

## A MYSTERY OF THE CIMBRI.

### THE REPRESENTATIVES OF Q AND R1a HAPLOGROUPS

*I. L. Rozhanskii (Tsukuba, Japan)*

*Excerpts from the original paper, translation from Russian by  
Bulat Muratov (Ufa, Russia)*



*Reprint 1. Wars of Rome vs barbarians*

#### Abstract

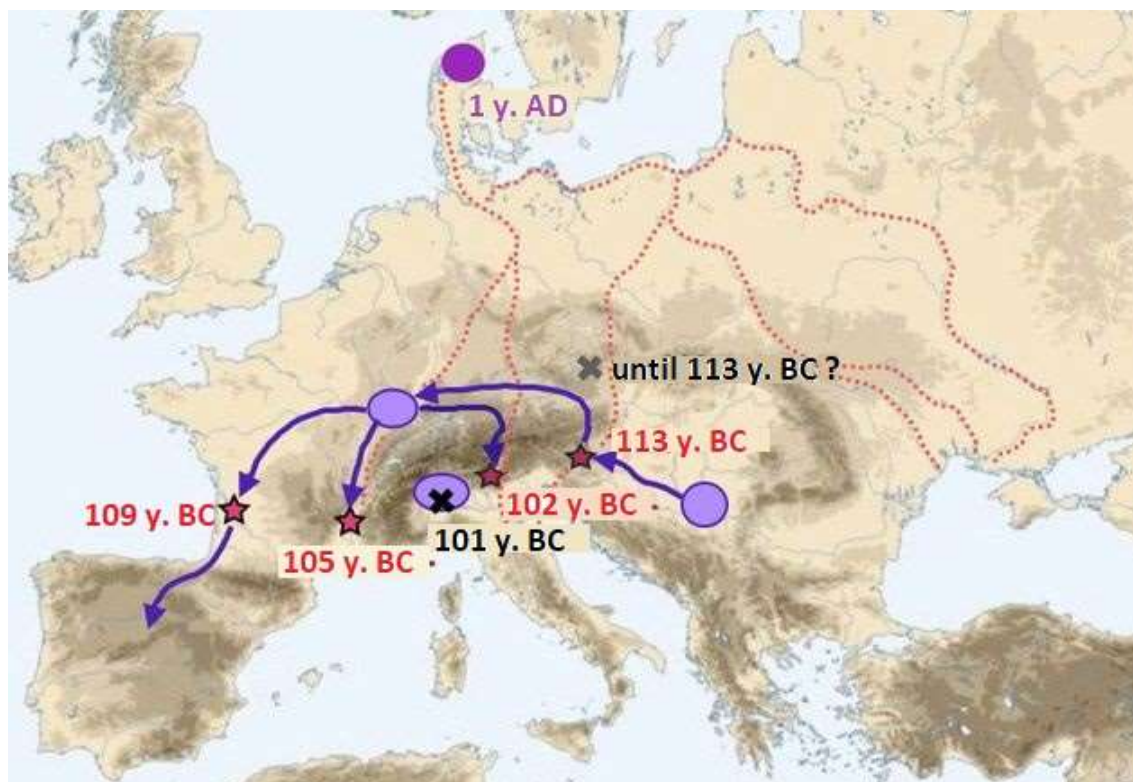
A scrutiny of primary literature sources, along with demographical and military historical considerations concerning the Cimbrian War in the late 2nd century BC revealed, that its common description as an invasion of tribes from the Northern Europe is far from convincing. There is more firm support to the hypothesis that the Cimbri have originated from the Central Asia. After being massacred by the Roman Army, their remnants and allies have settled in modern-day Denmark, becoming gradually a part of Germanic peoples. The presence of Asia-originated Y-chromosomal

lineages in the North-Western Europe on statistically significant levels, Ancient Chinese reports about massive migrations in the Central Asia just preceding the Cimbrian War, as well as certain arguments from linguistics and Old Scandinavian myths are in agreement with this suggestion.

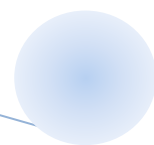
**Keywords:** Cimbri, DNA genealogy, Ancient Rome, ethnogenesis.

### Where did the Cimbri migrate from?

In any history textbook, you can find that the German Cimbri tribe lived on the territory of modern Denmark.



*Fig.1. Map of the alleged places of resettlement of the Cimbri, their campaigns, victories (asterisks) and defeats (crosses), according to information from ancient sources. The dotted lines indicate the ancient trade routes along which Baltic amber was delivered to the Mediterranean, according to M. Michelbertas*



For reasons not fully understood, at the end of the 2nd century BC they moved south, united along the way with the Teutons, and together attacked Rome.

This is presented as a well-established fact, often supported by a map with a diagram of their campaigns. But what is such confidence based on? If you carefully consider the primary sources, the design is based on only two reasons: the Cimbri were tall and blue-eyed, and at the beginning of our era they lived in the north of the Jutland Peninsula (August, XXVI; Strabo, VII, I, 3). The arguments are clearly shaky, because the appearance is a criterion too vague and subjective, and the place where the Cimbri lived 100 years after the war does not have to be the place they came from. By the same logic, America or Australia should be considered the homeland of the British.

Need confirmation by independent methods. First, you should restore the path of the Cimbri according to the sources closest to them in time. This is the "Geography" of Strabo, completed around 10 A.D., and the chapter on Gaius Marius from Plutarch's Comparative Biographies dating to about 75 A.D. Some other episodes of the Cimbrian Wars are mentioned among the later living Appian and Anneus Florus, as well as in the form of "abstracts" —periods of Titus Livius's books "History of Rome" that have not reached us. The main episodes of their 12-year odyssey, from appearance to collapse, can be represented in the form of a map (Fig. Below). Its main difference from the maps given in the textbooks is the lack of a path from Jutland to the lands of the Celtic tribe of Skordisci, who lived on the territory of modern Serbia. None of the ancient historians reports on the ways of the Cimbri until they appeared in the area of the Iron Gate on the Danube. Contemporaries of the invasion were not unanimous regarding their homeland. Strabo and Plutarch report on the assumption that the Cimbrians are a tribe obtained by mixing the Celts and Scythians somewhere east of the Meotides (Sea of Azov), or that they are "... barbarians, who were first called Cimmerians, and later, and not without reason, Cimbrians "(Plutarch, Marius, 11). The version of their northern origin and the reasons why the

Cimbrians went to Rome were called into question by these authors (Strabo, VII, II, 1).

The reconstruction of the path from Jutland up the Elbe, through the lands of the tribal union of the Boii (modern Czech Republic), apparently, originates in the testimony of the Greek encyclopedist Posidonius (139/135 – 51/50 BC): “...the Boii lived formerly in the Hercynian Forest, and the Cimbri entered this region, but were driven back by battles and descended to Istr and into the country of the Scordian Galatians ”(Strabo, VII, II, 2). Ancient geographers called the Hercynian Forest a vast area a vast area from modern Strasbourg in the west to Kosice in the east. It was crossed by several ancient trade routes, along which amber, which was highly valued in the ancient world, was delivered from the Baltic. If the inhabitants of Jutland used any of these routes they knew to go to Italy, then a clash with the Boii should have occurred at the northern or western border of their land. After the Cimbri were discarded while trying to pass from the north-west, in order to reach the territory of modern Vojvodina, they either had to bypass the unyielding Boii from the south, through Noricum allied to Rome, or from the north bypassing the High Tatras and crossing the Carpathians to Middle Danube plain. In the first case, they could not go unnoticed by Rome, in the second – the motive of such a maneuver is not very clear, if the ultimate goal of the campaign was Italy or the Celtic lands west of the Alps. If we assume that the clashes with the Boii occurred during the advance of the Cimbri from the Carpathians, then all the problems are resolved naturally. If you turn back while trying to break through from modern Budapest to Vienna, then the path to Belgrade, located on the lands of the Scordisci tribe, exactly corresponds to the phrase "went down to Istr". In the original, this is conveyed by the expression “ἐπὶ τὸν Ἰστρον <...> καταβῆναι”, which can be translated as “moved along Istra (Danube)”.

A possible failure in the first attempt to break up into the Central Europe up the Danube can be explained, for example, by the somewhat mysterious decision of the Cimbri to move along a less convenient route through the Eastern Alps and their even more

mysterious reluctance to turn to Italy when the way there was opened after the defeat of the Roman army in 113 g . BC. Obviously, Italy was not their goal then, but more on that below.

Summary. Ancient sources do not contain evidence that the Cimbri came to the Danube from the north. Based on the sequence of events that has reached us, it seems more logical that they moved from the east, crossing the Carpathians in some of the sections from the Iron Gate to modern Slovakia.

\* \* \*

The mysterious weapon of the Cimbri is dibolia (note – in later times, dibolia in Greek is the name of a halberd, but there is no information about the use of halberds in the wars of antiquity). However, in ancient China, such a weapon, known as "Ji (Tczi)" (戟 - the ideogram is made up of the signs "chariot" and "spear"), was widespread, and in the Han era (206 BC – 220 AD) there were many of its varieties, which were in service with both infantry and cavalry.



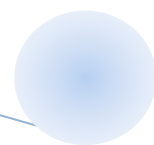
*Fig 2. (from left to right). Chinese halberd "Ji", II century BC, reconstruction; A heavily armed rider from the Sassanid army, armed with a long spear, in full armor, which also protects the horse, and a round shield, IV c. AD, rock bas-relief from Tag-e-Bostan, Iran; "Golden Man" from the Issyk barrow, Southern Kazakhstan, VI-V c. BC, reconstruction*

The protective armament of the Cimbrian horsemen (iron armor, shields and helmets) is a typical arsenal of heavy cavalry, which either appeared or went out of use in different eras of different nations. The mention of feather sultans (λόφοις πτερωτοῖς in the original) on the helmets of the Cimbri suggests that the riders were equipped for close combat using sabers and halberds, since this part was not so much an ornament as a hindrance for delivering a cutting blow from above. The maintenance of heavy cavalry was expensive, and the effectiveness depended largely on the skill of the riders and the breeding work of the horse breeders. In Europe, the end of the 2nd century BC none of the communities existing at that time were armed with such troops: the Celts more often fought on chariots, the Romans, Parthians and Scythians preferred a more mobile light cavalry. At the beginning of our era, heavy cavalry appears among the Sarmatians and in the Sassanian Iran (Fig.2, center), but this is a different era. At the same time, in Han China and the surrounding steppe peoples, the equipment of the riders largely coincided with the one that appears in the description of Plutarch. An example of their defensive armament is the ceremonial gold outfit of the leader from the Issyk barrow near Alma-Ata, imitating combat armor (Fig.2, right).

\* \* \*

The characteristic feature of the Cimbrian tactics is the false retreat that they used under Vercelli: *“The riders did not hit the Romans directly on the forehead, but deviated to the right and gradually lured them into the gap between the cavalry and the infantry lining up to the left. The Roman military leaders guessed the enemy’s cunning, but didn’t have time to restrain the soldiers, who immediately rushed after them, as soon as one of them cried out that the enemy was retreating”*.

Such a complex maneuver requires a good training of horsemen and skillful interaction of combat units. It is unlikely that unorganized crowds of barbarians would be able to master it. It was an experienced, battle-tested army.



Almost nothing is reported about the arming of foot soldiers, which are many times superior to cavalry, except for a somewhat curious, if not fancy, note about their passage through the Alps: *“And they were filled with such impudence and contempt for the enemies that it was not even necessary “But just to show their stamina and courage, they walked naked through the snowfall, climbed the peaks along the glaciers and deep snow and, putting wide shields under them, descended from above on the slippery slopes of the highest and steep mountains”.*

The mention of the wide shields was, in fact, the only argument in favor of the fact that the Cimbrians armed according to the Celtic model. Neither to prove nor to refute this conclusion is not yet possible.

**Summary.** The strength, armament, and tactics of the Cimbrian Army indicate that it designed for the battle of mounted troops in open areas. The main strike force was heavily armed cavalry, apparently consisting of tribal nobility. The task of ordinary community members fighting on foot was to protect their camp and main forces from a possible detour from the flank or rear. The professional Roman army, recruited after the reforms of Marius, took advantage of the weakness of this tactic, which was not very adapted to repel the attack of foot spearmen, and struck a weak spot – a very long line of foot soldiers, which predetermined the outcome of the battle.

### **What does DNA say?**

So, from the analysis of the primary sources that have come down to us, demographic estimates and archaeological data, it follows that the generally accepted version of the German tribe of the Cimbri with their homeland on the Jutland Peninsula has an extremely weak evidence base. Therefore, it is necessary to consider all more or less grounded versions, and choose the least contradictory one from them. Here they are in order of receipt:

Hypothesis No. 1. Steppe tribe of the Celtic Scythians or Cimmerians (Posidonius, about 70 BC).

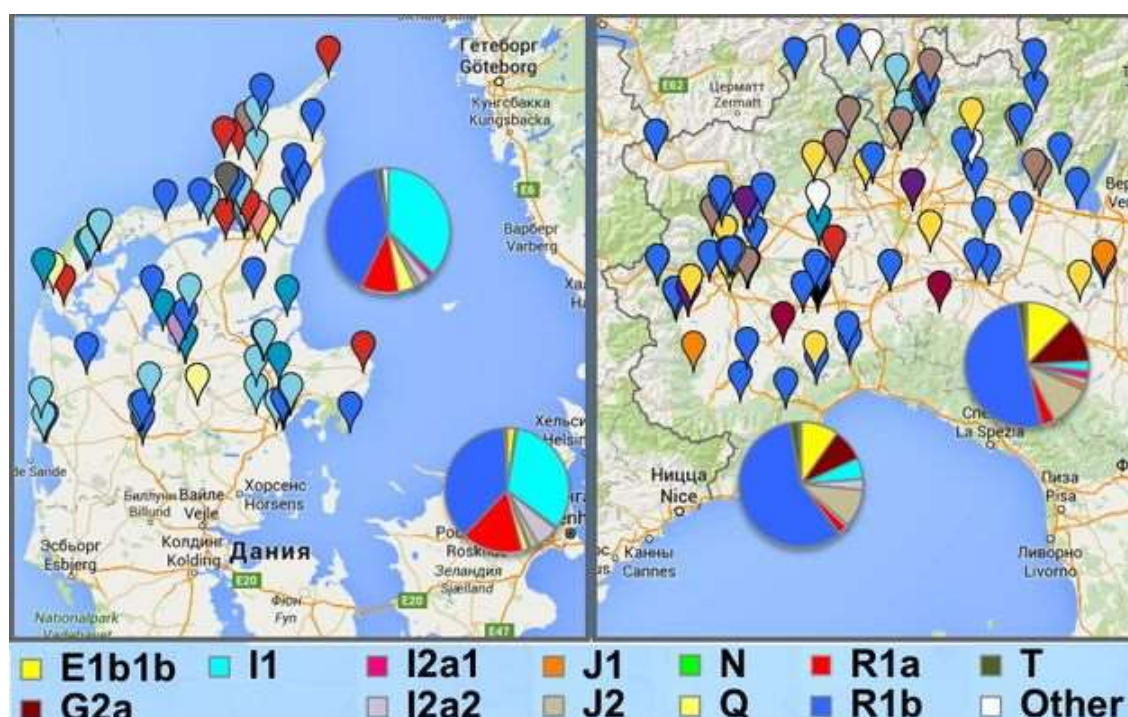
Hypothesis No. 2. A Germanic tribe that migrated from Jutland, possibly due to flooding (the author is unknown after 20 BC, when the Roman fleet expedition discovered the Cimbri in the North).

Hypothesis No. 3. A diverse tribe of hordes from Eastern Europe (the Vistula, Western Bug and Dnieper basins) is predominantly young people who have left their homes due to overcrowding.

Any of these versions can be substantiated with an appropriate interpretation of the scarce data, which are described in the first part. Independent information is needed, and DNA genealogy can give it. And an attempt to use the DNA data has already been made. A group of Danish and Italian population geneticists conducted a study of the mitochondrial and Y-chromosomal DNA of residents of northern Jutland and the German-speaking ethnic group “cymbern” (“i cimbri” in Italian) living in northeastern Italy. In the work, genetic distances between two populations were calculated. As a result, it turned out that the Italian “Cimbri” fell into one cluster with the Italians, and the inhabitants of northern Denmark – with the rest of the Danes, as well as Germans and Norwegians. There was no particular similarity between the alleged descendants of the historical Cimbri. A logical conclusion is that an ethnic group living in an area where more than 2000 years ago the Cimbri crossed the Alps does not show genetic proximity with the inhabitants of the area where the Cimbri settled after the hike. This, in general, expected result does not add anything to the solution of riddles. Population genetics is of little help here due to the lack of a time coordinate in its methods.

More reliable data can be obtained by comparing Y-chromosome lines in high resolution by STR and SNP phylogeny. If among the inhabitants of the regions where the Cimbri once lived, common lines are found whose ancestral lives fall on the last centuries BC, then they can be interpreted as that they go back to the people, which at that time went through a sharp reduction numbers, and then settled in two different places. In comparison with other

data, you can assess the likelihood of what kind of people it was, and where its probable ancestral home was located. Since it follows from the reconstruction of the Cimbri migrations that, before their defeat at Vercella, they most likely inhabited the western part of the Padan Plain, their descendants could not be found in the small commune of Asiago in the Venice region, as Børghlum et al did, among residents of the Piedmont and Lombardy regions. The source data was taken from geographic projects of Family Tree DNA and from field samples in a 23-marker format from forensic databases.



*Fig. 4. Distribution of Y-chromosome haplogroups among the modern population of Denmark and Italy, according to data from FTDNA projects (labels with birth places of the earliest male ancestors) and forensic samples (pie charts) from Copenhagen (185 haplotypes), Piedmont (203 ) and Lombardy (195). Statistics for northern Denmark (70 g / t) are based on Danish FTDNA projects*

## Q haplogroup

Turning to haplogroup Q, it should be noted that being extremely rare in continental Europe (with the exception of Ashkenazi Jews), it turns out to be quite specific for Scandinavia and Jutland.

These are the branches Q-L527 and Q-L804, which cover 2-3% of modern Danes, Norwegians and Swedes, reaching 7% among Icelanders. They have the following dating and basic 111-marker haplotypes:

Q-L527 –  $2,350 \pm 260$  years ago

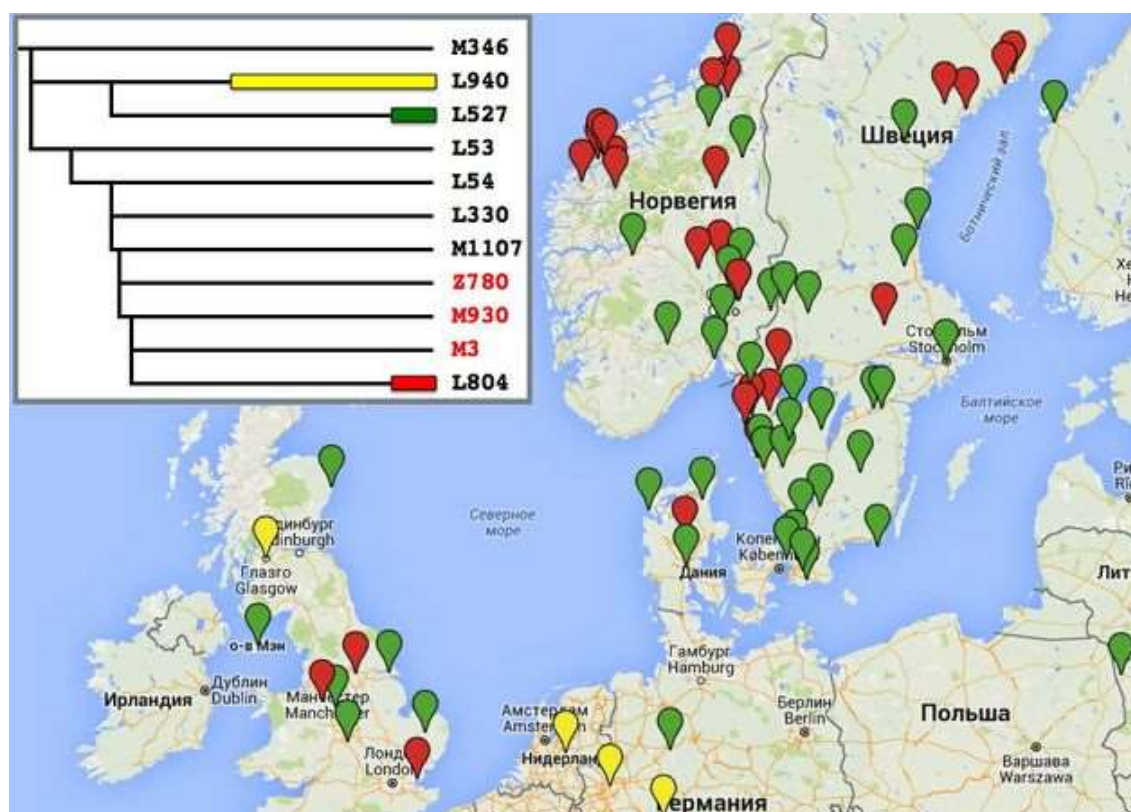
13 23 13 10 13 21 12 12 12 12 14 28 18 9 10 11 12 27 15 19 29 14  
15 16 16 10 11 19 22 17 15 18 20 33 36 12 12 11 8 17 17 8 9 10 8 10  
9 12 22 22 18 11 12 12 15 8 13 27 19 13 14 11 13 10 11 12 12 35 15  
9 15 11 25 26 20 12 12 11 13 11 9 11 11 10 11 12 31 13 11 25 17 11  
11 24 16 16 11 23 17 11 15 25 13 22 21 10 14 17 9 12 11

Q-L804 –  $2150 \pm 240$  years ago

13 23 13 10 13 17 12 12 12 12 12 29 16 9 9 11 11 24 14 19 30 14 14  
14 15 10 10 19 20 16 13 19 17 34 36 11 11 11 8 15 17 8 11 10 8 12  
10 12 24 24 17 11 13 12 14 8 12 20 22 14 13 11 13 12 11 12 12 33 14  
9 15 11 25 27 19 12 11 12 13 11 9 11 11 10 11 12 30 12 13 24 15 11  
10 22 15 18 11 23 16 11 15 25 12 22 21 10 14 17 9 12 11

In the 111-marker format, these haplotypes diverge into 84 markers, which gives a difference of 18,000 years, or about 11,000 years to a common ancestor, taking into account the dating of the basic haplotypes. On such a time scale, the score for standard marker sets gives underestimated dates, and therefore you should double-check the score on a slow 22-marker panel, where the distance is 8 mutations. This corresponds to twice the time difference, namely 37,000 years. Accordingly, the lifetime of a common ancestor shifted to about 20,000 years ago. Finally, for the lifetime of the common ancestor of both branches, there is an estimate made by YFull specialists ([link](#)) on the snips, which gives it an interval of 21700-18100 years ago with a 95% probability that

the same thing. Their relative position on the simplified tree of haplogroup Q and the geographical distribution shown in Fig. 7.



*Fig. 7. Birthplaces of the earliest documented male ancestors for FTDNA project participants from Nordic countries belonging to branches Q-L940, Q-L527 and Q-L804. Branches found exclusively from Native Americans are highlighted in red on a tree*

Unlike haplogroup N, representatives of these two Asian branches are concentrated mainly in Norway, in the south-west of Sweden and in the north of Denmark, which indicates other ways of their appearance. The phylogeny of the haplogroup Q (more precisely, the subclade Q1a2-M346) does not give a direct clue as to how these two widely separated DNA genera ended up shortly before the beginning of our era in the area where the Cimbrii once lived. If the Scandinavians from haplogroup N are part of the same branches that prevail east of the Baltic Sea, or closely related to them, then the common ancestors of the Scandinavian branches Q with their closest known "cousins" go about 16,000 years ago. For the Q-L804 branch, this is a common ancestor with the Q-M3

subclade, which included up to 2/3 of the inhabitants of both Americas in the pre-Columbian era, and for Q-L527 it is the parent branch of Q-L940, scattered with a low frequency in Central and Anterior Asia, and marked by single haplotypes in Europe. Closer genealogical lines in modern and fossil DNA have not yet been found, and this leaves the question open whether the Scandinavian branches Q are relicts of the ancient population of northern Europe, or whether they appeared there in historical time during one of the migrations from the East.

An indirect argument in favor of the second option is that all the other lines of the haplogroup Q found in Europe affiliated to the branches characteristic of Central Asia and Siberia. In addition to the already mentioned subclade L940, these are the branches L330 and YP4000, found, besides Europe and the Caucasus, among the natives of Kazakhstan and Siberia (see Fig. 8), as well as the subclade Q-M25 scattered along the entire strip of Eurasian steppes and the haplogroup Q1b, the parent branch which is noted in Central Asia. If the situation with the Scandinavian branches turns out to be the same, then this can be considered as a serious argument in favor of hypothesis No. 1, about the “Celtic-Scythians” from the Eurasian steppes.

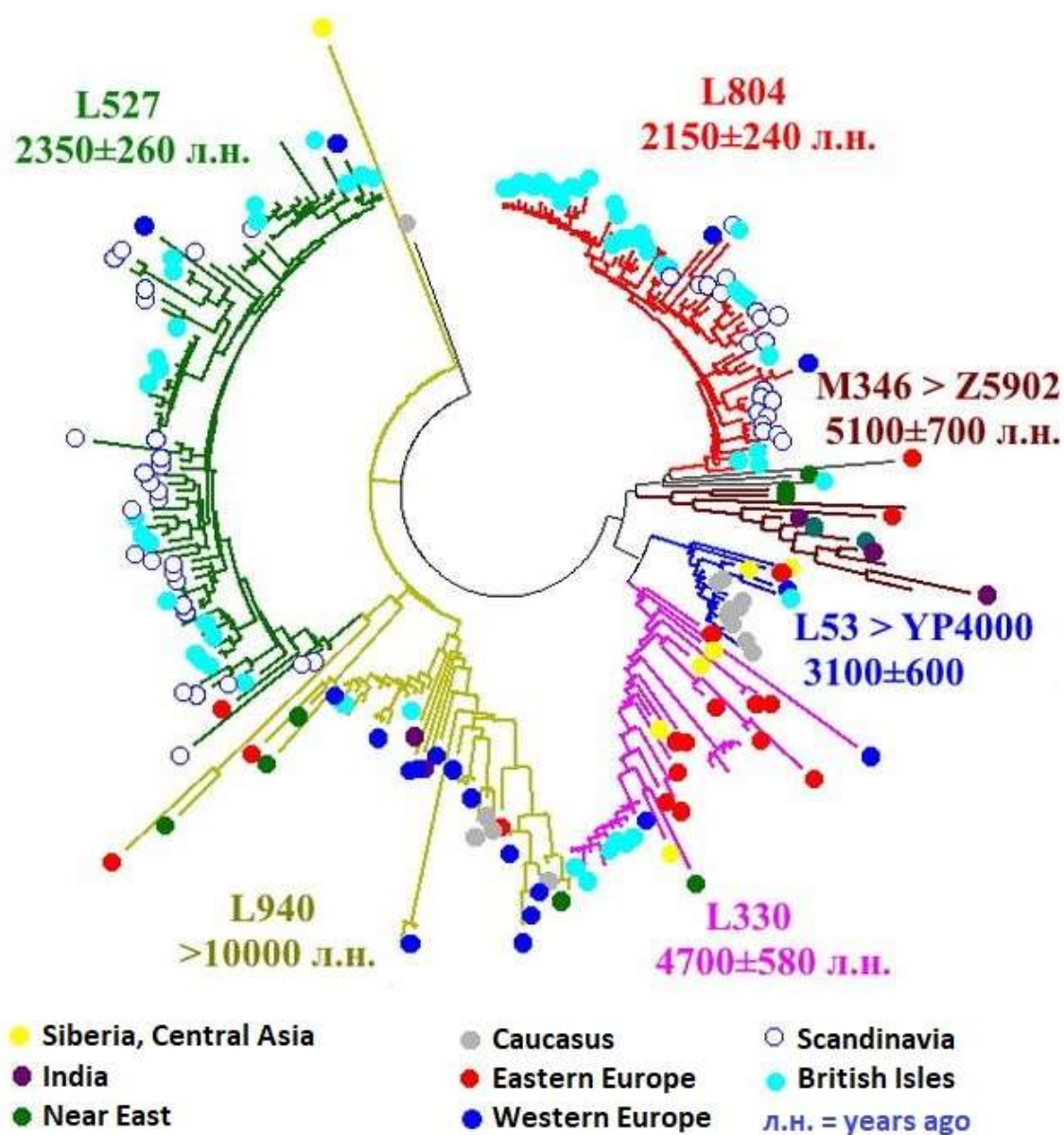
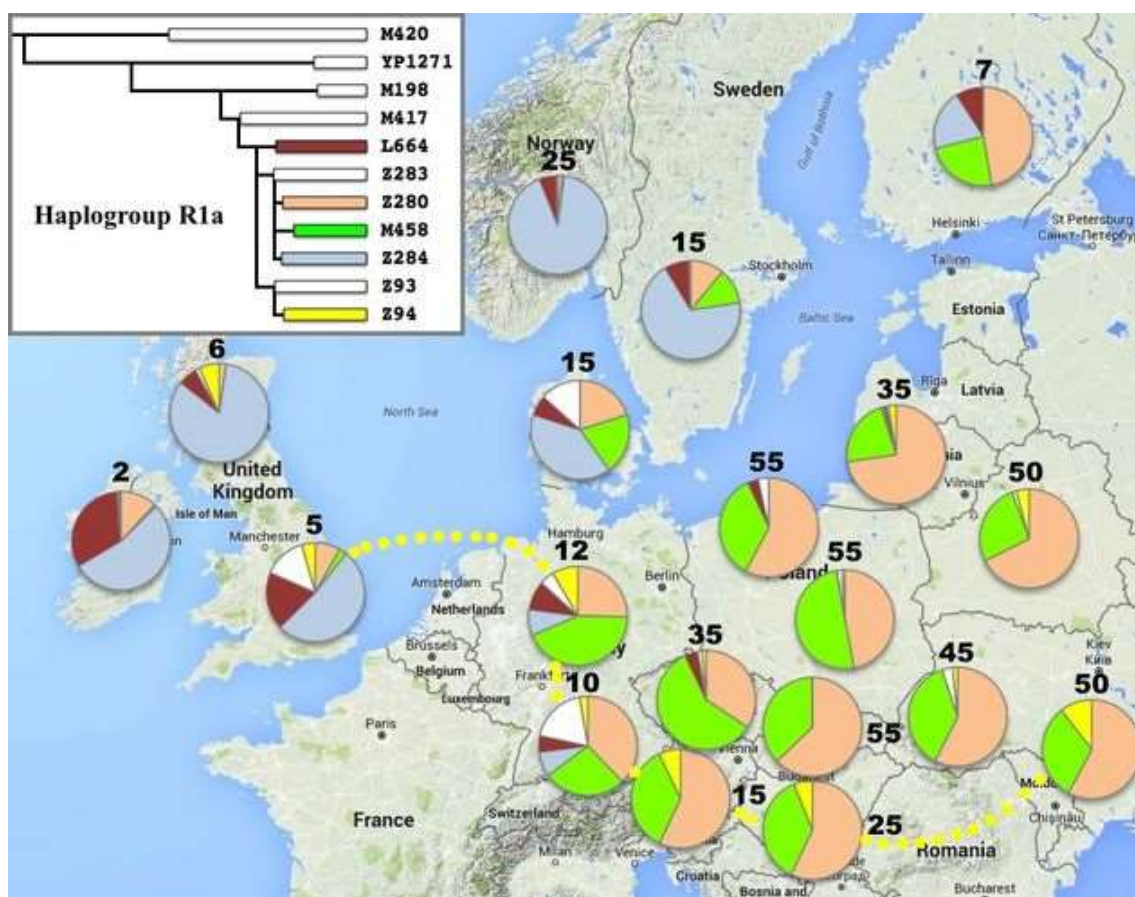


Fig 8. Tree of 37-marker haplotypes of the subclade Q1a2 from the Old World

## R1a haplogroup

Finally, another indirect argument in favor of the fact that migrations from the Eurasian steppes reached Northern Europe along a route close to what is being reconstructed for the Cimbri are the haplotypes found from Europeans from the subclade Z2124 specific to the steppe peoples, a subclade to Z94 (Fig. 9)



*Fig. 9. Distribution of the main branches of the haplogroup R1a in Europe, according to statistics from the IRAKAZ database. The numbers on the pie charts indicate the percentage of the haplogroup R1a in percent; the dashed line connects regions where subclade Z94 is marked at a statistically significant level*

Summary. Analysis of the Y-DNA of residents of Northern Europe and northern Italy does not reveal traces of migration from Jutland to southern Europe from the late Roman Republic, but gives indications that a group of people appeared in the Jutland Peninsula and / or southern Scandinavia, carriers of the haplogroup Q1a2, laid the foundation for new genealogical lines that have joined the Danish, Swedish and Norwegian ethnic groups. By the sum of indirect features, these new lines can be associated with immigrants from Asia.

## **Asian footprint: fiction or reality?**

So, of the three hypotheses, DNA genealogy points to the one proposed more than 2000 years ago by the Greek Posidonius, a contemporary, although not a direct witness to the Cimbrian war. He then lived in Syria, but during his many travels, he undoubtedly communicated with the campaigners, perhaps even with the enslaved Cimbrians. Surely this encyclopedically educated scientist, a member of the highest circles of Roman society (he served as the ambassador of Egypt in Rome), had reason to consider the Cimbri aliens from the East. But Rome was busy with civil wars and political intrigues, no one especially listened to the voice of a foreigner. When the legions of Julius Caesar (incidentally, the nephew of Gaius Marius) first encountered high blue-eyed Germans, the Cimbri and Teutons retroactively recorded to them, and this was taken for granted.

Who were the Cimbries in reality? Here are the facts that emerged from a critical analysis of the primary sources: heavy cavalry, improved harness, which allowed riders to effectively throw spears, nomadic or semi-nomadic farming, skill in working with metal (swords, armor) and breeding horses (this is a necessary condition for keeping heavy cavalry), while tall, blue eyes, Celtic names and sacrifices that resemble the rites of the Druids (Strabo, VII, II, 3). Obviously, the word "Celtic Scythians" invented by Posidonius describes the Cimbri most accurately. It is unlikely that they could be confused, for example, with the Sarmatians, who had similar weapons and an economic structure – the Greeks and Romans were quite familiar with them.

Is it possible that such a large and peculiar people appeared from nowhere, and no one noticed it? It is unlikely that their obvious skills in crafts and military affairs require fairly long contacts with the centers of civilization. But with what? Probably with those near whom carriers of the haplogroup Q1a2 (M346) could live. The method of exclusion remains Central Asia and China as such centers.

What then happened in that region far from Rome? Were there events that could force a large population to leave their homeland and move to the West? Yes had. The Chinese chronicles and reports of the ambassadors describe a series of wars, conquests and migrations of peoples, which independently confirmed by rich numismatic material (Loeschner 2008). Here is a short list of them:

Around 177 BC — Huns invade the lands of the Yuezhi people in the modern province of Gansu; part of the people, Xiaoyuezhi (Small Yuezhi), go to the Tarim basin and Tibet, the other, Dayuezhi (Large Yuezhi), settle in the Ili basin.

Around 145 BC — destroyed (presumably by the Saka tribes) the city of Eucratidia, the capital of the Greco-Bactrian kingdom; this ended the almost 200-year history of this Hellenistic state.

133-131 BC — Wusun, in alliance with the Huns, squeeze Dayuezhi from the northern foothills of the Tien Shan, they pass peacefully through the lands of the Kan-Gyu people on the banks of the Amu-Darya, where they found the state that became known as the Kushan Empire.

129-127 BC — Imperial cavalry of China breaks the Huns on the Ordos plateau, forcing them to move away from the Great Wall.

121-119 BC — The 150,000th Chinese army makes a campaign inland Huns, surrounds and forces them to capitulate; the ruling clan will be granted life in exchange for a promise to leave north of the Gobi desert; Huns are permanently driven back from the borders of the Han empire.

Chinese ethnonyms are intentionally given without decoding, because with their assignment, there is still no unity among specialists. In that confused ethnopolitical situation, it could well have turned out that a significant people were forced to migrate very far from their homeland. There is nothing fantastic about this — for 40-50 years, the Dayuezhi moved over a distance of more than 3,500 km, and several centuries later the Huns and Avars passed from Central Asia to Europe. However, “it could turn out”

does not mean “turned out” yet, and independent evidence is needed. They can be found in the fundamental treatise of the founder of Chinese historical science Sima Qian “Shi Ji (Tczi)” (Sima Qian, ch. 123).

In the midst of the events immediately preceding the advent of the Cimbri in Europe, a Chinese diplomatic mission headed by high-ranking official Zhang Qian went to Central Asia, who compiled a detailed report of what he saw and learned through his informants. It is likely that in the list of peoples and kingdoms from this report, he noted Cimbri. Here is the list:

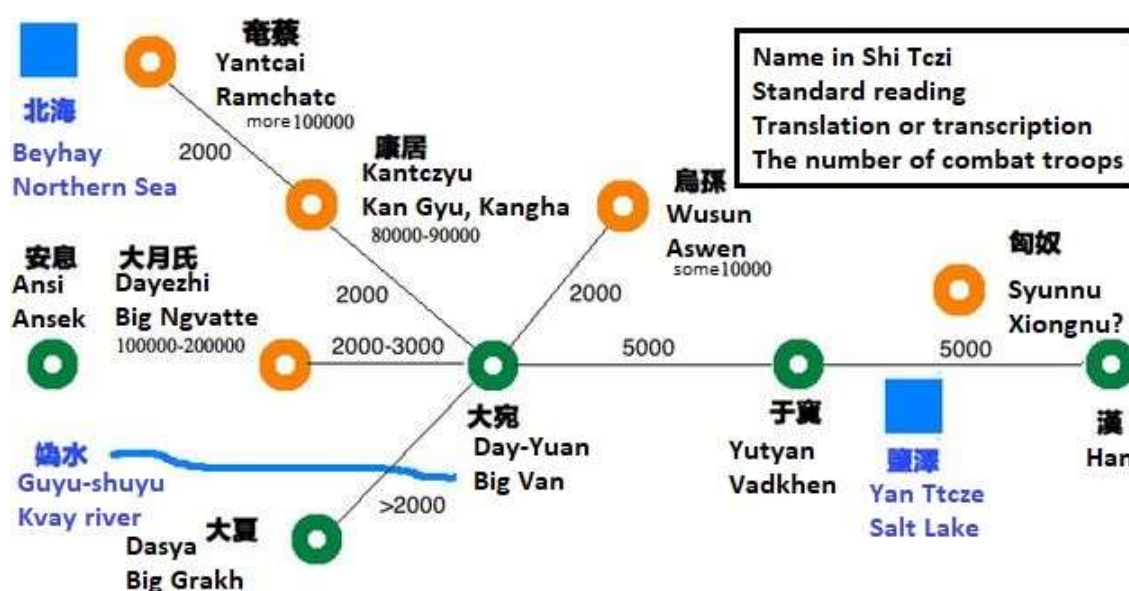


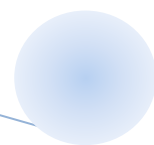
Fig. 10. Location of peoples and water bodies mentioned by Zhang Qian. Distances between countries are given in li (1 li  $\approx$  0.4 km in the Han era); agricultural nations are marked in green, nomadic peoples in orange; the transcription of the likely reading of hieroglyphs at the turn of our era is given in accordance with the reconstruction of S. A. Starostin

Unlike the Greeks – natural philosophers and systematizers, Zhang Qian was primarily a diplomat and intelligence officer, and his

reports are devoid of details scattered in the writings of Strabo or Ptolemy. His style is figures and dry facts: the distances between (presumably) the capitals of states, the number of soldiers, the way of farming. About customs – at a minimum, about the language – not a word. The interpretation of Chinese ethnonyms and toponyms is even more complicated, and there is still no agreement about the etymology and real reading of them. A hieroglyphic notation could equally well be both phonetic and ideographic, and have little in common with those names that are familiar to us in Greek, for the most part, transmission. Because of this, there are perhaps several times more interpretations of the list than there are peoples listed there.

In principle, any people from the list, except for the Han people themselves and, perhaps, the Huns, may be a candidate for the Cimbri. First of all, attention should be paid to the peoples who lived more and are known in modern standard reading as Yantcai (Yancai) and Kan-Gyu. The first of them is most often compared with Aorsi from ancient sources (Strabo XI, II, 1), and opinions differ on the second. The residents of Kan-Gyu are referred either to a tribe related to the Iranian-speaking Sogdians, or to the Türks, or to peoples close to the Tocharians from the Xinjiang oases. However, these assumptions based largely on unproven postulates (such as the ubiquitous Iranian language of the Great Steppe at the turn of our era) or their own interpretation of the distances reported by Zhang Qian. Therefore, for example, the hypothesis about the identity of Yancai and the Sarmatian tribal union of the Aorsi should be considered almost speculative, in the absence of independent evidence. If we consider only the facts, we cannot but note the military power and mobility of these two peoples, capable of putting together at least 200,000 warriors (literally kunsyanzh, pulling a bowstring). Even a relatively small part of them (Plutarch writes about the 15,000th cavalry), having appeared in Europe, could inflict a serious blow on the states and tribal unions that existed there.

The Shi Tczi translators also could not help but notice that in the information of Zhang Qian there is a clear contradiction between



the small size of Kan-Gyu's possessions (characterized by a combination of go Xiao — a small, insignificant country) and the number of archers she possessed (80-90 thousand), which raised doubts about the authenticity of the phrase. However, the Chinese diplomat personally traveled to Kan-Gyu and could hardly have been so blatantly mistaken in his assessment of the territory, unless it was the latest census of the scribe. Perhaps we have indirect evidence of a high population density at that time, which is not entirely compatible with the purely nomadic way of life of the economy, but is in agreement with the existence at the same time of a developed Khorezm civilization in the Aral Sea region, the economy of which was based both on irrigated agriculture and on distant pastoralism. Numerous hillforts and fortresses discovered by S. P. Tolstov and his students are located in the same territory where Zhang Qian placed Ka-Gyu, or in the immediate vicinity. Overpopulation could prove to be one of the driving causes of migration, especially in the case of unrest or natural disasters.

As for their northwestern neighbors, Yancai, several mysteries are also associated with this people (peoples). Why, for example, do references to such a powerful “kingdom” disappear from Chinese sources at the beginning of our era, when the Han empire established regular ties with this region? Or why did Sima Qian use the same rare character ‘Cai ‘for his record as in the name of the principality that existed during the Zhou era in the territory of the modern Henan province? In the comments on “Shi Ji” it is interpreted as “steppe”, but they do not provide any evidence of such use in other sources. Now this character can be found only in proper names, like the clan name Cai, which are the descendants of the natives of the long-vanished principality.

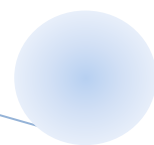
The vast lands occupied by these peoples could feed a significantly larger population than even now — it was the time of the Great Steppe humidification, when abundant pastures spread on the site of the modern semi-desert, and the area of arable land was incomparable with the modern one. What could be the prerequisites for such a large and organized tribe as the Cimbrians to go out of a large ethnic group that occupied the territory that

was once populated by aborigines – carriers of haplogroup Q? One can only assume that, in addition to overcrowding, migration could be caused by pressure from the east of the Huns or environmental changes that led to a decrease in pasture productivity. However, this is all interconnected. In the situation that developed in the region at the end of the 2nd century. BC, all migration routes except the western one were closed, so a clash with ancient civilization became inevitable.

But why the "Celto-Scythians"? What could be common between the steppe Asian people and sedentary farmers who settled throughout Europe? It is logical to assume – the language and customs that are not restored from archaeological finds. Again, there is nothing fantastic about this assumption.

Here is what the Tocharian language, a possible distant relative of people from Kan-Gyu and / or Yancai, writes, D. Adams is one of the most respected Tocharian scholars: *“Although the geographically close neighbors are Indian and Iranian, of which both Tocharian languages borrowed a lot of religious and other technical terms, the Tocharian do not seem particularly closely related to them. Surprisingly, the Tocharian people share more common vocabulary with Germanic languages than with any other Indo-European branch, and, in general, their lexical and morphological features bring them closer to Western Indo-European languages than to those located on the eastern edge of the range ”* (translation of the author – I. R.).

This observation of a professional linguist is in good agreement with the results of analysis of fossil DNA from the Krasnoyarsk Territory and Xinjiang. The studied remains belonged to people of high stature with blue or green eyes, and the haplogroup R1a dominated among them. It was also proved that the ancient inhabitants of the Tarim basin did not belong to the subclade R1a-Z93, which now dominates in Asia, that is, they were carriers of either the early departed, now suppressed line R1a (which is most likely), or any of the European branches R1a-Z283 . The dating of the earliest burials (3900 years ago) precedes the time of



migration of the Aryans to India and Iran (3500-3600 years ago). This can be interpreted as the fact that native speakers of Indo-European languages (R1a, according to the current hypothesis) reached the territory of Southern Siberia and China before the Satem dialects began to form, giving rise to the Indo-Iranian and Baltic-Slavic languages.

The dialects of Central Asia and Siberia retained archaic features characteristic of the centum languages of Western Europe, but lost in the satem languages of Asia and Eastern Europe. So the similarity of the Tocharian languages (apparently, the descendants of Xiaoyuezhi) with the Germanic languages does not look so exotic anymore. It is even more likely that the area of distribution of the languages of this “East Centum” branch was much wider, and also covered Dayuezhi and their neighbors. Almost all of their carriers joined the Turkic peoples or mixed with Iranian-speaking Saka and Sogdians, with the exception of the Cimbrians (and Teutons?) Who took part in the ethnogenesis of the Germans. It was they who could have brought into Germanic languages a superstratum that brought this branch closer to the Tocharians. They found in Germanic and borrowings from Asian languages that have never been in contact with Europeans in historical times. For example, the Yenisei, if we take the interpretation of the Proto-Germanic \*hus (house) as a loan from the Yenisei \*xuʔs (chooms).

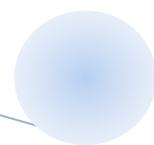
Direct indications of migration from Asia also found in German mythology. Here is a quote from the Ingling Saga, which begins the Old Icelandic collection known as the Circle of the Earth (in square brackets, comments by translator M. I. Steblin-Kamensky): *A large mountain range stretches from the north-east to the south-west [probably refer to the Ural Mountains]. It separates Great Sweden from other countries. Not far south of it is the Turka Country. Odin had large possessions there. In those days, the rulers of the Romans went on campaigns around the world and conquered all the nations, and many rulers then fled from their possessions. Since Odin was a seer and a sorcerer, he knew that his offspring would inhabit the northern outskirts of the world. He put his brothers Be and Willie rulers in Asgard, and he set off on his*

*journey and with him all diy [one of the names of pagan gods, a word of Irish descent] and many other people.*

*He went first west to Gardariki [the Old Norse name of Rus], and then south to the Land of Saxons. He had many sons. He took possession of the lands throughout the Land of Saxons and made his sons rulers there. Then he went north to the sea, and settled on one island. This is where Odin Island in Fion is now called.*

Most scholars interpret the above passage as a naive attempt to derive the etymology of the word “Sweden” (Svíþjóð in Old Norse) from “Scythia” (Σκυθαι in Greek) or tracing paper from biblical beginnings (... Abraham gave birth to Isaac, etc.). And if you look at the map of Asia? Everything coincides, even the directions of the ranges of the Western Tien Shan and Alai, separating the plains of Central Asia from the densely populated Ferghana Valley and Surkhan-Darya oasis – the object of nomad raids in all ages. Snorri Sturulson (1178-1241), who recorded the saga, could not tie this mountain range to any of the known ones – not one of the geographical tracts available to him at that time showed mountains located in this direction, except for the mountains of Norway. The latter could separate the legendary Asgard except from the Baltic Sea. So, he wrote down, as was customary in the tradition, did not think up. If we accept this version, then in it, paradoxically, two seemingly mutually exclusive hypotheses of the times of Ancient Rome turn out to be true: No. 1 – about the Celtic Scythians, and No. 2 – about the ancient Germans. Even a semi-fantastic escape from the flood can turn out to be true. The catastrophic floods of the rivers of Central Asia, accompanied by a changes in the riverbeds, as well as fluctuations in the level of the Balkhash and the Aral Sea, are quite well documented by geologists.

It is worth stopping at version 3 – about the inhabitants of Eastern Europe. According to the saga, the path of the legendary Æsirs ran through the Gardariki (i.e., the Dnieper basin), which means that part of the local population could join them, like the inhabitants



of the foothills of the Alps – the Celtic tribes of Ambrons and Helvets (Tiguins), who entered into a coalition with the Cimbrians.

If, according to the hypotheses of Shchukin and Eremenko, there was an oversupply of population in Eastern Europe, then the army of the Cimbrians who were well organized and armed with the latest military then could well have hopes for expanding their lands. Perhaps the presence of a large number of not so skilled allies in the battles can explain the significant superiority of the infantry over the cavalry in the battle of Vercelli, as well as the obvious disagreement of the actions of the Cimbrians, which led to their defeat. To test hypothesis No. 3, as well as to find traces of other Asian lines in possible descendants of the Cimbri, in addition to Q1a2, one should consider in detail the branches of the haplogroup R1a, which can mark the population of Eastern Europe and Central Asia in the last centuries BC. At the moment, this seems to be a difficult task due to the extremely weak commercial DNA testing of Central Asia and the indigenous peoples of Siberia. In Eastern Europe, statistics are more representative, but not yet sufficient to recognize lines that give a link to a particular migration from this region to Italy, Jutland and Scandinavia. Further work remains to be done on this topic, as material accumulates.

The same can be said about other areas of searches. For example, in solving the problem of about the origin of the Old Norse runic script. It is generally accepted among experts that the similarity in the inscription of its letters with the ancient Turkic runes and unencrypted inscriptions from Central Asia of the 5th-3rd centuries BC – no more than an accident. Is this really so, or was someone brought to the north of Europe the knowledge of one of the alphabets that existed in Central Asia? The question is still far from being resolved, however, finding the earliest dated inscription (the crest from Vimose, 160 AD) on the Danish island of Funen may indirectly indicate where the runes originated. The crest and several other ancient runic inscriptions were found 15 km from the city of Odense – Odin Island from the “Ingling Saga”. Also a coincidence?

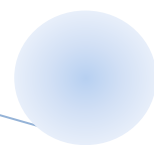
## Conclusions

Summing up the discussion of this version, it can be noted that today there is no actual data that would allow it to be rejected.

The opinion about of the Cimbrians from the north of Europe, which has established since ancient times, has not yet confirmed, while in support of their Asian homeland there are a number of signs that are difficult to explain otherwise. Firstly, this is a mismatch between demographic estimates, route information, weapons and tactics of the Cimbri with their homeland in northwestern Europe. Secondly, this is the presence in the same region of genealogical lines characteristic of Central Asia, the beginning of growth of which dates back to the times of the emergence of the Cimbri in Europe.

Thirdly, this is information from ancient Chinese sources, archeology and anthropology, indicating significant population movements in Central Asia (Europeans by anthropotype) between 170 and 100. BC, during which some of it forced out of the region. And fourthly, ancient German myths, as well as linguistics, point to the migration from Asia of some part of the ancestors of the Germans.

When choosing between science fiction and reality, the scales are currently leaning towards reality. Moreover, the reconstructed course of events is not something extraordinary. The same thing happened 500 years later, when well-armed and organized Hunnic steppes, who are usually identified with the Shi Tczi Huns, invaded Europe, subjugated or made numerous allies their hopes for their share in the Roman Empire, torn apart, and then face to face confronted by the combined forces of the kingdoms that inherited the Empire on the Catalaun Fields. Just like the Cimbrians after Vercellus, the Huns soon turned into a ghost nation that did not leave material traces that could interpreted as indisputably Hunnic.



The search for their labels in DNA is a separate task, which is still unclear how to set. The fundamental difference between these two invasions is that at the end of the II century BC The Roman Republic, which was on the rise, found the strength to answer the challenge from the East and emerge from the clash stronger to conquer the entire ancient world, and its decrepit successor disintegrated even before direct contact with the Huns.

So far, this is just a hypothesis, but it has one significant advantage: it can confirmed or refuted experimentally – through DNA analysis, both ancient and modern. According to the definition of K. Popper, the criterion of the scientific nature of the model is the principle of falsifiability, that is, the ability to put a real or thought experiment that refutes it. This cannot said about many of the established historical dogmas, if they rely mainly on the repeated repetition of an opinion once expressed by someone.

An analysis of the original sources made in the article would not have been possible without the existence of the Perseus<sup>1</sup> Internet portal, which provides open access to a significant body of ancient literature in the original language, and each word of the text provided with links to academic dictionaries of the ancient Greek and Latin languages. This makes it possible to independently verify the accuracy of translations and evaluate various interpretations of obscure places. The author sincerely thanks the creators and administrators of this Internet resource. The full version of this article published in the journal “Historical format”<sup>2</sup>.

*Igor Rozhanskii,*

*PhD in Chemistry,*

*Member of the Scientific Council of the Academy of DNA  
Genealogy*

## Bibliography and Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> Perseus Digital Library, [perseus.tufts.edu/hopper](http://perseus.tufts.edu/hopper)

<sup>2</sup> Historical format, [histformat.com/2016-01/](http://histformat.com/2016-01/)

