

# Notes – Early Medieval Ages 7

Notes 7

The Roman Empire committed suicide by accident?

The further back the events the easier it is for the historian to “see it coming”

Who are the Barbarians?

Burgundian code

Refer to themselves as Barbarians not Romans

What do we know

From Archaeology

Have settlements but not urban

Have grave sites

Have trade with Roman Empire

Roman items buried with them on occasion

Main written source for pre-invasion German tribes is Tacitus

Best known for his

Pessimistic annals of the Roman Empire

In Germania

For Tacitus the Germans are

Childlike and noble

Warlike

The general Roman view on Barbarians

Intent on invading the empire and enjoying the riches

Never visited Germania

Write about them as a way of castigating the Romans

Contrast a beautiful natural simple world

Gauguin's paintings

Melville

Compared to fatiguing rat race  
Warlike concerned with personal bravery and honour

Close family ties

Heterosexuals

Treat women well

Contrasting with Romans  
Some vices

Lazy

Drunk

Quarrel

Gamble

True of later German practices  
Tacitus does not make up for a moral purpose

Comitatus

Extend kinship

My second cousin will repay you if you kill me  
Wergeld

Compensation for hurt killing

Cost – depend on who he is and what he did  
Before enter empire

Lived in little villages

Cattle raisers

Cultivated grain

Iron working

Spot of raiding  
Above clan level

Federation or tribes?  
Who are the Visigoths?

Come together

Invent notion that from one place  
Ethnogenesis

Not a lot of evidence that they were searching for common ancestor

Come into empire as

Refugees

Allied troops

Federati

Supported by a system with bland name of hospitality

Goffart

Destroyed idea of invasion with arrows on map

Came from here, then there

506 – Franks defeat Visigoths

500 – most impressive Barbarians Ostrogoths – in Italy

Been in Crimea

Balkans

Tried to attack Constantinople

Impressive ruler

Theodoric

Ruled from Ravenna

Roman education survived in Italy for a bit

Boethesius

Last person to try and spread Greek knowledge

In prison wrote

The consolation of Philosophy  
Cassiodorus

Lives till 90ish  
Transmits to us liberal arts

Invents idea that monks should copy literature  
Liberal arts – things that are not immediately practically  
useful

Help illuminate the person seeking after knowledge

Seeking God and the divine

Bible not an immediately evident document

View of world full of mysteries  
Very few intellectuals in the Barbarian kingdom  
After Theodoric dies 535

Eastern empire invades

20 year war in Italy  
Vandals

Less accommodating than the Ostragoths

More fiercely Arian

Persecuted bishops

Plundered Rome several times in fifth century

Strong rulers  
506 kingdom shrunk

Fought among each other  
Anglo Saxons

From continent in 440s

First place to withdraw

Britain

Celtic majority

Very little knowledge of what is going on  
Brugundians

Very status orientated

Law shows a lot of Roman influence

If my dog bites you and kills you

No revenge if accident

Compensation for victims

In west

Injure me – you break peace offend state

In early times – more personal