

The Origin of the Merovingians

Or: Why was King Childeric not buried Catholic?

Discussion Paper

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Conclusions

1. The Merovingians were part of the Huns.
2. They belonged to the upper class, if not to the royal family of the Huns, and the founder of the Frankish state, Childrich I, had access to the Hun king.
3. Cicada figures are found in graves of leaders from the migration period throughout Europe. They are insignia of royal families emigrating from Asia.
4. The founder of the Mervingian royal lineage of the Franks, Merovech, was a Hun from Iran sent by Attila.

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Introduction

The beginnings of the European Middle Ages are in the dark, much is puzzling and inexplicable. It is surprising that we know more about the Greeks and Romans than, for example, about the beginnings of Franconia. The Franks, Merovingians, Saxons, Thuringians, Burgundis etc. were suddenly there. Today less is known about the origin of these peoples and tribes than about the origin of the Athenians or Romans. How comes that the one has the impression that the Europeans or their historians and politicians were/are united to cast a cloak of silence about the true origins of their nobility, from the very beginning of the European historiography up to now?

Archaeological finds and written documents from the time of the early European Middle Ages provide sufficient evidences of the true origin of the

European nobility: They were Huns or Xiongnu. While following the traces of the Merovingians this paper will prove this thesis.

1. Childeric's Grave

On May 27, 1653, in Tournai, Belgium, the deaf stonemason Adrien Quinquin came across a golden buckle and "a round nest made of soft leather" with more than a hundred golden coins: Childeric's grave was discovered. The owner of the property on which Childeric's grave was located, Archduke Leopold Wilhelm of Austria, came to Tournai himself, collected the grave finds as far as he could and commissioned his personal physician Johann Jacob Chiffle to prepare a report on the grave find. This report was published in 1655 under the title "Anastasis Childerici I. Francorum regis, sive thesaurus sepulchralis Tornaci Nerviorum effossus, & commentario illustratus. Auctore Ioanne Iacobo Chifletio, equite, regio archiatrorum comite, & archiducali medico primario."

This report, supplemented by further large-scale excavations in the 1980s, gave posterity unique insights into the burial of a king at the beginning of the European Middle Ages.

Some puzzling findings from the Childeric's grave indicate that Childeric was a Hun. These findings are:

1. Childeric had a barrow, he was not buried in a church;
2. A skull and a horse's head were found in his grave, and up to 21 horse skeletons in the immediate vicinity;
3. Roman coins which could only have come from the Treasury of East Rome;
4. Bee-shaped fibulae, the symbolic meaning of which has not yet been satisfactorily explained.

1.1 Attila's Funeral described by Jordanes

In order to better understand Childeric's grave let us turn to Jordanes' account of the burial of Attila in 453:

"There they cut off part of their hair, as is the custom of that people, and disfigured their hideous face with gaping wounds so that the great war hero might not be mourned with womanish laments and tears but with man's blood.

[...]

How his corpse was honored by his people, we want to highlight some of that. His remains were set up in the middle of the field under silk tents. Then they put on a wonderful solemn drama. The best horsemen from all over the Huns rode around the place where he lay, as in circus games, and glorified his deeds in funeral chants.

[...]

After they mourned him with such lamentations they celebrated a strava, as they call it, on his burial mound, with immeasurable drinking, and by combining opposites, they mixed the lament for death with expressions of joy. Then in the still of the night they surrendered the body to the earth. They had made his first coffin of gold, the second of silver, and the third of iron; with this they showed that all these things belonged to the mighty king: iron because he conquered the peoples, gold and silver because he had received the adornments of both kingdoms; to this end they laid weapons captured by the death of the enemy, precious horse jewelry, radiant with precious stones of all kinds, and various decorations with which the splendor of the court is adorned. And in order to keep human curiosity away from so many great riches, they killed - a terrible reward! - those charged with the work after the

work is done, and the grave-diggers, like the buried, experienced a surprising sudden death."¹

There is a dispute among archaeologists as to whether Childeric's tomb, as at Atilla's, had a mound. Even without a mound, the fact that he wasn't buried in a sarcophagus in a church is surprising. There is no doubt that the grandees of the Franconian Empire held episcopal offices, thus churches and basilicas were available as graves, as a congratulatory letter from the Bishop of Reims, Remigius, to the successor of Childeric, Clovis, is documented. The human skull and the horse's head also found in the grave suggest that the Franks celebrated a Hunnic funeral ceremony described by Jordanes. Chifflet assigned the second skull to the groom who was buried with him. It is also possible that it was the grave builder's skull. In any case, a lot of blood flowed at the funeral.

1.2 21 Dead Horses, Human Skull

Three pits with a total of 21 horse skeletons were found above the grave. There is no doubt that these graves were created at the same time as Childeric's grave. Horse graves which are related to graves of Germanic princes are not uncommon from this time but they are all in the area east of the Rhine and in the central Danube region, i.e. in the areas where the Huns ruled.

However, graves with several horses are rare, for instance at the large grave mound Žuráň in the Czech Republic, where the remains of five or six horses were found².

¹ Martens, Wilhelm, *Jordanes Gothengeschichte nebst Auszügen aus seiner Römischen Geschichte*, Leipzig, 1883, 44, 254-258, S. 81 ff..

² Cf. Quast, Dieter, *Die Grabbeigaben – ein kommentierter Fundkatalog*. In: Quast, Dieter (Hrsg.), *Das Grab des fränkischen Königs Childeric Tournai und die Anastasis Childerici von Jean-Jacques Chifflet aus dem Jahre 1655*, Mainz, 2015, p. 243 with further references.

The common burial of man and horse was not known before the Huns in either the Germanic or Roman world. But in the 5th and 6th centuries we find numerous such graves, especially among the Thuringians and Lombards³.

1.3 Roman Coins from Constantinople

The grave goods included a little over 100 Roman solidi coins, 455 g gold which was one and a half Roman pounds. Almost all of the coins came from mints in Constantinople, only two from Ravenna and one from Thessaloniki. Not a single coin came from the minting of western usurpers which were common in Gaul at that time. Some historians concluded from this find that Clovis, his son, had sorted out such coins as false coins⁴. The question, of course, arises: Why should he do this?

The following conclusion would be more obvious. These gold coins came from the treasury of the Eastern Roman Emperor. It goes without saying that the Eastern Roman Emperor had no coins from the usurperous Western Roman Emperors. If so there was only one place Eastern Rome had to deliver gold coins to: The Empire of the Huns. The Huns have received vast amounts of gold coins from Eastern Rome since the year 430. They received annual tributs from Eastern Rome beginning from 430 on 350 pounds, from 435 on 700 pounds, from 443 on 6,000 pounds. Even after Attila's death (453), Eastern Rome made an annual payment of 100 pounds.

³ Quast, Dieter, Die Grabbeigaben – ein kommentierter Fundkatalog. In: Quast, Dieter (Hrsg.), Das Grab des fränkischen Königs Childerich Tournai und die Anastasis Childerici von Jean-Jacques Chifflet aus dem Jahre 1655, Mainz, 2015, p. 161, with further references in footnote 42.

⁴ Quast, Dieter, Die Grabbeigaben – ein kommentierter Fundkatalog. In: Quast, Dieter (Hrsg.), Das Grab des fränkischen Königs Childerich Tournai und die Anastasis Childerici von Jean-Jacques Chifflet aus dem Jahre 1655, Mainz, 2015, p. 179.

So the Huns had enough gold treasure from Eastern Rome to distribute to their leaders and soldiers. According to the Hunnic tradition the Eastern Roman coins were added to Childeric's grave as spoils of war. This is clear evidence that Childeric was a Hun noble.

1.4 The Bees or Cicada Fibula

Another problem for historians is the small, bee-shaped brooches made of gold and garnet inlays (Figure 1). According to Chifflet there were originally over 300 of these fittings in the grave. Chifflet attached great importance to these bees as the heraldic animals of the Merovingians. The interpretation of these bees is still a big problem today.

The reference to the Greek-Roman ancient interpretation of animals, "according to which the swarm of bees is a symbol of the industrious people led by a king"⁵ is not convincing. In Childeric's grave there is no reference to the Greco-Roman world order.

⁵ So Quast, Dieter, Die Grabbeigaben – ein kommentierter Fundkatalog. In: Quast, Dieter (Hrsg.), Das Grab des fränkischen Königs Childericus Tournai und die Anastasis Childerici von Jean-Jacques Chifflet aus dem Jahre 1655, Mainz, 2015, p. 172.

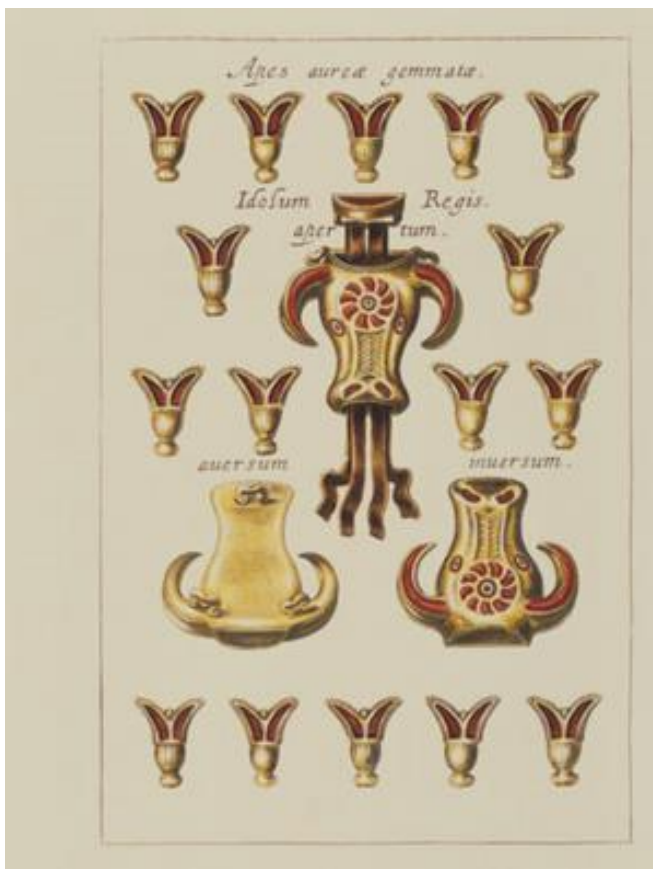


Figure 1: Bee-shaped fittings and the bull's head application from the spathe belt from the publication by Chifflet 1655, based on Quast, Dieter, Die Grabbeigaben - an annotated find catalog, plate 19.

But are these figures really bees? Isn't another insect shown here? Insect-shaped fibulae which have been identified as cicadas are known from the Hungarian Carpathian Basin.

In Germany, too, cicada-shaped fibulae were found in graves from this era, for example in Altenerding, Barbing-Irlmuth near Regensburg and Bittenbrunn, district of Neuburg-Schrobenhausen⁶.

⁶ Further with references in Quast, Dieter, Die Grabbeigaben – ein kommentierter Fundkatalog. In: Quast, Dieter (Hrsg.), Das Grab des

If we interpret these "bees" as cicadas their meaning can be derived much easier. Cicadas in graves and as symbolic emblems played a dominant role in Asia.

It is well known that the cicadas linger underground as worms between 7 and 17 years. For the last 7 days they come out of the earth as cicadas and linger on the trees to mate and sing their mating song. This way of life of the cicadas was understood in Asia as a symbol for the resurrection of the dead from the earth.

It has been documented since the Han period at the latest that cicada-shaped jade figures were placed in the mouth of the deceased at the funeral of important people. In Jiangnan for instance graves dated to the 2nd to 4th centuries were found with empty clay vessels, the upper half of which were decorated with many bird-like clay figures. Among them are figures which can be identified as cicadas (Figure 2)⁷. These grave goods, known as "ghost bottles, hunping (魂瓶)", expressed faith and longing for resurrection from the dead. Until then, the soul should remain in the earth, in the hunping (魂瓶).

fränkischen Königs Childeric von Tournai und die Anastasis Childerici von Jean-Jacques Chifflet aus dem Jahre 1655, Mainz, 2015, p. 248.

⁷ Knapp, Keith Nathaniel, The Meaning of Birds on Hunping (Spirit Jars): The Religious Imagination of Second to Fourth Century Jiangnan, in: Asian Studies, 7(2), 2019, 165.



Figure 2: Hunping from the 3rd century AD, exhibited in the Nanjing Municipal Museum, after Knapp, Keith Nathaniel, *The Meaning of Birds on Hunping*, Figure 16.

Association with Daniel 12 is awakened:

"At that time the great Prince Michael will arise, who will stand up for the children of your people; for there will be a time of tribulation such as has not been since there were peoples to this time. But at that time Your people will be saved, everyone inscribed in the book. And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth will wake up; some to eternal life, others to eternal shame and shame. "

This burial rite may be the result of the Israelites' apostasy from their original beliefs and acceptance of the Canaanite rites. In the Israel Museum in

Jerusalem there is a clay figure from the 7th to 5th centuries BC which had been excavated in Haseva (Figure 3) that looks amazingly similar to the Chinese Hunping. This object is ascribed to the Edomite culture.



Figure 3: Edomite clay ritual object, 7th to 5th century BC Chr., Israel Museum, Jerusalem, own photograph

In this respect the Chinese were no different from today's Jews in Israel whose greatest wish is to be buried in the Mount of Olives Cemetery in Jerusalem. If buried there they would be the first to rise from the dead when the Messiah comes to earth. Accordingly, the cemetery places there are hardly affordable.

Later in China, the cicada stood as a symbol for humble and dutiful state servants and rulers. Luyun (陸雲, 263-303) from the Jin period praises the cicada as the ideal servant of the state in a poem:

"She (the cicada) wears a noble hat on her head, so she is learned;

It feeds on the energy of the earth and the dew of heaven, so it is pure;

She doesn't eat grain, so she isn't corrupt;

She builds a house for herself to stay, so she's humble;

She knows when her time to sing is so trustworthy."⁸

The emperors of the Ming dynasty (Figure 4) and the kings of the Korean Joseon dynasty (Figure 5) wore a hat known as the "cicada wing crown (翼蟬冠)" to reflect this ideal of the rulers' leadership.

⁸ 習人稱雞有五德，而作者賦焉。至於寒蟬，才齊其美，獨未之思，而莫斯述。夫頭上有綏，則其文也；含氣飲露，則其清也；黍稷不食，則其廉也；處不巢居，則其儉也；應候守節，則其信也；加以冠冕，則其容也。Luyun (陸雲). Wikisource, [https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hant/寒蟬賦_\(陸雲\)](https://zh.wikisource.org/zh-hant/寒蟬賦_(陸雲))



Figure 4: Golden crowns of the Ming emperor Wanli (approx. 1600). The original is exhibited in the Ding Ling Museum near Beijing.



Figure 5: Portrait of the founder of the Joseon Kingdom (1392–1897), Lee Seonggae, wearing a cicada hat

And in *Chronicon Pictum des Chronica Hungarorum* the 7 Magyar tribal leaders (Figure 6) and the Grand Prince Géza (Figure 7) wear such cicada hats⁹.



Figure 6: The 7 Magyar leaders from the *Chronica Hungarorum*

⁹ Kalt, Markus, *Die Ungarische Bilderchronik*, Berlin, 1961.



Figure 7: Grand Prince Géza from the *Chronica Hungarorum*

Cicada figure as grave goods also found in a grave on the Korean peninsula. A jade cicada figure which was placed in the mouth of the deceased was found in a grave uncovered in Pyungyang in 1916 (Figure 8).

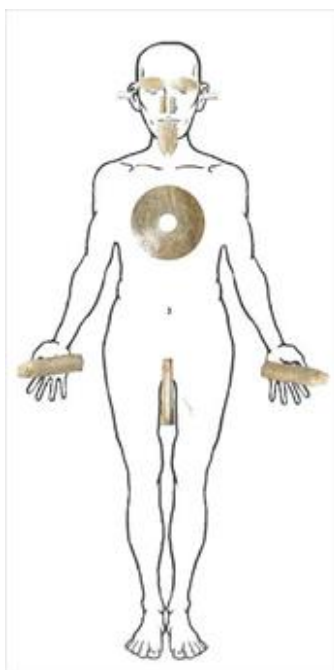


Figure 8: Grave goods from a grave in Pyungyang, National Museum of Korea

This tradition continued in Europe. For example in Scandinavia from the late Roman period (200 to 400) through the migration period (400 to 550) to the Merovingian period (550 to 800) many grave goods can easily be identified as cicada figures (Figure 9).



Figure 9 Brooch from Haukenes in Nordland from the Merovingian period (550 to 800), after Ingunn Marit Røstad *The immortal Broosch*, Figure 26.

This is astonishing since other finds from this long period (200 to 800) suggest major cultural and political upheavals¹⁰. The great increase in the use of gold for these large brooches, some of them are huge up to 30 cm, during the migration period reveals how the Huns had used the gold coins they received from Eastern Rome. They melted them down and made family heirlooms for the royal families. These findings can only be satisfactorily explained if we identify the European ruling elite as Yuezhis, Sarmatians, Alans and Huns who immigrated to Scandinavia in this chronological order, with a stopover in Constantinople.

The cicada fibula in the Childeric's grave reveals the origin of the Franconian royal family: They came from the Chinese culture that believed in the

¹⁰ Cf. Røstad, Ingunn Marit, *The immortal brooch*, 2018, p. 74.

resurrection of the dead at the end of time. To that extent, like the ancient biblical Israelites, they had the messianic faith.

The purpose of the Hunnic funeral for Childric was that Clovis, as the rightful successor of Childeric, intended to secure the support of the only power in the given circumstance. That only power were the Hunnic warriors. As we know Clovis was later baptized with 3,000 "from his army". These 3,000 did not belong to the Franks whose daughters Childeric raped and also not to the Franks whom Chilperich had shipped to Spain as slaves with his daughter as a wedding present in 584. These warriors were remnants of the Hunnish army from the Hungarian territory.

The dead Childeric had been laid out before the Huns in full Hunnish costume and adorned with Hunnish weapons. This funeral ceremony must have sparked fear among the Romans, Gauls, and free and enslaved Franks, and enthusiasm among the Hunnic warriors.

2. Merovingian and other Germans in contemporary Reports

2.1 Childeric's struggle for the Throne of the Frankish State

In the first years of the Frankish state a remarkable incident occurred in which the first Frankish king Childeric I lost his office as a king and returned to power through an intrigue of his friend called Wiomad. This incident is reported in great details in the Fredegar Chronicle¹¹. We want to take a closer look at this passage because it illuminates the relationship between Merovingians, Franks, Romans and Huns.

“But when Childeric, the son of Meroweck, followed his father in the rule he abused the daughters of the Franks in unrestrained arbitrariness. Out of bitterness they drove him out of his kingdom. The Franconian Wiomad who

¹¹ Kusternig, Andreas, Hermann Haupt: Quellen zur Geschichte des 7. und 8. Jahrhunderts, 1982, III, 11, S. 91 ff..

was more loyal to Childeric than anyone else and who freed him when he and his mother were dragged away as a prisoner by the Huns¹², and had fled with him, shared a gold piece with Childeric (with the intention as follows) when he realized that the Franks would dare to kill Childeric and advised him: “Flee to Thuringia and hide you there for a while. If I succeed in reconciling the Franks with you then I will send you this half of the gold piece as a sign; as long as I do not succeed in doing so let me be notified of every step you take. But as soon as I have brought about (the reconciliation) and I send you this half and the two parts put together form a whole solidus you can safely return to your home.” [1]

Childeric hid in Thuringia of King Bisin and his wife Basina and lived with them. During this time the Franks unanimously accepted Aegidius as their king. Aegidius placed Wiomad, Childeric's friend, as sub-king over the Franks on whose advice every Franconian had to pay a gold piece of tribute. They took it calmly and paid. [2]

This is how Wiomad spoke to Aegidius a second time:

“This defiant people which you commanded me to rule paid too little tribute and rebelled in high spirits; therefore order them to pay three solidi tribute each”.

When this was done the Franks took it calmly and comforted themselves with the words: "It is better for us to pay three solidi as tribute than to lead such a difficult life under Childeric." Then Wiomad spoke again to Aegidius: “The Franks have risen against you; if you do not give the order to strangle a great number of them you will not be able to curb their arrogance”. [3]

Wiomad selected a hundred men who were weak and unfit for war and work and sent them to Aegidius who following Wiomad's advice had them

¹² Some authors believe that they can infer from this that Childeric would have been a hostage to the Huns in the past. This passage should be understood to mean that the Huns locked him and his mother in when Childeric was deposed of from the kingship, no more and no less.

killed. But Wiomad said secretly to the Franks: "Is the tribute you pay still not enough for you? How long will you endure this evil that your relatives will be killed like cattle?" Thereupon the Franks replied unanimously: "If only we could find Childeric anywhere we would be saved from this distress through him". [4]

Thereupon Wiomad immediately rushed to Aegidius and reported: "Now the people of the Franks are at last completely at your command". He immediately advised him to send an embassy to the Emperor Maurikios to report that the neighboring peoples could (possibly at this very moment) be persuaded to join the Emperor; therefore he should send fifty thousand solidi so that after such a gift these peoples would be even more inclined to submit to his rule. [5]

Then he added: "I received little money from you for my military service so I, your servant, have too little silver. So I would like to send one of my men with your envoy to get me more silver in Constantinople"; thereupon Aegidius granted him five hundred gold pieces which he was to give to his servants to buy these goods; Wiomad now provided one of his men whom he placed a great deal of trust with half of the gold coin that he had shared with Childeric and a sack full of lead pieces that the servant was supposed to carry with him instead of the gold coins. Since he had already learned that Childeric was in Constantinople he instructed his servant, who was going on the journey with the envoys of Aegidius, to hurry ahead of the envoys and, before the envoys were admitted to the emperor, to hurry to Childeric and to tell him that Aegidius, who actually owed a tribute to the state treasure, would ask the Emperor to pay tribute. [6]

When Childeric told this to the Emperor Maurikos he ordered out of anger and indignation Aegidius' envoys to be thrown into dungeon when they were brought before him to utter these words. Then Childeric spoke to the Emperor Maurikos: "Order me, your servant, to go to Gaul, and I will let Aegidius feel your anger and your indignation". Childeric received rich gifts from Maurikos and returned to Gaul by ship. But Wiomad was informed of his return by his servant; Childeric met Wiomad in the fortress of Bar-le-Duc and was accepted

again by the people of Bar (as king); because they were the first to recognize him again, Childeric, on Wiomad's advice, exempted them from all public taxes. Thereupon he was reinstated in his empire by all Franks and he fought many battles against Aegidius; many killings were caused by him among the Romans. [7]

[1] Childeric and Wiomad were not Franks

Childeric and Wiomad do not seem to have been Franks. They speak of the Franks as of another people or aliens. B. S. Bachrach believes that Wiomad was a Hun¹³.

[2] Thuringians and Childeric are of the same People

Thuringian royal house seems to be of the same people as Childeric. He can take refuge there without the Thuringians having to fear revenge from the Franks. Aegidius (died in 464/65) was a western Roman army master in Gaul (magister militum per Gallias) and after 461 a ruler ("warlord") in northern Gaul who ruled independently of the Western Roman government. Franks are unable to choose the Roman Aegidius as their new king, but they merely accepted him as king. They cannot choose a king from within their own people. The question arises here as to who had the authority to put this king in front of them. Wiomad is also positioned as a vice-king. This is a legal institution which was widely used by the Huns. The Franks mentioned here were certainly no simple people or peasants; every Franconian was able to pay three gold pieces.

[3] The Franks are under foreign rule

¹³ Vgl. B. S. Bachrach, *Merovingian Military Organization 481-751*, 1972, S. 4.

This clearly shows that the rule of Wiomad (and Aegidius) was a foreign rule. Wiomad's policy towards the Franks is that of oppression: the Franks are a nasty people that must be oppressed; their pride must be tamed. That is a key indication for a colonial administration.

[4] The Franks have no sovereignty to choose their own king

Here it becomes clear: the Franks are unable to choose a king from among their own ranks. They have to choose between two evils: Childeric or Aegidius. These alternatives are presented to them from outside. Was it the Romans? If it were the Romans then the question arises as to why they had put a non-Roman, namely Childeric, in front of the Franks as a king in the past?

[5] Who determined the king of the Franks?

Wiomad now takes heed to the authority which is entitled to appoint the king of the Franks. According to the text it is the Emperor Maurice of Constantinople. That the place and the person of the Emperor cannot be correct already derived from the following: The Eastern Roman Emperor Maurice ruled from Constantinople between 582 and 602. But Aegidius died in 465 at the latest, around 20 years before the reign of Emperor Maurice. So it wasn't the Roman Emperor. The only ones who would have been able to determine the king of the Franks at this time were the Huns¹⁴.

[6] Distrust of the Huns against the Roman Aegidius

Childeric was with the Emperor so he must have been of the same people as the Emperor. At least he had direct access to the Emperor. Which other ground

¹⁴ Cf. B. S. Bachrach, *Merovingian Military Organization 481-751*, 1972, p. 4.

is thinkable that he, expelled from his own state, shall be entitled to draw near to the Emperor?

The second part is incomprehensible: why should the Emperor pay taxes to whomever? This can only be understood in such a way that the demand for 50,000 solidi which should be distributed as a gift to the neighboring peoples, should be reinterpreted as a demand for tax payment. This would raise the charge that Aegidius is still working for the Romans, that he is demanding taxes from the Huns for the benefit of the Roman treasury. The anger of the King of the Huns is understandable.

[7] Veiling of the Hunnic supremacy

Aegidius who was a Roman is replaced by Childeric who then does serious damage to him and to the Romans. According to this the Emperor cannot have been a Roman, for why should a Roman Emperor authorize Childeric to fight the Romans? The Emperor can only have been a king of the Huns who at that time was busy eliminating the rest of the Roman Empire. In the Fredegar Chronicle it is therefore deliberately concealed that it were the Huns who had a decisive influence on the occupation of the royal throne of the Franks.

This obfuscation goes even further in the account of the same incident of Gregory of Tours' report. The main people involved (Wiomad and Emperor Maurice) are not even mentioned here. Here he talks even more in the fog, it is not clear who the protagonists were and what actually happened. The story reads in Gregory of Tours¹⁵ description as follows:

“But when Childeric, who surrendered to the greatest debauchery, ruled over the Franconian people, he wanted to treat their daughters with dishonor. But the Franks, unwilling to do so, drove him out of their rulership. But after learning that they wanted to kill him too, he fled to Thoringien, but left a friend

¹⁵ Tours, Gregor von, Kirchliche Geschichte der Franken in zehn Büchern, Würzburg 1853, II, 12.

there who could soothe the angry men with good words and who was also supposed to give him a sign as to when he could return to his fatherland; they divided a piece of gold, and Childeric took one piece with him, but his friend kept the other with the words: "If I send you this piece and put the two pieces together, you can return to the fatherland without worrying." Childeric but lived in secrecy in Thoringien with King Bisinus and his wife Basina. After his expulsion, however, the Franks unanimously appointed Aegidius, who, as mentioned above, the Romans had made commander-in-chief of the army, as king having been king over them, that loyal friend who secretly appeased the Franks sent messengers to Childeric with the part of the broken piece of gold that he had retained. By this sign he knew for sure that the Franks wanted him, and even asked him, so he returned from Thoringien and was reinstated in his dignity. While they were now governing collectively, Basina left her husband to join Childeric."

This story is so shortened that Wiomad's intrigue against Aegidius, in which he exploited the general distrust of the Huns against the Romans, has completely disappeared. There can be no doubt about the intention of this abbreviation: Everything Hunnish shall disappear from the Franconian history.

2.2 Alien in the own State: Raid through their own Country

The following passages from the histories of Gregory of Tours make it clear that the upper class of the Franks had nothing in common with the population of the Franks. They rob them or move them like slaves from their homeland to foreign regions.

Let us first take a look at Rigunth, Chilperic's daughter who traveled to Spain in 584. Rigunth, (also called Rigundis) was a daughter of the Merovingian king Chilperic I.

In 584, a Visigoth embassy came to Paris to accompany Rigunth to Spain as a bride for Rekkared, a Visigoth prince. Gregory of Tours describes the journey

of Rigunth to Spain which is more like a raid than a bridal voyage: the raid took place in one's own country.

“As the calendar of September (September 1st) came in the meantime a great Gothic embassy appeared before King Chilperic. But the latter who had already returned to Paris ordered many families to be taken away from the state estates and put on wagons. He had many who were crying and did not want to go away taken into custody so that they could be sent with his daughter all the more easily. It is said, however, that because of these harsh treatment many put an end to their lives with the rope, fearing that they would be separated from their relatives. For the son was separated from the father, the mother from the daughter, and they parted with many tears and curses, and there was such mourning in the city of Paris that it was compared with the Egyptian mourning. But many of noble descent, forced to leave, made their wills, bequeathed their property to the churches and asked, as soon as the girl had entered Hispania, to open this will as if they were buried.

In the meantime King Childebert's ambassadors came to Paris to advise King Chilperic not to take anything from the cities that he had from the kingdom of his (Childebert's) father, or to make presents of any kind to his daughter with the treasures, and not to dare touch slaves, horses, cattle, etc.. One of these ambassadors is said to have been secretly killed, but it is not known by whom; however, the suspicion turned against the king. King Chilperic, however, promised not to touch any of these, called together the noble Franks and the rest of the faithful and celebrated his daughter's wedding. Then he handed her over to the Gothic ambassadors together with great treasures. Her mother also brought an enormous amount of gold and silver and clothes so that the king, when he saw this, suspected that he had nothing left. When the queen noticed that he had noticed she turned to the Franks and said: “Do not believe, O men, that this is something of the treasures of the earlier kings; for everything you see is of my own, because the glorious king gave me many things. I have also acquired a great deal with my own effort and from the houses given to me I have drawn a great deal both in fruit and in taxes. But you

too have enriched me very often with your gifts, and that is what you are seeing now; for there is nothing from the public treasure.” And thus she appeased the king.

There were so many gold and silver and the rest of the jewelry that fifty wagons were needed to carry them away. The Franks, too, brought many presents, some gold, others silver, a few horses, a lot of clothes, and everyone who could, brought a gift. But when the girl said goodbye with tears and kisses and drove through the gate, one axis of the wagon broke and all shouted: "Misfortune" (Malahora), and some took this as a premonition. At last she left Paris and set up her tents eight miles from the city. But that night fifty men got up, took a hundred of the best horses, just as many golden reins and two large wagons, and escaped to King Childebert as absconds. All along the way, too, whoever could ran away and took with him what he could catch. Large contributions to the costs were collected from the various towns along the way since the king did not allow anything from his treasury to be paid, but everything was financed from contributions of the poor. But because the king suspected that his brother or nephew might try to stalk the girl on the way, he let her travel under cover of army forces. With her, however, there were distinguished men, Duke Bobo, Mummolenus' son, with his wife, as bride and groom, Domegisel and Ansovald, the caretaker Waddo, who was once Count of Santon; but the rest of the people numbered over four thousand heads, but the remaining dukes and court servants (camerarii) who had gone with her turned back in Pictavum; but those continued on their way as best they could. But so much was robbed and plundered on the way that it can hardly be told. The huts of the poor were plundered, they devastated vineyards so that they cut the vines together with the grapes and took them, they drove away the cattle or dragged away whatever they could find; on their way they left nothing and thus the word of the prophet Joel was fulfilled: “What the locust leaves, the caterpillar eats, what the caterpillar leaves, the powdery mildew eats. So it happened at that time that what was left over from the frost was spoiled by a

thunderstorm, what was left over, burned up the heat, and what the heat spared was taken away by enemies."¹⁶

In 584 the Frankish King Childebert sent troops to Italy to fight the Lombards on behalf of Eastern Rome. On the way to Italy the Frankish army plundered its own country:

“After Grippo had reported this to King Childebert, the latter ordered an army to set out for Italy at once and sent twenty dukes to fight the Longobard people. I did not consider it necessary to quote their names in the order. But when Duke Audovald came with Winthrio and the people of Campania to the Mettensian city, which was on the way, they committed so much robbery, murder and death-blows that it was believed that they were raging as enemies against their own province. But the other dukes also did the same with their troops so that they rather damaged their own country and the people who remained at home before they had achieved something victorious against the enemy.”¹⁷

Only in this context can Gregor von Tours' complaint about the civil wars of the Franks (in the years 570s between the sons of Chlothar) be understood.

“And we still marvel and wonder why so great plagues fell upon them; but let us go back to what their ancestors did and what they do. The former turned from their idolatry to the church after the priests had preached, the later rob the churches every day. The former honored the Lord's priests with all their hearts and obeyed them; but the later not only do not hear, they also pursue them. The former enriched monasteries and churches, the later destroy and devastate them. What should I say of the Latta monastery, in which the remains of St. Martinus are kept? When a group of the enemy came and wanted to cross the nearby river to rob the monastery, the monks shouted: “Do not cross, you barbarians; here is the monastery of St. Martinus.” As they heard this, many withdrew from fear of God; but twenty of them, who neither feared God nor

¹⁶ Gregor von Tours, Buch VI, 45.

¹⁷ Gregor von Tours, Buch X, 3.

honored the holy confessor, boarded a shiü, drove across, killed the monks at the instigation of the (evil) enemy, destroyed the monastery, stole its treasures, tied them in bundles, and brought them up on the ships. But when they got on the river, the ship swayed and they were tossed to and fro. When they lost the rudder they pushed the shaft of the lances to the bottom of the river and tried to sail back. The ship, however, got leaks from under them and everyone stabbed against each other in the chest, and so they all stabbed themselves with their own spears.

Only one of them who warned them to do so was unharmed. If anyone thinks this happened by accident consider that the only innocent man got away among so many guilty ones. The monks pulled the dead and their belongings out of the water, buried them and brought their property back to its place."¹⁸

For Gregory of Tours, 100 years after Childeric (457-481) took power, the Franks are the barbaric strangers who are raging in his country. Although they have accepted Christianity their paganism breaks through again and again which drives them to rob monasteries and churches.

2.3 Ancestors of the Germans in Fredegar

There is unmistakable historical evidence that indicates that the upper class of the Germans was Huns and/or Alans/Sarmatians.

Fredegar says about the origin of the Franks that their ancestors split into two parts on the Danube. One part emigrated to the west and became Franks, the remaining part became Turks (Turchi)¹⁹. The "Turchi" ethnic group mentioned

¹⁸ Gregor von Tours, Buch IV 47-48, 207 f..

¹⁹ "Ceptum quidem, sed imperfectum opus remansit. Residua eorum pars, que super litore Danuvii remanserat, elietum a se Torcoth nomen regem, per quem ibique vocati sunt Turchi; et per Francionem hii alii vacati sunt Franci. Multis post peroribus cum ducibus externas dominationis semper negantes." Fredegarü et Aliorum Chronica, 3.2, p. 93.

here can only refer to the Huns since in the Fredegar's time the Avar Huns (who were called Turks) lived in the east of the Frankish state.

2.4 Ancestors of the Saxons in Sachsenspiegel

The immigration of the upper class of the Saxons from the east is also described in a legend in Sachsenspiegel from the 13th century:

“§ 2. Our ancestors, when they came ashore and drove out the Thuringians, had been in Alexander's armies; with their help he had conquered all of Asia. When Alexander died because of the hatred of the country they were not allowed to settle there, and they sailed away with three hundred Kielen; they were all destroyed but fifty-four. Eighteen of them came to Prussia and occupied it, twelve occupied Rügen, four and twenty came over by land.

§ 3. There were not so many of them that they were able to cultivate the fields; when they slew the Thuringian lords and drove them out they left the peasants untouched and gave them the right of the field, as the men still have it. Hence they are the Lassens. The day laborers come from the Lassens who forfeited their rights.”²⁰

One cannot deny the true essence of this legend. If the upper class of the Saxons consisted of the Huns / Alans, they immigrated via the areas of the Alexander Empire. It is quite possible that, for example, in the Ferghana Valley (which was still called Alexandria Eschate in 160 BC) the memory of Alexander the Great was cultivated when the Yuezhis and Xiongnu arrived there. The “Lassens” mentioned here were the farmers who became taxable towards the new masters.

²⁰ Sachsenspiegel, Buch III, 44, §§ 2, 3, S. 254 f..

According to some historians the Hun king Attila is said to have acted as an under-king among the Gepids in his younger years²¹. Odoacer, the first Gothic king of Italy, is said to have been the son of a general in the army of Attila²².

Jordanes writes that the Hun king Balamber, after killing the Gothic king Vinitharius, ruled the Goths as a king:

“It is certain that after the death of their king Hermanaric and their separation from the Vesegoths they remained in the same country in dependence of the Huns; however, the Amaler Vinithar kept the insignia of his prince's rank. He took the bravery of his grandfather Vultulf as an example and tried, albeit less happily than Hermanarich, since he was grieved at being subject to the rule of the Huns, to gradually withdraw from them, and moved into the country of the Antes to show his bravery. When attacking the same, however, he was defeated in the first fight. But now he acted as a courageous man; he had their king named Voz, his sons and seventy distinguished men nailed to the cross as a deterrent example so that the dead bodies would double the fear of the subjugated. Since he had ruled for scarcely a year in such independence, Balamber, the Hun king, no longer tolerated it but allied himself with Gesimund, the Son of Hunnimundes the Great who, mindful of his oath and his loyalty, still ruling a large part of the Goths stood with the Huns, renewed the alliance with them and marched with an army against Vinithar. In the long warfare Vinithar won the first and second battle and no one can say how great losses Vinithar inflicted on the Huns. In the third battle, however, when both had drawn against him, Balamber sneaked up to the river Erak and wounded and killed Vinithar with an arrow by a shot in the head. After that he took his niece Vadamerka as his wife and ruled the entire Goth people, who lived in

²¹ Cf. Kim, Hyun Jin, *The Huns, Rome and the Birth of Europe*, Cambridge, 2013, p. 99 with further references.

²² Cf. Kim, Hyun Jin, *The Huns, Rome and the Birth of Europe*, Cambridge, 2013, S. 102 with further references.

peace and subservience, but in such a way that they always stood under their own head, albeit subject to the election of the Huns."²³

2.5 Who was Childeric's Father Merovech?

Childrich was not a Frank according to what has been said so far. Nor was he a Roman. He belonged to the innermost circle of the rulers of the European sphere of power at the time, and this were the Huns. There are two contemporary sources that seem to provide concrete evidence of this.

First of all Priscos writes about Attila and his involvement in the royal succession to the Franks:

“Attila's excuse for his war against the Franks was the death at their king and the disagreement at his children over the rule, the elder, who decided to bring Attila in as his ally, and the younger, Aetius. I saw this boy when he was at Rome on an embassy, a lad without down on his cheeks as yet and with tair hair so long that it poured down around his shoulders. Aetius had made him his adopted son, along with the emperor given him many gifts, and sent him away in friendship and alliance. For these reasons Attila was making his expedition, and again he sent certain men at his court to Italy that the Romans might surrender Honoria.”²⁴

The late king of the Franks was Clodion²⁵, who had conquered Tournai in 447. The Hun king Atilla preferred the elder as the new king of the Franks, while the Romans favored the younger son of Clodion. At the end, Merovech was elected king of the Franks, but this Merovech was not a son of Clodion for he does not appear in the genealogy of the ruling house of the Franks according to Lex Salica, which begins with Pharamund²⁶. Apparently, Merovech was a Hun sent by Attila to the Franks. This is further evidenced by a text passage of Fredegar that

²³ Martens, Wilhelm, *Jordanes Gothengeschichte nebst Auszügen aus seiner Römischen Geschichte*, Leipzig, 1883, Kapitel 48, p. 78 f..

²⁴ Colin Gordon, *The Age of Attila. Fifth-Century Byzantium and the Barbarians*, Colin Gordon, 1960, P.fr. 16, p. 106.

²⁵ So Gibbon, Edward, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, 1909, III, p. 455.

²⁶ See in detail Henry H. Howorth, *The Ethnology of Germany.- Part VI. The Varini, Varangians, and Franks.- Section II*, p. 228

remains completely incomprehensible without this context. Here Fredegar calls Merevech one of the Iranian kings (Reges irancorum).

" Hec generatio (ie, that of the Franks) fanaticis usibus culta est. Fertur super litore maris eestatis tempore Chlodeone cum uxore resedente meridie, uxor ad mare lavatum vadens, terretur a bestia Neptuni, qui Minotauro similis eam ad petisset. Cumque in continuo aut a bestia aut a viro fuisset, concepit, ac peperit filium, Meroveum nomine, a quo Reges irancorum postea Merovingii vocantur" (id., ii, 395-6)."

*"This generation (ie that of the Franks) was shaped by fanatical customs. At the time of this state, Chlodeon was taken to the shore of the sea with his wife, who was staying at midday. The woman went to the sea. She was afraid of the sea monster Neptune, who, like the Minotaur, was looking for her. Whether by animal or by man, she conceived and gave birth to a son named Meroveus, from whom proceeded the kings of the Iranians; they were later called the Merovingians (id., ii, 395-6)."*²⁷

Huns had invaded the Sasanian Iranshar in the mid-4th century. As early as 356 AD, Ammianus Marcellinus reported battles between the Persian king Shapur II and the Chionites, who lived in the south-west of the Caspian Sea. According to Fredegar, Merevech belonged to these Chionites, whom Göbl calls "White Huns" or "Iranian Huns". The Merovingians were Huns who invaded Persia and continued their invasion deep into Western Europe.

Comments from an Academia Session:

Marco GIUSEPPE Toma

23 days ago

Ok. Interesting paper with anticonventional theories. Childeric asiatic, not of common indoeuropean core of post Roman empire Europe? I make a more general observation. The Indo-European people that be it over the Roman

²⁷ Quoted from Henry H. Howorth, *The Ethnology of Germany*.- Part VI. The Varini, Varangians, and Franks.- Section II, p. 228.

civilization. The North Area of old continent and their population. A homogenous ethnic system? Not properly. This civilization structural system is based on a so called "organized nomadism migration society". The same that provoked the great migration that beated the Roman Empire("Barbaric Invasion", as the old denomination).And. The same Roman Empire. In the structure itself, mixed and mingled several elements, ethnic, genetic, cultural, to maintain the general idea of its universality. But. In any case. The social and anthropological description of old continent and Europe is marked by continuous interchange of various elements. From a physical anthropological point of view :the Mediterranean racial group presents Aplo and feature genetic hype intermixed with a lot of other elements. Same in all peoples of area. But more determinant element of it? The commercial route, the economic needs. Determining a continue interchange, mix, and, ultimately, migration. Barbaric Invasion in the old optic of a terrific wave of population enemies attacking Roman Civilization? Or, better, a confederation, a commercial confederation of many ethnically mixed people that want to expand their economic goals? And, if analize all elements of these population, we can see a lot, a mount of intercultural elements side to side. But. Byzantine empire. The Empire heritage of Hellenistic Alexandrian empire developed in Orthodox Christian Forms. Well. The Hellenistic empire is intermingled and policentric. And, in a final conclusion. The situation of "Organized nomadism and migration", of continuous interchange was a normal system in Classic and post Classic European old continent. And do not amaze of a Childeric case described in this paper.

Like



Claudia Holzhammer

2 mos ago

Thanks for the invitation. But why exactly should Childerich be buried like a Catholic when he - like most of the people east of the Rhine - wasn't even baptized? Worse - most churches being built long after Childerichs death and the early churches being reserved as the resting-place of abbots and perhaps selected

holy monks? That Harald Bluetooth reburied his parents Gorm and Thyra after he built a chapel at Jellinge, happened only four centuries later and the idea of christening dead people is also a later idea. The germanic-pagan idea might more be that the desacrator of a burial mound would 'wake a dragon' and cause the death of the desacrator like in Beowulf. Most chieftains and kings (= warlords), be they celtic or germanic, were still buried in gravemounds up to the end of the roman era - the anglo-saxons and danes even centuries past the roman era. And the habit of burying - often mummified - leaders beneath mounds along with their belongings, livestock and often servants in Europe goes back at least to the bronzeage, and though it is vastly considered a general steppe tradition, it started already in the neolithic and stayed regionally visible landmarks and building hills for important dead remained an on&off custom even though many of the germanic people used row-graves for 'normal' folks, and some switched to cremation. And Salic Franks are not Huns. Franks = 'Free Men' are a mixed but predominantly pagan belgian-germanic warband and mercenaries from the germanic side of the former Limes. Some of the frankish graves might have traces of Sarmatian or Alan DNA, due to work-migration in the late decades of the Roman Empire, but they remained a minority and Sarmats and Alans are not Huns. Huns were seen as rivals and enemies by most of the germanic tribes, though they were influenced by hunnish style and fashions. But as Vincent Megaw put it: 'Wearing celtic fashion doesn't make you a Celt, just like wearing a baseball-cap and a blue-jeans doesn't make you an American.' The 'asiatic' resettlements west of the Rhine happened twice, according to legends taken up by historians (and anthropologists like Erwin Bälz, who claimed to have found typical Hunnic/Avaric = 'Mongolic' pigmentation in children of the Champagne): once after Attilas death, and a second time after the Avars got beaten. As far as I know a proof of an earlier empire-'controlled' settlement of steppe-people like Sarmatians and Alans and early Huns at the Roman Limes in Belgium is still missing. It is true, however, that it was a far spread custom to send - superfluous - children as hostages to be raised with powerful neighbours, so it is possible, that the legend Childerich and his mother were abducted by the Huns might have a historic background, asides it being a fetching adventure-story. But growing up with Huns and being a Hun oneself are two different shoes. If the argument of spending some years as a hostage in the 'care' of a neighbouring ruler was valid, then the ostrogothic king Theoderic - and the cheruscan warlord Arminius would both be

Romans. Of the rest of your topic I know too little to add comments. The idea and the cultural meaning of the Zikadas is very interesting, though, and I like it at least as much as the other theory, that the 'little bees' were celtic-stylized smaller bullheads, stemming from animal-style fibulas, what would go d'accord with the Merovingian Dynastie - or more their later historiographs - claiming to be offsprings of a sacred bull or the Minotaurus probably an educated-guess mistranslation of Meroweck as a 'Seacreature'. But the fact remains that there was indeed a far-trade network across the steppe and also connections between the barbaricum and Persia, proven by traces of silk in celtic and germanic graves and many of the almandines used in early-medieval germanic grave-goods originating from Sri Lanca. (Asides the recent re-finding of an ivory knifehandle from a 2nd century site in Wels/Austria that allegedly originated from Niya/Xinyang - and was inscribed in the Khar Script adds another puzzlestone to these far-range-contacts.) Thank you very much for the invitation. I'm always looking for 'fresh' interpretations and mind-food.

Like 1



Howard HS Chung

2 mos ago

Thank you for reading my paper and your valuable input. It is correct that the baptism of the Franks only happened with Clovis, that is, with the son of Childerich. But that the churches were not built until long after Childrich's death is incorrect. There is a letter from the Bishop of Reims, Remigius, to Clovis regarding his assumption of power. Bishop of Reim should already own a church. Church burial of rulers had been common since Constantine. He died in 337 and was buried in the Church of the Apostles in Constantinople. Clovis was also buried in a church (in the Church of the Apostles in Paris, later the Church of Sainte-Geneviève). Clovis was responsible for the burial of Childerich. Had he found it necessary to secure Roman support, he would have buried his father according to Roman custom, that is, Catholic. His choice of Hunnic burial shows that he despised the Romans.

Like



Howard HS Chung

2 mos ago

I agree with you that the Franks were not Huns. My paper attempts to demonstrate that the Merovingians were not Franks, but Huns. Childeric had molested the daughters of the Franks, his descendants treated the Franks like slaves, e.g. Chilperic, who shipped the Franks, including nobles, to Spain as bridal gifts. As with other Germanic tribes, the Huns formed the royal family or the high nobility, among the Franks. The name of the Franks can provide important information about their origin. The Latins called them "Franci"; in Old High German they were called "Franchon, Franchono"; in Anglo-Saxon "Frankan," "Francena"; Libanius calls them "Phragkhoi-"; in Old Russian "Fraji" or "Frajni." A Persian source gives an indication of the identity of the Franks: they called the Russ as "Farang-i-Russ" (Howorth, Henry H., *The Ethnology of Germany.- Part VI. The Varini, Varangians, and Franks.- Section I. The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland, Vol. 12 (1883), p. 536.*) In fact, there was a large Russ people called the Varangians. The Russian chronicler Nestor used this folk name to designate the Baltic Sea. He called all the inhabitants of this area the Varangers, unless they were Slavs or Finns. The Vikings also called themselves Varangians. The Chinese word Huarang 花郎 could be related to Varang. It was the name of a war caste in the Far East. The designation Varang, Huarang, Frank could stand for war caste. They were warriors in the main profession that the Yuezhi, Sarmatians and Alans used in wars. The Rus-Varangians, hired by the Byzantines under Emperor Basil in 988 as the emperor's personal guards, continued this tradition.

Like

1



Claudia Holzhammer

2 mos ago

Interesting, I never read that, though 1883 is not the newest date. In German they are written 'Waräger', and this term is exclusively used for Swedish travellers and traders and the Byzantine Imperial Guard in eastern Europe between the 8th and 12th century, in contrast to the Danish and Norwegian 'Wikinger' raiding the West. I don't know if the syllables Frank- and War- can be reduced to the same word-stem, them being different. That would need a modern linguist, which I am not. I do not dare to judge on Merovingian beginnings, with their historiographers being very late to the show and reporting legends and hearsay after their subjects' age-companions and life-witnesses had long died off and inventing speeches and reasonings of people they had not met. But I recall I once read - I fail to recall the author's name - another interesting discussion about the Merovingian dynasty, that might also link to dynastically far-reaching relationships at least at its end: that it had been harem-keeping Muslim and therefore Mozarabic mixed, and as argument was brought, the 8th century Muslim claim that their rule spread 'from the Seine to China' and that this would have been the 'true' reason for the Christian Carolingians replacing them and starting a Christian 'reconquista' in the name of Rome and added churchbuilding all over the place with Louis the Pious. But like all 'ancient people' they are a shattered projection-field that allows looks from all different angles. I don't know how well the bones of Childerich are preserved, but an analysis of his ancient aDNA could perhaps solve that puzzle. The only thing I know is that at least some of the Thuringians seem to have had a custom of head-binding, because in Bavaria there exists the grave of a lady with a Thuringian fibula and a deformed head, in this following 'Hunnic' customs. I seem to remember the reference-number of her genetic sample is AED 1108. If my memory serves me correct, she is from 420 AD, and she was past 60, so she was born about a century before Childerich's wife Basina, if she was member of the Thuringian nobility. So, end of the mays and might: I just found the article you want to read, if you haven't yet, you could add it as a footnote to 'Thuringians are Huns': Population genomic analysis of elongated skulls reveals extensive female-biased immigration in Early Medieval Bavaria Krishna R. Veeramah, Andreas Rott, Melanie Groß, +16, and Joachim Burger Michaela.Harbeck@extern.lrz-muenchen.de Authors Info & Affiliations Edited by Eske Willerslev, University of Copenhagen, Copenhagen, Denmark, and approved January 30, 2018 (received for review November 21,

2017) March 12, 2018 115 (13) 3494-3499
<https://doi.org/10.1073/pnas.1719880115>

Like



Howard HS Chung

2 mos ago

The subject of artificial skull deformation is indeed very interesting. However, it was not only the Huns who cultivated this custom. This custom arose for a short time among all Germanic peoples. Of course, one is content here with the succinct remark that the Germanic elite for a short time imitated the Huns (e.g. M. Schweissing, G. Grupe: Local of nonlocal? A research of strontium isotope ratios of the teeth and bones on skeletal remains with artificial deformed skulls, in: *Anthropologischer Anzeiger* 58 (2000) 99-103.). It is overlooked that this custom was firmly anchored in all peoples who emigrated from the Far East. So with the Alans (Bachrach, Bernard S. (1973) *A History of the Alans in the West: From Their First Appearance in the Sources of Classical Antiquity Through the Early Middle Ages*, pp. 67-69, Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press.), Sarmatians (Hyun Jin Kim, *Eurasian Empires in Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages Contact and Exchange between the Graeco-Roman World, Inner Asia and China*, 2017, p. 258), Kushans (A. Z. Zadneprovsky, in Gafurov (1970), p.148). Sources from the Far East show that this custom was intensively cultivated there: In *San Guo Zhi* (三國志) there is an entry describing this custom among the Dongyi (Koreans) for the 5th century: "When a male child is born, they press his head with a stone to flatten its shape. Therefore, all Chen-han people have flat heads." (兒生，便以石厭其頭，欲其褊。今辰韓人皆褊頭。 *San Guo Zhi* (三國志), 魏書三十, 弁辰傳.) The tradition of skull deformation seems to have lasted for a long time among the Koreans. For as late as the 14th century, this custom was widespread among Koreans, as revealed by *Song Shi* (宋史, from 1346) in the book on Goryeo (高麗): "They don't have a dent in the back of their head, the back of their head is flat." (人首無枕骨，背扁側。 *Song Shi* (宋史), Buch 487, 高麗). Also in the Japanese sources it is attested that in the Japanese Heian era (794-1185)

artificial skull deformation was widely practiced (Riddle, Mark A., *Tenn ō (天皇): The Central Asian Origin of Japan's Solar Kingship*, Sino-Platonic Papers, 214, 2011, S. 25).

Like 1



Elnathan Barnett

2 mos ago

Hi! Thank you for the invitation. I am somewhat pressed for time, as I am preparing for a move and my sources are packed away and unavailable, but I'll respond as best I can from memory. I am afraid you have made the mistake of assuming that material culture - grave goods in this case - are indicative of race or ethnicity. That isn't necessarily so. For example, the Romans and Germans military adopted Han-style scabbard slides, with the steppe cultures acting as intermediaries, several hundred years prior to the appearance of the Huns, yet it is wildly improbable that this change is due to the entire Roman military being drawn from steppe populations - it was simply that the style became fashionable or was considered useful and was adopted by largely non-steppe peoples. The Huns, for a short period, exercised a considerable amount of political and military power and it isn't too surprising that their material culture influenced other peoples -that it became fashionable. I believe that the gold-and-garnet cloisonne decoration so typical of the very early Medieval European peoples (including the Byzantines) was introduced by the Huns, and outlasted the empire by many generations and spread far beyond their borders. Ergo, it is not such a surprise to find considerable Hunnic influence on the material culture of the Frankish king, particularly one with connections to the Attila's court - as a matter of fact, it would be rather odd if he had not aped the Huns! As for the written sources, I am afraid that once one drops the a priori belief that Childeric was not a Frank, I don't see much to support your argument, and a good deal that has to be explained away. As a matter of fact, one could argue that given Gregory's antipathy towards the Merovingians, had he been in a position to link them with a people, the Huns, whose name was a byword for brutality and destruction, he would have done so. I

don't see that Gregory would have had any reason to try to conceal Childeric's foreign origins had they existed. As for the poor relations between the Merovingians and their subject people, I am afraid that that can be easily explained by noting that, if my memory is correct, the majority of the people under Frankish rule were Gallo-Roman and considered "foreigners" by the Franks, and second, Gregory of Tours was not shy about publicizing, and possibly exaggerating, every instance of Merovingian misbehavior. In sum, I don't think that there is any mystery to be explained, and even if one does find it odd that a pagan Frankish king was buried in a pagan-style grave with Hunnic influences, I don't think that the evidence presented indicates that he was anything but a Frank. If you wish to continue this line of research, I would suggest looking into the literature regarding the issues of race, ethnicity, and identity in the early Middle Ages, particularly in regard to the easy shifting of allegiances among the elite of both Roman and non-Romans in the final years of the Western Empire.

Like 3



Howard HS Chung

2 mos ago

Thank you for taking the time to read my paper despite moving. I wish you a good start in the new environment. Regarding your comments: 1. Grave goods as indication for race or ethnicity: May I ask: From where else can we make such deductions? Why are you doing archaeological excavations and making detailed descriptions of finds? For the museum? But here the museum visitor expects explanations about the find objects, namely about the cultural and ethnic environment of the find objects. I acknowledge that there can be misinterpretations of a find's cultural or ethnic context. But I cannot understand why it should be wrong to infer cultural or ethnic backgrounds from grave finds. With such claim you abolish historical archeology. 2. Han style scabbard slides: To interpret the Han-style scabbard slides you mentioned as „life style imitations“ makes things too easy. These swords (they are called "Swords of the Asiatic type", after W. Menghin) appear in Sarmatian tombs in the Pontic region

as early as in the first century, and their distribution extends via Persia to China. See Jaroslav Tejral and Tomáš Zeman, The warrior graves with swords of the so-called Asian type in the central Danube region, taking into account the new find from Horakov (Moravia, CZ), 2021). It is precisely such finds that allow for cultural and ethnic interpretations, provided one has enough material, which is the case with the "Chinese Swords".

3. Gold and garnet cloisonne decoration: It is also simplistic to classify the Merovingian-era gold-and-garnet cloisonne decoration as a fashionable imitation of Hunnic tradition. There is an interesting article on the chemical analysis of garnet cloisonne. According to this, the garnet all come from India and Ceylon up to the 7th century, then afterwards from Bohemia (cf. PATRICK PÉRIN, THOMAS CALLIGARO, FRANÇOISE VALLET, JEAN-PAUL POIROT & DOMINIQUE BAGAUT, Provenancing Merovingian garnets by PIXE and μ -Raman spectrometry, 2007). Now the historian must try to draw cultural and ethnic conclusions from this result for this result is quite strange. If the garnet were a commodity, why didn't they get to the Romans, why do they appear only with the Germanic peoples? Who had control over the areas of India, Ceylon and then Bohemia, while also having access to the Germanic upper class? I mean it could only have been the Huns. The Huns (White Huns, the Hepthalites) occupied large parts of Parthia in the 4th and 5th century. Parthia had a trade monopoly with India and China, which was transacted via Ceylon. The Huns then occupied Hungary and began producing the garnet locally. If anyone has a better interpretation of the spread of garnet cloisonne from India, Ceylon and Bohemia, I am more than willing to give up my interpretation.

4. The issues of race, ethnicity, and identity in the early Middle Ages This is of course a very challenging undertaking. And I admit that this is not easy to prove on the basis of grave finds. Nevertheless, I believe that we have enough material today, both in the West and in the East and in between, that one can dare to venture ethnic distinctions between peoples of the Early Middle Ages. As a lawyer, I can tell you that legal anthropology can be very fruitful. What changes little with migrating peoples is the burial culture and the legal system, which is connected with the fact that these forge a people together. I see e.g. a *continuum culturae* in the Frankish feudal system to the Parthian and Xiongnu constitution.

Like

**Howard HS Chung**

2 mos ago

A pretty obvious question which no historian of the Middle Ages has seriously asked, let alone attempted to answer.

Like

**Wayne Tucker**

2 mos ago

Thank you for inviting me into this discussion. The more pressing question becomes the use of the term "Hun" to describe Childeric I. Certainly, he occupied the French area, and the Huns were from the east but therein lays the conundrum. John of Gaunt claimed to be a descendent of the western Persians. But to try to place a Roman style mindset and, by extension, the use of the Roman-Catholic system of burial practices is to completely miss the point. The western Hun are a completely different culture than the Romans. Their traditions reach farther back in prehistory and the Silk Road Cultures were not on the best of terms with the descendants of the Fertile Crecent. The most obvious observation here is that Pre-Greek Dark Age Cultures, albeit more ancient were not entertained. So, we come to the grave good tradition of the use of the Cicada. In most instances the discussion of the Cicada as a grave good item should be expanded to include a greater range of insects that might be found in a post-apocalyptic environment. The stench described in a number of places must have been more compelling a thought than wondering whether someone was more aligned with the more recent societal influences of the cuneiform cultures. The area covered by these cultures literally covers two continents. Again thank you for inviting me.

Like



Howard HS Chung

2 mos ago

Dear Wayne, Thank you for joining the session. I'm honoured. The fact that cuneiform cultures were able to spread to two continents was based not least on their ability to orientate themselves in the world. They knew where they were and how to move to another place and come back home. In other words, they had mapping and navigation skills. In this regard, your work on Nüwa (女媧) and ASTRONOMY CALCULATIONS to DETERMINE LOCATION can shed light on this topic.

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