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978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

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Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376–568

This is a major new survey of the barbarian migrations and their role in the fall of the Roman Empire and the creation of early medieval Europe, one of the key events in European history. Unlike previous studies it integrates historical and archaeological evidence and discusses Britain, Ireland, mainland Europe and North Africa, demonstrating that the Roman Empire and its neighbours were inextricably linked. A narrative account of the turbulent fifth and early sixth centuries is followed by a description of society and politics during the migration period and an analysis of the mechanisms of settlement and the changes of identity. Guy Halsall reveals that the creation and maintenance of kingdoms and empires was impossible without the active involvement of people in the communities of Europe and North Africa. He concludes that, contrary to most opinions, the fall of the Roman Empire produced the barbarian migrations, not vice versa.

GUY HALSALL is Professor of History at the University of York. His recent publications include *Settlement and Social Organization* (Cambridge, 1995) and *Humour, History and Politics in Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages* (Cambridge, 2002).

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Frontmatter

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GUY HALSALL

University of York



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Frontmatter

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For My Friends,
without whom this book would have been finished sooner

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978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CONTENTS

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------|
| <i>List of maps and figure</i> | page xii |
| <i>Acknowledgements</i> | xiv |
| <i>A note on spellings</i> | xvii |

| | |
|--|----------|
| Part I Romans and barbarians in the imperial world | I |
| 1 How the west was lost and where it got us | 3 |
| Saba, Romanus and Guntramn Boso: the problems of government | 3 |
| The barbarians' role in history | 10 |
| Transformation or fall? | 19 |
| Germanism and Celticism | 22 |
| The present study | 25 |
| 2 Defining identities | 35 |
| Ethnicity | 35 |
| 'Men who have nothing human beyond their limbs and voices'? The Roman view | 45 |
| The barbarian view? | 57 |
| 3 The late Roman Empire in the west | 63 |
| Ruling Europe: the early Roman solution | 68 |
| The 'third-century crisis' | 71 |
| The new empire of the fourth century | 74 |
| The regions | 79 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

Contents

| | |
|--|------------|
| Gender | 96 |
| The church | 99 |
| The army | 101 |
| The late Roman Empire: the problem remains | 110 |
| 4 Society beyond the frontier | 112 |
| West of the Irish Sea: the <i>Scotti</i> | 112 |
| North of Hadrian's Wall: the <i>Picti</i> | 114 |
| East of the Rhine: the <i>Germani</i> | 118 |
| North of the Danube: the Goths | 131 |
| Around the African frontier: the <i>Mauri</i> | 136 |
| 5 Romans and barbarians before 376 | 138 |
| The frontier | 138 |
| The barbarian threat? | 144 |
| Roman use of the barbarians | 149 |
| Barbarian use of the Roman Empire | 150 |
| Barbarians within the Roman Empire | 152 |
| Conclusion | 161 |
| Part II A world renegotiated: Western Europe, 376-550 | 163 |
| 6 The Gothic crisis, 376-382 | 165 |
| Introduction: history and irony | 165 |
| The Hunnic storm | 170 |
| The Gothic entry into the Empire | 175 |
| The Goths rebel | 177 |
| The battle of Adrianople and after | 178 |
| Trying hard to recreate what had yet to be created: historians and the 'treaty of 382' | 180 |
| 7 The crisis of the Empire, 382-410 | 186 |
| The usurpations of Magnus Maximus and Eugenius and the death of Theodosius, 383-395 | 186 |
| Alaric's Goths | 189 |
| Alaric, Stilicho and court politics, 395-397 | 194 |
| Military withdrawal from the north | 195 |
| Alaric's invasion of Italy, 397-405 | 200 |
| Alaric, king of the Goths? | 202 |
| Radagaisus, 405-406 | 206 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

| | <i>Contents</i> | ix |
|----|---|-----|
| | The great invasion and Constantine 'III', 406-408 | 210 |
| | The fall of Stilicho, 408 | 212 |
| | Alaric in Italy and the sack of Rome, 408-410 | 214 |
| | The crisis at the peripheries | 217 |
| 8 | The triumph of the generals, 410-455 | 220 |
| | The suppression of the usurpers, 410-413 | 220 |
| | The supremacy of Constantius: the Empire on the offensive, 413-421 | 224 |
| | Competition for authority, 421-434 | 234 |
| | Aëtius, Gaiseric and Attila, 434-453 | 242 |
| | The deaths of Aëtius and Valentinian and the second sack of Rome, 453-455 | 254 |
| 9 | The parting of Gaul and Italy, 455-480 | 257 |
| | Avitus: the Gauls throw the dice again, 455-456 | 257 |
| | Majorian, 456-461 | 262 |
| | The supremacy of Ricimer, 461-472 | 266 |
| | Ephemeral emperors, 472-480 | 278 |
| 10 | Kingdoms of the Empire, 476-550 | 284 |
| | Italy: two nations under a Goth? | 284 |
| | The Vandals in Africa | 293 |
| | The Visigoths from Gaul to Spain | 296 |
| | The Burgundian kingdom | 300 |
| | Gaul: Clovis and the triumph of the Merovingians | 303 |
| | Where no narrative is possible: Britain | 311 |
| 11 | Provincial society in the long fifth century | 320 |
| | The material base: society and economy | 321 |
| | Africa | 321 |
| | Italy | 328 |
| | Spain | 338 |
| | Gaul | 346 |
| | Britain | 357 |
| | Survival strategies | 368 |
| 12 | Beyond the old frontier | 371 |
| | West of the Irish Sea | 371 |
| | North of Hadrian's Wall | 375 |
| | East of the Rhine | 379 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Contents

| | |
|---|------------|
| Scandinavia | 379 |
| The Saxons: settlements and cemeteries in north-west Germany | 383 |
| Change around the North Sea and the Anglo-Saxon migration | 386 |
| Politics and migration in the Elbe valley: the Thuringians and Lombards | 392 |
| Settlements and cemeteries along the old Rhine frontier: the Franks and <i>Alamanni</i> | 399 |
| The Bavarians | 403 |
| Around the African frontier | 405 |
| Conclusions | 411 |
| | |
| Part III Romans and barbarians in a post-imperial world | 415 |
| | |
| 13 Mechanisms of migration and settlement | 417 |
| The mechanics of migration | 417 |
| Administered settlement: the <i>hospitalitas</i> question | 422 |
| Settlement | 447 |
| | |
| 14 New peoples, new identities, new kingdoms? | 455 |
| New Peoples? Ethnogenesis | 457 |
| Law and ethnicity | 462 |
| Archaeology and ethnogenesis | 466 |
| Language, names and religion | 468 |
| Ethnic change | 470 |
| Gender | 482 |
| New forms of power? 1: post-imperial rulership | 488 |
| New forms of power? 2: aristocracy and nobility | 494 |
| Conclusion | 497 |
| | |
| 15 A changed world: the roots of failure | 499 |
| Justinian's wars | 499 |
| The roots of failure (1): the barbarians | 507 |
| The roots of failure (2): the Romans | 512 |
| A changed world, 'partly dependent upon unhistoric acts' | 515 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

xi

| | |
|---|-----|
| <i>Appendix: Gildas' narrative and the identity of the 'proud tyrant'</i> | 519 |
| <i>Bibliography</i> | 527 |
| Abbreviations | 527 |
| A. Journals, series, collections and secondary works | 527 |
| B. Primary sources and authors | 529 |
| Primary sources | 531 |
| Secondary works | 537 |
| <i>Index</i> | 585 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MAPS AND FIGURE

MAPS

| | | |
|----|---|---------------|
| 1 | Europe: physical relief | <i>page 8</i> |
| 2 | Barbarian culture groups between the Rhine and the Baltic | 60 |
| 3 | The western Empire: administrative units | 75 |
| 4 | Britain | 80 |
| 5 | Gaul | 82 |
| 6 | Spain | 87 |
| 7 | Italy | 89 |
| 8 | North Africa | 93 |
| 9 | Fourth-century barbarian political units | 119 |
| 10 | Distribution of supposedly 'Germanic' furnished burials in late Roman northern Gaul | 154 |
| 11 | Warrior burials in northern Gaul | 155 |
| 12 | Distribution of Tutulusfibeln | 158 |
| 13 | Distribution of military metalwork in later fourth-century Britain | 196 |
| 14 | Distribution of metalwork from Germany in earlier fifth-century Britain | 199 |
| 15 | The western Empire in 410, at the death of Alaric | 221 |
| 16 | The western Empire in 421, at the death of Constantius 'III' | 235 |
| 17 | Distribution of quoit brooch style metalwork | 239 |
| 18 | The western Empire, 439, after the Vandal sack of Carthage | 246 |

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*List of maps and figure*

xiii

| | | |
|----|---|-----|
| 19 | The western Empire, 455, on the eve of the assassination of Valentinian III | 256 |
| 20 | The western Empire in 470 | 275 |
| 21 | Western Europe, 506 | 289 |
| 22 | Western Europe, 560 | 311 |
| 23 | 'Ostrogothic' material in Italy | 336 |
| 24 | The 'Duero valley culture' | 342 |
| 25 | Sixth-century 'Visigothic' cemeteries in Spain | 344 |
| 26 | The distribution of Roman villas and Anglo-Saxon cemeteries in Britain | 365 |
| 27 | Zones of cultural interaction on the Elbe | 396 |
| 28 | Moorish kingdoms in North Africa | 406 |

FIGURE

| | | |
|---|-------------------|-----|
| I | Gildas' narrative | 524 |
|---|-------------------|-----|

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgements*

xv

which this book deals, it is very much one derived from a vantage point perched ‘on the shoulders of giants’. Numerous scholars have kindly sent me off-prints of their works, which have proved invaluable. Of these learned ladies and gentlemen some deserve additional thanks. In the reinterpretation of ‘Germanic’ archaeology I have benefited from discussions with, and the encouragement of fellow-subversives: Sebastian Brather, Frans Theuws and Philipp von Rummel (vive la révolution!). Philipp also read the entire book in draft and made numerous helpful suggestions, saving me from many an error. Many others have helped too, as supporters, readers, discussants, always amiable (and patient!) sparring partners and in numerous other ways: Kate Cooper, Mayke de Jong, Bonnie Effros, Paul Fouracre, Mark Handley, Heinrich Härke, Peter Heather, Mark Humphries, Charlie Insley, Edward James, Ralph Mathisen, Walter Pohl, Susan Reynolds, Danuta Shanzer, Alan Thacker, Chris Wickham, and Ian Wood.

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Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-43543-7 - Barbarian Migrations and the Roman West, 376-568

Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

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Guy Halsall

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

A NOTE ON SPELLINGS

Place-names within the Western Empire (where modern towns often preserve one element or another of their Roman name) have generally been given in their current form. Further east and south, in the Empire's Balkan, Asian and African provinces (where they frequently do not), I have used the ancient form, with the modern place-name given in brackets after the first occurrence. In the West, where there is no significantly different, generally accepted and thus more familiar, English form, I have employed the spelling used in the country within which the town now lies: thus Reims, Lyon, Mainz and Trier rather than Rheims, Lyons, Mayence and Trèves; but Cologne, Seville, Milan and Rome rather than Köln, Sevilla, Milano and Roma.

Roman provinces have always been given their ancient titles, even where a modern region derives its name from the same source: thus 'Aquitania Secunda' rather than 'Second Aquitaine'. Germanic personal names, rarely spelt consistently in contemporary sources, have usually been given in a Germanic rather than Graeco-Latinised form: Wulfila rather than Ulfilas; Theoderic rather than Theodericus. Some names, however, have forms which are too accepted to change. Therefore Radagaisus retains his Latinised name rather than his Germanic original (presumably something like Radegis or Ratchis) and Clovis keeps the later antiquarian, artificial but (in French and English) usual, back-formation from 'Louis' instead of his actual name of Chlodovech.