

# Problems in the Study of the Huns and Eurasian History in Relation to World History

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## Abstract

In-depth study of the history of Central Asia and Eurasia from antiquity to the present day should become one of the most important tasks of world history in the Republic of Kazakhstan. The IV-VII centuries were recorded in the history of Eurasia and Europe as the era of the Great Migration. The Great Migration was a turning point in world history, the foundation of which was laid by the Hunnish tribal union moving from the depths of Central Asia to the western parts of the European continent. Studying and teaching the history of the Huns in terms of the interrelation between world and national history is of great theoretical and practical significance for university education. Additionally, in the history of Europe and Eurasia, world history specialists should start a systematic study of the long-standing problems of the Turkic world history of this period. First of all, it is the history of the Avarian Kaganate of the VI-VIII centuries, the Turkic speaking Avars, who came from the Eurasian steppes to the Huns' former settlements in Pannonia. There is a need for an objective exposition of the history of the West and the East during the period of the Crusades. Historians should also study the history of the Golden Horde, which originally was part of the great Mongol Empire, in detail. In this regard, this article is an attempt to define the major issues of Eurasian history which are considered to be problems of world history too.

**Keywords:** Huns, Eurasian and world history, medieval studies, periodization, education process

## 1. Introduction

It should be noted that, unfortunately, the history of the Huns and some aspects of Eurasian history did not take its proper place in textbooks and learning aids on world history, particularly in the courses "Ancient History" and "History of the Middle Ages" in the Soviet era. These topics were hardly covered except for some brief reviews or mentions. Apparently, this was due to the influence of a number of generations of Western authors, who characterized the movement of the Huns as that of the "Asians" ostensibly having destroyed European culture (Helfen, 1973; Pirenne, 1963, p. 162; Thompson, 2006, p. 1). This is not by accident since these scholars drew information from the late antique and early medieval chroniclers, often using them uncritically and without sufficient analysis and comparison with other types of evidence.

As is well known, historical studies were too ideologized and politicized in the Soviet era, and it left its mark both on the development of world history problems and those of the history of Kazakhstan. Central scientific institutes, i.e. those located in Moscow and Leningrad, monopolized the study of world history, and scientific staff were trained mainly in Moscow, Leningrad, Kiev and other cities.

At the second part of the XX century there were published important works of Russian and Kazakhstani researchers devoted to the history of the Huns and Kazakhstan. Among them are the researchers such as Gumilev (1960), Klyashtorny and Sultanov (2009, p. 88), etc. Basing the western and Chinese sources they prove the connection between Asian and European Huns. Gumilev wrote: "Victory and join him Alans, the Huns formed a huge tribal alliance ... In the seventh decade of the Fourth Century ... they crossed the Don and the victory over the Ostrogoths opened a new period of history known as the "Great Migration" ... Here we have the right to interrupt the narrative, as the newly opened page belongs to the history of Europe" (Gumilev, 1960, pp. 247-248).

The years of independence that came after 1991 provided a good opportunity to deal objectively with the problems of general and national history in Kazakhstan. Scientists and experts could travel more frequently to

foreign countries for research purposes. Now, being an independent state and a member of the world community and creating its own educational and research areas, Kazakhstan should have its own centre for training appropriate staff.

From antiquity Kazakhstan has acted as an intermediary, linking Asia and Europe, which determined the uniqueness of the historical development of this state. Kazakhstan is a direct descendant of the greatness of the ancient kaganates and ulus states. The history of the Saks, Sarmatians, Huns, Turkic kaganates, Turgesh, Oguz, Karluk States, Mongol ulus, the Golden Horde, and the Kazakh Khanate became the basis of the history of the Kazakh national identity. The ancestors of the Kazakh people played a significant role in the development of states from the Far East to Western Europe, from Siberia to India for two millennia. Moving across vast distances, tribes and tribal unions repeatedly changed the ethnic and state picture of Eurasia. This also relates to the history of the Huns, which is part of Eurasian history and, therefore, the history of Kazakhstan. Consequently, the Hunnic Empire in the West should be the subject not only of world history, but also the Kazakh national history in studying the transition from antiquity to the Middle Ages.

## 2. Methods

The research methods reported in this paper are based on the use of rare sources written in Latin and Greek languages. There is also evidence regarding the Turkic world and the Huns in these rarest written sources for the period of late antiquity and the early Middle Ages. In particular, these are the chronicles of Ammianus Marcellinus, Sidonius Apollinaris, Claudius Claudianus, Hidatii, Marcellinus Comes, Orosius, Jordanis, Priscus of Panitus, Prosper Tiro, Joahn Antioch, etc. The data of archeology, ethnology, historical linguistics and modern interdisciplinary research are used in our article.

## 3. Results

### 3.1 World History Studies in the Educational Process in Kazakhstan

The problems of world history are studied and should be studied mainly in the leading universities of Kazakhstan, which have departments of world history. Al-Farabi Kazakh National University should be mentioned first. The Department of World History, Historiography and Source Studies of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University has already established itself as a centre for training highly qualified specialists on world history in the Republic of Kazakhstan. There are also Departments of World History at E. A. Buketov Karaganda State University, Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical University, Kazakh State Women's Teacher Training University, Yasawi International Kazakh-Turkish University and others in Kazakhstan.

In this regard, it is important to note that the main topic of research conducted by the Department of World History, Historiography and Source Studies of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University is "The Historical Roots of Eurasianism and its role in world history". The main subject of its study is to show the place of Eurasia, Kazakhstan and the Turkic world in a global world-historical process. Within this framework, a programme of scientific cooperation between the Department of World History, Historiography and Source Studies of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and specialists of Georg-August University of Göttingen (Germany) has been developed and adopted. In the framework of the programme, the multifaceted ways of interaction between East and West, from ancient times and the Middle Ages until the present day, are studied based on rare historical sources and literature in ancient and modern languages.

Also the creation of the Republic scientific-research center on World history in Al-Farabi Kazakh National University made great contribution to the development of the research works.

The Dissertation Councils at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University on candidate and doctoral degree dissertations defense, including those in world history, have played a positive role in training staff on world history. Now contemporary issues of world history are being studied by young PhD candidates under the Bologna process.

Of course, Kazakhstan has not been independent for a long period of time. Nevertheless, in terms of de-ideologization and depoliticization of historical science, in the age of integration processes an attempt should be made to find new ways of analysing certain important theoretical and methodological problems.

There is no proper source base that can be used by specialists of various levels in studying world history issues fruitfully. Therefore, it is necessary for them to be trained abroad, as well as to have consultation on world history issues. Kazakh scientists should have an opportunity to give lectures in other countries near and far, and inviting leading scientists from different countries to Kazakh universities is necessary too. Collaboration in studying the problem "Eurasia in antiquity and the Middle Ages" between the Department of World History of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University and the Institute of Turkology and Central Asian Countries of the

University of Gottingen, Germany, can serve as an example of such an experience.

Since 2000, a number of innovations in the standards of education, training programmes and methodological developments have been made. For example, a radically new independent section “The Huns in the era of the Great Migration in Europe” has been included in the sample programme of the course “The History of the Middle Ages” for university students of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The newly written special courses of study “The Problems of the History of Huns in the West”, “The Huns in the history and civilization of Eurasia”, and “East and West in World History” are offered by professors to postgraduate students. The issues of the history of the Huns are studied within special courses of study by postdoctoral students as “Europe and the Turkic world”, “The issues of History of the Huns till the fifth century”, “Ottoman Empire and the states of Europe: theoretical and methodological problems of studying their interaction”.

The graduate, postgraduate, postdoctoral and PhD students, as well as professors and lecturers, enjoy lectures given by known historians from Germany on a regular basis. They are professors M. Mayer, K. Gestwa (the University of Tübingen), T. Shmitt (the University of Bremen), and others. But still there are problems in conducting these lectures. One of the important issues in medieval studies is the problem of periodization.

### *3.2 The Problem of Periodization of World History and the Role of the Huns*

The problem of periodization of both global and national history has been one of the essential problems on the educational process. In this regard, it should be noted that the history of Eurasia, Eurasianism, essentially began at the history of the Huns in Asia and Europe. It was not only wars and migrations, but also an example of multifaceted interaction between East and West, the synthesis of traditions and cultures, which had numerous consequences, affecting, in turn, the formation of a qualitatively new civilization and public relations.

In general, the history of the world can be divided into four main periods:

- 1) The Ancient World (from the end of the IV millennium BC to the beginning of the Great Migration in the 70s of the IV century AD).
- 2) The Middle Ages (the period from the beginning of the Great Migration and to the English Bourgeois Revolution of the XVII century).
- 3) The Modern Age (from the English Bourgeois Revolution of the XVII century to 1918, i.e. to the end of World War I).
- 4) The Contemporary History (from 1919 to the present day).

Russian historiography, following a number of trends in European medieval studies, has considered the year of 476 AD to be the end of the ancient history period and the beginning of the Middle Ages. This date appeared in Soviet historiography and it is accepted by that of contemporary Russia and the CIS countries; but it is merely a conditional date, the year of deposition of the last Western Roman Emperor that was not a major historical event. The background was founded a century before, when, after the year 375 AD, the Great Migration in Europe began, and the Hunnic invasions of Europe agitated the entire Eurasian continent. This had global far-reaching consequences and contributed to the transition from one era to the next, from one civilization to another. This was an epochal event, common to all the countries of Europe and Asia.

Therefore, there are compelling reasons to date the beginning of the medieval history on a global basis, including the history of Kazakhstan, from the second half of the fourth century (375 AD) - the turning point of the Great Migration in Eurasia. Such an approach to the question of the end of the history of antiquity and the beginning of medieval history was approved, in particular, by a number of international conferences and included in the sample syllabus on the history of the Middle Ages, developed and published by the Department of World History, Historiography and Source Studies of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University for all the humanities specialties of the universities of the Republic of Kazakhstan. The syllabus has been approved by the Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Kazakhstan (Zhumagulov, 2014, pp. 223-226).

It is necessary to provide material showing that the Hunnish tribal union, moving to the west of the Eurasian continent, led the epochal process in Asia and Europe. The second half of the fourth century BC was the time of the beginning of the Great Migrations, a turning point in world history as a whole.

And indeed, it was the Hunnish tribal union that led the global and epochal processes in Eurasia and Europe. The IV-VII centuries have been recorded in the history of Eurasia as the era of the Great Migration. These four centuries experienced the peak of migration that swept almost the entire continent and changed its political, ethnic and cultural character radically. This was the period marking the death of the ancient slave-owning system and the emergence of feudalism. In the IV-V centuries, German and Turkic tribes played the major role in the

Great Migration. Mass migration of the Huns in Europe dates to the 70s of the IV century. Since ancient times, the Huns (Hunnoi) had inhabited Central Asia. They belonged to the Turkic tribes. As far back as IV. BC, the Chinese called the Huns their most serious opponents. Hun chieftains made real progress in the wars with the Han Empire. Important materials about huns can be found on the Chinese sources. Sima Qian wrote that the radical change in the overall situation in Central Asia took place, in the "Warring States Period" (403-221 BC.). The main opponent of Zhao in the north was the Huns. In the middle of the III century BC Zhao commanded those districts (Qian, 1996, pp. 259-260)

But some western researchers as Thompson in their works rejected the idea of connection of Asian and European huns. Thus he wrote that every history should begin with the question are the Huns to be identifies with the Hsiung-nu of whom the Chinese annals speak to often?...At any rate, until the experts reach some agreement the student of the later Roman Empire is best advised to say nothing of the Hsiung-nu. (Thompson, 2006, p.1)

Otto Maenchen Helfen was against to the idea of connection between Asian and Western Huns too. On introduction of his book he emphasized: "although aware of the dangers in looking for parallels between the Huns and former and later nomads of the Eurasian steppes, I confess that my views are to a certain." (Maenchen-Helfen, 1973)

Kazakhstani and Russian researchers answered to these suggestions. Thus Klyashtornii and Sultanov emphasized, that the movement of the Huns to the west began from the period of shanyu Maodune, from the war for political dominance in East Turkestan. The letter of Maodune sent in 176 BC to Han Emperor Wendu, describess the defeat of Yueh-chih and the conquest of other tribes to the west (Klyashtornii & Sultanov, 2009, p. 88). The letter states: "With the Gods support war commanders were in good condition, horses were strong. It allowed me to destroy the Yueh-chih, who had been destroyed or surrendered. I pacified Loulan, Usuns hutsze and twenty-six neighboring domains that's just all were joined by the Huns (Huns)" (Taskin, 1968, p. 43).

The Huns' military leaders made significant progress in the wars with the Han Empire. In the course of several wars between the Huns and the Chinese, the Hunnish tribal union recovered control of pasture areas occupied by the Qin Emperors and achieved a constant supply of fabrics and grain from China. In the second century BC and later, China, which had been unable to beat the Huns on its own, defeated them with the help of other nomadic peoples.

In the second century AD, the Hunnish tribes actively migrated to Kazakhstan and Western Siberia, where they assimilated with local populations. Then, in the middle of the fourth century, this union invaded the territory between the Volga and the Don. Having conquered the Alans in the Northern Caucasus and having defeated the Kingdom of Bosphorus, the Huns crossed the Don, crushing the multi-tribal state of Ermanaric, King of the Ostrogoths in Southeast Europe (375). That year was the beginning of a series of movements that led to the Great Migration, which the Kazakh medieval studies consider the beginning of the era of medieval history and civilization.

The greatest territorial expansion and the greatest power of the Hun Empire in the West was when the centre of their activities reached Pannonia under the leadership of Attila. Greek and Latin sources indicate that Attila was of royal lineage, a line which for generations had ruled the Huns (Priscus, 1851). Attila was a great statesman who did great deeds. He was a wise ruler, a skilled diplomat, and a fair judge. With good reason he should be considered a prominent figure in the first millennium AD.

The Hun land under Attila's control consisted of four areas; the northern border of the kingdom stretched from the Hun's homeland to the west of Germany. In the south, both Roman Empires (the Eastern Roman and the Western Roman Empire) were paying tribute to Attila. In terms of its territory and influence, Attila's empire covered geographically almost all the four corners of the known world, from east to west and from north to south (ancient Turkic: tört bulun, Kazakh "dunienin tort buryshy"). The Hun territory ran from east to west - from Altai, Central Asia and the Caucasus to the Danube and the Rhine. The Hun's Union in Central Asia contributed to the later emergence of the Kazakh nation and other Turkic peoples (Zhumagulov & Sadykova, 2013, pp. 223-226).

By accumulating and concentrating power, the Hun ruler organized an invasion of Western Europe, in order to expand the territory of his state. And so the Catalaunian Fields (Latin Campi Catalaunici) in Champagne (France) became the place for the decisive (major) battle. This area has its origin from Catuvellauner, the name of a Celtic tribe, and it is a plain between Troyes and present-day Châlons-sur-Marne in France.

From the 'Vita St. Genovea' we learn: at that time, Attila, the king of the Huns, began to ravage the provinces of Gaul. Parisians were frightened of his cruelty and anger, so they decided to send women and children and some belongings to a safe place. There St. Genovea turned up and she resolved to persuade women not to leave the city,

in which they had been born and grown up, in the hour of danger and, moreover, to prepare themselves and their men to the defense. St. Genovea told the women to ask God for help and salvation. They listened to Genovea and decided to stay in the city and rely on God's mercy (Genovefae, 1910).

In the evaluation of the largest battle, a number of Western history scholars, both modern and contemporary, drew on information from the chroniclers of the early Middle Ages, and used them uncritically. The objective evaluation of historical reality is always difficult. A Belgian historian - Pirenne concluded that Attila, getting through the Rhine in the spring of 451 AD, devastated everything up to the Loire. Aetius stopped him with the help of the Germans near Troyes. The Franks, Burgundians and Visigoths and others were good allies. The military art of the Romans and German bravery decided everything here... Attila's death in 453 AD resulted in the collapse of Hun power, and thereby saved the West (Pirenne, 1963, p. 162).

In our opinion, the situation in Gaul can be explained by the over-large scale of Attila's campaigns and the inability to restrain dozens of tribes and entities that were not related to the Huns socially and ethnically within the vast territory under the unified leadership. Indeed, the forces of the Huns were by no means exhausted after 'the Battle of the Nations' in 451. (Fehr & Rummel, 2011, pp. 88-90)

Having returned to Pannonia, the Hun ruler started preparing a new march, but this time against the Eastern Roman Empire. Jordanes wrote: ...Attila returned to their encampment, and as if feeling the stand-off and the termination of war to be a burden, sent ambassadors to Marcian, Emperor of the Eastern Empire, stating his intention to rob the province, because he had not been paid tribute as promised by the late Emperor Theodosius ... (Reversus itaque Attila in sedes suas, et quasi otii penitens graviterque ferens a bello cessare, ad Orientis principem Marcianum legatos dirigit, provinciarum testans vastationem, quod sibi promissum a Theodosio quondam imperatore minime persolveretur ...) (Jordanes, 1882, p. 225).

If Attila, standing in front of the walls of Rome, was stopped by the Pope, the same cannot be said of the other characters of the time of Genseric, king of the Vandals. As Procopius Caesariensis in particular, wrote Genseric "...loading huge amounts of gold on the ships and other royal treasures, sailed to Carthage, taking out of the palace, copper, and everything else. He robbed the temple of Jupiter Capitoline and took half of its roof off. That roof was made of the best copper and covered with a thick layer of gold, representing a majestic and amazing sight. They say one of Genseric's ships with statues was lost and the vandals, with all the rest, entered safely the harbour of Carthage". (Caesariensis, 1965, pp. 4-6)

Thus, in a letter to Emperor Marcian of the Eastern Roman Empire (450-457 AD) on April 23, 451 AD, Pope Leo I the Great (440-461 AD) made it clear that the consent of the two Christian emperors of the East and the West would be needed to resist the encroachments of the heretical Barbarian invaders ("nam inter principes Christianos spiritu dei confirmante concordiam gemina per totum mundum fiducia roboratur, quia profectus caritatis et fidei utrorumque armorum potentiam insuperabilem facit, ut propitiato per unam confessionem deo simul et haeretica falsitae et barbara destruat hostilitas...") (Leo Magnus)

But let us return to the momentous meeting of 452 AD. Reading the papal correspondence of those years, we came across a letter of 512 or 513, which the bishops of the eastern regions addressed to Pope Symmachus (498-514). Its content reveals that Pope St Leo I also spoke with Attila about releasing the prisoners who had been captured by the Huns. (Latina, 1865, pp. 59-60).

Some soviet researchers had a negative attitude to the history of religion. For example, in the book summarizing the degeneration of the Western Roman Empire and the emergence of the Germanic kingdoms, the Soviet medievalist A. R. Korsunskii and the historian R. Gunther confined themselves to one or two sentences: 'but the situation in Italy proved to be dangerous to the Huns themselves, as the country suffered from famine and an epidemic had begun. This facilitated a dialog between the Roman embassy headed by Pope Leo I to negotiate with the Huns' (Korsunskii & Gunter, 1984, p. 115)

The last few months of the life the King of the Huns was spent preparing a military campaign in the East. But a new war with the Byzantine Empire did not happen. In the spring of 453 AD, the ruler of the Hun Empire, Attila, died.

Reading and analyzing rare historical data in Latin, early German and Scandinavian languages, we were able to establish that at least 18 and the works of German and Scandinavian heroic epic sagas reflect the great deeds of the Huns and their ruler in which he called Attila, Etzel, Atzel, Atli (Simrock, 2005). The lecturers and professors of the Chair of World History, Historiography and Source Studies of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University, in their manuals and lectures, objectively show that Attila and his time have left an indelible mark on the history of Eurasia, which has been preserved not only in historical works, but also chronicles and epic creations. Reading

and analysing historical evidence in Latin, early Greek and Scandinavian languages, they have been able to establish that the great deeds of the Huns and their ruler were reflected at least in 18 works of the German heroic epos and Scandinavian sagas. Attila's name (Etzel) and the Huns' camps have been preserved in the toponymy of Europe since the Middle Ages, despite some linguistic changes which occurred over time. "Attila" has been one of the most common names in the Turkic peoples (Kazakh - "Edil") and some peoples of the Eurasian continent. It is interesting that the boundary between the Greek and Turkish communities in the Republic of Cyprus is called the "Attila Line".

Attila's time left an indelible mark on the history of Eurasia, which has not only been preserved in historical works, chronicles and epic creations.

#### 4. Discussion

The earliest, ancient, medieval, modern and contemporary history of Kazakhstan is inextricably linked with the global, epoch-making processes taking place in Central Asia, Eurasia and in the world. Hence, the history of Kazakhstan cannot be studied in isolation from the world-historical process.

Kazakhstan is a direct descendant of the greatness of the ancient kaganates and ulus - states. The history of the Saks, Sarmatians, Huns, Turkic kaganates, Turgesh, Oguz, Karluk States, Mongol ulus, the Golden Horde, and the Kazakh Khanate became the basis of the history of Kazakh national identity.

The ancestors of the Kazakh people played a significant role in the development of states from the Far East to Western Europe, from Siberia to India for two millennia. Moving across vast distances, tribes and tribal unions repeatedly changed the ethnic and state picture of Eurasia.

Addressing the ancient history of the ethnic group, it is necessary to provide detailed material about the history and civilization of the Saks, which was paralleled by the Hellenic civilization in the West.

The early history of Kazakhstan is part of common Turkic history. In this regard, it is important to elaborate on the history of the Huns (Hunnoi) and their relationship with the Han Empire in the East and both the Roman Empires in the West. The peak of the migration processes, which swept almost the entire continent and radically changed its political, ethnic and cultural character, occurred during the fourth century and later. That was the time of the death of the former slave-owning system and the emergence of new social relations and civilization of the Middle Ages in Eurasia and globally in general.

There is a need to introduce the rarest written historical sources on the early history of the Turks and Kazakhstan in the Latin, Greek, Early Germanic and Scandinavian languages that are available in the libraries of Europe. They are primarily chronicles of Ammianus Marcellinus, Sidonius Apollinaris, Claudius Claudianus, Hidatii, Marcellinus Comes, Orosius, Jordanis, Priscus of Panium, Olympiodorus, Herodianus, Prosper Tiro, John of Antioch, Menander Protector, Theophylact Simocatta, Pseudo-Mauritius, Leo the Deacon, Gregory of Tours, Paul the Deacon, etc.

The documents and materials in scientific collections and museums of the Vatican, as well as the materials in the interiors of St. Peter's Basilica - the world's largest Catholic Church - are of particular value. There is papal correspondence, chronicles, eyewitness accounts of those years, and exhibits that could shed much light on the nature of international relations during this tumultuous period in world history.

Professor K. T. Zhumagulov, carrying out scientific retrieval work in the archives and libraries of Europe, managed to find very valuable information on the image of Attila, the powerful ruler of the Huns. These data allow one to objectively recreate Attila's authentic appearance. He was a great statesman, performing great deeds, and so with good reason, Attila should be considered one of the men of outstanding personality of the first millennium.

The results of archaeological excavations in the regions of Hun settlements represented in the museums of Europe demonstrate a sufficiently high level of development of crafts, trade, material culture, military art and other aspects of the social structure of the Hunnic society.

The Huns' famous bronze cauldrons, found in Europe and similar to the Saks' ones, including those kept in the Central State Museum of Kazakhstan, provoked great interest among visitors.

In 2007-2008, superb examples of the jewelry of the Huns were presented at the exhibition and expositions of the Historical Museum of the Palatinate in Speyer (Germany). There were gold and silver tiaras, kolts (pendant ornaments), pendants, earrings, tips of torques, fibulas and many others that coincide with the jewelry of the Kazakhs in their style and appearance.

At the exhibition in Speyer, according to German researchers, the Hun's way of life as representative of a unique

“nomadic horsemen civilization” (Reiternomadische Kultur), which covered other aspects of social development, was emphasized.

In the lectures given in accordance with the university’s new programmes, the authors note that the Huns’ art of war was outstanding. This is indisputably confirmed by archaeological data in the considerable territory of Eurasia. But how could the Huns, who lived in the depths of Asia, cover the enormous distances of thousands of kilometers under the then conditions and conquer large areas of Eurasia? The ability to get used to the conquered areas of hitherto completely unknown nations and countries, having their specific landscape, climate, language, life, manners and customs of the people, is also admirable. All this can be primarily explained by the presence of mobile cavalry. The Hun horsemen were accustomed to riding almost since birth; according to the late antique authors such as Ammianus Marcellinus, Sidonius Apollinaris, and others, they sat in their saddles as if they were nailed. As a matter of fact, saddles and trappings as a whole had not been known in the Western world by the time it was faced with the Huns. Fragments of wooden saddles of the Huns period, decorated with gold and silver ornaments, were found by archaeologists in the Altai Region and the Minusinsk Basin, Kenkolsk burial ground (Tien Shan), at Lake Burabay (Borovoe), at the Lower Volga (Borodaevka), in Melitopol (the Ukraine), and in Hungary. A Hun rider used to have 2-3 war-horses that were changed as necessary. According to the chroniclers of the time, the Huns were the fiercest warriors, who fought by throwing spears while far from the enemy and then precipitated themselves into hand to hand combat, fighting with swords, dodging dagger blows, catching enemies with tightly twisted lariats. A bow and arrows, which they used with great skill, were especially important in the Huns’ armament. Bows, having a special asymmetrical shape, made of flexible wood, to which plate of horns, tendons, bone plates were attached - reached the target at a distance of 100 m, while the enemy could reach 50-60 m maximum.

The events of the middle of the fifth century gives evidence of the Hunnic Empire military might. Having concentrated his forces, Attila organized a campaign against Western Europe, aiming at expansion of the territory of his empire. The contemporary of that driving age Prosper Tiro wrote, “Once he crossed the Rhine, fear gripped numerous Gallic cities. So the Romans and the Goths quickly decided to combine forces to meet the brazen enemy...” (Tiro, 1892, p. 481). And the fight against the Huns united the Roman Empire and the Visigothic Kingdom, who managed to carry the other unions of Celtic and some Germanic tribes with them. Old contradictions and struggles were forgotten. The united army of Rome and the Visigothic Kingdom in the territory of Gaul and Spain and other unions of Western tribes were headed by patrician Aetius. After a victorious march of the Huns through the territory of Northern Gaul, i.e. France, there was a decisive battle on the Catalaunian Fields in Champagne in 451. This author rates the battle among the largest ones, since along with the Battle of Cannes (216 BC) won by Hannibal and that of Waterloo (1815), the last great battle of Napoleon, it ranks among the most famous battles in European and world history.

The situation in Gaul can be explained by the too large scale of Attila’s campaigns and the inability to restrain dozens of tribes and entities within the vast territory under the unified leadership. Indeed, the forces of the Huns by no means were exhausted after ‘the Battle of the Nations’ in 451. It was not a victory in keeping with the usual spirit of Attila, but it cannot be considered a defeat either. The fact that the next year Attila launched a new campaign into the heart of the Roman Empire - Italy - gives evidence of it. In the author’s opinion, it was a strategic plan of the Huns commander that changed during the Gallic campaign.

After all of Northern Italy was conquered by the Huns in the spring and summer of the year of 452, their march to Rome did not take much time. It was becoming more and more obvious that the Roman Empire did not have a force capable of stopping the onslaught of the menacing invaders, and Attila was close to world domination. The Empire, consisting of 4 parts, stretched from the so-called Scythia (the Kingdom of the Huns) to Germany on the northern borders; in the south, both the Roman Empires (the Eastern Roman Empire and the Western Roman Empire) were Attila’s tributaries. This was confirmed by the funeral hymns (zhoktau) after Attila’s death, the contents of which this author was able to recover from the Latin and early German chronicles of the time.

The fact that the ruler of the great Hunnic Empire, whose tributaries were both the Roman Empires, stopped before the city of Rome, throwing out a white flag, and took up the appeal of the embassy headed by the Pope, says much about Attila’s wisdom. The Hunnic invasions objectively undermined the Western Roman Empire all the more, bringing about its decline. After Attila’s death, the Hun Empire collapsed in the West during the reign of his sons. Some of the Huns stayed in the area northward of the Lower Danube. However, most of them went to the Greater Black Sea area and farther to the east, towards the Urals and the Aral Sea, i.e. to the frontal eastern limits of the huge Hunnic Empire. The local Huns continued marching on their neighbouring countries. Thus, the Huns-Ephtalits subjugated Gandhara at the end of the fifth century after a successful struggle against the

Sassanids. Their leaders Toramana and Mihirakula captured the Gupta Empire in India in the first quarter of the sixth century.

The Hunnic Empire objectively had an impact on the fate of European history in terms of the transition to a new era and civilization of the Middle Ages. After the fall of the Roman Empire, the civilization broadened and developed in the regions to north of the Alps - Western, Central and Eastern Europe. The significance of "Europe" itself, which replaced the old Roman Empire, increased. The Huns were the first Eurasians. They participated in the ethnogenesis of the peoples not only in Asia, but also Europe. The Hun Union in Central Asia contributed to the unification of tribes and ethnic groups such as the addition of Kazakhs, Kyrgyz, Turkmen and others. This legacy of the Huns can be judged by the world of science with famous archaeological finds that were excavated over the past decade, including the territory of Kazakhstan and other countries of the Eurasian continent.

After the collapse of the Hunnic Empire, numerous tribes mentioned in a number of early medieval sources stayed to roam in the European steppes. Among these nomadic ethnic groups, the Avars stood out. The history of the Avarian Kaganate of the VI-VIII centuries, as part of Turkic history, should be paid attention in a multi-volume edition.

Many peoples that had been under the sway of the Hunnic Empire were possessed by Bayan, the Avarian Kagan. Apparently, the nomadic peoples that were part of the union began to form a single complex with its own ethnic culture, where the Turkic language prevailed. Reconstruction of an authentic image of Khan Bayan, the powerful ruler, as well as the entire history of the Avarian Kaganate is still waiting to be studied.

The reconstruction of the history of the Avarian Kaganate can be successfully carried out with the help of archaeology. The archaeological data of the last decades of the twentieth century give evidence about the economy, crafts, and material culture of the Avarian Kaganate. The Avars brought two innovations related to each other from the East: iron stirrups and single-edged sabers, lightly curved blades designed to fetch a glancing blow. The archaeology of the last decades of the twentieth century found rich burials of leaders, nobles (Fürstengräber) of the Bayan's time, particularly in the areas between the Tisza and the Danube (Germanen, Hunnen, & Awaren, 1987).

Both written and archaeological sources indicate a high level of military art in the Kaganate. Like the Huns, the Avars were excellent riders; they shot with a bow without missing. According to the Byzantine treatises on the art of war, known as Strategikon, the Avars' armament consisted of armour, swords, bows and long spears, and in battle many had two spears. Warriors fought in loose formation, extended in one line and consisted of individual groups; retreating enemies were followed until they were completely dissipated; they were tenacious in battle and the battle continued even after the defeat, until the enemy was beaten hollow. The Huns' traditions continued in the time of the Avars. This can be seen in the example of art where there was interaction between East and West. The Avars' art was influenced both by Europe, via the Byzantine Empire and the Lombards, and by the Hunnish style. Animal motifs, which continued to exist in the East and, in particular, in the Altai, at that time and later on, came from the Turkic lands. The Avar themselves, such as stirrups, vessels made of gold and silver, etc. were typically Turkic, similar to finds in the Turkic burial grounds of the VI-VIII centuries in Central Asia.

Archaeological data confirm the historical continuity of the Hunnish Empire and the Avarian Kaganate, its multi-tribal nature, and development of international relations from the East (the Altai region of Central Asia, Iran) to the West (the Byzantine Empire, the German unions of tribal entities and kingdoms).

The history of early medieval Turkic Kaganates should be inextricably linked to the history of East and West, i.e. with the history of the Byzantine Empire, China and India.

In subsequent periods of medieval history, in the authors' opinion, attention should be paid to the history of Kazakhstan during the period of the Crusades; especially, to the Mamluk state and the Kipchaks under the reign of Sultan Baybars.

In formulating the problems of the Kazakh nation formation and the establishment of the Kazakh state, it is necessary to do much to show the history of the Golden Horde, which originally was part of the great Mongol Empire, in detail. The Horde was the most powerful country in Central Asia and Eastern Europe for a long time. In addition to the vast steppes of Kazakhstan, it possessed Russia, Khorezm, the Crimea, the Northern Caucasus, and Western Siberia. European kings and popes, the Byzantine emperors and Turkish sultans sought to maintain friendly relations with the court of the Golden Horde. This is evidenced by the grant-charters given by the Golden Horde khans of Tokhtamysh to Jagiello the Polish king, as well as given by Ulugh Muhammad to Murad II, the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire, etc. which survived to the present time. It is necessary to study carefully



the evidence of literary sources, including those written in foreign languages of western and eastern origin involving data from archaeology, ethnology, linguistics, and other related sciences.

The late Middle Ages and the early Modern Age from the sixteenth century to the first half of the seventeenth century were the Age of Discovery and the beginning of the colonial system in world history. The process of political consolidation of national territories and formation of centralized states had been essentially completed in most Western European countries by the beginning of the XVI century. Kazakhstan experienced the same. In the second decade of the XVI century, Qasim Khan secured his predominance over the vast steppe areas of the Kazakh territory with finality.

The Kazakh Khanate was being gradually drawn into the international relations of the time. In the XVIII century, the international relations in the world were characterized by political and military conflict and the struggle for colonies. Both in the XVII century and in the XVIII century, the history of the peoples of the East was inextricably linked to the colonial policy of the European powers. The foundations of the colonial system that met the interests of large commercial bourgeoisie were laid in that period.

Not only the Western powers, but also Russia under Peter the Great and Katherine the Great undertook campaigns to expand the borders of the Russian Empire. Thus, they began to encroach upon the territory of Kazakh jüzes.

From the beginning of the XVIII century, the Kazakh Khanate experienced profound turmoil which caused further aggravation of the external situation. Tauke Khan managed to overcome inter-clan feuds to restore calm in the zhuzes, thereby securing the camping grounds of Kazakh tribes from outside intruders for a while. It was the time of the struggle of the Kazakh people against the Dzhungarian aggression.

The nineteenth century was the time of violent revolutionary upheavals, the bourgeois revolutions that took a variety of forms: insurrection, civil wars, and national liberation movements.

In Kazakhstan, there occurred several rebellions: a rebellion led by Sultan Sarzhan Kasymov (1825-1836); the national liberation rebellion led by Isatai Taimanov and Makhambet Utemisov; and the national liberation struggle led by Kenesary Khan (1837-1847).

## 5. Results

This paper has outlined the actual problems in Kazakhstan medieval studies for 20 years in the main. In the new realities of the Republic of Kazakhstan, the bright page of the history of the Huns in Eurasia and Europe should be considered and taught not only as an object of world history, but also as part of the history of the Turkic world and world history. It is necessary to provide material showing that the movement of Huns to the West was the time of the beginning of the Great Migrations, a turning point in world history as a whole. As the date of the beginning of the medieval history on a global basis, including the history of Kazakhstan must be considered from the second half of the fourth century (375 AD). This is the period of interaction of Eastern and Western civilization.

In research and teaching in universities, it is necessary to show that many of the nations of Europe considered the Hunnic Empire as a counterweight to the Roman Empire and saw it as the saviour from the Roman expansion. The life of the Huns as special representatives of the steppe civilization should be carefully studied.

After the fall of the Roman Empire, the civilization expanded, covering the whole European area. The Avarian Khanate, which became the successors of the Hunnic Empire, is to be studied too. It is also necessary to continue the study of the issues of interaction between East and West in the period of the Crusades, etc.

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