, as of society, was from this time on the landed proprietor. Just as the Carolingian Empire was an inland State without foreign markets, so also was it an essentially agricultural State. The traces of commerce which were still to be found there were negligible. There was no other property than landed property, and no other work than rural work. As has already been stated above, this predominance of agriculture was no new fact. It existed in a very distinct form in the Roman era and it continued with increasing strength in the Merovingian era. As early as the close of antiquity, all the west of Europe was covered with great demesnes belonging to an aristocracy the members of which bore

the title of senators (*senatores*). More and more, property was disappearing in a transformation into hereditary tenures, while the old free farmers were themselves undergoing a transformation into "cultivators" (*coloni*) bound to the soil, from father to son. The Germanic invasions did not noticeably alter this state of things. We have definitely given up the idea of picturing the Germanic tribes in the light of a democracy of peasants, all on an equal footing. Social distinctions were very great among them even when they first invaded the Empire. They comprised a minority of the wealthy and a majority of the poor. The number of slaves and half-free (*liti*) was considerable.

The arrival of the invaders in the Roman provinces brought with it, then, no overthrow of the existing order. The newcomers preserved, in adapting themselves thereto, the status quo. Many of the invaders received from the king or acquired by force or by marriage, or otherwise, great demesnes which made them the equals of the "senators." The landed aristocracy, far from disappearing, was on the contrary invigorated by new elements.

The disappearance of the small free proprietors continued. It seems, in fact, that as early as the start of the Carolingian period only a very small number of them still existed in Gaul.

Charlemagne in vain took measures to safeguard those who were left. The need of protection inevitably made them turn to the more powerful individuals to whose patronage they subordinated their persons and their possessions.

Large estates, then, kept on being more and more generally in evidence after the period of the invasions. The favor which the kings showed the Church was an additional factor in this development, and the religious fervor of the aristocracy had the same effect. Monasteries, whose number multiplied with such remarkable rapidity after the seventh century, were receiving bountiful gifts of land. Everywhere ecclesiastical demesnes and lay demesnes were mixed up together, uniting not only cultivated ground, but woods, heaths and waste-lands.

The organization of these demesnes remained in conformity, in Frankish Gaul, with what it had been in Roman Gaul. It is clear that this could not have been otherwise. The Germanic tribes had no motive for, and were, furthermore, incapable of, substituting a different organization. It consisted, in its essentials, of classifying all the land in two groups, subject to two distinct forms of government. The first, the less extensive, was directly exploited by the proprietor; the second was divided, under deeds of tenure, among

the peasants. Each of the *villae* of which a demesne was composed comprised both seignorial land (*terra dominicata*) and censal land, divided in units of cultivation (*mansus*) held by hereditary right by manants or villeins (*manentes, villani*) in return for the prestation of rents, in money or in kind, and statute-labor.<sup>5</sup>

As long as urban life and commerce flourished, the great demesnes had a market for the disposal of their produce. There is no room for doubt that during all the Merovingian era it was through them that the city groups were provisioned and that the merchants were supplied. But it could not help be otherwise when trade disappeared and therewith the merchant class and the municipal population. The great estates suffered the same fate as the Frankish Empire. Like it, they lost their markets. The possibility of selling abroad existed no longer because of the lack of buyers, and it became useless to continue to produce more than the indispensable minimum for the subsis-

<sup>5</sup> The registry of rents of the Abbot Irminon is the principal source of knowledge of this organization. The prolegomena of Guérard in the edition which he issued in 1844, should, however, be read. One should also consult, on this point, the famous *Capitulaire de Villis*. K. Gareis has issued a good commentary: *Die Landgüterordnung Karls des Grossen*, Berlin, 1895. On the recent controversies over the import and the date of the *Capitulaire*, see M. Bloch, "L'origine et la date du Capitulaire de Villis," *Revue Historique*, 1923, Vol. CXLIII, p. 40.

tence of the men, proprietors or tenants, living on the estate.

For an economy of exchange was substituted an economy of consumption. Each demesne, in place of continuing to deal with the outside, constituted from this time on a little world of its own. It lived by itself and for itself, in the traditional immobility of a patriarchal form of government. The ninth century is the golden age of what we have called the closed domestic economy and which we might call, with more exactitude, the economy of no markets.<sup>6</sup>

This economy, in which production had no other aim than the sustenance of the demesial group and which in consequence was absolutely foreign to the idea of profit, can not be considered as a natural and spontaneous phenomenon. It was, on the contrary, merely the result of an evolution which forced it to take this characteristic form. The great proprietors did not give up selling the products of their lands of their own free

<sup>6</sup> Certain authors have believed that demesial products were destined for sale. See, for example, F. Keutgen, *Ämter und Zünfte*, Jena, 1903, p. 58. It is a fact that in certain exceptional cases and, for example, in times of famine, selling took place. But as a general rule there was certainly no selling. The texts alleged to prove the contrary are too few in number and too ambiguous to carry conviction. It is evident that the whole economy of the demesial system of the early Middle Ages is in flagrant opposition to this idea of profit.

will; they stopped because they could not do otherwise. Certainly if commerce had continued to supply them regularly with the means of disposing of these products abroad, they would not have neglected to profit thereby. They did not sell because they could not sell, and they could not sell because markets were wanting. The closed demesial organization, which made its appearance at the beginning of the ninth century, was a phenomenon due to compulsion. That is merely to say that it was an abnormal phenomenon.

This can be most effectively shown by comparing the picture, which Carolingian Europe presents, with that of Southern Russia at the same era.

We know that bands of sea-faring Norsemen, that is to say of Scandinavians originally from Sweden, established their domination over the Slavs of the watershed of the Dnieper during the course of the ninth century. These conquerors, whom the conquered designated by the name of Russians, naturally had to congregate in groups in order to insure their safety in the midst of the populations they had subjected.

For this purpose they built fortified enclosures, called *gorods* in the Slavic tongue, where they settled with their princes and the images of their gods. The most ancient Russian cities owe their

origin to these entrenched camps. There were such camps at Smolensk, Suzdal and Novgorod; the most important and the most civilized was at Kiev, the prince of which ranked above all the other princes. The subsistence of the invaders was assured by tributes levied on the native population.

It was therefore possible for the Russians to live off the land, without seeking abroad to supplement the resources which the country gave them in abundance. They would have done so, without doubt, and been content to use the prestations of their subjects if they had found it impossible, like their contemporaries in Western Europe, to communicate with the exterior. But the position which they occupied must have early led them to practise an economy of exchange.

Southern Russia was placed, as a matter of fact, between two regions of a superior civilization. To the east, beyond the Caspian Sea, extended the Caliphate of Bagdad; to the south, the Black Sea bathed the coasts of the Byzantine Empire and pointed the way towards Constantinople. The barbarians felt at once the effect of these two strong centers of attraction. To be sure, they were in the highest degree energetic, enterprising and adventurous, but their native qualities only served to turn circumstances to the best account. Arab merchants, Jews, and Byzantines were already fre-

quencing the Slavic regions when they took possession, and showed them the route to follow. They themselves did not hesitate to plunge along it under the spur of the love of gain, quite as natural to primitive man as to civilized. *The Scandi.*

The country they occupied placed at their disposal products particularly well suited for trade with rich empires accustomed to the refinements of life. Its immense forests furnished them with a quantity of honey, precious in those days when sugar was still unknown, and furs, sumptuousness in which was a requisite, even in southern climes, of luxurious dress and equipment.

Slaves were easier still to procure and, thanks to the Moslem harems and the great houses or Byzantine workshops, had a sale as sure as it was remunerative. Thus as early as the ninth century, while the Empire of Charlemagne was kept in isolation after the closing of the Mediterranean, Southern Russia on the contrary was induced to sell her products in the two great markets which exercised their attraction on her. The paganism of the Scandinavians of the Dnieper left them free of the religious scruples which prevented the Christians of the west from having dealings with the Moslems. Belonging neither to the faith of Christ nor to that of Mahomet, they only asked to get



rich, in dealing impartially with the followers of either.

The importance of the trade which they kept up as much with the Moslem Empire as with the Greek, is made clear by the extraordinary number of Arab and Byzantine coins discovered in Russia and which mark, like a golden compass needle, the direction of the commercial routes.

In the region of Kiev they followed to the south the course of the Dnieper, to the east the Volga, and to the north the direction marked by the Western Dvina or the lakes which abut the Gulf of Bothnia. Information from Jewish or Arab travellers and from Byzantine writers fortunately supplements the data from archaeological records. It will suffice here to give a brief résumé of what Constantine Porphyrogenetus reports in the ninth century. He shows the Russians assembling their boats at Kiev each year after the ice melts. Their flotilla slowly descends the Dnieper, whose numerous cataracts present obstacles that have to be avoided by dragging the barks along the banks. The sea once reached, they sail before the wind along the coasts towards Constantinople, the supreme goal of their long and perilous voyage. There the Russian merchants had a special quarter and made commercial treaties, the oldest of which dates back to the ninth century, regulating

their relations with the population. Many of them, seduced by its attractions, settled down there and took service in the Imperial Guard, as had done, before that time, the Germans in the legions of Rome.

The City of the Emperors (*Czarograd*) had for the Russians a fascination the influence of which has lasted across the centuries. It was from her that they received Christianity (957-1015); it was from her that they borrowed their art, their writing, the use of money and a good part of their administrative organization. Nothing more is needed to demonstrate the rôle played by Byzantine commerce in their social life. It occupied so essential a place therein that without it their civilization would remain inexplicable. To be sure, the forms in which it is found are very primitive, but the important thing is not the forms of this traffic; it is the effect it had.

Among the Russians of the late Middle Ages it actually determined the constitution of society. By striking contrast with what has been shown to be the case with their contemporaries of Carolingian Europe, not only the importance but the very idea of real estate was unknown to them. Their notion of wealth comprised only personal property, of which slaves were the most valuable. They

were not interested in land except in so far as, by their control of it, they were able to appropriate its products. And if this conception was that of a class of warrior-conquerors, there is but little doubt that it was held for so long because these warriors were, at the same time, merchants. We might, incidentally, add that the concentration of the Russians in the *gorods*, motivated in the beginning by military necessity, is itself found to fit in admirably with commercial needs. An organization created by barbarians for the purpose of keeping conquered populations under the yoke was well adapted to the sort of life which theirs became after they gave heed to the economic attraction of Byzantium and Bagdad. Their example shows that a society does not necessarily have to pass through an agrarian stage before giving itself over to commerce. Here commerce appears as an original phenomenon. And if this is so, it is because the Russians instead of finding themselves isolated from the outside world like Western Europe were on the contrary pushed or, to use a better word, *drawn* into contact with it from the beginning. Out of this derive the violent contrasts which are disclosed in comparing their social state with that of the Carolingian Empire: in place of a demesne aristocracy, a commercial

aristocracy; in place of serfs bound to the soil, slaves considered as instruments of work; in place of a population living in the country, a population gathered together in towns; in place, finally, of a simple economy of consumption, an economy of exchange and a regular and permanent commercial activity.

That these outstanding contrasts were the result of circumstances which gave Russia markets while depriving the Carolingian Empire of them, history clearly demonstrates. The activity of Russian trade was maintained, indeed, only as long as the routes to Constantinople and Bagdad remained open before it. It was not fated to withstand the crisis which the Petchenegs brought about in the eleventh century. The invasion of these barbarians along the shores of the Caspian and the Black Seas brought in their train consequences identical to those which the invasion of Islam in the Mediterranean had had for Western Europe in the eighth century.

Just as the latter cut the communications between Gaul and the East, the former cut the communications between Russia and her foreign markets. And in both quarters, the results of this interruption coincide with a singular exactitude. In Russia as in Gaul, when means of communication disappeared and towns were depopulated and the

populace forced to find near at hand the means of their subsistence, a period of agricultural economy was substituted for a period of commercial economy. Despite the differences in details, it was the same picture in both cases. The regions of the south, ruined and troubled by the barbarians, gave way in importance to the regions of the north. Kiev fell into a decline as Marseilles had fallen, and the center of the Russian State was removed to Moscow just as the center of the Frankish State, with the Carolingian dynasty, had been removed to the watershed of the Rhine. And to end by making the parallel still more conclusive, there arose, in Russia as in Gaul, a landed aristocracy, and a demesrial system was organized in which the impossibility of exporting or of selling forced production to be limited to the needs of the proprietor and his peasants.

So, in both cases, the same causes produced the same effects. But they did not produce them at the same date. Russia was living by trade at an era when the Carolingian Empire knew only the demesrial régime, and she in turn inaugurated this form of government at the very moment when Western Europe, having found new markets, broke away from it. We shall examine further how this break was accomplished. It will suffice

for the moment to have proved, by the example of Russia, the theory that the economy of the Carolingian era was not the result of an internal evolution but must be attributed to the closing of the Mediterranean by Islam.