

Student Essay on Charlemagne

Charlemagne

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Essay

War and Conversion under Charlemagne

The leaders and tyrants that manage to be remembered throughout the ages as conquerors of lands and peoples, whether they conquered with purpose or wild abandon are still respected. Figures such as Alexander the Great, Constantine and even Charlemagne, not only conquered peoples of various ethnic and religious backgrounds, but held them all together in one, strong, unified empire. Not to say there wasn't resistance from the conquered peoples, but the ways in which these great leaders went about procuring peace in their empires needed a strong hand and a bit of imagination.

Alexander did not force those he defeated to accept his Hellenistic views. Instead he absorbed the ideals and philosophies from all that he brought into his empire. He melded and mixed all the cultures in the world until there were no separate cultures, only one huge Cosmopolitan world. Constantine changed the religion of the Roman Empire to Christianity yet was still open to other religions and did not persecute non-Christians. Charles the Great became the leader of his empire after very dark times and after watching the Western Roman Empire crumble. Under Charlemagne, conquered peoples were taken from their homes and relocated throughout his empire so that they had no chance of reorganizing or rebelling. It seems harsh compared to the subtle approaches of Rome and ancient Greece, but it worked and brought peace to seemingly endless wars. Without a strong will and strong hand, Charlemagne would not have been able to hold his empire together. The archaic times in which he resided were brightened a bit by his authority, but if Charlemagne hadn't ruled with a heavy hand and let his empire crumble, no one would even know his name.