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THE HUNS AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON THE WESTERN AND EASTERN ROMAN EMPIRES. HISTORICAL ESSAY

This essay deals with history of the Huns intrusion into the situation of both East and West Roman empires in the middle of V century. Meagre number of sources preserved for this very important event of the European history, including Ammianus Marcellinus, Priscus, Jordanes writings. The most valuable source about the Huns in this period is the Byzantine History of Priscus. It began story with the year 434 and is the most informative source on the history of the Huns. Small number of contemporary historians made original researches on the item too, first of all-Edward Thomson, whose research was published firstly nearly seventy years ago. Hyum Jim Kim in his book “The Huns” (2016) looks at the problem in contexts of other Huns- from Asia.

I propose to look on the Huns history in Europe using scientific discussing on it, especially their role on fate of the East and the West Roman empires. We may remember that both parts of the Roman empire were ruled different emperors, the situation in them were different, though it was conceived as one political and cultural community. Both parts of the empire were in crises conditioned additionally by the invasions of different tribes through its borders and arising of the new barbarian states. October 19, 439 Vandals under leadership of Gaiserik took Carthagen, one of the biggest cities in the world.

The story is divided into two part- reasons of the Hunnic invasions into the Roman empire and decisive battle against the Huns at the Catalaunian Plains in 451 A. C. In the first part of an essay, I write about the origin of these nomads, their relations with other barbarian tribes and with both Roman empires. The Huns were Eurasian nomad which near AD 350 passed from northern coast of the Black Sea to the West of Europe. The Huns was a new arising empire, Rome was in decline.

In the second part of essay the main item are the conditions of the rapid decline of the Huns empire in result of its defeat at the Catalaunim Plains. The policy of uniting different forces against the Huns was carried out by Flavius Aetius. Finally, he became Commander-in-Chief of the western empire troops. Both sides, the Huns and the Romans used different pretexts to weaken each other. The situation decided the existence of the third party- barbarians, that were not striving become subjected none. Next year after the defeat, Attila, the king of the Huns, led them into Italy too, but must return and died soon. His empire collapsed. Surprisingly or not, both main figures of the story were died from different reasons shortly after main combats took place between all sides.

Key words: *the Huns, barbarians, invasions, combat, crisis, empire, collapse.*

PRECONDITIONS.

“The Byzantine History” of Priscus, that began story with the year 434 is the most valuable source on the history of the Huns. But his book had survived only in fragments. It could probably be said that his work did not include a consecutive narrative of Western affairs; our sunny moments, then, are restricted to the frontier history of the Eastern Empire. Ammianus Marcellinus wrote about previous years of the Roman contacts with Huns, Olympiodorus of Thebes, who was an envoy to the Huns left some information on it (in fragments). Later, this early information on the Guns was retold in “The Gothic history” of Jordanes (V century). He also wrote about the Gothic allies in struggle with Guns.

Edvard Thompson made detailed research about the Guns in 1948, it was updated by Kristopher Kelly in 2009. Hyum Jim Kim in his book “The Huns” (2016) looks at the problem in contexts of other Huns- from Asia. He confirms, that when the Huns have arrived from the inner Asia, they were, most possible, multiethnic, multilingual community consisted from different tribes and peoples of the Turkish and Iranian origin [5.5]. This point of view was rejected by O. J. Maenchen-Helfen previously.

I propose to look on the Huns history in Europe using this discussing, especially their role on fate of the East and the West Roman empires.

The years of the Hunnic invasion represent no more than different phases of a single crisis in both parts of the Roman empire. In particular, the two

main phases of population movement – c. 376-86 and 405-8 – were directly caused by the intrusion of the Hunnic power into the fringes of Europe.

The Huns would seem to be the first group of Turkic nomads to have intruded into Europe, wrote O. J. Maenchen-Helfen [7. ch.9]. The Huns were Eurasian nomad which near AD 350 passed from northern coast of the Black Sea to the West of Europe. They strongly impacted on the Germanic tribes (and others) living in central and eastern Europe which previously been in main focus of the Roman policy on the Rhine and the Danube. The first Gothic tribes asking for asylum for Rome were Tervingi and Greuthungi. It is well documented by Ammianus Marcellinus. They came to the river directly pressed upon by the Huns. All these invasions, with Huns included, during some decades had led to the collapse of the Western Roman empire.

In 395 the Huns crossed the Caucasus. One of these groups moved south and east toward Persia, other toward the Roman territories in Armenia, Cappadocia, and Syria. The fighting with them continued into 398. Some years later the Hunnic groups became the real threat on the Danube, though majority of them still were closer to the Don and the Volga. Flavius Aetius ((391–454), a Roman general and statesman of the western empire, drew upon the Huns in his inner political struggle. He used the Huns extensively in Gaul too, where they were responsible both for crushing the Armorican Bagaudae, and for much of the campaign against the Visigoths. They also savaged the Burgundians in 437.

By c. 410, Goths, Vandals, Alans, and Suevi (amongst others) had made their way into the western Roman Empire directly as a result of the insecurity generated by the Huns beyond Rome's frontiers. Immigrations was not new affair for Rome, but previously it was done on the Rome terms or else resisted. Local elites and landlords supported central power and Roman army as a condition of their security. Any weakening of Roman power effected breaking down ties between local Roman elites and the imperial center [3, p. 21]. Even more: P. Heather confirmed that the disintegration of the west Roman state was a direct political consequence of the immigrations prompted by the Huns [3, p. 23]. But how big were these bands of the Huns at the empire border? E. Tomson assumed the average the Huns raiding party, which harried the Roman provinces at the beginning of the fifth century, rarely if ever to have numbered more than about 1200 warriors [8, p. 54].

Serious changes took place in the Balkan Peninsula and in Greece in 420-s. The Huns encamped on the

Great Hungarian Plain and threat towards South and East both Roman empires. Population of countryside rescued themselves, if possible, by running into cities. The Huns and the Goths from Pannonia could threat now both parts of the Roman empire. Though, our information about events is meagre in these areas during V century. The towns and cities were overcrowded with refugees and resettled for defense to heights, or closer to the rivers and mountains.

Decisive change in war tactic of the Huns took place at the V century beginning. Instead to leave after themselves ruined and burnt villages, to slaughter peasants, they begun to demand regular tribute from blossomed agricultural communities, threatening them by repressions. The Huns' empire, spreading through Europe successfully expropriated wealth and working force from conquering territories, Christopher Kelly notes [6.61]. The conquered lands provided the Huns army with provisions, recruits, with pastures for the breeding and support of their horses. That is why intrusion in economic and social life of subjugated tribes was minimal. The Huns strived to exploit Goths but not to break it. Their living on the middle Danube was not lasting: from nearly 410 to 465. Anyhow, in Europe there are small number of the determined Huns' entombments.

But culture, way of living, habits of the Goths subjected by the Huns continued to exist. C. Kelly writes that it is more possible the Huns adopted the way of living, some elements of culture from the Goths. Building their empire in Europe the Huns stopped to be nomads. In spite of their atrocities and plunder Attila, it has been said, was only the Scourge of God for the Roman priests and administrators interested in keeping the nations under the domination of Rome. As for me, it is very strong confirmation even for the contemporaries. Because, building their empire they ruined others and brought the suffering for the masses.

In 422 A.D. Constantinople agreed for indemnity for the Huns in 350 pounds of gold. By the 420s, however, they were definitely occupying middle Danubian regions west of the Carpathians.

In the middle of the V century the Ravenna' imperial court controlled Italy and the part of the southern Gaul only. Another part of western empire was governed by barbarian chiefs which treated themselves almost as the independent sovereigns. Even more badly, the West lost the provinces which have grown bread cultures in Africa, in Spain. In 444 A. D. state revenues were not enough to maintain an army that existed, not to mention about of increasing of it. That's why many of the imperial

officials lost privileges do not to pay of taxes. The exploitation human and economic resources was possible now with accordance of the local elites. To defend the empire borders, even more- to beat off military threat would possible to draw into coalition all who have interest in it: not the Romans only, but neighbouring tribes, the Gallic-Romans too.

Such policy of uniting different forces against the Huns was carried out by Flavius Aetius now. Finally, he became Commander-in-Chief of the western empire troops (from 430). Previously, he had been defeated by other pretendent for this post Boniphacius and escaped for the Huns. But the last was died. With their troops Aetius raided in the North Italy, bluffing its support. Galla Placidia, mother of emperor Valentinian III, that aided Bonifacius was forced to agree with that situation.

The immediate task for Aetius was now: to stop the Huns invasion. Maybe, he was best off the Romanian officials prepared for this task (he had been their hostage more than twenty years before). In 425, when the usurper John was fighting for his life against East Roman forces at Ravenna, he sent Aetius to the Huns to hire an army and bring it to Italy as quickly as possible. But Aetius returned too late. When he appeared with 65 000 Hunnic troops in Italy John had been three days dead [3.40]. So, Aetius had real knowledge about the Huns. Combatting against the German tribes he used the Huns too. E. Thompson disagreed with such numbers of the Huns' help. He stated that when we further take into account the fact that neither Aetius nor the Western government could possibly have paid or fed 60,000 mercenaries, we cannot but conclude this figure to be an exaggeration [8, p. 55].

Later, Aetius conscripted of the Huns for war with Tuluzia kingdom. This war was waged 3 years. For the support in war with Burgundia the western empire was forced to cede for the Huns 100 miles western from the Danube nearly contemporary Budapest towards the river turn to east in present Serbia (200 miles). This was price of compromise. So, the Huns were not only foes of Romans but also to some extent their friends, and served not without effect as mercenaries in the imperial armies. During the year 433, as a result of a treaty between Aetius and the Huns, Pannonia Prima was surrendered to the latter by the Western government. So, Aetius voluntarily surrendered to the barbarians a province of the Roman Empire. It may have been in connection with this agreement that his son Carpilio followed in his footsteps by serving as a hostage among the nomad [8, p. 71].

In the beginning of the year 434 Esla, diplomat of the Hunnic king Rua demanded in Constantinople that

the Romans must return to Rua's dominions certain peoples who had fled from it; otherwise, Rua would declare war [8.79]. It seems that they were Hunnic tribes who refused to recognize the overlordship of Rua. In summer of 434 the Huns under leadership of the king Rua (he first appears in history in the year 432) were going into the eastern empire, the majority troops of the latter were prepared to the war with Vandals in Afrika. But, suddenly, after death of their king the Huns had retreated from the Constantinople's walls.

According to so called Peace of Margus in the year 435 the Romans were to receive no further fugitives from the dominions of the Huns, and they were at once to return those whom they had already admitted into their empire. Additionally, the Romans were also to send back escaped Roman prisoners or were instead to pay 8 solidi for each of them. It was further stipulated that the Romans should make no alliance with any people with whom the Huns went to war. The Huns' trading rights were also reaffirmed by this treaty. Even more: that the annual tribute payable to the Huns should be doubled, and that henceforth 700 lb of gold (nearly 320 kg) must be sent to the kings directly. Theodosius II was forced to pay these money. It was more usefully and cheaply for the empire to pay this tribute than to send any punitive expedition against nomads.

In c. 440, the Hunnic Empire reached the apotheosis of its power under the nephews of Rua-Bleda (older) and Attila his brother: the end result, it seems, of related processes of power centralization among the Huns, and conquest of other tribes.

Within seven years the new rulers had built up a vast barbaric dominion of their own, stretching from the Balcans to the Caucasus and beyond. It included all the Germanic and other nations between the Alps and the Baltic, and between the Caspian (or somewhat west of it) and a line drawn an unknown distance east of the Rhine. The Huns, taking parts in battles with Romans, had learned to storm the cities and towns, and enslave its population. Because of the greater strength at their disposal, Hunnic leaders could now widen their ambitions. Attila and Bleda launched the first of their major invasions across the Danube. Realizing vulnerability of the Roman empire, the Huns begun raids into Illiria and Thrace.

Many of the eastern troops in Sicily had been drafted from this frontier, and had to return. The richest lands of the western Empire were thus lost, because Vandals occupied it.

In winter of 439 high officials of the eastern empire Flavius Pinta, courtier Epigan were waging

negotiations with Attila and Breda in contemporary Serbia. Two sides came to mutual agreement. The Romans promised that they would return all Hunnic refugees and did not support anybody who would cross the Danube. The Romans have not right to conclude union with anybody who was the Huns' enemy. The trade obligations were confirmed on the mutual base. The Romans must to pay 700 pounds of gold yearly directly to Attila and Breda. The returned to the Huns two boys- relatives of these kings were piled with aim to intimidate anybody who may encroach upon the power the present Hunnic kings. The Romans withdrew the troops from Balkan and may to use it anywhere now.

October 19, 439 Vandals under leadership of Gaiseric took Carthagen, one of the biggest cities in the world. Capturing the Roman fleet, they plundered Sicilia next year. The troops of both Roman empires gathered to reconquest these territories. A Persian army under Yezdegerd II launched an invasion of Roman Armenia. Although the Persian forces soon had to retire because they were menaced in the rear by an attack of the 'White Huns', a considerable Roman army must have been deployed to meet their threat. Knowing about it, the Huns gathered troops and crossed Danube, making intrusion into the eastern Roman empire, using for it different pretexts. They took firstly fort Margus on Danube. When Flavius Aspar, an envoy of Theodosius II had arrived to settle the conflict as misunderstanding, Attila charged local bishop with sacrilege concerning the tombs of his relatives and refused to continue negotiation. This bishop betrayed this town promising Attila that Margus would surrender to the Huns. From now on the Huns (from summer of 441 to spring of the next year) attacked, seized, captured and ruined almost all bigger towns along river Morava, as well as the unprotected smaller settlements. The assailants used military tactic of the Romans by besieging the towns now.

The Roman troops have been taken from the Danube border and were returning back on their previous placement to meet the Hunnic threat in spring of 442. Next year Attila assembled his army and demanded the fugitives and the tribute money. The Romans refused to hand over the fugitives. But they strived to negotiate on the peace with Attila. He was angered such reply and his army was driving eastward along the Danube.

On 12 September 443, within a month of the end of the fighting, stringent orders were given to Nomus, the master of the offices and one of the most trusted ministers of the emperor, to fortify the exposed

frontier along the Danube where Attila had won his initial successes in 441, to repair the fortresses there, and to bring all military detachments posted in that area up to their full strength.

Learning it, the Huns returned to the Great Hungarian Plaine. In results of the Hunnic raid northern border of the eastern part of the Roman empire was ruined. King of the Huns Bleda was killed in 445. His brother Attila (396-453) left the only king of that expansive empire. E. Thompson wrote that he realized more clearly than any of his predecessors that, if all the tribes could be united under an unquestioned and absolute leader, the Huns would form an unparalleled instrument for the exploitation of the peoples of central Europe [8. 230].

Attila' principal secretary and lead messenger, Constantius, was from Italy and his second in command, Onegesius was from Hellenized origins. Both men knew the workings of the outside world and could speak either Latin or Greek, the two principal languages of the Empire, noted Patrick Howarth [4.41].

The rest of the 440s saw both eastern and western parts of the Roman empire attempted to resist the overt aggression of the Attila's Hunnic empire. The campaigns of these years had many serious effects: both halves of the Empire lost lands in Pannonia to the Huns, and both suffered from the wide-ranging Hunnic raids.

As in some other parts of Roman empire, in western empire was evident financial crisis. In 444, an imperial law openly admitted that plans for a larger army were being frustrated by the fact that revenues were not even large enough to feed and clothe existing troops: a statement justifying the introduction of a new sales tax of about 4 per cent. Then the regime widened the taxes on some privileged group of population.

After crushing defeat on the Roman army at Gallipoli, Theodosius II emperor was forced to treble the annual tribute: 210 pounds of golds per year and 6000 pounds immediately as a debt for the previous years. Attila, killing in 445 his brother became the only king of the Hunnic empire. He owned the Central Europe, and, maybe, even Eastern Europe from the Black Sea. The group of Huns had gone to the Thermopylae in Greece. According to peace treaty the Huns received 300 miles of territory on Danube's south, in Pannonia. In eastern empire the taxes were rising to pay this gold. In short time the Huns turned towards western part of Roman empire, that looked more vulnerable than eastern part of it.

Two years in the Eastern Europe were poor harvests, a plague and an earthquake in January 447

added troubles. Some part of the Constantinople's walls crumbled in result of the last trouble. The Huns did not miss the opportunity. Their forces included the Gepids that were led by their king Ardaric and the Goths by Valamer, and there were others whose names have not been recorded [8, p. 99]. All these troops moved toward Thessaly and Constantinople, and reminded to the Romans the accord of the 439 year' treaty: to return to the Huns all the fugitives and to pay 700 pounds of gold per year.

But Theodosius II refused to fulfill those demands, proposing negotiations on it. The Constantinople walls were rapidly rebuilt in two months. The Huns passed the border and advanced in two directions at once: southward into Thessaly, and eastward to Constantinople. During this advancement they seized some frontier towns, though Adrianople and Edirne repulsed attacks. An offensive tactic of the Roman army against the Huns did not stop them, but slowed down [6, p. 137]. The Roman experienced generals: Flavius Aspar, Flavius Ariobindus, Arnegisclus generals were not prepared to stake all on one decisive encounter. They elected instead to sustain severe and demoralizing losses over two long and weary months to win the time needed for the rebuilding of the capital's defenses. They fulfilled this task but suffered defeats in battles with Huns. After victorious battles the Huns could have found themselves trapped before the Theodosian Walls, short of food, threatened by disease, and too far from the safety of the Danube. Without a fleet, they could not have imposed an effective blockade. Though 20 miles only separated them from Constantinople, the Huns returned to the Great Hungarian Plain. But before it, near Marsianople and river Utus, the Roman forces under Arnegisclus blocked the Huns' homeward march. The Huns won the battle in the end, but with great losses for themselves, so it was nearly the only Roman victory in the war, where Arnegisclus was died in combat. The fact remains that this was the last of Attila's victories over the Romans, noted E.Thompson. But the Huns devastated the Balkan provinces. After it they drove straight down southwards into Greece and were only held at Thermopylae.

After it, the same year 447 Theodosius had sent two of high-ranked persons: the general Flavius Anatolius and master of the office Nomus to negotiate with Attila about withdrawing of the Huns from territory of empire. Attila demanded to pay per year tributes, to pay off debts for previous years and to return fugitives from his lands. The eastern Roman empire paid 2100 pounds of gold (c. 1000 kg) and 6000 as a debt. This sum was big

enough, but smaller than prize of continuing fighting for the Romans. Additional point of that agreement was to give for the Huns territories for their resettlement in Pannonia as long as 200 miles and width from 20 to 100 miles along natural border among empire and the Huns- Danube. Theodosius adhered the policy of reconciliation toward the Huns, but not exclude secret plan to murder Attila. For the last aim the Romans have recruited (or thought so) the Hunnic envoy Edico, promising for the work 50 lb of gold. The persons who might to organize the affair were secretly present in the Roman embassy to Attila. This plan was elaborated by Theodosius' most powerful secretary, eunuch Chrysaphius. The embassy was leading by Margus. But Edico have revealed this plot to Attila, that led to the next disputes between sides.

Theodosius did not venture to attack the Huns in a decisive combat, because the military power of the empire lost former mighty, additionally-threats existed on other fronts from Vandals, Persia. On July 26, the emperor fell from his horse and

injured his spine. Two days later he was dead. He had not a son, but his sister Pulcheria was ready to take power even with nominal marriage with Thracian senator and ex-soldier Marcian whom she promptly named Augustus and placed with herself, on the throne-claiming, that he had been nominated by Theodosius on his deathbed.

One of Marcian's first act was to refuse the king of the Huns his annual tribute. Knowing that Attila was preparing a vast operation against the Western empire, he doubtless gambled on his unwillingness to delay this by a punitive expedition to the East. The gamble paid off, when the Hunnic army had started upon its march into Italy and Gaul.

COMBAT ON THE CATALAUNIAN PLAINS AND FATE OF THE HUNS.

Flavius Aetius, under pressure was forced to cede province Savia in Pannonia to the Huns, in 449. Even more! Attila gained the honorary title *magister militum* with according allowance. But after the victories over eastern empire the Huns turned to the western one. Historians wrote, that Hunnic successes were results of the Roman weakness, because in the past Romans mastered with nomads, but were rather afraid to lose prestige had been defeated in big battle with Huns now.

As Adrian Goldsworthy noted, Attila had not had aim to widen his possession by war. He strived simply to reward his supporters. For it he had to wage successful raids to profit by plunder and to intimidate the Romans to faster payment of tribute. K. Kelly writes, that chieftains of the Huns must share war

loots with chieftains of the conquered peoples and tribes, and in this way drawing them into their empire. They strived to draw local rulers not by arms and force only, but to draw them into collaboration. The Romans tried to baptize of the Huns but failed.

In 451 and 452 years the destiny of European civilization depended on its ability to bring to an end external threat, in first place with the Huns. Attila, for some times have contained by the Rome army, moved from his headquarters in contemporary Hungary towards Italy with army, estimated by Jordanes in half of million, that included some German tribes [1.181]. For pretext Attila used scandal in the emperor's family. The sister of emperor of the Western Roman empire Justa Grata Honoria had been seduced by Eugenius who was her steward and she became pregnant. Honoria was sent by her brother emperor Valentinian III to Constantinople under guardianship of the emperor Theodosius II sisters that gave the vow of virginity and were engaged in philanthropy, helped the Church and poor peoples. Eugenius was finally executed. Later, Honoria was returned to Ravenna. In near future the Valentinian's daughter 12 years old Eudocia marriage with sun of the Vandal's king Gunerik. So, emperor decided to resolve problems and scandal with his sister. Honoria had been forcibly engaged to the Italian aristocrat Flavius Bassus Herculanus. Valentinian's choice was carefully made. He was all too aware of his sister's ambitions; like their mother, Galla Placidia, she wished to be the wife and mother of emperors. In the spring of 450 she sent one of her eunuchs, Hyacinth by name, to Attila, to beg him, in return for a sum of money, to rescue her from her intolerable marriage. She gave her ring to Hyacinth to hand to Attila, so that the barbarian might be assured of the authenticity of the message. Honoria's motives had been political from the first. Her plan was to make Eugenius emperor and to reign as his empress. Subsequent fortunes of Honoria remain unknown. Whatever the princess's fate, Attila welcomed the opening which she had given him; he at once claimed Honoria as his wife [8.146]. This was successful pressure on her brother. But Honoria hardly had relied for such response, it was impossible for her as a Christian to become the one's of the barbarian wives. Valentinian III found out about this undertaking was out of his mind. But to refuse Attila's proposal meant to provoke the Huns real invasion into Western empire. So, Valentinian III had ordered his sister to prepare for travel to the Huns, for Attila. Galla Placidia, mother of both Valentinian and Honoria meddled with affair. Because such deportation would have received by the

Huns as a weakness of the empire with corresponding consequences for the Romans. So, Honoria must be married with Herculanus and live in the countryside Italy. Galla Placidia died in Rome in November 450.

Attila, using the Honoria letter, demanded their marriage, threatening by the war. He sent embassy to Ravenna where it demanded that Honoria would become coruler of his brother. Attila knew well that his demand was impossible to fulfill in that society, where inheritance of the throne was through the male only. Valentinian III answered according "History of Attila" written by Priscus, that Honoria could not marry Attila, for she was already pledged to another man, and to rule the Rome empire have to be a man only. Of course, Honoria was not the only pretext, Attila knew about her marriage. The Huns chieftain long before have been preparing for the war. In 450 he settled an affair with the eastern part of Roman empire, avoiding second front, tried to cause disorder between different forces in Gallia ant Flavius Aetius. Attila aimed did not create united front against the Huns on the West, enlist chieftains of the different tribes and nationalities support. In February 451 he sent again an embassy to Ravenna. Attila demanded the half of the Western empire for himself and a right to marry Honoria with whom, he claimed, he was engaged. For proving of these words, the envoys produced Honoria's ring too.

As these troops of different tribes, including a good deal of the Goths, have moved into western Europe, Attila have sent a letter to the Ravenna court, declaring that he went against the Goths at the Romans request. In the same time, in the letter having been sent to a king Theodoric of Visigoths, he pointed out that he is in conflict with Romans and demanded from the king to join up with his troops. Attila did not strive to have the alliance the Goths and the Romans against himself.

Be late March 451, Attila's army marched along western bank of the Danube, and many cities fell to him, then crossed the Rhine near contemporary Koblenz. When his troops were marching west, in the third embassy toward Valentinian III, Attila demanded openly to prepare for him a palace in Ravenna. The Guns robbed contemporary Belgium, April 7 was burnt down Metz. Trier – the city that sometimes was a place of the temporary empire capital, was plundered also.

In May- June 451 the Huns troops achieved the walls of Orleans. The Gallic cities were already going up in flames when Aetius set out from Italy, where was a famine. This prevented him from mustering a considerable army, so he marched with auxiliary

troops only. His troops came to Orleans too. Aetius was the most influential figure in the Western Roman empire of that time: magister of all soldiers who newer strived become an emperor. By the way, Aetius could speak in the Hunnic language. Attila, his lifelong friend now became his enemy. With aim to oppose the Huns invasion which from the Roman empire allies have turn into its threat, general Aetius for a battle with them received support from Bagaudae, Burgundians (partly), Saxons, some Franks, Alans and Visigoths of the same king Theodoric. In last case-even by those Visigoths that were in auxiliary troops of the Roman army, but in result of long-term negotiations. However, the offer of an alliance with Theodoric was one of Valentinian's most significant policy decisions. It forced him to recognize the permanence of the Gothic state in France.

When the Roman army had arrived to Orleans, Attila troops retreated in the direction of Champagne. There, on the Catalaunian Plains, for suggestion of Jordanes (VI century), the decisive battle had taken place. 20 June is an approximate date of the engagement. The Roman troops under command of Aetius stood side by side with Visigoths of Theodoric and his older son Thorismud. These two were enforced by Burgundians, Bagaudae. With the Huns stand other Goths, descendants of subjugated by the Huns 75 years ago, which lived on the north from the Danube. Their leaders were brothers Valamer, Thiudimer, and Vidimer.

The battle begun nearly June 20, 451. The first day of combat was muddled. The Romans constructed their usual military camp, the allies disposed themselves without fortifications. The Huns encircled themselves with protection of their wagons. The battle opened at about the ninth hour of the day with an effort by both sides to occupy a hill which dominated the battlefield. The Romans seized it in night and in the next day prevented the enemy to occupy the hill. Fighting ceased only at nightfall. Both sides had suffered significant losses. Next day the fight renewed nearly 3 hours afternoon, as was proposed, Attila thought, that in case of defeat his troops would escape in night. Attila himself was in the center of his troops, right and left sides occupied the troops of dependent tribes. In the center of the Roman troops were situated Franks, Alans and others tribes. Aetius with Romans situated themselves on the left flank, Visigoths- on the right. In the fierce combat king Theodoric was among the slain, and his body was only found on the following day.

Visigoths forced the Huns back to their camp. In the morning of the next day the Romans with

allies decided to starve the Huns and their allies into surrender by blockading their camp. The fate of the Huns looked ghostly. But at the end of the battle situation dramatically changed. Jordanes wrote about sudden withdrawal of the coalition forces from Catalaunian Plains. He explained it unwillingness of Aetius to strength his ally Visigoths. So, Aetius, recommended to the late king's Theodoric son, Thorismud, that he should at once return to Toulouse so as to prevent his brothers from seizing the throne in his absence. Thorismud took the advice given him, and led his men away. According to Jordanes:

"He feared that if the Huns were annihilated by the Goths, then the Roman empire would be overwhelmed and urgently advised him to return to his own dominions to take up the rule which his father had left" [2. [XLI. 216].

Aetius, writes C.Kelly, was aware that victory might mean little more than the replacement of one threat with another. Attila might well have been eliminated, but without his leadership the Hun empire could have dissolved into civil war. If Attila's empire collapsed, then in the violent competition for control that followed, there might again be pressure from the displaced tribes and the defeated to move across the frontier of the Roman empire [6, p. 252]. Aetius was probably looking forward to years of co-operation with Attila even after the Catalaunian Plains' battle too. So, Aetius allowed Attila to retreat from Gaul.

The Huns had retreated from Gallia. In result of the battle 165 000 have been slain on both sides, leaving out of account fifteen thousand of the Gepidae and Franks from both sides, who met each other the night before the general engagement and fell by wounds received [2, p. 219].

But in the 451 end Attila demands tribute -now from the eastern Roman empire, as it did previously, as if nothing happened.

At the beginning of 452, Attila, recovering from defeat, moved through contemporary Hungary and Slovenia to Italy where he did not meet a resistance for some time. Attila considered that he should invade into Italy and without being clashing with united forcers of the Romans and the Goths. He really took some cities and plundered it: Aquileia-after long besiege was razed to the ground, those who survived abandoned the ruins and settled sixty miles along the coast on the shores of a sheltered lagoon- it was future Venice; Pavia with Milan was sacked, pillaged too, inhabitants led away into slavery. Milan was a capital of the Western Roman empire from 382 toward 402. In the last two cases, as it looks, considerable part of population had left the city and moved in direction of

Alps. While the Huns advanced across northern Italy, Valentinian III remained in Rome.

From Milan the Huns went on the southwest and near Mantua, on the banks of the Mincius had met an embassy sent by Valentinian III from Rome, headed by the Pope Leo I (Great). In the central Italy Flavius Aetius did not pass the Huns. Attila's army stopped. The historians dispute the reasons of it. Traditionally, standstill was being explained by the convincing by Leo I of Attila that he would no move forward. Attila was superstitious and Leo I or somebody other dissuaded him by reminding him of that same Alaric and how he had died almost immediately after sacking the great city (Rome). It so likely that the Huns have problems with their provision, because in previous year the harvests was meagre in Italy and in 452 the situation with it was not better. Italy suffered from famine and pestilence. In Hunnic army the first cases of plague appeared. The new East Roman emperor Marcian did not lose his opportunity. An East Roman force crossed the Danube under the command of an officer who, curiously enough, bore the name of Aetius. Flavius Aetius, from the Western empire, could not conduct general combat with Guns without the Goths. The raid on Rome looked not so attractive for Attila now. Maybe, Valentinian III had bribed the Huns too.

These or others reasons forced Attila's turn to the north and returned to the Great Hungarian Plain; he retired from Italy, his army did not even cross Po. This raid was successful for the Huns—they sacked some towns and cities, and returned with their wagons piled high with plunder. Another result for the Romans was explicit: the Western Roman empire was unable to protect itself.

In the end of 452 Attila sent a message in Constantinople that he would attack the Romans, because they stopped to pay the tribute. But at the beginning of the next year, Attila planned of his new marriage with additional wife. On this occasion his bride was Ildico, a woman of outstanding beauty. After the wedding, being heavily drunk, he had been suffocated in his sleep.

The high officials of both Roman empires thought that the biggest trouble they survived. This was a delusion, but such thinking existed some time. The place of Attila's grave is unknown, because all the participant in the action were killed.

Aetius' fears were proved right: after Attila's death the Hun empire fell apart. Attila had sons:

Ellac, Dengizich, and (the youngest) Ernac. It was not many months after their father's death that they began to quarrel. As to the cause of their quarrel, it would seem that one or more tried to dispossess the others from heir' share of the inheritance, and that several great battles were fought between them as a result. A subsequent civil war between Attila' sons allowed groups subjected to the Huns, such as Gepids and Goths, to reassert their independence. Using weakness of the Guns kings the subjected to them peoples and tribes shifted from that empire in the next years. These peoples and tribes formed confederation that defeated of the Huns somewhere in Slovenia in 454. Ellak died in the battle, the Guns and their allies lost nearly 30 thousands soldiers. By the late 460s the remnants of Attila's Huns were themselves seeking asylum inside the eastern Roman empire. The younger brothers of Ellak rised in opposition against the Goths on the middle Danube, but suffered the defeat too. One off the brothers began demand from Leo I, emperor of the East Roman empire, both money and land. Leo I answered, if they would recognize his imperial power, he might resettle them in Thrace. Dengizich attempted to vin a victory over the Roman army, but was unsuccessful, and died himself in the battle. His head was displayed for public. Some part of the Huns had withdrawn to the East across the Carpathians, till the Black Sea.

Flavius Aetius became a victim of a conspiracy of the Italian courtiers and was cut by sword by Valentinian III himself in September 454. These courtiers had claimed that Aetius was preparing to overthrow the acting emperor. The emperor did not survive long: he was killed in the next March by two of Aetius' bodyguards.

This dramatic collapse of Hunnic power brought in its wake a final crisis for the Roman Empire in western Europe in the next two decades. More barbarian groups, now released from Hunnic thrall, also started to press their demands on the Roman state. Hunnic power had been used by and Aetius to contain these groups within designated physical boundaries and minimize their political influence. When the disappearance of Hunnic power made this impossible after 453, the only viable alternative was actually to include all or some of them within the western Empire's body politic. And that is precisely what happening – with disastrous consequences – after 454 A.D.

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Русначенко А.М. ГУНИ ТА ЇХ ВПЛИВ НА ЗАХІДНУ І СХІДНУ РИМСЬКУ ІМПЕРІЮ: ІСТОРИЧНЕ ЕСЕ

Есе розкриває історію вторгнень гунів у Західну і Східну Римські імперії та вплив цього на становище тих імперій. Збереглась дрібка документів про ці дуже важливі події європейської історії. Вони включають, зокрема, твори Амiana Марцеліна, Пріскуса, Йордана Готського. Найціннішим джерелом про гунів є «Візантійська історія Пріскуса». Зовсім небагато сучасних істориків здійснили оригінальні дослідження на цю тему (наприклад, Едвард Томсон, чие дослідження вперше опубліковано понад сімдесят років тому; Хіюм Джім Кім у своїй книзі «Гуни» (2016) розглядає проблему в контексті інших гунів з Азії).

Запропоновано поглянути на історію гунів у Європі, використовуючи наукову дискусію про них, особливо про їхню роль і долі Східної і Західної частин Римської імперії. Маємо пам'ятати, що в обидвох частинах імперії правили різні імператори, становище їх було різним, хоч і вважалося, сприймалося, що обидві ці частини імперії – єдина політична і культурна цілісність.

Обидві частини імперії були в кризі, не в останню чергу зумовленій вторгненнями різних варварських племен через їхні кордони і появою нових держав варварів. Ще 19 жовтня 435 р. вандали під орудою свого вождя Гейзеріка взяли Карфагун – одне з найбільших міст світу.

Есе ділиться на дві частини. У першій ідеться про причини вторгнень гунів у Римську імперію, у другій – про вирішальну битву з ними на Каталаунійських полях у 451 році.

У першій частині есе описано походження цих кочівників, їхні стосунки з іншими варварськими племенами і з обома [частинами] Римської імперії. Гуни були євразійськими кочівниками, які близько у 350 р. н.е. прийшли з північного узбережжя Чорного моря до Західної Європи. Гуни були імперією, що піднімалась, Рим був у занепаді.

У другій частині історії головною темою є підстави швидкого падіння імперії гунів у результаті битви на Каталаунійських полях. Об'єднання різних сил проти гунів провадив Флавій Аецій, який став головнокомандувачем військ західної частини імперії.

Обидві сторони використали різні приводи, щоб ослабити один одного. Гуни ставали імперією, що піднімалася, Рим був у стані занепаду. Становище між ними вирішило існування третьої сторони – варварів, які не бажали ставати підлеглими жодній з імперій. Після поразки на Каталаунійських полях, Аттіла, вождь гунів, повів їх в Італію наступного року, але змушений був повернутися і незабаром помер. Його імперія скоро розвалилася. Дивно чи ні, але головні дійові особи описуваних подій померли зовсім незабаром після головних зіткнень між усіма сторонами.

Ключові слова: гуни, варвари, вторгнення, бій, криза, імперія, падіння.