

Peter Dunoff

**The Migration of the Teutonic Tribes
and their Conversion to Christianity**

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Thesis

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A SHORT BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Peter Konstantinov Deunov¹ was born on July 11th, 1864 in the village of Nikolaevka (previously Hadarch), not far from Varna, Bulgaria. He was the third child in the family of Konstantin Deunovski, a priest and Dobra Georgieva. His maternal grandfather was Atanas Georgiev (1805–1865), a prominent figure in the struggles for an Independent Bulgarian Church during the National Revival period. His father was the first teacher and priest in Varna to teach and conduct services in the Bulgarian language.

Peter Deunov was a pupil at Varna School for Boys. In 1887 he finished the American Theology School in Svishtov and from the autumn of 1888 he was a teacher at Hotanza, near Russe.

In August 1888 he left for the USA where he studied at the Methodist Seminary in Drew, Medison, New Jersey. He graduated in 1892. During the summer of the same year he enrolled in the School of Theology at Boston University and the next year he finished his thesis on the migration of the Germanic tribes and their Christianization. He graduated in June 1893. For a year he also attended the School of Medicine.

In 1895 he returned to Bulgaria and settled in Varna. He was offered to become a methodist and a theosophical preacher but he refused. In 1896 he published *Science and Upbringing* which describes the foundations of a new culture to come in the next century. In 1896 he became one of the founders of the community cultural centre *P. R. Slaveikov*, was elected as a librarian and during the next several years he lectured to Varna community.

In 1897 at the age of 33, P. Deunov and his followers founded the *Society for Raising the Religious Consciousness of the Bulgarian People*. The same year he published a leaflet with a mystical text called *Huo-Eli-Meli-Mesail*. The events of 1897 put him in the centre of a spiritual society which later on grew into *The Chain* (1906) and *The Universal White Brotherhood* (1920). He was confirmed as the *Teacher*.

In 1898 he wrote down and delivered the lecture *An Address to My People* at Varna spiritualistic society. The lecture was an appeal to a social and spiritual self-assertion. The next year he wrote down *Ten God's Pieces of Evidence* and *God's Promise*. In 1899 he started organizing annual meetings in Varna which he first called Meetings of the Chain. Between then and 1942, every year in August the annual meetings of the Universal White Brotherhood were held at various locations: in Varna (1899–1909), in Veliko Tarnovo (1910–1925), in Sofia (1926–1941), in Rila and Vitosha.

Between 1901 and 1912 he travelled around Bulgaria delivering lectures and doing phrenological research. From 1904 onwards he stayed longer periods in Sofia where he preached through his lectures.

In 1912 in Arbanassi (near Veliko Tarnovo) he worked on the Bible and wrote down *The Testament of Light's Colour Rays*, which was published in September the same year. On the title page there was the motto: *I shall always remain a devoted servant to Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, 15th August, Tarnovo, 1912.*

On 16th of March 1914, in Sofia, he delivered the first stenographically recorded Sunday lecture *Here is the Man*, which marks the beginning of the *Strength and Life* cycle. There he laid out the founding principles of his teaching which he called *The New Teaching of the Universal White Brotherhood*. During World War I Vasil Radoslavov's cabinet forced him into exile in Varna, claiming that his teachings weakened the soldiers' spirits at the front. After the war the number of his followers grew quickly and during the 30s of the 20th c. they were about 40 000.

On February 24th, 1922, in Sofia, Peter Deunov founded an esoteric school called *The School of the Universal White Brotherhood*. It had two classes of pupils: general and special. The lectures there continued for 22 years until December 1944.

In 1927 Deunov set up the settlement called *Izgreva* (the Sunrise), which is the modern residential area *Izgrevo*, and there he gathered his listeners, followers and pupils. He settled there permanently and in a purpose-built hall he delivered series of his Word.

In the summer of 1929 for the first time he took his followers to a camp near the seven Rila lakes. On the 21st of September 1930 he began a new series of lectures called *Sunday Morning Words*. In 1934 he began work on *Paneurhythmia*, a cycle of twenty eight exercises, containing music, text and movement. Later he added the exercises called *Sun Rays* and *Pentagram*.

At the beginning of 1944 during the air raids on Sofia Deunov organized the evacuation of *Izgreva* to Marchaevo (south west from Sofia) and moved into the home (now museum) of his pupil Temelko Giorev. He returned to *Izgreva* on the 19th of October 1944. On the 20th of December 1944 he gave a lecture called *The Last Word* to the general class. On the 27th of December 1944 he left the physical world. His body was laid to rest in *Izgreva*.

PETER DEUNOV, THE FIRST BULGARIAN SCHOLAR TO STUDY THE GOTHIS AND OTHER GERMANIC PEOPLES

Rossen Milev

As in many other aspects of his spiritual and research work, Peter Deunov is a pioneer, a forefather, and a founder – this time of the Bulgarian research into the history of the Goths and other Germanic peoples. The present essay, written during his studies at the School of Theology at Boston University between 1892 and 1893, makes him the first Bulgarian to address and discuss this topic. Its length was limited by the requirements for a degree thesis at the time. Nevertheless, the essay is clear, precise and concentrated. He outlines all the major points in this area, reviews the most significant publications at the time and suggests his own original interpretation, generalization and heuristics. There is all the evidence of a short but magnificent contribution to this research area. At that time the history of the German peoples had already been researched for centuries, mainly in Western and Northern Europe. Thus Deunov is the first Bulgarian to have worked extensively on this topic. (Only Gavriil Krustevich before him mentions the Gothic presence in what is now Bulgaria, in his „Bulgarian history“, volume 1, published in Constantinople in 1869.)

Deunov's pioneering work acquires even greater significance in the context of the enormous delay among Bulgarian scholars in studying Gothic and other Old Germanic cultural and historical heritage in Bulgaria. Systematic and comprehensive analyses have just started. Various factors, mainly ideological, have prevented whole generations of Bulgarian scholars from studying the history and culture of the Goths on Bulgarian territories and in the rest of Europe, their part in Bulgarian ethnogenesis, their role and position in the formation of early medieval Bulgarian Christianity. It was as late as 2002 when a group of Bulgarian scholars – historians, archeologists, linguists, theologians and others, decided to put their efforts together and to begin interdisciplinary studies of the Gothic cultural and historical trail on the Bulgarian territories. As part of the Gothic Research Project (2002 – 2001) an international research centre „Ulphilas“ was established in Sofia in 2004 and I have the honour to be its director. It also has a library – „Bibliotheca Gothica“. The centre gathers many Bulgarian scholars as well as colleagues from Sweden, Norway, Germany, Austria, Italy, Russia, the Ukraine, the USA, Spain, Romania, etc. When, in the summer of 2007, we learned of P. Deunov's work on the history of the Teutonic migration and christianization, we were amazed that Bulgarian scholarly circles had forgotten or disregarded the topic for such a long time. Our foreign colleagues were particularly amazed. Now we have the very great pleasure of rediscovering P. Deunov's work. The embarrassment, almost shame, of the Bulgarian backwardness in the area of gothology has been cleared „post scriptum“ – we do have a Bulgarian contribution as early as the 19th c. and by a thinker and enlightener of whom every nation can be proud.

It is remarkable that in his essay on German migration and christianization Peter Duenov discusses the life and work of Ulphilas (311–383), a Gothic bishop who translated the Bible into the Gothic language near Nicopolis ad Istrum (what is now the village of Nikjup, near Veliko Tarnovo), thus marking the beginning of the first German literary language. Ulphilas had encyclopaedic knowledge, a missionary talent and great spirituality which were highly appreciated by his contemporaries and later conveniently „forgotten“ by the official church as he had been suspected of being an Arian heretic. He also created the Gothic Christian alphabet, and a centre of learning and spirituality in Moesia, which lasted for centuries. Later on it gave impetus to the development of the official Bulgarian Christianity and the Bogomils, a kind of inherited „faith laboratory“. Until the 13th c., in addition to the Gothic saints, officially respected by the Bulgarian Orthodox Church until now (St. Nikita Gotski, St. Sava Gotski, etc.), „got“, „gotin“ and other related ethnonyms had often been used also as a synonym of „heretic“ in official ecclesiastical documents.

Such attitudes could hardly be taken for granted by a broad-minded person like Duenov. On the contrary, he notices and focuses on a quality which Ulphilas had and which made him so successful among the Goths: „He gained their love and reverence by his blameless Christian life“. The moral integrity and purity of Ulphilas in particular and of the Goths in general were recognized and pointed out by Silvanus, a chronicler in the Frankish Empire in the 5th c. He says that „in spite of being heretics, Ulphilas' Goths are morally purer than more of today's Christians“. These Goths, also called by their contemporaries Moesian Goths or Minor Goths remained on Bulgarian territories and became part of the Bulgarian ethnogenesis. The written source mentioning them has been deliberately hidden for centuries and has been re-discovered through the interpretation of Gothic Christianity as late as the 20th c. Duenov did not cite it; the source must have been inaccessible at his time but he was the first one to notice a quality of Ulphilas' which

unfortunately is not mentioned even today – his moral righteousness. This is such a simple and natural insight into the personality „of the Apostle of the Goths“, yet it needed a person like Deunov to be able to state it clearly and categorically in gothology for the first time. This is considered to be his original contribution to the modern studies on Bishop Ulphilas.

In his essay P. Deunov points out yet another fact which has often been analyzed by researchers. When Ulphilas translated the Old Testament he omitted the Books of Kings as he feared that they might „excite their warlike minds“ (i.e. of the Goths). The Moesian Goths were extraordinary peace-loving people and this quality was noticed centuries after Ulphilas, at the beginning of the 7th c. by Isidor of Seville. He writes that they are well known for their love of peace and also that they do not drink wine, only milk. In the context of the militaristic attitudes at the time we can only imagine the utmost energy with which Ulphilas exerted himself to perpetrate among his people such a stable value which lasted for centuries. Perhaps the life style of the Moesian Gothic communities rejecting war and dissipation inspired P. Deunov and served as a model for the organization of his White Brotherhood. This could only be a hypothesis. When he wrote his work in Boston he was still being trained as a Methodist pastor in Bulgaria. The fact that the Methodist church first stepped in Moesia, Northern Bulgaria, its centre being in Svishtov (the ancient Nove was the capital of the Gothic king Theodoric the Great in the 5th c.) could also have provoked P. Deunov’s interest in the Goths.

In his article P. Deunov concentrates on the migration and the following christianization of the main Germanic tribes – Goths, Vandals, Franks, Swabians, etc. during the Great Migration, outlines the major events in the clashes between the Late Roman Empire and the invading Germanic tribes and finally the collapse of the Western part of the empire. This is the area where during the 5th – 6th c. the first early medieval states in Europe were formed – the Kingdom of the Ostrogoths, which existed on the territory of modern Italy, and the Kingdom of the Visigoths, which existed on the territory of modern Spain.

Nowadays Deunov’s study can be useful to researchers, students and history lovers as a brief, clear and factually reliable introduction to the topic of the Germanic migration and Christianization at the border line between the Classical Age and the Middle Ages, between heathen and Christian times in European history. As its length shows, it was not designed as a comprehensive study. We should also keep in mind that it was written a century ago when more facts about this historical process were yet to be discovered. Deunov himself points out that „much history concerning the earlier development of the human family is obscure“. However, measuring his work not only with the criteria of his time but also from the point of view of modern research on the topic, which has just started in Bulgaria, Peter Deunov has left a new and distinct mark on the history of research on the Germanic migration and Christianization.

PETER DEUNOV AND METHODISM

Harrie Salman

When the 28-year-old Peter Deunov, in 1893, wrote his essay on the migration of the Teutonic tribes and their conversion to Christianity, he was a student of theology at the Methodist University of Boston in the United States. A year before, he had completed a higher education in theology at the Methodist Seminary of Madison, New Jersey. Six years earlier, in 1887, he had received his licence to preach after finishing his first theological studies at the Methodist Scientific Theological School in Svishtov (Bulgaria).

It may seem strange that Deunov, born in 1864 as the son of a Bulgarian-Orthodox priest, wanted to become a Protestant minister. He never wrote or told of why he took the path of Methodism. In her biography of Peter Deunov, Milka Krалева writes that he lived in the family of his sister Maria (who was some seven years older), while he was a pupil at the gymnasium in Varna.¹ Her husband, Penko Stамov, a weaver and tailor by profession, was a devout Methodist and in their home people came together for prayer.²

In this introduction to Peter Deunov's essay, which is published for the first time in this book, we will discuss the development of Methodism, the coming of Methodist Protestantism to Bulgaria, Deunov's years as a student at Methodist schools, the content of his essay, and the reasons he may have had for dedicating it to the migration and the conversion of the Germanic tribes. Finally, the question will be posed how the spiritual impulses he discovered in Methodism were transformed in his work for the White Brotherhood.

Methodist Protestantism

The rise of Protestantism at the end of the Middle Ages is related to the development of individual consciousness. The founders of Protestantism stressed the personal relationship of the believer to God, without the mediation of a priest and the hierarchy of the Church. They propagated the reading of the Scriptures by the believers and saw the Bible as the only source of Christian religion. They also criticized the lack of dignity among priests and the wealth of the Church of Rome.

Methodism began as an evangelical movement within the Church of England. It traces its origin to the activity of John Wesley (1703–1791), an Anglican minister and theologian. Wesley promoted the idea of 'Christian perfection', which he saw as the holiness of heart and life. The 'methods' for developing this perfection were practised in regularly receiving communion, fasting, leading a modest life, supporting each other in intimate groups, but also in visiting the poor and sick, as well as prisoners. Wesley and his friends had a strong sense of social justice. They reacted against the apathy in the Church of England and the lack of enthusiasm among believers. As itinerant preachers they had a strong missionary zeal. To them the Methodist Church owes a tradition of enthusiastic congregational singing of hymns.

Theologically, Wesley was influenced by the moderate ideas of the Dutch theologian Arminius, who defended the free will of humankind against the views of fundamentalist Calvinism on predestination, which say that God has already before the birth of a man decided whether he will be saved or go to hell.

A second influence came from the Moravians. In 1735 Wesley travelled by ship to Georgia in America. During a heavy storm, everybody panicked, but a group of Moravians was calmly singing hymns and praying, which deeply impressed him. He even visited their centre Herrnhut, near Dresden in East Germany, in 1738. The Moravian Church, originally known as the Unity of the Brethren, was founded in the 15th c. in the Czech Countries as an offshoot of the repressed Hussite movement.

Although Wesley broke with the Moravians in 1739, this contact created a link between the new Methodist Church and the movement of Jan Hus that, together with the English Lollards and the Dutch Brothers and Sisters of Common Life, carried an essential element of the Bogomil-Cathar stream into the future. It is the attempt to realize the qualities of a truly Christian life within human society. This sanctification of daily life was central to the whole Manichean stream. For Rudolf Steiner, the task of Manichaeism (including the Bogomils and the groups they influenced) is to prepare the forms of the social life of the future, in which Christ can be present among people.³

Protestantism meets the Orthodox Church

In 1804 a Bible Society was founded in England, and in 1810 a Calvinist missionary society in America. They became active in the Ottoman Empire, but when missionary activity among Muslims and Jews proved to be impossible they turned to the Orthodox Christians – in Greece, Armenia and Bulgaria. In Turkey itself, American missionaries founded nine schools in the second half of the 19th c., as did missionaries from Western European countries. A well-known school was Robert College, an American high school founded in 1863 in Constantinople by the Congregational missionary Cyrus Hamlin and the philanthropist Christopher Robert. Many Bulgarian graduates of the school became important political leaders after Bulgaria's independence.

The initial purpose of the English and American Societies in Bulgaria was to contribute to a reform and revitalization of the Orthodox Church, first of all by spreading the Bible and preaching the Gospel, but they had no clear idea of how the Orthodox Church could be reformed. They supported the struggle of the Bulgarian Church for independence from the Greek Patriarchate and they initiated the full translation of the Bible into modern Bulgarian. During the long Ottoman occupation, the language of the liturgy was Greek and the Bible was only read by priests, in a translation into Church Slavonic (Old Bulgarian) that was very different from the spoken Bulgarian language of the 19th c.

The first proposals for a new Bulgarian Bible translation date back to 1818.⁴ Its realization contributed significantly to the National Revival of Bulgarian culture in the 19th c. The British Bible Society organized the translation of the New Testament, its printing in Smyrna (Izmir) in 1840 and its distribution. The translation into the Western Bulgarian dialect was made by Neofit Rilski, who had been recommended by the Greek archbishop of Veliko Turnovo. After its publication, however, the Greek Patriarchy immediately organized a campaign to destroy every copy of this translation.

Some twenty years later, it was decided to revise this translation and to publish it in the Eastern Bulgarian dialect, together with a translation of the Old Testament. This whole project was organized by Elias Riggs and Albert Long. They asked the writer Petko Slavejkov to revise Neofit Rilski's translation. According to the writer Ivan Vazov, Slavejkov's work established the official Bulgarian language. The complete Bulgarian Bible translation was published in 1871 in Constantinople, a year after the Ottoman Sultan allowed the creation of an independent Bulgarian Church.

After the establishment of the autonomous Bulgarian Church, the work of the societies became more difficult. Their long-term vision of reforming the Orthodox Church and turning all its members into Protestants was replaced by the short-term goal of converting Orthodox believers and founding local congregations. It became clear how huge the differences between these two forms of Christianity actually were. In the Orthodox Church, the believers have a passive role – there is no sermon, no appeal to the human intellect, no singing (only as member of a choir) and no gathering of the believers for the communion around the Table of Christ.

The Methodist mission in Bulgaria

In 1856 the American missionary society, which was run by the Congregational Church, made an agreement with the American Methodist Episcopal Church to organize the missionary work in Bulgaria together. The Methodists would work in the northern part of Bulgaria, between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains and the Congregationalists would open their missionary stations in southern Bulgaria.⁵

In 1857 the Methodist missionaries Albert Long and Wesley Prettyman made a tour through northern Bulgaria. Shumen became the first missionary station. Other foreign missionaries followed and stayed for some years, but also Bulgarians were educated as preachers. Small congregations were founded in a number of towns and villages, the most important of them being Svishtov, Varna (in 1885) and Ruse. In these towns, the first churches were built.

The Methodist mission experienced strong resistance from the side of the Orthodox Church. Its future was precarious and several times the abandonment of the mission was discussed. In 1910, after fifty years of missionary work, the Methodist Church had only 482 members and some 1000 adherents. The Protestant Churches found a better way to reach the Bulgarians through their publications of religious books, their philanthropic and their educational activities, but this brought them few members.

In 1863 Albert Long founded the first periodical in the Bulgarian language, *Zornitsa* (The Morning Star), which became very popular. In 1880 the Methodist missionaries opened two high schools, one for girls and one for boys. Between 1883 and 1894, the boys' school, which had moved from Veliko Turnovo to

Svishtov and was officially called 'The American Scientific Theological School', offered a high school education of five years. The courses of the first three years were prescribed by the Bulgarian government. In the last two years, Bible studies were added to the general courses. In its theology Department, preachers were educated in a one-year program. Some of them were sent to Drew Theological Seminary in New Jersey (USA), to become ministers. In 1894 the school of Svishtov was set on fire by enemies of the Methodist mission. The school moved to Ruse and became a theological seminary.

Peter Deunov in Methodist schools (1884–1895)⁶

Probably in September 1884, but certainly before the spring of 1885, Peter Deunov came to Svishtov. He was 20 years old and had not finished the Ferdinand I Gymnasium of Varna, because he had been ill between February and June 1884, in the final school year. He had become a pupil of this three-year high school in September 1880.⁷

His long illness may have been a time of inner transformation in which he found his life mission and probably decided to become a Methodist preacher. The spiritual atmosphere in the Stamov family, where he had lived since 1880, may have supported this step.

For three years, Peter Deunov remained in the school of Svishtov. He finished its first three-year part by taking the examinations he had missed in Varna because of his long absence. And then he did the following two-year part and his preacher's education. His diploma from the school's Theological Department lists 12 regular subjects and six theological subjects, most of them with good or very good marks. His skills in preaching were, according to Pastor Tsvetan Tsvetanov, one of his former classmates, unrivalled. The school diploma did not give him the right to become a teacher in a state school or to go to the university. In the early autumn of 1887, Deunov became a teacher in the Methodist primary school in Hotantsa, a village to the east of Ruse. In 1888 this school had 20 pupils. He served in the local congregation as a preacher.

After one year of teaching in Hotantsa, Peter Deunov was sent to Drew Seminary in Madison, New Jersey, where candidates for the Methodist ministry had been trained since 1867. On September 19, 1888, he enrolled in a two-year course, of which the first year was preparatory and the second year was more practical and focused on preaching. It seems that most preachers from Bulgaria took this two-year training to become a pastor. After finishing it, Deunov was allowed to stay for two more years. He completed his studies at Drew Seminary on May 19, 1892.

The schedule of studies for the regular three-year bachelor program included Greek, Hebrew, Anthropology, Church History, Theology, Practical Theology, Canon and Criticism, Bible Interpretation, Soteriology, and Elocution. Deunov took all these courses in a special program. He did not receive the bachelor degree in theology, because it was only conferred upon students who already had the degree of Bachelor of Arts.

After the summer of 1892, Peter Deunov became a theology student, he was enrolled at Boston University's School of Medicine for a one-year special course for missionaries. In 1895, probably after he was a student at the School of Theology of the Methodist University of Boston. Because of his earlier studies at Drew Seminary he was able to finish the three-year course within one year on June 7, 1893. After his graduation and doing the usual pastoral work in a Methodist congregation, he left the United States after a stay of seven years.

During his studies in Boston, Peter Deunov was in the heart of Protestant America, in a world of intellectual discussions on theological but also philosophical questions. Boston had excellent libraries, where he could satisfy his thirst for knowledge. He was seeking a new understanding between science and religion, necessary to transform both a one-sided materialistic science and a narrow-minded conception of religion.

At Boston University, Peter Deunov attended the lectures of Professor Borden P. Bowne (1847–1910). As a preacher and journalist, Bowne applied his philosophy to social and religious issues. In his view, both scientific and theological explanations were incomplete. Boston was also the centre of American Transcendentalism, a philosophy created around 1836 by the writer and philosopher Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803–1882) and his friends. Rejecting the intellectualism of Harvard University in Boston and inspired by German Idealism, English Romanticism and Vedic thought, they searched for transcendental principles deriving from the spiritual essence of man. To this movement also Henry David Thoreau (1817–1862)

belonged. He became widely known by his book *Walden, or Life in the Woods* (1854), in which he described his experiences of living in natural simplicity for two years in a cabin on the shores of Walden Pond, near Concord, about 30 km from Boston.

Peter Deunov must have heard of this spiritual philosophy, in which the experience of nature was so important. At the same time, another spiritual movement will not have escaped his attention – the Theosophical Society, founded in 1875 in New York by Madame H. P. Blavatsky (1831–1891) and others. As a medium, she received information from spiritual teachers, published in *Isis Unveiled* (1877), which has esoteric Christian sources, and in other books that were influenced by Hinduism and Buddhism. It is unlikely that Deunov had contacts with so-called Rosicrucian groups that were founded at that time in America and were usually connected to Masonic lodges.

Peter Deunov often made excursions into the countryside around Boston. On one occasion he took with him his friend Velichko Grablashev, who later told the story of this excursion. He had to promise that he would not speak about it to others, because they would go to an important place where a secret society of very developed people gathered. They travelled to a farm in the forests, where they met people who did not have the appearance of farmers. They prayed and sang, a talk was given and they engaged in spiritual conversation. After Deunov's return to Bulgaria, Grablashev returned to the area, but could no longer find the occult society.⁸ Apparently, they had visited one of the Utopian agricultural communities, maybe the *Fruitlands*, which were inspired by the Transcendentalist Movement, by religious ideas or ideas of the Utopian socialist Fourier. Usually, they only existed for a short period.

Peter Deunov's essay on the Germanic tribes

In the academic year 1892–93, Peter Deunov took a course in Practical Theology. It was taught by Luther T. Townsend (1838–1922), professor at the School of Theology of Boston since 1867. For this course he had to write an essay, which he finished on April 15, 1893. This essay on the original topic of the migration of the Germanic tribes and their conversion to Christianity is of moderate length (48 pages) and does not have footnotes or a bibliography. As was usual in those days, the text is handwritten, in a very readable and regular handwriting.

In the essay, some 39 pages are dedicated to a description of the migrations of the Germanic tribes and only seven pages to their conversion to Christianity, creating a certain imbalance in the treatment of the two topics. Peter Deunov himself remarked that there is a lack of information on the second topic. Professor Townsend was probably satisfied with an assignment in which a few books on a topic of the student's choice were interpreted intelligently. Deunov did this and wrote an essay in which he presented the essential elements of the story of the Germanic migrations and finished by pointing to the special role of the Gothic bishop Ulphilas (Wulphila) in the conversion of the Germanic tribes.

Most of the information on the Germanic migrations and many quotations in this part come from the book *An Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages*, written by the historian Ephraim Emerton (1851–1935), a professor of Ecclesiastical History in the Harvard Divinity School, also in Boston. Peter Deunov followed the first seven chapters (pp 1–72) of this excellent book closely. He also consulted *The History of France*, written by Parke Godwin (1816–1904), an American lawyer and journalist, and *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, written by the English historian Edward Gibbon (1737–1794).

At the beginning of the second part, Peter Deunov makes some personal remarks that link the essay with the course on Practical Theology. He says that Christianity has an 'intrinsic value' and is 'well adapted to all relations of human life'. Secondly, behind it stands 'divine power and agency'. Thirdly, Christianity's divine spirit places its teaching in the depth of the human soul and brings life to the human spirit. And finally he remarked that Christianity spread among the Germanic tribes through 'preaching and personal influence'. It spread because there were good preachers, among them the apostle of the Goths and translator of the Bible, Ulphilas, a man who led a 'blameless Christian life'.

The message of the essay

The last part of the essay would have deserved more elaboration, because the Goths and through them all the other Germanic tribes mentioned in the essay, except the Franks, were adherents of Arian Christianity. Peter Deunov avoided a discussion of the doctrinal differences between Arianism and the dominant stream in the Church, as well as an analysis of the destruction of this so-called heresy by the Church. Among the

differences in doctrine, we find in the teaching of Arius (250–336), a theologian living in Alexandria, an emphasis on the human side of Jesus Christ, while his opponent Athanasius (293–373), Patriarch of Alexandria, stressed His divine side. The theology of Arius speaks of an ascending man who develops himself spiritually in order to meet God, whereas the theology of Athanasius speaks of a descending God who comes to save a passive man. These different positions we find again between esoteric Christianity on the one hand and the official Church, including the Orthodox Church, on the other.

Peter Deunov limits the story of the conversion of the Germanic tribes to a short biography of Ulphilas (311–383). Around 348 he fled with his fellow Christians among the Goths from Dacia (Romania) to Moesia (northern Bulgaria), where they settled between the Danube and the Balkan Mountains. This was exactly the area of the Methodist mission! Here we see the reason why Deunov chose the subject of his essay. As a Bulgarian Methodist preacher, he wanted to write about the historical destiny of the area he came from and about its new destiny related to the transformation of Orthodox Christianity that was the goal of the Protestant mission.

Ulphilas was bishop of Nicopolis ad Istrum (near present-day Nikyup, 20 km north of Veliko Turnovo) and the area of Gothic settlement also comprised Svishtov, the spiritual centre of Bulgarian Methodism. According to Rudolf Steiner, Ulphilas was the first Christian initiate of Europe. For his Bible translation he created the new personal pronoun *ik* (I) from the Old Germanic root *eko*. Its two letters stand for Iesus Krist (Jesus Christ).⁹ This word developed into the German *Ich*, the Dutch *ik* and the English *I*.

The name of bishop Ulphila was also later mentioned by Peter Deunov and it was well known and honoured among his close pupils. In a conversation, one of them, Boris Nikolov, said that Ulphila also did spiritual work south of the Balkan Mountains, near Tulovo, Stara Zagora (a site of an ancient Celtic capital).

To support the Christian mission among the Goths and the other Germanic tribes, Ulphilas translated the Bible into Gothic in Nicopolis and the Methodist mission also began with a Bible translation. There is clearly a connection between the mission of Ulphilas and the Methodist mission. This seems to be the hidden message of the essay.

The spiritual mission of Peter Deunov

Peter Deunov was born into a family in which the impulse of the Bulgarian Enlightenment had taken strong roots. His father, the orthodox priest Konstantin Deunovski (1830–1918), was the first Bulgarian teacher in the region of Varna and he is considered to be the first priest in the area of Varna to celebrate the orthodox liturgy in Bulgarian. Also, his maternal grandfather, Atanas Georgiev, was active in the National Revival of Bulgarian culture.

Between the ages of 16 and 20, Peter Deunov discovered the spiritual meaning of Methodism and its possible contribution to the reawakening of the Bulgarian nation after the liberation of northern Bulgaria by the Russian army. This liberation took place in 1877–78, after five centuries of Ottoman rule. He saw the need for a reformation of the Orthodox Church and had his own experience of the way Methodist preachers brought Christ closer to the people. His confidence in Wesley's 'methods' of attaining 'Christian perfection' brought him to the Methodist school in Svishtov, to the seminary in Drew and to the School of Theology in Boston.

In America, Peter Deunov experienced the positive aspects of American Protestantism and in his extensive reading he began to value the meaning of science for the discovery of truth. He also became familiar with new spiritual movements, such as Transcendentalism and Theosophy, and with the agricultural communities of spiritual seekers. He must also have heard of the influence of the Moravians upon John Wesley. All this had a deep impact on Deunov, especially the realization that American spirituality has very practical qualities and brings spiritual impulses into the will.

Back in Bulgaria in 1895, and perhaps earlier, he may have realized that the mission of Methodism could not succeed. The reformation of the Orthodox Church required stronger spiritual impulses than American Protestantism could offer. In the spiritual atmosphere of Methodism, Peter Deunov had discovered his personal mission to be a messenger of the living Word of God, but he did not see his future in the Methodist Church. Various Methodist congregations invited him to become their pastor, but he declined. In 1896 the Congregational Church of Yambol invited him, but he made clear that he could only accept a position as a pastor if it would be without payment. Also the Theosophical Society of Bulgaria invited him

to give lectures, but he declined. He went his own way, to work for his life's mission. He had meetings with Protestant pastors, spiritists and theosophists; he wrote his book *Science and Education* in 1896, and he began to give lectures, sometimes of a scientific nature, but also of a mystical-spiritual kind.¹⁰

Peter Deunov's spiritual diary and the spiritual messages he wrote down show the depth of his inner transformation in the first years after his return from America.¹¹ In the archives of Boyan Boev we find the following text: *A sister visited the Teacher and he told her*: "I have been inspired and that happened on March 7, 1897 (in the Gregorian calendar on March 19). Then I received a mission from heavens, it was revealed to me that I am a teacher for the whole humanity. The mission assigned to me is connected with the new path of the Slavs and with the coming of the sixth race (the new cycle of cultures – *remark by the author*)."¹² In 1899 a small circle of friends who saw him as their teacher began to gather around him. His mission found an earthly form, after 1900, in the foundation of the White Brotherhood, in which his followers came together in order to receive, through their teacher, inspirations from the heavenly White Brotherhood.

The White Brotherhood

In a number of aspects, Peter Deunov's work in the White Brotherhood can be seen as a transformation of the Methodist mission in Bulgaria. The Methodists were not able to reform the Orthodox Church. In his work, Deunov was able to connect on a deeper level with the spiritual traditions of the Balkans and with the spiritual mission of the Slavs. He created a new spiritual path for Eastern Europe, directed at the liberation of the living spiritual impulse of Christianity from the outer forms of the Church. This would be the creation of an 'invisible Church' or a 'spiritual Church', which corresponds to the vision of the Russian philosopher Vladimir Soloviev – it is human society organised as a brotherhood.

In Methodism, Peter Deunov found an impulse that represents a pure form of Protestantism – the service of the Divine Word through Bible reading, praying, singing and preaching. This impulse is also to some extent connected with the mission of Manichaeism, which ran through Bogomilism – the creation of living Christian communities. The White Brotherhood can be seen as a metamorphosis of the Bogomil traditions, but it also incorporated elements from the Protestant traditions of Methodism.

In the White Brotherhood, the Methodist Church services, with their praying, singing and listening to a sermon, were transformed into the Brotherhood's meetings with their singing and listening to the talks of its teacher Peter Deunov. Some of the early religious songs he composed may have been inspired by Methodist hymns. In other aspects of the White Brotherhood's methods of spiritual development no Methodist roots can be found. Paneurythmy, harmonious music and the excursions into nature have another source, which can be found in the mystery traditions, such as the School of Orpheus.

In his historical studies, Peter Deunov discovered behind the mission of the Methodism in Bulgaria the figure of the Gothic preacher Ulphilas, as he showed in his essay. Ulphilas created new Gothic words and a new alphabet for his Gospel translation that inspired the Germanic tribes to find their way to Christ. Deunov brought a new Gospel, especially but not exclusively for the Slavic nations of Europe, of which his talks are a substantial part. In them, the moral qualities of the Living Word could be heard again, which will inspire people, as he saw it, to do inner work and to prepare for the beginning Second Coming of Christ.

¹ Milka Krалева, *The Master Peter Deunov – His Life and His Teaching*, Sofia, 2001, p 15.

² Lyudmilla Dimitrova, manuscript of the lecture "On some little known facts from the early years of the spiritual teacher Peter Deunov", held on September 2, 2006, during a forum of the White Brotherhood in Varna.

³ Rudolf Steiner, "Manichaeism", lecture from November 11, 1911, in: *The Temple Legend*, Great Barrington, 2002.

⁴ Dony K. Donev, *The Story of the Bulgarian Bible*, 2006. This essay can be found at the webpage www.pneumafoundation.org/resources/articles/article_0025.pdf

⁵ Paul B. Mojzes, *A History of the Congregational and Methodist Churches in Bulgaria and Yugoslavia*, dissertation, Boston University, 1965. The missionary work of the Congregational Church has been analyzed by Tatyana Kh. Nestorova-Matejic, *American Missionaries in Bulgaria (1858–1912)*, dissertation, Ohio State University, 1985. They can be found at the website www.protestantstvo.com.

⁶ In his biography of Peter Deunov, *Putyat i vremeto*, part 1, chapters 3-5, Sofia, 1998, Atanas Slavov gives many details and additional background information on these years.

⁷ Lyudmilla Dimitrova, information from the manuscript of a lecture "On some little known facts from the early years of the spiritual teacher Peter Deunov", held on September 2, 2006, during a forum of the White Brotherhood in Varna.

⁸ Atanas Slavov, Putyat i vremeto, part 1, pp 286-287.

⁹ Rudolf Steiner, lecture from September, 27, 1905, in: Grundelemente der Esoterik, Dornach, 1987.

¹⁰ Such as the lecture “A call to my people“, delivered in Varna in 1898.

¹¹ Dnevnik na Uchitelja Beinsa Duno (Peter Deunov), Sofia, 2001.

¹² Akordirane na choveshkata dusha (from the archives of Boyan Boev), Vol 1, Sofia, 1999, p 339.

THE MIGRATION OF THE TEUTONIC TRIBES AND THEIR CONVERSION TO CHRISTIANITY¹

Peter Dunoff

In the scope of this essay we intend to follow the migration of the German races and their conversion to Christianity.

As the Germans take an important part in the development of human thought and the ideas of the present time, the subject is worthy of our consideration.

In treating it we must refer to history as the source of information.

As astronomy begins with causation, geology with the formation of the earth, biology /2/ with the appearance of protoplasm; so the human history begins with the appearance of man, and proceeds onward until it reaches our days.

The purpose of history is to throw light upon the human race, its development, life, thought, ideas and organization so that we may clearly see the gradual progress of humanity. How far history has succeeded in its endeavors it remains for the learned historians to determine. The fact is acknowledged that much history concerning the earlier development of the human family is obscure.

Nevertheless human genius with unceasing labor has succeeded in discovering to us /3/ many facts, and has solved many hard problems.

It is certain that future labor will bring new trophies to its possession.

The limit of this paper does not allow an elaborate discussion.

It is not more than a hundred years since the historians after scientific research came to the conclusion that all races in Europe – Celts, Germans, Slavs, Italians and Greek – and some in Asia belong to the Indo-European race of men.

According to later investigations, there were eight principal branches of this race. Five of them found their homes in Europe and three remained in Asia.

/4/ It is believed that the earlier home of that great undivided race was somewhere in western Asia, between the valley of the Euphrates and the valley of Indus. However it is not conceded by all.

Allowing this view as correct we may suppose that an increase in numbers, or internal divisions caused their search for new homes.

Probably one part passed by the way between the Ural Mountains and the Caspian Sea into Europe, while another part went to the East into the valley of the Ganges and formed the great Indian race. A third part of the same race including the Medes and Persians remained settled in the Tigris-Euphrates valley.

Of the five branches into which the European portion was divided, the Celts seem to have been in advance; probably they were pushed by the others towards the west and settled in British islands, France and Spain.

Behind the Celts were following the Germans, who occupied the central part of Europe from the Alps northward to the sea and were spreading over Scandinavia. After the Germans were advancing the Slavs – a race who had not yet formed a united government. One division occupied the provinces of the Danube and Hungary while the rest settled in Russia and today they form the largest /6/ part of the population in the Empire. Farther to the south came the Italians and the Greeks who occupied the southern part of Europe near the Mediterranean Sea. These two branches of the Aryan race – the Italians and the Greeks – have done much in the preparation of the present civilization which Christianity brought into the world. The Greek mind was prepared by nature to grasp everything which had to do with beauty and delicacy in human thought in the abstract; they left us a splendid inheritance in works of art, literature, philosophy, history and political governments.

The Italians distinguished themselves in the formation of a /7/ great empire with splendid laws. In the work of civilization the Germans alone of the Northmen have taken rank with the Greeks and the Romans.

As our main interest in this discourse is with the Germans, we intend to notice several facts – their origin, migration and conversion.

In regard to their origin many questions have been asked. Where were they during the distant centuries, in which Phoenicia and Carthage were unfurling the sails of their commerce upon the seas and Greece was flourishing in beauty of her civilization and Rome was building up here colossal iron despotism? These are questions which history cannot answer positively.

/8/ Parke Godwin, when he speaks about the origin of the Germans, says: „An impervious cloud overhangs the morning of the old Teutonic world.“²

Von Hammer³ refers the origin of the Germans to a Persian tribe mentioned by Herodotus the Greek historian under the name Γερμανιοι, but in some texts this word is Καρμανιοι, which renders it of doubtful authority. Moreover Tacitus⁴ says expressly that the tribes of north and central Europe had in his time been but recently called Germans; and this is confirmed by Strabo⁵, who makes the name of Roman origin. They were called Germans from „germanus“ – brother – because /9/ they were the brothers of the Gauls. Some refer the name to the Kymric⁶ „ger“ – near, and „man“ – people = the neighbors. But Grimm⁷ says these tribes did not call themselves Germans, and that so far as they had any collective appellation it was „Teuton“ from the root „teut“ or the people.

However one thing is sure – that they came from the East. When, we do not know.

The probability is that they were compelled to leave their home either by natural necessities or by the force of some other tribes and that they wandered for many centuries upon the steppes in western Russia with their herds and flocks, moving slowly on their progressive journey.

/10/ With the long centuries they increased in number, and this caused the subdivision of the race into other smaller tribes who pressed onward towards the northern part of Europe until they came into the possession of that large portion of the continent called Germany.

Parke Godwin in his *History of France* says: „Early ethnography assigned to Germans that part of central Europe which was bounded on the south by the Danube, on the west by the Rhine, on the north by the Baltic and on the east where they were vaguely blended with the Sarmatians or Schlaves⁸ by mountains and mutual fear.“ This was a wild and savage region of woods /11/ and marshes; and the people who occupied it in common with the bears, wolves, bison and wild-boars, were divided into some fifty distinct and independent tribes.

Their general resemblance of complexion, language, habits and institutions denoted that they were of common origin.

Formerly they represented a vast multitude of petty tribes living each for itself; but after the first great attack of the Romans to subdue them and break up their unceasing disturbances caused to the Empire by their restless disposition, these tribes made a great confederation under their famous leader Hermann. P' Julius Caesar was the first of the Roman /12/ emperors who cast a few glances into the dark continent occupied by the Germans, and checked their rapid advancement upon the Empire. The military genius of this man folded the Teutons into heavy obscurity for more than a century.

In the time of Augustus (31 B.C. – 14 A.D.) the Romans made several expeditions across the river Rhine, but the Roman armies suffered defeat.

From all other German tribes the Goths first appear prominently in history.

The hypothesis adapted by Werth⁹ traces the Goths to the „Getai“ who dwelt on the borders of the Black Sea. He cites /13/ Herodotus, Strabo, Solinus¹⁰ as establishing the identity. Humboldt¹¹ indeed says that Grimm¹², in a work which I have not seen, clearly demonstrates the fact. If the Goths were Getai, then they were ... (*missing words in the text; most probably: a Thracian*) race.

In the time of Herodotus – 450 B.C. – the Getai occupied both sides of the Danube, in what are now Bulgaria, Bessarabia and Wallachia. How far this supposition is true is a question.

Three centuries from this time they appear in history prominently. We hear about their long journey from the mouth of the Vistula, and then we find them near the mouth of the Danube.

/14/ Of this long journey we know very little. The Goths according to their tradition believed that they came from Sweden in three ships. „This tradition is not incredible,“ says Emerton, „if we are willing to multiply the ships a little, and if we remember that to get to Scandinavia they must first have made the same long journey to the northwest which all their German brethren had made. At all events we may believe that the whole nation had moved, perhaps driven by enemies, perhaps in search of new pasture-lands for their cattle, up the valleys of the northward-flowing and down the valleys of the southward-flowing rivers until /15/ they came near the Black Sea and had then spread out westward until they reached the position we have just described.“¹³

It is hard for us to imagine such a great migration, but we must remember that the people had no property except such as they could drive or carry upon their wagons. The progress made by them from the Baltic to the Euxine¹⁴ was no doubt very slow. Perhaps one journey was made once in a lifetime or a generation, but in later times their movement was more rapid.

„In the age of Antonines“ (A.D. 248–264), says Gibbon, „the Goths were still seated in Prussia. About the reign of Alexander /16/ Severus, the Roman province of Dacia had already experienced their proximity by frequent and destructive inroads. In this interval, therefore, of about seventy years, we must place the second migration of the Goths from the Baltic to the Euxine; but the cause that produced it lies concealed among the various motives which actuate the conduct of unsettled barbarians. Either a pestilence or a famine, a victory or a defeat, an oracle of the gods or the eloquence of a daring leader were sufficient to impel the Gothic arms on the milder climate of the south.“¹⁵

In the time of Emperor Hadrian, a few months after his /17/ ascension to the Roman throne he was summoned to the banks of the Danube to fight with the Goths who invaded the Roman Empire.

Gibbon says: „This is the first considerable occasion in which history mentions that great people who afterward broke the Roman power, sacked the Capitol,¹⁶ and reigned in Gaul, Spain and Italy. So memorable was the part which they acted in the subversion of the Western Empire that the name of Goths is frequently but improperly used as general appellation of rude and warlike barbarism.“¹⁷

About a century after Emperor Aurelian had given to the Western Goths the province of Dacia they had lived on comparatively /18/ good terms with the Romans neighbors and were inclined to lead a more settled life.

But about the year 375 a new difficulty arose. A new people, up to this time unknown, invaded Europe. They were the Huns – a people who did not belong to the Aryan race, but to the Turanian race. „They came from the north of Asia beyond the Great Wall of China, passed the ‘gateway of the nations’ between Caspian Sea and the Ural Mountains, and fell upon the distant settlement of the East-Goths. They surrendered and were obligated to join the Huns in their attack upon the West-Goths.“¹⁸

These later in their despair begged the Roman emperor /19/ Valens to give them shelter in the Empire. The petition was granted and they were allowed to settle in Moesia¹⁹ on the condition that they should defend the frontiers of the Empire from new attack, and the Romans should supply them with weapons.

But soon there arose new troubles. The Roman officers were careless in their conduct. The ill treatment of the barbarians, their properties and their families aroused the indignation of the whole nation into open revolt.

Emperor Valens decided to break up the rebellion and without waiting for any help from the West gave battle near Adrianople. His army was utterly /20/ defeated. He himself was killed in the retreat in 378. This decisive battle taught the Germans that they were able to beat the Roman legions in open fight.

Gratian, the emperor of the West, invited Theodosius, a Spaniard of great ability, to take the government of the Eastern Empire.

The political genius of Theodosius saved the Empire from ruin, and he succeeded in holding them in peace; but soon after his death the Gothic warriors were not to be bound with empty promises. Their restless ambition for conquest brought to the front their greatest leader Alaric. Once more the whole nation /21/ took up its march with the fixed purpose of finding lands in the very heart of the Empire where they might settle once for all.

Alaric devastated Greece and then took his march for Italy to plunder Rome. However his advance was stopped by Stilicho, the ablest general of Honorius and he was obliged to retreat.

The murder of Stilicho by Emperor Honorius opened the way for Alaric. He drew near Rome with his army, besieged it, and in 410 the city was taken by storm and plundered.

Alaric already intended to pass into Africa, but this was prevented by his sudden death. „The sister of Honorius, the /22/ beautiful and learned Placidia, taken captive in Rome, marries the Gothic leader Adolf. (...) The Visigoths served as the allies of Rome. (...) The price of this service was a new and final grant of land in Spain and in the south of Gaul, – extending from the river Loire beyond the Pyrenees and over the greater part of the peninsula. Here the wanderings of the Visigoths came to an end. They made use of what they had learned at Rome to found a great and prosperous kingdom with Toulouse as its capital.“²⁰

The Gallic part of the Visigothic kingdom lasted until the 6th c., when the rise /23/ of the Franks reduced it to a Frankish province. The Spanish portion existed until the 8th c. The invasion of the Mohammedans from the south put an end to it.

We must now turn our attention to some others of their kinsmen who were in the same way seeking lands, wealth and power.

Along the Baltic shore we first hear about the Vandals, who were neighbors to the Goths. In some early period they moved slowly in a southeastern and then in a western course.

Reaching Pannonia on the Danube they encamped as though they were going to settle forever.

/24/ The Romans, who by experience had learned how to treat the barbarians, used them as their allies and defenders of the frontier of the Empire; and to some extent they had been faithful in the Roman service. However, the success of Alaric, and his example set them in motion. They left their place and moved rapidly to the northwest with their kinsmen the Suevi, carrying also with them an un-German tribe, the Alani.

Near the border of Mainz they crossed the Rhine and made a long circuit through the north part of Gaul and then passed into Spain, which became their prey.

„Emperor Honorius by the help /25/ of the Gothic kings Adolph and Wallia (*this part of the quotation is not correct; the original text says: After the retreat of the Goths the authority of Honorius had*) obtained a precarious establishment in Spain, except only in the province of Gallicia,“ says Gibbon, „where the Suevi and Vandals had fortified their camps, in mutual discord and hostile independence“.²¹ However the Vandals did not stay long in Spain. They took their march for new countries.

Emerton says: „The plan which Alaric had failed to carry out was to be taken up by the Vandals of Spain. They are said to have been ‘invited’ by a Roman officer named Boniface out of revenge for some injury received from his government.“²² Under their famous leader Genseric they /26/ passed over to the shores of Africa and overthrew provinces of Mauritania and Numidia, and then besieged the fortress of Hippo.

Ten years had not elapsed before they left the shores of Spain and before they became masters over the whole province of Africa. They had finally entered Carthage.

„After an interval of six hundred years,“ says Emerton, „Carthage became the capital of a great seafaring and fighting people“.²³ The Vandals became bold and dreadful pirates in the Mediterranean Sea with their light vessels running along the shores of Italy, Gaul or Greece, etc.

In 455 a bitter quarrel arose /27/ in the imperial family of Honorius. The Empress Eudokia invited Genseric to bring his Vandals and plunder the city. They came and had a delightful time for 14 days, carrying away everything they could find of value.

„The Vandal kingdom in Africa lasted after this,“ says Emerton, „about eighty years and was conquered by the armies of the Roman emperor Justinian, a successor of Arcadius, the son of Theodosius“²⁴

„The whole nation of Vandals,“ says Emerton, „amounted to about one hundred thousand souls.“²⁵

Close kinsmen of the Vandals and the Goths were the Burgundians.

/28/ According to the general opinion, the Burgundians formed a Gothic or Vandalic tribe, who from the banks of the lower Vistula made incursions on one side towards Transylvania and the other towards the centre of Germany.

At the end of the 3rd c. we hear they were engaged in war with the emperor Probus at the frontier near the Rhine.

Gibbon says: „About the middle of the 4th c., the countries, perhaps of Lusace and Thuringia, on either side of the Elbe, were occupied by the vague dominion of the Burgundians, a warlike and numerous people.“²⁶

„Early in the 5th c.“ /29/ says Emerton, „they received a grant of land from Honorius, and seem to have begun their settled life in the vicinity of the city of Worms.“²⁷

From here they soon spread westward over the fertile valleys of the Rhine and Saône and rapidly grew to be a powerful kingdom.

The most famous of their kings was Gundobald. In his time the laws were written. The rise of the Franks turned the Burgundian kingdom into a Frankish province.

In this conflict with the Franks they were led to change their religious belief and became devoted Catholics.

Before proceeding further let us notice the cause pro- /30/ ducing that great upheaval of national migration which took place in the latter part of the 4th c.

We must speak of it in order to understand the movement of the German races. We mentioned the Huns as just emerging from the desert of Asia driving the Gothic people into conflict with Rome. „For a number of years,“ says Emerton, „they hover like a distant cloud about the frontiers of the Empire. The excited imagination of the Roman writers described them as the offspring of demons. Their horrid appearance, their filthy habits, their swiftness of motion, their mode of fighting, all combined to give /31/ them a most uncanny reputation.“²⁸

Their incursion into Europe produced the most remarkable event. The German tribes that had been settled for generations in Europe were removed from their homes, or compelled to join the Hunnish army. Their power reached its limit when Attila became their leader.

This wild man of the steppes began to dream of forming a great empire like the Roman. With his innumerable army he swept all over Europe destroying and burning everything on his way. The Romans were so scared that for a long time he was known as the „Scourge of God“.

/32/ His furious advance however was checked before the city of Orléans where he was met by the Roman general Aetius who was leading his united army of Romans, Goths and Alani.

This was the first time that Attila suffered defeat. The battle was so memorable that it is said 300.000 were left dead on the battle-field.

With the death of Attila the great plan of Hunnish people ends. Their empire furnished the broken pieces out of which new kingdoms were to be built up.

In 453 the great body of the East-Gothic nation had settled in Pannonia where they could watch their chance for /33/ a share of the spoil of Rome. The Ostrogoths were hired to defend the lower Danube.

„In the year of the fall of the Western Empire,“ says Emerton, „the great Theodoric became king of the Ostrogoths.“²⁹ He belonged to the royal family of the Amali from which the Ostrogoths had for generations chosen their leaders. He had been educated in Constantinople and had polished manners. Having been made head of his people he offered his services to the emperor of the East to drive the barbarians from Italy. The emperor gladly consented to get ready with such a neighbor.

Theodoric moved with the /34/ whole Ostrogothic nation into Italy. He passed the Alps and in several battles crushed the armies led by Odoacer. Theodoric established his power in Rome and all the Western Empire.

„Now, for the first time,“ says Emerton, „Italy was occupied by a barbarian nation, not merely a horde of hungry warriors, but a people with a history behind them and with fixed political system.“³⁰

In their past history we have seen them as warlike people whose duty in the world was to put down. Now we find a German race beginning to show a disposition to build up. Theodoric extended his power over the Alpine country to the /35/ Rhine by alliance with his German kinsmen.

But after the death of Theodoric, the emperor of the East, Justinian (527–565) succeeded in overturning the Ostrogothic kingdom by the help of his able generals Belisarius and Narses and revived the Western Empire once more.

However, in 565 General Narses in rage at his ungrateful treatment sent word to the Longobards who lived in Pannonia to come and avenge the Romans. This was enough. The whole nation took up its march, led by their king Alboin. Soon the beautiful valley of the Po, which ever since has been called ‘Lombardy’ with many /36/ other provinces became the property of the Lombards. Their kingdom lasted until 774.

In the study of this subject we approach the next and most important of the Germanic nations that settled on Roman soil, namely the Franks.

We speak of them last not in point of time, but because they were to bring together almost all the Germanic tribes under their rule.

We find them to live along the lower Rhine near the river’s mouth.

In regard to their origin and early history we know nothing positively. The French historians of the present time with laborious investigations have been attempting to prove their /37/ descent from famous ancestors. Gibbon says „Every passage has been sifted, every spot has been surveyed that might possibly reveal some faint traces of their origin. It has been supposed that Pannonia, that Gaul, that the northern parts of Germany gave birth to that celebrated colony of warriors. At length the most rational critics, rejecting the fictitious emigration of ideal conquerors (*part of the quotation is missing*: have acquiesced in a sentiment whose simplicity persuades us of its truth). They suppose that about the year 240 a new confederacy was formed under the name of Franks, by the old inhabitants of the lower Rhine and the Weser.“³¹

When they received their name has been much disputed. /38/ The Abbé Gilbert (*Mémoires pour servir à l’Histoire des Gaules*, Paris, 1847) has settled the date of 242.

The name „Frank“ some of their historians, as Adelung³² and Grimm, derive from the word „Frak“, „Frank“ – wrong, bold or ferocious, and „Frakkar“ „France“ „Franca“ – free.

One thing remarkable in the character of the Franks is that they did not leave their country like their kinsmen, the Goths, Vandals and Longobards to go roaming over the world in search of new lands, they held what they had and added more to it. Probably this is the chief reason why they overcame the rest.

The Franks were divided: first /39/ the Salians – those who lived near the mouth of the Rhine, and second – the Ripuarians – those who lived further up the river near Cologne.

„The more prominent were the Salian Franks“ says Emerton „who long before the time of their great conquest in Gaul, had been spreading out toward the south and west, passing the rivers Meuse, Scheldt and Somme“.³³

The name Salian is commonly supposed to be derived from the river Isala or IJssel on which they dwelt; and the name „Ripuarian“ from „ripa“ – bank, and the Celtic „warii“ – occupant.

In the year of 486 the Salian Franks came to prominence under their great leader and /40/ king Clovis or Chlodowig. They began an active attack upon the Roman Empire. Near Soissons the Franks inflicted a great defeat upon the Roman army led by Syagrius.

Emerton says: „This one battle settled the fate of northern Gaul and moved the southern boundary of the Franks to the river Loire which was the northern frontier of the Visigothic kingdom.“³⁴

The following 10 years were spent by Clovis in strengthening his power over the land gained.

In 496 the Alemanic tribe beyond the Rhine in the Black Forest and the Alps attacked the Ripuarian Franks. They /41/ invited the Salians to help them. Clovis responded to their call and near Strassburg he gained a complete victory.

This battle near Strassburg is to be remembered because it was the turning point of the belief of Clovis.

He promised that if he gained the battle he would accept the religion of the wife Clotilda, a Burgundian princess. As soon as he gained the victory he received the Catholic faith and was baptized. Three thousand chief men of the Franks followed his example. Clovis did much for the restoration of the Catholic faith among all other German races who were Arians.³⁵ He laid the foundation of the /42/ Frankish Empire which in the time of Charles the Great reached the summit of its glory. He extended his victories over all the German races and brought them together and was crowned king over the Roman Empire in 768 A.D.

So far we have related the origin and the migration of the Germans. The last question that remains refers to the mode of their conversion.

In solution to the inquiry first of all we must bear in mind the intrinsic value of Christianity so well adapted to all relations of human life. Second, the divine power and agency that stood /43/ behind it. Third, its divine spirit that inserted and agitated its teachings in the very depths of the soul, and gradually brought life and quickening power into the human spirit.

We know already that Christianity in a period of three hundred years gained the victory over the learned and luxurious citizens of the Roman Empire, and over the warlike barbarism of Scythia and Germany who overthrew the Empire of Rome. In what manner these barbaric German races were converted we do not have exact knowledge. However it is true that it spread by preaching and personal influence.

/44/ The long interaction of the Germans with the Roman Empire where Christianity had stretched its deep root, brought them under its moulding power; and as their minds were already susceptible and prepared for its teaching, it fell as seed on fertile ground, and soon began to bring the barbarian tribes one by one under its influence.

The Goths were foremost of these German barbarians who accepted Christianity. From the many records only one has reached to us. In the reign of Gallienus, the Gothic bands who invaded Asia Minor in their retreat led away a great number of Roman provincial citizens /45/ into captivity.

Many of them were Christians and some belonged to the ecclesiastical order.

When the Goths returned into Dacia those involuntary missionaries were dispersed as slaves in the villages and successfully labored for the conversion of their masters.

Gibbon says: „The seeds they planted of the evangelical doctrine were gradually propagated; and before the end of a century the pious work was achieved by the labor of Ulphilas, whose ancestors had been transported beyond the Danube from a small town of Cappadocia.“³⁶

Ulphilas became the first bishop and apostle of the /46/ Goths. He gained their love and reverence by his blameless Christian life. He worked with great zeal and enthusiasm for the salvation of his own people, translating the Bible into their own language – omitting the Books of Kings fearing that they might excite their warlike minds.

His success was so great that it excited the hatred of paganism.

Soon the camps of the Goths divided among their chiefs. Fritigern, the friend of the Romans, became the follower of Ulphilas, while Athanaric joined the pagan party and aroused severe persecution which caused the distressed Goths to implore the protection /47/ of Valens.

By permission they passed the Danube with their devoted shepherd and settled at the foot of the Moesian Mountains.³⁷ The place was well suited to support their flocks and herds and enable them to live a harmless and peaceful life.

Gibbon says: „During the same period Christianity was embraced by almost all the barbarians who established their kingdoms on the ruins of the Western Empire, the Burgundians in Gaul, the Suevi in Spain, the Vandals in Africa, the Ostrogoths in Pannonia and the various bands of mercenaries that raised Odoacer to the throne /48/ of Italy.“³⁸

The Franks and the Saxons for a long time persevered in the errors of paganism; but when Clovis became leader of the Franks they were converted to the Catholic faith by example.

„The Merovingian Kings and their successors, Charlemagne and the Otos,³⁹ extended by their laws and victories the dominion of the cross. England produced the apostle of Germany; and the evangelic light was gradually diffused from the neighborhood of the Rhine to the nations of the Elbe, the Vistula, and the Baltic.“⁴⁰

¹ The manuscript of this essay is kept in the STH Thesis Archives, School of Theology Library, Boston University, Boston, MA. Transcription and notes by Harrie Salman, assisted by Nadia Donevska. Editorial remarks (in italics) have been placed in parentheses. Errors in writing, misplaced words, missing quotation marks, mistakes in quoting have been corrected.

² Parke Godwin, *The History of France*, Vol. 1 (*Ancient Gaul*), Harper & brothers, New York, 1860.

³ Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall (1774–1856), Austrian orientalist.

⁴ Tacitus (56-117 A.D.), Roman historian.

⁵ Strabo (64 B.C.-c. 24 A.D.), Greek historian.

⁶ Celtic language of Wales.

⁷ Wilhelm Grimm (1786–1859), German philologist and collector of fairy-tales (with his brother Jacob).

⁸ Probably Godwin meant the Slavs.

⁹ Werth, unknown scholar. The first historian to identify the Goths with the Thracian tribe of the Getai was Jordanes, in his book *The Origins and Deeds of the Goths*, written 551 in Constantinople.

¹⁰ Solinus, 4th c. A.D., Latin grammarian and compiler.

¹¹ Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835), German scholar.

¹² Jacob Grimm (1785–1863), German philologist.

¹³ Ephraim Emerton, *An Introduction to the Study of the Middle Ages (375–814)*, Ginn & Company, Boston, 1888, pp 25-26.

An electronic version of this book can be found at <http://www.archive.org/details/introductiontost00emeruo/ft>

¹⁴ The Black Sea.

¹⁵ Edward Gibbon, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (published between 1776 and 1788), chapter 10. An electronic version of this book can be found at <http://ccel.org/g/gibbon/decline/index.htm>

¹⁶ Capitoline Hill, the administrative centre of Rome.

¹⁷ Gibbon, chapter 10.

¹⁸ Emerton, p 26.

¹⁹ The Roman province of North Bulgaria.

²⁰ Emerton, pp 33–34.

²¹ Gibbon, chapter 33.

²² Emerton, p 36.

²³ Emerton, p 37.

²⁴ Emerton, p 38.

²⁵ Emerton, p 38.

²⁶ Gibbon, chapter 25.

²⁷ Emerton, p 39.

²⁸ Emerton, p 41.

²⁹ Emerton, pp 52-53.

³⁰ Emerton, p 53.

³¹ Gibbon, chapter 10.

³² Johann Christoph Adelung (1732–1806), German philologist.

³³ Emerton, p 63.

³⁴ Emerton, p 64.

³⁵ Followers of the Christian theologian Arius.

³⁶ Gibbon, chapter 37.

³⁷ The Balkan Mountains in northern Bulgaria.

³⁸ Gibbon, chapter 37.

³⁹ Three kings of the German Empire in the 10th c.

⁴⁰ Gibbon, chapter 37.