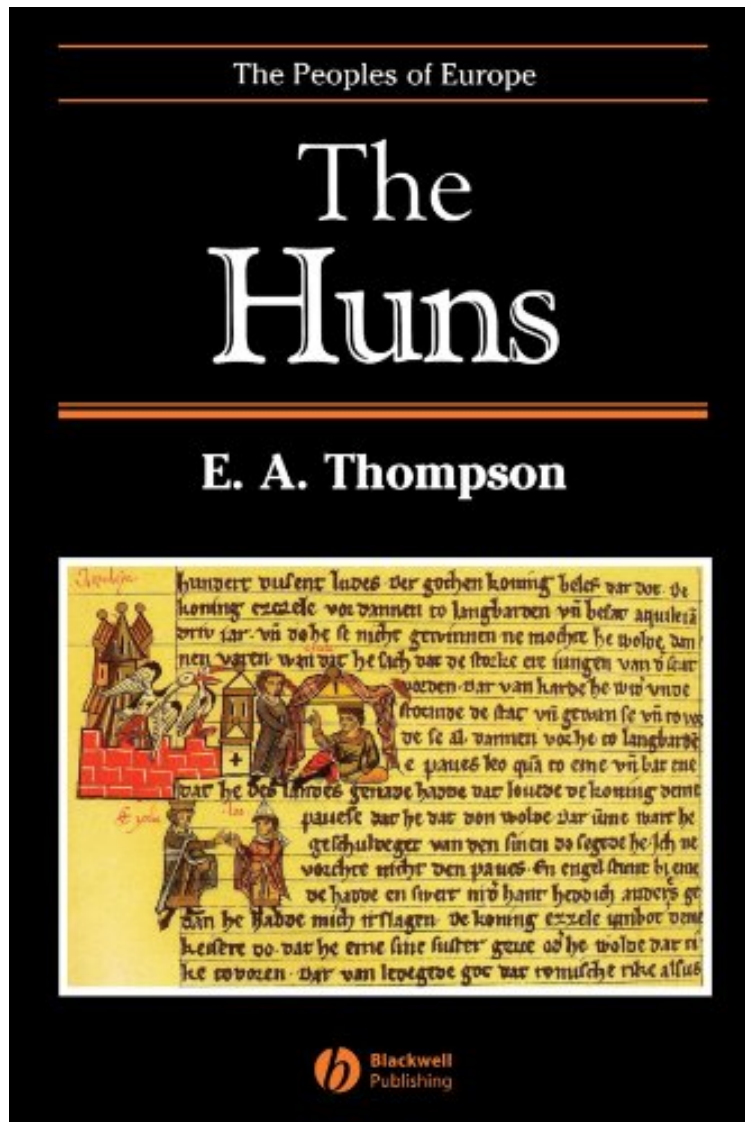


The Huns

E. A. Thompson

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E. A. Thompson : The Huns before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Huns:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A good story in there (somewhere)By WilhelminaWritten in a very old fashioned scholarly style (1948), this is really a historical textbook and assumes the reader has detailed knowledge of background historical events. If you don't, you'll be lost. Heavily footnoted, which is another distraction. It's hard to get through, but there are kernels of great interest here, with some fascinating details of Roman interactions with the Huns. Who knew?. Too bad this information isn't available in a more readable style.8 of 8 people found the following

review helpful. Informative and critical, but a little dated. By KirialaxE. A Thompson's book entitled "A History of Attila and the Huns" was first published in 1948. This is a slightly revised version of that same book, with a different title to make it fit into Wiley-Blackwell's "People of Europe" series. Given the original title, the reign of the Attila is the bulk of this book. While I would consider this to be a limitation, it is hardly one that I can fault Thompson for, given the paucity of source material on the Huns around that period. The book starts off with a discussion of those sources, and this is to Thompson's credit, as far too many history books fail to give a discussion of the relevant source material before diving into it. He analyzes the main literary sources and discusses the limitations of archaeological evidence, although in the afterward, Peter Heather suggests that the archaeological understanding of the Huns has advanced since Thompson's day. Thompson takes the reader through a journey of the obscure early days of the Huns, of which very little is known. It is good that he includes some excellent maps to illustrate their early movements, as I suspect most readers will not be familiar with many of the geographical features of Eastern Europe mentioned. The focus from this point on is the relationship between the Huns and the Roman Empire. With careful analysis, Thompson details the events that led up to the rise of Attila, his wars with Rome, the embassy that Priskos participated in, and his eventual fall. The book ends with an afterward by Peter Heather, one of the most renowned historians on the barbarians of the later Roman Empire, which provides a nice supplement. However, it would have been a lot better if Heather had simply edited the text, as currently it forces readers to go through the final section and decide whether they would prefer to believe Thompson or Heather on several issues. Unfortunately, while the book ends with a short description of why the Hun Confederacy was unable to stay together following Attila's death, that is its end. It never goes on to detail the many interactions between small Hun groups and the later Eastern Roman Empire, which is really too bad because Dr. Thompson's insight would certainly have been appreciated given the questionable "Hun" status of many of those groups. I am aware that this is a book focusing on the interactions between Rome and the Huns, but even a paragraph or two on the Huns against the Sassanian Empire would have rounded it out nicely. Additionally, the reason why Attila received the title "Flagellum Dei" and so much notoriety in later European thought is never explained. Thompson also makes a few questionable points, such as the Huns being present at the Battle of Adrianople, and the issue of Attila's strategic competence. There is little information on the former, and Thompson's thesis is nothing more than speculation, whereas for the latter I wonder if perhaps Attila was being driven to maintain the Hun Confederacy the only way he knew, and as such was on the proverbial tiger that he could not get off. This is a good book, although it is dated and should be read critically. Nonetheless, it remains an excellent account of Attila and the Huns, and will probably remain the standard work on the field for some time. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. A must have. By Ashley Reeves. This is way cool a must have.

This is a history of the Huns in Europe from their first attacks on the Goths north of the Black Sea to the collapse of their central European empire after the death of the legendary Attila. In the only connected narrative account of the rise and fall of the Huns in English, Professor Thompson reconstructs their campaigns in detail from disparate and often fragmentary sources. In the process, there emerges a clear picture of their dramatic successes, and failures, against the non-Roman peoples of central and eastern Europe, and of their many invasions of the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire.

From the Back Cover. This is a history of the Huns in Europe from their first attacks on the Goths north of the Black Sea to the collapse of their central European empire after the death of the legendary Attila. In the only connected narrative account of the rise and fall of the Huns in English, Professor Thompson reconstructs their campaigns in detail from disparate and often fragmentary sources. In the process, there emerges a clear picture of their dramatic successes, and failures, against the non-Roman peoples of central and eastern Europe, and of their many invasions of the eastern and western halves of the Roman Empire. This dramatic narrative is punctuated by analytical chapters which chart the transformations wrought in Hunnic society by contact with the more developed world of the Roman Mediterranean. In these chapters, the author sets himself the task of explaining the sudden rise and equally sudden fall of the Huns in the fourth and fifth centuries. He finds his answer in the impact of Roman wealth upon the original social structures of the Huns. The Huns includes an Afterword by Peter Heather, Lecturer in Early Medieval History at University College London, which sets Professor Thompson's book in the broad context of recent studies on the Huns. About the Author. E. A. Thompson was Professor of Classics at the University of Nottingham from 1948-1979. His previous books include *A History of Attila and The Huns*, *The Early Germans*, *The Goths in Spain*, *Romans and Barbarians* and *Who was St Patrick?* The Huns includes a revised afterword by Peter Heather, Lecturer of Ancient History at University College London. Professor Thompson died in 1994.