MIGRATION ART
A.D. 300–800

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THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART, NEW YORK

This book is dedicated to Bill and Nancy Wixom, Florence and Bill Barnsdale, Thomas C. Vinton, and Sarita van Vleck.

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INTRODUCTION

The Migration period (fourth to eighth century) was marked by the gradual waning of "civilized" Rome's power and the rise of "barbarian" Germanic tribes. The art of the Migration period in Europe is linked to the animal-style art of the Eurasian Steppes. This region, stretching from Mongolia to Hungary, was host to tribes of warrior herdsmen who brandished lavishly ornamented swords, rode horses decked out with elaborate trappings, and wore splendid polychrome jewelry that incorporated animal and bird motifs. These tribespeople followed their herds which provided daily food. When these people moved into Europe, their art was modified by Greco-Roman and Celtic traditions.

There remained, however, notable similarities between the animal-style art of Central Asia and the art of the Migration period in Europe: both were portable; there were no paintings, sculpture, or architecture until the tribespeople settled down. In both traditions animal and bird forms were abstract. The meanings of ani-

mal motifs were shared: the horse, companion of the nomads in their wanderings, was believed to be the conductor of the human soul after death. The serpent, appearing and disappearing in turn and representing the soul of the dead, provided a link between the underworld and the world of the living. The eagle with uplifted glance was the symbol of the supreme being, crowning the cosmic tree and embodying power and its attribute, status.

The prelude to the Migration period in Europe began in Scandinavia sometime during the first millennium B.C., when the Germanic tribes, principally the Goths, started moving south toward the Mediterranean Sea and the Black Sea, probably in search of pastureland. The western branch was in contact with the Celtic people of Eastern Europe by the second century B.C. By the second–third century A.D. the East Germans, principally the Ostrogoths but also the Vandals, Burgundians, and others, reached the north shores of the Black Sea where
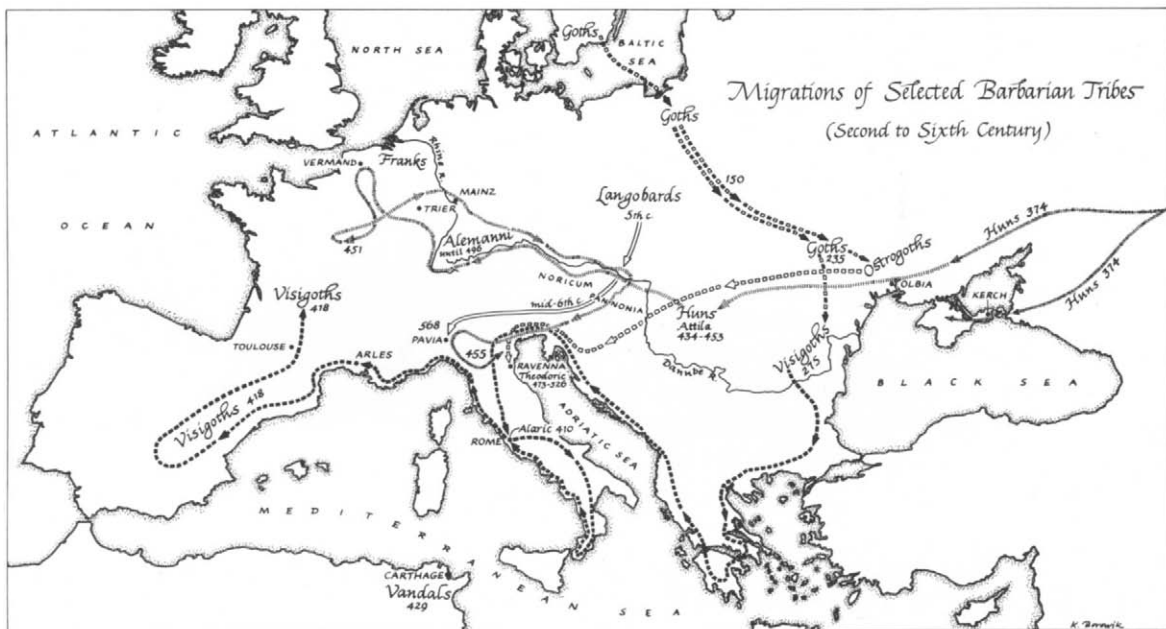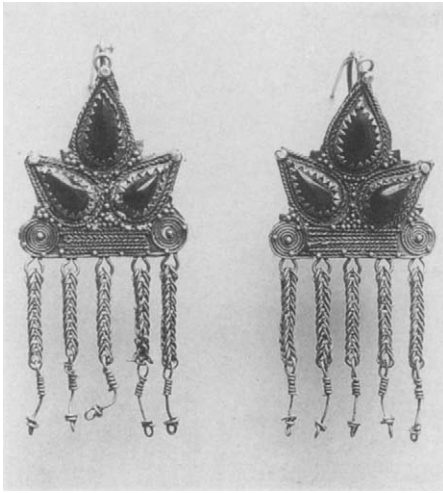
1 *Pair of earrings.* Gold, sardonyx; h. 2¼ in. (5.7 cm). Pontic (Hellenistic), 3rd century. Olbia, north shore of the Black Sea. Rogers Fund, 1922 (22.50.5,6)

they came in contact with a highly developed culture formed by a symbiosis of Greek and Scythian, Roman and Sarmatian artistic tastes. Tangible evidence of this melding is provided by the pair of third-century earrings (fig. 1) from the Pontic Greek city of Olbia. The filigree, granulation, loop-in-loop chains, and dogtooth settings are common in Greek and Roman jewelry, while the cabochon cutting of the sardonyxes probably derives from the Sarmatians.

The Ostrogoths, or East Goths, lived peacefully in the Pontic area until A.D. 375, when the Huns, coming from the Steppes of Central Asia, invaded their territory, driving most of them westward into what had been Celtic and was then Roman territory along the lower Danube. The Huns were the catalyst for the westward movement of the Goths that marked the beginning of the Migration period. Some of the Ostrogoths remained in South Russia and were subject to Hunnish rule, but the Visigoths, or West Goths, who had settled in the Roman province of Dacia, successfully appealed to Rome for sanctuary. In 378, however, they revolted against the Romans because of their new masters' demands. They were then given the duty of guarding the frontier in units commanded by

their own leaders; this was the first of many instances in which a barbarian people was allowed to keep a great measure of independence after settling within the empire. Some of the Visigoths became restive, and in 396 they entered Athens. In 410, under the leadership of Alaric, they sacked Rome and then moved into southwest Gaul and made Toulouse their capital in 418. They later moved into Spain where Toledo became their capital in 534.

The Gepids, a branch of the Goths and late arrivers from Scandinavia, had established themselves in the northeastern part of the Carpathian Basin about A.D. 269, where they were enslaved by the Huns.

What art forms can be attributed to the Goths? Notably they brought the bow fibula, a clasp similar to a modern safety pin, to the Black Sea. This type of fibula has a semicircular head with three digits and a rhomboidal footplate with a slight median ridge; an arched bow connects the head and foot. These early fibulae were worn with the head pointing downward. The earliest examples, which are small and made of bronze, have been found in graves of the late second and early third centuries in the
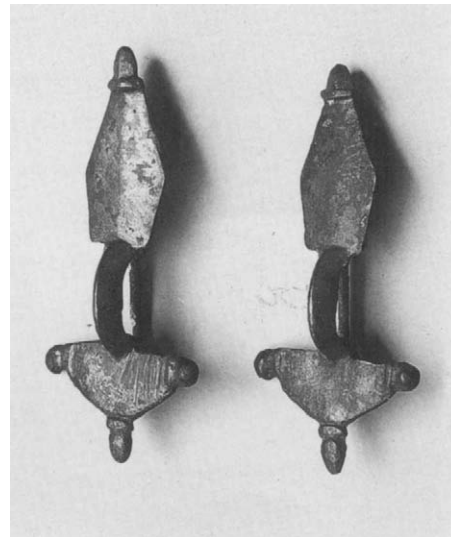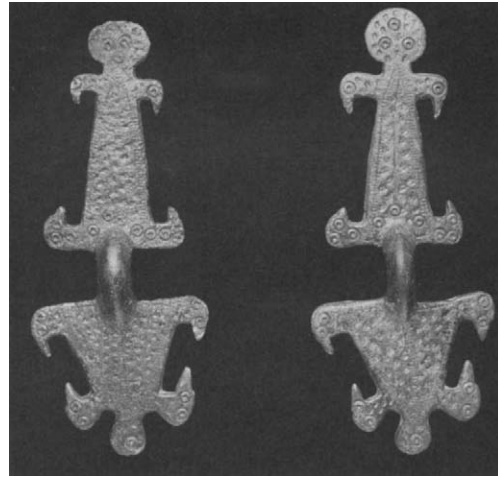

2 *Pair of bow fibulae.* Silver; l. 2⅞ in. (7.3 cm). Pontic (Gothic), 5th century. Probably from the north shore of the Black Sea. Purchase, 1898 (98.11.107,108)

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South Russian–Danubian areas. The Metropolitan has a pair in silver (fig. 2). The Goths also developed cloisonné work, or the setting of garnets, sometimes heightened by blue or green glass, into small gold cells. This technique lasted well into the medieval period.

The bow fibula (pl. 1) from Szilágy-Somlyó, close to the headwaters of the Tisza River in the homeland of the Gepids, is typical in general shape and decoration of the Russo-Danubian culture at the end of the fourth century. The fibula has an approximately rectangular head-plate with two of the outer corners removed, a broad bow, and a rhomboidal footplate. On the front heavy gold sheet was placed over a silver core; the reverse is uncovered. Garnets of various shapes, cut as cabochons, recall their Sarmatian predecessors, and their placement in a symmetrical pattern of gold filigree wire and granulation harks back to Greek and Roman models. On the reverse of the headplate are the remains of spring coils. Most fibulae of this type have one or more decorative knobs extending from the

4 *Pair of fibulae with birds'-heads terminals.* Copper alloy; l. 5 in. (12.7 cm). Visigothic, 6th century. Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Lauder Gift, 1990 (1990.193.1,2)

head. These projecting knobs later became longer fingerlike projections called digits. At the end of the fourth century women wore such fibulae in pairs, one on each shoulder, connected by a chain. Scholars are not in agreement as to whether this fibula and the other objects from the second Szilágy-Somlyó treasure (Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, Budapest) were made in South Russia or in a Danubian workshop in the Carpathian Basin. However, examination of a fibula from Regöly (Béri Balogh Adám Múzeum, Szekszárd, Hungary) and of several other fibulae from the second Szilágy-Somlyó treasure, all comparable in the carefully balanced design of stones and granulation, allows us to attribute the MMA fibula to a Danubian workshop. (This attribution is widely accepted but has been challenged by some Hungarian scholars.) The question will remain open, however, until comparable examples from South Russia are examined. Most of those from South Russia, however, are only half as large as the examples from the Danubian workshops.

A similarly shaped pair of fibulae—each of silver gilt with a rectangular head branching into two birds' heads and one mammal head—and a silver-gilt rhomboidal buckle cast with symmetrical spiral designs and possessing a nearly circular loop, were found on the skeleton of an

3 *Drawing of an aristocratic woman's grave.* Probably Gepidic or Visigothic (Tiszalok, Hungary), mid-5th century. From *Magistra Barbaritas: I Barbari in Italia* (Milan, 1984), table 5, no. 2

5 *Pair of bow fibulae.* Silver gilt, niello, red glass; l. 3¾ in. (9.5 cm). Frankish, 5th–6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.172, 173)

aristocratic woman in Tiszalok, Hungary (fig. 3). Gold polyhedral earrings inlaid with violet glass were also discovered. The grave is considered a mid-fifth-century Gepidic or Visigothic one; both tribes were in the vicinity of Tiszalok at that time. A pair of unprovenanced Visigothic fibulae (fig. 4), recently acquired by the Metropolitan Museum, is made of copper alloy; each has a triangular head connected to a long foot by a bow. The sides of head and foot are decorated with pairs of projecting confronted birds' heads. The large number of digits terminating in birds' heads (eight as opposed to the usual three), and the appearance of digits on the foot as well as the head would seem to place the pair at the end of the development of Visigothic fibulae in Spain, that is, at the end of the sixth century; but they still demonstrate features of Visigothic and Gepidic fibulae of the mid-fifth century, when the tribes cohabited the Carpathian Basin. Bow fibulae with digits terminating in birds' heads were taken over by the Franks—an observation documented by the MMA's pair of champlieu fibulae (named for the French site where a number of similar examples were found) (fig. 5).

A silver-gilt buckle in the MMA (fig. 6), with a rhomboidal plate framed with niello decoration and an inner beaded border, is similar to one from the woman's grave in Tiszalok (fig. 3). The plate's central surface is decorated with a cast-gilt, chip-carved ornament that is based on spiral and pelta (heart-shaped) motifs. Both the chip-carving technique, which simulates wood carving, and the pelta motif are of Late Roman origin. The plate terminates in the head of a bird of prey and the loop is decorated with Celtic-inspired spirals.

Migration art then is a portable art based on animal styles of the Eurasian Steppes fused with Greco-Roman and Celtic traditions. The resulting style appeared in some new forms of jewelry and artifacts and some already existing forms. The Metropolitan is fortunate to have one of the broadest, and in several areas the richest, collections in the world. It is housed by the Department of Medieval Art because it provides the foundations for medieval art. This Museum's collection is rivaled in scope by those of the Musée des Antiquités Nationales, Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and the British Museum. The two other important museum collections in the United States are in the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, and the Dumbarton Oaks Collections, Washington, D.C. The most important private collections in the United States are those of the J. de Menil Foundation, Houston, Texas and of Shelby White and Leon Levy, New York.
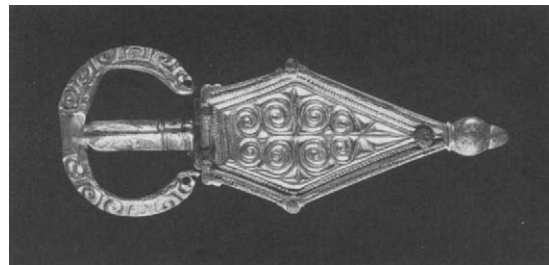
6 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Silver gilt, niello; l. 5 in. (12.7 cm). Gepidic, 5th century. Anonymous Gift, in memory of Harry Bober, 1990 (1990.184)

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pl. 1 *Bow fibula.* Gold leaf over silver core with almandine, mother-of-pearl, or enamel; l. 6¼ in. (15.9 cm). Gepidic, 5th century. Said to be from Szilágy-Somlyó (Hungary). Fletcher Fund, 1947 (47.100.19)

pl. 2 *La Guierche vase.* Bronze, champlevé enamel; h. 4¾ in. (12.1 cm). Provincial Roman (Gaul),
   mid-3rd century. Found at La Guierche, Charente, France. Fletcher Fund, 1947 (47.100.18)

pl. 3 *Disk fibula.* Bronze, champlevé enamel; l. 2½ in. (6.4 cm). Provincial Roman, 2nd century. From the collection of Robin B. Martin (L.55.57)

pl. 4 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Gold, garnets; l. 1⅜ in. (3.5 cm). Hunnish or East German, 5th century. Purchase, Rogers Fund, Alastair B. Martin, Norbert Schimmel Foundation Inc., and Levy Hermanos Foundation Inc. Gifts and funds from various donors, 1986 (1986.341)

pl. 5 *Pair of disk fibulae.* Silver, garnet, glass paste; diam. 1⅛ in. (2.9 cm).
Frankish, second half of 6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
(17.191.137,150)

pl. 6 *Disk fibula.* Gold, bronze, glass paste, filigree, pearls; diam.
1¾ in. (4.5 cm). Frankish, late 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont
Morgan, 1917 (17.193.83)

pl. 7 *Disk fibula.* Gold, cabochons, onyx cameo; diam. 2½ in.
(6.3 cm). Langobardic, early 7th century. Purchase, 1895
(95.15.101)

pl. 8 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Copper alloy, garnets over gold foil,
lapis lazuli, green glass, cuttlefish bone; l. of buckle plaque 3¾ in.
(9.6 cm). Visigothic, 6th century. Rogers Fund, 1988 (1988.305ab)

pl. 9 *Terret ring.* Bronze, champlevé enamel; l. 4¼ in. (10.8 cm). Roman-Celtic (Britain), 1st century. Purchase, Harris Brisbane Dick Fund; Joseph Pulitzer Bequest; Pfeiffer, Rogers, Fletcher, Louis V. Bell, and Dodge Funds; and J. Richardson Dilworth, Peter Sharp, and Annette Reed Gifts, 1988 (1988.79)

pl. 10 *Pendant* (left; 1987.90.3): gold, filigree, garnets; diam. 1 in. (2.6 cm). *Pendant* (middle; 1987.90.2): gold, garnets; diam. 1⅛ in. (2.8 cm). *Brooch* (right; 1987.90.1): silver, silver gilt, cloisonné, garnets, blue glass, white agglomerate; diam. 1⅞ in. (4.6 cm). Anglo-Saxon (Kent), Jutish, early 7th century. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1987 (1987.90.1–3)

pl. 11 *Quatrefoil fibula.* Gold, bronze, glass; diam. 2⅛ in. (5.5 cm). Frankish, late 7th–early 8th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.134)

pl. 12 *Pair of bracelets.* Gold, pearls, sapphires, emerald plasma; diam. 3¼ in. (8.3 cm). Byzantine
(Constantinople), first half of 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1670, 1671)

GALLO-ROMAN AND PROVINCIAL ROMAN ART,

THIRD TO FIFTH CENTURY

Roman Gaul comprised present-day France, Belgium, part of the Netherlands, Germany (west of the Rhine), and most of Switzerland. Compared to the Old Rome of the third–fifth century, Gallic society was more stable and was in many ways as cultured and artistically proficient, though it drew more on Celtic than on Greek and Roman sources. Teachers and leaders from the Gallo-Roman aristocracy often made careers in New Rome (Constantinople). Orators from Toulouse were tutors to Emperor Constantine's son and two nephews.

A compelling and unique bronze from a chariot (fig. 7) is one of the most fascinating pieces in the Museum's strong Gallo-Roman collection. Weighing seven and a quarter pounds and standing eight and an eighth inches high, it has a glossy brown patina. The four-sided pyramidal hollow socket is flanked by S-shaped loops, the upper parts of which are formed by pantherlike forms emerging from acanthus leaves. The long sinuous necks of the pantherlike beasts are decorated with engraved horizontal lines and dots. Abstract floral and vegetal motifs are engraved on the front of the socket. On a narrow rectangular plinth above the socket three men are seated in chairs with arms and high round backs. All three wear hooded cloaks and boots. The men at the center and right hold open books or writing tablets with their left hands and have their right hands raised; the man at the left holds an open scroll

7   *Chariot mount.* Bronze; h. 8⅛ in. (20.6 cm). Provincial Roman (Gaul), 4th century. Fletcher Fund, 1947 (47.100.42)
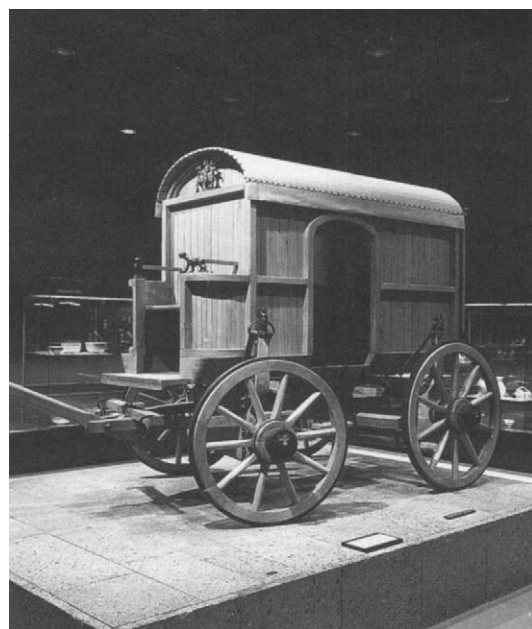
8   *Reconstruction of a Roman chariot.* Wood and bronze. Late Roman, probably 3rd century. Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne

with both hands. The men at the ends have beards and are balding; the one in the center is beardless and retains his hair.

In the early 1900s the remains of a Thraco-Macedonian chariot were discovered in Bulgaria. Associated with it were many bronzes of various descriptions. After this find bronzes having two loops, like the S-shaped parts of the MMA piece, were usually interpreted as rein guides for chariots. In 1935, however, Andreas Alföldi proposed that these two-loop bronzes decorated the vertical shaft, attached to the axle, that protected the wagon's frame from the wheel. This hypothesis was supported by archaeological finds that form the basis of the reconstruction of a chariot (fig. 8) in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne. The MMA example is the largest and heaviest mount known of this type. Its size may indicate that it came from a four-wheel rather than a two-wheel wagon. Four-wheel wagons were reserved for the emperor and his entourage or were used as large luxury chari-ots in which several people could sleep during journeys. They were decorated with bronze and ivory ornaments, and they stood high off the ground, placing those who were honored in a position of maximum visibility. Of the known mounts with two loops, only three others are surmounted by groups of figures as the MMA example is. These three (Museum of Fine Arts, Boston; Musée des Antiquités Nationales, Château de Saint-Germain-en-Laye; private collection, Paris) all have imperial connotations and were probably used on imperial chariots. Since there is nothing imperial about the MMA piece, it was probably used, with other bronzes and ivories, on a luxury chariot. The three men wearing hooded cloaks and boots are related to several similarly dressed figures, also seated on high-backed chairs, all of which are thought to be Gallo-Roman.

The heavy hooded woolen cloaks were made in Gaul but were also exported. They were worn by both men and women, particularly in Gaul, and by humble people as well as by trav-elers. Although the high-backed chairs on which the men sit are found in many regions throughout the Early Christian and Byzantine

periods, they seem to occur first, and with the greatest frequency, in Gallo-Roman art. The figures' thick short necks, large ears, pointed chins, and broad heads and the hair indicated by parallel incised lines distinguish them as Gallo-Roman. It has been suggested that they may represent priests or apostles, but there is nothing Christian about the mount. An alter-native suggestion can be based on Roman Gaul's position as a leading region of culture and learning in the third to the fifth century.

Twenty years ago in the south of France a Gallo-Roman bronze socket (private collection, France) was excavated which depicts a seated figure holding a book in his left hand, while his right hand is raised in the gesture of an orator. Both the open book and the front of the socket bear inscriptions, the latter being Cicero's open-ing lines to the Senate in A.D. 63. Two of the three MMA figures hold open books or writing tablets and raise their right hands in what may equally well be described as a gesture of speech as one of blessing; the third holds a scroll open on his lap. It is known that the role of the ora-tor had close associations with that of the priest. Saint Augustine was a professor of rhetoric in Milan before his conversion to Christianity, and he recommended that those entering the priest-hood master rhetoric. In fourth-century Gaul orators and grammarians were often publicly honored. Since this mount most probably comes from a type of chariot reserved for those to be honored, the figures are probably two ora-tors and a grammarian, apt representatives of the learned society of Roman Gaul.

The Gallo-Roman society was highly sophis-ticated in arts and crafts such as pottery, metal-work, glass, and enamel. One of the main workshops for enameling was at the Villa Anthée, near Namur, Belgium. One of the most famous extant examples of this enameling is in the MMA: a bronze vase (pl. 2) which was found at La Guierche, west of Limoges, in the first half of the nineteenth century. It was found with numerous coins that allow it to be dated to the end of the third century. The vase, together with silver bracelets, gold and silver rings, silver and bronze spoons, and an earthen-
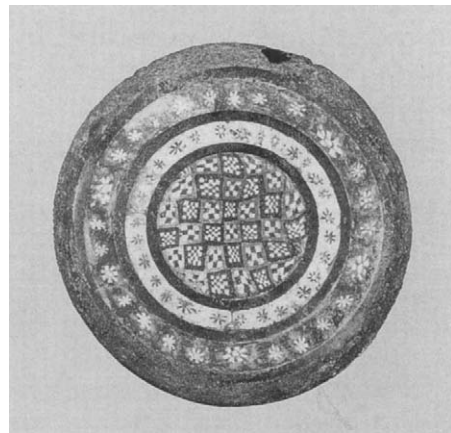
9 *Pyxis.* Bronze, millefiori enamel; h. 2⅜ in. (6 cm). Provincial Roman (probably Gaul), 2nd–3rd century. Fletcher Fund, 1947 (47.100.7)

the optical illusionism characteristic of Late Roman art throughout the Mediterranean.

According to Françoise Henry, millefiori glass may first have been applied to metal as enameling in Gaul soon after the Roman conquest. The glass rods from which the enamel was made were probably imported from Italy and Alexandria. In millefiori enameling different colored glass rods are fused together and cut into cross sections. These pieces are then placed on the copper-alloy base, either side by side or at intervals in an enamel powder, and are then heated sufficiently for them to adhere to the base and to each other without dissolving and losing the details of their flower patterns.

The Metropolitan has a hexagonal pyxis, or container (fig. 9), which, although partially restored, is an excellent example of millefiori enamel. It is one of a group of examples— including one from Elseham, recently acquired by the British Museum—which are thought to have been used as containers for ink or perhaps incense, unguents, or perfume. The sides and top of these pyxides are decorated with mosaic squares and millefiori enamel in red, white, blue, and green. All of this "checkerboard" group has been found in Western Europe. It is impossible to say whether the group was made at the Villa Anthée, but two examples are known to have come from northern Gaul and

ware vase, is thought to have been buried during one of the recurrent Frankish invasions of the second half of the third century. The vase itself consists of two sections; four attachment points on opposite sides of the neck indicate that it originally had two handles. The surface is decorated with a series of vertical bands that increase in width in the middle and diminish again toward the top and bottom. The bands are of two alternating designs in contrasting colors. One design presents pairs of confronted trumpets—a design of Celtic origin—in dark blue enamel against the blackened copper-alloy background, while the other displays pairs of trumpets joined together to form a pelta pattern of alternating red and green enamel against a background of blue-green enamel. The pattern of the upper section is the mirror image of that of the lower. The alternation of colors makes it difficult to distinguish between the design and the background. This apparent shifting of pattern and background is an example of

10 *Disk fibula.* Bronze, millefiori enamel; diam. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm). Provincial Roman (probably Gaul), 2nd–3rd century. Rogers Fund, 1966 (66.16)
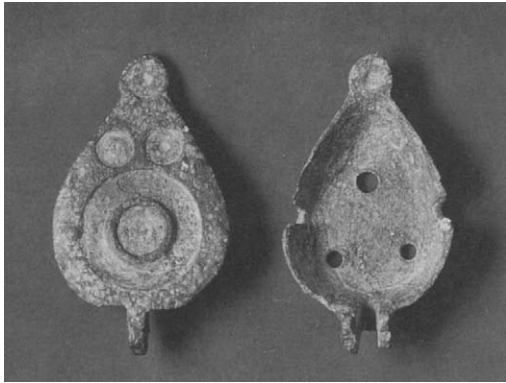
11 *Seal box.* Bronze, champlevé enamel; l. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm). Provincial Roman, 3rd century. Gift of Ruth and Victoria Blumka, 1988 (1988.408.2ab)

the Rhineland (Musée des Antiquités Nationales, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, and Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne). The Museum also has one of the numerous extant examples of millefiori disk fibulae (fig. 10), which are also generally attributable to Gallo-Roman workshops.

Enameled seal boxes (fig. 11) have been found throughout the Roman Empire. Spade-shaped boxes with hinged enameled covers seem to have been typical of the Roman provinces of Gaul, Pannonia, and Britannia. Like the three other boxes in the collection, the illustrated example has three holes in the bottom for the wax and string used in the sealing process.

A Provincial Roman (German?) disk fibula in champlevé enamel (pl. 3) has traces of gilding on the back near the clasp. A round bronze knob is fastened by a pinion to the junction of four spokes in the center of the front. The inner enamel band is orange with an inlay of black circles. The middle band has alternating rectangular and trapezoidal enamels in a red-white-blue sequence. The outer band consists of a scallop motif with alternating blue and red enamel. Separating the middle and outer bands is a ring with diagonal incisions in a ropelike pattern. This fibula is a late example of a group of scalloped fibulae dating from the second quarter to the final quarter of the second century.

In all of the Roman provinces the artisans drew on Celtic art. Thus, as has been noted, the Celtic trumpet motif became part of the Provincial Roman repertory. The swirling trumpet motif of the horse harness mount (fig. 12) has been attributed to Central Europe. However, it is equally possible that it comes from Dura-Europos, Syria, for it is well known that the Celts (Gauls) were in Galatia (Asia Minor) in the last quarter of the third century B.C., and Syrian craftsmen most likely knew their art. Evidence for this eastern origin would seem to be provided by the cache of horse harness mounts excavated at Dura-Europos (Yale University Art Gallery). The horde has several examples that incorporate Celtic swirling trumpets in a manner similar to that of the MMA mount.

Swirling trumpets form an S-shaped design in an appealing nearly three-dimensional brooch (fig. 13). Similar brooches from the Rhineland, Switzerland, and Pannonia have been found and have been dated to the second to third century. The plasticity of the style, characteristic of the last phase of Celtic art, was echoed in examples of Provincial Roman art such as this brooch.
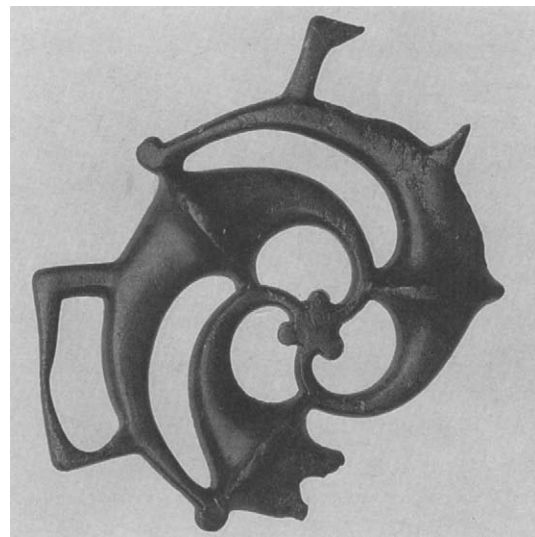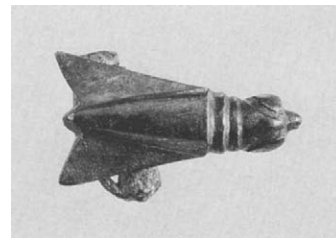

12 *Harness decoration.* Bronze; h. 2⅞ in. (7.3 cm). Provincial Roman, 2nd century. Gift of Alastair B. Martin, 1948 (48.154.5)

13 *Fibula.* Bronze; l. 1⅝ in. (4.1 cm). Provincial Roman, 2nd–3rd century. Gift of Alastair B. Martin, 1991 (1991.279)
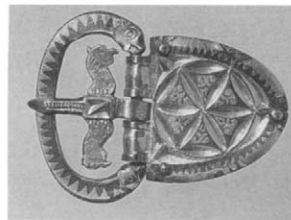
Trumpet motifs and peltas are decorative motifs on the silver-gilt mounts (fig. 14) thought to have decorated the lance of a barbarian military chief serving in the Roman army. The mounts, together with the lance's tip (the wooden shaft had long since disintegrated), were found outside a tomb in the Gallo-Roman cemetery of Vermand near Saint-Quentin in northern France. This tomb was by far the richest of the more than seven hundred graves in the cemetery. Gold coins of the emperor Valentinian I suggest a date in the second half of the fourth century. The motifs are executed in chip carving. This technique, developed in the frontier

17.192.146

17.192.143

17.192.145   17.192.144

14 *Spear-shaft fittings from the Vermand Treasure.* Silver gilt, niello; l. of plaque with two rings (17.192.145) 4⅞ in. (12.5 cm); l. of buckle (17.192.146) 2⅜ in. (5.9 cm); h. of ring (17.192.143) 1⅜ in. (3.5 cm); l. of plaque (17.192.144) 3¾ in. (9.5 cm). Provincial Roman (Gaul), 4th century. Found in Vermand, northern France. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.192.143–146)

15 *Cicada brooch.* Copper alloy; l. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm). Gepidic, first half of 5th century. Purchase, William Kelly Simpson Gift, 1993 (1993.263)

regions, was very popular for decorating military trappings. Contrasts are heightened by the use of niello. The elements of the chip-carving style—motifs from Celtic and classical sources (here seen in the hippocampi on the large plaque [fig. 14; 17.192.145]), the use of relief, and a horror vacui—became popular among the western barbarian tribes.

The Provincial Roman style is often marked by ambiguity of design. In the La Guierche vase (pl. 2) the color alternation makes it difficult to distinguish between pattern and background. On the Vermand plaque (fig. 14; 17.192.144) the design reads as two scrolling vines when placed horizontally, but when placed vertically, it presents the same arrangement of peltas and trumpet motifs as does the La Guierche vase.

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On the tip of the large plaque is a stylized cicada which is derived from those used as pins and found in Sarmatian graves both in Hungary and South Russia. The motif was preserved in Provincial Roman artifacts and transferred to the Germanic tribes. The MMA has recently purchased a copper alloy cicada brooch (fig. 15) of the first half of the fifth century, said to have been found in Hungary. Its demarcations and patina are unusually fine. By comparison with other known examples, the MMA piece is thought to be Gepidic. Cicada brooches of the fifth and sixth century have been found particularly in Hungary where their tradition was preserved.

The wealthy, stable Gallo-Roman society patronized the arts of metalwork, glass, and enamel. Whereas glass was introduced to Gaul by the Romans, the metalwork and enameling traditions had been established at least as early as the Celtic period and incorporated many Celtic designs. Artisans in other Roman provinces also made use of Celtic motifs, but they appear to have included more classical elements than did the Gauls.

TRIBAL MOVEMENTS, FIRST HALF OF
FIFTH TO EARLY SIXTH CENTURY

The inundation of Europe by the Huns, which began with their invasion of the north shore of the Black Sea in 375 and lasted until the mid-fifth century in France, is well demonstrated by the numerous widespread examples of their gold-and-garnet shoe buckles, some of which have been found as far west as Portugal. The Museum's example of a Hunnish shoe buckle (fig. 16) is said to have been found in France and indeed, given the geographical thrust of these people, probably was.

What was the character of the Western Europe into which these tribes catapulted? By far the largest and most important province was Gaul. The exceptionally cold winter of 406 had deprived the Western Roman Empire of its most natural frontier: the Rhine had frozen near the city of Mainz. Hordes of Germanic tribes—Vandals, Suevi, Alani, and Burgundians—had crossed the river in December and invaded imperial territory. A branch of the Franks had established themselves in Cologne and other cities on the Rhine's west bank. Because the Rhine frontier was not rebuilt, the invaders were able to move across Gaul to Spain, where they later carved out their own kingdoms from Roman provinces.


16 *Shoe buckle and plaque.* Gold, garnets; l. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm). Hunnish, first half of 5th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.697)

Throughout the fifth century other Germanic tribes invaded the wealthy province of Gaul: the Franks, who made numerous raids from the mid-third century on, reached the Somme; the Alemanni attained Alsace and eastern Switzerland; the Burgundians were defeated by the Huns in 436 and were forced to leave their kingdom at Worms for Roman Switzerland; and the Visigoths began their conquest of Aquitaine. In 451 the Huns were defeated near the city of Troyes by the joined forces of Franks, Visigoths, and Saxons. Gaul was also invaded from the west in the mid-fifth century by the Celtic Britons, who had been displaced by Jutes, Angles, and Saxons, the invaders from northern Europe.

Restless, covetous, and pugnacious by tradition and training, the Germanic tribes were the most threatening menace to the immense, still-wealthy Roman Empire from the third to the fifth century. So large was the empire, stretching from Britain to Asia Minor and from the Rhine and the Danube to North Africa, that it was divided in two in 395: Rome continued to be the titular capital in the West, although the emperors preferred to live in Trier, Milan, or Ravenna. Constantinople, formerly called Byzantium, became the capital of the Eastern Empire, which endured until 1453 as the Byzantine Empire. The Western Empire, however, succumbed to the Visigoths in August 410.
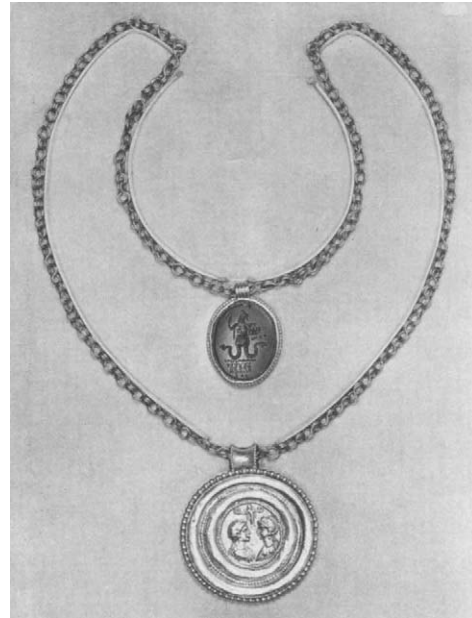
By the mid-fifth century in Rome, the imperial forces, consisting largely of barbarian mercenaries who constantly quarreled among themselves, were incapable of repelling the Vandals' advance. The Vandals, who had originally been associated with the Visigoths and had lived between the Vistula and the Oder Rivers, had joined with the hordes of tribes that crossed the Rhine in 406. They quarreled with the Goths and Suevi in Spain and in 429 set sail for Africa at the
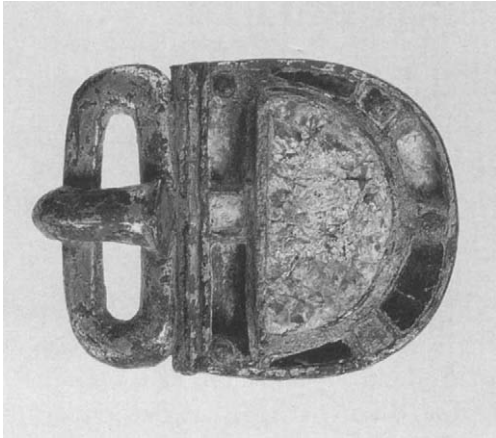
17 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Bronze gilt, glass, garnets, malachite; l. 2⅜ in. (5.9 cm). Vandalic, 5th century. Gift of Max Falk, 1991 (1991.173)
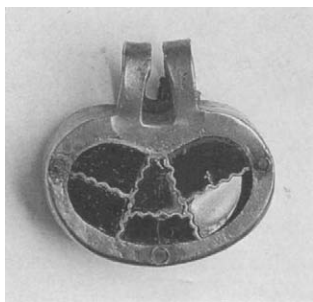

18 *Necklace with marriage medallion and amulet.* Gold, bloodstone; l. of chain 31 in. (78.7 cm). Late Roman (Rome), early 5th century (amulet, 2nd century). Found in the Piazza della Consolazione, Rome, 1908. Rogers Fund, 1957 (58.12)

invitation of Count Bonifacius, governor of Africa. By May 430 the Vandals had conquered all of Roman Africa with the exception of Carthage, which they took in 439. From Carthage and Sicily the Vandals sailed to Ostia and sacked Rome in 476. Imperial insignia and rich furnishings were seized as booty and carried off to Carthage. The Western Roman Empire had fallen, a fact confirmed by the arrival of the Ostrogoths under Theodoric in 488 (they were sent to rule Italy by the East Roman emperor Zeno). The Museum's Vandalic buckle (fig. 17) seems to date from this period. Because it is similar to several pieces from Annaba (Bône, Algeria) in the British Museum, it is thought to have come from northern Algeria. The glass cabochon mounted on a gilt-bronze base is badly corroded, but the garnet-and-malachite border is still largely intact.

The wealth of Rome's staid aristocratic society when the Visigoths invaded in 410 is evident from a gold treasure unearthed in the Piazza della Consolazione in Rome. Two pieces from this find are housed in the Metropolitan Museum. The first is a gold necklace with two pendants: a large gold marriage medallion and a small oval bloodstone amulet (fig. 18). The marriage medallion depicts a pair of confronted profile busts: an emperor and his wife with Christus

Pronubus replacing Concordia above and between them. The repoussé image is surrounded by a heavy beaded border. The smaller pendant is an oval bloodstone carved in intaglio with a cock-headed god on the obverse and

19 *Bracelet with a bust of Athena.* Gold; diam. 2½ in. (6.4 cm). Late Roman (Rome), early 5th century. Found in the Piazza della Consolazione, Rome, 1908. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.2053)

20 *Shoe buckle plate.* Gold, garnets; l. 1⅛ in. (3 cm).
  East German, 5th century. Purchase, 1895
  (95.15.102)

21 *Diptych celebrating the consulship of Boethius (both
  figures represent the philosopher).* Ivory; Late Roman
  (Rome), 487. Museo Christiano, Brescia. From
  W. F. Volbach, *Elfenbeinarbeiten der Spätantike
  und frühen Mittelalter* (Mainz, 1952), pl. 2, no. 6

Harpocrates accompanied by a cabalistic inscrip-
tion on the reverse. The amulet is second centu-
ry in date, and the marriage medallion is from
the early fifth century. The Museum's second
piece from this treasure is a gold bracelet (fig. 19)
with a bust of Athena in relief against a stippled
background. The medallion's border is beaded,
and its hoop is of heavy, twisted gold wires. The
marriage medallion and the bracelet, along with
a necklace from the same treasure, exemplify the
crosscurrents of heterogeneous thought in the
Late Roman Empire at the end of the fourth and
the beginning of the fifth century. The Christian
religion was slowly gaining in strength, but the
Roman aristocracy clung to pagan beliefs and
oriental cults were revived.

Equally characteristic of this period when
"barbarians" of all descriptions served in the
Roman army is the kidney-shaped buckle plate
from a gold-and-garnet shoe buckle in the
Metropolitan's collection (fig. 20). This piece's
gold backing has been cut into, and the cement
or putty has been cleaned out. The two lower
garnets have been replaced by pieces of flat red
glass; the three apparently original garnets are cut
and set in step-shaped cloisons. The original fill
is missing and thus cannot be related technically
to the cloisonné work from the graves of the
Frankish king Childeric (Tournai) and of the
Gepidic king Omharus (Apahida, near Cluj,
Romania). But stylistically it surely can. Both
graves contain buckle plates similar to this one:
kidney-shaped gold buckle plates inlaid with
step-cut garnets. And since the Childeric and

Omharus buckle plates are similar to two from
Blucina, Czechoslovakia, found at the feet of
the skeleton, all such buckles are now thought
to be shoestrap buckles, possibly derived from
Roman prototypes. This supposition seems to
be confirmed by the slightly later (487) diptych
of Boethius, which shows the Roman philoso-
pher wearing similar shoestrap buckles (fig. 21).
Both the Childeric and Omharus finds contain
large Roman cruciform fibulae and Roman seal
rings—the owners of these pieces were proba-
bly high barbarian officials serving the Roman
army. Thus the MMA shoe buckle plate must
also have been worn by a barbarian prince serv-
ing in the army and can be placed in the same
period, about 480.

Any art-historical survey of this period must
include a discussion of the term "Attila period,"
the first half of the fifth century. It is used to
describe a large number of objects made during
this time which cannot with certainty be identi-

22 *Torc.* Gold; diam. 5⅞ in. (14.9 cm). East German, 5th century. Fletcher Fund, 1927 (27.122.16)

fied as specifically Hunnish or East German, especially those created by Goths in the wake of the Huns.

A treasure divided between the MMA and the British Museum exemplifies Attila period work. It consists of three pieces: two silver-gilt and garnet fittings from a sword and a battle dagger, both in the British Museum, and a gold-and-garnet buckle (pl. 4) in the MMA. The treasure is said to have been found around 1880 in the vicinity of Komárom, Slovakia. The combination in a burial of a double-edged sword with a single-edged battle dagger was originally indicative of a Eurasian custom but is well known in fifth-century graves of the west. In the graves of Blucina, Pouan, and Tournai the inclusion of such a sword and dagger is thought to indicate the burial of a warrior of exceptionally high status. The MMA buckle has an oval loop with stepped cloisons inlaid with garnets backed by patterned gold foil, a gold tongue, and a rectangular

buckle plate set with pyramidal and teardrop-shaped garnets in collets. The teardrop-shaped garnets differentiate the MMA buckle from Ostrogothic examples of metalwork and ally it most closely with the small fibula from the Pietroasa treasure from Romania and with the temple ornaments from Varna, Bulgaria (both in the Römisch-Germanisches Museum, Cologne), both of which are considered Hunnish by most scholars and are datable to the first half of the fifth century (although the suggestion first made by Birgit Arrhenius, and recently support-ed by Barbara Deppert, that such objects were made in Constantinople appears to be gaining favor). The stepped cloisonné pattern of the MMA loop, however, is generally considered to be characteristic of East German cloisonné work in this early period. Upon its entry into the Museum, the buckle plate and loop were analyzed and found to belong together. Thus, it is not possible to ascertain whether the buckle is of Hunnish or East German manufacture.

Similarly, contemporary gold torcs (fig. 22) of unspecific provenance evade precise labeling. Gold torcs had become status symbols among fifth-century Germanic princes, and examples of various descriptions have been found in Attila period graves of men from western Siberia to Central Europe. The MMA torc is said to be from Kerch, on the Black Sea, and finds its closest parallel in the example from a princely tomb found at Untersiebenbrunn, Austria, and now in the Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna.

In summary, Western Europe changed radi-cally in the first half of the fifth century. After the Hunnish invasion of the Gothic territory on the north shore of the Black Sea, Western Europe was overrun with Germanic tribes, who quickly became essential components of the Roman army. The Huns and East Germans were respon-sible for introducing Eurasian fashions into Western Europe.

CONTINENTAL MIGRATION ART,
SIXTH AND SEVENTH CENTURIES

Two major forces changed Europe in the sixth and seventh centuries: the conversion of the Germanic tribes to Christianity and the arrival of the Avars in the Carpathian Basin. During this period a fusion of Mediterranean and Germanic elements came to mark the art of the Ostrogoths, Franks, Alemanni, Avars, Langobards, Visigoths, and others. The south of Spain had fallen to Byzantine troops in the mid-sixth century. The single most important and far-reaching event of this period was the conversion to Catholicism of the Frankish king Clovis I (about 466–511) at the end of the fifth century, which resulted in the shift of the political center of Western Europe from the Mediterranean to Central Europe.

The Ostrogoths

Because the Ostrogoths were the first "barbarian" tribe to settle in Western Europe, they were also the first to develop a fusion of Late Roman and Early Christian influences with their Germanic traditions and the first to create architectural monuments. For example, the mausoleum of Theodoric (454?–526) in Ravenna follows the domed-rotunda plan used for imperial Roman tombs and Christian martyria. The ornamental frieze around the dome is, however, composed of pincerlike motifs sometimes interpreted as birds' heads (with the eye at the top). This design is characteristic of Ostrogothic jewelry, and the tangential juxtaposition of the heads recalls the partitions of Ostrogothic cloisonné jewelry. The Ostrogoths were also pioneers in adapting their animal symbols to serve the Christian religion. The masterpiece of Ostrogothic jewelry is the Domagnano Treasure (fig. 23), a group of twenty-one elements found in San Marino and datable to the first half of the

sixth century. The British Museum and the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg each have eight pieces. The MMA has the lower part of one of the ten pendants (fig. 24); the museum in San Marino has retained three pieces; and one is in a private collection. On the MMA
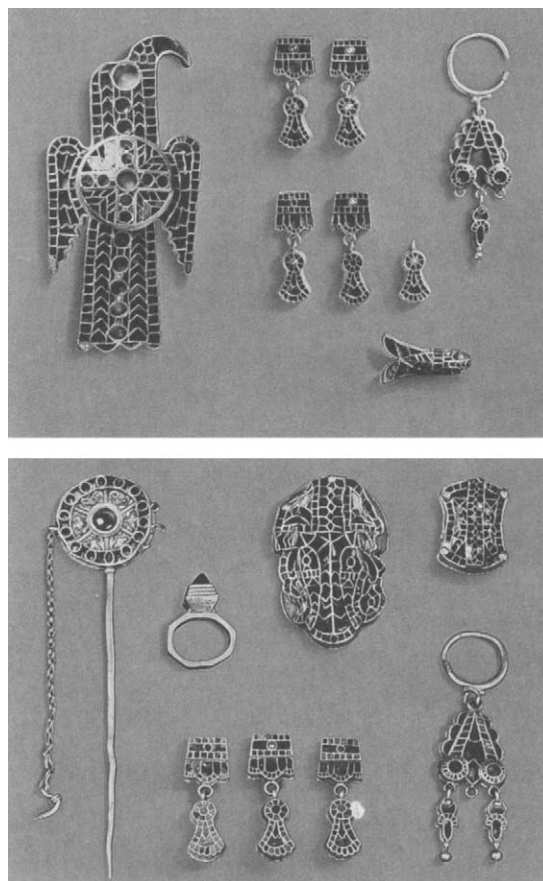
23 *Jewelry from the Domagnano Treasure.* Gold, garnets, glass, glass paste. Ostrogothic (tomb of a princess), first half of 6th century. British Museum, London; Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg; San Marino; Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.698); private collection, New York.
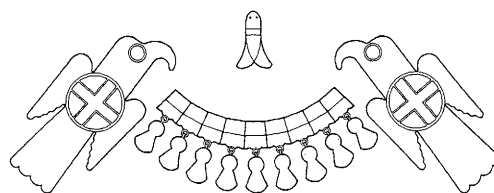
24 *Pendant from a necklace.* Gold, garnets, green glass, pearl; l. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm). Ostrogothic (Italy), first half of 6th century. Found in Domagnano, Italy. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.698)

25 *Manner in which the Domagnano jewelry may have been worn.* Drawing by Dafydd Kidd. From *Anzeiger des Germanischen Nationalmuseums* (Nuremberg, 1987). Courtesy of the British Museum

pendant's lower part is a minute network of gold cells, containing garnets, green glass, and a pearl. The pendant's upper part, like those of the other nine in the group, was trapezoidal and had side perforations for a suspensory wire. While these trapezoidal pieces had beaded edges on top and bottom, their perforated sides are plain, thus allowing them to be placed side by side. The free-swinging lower portions of the pendants, like the MMA example, have fine beaded borders.

A drawing by Dafydd Kidd of the British Museum (fig. 25) suggests that the pendants may have been suspended from two large eagle fibulae facing each other and that the cicada brooch may have been worn at the neck of the robe.

As noted by Kidd, in outline the pendants resemble stylized winged insects. The juxtaposition of insects with birds of prey occurs regularly in Germanic art over a two-hundred-year period from the fifth to the seventh century. Some of these winged insects are moths or bees, and others, like those of the Domagnano Treasure, are cicadas. In every instance the motif indi-

cates elevated status. Winged insects are found, for instance, in the tomb of the Frankish king Childeric (482) in Tournai, Belgium, and they appear in association with double birds' heads in an aristocratic woman's tomb in Cologne. As noted earlier, the eagle indicates high status. By the first half of the sixth century the eagle could also have been interpreted by Christians as a symbol of Saint John the Evangelist. As remarked by Kidd, the Domagnano ensemble may have had a religious import, since the two eagle brooches have a cross in the raised central dome.

The Franks

The Franks were an amalgamation of small tribes inhabiting the area between the Weser and Rhine Rivers, the frontier of the Western Roman Empire at the height of its power. By the mid-third century larger groups of them began to establish themselves as auxiliary troops guarding the borders of the Roman Empire. In 406 they occupied the west bank of the Rhine. Their first king, Clovis I, was converted to orthodox Christianity in 493. This conversion won him

26 *Horse-shaped fibula.* Silver, red glass; l. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm). Frankish, 5th–6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.192.186)
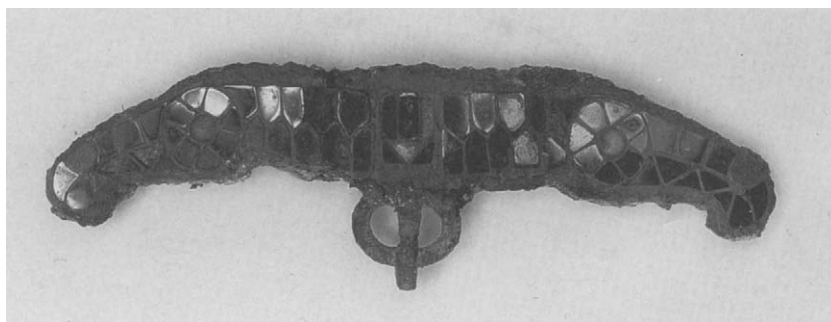
27 *Purse clasp (fermoir)*. Iron, bronze, glass paste, garnets; l. 4⅜ in. (11 cm).
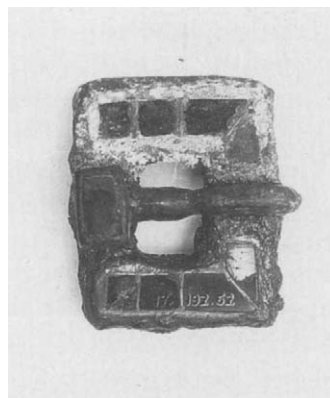Frankish, mid-6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.192.42)

the support of the orthodox majority of the
Gallo-Roman populations against his neighbors,
the Visigoths, Ostrogoths, and Burgundians, all
of whom adhered to Arianism, a belief that God
the Son (Christ) was not consubstantial with God
the Father. Frankish political and religious unity,
unique among the migratory peoples, allowed
them to establish a polity that survived the dis-
integration of the Roman Empire and served as
the foundation of the Carolingian Empire.

The art of the early Franks combined aspects
of Late Roman minor arts with those of the
Ostrogoths. The Frankish court may have em-
ployed Ostrogothic artisans from South Russia, or
the Ostrogoths may have carried stylistic elements
with them as they moved westward. Frankish
art was gradually permeated by other Germanic
artistic traditions, as well as by ideas and prac-
tices from the Christian East and from Byzantium
and from the Langobards in northern Italy.

A pair of cloisonné disk fibulae in red and
green glass (pl. 5) would have been worn, one
on each shoulder, by a Frankish woman; they
were often connected by a chain. Frankish
women also wore horse-shaped pins at the neck
of their robes. One of two such fibulae in the
Metropolitan is illustrated here (fig. 26). These
fibulae are particularly interesting because the
horse's position—its legs folded under its body
as if it were reclining—recalls a Scythian proto-
type. The purse clasp (fig. 27), terminating in
two horses' heads, had inlaid garnets with green
and blue(?) glass (some of the glass is now miss-
ing). Such purse clasps are usually found with

cloisonné belt buckles (fig. 28) in the tombs of
fifth-century Frankish male aristocrats and
demonstrate the westward migration of the
Ponto-Gothic polychrome style.

The Roman legacy of Frankish art is evident
in the medium of glass, for Roman Gaul and the
Rhineland were noted centers of glass production.
A green glass cup (fig. 29), decorated with dark
green, elongated, tubular, hook-shaped projec-
tions and having a small foot, is comparable to
one excavated at Krefeld-Gellup, Germany, dated
to the first half of the fifth century, and to another
from Vermand, France. This type of Provincial
Roman cup inspired the seventh–eighth-century
Rüsselbecher, or trunk beaker, with proboscis
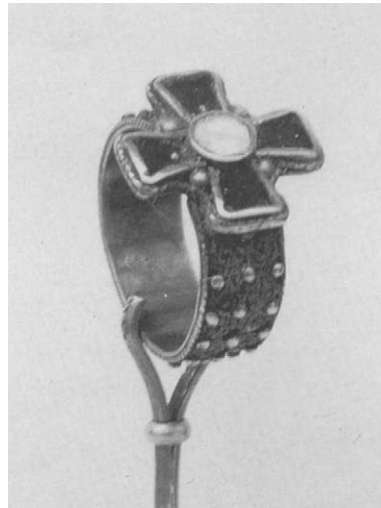decorations, of which the Museum also has an
example.

28 *Belt buckle*. Bronze, red glass; l. 1⅜ in. (3.5 cm).
Frankish, 5th–6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont
Morgan, 1917 (17.192.62)

29 *Cup.* Glass: diam. 5⅛ in. (13.1 cm). Roman or Frankish, first half of 5th century. Gift of Henry G. Marquand, 1881 (81.10.163)

30 *Ring with cross-shaped bezel.* Gold, garnet, meerschaum, filigree; diam. ⅞ in. (2.2 cm). Frankish, second half of 5th–early 6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.192.229)

One of the best illustrations of the two roots—Gothic and Roman—of Frankish art is a ring (fig. 30) of the second half of the fifth or early sixth century. It has a cross-shaped bezel bordered by twisted wire and set with red glass over foil around a circular white-paste inset. A gold grain marks the juncture of the bezel and the hoop in each of the four inside corners. The flat hoop is decorated overall with S-shaped volutes in filigree and large gold grains in the interstices (fig. 31). This kind of decoration on the hoop was common on Late Roman rings. As we have seen, however, the red-glass or garnet cloisonné had its origin in the Ostrogothic art of the north shores of the Black Sea. The polychrome style is one of the several aspects of the art of the Goths which were transmitted to the Franks. Inlaid cloisonné garnets became characteristic of sixth-century Frankish art—a fact well demonstrated by the many disk fibulae, rings, and bird-shaped fibulae (fig. 32) in the MMA. The latter, set with cloisonné garnets or red glass, also originated in South Russia.

Under Mediterranean influence the Franks developed a new type of fibula—the gold disk fibula—at the beginning of the seventh century. Set with stones or glass paste and decorated with gold filigree, they were worn on the right shoulder. A particularly beautiful late example (pl. 6) has been likened by Helmut Roth to the center of the cross by the Eligius Master, born in 589 near Limoges and renowned for his secular and liturgical goldwork. The cross is today known only from a painting of 1500 of the celebration of a mass at Saint-Denis by the Master of Saint Gilles (fig. 33). The fibula's bronze core is covered with a sheet of gold, and the raised central section has cloisonné inlays of blue and red glass and is surrounded by a wreath of beads and triangles. This wreath is enclosed by a double-twisted gold cord that forms two interlaced squares. In the outermost section, around the rim, are red and white cabochons with filigree in the interstices.

31 Hoop seen in fig. 30

32 *Pair of bird-shaped fibulae.* Gold, bronze, red
   glass, white paste, pearls; h. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm).
   Frankish, 5th–6th century. Gift of J. Pierpont
   Morgan, 1917 (17.191.164,165)

34 *Octagonal ring with columns supporting bezel.*
   Gold, intaglio; diam. ¾ in. (2 cm). Frankish, 6th
   century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
   (17.191.102)

Rings with bezels supported by architectural
elements were also popular among the Franks.
The bezel is supported by several arches in
examples in the Victoria and Albert Museum
and in the Musée Royal de Mariemont,
Belgium. Others have fine arcades supporting
the setting, whereas still others—like the exam-
ple in the MMA (fig. 34)—have columns with
no arches. The closest parallel for the MMA
ring is one of several from Gondorf, now in the
Rheinisches Landesmuseum in Bonn. Also in

33 Master of Saint Gilles, *Mass in the Abbey Church
   of Saint-Denis* (detail). Tempera on wood.
   French, about 1500. National Gallery, London.
   From Helmut Roth, *Kunst und Handwerk im
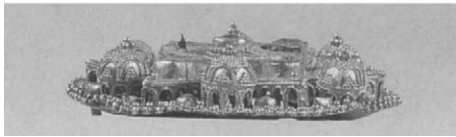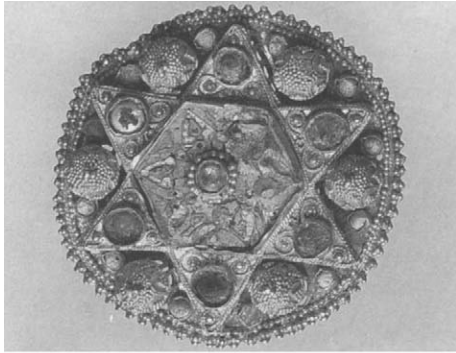   frühen Mittelalter* (Stuttgart, 1988)

Bonn are a number of cloak pins, the heads of
which are comparable to the MMA and Gondorf
rings. Such architectural settings became the
hallmark of Ottonian brooches (fig. 35).

Several Frankish openwork buckles in the
MMA illustrate Christian themes. For example,
the griffin drinking from a vase is usually inter-
preted as a symbol of the soul refreshing itself at
the source of immortal life. Whereas their open-
work technique recalls that of Roman buckles,
the flat two-dimensional figural representation
of a Christian subject (fig. 36) exemplifies the
influence of the Christian East—an influence
that increased throughout the seventh century
and into the eighth century. Such images also
abound on the openwork disk-shaped plaques
worn hanging from the belt for the suspension
of implements and other personal possessions.
The MMA's collection includes several exam-
ples of equestrian saints (fig. 37).

In spite of their weight and large size, iron
buckles were worn by women as well as by men.
A sheet of silver was hammered onto them; a
design was cut into this surface and filled with
brass and sometimes gold. These buckles dis-
play animal interlace with elongated, symmetri-
cally intertwined bodies and, usually, dragons'
heads (figs. 38 and 39). In the much larger seventh–
eighth-century examples the design becomes so
abstract that the animal heads are no longer
represented (fig. 40). Although such interlace is
traditionally regarded as the last phase in the

35 *Brooch.* Gold, filigree and granulation, pearls, glass, cloisonné enamel; diam. 1⅞ in. (4.7 cm). Ottonian, late 10th–early 11th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.7)

36 *Belt buckle and openwork plaque with griffin.* Bronze; l. 3⅞ in. (9.8 cm). Frankish, 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.226)

37 *Openwork plaque with horse and rider.* Silvered(?) bronze; h. 3½ in. (8.9 cm). Frankish, 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.192.162)

development of animal interlace, some scholars see it as yet another expression of influences from the Christian East.

The Alemanni

Close neighbors of the Franks were the Alemanni, meaning "all men" and referring to a fusion of Germanic tribes occupying the area between Basel and Munich in the sixth century. Together with the Franks, the Alemanni kept the tradition of chip carving alive, as is demonstrated by a beautiful pair of silver-gilt bow fibulae each with seven digits (fig. 41). The digits of these fibulae, which consist of stylized animal heads, are similar to those on some types of Langobardic bow fibulae, of which the MMA has a splendid example (fig. 42), originally with eleven such digits but now with seven. On each faceted digit of these fibulae a raised central ridge is flanked by indentations that indicate a pair of eyes; a small button at the end of the digit indicates a snout. When the Langobards moved into northern Italy, they became neighbors of the Alemanni, a circumstance that supports this observation of stylistic similarity.

The Avars

The Avars came from the Steppes of Central Asia as had the Huns, to whom they were related, and arrived in the Carpathian Basin in the mid-sixth century. They had been exposed to Byzantine art and culture, and motivated by greed, they staged several military campaigns against Byzantium, from which they extracted great quantities of gold as tribute for peace. This wealth is seen in their lavish use of gold in the late sixth and early seventh century. Belts, saddles, and horse trappings were decorated with gold, and gold ornaments were made for women's hair, ears, and veils. The Museum has a splendid pair of earrings (fig. 43) from this period, each consisting of a large sphere surmounted by three smaller spheres decorated with granulation and colored glass (now missing).

The MMA also houses the interesting treasure found about 1902 in Vrap, Albania.

38 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Iron, inlaid silver, latten; l. 5⅛ in. (13.1 cm). Frankish, 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.330)

39 Dorsal plate of plaque seen in fig. 38. L. 2¼ in. (5.7 cm). Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.193.282)

40 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Iron, inlaid silver; l. 8⅜ in. (21.3 cm). Frankish, 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.326)

Datable to the seventh–ninth century, this treasure is partly Avaric and partly Byzantine. Two Byzantine gold chalices—one (MMA) decorated with personifications and the second (Archaeological Museum, Istanbul) displaying bird and floral motifs in relief—exemplify the Byzantine components. Some forty buckles and belt fittings, now in the MMA (fig. 44) and three cups (fig. 45) in the MMA and the Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore, constitute the Avaric pieces. The familiar description of the Avars by the eighth-century chronicler Theophrastes bears repetition: "At this time [A.D. 565] a totally strange and unknown people came to Constantinople, who were called Avars: and the entire city came out to see them, because never had men of this race been seen before. They wore their hair plaited with ribbons down their backs, but otherwise their dress was like that of the other Huns." Most scholars concur that the Vrap treasure dates to about 700 in the second Avar period which extended from about 650 through the ninth century. They base their conclusion on two facts that indicate Byzantine influence: the fittings are cast rather than stamped; and griffin and vine scroll motifs are used. To date there is only one other princely treasure known from the second Avar period: that of Kunbábony in Kecskemét, Hungary. The gold ingot and several undecorated belt tabs led Joachim Werner to conclude that the treasure came from a workshop that also functioned as a storehouse for items not in use.

The Langobards

The Avars' mid-sixth-century movement into the Carpathian Basin forced the Langobards to migrate into northern Italy, where they displaced the Ostrogoths and established their capital in 569.

The Langobardic bow fibula (fig. 42) is from a workshop in Nocera Umbra (a grave site in Umbria in central Italy). Among the largest examples of Langobardic fibulae, its closest parallel is another example from grave II of Nocera Umbra. The headplate is filled with two addorsed one-legged animals, and the bow is decorated

41 *Pair of bow fibulae.* Silver gilt; l. 3⅜ in. (8.6 cm). Alemannic, 6th century. Gift of Alastair B. Martin, 1948 (48.154.3,4)
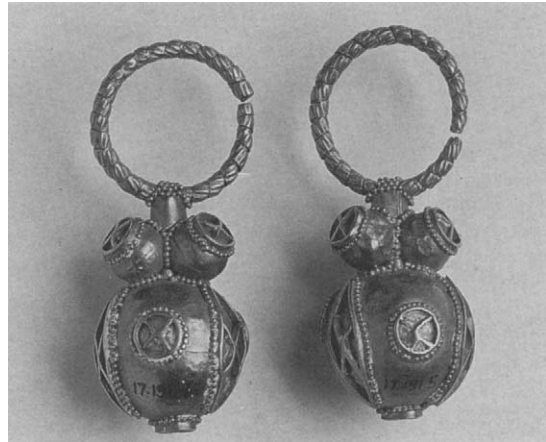
43 *Pair of earrings.* Gold; l. 2⅛ in. (5.5 cm). Avaric, 7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.191.4,5)

with two complete addorsed kneeling creatures in chip carving. The base of the footplate is decorated by two projecting pendent animal heads, and the top of the footplate is flanked by two crouching beasts. The foot terminates in a large, powerful animal head. The head, bow,

42 *Bow fibula.* Silver gilt, niello; l. 6⅛ in. (15.6 cm). Langobardic, 6th–7th century. Purchase, Joseph Pulitzer Bequest, 1955 (55.56)

and foot are decorated in animal style I, that is, entire creatures are depicted. The projecting pendent heads on the foot represent Continental animal style II. This style is thought to have been developed by the Langobards and was exploited to the fullest on the seventh-century Frankish (Burgundian) buckles (fig. 38).

By the beginning of the seventh century the Langobards, some of whom were pagan and some Arian, were ruled by Queen Theodolinda, a follower of the Roman pope Gregory the Great and a patron of the arts. She succeeded in converting the majority of her subjects to Catholicism in 603. The art they produced in this period emulates that of Rome and Byzantium, and through it the Langobards became important transmitters of Mediterranean influences to the northern Germanic tribes. This period is well represented in the MMA by a gold disk fibula (pl. 7) with an ancient Roman cameo in its center, surrounded by two concentric zones; the outer zone contains eight cabochons in raised settings with the interstices filled with filigree. The cameo, which is brown and white on black, depicts a female figure in a triga bearing a torch or scourge. The figure probably represents Nox or Persephone. Ancient Roman cameos and intaglios were important elements in medieval metalwork. The fibula's surface is decorated with filigree motifs—S and reverse S, or lyre-shaped—

17.190.1673

17.190.1683

17.190.1686

17.190.1678

44 *Belt fittings from the Vrap Treasure.* Gold; l. of belt
strap end (17.190.1673) 5 in. (12.7 cm); l. of slide
(17.190.1683) 1¼ in. (3.2 cm); l. of ornamental
plaque (17.190.1686) 1¾ in. (4.5 cm); l. of buckle
(17.190.1678) 3⅜ in. (8.6 cm). Avaric, 7th–9th
century. Found in Vrap, Albania. Gift of
J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917

which fill the interstices, and its border is braided
wire. Such motifs and borders are characteristic
of Roman and Byzantine goldwork. Similar sev-
enth-century fibulae have been found at Castel
Trosino, a rich cemetery in central Italy
(Marches), and at Senise (southeast of Naples),
but they have intaglios rather than cameos.

An example without the eight cabochons but
with a central cameo and three pendent amethysts
is in the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford. The
Metropolitan piece may originally have had three
pendants as well, but because these probably
would have been attached to the backplate (now
missing), this is only conjecture. However, the
presence of three pendants is usual in Byzantine
fibulae.

These gold disk fibulae are comparable to
contemporary Frankish examples (pl. 6). The
seventh century was a time of easy contacts
between Byzantium, the Langobards, and the
Franks. Charlemagne, prior to becoming Holy
Roman Emperor in 800, assumed the title of
king of the Franks and Langobards.

Five gold-sheet crosses (pl. 46), said to come
from a grave in Chiusi (Tuscany), are consid-
ered genuine, but doubts have been expressed
about their provenance. Such plain crosses, with
pierced holes in their corners, have been found
in the graves of men, women, and children of
Langobardic, Bavarian, or Alemannic origin
after 580.

These crosses may have been sewn onto robes
for special occasions during the lifetime of the
owner, or they may have been sewn onto a cloth
that covered a deceased dignitary. Most scholars
support the funerary use, but as yet nothing is
known of Langobardic funerary rites. It may be
that the crosses had some relationship to the
conversion of the Langobards from Arianism to
Catholicism in 603.

The Visigoths

The Visigoths migrated from the Roman
province of Dacia and, after sacking Rome in
410, settled in Toulouse in 418. This particular

45 *Cup from the Vrap Treasure.* Gold; diam. 7 in.
(17.8 cm). Avaric, 7th–9th century. Found in
Vrap, Albania. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
(17.190.1708)
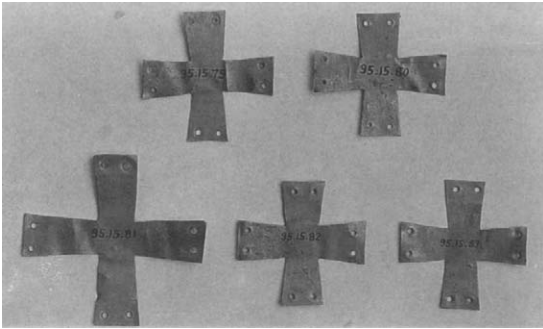
46 *Five crosses.* Gold; average l. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm).
Langobardic, 6th–7th century. Purchase, 1895
(95.15.79–83)

migration is perhaps responsible for the trans-
mission of the technique of decorating disks
with C-shaped enamel-filled cloisons. Examples
of these include one of the fifth-century fibulae
from the second Szilágy-Somlyó treasure and
the Aquitanian seventh-century triangular
buckles whose corner disks had addorsed C-
shaped wires set into the glass paste (fig. 47).
We have already noted that the second Szilágy-
Somlyó treasure was probably made in the
Carpathian Basin by the Gepids, who were
neighbors of the Visigoths. It is plausible to
suggest that the Visigoths adopted this motif
and technique from the Gepids and carried it to
southwest France, where they lived for about
eighty years. The seventh-century Aquitanian
buckles are generally attributed to southwest
Gaul or the Garonne Valley. The tongue of this
type of triangular buckle has a shield-shaped
base, and the plate is decorated with three chan-
nels which were originally filled with enamel.
Although Gallo-Roman enamels are usually
cited as the forerunners of these buckles, some
lost works of the Visigoths may have also played
a role. An example in the Metropolitan of one
of these buckles is close to one from Amiens in
the British Museum. Aquitanian buckles like
the MMA example seem to be an important
link in the history of cloisonné enamel. A simi-
lar use of cloisons is seen in the MMA's Luna
medallion from Aquitaine (fig. 48), which is
among the few extant tenth-century cloisonné
enamels.

The Visigoths moved into northern Spain in
the last decade of the fifth century. They main-
tained close ties with Byzantium throughout
the sixth century, and following the conversion
of their king Recared (r. 587–601) from Arianism
to Catholicism, revolutionized their art forms.
Garnets over gold foil, lapis lazuli, green glass,
and cuttlefish bone surround the green glass
quatrefoil in the center of this sixth-century
Hispano-Visigothic rectangular buckle plate
(pl. 8). The base of the plate and the cloisons are
made of a copper alloy, as are the buckle and
tongue. The base of the tongue originally had four
pieces of garnet. Several cloisons and part of the
tongue retain traces of their original gilding.
The buckle's colors are an important echo of
the Ponto-Gothic style which was characterized
by garnets over gold foil with accents of blue
and green. This buckle is an excellent example
of the sixth-century Visigothic polychrome style.
Its cloison design relates the piece to several
buckles in the Museo Arqueológica, Barcelona,
whose decoration is restricted to garnets and
blue glass. The use of lapis lazuli in the MMA
buckle is apparently unique in Visigothic art.
This semiprecious stone was, however, popular
in Roman and Byzantine art, and its presence in
this buckle seems to confirm the close relation-
ship between the Visigothic kings and Byzantium.

The provenance of this buckle is unknown,
but it is comparable to an example found at
Azuqueca (Guadalajara, Spain), which Gisela
Ripoll has placed in the period 525–560/80,
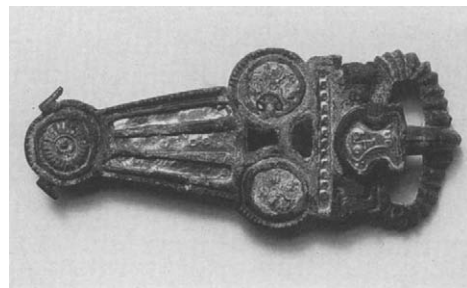
47 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Copper alloy, silver, enam-
el; l. 4⅜ in (11 cm). Aquitanian, first half of 7th
century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
(17.192.53)

48 *Luna medallion.* Cloisonné enamel, copper alloy, gilt, iron base; diam. 3⅜ in. (8.6 cm). Aquitanian, 10th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.688)

thus permitting us to similarly date the MMA buckle. The cloisonné buckles of this period often have innovative design elements, as the quadrilobed centers of these two examples.

After the Byzantine emperor Justinian the Great (r. 527–65) reconquered the Visigoths, trade with Ravenna and Sicily was very active. Although Recared's father Leovigild (r. 568–86) wanted to unify the Spanish provinces and had imitated Byzantine court customs and currency, he championed Arianism. After the conversion of Recared, the process of unification under

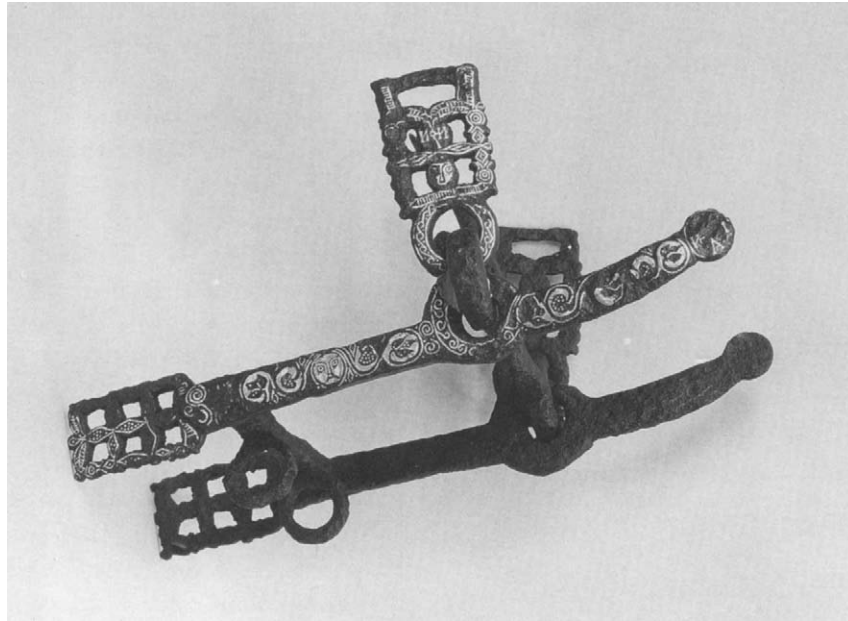Catholicism continued under his son, Receswinth (r. 653–72).

Following Recared's acceptance of Catholicism, liturgical items came into vogue, and objects of apparel were changed in appearance. Polychromed buckles were replaced by lyre-shaped buckles, which derive their name from their border contours. The high-relief borders have canted inner edges that lead to recessed fields which are engraved with abstract foliate forms. Mediterranean examples were often made of precious metal, and those from other areas were often cast after them in bronze. The Museum has a small gold example which is Langobardic or Byzantine (fig. 49) and a small copper alloy Visigothic example (fig. 50). The most striking feature of the large lyre-shaped Visigothic buckle is its bright blue color, which comes from a form of azurite often associated with excavated objects.

The distinguishing feature of a bar bit (fig. 51) is the large tongue in the center of the bar. The latter terminates in two large rings, through which the movable rectangular openwork plaques are attached. Both cheeks, or branches, terminate in disks in the front and in openwork rectangular
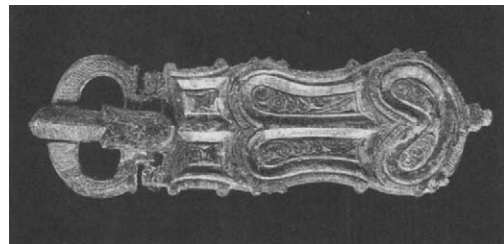
50 *Lyre-shaped belt buckle and plaque.* Copper alloy; l. 5⅞ in. (15 cm). Visigothic, 7th century. Purchase, Mr. and Mrs. Ronald S. Lauder Gift, 1990 (1990.193.3)

plaques in back. The branches are inlaid with silver except for the front disk-shaped terminals, which are inlaid in latten. The movable openwork plaques are also inlaid with silver, each with a human head surmounted by a monogram enclosed by birds' heads. The branches are decorated with vine scrolls surrounding human heads and a cross composed of four leaves on the openwork terminal.

49 *Belt buckle and plaque.* Gold; l. 2⅜ in. (6 cm). Langobardic or Byzantine, 6th–7th century. Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.190.1662)

51 *Horse bit.* Iron inlaid with silver and latten(?); l. 11¼ in. (28.6 cm). Visigothic (Andalusia), late 7th–early 8th century. Fletcher Fund, 1947 (47.100.24)

This bit is closest to a large-tongued bar bit in the collection of Don Rafael Garcia Palencia. Pedro Miguel de Artinano y Galdácano noted that the latter bit appears to have had no fillet reins, so the horse would have been led by a valet pulling two straps attached to the rings.

He therefore concluded that the bit in the Palencia collection was for ceremonial use only. It may well be that these two bits, both thought to date from the late seventh or early eighth century, were used together in some now-unknown ceremony.

GREAT BRITAIN, FIRST
TO TENTH CENTURY

During the period of Roman rule in Britain from A.D. 43 through the early fifth century, British art developed along the same principles of Roman design (symmetry, ambiguity, horror vacui) as did Gallo-Roman and Provincial Roman art on the Continent. In Ireland and southern Scotland the Celtic style, based on trumpets, palmettes, spirals, and dynamic asymmetrical forms, was preserved. Throughout Britain elements of traditional Roman design coexisted with indigenous styles. Terret rings, or rein guides, are among the most characteristic artifacts to have survived from the Roman-Celtic period. A first-century piece (pl. 9), one of the best existing examples, was found some twenty years ago by a farmer in Norwich. It retains most of its red champlevé enamel decoration, today enhanced by the bronze's green patina. The enameled motifs are circles, peltas, and comma shapes. The ring was cast with three pairs of lips, which are decorated with circles and peltas that reflect each other, demonstrating the Roman taste for mirror images. The circles flanked by commalike motifs on the ring's upper part are another confirmation of the Roman fondness for mirror images and symmetry, as is the pelta-and-circle design on the ring's base.

Terrets occur in sets of five—two pairs and a larger fifth ring, which was attached to the wagon. The two terret pairs, spaced equidistantly, were strapped to the wooden yoke, and the reins of each of the two horses thus passed through four rings. In the so-called king's barrow at Arras—an earlier Continental Celtic burial—both horses were buried with the vehicle, but the two human skeletons had only objects of personal attire associated with them and no weapons. This seems to indicate that in this case the chariot was an all-purpose cart rather than a war chariot. It is thought, therefore, that the chariot

was placed in the grave to indicate high status or perhaps to speed the journey of the deceased. In Britain the same vehicles may have been used for both war and journeys, but the scant archaeological evidence is inconclusive.

The Museum's other Roman-Celtic artifact is a dragonesque brooch (fig. 52). Here square panels of champlevé enamel are bordered by comma-shaped motifs, like those that flank the circles on the terret ring. Two such brooches were once found united by a chain—indicating that they were worn as a pair—but most of them seem to have been worn singly.

Although the Romans never gained a foothold in Ireland, their influence penetrated the island. Irish penannular brooches—those, such as the Tara brooch, in the form of a ring with a small break in the circumference for the passage of a pin—were inspired in part by Provincial Roman prototypes (fig. 53). Late-fifth-century Irish examples have a close connection with their
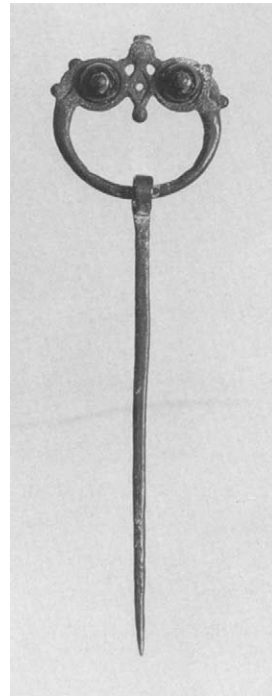

52 *Dragonesque brooch.* Bronze, champlevé enamel; diam. 2 in. (5 cm). Roman-Celtic (Britain), 1st century. Rogers Fund, 1980 (1980.450)
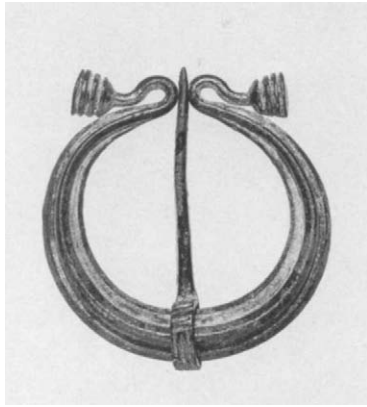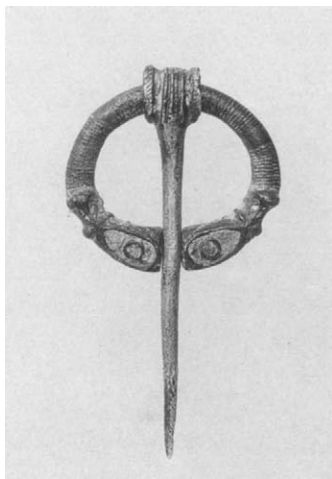
53 *Penannular omega brooch.* Bronze; l. of pin 2⅛ in. (5.4 cm). Provincial Roman, 1st–2nd century. Rogers Fund, 1981 (1981.205)

55 *Ring brooch.* Bronze, garnets; l. 3⅞ in. (9.8 cm). Irish, 9th century. Rogers Fund, 1949 (49.125.8)

Roman models. In both the hoop is rounded in front and enlarged at each end, and in both it is ornamented with engraved transverse lines next to the terminals. In both the pin has a plain cylindrical head and is not much longer than the diameter of the hoop. During the sixth–seventh century the terminals became larger and flatter and were decorated with champlevé enamel (fig. 54). The ring brooch had developed by the ninth century (fig. 55). It is usually bronze with garnet-set terminals connected by an animal snout; its pin is considerably lengthened (fig. 56).

54 *Penannular pin.* Bronze, champlevé enamel; l. 3⅜ in. (8.6 cm). Irish, 7th century. Gift of Alastair B. Martin, 1953 (53.48.5)
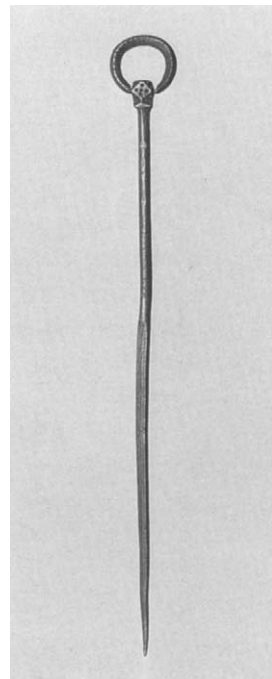
56 *Ring brooch.* Bronze; l. 9¼ in. (23.5 cm). Irish, 10th–11th century. Rogers Fund, 1949 (49.125.9)
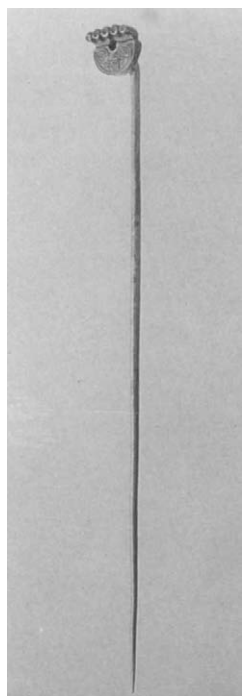
57 *Hand pin.* Bronze; l. 12¼ in. (31.1 cm). Irish, 7th–8th century. Gift of Alastair B. Martin, 1953 (53.48.4)

58 *Penannular brooch.* Silver, amber; l. 3⅞ in. (9.9 cm). Pictish, second half of 8th century. Purchase, Rogers Fund, and Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, by exchange, 1981 (1981.413)

Unique to Ireland and Scotland are the so-called hand pins (fig. 57), which were made from the fourth century onward (the name derives from their resemblance to a clenched hand). The Museum's example—on which the semicircular, formerly enameled head is capped by five pellets—dates to the seventh–eighth century and is among the more elaborate later examples.

The Picts, who were early inhabitants of Scotland, wore penannular brooches, as did the Irish. On one beautiful silver example (fig. 58) the terminals are characteristically decorated with formalized birds' or bats' heads in relief. The center of each terminal is studded with a highly polished piece of amber. Although this brooch was discovered in a field near Galway, Ireland, it is related to a number of Pictish brooches found at Saint Ninian's Isle, Scotland. Such brooches seem to have been fashionable in Scotland toward the end of the eighth century. In the tenth and eleventh centuries the eastern shore of the Baltic Sea was inhabited by the Balts

(Slavs and Scandinavians), among whom the divided ring brooch was also popular (fig. 59).

The Angles, Saxons, and Jutes started to arrive on the shores of today's England shortly after the Franks crossed the Rhine in 406, along with the Suevi, Alani, and Burgundians. Because of the resulting dislocations, a number of Britons crossed the Channel to France, where their artistic traditions took root. During the second half
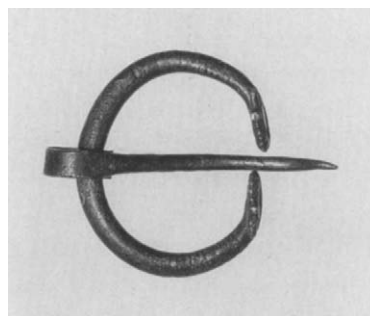
59 *Divided ring brooch.* Bronze; diam. 1¾ in. (4.5 cm). Scandinavian (West Sweden), 10th–11th century. Gift of Dr. Ernest Harms, 1953 (53.78.4)

60 *Pair of bow fibulae.* Silver gilt, niello; l. 4 in.
    (10 cm). Frankish, first half of 7th century. Gift
    of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917 (17.193.64a,b)

of the fifth century Northumbria, Mercia, and
East Anglia were colonized by the Angles; Essex,
Sussex, and Wessex by the Saxons; and Kent and
the Isle of Wight by the Jutes. It was not until the
mid-sixth century that this migration was com-
pleted. Many aspects of Anglo-Saxon art were
imported from the Continent: Merovingian,
Scandinavian, and even Mediterranean influences
played a role.

The square-headed bow fibula—with animal
protomes on the foot which terminated in a
human mask or head—originated in Scandinavia
and later became popular among the Franks,
Alemanni, and Anglo-Saxons. The Museum has
a Frankish pair of this type dated to the first
half of the seventh century (fig. 60). The MMA
collection also includes six miniature gilt-bronze
bow fibulae that are sixth century in date and
are said to be from Kent. Such miniature exam-
ples were characteristic of Charente, France, as
well as of southern England. To the mid-sixth
century belongs a gilt-bronze great square-headed
brooch (fig. 61) which is 5⅜ inches (13.5 cen-
timeters) long, half again as long as the Frankish
examples. The head is decorated with a border
of freestanding masks, those at the corners hav-
ing birds' beaks. The bow is plain and paneled.
At the top of the foot are animal protomes with
spiral-curled beaks. There are two protruding
knobs below; the foot once terminated in a
third knob, now missing. This brooch is analo-

gous to the Museum's Frankish examples in a
number of ways, but its profusion of chip-carved
surface decoration and its border of freestanding
masks distinguish it from Continental versions.
Lavish surface decoration is a hallmark of Anglo-
Saxon art. About one hundred square-headed
brooches made in Britain during the sixth century
have survived. The freestanding masks forming
the border of this brooch's head set it apart from
most of these and place it in a small subgroup
within the general type. This is the only Anglo-
Saxon piece in the Museum's collection not of
Jutish manufacture from Kent.

The brooch and pendants (pl. 10) from Kent
reflect cultural crosscurrents between France
and southern Britain. This brooch's shape and

61 *Great square-headed brooch.* Bronze gilt, niello; h.
    5⅜ in. (13.5 cm). Anglo-Saxon, 6th–7th century.
    Purchase, Rogers Fund and Alastair B. Martin,
    Levy Hermanos Foundation, Inc., and J. William
    Middendorf II Gifts, 1985 (1985.209)

cloisonné design demonstrate the close ties between the artisans of France and those of Kent (pl. 10; 1987.90.1). The garnets are backed by gold foil and are interspersed with stepped cloisons filled with blue glass. This color combination recalls fifth-century objects from the Pontine region. The quatrefoil cloisonné design rests on a gold plate decorated in filigree with an outer circle of heart-shaped patterns and an inner band of circles. Such use of filigree can be traced to Mediterranean sources, although its immediate source was contemporary Frankish disk fibulae (pl. 6). At the center of the raised quatrefoil design is a domed field of white agglomerate set with a garnet boss with a beaded wire collar. Between each of the four foils is a boss of similar white agglomerate set with a garnet cabochon backed with gold foil. The gold plate is bordered by a beaded gold wire and is joined to a larger silver backplate with two bands around the rim. Typical Frankish metalwork has replaced animal ornament. Traces of gilding remain. The technique of working a gold sheet over a silver core recalls that of the MMA Szilágy-Somlyó fibula (pl. 1).

One Kentish pendant (pl. 10; 1987.90.2) is a masterpiece of Jutish jewelry, which finds its closest parallels among the gold-and-garnet pendants (British Museum) from Faversham, Kent—the center of Jutish jewelry production. It is decorated with cloisonné garnets and gold wire. The cloisonné garnets form a star pattern with a single circular cell at the tip of each of the star's four points. All of the garnets are backed by gold foil. Along the outer border beaded wires flank three strands of twisted gold wire. Bands of the same pattern extend from each cloisonné tip to the outer border. The second gold pendant (pl. 10; 1987.90.3) has a large central garnet to which four triangular gold cells are attached. The tips of these triangles are enclosed in circular cells; four additional circular cells fill the interstices. The remaining surface is decorated with heart-shaped palmettes in filigree. Only one interstitial boss and the central cell retain their garnets.

These three pieces were excavated in Teynham, Kent, three miles from Faversham. Their geometric designs are part of the rich heritage of Migration art that, with the Late Antique tradi-

62 *Fibula in the shape of a bird of prey.* Copper alloy; h. 2⅜ in. (6 cm). Scandinavian, about 600. Purchase, Leon Levy and Shelby White Gift, Rogers Fund, and funds from various donors, 1991 (1991.308)

tion of representational art, underlies medieval art. The filigree is derived from Roman or Mediterranean techniques; the working of the cloisonné garnets was contributed by the Goths through Frankish artisans.

A stylized bird of prey (fig. 62) datable to about 600 illustrates the connections between Scandinavian and Anglo-Saxon artisans. In this brooch the bird's head and leg are in left profile, while its rounded body and flaring tail are presented frontally. The extended right wing curves behind the tail. The edges of the neck, wings, tail, and upper leg are outlined by pseudobeading. Nine stamped (punched?) crayfish decorate the tail. The brooch is said to have come from a Scandinavian collection before being sold in London. It is more or less comparable to examples from Scandinavia and England as well as to representations of birds of prey on openwork disks from Germany. However, the high relief of the eye, sharply curved caplike eyebrow, and sharply curved beak are typical features of the first Vendel style. The Vendel style (600–800) is named after the pieces excavated at this royal site in Sweden. It is further characterized by

crouching men and animals that have become serpentine beasts weaving through intricate interlaces and was probably inspired by Continental animal style II, usually attributed to the Langobards. Because the MMA bird has features comparable to those from the site at Vendel, we tentatively ascribe it to Scandinavia, although other features ally it to Anglo-Saxon birds. However, none of the comparative works has the elegance and allure of this piece. In the mid-seventh century the conflict between the Celtic and Roman liturgies was resolved in favor of the Roman rite. This resolution had profound artistic consequences. Strengthening British ties to Rome facilitated the flow of Mediterranean influences to the island. As a result the Roman-Byzantine figurative style found its way to Britain. Thus, during the Migration period Britain had a profound spiritual and artistic influence on Continental culture, and it received and modified ideas from the Continent.

SCANDINAVIA, SIXTH TO ELEVENTH CENTURY

Scandinavia never became part of the Roman Empire and was as a result slow to accept principles of townships and of the Christian religion, both of which strongly influenced its later development in the tenth and eleventh centuries. Trade contacts enabled Mediterranean art to reach those tribes in Scandinavia that had not migrated. But, in spite of the contact, Scandinavian artists developed their own style, which differed from other Continental styles. As defined by Marilyn Stokestad, in the Scandinavian style each animal is a complete being and each interlocks with its neighbor; human figures are represented by generalized shapes, which are compressed into physically contorted, artistically elegant patterns, and hands and fingers, emphatically enlarged, resemble paws and claws.

The Viking period began, most scholars agree, in the late eighth century when these Scandinavians raided Britain and Ireland. The first raid of a known date was mounted by Norwegians who attacked the monastery on the island of Lindisfarne. In 789 the Northmen, whom the Byzantines called barbarians, first raided southern England. In 793 the Norwegians destroyed the church of Lindisfarne, a great Northumbrian center of learning, and ravaged the monasteries of Jarrow in Northumbria and Iona in Scotland. In 834 the Danes invaded Dorestadt (Netherlands). Probably datable to this raid is a small bronze Viking belt loop (fig. 63), said to have come from Dorestadt. Whereas many Scandinavians went "a-Viking," the majority stayed at home.

As we have seen, the Goths, Gepids, Langobards, and other Germanic peoples had, by the fifth century, left their homelands in the "island" of Skåne on the Baltic Sea and were living in central and southern Europe. Natural boundaries, such as inlets of the Baltic Sea and mountains, perpetuated the lack of unity between the tribes that remained in the north. Their cultures show contacts with workshops in Germany. The Metropolitan has a north German (Baltic) crossbow fibula (fig. 64) with stylized animal heads at both ends terminating the bow. The piece was described by Stephen Foltiny as a rare type of north German brooch, of which comparable
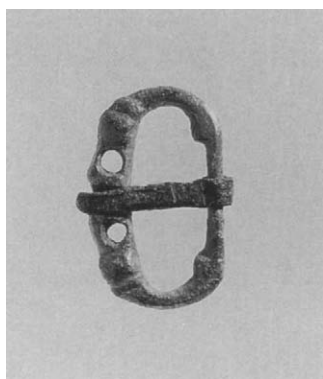
63 *Loop and tongue of a buckle.* Copper alloy; h. 1¼ in. (3.2 cm). Early Viking, 8th century. Gift of Bastiaan Blok, 1991 (1991.260.13)

64 *Crossbow fibula.* Gold, electrum; l. 1⅞ in. (4.8 cm). Baltic, 7th century. Gift of Alastair B. Martin, 1955 (55.63)
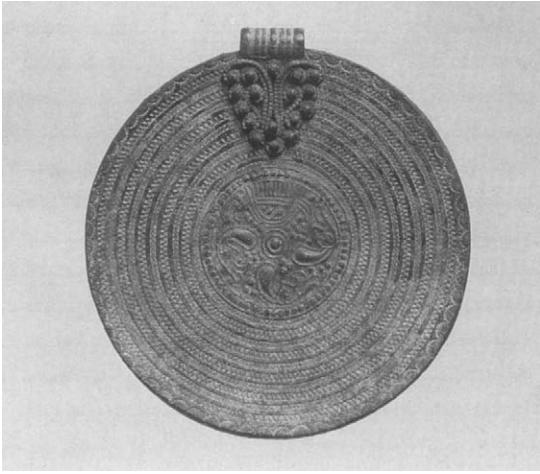
65 *Bracteate mounted as a pendant.* Brass gilt;
    h. 2⅛ in. (5.6 cm). Early Viking, 7th–8th century.
    Rogers Fund, 1984 (1984.300)

examples are found in Denmark, northern
Germany, Sweden, and Norway of the sixth–
eighth century. Recently J. P. Lamm of the
Historiska Museet, Stockholm, called my attention
to two similar examples from two different sites in
Sweden. Quantities of Frankish glass have been
found in Norway. As noted by Philip Dixon, dur-
ing the fifth century, when the Western Roman
Empire collapsed, a stream of Late Roman
and Byzantine coins reached the Scandinavian
peninsula, perhaps from the sale of furs. From
the sixth century on the Baltic countries grew
more and more remote from the rest of Europe.

A large number of Roman and Byzantine gold
medallions have been found in Scandinavia, and
the Scandinavians also made imitations of them
(struck on only one side). The decoration of
such bracteates ranges from portraits inspired by
imperial examples to narrative scenes and animal
ornament. In 1984 the Metropolitan purchased a
gilt-brass bracteate mounted as a pendant (fig. 65),
which dates to the seventh–eighth century. The
central medallion is formed of three stylized
animal heads, each attacking its neighbor. The
borders consist of concentric circles alternating
with bands of zigzag pattern. The bracteate is
comparable to a gold example in the British
Museum which has been dated to the eighth

century. The British Museum piece has been
published as a late example of a specifically
Gotlandic type, which is rarely found beyond
the confines of the island of Gotland.

As mentioned above, animal style II (and the
first Vendel style) is distinguished by elongated
beasts—whose bodies could be mistaken for
serpents were it not for their feet and long muz-
zles—which are intertwined irregularly but in
easily readable designs. The junction of the feet
and body is not stressed. The limbs and bodies
are uniform and the contours are parallel. The
overall effect is more flowing than that of ani-
mal style I. Animal style II is sometimes credited
to Anglo-Saxon artisans and, perhaps more often,
to the Langobards. The second phase of animal
style II is marked by chip-carved surfaces rather
than flat bands and by a far more complicated,
rhythmic animal style—long, sinuous, elegant,
and interlaced. A beautiful, recently conserved
button-on-box fibula (fig. 66), in the Metro-
politan's collection exemplifies this late phase of
Scandinavian style II and consequently may be
dated to the early or mid-eighth century. When
the fibula came into the Museum in 1947, it was
incorrectly assembled and has only recently
been reassembled to correspond to the eighth-

66 *Button-on-box brooch.* Bronze, gold, silver, red
    glass or garnet; l. 7 in. (17.8 cm). Scandinavian,
    early 8th century. Fletcher Fund, 1947 (47.100.25)

46

67 *Box brooch.* Copper alloy; diam. 1⅞ in. (4.9 cm). Early Viking (Gotland), late 8th–9th century. Pfeiffer Fund, 1992 (1992.59.1)

69 *Oval brooch.* Bronze gilt; l. 4½ in. (11.4 cm). Middle Viking, 10th century. Purchase, Fletcher Fund and Bequest of Gwynne M. Andrews, by exchange, 1982 (1982.323.1)

century fibula from Othem, Sweden. The entire surface of the head, foot, and disk interior was originally filled with garnets or colored glass, as the two remaining garnets between the buttons on the foot suggest.

Animal style III, which succeeded animal style II, appeared in the late eighth century. It is characterized by bird-headed creatures with beards and a general variety of animals—including one sometimes identified as a lion, which has elongated extremities and disproportionately long paws. Such creatures soon broke away from the interlace style and developed into the gripping-beast style of the early Vikings. An outstanding Viking box brooch (fig. 67) illustrates this transitional style. Among the variety of sinuous interlaced bodies with bird heads,

elongated extremities, and exceptionally long paws are two on the sides of the brooch that can be identified as feline creatures. The top of the brooch is divided into four areas, one of which contains a feline form. The remaining areas are filled with animals in the "gripping beast" style.

The Metropolitan has recently acquired a pair of animal-head brooches (fig. 68), whose extreme stylization seems to defy identification. In fact, pieces of this type are usually known as boar's-head brooches—perhaps because of the significance of the boar in Norse religion as an associate of the god Frey. The tactile appeal of these brooches—with their smoothly modeled surfaces, their contours suggested by fine cast

68 *Pair of boar's-head brooches.* Copper alloy; l. 1⅞ in. (4.5 cm). Early Viking (Gotland), late 8th–9th century. Pfeiffer Fund, 1992 (1992.59.2,3)

70 *Box brooch.* Bronze, niello; l. 2⅛ in. (5.5 cm). Late Viking, about 1000. Purchase, Fletcher Fund and Bequest of Gwynne M. Andrews, by exchange, 1982 (1982.323.3)

71 *Boar's-head brooch.* Bronze; diam. 2⅜ in. (6 cm). Middle Viking, 9th century. Purchase, Fletcher Fund and Bequest of Gwynne M. Andrews, by exchange, 1982 (1982.323.2)

beaded borders, and their subtly recessed ears—is enhanced by a glossy patina. The box brooch and the boar's-head brooches were worn by women in Gotland. The first was worn at the collarbone to secure the shawl, and the second were worn in pairs on tunic straps.

From the ensuing middle Viking period—late ninth to the mid tenth century—the Museum has a large oval, intricately ornamented brooch. This piece (fig. 69), like the boar's-head brooches mentioned above, would have been worn as one of a pair to secure the straps of tunics worn by Viking women but in Norway and Sweden rather than in Gotland. Its symmetrically grouped decorative motifs are made up of recessed lines with sloping sides derived from Late Roman chip carving. The resulting chiaroscuro is heightened by traces of gilding best preserved on the lip of the separately cast collar.

The late Viking period (950–1100) is represented in the Museum's collection by a high, circular example of a box brooch with traces of niello (fig. 70). It too is decorated in the cast, chip-carved style. The collection also houses a stylized, boar's-head brooch (fig. 71) which, unlike the earlier examples of the type in this Museum, is decorated with cast crosshatchings.

CAROLINGIAN ART, LATE SEVENTH
TO EARLY NINTH CENTURY

By the late seventh century the kingdom of the Franks had become a major force in Europe. In the early part of the century Chlotar II (r. 613–29) and Dagobert (r. 629–39) had been forced to surrender most of their administrative authority to the landed nobility. The kingdom then consisted of three semi-independent regions, each with its own laws and officials. Under the family of Pepin, Austrasia (the northern and eastern Germanic region) finally prevailed over Neustria and Burgundy. In 687 Pepin II of the Carolingian dynasty became the effective ruler of most of the Merovingian line of Frankish kings. When Pepin II died in 714, he was succeeded by his illegitimate son Charles Martel (The Hammer). In the battle of Poitiers in 732 Charles defeated the Arabs who had crossed the Pyrenees in 720. In 738 he defeated the Saxons on his eastern frontier. Pepin achieved all this while he held the title "mayor of the palace" (leader of the aristocracy); the title of king was not bestowed on him until he became sole ruler in 751. After the death of Charles in 741, Pepin and Carloman, his sons, shared the government of the kingdom according to Frankish (following Roman) tradition. In November 751 the last Merovingian king, Childeric III, was formally deposed, and Pepin the Short of the Carolingian dynasty was anointed king of the Franks by the pope. This coronation marks the official end of the Merovingian era and the beginning of the Carolingian period. Pepin initiated the reforms and policies on which his son Charlemagne (742–814) built his empire: greater centralization and royal control over economic and monetary policy, the extension of Frankish royal power, the expansion of monastic landed wealth, and, last but not least, the extension of Frankish interests into Italy. In 754 Pope Stephen II asked Pepin's help against the Lombards who had conquered the exarchy

of Ravenna in 751. Pepin crossed the Alps and defeated the Lombard king, restored the temporal power of the pope in Rome, and granted the papacy the provinces of Central Italy which had previously belonged to the Byzantine Empire.

The greatest of the Anglo-Saxon missionaries was Wynfrith, born in Devonshire about 675. When he traveled to the Continent, he first visited Rome rather than the Frankish court. Under his new Roman name, Boniface, he received papal authority to attempt the conversion of the Germanic tribes. Gregory II named him bishop and in 732 Gregory III made him an archbishop. In 741 Carloman summoned the recently created archbishop, an action which inaugurated a new era of cooperation between church and state and was to set the pattern for centuries to come. Boniface was commissioned to reform the entire Frankish church, and Carloman incorporated the decrees of the synods of bishops into the law. After a brief but highly successful career, Carloman resigned from his office in 747 and withdrew to the monastery of Monte Cassino, where he died in 754.

In 774 Charlemagne was crowned king of the Franks and Lombards and in 800 Holy Roman Emperor. At this time Europe was more politically unified than it had been since the end of the Roman Empire. The church, in its secular capacity under the bishops and in its monastic form, expanded in wealth and power. Influences from older cultures—from Byzantium, Italy, Syria, Egypt, and Scandinavia—were absorbed creatively by the Frankish artisans. The broadening of the cultural base in the seventh-century Merovingian kingdom is well documented in the secular and Christian art of this period.

Jewelry from the tomb of the Merovingian queen Arnegunde (d. 570), excavated in 1959 in

the crypt of the abbey church of Saint-Denis near Paris, shows that by the mid-sixth century, the various Germanic styles had penetrated the art of the Frankish court and the higher levels of artistic patronage. The queen was identified as the second wife of Chlotar I (511–561) by the gold seal ring she had been wearing. The shoes-trap buckles and counterplates (fig. 72) found in the tomb were examples of animal style II, made of an alloy of silver and copper, gilt cast in the lost-wax process with niello highlights. As we have seen, this style appeared more or less simultaneously in Scandinavia, upper Italy, and the Frankish-Alemannic regions during the last quarter of the sixth century. The importance of the pieces from the queen's tomb lies in their documenting of an international style practiced by Frankish artisans. If we did not know that they were found in the tomb of a Frankish queen, we would perhaps label them as Anglo-Saxon or Swedish, noting with interest the pen-etration of Burgundian(?) influence in the niello highlights.

The large buckle and counterplate (figs. 73 and 74)—made of silver covered with gold sheet and decorated with filigree and green-and-blue

73 *Large belt buckle and plaque.* Silver, gold sheet, garnets, glass, niello; Frankish (tomb of Arnegunde), third quarter of 6th century. From *Dossiers de l'archéologie* 32 (January–February 1979), p. 59
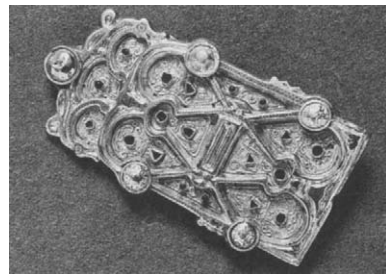
74 Counterplate of belt buckle seen in fig. 73

glass paste settings with incrustations of garnets—represent a new synthesis of the Pontic poly-chrome style and Mediterranean influences. They foretell a new mode of adornment in which the gold disk and quatrefoil fibulae (pls. 6 and 11) were to reign supreme.

Thus, as Peter Lasko points out, it is obvious that it was no longer necessary for Frankish rul-ing classes to rely on alien eastern styles for adornment and decoration. Consequently over the next seventy-five years, the bow, bird, and small cloisonné fibulae faded from fashion and were replaced by new modes showing a confla-tion of Mediterranean, eastern, and Byzantine influences. The large gold disk and quatrefoil fibulae remained in favor from the seventh cen-tury well into the medieval period.

This broadening of the cultural base in the Frankish kingdom in the seventh century was largely the result of increased contacts with the

72 *Shoe buckles, counterplates, and tabs.* Silver alloy, copper gilt, niello; Frankish (tomb of Arnegunde), third quarter of 6th century. From *Dossiers de l'archéologie* 32 (January–February 1979), p. 63

Mediterranean world. This development owed much to more settled political and economic conditions in the kingdom, but the major impetus came from the growing power of Christianity and the church. There was a great increase in the number of Frankish monasteries following the arrival of the Irish monk Saint Columban at the end of the sixth century. The monasteries were primarily noted for their manuscripts, but many artisans who had been making secular works and objects for adornment probably now worked for the church making liturgical vessels and reliquaries.

In the late seventh century Irish-influenced Anglo-Saxon monasteries became centers of large-scale book illumination. The Venerable Bede (675–725) was one of several British churchmen to take home Late Antique works of art (Bede is especially known for the manuscripts he collected on his stays in Rome). Thus, the figurative and narrative styles of the Mediterranean were fused with Germanic decorative styles and Celtic tradition. The synthesis took place in the Hiberno-Saxon kingdom of Northumbria, in the monasteries of Jarrow and Lindisfarne among others. Works produced in Ireland (the ancient name of which was Hibernia), Scotland, and northern England have so many features in common that the area is treated as a single cultural province and termed Hiberno-Saxon. The Hiberno-Saxon style was carried by British missionaries to all parts of Europe from the end of the seventh throughout the eighth century, but it did not make a strong impact on Frankish art before the late eighth century.

We have noted that by the beginning of the seventh century Byzantine influence was the salient feature of Langobardic art. This is evident in a Langobardic gold disk fibula (pl. 7) which has a surface covered with filigree, a border formed of braided gold wire, and a center marked by a reused Roman cameo. We also noted the interaction between Langobardic and Frankish artisans. Thus, it is not surprising that other features of Byzantine goldwork are found on contemporary Frankish gold disk fibulae. The fibula that may have come from the workshop of Eligius (pl. 6) is a case in point. Like

Byzantine examples, it has filigree decoration on the surface and a braided-wire outer border (as well as a braided-wire star forming its principal surface decoration). It also has another Byzantine feature: a wreath of beads surrounds the central setting (in Byzantine art these beads are always pearls perforated in the center, but in this example they are beads held in place by triangles formed by a strip of wire). Yet another Byzantine feature known to Frankish goldsmiths was the box setting for stones or glass paste. A Frankish quatrefoil fibula from the late seventh–early eighth century exemplifies this type of setting (pl. 11). Among the riches of the MMA's collection of early Byzantine jewelry is a pair of bracelets which exhibit two of the elements just mentioned (pl. 12). Along the edges of the hoop of each bracelet pearls and tiny gold beads are strung alternately on fine gold wires. Between these pearl borders are pairs of box settings—one of which still retains its emerald plasma—that alternate with sapphires, each set in an oval mount and held by prongs.

The same type of setting is prominent on the obverse of the Enger reliquary (fig. 75) which falls at the end of a long series of Merovingian reliquaries and is usually considered to be late eighth to ninth century in date. The central setting is surrounded by a wreath of pearls, and the upper left setting contains a classical intaglio, thus representing Mediterranean, Langobardic, and Byzantine traditions. The bird, fish, and dragon motifs are rendered in cloisonné enamel, a tradition that David Buckton has shown was preserved in northern Europe. The reliquary's surface, with its garnet, glass-paste, and enamel inlay in red, green, blue, and white, recalls the polychrome style which originated in the Pontic region and was perpetuated by the Visigoths in their inlaid buckles (pl. 8) and by the Franks in their cloisonné disk fibulae (pl. 5) and purse clasps (fig. 27). The gold partitions, however, recall directly the work of the Ostrogothic goldsmiths in the Pontic region and later in northern Italy (fig. 24). Only the silver-gilt plaques on the reverse—showing under triple arches Christ between two saints above and the Virgin and Child flanked by Peter and Paul below—speak of the Carolingian renaissance, the deliberate

75 *Enger reliquary.* Silver gilt, precious or semi precious stones, pearls, cloisonné enamels, glass and garnet inlays. Late Merovingian–early Carolingian, early 9th century. Staatliche Museen, Berlin

reversion to the art of antiquity sponsored by Charlemagne. The royal court and the imperial monasteries were the main vehicles for this renaissance. In addition to the splendid reliquaries, book covers, and liturgical vessels, Carolingian goldsmiths also produced accessory objects. Strap ends, which because of their small size and narrow width are described as manuscript clasps, fall into this category. The Metropolitan's collection contains a particularly charming example (fig. 76) whose tip represents the head of a harmless beast with a rounded mouth similar in style to the creatures terminating some Langobardic fibulae from Nocera Umbra, Italy. The Museum's clasp shows a bird surrounded by vine tendrils, with a clarity typical of the Hiberno-Saxon animal style. This clasp probably dates to the end of the seventh to the eighth century, when the Hiberno-Saxon style was carried throughout Europe.

In the Insular style as practiced on the Continent, the elongated bodies of individual animals are indicated by bands which are completely entwined. Scooping necks and tails and small three-cornered leaflike endings are also

characteristic. Striations on the bandlike bodies—like those seen earlier on the large silver-inlaid Burgundian buckles (fig. 38)—is another stylistic element. The culmination of Insular influence on the Continent is seen on the back cover of the Lindau Gospels from the cloister of Lindau (fig. 77), thought to have been made in one of the monasteries founded by British mis-

76 *Manuscript clasp.* Bronze gilt; l. 1⅟₁₆ in. (2.7 cm). Hiberno-Saxon on the Continent, late 7th–8th century. Purchase, 1895 (95.15.73)
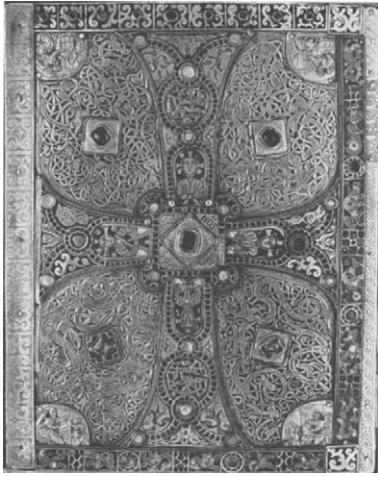
77 *Lindau book cover (back)*. Gold, silver gilt, niello,
mother-of-pearl, cloisonné and champlevé enamel,
glass paste and garnet inlays. Carolingian (Insular
style on the Continent, perhaps Salzburg), early
9th century. Enger, Westphalia. The Pierpont
Morgan Library, New York

sionaries, probably in the south German,
Alemannic region in the early ninth century.
The book cover bears a chip-carved, silver-gilt
animal interlace that is bordered at the top and
left side by animals and birds in cloisonné
enamel, a technique preserved in the Roman

provinces of northern Europe. The four
repoussé evangelist portraits in the corners are
later additions. The animals of the Creation
(quadrupeds, amphibians, snakes, and undefin-
able creatures in a dense vegetation) surround
the four arms of a cross decorated with four ena-
mel images of Christ. The figures of Christ and
the roundels above them on the upper and lower
arms are bordered by finely partitioned gold
cells filled with garnets, a technique familiar
from Ostrogothic, Frankish, and Anglo-Saxon
goldwork. However, the two roundels on the
upper and lower arms are examples of the grip-
ping-beast style, which was earlier seen in the
Museum's Viking box brooch (fig. 67). The fig-
ures of Christ are rendered in the flat two-
dimensional figure style of the Christian East.
An example of this style is the Metropolitan's
openwork plaque showing an equestrian saint
orans (with arms outstretched in supplication)
(cf. fig. 37).

This survey of the rich collection of portable
art in The Metropolitan Museum of Art reveals
that Carolingian metalwork evolved quite natu-
rally out of Frankish and earlier tribal metalwork
traditions. All that was needed to form the com-
posite foundation of medieval art was the revival
of Roman sculptural and architectural models.

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