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NOMADIC MIGRATION IN EURASIAN HISTORY

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1. Introduction.

A part of the 'Trends in Western Civilization Program'.

This paper about the nomadic migrations in Eurasian history is a part of the 'Trends in Western Civilization Program'. In line with the program we regard all nomadic migrations after 3000 B. C as a single field apt to study. The material taken is not limited to any part of the continent.

Mankind is - in this paper - regarded as divided into two: 'civilized' and 'nomadic' people. We got across no better, though the notations might appear unfamiliar at times. ¹

We imagine 'civilized' and 'nomadic' people inhabiting separate regions on the Eurasian continent. We study the relation between them as it expresses itself in the movement of people.

The concept of 'civilization' so formed will be a grouping together of all units commonly known as 'civilizations' or 'higher civilizations'. We have in mind China, India, the Near East and the West.

The concept of 'civilization'.

'Civilization' means society organized in a certain way. Some communities took it up 3000 years B. C, most societies have adopted it today. It took hold in the river-valleys of Euphrat, Indus, Ho-ang and the Nile and spread from there. The dividing line against the outer, non-civilized world corresponded roughly with literacy. Though perhaps the best of all simple dividing lines certain nomadic societies for instance were certainly literate. Civilization was based predominantly at agriculture as nomadism was on husbandry. In later history our concept of civilization corresponds roughly with what was under the rule of mandarins, brahmins, Islam and Christianity.

The concept of 'nomads'.

The Eurasian migrations make up a history of struggle between the more complex, 'civilized' societies that occupied some part of the region and the less complex societies occupying other areas - above all the steppes. Not every of the steppe peoples were pastoralist or moved around. We felt the participants in the European Völkerwanderung to be a part of the Eurasian migrations although they were seldom nomads. The term 'barbarian' could have served our purpose. But the true nomadic peoples play a so significant part in our subject that we chose to stick to that term.

The dichotomy between 'civilization' and 'nomad'.

We have chosen to study a dichotomy and we have chosen to study ideal types. 'Nomads' are largely occupied with herding, 'civilization' are densely populated areas with agriculture and a more fixed habitation. In the Bible the dichotomy between agriculturalist and pastoralist occur second after man and woman. We could construct a model life of both. Real societies would probably contain something of each.²

Dichotomies and writing of history.

The dichotomy between nomad and civilization plays an important role in Mark Elvin's pattern of the Chinese past. Marc Bloch's feudal society was shaped in two subsequent conflicts between civilization and nomads - Romans against Teutons, Franks against Vikings and Hungarians. In his study Toynbee employs nomads as his 'outer proletariat', an agent in bringing about the downfall of a culture. The dichotomy can be recognized in Turner's thesis of the importance of the frontier in the history of the United States. It is also prominent with Gibbon.³

The importance of the study.

From a macro-historical point of view the nomadic movement is important by linking separate - regional - histories together. The movements often struck against different areas at the same time, exposing them to the same strain and thereby making a whole of Eurasian history. They opened important trade routes and transmitted culture. They often recruited the ruling strata in the societies they came to invade.

2. Some aspects of structure.

Expansion of civilization.

In the end civilization won. Throughout history it always expanded its territory at the expense of the others, reverting them to its own ways or by extermination. 500 B. C. it made up a continuous sector between the Atlantic and the Pacific. Later the large woodlands were converted to fields in China, India and Europe. There always remained pockets of nomadism within civilization. The mountains long retained their semi-civilized character. It appears that the dividing line between nomad and agriculturalist was less marked in Europe than elsewhere.

Development of nomadism.⁴

Nomadism and nomad culture changed appreciably between 3000 B. C. and 1500 A. D. Domestication of animals had taken place before 3000 B. C., the later development was dominated by the transformation of asses, horses and dromedars from food-producing to pulling and riding animals. Grahame Clark considers an important chapter to have been concluded at 800 B. C. At this date the process making the horse to a riding animal had been concluded and the material culture transformed so that the nomads could take advantage of this new possibility with its greater mobility.

Housing, clothes and equipment were transformed to make man an optimal parasite on the 'new' horse.

The most important element in the development of the horse is in its turn fodder. Step by step the better fodder and the stronger horses created opportunities. First fewer horses to the combat-wagon, then riding, then armour, then horses as substitute for cows and oxen in ploughing. We note the role of fodder - e. g. agriculture in this process. Very important in world history is the increased capability for carrying armour. We will return to this point later. A parallel development to the horse took place with the dromedar - adapted to use between 1500 B. C and 300 A.D. At this time nomadic culture seems to have found its final form. Adaption of armour and stirrup was chiefly a result of Central Asian activity and connected with introduction of new fodder crops - probably alfalfa.⁵ Development of the military means continued among the nomads, but the further development of fodder and armoury seems to have taken place outside nomad territory, developments the nomads got knowledge of by diffusion of technique. This period in turn - which started with the new, Medieval crop system in Europe - terminated in the 1500s when warfare turned away from the older use of cavalry.

population pressure.

Agriculture was always a precondition for civilization. The world of the farmer might be assumed to have a character different from that of the herder. The world of the first is fenced in, the second open up outwards. The farmer might have a clear concept how many can survive on his land. Increased pressure can not continue forever. The pastures of the herder is also limited, but more elastic with respect to one unit more to provide for. This might have caused disequilibrium to occur. Living in areas where rainfall is sparse, the nomads also live in areas where rainfall is unreliable.

Occupational differentiation.

Civilization retained a far greater register of occupations than did nomads. It must have exhibited great capacity to absorb nomads with their qualities - as traders, warriors, colonists, slaves. But nomadic society was also widely differentiated itself. Technicians of various sorts could hardly be dispensed with. The attacks on the Near East c. 1700 B. C employed combat-wagons that require thorough skill in maintaining. Iron-technique had to be mastered by the nomads as well. Vikings and Mongols used siege-engines against their enemies.

Neither trade nor town-life was entirely absent. Turk chieftains settled in towns where agricultural surplus was available and their strong combat-horses be fed. In the predominant nomadic Arabia, towns were important. Here nomadic life became subject for literature. The export of corn from South Russia in Antiquity was kept up by nomads.

Social differentiation.

Medieval European society is held to owe a lot to its nomadic, Germanic inheritance, for instance in the model of a Roman and a Germanic-'concept of state' that met in medieval society. In that case a distinctive feature of nomad concept was the role played by the 'people' as the ultimate source of law and sovereignty. It is often held that nomadic society was more egalitarian as the chieftains were more dependent upon ordinary members of society.

Politics and political affiliation.

The nomads were inferior in number. A large tribe like the Visigoths might have numbered 300 thousand. Prominent entities like vandals and Burgundians were rather below than above the 100 thousand mark. At times some tribe could build up great empires. The Avars extended their rule almost from Central Asia to the Pacific, both Huns and Avars ruled from Volga and into Central Europe. The

extent of the Mongol Empire is well known. Diplomatic relation extended over long distances. The antagonist of Caesar, Ariovist, had from his quarter in Gaul contact with opponents of the Romans in Balkan. Innen and outer enemies of the Roman joined forces in the contact between the Huns and the native Bacaudae resistance in Gaul in the 400s. From Central Asia nomads took up contact with Byzans and formed a counterweight to their enemies in South Russia. Tribes associated rather easy into larger, at least the Germanic did. Already during first century A. D. three cultic unities covered all tribes, but political unities within them grew appreciably under periods of Roman military adventure like the Marcomannian war. (Ended 180). And the new units were dominant thereafter.

Adaption to civilization.

Civilization determined itself by certain institutions. Greek civilization extended to areas where people were organized in polis. The acceptance of mandarin or brahman rule and rules marked adherence to Chinese or Indian civilization. Later Europe identified itself with Christianity. As the penetration of nomads regularly took place by gradual and partly political means, conversion to civilized religion and acceptance of some basic values signalled an assimilation of the nomads that predated their conquest.

3. The two societies.

They knocked ten times.⁸

Rather seldom nomads unaccustomed to the area succeeded in their attack. More often successes were obtained by nomads who had long been in close contact. The nomads had to knock ten times before the gate opened. The Franks had been in charge of the defence of Northern Gaul for generations when they penetrated the interior of

the Empire. The Visigoths had adopted Roman religion and the Arabs were familiar with Persian and Byzantine politics. From the time of Arbogast, the 380s, foreign generals of Germanic stock found their way into Roman administration, in the West and East alike. Turkish generals, mercenaries and princesses were brought into the Near East long before settlement took place. Djenghiz Khan considered the Tangut state of Hsi-Hsia, organized on the Chinese model, as a training ground for the later attack on North China. South China in turn, with its different geographical conditions, required new processes of adaption.

The semi-civilized barbarian had more knowledge of the military techniques of their opponents. Unfamiliar Eastern tactics were very efficient against the Germanic tribes. The semi-civilized often found their way into administration and military establishment. Familiarity with their ways might have had something to say, as could a better knowledge of internal politics.

Diffusion of technique.

At the border between civilization and nomads knowledge is subject to diffusion in both directions, mostly from civilization and to the nomads. This is a point elaborated by Mark Elvin. For the civilization maintenance of peace rested on its technical superiority. If the nomads got advanced enough to wage wars defence costs rose rapidly. Some cases from Europe will clarify the point, though they do not relate to the tensions between civilization and nomads. The migration of skilled European experts to the Ottomans was a matter of great concern in the 1400s. And - as Cardinal Bessarion noted - in field like maritime technique and artillery and siege warfare Europe had much to offer. During the wars against Spain Dutch and English ships sought refuge in North Africa and brought a fresh, technical stimulus to piracy.

The economy of the civilization.

It cost money to ward off the nomads. The efforts put down to keep up defences frequently led to social and economic restructuring within the civilization and ultimately to disturbances. In Byzans the burden of conscription and taxes fell on the free peasants. As the burden mounted dependency on and protection from the nobility was the lesser evil. In its turn the increased following of noblemen tilted the balance of power in their direction. A government determined to stem the tide had to face a united and hostile countryside. The financial situation of the Roman Empire allowed it to keep an army somewhat under 200 thousand man strong. Additional financial reserves for war were present during the peace period in the second century A. D, but vanished rapidly during war. The solution during nomad attack had to be sought in depreciation of currency and prices started to rise. The real wages of soldiers fell drastically in spite of all pressure applied. Not only was the army then difficult to control but this large and relatively well paid section of the population must have constituted a substantial market. As wages fell towards subsistence a decline in economic activity took place around the military camps. Dissatisfaction among the peasantry at the rising expenses of defence is a recurrent theme in Chinese history. The Turk mercenaries in rebellion under An Lu Shan found the peasants sympathetic to their cause, to great consternation to the Tang government.

Opinions of each other.

Civilization and nomads admired and detested each other. From Hesiod and Theokrit rustic values were appreciated and Tacitus could picture a nomadic society with many of the old Roman virtues still intact. More common was the feeling of a better life. Late Romans considered themselves the 'free' people as opposed to those living a poor and wretched life outside the border. A Roman tradesman that migrated to the

Huns prized his luck however. Especially the taxes were more amiable, and freedom of commerce existed.

We know less about the nomads. The second K8k-Turk state in Central-Asia was established on strict nomadic tradition safely removed from Chinese influence as its predecessor adopted ways too Chinese, too urban, too refined.¹⁰

Civilization clearly fascinated, combined with contempt for what was regarded as softness and cunning. And indication might be traced in the awe inspired by Byzans in the Westerners during many centuries.

4. The causes of the migrations.

Climate as a factor.

A great number of migrations started in Central Asia, Arabia or Northern Europe. Their origin in marginal areas - vulnerable to famine by drought or severe cold suggests that climate and climate-changes could cause movements. Foddercrops and grass will be influenced by prolonged summer drought and hurt the nomad. Another frequent calamity is long and severe winters. The spring was at any rate a difficult season. 'Attack them in February or March' was the advice giver by the Byzantine emperor-general Leo. If grass came late a calamity might occur. The agricultural production of cereals might be hurt by drought or severe winters in marginal areas. In most of Europe the worst will be an exceptional wet year however.

From recent times we know that spells of climate can bring about migration as the one to California in the 1930s, partly caused by drought. A serie of hard winters around 1890 killed the cattle and destroyed the cattle 'kingdom' in the Western United States and opened the way for agriculture.

One Germanic people brought with it the tradition that they had migrated because of flooding in Denmark. Migration from Saxony to Hungary, Italy and France after 550 were due to famine. Other movements can be traced back to the same cause but for the great majority other explanations are nearer at

It is clear that climate has changed throughout Eurasian history and might have brought upheaval. But the relation between climate and production is a complicated one. It would be safe to indicate that other factors might have been more important.

The steppe gradient.

For the grass vegetation abundant rainfall is an advantage. As rainfall increases from the east towards the west in the continent pastures will be richer in the west. William McNeill points out that this tends to draw nomads to the west where opportunities are better and he calls the effect 'the steppe gradient'.

The economics of population.

Several communities knew the institution ver sacrum. Ver sacrum - 'holy spring' acted as an expedient against over-population. The famines were regarded as a sign that relation between population and economic resources had grown unfavourable. Children born in that year were expelled when they reached maturity. The connection between economy and migration is clear. A force like this consisted of young people and had no children and old to protect and care for. They were able to attract contingents from other tribes and it would end up in an excursion like a 'Viking-campaign', ending in defeat or settlement. They were attractive as mercenaries. Saxon youth migrated to the Langobards in 568 and were rewarded in Italy after the conquests. At least some Greek colonization were related to ver sacrum. The institution was also known to the Italic peoples.¹¹

The wish for reward.

If an undertaking like a migration succeeded - and it not seldom failed - a reward of some sort would be the outcome. The nomads could withdraw with loot or let themselves be

bought off. The nomads took up a sort of parasitic life, preying on civilized economy. A further step would be conquest. A successful break-through established the nomads as a ruling class. In the case of the Semitic and Germanic movements settlement usually followed. In many European movements the demand for land was present. The Greek colonization started as agricultural enterprises overseas. The wars on Balkan around 60 B. C drove the Boians to Switzerland as refugees to seek protections from their relatives the Helvetians. This problem of providing for two tribes was sought solved by invading Roman territory to seek farmland. Cimbrians and Teutons sought also settlement.

The gradient of technology and warfare.

No aspect of nomadic movement is more striking than the chain-reactions of movement that run across Eurasia. A tribe expelled from its territory has few alternatives to the expulsion of another tribe from its territory in turn. There are recent cases from South Africa. The expansion of the Zulu under Chaka dislodged a number of tribes from their homeland. Some would in their turn drive other tribes out, some sought to establish themselves as rulers far away, some adapted themselves to a life as roaming warrior-bands. Normally nomads have a clearly defined route to traverse during the year - a serie of rights to water and pasture. Here formed bands possessing no such traditional rights and who therefore adopted a life as roaming exploiters. The breakdown of the Roman Empire was connected with a similar dislodgement of people. Not only were the Goths forced to seek protection within the Empire, the Vandals withdrew to the relative security of Southern Germany when the Huns took possession of South Russia. The pressure of peoples in Southern Germany in turn let loose a concerted assault of five tribes in 406, probably the largest the Empire ever had to face.¹²

Dislodgement might take place many times in succession so we get something of a 'domino-effect'. When the Greeks appeared in Central Asia under Alexander they forced the nomads out and drove them towards China. After two centuries the Hiung-nu ('Huns') pressed them out and replacement occurred in the direction of India, the Near East and Europe.¹³ The replacement of Celts by Iranians in South East Russia pushed the Dacians of Transilvania against the Boians of the Danube Plain in the west and their flight to Switzerland. The Sien-bi expansion in the lands to the north of China drove the Huns towards Europe. The Toba-Mongols conquered Northern China, founded the Wei-dynasty and retaliated from their strengthened position, thereby protecting China. When the subjugated Turkish population forced the Sien-bi/Avars out of their homeland, Germanic Langobards had to leave Danube and seek refuge in Italy, well known to them from activity as mercenaries.

There is one further aspect - the existence of technological gradients, i. e. advantages in certain areas that facilitated their expansion. As a rule migration went against the gradient - the less sophisticated overran the better equipped. A point must be made however, for the development of armoured cavalry in Central Asia. Chinese emissaries who visited the region after 200 B. C admired the strong horses and had them brought to China to form a heavy cavalry. Gradually a new type of horseman appeared. Traditionally the blow was delivered by the arm. Stirrups and saddle tied the man to the horse and put the entire weight of both behind the blow. The equipment was probably introduced in Europe in the 300s. The successes of the Goths and Vandals might have owed a deal to the development of this horseman. In recent history dislodgement continued to be a source for large movement of people.

5. The armed struggle.

The limes.

The armed struggle between nomads and civilization often took the form as one between fixed defences - a Chinese wall - and swift attacks of light cavalry, the traditional weapon of the nomads.

If fortification is only one of the elements in the defence of civilization it is one it normally depended on.

Sometimes it took the form of a contiguous barrier, a limes or a Chinese wall. When the Greeks drove the nomads from Central Asia and they started attacking China the wall-system was employed for the first time. But the wall was only one of the instrument used in wearing down nomad resistance. Like some of the Roman constructions the Chinese wall follows an isohyet (line indicating equal amounts of rainfall) closely.

A wall might not necessarily prevent a determined attack. But it assures that every inroad has to be determined, and an attack is easier to localize. It might provide transport facilities (China) or a river close to the limes might be used (Roman). Central-Asia protected itself against the nomads with a similar wall some centuries later. A Persian wall was built around 400 A.D, shielding the Caucasian areas against the north. The Roman limes was partly a wall, partly a system of castles. Along the Upper Danube and in North Africa the limes was further strengthened by systematic wasting of the foreland.

Defence by castles.

'We are at peace with towns' - the Visigoths declared, lacking the (military) means to take them. Sometimes barbarians managed to overcome these difficulties. Mark Elvin stresses the role of technical diffusion, in siege-craft and arms production, from civilization to the nomads as a precondition for nomad attacks.

Siege-equipment was introduced after 1000 B.C. The Assyrians were the first to develop military means to conquer castles and towns. One effect of this was to stimulate the development in fortification technique.

Both towns and castles can be taken from within. Apart from this castles often posed the problem of adopting the methods of civilization in the warfare of the nomads. An army occupied with siege is vulnerable to attack from behind, the more so as castles were placed to give each other some protection, placed low in the terrain with subsequent difficulties in detecting counterattacks.

The attackers during siege had two sides to take care of, very often the nomads very inferior in number and siege meant shedding their distinctive advantage - mobility.

To the nomads from the north conquest of South China¹⁴ meant adaption not only to siege-warfare but to a humid country with swamps, forests and rivers to protect itself. These factors limited nomad mobility and foraging. At least the Mongols were succesful in adopting indigenous methods in the conquest of China. Employment of technicians, a river navy, artillery, siege-craft (partly from Europe) and infantry performed the conquest.

The limes type of fortification dominated into the Early Middle Ages. After Wat's dyke and Offa's dyke were constructed in England around 750 and 800 respectively, castles were used to meet the vikings. The vikings exploited the waterways in much the same manner as the steppe-nomads used their environment. Fortification of the borough-type proved effective against them and was adopted in Germany when the Hungarian attacks opened shortly after.

Homogenous terrain.

The hit and run method for warfare was often the clue to nomad success. Their mounted archers could not shoot as far as archers on foot. Their light cavalry was inferior to the heavier of their opponents in close combat and their enemy could rely on fortification.

Civilization consequently had a strong defensive position. The nomads could waste their territory or seek to draw them away from the castles and destroy them in part, what succeeded very often.

But the hit and run method is more effective the more homogenous the country is, e. g. the less fragmented by rivers, forests and mountains. The swiftness is lost at rivercrossings. Germany¹⁵ relied on the rivers against the Mongols in 1241 as she had did against the Hungarians. Ambush at river-crossing was effective in the battle between Hua-chai and Djenghiz Khan, a battle where the Chinese almost succeeded in exterminating the Mongols.

Castles, towns and natural obstacles to movement limit the opportunities the nomads had for moving. To be locked in behind mountains during winter can be disastrous. Nomads depended on horses, and fodder was difficult to obtain under such circumstances.

Without fixed habitation.

Already Dareios found it difficult to fight an enemy without fixed habitation that only withdrew from his army. Later one tried to work out solutions to this problem. Emperor Leo of Byzans advised in his military manual that attacks ought to take place in February or March when fodder was scarce and the animals in bad shape after the winter.

Development of equipment.

In the thousand years between 3000 and 2000 B. C the arms of civilization progressed rapidly in sophistication. Bows, plate-armour, combat-wagon and metal-knives were developed, swords followed around 1800 B. C. An improved bow and a new combat-wagon were the first contributions of the nomads. The latter invention is probably behind the nomadic movement around 1700 B. C, Indo-Europeans occurred all over the Near East as experts in the art of wagon-fight centuries after.

The development of cavalry took place around 700 B. C, first employed by the Assyrians. It never got a high standing among the Greeks, the country was unfitted to raise strong horses and were an auxillary arm among the Romans until the 200's A. D. We have earlier touched the development of heavy cavalry in Central Asia. They were employed by the Parthians and Sassanids in Persia, the most potent enemies of the Romans. Partly for this reason and partly because of the need for the greater mobility cavalry has, the Romans had to follow. ¹⁶

6. Effects of the movements

The nomadic migrations often brought much destruction in their wake. A distinctive 'Dark Age' occurred after the Sumerian migration to Mesopotamia 3200 B. C, after the great migrations thousand years later, after the Dorian migration to Greece and so on, and not only at the fall of the Roman Empire. In some cases, as by the Mongols, the wasting was a part of and a precondition for the conquest and the movement. Not only did material structures suffer, obviously the entire social structure was cast in the mould.

What came out of it? Were the nomadic migrations epoch or event - did they shape the new structures from their own preconditions or was the society that emerged after the migration a result of indigenous features? How much - f.i. did society in the middle ages owe to the Germanic peoples and how much to the Romans?

Or were the nomadic migrations epoch-making not in producing new social structures but above all in freeing society from the old? This might happen if the structures did not reflect indigenous conditions as such but were transferred from other regions as a result of empire-building or from an earlier period in history - now appearing as a strait waistcoat where only a challenge from outside could

force the outworn social structures to vanish. As for Roman culture it was developed in and adapted to circumstances in the Mediterranean area. Romans acted no different from anyone else. Nomadic migrants moving to areas with unfamiliar geographical conditions will settle in environments most similar to those they left. And the Romans developed the potentialities of the areas very slowly when they kept their old methods. The heavy soils north of the Alps were the most productive potentially, but required many animals for pulling. Their exploitation in the Middle Ages put a resource of animals and animal-power to the disposition of Europe that exceeded other cultures by far. The heavy ploughs employed in Gaul were commented upon by Roman authors. Roman settlement, however, exploited the light, dry but less fertile soils, soils that required few animals. Perhaps that was sufficient as long as Roman conceptions about food dominated so much of Europe, conceptions that found its most dramatic expression in the admiration for the brave Roman soldiers who without too much complaint suffered the barbarian meat diet while campaigning in Gaul.

The mode of production changed rapidly when the Empire fell. Population settled on clay-soils, requiring and productive which in its turn would allow the European peasant to use horse instead of oxen. There were strong pastoral elements in the Germanic mode of production, elements left over from a tribal and nomadic past. Though dependent on agriculture the Germanic mode of production retained an element of semi-nomadism, nowhere easier to detect than in the enormous economic importance of transhumance. This complex mode of production allowed for regional specialization, historical preconditions for later specialization during the agricultural revolutions in the 17th and 18th Century. The flexibility inherent in the system gave a survival value. No less important was the need for spices created by the meat diet. Cfr. Jones, E.L. and Woolf, S.J.; 1969 Agrarian Change and Economic Development, London and Rudeng, Erik 1976 Patterns of Western History: Unity in Diversity, Oslo

7. The main migrations.¹⁷

- 3200. The movement fanned out from Central Asia and brought people into India and Mesopotamia. Its importance was to bring carriers of Dravidian language to both areas. The relative importance of indigenous or 'Sumerian' elements in the later cultural development in Mesopotamia is matter for debate. The immediate effect of the migration was to bring a 'Dark Age' to the area. We might term it the 'Sumerian' migration.

- 2700. Movements spread across the Mediterranean, from there and seawards to Scandinavia, from east to west in Europe and the Middle East. Strong cultural currents, termed 'Megalith-people' connected the Eastern Mediterranean and the European coastline up to Scandinavia. At the same time agriculture was introduced in the north. Migrants crossed the Mediterranean from North Africa to Crete, initiating the period when Crete was an important power in that area. The continuity in Mesopotamia disturbed by incursions from the Iranian highland.

- 2200. Originating in the Eurasian steppe-country movements fanned out towards Syria and Mesopotamia (Churites and Guteans), from South Russia towards Scandinavia, Central Europe, Italy and Greece, Turkey and perhaps Spain. Indo-Europeans entered Anatolia, and Italy and Greece not long after. This has traditionally been held as the movement that spread the Indo-European idiom in Eurasia. Semites penetrated Mesopotamia and erected an Empire under Sargon. A distinctive 'Dark Age' occurred in the Near East after the movements.

- 1700. Originating in the steppe, nomads went into China, India, the Near East and Egypt. The Kimmerians established themselves in South Russia, and penetrated into Central Europe. A peaceful migration from Greece to the Near East took place. The Indo-European idiom was

brought to India, the Shang dynasty set up in China, the Hyksos in Egypt.

- 1200. The predominant movement originated in North Central Europe where the Germanic peoples pressed towards the south. From Central Europe and Balkan movements went to Italy, Greece (Dorians), the Near East and Egypt. (Sea People). The overthrow of the Hittites spread iron-technique in the area. In Syria the sea-adventures started from the Phoenician towns. A new Semitic movement from the steppe towards Syria took place. Similar movements occurred in Russia and China, where the Chou dynasty was established.

- 700. The intermediate period had witnessed the spread of Celts from Central Europe to England, Spain and Balkan. The movement now originated among the Iranian peoples on the steppe, fanned out towards China, the Near East, Balkan and Central Europe. The migrations of Medes and Persians to the Western edge of the Iranian plateau is probably somewhat earlier. In Greece colonization started. New migrations of Semites to Mesopotamia took place. The predominant element in Europe is the Scythian attacks in Central Europe. Germanic people moved into Eastern Germany from the north.

- 200. After nomads had been pushed from Central Asia towards China, retaliation brought a movement in the opposite direction. From Central Asia it struck India, the Near East as far as Syria and Central Europe. The movements ended at the Roman frontier. To the north Finns were displaced towards the West. Celto-Germanic movements brought Germanic people southwards to the Roman frontier all across Europe, after a great Celtic expansion in the previous centuries. Nomad dynasties were established in India and Iran.

+ 300. The movements originated to the north of China. Movements took place towards China and Korea, towards

India, attacks on the Near East by Huns and Hephtalites and the Hun establishment in Central Europe. This triggered the Germanic migration into the Roman Empire. When the Avars followed the Huns to Europe a similar Slav movement was in motion. The Turk idiom spread in Central Asia.

+ 600. Movements originated in China and Arabia. The strengthened China under the Tang released the first Turk migration to Europe: Chazars and Bulgars. The conquest by the Arabs influenced China, India and Europe alike. The next centuries brought the last Germanic migrations by the Vikings - to Western Europe, Russia and the Near East, and the Hungarian migration into all parts of Central Europe.

+ 1000. The movement originated in Central Asia. The Turk attack on India was followed up during centuries. The movement through Iran brought them to Byzans, Patzinaks and Cumans invaded South Russia and Balkan. Tungusian tribes from Mandchuria put up a dynasty in Northern China.

+ 1250. The Mongolian movement reached almost all parts of Asia, most of the Near East and a great deal of Europe. Later movements chiefly originated in Russia and Siberia and fanned out towards China, India and the Near East. Uzbeks were brought to Central Asia and Turkmens to the Near East. Displacement in the Chinese/Russian border area led the Mandchus into China. The rulers of Afgahnistan extended their power to India. From now on the new military techniques worked against the nomads in Eurasia.

Notes.

- (1) The word 'barbarian', originally related to 'to babble', non-greek speaking person whose talk was not intelligible. It was transferred to the Berbers of North Africa. On the etymology: Pokorny, Julius; 1961 vergleichendes indo-europaisches Worterbuch, Zurich. 'Nomads', e. g. 'to let grass' - also transferred to the Numidians of North Africa.
- (2) Leach, Edmund; 1969 Genesis as Myth and other Essays, London on this aspect of the Bible, especially pp. 25 - 83.
- (3) Elvin, Mark; 1973 The Pattern of Chinese History, London. To Marc Bloch 'feudalism coincided with a profound weakening of the state,...' And that feudalism would be 'unintelligible without the great upheaval of the Germanic invasions,...'. The conflict disrupted both societies and brought new types of social organization, many of a primitive character. Marc Bloch; 1967 Feudal Society, London. Especially vol. 2, pp. 444-46. On the frontier literature: Rudeng, Erik; 1976 Unity in Diversity, Oslo. On Gibbon: White, Lynn (ed.); 1966 The Transformation of the Roman World, Berkeley and Los Angeles.
- (4) Clark, Grahame; 1969 World Prehistory, Oxford.
- (5) On the stirrup: White, Lynn jr.; 1968 Machina ex Deo, Cambridge, Massachusetts and London. On the medieval crops in Europe and their military significance: White Lynn jr.; 1972 'The expansion of technology' in: Carlo Cipolla (ed.) The Fontana Economic History of Europe, vol 1, pp. 143 - 174.
- (6) Ullmann, Walter; 1970 A History of Political Thought: The Middle Ages, Harmondsworth
- (7) Fuller, J.F.C.; 1972 The Decisive Battles of the Western World, London, p. 274.
- (8) The expression is borrowed from Braudel. Braudel, Fernand; 1966 Civilisation materiel et capitalisme, Paris.
- (9) Chambers, Mortimer; 1966 'The Crisis of the Third Century' in: Lynn White jr. (ed.) The Transformation of the Roman World, pp. 30 - 58, Berkeley and Los Angeles.
- (10) Ploetz, Karl; 1968 Auszug aus der Geschichte, Würzburg

- (11) Kirsten, Ernst; 1968 Raum und Bevölkerung in der Weltgeschichte, vol. 2, Würzburg.
- (12) Jones, A.H.M., 1964 The Late Roman Empire, Oxford
- (13) (Kirsten, 1968), op. cit.
- (14) Cfr. Elvin, Mark; 1973 The Pattern of the Chinese History, London and Cipolla, Carlo; 1970 European Culture and Overseas Expansion, Harmondsworth,
- (15) Lenk, Anton; 1974 Die Gezeiten der Geschichte, Düsseldorf und Wien.
- (16) Cfr. Mc Neill, William; 1970 The Rise of the West, Chicago and London, and 1971 A World History, New York, both with a thorough treatment of the nomads and their role in world history.
- (17) The sources are: Kirsten, Ernst; 1968 Raum und Bevölkerung in der Weltgeschichte, Würzburg, Plotz, Karl (publisher) 1968 Auszug aus der Geschichte, Würzburg, Mc Evedy, Colin; 1972, 1968, 1972, The Penguin Atlas of Ancient, Medieval, Modern History.