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SIEGFRIED FOUND: DECODING THE NIBELUNGEN PERIOD



VICTORINUS (coin portrait)

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I Was Emperor VICTORINUS the historical model for SIEGFRIED of the Nibelungen Saga?

The mythical figure of Siegfried from Xanten (*Colonia Ulpia Traiana*), the greatest hero of the Germanic and Nordic sagas, is based on the real Gallic emperor Victorinus (meaning “the victorious”), whose name can be translated into Siegfried (Sigurd etc.), which means “victorious” in German and the Scandinavian languages. The reign of Victorinus is conventionally dated 269-271 AD. He is one of the leaders of the so-called Gallic Empire (*Imperium Galliarum*; 260-274 AD), mostly known from *Historia Augusta* (Thayer 2018), *Epitome de Caesaribus* of Aurelius Victor (Banchich 2009), and the *Breviarum* of Eutropius (Watson 1886). The capital city of this empire was Cologne, 80 km south of Xanten. Trier and Lyon were additional administrative centers. This sub-kingdom tried to defend the western part of the Roman Empire against invaders who were taking advantage of the so-called Crisis of the Third Century, which mysteriously lasted exactly 50 years (234 to 284 AD). Yet, the Gallic Empire also had separatist tendencies and sought to become independent from Rome.

The bold claim of Victorinus = Siegfried was put forward, in 1841, by A. Crüger from Landsberg an der Warthe (Prussia; today Poland’s Gorzów Wielkopolski). Not much is known about Crüger. He may have been an architect by profession, and a Latinist with an amateur’s passion for history. He developed his controversial idea when he was executing a drawing to scale of the Cathedral of Xanten that, according to the legends, was the birthplace of Siegfried. Of course, Crüger understood that sagas are traditionally packed with topoi, dwarfs and giants, compressions or extensions of time, amalgamations of characters, tribes and places, as well as many other poetic liberties. They defy attempts at identification. Still, Crüger felt confident that core actors and events of the Nibelungen Saga (Lichtenstein 1992; Raffel 2006) should be researched and their counterparts in history could be found. He focused on four major personalities that, he believed, are found in the sagas. Latin historians and coins provided his most important sources for **(1)** Postumus (Alberich), **(2)** Marius/Mamuris (Mimir), **(3)** Victorinus (Siegfried), and **(4)** Tetricus I (Dietrich). Their portraits are shown -- with biographical details matching details of the sagas -- on pages 4 to 7 below.

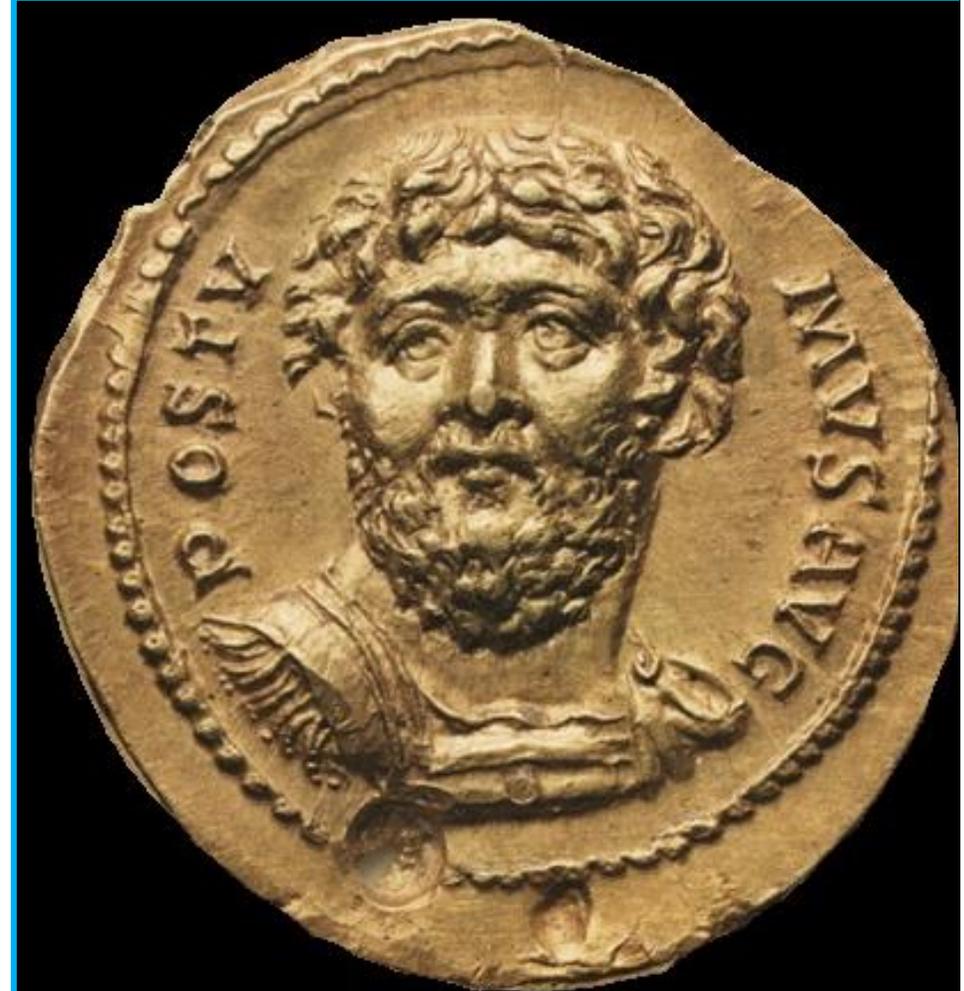
The four rulers all belong to the Gallic Empire (*Imperium Galliarum*). Though it is dated to the late 3rd century AD (260-274 AD), its activities and coins are strongly suggestive of the attempts to defend the Roman Empire during the plague-crisis in the time of

Marcus Aurelius (161-180 AD) and Septimius Severus (193-211 AD), when battles were fought simultaneously on many frontiers. For a long time, the shaky period of the 180s to the 230s was even lumped together with the barracks-emperors of the 230s to 280s

Imperium Galliarum (Gallic Empire [only briefly with Spain]). Capital city is Cologne. Tetricus I (271-274) was its last ruler. He is the real person behind behind Dietrich von Bern of the Nibelungen Saga according to Crüger (1841) [<http://learnlearn.net/Europa2/Ithb.htm>]



(1) Coin portraits of **Marcus Cassianus Latinus POSTUMUS** (260-269 AD; https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Postumus#/media/File:Postumus_Treves_aureus_268_gold_7400g.jpg; https://www.armstrongeconomics.com/research/monetary-history-of-the-world/roman-empire/chronology_-by_-emperor/gallic-empire/postumus-259-268-ad/). **His rule coincided with attacks of Hun-like Iazyges. He captured a treasure from marauding Franks from east of the Rhine. His co-consul (and kind of foster-son) was Victorinus. Soon after the assassination of Postumus by his soldiers from Legio XXX, with a dragon as its coat of arms, Victorinus is made Emperor. POSTUMUS is seen as the historical personality behind ALBERICH, guardian of the Nibelungen with the treasure stolen by SIEGFRIED after defeating a dragon.**



(2) Coin portraits of **MARCUS AURELIUS MARIUS** (also **MAMURIS**; assassinated after a few months in 269 AD). He was a **swordsmith** (*faber ferrarius* = armourer) succeeded by **VICTORINUS** [<http://www.forumancientcoins.com/catalog/roman-and-greek-coins.asp?vpar=757>; <https://finds.org.uk/romancoins/emperors/emperor/id/78>]. **Emperor MAMURIS the Swordsmith** is seen as the historical personality behind **MIMIR the Swordsmith** of the Saga who taught **SIEGFRIED**.



(3) Coin portraits of **MARCUS PIAVONIUS VICTORINUS** (269-271 AD; Latin for victorious) [http://media.liveauctiongroup.net/i/7591/9258241_1.jpg?v=8CC78A19B47A970; http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/victorinus/RIC_0013var.jpg] . He succeeded MAMURIUS THE **SWORDSMITH**. He was assassinated by one of his commanders for seducing his wife. Victorinus ("II"), his son of three years, was killed, too. He *leaves great wealth to his mother*, **VICTORIA/VICTORINA** (Latin female for victorious). He is connected to *Legio XXX Ulpia Victrix* (with a **CAPRICORN DRAGON** as a coat of arms) in the 3rd c. AD. Many of his coins were found in the vicinity of **Xanten**. **VICTORINUS** is identified as the historical personality behind **SIEGFRIED** (German for victorious), the most outstanding hero of the German NIBELUNGEN Saga. He was born in **Xanten** where *Legio XXX Ulpia Victrix* (with a **CAPRICORN DRAGON** as its coat of arms) was stationed in the 5th c. AD. He receives training as a **SWORDSMITH**. A dragon is his coat of arms. He steals the Nibelungen *treasure* from King **ALBERICH**. He is by a commander, Hagen, because of an earlier affair with Brunhild, King Gunther's/Gunnar's wife. His son was killed, too. He *leaves the treasure to his mother*, **SIEGLINDE** (German for a victorious female).



(4) Coin portraits of **GAIVS PIVS ESUVIVS TETRICVS** (271-274 AD; Latin for German DIETRICH). He protects **VICTORIA** (Victorinus's mother) whose **treasure** buys him the title of Emperor. [http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/tetricus_1/t.html; <https://finds.org.uk/romancoins/emperors/emperor/id/66>]
TETRICVS (fights a **battle on Catalaunian plains**) is identified as the historical personality behind **DIETRICH von Bern** of the Nibelungen Saga. He protects **SIEGLINDE** (Siegfried's mother). He is instrumental in organizing the revenge for the assassination of SIEGFRIED in a historical context of Etzel/Attila of the Huns (with a **battle on the Catalaunian plains**).



AD. The Gallic emperors stabilized Germania, Gallia, and Britannia. Briefly, they also held Hispania. The beginning of their reign, dated to 260 AD, coincides with invasions of Hun-like (Botalov1993; Symonenko 2012) Iazyges and Goth-like Quadi, whose attacks strikingly matched the invasions of Hun-like Iazyges and Goth-like Quadi around 175 AD under Marcus Aurelius. They engaged in a massive battle on the Catalaunian Plains (274 AD) in which Tetricus I and Tetricus II took part. The situation of the Gallic Empire also had much in common with the plague-crisis in the middle of the 5th century AD, when Huns and Goths endangered the Empire,

Empire of Theoderich the Great (493-526; Ostrogoth) is mainstream's Dietrich von Bern of the Nibelungen Saga. His Capital city is Ravenna. He left not a single coin portrait. The medal (right) shows his only extant image.

[<https://www.timetoast.com/timelines/history-of-migration>; <https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/http://www.genealogie-93-generationen.eu/index.asp?nid=3222>]



and another epic battle on the Catalaunian Plains (451 AD) was fought in which Theoderich I and , II (Western Goths) were involved. Back in Crüger's day, just as today, the least-disputed historical figure behind one of the Nibelungen saga's heroes, Dietrich von Bern, was Theoderich the Great (493-526) of the Ostrogoths. As King of Italy with his residence in Ravenna, Theoderich was also in charge of Verona ("Bern" in German). Crüger, of course, needed a Dietrich-figure who was close to his Siegfried = Victorinus. Therefore, he settled for Tetricus I (271-274), whose death, in textbook chronology, precedes Theoderich the Great's's by a quarter of a millennium. One may therefore criticize Crüger as biased. Yet, he makes territorial observations that cannot be denied. Theoderich's empire was located to the east of the Gallic Empire, whereas the realm of the Nibelungen was definitely centered around Cologne, the capital of that Empire. However, we will see that Theoderich the Great did play a role on the periphery.

One hundred forty years after Crüger another outsider, Heinz Ritter-Schaumburg (1982), again challenged the Theoderich the Great = Dietrich equation as geographically impossible. Yet, he hinted at a Frankish King, Theuderich I. (511-533 AD), a son of Clovis/Chlodovechus. Theuderich fits the time frame of Theoderich the Great, brother-in-law of Clovis, as well as Dietrich's realm on the Rhine, as required by the Nibelungen saga. If this Theuderich was none other than Tetricus, Crüger's Dietrich von Bern, there would be a city other than Verona for the Bern addition. Bonn, located between Cologne (Victorinus's Capital) and Trier (Tetricus's Capital), was also called Verona. This is evidenced, as interpreted by Ritter-Schaumburg, by a city seal of the 13th century, in which the Nibelungen saga received its final form: *sigillvm antique Verone nvnc opidi Bvnnensis* (= "The seal of ancient Verona, now the city of Bonn"¹). Of Theuderich, however, not a single portrait is known. The same is true for his father Clovis, victorious against Visigoths, as was Claudius Gothicus, a predecessor of Tetricus. We will return to them.

Crüger utterly failed to convince anyone. The most respected periodical of German philology, *Repertorium der gesamten deutschen Literatur*, immediately ostracized him for "taking the wrong track [...] combining a mass of historical, mythological, and numismatic observations"² (Gersdorf 1841, 184). The author did "not deserve a refutation"³, was the verdict of *Göttingische*

¹ Cf. https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heinz_Ritter-Schaumburg#/media/File:Bonn_1280.jpg

² "Holzweg [...], eine Masse von [...] historischen, mythologischen und numismatischen Notizen zu verbinden"

³ „die keiner Widerlegung bedarf“

gelehrte Anzeigen (GLA 1841, 1007). Another damning criticism buried his work for good: “It gives us a vivid picture of the one-sidedness and the unconscious staging of purely subjective research, which, not guided by any scientific law, drifts into ideas and prejudices”⁴ (Wellmann 1841, 386).

Despite their indignation, the reviewers presented Crüger’s equations of Roman imperatores and Germanic heroes correctly, albeit with growing anger. They made no attempt to refute them because -- they were sure -- everybody would recognize the absurdity of Crüger’s equations in an instant. Wellmann (1841, 386) was content with stressing the absolute impossibility of “turning [Germans] into Romans”³ (Wellmann 1841, 386). Crüger might not have objected, but insisted that those Romans were really Germanic commanders in the service of Rome wearing Roman uniforms, as well as having Latin names. Wellmann obviously felt repelled at seeing his Teutonic giants transformed into ethnic Italians. Today, however, it is common knowledge that numerous *imperatores* were neither born in Italy nor the offspring of Italian expatriates but were drawn from indigenous elites assimilated to Roman laws, lifestyles and customs. Many Roman wars against Germanic formations were fought by Germanic *foederati* of the Empire.

Yet, there is also a powerful chronological reason why Crüger’s view was rejected. He freely scanned across some 700 years of history, from Imperial Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages, for hints on how to support his ideas. Yet, his core interest covers only three years: from the assassination of Postumus = Alberich (260-269) in 269 AD via the assassination of Victorinus = Siegfried (269-271) in 271 AD, the year in which Tetricus = Dietrich (271-274) takes the reins of government in the Gallic Empire. The earliest segments of the Nibelungen Saga, however, date from the end of the Early Middle Ages. Gunther/Gunnar and Hagen, brother in law and murderer of Siegfried respectively, are mentioned in the Waltharius Poem that is dated to 9th/10th c. AD [<http://www.thelatinlibrary.com/waltarius.html>]. It was written in Latin by Eccehardus (“I”), a monk from the Swiss Abbey of St. Gall, whose death is currently dated to 973 AD (Brunhölzl 1959, 432 f.). The earliest physical source for the saga is the Ramsund carving from 1030 AD (see next chapter)

⁴ “gibt uns ein anschauliches Bild von der Einseitigkeit und dem haltungslosen Umhertappen einer rein subjectiven Forschung, die, von keinem wissenschaftlichen Gesetz geleitet, sich in Einfällen und Vorurtheilen umhertreibt“

Crüger was aware of the enormous time gap between the historical events and the earliest legends. Still, he believed in textbook chronology as fiercely as his critics. Stratigraphy reports for checking that chronology were not yet available. Crüger tried to solve the problem with a bold assumption: the creators of the saga did, helped by some snippets of oral traditions, read the stories of their heroes directly from the highly detailed coins of the Gallic empire. Such a theory sounds ludicrous indeed. Yet, to this very day, his opponents fail to overcome similar obstacles. They locate the historical background of the saga between the 430s and 500s AD, i.e. to the so-called migration period with the Hunnic wars up to Theoderic the Great (456-526), their Dietrich von Bern. Though that would bring them a quarter of millennium closer to the earliest textual sources, it would still leave many centuries between news and reporter. After all, a silence of 450 years is as mute as a silence of 700 years. We will come back to the intricacies of chronology in chapter three.

II Siegfried the Dragon Slayer and the Dragon Legion of Victorinus

If, in German, one wants to talk about Siegfried without using that name directly, one will settle for his epithet, “the Dragon Slayer.” When dragons are mentioned, everyone expects stories about Siegfried, with St. George a distant second. Siegfried can only capture the treasure of the Nibelungen after killing the dragon Fafnir. Before he was bewitched and turned into a dragon, Fafnir -- according to the Icelandic *Völsunga Saga* (Grimstad 2005) -- was a brother of Siegfried’s/Sigurd’s foster father Regin (probably derived from rex = king). The earliest tangible source for Siegfried/Sigurd, the *Ramsund* stone carvings from East Sweden (dated to 1030 AD), show Sigurd in front of a fire, roasting a dragon's heart. Since the legend is already fully developed at 1030 AD, its origins could reasonably be traced back to the early medieval Viking period of the 9th/10th century. No one understands, however, how this time can be linked back to the 3rd or even only the 5th century of mainstream’s dating of the real events behind the saga.

Left: Detail of the *Ramsund* rock carving. Right: Complete outline with Sigurd stabbing the dragon (below right)

[<http://gottfried.unistra.fr/nibelungen/islandische-und-norrone-fassungen/prosa-edda/>; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sigurd_stones#/media/File:Sigurd.svg]



Although dragons are often found in legends, they are rare in Roman art. Yet, they have a prominent role in the iconography of the Roman military. Twenty small cavalry 'dragons' or 'serpents,' fabric tubes (with or without heads) carried by mounted soldiers, which stream out behind them as they ride, appear on Trajan's column in Rome. These battle emblems were also called "Persian dragon flags" (Vermaat 2011). Officers, called *magister draconum*, had to procure the dragon banners. They were also in charge of the soldiers, known as *draconarii*, who made hissing sounds as they rode into battle.

A *magister draconum* was in charge of *draconarii*, possibly at least since the time of Septimius Severus (Vermaat 2009).

2nd c. AD Sarmatian *draconarius* from **Imperial Antiquity** in Roman service with draco-banner that served as an inspiration for Rome's own cavalry. Reconstruction drawing by Gerry Embleton after a funeral stele from Chester/England.

[<https://daniilgaucan.wordpress.com/2013/06/01/trairi-1-iunie-2013/>]

Reconstruction of dragon heads for fabric tubes from Niederbieber (currently **3rd c. AD**).

[<http://www.fectio.org.uk/articles/draco7.jpg>]

Return of the dragon-banner in **Early Middle Ages** (late **9th c. AD**; St. Gallen manuscript)

[<http://forum.index.hu/Article/showArticle?go=64342214&t=9139311>]



The huge mosaics shown below belong to a different and much rarer category. They decorated floors and walls and were meant to convey high status.

Hellenistic mosaic of dragon from Kaulonia/Calabria (4th/3rd c. BC)

[<http://www.famedisud.it/discovering-the-amazing-dragons-and-dolphins-in-kaulonia-the-city-of-the-amazon-clete/>]



Mosaic of capricorn dragon (2nd c. AD) from Ostia Antica (Room 4 of the Baths of Neptune)

[<https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/238479742749233896/?!p=true>]



The Capricorn dragon from Ostia (dated 2nd c. AD) is chronologically closest to Victorinus. We may recall that he could only secure the position of Gallic Emperor, as well as the treasure of his former mentor and co-consul, Postumus, by winning over the soldiers of Legio XXX. This legion is famous for displaying a dragon as one of its coats of arms. Unknown to Crüger and his critics, Legio XXX is also noteworthy for having issued a coin with an image of Victorinus. This author is not aware of any other Roman ruler

Victorinus coin of *Legio XXX Ulpia Victrix* with **CAPRICORN DRAGON** as coat of arms
[<http://www.romancoins.info/Soldatenkaiser2.html>; <http://www.wildwinds.com/coins/ric/victorinus/i.html>].



Examples of modern souvenirs for today's fans of Legio XXX Ulpia Victrix

[<https://www.theflagfactory.com/product/legion-xxx-ulpia-victrix/>; <https://www.mein-raetien.de/milit%C3%A4r/legionen/leg-xi-xxx/>]



honored by dragon coins. Even the most famous emperor to be coin-honored by Legio XXX, Septimius Severus (193-211 AD), was not shown with the coin image of a dragon, but merely with the traditional eagle (aquila) emblem of Roman legions. Only Victorinus was honored by Legio XXX with a dragon. Legio XXII occasionally, too, employed the Capricorn dragon as its symbol. It also issued coins for Septimius Severus. Yet, again, all this outstanding emperor got was the legion's eagle standard.

Left: Legio XXX coin for Septimius Severus (193-212 AD). He, too, was promoted to the Purple by *Leg XXX Ulpia Victrix*. The legion provides another important link between the Gallic Empire and the Severans though, in textbook chronology, they are seventy years apart.

Right: Coin of Legio XXII (occasionally using a Capricorn dragon, too) with an eagle standard for Septimius Severus

[<http://www.romancoins.info/Legionary-Coins-2.html>;

https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Legio_XXII_Primigenia#/media/File:Denarius-Septimius_Severus-122primigenia-RIC_0005.jpg]



Legions were into emperor-making for the money. It is treasure that keeps both Gallic emperors and saga heroes in line. From Postumus, we know that he captured treasures looted by Germanic warriors from east of the Rhine, whilst they tried to ferry their booty across the foggy river into their tribal homelands (Historia Augusta, Thirty Tyrants 3). Legio XXX changed sides, leaving a strongman called Laelianus to follow Postumus and his treasure. Many coins of Legio XXX were found around Xanten. Victorinus was like a foster son for Postumus, who had made him his co-consul. We can assume that Victorinus played a prominent role in the Rhine-battle for the treasure. After the assassination of Postumus by his soldiers, they briefly supported Marius/Mamuris, a

swordsmith and armorer by profession. After the assassination of Marius, Legio XXX handed the Purple to Victorinus. After the assassination of Victorinus, his mother, Victoria/Victorina, used the treasure to make Tetricus emperor. This took place in a context of Hun-like Iazyges.

In the Siegfried saga, King Alberich (“rich” means rex = king, as in Alarich etc.), guarded a treasure owned by the Nibelungen. They were literally the “sons of fog” (Nebel in German). Their treasure was eventually hidden in the Rhine. Siegfried had received an education as a blacksmith by Mimir, a famous swordsmith. Siegfried, with his sword Balmung, killed the Nibelungen whilst they fought over the division of their booty. Subsequently, he defeated Alberich. In a death-like netherworld, Alberich was forced to guard the treasure for Siegfried. In another version, King Nibelung was guardian of the treasure until he was killed by Siegfried. After Siegfried’s assassination his mother, Sieglinde (German for Victoria/Victorina) of Xanten, was an extremely wealthy lady. The revenge for Siegfried’s murder was organized by Dietrich in a context of Etzel/Attila and Huns.

It would be difficult to name another sequence that could match Mimir, Siegfried, Sieglinde, and Dietrich as closely as Mamuris, Victorinus, Victorina, and Tetricus. The thesis is by no means far-fetched. We have here two versions -- one in German, one in Latin -- of the history of Germanic rulers in Roman offices. Yet, we still cannot grasp how events remembered in the 10th century did not happen in the 9th but as early as the 3rd century AD. We already know that for the historical background of the legend, it is hardly easier for 5th century advocates to bring this material back to life from the 10th century onwards. When we clarify this problem, we will see that the prevailing doctrine of insisting on the 5th century perceives a lot of elements correctly, but without really contradicting a placement of the legend in the 3rd, or the 2nd, or the 9th century of the Viking Early Middle Ages, either.

III Nibelungen of the 9th century: How many migration periods occurred in the First Millennium? Who was Clovis, first King of France?

If one wants to link legends back to historical events in a credible way, one should be able to show an uninterrupted chain of tradition. Since the earliest sources for characters of the Nibelungenlied belong to the 10th (Waltharius Saga) and early 11th century (Ramsund rock), their reality background in the 9th/10th century would satisfy this scientific criterion. The more time without tradition that one must push between legend and history, the more improbable the thesis becomes. If mainstream's 5th century is already subject to severe doubts, Crüger's 3rd century must appear completely untrustworthy.

Selected repetitions of prominent events with possible ties to the Nibelungen Saga during 700 years of the 1 st millennium			
10th / 11th century	Earliest tangible sources of Nibelungen Saga (Waltharius Saga 10 th c.); Ramsund rock carving; 11 th c.)		
Gap to sources: 700 years	Gap to sources: 650 years	Gap to sources: 450 years	Gap to sources: decades
2nd /3rd century	Late 3rd century	Mid 5th century ff.	9th/10th century
1st Migration Period Earliest period to materially fit turmoil of Nibelungen period	2nd Migration Period Crüger's Nibelungen period extremely early for 10th/11th c. sources	3rd Migration Period Mainstream's Nibelungen period very early for 10th/11th c. sources	4th Migration Period If located here, the Nibelungen period would be reasonably close to the 10th/11th c. sources
Plague, invasions	Plague, invasions	Plague, invasions	Depopulation, invasions
Hun-like Iazyges and Goth-like Quadi invade Italy	Hun-like Iazyges and Goth-like Quadi invade Italy	Huns Goths invade Italy	Hungarians invade Italy in the time of Goth-like Vikings
Iazyges + Quadi attack Aquileia + Opitergium (Oderzo). Altinum's inhabitants flee to the Venetian lagoon . Quadi settle around Ravenna .		Huns + Goths attack Aquileia + Opitergium . Altinum's inhabitants flee from the Huns to the islands of the Venetian lagoon . Goths settle around Ravenna .	Altinum's inhabitants flee from the Hungarians to the islands of the Venetian lagoon .
	Tetricus I + Tetricus II in Battle on the Catalaunian Plains	Theoderich I + Theoderich II (Western Goths) in Battle on the Catalaunian Plains	
	Legio XXX coins around Xanten	Legio XXX stationed at Xanten	

The objections to mainstream and to Crüger are chronologically motivated. However, there is no stratigraphy that could provide substance for seven centuries between the 2nd/3rd and 9th/10th centuries, with superimposed residential districts, latrines and hearths. Such elementary urban structures only exist for one period per excavation site. The author has shown this stratigraphy at many sites (First Millennium Chronology Controversy 2013 ff.; Heinsohn 2018). Here, it will suffice to show the contemporaneity of Imperial Antiquity, Late Antiquity, and the Early Middle Ages for the mother of all cities of Roman culture, that is to say, for Rome itself.

Residential districts, latrines, hearths, water pipes, etc. are only erected in Imperial Antiquity until the 230s. All buildings dated thereafter -- especially churches (first pointed out by Krautheimer 1942) -- are built in the style and technology of the 1st-3rd centuries. Post-230s structures are not built upon buildings of the 3rd century but are erected parallel with them. Scholars are at a loss to comprehend such a bizarre lack of activity over more than three centuries. The emperors, it is believed, did not build in Rome after the 3rd century because they felt “it was enough to reflect themselves in the monumental buildings of the developed Principate”⁵ [1st/2nd c. CE; Behrwald 2009,281]. The senatorial class did not build after the devastations of the 3rd century crisis because there was still so much 1st/2nd c. urban substance left that “a return to a generous building policy would not have turned a profit”⁶ (Behrwald 2009,281). Rome’s aristocracy did not build *domus* (city villas) “because impressive buildings [of Antiquity] were still in use (but for how long?) whilst others were given to a modest occupation, and still others simply fell apart”⁷ (Machado 2012,130f.).

Whereas for Late Antiquity there is at least an attempt to explain the cessation of the construction of residential buildings, there is only laconic helplessness for the 7th to 10th centuries: “Nothing is known of the shape of the residential houses. / Of houses and streets only few traces remained”⁸ (Krautheimer 1987, 126 / 257).

The following overview shows schematically the existing substance of elementary urban structures in a stratigraphic chronology painted into the framework of our textbook chronology. At a glance it becomes clear that the Nibelungen periods settled upon by Crüger and his mainstream opponents belong to those periods that are without new construction activities. A period with urban

⁵ “sich an den Großbauten der fortgeschrittenen Prinzipatszeit spiegeln“

⁶ “von einer Rückkehr zu einer umfangreichen Baupolitik wäre deshalb [...] kein Gewinn zu erwarten gewesen“

⁷ “Imposante Häuser wurden wahrscheinlich weiter genutzt (aber für wie lange?), während andere eine bescheidenere Nutzung erfuhren und wieder andere schlicht zerfielen“

⁸ “Über den Zustand der Wohnhäuser ist nichts bekannt. / Von Häusern und Strassen sind nur wenige Spuren übriggeblieben“

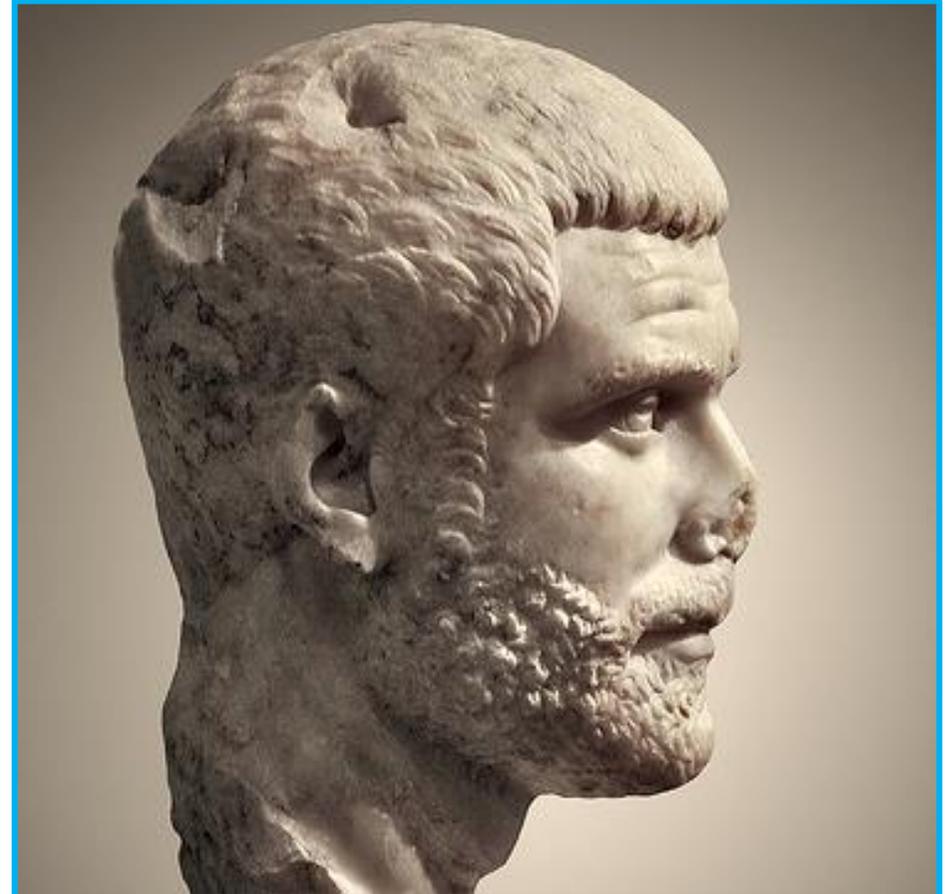
substance to accommodate the culture of the Nibelungen would be Imperial Antiquity. Although it dates from the 1st to 3rd century, it is stratigraphically located directly below the High Middle Ages (930s ff.), from which the earliest sources of the legend come. Of course, it seems bizarre to push Imperial Antiquity from the 1st-3rd century into the 8th-10th century time-span, but stratigraphically there is no other choice.

Selected cities with periods (grey ???) that undergo a mysterious halt in the construction of new residential quarters, latrines, hearths, water pipes, brothels, streets and ports etc. (same color = same period in stratigraphy, whatever the textbook chronology).					
PERIODS	ROME	CONSTANTINOPLE	JERUSALEM (Kishle)	POLAND: WIELBARK Sites	POLAND: SLAVIC TRIBAL Centers
High Middle Ages Earliest Nibelungen sources	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.
Early Middle Ages (700-930s)	???	???	???	???	Residential quarters, latrines etc.; 1 st /2 nd c. Roman coins + pottery similar to 1 st -3 rd c.
Late Antiquity (290s-/6 th /7 th c.)	5 th c. Mainstream Nibelungen period ???	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	???	???	???
Third Century Crisis (230s-280s)	3 rd c. Crüger's Nibelungen period ???	???	???	???	???
Imperial Antiquity (1-230s)	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	???	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.; 1 st /2 nd c. Roman coins + pottery similar to 8 th -10 th c.	???
Late Republic Late Hellenism Late Latène	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.	Residential quarters, latrines etc.

We have not yet talked about Theuderich I, successor of Clovis in 511 AD, who Ritter-Schaumburg (1982) declared as Dietrich von Bern. Tetricus (271-274), our candidate for Dietrich of the Nibelungen saga, was successor not only of Victorinus (Siegfried) but also of Marcus Aurelius **Claudius** Valerius Augustus (260-270), called **Gothicus**. Claudius had conquered Aquitania, which was

Marcus Aurelius **CLAUDIUS** Valerius Augustus, called **GOTHICUS** (268-70), predecessor of **TETRICUS** (271-274) in Aquitania and Gallia Narbonensis -- like **CLOVIS, FIRST KING OF FRANCE**)victor against **Visi-GOTHS**, as predecessor of **THEUDERICH** [coin:http://www.icollector.com/Roman-Empire-Claudius-Gothicus-Aureus-268-270-AV-4-16g_i9258244;

Bust: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/bstorage/sets/72157627784706123/>]



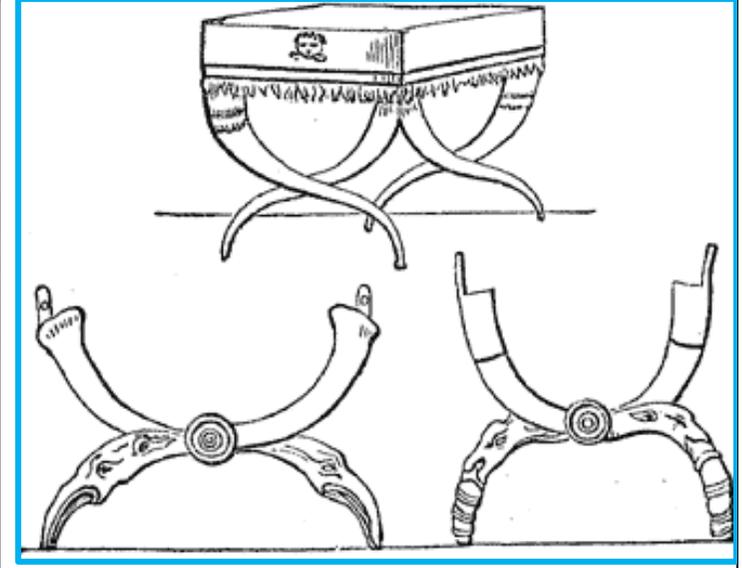
taken over by Tetricus. Claudius Gothicus is well documented by coins, sculptures, and medals. He was also honored by a *sella curulis*, a seat upon which only magistrates holding *imperium* were entitled to sit.

Coin (Trier) of Marcus Aurelius **CLAUDIUS** Valerius Augustus (268-70), called **GOTHICUS** with *sella curulis* (expected also for **CLOVIS, FIRST KING OF FRANCE** (victor against Visi-GOTHS but so far not identified)

[https://www.vcoins.com/de/stores/romae_aeternae_numismatics/136/product/divus_claudius_ii_gothicus_veiled_bust_seated_curule_trier RIC_297_gvf/611081/Default.aspx]

Two pairs of bronze legs, belonging to *sellae curules*, preserved in the museum at Naples (*Museo Borbonico*). Above a *sella curulis* from the Vatican collection

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Curule_seat#/media/File:Curule_chair,_sella_curulis,_Museo_Borbonico,_vol._vi._tav._28.gif]



An even more famous conqueror of Aquitania than Claudius was Clovis/*Chlodovechus* (509-511), who also founded the second Gallic Empire. Although Clovis is almost a quarter of a millennium closer to us than Claudius, there are no portraits of this king, whom France adores as its founding father. His dynasty, like the line of Claudius, became famous for an imperial *sella curulis*, held in the highest honor as the oldest throne of France. Although, like Claudius, Clovis carried the Roman titles of Consul and Augustus

(Becher 211, 236), nobody understands why he didn't issue coins of his own. The same is true for his successor, Theuderich. However, Tetricus, the successor of Claudius, is richly represented with milestones or coins that became the most frequently imitated prototypes for barbarous radiates, barbaric imitations of Roman coins. Yet, Theuderich, the successor of Clovis, is surrounded by darkness, with one possible exception. It is an ivory carving depicting the baptism of Clovis by St. Remigius (437-533). However, it has no inscription. Interestingly, this piece is not a work from Clovis's Late Antiquity, but from the 880s of the Early Middle Ages

Phantasy of Baptism of CLOVIS, victor against Visi-GOTHS (5th/6th c., 1st King of 2nd Gallic Empire) by St. Remigius (ivory; 880s AD)
[\[http://www.wikiwand.com/fr/Clovis_Ier\]](http://www.wikiwand.com/fr/Clovis_Ier)



Baptism of Clovis by St. Remigius (modern phantasy; Reims in outside the cathedral)
[\[https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baptism_of_Clovis,_Basilique_Saint-Remi_de_Reims.jpg\]](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baptism_of_Clovis,_Basilique_Saint-Remi_de_Reims.jpg)



CLAUDIUS COTHICUS from 1st Gallic Empire

[from medaillon:
[http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/medallion-8-aurei-with-bust-of-claudius-ii-gothicus-199\]](http://www.mfa.org/collections/object/medallion-8-aurei-with-bust-of-claudius-ii-gothicus-199)



(ending in the 930s), which would at least bring us closer to the first tangible sources of the sagas from the 10th/11th century in the High Middle Ages (beginning after the cataclysm of the 930s [Heinsohn 2017]). Childerich (+482), the father of Clovis, became immortal because a leather wallet found on his entombed body contained not only, as expected, coins of Late Antiquity, but also many pieces from Imperial Antiquity. Childerich seems to have lived in the 2nd and 5th centuries at the same time. But one does not have to bother with such miracles if the stratigraphic parallelism of both epochs is acknowledged and the artificiality of their division into two consecutive time blocks is abandoned (see already Heinsohn 2011a; 2011b).

Coins found in the leather purse of Childerich (+482 AD; father of Clovis) excavated in 1655 (Quast 2015, 178 f.)								
Coins of Imperial Antiquity				Coins of Late Antiquity				
Kaiser	RIC	Chronologie	Anzahl	Kaiser	Münzstätte	RIC X	Chronologie	Anzahl
Republik	unbestimmt		1	Theodosius II.	Konstantinopel	232-237. 257-260	431-434	1
Nero	RIC I	50-68	1	Theodosius II.	Konstantinopel	282-293	441-443	1
Trajan	RIC II	98-117	2	Valentinian III.	Ravenna	2035-2036	435	1
Hadrian	RIC II	117-138	5	Valentinian III.	Konstantinopel	505-506	452	1
Antoninus Pius	RIC III	138-161	9	Marcian	Konstantinopel	507-511	451-456	8
Faustina I.	RIC III	138-161	3	Leo I.	Thessaloniki	620-627	457	1
Marc Aurel	RIC III	140-180	7	Leo I.	Konstantinopel	605. 630	462-471	57
Faustina II.	RIC III	147-180	3	Julius Nepos	Ravenna	3212-3213	474-477	1
Lucius Verus	RIC III	161-169	6	Basiliscus	Konstantinopel	1001-1007	475-476	1
Commodus	RIC III	172-192	2	Basiliscus & Marcus	Konstantinopel	1010-1012. 1019-1024	476	2
Julia Domna	RIC IV	193-217	1	Zeno	Konstantinopel	911	474-475, 476-491	14
Caracalla	RIC IV	196-217	1	Zeno & Leo	Konstantinopel	906	476-477	1
Constantius II.	RIC VIII	351-355	1	Anzahl				89
Anzahl			42					

Constantinople did not forego evolution, because in the 4th/5th century it used the same technology and architecture as Rome in the 1st/2nd century, but developed at the same time, in Imperial Antiquity. Cassius Dio (163-229) praised the city as second only to Rome in size and power. Today, out of obedience to chronological dogma, one has to assert that the city, which was already

huge in the Augustus period, lay waste from 1 to 300 AD, only to be revived in the 4th century, but with a strange second coming for the styles of the 1st century.

Reconstruction of a section of Rome in the early 2nd century

[<https://pl.pinterest.com/pin/313844667759854163/?lp=true>]



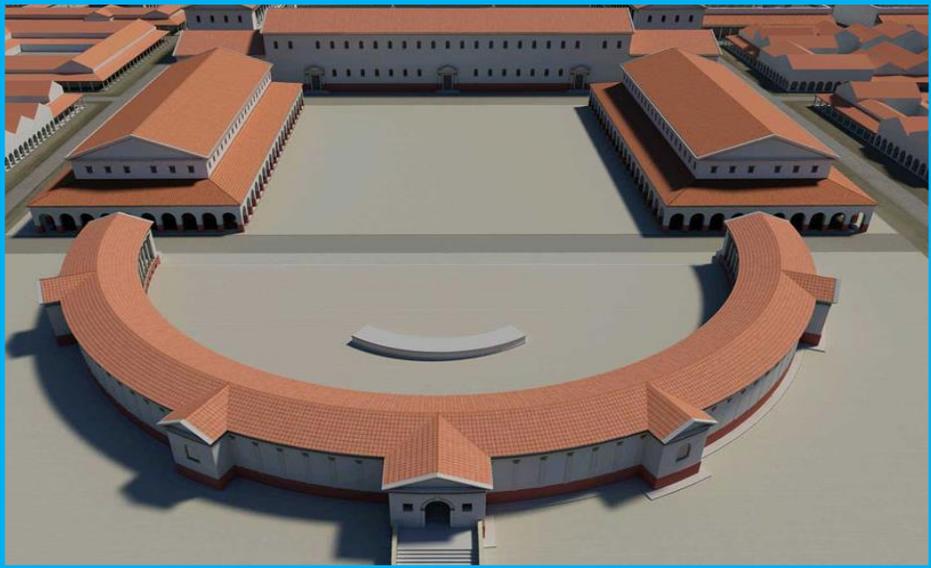
Reconstruction of a section of Constantinople in the early 5th century

[<http://www.twcenter.net/forums/showthread.php?652821-AMAZING!-Reconstructions-of-CONSTANTINOPLE>]



This mysterious interruption of evolution continues in the 9th century, in which languages (Greek, Hebrew, Latin) have remained unchanged for centuries. All the way from Norway (Kaupang) to Mesopotamia (Samarra), even refined millefiori pearls -- right down to their chemical fingerprint -- seem to come from the 2nd century. Stratigraphically, Imperial Antiquity is at the same level not only with Late Antiquity, but also with the Early Middle Ages. Therefore, Charlemagne's 8th/9th century "royal palaces with halls, chapels, colonnade passages and living quarters show the same clear overall composition as the Roman palaces in the diversity

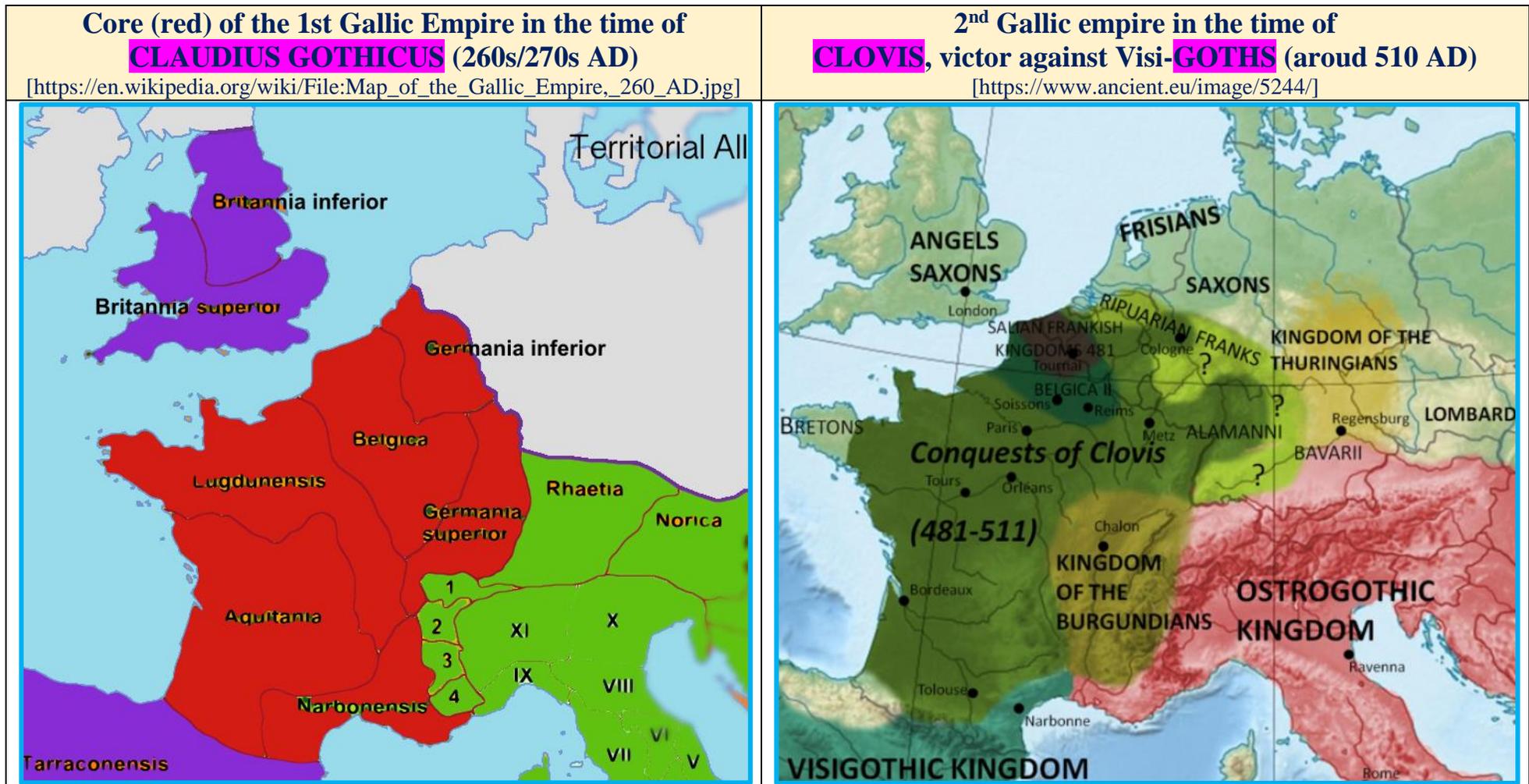
of the individual buildings. [...] In solving architectural problems, the builders rely on the mass-produced construction with its pillars, barrel vaults or columns built in ancient Rome. In addition, he was interested in the Greeks 'column architecture' ”⁹ (Binding 2003,1633 f.).

Reconstructions of palaces in Roman style and technology from Cologne (large city; 2nd c.), and Ingelheim (country villa; 9th c.)	
<p style="text-align: center;">Excedra palace at Cologne’s Roman Forum (2nd c.)</p> <p>[http://www.smartphone-daily.de/aid,664751/Roemisches-Koeln-steht-in-3D-Simulation-wieder-auf/Hardware/News/bildergalerie/?iid=926996&vollbild]</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">Excedra palace at Carolingian Ingelheim (9th c.)</p> <p>[www.google.pl/search?q=ingelheim&espv=210&es_sm=93&source=lnms&tbn=isch&sa=X&ei=62QXU6jYNcmAywOj5YHwDQ&ved=0CAoQ_AUoAg&biw=1366&bih=667#q=ingelheim+excedra&tbn]</p>
	

The stratigraphic simultaneity of the late 2nd, late 3rd and late 5th centuries, which was often sensed by historians of art and architecture, but which was forbidden by the dogma of chronology, makes the identification of the Nibelungen (with earliest sources

⁹ “Die königlichen Pfalzen mit Hallen, Kapellen, Kolonnadengängen und Wohnräumen zeigen in der Vielfalt der einzelnen Gebäude die gleiche klare Gesamtkomposition wie die römischen Paläste. [...] In der Lösung architektonischer Probleme stützen sich die Baumeister auf den im antiken Rom ausgebildeten Massenbau mit seinen Pfeilern, Tonnengewölben oder Kuppeln und seiner Vorliebe für senkrecht aufeinander stehende Achsen, andererseits auf die von den Griechen ausgebildete Säulenarchitektur.

in the 10th c.) much easier. Let us look at the amazing parallels between the rulers of the first Gallic Empire with Tetricus, and the second Gallic Empire with Theuderich. Chronologically, they are considered to be different Dietrich candidates, separated from each other by a quarter of a millennium. But stratigraphically, and in the details, they turn out to be two descriptions of the same man. This also applies to their predecessors, Claudius and Clovis. They do not reign 250 years apart in a first and a second Gallic



Empire. Rather, we are dealing with two types of sources about one and the same king of France: Clovis (Chlodovechus), *LE "CLAUDIUS" LATIN*.

Three candidates for DIETRICH VON BERN of the Nibelungen Saga		
FIRST GALLIC EMPIRE (late 3 rd century)	SECOND GALLIC EMPIRE (early 6 th century)	Ostrogothic Empire (5 th /6 th century)
<p>TETRICUS is successor of CLAUDIUS. His father is unknown. He may have been from Aquitania because Tetricus was <i>praeses provinciae Aquitaniae</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He is ruler of a GALLIC EMPIRE in Germany and France etc. (including AQUITANIA). -He leaves coins, milestones etc. -He fights against Quadi-Goths resembling 9th c. Vikings -He is Crüger's Dietrich von Bern 	<p>THEUDERICH is successor of CLOVIS, his father.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He is ruler of a GALLIC EMPIRE in Germany and France etc. (including AQUITANIA). -He leaves no coins, no milestones etc. -He fights against Danes (Goths) resembling 9th c. Vikings -He is Ritter-Schaumburg's Dietrich von Bern 	<p>[Gunther, Gernot, and Giselher, Burgundy kings of the Nibelungen saga, may have counterparts in Flavius Gundobadus (473-516), King of Burgundy, and his brothers Godemar, and Godegisel (Kaiser 2004.)]</p>
<p>CLAUDIUS GOTHICUS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -conquers AQUITANIA -No sons are known -He is CONSUL and AUGUSTUS -He defeats Goths ("GOTHICUS") -He has <i>SELLA CURULIS</i> -He leaves coins (also with <i>sella curulis</i>), milestones etc. 	<p>CLOVIS, victor against Visi-GOTHS - conquers AQUITANIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Theuderich is one of his sons -He is CONSUL and AUGUSTUS -He defeats the Visigoths -He should have <i>SELLA CURULIS</i> -He leaves no coins, no <i>sella curulis</i>, no milestones etc. 	<p>THEODERICH THE GREAT, an Ostrogoth, rules in Italy and Dalmatia etc.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In vain, he begs CLOVIS, his brother in law, to spare the Visigoths <p>He is mainstream's Dietrich von Bern</p>

It may seem ironic that the rejected outsider theories about Dietrich von Bern, Crüger's Tetricus and Ritter-Schaumburg's Theuderich, have the greatest probability of not only being true but being one and the same person. If the two scholars were still alive, they would perhaps fight fiercely with each other (and with this author) because of the quarter of a millennium that textbook chronology has inserted between their candidates. The prevailing doctrine, on the other hand, would, together with the two ostracized

authors, protest fiercely against anyone who sees the time span of all three Dietrich candidates as being very close together and who, on top of that, moves it into the 9th/10th century by stratigraphically equating this period with the 2nd/3rd century of Imperial Antiquity.

The mockery about a migration period that lasts 700 years, from the Hun-Iazyges and Quadi-Goths of the 2nd/3rd century, through the Huns and Goths of the 5th/6th century, up to the Hungarians and Viking-Goths of the 9th/10th century, and which is always afflicted by the same battlefields, wars and plague epidemics, is understandable. But what is surrealistically overstretched in chronology, has archaeological substance only for 50 to 60 years, which stratigraphically fall into the 9th/10th century. It is not history that is bizarre, but the historiography that has developed since the beginning of the second millennium.

What is placed one after the other over four or more periods is found in the earth side by side, but not stacked on top of each other. If one removes the span of time that has been artificially created by mistakenly placing parallel periods in sequence, only emptiness is lost, not history. By reuniting texts and artifacts that have now been chopped up and scattered over seven centuries, meaningful historiography becomes possible for the first time.

The great migration begins with the Antonine plague and the mysterious Antonine Fires in the 160s AD during the crisis under Marcus-Aurelius and his son, Commodus (161-192). At this time, Rome's State Archives (the Tabularium) were burned. Due to the enormous loss of information and population, the lines of command between Rome and its empire were cut. Local commanders, therefore, had to act independently. These quite a few so-called Barracks Emperors choose Marcus or Septimius as additional names because they existed simultaneously with Marcus Aurelius or Septimius Severus (193-211), but not after them. That is why their coins are discovered in thousands of buried finds along with those of the Severans. Therefore, there are no buildings of the Barracks Emperors (230s-280s) sitting on top of ruins of Severan buildings (190s-230s). Neither are buildings of the emperors of the 4th-6th century ever found on Severan buildings. Stratigraphically, the Severan buildings are the last remains of Roman civilization, just as the aqueduct of Alexander Severus (222-235AD) in 226 was the last ever built in Rome. That's why Roman art and architecture attributed to post-Severan decades is indistinguishable from Severan works.

Roman legal culture ends during the time of Alexander Severus, too. The latest jurists who commented -- in the Digestae and Pandectae -- on Justinian's collection of laws (Codex Justiniani), were the insignificant Modestinus (*185) and the very significant Domitius Ulpian (35 percent of comments), who was assassinated in 223 or 228. But Justinian (527-565) is dated into the 6th century, after which his laws mysteriously disappeared until the end of the 9th century, when an abbreviated Greek version, the *Basilika*, was published under Leo VI (886-912 AD). Justinian expressly promised the Romans that he would always keep laws

Surrealism in the chronology of Justinian's laws		
The commentators worked in IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY	The Corpus was put together in LATE ANTIQUITY	The Corpus disappeared 600-900 in the EARLY MIDDLE AGES
-Publius Iuventius Celsus (67-130 AD) -Aemilius Papinianus (141-212 AD) -Iulius Paulus (2 nd /early 3 rd century AD) -Modestinus (born ca. 185 AD) -Domitius Ulpian (murdered 223 or 228 AD)	- 529 AD first edition - 534 AD second edition -Promise to keep laws always up to date but "texts dating mostly before about AD 230" (Johnston 1999, 22)	-Abridged Greek version (<i>Basilika</i>) appeared under Leo VI. (886-912 AD) -No comments between Domitius Ulpian (+228) and Irnerius of Bologna (ca. 1050-1130).

and procedures up to date. Therefore, nobody understands why the last commentator died 340 years before the greatest of all lawgivers himself: "There remains the fact that between the writing of the classical works, mostly before about AD 230, and the compilation of the Digest in the AD 530s three centuries intervened" (Crook 1967, 14). These absurdities can also be overcome if the stratigraphic simultaneity of Imperial antiquity, Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages is acknowledged.

It is well known that in the first millennium there is another great mystery: when was the first attempted conquest of Europe by Saracens and Moors? The latter had already conquered *Corduba* and Spain during the 2nd century crisis of Imperial Antiquity under

Moors and Saracens in Imperial Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages	
IMPERIAL ANTIQUITY	EARLY MIDDLE AGES
Ptolemy, in his 2nd c. Geography, described <i>Sarakēnē</i> (Σαρακηνή) in the Sinai + Arabia. North African Moors are already known to Strabo in the 1st c. AD as Mauri (Μαῦροι). In the 170s AD, Moors conquered Corduba , the city of the grandfather of Marcus Aurelius. Mysteriously, they left no traces.	Saracens reappeared in Late Antiquity and, again, in the Early Middle Ages. Moors conquered Corduba. They left traces only this time because there was just one conquest with two reports on it.

Marcus Aurelius, although they should not become masters of Spain and *Cordoba* until the Early Middle Ages. Here too, the stratigraphic simultaneity of both epochs provides the solution to the enigma.

This does not claim a 1:1 parallelism in which events reported for the year 100 AD could simply be supplemented with information for the year 800 AD. The sequence from Augustus to Alexander Severus, which was handed down for Imperial Antiquity (1-230s AD), is most reliable, because it was reported already during Imperial Antiquity. It can be furnished with residential buildings, latrines, water pipes, sewers, streets and ports. On the other hand, the events dated from 284 onwards (Late Antiquity) and from 700 onwards (Early Middle Ages) contain so many dating shifts and arbitrarily combined fragments that it is always necessary to examine on a case-by-case basis what belongs to when in the 2nd century, which -- let us say -- is currently dated to 850.

But we return to the turmoil since the plague crisis under Marcus Aurelius to better understand the historical context of separatism and the role of some of the Barracks Emperors. Because of high mortality rates during the plague-crisis under Marcus Aurelius, foreign ethnic groups were invited to help compensate for the loss of population. Uninvited guests also moved into the empire, and wars broke out. In the south, and all the way to Spain, Moors/Arabs attacked Roman territory. Germanic tribes came in from the north and east. From the east, Huns also crowded in. In the southeast, sub-empires were created simultaneously with the Gallic Empire (260-274). Two generals, Zabdas and Zabdai, of Postumus' contemporary with Septimius Oedaenathus (assassinated in 267 AD), were given the name Septimius (Potter 2014, 257), supposedly more than half a century after the demise of Septimius Severus (193-211 AD). Oedaenathus' son, Herodianus, was called Septimius Herodianus. Already Philippus Arabs (204-249 AD), who founded the new city of Philippopolis, was known as a conscious imitator of Septimius Severus (Körner 2002, 225) from Leptis Magna in North Africa, the main rebuilders of the Empire. Leaders of these separate political entities, spread over five million km², which today is home to more than 30 nations, may have imitated Marcus Aurelius or Septimius Severus, but they did it at the same time, and not many centuries -- or even decades -- later.

IV Results

From a scientific point of view, the identification of historical persons behind characters of the Nibelungen saga has always been unsatisfactory. The chronological distance of 500 years (mainstream) or even 700 years (dissidents) between reality and the earliest sources cannot be bridged. Despite fierce controversies, all researchers share an unshakable belief in the chronology of the first millennium. Textbook chronology is one of the last things that is truly sacred. It is burned into our cultural DNA. Checking that chronology by comparing it to the excavation layers found in the ground comes close to blasphemy. These layers confirm that the sequence from the end of Late Latène *via* Imperial Roman Civilization to a global cataclysm in the 930s AD, that ended Antiquity, lasted only some 230 but not 930 years. The ca. 230 years are divided into two phases -- the period up to the Antonine plague crisis of Marcus Aurelius (textbook-dated to the 160s AD), and from then to the cataclysm in the 230s. The following overview illustrates this development schematically:

Stratigraphy dates (ca.)	Periods commonly dated between 1 and the 930s AD
930s ff.	High Middle Ages (Dark Age of survivors) starting in ruins, monasteries, and castles built and run by reckless men who had turned themselves into knights, the new nobility. Triumph of Christianity; earliest Nibelungen sources.
930s	Cataclysm [“3 rd “ c. crisis; “6 th “ c. crisis] with extreme population losses. Even a millennium later, Rome [shown <i>pars pro toto</i> on the next four pages], has not recovered.
860s-930s	Period of Migrations [“170s” ff; (Quadi-Goths), “230s” ff. (Quadi-Goths) “5 th /6 th ” c. (Danes); “9 th “ c. (Vikings)]. Conversions to Christianity with intensive church building; Nibelungen Period.
860s ff.	Crisis with plague and Antonine Fires [“160s” AD] (in “192” the murder of Marcus Aurelius’s son Commodus, with a 284-year Diocletian cycle added, brings the end of the Western Empire in “476” AD). Many cities become smaller, using <i>spoliae</i> (see Heinsohn 2016, <i>pars pro toto</i> , for Ephesus) from destroyed parts to build walls against deserted quarters.
700-860s	Blossoming of Imperial Roman Culture with <i>Pax Romana</i> (“1-160s”). Steady evolution of Christianity.
600-700	Late La Tène -- Late Roman Republic -- Late Hellenism (1 st century BC)

The author understands that saying goodbye to our textbook chronology in favor of the provable stratigraphic sequence is incredibly difficult. Breaking with scholarly and religious tradition, which is portrayed as unshakable truth in millions of books, essays and theological treatises, contradicts everything we have learned for almost a thousand years. Excavation-based analysis allows the decoding of important characters of the Nibelungen saga, as well as central figures of early European history. This analysis uncovers, among others, the real identity of France's first king, Clovis ‘Visigothic’, who is revealed as Claudius Gothicus. On page 38 below, our four main legendary figures are summarized -- side by side -- with their historical counterparts.

ROME'S CATAclySM IN THE "3rd" C. AD: The floor of Imperial Antiquity (**PIANO ANTICO 2nd /3rd c. AD** ending with the Severan Dynasty that runs parallel with some of the Barracks Emperors [190s-230s]) was **covered by a level of FANGO** (dark mud/earth) that finished Roman Civilization for good. The disaster is vaguely dated to the 9th/10th c. AD. In the very heart of Rome there are no remains for Late Antiquity (late 3rd to 6/7th c. AD) or for the Early Middle Ages (8th to early 10th c. AD). Imperial Antiquity is immediately followed by the High Middle Ages (Bonifica) after the **930s AD** [Bernacchio/Meneghini 2017, fig. 8]. **Therefore, the cataclysm's "3rd" century textbook date translates into an early 10th century stratigraphic date!**

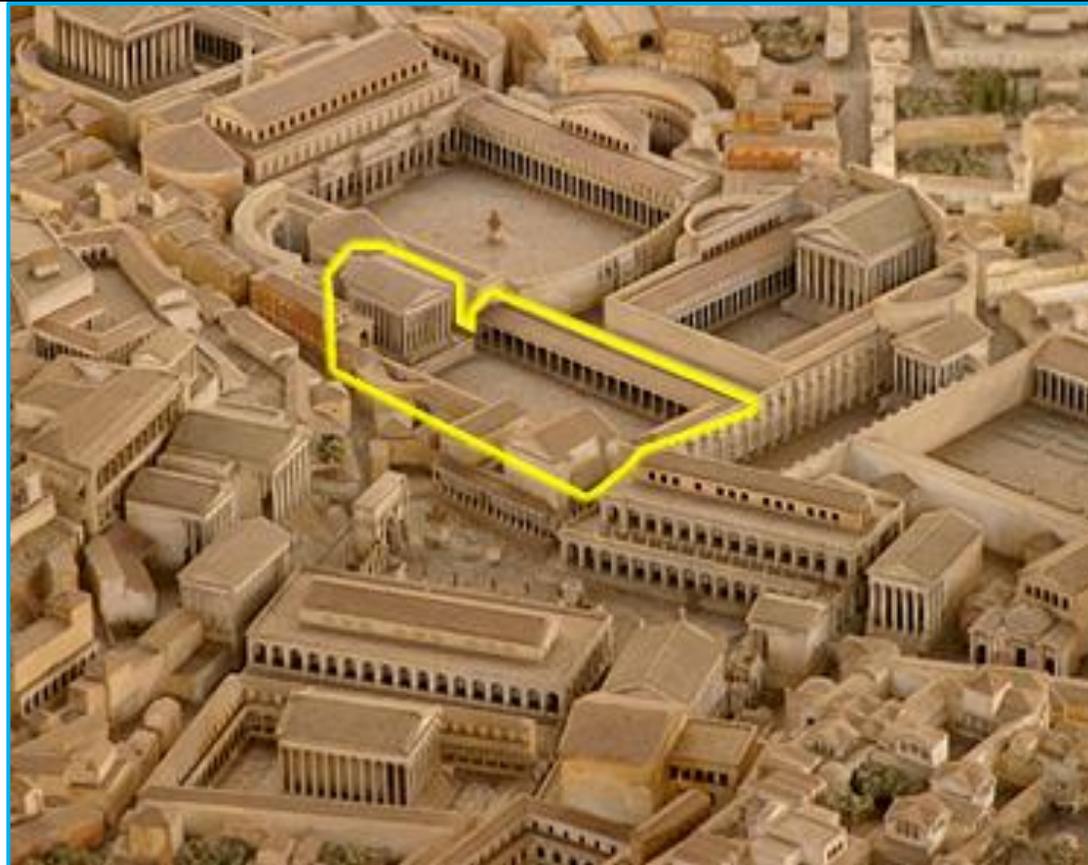


FORUM OF CAESAR before and after the TENTH CENTURY CATAclysm (Heinsohn 2017).

The center of the heart of the *Imperium Romanum* has **nothing to show for the seven centuries between** the 3rd and the 10th c. AD. The urban substance of the 3rd c. AD stratigraphically belongs to the early 10th after which it is wiped out: "The eleventh century marked another turning-point in Rome's urban history. Excavations have revealed that this period [of the High Middle Ages; GH] is characterized, in all strata, by a **significant rise in paving levels, and the consequent obliteration of many structures and ancient ruins**" [Santangeli Valenzani 2013, 133; bold letters GH].

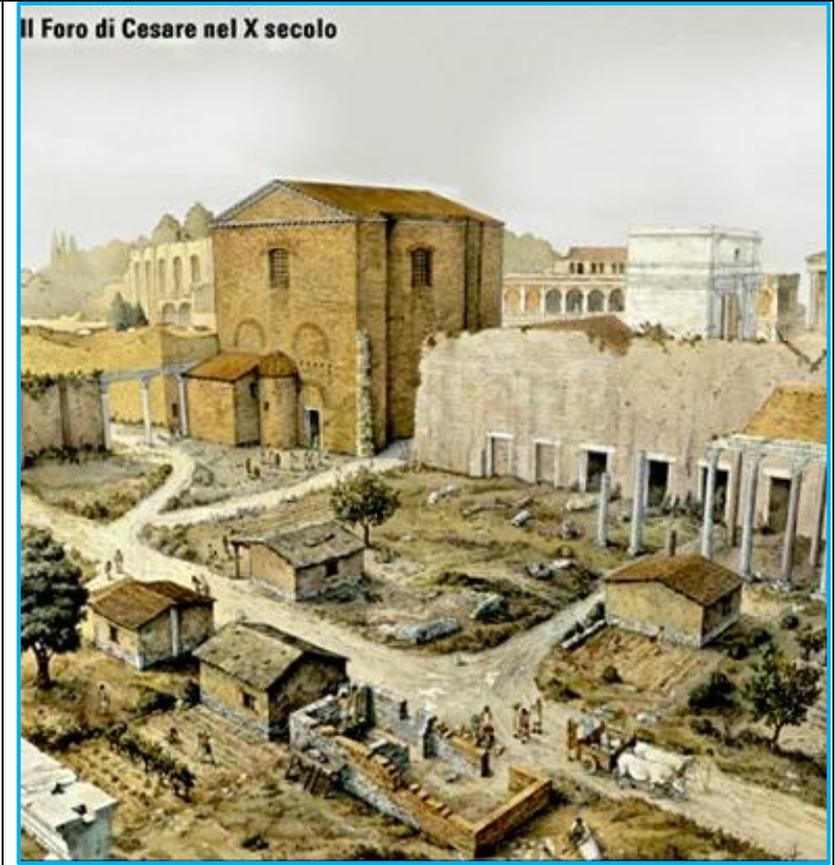
Rome's CAESAR-FORUM in the 2nd/3rd c. AD (stratigraphically 9th/10th). Curia is in bottom corner inside the yellow line.

[<http://www.creatinghistory.com/the-forum-of-julius-caesar/>]



Huts of survivors on Rome's CAESAR-FORUM in the 10th/11th c. AD (Curia top left)

[<http://www.romanoimpero.com/2010/01/foro-di-cesare.html>]

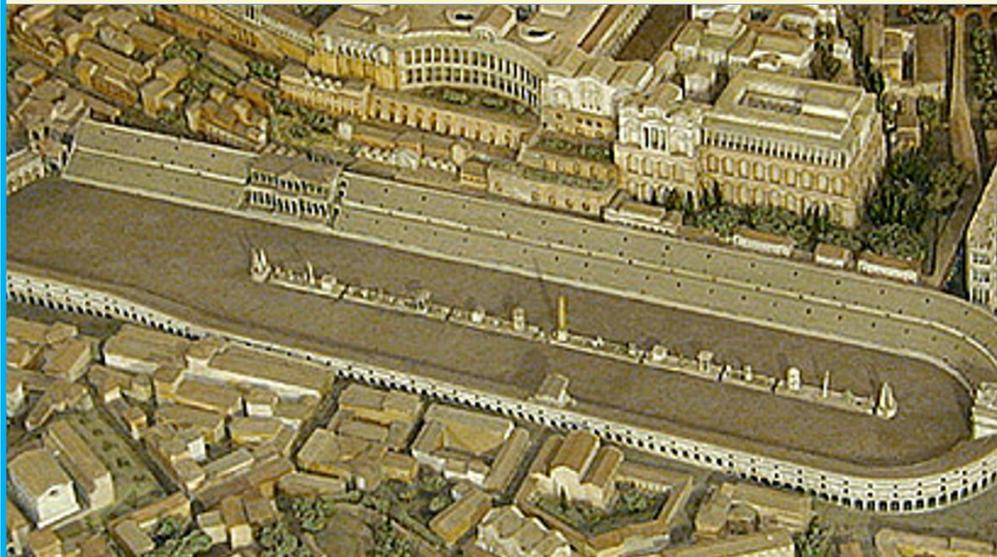


Rome: Circus Maximus in the 3rd c., and in 1575

[<http://www.vroma.org/~bmcmanus/circus.html> / E. Dupérac [ca. 1525-1604; <https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/e/e6/Peracvestigi157512.jpg>]

Michel de Montaigne (1581):

“This was nothing but Rome’s sepulcher. The world, hostile to its long domination, had first broken and shattered all the parts of this wonderful body; and because, even though quite dead, overthrown, and disfigured, it still terrified the world, the world had buried its very ruin. [...] It was likely that these disfigured limbs that remained were the least worthy, and that the fury of the enemies of that immortal glory had impelled them to destroy first of all what was most beautiful and most worthy; and the buildings of this bastard Rome which they are now attaching to these ancient ruins [...] reminded him precisely of the nests which sparrows and crows in France suspend from the arches and walls of the churches”.



Imperial Rome in the 9th (=5th=2nd) century. The Tiber island is located in the center

[Gismondi, *Plastico di Roma Antica*; Giovanni Lattanzi:

<http://www.archart.it/italia/lazio/Roma/Roma-plastico-Roma-antica/foto-RMplastico003@.html>]



Rome (1569) with the remains of the imperial walls (19 km) inside which less than 25 percent were settled whereas the rest served as cow pastures, gardens and vineyards. The Tiber island is located to the right. Etching after Giovanni Francesco Camocio {1569}; Braun-Hogenberg; *Civitates Orbis Terrarum* I, 1572.

[<http://www.exurbe.com/?p=2219>]



The recording of the Nibelungen Saga took place after the extinction of western Roman civilization in the cataclysm of the 930s (= 230s). This natural catastrophe killed large numbers of people and destroyed most of the original Roman texts. Only a few fragments were available to surviving scholars, church leaders and poets alike as they tried to piece together their history, and they mistakenly added 700 years to the

chronology of the first millennium. They did not have excavations and stratigraphy to help them in their work. But we do. Today, the science of archaeology allows us to see the real parallels between texts and stratigraphy, parallels that can speak for themselves.

Coin portraits	Rulers of the Gallic Empire	Characters of the Nibelungen Legends
	<p>Marcus Cassianus Latinus Postumus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Hun-like Iazyges attack in his first imperial years. He captures treasures looted by Germanic warriors whilst they ferry their booty across the foggy river. -He is murdered by his troops whose <i>praetorian</i> guard is commanded by his pro-consul Victorinus. He is made emperor and treasure owner after the Marius intermezzo. 	<p>Alberich the Treasure-King of Elves</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -In Hun-dominated times, this king guards a treasure (later sunk in the Rhine) owned by the Nibelungen (=sons of fog). -Siegfried kills the Nibelungen fighting over the treasure. Subsequently he defeats Alberich. -In a death-like netherworld, Alberich is forced to guard the treasure for Siegfried.
	<p>Marcus Aurelius Marius/Mamuris</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He is a swordsmith (<i>faber ferrarius</i> = armourer). -He is succeeded by Victorinus. 	<p>Mimir/Mime the Swordsmith</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He is a swordsmith (<i>faber ferrarius</i> = armourer). -He is the teacher of Siegfried.
	<p>Marcus Piavonius Victorinus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -His coins are frequently found around Xanten. -He is assassinated by a commander for seducing his wife. -His son Victorinus ("II") is murdered, too. -His treasure buys loyalty of <i>Legio XXX</i> which uses a dragon as a coat of arms. -He leaves the treasure to his mother, Victorina. 	<p>Siegfried the Dragon-Slayer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He is born in Xanten where he is taught in forging by Mimir. -He is assassinated after an affair with Gunther's wife, Brunhild. -His son is murdered, too. -He slays a dragon to get hold of a treasure. -He leaves the Nibelungen treasure to his mother, Sieglinde.
	<p>Gaius Pius Esuvius Tetricus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He protects Victorina, Victorinus's mother. -Victorina's treasure buys Tetricus the title of Emperor. -Trier, his capital, is close to Bonn (also called Verona) -He fights a battle on the Catalaunian plains in which Hun-Iazyges and Quadi-Goths are involved. [Tetricus is, in Aquitania, heir of Claudius Gothicus as Theuderich is heir of Clovis, victor against Visigoths, and first king of France.] 	<p>Dietrich von Bern</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -He protects Sieglinde, Siegfried's mother. -He has the means to organize the revenge for Siegfried's murder. -The revenge occurs in the context of a battle with (Etzel/Attila the Hun, who fights -- with Gothic allies -- on the Catalaunian plains.

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Thanks for editorial assistance go to Clark Whelton (New York). Suggestions also came from Decker (Sydney), Tadeusz Heinsohn (Kraków), and Reiner Spieker (Karlsruhe).

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