

Attila the Hun by Edward Gibbon.

upon murdering his brother in 445. Attila became the 5th century King of the Hunnic Empire and the sole ruler of the Huns. Attila united the tribes of the Hun Kingdom and was said to be a just ruler to his own people. But Attila was also an aggressive and ruthless leader. Attila was Khan of the Huns. He is remembered as the epitome of cruelty and rapacity. He considered his nephew, inspired the legend of Robin Hood and caused the creation of Magna Carta.

Both Huns and Mongols were horse riding nomads originating in or around Central Asia. Mongolian is an Altaic language (along with Turkic languages and probably Japanese and Korean), and the Huns appear to have spoken or at least started with an Altaic language as well.

The White Huns were a race of largely nomadic peoples who were a part of the Hunnic tribes

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of Central Asia. They ruled over an
extensive areas stretching from the
Central Asia lands all the way to the
Western Indian Subcontinent.

His real name was Attila,
King of Huns, and even today the mention
of it jangles some instinctive panic bell
deep within civilized hearts. For Edward
Gibbon — no great admirer of the
Roman Empire that the Huns ravaged
repeatedly between 434 and 453 A.D. —
Attila was a "barbaric destroyer" of
whom it was said that "the grass
never grew on the spot where his horse
had trod." For the Roman Historian
Jordanes, he was a harbinger into
the world to shake the nations. yet
there are those who think we have much
to learn from ~~or~~ people who came
apparently from nowhere to force the
mighty Roman Empire almost to its
knees. Even serious historians are
prone to ponder why exactly Attila
is so memorable, why it is as

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Adrian Goldsworthy observes, that there have been many barbarian leaders, and yet Attila is "one of the few names from antiquity that still prompt instant recognition, putting him alongside the likes of Alexander, Caesar, Cleopatra and Nero. Thus, Attila has become the barbarian of the ancient world.

It would be wrong, of course, to portray Attila as some sort of beacon of enlightenment. He killed Bleda, his own brother, in order to unite the Hun empire and rule it alone. He was no patron of learning, and he did not order massacres, putting entire monasteries to the sword.

Attila remained a threat to both Western and the Eastern Empires, nonetheless. His armies reached as far south as Constantinople in 443; between 450 and 453 he invaded France and Italy. Oddly, but arguably creditably, the latter two campaigns were fought — so the Hun king claimed — to satisfy the honour of a Roman

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Process. Of all Attila's better qualities, though, the one that most commends him to the modern mind is his refusal to be seduced by wealth. So lived Attila, King of the Huns — and so he died, in 453, age probably about 50 and still refusing to yield to the temptations of luxury. His spectacular demise, on one of his many wedding nights, is memorably described by Gibbon:

Before the King of the Huns evicted Italy, he threatened to

regurgitated into the lunge and Gomsch.

Attila's people would not threaten Rome again and they knew what they had lost. Edward Gibbon puts it best: — "The Barbarians cut off a part of their hair, gashed their faces with unseemly wounds, and bearded their valiant leader as he deserved. Not with the tears of women, but with the blood of warriors."

By Courtesy of Dr. Md. Firoz Alam
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