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Note from the Editor in Chief

We are pleased to invite all scholars to publish their research papers on History and fields, related to History, written impartially and analyzing the historical past without political bias.

Reconstructing the Past: Journal of Historical Studies aims to foster recovering historical past without fear or favor, based not only on the historical methods and methodology, but also on an interdisciplinary approach.

Our purpose is to provide a forum for scientific research without political overtones.

Kind regards,

Professor Huseyn Baghirov

Founder of the Western Caspian University

SOME ASPECTS OF SAVIRS IN AZERBAIJAN

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Abstract. The Savirs played an important role in the early medieval history of the Caucasian people, and many historical sources mention them. They had involved in the Byzantine-Persian wars during the 6th century, then actively participated in the struggles against the invading Arabs in the 6-7th centuries. Most historical sources considered them to be Huns. They lived on the western part of the Caspian Sea, and we can find early historical sources, which mentioned them on the eastern parts of the Black Sea. Traces of the steppe horsemen can still be found in some parts of Azerbaijan, where some monuments preserved their memories. Archaeological excavations revealed their material culture almost the whole territory of Azerbaijan. In my presentation, I would present the memories left behind by the Savirs, referring some ancient historical sources and results of the archaeological excavations as well.

Keywords: *Huns, Savirs, Azerbaijan, Caucasus, Nomads, Byzantine, Persia*

The Transcaucasian region was a melting pot for various horsemen peoples in the early Middle Ages. Unfortunately, little attention has been paid to this topic in the last centuries. However, thanks to archeological excavations and new historical approaches, more data is being found about them. According to Jafarov, a researcher of the Huns in Azerbaijan, Savirs, as a member of the Hun alliance, played decisive role in the politics and ethnic image of Azerbaijan. [Jafarov (1985): 69] The name of the Savirs have preserved in many places in Azerbaijan: we can find Sabir, Sabirkend, Samukh, Sabir names throughout the country. [Geybullayev (1986): 34] The Savirs are often mentioned by Hungarian scholars as well. Archaeological excavations have increased in recent times, through which a hitherto unknown phase of the Huns who lived in the Transcaucasian region can be revealed.

Some Azerbaijani and foreign scholars believe that horsemen of the Eurasian steppe not only invaded the territory of present-day Azerbaijan, but also settled down and merged with the local population. Jafarov was one of the first scholar, who periodized the history of the Huns in the Transcaucasian area in his monograph. According to him, the Huns have established a strong power in the territory of present-day Azerbaijan during the 3-4. century, and one group of them, the Savirs, occupied quite few areas of Caucasian Albania, mainly in the northern and western parts in the 5th-6th century. [Agaev (2017): 46]

Two significant theories have emerged among historians and linguists regarding the origin of the Savirs. According to the first and the earliest concept, they arrived from Siberia and appeared in the Cis-Caucasus at the very beginning of the 6th century. Because of the superficial similarity of the words, some scholars derived the name of Siberia from the Savirs.¹ However, this theory has been rejected in recent years due to archaeological and linguistic contradictions. (The name of Siberia does not come from Savir either, but from the Mongolian word Shivar, which meant swamp. It is an expression from the 13th century.) The second theory is based on the records of ancient historical sources presented below, the Savirs were associated with Huns. They were the part of the Hun alliance during the 5th-6th centuries. However, it is not clear whether the Savirs came from Inner Asia together with Asian Huns or they lived in the Caucasus and made an alliance with the newly arrived people. In any case, their first mention is related to the appearance of the Huns in the 2nd century A.D.² There is no convincing evidence of their earlier presence.³

Let's examine, what historical sources recorded about the Savirs. The first is from the second half of the 2nd century A. D. The Roman geographer Ptolemy⁴ recorded people called Savaroi below the peoples Aorsi and the Pagyrtae. [Ptol. Geogr. III, 5, 22] The Azerbaijan scholar, Geibullaev thought that Ptolemy mentioned this tribe among the peoples living around the Caspian Sea. [Geybullayev (1986): 33] After that, Ammianus Marcellinus wrote the history of Rome, in the 4th century. He mentioned the Saphir tribe lived on the eastern coast of the Black Sea in 361-362, somewhere between the Halys and Phasis rivers, the territory of today's Georgia. [Marcellinus 22.8.] However, the author did not indicate a specific place of residence, because Romans had no direct contact with these peoples. Stephanus of Byzantium was an Eastern Roman grammarian and the author of an important geographical dictionary entitled "Ethnica" mentioned the people Sapire in the 5th century, living on the River Akampis (Coruh), between Colchis and Persia. [L. Balint 1901. 33] After the Hun invasion to the Roman Empire, the Greek-language sources consider Savirs as a tribe of the Huns. Sabirs or Savirs gained control of the eastern and central regions of the Northern Caucasus during the 5-6th centuries.

Jordanes mentioned them as a member of Hun confederation: "From here (Black Sea- O.B) the Huns, like a kind of very fertile sod of exceedingly strong tribes, expanded with two-pronged ferocity against other peoples. Some of these are called Altziagiri,

¹ According to Z. Ya. Boyarshinova, this term comes from the name of the ethnic group "Sipyr" (Sopyr, Sabir), whose language was the ancestor of the Ugric language group. Later, they assimilated into the Turkic-speaking group living along the river Irtysh in modern city Tobolsk. (Boyarshinova 2013. 152.) V. Ya. Petrukhin and D. S. Raevsky noticed that the Savirs migrated from the south of Western Siberia to the North Caucasus, and then to the Middle Volga region. (Petrukhin-Raevsky 2004. 416.)

² Dionysios Periegetes, the geographer of Emperor Hadrian (117-138) already mentioned the Huns in 117 A.D: "...after the Huns, the Caspians, and after them the Albanians and Kadus, who live in the mountainous region. L. Bálint 1901, 31.

³ Anton Salmin found some tribal names, which was similar to Savirs, as Sasperians in Herodotus, or Saperires (Apollonius of Rhodes), etc. Salmin 2016. 17.

⁴ The Ptolemy world map is a map of the world known to Greco-Roman societies in the 2nd century. It is based on the description contained in Ptolemy's book Geography, written around 150 A. D. Based on an inscription in several of the earliest surviving manuscripts, it is traditionally credited to Agathodaemon of Alexandria. So, the information recorded by Ptolemy, can be earlier than the middle of 2nd century A.D.

others Sabiri; and they have separate dwelling places. The Altziagiri are near Kherson, where the avaricious trader brings in the goods of Asia. In summer they range the plains, their broad domains, wherever the pasturage for their cattle invites them, and in winter returning to over the Black Sea. [Jordanes 1904. 33–37] The Eastern Roman author Theophanes wrote the same information in his chronicle: “The Huns called Savirs penetrated beyond the Caspian Gate (the Derbent pass), raided Armenia, plundered Cappadocia, Galatia and Pontus and almost reached Euchaita.” [Moravcsik 1942. 133] This event happened around 517.

The Savirs are also mentioned by Zakharias rhetor, who wrote a short note about the northern horsemen peoples around 518. According to him, *saber, ungur, abar, abdel, burgars, ogur*, etc. thirteen peoples belong to the Huns, they live inside the gates, some live in tents, and some lead a settled lifestyle." [Kmosko (2004): 99] Then, Procopius, the historian of Emperor Justinian, provides data on the presence of the Savirs in the Caucasus. According to him, a Hunnic people, the Savirs, live in the region beyond the Caucasus, about the Alans and Abazges. [Procopius II. XXIX. 15] He had no knowledge of the exact location, just like Marcellinus, but he roughly placed their residence next to Iberia, which could be the western region of today's Azerbaijan and eastern part of today's Georgia. The author also mentioned a queen, Boarix, a woman of the Huns called Savirs around 527-528. She had begun to rule after the death of her husband Valakh and had 100 thousand warriors under her control. [Helfen (1973): 196]

The Huns played an important role in the Persian-Byzantine wars during the 6th century, which were about the possession of the Caucasus, and mainly involved Iberia and Lazica. In the middle of the 6th century, hostilities between Iran and Byzantium erupted in Lazica.¹ Procopius and Agathias, as well as later Eastern Roman chroniclers, reported on the event, in which the Savirs often appeared. The Huns or Savirs concluded an alliance with the Romans, but some parts joined to the Persians as a mercenary. We can see the process for almost the entire sixth century that Savirs migrated unhindered around an area extending from the northern Caucasus to Asia Minor.

Later, according to Menander Protector, a Roman military commander forced the Savirs and Albanians to resettle between the River Kür and Araz. [Menandros Exc.de. Leg. Gent 2.] They also settled in Shamkir or Aghstafa, or the western region of Azerbaijan. [Ashurbeili (1983): 62] From the fragments of Menander we can also read that the Byzantine-Persian negotiations at Dara in 561 stipulated that "Persians, Huns, Alans or other barbarians" could not cross the Chor Pass or the Caspian Gates to attack Roman territories. Masudi from the 10th century mentioned the Savirs living between Ganja and Tbilisi regions. [Thúry (1898): 325] According to the historical sources, Savirs were able to preserve their own identity until the Middle Ages and sometimes they were called Hungarians or Madjars as well. [Ibidem, 393] So, the history of Huns, Madjars or

¹ Lazica, situated on the eastern shore of the Black Sea, and controlling important mountain passes across the Caucasus. It had a key strategic importance for both neighboring empires. That's why a war broke out between the Byzantine Empire and the Sasanian Empire for control of the ancient region of Lazica. The Lazic War lasted for twenty years, from 541 to 562, with varying success and ended with the fifty-year peace treaty.

Hungarians became connected with the Savirs in the Trans Caucasian region as well, they had various names, as Sevordik, Siyavurdi, etc.¹

Some parts of Savirs lived in the northern part of Azerbaijan, where the state of Caucasian Huns had been established. It was carried out by Jafarov, who presented that Hun-Savirans owned some parts of Albania, especially territory of Gabala. [Jafarov (1985): 124]. Azerbaijani historian Farida Mammedova placed residence of the Savirs in the 6th century in ancient provinces Kambisena, Udi and Sakasena, which are the northwestern and western half of today's Azerbaijan, and they also extend into the eastern part of today's Armenia.

Geibullaev mentioned place names suvar/savar and referring to Procopius he thought savir/sabir etc. place names are linked to the Savir people and they settled down in the 6th century northern part of Derbent, in today's North Dagestan, where a strong Hun kingdom existed at that time. In the 19th century, the fortress of Galeje-Suvar and Gala-Suvar still stood in the modern province of Guba. In the middle of the 19th century, the place name Suvarli also appears several times in the north. The name of the city of Shabran (in the Republic of Azerbaijan) is associated with the Savirs also. The local name "Suvar", "Sabiroba", located in the Khachmaz region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, is exactly related to the Savirs. [Geybullayev (1986): 34] Archaeological finding also proved that Savirs lived in the regions of today's northern Azerbaijan and northward, the regions of today's Dagestan, as well. A secondary burial at the Uch-Tepe tumulus in Azerbaijan is associated with the northern tribes. The finds made there include a Byzantine gold coin of Justin I (518–527). The grave goods (a sword with a single-edged blade, a gold belt set and gold ring with a Pahlavi inscription) make it possible to date the interment to the late 6th – early 7th century A.D. [Fedorov (1978): 61, 64] That was the heyday of the magnificent Varachan and the 'Kingdom of the Huns' in general. In the Caucasus, some burial sites, such as Verkhny Chiryurt (Kizilyurtovsky District, Dagestan). The inconsistent orientation of the graves there testifies to the ethnic diversity of the Sulak basin lowlands in the early Middle Ages. That is also reflected in the craniological material. Considering the evidence of written sources, it is possible to assume that the population that left this site behind included a certain portion with Savir characteristics. Furthermore, in ground burials occupy a particular section. On the Palasa-Syrt plateau (30 kilometers south of Derbent) there are cemeteries between the 5-6th centuries contain close combat weapons (long and short swords and daggers) and long-range weapons (bows and arrows). Their design suggests a Hun origin. The adult male population participating in military activities in one way, or another had a high degree of military preparation at the time. [Saidov (2014): 24–25]

The name of the Huns also preserved in Arran, where Hun galasi or fort of Huns stood. It is also called as "Hunan güzü", on the western shore of the River Kür.

¹ The origin of the Sevordik is analyzed in the works of many authors including the book of Naila Velikhanly. She notes that Arab authors of the 9-10th centuries as Balazuri, Masudi and Istahri mention that the tribes titled as Siyavurdi, who were outlaws and robbers, inhabited an area between Ganja and Tiflis even before Azerbaijan was occupied by the Arabs. Thus, Velikhanly identifies the Sevordiks as Savirs who, during the sway of Albanian ruler Vachagan III (503), could cross the Derbent-gate guarded by the Sasanid military contingent against northern nomads, annihilated the Onogur union of tribes, and invaded Albania and Iberia.

[Geybullayev 1986. 126]. The fort was situated on the road from Barda to Tbilisi. Ibn-Khaukal said it is laid between the Shamkir city and Ibn Kendmen castle. Minorsky supposed that fort Hunan situated on the road between Ganja and Tbilis. [Minorsky (1958): 47] According to the latest researches, some researchers as Vakhidov and Guliyev studied the record of Arabic author al-Istakhri, who wrote about the Hun fort, and it is probably that it is close to city Tovuz, maybe near the village of Ikinji Shihli (Gazakh province), where a big pile, Giz galasi stood. [Agaev (2017): 49] So, it is an evidence of Hun presence in the western part of Azerbaijan.

Due to the high mountains, transport was limited. There were only two passes (Darial and Derbent) in the area, which had strategic importance from the ancient time. These gateways connected the Eurasian region with the Caucasus and the Middle East. That is why all the regional powers tried to gain control over the passes. Between the 3-7th centuries A.D, the Persian Sassanid dynasty gained control over these territories. However, in some period of time, especially, in the 5-6th centuries these two passes belonged to the Huns. Procopius mentioned that there was a certain Hun leader named Ambazoukes who gained control over the Darial Pass. The Byzantine author noted that he was a friend of Anastasius, the Eastern Roman Emperor. When Ambazoukes fell ill and he was about to die, he sent an envoy to Emperor Anastasius and asked him to rebuild the fortress. However, the emperor did nothing with him. The Hun leader died and after that Kabades or Persian Sasanid-dynasty occupied the fortress. [Gadjiev (2009): 239-265]

Because of the constant attack of the nomadic people from the north, the Persian Shahs of the 6th century decided to build strongholds and massive defensive walls against the Huns and Savirs and establishing planned cities and irrigation canal systems to monitor coastal movements of the Huns and related peoples as Savirs. [Ibidem] The system of forts in the territory of present-day Dagestan and northern Azerbaijan remained until now. This is perhaps the best-known and strongest line in Derbent, which played a decisive role in the defense, where they tried to stop the Huns attacking from the north. Kavad I (488-96, 498-531) built a rammed earth wall between Shirvan and the Daryal gorge with a series of forts along it. Despite their efforts, the Huns repeatedly broke into the Derbent Gate, known as the Hun Gate, and settled in northern Azerbaijan today (Kachmaz, Shabran regions). Their remains can still be observed in Azerbaijan, in the Guba-Kachmaz region. One of the best-preserved forts is Chirag gala, which situated at a height of 1,232 meters and offers a good view of the surrounding area. The guards could sign some information by smoke signals. The southernmost part of this defensive system is in Beshbarmag hill, where an ancient stronghold, Kursan gala stood. [Obrusánszky (2013)]

Khosrow I Anushirvan (531–579), constructed the famous Derbent wall (this time from large cubic stone blocks). The large-scale fortification works started from 568-569, when the Persian ruler forced the Byzantine Emperor to pay him an annual tax and used part of this amount to fortify Derbent against Huns (Savirs as well). For a long time, this gate was also called the Hun gate because the Huns passed through it.

Because of the constant threat of the nomadic people from the north, the Persian shahs decided to build strongholds in the southern part of the Transcaucasian region, e.g. Mughan steppe, to keep the Huns away from the Sassanid motherland. Menander's report

that Persian king Khosrov Anushirvan (501- 579) settled 10,000 Sabirs 78 at the interfluvium of the Rivers Kura and Arax is confirmed by at-Tabari, who indicates that the Sasanid Shah placed 10,000 Khazars in Azerbaijan. Agaev mentioned they settled down in Mughan steppe in the 5th century, near Balasakan, Nakshe-Rustam and Aghun (Balasagan).¹[Agaev (2017): 48] Archaeologists have excavated Ultan Qalasi fort near Pashavad (Iran) in Mughan steppe, [Alizadeh (2011): 55-77] which was a strong fortification, surrounding moat and network of irrigation canals. Maybe other fortified centers will be found on Mughan Steppe, which will show the presence of the Huns in the Transcaucasian region. The scholars think, Savirs lived there, because the local place name as "Bilasuvar" (Mugan steppe) is mentioned in many Persian works. Close to this region, we can find a city name as Sabirabad.

Some scholars noticed, that Savirs had settled down outside of the Caucasus region, in Carpathian basin and along the River Volga. The theory was based on the record of Byzantine Emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenitus from the 10th century, who referred to Hungarians as Savartoi Asphaloi. Based on the above information, some Hungarian historians began to search the ancient history of the Caucasus region to find evidence the presence of the Hungarians. Among the modern Hungarian historians, József Thúry (1861-1906) was the first to write a comprehensive study on the question of the "Savard Hungarians". He paid attention of Emperor Constantine's report about the Hungarians, who settled down in the Carpathian basin, maintained contact with the Savirs of the Caucasus even around 950. He thought that Savirs lived permanently there, which was a part of former "Persia", then other historical sources also must be reported on them. That's why he studied ancient Persian, Muslim, Byzantine, and Armenian historical sources, and found out they also mentioned Savirs with almost the similar names. That is why he studied the Muslim, Byzantine, and Armenian sources of the time, in which he noticed some records about the Savirs. He has published a two-part study about his result on Savir and Hungarian connections in 1898. He pointed out, that the name Savarti-Asfali is not only known by the Emperor Constantine VII., but it is also can be found in the literature of the five nations, who lived in the region. According to his research, from the beginning of the 10th century until the 13th century, eleven historians wrote about Savirs, who lived in former Persia. Some of them called Savirs as Madjar, which is the name of Hungarians, who live in the Carpathian basin. [Thúry 1898. 324] The Caucasian Albanian author, Movses Kalankatuyk and some Arabian and Armenian authors called Savirs as Khazars. [Dowsett 1961. 83]

Later, Hungarian historian György Györffy noticed, that the memory of the Savirs was not only remained in foreign chronicles, but it can be found among ancient Hungarian tradition as well. He found out, that one of the first Hungarian historical chronicle, *Gesta Hungarorum* by Anonymus mentioned the name of leader Zuard (or Sovard), who was the cousin of Prince Arpad, who led the Hungarian invasion to the Carpathian basin.² So, according to the ancient historical source, the Savirs belonged to

¹ Movses Kalankatuyk mentioned that those Huns, who lived in Caucasian Albania, named as „King of Balasakan” [Dowsett (1961)].

² *Gesta Hungarorum* by Anonymus 6. Zuard or Sovard was Prince Arpad's cousin. So, he belonged to the royal or Hun line of Hungarians.

the royal line of Hungarians, who kept themselves as the descendants of Hun Attila. It means nothing more than the memory of the Savirs have remained in the Hungarian tradition for a long time. Hungarians traditionally originated from the Huns. The ancient royal chronicles mentioned that the first king of them was Attila, the king of Huns. It is very likely, that the common ancestor for Savirs and Hungarians was the Huns, who had dominated the vast territories both Caucasus and Eastern and Central Europe for centuries and left behind many memories, both materially and intellectually [Obrusánszky (2016)]. According to these results, it is likely that Savirs got connected two regions-Caucasus and Carpathian basin as well. In addition to that, some researchers, such as Anton K. Salmin, found, that the descendants of the Savirs remained among the Volga Bulgarians (whose name was Suvar). He thinks, that some parts of the Savirs migrated northward in some waves, from the death of Attila, King of the Hun Empire in the middle of the 6th century. The last migration way had happened in the middle of the 7th century, when the Arabs invaded the Caucasus.

Salmin thinks, that Suvars, the descendants of Savirs, left the main territory of Volga Bulgaria around 922, when Bulgarians converted to Islam faith, crossed over to the right bank of the river, and established a stronghold named Suvar. Salmin has found archaeological evidence of that migration and similarities of the material culture in Caucasus and Middle Volga Region.¹

CONCLUSION

Summarizing the historical role of Savirs in today's Azerbaijan, we can see, that horsemen tribes migrated in various places of Eurasian steppe and its outskirts. It is conceivable that the Savirs migrated from the Caucasus to other places, where horsemen tribes previously lived. Probably they reached the Bulgarians and Hungarians, referred to as the Hun people in the above-mentioned historical sources, and preserved their own names there. According to the historical sources of the Caucasus, the Savirs kept their identity for a long time, then assimilated into the neighboring people in the territories of modern Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia. Maybe their traces can be revealed through detailed research, like archaeogenetics, archaeology, and ethnography.

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¹ Salmin (2014). Archaeologists confirm that the Suvars established themselves on the right bank of the Volga in the early 10th century CE. On the territory of the present-day Chuvash Republic, Suvar settlements appeared on the chernozem lands along the Rivers Bula, Ulema and Kubnya. Sites of ancient habitation have been discovered near Bolshiye Yalchiki, Baideryako vo, Arabuzi, Novoye Akhperdino, Starye Toisi, Russkiye Norvashi, Yanashevo and other places. Finds include pottery shards, spindle whorls, the bones of domesticated animals and other cultural remains.

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THE HUNS IN AFRICA: SOME OF THEIR DEEDS AND PARTICULARITIES ACCORDING TO PROCOPIUS

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Abstract. The “History of the Wars”,¹ and specially “The Vandalic War”² written by the Byzantine chronicler and general Procopius of Caesarea (Caesarea Maritima ca. 590 AD- Constantinople ca. 560-65 AD ca.)³ represent an important literary source for the knowledge about the steppe populations living or moving on the western part of the Caspian Sea until the Western Europe, mainly regard those contemporary at the put in writing of the Procopius' works, namely the half of the VI century AD.

This happened because Procopius himself has been personally present or involved in most of the events that he has related. In fact, he was a very high rank character (legal advisor, *adessor*) starting by the first year of the ascend to the throne of Justinian I (527 AD), following the byzantine general Belisarius (ca. 500-565 AD)⁴ in his many military campaigns on various war theatres.

Thus, under the orders of Belisarius he was on the border area with the Persian Empire against the Sasanians in the Iberian War (526-532 AD.), in the North Africa against the Vandals (533-534 AD) and in Italy against the Ostrogoths (535-540 AD). In 551 AD Procopius completed his work regarding these warlike events, the *History of the Wars* in seven books and, after, he wrote another book in 553 AD where he relates about the *Lazic War* (551-553 AD).

The books III and IV of the *History of the Wars* regard the Vandalic War, namely the military expedition organized by Belisarius against the Kingdom of the Vandals and Alans⁵ in North Africa. In this expedition there were a consistent force of Huns at the

¹ Principally, here we follow these editions: Anthony Kaldellis (ed.); Ian Mladjov; H.B Dewing (trans.), *Prokopios, The Wars of Justinian*, Hackett Pub Co Inc, Indianapolis/Cambridge, 2014.

² *Ibidem*, pp. 144-251; Kaldellis, Anthony: *Prokopios' Vandal War: Thematic Trajectories and Hidden Transcripts*, in: S. T. Stevens & J. Conant, eds., *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam*, Washington, D.C: Dumbarton Oaks, 2016, 13–21.

³ Naturally, on Procopius and his life and works, there is a huge literature in various languages. Here we recommend only some works where is possible to find more exhaustive bibliographic indications and discussions: Börm, Henning: *Procopius of Caesarea*, in *Encyclopaedia Iranica Online*, New York 2013, <https://iranicaonline.org/articles/procopius> ; Cameron, Averil: *Procopius and the Sixth Century*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985; Meier, Mischa and Federico Montinaro (eds.): *A Companion to Procopius of Caesarea*. Brill, Leiden 2022.

⁴ For a biography of Belisarius, see: Martindale, John R., ed. , *The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire: Volume III, AD 527–641*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press. 1992 p. 182, and Hughes, Ian, *Belisarius: The Last Roman General*. Yardley, Pennsylvania: Westholme Publishing , 2009.

⁵ A part of Alans, a steppe people of iranic language, united themselves with the Vandals in their

Byzantine service, and precisely in the Procopius writings that we can find the personal events of a lot of them and interesting accounts on some of their customs and traditions. In this article will be underlined and analyzed both these Huns and the events in connection with them during and after this African campaign.

Keywords: *Huns, Africa, Procopius of Caesarea, Attila, Vandals, Alans*

Overview

In June 533 AD, the Byzantine Emperor Justinian started the first of his wars reconquering the Western part of the Roman Empire. This was a campaign in modern-day Morocco, Tunisia, Libya and Algeria, ruled by the Vandals since the first decades of V century. Person in charge of this operation was one of the most competent of his generals, Belisarius.

The Vandal navy was a perpetual danger for the Byzantine navigation and coasts and, more important, the Vandals were followers of the Christian Arian¹ faith since the 4th century, and they actively persecuted Nicene Christians, the faith of the other local inhabitants of North Africa, mainly belonging to the Roman culture.

In 523 AD Hilderic (or Ilderic, or Childeric, r. 523–30 AD), became the king of the Realm of Vandals and Alans. [Procopius (2014): 3.9, 164]. This half-roman and pro-roman pacific king, contrary to the most part of Vandal population, followed the orthodox faith of his mother, the Roman princess Eudoxia² an element that caused the conversion of many Vandals, provoking an enormous disappointment amongst the Vandals' aristocracy and clergy.

After that the Vandals were defeated by the Moors, Gelimer, [Procopius (2014): cit., 3.9.3-3.9.6., 163] a cousin of Hilderic, overruled with the armed alliance of the Moors, the king in 530 AD and taking his place, he re-established the priority of the Christian Arian faith. Hilderic was imprisoned and Justinian I threatened a breaking of the Treaty of Friendship with the Vandals, if the usurper doesn't liberate him. When

conquests, see below. Giuseppe Cossuto, *I popoli delle steppe e l'Impero romano d'Occidente*, Aseq, Roma, 2019 pp. 78, 85.

¹ Amongst various Germanic and “gothic” peoples, the Arian version of the Christianity (a doctrine elaborated by the African theologian Arius (250 or 255-56) was diffused principally by a typical example of pluricultural man of the last centuries of the Roman Empire: the bishop of Roman origin (he was born in a Cappadocian (of Sagolthina, probably modern day Karamollauşağı, Ankara province) family and grown under Visigothic rule on the North of Danube) Ulfilas (311-383). Ulfilas, that spent most part of his life in the territories between Black Sea and Danube, translated the Bible in gothic, elaborating a new alphabet based on Latin, Greek and Runic, too and he was a renowned bishop and missionary. Peter Heather, *The Fall of Roman Empire*, Londra, Macmillan, 2005, p. 76, Falluomini, Carla. *The gothic version of the Gospels and pauline Epistles: cultural background, transmission and character. Arbeiten zur neutestamentlichen Textforschung*. Berlin, De Gruyter, 2015, pp. 18–21.

² Eudoxia (439-471 or 472 AD) was the daughter of the Emperor Valentinian III. At some time following the birth of Hilderic, Eudocia withdrew to Jerusalem due to religious differences with her Arian husband, the Arian king Huneric, a fierce persecutor of the Catholic Christians and of other declination of Christianity. On the persecutions in the Kingdom of Vandals and Alans there is the account of the contemporary African roman catholic bishop Victor Vitensis (ca 330-after 484), *History of the Vandal Persecution*, translated with notes and introduction by John Moorhead, Liverpool, Liverpool University Press, 1992.

Gelimer refused, Justinian I planned an invasion of the Vandals' lands, an action that has been seen by the Byzantine advisors as very dangerous. But, as soon as the Persian War was ended with the signing of the 'Endless Peace' in September 532 AD, the Emperor started to plan this ambitious, new campaign.

Procopius himself gives us a detailed description of the troops engaged in the Belisarius' expedition [Procopius (2014): cit., 3.11.1–21, 169]. In this typical Byzantine army of the middle of VI century, we can find various "Huns", as commanders (see below), as in the troops. [Ibidem]

The Huns in the expedition

It's well known how the different steppe peoples changed the Roman (both Western and Eastern Empires, with their local differences) way of combat and how they became an essential element in the Roman armies and, furthermore, during the Procopius era, the Roman citizens belonging to the hippodrome faction called "the Blue" dressed themselves like the Huns (Massagetai: Kutrigurs, see below) and the notable peoples and the high clergy during the ceremonies dressed the *scaramangium*, [Cossuto, 193-95] a long robe of Hunnic derivation.

Circa a century before this expedition, little later after the Nedao battle, we can find companies of Huns in the service of the Western Romans. In 457 AD Huns were enlisted in the army that Majorian (r. 457-461 AD) had assembled for his projected campaigns in Africa and Gauls as Sidonius Apollinaris (430-486 AD) affirms [Edward A. Thompson (1948): 174]. These Hunnic mercenaries, who had previously lost their best commanders at the Battle of Nedao and had revolted before retreating from Italy, were led by Tuldila (458 CE). Another different and considerable group of Huns were engaged in 461 AD by Marcellinus (d. 468 AD), count of Dalmatia, but these Huns were corrupted by Ricimer (407-472 AD), a very rich and powerful Romanized Goth of Arian faith, and they betray Marcellinus. In this period the Attilan Hun bands, after the Attila death, are still a no-good affair for who intended hire them.

At the time of Belisarius, the situation was very different. We can find also a good number of Huns in the high ranks of the Byzantine army and very loyal to the Empire. Belisarius preferred the use of the cavalry. [Procopius (2014): XIII] By the time that this commander's troops fought in the Vandalic War, the transformation begun with the Emperor Aurelian (214/15-275) of the Roman army into squadrons of heavy cavalry was complete. The most valuable sixth-century Roman soldiers sat astride horses, armed with lances and the compound bow that was the great contribution of the steppe peoples to the art of war. This bow was short enough to be shot on horseback, recurved in a double-S and reinforced with horn and sinew, this tool of battle could send an iron-tipped arrow through chain mail at a distance of several meters. Procopius writes:

But archers of the present go into battle fully armored and fitted out with greaves that extend up to the knee. From the right side hang their arrows, from the other a sword. There are some who have a spear also attached to them and, at the shoulders, a sort of small shield without a grip, so as to cover the face and neck. They are excellent horsemen and are able without difficulty to shoot their bows to either side while riding at full speed, and to shoot an opponent whether in pursuit or in flight. They draw the bowstring along by the forehead all the way to the right ear, thereby charging the arrow with such an

impetus as to kill whoever stands in its way: neither shields nor breastplates can withstand its force. [Ibidem, 1.2.1, 4]

Procopius affirms that the soldiers participating to this expedition, when they were not regularly enlisted in the imperial army, are equalised with these last as *foederati* auxiliaries. The most part of these *foederati* were mounted archers (*hippotoxotai*) and a force of infantry composed mainly by, exotics amongst exotics, Herules led by Fara [Ibidem, 3.11] that used a lance or javelin in the strict combat and had their bows strong and weighty; they shoot in every possible direction, advancing, retreating, to the front, to the rear, or to either flank; and as they are taught to draw the bowstring not to the breast, but to the right ear, firm indeed must be the armour that can resist the rapid violence of their shaft.¹ The Herules were, a century before, until the decisive battle of Nedao in 455, a human component of the so-called “Hunnic System”,² a sophisticated super-complex tribal confederation with imperial dimension where the Attila's Huns had the supremacy.³ In fact, we can find the elaborate political system of the ancient Xiung-nu amongst the European Huns in the 4th and 5th centuries, too.

Procopius knew very well the “Huns” of his time, because often he had a strict contact with them during his military career and, from his notices, we can better understand the historical events of these post-Attilan nomadic peoples, their political situation and a lot of different facts in connection with them.

Procopius gives us a precise definition for the “Huns” of his time: they belonging to the Scythians for the lands where they lived in origin, as other peoples, [Procopius (2014): 8.5.6, 470] but they are their own *ethnos*, divided in some political formations.⁴ Procopius underlines the “ancient” name of the various Huns (i.e. Cimmerians, Massagetes, etc..., *see below*) and these parallelism may be are some other indicators for a better definitions of human groups and personalities.

In this sense, a very great importance is represented by the story related by this historian about the passage of the ancient Cimmerians [Giuseppe Cossuto (2012): 16] beyond the Maeotis Lake (Azov Sea), an event that “opened the doors” to the movement of “Scythian” populations outside of Scythia. This record, says Procopius, is preserved by the “Scythes” of his time. Thus, a group of young Cimmerians (this element leads me to think that this is a *mannerbunde* with a class of age in initiation to become adults) saw a doe and decided to follow her. This doe passed the waters and the Youngs failed the hunt, but returned to their own lands saying that it was possible to cross the waters. When the

¹ A lot of Herules belonging to the Arian confession, as Procopius affirms. From the late 4th century the Heruls were one of the peoples belonging to the Hunnic Confederation. By 454 AD, after the death of Attila, they ruled over a mixed population including Suevi, Huns and Alans in a proper territory in Middle Danube. Herules also participated in successive conquests of Italy by Odoacer (433-493). See Cossuto, *I popoli delle steppe...*, *cit.* pp. 82 and ss.. One of the last commanders of the Herules has been the grandson of Attila, Mundus, died in 536 in the service of Byzantines. See Alexander Sarantis, "The Justinianic Herules", in Florin Curta, (ed.), *Neglected Barbarians*, Brabel, Turnhout, 2010, pp. 361-402

² See Roland Steinacher, “The Herules: fragments of a history”, in “*Neglected Barbarians...*, *cit.* p. 360.

³ Kradin, N.N., ‘Stateless Empire: The Structure of the Xiongnu Nomadic Super-Complex Chiefdom’, in (U. Brosseder and B.K. Miller, eds.), *Xiongnu Archaeology: Multidisciplinary Perspectives of the First Steppe Empire in Inner Asia*, Contributions to to Asian Archaeology, Bonn, 2011, vol. 5, pp. 77-96.

⁴ I'll debate this interesting topic in a further article.

different peoples of Scythia had known this news, they moved towards the Roman Lands [Procopius (2014): cit., 8.5.6, 470] and the Cimmerians that finally Procopius reveals to be the Kutrigur Huns, follow them and occupied their ancestral lands. [Ibidem] Clearly, the crux of this story (the young hunters that follow the doe and crossed the sea), was preserved in the story of the passage of the Huns described by Jordanes (half of the VI century) and the episode of Hunor and Magor of the Magyar tradition, reported by Simon de Keza (XIII century).

The most important between the “true Huns” described by Procopius were the Kutrigurs and the Utigurs, two confederations that, before, were only one, probably leaded by Ernak the third and youngest son of Attila. They are first recorded in the 540 AD on both banks of the Don River [Zimonyi (2015): 251]. Procopius relates a foundation legend, not far away from an historical process, about the political ethnogenesis of this two tribal Hun groups, process that includes them in the classic Hun system of the territorial diarchy. According to Procopius, Utigur and Kutrigur were two sons of a single ruler (may be “the hero founder”, too) and the confederations adopted their names [Procopius (2014): 8.5.1–4, 469]. Procopius locates the Utigurs in the Kuban steppe and the Kutrigurs in ‘the greater part of the plains’ west of the Sea of Azov (South of modern Ukraine) [Procopius (2014): 8.5.22–3, 471]. Also for the contemporaries Agathias (536-582) and Menander Protector (Menander the Guardsman, VI century) the Utigurs and Kutrigurs are Huns. The use of the name Hun in a generic sense for northern Pontic nomads only begins later, with Theophylact Simocatta in the seventh century who calls Huns both the Turks and their enemies Avars, two confederations that in the VI century are still defined with their specific political identity.¹

Evidently about the name of these two post-attilan confederations, we have the suffix *-oğur* that indicate us that they are groups of this type, namely a military-tribal group, confederate for kinship. We had the peoples of a Hun leader, living at same time of Ernak, called Uto, recorded by Jordanes that become sedentary and changed their name in *Sacromontisii* [Cossuto (2019): 78]: “*Uto et Iscalmus, qui ea potiti sunt, multique Hunnorum passim proruentes tunc se in Romaniam dederunt. Et quibus nunc usque Sacromontisii, et Fosatisii dicuntur.*” [Getica, L, 126] Thus, there was an Uto captain well connected with the formation of the post-Attila Huns confederations, but it's uncertain if he was also the founder of the *Ut-oğur*, also because an ancient *oğur* confederation habitually takes the name by a colour or by number of its components as: *Utigur* (*otur oğur = thirty Ogurs); *Saragur* (*şarı oğur = white Oğur); *Onogur* (on oğur = ten Ogurs) and *Kutrigur* (*toqur oğur = nine Ogurs) [Zimonyi (2015): 245] At the same time, we had a consanguineous of Attila, the danubian hun Ultzindur (living around 460), that gives his name to a Hun tribe. In fact, tribal names arose very frequently out the steppe from the names of famous heroes, real or legendary, a process that can be illustrated from the Othman, the Seljuks, the Chatagai and the Nogai, among others

¹ Hiun Jin Kim, *The Huns, Rome and the birth of Europe*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511920493>, p. 253, note 24. See, Giuseppe Cossuto, “Un problema di identità politica: le confederazioni nomadiche autoctone dell'attuale Dobrugia durante la grande guerra tra Gökürk e Avari”, in Tasin Gemil, Gabriel Custurea, Delia Roxana Cornea Eds.), *Moştenirea culturală turcă în Dobrogea* (The Turkish Cultural Legacy in Dobroudja), Muzeul de Istorie Nationala si Arheologie, Constanta, 2013, pp. 17-31.

[Thompson (1996): 202; Reynolds L., Lopez R.S. (1946): 44].

The fact is that also the Western Steppe confederations, after a dozen of years, will be involved in the huge relocation of populations provoked principally by the revolt of the Göktürk against the Juan-Juan (Roruan Kaghanate). This movement changed the political aspect of the confederations in Eurasia and brought a large number of nomad tribes living traditionally beyond the eastern banks of the Caspian Sea until Western Europe with the name of a new confederation: the Avars.

This huge movement of population from Inner Asia to Eastern Europe in VI century has as precedent the dislocation and the newest tribal aggregations that brought the Oğur one century before [Golden (1992): 78]. Rightly, Istvan Zimonyi wrote that the migration of about 463 was among the crucial events in the history of Eastern Europe [Zimonyi (2015): 252]. Has been suggested that this nomadic movement began with the Chinese attack in 450-458 against the Rouran Khaganate [Ibidem, 246-247] well known by Priskus [Priskus (2008)], and that interest the destiny of the Huns, as happened to the Akatzirs led by the Attila's son Ellak and other Hun tribes living in the north of Crimea, that were disrupted by the Saragurs around 463 [Golden (1992): 88; Denis Sinor (1946-1947): 5] but probably, at the same time, we can meet an *Oğur* tribe amongst the attilan confederation, the Bittugurs, too.¹ The Saragurs missing in the sources very early, probably absorbed by the Sabirs (*see below*) that arrived in the region by the late 5th-early 6th century. [Golden (1992): 97]

Thus, amongst the true Huns that Procopius knows, there are these Oğur confederations that incorporates some of the most significative post attilan tribes. Other significative groups where the interesting Sabirs (Wanderers, Nomads), that were very skilled in the use of siege machinery and had also a lot of warrior women.² There were located in Northern Caucasus, in Kuban and in Western Shores of the Black Sea and were able to build boats for their raids. They were allied and mercenaries both for the Byzantines and the Sasanians but [Golden (2011): 35] around 515 AD, one of their leaders called Zilbigis, had a terrible force of 20.000 cavalymen, [Ibidem, 87] and five years later, the powerful Sabirian leader Boareks (she ruled over 100.000 peoples, with an huge military force), widow of the chieftain Balaq came closer to Justinian I, and attacked two Hunnic groups led by Astera/Styrax (after executed in Constantinople) and Aglanos/Glonos (a Sasanian ally). [Golden (1992): 106] These Northern Caucasian Huns had also a significative infantry, a fact that brings to think that they used their sedentary people, inserted in their Hunnic System, as subordinates. In fact, in 556, a force of two thousand Sabirs were enlisted as heavy infantry mercenaries of the Byzantine

¹ On the arrive of Oğur type tribes in the Ponto-Caspian Steppes in the V century, see Golden, *An introduction...*, cit. pp. 92 and ss.. See also Cossuto, *I signori del Danubio. I nomadi guerrieri e l'Europa alto-medievale*, Chillemi, Roma, 2014, pp. 25 e ss. and Idem, *Tracce "turche" in Europa medioevale. I popoli delle steppe in Europa dalla comparsa degli Unni alla nascita della Turchia*, Aracne, Roma, 2009, pp. 89 and ss..

² Peter B. Golden, *Studies on the Peoples and Cultures of the Eurasian Steppes*. Editura Academiei Române; Editura Istros a Muzeului Brăilei., p. 91. P. Golden, later, gives also other possibly ethimologies: "Some Notes on the Etymology of Sabirs", in Alexander A. Sinitsyn; Maxim M. Kholod (eds.). *Koivov Δωρον - Studies and Essays in Honour of Valery P. Nikonorov on the Occasion of His Sixtieth Birthday presented by His Friends and Colleagues.*, St. Petersburg State University - Faculty of Philology., 2013, pp. 49–55.

Empire against the Sasanians but they were led by three cheftains with a Turkic name: Balmaq (finger), Kutilzis (**qut-il-či*, with *qut* meaning "majesty") and Iliger (*Ilig-ār*, "prince-man").¹ In the same year, relates Agathias (530-between 582-594 AD), circa five thousand Sabirs that were allied with the Sasanians were killed by three thousand Byzantine horsemen. [Agathias (1975): 4.14.1, 115]

The end of their power, according to Theophylact Simocatta and Menander Protector (that placed these events between 558 and 560) happened when them, together with the Onugurs and the Barsils suffered the invasions of other steppe peoples, the Uar and Chunni, two ancient tribes of Ogurs. A small portion of these tribes fled westward and usurped the name Avar (Rouran). [Zimonyi (2015): 250; Cossuto (2009): 119] The last mentions of the Sabirs is dated during the Byzantine conquest of Caucasian Albania during the period of reign of Tiberius II Constantine (578–582), [Cossuto (1992): 106] but surely they were absorbed by other confederations, as the Bulgars and the Khazars, a theory supported also by the Arab traveller and writer al-Mas'ūdī (896-956) that connected them to the this latter [Ibidem] and they left a certain numbers of toponyms, too.

The Onugur (Ten Oğurs), as the Urog (Ugor) and Saragurs were one of the first Oğur groups that entered the Ponto-Caspian steppes as the result of migrations set off in Central Asia. [Ibidem, 0203] We have their representatives in Constantinople, send by the Attilan ruler Ernak in 463. [Ibidem, 92-93, 103] Without a doubt, this meaning that they were entered in the Hunnic System ruled by Ernak. A century later, when the pseudo-Avars and Gökturks, arrived in Western Eurasia, the name of this confederation appears many times.

Another important confederation present in the Procopius time, is the Bulgar (The Mixed).² [Zimonyi (2015): 245]. They are certainly in connection with the Attila's Huns and tribes of oğur type, and we can find, in the VI century, various groups, mainly in Ponto-Caspian Steppe, [Cossuto (2009): 135-170; Cassuto (2014): 55-88] but also around the Black Sea. [Zimonyi (2015): 250]

For Procopius, a more atypical great group of Huns were the Ephtalites. In fact, there were Huns but their physical appearance were clearly Caucasian, as Procopius underlines. [Prokopios (2014): 1.3.2, 6] According to Procopius the Ephtalites aren't nomads, they are settled on a good territory and had a capital city called Gorgo, situated on the border with the Sasanian Empire. [Prokopios (2014): 1.3.2, 6; 1.4.10, 9] Menander Protector (middle of VI century) confirms these words and relates that the Turk ambassadors said to the Byzantine Emperor Justin II (520-578) that the Ephtalites are "a people of the cities". [Menander (1985): frag. 10.1, 115] For Procopius they are different stock respect to the Huns that he knows, and they do not mingle with these other Huns.

¹ Peter B. Golden, *Khazar Studies (An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars)*, Akademiai Kiado, Budapest, 1980, p. 258; J. D. Frendo, *Agathias: The Histories*, in *Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* (English translation with introduction and short notes), vol. 2A, Series Berolinensis, Walter de Gruyter, 1975, 3.3.5, p. 87 and the more recent edition in french of Pierre Maraval, *Agathias, Histoires, Guerres et malheurs du temps sous Justinien*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 2007 and Maenchen-Helfen, Otto John, *The World of the Huns: Studies in Their History and Culture*, University of California Press, 1973, pp. 409-414.

² A list of other etymologies is in Zimonyi, "Muslim...", *cit.*, p. 245.

Their “way of life” is very similar to the Romans and Persians and not to “savages” Huns. Thus, why they are considered Huns by Procopius? It is possible that their *élite* continued the nomadic life, controlling an urbanised territory with aristocratic and military garrisons inside the cities, a process that involved other nomadic groups, too.

During Justinian time, the politic of the Roman Empire towards the Huns was also based on the use of the religion to establish more links between the Huns and Constantinople. A typical and unsuccessful of this politic was the episode of Grod (Gordas, d. 528 AD), a king of the Crimean Huns (politically Sabir, may be), that came in Constantinople in 527-528 AD to be converted but, when he returned in his lands, with a neophyte zeal, he destroyed the pagan idols venerated by his peoples causing a revolt and his death. Justinian sends a fleet and a Gothic army in Crimea and occupy the region in 530. [Elizabeth Jeffreys et al. (1986): 18.14, 250-251; Cossuto (2014): 111-112].

Another fundamental aspect regarding the human movement of the steppe people groups in this period are certainly the little glaciation effects and the terrible plague in the Sasanian and Byzantine Empires and the contiguous territories. This plague, originated by the *Yersinia pestis*, is the same bacterium responsible for the Black Death (1346–1353).¹ Older and actual *Yersinia pestis* strains are closely related to the ancestor of the Justinian plague strain that has been found in the Tian Shan, a system of mountain ranges on the borders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and China, and this suggests that the plague of the Justinian period originated around this area and diffused by the human movement in the Eurasian steppes towards the west, but there are some other opinions, too.² According to Procopius, the plague started in Egypt, at Pelusion, in 540, [Prokopios (2014): 2.22.6,120] did not afflict the tribal populations³ and it was diffused widespread by the ships of the Alexandria harbour, and this is in strict connection with the period of the Vandalic Wars, also because the plague affected the Persian Lands and the southern shores of the Western Caspian Sea in 546 AD after the Mediterranean Sea and Constantinople.

The Huns in Africa

The authority of Belisarius on the Huns of the expedition was almost absolute in his presence. This fact is demonstrated by Procopius that relates that, during the navigation, in Abydos (Egypt) Belisarius punished with the capital death of the pale two Huns that had killed another hun that, drunk, ridiculed them during a collective binge.

¹ See the detailed article of Uli Schamiloglu, U., “The Plague in the Time of Justinian and Central Eurasian History: An Agenda for Research” in O. Karatay, & I. Zimonyi (Eds.), *Central Eurasia in the Middle Ages: Studies in Honour of Peter B. Golden*, (Turcologica ; Vol. 104). Harrassowitz Verlag, 2016, pp. 293-311.

² There are a lot of studies on this argument. See Peter Sarris, "Bubonic Plague in Byzantium: The Evidence of Non-Literary Sources", in Lester K. Little (ed.), *Plague and the End of Antiquity: The Pandemic of 541–750*, Cambridge University Press, 2007, pp. 119–132, and 121–123; Amongst the others, see the discussion on the original place where the virus had origin in Justinian times in William Rosen, *Justinian's Flea: Plague, Empire and the Birth of Europe*, Penguin Group, New York, 2007, pp.194-197.

³ As affirms the contemporary African Roman writer Flavius Cresconius Corippus, see George W. Shea., *The Iohannis or de Bellis Libycis of Flavius Cresconius Corippus* (Studies in Classics 7), Lewiston/NY 1998, 3.343-390.

According to Procopius, the Huns were heavy drinkers of alcohol. The relatives and friends of the two Huns impaled were very angry, because the laws of the Huns don't adopted this punishment for this kind of actions, and they declared that they will not adopt the laws of the Romans. With a long and determined discourse, Belisarius calmed and scared his men. [Prokopios (2014): 3.12.7, 171]

The main enemies of the Byzantines in Africa were the Vandals (a Germanic people that, during the decades had augmented his number joining other peoples as the Suebi and the Alans, a steppe people of iranic language. We can find the Alans in the same period also in the Caucasus and Eastern Europe. In fact, after the death of their ruler Attaco (d. 418 AD) in Spain against the Visigoths, the Alans arrived in Western Europe decided to unify their people with the Vandals and, in 530 AD the Vandal souverain, Gelimer still used the title "King of the Vandals and Alans". It seems probable that the Vandal armies, included the Alans, consisted entirely of cavalry, useful against the Moors, but very scarce in comparison with the Byzantine army. [Ibidem, 3.8.27, 163]

Against the Vandals, in charge of the regular byzantine cavalry was an eminent Hun, called Aygan (probably late of the 5th century-between 534-548 AD). This general was a renowned soldier during the Iberian War against the Sasanians and, during the battle of Dara in Mesopotamia (AD 530, Dara is located in the present day in Mardin Province, in Turkey), Aygan, under a temperature of ca. 45°, together with another baptized Nicean hun, Sunicas¹ led a troop of 300 Hun cavalry that hold the left flank, meanwhile many more Huns (ca. AD 600) where on the right side under the order of other two generals of Hunnic origin, the *dux* Simmas (late 5th century- after AD 531) [Elizabeth Jeffreys et al. (1986): 18.462, 270-271] and the brave Askan (d. 19 April AD 531). His actions were fundamental in the Roman victory. [Kim, Hyun Jin (2015); Whately, Conor (2021): 56]. After, Aygan participated in the expedition against the Vandalic Kingdom in AD 533, being one of the four cavalry commanders of Belisarius. [Martindale (1992): 1098]

After the end of the war, when his commander Belisarius come back to Constantinople in summer of AD 534² Aygan remained in Africa to give his services to the byzantine *magister militum* and Pretorian prefect, the eunuch Solomon (Last twenty years of V century- AD 544).

Immediately, during the same year, Aygan was involved in the repression of a Moors uprising against the Byzantines, and he combats against the tribal forces in Byzacena (modern day Tunisia). Aygan and his companion ambushed and killed an entire Moorish raiders group, liberating their prisoners. After they fought bravely and lost against an enormous Moorish army leaded by Medisinissas, composed of circa 50.000 warriors, while the Romans were only 500 men [Martindale (1992): 1098]:

"The Romans, being few and shut off in a narrow place in the midst of many thousands, were not able to fight off their assailants. For wherever they might turn, they were always being shot at from behind. [8] Then Rouphinos and Aïgan with some few men ran to the top of a rock that was nearby and from there defended themselves against

¹ Sunicas, during the battle of Dora, killed the Persian Commander, giving a decisive resolution to the battle.

² For the events happened in Africa after the departure of Belisarius see *Corippus, cit.*

the barbarians. [9] As long as they were using their bows, the enemy did not dare to come directly to a hand-to-hand struggle with them, but kept hurling javelins at them. But when all the arrows of the Romans were exhausted, the Moors closed with them and so they defended themselves with swords as well as the circumstances permitted. [10] But they were overpowered by the multitude of the barbarians: Aigan fell there with his whole body hacked to pieces, and Rousphinos was seized by the enemy and led away.” [Procopius (2014): 4.10.10, 210-210]

Procopius wrote that Aygan, and a lot of the Huns in the expedition or that fought in Italy or previously in the wars against the Persians (as Simmas, Askan, etc.), belonged at the Huns that in the past were called Massagetai [Ibidem, 1.13.21, 32 and 3.11.9, 169] and this, may be, indicate sthe geographic origin of these Huns, the Eastern shores of the Caspian Sea, the ancient Massagetai lands.

We can find an Aygan (Moon Khan) also in the legend of origin of the Oğuz, as one of the Oguz Khagan' son. Many time, the legends of origin of the Steppe Peoples, may be containing historical fact or real personages. In this case, it can be a simple homonymy, because also the other sons of Oğuz Khan are all elements of the Sky or of the Earth.

Another important Hun in the expedition was Sinnion, that Procopius describes as a man of “endowed with bravery and endurance to the highest degree” [Ibidem, 3.11.12, 169]. He and another “massagetae” (Kutrugur) with an iranic name, Balas, [Maenchen-Helfen (1973): 390] leded 600 mounted archers. Procopius cited a lot of “Massagetes” (Kutrugurs) with an iranic, or other linguistic, names. Later, Procopius, more clearly, affirms that the “massagete” [Ibidem, 3.11.12, 169] Sinnion belonging to the Kutrigur confederation and he was involved in the wars against the Utigurs. After the defeat against the Utigurs, Sinnion, as well-known follower of Belisarius and fighter in Africa for the Byzantines, became suppliant to Justinian and ask him to be settled with his peoples in the Byzantine territory. The Emperor received him and established this Huns in Thracia [Ibidem, 8.19.7, 504]. This episode is very important because, according to Procopius: “He (Sandil, the ruler of Utigurs) accordingly sent envoys to the Emperor to protest at what had been done, not putting any letter into their hands—for the Huns are absolutely unacquainted with writing and unskilled in it up to now; neither do they have any teacher of grammar nor do their children toil over their letters at all as they grow up— but instructing them rather to deliver by word of mouth in the barbarian fashion everything that he told them.” [Ibidem] The oral letter of Sandil to Justinian is a perfect example of a Hunnic self-awareness.

After Dara, Simmas and Sunicas led the Hun cavalry at the Battle of Callinicum.(19 April 531, modern day Raqqa, in Syria). During the latter part of this battle, he and Sunicas dismounted and fought alongside the infantry, and Simmas and Askan prevented the complete rout of the Romans [Cameron (1985): 158]. During this battle, the Hun leader Askan and all his Huns has been killed and defeated by the Sasanians. [Hughes (2009): 71]

Another important and celebrated Hun in the African expedition was Althias (around 530, having a Turkic name). [Prokopios (2014): 3.1.1.7, 169] During the battle against the Vandals at Trimacaram, not far away from Carthage, Althias was one of the Roman leaders of the left wing as Aygan of the right wing [Ibidem, 4.3.4, 197.5]. In this

battle the mercenary Huns (ca. 500, arrived with Belisarius) follow their use of to not mingle with the other parts of Roman army.

The main episode of his life happened when a very powerful Moorish leader Iaudas with Donatist sympathy, with thirty thousand warriors, was plundering the land and enslaving many peoples. During this period Althias was keeping guard over some forts in Centuria (Ain El Adjar, in modern day Algeria) in the lands ravaged by Iaudas and wanting liberate the captives, exits with his 70 Huns from the fort:

“Reasoning that he was not able to fight against such a great multitude of Moors with only seventy, men, he wished to occupy some narrow pass so that, while the enemy were marching through it, he might be able to snatch up some of the captives. [4] As there are no such roads there, because flat plains extend in every direction, he devised the following. [5] There is a city nearby named Tigisis, then an unwalled place but having a large spring in a very narrow place. [6] Althias therefore decided to take possession of this spring, reasoning that the enemy, compelled by thirst, would surely come there, for there is no other water at all close by. [7] Now it seemed to all who considered the disparity of the armies that his plan was insane. [8] But the Moors came up feeling exhausted, greatly oppressed by the heat of the summer, and naturally almost overcome by an intense thirst, and they made for the spring with a great rush, not thinking that they would meet any obstacle. [9] But when they found the water held by the enemy, they all halted, at a loss what to do, for they had already spent the greatest part of their strength in their desire for water. [10] Iaudas therefore had a parley with Althias and agreed to give him a third of the booty if the Moors could all drink. [11] Althias was not willing to accept the proposal, demanding that he fight with him in single combat for the booty. [12] This challenge was accepted by Iaudas, and it was agreed that if it so fell out that Althias was overcome, the Moors would drink. [13] The whole Moorish army rejoiced, being in good hope, as Althias was lean and not tall of body, whereas Iaudas was the finest and most warlike of all the Moors. [14] Both of them were, as it happened, mounted. Iaudas hurled his spear first, but as it was coming toward him Althias unexpectedly managed to catch it with his right hand, stunning Iaudas and the enemy. [15] With his left hand he drew his bow instantly, for he was ambidextrous, and hit and killed the horse of Iaudas. [16] After he fell, the Moors brought another horse for their leader, upon which Iaudas leaped and immediately fled, and the Moorish army followed him in complete disorder. [17] And Althias, by thus taking from them the captives and the whole of the booty, won a great name for this deed throughout all Libya” [Procopius (2014): 4.13.2,218]

Other Huns accomplished act of valour in Africa but, unfortunately, Procopius does not report their name. For example, a Hun chieftain that following the rules of his people (the man with more illustrious forefathers can be the first in battle), confronted alone with the Vandal army of Gibamund composed by two thousand men, provoking them, at the Fields of Salt, near Decimum [Ibidem, 3.19.12. 182].

Procopius relates another interesting episode about the nature of the relationship between the Roman army in Africa and their Hunnish mercenaries. The king of the Vandals Gelimer put on siege Carthage and tried to attract to himself the Roman soldiers and inhabitants professing the Arian faith. At same time he sent messengers to the Hun leaders, promising them a lot of goods if them betrayed the Romans joining his side. The

Huns, that had received a false oath by the byzantine general Petros, were not in good confidence with the Romans were receptive to the Vandals' words. But Belisarius, suspecting the betrayal, with shrewdness and diplomacy, started to court everyday the Huns with a lot of gifts, banquets and everything they asked. After, Belisarius promised them that when the Vandals will be defeated, the Roman navy will transport the Huns and their booty to their homeland without any delay. When the battle started, after a council, the Huns decided to not engage immediately the fight, but to maintain good relationship both Romans and Vandals, attacking the part that clearly is losing. Naturally Aygan, Althias and the other Roman-Huns were in the battle with their regular soldiers. The mercenary Huns were positioned in a separate part, and they do not mingle with the Roman army until this defeated the Vandals [Ibidem, 4.1.1, 193-198].

CONCLUSIONS

In Procopius *Vandalic Wars* we can find first hand reports about the Huns, especially about VI century Huns. These Huns are a constant presence in many parts of the Roman Empire and other lands. A lot of them are well integrated in the Roman Empire System, meanwhile other lived mainly in the Hunnic System. All these Hunnic populations are well determinated in the period between the death of Attila (*grossomodo* coincident with the arrival of the *Oğur* groups in the western steppes and Eastern Europe) and the arrival (after a couple of decades) of other tribes determinates by the war of the Göktürk and their nomadic enemies. Some of these Huns (called by Procopius “Massagetai”) have mainly a Turkic name, other an Iranic one. The great plague of the Justinian's era affected these and other populations after the departure of Belisarius from Africa, in 540 AD, but many Huns remained in the territories of North Africa and, amongst them, there were important figures of the Roman Empire.

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THE HUNS IN SCANDINAVIA: A NEW APPROACH CENTERED AROUND MODERN DNA

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Abstract. Several scholars have in the past hypothesized a northward movement of Hunnic contingents which ultimately reached Scandinavia on the basis of archaeological and philological evidence, an event which should be detectable in both ancient and modern DNA if true. Here I report that when analyzing a combination of ancient and modern DNA samples from across Eurasia one can detect a westward movement from the Altai-Sayan region to Europe which ultimately reached southern Sweden, and also accurately date this migration event to the 4th and 5th centuries CE with the help of carbon-14 dating and estimated TMRCAs of certain Y-DNA lineages. It is possible to identify these individuals and groups as Huns by analyzing their Y-chromosomal and autosomal DNA in combination with burial context. The significance and implications of this become clear when looking at the philological evidence which suggests that the Huns had a formative and lasting impact on the development of the peoples, cultures and beliefs of Scandinavia

Keywords: *Attila, Huns, Scythians, Y-DNA, Xiongnu*

In 2007, Lotte Hedeager published an article in the Norwegian journal *Norwegian Archaeological Review* about Hunnic presence in Scandinavia that prompted Ulf Näsman to publish an article in the Swedish journal *Fornvännen* in 2008 where he argued against Hedeager's hypothesis. This triggered a reply by Hedeager in *Fornvännen* the same year that Näsman in turn replied to in the same journal the following year. In 2011, Hedeager published a book titled *Iron Age Myth and Materiality: An Archaeology of Scandinavia AD 400–1000* where she further developed her hypothesis. Hedeager (2007, p. 1, 2011, p. 203) argues, among other things, that the customs practiced by the equestrian elite in Sösdala and Fulltofta in central Scania during the 5th century CE are indicative of Hunnic presence in southern Scandinavia.

In 2017, Näsman and Charlotte Fabech published a book titled *The Sösdala Horsemen: and the Equestrian Elite of Fifth Century Europe* where they present the accumulated knowledge so far regarding the cultural horizon known as the Sösdala style. In the final chapter, Fabech and Näsman (2017, pp. 339–341) present a fictional narrative constructed around local warriors who travel to southeastern Europe where they are

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introduced to steppe nomadic customs which they bring back to central Scania. However, the authors (Fabech, 2017, p. 54; Fabech & Näsman, 2017, p. 343) simultaneously describe the archaeological finds from central Scania and the context to which they belong as foreign, and that this cultural phenomenon seems to lack local roots, which arguably contradicts their local origin hypothesis.

In the 5th century CE, a cultural shift takes place in Scandinavia where eastern influences become detectable in the material culture (Hedeager, 2007; Hedeager, 2011). One example is a new ornamentation style centered around animals and shapeshifting whose origins can be traced back to a steppe nomadic context (Hedeager, 2007, p. 46; Hedeager, 2011). Another example are the equestrian artefacts from central Scania that were ritually destroyed and deposited according to Hunnic customs (Görman, 1993, pp. 276–277; Hedeager, 2007, p. 1, 2011, p. 203; Fabech, 2017, pp. 46, 55). These cultural phenomena coincide with a shift in the military organization towards an emphasis on mounted warriors which Hedeager (2007, p. 51) argues all in all should be attributed to Hunnic presence in Scandinavia.

If Hedeager is correct, one would expect to find evidence of gene flow from the East in modern Scandinavians. Furthermore, one should also be able to date this gene flow to the Migration Period, i.e. 375–568 CE, for it to serve as evidence. I would argue that such evidence exists in the form of Y-DNA and autosomal admixture. My statement is based on inside knowledge acquired from working as an administrator of group projects linked to FamilyTreeDNA (Ćwiklak & Högström, 2024; Högström, 2024a, 2024c). In this paper, I will use genomic data from modern and ancient DNA in combination with carbon-14 dates, TMRCA estimates, archaeology and philology to argue that the modern distribution of certain Y-DNA lineages suggest that a northward migration was undertaken by heterogeneous Hunnic contingents during the 5th century CE which ultimately reached southern Sweden, and that they should be associated with the spread of the Sösdala style.

Methods

The methods used in this paper are centered around dating certain phenomena, namely carbon-14 dates of historical human remains and estimated TMRCA dates of certain Y-DNA branches detected among both historical and modern individuals, and how these phenomena correlate with one another as well as with other phenomena such as autosomal admixture, material culture and burial context. The carbon-14 dates referenced in this paper come from already published scientific papers. The TMRCA dates, i.e. time to most recent common ancestor, referenced in this paper have all been calculated and published by FamilyTreeDNA (FTDNA, 2024a). The reason for using divergence and coalescence (TMRCA) dates estimated by FamilyTreeDNA is due to their large database of both historical and modern DNA samples, and the ability to easily access and verify the results via their Time Tree and Public Y-DNA Haplotree (FTDNA, 2024a, 2024b).

There are other similar methods that will render similar TMRCA dates. One such method is described in a paper from 2021 by Iain McDonald titled *Improved Models of Coalescence Ages of Y-DNA Haplogroups*. One can take the Y-chromosomal data generated from historical and modern DNA samples published by scientific papers,

FamilyTreeDNA and other sources, and use McDonald's method to calculate TMRCA dates that will resemble those calculated by FamilyTreeDNA, and by doing so, verify the validity of the TMRCA dates provided by FamilyTreeDNA. However, TMRCA's are just time estimates, not exact dates, and tend to fluctuate slightly as new samples are added to the tree.

I would recommend that readers of this paper use FamilyTreeDNA's Time Tree in tandem with the archaeogenetic papers also referenced in this paper since the latter rarely contain detailed analyses of Y-chromosomal DNA. Another reason is that the APA citation format does not allow for detailed references about individual DNA samples since it would make the in-text citations too long and the paper difficult to read. One can, therefore, use the Time Tree to look up specific Y-DNA branches and samples referenced in this paper, and then read the metadata about various samples on that branch in the Time Tree. In this way, the reader gets a better overview and can more easily detect the patterns highlighted in this paper.

Results

In human genetics, a Y-DNA haplogroup and its subbranches are defined by mutations known as single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in the non-recombining DNA of the Y chromosome. SNPs are unique to specific patrilineal branches and can, therefore, be used to track human migrations. The Huns in Europe mainly belonged to subbranches of Y-DNA haplogroups Q and R such as Q-M25, Q-L330, R-Z93 and R-PH155 which they had mainly inherited from their Scytho-Siberian forefathers via western Xiongnu groups. The western Xiongnu groups over time acquired a high amount of East Eurasian admixture, seemingly mediated by females from eastern Xiongnu groups who unlike the western groups mainly carried Ancient Northeast Asian (ANA) ancestry (Jeong et al., 2020; Lee et al., 2023). It was these ANA-enriched western Xiongnu groups who later became the backbone of the Huns. Some of the leading clans of the Huns (Maróti et al., 2022, VZ-12673) belonged to the same R-Z93 branch as the early Scytho-Siberian elite from Arzhan (Unterländer et al., 2017, I0577; FTDNA, 2024a). Furthermore, a supposed Xiongnu chanyu (DA39), i.e. a high king, from Arkhangai, Mongolia, belonged to a R-Z93 branch nowadays only present in Poland and Sweden (Damgaard et al., 2018b; FTDNA, 2024a).

The Q-M25-derived branch Q-YP789 has been detected in two Hunnic samples from Berel, eastern Kazakhstan, dated to the early 300s CE (Gnecchi-Ruscone et al., 2021, BRE004, BRE011; FTDNA, 2024a). One of these men was buried with a type of composite bow that is typically associated with the Huns (Gnecchi-Ruscone et al., 2021). Q-YP789 is present at a frequency of 4–5% among the Székely (Long & Fehér, 2024a, 2024b) in Romania, a Hungarian ethnic subgroup, who claim to descend from the Huns (Neparáczki et al., 2019, pp. 3–4). Q-YP789 is also present in Hungary, Poland, Russia and Kazakhstan (Ćwiklak & Högström, 2024; FTDNA, 2024a). The Székely, and Hungarians at large, are genomically fairly similar to their European neighbors (Fóthi et al., 2020, p. 2). In the case of the Székely, there is little evidence to support their claim regarding Hunnic descent except for the fact that some of them belong to Q-M25 and R-Z93 (Fóthi et al., 2020, p. 16; Ádám, et al. 2022, pp. 7–8; Ćwiklak & Högström, 2024;

Long & Fehér, 2024a, 2024b).

Most myths and legends usually contain at least a kernel of truth. For there to be a continuation of identity, there must be some type of genetic continuity however small it may be, and it is usually patrilineal in nature. The TMRCA of Q-YP789 is dated to c. 100 CE (FTDNA, 2024a) which indicates that its MRCA, i.e. most recent common ancestor, flourished within a Late Xiongnu context. Q-BZ1000 is located downstream of Q-YP789 and the TMRCA is dated to c. 300 CE (FTDNA, 2024a). All the Székely and Polish samples except for a Szlachta family (nobility) from Poland have tested negative for Q-BZ1000 (Ćwiklak & Högström, 2024). Q-BZ1000 is also present in Russia and Kazakhstan, and the former are all ethnically Tatar (Ćwiklak & Högström, 2024). The other Polish samples have terminal SNP Q-BZ351, a subclade confined to Poland (FTDNA, 2024a). The presence of Q-BZ1000 and Q-BZ351 in Poland likely represent a remnant of Hunnic presence in these lands.

Both the modern and the ancient distribution of Q-YP789 and several other Hunnic Y-DNA branches corroborate Jordanes' (50.266 [Mierow, 1908, p. 84]) claim that some Huns remained while others fled east after the Hunnic Empire collapsed. Csáky et al. (2020, p. 4) analyzed seventeen male samples from Avaric elite burials and fourteen of those samples belonged to Y-DNA haplogroup N1a and two belonged to Q1, more precisely Q-YP789 (AC4) and Q-BZ93 (AC7) respectively (FTDNA, 2024a). The fact that Q-YP789 is twice as common as N1a among the Székely (Long & Fehér, 2024b, 2024b) along with the fact that the Székely claim Hunnic descent support the view that Q-YP789 and Q-BZ93 were Hunnic Y-DNA branches that were absorbed by the incoming Avars. Jordanes (50.266 [Mierow, 1908, p. 84]) states that some Hunnic groups settled in Romania after the fall of the Hunnic Empire that is the same lands where the Székely now live.

The process of weaker groups being integrated into steppe confederacies controlled by more powerful groups, and the former sometimes also adopting the identity of the latter, is best exemplified by the Q-L330 branch Q-BZ93 (BRE005) that first appears c. 200 BCE among the Pazyryk culture in Berel, eastern Kazakhstan (Gnecchi-Ruscione et al., 2021; FTDNA, 2024a). The Pazyryk culture were Scytho-Siberians/Sakas just like the Tagar culture in Khakassia and the Sagly/Chandman culture in Tuva and northwestern Mongolia (Linduff & Rubinson, 2022). Q-BZ93 reappears among a Hunnic sample (BRE013) from Berel dated to c. 200 CE (Gnecchi-Ruscione et al., 2021; FTDNA, 2024a). The Huns from Berel likely brought Q-BZ93 to Europe in 4th century CE because it resurfaces together with two other Hunnic branches, Q-YP789 and R-S15948, among Avaric samples from Szarvas, Hungary (Csáky et al., 2020, AC4, AC7; Maróti et al., 2022, SZRV-147, SZRV-168, SZRV-277; FTDNA, 2024a). It should be noted that one of the Avaric R-S15948 samples (SZRV-147) from Szarvas has terminal SNP R-FGC56440 and is closely related to an earlier Hunnic sample (VZ-12673) from Budapest, Hungary, with terminal SNP R-FGC56425 (Maróti et al., 2022; FTDNA, 2024a). Another illustrative example is Hajdúnánás, Hungary, where the Avaric samples belong to Q-YP789 (HNJ012) and R-PH155 (HNJ002), both Hunnic Y-DNA branches (Gnecchi-Ruscione et al., 2024, FTDNA, 2024a). The fact that the same R-PH155-derived branch, R-BY17637, that was detected in the Avaric sample HNJ002 from Hajdúnánás also has been detected in a Gepid sample (Veeramah et al., 2018, VIM2; FTDNA, 2024a)

indicate that core Hunnic groups remained in Hungary and elsewhere in Europe after the fall of the Hunnic Empire, and that these groups were later absorbed by other groups like the Gepids and the Avars. This is likely also the reason why the aforementioned Hunnic branch R-FGC56425 later reappears among the Magyars in Hungary (Maróti et al., 2022, HMSZ-88; FTDNA, 2024a).

A Hunnic sample (Gnecchi-Ruscone et al., 2021, BRE014) dated to the early 4th century CE from one of the elite burial mounds in Berel has terminal SNP R-BY172798 (FTDNA, 2024a). Another Hunnic sample (KRY001) dated to the mid-5th century CE from western Kazakhstan has the same terminal SNP (Gnecchi-Ruscone et al., 2021; FTDNA, 2024a). R-BY172798 and R-PH155 are nowadays present in Dagestan (FTDNA, 2024a) where the kingdom of the Caucasian Huns was located (Golden, 1992, p. 107; Gmyrya 1995). R-S15948, the sister clade of R-BY172798, is present in Russia, Kazakhstan, China, Türkiye, Hungary, Czechia, Jura (France) and Sweden (FTDNA, 2024a). In Russia, R-S15948 is exclusively found among the Tatars. The TMRCA of R-S15948 is dated to c. 50 BCE (FTDNA, 2024a). The TMRCA of its major subbranch R-S10438 is dated to c. 50 CE (FTDNA, 2024a) which indicates that also this branch flourished within a Late Xiongnu context. The Hunnic sample from Budapest (Maróti et al., 2022, VZ-12673) has terminal SNP R-FGC56425, a subclade of R-S10438, and its TMRCA is dated to c. 300 CE (FTDNA, 2024a). The same branch is also present in Jura, France (FTDNA, 2024a), an area that historically belonged to the Burgundian kingdom. The Hunnic branch R-FGC56425 may have become a Burgundian Y-DNA lineage after the Hunnic military campaigns launched against them in the 430s CE (Epitoma Chronicon, 1322 [Mommsen, 1892, p. 475]; Maenchen-Helfen, 1973, p. 83; Kim 2015, p. 80).

Another R-S10438-derived branch, R-Y38432, is present in Sweden, and its TMRCA is dated to c. 400–450 CE (FTDNA, 2024a). The fact that R-Y38432 is not present in continental Europe indicate that it was brought to Scandinavia around that time. Iain McDonald (personal communication, August 1, 2022) argues that “the breakup of R-S10438 seems to be the start of a mass expansion or migration of this super-family” and that “R-S10438 is the haplogroup that is historically most important in this recent sequence”. McDonald (personal communication, August 1, 2022) agrees with FamilyTreeDNA that the TMRCA of R-Y38432 should be dated to c. 400–450 CE. The accumulated data suggests that R-BY172798 and R-S15948 were brought to Europe by the Huns and that some of these Huns made it all the way to Scandinavia. This view is further substantiated by the presence of other R-Z93-derived branches in Sweden like R-Y56311, R-S10247 and R-YP5275 (FTDNA, 2024a). R-Y56311 is the parent clade of R-PRX4, the latter detected in a supposed Xiongnu chanyu (DA39), i.e. high king, from Arkhangai, Mongolia (Damgaard et al., 2018b; FTDNA, 2024a). R-PRX4 later shows up among the Avars (Maróti et al., 2022, KFP-30a; FTDNA, 2024a), likely mediated by the Huns. It should be noted that these R-Z93 branches are only present in southern Sweden, not in the rest of Scandinavia (Högström, 2024b).

Yet another Y-DNA branch that might be linked to Hunnic presence in Scandinavia is Q-L527, which nowadays is mainly found in southern Sweden. The closest related branch is the sister clade Q-FT377000 that has been detected among aDNA samples (RISE672) from southern Siberia attributed to the Okunev culture, and dated to c. 2,300–

1,950 BCE (Damgaard et al., 2018a; FTDNA, 2024a). The TMRCA of Q-L527 is dated to c. 1,700 BCE (FTDNA, 2024a). However, Q-L527 only starts diverging into multiple subbranches from the 7th century BCE and onwards, and one of these subbranches, Q-Y15684, is nowadays present in Ukraine and southern Russia (FTDNA, 2024a). This may indicate that the initial major diversification of Q-L527 should be attributed to a Scythian context. This view is substantiated by the fact that related Q1b2b branches have been detected among the Srubnaya-Alakul (Blöcher et al., 2023, B2B-1), the Tagar (Damgaard et al., 2018b, DA4), the Karasuk and the Wusun (Kumar et al., 2022, C1246, C3325) cultural horizons (FTDNA, 2024a), all Iranic-speaking steppe nomadic groups, the latter also allies of the Xiongnu (Kim, 2015, pp. 37–43). Q-L527 may equate to a faction of the Akatziri who were based in Ukraine and who were allies of the Huns (Kim, 2015, pp. 84–86). The Akatziri are referred to as both Scythians and Huns by Priscus and may partially derive from the earlier Agathyrsi (Maenchen-Helfen, 1973, pp. 431–438, 451).

The highest frequency and diversity of Q-L527 is nowadays found in Götaland, Sweden, which is also the region with the highest frequency and diversity of Y-DNA haplogroup I1 (Högström, 2024b). The latter was spread to other parts of Europe by I1-rich Germanic-speaking groups whose origins can in part be traced back to Sweden (Stolarek et al., 2023). One would therefore expect the geographical distribution of Q-L527 in continental Europe to somewhat match I1 which is not the case. One would also expect Q-L527 to be present among aDNA samples from Sweden and among I1-rich continental Germanic groups. However, neither is the case. Several unusual Y-DNA haplogroups have been detected among the I1-rich Goths which demonstrate that they had no issue with intermixing and integrating groups from diverse backgrounds (Stolarek et al., 2023). These facts combined indicate that Q-L527 was brought to Götaland after those processes had occurred. Furthermore, the distribution of Q-L527 mirrors the distribution of artefacts from the Migration Period attributed to the Sösdala style in both Scandinavia and in continental Europe.

The Q-Y15684-derived branch Q-BY106702 is present in Sweden and northern Poland but as two separate subclades that diverged during the Migration Period and which do not overlap geographically (FTDNA, 2024a; Högström, 2024a, 2024c). This indicates that their current distribution is due to events that took place during that time period. The same can be said about another subbranch, Q-BY103840, which is present in Sweden and western Germany, but as two separate subclades which do not overlap geographically and which diverged during the Migration Period, more precisely c. 400 CE (FTDNA, 2024a; Högström, 2024a, 2024c). Another subbranch, Q-FT192927, with TMRCA dated to c. 200 CE, is present in Hungary and the Balkans but not in Sweden (FTDNA, 2024a; Högström, 2024a, 2024c). These examples combined suggest that the bearers of Q-L527 migrated from and/or to Scandinavia during the Migration Period. Furthermore, a related Q1b2b branch, Q-BY66647, with TMRCA dated to c. 250 CE, and which diversified into multiple subbranches c. 400 CE, is present in western Germany (FTDNA, 2024a; Högström, 2024c).

The ethnolinguistic identity of Q-L527 is difficult to discern, but the fact that one of its subbranches, Q-Y16739, with TMRCA dated to c. 100 BCE, is present in Cagliari, Sardinia, is helpful since the history of Sardinia is well-documented by Roman

chroniclers (Francalacci et al., 2013, ERS256927; Francalacci et al., 2015, pp. 6–7; FTDNA, 2024a). Procopius (3.11.13 [Dewing, 1916, p. 105]) states that a Roman army that was sent to conquer the Vandalic kingdom in 533 CE contained four hundred Heruli and six hundred Hunnic mercenaries. A portion of the army was sent to Cagliari in 534 CE to conquer the island Sardinia (Procopius 4.5.1–2 [Dewing, 1916, p. 247]). It is possible that some of these soldiers were Heruli and/or Huns, and that this Y-DNA lineage derive from one of those soldiers or commanders, or alternatively from the Vandals or their Alanic allies. Procopius (6.15.1–4, 6.15.26 [Dewing, 1919, pp. 414–415, 420–421]) states that the Heruli migrated north to Scandinavia during the 6th century CE and settled next to the Gautoi, i.e. the Geats, in Götaland. The accumulated evidence suggests that Q-L527 either equates to a Scythian ally of the Huns or the Heruli, the latter also allies of the Huns (Kim 2015, pp. 127, 143).

Discussion

Priscus (fr. 8 [Gordon, 1960, p. 91]) states that Attila's empire in the late 440s CE encompassed the whole of Scythia and the islands of the ocean, the former referring to the Pontic-Caspian steppe while the latter is thought to refer to Scandinavia that at the time was believed by the Romans to be a large island with other smaller islands surrounding it (Sinor, 1990, p. 189; Kim, 2015, p. 54). Jordanes (49.257 [Mierow, 1908, pp. 80–81]) states that the Huns and their allies referred to Attila as “the sole possessor of the Scythian and German realms”. Bede (5.9 [Sellar, 1907, pp. 316–317]) states that there were Huns living nearby the Old Saxons and the Danes in the late 7th century CE which arguably should not be taken literally but rather as reflecting a distant memory of the political landscape of the 5th century CE before the *Adventus Saxonum* (Campbell, 1995, pp. 123–124). Further evidence can be found in several contemporary Roman sources that mention Hunnic military campaigns along the Rhine in western Germany in both 430 CE (*Epitoma Chronicon* 1322 [Mommsen, 1892, p. 475]) and 436–437 CE (*Chronica Gallica A. CCCCLII* 118 [Mommsen, 1892, p. 660]). It should be noted that the Hunnic ruler Octar died in western Germany during the military campaign 430 CE (Maenchen-Helfen, 1973, p. 83; Sinor, 1990, p. 187).

According to *Widsið* (119–122 [Chambers, 1912, pp. 221–222]), wars were fought between the Huns and the Goths in the forestland near the Vistula. The forestland along the Lower Vistula in northwestern Poland was the birthplace of the Wielbark culture, an Iron Age archaeological complex associated with the Goths (Łuczkiwicz et al., 2021; Stolarek et al., 2023). In the 3rd century CE, the major part of the Goths migrated south but small pockets remained in the lands around the Lower Vistula until the 5th century CE (Pędziszewska et al., 2020, pp. 192–194). One such example is Pruszcz Gdański where a large settlement cluster of the Wielbark culture was still located during the first half of the 5th century CE (Pędziszewska et al., 2020, p. 193). The Huns in *Widsið* (119–122 [Chambers, 1912, pp. 221–222]) are referred to as Attila's host. This passage in *Widsið* along with Priscus' account indicate that Attila may have partaken in these northern expeditions before he and his brother Bleda took over the leadership in 434 CE, and that they made it to southern Sweden. The presence of the likely aristocratic Hunnic branches R-Y56311 and R-Y38432 in Sweden support this scenario.

The fact that Attila's son Ellac ruled the Akatziri in the late 440s CE indicates that Ellac was born before 434 CE. Attila is described around the same time by Jordanes (35.182 [Mierow, 1908, p. 57]) as having a beard sprinkled with gray which suggests that Attila had already reached a considerable age by then (Maenchen-Helfen, 1973, p. 198). When one takes into account that Attila and Bleda only were nephews of the previous co-rulers, Octar and Rugila, the logical conclusion is that the two brothers must have made a name for themselves already before 434 CE for them to be chosen as the next co-rulers. The way to make a name for yourself was to lead successful military campaigns. It is likely that Attila was a Hunnic provincial leader before 434 CE among the northern Germanic allies as indicated by the fact that both Priscus (fr. 21.1 [Blockley, 1983]) and John Malalas (Chronographia 14.10 [Jeffreys et al., 1986, p. 195]) refer to Attila as a Gepid Hun (Kim, 2015, pp. 84–87, 109). Perhaps Attila's bid for power was that he had won several impressive military victories in the North and that he expanded the zone of influence all the way to southern Scandinavia.

If Hunnic contingents were sent north towards Scandinavia, it is difficult to discern exactly who these people were, but it is likely that they contained both Hunnic and Germanic elements, and that they should be equated with the cultural horizon known as the Sösdala style. The Sösdala style is defined by ceremonial horse bridles and pelta-shaped pendants with stamp ornamentation that were ritually destroyed and deposited on ridges in Sösdala and Fulltofta in central Scania during the first half of the 5th century CE (Bitner-Wróblewska, 2017, pp. 259–261). Similar finds from eastern Europe are dated to the late 4th and the early 5th centuries CE (Tomka, 1987, pp. 156–161; Rodzińska-Nowak, 2020, pp. 389–390). The nature of these finds, the way they were deposited and the limited distribution of similar finds in Europe is according to Mogens Ørsnes (1993) an indication that these finds belong to a princely Hunnic context. An illustrative example are the artefacts from a princely grave in Jakuszowice, Poland, that contained items both in the Sösdala style and the Hunnic polychrome style (Rodzińska-Nowak, 2021, pp. 117, 119; Obrusánszky, 2023a, p. 777). It should be noted that the finds from Jakuszowice, just like the finds from central Scania, predates the reign of Attila (Rodzińska-Nowak, 2020, pp. 380–393; Rodzińska-Nowak, 2021, p. 119).

In the 5th century CE, the main route north seems to have run west of the Vistula through the lands previously dominated by the Przeworsk culture, i.e. the Vandals (Gralak, 2010, p. 63; Mączyńska, 2020, pp. 451–461, 466). Hunnic contingents would have used communication routes running through the Carpathian passes towards Jakuszowice which seems to have been a gateway community controlled by the Huns (Gralak, 2010, pp. 66–67; Rodzińska-Nowak, 2021, pp. 121–123). This view is substantiated by a burial from Przemęczany, only 20 km from Jakuszowice, and another burial from Czulice, only 32 km from Jakuszowice, which both contained an individual with an artificially deformed skull, the latter also determined to be a Hun by genomic analysis (Gralak, 2010, p. 65; Niebylski et al., 2024, pp. 4–5, 10–11). The burial from Czulice also contained a second individual, perhaps a servant judging by the lack of grave goods, whose genomic and isotopic (0.7114) signatures point to southern Scandinavia (Niebylski et al., 2024, p. 6). The fact that the Czulice burial is dated to c. 395–418 CE (Niebylski et al., 2024, p. 10) suggests that the Vandals who left this region and crossed the Rhine in 406 CE (Epitoma Chronicon 1230 [Mommsen, 1892, p. 465])

did so to escape the Huns (Kim, 2013, pp. 160–161). Furthermore, a Hunnic sword amulet from Rędzina, located northwest of Jakuszowice, seems to indicate a northward route west of the Vistula towards the southern Baltic coast (Gralak, 2010, p. 46).

Once these Hunnic contingents arrived at the southern Baltic coast, it is likely that some would have crossed the sea from the area around Koszalin via Bornholm to southeastern Scania while other contingents would have stayed behind. Pruszcz Gdański and Juszkowo are located east of Koszalin and likely correspond to the area around the Lower Vistula where clashes occurred between the Huns and the Goths according to *Widsið*, a notion supported by the find of a spatha sword of Asian type in Juszkowo which likely belong to the same Hunnic context (Machajewski & Schuster, 2020, pp. 357–358). It should be noted that both Pruszcz Gdański and Juszkowo are dated to the first half of the 5th century CE, and just like the sites in southern Poland, predates the reign of Attila (Machajewski & Schuster, 2020, pp. 357–358; Pędziszewska et al., 2020, p. 193).

Hoards with solidi from Bornholm resemble hoards from Slovakia and Hungary dated to the mid-5th century CE (Fischer, 2017, 2019), and may belong to the same Hunnic context. Similar finds have also been found in the area around Koszalin (Gralak, 2010, pp. 67–68). Sacrificed horse remains from the Migration Period have been found in Sorte Muld on Bornholm and in Vikhem in Scania. Similar horse sacrifices have also been found in Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania and southern Russia, all attributed to a Hunnic context (Bóna, 1979; Mráv et al., 2021). Ole Klindt-Jensen (1957, 1959) and Marianne Görman (1993, pp. 287–290) argue that the horse sacrifice from Bornholm should be attributed to a Hunnic context since only the head, limbs and tail of the horse were preserved, a custom mainly practiced by the Huns. Görman (1993, pp. 276–290) further argues that the deposited horse tack from central Scania belong to the same Hunnic context, a view substantiated by the fact that the burial from Jakuszowice also contained a horse sacrifice and items in both the Sösdala style and the Hunnic polychrome style (Rodzińska-Nowak, 2021).

C-bracteate IK 386 (Hauck, 1986, p. 163) from a hoard in Wapno, northern Poland, bears a unique runic inscription that transliterates as “sabar” (Pesch, 2020, pp. 421–425). The hoard is dated to the beginning of the 6th century CE (Pesch, 2020, p. 422). There is no consensus regarding the meaning of this inscription (Pesch, 2020, p. 423). IK 386 is a bastard of a specific subgroup of Scandinavian C-bracteates that seems to have been manufactured locally (Pesch, 2020, pp. 421–425). The same thing can be said about C-bracteate IK 211 (Hauck, 1985, p. 277) from the same hoard (Pesch, 2020, pp. 421–425). A row of connected squares depicted on IK 211 has been interpreted as mimicking runic inscriptions on C-bracteates from Scandinavia (Pesch, 2020, p. 422). I would argue that these peculiarities regarding IK 386 and IK 211 could stem from these C-bracteates being manufactured and owned by an individual or group who did not speak a Germanic language as a first language.

I would further argue that the runic inscription on IK 386 could derive from the same root that gave rise to the ethnonym of the Sabirs. The Sabirs are mentioned in accounts from the 5th and 6th centuries CE as living east of the Don (Sinor, 1990, p. 200). Some historical chroniclers like Procopius (8.3.5 [Dewing, 1928, pp. 74–75]) refer to the Sabirs as Huns while other chroniclers refer to them as related to but different from the

Huns (Golden, 2013, pp. 49–55; Kim, 2013, p. 138; Obrusánszky, 2023b, pp. 10, 13). The same root seems to also be preserved in Sabar and Sabur/Sabir which both designate subsets of the Kyrgyz (Golden, 2013, p. 51 [note 18]). Omeljan Pritsak (1976, pp. 17–30) argues that the words Sabir and Xianbei have the same etymology. The Xianbei were rivals of the Xiongnu who supplanted the latter as the hegemonic power in Inner Asia during the late 2nd century CE (Ishjamts, 1994, pp. 151–152; Golden, 2013, p. 50). The Xianbei-Hun cultural-chronological horizon in Berel, dated to the 2nd–4th centuries CE, has analogies in southern Siberia and Mongolia (Gnecchi-Ruscione et al., 2021). The samples with Q-YP789 and R-BY172798 from Berel are designated as Xianbei-Hun because they belong to a group who carry both local Pazyryk ancestry and admixture from those regions (Gnecchi-Ruscione et al., 2021, p. 4). They align genomically with later Hunnic samples from western Kazakhstan, Hungary and Poland (Gnecchi-Ruscione et al., 2021, p. 4; Maróti et al., 2022, pp. 2860–2861; Niebylski et al., 2024, p. 6).

Some Xiongnu factions defected to the Xianbei in 91 CE and consequently adopted the Xianbei politonym (Vasjutin, 2003, p. 57), an event that coincides with the TMRCA of Q-YP789 (FTDNA, 2024a). The supposed connection to the Xianbei is supported by the fact that Q-YP789 was seemingly not present in Berel before the 2nd century CE. The accumulated evidence suggests that the bearers of Q-YP789 were a faction of the Xiongnu who defected to the Xianbei in 91 CE, but later joined those Huns who migrated west, perhaps due to linguistic and cultural ties. This view is supported by the fact that the entire Q-YP844 branch to which Q-YP789 belong is associated with the Xiongnu and the Huns (Damgaard et al., 2018b, DA54, DA74), and it is later mainly found among Turkic-speaking groups (FTDNA, 2024a). Ancient chroniclers associated the Sabirs with both the Huns and the Magyars. It should be noted that Q-YP789 was present among both these groups. Q-YP789 is nowadays also present in northern Poland and may derive from those Hunnic contingents who likely stayed behind.

My view is that the Huns contained both Sabir and Bulgar elements, and that the latter was a Hunnified mixed group (Maenchen-Helfen, 1973, p. 168), as implied by their politonym, who formed among the Huns in the Balkans as a mixture of steppe nomadic (Saag et al., 2024) and local elements (Veeramah et al., 2018), a view shared by Borbála Obrusánszky (personal communication, July 6, 2024). The fact that Q-YP789 (I2525) was present among the Bulgars proves the Hunnic connection (Lazaridis et al., 2022, FTDNA, 2024a). I-L621, a Y-DNA branch local to the Balkans (Karachanak et al., 2013), seems to have been common among the Bulgars, and some of its subbranches like I-FT87075 and I-Y91535 with TMRCA's dated to the 200s–300s CE are nowadays present in Sweden (FTDNA, 2024a). The social mobility among the Bulgars which enabled commoners who excelled on the battlefield to rise through the ranks may help to explain how I-L621 became prolific among the Bulgars (Maenchen-Helfen, 1973, pp. 199, 213 [note 80]). Some of the R-Z93-derived branches in Sweden (R-YP5275, R-S10247) and Bulgaria (R-YP5275, R-BY104501) may represent Bulgar branches (FTDNA, 2024a). The accumulated evidence indicates that both Sabir and Bulgar elements participated in the Hunnic expeditions that were sent north towards Scandinavia. It is more difficult to detect and trace Germanic Y-DNA branches that may have partaken in these Hunnic expeditions since they are more or less the same as the native Y-DNA branches.

One Germanic group that has not been tested so far are the Heruli. One possibility is, therefore, that the modern distribution of Q-L527 reflects their movements across Europe during the 3rd–6th centuries CE. Another possibility is that it reflects movements by the Heruli both as Hunnic allies and as an independent group. A bone piece from Scania, dated to the 5th century CE, contains a runic inscription that in part transliterates as “ek erilaz” meaning “I, the Heruli” (Düwel, 2001, p. 29). A spear head from Rozwadów, Poland, contains a similar runic inscription transliterated as “[i]k [e]rlas” accompanied by several tamgas (Garbacz, 2016). With that said, the most likely scenario in my opinion is that Q-L527 equates to a Scythian ally of the Huns, perhaps a faction of the Akatziri. It should be noted that some individuals with Q1 from southern Scandinavia have been shown to still carry a minor steppe nomadic signal in their autosomal DNA (Högström, 2024a).

Scholars like Lotte Hedeager (2011), Hyun Jin Kim (2015), Marianne Görman (1993) and John D. Niles (2016) argue that the Huns had a formative and lasting impact on the cultures, beliefs, rituals and arts of the Germanic peoples of the North, even Scandinavia. It is noteworthy that Attila and the Huns are mentioned in a multitude of local legends, epic poems and sagas from northern Europe, especially from Scandinavia (Hedeager, 2011), while there is not a single mention of Scythians, Sarmatians or Alans within this corpus in relation to Scandinavia. To argue with great confidence, as many scholars do, that there was no Hunnic presence in Scandinavia, and that the Sösdala style has no direct connection to the Huns, is questionable when one considers the fact that the equestrian artefacts from central Scania were destroyed and deposited according to Hunnic customs along with the fact that the emergence and disappearance of the Sösdala style coincides with the emergence and disappearance of the Hunnic Empire (Näsman, 2017, p. 119). The fact that Czulice with certainty can be attributed to a Hunnic context implies that nearby Jakuszowice as well as Sösdala and Fulltofta in Scania should be attributed to the same Hunnic context.

Conclusion

In the past, a major obstacle when trying to map the distribution and spread of various Y-DNA branches was that the models were based on only a few ancient and modern DNA samples. Furthermore, the data generated from those samples were not detailed enough to conclude anything with great certainty. Nowadays, we have a fair amount of aDNA samples from across Eurasia with detailed genomic data. The same thing can also be said about modern DNA samples. This enables us to see patterns and to construct viable models, especially when used in combination with carbon-14 dates, TMRCA, archaeology and philology. The finds from Czulice, Jakuszowice, Juszkowo, Fulltofta and Sösdala and the presence of certain R-Z93- and Q-YP789-derived branches in Poland and southern Sweden suggest that a northward migration from southeastern Europe took place during the first half of the 5th century CE which ultimately reached southern Sweden. The fact that the archaeological finds from Jakuszowice, Fulltofta and Sösdala belong to a princely Hunnic context along with the fact that the finds from Jakuszowice contained items in both the Sösdala style and the Hunnic polychrome style indicate that these phenomena are interconnected. This view is further substantiated by the fact that

the Hunnic burial from Czulice also contained a Germanic individual with an isotopic signature equivalent to southern Scandinavia. The distribution of Q-L527 mirrors the distribution of the Sösdala horizon and both seem to have spread along a southeastern-northwestern axis within the same time frame as the Hunnic R-Z93-derived branches nowadays present in Sweden which indicate that Q-L527 belong to the same Hunnic context. However, it is less clear whether Q-L527 represents a Scythian or a Heruli component within the aforesaid context. The conclusion is that the accumulated evidence, when structured into a coherent hypothesis, creates a synergistic effect that supports Hedeager's hypothesis.

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ART OF SIEGE AMONG THE KIPCHAKS

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Abstract: This article is devoted to the history of art of siege among the Kipchaks. The Kipchaks possessed the basic skills of besieging cities. They could take small towns as a result of a long blockade or a surprise attack. The Kipchaks could capture large cities only together with their allies. Ruthenians, Georgians, and Bulgarians were such allies. An attempt to use catapults of the Tir-i Charkh type is recorded in 1184. The Kipchaks hired a Khorezm specialist in the art of siege.

Keywords: *Kipchaks, art of Siege, siege of cities, Tir-i Charkh catapult, Bulgarians, Georgians*

One of the complex issues in the Kipchaks history is related to the development of the art of siege among the Kipchaks. Unfortunately, until now this aspect has been of little interest for researchers. It is necessary to answer the question of whether the siege skills of the nomads evolved and what equipment they used.

In the case of an enemy attack, the nomads defended themselves in a camp of carts (tabor). This was recorded by Michael the Syrian. In such a camp the Pechenegs defended themselves from the Romans and Kipchaks in the Battle of Levunion. In order to storm camps, nomads had to have basic siege skills. The camp was to be bombarded with both conventional and incendiary arrows. It was also important to open the wall of carts in order to break into the enemy's camp [Anna Komnena (1965): book 8, paragraphs 4–6; Marquart 2002].

Very little is known about sieges among nomads. In order to get an idea of the skills of the Kipchaks during sieges, it is necessary to analyze data from sources about their campaigns. In 1068, the Kipchaks fought near Chernigov without even making an attempt to take the city. In 1070 it was reported that the Kipchaks fought near Rostovets and Neyatin. In 1079, Prince Roman led the Kipchaks to the Warrior, but they did not take the city. Thus, even small cities could withstand the raids of the Kipchaks [Ипатьевская (1962): 161, 164, 195].

Typologically similar to these campaigns was the Kipchak campaign against Hungary in 1091, carried out by duke (prince) Kopulkh, son of Krul (Kol). During this campaign, the Kipchaks devastated Transylvania. They reached the city of Bechei (Old Bechei on Tisza). However, the Kipchaks were defeated in the battles of Paganti (Poganch stream) and near the Danube. The Kipchaks did not take a single city. The earlier campaigns of the Pechenegs in 1068 (or 1071) and 1085 were also unsuccessful. [Shusharin (1997): 327–328; Scriptorum Rerum Hungaricarum (1776): 196–197;

Chronicon pictum 1883, 163-164]. Feeling the weakness of the Romans, the Kipchaks supported the rebellion of the Pseudo-Roman Diogenes in 1095, which, although defeated, showed the danger the nomads posed to the Byzantine Empire. The impostor was supported by the Wallachians, who let the Kipchaks through the mountain passes [Anna Komnena (1965): book 10, paragraphs 2–4; Litavrin (1960): 422].

At the end of the 11th century, the situation for the Kievan Rus' became more complicated. In 1093, the Kipchaks defeated the army of Svyatopolk on the Stugna River and crossed the rampart built by the Ruthenians near the camp. After the defeat, Svyatopolk hid from the Kipchaks in the city of Trepolye, which they could not take. Then they, having besieged Torchesk, made an attempt to take possession of the city. But, as the chronicler pointed out, the Torqs (Oghuzs) repelled the assault of the Kipchaks and inflicted significant losses on the enemy. After an unsuccessful assault, the Kipchaks switched to a blockade and cut off the city garrison from the water. The defenders, suffering from thirst and hunger, asked Svyatopolk to release the city. The attempt to do this was a failure. The Kipchaks defeated the the Ruthenians and drove them to Trypillya and Kyiv. In 1095, the residents of Yuryev did not wait for the siege, like the Torci near Sakov, and moved to the north. The Kipchak attempt to take control of large cities in 1096 was unsuccessful. Bonyak tried to “expel” (on the move) get Kyiv, but the guards responded to the threat in time and did not allow the Kipchaks to break into the city. Tugorkan besieged the city of Pereyaslav, but it withstood the siege, and the troops of Vladimir Monomakh and Svyatopolk arrived in time and released the city. Tugorkan died during the battle of Pereyaslav. Bonyak, not receiving Kyiv, took revenge on the Rus by devastating the monasteries near the city. The Kipchaks burned the monastery in Stefanova village, devastated the settlement of Germanich and cut down the gates in the Pechersky monastery [Ипатъевская (1962): 211-213, 219, 221-224].

A. Bazhenov points out that at the end of the 11th century, the lands of Middle Transnistria were attacked by nomads. As a result of an unexpected raid, the Glybovskoe settlement was captured and burned. The settlements of Derazhnya Gatna, Kutkovtsy, and Kolubovtsy ceased to exist. The previous defense system, effective against the Pechenegs, was unable to withstand the Kipchaks. The main culprit of these destructions was Bonyak. His image was preserved in Podolian legends as “Bonyak Solodivy (Bonyak Sheludivy)” [Баженов (2009): 159–160]. In the 12th century, the chronicler recorded the settlements of Vasiliev, Onut, Kalius, Ushitsa and Kuchelmin on the territory of Transnistria (the settlement of Galitsa in the Sokiryansky district of the Chernivtsi region) [Котляр (1998): 143-149; Кудряшов (1948): 127; Баженов (2009): 94-97].

The capital of the Galician Ponyzzya became Bakota, around which there were settlements in the villages of Braga, Bolshaya Slobodka, Vrubovtsy, Grinchuk, Loevskoye. Six private castles and two princely fortresses were built [Баженов (2009): 96–99]. The new fortresses turned out to be more powerful than the old ones. In 1159, Ivan Berladnik and the Kipchak Khan Bashkord were unable to take the city of Ushitsa. In 1205, Rurik, together with the Kipchaks, was defeated by Mikulin. In 1228, Vladimir Rurikovich, together with Mikhail Vsevolodovich and the Kipchaks, besieged Kamenets, but were unable to take it [Баженов (2009): 169-176]. During the Kipchak expansion of

the 1090s, the Kipchaks had the strength to besiege small cities and overcome fortification lines.

The retaliatory campaigns of the Ruthenians slowed down the expansion of the Kipchaks, who returned to the traditional tactics of quick raids. In 1105, Bonyak's troops attacked Zarub. In the battle that took place, he defeated the Torks and Berendeys [Прицак 2008, 41; Плетнева 1990, 56; Kurat (1972): 83; Ипатьевская (1962): 257; Расовский (1940): 110]. The following year, the Urusobichs attacked Zarechesk on the Kiev-Volyn border [Прицак 2009, 41; Плетнева (1990): 56; Kurat (1972): 83; Spinei (2009): 124; Лаврентьевская (1962): 281; Ипатьевская (1962): 257; Расовский (1940): 110]. A battle took place near the Sula River in 1106 or 1107, where Bonyak's brother Taz died [Прицак (2008): 41-42; Плетнева (1990): 60-61; Kurat (1972): 83; (Gökbel 2002): 649; Лаврентьевская (1962): 281-282; Ипатьевская (1962): 258-259; Расовский (1940): 110]. In 1116 Bonyak attacked the city of Ksnyatin [Плетнева (1990): 64]. In 1125, Mstislav Vladimirovich repelled a Kipchak raid on Baruch and pursued them to Polksoten [Ипатьевская (1962): 289-290; Лаврентьевская (1962): 295-296; Расовский (1940): 114]. The princes of Rus' organized an effective fortification system. The Ruthenians quickly reacted to the invasion, and vigilantes came to their aid.

Konchak's first campaigns against Rus' had the nature of raids. It was first mentioned in 1172 [Ипатьевская (1962): 548]. In addition to the actions near Ksnyatin, the Donetsk Kipchaks made a campaign against the Pereyaslavl land and approached the city of Pesochen [Ипатьевская (1962): 548, 555]. In 1174, Konchak, together with Kobyak, made a campaign, plundering the outskirts of Serebryany and Baruch, and when the army of the Seversky prince Igor Svyatoslavich approached them, the nomads retreated beyond the Vorskla, avoiding the battle [Плетнева (1990): 157; Kurat (1972): 85-86; Gökbel (2002): 649; Ипатьевская (1962): 568-570]. The campaign of 1179 was directed against Pereyaslav, but the Kipchaks did not besiege the city [Gökbel (2002): 649; Плетнева (1990): 157; Ипатьевская (1962): 612-613].

In 1177, the Kipchaks made a campaign against Kyiv and took six towns of the Berendeys [Ипатьевская (1962): 603-605]. This was the beginning of a new era in the history of Kipchak military affairs. The Kipchak khans thought about using more complex technologies to take cities. In 1184, Konchak was preparing for a campaign against Rus'. He specially invited some "busurmenin" to build siege equipment, and he even built some kind of machine, which the Slavs called "shereshir" in "The Tale of Igor's Campaign." In Farsi this siege weapon was called "tir-i charkh". This siege engine was a ballista that used ignited oil to destroy fortifications. In the Galicia-Volyn Chronicle it is mentioned that the "busurmenin" had "living fire". The chronicler highly appreciated the significance of the presence of this person among the Kipchaks. He reported that Konchak wanted to take the cities of the Rus and burn them. However, the Ruthenians learned in advance about the plans of the Kipchaks and, in order to destroy them, carried out a raid on Khorol. Konchak was forced to flee, and the "Busurmenin" was captured. As for the ethnicity of the Muslim military instructor, O. Pritsak believed that he was an Iranian-speaking Khorezmian. As for the origin of the oil, the Ukrainian researcher suggested that the oil could have come from the Taman Peninsula. This was not the so-called "Greek fire", the origin and use of which was kept secret by the Romans. This was another, now Muslim development. It is likely that a Muslim

instructor could get to Dasht-i Kipchak from the Middle East or Central Asia (from Khorezm) through Saksin (a country in the Lower Volga region) [Прицак (2008): 91–98; Плетнева (1990): 159; Kurat (1972): 86; Gökbel (2002): 649; Ипатьевская (1962): 634–636].

After 1184, the Galician-Volyn chronicler no longer spoke of a significant danger to Rus'. However, Igor's defeat in the Battle of Kayal opened up the possibility for the Kipchaks to devastate the border regions. The Burj-Ogly troops moved to the cities of Poseymye. Gza approached Putivl and even took a fortress-near this city. The Kipchak leader never dared to besiege the capital of the Seversk land. The troops of the Donetsk Kipchaks devastated the borderlands of the Pereyaslav principality and the region up to Pereyaslav. However, Konchak never dared to besiege Pereyaslav. It was noted that the inhabitants of the city of Rimov died in the battle with the Kipchaks in 1185. They were destroyed by Polovtsian sabers. The Kipchaks stormed several fortresses of the Sivershchina land. The unsuccessful campaign of Igor Svyatoslavich deprived the garrisons of the cities of the support of the princely army, which fell in the battle of Kayal. There was no way to get help for the besieged. The description of the siege of Rimov indicates that the defenders were on the fences. Therefore, it can be assumed that the Rimov garrison repelled the Kipchak assault. However, the ongoing siege had a negative impact on the city's defenders. Part of the garrison fled due to the swamps located near the city. Those who remained in the city could not withstand the new assault by the Kipchaks. The assault was successful, and the Kipchaks captured the city and destroyed its defenders. In 1187, the Kipchaks fought with the Rusyns on the river Ros and in the Chernigov borderland, however, they did not achieve success. The warriors of the princes came to the aid of the garrisons of the cities in time [Плетнева (1990): 165–166; Ипатьевская (1962): 646–648; Прицак (2008): 118–122].

After the failures in Rus', they began to put even more active pressure on the Roman fortifications on the Danube border. In 1114, the Kipchaks attacked the city of Vidin [Stoyanow 2002, 682; Diaconu 1978, 59]. A terrible warning was the capture of the city of Garvan in Dobrudja by the Pechenegs and Berendeys. This happened in 1122 [Гръцки извори (1968): 209–210; Маркварт (2002); Diaconu (1978): 62–71]. In 1148, the Kurchaks attacked Dristra (Silistria) [Бибииков (1981): 117; Гръцки извори (1968): 226–227; Гръцки извори (1972): 226–227; Расовский (1940): 120]. The next campaign took place in 1160. According to John Kinnam, the Kipchaks attacked the Byzantine borderland when Manuel was on a campaign against the Rumian Turks. As a result of this attack, the basileus (emperor) was forced to return to Europe, but when the nomads learned about the advance of his troops to the Danube, they retreated back to the steppes [Бибииков (1981): 121; Гръцки извори (1968): 247; Расовский (1940): 124]. If in 1114 the Vidin garrison managed to fight off the Kipchaks, then in 1148 and 1160. the garrisons of the Danube fortresses needed the help of the emperor's troops to hold the border. The Hungarian king Endre II in 1211 was forced to give the land of Bartsa as fief to the Teutonic knights. The old system of Hungarian bins (gyepu) could no longer stop the Kipchak invasions. Obviously, the Kipchaks stormed Hungarian fortresses as well as insignificant Russian towns [Папаска (1981): 16; Vasary (2005): 32; Spinei (2008): 417; Пашуто (2011): 575]. Before the Crusaders moved to this region, the Kipchaks devastated the lands of the counties of Brasov and Fegheras [Vasary 2005, 32; Spinei

1986, 49]. By charter of the king in 1212, the Teutons were given lands south of the Tatar Pass. The Teutons were offered to expand their possessions at the expense of the lands between Bulgaria and the Brodniki [Шушарин (1978): 41]. The documents of the diplomatic correspondence between Endre II and Pope Honorius III noted that the pagans were attacking the land of Bartz and “the land beyond the snow-capped mountains” [Шушарин 1978, 41–42]. In the summer, the Kipchaks approached the Carpathian Mountains, and it was then that their attacks on the Hungarian border area could occur [Шушарин (1978): 44]. The Teutons were not only able to repel the attacks of the nomads for several years, but also launched a counter-offensive. The knights conquered some areas near Bartsashag in the possessions of the Kipchaks and Brodniks. The Teutons were able to successfully fight the Kipchaks by building fortifications. They built several settlements such as Brasov (Kronstadt) and Kreuzburg. The Kipchaks could not oppose anything to the German castles [Князький (1988): 26; Spinei (2008): 575–576; Spinei (1986): 49].

However, the nomads had the opportunity to take cities together with their allies. In this regard, the wars of the Kipchaks with the Romans and the Latin Empire are indicative. The largest invasion of the Kipchaks and Vlachs into the Byzantine possessions in history was the campaign in Thrace in 1199 - 1200. [Vasary (2005): 48–49; Иречек (1878): 310; Успенский (1879): 207–209; Diaconu (1978): 130; Spinei (1986): 47]. According to the dating of M. Bibikov, in 1199 the Wallachians and Kipchaks occupied all the Thracian cities that were located between Mesina and Tsurul. On April 23, the army of Bulgarians, Vlachs and Kipchaks approached Constantinople. In the fall of 1199 and spring of 1200, the Kipchaks were near Plovdiv (Philippol) [Бибииков (1981): 126; Расовский (2012): 234]. An event of world significance was the Battle of Adrianople (1205). It is known according to Robert de Clary, Geoffroy de Villehardouin, Niketas Choniates, Nikephoros Gregoras, George Acropolite [Geoffroy de Villehardouin (1993): chapters 354–361; Robert de Clary (1986): chapter 112; Nikita Choniates (1862); Nikifor Grigora (1862): 19–20; George Acropolis (1863): 26]. In it, the allied Bulgarian-Kypchak army defeated the crusaders [Vasary (2005): 50; Успенский (1879): 131–132; Diaconu (1978): 247–249; Иречек (1878): 320; Расовский (2012): 234–235]. After this, the Bulgarians and Hairs, together with the Kipchaks, took the cities of Verroya, Ruzia, Apros, Perinth, Daonia, Arkadiopol, Messina, Tsurul, Afira [Nikita Choniates (1862)].

The Kipchaks took part in the Bulgarian campaigns in Thrace and Macedonia in 1205 - 1207, as well as in the siege of Thessalonica (1207). Kipchak warriors were in the army of the Bulgarian king Kaloyan in January and February 1206. However, during the campaign of 1207 they also acted in the spring. Thessalonica could not be taken quickly, the war continued until mid-April 1207. The Kypchaks could not stay in the Asenid army for a very long time and were forced to retreat [Robert de Clary (1986): chapter 116; Geoffroy de Villehardouin (1993): chapters 386–389, 399, 404–410, 417–421, 461–475; Nikifor Grigora (1862): 23–26; Nikita Choniates (1862); Князький (1988): 25; Успенский (1879): 254–255; Vasary (2005): 51–53; Иречек (1878): 323–325; Расовский (1940): 232–236; Расовский (2012): 684; Diaconu (1978): 133]. They acted as auxiliary troops during the siege of Tsurul in 1239 [Vasary (2005): 63; George Acropolis (1863): 60–61].

The Kipchaks also distinguished themselves in the Caucasus. With their help, the city of Tbilisi was liberated in 1122 [Anchabadze (1980): 342; Golden (1984): 73; Golden (2001): 48]. An-Nasawi pointed out that in 1227 Emir Jalal ad-Din managed to negotiate an alliance with Khan Gyurge (Gurka, Gur Khan). The latter can be identified with Yuri Konchakovich (i.e. Yuri Konchakovich). The Khorezme and Kipchaks tried to get Derbent. However, the Emir of Derbent still defended the city [Marquart (2002); Насави (1996): chapter 77].

To better understand the development of art of siege among the Kipchaks, it is necessary to compare their military art in the field of obtaining cities with examples from the history of other nomadic peoples. Data from archaeological research indicate that the Pechenegs took the fortifications of the Tivertsi - a settlement between the Dniester and Reut. Under pressure from the Pechenegs, part of the Tivertsi migrated to the lands of the White Croats. However, even Rus' itself during the reign of Prince Vladimir found it difficult to cope with their raids. In 969, the Pechenegs besieged Kyiv, in 992 - Pereyaslav, in 994 - Belgorod, in 996 - Vasilkov. To protect his possessions from the Pechenegs, Vladimir built lines of fortifications. He built fortifications along the Stugna on the Dnieper Right Bank, and on the Dnieper Left Bank along the Desna, Ostro, Trubezh and Sula. The fortification lines built by Vladimir Svyatoslavich and Yaroslav Vladimirovich became an obstacle to Pecheneg raids and pushed the border to Sula and Ros, securing Kyiv and Chernigov. With the help of the inhabitants of the Paradunavon region and the Paulicians (heretic Bohumils), the Pechenegs took possession of the cities of the Romans in the second half of the 11th century. [ПВЛ; Spinei (2009): 85-92, 97, 107-118; Кудряшов (1948): 128-129, 134-136; Котляр (1998): 127, 142; Баженов (2009): 94-99].

As for the Khazar fortifications, the Pechenegs were able to overcome them during the civil war in the Khazar Kaganate. The taking of Khazar territories by the Oguzes can be explained by the fact that after the war with Svyatoslav Igorevich, the Khazar state was in crisis, and the Rusyns took possession of key fortresses - Sarkel (White Tower) and Samkerts (Tmutarakan) [Прицак, Голб (2003), 140-141, 158; Білецький (2008), 23-30; Hudud al-Alam (1937), глава 47; Spinei (2009), 51]. The Pechenegs took control of the settlement on the Seversky Donets. The local population accepted the power of the Pechenegs. The decline of the Khazar settlements (X - XI centuries) occurred during the expansion of the Oguzes. The time of construction of the Khazar fortresses (the first half of the 9th century) indicates that the first opponents against whom the Khazars built fortresses were the Hungarians. Sarkel was built when the Hungarians appeared in the Black Sea steppes. According to Arab and Persian sources, the Magyars raided the Slavs, took tribute from them and captured them as slaves. The Slavs defended themselves from attacks by the Magyars by building fortresses. Gardizi and Ibn Ruste reported that the Magyars were attacking the Sakaliba. Similar evidence was given by Tahir al-Marwazi, reporting on the Magyars' raids on the Rus and the Sakaliba (as in the source) [Круглов (2003): 27-29, 49-58; Артамонов (2001): 391-432; Ипатьевская (1962): 17-18; Ибн Русте (2006): 703; Тахир Марвази (2006): 708; Гардизи (1973); ПВЛ].

Nomads could also acquire fortifications that were considered impregnable. Thus, the Turkuts took the city of Chora (Derbent). The Türkuts and Avars could use complex siege engines. In particular, it is known that the Avars used siege equipment when trying

to take control of Constantinople. The Avars mastered polyorhetics thanks to the help of captured Byzantine engineers. They learned the art of siege at the end of the 6th century. Theophanes the Byzantine reported that the mechanic Busa from the city of Aporia was captured by the Avars. He suggested how to build a siege machine called a “ram.” After the devastation of Caucasian Albania, the Turkuts broke into Iveria. The Turkuts failed to take Tbilisi straight away, but after two months of siege they took possession of the city. The description of the siege indirectly indicates that the Turkuts gained control of the city walls with the help of siege towers. The Sogdians could have introduced this technique to the Turkuts [Феофан Византиец (2005): 231; Мовсес Каланкаутаци (1984): XI, XII, XIV].

The nomads adopted the achievements of the art of siege from their neighbors. As to what siege devices the Pechenegs, Oguzes and Hungarians could use, the example of the Savirs can indicate. The Savirs, like other nomads, initially raided the border provinces. However, after some time they mastered the skills of besieging cities. Apparently, they were taught this by captured Romans [Артамонов (2001): 97–102]. As for the Turko-Bulgars, we do not have sufficient information about the existence of the art of siege in individual Turko-Bulgar tribes. The first data on complex machines date back to the 9th century. The captive Arab and the Byzantine mechanic Eumatius went into the service of the Bulgarian king Krum, who taught polyorhetics to the Turkic-Bulgars. With the help of siege engines, the Turko-Bulgars gained Mesemvria and Adrianople. And even after the “conquest of their homeland,” the Magyars acquired more complex machines, and in 954 they made an attempt to take possession of Augsburg, but were driven away from the city by the Germans [Фехер (1938): 56–57; Измайлов (2008): 87-94, 144-154]. It should be noted that a similar picture can be observed among the European Huns. In the 4th century. They counted on the speed of the attack, then under Attila the Huns developed polyorhetics in such a way that not a single city with stone walls could resist them. The Huns used rams and catapults during the siege. They were made by prisoners and renegades from the Romans. Attila used all types of throwing machines during the siege of Aquileia [Никоноров, Худяков 2004, 274–280]. The polyorhetics of the Kipchaks remained at the level of the early nomadic Magyars and Pechenegs. The Mongols had the most advanced polyorchetics [Храпачевский 2004, 209-257].

After conducting the research, we came to the following conclusions: The Kipchaks possessed the basic skills of besieging cities. They could take small towns as a result of a long blockade or a surprise attack. The Kipchaks could capture large cities only together with their allies. Ruthenians, Georgians, and Bulgarians were such allies. An attempt to use catapults of the Tir-i Charkh type is recorded in 1184. The Kipchaks hired a Khorezm specialist in the art of siege.

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‘MUST THEY GO TO SCHOOL?’ NORTHERN NIGERIA AND THE CHALLENGES OF GIRL CHILD EDUCATION, 1999-2015**Nadir A. Nasidi (PhD)**Department of History, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, Nigeria
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Abstract. In 1999, the Nigerian government launched its Universal Basic Education (UBE) program to provide free and compulsory education for every Nigerian child. Despite this effort, girls' enrollment and school retention are still at their lowest ebb. This problem is even more apparent in Northern Nigeria where economic, religious and cultural factors often deny most girls access to education, especially in the North-West. Using a qualitative research methodology, this paper assesses the factors debilitating against girl child education in Northern Nigeria between 1999 and 2015 and their implications. This study finds out that factors such as early marriage, gender discrimination, low government support and the condemnation of co-education were responsible for the low enrollment of girls in schools across the Northern region. The paper concludes that to achieve the United Nation's Millennium Development Goals-2 (MDG2) and Sustainable Development Goals-4 (SDG 4), the government, international community, NGOs and parents must put their hands on deck to break the social, economic, religious and cultural barriers denying girls full and equitable access to education in Northern Nigeria.

Keywords: *Girl child education, Social Inclusion, MDG2, SDG4, Northern Nigeria, Challenges*

INTRODUCTION

Due to the significance of inclusive education, especially based on the existing realities of the twenty-first century, the Nigerian government introduced some policies. These policies range from constitutional provisions as spelt out in Article 21A of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, which made it clear that the state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children from six to 14 years as the state may determine by law. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) Charter declares that 'every child shall have the right to education and full realization of this right shall, in particular, ensure equal access to education in respect of males, females, gifted and disadvantaged children for all section of the community' [Olanmi (2014): 8]. These governmental efforts were concretized by the Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1991 in which Nigeria with the support of UNICEF (United Nations International

Emergency Children's Fund) attempted to domesticate the convention into national law [Nasidi and Wali (2023): 1-7]. In July 2003, a bill was passed by the National Assembly, which was later promulgated as the Child's Rights Act of 2003, after the assent of the Nigerian president [Magbadelo (2009)]. Despite all these efforts, the girl child education, especially in the Northern part of Nigeria is still at its lowest ebb. This was largely attributed to certain socio-religious, economic and cultural reasons that hindered the girls from acquiring both the Western and Islamic forms of education.

This paper is based on empirical data collected from February 2014 to December 2015. It relies on primary sources ranging from newspapers, government and inter-government documents, as well as reports to oral interviews conducted in Northern Nigeria. Contrary to most recent research works that tend to emphasize feminist discourses in Northern Nigeria, the major focus of this paper is to find out the roles played by religious and cultural beliefs, poverty, gender discrimination, and low governmental support systems in depriving girl child education in the region. In so doing, an effort is also made to assess the said factors within the socio-economic, political and cultural realities of Nigeria.

Despite the massive transformation in the field of education in terms of the establishment of schools, colleges and universities in Nigeria, the question of inclusivity concerning girl child education remains a serious challenge. Although other scholars such as O. E. Osita-Oleribe [Osita-Oleribe (2007)], G. Nmadu, S. Avidime [Nmadu, et al (2010)], L. M. Tyoakaa, J. I. Amaka, [Tyoakaa, et al (2014)], A. Ishaq and M. Ali [Ishaq & Ali (2014)] have written on the issue, their attempts are more generic than specific to the factors affecting girl-child education in Northern Nigeria. On this basis, therefore, this paper studies this neglected or generally overlooked area to understand the plight of girls in terms of equitable access to education, as well as advancing inclusivity.

The paper is largely divided into three (3) important sections and sub-sections. While the first one deals with the introduction, statement of the research problem and the methodology adopted, the second section focuses on the major factors responsible for the denial of girl-child education in Northern Nigeria such as cultural belief system, poverty, gender discrimination and low government support. The last section is the conclusion of the paper.

Methodology

This study adopts a purely qualitative research methodology for data analysis. It is also based on primary and secondary sources. The primary data was largely generated through oral interviews with policy-makers and other constituted authorities, newspaper reports, and government documents. The selection of different informants for the interviews surely provides interesting perspectives and viewpoints on the subject matter.

Secondary data in the form of both published and unpublished materials were also consulted. This includes; books and journal articles, theses, and dissertations. The choice of different sources for historical reconstruction creates room for check-mating and corroborating various viewpoints to produce a factual historical analysis. It also bridges the gaps in historical reconstruction left by archival silences, over-exaggeration, falsification, and lack of chronology as in the case of oral tradition.

Findings and Discussion

Cultural Belief System

The cultural belief system constitutes one of the major factors militating against girl child education in Northern Nigeria. These beliefs have a significant impact on the parental decision on whether to send their girl child to school because many Nigerian parents show a negative attitude towards it, while some show a positive attitude towards it by sending their girl child to school but probably due to environmental factors such as government enforcement and laws regarding education [Umar (2004); Kurfi (2015)]. Musa Ibrahim opines that cultural restriction is a factor that contributes to the low level of enrollment and retention of girl children into the educational system stating the fact that, about 30% of school-aged girls drop out of school having already begun childbearing at an early age [Musa (2019)]. This phenomenon implies that many have suffered from psychological imbalances since they are mostly not mature enough to manage a marital home. UNESCO experts observe that cultural restrictions militate against girl child education in Northern Nigeria concluding that ‘in some cultures, girls are restricted in the kind of roles they can play, education inclusive’ [UNESCO (2015)].

The prevalence of the problem of girl child education is due to cultural relativity, although many reasons show that these cultural beliefs are rooted in the history of the people, we cannot neglect the fact that culture, as well as history, are dynamic, thus, the rights of the girl child can no longer be negotiated in the name of cultural belief and restrictions [Hassan (2015)]. The protection and promotion of the rights of the girl child secure a future for such a child as well as the nation at large. Several literatures agree on the fact that cultural beliefs are responsible for the denial of girl child education [Bilkisu (2015); Okpani (2003); Aisha (n.d), UNICEF (2001), Maimuna (2016); Eresimadu (1984); Okwara (1997)]. The following are cultural factors responsible for the denial of girl child education in Northern Nigeria:

Early marriage

Most of the girls in Northern Nigeria are married at a premature age which militates against their attendance and retention in school [Gender Development Database (2009)]. Statistic data show that ‘over half of all girl children in North-West and North-East are married off before the age of 16 and expected to bear children within the first year of marriage [NDHS (1999)]. It indicates that 20% of teenagers aged 15-19 were already mothers and another 6% were pregnant with their first child because of early marriage. Nationally, the median age of marriage for girls was 18.3 years, but it was much lower in Northern Nigeria where early marriage is regarded as a means of maintaining female chastity. The median age for marriage was found to be 15.1 years in the North East and 14.7 years in the North West. Of women aged 20-24, 20% had been married by the age of 15 and 40% by the age of 18. However, in some parts of the North, girls get married even earlier than these average figures suggest.

Condemnation of coeducation

As suggested by previous studies, most parents in Northern Nigeria fear that Western education could have devastating consequences on their girls while studying with boys in the same school. Parents believe that girl child education may threaten the moral training and orientation of girl children, especially with the few cases of young girls being pregnant in school either by their teachers, or their classmates. This decision is

deeply rooted in the orthodox Islamic traditions of the people since the Jihad of Sheikh Uthman ibn Fudi in 1804 [Nasidi, (2020): 1-20].

Preference of educating the male child

Many cultures in Northern Nigeria have a relative worth of educating boys than girls thereby sending the male child to school and leaving behind the girl child at home to perform domestic house chores. A. Dauda argues that ‘these historical, ideological and cultural variables constitute the major stumbling blocks to the smooth acceptance of girl child education in Northern Nigeria’ [Dauda (2008): 2-30]. This was based on the notion that if the girl child is trained, she goes to another family, unlike the boys who will later become the breadwinners of the family. A. Dauda further compares the conditions of girls' education in the Southern and Northern parts of Nigeria and concludes that Western education of girls has greater rejection in the North due to socio-cultural beliefs of the community. A. S. Mohammed also reaffirms that girls' education is denied because ‘of certain traditional beliefs which put them at the risk of neglect and denial’ [Mohammed (2004): 24]. These case studies evidenced that certain beliefs hamper girl child education in Northern Nigeria. While some stated specific cultural beliefs, other literature did not specify the types of cultural beliefs that restrict girl child education. However, in some families, cultural beliefs do not affect the chances of girls' enrollment into school. What could be the factor then? These issues are discussed below.

Poverty

Poverty is regarded as a major challenge to girl child education in Northern Nigeria. A Paper, presented at the workshop on Gender Disparities held by UNICEF, on 15-17 January, argues that poverty constrains the girl children's education who are occupied with the problem of daily survival [UNESCO (2015)]. This is because most parents do not consider a girl's education a priority. After all, they have little or no disposable income to supplement family expenses and the cost of education. In line with this, the Situation assessment and analysis "Children's and Women's Rights in Nigeria: A Wake-up Call" observes that ‘poverty prevents many families from enrolling their girl child to school or forcing them to withdraw their girl children prematurely from school due to the cost of education’ [UNICEF (2001)]. It is also difficult for many families to afford the cost of sending their girl child to school, as well as the psychological support needed for the progress in learning. The same source further states that the cost of sending a girl child to school is broken down into two major components; direct and indirect costs [Ibid].

- i. ***Direct Cost:*** this includes tuition fees, cost of uniform, textbooks, learning materials including exercise books, pens, and pencils, pocket money and the cost of transport money to and from school. These are paid by the household directly to the school or to the child in cash. However, following the National policy on education, primary school education is free [FME (1981)]. The reality is quite different, since the Federal and State governments are unable to finance education fully from their budget, administrators in public schools raise money by imposing fees and levies under one guise or another. For instance, parents are required to pay the Parent-Teacher Association fees, examination fees, report card fees, and extra lesson fees apart from buying other learning materials [UNICEF (2001)].

- ii. **Indirect Cost:** the indirect cost is the hidden cost of time that children devote to school. These costs are heavy on many parents, especially for students living in rural areas, but also for many in urban areas [Abubakar (2016)]. This inhibits the access of many girl children into the educational system. Nigerian Demographic Health Survey maintains that, among females aged 15-24 who had left school, 29% cited their inability to pay for school costs as the reason for dropping out. This was by far the most important reason given by those who had dropped out before completing primary school (36%), and at the end of primary school (41%). Other poverty-related reasons were the need to earn money (5%) to help parents or provide for the family [NDHS (1999)].

The Monitoring Learning Achievement (MLA) project found that among the reasons why girl children do not attend schools included the cost of living in school [Falayajo, Makoju, Okebukola, Onugha & Olubodun (1997)]. The authors, such as I. E. Okpani [Okpani (2003)], A.S. Muhammed [Mohammed (2014)], N.G. Ojimadu [Ojimadu (2005)], M.H. Kurfi [Kurfi (2015)], Hajara [Hajara (2010)], K. Maimuna [Maimuna (2016)], D. Birmingham [Birmingham (1995)], A.I. Aisha [Aisha (n.d)], H. Bilkisu [Bilkisu (2015)], and Mamman [Mamman (1996)], all exhibit similarities on their research findings [United Nation (2015), stating that poverty always challenges the state of girl child education in Northern Nigeria. In the same regard, Ikwen [Ikwen (2006)] and Abolarin [Abolarin (2010)] argue that poverty is a major factor that hinders the girl child from having access to education. Parents also regard school fees as a burden and thus girls often engage in menial jobs such as hawking that could generate financial benefits for the family. In addition, I.E. Okpani [Okpani (2003)], A.I. Aisha [Aisha (n.d)], and N.G. Ojimadu [Ojimadu (2005)] maintain that girls engage in street hawking practices to generate income for their families by selling foodstuffs in the market or on the street. While this goes on, the girl misses the opportunity to go to school, which becomes detrimental to her career development in education.

From this discussion, therefore, poverty constrains girls' access to education. Sad but true, one could find instances where some families are rich, but they still did not consider girls' education a priority. As such, the argument that poverty is the sole factor inhibiting girl child education is countered [Samuel (2016)]. Hence, poverty is one among other challenges affecting girl child education. Besides, it is not all girl children who are denied access to education are sent to street hawking to generate income for the family. This may be true for some poor and rural families but not in all cases.

Gender Discrimination

Numerous girls have no access to school in the Northern part of Nigeria, especially in the North-West [Ogbebo (2014): 20] It is unfortunate that even in the 21st century, female child is denied equal access to education facing gender discrimination from the earliest stage of her life, through childhood into adulthood [Kurfi (2015): 277-290]. In addition, S.A. Galadanci observes that 'the general system of education is a bit biased towards providing education to half of its communities that is the male sex while the female folks were almost neglected' [Galadanci (1971): 5-10]. To buttress this point, UNICEF states that more than 100 million children had no access to primary education in

Africa and out of this number, 60 million were girls [UNICEF (1999)]. It is quite devastating that the future mothers responsible for the socialization of children are denied equitable access to education, which slows down societal development. Aisha opines that the illiteracy level of youth across several regions in the world is by gender bias [Aisha (n.d)]. In most regions, boys are more literate than girls and Sub-Saharan Africa is second only to South Asia in the highest illiteracy rate of girls [Mamuda (2019)]. The effect of gender inequality makes the girl child vulnerable to abuse, harassment, exploitation and maternal mortality which could also be reduced with qualitative education of the girl child. Statistics by the Federal Ministry of Women Affairs show that the proportion of girls' education is still trailing that of males [Federal Ministry of Women Affairs (2006)]. Only 44.1% of girls in 2005 enrolled in school, while their male counterparts accounted for about 55.9% of school enrollment. According to A. Afigbo 'It is therefore not surprising that girls' inadequate access to education has been into place because of gender discrimination they face' [Afigbo (1991): 216].

More generally, girls' educational opportunities tend to be circumscribed by patriarchal attitudes about gender roles, which results in some parents attaching greater importance to the education of boys than girls. Overall, only 59% of girls aged 6-15 are enrolled in school in the North compared to 63% of boys [NDHS (1999)]. Because Nigeria is a deeply patriarchal society, especially in the Northern part of the country, gender discrimination constitutes the greatest factor affecting girls' access to education, especially in large families where funds are insufficient to enrol all children [UNICEF (2001)]. In addition, N. Mamman observes that one clear area of noted imbalance against girls is education and this discrimination exacerbates conflict and poverty by preventing most girls from obtaining the education needed support to improve their prospects [Mamman (1996)]. World Bank reports that gender inequality in education has the largest negative effect on the deprived girl, and society will also lose, which brings more poverty, malnutrition, illness and other forms of deprivation [World Bank (2001)]. UNESCO states that 'inequality in education is highly correlated to poverty, and its elimination will help eliminate poverty generally [UNESCO (2015)]. In addition, female education has spill-over effects on society, including improved fertility rates, household and child health, and educational opportunities for the rest of the household' [Globalization Review (2006)].

H. Bilkisu [Bilkisu (2015)], D. Birmingham [Birmingham (1995)], and N.G. Ojimadu [Ojimadu (2005)] exhibit similarities in their findings that gender discrimination serves as a factor in the denial of girl child education. In accordance to the Gender Report of 2012, about 42.1 million girl children in Nigeria are eligible for primary school, but only 23.3 million are enrolled [Gender Report (2012)]. Although the literature on the challenges of girl child education in Northern Nigeria claims that since society ascribed roles in terms of gender discrimination, boys have more chances of enrollment into school than their female counterparts, one would argue that gender discrimination cannot serve as a major underlying factor inhibiting girls' access to education. For instance, what about the cases of families where the children are all females but still, were denied access to education? Thus, other factors need to be put into consideration not necessarily based on gender.

Low Government Support

This serves as a determinant factor, that contributes to the backward state of girl child education in Northern Nigeria. I.E. Okpani observes that the most striking factor of girl child education is low governmental efforts in tackling the problem of girl child education, which is accompanied by changes in governmental policies [Okpani (2003): 20-21]. UNICEF opines that the problem of girl child education is due to low governmental effort and the problem of school administrators in public schools who imposed levies and fees within the educational system [UNICEF (2001)]. Along the same line, M.H. Kurfi argues that the lack of enforced legislature on the problem of girl-child education is the major factor affecting the backward state of girl-child education in Northern Nigeria [Kurfi (2015): 277]. The argument on low government effort on the problem of girl child education is true to some extent because each government has its policy and the sectors it pays attention to during the period of its tenure. For example, if a previous government formulated policies to tackle the problem of girl child education, a preceding government might not necessarily focus on the problem. However, it cannot be denied that both Federal and State governments have made several attempts to promote girl child education. They have also participated in many conventions and conferences both nationally and internationally among which include Universal Primary Education in 1976, the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1977, the production of a blueprint on women's Education by the Federal Ministry of Education in 1987 and the Declaration of free education for girls in many Nigeria states in 1988. Yet, existing literature still attributes the problem of girl child education to the government [Nasidi and Wali (2023): 4-8].

Other factors discussed by previous writers on the issue include poor efficient management of resources, poor parental support, poorly qualified teachers, and inadequate school infrastructure. A.I. Aisha argues that another important factor which may be hidden but also affects girl child education is the enrollment age of girls into secondary schools [Aisha (n.d)]. The 2006 National Population Census indicates that 15 years was the enrollment age of girls into secondary schools which is equivalent to the stage at which the physical development of a girl child into maturity is manifested. The social environment in Northern Nigeria is occupied by Muslims, who, therefore, give marriage of girl child premium to guard her chastity. A.I. Aisha concludes that when the girl child is to be enrolled at an early age and by the time, she must have completed her basic and secondary school education, such a problem will not clash with the cultural and socioeconomic needs of parents marrying off their daughters [Aisha (n.d)].

CONCLUSION

This paper discussed the major challenges militating against girl child education in Northern Nigeria. The study revealed that these factors include cultural belief, gender discrimination, the colonial foundation of girl child education in Northern Nigeria, poverty, and low government effort in funding girl child education in the region. Thus, the research filled in the gaps left by previous studies. Despite the Federal government's efforts in recent years, gender disparities in education persist, with girls facing significant barriers to accessing and completing quality education. This paper observed that

addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach involving policy reforms, community engagement, and targeted intervention programs. Through this process, gender stereotypes and social norms would be challenged. It will also improve access to safe and inclusive learning environments, especially by providing economic support systems to help families prioritize girl-child education.

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