

IX. THE HOLY ROMAN EMPIRE

600-1415

A. **Concepts**1. The idea:

The Holy Roman Empire was the concept of all the nations loyal to the Roman Church being bound in an understood league for the defense and propagation of the Roman civilization. It was a paper empire that survived in some form until World War I although it was drastically curtailed following the Napoleonic wars. The Emperor was customarily elected by other members of the order and was recognized by Rome as the head of the confederation. The position was largely titular and involved no real exchange of power although the prestige involved was considerable and brought with it some emolument. The concept grew out of the shattered condition of the western world in the days of the Dark Ages and in the hope of a better ordered society although the opposite was often the real result.

2. The formation

This occurred over a number of years..maybe centuries is the better term. It is hard put an exact beginning but for practicality the time of Gregory I (600 AD) is a good starting point..with the formation of a political security system for preserving Rome the city and the ecclesiastical culture.

The "Christian" nations of the western world would eventually "join" and so the community grew although the membership was more or less in blocks of states. Church privileges were accorded or denied as the various ecclesiastical leaders view with the politicians for control of the whole.

3. The result

Whole books are written on this subject