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THE MAGYARS

Their names, identity and ancient homeland



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INTRODUCTORY

This collection of papers is the result of lengthy research necessitated by contradictory evidence and misleading treatment of Magyar history.

A number of theories exist about the identity of the Magyars and one of them is based on Scythian ancestry. The probability of Scythian descent continues to be included, somewhat conditionally, in recently published scholarly works.¹ One must remember, however, that according to the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language² and in accordance with the international school of thought, the Scythians were Iranian-speaking Eurasian nomads. Nonetheless, that genealogy somehow managed to filter into Hungarian history and gained significant popularity.

According to another well-received and widely-held theory, the Magyars are the descendants of the Huns, who galloped into the Carpathian Basin in the 5th Century and left in haste some time later, allegedly promising to return. Indeed, they returned in 896 but the scholarly establishment decided that they were not Huns but Magyars and they found Slavic population living in Hungary.

But the Huns are deemed to be Turkish speaking equestrian nomads, according to the Dictionary of the Magyar

¹ Bárczi és Országh 1962: 307, vol. 6

² Benkő 1967: 767, vol. 3

Language;³ consequently, they could not have been Magyars. Regardless of this fact, the Magyars probably inherited their Hungar name from them. No matter how wrong these concepts are, the view that the Magyars are either Scythians or descendants of Attila's Huns, has survived until the present day.

To further complicate matters, the Hungarian Academy of Sciences keeps the dubious Uralic origin of Magyars in place, despite that belief being long past the need for revision.

Historical works about the Hungarians and about the ancient population of the Carpathian Basin is so extensive and so diverse that the process of research had to be narrowed down to original historical sources and other trustworthy works that treat the subject objectively.

Old chronicles provide the most reliable information for historical research. The writers of those events were close to the time when they happened; some of them were even participants. They inform us correctly that the Hungarians, who entered the Carpathian Basin in 896, descended from the Huns.

One of the earliest extant written records about the Hungarian ingress into the Carpathian Basin in 896 is the *Gesta Hungarorum* written in Latin by an unknown author.⁴ The purpose of the *Gesta* is to relate the origin of Hungary's

³ Bárczi és Országh 1960, 379, vol. 3

⁴ Anonymus c. 1200. Reprinted by Magyar Helikon in 1977. Hungarian translation by Dezső Pais.

nobility and their kings. To recount their conquests and accomplishments under the leadership of Álmos then his son Árpád. Members of that group constituted the ruling caste in historical Hungary until 1526 when Ferdinand I, the first Habsburg to do so, claimed the throne of the country.

Names of the local population and of the neighboring countries are sporadically mentioned in the *Gesta* as they came in contact with the Hungarians. Close examination reveals the following ethnic names: *Bavaroy* (Bavarian); *bulgaros* (Bulgarians); *Blachý* (Unidentifiable. Probably Turkic.); *carinthinos* (Carinthians); *crovat-* (Croats); *cumanoy* (Cumanians); *francie* (Franks); *grecoy* (Greeks); *hungari* (Hun tribes); *moger* (Magyar); *polonoy* (Polish); *romanoy* (Romans); *rusticoy* (Russians); *scithicoy* (Scythians); *theotonicoy* (Teutons i.e. Germans); *picenatis* (Pechenegs). Evidently, the name of every group of people, with which the incoming Hungarians had contact, was recorded by Anonymus in a recognizable way by present-day standards. Except for the name *sclauī*.

The *sclauī* (proper Latin spelling *sclavi*) is the plural of the Medieval Latin *sclavus*. It could not have meant Slovenes, as the translator of the *Gesta* interpreted, because it accompanies ethnic names whose members speak a Slavonic language even at the present time. At other places, the term *sclavi* denotes the local population and then it turns up accompanying a generic name. That would allow the rationalization that the word *sclavi* does not convey national identity but rather a condition, way of life or social status.

The word is present in the Latin text as follows. Pars 9: *Terram habitarem sclavi, Bulgary et Blachy ac pastores romanoy* (The land is inhabited by *sclavs*, Bulgarians and Blachs in addition to the shepherds of the Romans); Pars 11: *et fecisset ibi habitare sclavos et bulgaros* (and for settlers *sclavs* and Bulgarians were moved there). It defies logic that *sclavi* or *sclavos* was meant to mean Slav because Bulgaria's population was Slavic.

Furthermore, Pars 12: *sclavi habitatores t[er]re audientes adventii eoy timuerunt valde et sua sponte fe[cit] almo duci subuigatierunt* (the *sclavs* who inhabited the land heard of their nearby advance, seized by fear, voluntarily offered submission to chief Álmos); Pars 50: *Sclavoy et panonoy gentes et regina vastaverunt et eoy regions occupaverunt* (They wasted and occupied the *sclav* and Pannon regions and country up to there).

In the 20th Century, however, following the contemporary trend, the problematic *sclauui* in the Gesta was translated as 'Slovenians' which resulted in an assumption that the population of the Carpathian Basin was Slavic before the Hungarian ingressions. Members of the ruling caste are always denoted as *Hungars* [Hungarians] in the Gesta. The ethnonym *Moger* is also mentioned and interpreted by historians as the early form of Magyar.

Constantinos Porfirogennitos (905-959), emperor of the Byzantine Empire, was born about ten years after the Hungarian ingressions. In his *De administrando imperio*, ethnic names are noted inside and around the Carpathian Basin, mostly within the 948-952 periods. Of those names, speakers

of the Slavonic language are: Βουλγαρους (Bulgarians); Χρωατοι (Croatians); Ρως (Russians); Σερβλοι [sic] (Serbians).⁵ The name Σκλαβοις (Sklavis) also appears once and judging by their geographic location, they may have been vassals of the Russians.

The Greek Σκλαβοις have survived in major and influential languages like the German *Sklave*, the French *esclave* and the Spanish *esclavo* having identical meaning with the Medieval Latin *sclavus* ‘slave’. This makes it obvious that Anonymus was referring to the subjugated and enslaved local population whom he described by their lowly status, not by their ethnicity.

The concept of pre-Hungarian Slavic presence in the Carpathian Basin intensified during the 46 years of Russian occupation of Hungary (1945-1991) and students of history were indoctrinated accordingly. An entire generation grew up believing that their Magyar ancestors were intruders in their own country. This fallacy has been accepted by historians in Hungary and abroad.

The origin of the name Slav is uncertain. Five particular possibilities, among many others, are explored by Slavicists to solve this complex problem.

1. *Slav* is derived from the Slavic *slava* ‘glory’ i.e. ‘the glorious ones’.
2. *Slovo* ‘word’ i.e. those who ‘speak the same language’.

⁵ Moravcsik 1988: 3051

3. The less attractive ***slue-/slei-* ‘slow’.⁶
4. Geographic origins include **slov-/slav-* > *slověne /slovjane* ‘people living by a body of water’ and *slov* ‘hill’.⁷
5. The name originated at the slave markets in Europe. “Whoever bought slaves of Slavic origin and asked for their names always heard the afore-mentioned names.

The [...] often and clearly repeated part of the names remained in the memory of the foreign trader. Thus, the meaning *slave* was transferred to the name *Slav*. Here Baudouin de Courtenay compares the term Latin *sclavus*, German *Sklave*, French *esclave*, etc. with such transfers of the meaning as *Schweizer*⁸ ‘doorman’, *Wegier*⁹ ‘traveling merchant’, etc.” This theory is still recounted in dictionaries, encyclopedias and other related works.¹⁰

As I have documented, there is no unanimous consent regarding the origin of the name Slav. Nevertheless, the name now represents a large group of people who speak the same language called Slavonic, but the genetic makeup of those people is diverse. For example, the Polish and Ukrainian people speak a Slavonic language, but a scant majority of

⁶ Rudnyćkyj 1960: 68-70

⁷ Rudnyćkyj 1960: 68-69

⁸ Primary German meaning of *Schweizer* is ‘Swiss’.

⁹ Primary Polish meaning of *Wegier* is Hungarian (i.e. Magyar).

¹⁰ Rudnyćkyj 1960: 70

them are genetically related to the majority of Magyars. For this reason, the question arises: what would be the best way to denote a nation? Is this best done by the language they speak, the country they live in or by their genetic makeup? Are artificially created political boundaries determinative in identifying a distinct nation?

Because only a limited reliance can be placed upon the *sclavus-Slav* etymology, it is, therefore, fitting to subject it to a thorough analysis. The first observation is that the Latin term *sclavus* appears only in non-Roman Latin literature in the Middle Ages meaning ‘slave’.¹¹ This would explain why the unknown Hungarian chronicler used the expression *sclavi*, the plural of *sclavus*, when referring to the enslaved autochthon Magyar population in the Carpathian Basin. Chroniclers in Rome proper used the appellations *captivus*, *servus* to denote slaves.

That the Latin *sclavus* meant ‘slave’ and not ‘Slav’ is clearly indicated by Domino du Cange and Carolo du Fresne.¹² In order to understand the sense of *sclavus*, the context has to be known. One of the examples cited by the authors show that the context is in favor of the meaning ‘slave’ (captive): *Cum Christianis Sclavis, sic namque vocantur captivi* (As the Christian Sclavs, likewise are the slaves called). Conclusively, the terms *sclavus* and *Slav* have nothing in common. One denotes living conditions or social status while the other is a language spoken by different nationali-

¹¹ Lozinski 1964: 19-30

¹² Cange and Fresne. 1883-1887: 357, vol. 7

ties. It is unfortunate that scholars are unable to agree on this position consistently.

Much of what was written about the correlation of the Latin *sclavus* and the Slavonic *Slav* is speculative and can be argued only on theoretical grounds. In real life the slaves of Rome were comprised of many different nationalities that vastly outnumbered those of Slavic origin. Moreover the slaves in Rome were recorded by their ethnic names when in captivity. According to the publication Colosseo¹³ “East of the Coliseum are the remains of large barracks for gladiators in Rome where they were held in imprisonment. Among them was the Ludus Dacicus and the Ludus Gallicus, both took their names from the place of origin of the gladiators”. There is mention of Thracians, on page 54 of the same publication, but not of Sclavs.

One additional point should be addressed in connection with the “c” in *sclavus*. It is a morphological discrepancy. The “c”, pronounced “k”, is present in the Latin *sclavus* but absent in the name *Slav*.

Many dictionaries rely on Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm’s etymology, which attempts to prove that the English *slave*, German *Sklave* and their variants in other languages are derived from the Byzantine Greek Σκλάβοι [Sklavi], the equivalent of the ethnonym *Slav*. The presence of the letter “k” in the German *Sklave* is elaborated on briefly, based on the erroneous assumption that the word originated in the

¹³ Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali Soprintendenza Archeologica di Roma. (p. 42)

Slavonic languages and the insertion of “c” between “sl” is a Roman peculiarity. It is impossible to condense seven pages into one paragraph, but part of section 2 of their etymological analysis sufficiently indicates their general conception.

*...der wie in den oben erwähnten formen auch hier erscheinende k-laut, der bei slavischem ursprung des worts natürlich secundär ist, dankt wahrscheinlich lateinisch sprechenden bewohnern der östlichen Donaugebiete seinen ursprung. c zwischen sl einzuschieben ist eine romanische eigenthümlichkeit...*¹⁴

(Translation: ...as in the above mentioned forms [Σκλαυηνοι, Σκλαβηνοι, Σκλαβος, Σκλαβοι] it appears here also with the k-sound, which is naturally secondary considering the Slavic origin of the word, thanks probably to the Latin speaking inhabitants of the Eastern Danube region. To insert “c” between “sl” is a Roman peculiarity...).¹⁵

The assertion that the word may have originated in the Eastern Danube region is correct, but according to new evidence it was coined in the Greco-Latin parlance of the East-Roman Empire.

No meaning is assigned to the word, however, and the Sclavi’s spoken language is not mentioned either in Byzantine Greek or Latin documents. It has been suggested, that the Avars’ expendable slave-combatants were called by such

¹⁴ Grimm 1905: 1310, vol. 16

¹⁵ The assistance of Joseph Simon in evaluating the German text is acknowledged.

name. Beginning in 531 C.E., groups of barbarians are referred to as Σκλαβηνοί (Sklavini) in connection with military events along the lower Danube River.¹⁶

The Avars, who at that time occupied the Carpathian Basin and the area north of the lower Danube, like other people of the steppe, were in the habit of pressing the local subjugated people into military service and deploying them as front-line non-essential warriors. Those soldiers were *slaves* in every sense of the word. Their slaughter would not diminish the striking power of the elite Avar military forces; hence, the slave-warriors of the Avars were called *Sklavini* or *Sklaveni* in Greek and *sclavus*, *sclavi* in Latin. Then the appellation *sclavi* was extended to the entire population of the occupied land, the source of their recruitments.

The ‘slave’ meaning of *sclavus* was confirmed in the 1960’s when a multilingual dictionary compiled in the Arabic script in the 14th Century emerged. The document is privately owned in Yemen. One of the entries is سكارغا, pronounced *sklava* and means ‘slave girl’ in the contemporary Greek [Greco-Latin] parlance.¹⁷ Morphologically *sklava* is the feminine form of the Latin *sclavus* (male slave).

It is now possible to establish the presence of the *sklavi* in present-day Ukraine, Poland, the Carpathian Basin and the South-East of the Balkan Peninsula as indicated by genetic markers. The genetic evidence indicates that the ances-

¹⁶ Pritsak 1983: 365, 367, 392

¹⁷ Golden 2000: 111, no. 28, section 190-col.C

tors of the Magyars belonged to that ancient European population that was recorded as *sclavi* by medieval chroniclers.

The name *Magyar* requires close examination too. It cannot be etymologized in their present-day language. The name, also spelled *Megyer*, denotes the original inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin.¹⁸ Their name received gradual recognition during more than a thousand years of subjugation by Sarmatian, Roman, Hun, Avar, Hungar, Turkish and Austrian rulers. The entire population of the country was referred to by the name of their Hungar ruling class during the Árpád dynasty's reign (896-1301). The name continued until the Austrian Habsburg dynasty gained power after 1526 but then the name Hungar coexisted with Ungar. Only the serfs, who vastly outnumbered their foreign rulers, called themselves Magyar.

Old Hungarian spelling of Magyar: 1121 Mogioroi, 1150 –moger;¹⁹ 1228 Mogor, 1230 Mogior, 1275 Magyar, 1283 Mogyor, 1286 Magor, 1323 Maghor, 1329 Magar, 1333 Magyar;²⁰ 1399 Magyari, 1510 Magery.²¹

The prevalent hypothesis, advocated and made part of the education system by the powerful Finno-Ugric lobby, is that the name Magyar originated in the Vogul language. Both Hungarian and Vogul are listed as members of the Finno-Ugric language group. The Voguls' name for themselves is *Mańsi* and is derived from *mańś*, an earlier form of the

¹⁸ Krantz 1988: 11, 72

¹⁹ Benkő 1967: 816, vol. 2

²⁰ Szamota 1902-1906: 606

²¹ Benkő 1967: 816, vol. 2

current *mōś*.²² This is the name of one of the two fraternities among the Voguls and Ostyaks.²³ A similar derivation can be ascribed to the *Magy* segment in *Magyar* according to Hajdú.

The second element *-ar*, *-er* is identical with a word meaning ‘male’ and was probably inherited from the Finno-Ugric period, according to the same Vogul-Ostyak hypothesis. It may be part of the modern Hungarian *férfi* ‘male’, *férj* ‘husband’ and *ember* ‘man’.²⁴ These two elements would make the meaning of the compound *Magyar* ‘man of the mańś' fraternity’.

Nonetheless, many Hungarians believe that searching for answers among the Voguls and Ostyaks is like expecting the French to find the origin of their name among the Métis of Manitoba in Canada. The assertion that Magyar is derived from mańś, and restricting its source to the remote and scanty group of Voguls and Ostyaks, is a solution that only touches on exactness and requires further investigation. Leading Hungarian linguists observed the similarity between *mańś* and the Indo-European **manu* ‘man’, Sanskrit *mānuša*, German *Mann* and Slavonic *muzh*,²⁵ but their views have not received adequate attention.

In a vague case like this - when both elements of the name have to be reconstructed from latter forms to obtain

²² Palatalization from Hajdú 1975. Hungarian spelling would be *manys* and *mós* respectively.

²³ Hajdú 1975: 69

²⁴ Benkő 1967: 816, vol. 2

²⁵ Györffy 1975: 24

the necessary requirements for a satisfactory correspondence between two morphemes - name researchers may reach a better understanding by postulating close parallels between other ethnic names of similar structure.

There is no standard to be followed, other than morphological tabulation of related names. This is probably more reliable than other methods used so far. The word-final element *-ar* and its vowel harmonized phonetic equivalents are present in other ethnic names, such as *Avar*, *Bavar*, *Bashkir*, *Illir*, *Kabar*, *Khazar*, *Sabir* and *Tatar*, which inspires the thought that the Turkish *er* ‘man, male’,²⁶ old Akkadian *ir* ‘male’ and the Sumerian *er*, *eri* ‘slave, servant’, (the same cuneiform sign means ‘male’ when pronounced *nita*)²⁷ *ur* ‘man, hero’²⁸ should also be considered as part of the solution - especially the Sumerian ‘slave, servant’.

Those who regard the Sumerian language as an essential part of modern Hungarian may argue that the phoneme *gy* in *Magy* is the palatal counterpart of the alveolar *d* in the Sumerian *ma-da* ‘land, region, country’.²⁹ By adding the final syllable *-er*, the word *ma-da-er* is obtained, which would correspond to a present-day Hungarian spelling *ma-gya-er*, meaning ‘slave, servant of the land’ or ‘man of the land’, that is a ‘native’. The name was then shortened by syncopation to either *Magyar* or *Megyer*, depending on regional dialects. One example of the sound *d* becoming a palatal, viz.

²⁶ Akdikmen 1986: 123

²⁷ Labat 1948: Cuneiform No. 50

²⁸ Labat 1948: Cuneiform No. 575

²⁹ Labat 1948: Cuneiform No. 342

[dj] (Hungarian spelling gy), can be seen by comparing the English *diamond* with the Hungarian *gyémánt*. Both are derived from the Greek *adamas*.³⁰

Other phonetic values of the cuneiform sign for *ma-da* are the Old Babylonian *ma*, Sumerian *ma-a* and Akkadian *matu*. All these words show equivalence with the Finnish *maa* and have the same meaning 'land, country'. The following Magyar surnames appear to be derived from those root words: Mada, Madas, Maday, Matai, Matók, Matos, and Magy. Their old spellings are: 1202 Mada; 1221 Mod, Mot, Matou, Modu; 1202 Mogy; 1214 Matu, Mota, Moda; 1229 Matha, Mogya.³¹

The etymology of Magyar and Megyer implies that *megye* 'county' is also derived from the Sumerian *ma-da*. The generic term *megye* is always preceded by the specific name that denotes the authority to which the county belongs. For example *Csanád megye* is comprised of the personal name *Csanád*, king St. Stephen's nephew, *megy* a front vowel derivation from *ma-da* and the possessive suffix *-e*, meaning 'Csanád's land'. Another example would be *Győr megye* 'Győr's land', i.e. the land owned or administered by the city of Győr.

The Hungarian etymological dictionary lists *m.h.f.rīya* as an early form of Magyar³² referencing the Pais Memorial Volume³³ without further comment.

³⁰ Nogrady 1994: 33-35

³¹ Fehértói 1983: 210, 219, 221, 237, 240

³² Benkő 1967: 816, vol. 2

³³ Bárczi és Benkő 1956.

That transliteration does not agree with *al-Madjhariyya* in the Kitāb al-A'lāk al-nafisa by Ibn Rusta (Ibn Rosteh). His work is dated between 903-913 C.E. but contains borrowings from an earlier geographical treatise of al-Djāyhānī who in turn borrowed from an even earlier but lost historical account dating from the second half of the 9th century.³⁴ Ibn Rusta neither identifies the ethnicity of those people nor their dwelling place.

But “the name *Madjharī* or rather *Madjhiān* (the plural in Persian of *Madjharī*) is also found in the Zayn al-akhbār, a Persian historical treatise composed in the years 1048-1052 by Gardīzī (or Gurdēzī). Gardīzī considers this people to be Turkish”.³⁵ This information reinforces the proposition that the isolated Magyar linguistic pockets, east of the Carpathians, were absorbed by their Turkish (and later Russian) conquerors. But the name of the original inhabitants continued to be used by people of the neighboring countries. A present-day example for such continuation is Tót, the Magyar name for Slovak. The ancient Magyars interacted with Germans of pre-Slavic Moravia who were called Teutons in those days adjacent to the northwest corner of historical Hungary. The Magyar name Tót is the shortened version of Teuton.

There is other evidence that the Magyars of the East assimilated with their conquerors. In his Tabā'ī' al-hayawān (prior to 889 C.E.) al-Marwazī also calls the Hungarians *al-*

³⁴ Encyclopaedia of Islam 1986: 1010, vol. 5

³⁵ Encyclopaedia of Islam 1986: 1011, vol. 5

Madjghariyya, whom he knew still in their ancient homeland to the north of the Black Sea, between two rivers which may be identified as the Don and the Danube.³⁶ He considered those people as being of Turkish origin. Al-Marwazī also took some information from the lost historical account used by al-Djayhānī.

Al-Marwazī's observation is consistent with that of other Arab chroniclers who call the population by their Magyar-like old name but consider them being Turkish. Byzantine sources and the *Gesta Hungarorum* of Anonymus also have this tendency. The ruling caste may have been Turkish in Hungary and east of the Carpathians, but the subjugated autochthon population was Magyar. The area described by al-Marwazī is coincident with the geographic expanse where the haplotype Eu19 is predominant, e.g. historical Hungary, Poland and the Ukraine.

Rudničkyj corroborates this by explaining that the pre-Slavic population of the area west of the Don river - where the incoming Slavs (under the name Antes) initially settled in the 6th Century C.E. - were a people that had been living there since Neolithic times. "Archaeology shows that in few areas in the world has there been through thousands of years so stable a population."³⁷

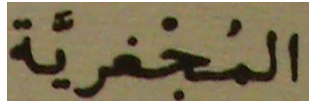
Descendants of those Neolithic people still live in the same area and constitute the majority of the present-day population as evidenced by the genetic marker Eu19. This

³⁶ Encyclopaedia of Islam 1986: 1011, vol. 5

³⁷ Rudničkyj 1982: 1037

inspires the thought that the so called Slavonic loan-words in the Magyar language may have originated in the language spoken by those ancient inhabitants and shared by both languages.

Regarding the presence of the name Magyar in Arabic historical works, the original Arab form that was published by Gyula Németh,³⁸ is worth a close examination.



The contemporary pronunciation of the name above was *el-modžyerijje* according to Németh. That phonetic value is very close to the pronunciation given by the Encyclopaedia of Islam. The only discrepancy is the articulation of the vowels. There are only three vowels in standard Arabic that are considered as independent (important) sounds: *a*, *i*, and *u*.³⁹ Accordingly, it is not surprising that the present-day pronunciation is *el-mudzhreriyje*.⁴⁰ That is, the vowel after the initial *m* should be *u* instead of *o*. The comma-like diacritic, the damma (◌ُ), above the *m* (مُ) represents the vowel *u*. There is no reason to question the Arab linguists' *a* vocalization, albeit they may have been influenced by the well-known ethnonym *Magyar*.

³⁸ Németh 1990: 70

³⁹ Dévényi-Iványi 1987: 99

⁴⁰ I am indebted to George Demmer for his help in obtaining the present-day pronunciation.

To continue the analysis of the phonetic transcription of *al-Madjhariyya* in the encyclopaedia, the dj (د) is pronounced as the *j* in jeep. The gh (گ) is a soft *r* much like the Turkish ğ. The complete phonetic value of the name would be *al-Majrariyya*.

This would mean that the principal element *Madjghar* is an attempt to approximate the present-day phonetic value of the ethnic name *Magyar*. There is no phonetic equivalent for the Hungarian *gy* in the Arabic language; therefore it is substituted by the consonant cluster djgh.

In the Arab language, the relationship to the place of origin is marked by a pair of formatives called *nisba* that indicates descent or membership of a tribe. The *nisba* is comprised of *al-* that precedes the root word and the derivational suffix *-i* at the end.⁴¹ In this case *al-Madjhari* indicates that the bearer(s) of the name belong to the *Madjghar* tribe or community. The word-final element *yya* turns a name into an attribute, like the Hungarian *-ság*. For example the Arabic *hurriyya* means *szabadság* ‘freedom’ in Hungarian. Then the exact meaning of *al-Madjhariyya* would be: belonging to the *Magyarság* (Hungarian nation).

In possession of this information, we can now set out to explore more about the identity and ancient homeland of the Magyars.

⁴¹ Ahmed 2001: xii-xiii and footnote 10.

THE NAMES TESTIFY⁴²***Conference paper***

ABSTRACT: An onomastic probe into the identity of the Magyars with examples from anthropological, historical and genetic analysis. A review of the current misunderstanding that the ethnonyms Magyar and Hungarian denote the same people and of their Uralic origin. Pre-12th century Turkish names of Hungary's ruling caste in the Middle Ages are instrumental in helping us form an opinion about their ethnicity. The Magyar servants and serfs of the same period had names that are etymologically different; they are derived from the Magyar language.

The linguistic interrelationship of Magyars, Finns, Estonians in Central Europe and other Finno-Ugric people in the Ural Region is not disputed only their genetic relationship. The Carpa-

⁴² Precursory works were published in two Hungarian language periodicals. The *Tárogató* May 1996 edition in Vancouver, entitled "Secundus Ingressus Hungarorum Pannoniam", and the *Kapu* June 2006 issue in Budapest entitled "Kik vagyunk mi, magyarok és kik voltak a hódító nomádok 896-ban". The English language text, presented here, was read for members of the Canadian Society for the Study of Names at the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities on May 24, 2009, Carleton University, Ottawa.

thian Region comes forth as the most likely area where the Magyar proto-language developed.

Genetic markers indicate that Magyars, Poles and Ukrainians are more related to each other than to any other peoples in Europe. The genetic relationship between Magyars and Finns is negligible.

*

The origin of the Magyars has been decided a long time ago in favor of the Finno-Ugric theory and is part of the compulsory scholastic curriculum in Hungary. But there are reasons to doubt the ages old rationale and to revisit old explanations by using onomastic resources as a point of departure. The current understanding of the Uralic origin of the Magyars, the origin of their names is scrutinized and a look at other evidence will be presented.

The results of this investigation are not in agreement with the Uralic origin. The name Magyar is not synonymous with Hungarian. They denote two different groups of people: The indigenous Magyars and the invading Turkish Huns and Hungars. Onomastic evidence suggests that it was not the Magyars who conquered the Carpathian Basin in 896 CE but they are the aboriginal people of the area. The findings that have led to this outcome are plentiful and persuasive.

The various current beliefs, such as the Finno-Ugric or Turkish ancestry, have their basis in historical and linguistic research, where researchers provided explanations about ancient Magyar history by using investigative methods they studied and understood. But drawing examples from anthro-

pological, historical and genetic analysis, in support of the results shown by the onomastic probe, would be more beneficial as it would broaden our understanding of the past and establish a new perspective on the present.

The available written evidence of the Magyars' early history is not sufficient to support existing theories. Some of the written evidence comes from Greek sources such as *De Adinistrando imperio*⁴³, others are written as legends that were most likely borrowed from foreign sources. Using onomastic methodology while revisiting the past allows us to identify old words in the form of proper names. They have survived from the middle Ages and may provide us with clues and directions that are not available through historical accounts.

Spoken languages are not as accurate indicators of ancient ethnic relationships as names. Names can provide clues by their etymology that unmistakably point to the language from which they were derived. For example, the following four names meaning 'shepherd' can be connected to their language of origin. *Shepard* would point to English, while *Schäfer* is German, *Berger* is French and *Juhász* is Hungarian.

This simple example illustrates why names are considered reliable sources of information. Languages may change but names retain their original forms, the one used at the time of bestowal with minimum of distortion. With regard to the population of the Carpathian Basin, the majority of per-

⁴³ Moravcsik 1988: 30-51

sonal names among the serfs and servants, recorded in the 12th century, display Magyar linguistic forms and meanings as shown in Appendix A. Some of those names can be traced to the Sumerian language. It follows that no other but a Magyar and Sumerian speaking community would give such names. But names of the ruling class for the preceding centuries, also recorded in the 12th century, were predominantly of Turkish origin. How could that be?

In order to bring light to that part of Hungary's concealed history, the remote past has to be re-interpreted with the help of recently accessible information. Names of leaders in the Middle Ages will be traced to the language of the people who gave them.

What is known about Magyars or Hungarians as they are called in the English-speaking world? The most popular but partially inaccurate belief is that the Hungarians, an ethnic blend of Ugric and Turkish people, migrated southwestward from western Siberia. Their original seven tribes were joined by three of the Khazars during the long journey. The ten tribes then entered the Carpathian Basin in the late 9th century subjugating the local Slavs and Huns.⁴⁴ But their foreign names *Hungar* and *Ungar* suggest differently. They seem to denote two different groups of people, the *Hun-gar* and the *Un-gar*, two names of Asian origin. Variants of both names, with reference to either the country or its people, are still in use throughout Europe.

⁴⁴ The New Encyclopaedia Britannica 15th ed. Vol. 6 p. 154

Language	Term	Language	Term
Austrian	<i>Ungarn</i>	Greek	<i>ungroy</i>
Bulgarian	<i>Ungarec</i>	Italian	<i>ungherese</i>
Croatian	<i>Ugar</i>	Latin	<i>Hungaria</i>
Danish	<i>ungarer</i>	Polish	<i>Wegier</i>
Dutch	<i>Hongaars</i>	Romanian	<i>ungur</i>
English	<i>Hungary</i>	Serbian	<i>ugarska</i>
Finnish	<i>unkari</i>	Spanish	<i>húngaro</i>
French	<i>Hongrie</i>	Swedish	<i>ungrare</i>
German	<i>Ungarn</i>	Turkish	<i>üngür</i>

The only constant segment of each name is *gar*. It outnumbers all other variants like *gur*, *gür* and *kar*. The most frequent initial element is *Un* (9) followed by *Hun* (3). Accordingly, we may assume that *Un-gar* is more recent than *Hun-gar*. That is the form preserved in languages near Hungary. People of those countries had firsthand contact with the group that entered the Carpathian Basin in 896, therefore, must have known who they were. It is unlikely they all made the same mistake and gave them a name derived from the Turkic languages. Nations further away preserved the earlier name *Hungar*, borrowed from the Romans who had direct contact with the Huns.

Ancient Magyars are persistently identified as *Ugric* or *Ugor* in scholarly publications both in Hungary and abroad. These names do not originate in the Finno-Ugric languages but are the distorted forms of the Turkish *On-gur* 'ten-gur', a compound of *on* 'ten' and the term *gur*. But no matter what

the true source may be, none of the names above are derived from the Magyar language. Judging from the list of their foreign names, *on-gur* 'ten-gur' would be more convincing because neither *Ugor* nor *Ogur* but *gur* is still the last element of ethnic denominations in Asia, like *Yugur*, *Uygur* in China, then there are *Saragur*, *Kutrigur* and *Utigur*, the names of Turkic-speaking people. *On-gur* would clearly denote ten tribes.

The name *Hungar* is comprised of *Hun*, the name of a Turkic-speaking Asian people according to the Hungarian Historical Etymological Dictionary.⁴⁵ The first element *Hun* most likely originated in China, spelled *χsiung-nu* in Chinese language literature. However, the name appears as *Hun*, or variants of it in most Asian languages and Hungarian scholars believe this may have been the Huns' own name.

Another explanation is that the name may be a variant of the Turkic *kun*, *kün*, *kum*, *kümün*, *komi* meaning 'man, people'.⁴⁶ The initial consonant was affected by a *k > h* sound shift, resulting in the form *Hun*.

The second element *gar* is a Turkish (Altaic) word, believed to indicate national or linguistic unity of people sharing a common history, like a tribe or a nation. This word, when used as a suffix, may take the form of *ger* (Venger), *gur* (Onogur) or *gor* (Yugor) as required by the rules of vowel harmony as explained in appendix B.

Not enough information is available about the exact

⁴⁵ Benkő 1967: 166, vol. 2

⁴⁶ Németh 1940: 225

meaning of *gur* but a phonetically similar Mongol word may bring us closer to its original context. The survival process of early words in modern languages introduces alterations within the established phonetic laws. *Gyr* (pronounced as *gür*) signifies 'a crowd of people', it also means 'cavalry brigade'.⁴⁷ This would explain the *gür* ending of the Turkish *üngür* for Hungarians. This word may have meant a tribe or a nation in antiquity but in present-day Mongolian the expression for 'all the people' is *gyr ulus*.⁴⁸ *Ulus* denotes 'people, nation and state'.⁴⁹

Hungar, therefore, can be traced first to the Turkic languages, then to China. The name and its elements cannot be etymologized in any other language, including the present-day language of the Magyars, as Hungarians call themselves.

The Huns entered the Carpathian Basin in the fifth century, around 420 CE to the best of our knowledge, and imposed their name on the local Magyar population. That was not an isolated case in such name giving. The Bulgar Turks settled in SE Europe in 488 CE and imposed their name on the local Slavic population we now know as Bulgars. Another example is the German-speaking Franks when they became rulers of the Celtic Gauls in the fifth century; it is from them that France gets its name. Likewise, the name Hungar was thrust upon the indigenous Magyars and they are called by this name throughout Europe, although it denotes only

⁴⁷ Lessing 1973: 391, vol. 1

⁴⁸ Lessing 1973: 377, vol. 1

⁴⁹ Lessing 1973: 873, vol. 1

the thin layer of their Hun-gar ruling class, not the local Magyar population subjugated by them. Therefore insisting on a Magyar conquest in 896 CE would be the same as if the English insisted on being their own Norman conquerors in 1066.

It is important to remember that none of those invasions resulted in change of the local languages. The language of France is still French, the Bulgarians still speak a Slavonic language and English is the language of England. The same should be assumed for the people of the Carpathian Basin after the Hun and Hungar invasion. There is no evidence that the indigenous Magyars went through a complete language change.

The Handbook of the Turkish World, published by the Research Institute of Turkish culture, clearly states that the language of the European Huns was Turkish.⁵⁰

Being in minority, Hun personal names have not survived in large numbers in the Magyar culture except for Csaba, Attila and the non-Hun name of *Buda*, Attila's contemporary, mistakenly recorded as his brother who plotted to usurp his throne. His name, derived from the Sumerian language, suggests otherwise.⁵¹ This part of history is obscure, but Buda must have been some sort of a leader of the local people before the Hun invasion. It can be reasonably argued that he wanted to see the Huns go and his status reinstated. We do not know this, but his name suggests that *Buda* was

⁵⁰ Türk Dünyası El Kitabı 1992:116, vol. 1

⁵¹ Nogrady 1996: 52-55

not a Hun and we know that Attila had him brutally slain. *Buda* is still a popular surname and part of many toponyms in Hungary: A continuity that can only be accomplished in a homogeneous society.

Attila is a frequent forename in Turkish-speaking societies, believed to originate in the Turkish language, but *Buda* is unknown.

Before the Turkic Hun invasion, the Magyars had no word for 'interpreter', probably because they understood the language spoken in that part of Europe at the time and there was no need for it. Their present word for 'interpreter' is *tolmács*, derived from the pre-13th century Turkish *tilmaç*, *tulmaç*. This may be an indication that the Turkish ruling class needed interpreters for communicating with the local Magyar population.

The Hun names, etymologized in Appendix C unmistakably indicate their Turkish origin.

Péter Váczy renowned Hungarian historian said: The Huns were Turks. Not only their outward appearance was Turkish, their language was that too. It has been successfully demonstrated that the Huns spoke a language like the Turks, Uygurs and Avars.⁵²

The Hun invasion may have been the first time the Magyars of the Carpathian Basin were exposed to the Turkish language. This would be an important factor in identifying the location and the time frame when the approximately

⁵² Cited by Németh 1940: 65

300 pre-13th century Turkish loan words entered the Magyar language.

Finno-Ugric is a branch of the Uralic family of languages spoken by the Magyars, Finns and Estonians in Central Europe and by minor communities in the Ural Region, like the Khanty, Mansi, Mordvin, Udmurt and Komi. This linguistic relationship was extended to chart the history of the people who speak these languages. The foothills of the Ural Mountains were designated as the original homeland of the entire language family.⁵³ Thus, international scholars, being unaware of the limitations this designation would impose on future research, named this family of languages Uralic. The Finno-Ugric theory supports this with the assertion that the Magyars came from the Ural Mountains, the traditional eastern boundary between Europe and Asia, moved south-west as a whole then conquered the Carpathian Basin.

Foreign educated linguists proposed this common ancient homeland in the Ural Region in the 19th century and it became mandatory for other disciplines that contribute to the history of Hungary.

The linguistic part of the Magyar-Finn relationship is well-founded and accurately researched, but the range of shared linguistic features seems to represent only one segment of the older common agglutinative language that extended from Central Europe to the east including the Ural Region and parts of the Middle East. A language in which complex words are formed by a string of affixes attached to

⁵³ Hajdú 1975: 34, 36, 39

the word root is called agglutinative.

The genetic relationship with the rest of this language family and the Uralic origin of the Magyars are the only questionable assertion of the Finno-Ugric hypothesis. They are sadly mistaken assertions and the weakest points of the theory.

Our experience in modern history and written accounts in past history have given us an understanding of how populations migrate and move, thus the Uralic origin is difficult to accept wholeheartedly. We know from later population movements that both migrations and dispersions take place at slow pace by individuals or family units, unless political or economic situations force short-term despondent movement. As for the Magyars, if it were possible for them to migrate from the Ural Mountains to the Carpathian Basin, as the Finno-Ugric theory proposes, then it was equally possible for them to expand in the opposite direction at an earlier time.

History shows us and logic tells us that entire nations are reluctant to abandon their natural homelands en mass and seldom do it. As well, the idea of the Magyars traveling thousands of miles across hostile territories under the guidance of their leaders, grow in numbers during the process and then conquer a foreign country which was populated by people unrelated to them, as suggested by the Finno-Ugric theory, is unrealistic.

The migration of people is only understood if we place ourselves into their world and join them in their journey. Hunger, adversities of the weather, illness, food problems

and availability of drinking water have to be overcome. Not everybody is prepared to undertake such a journey, only a few. These are, in most cases, the adventurous young folks, they would be the ones to move away, but stay within the range of the old established family residence where they could return in the event of an emergency. The older established members of society are more likely to remain in place and only a small percentage of the young would venture beyond familiar grounds. They would continue to advance in directions free of natural barriers or human resistance. The vast majority of the population would always remain in the original homeland as they do nowadays.

The movement of Magyars should be viewed in this concept. The linguistic evidence, present in Europe, in the Ural region and in parts of Asia, is just that; the presence of related languages not ancient homelands or sources of a migration process. The argument that the Ural region was the original homeland of the Finno-Ugric people would only be sustainable if the genetic indicators overwhelmed those in the Carpathian Basin. However, they do not.

Where does this leave us? Should we abandon all recognized thinking on this subject? Based on linguistic evidence, the Magyars were present in the Ural Mountains and are established in the Carpathian Basin. What if we looked at the reverse, namely, that the proto-language Magyar is derived from originated in the Carpathian Basin and speakers of that language formed settlements in the Ural Mountains and in the intermediate areas. That ancient expansion was probably followed by a return by some back to the original

homeland in the Carpathian Basin, a statistical reality repeated by many nations, when their territorial acquisitions were abandoned either by free will, expulsion or by yielding to military action. The possibility of a competing expansion may be attributed to the prehistoric diffusion of the Altaic Turks and Mongols from Central Asia. Their expansion probably prompted the Magyars to yield territory then regroup and congregate in Magyar speaking pockets in specific areas of Eastern Europe and Asia. These were the areas identified by historians as either ancient homelands or transitional dwelling places during the migration process from the Ural Region to the conquest of the Carpathian Basin.

But in reality, as demonstrated by known history, the prerequisite for a conquest is an economically viable and militarily strong homeland, able to support such action and subdue native resistance. Such strong homeland did not exist for the migrating Magyars at the time of their supposed conquest of the Carpathian Basin. It did exist for the Turks though.

There are no names or other tangible evidence available from the most ancient times but Grover S. Krantz, professor of physical anthropology at Washington State University, arrived at the conclusion that the Magyar language was present in the Carpathian Basin as early as the beginning of the Neolithic age.⁵⁴ That would put their presence in historical Hungary before 8,000 BCE. They dispersed from there and populated Central and Eastern Europe, then parts of Asia. Is this

⁵⁴ Krantz 1988: 11, 72

conclusive?

During the last decade of the 20th century, a team of geneticists carried out a survey of 22 genetic markers in Europe to sort out which populations are most closely related.⁵⁵ They looked at genetic identity as recorded on the Y-chromosomes that are inherited only through the male lineage. Most European men could be sorted into ten different Y chromosome lineages. It was found that the descendants of the marker M173 have the highest frequency today in Europe. M173 is an ancient Eurasian marker that moved into Europe c. 35,000 to 40,000 years ago.⁵⁶ The marker M173-C is a component of haplotype Eu19.

For the purpose of this study, it is not essential to fully understand of what follows but the end result of this scientific research, based on the laws of nature, will clearly show the geographic distribution of genetically related people. Every person receives an allele from each parent. The full replacement of the old allele may take tens of thousands of generations. Haplotypes, which are the final unit of measurement, are defined by a number of markers and alleles.

The haplotype, relevant to the group of people the Magyars are genetically most related to, is code-named Eu19. The frequency of Eu19 is 60.0% in the examined Magyar population, 56.4% in the Polish and 54.0% in the Ukrainian. Consequently, the Magyars, Poles and Ukrainians are more related to each other than to any other people. Runner-ups

⁵⁵ Semino and Passarino 2000: 1155-1163

⁵⁶ Gibbons 2000: 1080-1081

are the Udmurts in the Ural region (37.2%), Macedonians (35.0%), Croatians (29.3%) and the Czech-Slovakians (26.7%). The survey identifies the present Ukraine for the expansion of Eu19 types following the last glacial period (20,000 to 13,000 years ago) during which human groups found refuge in the northern Balkans.⁵⁷

An independent survey by Béres of 28 genetic markers was carried out from 1984 to 1989 that included several ethnic groups in Hungary and their counterparts abroad. The result of the survey indicates that, despite earlier assumptions, present-day Magyars are not related to the Finns genetically.⁵⁸

With this many questions and doubts about the Finno-Ugric theory's ancient Magyar homeland in the Ural Region, it is easy to see why this review is necessary.

Written evidence of human presence that can be linked to the language spoken by the early inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin was unearthed in Transylvania near Tartaria in the form of three inscribed clay tablets.⁵⁹ Transylvania at present is confined to Rumania but it was part of historical Hungary until 1920. The clay tablets were found at the bottom of an ash-filled pit in the ruins of a Neolithic village. Some of the signs on the tablets are identical with Sumerian signs in early Mesopotamia. The startling detail of these tablets is that they are made of local clay and are more than

⁵⁷ Semino and Passarino 2000: 1155-1163

⁵⁸ Béres 2001

⁵⁹ Makkay 1990

1000 years older than their Sumerian counterparts, according to carbon-14 dating. That would put them in the chronological range of the time Krantz places the Magyars in the same geographical region.



Enhanced replica of the Tartaria tablet

Many attempts were made to give meaning to the pictographs on one of the tablets (above) but our attention is directed to the symbol comprised of two horizontal lines across a vertical one in the lower left quadrant. This pictograph denotes a leader called Buda, a symbol that survived the vicissitude of time and is still part of the Hungarian coat of arms (below).⁶⁰ The pictograph and its phonetic value Buda would not have survived under dissimilar linguistic and cultural conditions. Favorable conditions had to be present for its continued existence.



The Hungarian coat of arms

⁶⁰ Nogrady 1996: 54

Bálint Hóman, professor of history at Péter Pázmány University in Budapest and a leading Hungarian scholar during the inter-war years, dismissed the Uralic origin of Hungarians and their language. He advocated the Carpathian region as the most probable place where Magyar speaking people have emerged.⁶¹ The Hungarian Cultural Foundation, Atlanta, GA, published his findings posthumously in 1985.

According to him, we can only talk about Uralic, or more correctly Upper-Volga cohabitation and multilingual communities, but can talk neither about Uralic prehistoric people and ancient homeland nor a common ancestor language. There has been only shared occupancy of the same land by people of different origins and of dissimilar languages. To insist on the one-time existence of a cohesive Uralic people, their ancient homeland or common first language would be just as ill-considered as to insist on a Sumerian-Semitic, Etruscan-Latin, Gaul-Frank, Anglo-Saxon or Bulgar-Slavic ancient homeland and language.⁶²

As the long ago abandoned ancient Magyar homeland in Asia, the Uralic theory also has to be put on the heap of false ideas. Anthropological, linguistic and historical evidence, separately and collectively, demonstrate that ancient Magyars diffused from the Carpathian Region to the east.

The diffusion of early Magyars from the Carpathian Region may be explained by the Svidler culture (c. 11,000 -

⁶¹ Hóman 1985: 123-128

⁶² Hóman 1985: 113

5,000 BCE). It was probably a revived version of the Eastern Gravettian culture (c. 24,000-14,000 BCE) that extended from Central Europe to the Ural Mountains before the height of the last ice age. At that time the population of northern Europe moved south but repopulated the area thousands of years later as the ice retreated. The language of that culture was most likely an agglutinative type, typical of the Uralic and Altaic languages, which include Magyar, Finn, Turkish, Japanese and Sumerian. The presence of Magyar linguistic elements is difficult to explain any other way in the language of Finno-Ugric people in the Ural region, like the Udmurts.

This is what Gyula László a leading Hungarian archaeologist had to say about it:

*The people called Uralic may be identical with those who brought about the Svider culture that moved east and north from the southern part of present-day Ukraine. He points out that contact was established between the people of the Svider culture and the Kunda-Sigirs north of them, separately group by group, which resulted in the formation of a Lingua Franca derived from the Svider and Uralic languages. They were able to understand each other with the help of that auxiliary language. These composite, cognate languages were later identified as Finno-Ugric.*⁶³

The oldest records of the agglutinative languages are

⁶³ László 1986: 27-28. (Translated by the author).

in Sumerian but there are Sumerian words in the Turkish language as well as in Magyar. Thus, an early Magyar-Turkish contact is becoming increasingly evident but, if it is genuine, its first occurrence is difficult to demonstrate both in time and place. The commonalties and differences make it difficult to make conclusions. The Sumerian language, for example, has words that are traceable to both Magyar and Turkish but others are present only in either Magyar or Turkish but not in both. Samples are given in appendix G. Genetically the Turks are not related to the Magyars, their frequency of haplotype Eu19 is too low, only 6.6%.

There is no shortage of complexities in comparative linguistics, especially when corroborating languages of prehistoric times, but the presence of Sumerian words in both the Uralic and Altaic languages point to an older common language. The reconstruction of that older common language would be difficult and time consuming for lack of written documentation, other than the Sumerian clay tablets of Mesopotamia.

We can, therefore, cautiously suggest that the language of the Svider culture was part of that older common language as it predated the Mesopotamian civilization. A culture cannot exist without means of communication, a common language had to be spoken by those people and most likely it was the generic form of the languages now classified as agglutinative. The present linguistic combination of this area is predominantly Turkic and Slavonic. Many of their words, some Turkic and more Slavonic, are shared with the Magyar language. These words, now classified as loan-

words by Hungarian linguists, may have their origin in the language spoken by the early inhabitants of these areas.

The Huns, Avars, Pechenegs and other Turkic speaking tribes known as European Huns, were most likely to ingress into Svider territory from the South-East. The Slavic people did the same from the opposite direction. Thus the Eurasian steppe zone became a melting pot for peoples of diverse origins.

The large Svider domain extending from Central Europe to the Urals then disintegrated into small linguistic pockets between the populous Turkic and Slavic settlers by the time of the Hun invasion of the Magyars in the Carpathian Basin. The Magyar linguistic pockets of the area east of the Carpathians had lived first in a symbiotic relationship with the Turkish and Slavonic newcomers then they were absorbed by them.

The group, referred to as Sumerians, was most likely part of the Gravettian people and must have had a compelling reason, like a climatic change caused by the last Ice Age, to separate from that homogenous prehistoric community to move south.

Although it is impossible to speak with confidence but climatic changes, such as the last Ice Age, may have played a role in causing a migration process from Central Asia, as Leonard W. King pointed out.⁶⁴ He suggested that the area including Southern Turkistan was densely populated in antiquity; its inhabitants lived in houses built of sun-dried

⁶⁴ King 1910: 53-55, 352-358

bricks, like in Mesopotamia. Their earliest stratum contains the remains of a Stone Age culture. Designs on painted potsherds resemble those found at Susa, an ancient city now in ruins at the village of Shush near Dezful, South West Iran. Baked clay figurines from the Copper culture may prove an early cultural contact with the Sumerians.

If some of the early Sumerians were part of the Gravettian culture's Central Asia branch, then the most likely route of their migration may have taken place through Iran.

We may also note, without pushing conclusions beyond the limit of available evidence that the use of the semi-precious stone lapis-lazuli by the Sumerians is in favor of early contact on their part with Central Asia. Lapis-lazuli, a stone of azure blue color was mined only in Bakshan, north Afghanistan at the time of the Sumerians.⁶⁵

Mesopotamia was probably sufficiently populated to resist their settlement in the northern regions, a reason for them to settle in the sparsely inhabited southern marshes. There, they drained the swamps by digging a network of canals and then set up irrigated agriculture and developed the first known civilization of mankind. But the reason for their inclusion in the Uralic and Altaic language families is the agglutinative language they spoke and the 5000 year old written records they left behind. Their cuneiform tablets are written evidence of their language being cognate with Magyar and Turkish.

The presence of the Sumerians in Lower Mesopotamia

⁶⁵ Mallowan 1965: 22

at the confluence of the Tigris and Euphrates rivers, just north of what is now the Persian Gulf, can be attested as early as 3450 BCE, but their records speak of the times before the Great Flood (c. 4500 BCE).

Pictographic writing on clay tablets, identical to the Tartaria tablets, emerged at that time and gradually developed into cuneiform writing during the next thousand years. At about the same time, during the fourth millennium BCE, a culture similar to the Sumerians' flourished at Erősd in Transylvania,⁶⁶ but there is no indication of the spoken language, or what those people called themselves. The culture at Erősd would attest to the continuity of the Tartaria culture in that area.

There is no further written evidence either as to the population or to the language spoken in the Carpathian Basin until the Roman conquest of Pannonia in 39-35 BCE. The chronological void is partially filled by misleading legends pertaining to the origin of Magyars, recorded by chroniclers in the Middle Ages, summarized in appendix D. However, the names in these legends are not derived from the Magyar language but most likely originate in the Semitic languages in the Middle East where their counterparts existed long before they were recorded in Hungary. These legends, in spite of being fantasies rather than facts, are still subjects of conflicting reviews in recent publications.⁶⁷

Some evidence about the Magyars is recorded in Roman

⁶⁶ Childe 1929: 109

⁶⁷ Kristó 1996: 71, 76, 94, 119, 165-167

chronicles in an elusive way after the beginning of the Common Era. The first such evidence is the presence of *Bato*, the name of two leaders in the western part of the Carpathian Basin in 6 CE. These men were leaders of the resistance against Roman occupation.⁶⁸ *Bató* is still a surname in Hungary, derived from the Sumerian *bad* 'bat, scepter, stave' a possible common source of Buda, and the Magyar *bot* 'stick'.⁶⁹

The presence of this name in the Carpathian Basin suggests that, thousands of years after the Tartaria tablets were inscribed, a language similar to Sumerian was still spoken and names were derived from it. A seemingly incredible theory, but supported by credible evidence, worthy of discussion at length because something similar happened 300 years later in the 4th century when Roman chronicler Marcellinus Ammianus jotted down *marha*, *marha*⁷⁰ 'ox, ox' a derogatory Magyar epithet that translates as 'stupid ox'. The Magyars do not enunciate the adjective 'stupid' when referring to someone as a 'stupid ox'. In their culture it is axiomatic that an ox is stupid. Ammianus attributed this word to a people he called Limigantes.

⁶⁸ Cook et al. 1934: 369, vol. 10

⁶⁹ Nogrady 1996: 52-55

⁷⁰ Seyfarth 1978: 177



The Carpathian Basin

The language of the Limigantes was not noted by Ammianus, we only know that they swore in Magyar while being angry at Roman Emperor Constantius II at Acimincum, near the confluence of the Danube and the Tisza rivers. The Hungarian name of the place is Szalánkemén but was changed to N. Slankamen after Serbia annexed the area in 1920. We also know that *marha* is not part of any other language but Magyar and Sumerian. It is part of present-day Hungarian vocabulary and used in a reduplicated form only in extreme anger. It is not a word of defiance or battle-cry as interpreted by Ammianus.

According to Ammianus, the Limigantes were slaves of the Sarmatians. Their name may be derived from the Latin

limes 'border line, frontier', a vague description of where they lived.

But they were natives of the Carpathian Basin according to contemporary records. Their territory included the marshy land between the Danube (Duna) and the Theiss (Tisza) rivers, an area prone to frequent inundation.⁷¹

The Limigantes, recorded by the present form of their name *Magyar* in 1275, did not achieve emancipation until 1848, shortly before the outbreak of the two year long War of Independence from Austrian rule. They were called *jobbágy*, translated in dictionaries as 'serf' but their status clearly indicated slaves.

The Magyars could not have been the conquering nomads in 896 CE then relegate themselves to the inferior position of slavery and serfdom throughout their history.

Jobbágy is a difficult word to etymologize; it was spelled *ioubag-* in 1116.⁷² The word appears to be a distorted hybrid, fit together from various sources. The initial element *io* is most likely the Magyar *jó* 'good'. The following languages may be considered for the second element *ubag*: Babylonian *abed* 'slave';⁷³ Persian *bande*, *abd* 'slave';⁷⁴ Arabic *abd* 'male servant', its diminutive is *ubayd* 'servant of lower rank';⁷⁵ Latin *iugum* 'slavery'; Greek *opados* 'servant'. Thus the meaning of *jobbágy* would be 'good slave'.

⁷¹ Gibbon 1896: 265, vol. 2

⁷² Benkő 1967: 276, vol. 2

⁷³ Rawlinson 1885: 263, vol. 2

⁷⁴ Lambton 1988: 28, 106, 358

⁷⁵ Ahmed 2001: 3, 214

The Sumerian *bad₅-bad₅* 'defeat'⁷⁶ may also be considered in the sense of being an enslaved, defeated ex-enemy. Sound change between the voiced dental plosive *d* and the voiced palatal plosive *gy* did occur in medieval Magyar vernacular. Examples: *Szilád* > *Szilágy*, *Koród* > *Korógy*. The surnames of two Magyar immigrants in Canada that may have been derived from the source languages above are *Obbágy* and *Obajt*.

The Huns, as discussed above, followed the Romans but their empire collapsed in the Carpathian Basin after their leader Attila died. Some of the Huns then retreated to the east to Turkish territory. Sometime later a new wave of Turkish-speaking people called *Avars* were gathering force in the east then entered the Carpathian Basin. The Avar Kaganate then reestablished the Turkish rule under the leadership of *Bajan* in 568 CE.⁷⁷

More Avar tribes arrived in separate groups from the 6th to the 9th century. Archaeological evidence from 60,000 graves indicates that the majority of the ruling caste was probably of Mongoloid type during the Avar era.⁷⁸ At the same time the vast majority of the common people belonged to the Europid genus.⁷⁹ Those Europid types were most likely the indigenous Magyars.

We know that the title of the Avar ruler was *kagan*,⁸⁰ a

⁷⁶ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 449

⁷⁷ Kürti-Lőrinczy 1991: 48

⁷⁸ Bakay 1998: 139-146, vol. 2

⁷⁹ Kürty-Lőrinczy 1991: 48

⁸⁰ Bakay 1998: 223, vol. 2

Turkic appellation of probably *Juan-juan* and *T'u-yü-hun* origin, first noted around 400 CE.⁸¹ The kagan's wife was called *hatun* 'queen' in Turkish and *qatun* 'queen' in Mongolian.⁸²

Avar names that survived in contemporary chronicles are all derived from the Turkish language. Samples are given in appendix E.

The beginning of the end of the Avar Kaganate commenced with Charlemagne's reign. The Frankish army embarked upon a successful campaign in 791 against the Avars. Another offensive was launched by his son Pépin in 796 and the invasion of a Bulgarian force in 803, was lead by Krum khan.⁸³

Life was in haste and confusion after the demise of the Avar rule until another Turkish-speaking group, the troops of Árpád, crossed the eastern Carpathians in 896 and took control of the area referred to as Historical Hungary.

Books written about the arrival of Árpád's people would fill a library. Historians describe the event as "conquest", but in reality it was the relocation of another Turkic occupying party from the Turkish mother country to reinstate their rule in the Carpathian Basin. Their entry is called *honfoglalás* 'settlement' in the Magyar language, but was incorrectly translated into foreign languages as 'conquest'. Old Hungarian chronicles describe this historical event as *ingress*, from

⁸¹ Clauson 1972: 611

⁸² Golden 2000: 202

⁸³ Kürty-Lőrinczy 1991: 58

the Latin *ingressus* 'to go into, to enter'. There was no unified armed resistance on part of the native Magyar population to stop them from coming in. Turks governed their land for 500 years by then and the Magyars had already given up organized struggle against their Turkish oppressors. There was nothing unusual about a new group of the same fold assuming leadership of their country. An Avar request for reinforcement from the old country cannot be dismissed either.

However, old chronicles, especially the anonymous, recorded some form of opposition under the leadership of *Salán* (also spelled *Zalán*), *Mén-Marót* and *Gelu*. These names are listed in Hungarian publications as derivations from the Turkish and Slavonic languages but no etymology is given.⁸⁴ For example *Zalán* is simply identified as a Turkish word meaning 'thrower, beater',⁸⁵ but etymologically it fits into the Sumerian language: *zal* means 'to persist, to persevere'⁸⁶ to which the antiquated substantive suffix *án*, equivalent of the current Magyar *-ány*, is added. The name denotes a 'firm, steady' person. *Szalai* and *Zalán* are still surnames and forename in Hungary and *Zala* is present in many place names.

The name *Gelu* cannot be etymologized in the present-day Magyar language. It may be a compound of the Sumerian *ge*₁₆ 'bow'⁸⁷ and *lu* 'man'⁸⁸ meaning 'archer, bowman'.

⁸⁴ Ladó 1978: 165, 190, 227

⁸⁵ Kálmán 1978: 37

⁸⁶ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 231

⁸⁷ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 67

⁸⁸ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 330

The ineffective Avar ruling class, weakened by external military defeats, fueled by internal antagonism and passive resistance by the natives, would surely ask for help from their colonizationist kindred dominating the area east of the Carpathian Mountains. That Turkic reinforcement is the one identified as being the "conquering Magyars" by historians in Hungary and abroad. This fallacy, more declared than real, has absorbed well-intentioned researchers for so long that the willingness to change it is not even on the list of contemporary concern. Lack of a strong Magyar hinterland outside the Carpathian Basin at that time, a prerequisite for any conquest anywhere, is in direct contradiction of those people being Magyar.

First we turn to foreign sources to see who they thought the newcomers were. The Greek chronicles are the earliest sources for identifying the representatives from the Carpathian Basin. They were constantly in touch with them and systematically called them *Tourkoi* 'Turk' from the middle of the 9th century until 1075. At that time, Greek emperor Michael Dukas presented a golden crown to the Hungarian king Géza I (1039?-1077) that had an inscription identifying him as *κράλης Τουρκίας* 'king of the Turks'.⁸⁹ It is unlikely that the entire high *échelon* of Greece, envoys and administrators, would be unaware of his true identity and make a major diplomatic blunder like that. Furthermore, it is unlikely that the emperor would have allowed calling the Magyar king a Turk. He was called so because he and the entire rul-

⁸⁹ Moravcsik 1988: 254

ing stratum were Turkish. The Magyar common people, the tillers of the soil, craftsmen and artisans were kept in the background, not in a position to be noticed by foreign dignitaries.

Old chronicles in Hungary recorded Árpád's people by the name *Hungar*, but lately historians and linguists arbitrarily call them Magyar. Byzantine chroniclers recorded the names of foreign nations the Greeks were in contact with during the 10th and 11th centuries. The names, which are translated as *Magyar* by Hungarian linguists and historians, are Οὔγγροι, (Οὔγγαροι), Οὔννοι, Τοῦρκοι, Παίονες, Πάννονες, Σαυρομάται, Δᾶκες, Γήπαιδες, Μυσοί, Γέται, Σκύθαι.⁹⁰ Authors are adamant about Οὔγγροι and Οὔγγαροι being Magyar, but admit that the rest of the names may denote other nations.

The dedication that must have gone into collecting and translating the Greek texts is worthy of admiration, but the most improbable of all possibilities is that Οὔγγροι and Οὔγγαροι were meant to denote Magyar. Their transliterated forms are *Ungri* and *Ungari*; they are the Greek forms of the Turkish *On-gar*. [Method of transliteration: The ου is pronounced as the double 'o' in moon, the reduplicated γγ is 'ng' and the word-final element οι is the same as the double 'e' in meet.] The name *Magyar* was first recorded in 1275 in its present form.⁹¹ Other identifiable forms, like *Mogior*-,

⁹⁰ Moravcsik 1988: 10

⁹¹ Szamota 1902-1906: 606

Moger and *Mogor* were reported in 1121, 1150 and 1125.⁹²

Konstantinos Porphyrogenitus (905-959) in his *De Administrando imperio* reviews the conduct of several nations and their treatment by the Greek authorities. He unmistakably identifies the people adjacent to the Turks in the Carpathian Basin as *Franks*, *Pechenegs* and *Croatians*. He mentions the Turks reigning prince *Árpád* and his father *Álmos* by name.⁹³ This would rule out any notion that the Greeks were in the dark about the identity of nearby nations and their leaders.

The names from the Hungarian *Árpád* era listed in appendix F will sufficiently demonstrate their Turkishness.

Proper names of the ruling class during the Hun, Avar era and of the Hungarian *Árpád* dynasty decidedly indicate their Turkish origin. From other bits and pieces that have come to us from the most ancient times, a fair amount of certainties were demonstrated or deduced.

The evidence, assembled in this brief treatise indicates another Turkish ingression into the Carpathian Basin in 896, not a Magyar "conquest", as believed and promulgated by historians. The language of the local population could not have been Slavonic or Turkish-Hun at that time, as claimed by The Encyclopaedia Britannica, because, like in France and Bulgaria, the invaders adapted to the language of the vanquished. If the locals in Hungary spoke Slavonic then the language of the Magyars would be Slavonic at the present

⁹² Benkő 1967: 816, vol. 2

⁹³ Moravcsik 1988: 30-51

time, like in Bulgaria. But it is not. The Magyars still speak their unique ancestral language that withstood numerous linguistic interventions in the past.

POSTSCRIPT

The research for this paper began in 1996 with the occasion of the 1100th anniversary of the so-called “Magyar conquest” of the Carpathian Basin. At that time I realized that the names of those conquerors had a story to tell but their language is not Magyar but Turkish. Sorting through the multitude of conflicting information and trying to resolve the status of the Magyars lasted for more than a decade.

The spelling of names influenced by the Latin alphabet that has fewer letters than there are speech sounds in the Magyar language have complicated the task. Records were written in Latin, the language of administration in medieval Hungary meanwhile the Magyar language survived as the spoken language of servants and serfs.

The evidence presented in this paper continues from the corpus of my life’s work and does not support the currently acknowledged Uralic origin of the Magyars. However, it is meant to provide a studied and thoughtful thesis, which looks at their history from an alternative viewpoint.

APPENDIX A

Magyar serf names

The names in this list are from the Latin language deed of gift to the diocese of Dömös in 1138.⁹⁴ The document lists the personal names of *jobbágys* ‘serfs’. The group was assembled from various places of historical Hungary and transported to Dömös to serve the local provost. Foreign scribes being unfamiliar with names derived from the Magyar language recorded their names in distorted forms typical of contemporary writings. Noteworthy that members of the ruling caste had names derived from dignified Turkic words while names of the *jobbágys* are derived from ordinary, sometimes disparaging Magyar words. The kind of names generated in a subdued society entrapped in servitude.

Names recorded in the deed	Present spelling	Meaning	Notes
<i>Aianduk</i>	Ajándék	gift	The servant may have been received as a gift.
<i>Baka</i>	Baka	foot soldier	
<i>Bata</i>	Bata	overseer	May be comprised of the Sumerian <i>Bat</i> ‘scepter’ ⁹⁵ and the ad-

⁹⁴ Fehértói 1983

⁹⁵ Waddell 1927: 23

jectival suffix *-a*.

<i>Belch</i>	Bölcs	wise
<i>Bena</i>	Béna	lame
<i>Budosov</i>	Bujdosó	fugitive, outlaw
<i>Cegedi</i>	Szegedi	from the city of Szeged.
<i>Curpas</i>	Korpás	having dandruff
<i>Cuzma</i>	Kozma	burned
<i>Dubos</i>	Dobos	drummer

Cf. Sumerian *ub₃*
‘drum’.⁹⁶ The word-
final element *-os* is
the adjectival suffix.

<i>Ecil</i>	Acél	steel
<i>Edus</i>	Édes	sweet
<i>Egid</i>	Egyed	only child
<i>Elud</i>	Előd	first-born
<i>Elees</i>	Éles	sharp
<i>Erdeidi</i>	Erdődi	forest ranger
<i>Farkas</i>	Farkas	wolf
<i>Fekete</i>	Fekete	black
<i>Fenyés</i>	Fényes	bright
<i>Finta</i>	Finta	dodge
<i>Gal</i>	Gál	pompous

The name may be a
relic from the Sumeri-
an language where *gal*

⁹⁶ Deimel 1939: Cuneiform No. 256

‘noble, high-class’⁹⁷
was a title.

<i>Gegu</i>	Gége	throat	
<i>Gumba</i>	Gombos	button-maker	
<i>Gurgu</i>	Görgő	roller	
<i>Halald</i>	Halott	dead	
<i>Hazug</i>	Hazug	liar	
<i>Numel</i>	Nemél	does not live	
<i>Numhw</i>	Nemhű	disloyal	
<i>Odu</i>	Adós	indebted	
<i>Ogu</i>	Ágas	forked	
<i>Okus</i>	Okos	smart	
<i>Otus</i>	Ötös	fifth-born	
<i>Patkan</i>	Patkány	rat	
<i>Pusti</i>	Pusztai	from the plain	
<i>Rece</i>	Réce	duck	
<i>Remen</i>	Remény	hope	
<i>Saba</i>	Szabó	tailor	Cf. Sumerian <i>šab</i> ‘to cut’. ⁹⁸
<i>Sacas</i>	Szakács	cook	Cf. Sumerian <i>šuku</i> ‘food fare’. ⁹⁹
<i>Samar</i>	Szamár	donkey	
<i>Sanka</i>	Szánkó	sledge	
<i>Sebe</i>	Sebes	fast	
<i>Sele</i>	Szelő	slicer	Cf. Sumerian <i>sil</i> ‘to cut up’. ¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 343

⁹⁸ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 295_k

⁹⁹ Deimel 1939: cuneiform sign no. 285

<i>Sileu</i>	Szülő	parent	Cf. Sumerian <i>sal-la</i> ‘parent’. ¹⁰¹
<i>Simian</i>	Semilyen	nothing	
<i>Sipus</i>	Sípos	piper	
<i>Sugaldi</i>	Szolgádi	descendant of a servant	
<i>Tortou</i>	Tartó	keeper	
<i>Tuda</i>	Tudós	wizard	
<i>Vara</i>	Varró	stitcher	
<i>Vendeg</i>	Vendég	guest	
<i>Vin</i>	Vén	old	
<i>Vir</i>	Vér	blood	

Some of the serfs were transferred from places listed below.

<i>Asavfeu.</i>	Survived as <i>Aszófő</i> in Veszprém County. Derived from <i>aszó</i> ‘intermittent creek’ and <i>fő</i> ‘head’.
<i>Bata.</i>	Present-day <i>Báta</i> in Tolna County. Derived from <i>bat</i> the archaic form of <i>bot</i> ‘stave, scepter’ and the archaic adjectival suffix <i>-a</i> . Modern spelling would be <i>botos</i> ‘overseer’.
<i>Doboz.</i>	This name meaning ‘box’ is unchanged in Békés County.
<i>Durusa.</i>	Survived as <i>Dorozsma</i> in Csongrád County. A probable derivative of <i>darázs</i> ‘wasp’ and

¹⁰⁰ Deimel 1939: cuneiform sign no. 11

¹⁰¹ Gostony 1975: 56

- the Mesopotamian *ma-a* ‘land’.¹⁰²
- Geu.* Toponym in Csongrád County listed as *Algyő*, Lower Győ. Etymology obscure.
- Humur.* A place in a *homor* ‘hollow’. May be the present-day *Homorúd* in Baranya County.
- Hodus.* Frequent element in place names in Hungary, derived from *hód* ‘beaver’ suffixed by the adjective *-os*.
- Sakani.* Name of a bird. Survived as *Zákány* in Somogy County.
- Sebe.* *Sebes* ‘fast’ is a frequent element in place names located by fast flowing rivers.
- Surcudi.* Survived in Békés County as *Sarkad*, the name denotes a place located at the tip of an angular topographic feature.
- Wadasu.* Derived from *vad* ‘wild’ and the adjectival suffix *as*. The name denotes a game reserve. Survived in Győr-Sopron County as *Vadosfa*.
- Zamthou.* Survived as *Szántód* in Somogy County. Comprised of *szánt* ‘to plow’ and the participle *-ó*.

¹⁰² Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 342

APPENDIX B

Vowel harmony

The principle of phonetic agreement between the initial and subsequent vowels in a word is referred to as vowel harmony. The vowels in most agglutinative languages, like Turkish and Hungarian, must either be all frontal (e.g. e, ö, ő, ü, ű) or all back (e.g. a, á, o, ó, u, ú). Loan words from foreign languages compound words and intermediate vowels (e.g. é, i, í) are the only exceptions, they do not require harmonization but all others do. The rules of vowel harmony require that suffixes attached to the root word must all contain either front or back vowels, not a combination of both. If the vowel of the root word happens to be a back vowel, like in the case of Hun, then the vowel of the suffix must be of the same class: -gar.

APPENDIX C

Hun names

ATAKAM, the name of a Hun nobleman, derived from the Turkish *ata* 'father' and *kam* 'shaman'.¹⁰³

ARIKAN was the name of an uncle of Attila. A Turkish name, translates as 'pure blood', that is a 'noble'. It is comprised of *ari* 'pure' and *kan* 'blood'.¹⁰⁴

The name of Attila's wife, recorded as Rekan and Krekan may also be derived from ari-kan.¹⁰⁵

ATTILA, king of the Huns had a name of uncertain etymology; it has also been recorded as *Etele*. This form fosters the notion that he was from the area adjacent to the river *Etil*, *Etel*, *Itil*, the old name of the river Volga in present-day Russia, thus the name *Etel-i* i.e. 'from the Etel', indicated by the derivational suffix *-i* which may change to *-e* if the rules of vowel harmony were strictly adhered to. Turkish sources suggest this derivation.¹⁰⁶

Another explanation is the Turkish *ata* 'father' to which the Gothic diminutive suffix *ila* is attached.¹⁰⁷ This combination would indicate a hybrid name.

However, the Akkadian *etellu* 'hero'¹⁰⁸ would also be an

¹⁰³ Németh 1940: 224

¹⁰⁴ Türk Dünyası El Kitabı 1992: 116, vol. 1

¹⁰⁵ Németh 1940: 224

¹⁰⁶ Türk Dünyası El Kitabı 1992: 116, vol. 1

¹⁰⁷ Németh 1940: 221

¹⁰⁸ Labat 1948, cuneiform sign no. 325

appropriate appellation for a king.

AYBARS was one of Attila's uncles, recorded as *Oibarsios* by Priscos Rhetor, the Greek envoy to Attila's court. The element *-ios* is a Greek ending. The Greeks often substituted an *o* for *a* in foreign languages, thus the name may be read as Aybars.¹⁰⁹ It is a compound of the Turkish *ay* 'moon' and *bars* 'leopard'. Modern Turkish form of leopard is *pars*.

The form *bars* is shared with very early Iranian, probably a loan word. It is one of the animals of the 12-year Turkic animal cycle.¹¹⁰

CSABA, the name of Attila's youngest son is derived from the Turkish *çoban* 'shepherd, herdsman'.¹¹¹ Another possibility is the also Turkish *çaba* 'eager, zealous'.

DENZEK was one of Attila's sons. His name is derived from the old Turkish *tengiz* or *dengiz* 'sea, ocean' [Modern Turkish *deniz*]. The personal name *Tenizek* and the place name *Tengezek* still exist in Turkic Asia.¹¹²

ELLAK was the name of another son of Attila's, recorded by Jordanes a 6th century historian, as Ellac. This is probably an altered form of *Ilek*, a frequent Turkish name.¹¹³

IRNEK, the third son of Attila, had his name recorded as *Ērnakh* by Priskos Rhetor, but spelled *Irnik* in Bulgarian sources. It is comprised of the Turkish *er* 'man, brave man' and the *-ni(e)k* ending. *Irnek-Bay* survived as a Kirghiz

¹⁰⁹ Németh 1990: 151

¹¹⁰ Clauson 1972: 368

¹¹¹ Ladó 1978: 146

¹¹² Németh 1940: 224

¹¹³ Németh 1940: 224

name.¹¹⁴

MUNDZSUK, the name of Attila's father is also derived from the Turkish language. Priskos Rhetor recorded it as *Mundiuchos* and Jordanes as *Mundzucus*. The original form is probably **MONCUK**, which means 'pearl, glass-bead' in Turkic vernaculars. The word is *boncuk* in present-day Turkish. There are many similar names among the Turks, like the old *Er-Monçuk* (er 'man male' is a frequent element in Turkish personal names).¹¹⁵

An alternative explanation would be a person of *Manchu* origin (Hungarian spelling *Mandzsu*) to which the Turkish diminutive suffix *-k* is added. Manchuria is a region northeast of China. In their language *Manchu* means 'pure',¹¹⁶ a probable substitute for 'noble'.

OKTAY was Attila's third uncle.¹¹⁷ He must have been an expert with bow and arrow as suggested by his name. It is derived from the Turkish *ok* 'arrow' and *tay* 'peer'. The name would translate as 'noble archer'.

Another possible interpretation would be *ak* 'white' and *tay* 'colt'.

"We can now proclaim, based on the foregoing information, that the ruling class of European Huns and probably the entire Hun nation spoke the Turkish language, in other words they were Turks. The Turkish names above do not allow any other conclusion. Those names cannot be the results

¹¹⁴ Németh 1940: 223

¹¹⁵ Németh 1990: 152

¹¹⁶ Benkő 1967: 837, vol. 2

¹¹⁷ Türk Dünyası El Kitabı 1992: 116, vol. 1

of some sort of Turkic cultural influence, they must have originated in the actual Hun language itself."¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ Németh 1940: 225

APPENDIX D

Legends

Most popular is the *Legend of the Mythical Hind* that recounts a hunt by *Hunor* and *Magor*, the two sons of *Nimrod*, who chased the deer but never caught up with it. The deer kept luring them and their men toward the Carpathian Basin where they eventually settled. The message of the story is that the Magyars are the descendants of Magor and Hunor is the ancestor of the Huns.

But the narrative seems to describe a people other than the Magyars. The name *Nimrod* cannot be etymologized in the present-day Magyar language, only in the Semitic Akkadian in which *nimru* means 'leopard'.¹¹⁹ Interestingly, a leopard's skin, worn loosely over the left shoulder, was a distinguishing symbol of the Hungarian nobility at the turn of the first millennium and for hundreds of years thereafter. The Magyar name of the garb is *párducbőr kacagány* but only members of the ruling class were permitted to wear it.

The proper name *Nimrod* may be associated with *Nimrud*, also known as *Calah*,¹²⁰ the onetime capital and royal residence of Assyria, near the present-day town of Mosul in Iraq. The city was conquered and destroyed by the combined forces of the Medes, the Babylonians and the Scythians in 612 BCE.

The name of Nimrod's wife was recorded as *Ankisz* in the *Tarih-i Üngürüs*, a Turkish translation of an old Hungar-

¹¹⁹ Labat 1948, cuneiform sign no. 131a

¹²⁰ Genesis X, 11, 12

ian chronicle.¹²¹ Her name is probably an imperfect rendering of the Arab *Anisa*, Hungarian spelling *Anisza*, the feminine of *Anis*, which means 'friendly, sociable'.¹²²

Thus, the names in this legend are not relevant in accounting for the origin of the Magyar nation; they denote individuals whose names originated in the Semitic languages within Assyria. It is unclear how this story came to be part of the Magyar folklore and attained such significance. But it is known that chronicles were almost always the work of one man rather than a committee of academics. Perhaps it was included on request from higher authority to justify the presence of the non-Magyar upper class in Hungary. The head of that upper class was the House of Árpád whose origin is traced back to Nimrod by other chroniclers. Everything points to the Middle East in the story except the name *Magor*, which contains the Turkish element *gor*.

Another well-known legend is the birth of *Álmos*, the father of chieftain *Árpád* who led his people into the Carpathian Basin from Scythia in 896 CE. *Eunodbia*, wife of *Eleud* (Előd?) had a dream while pregnant with *Álmos*. In that dream a bird, much like a vulture, descended on her, then a torrent of water sprung from her groin and washed over a foreign land. The dream was interpreted as a divine sign suggesting that her offspring and his descendants will be famous kings.¹²³

¹²¹ Tedzsüman 1988: 19

¹²² Ahmed 2001: 239

¹²³ Kálti 1358: 22

Eunodbilia became known as *Emese* in the popular Hungarian version of this legend. The name may be derived from the Sumerian compound *geme-še* 'female-seed' from which the present-day surnames *Gémes* and *Gémesi* may originate. Eunodbila is one of those obscure names that resisted all attempts so far to resolve its etymology. It certainly is not a Magyar name and probably that was the reason for substituting it with *Emese* for public consumption.

Again there is a non-Magyar myth that was previously recorded by Herodotus (b. 490 CE) very much the same way. *Astyages*, king of the Medes, had a daughter called *Mandane*. Once *Astyages* dreamt that his daughter discharged such a vast amount of fluid that it flooded his city and then the entire Asia. His dream was interpreted as an alarming sign.

Astyages had a second dream after *Mandane* became pregnant by her Persian husband *Cambises*. In that dream a vine grew from *Mandane's* groin and extended all over Asia. The second dream's interpretation was that his daughter's son would usurp the throne of Media.¹²⁴

The story continues to describe the circumstances of the boy's hazardous life, but eventually he becomes *Cyrus*, king of Persia, defeats *Astyages* and Media becomes part of the Persian Empire.

The *Álmos* legend, therefore, also has its counterpart in the Middle East, though the Medes were not Semites but most likely Iranian stock. Their country, ancient Media, was

¹²⁴ Herodotus, book one 107, 108

located in the NW part of Modern Iran.

APPENDIX E

Avar names

BAJÁN was the first Avar kagan in the Carpathian Basin. His name appears to be compounded from the Turkish *bay* 'rich'¹²⁵ and *-an*, an obsolete Turkish suffix.

BOYLA is a standard Turkish proper name that is part of the Turkish inscription written in Greek letters on the No. 21 gold cup of the treasure of Nagyszentmiklós, spelled *Boilla*.¹²⁶ The treasure is dated for the Avar era. The inscription was demonstrated to be Turkish and was transliterated by Danish linguist Vilhelm Thomsen (1842-1927). Originally Boyla was a high Turkish title but its exact meaning is obscure. "The word is very old, prob. pre-Turkish and possibly Hsiung-nu, but has not have been traced in Chinese texts regarding that people".¹²⁷

Boyla may be an old form of the present-day Turkish *boylu* 'of high stature'.¹²⁸

BOTAUL is another name on the same cup (No. 21) spelled *Boitaoil*, comparable with the Turkic proper name

¹²⁵ Akdikmen 1986: 45

¹²⁶ Németh 1990: 457

¹²⁷ Clauson 1972: 358

¹²⁸ Akdikmen 1986: 58

*Bota*¹²⁹ and the Magyar *Buda*. Both names are derived from the Sumerian *bad*, *bat* 'bat, scepter', cf. Magyar *bot* 'bat' and Turkish *budak* 'twig'. *Botaul* means 'son of bot', the name of a Turkish dignitary. The *aul* ending, suffixed to personal names, is derived from the Turkish *ogul* 'son'.

KAPKAN was another Avar high rank,¹³⁰ probably a compound of the Turkish *kapi* 'gate'¹³¹ and *kan* a 'title used mainly for a subordinate ruler'.¹³² It may denote the captain of a garrison.

TARHAN was a title in great antiquity; it may have been derived from the Chinese *darxan*. The Chagatay *tarxan* was exempt from taxes and the loot from military campaigns was allotted to him.¹³³

Tárkányi 'descendant of Tárkány' is still a surname in Hungary.

TUDUN was the second highest rank after the kagan.¹³⁴ It may be a variant of the Turkish *tutum* 'economy' and denote a dignitary in charge of finance.

¹²⁹ Németh 1990: 459

¹³⁰ Bakay 1998: 226, vol. 2

¹³¹ Akdikmen 1986: 216

¹³² Clauson 1972: 630

¹³³ Clauson 1972: 539

¹³⁴ Bakay 1998: 226, vol. 2

APPENDIX F

Names of the Hungarians

AJTONY was the name of a chieftain at the beginning of St. Stephen's reign. His territory encompassed the area south of the river Maros, to the Lower Danube, presently known as Bánát.

His name undoubtedly originated in the Turkish language. According to one interpretation it is derived from *al-tin* 'gold',¹³⁵ but it is more likely a distorted form of *ay* 'moon' and *ata* 'father'. *Ayata* would be more in line with Turkish appellation.

ÁLMOS was the forefather of the Árpád Dynasty, the son born to Emese in the medieval legend mentioned above. The name has three possible origins, but most probable would be a derivation from the Turkish language.

Aurel Mark Stein Hungarian born British archaeological explorer mentions a Kirghiz chieftain called *Satip-Aldi* in one of his travelogues. The name means 'bought, purchased'. Names like that are classified as protecting names. The meaning of the old Turkish *Almis*, from which the Hungarian *Álmos* is derived, also means 'obtained, bought, purchased'.¹³⁶ Cf. modern Turkish *almak* 'to take, to get, to obtain'. This old naming practice is represented in modern Hungary by the name *Dónát* derived from the Latin *donatio* 'donation, gift'.

The other Turkish explanation of the same name is the

¹³⁵ Ladó 1978: 128

¹³⁶ Németh 1990: 280

title of a Volga-Bulgar ruler, which means 'exalted, majestic'.¹³⁷

A widely believed explanation is that Álmos was named so because his mother dreamt about his promising future while being pregnant. The weakness of this interpretation is that *álmos* means 'sleepy' in the Magyar language. To denote a person dreamt about would be a complex string of prefix-verb-suffix: *megálmodott*. If Álmos' parents spoke Magyar, that would have been the appropriate name. Besides, *Sleepy* is an unsuitable name for a ruling prince.

ÁRPÁD was the son of Álmos and the elected supreme ruler of all the tribes, Turkish and others that belonged to the confederacy. He is credited with leading the confederate units into the Carpathian Basin in 896 CE.

According to the Hungarian scholarly establishment, the name Árpád is derived from *árpa* 'barley', a Turkish loan word, to which the diminutive ending *-d* is suffixed.¹³⁸

Arpad, an ancient city in modern Syria, about 30 km north of Aleppo,¹³⁹ may have significance pertaining to the origin of the name. It was the capital city of a Syro-Hittite kingdom c. 800 BCE. A phonetically close Assyrian adjective *erpu* (*erbu*, *arpu*) 'dark' may have relevance to the name.

CSEPEL. The Unknown Chronicler wrote that chief-tain Árpád appointed a clever Cumanian man to supervise

¹³⁷ Ladó 1978: 129

¹³⁸ Ladó 1978: 133

¹³⁹ McKenzie 1965: 57

his stablemen on an island on the Danube.¹⁴⁰ Because he resided there, the island was named after him. Csepel is still the name of that island on the Danube, a short distance south of Budapest. The Cumanians were a Turkish speaking tribe, *çepel* means 'disagreeable, dull' in the Turkish language.¹⁴¹

JUTAS, the name of one of Árpád's sons, spelled Ιουτοτζας [Iūtotzas] in Greek sources, is derived from the Turkish root *yut* and denotes a 'gluttonous' person. Cf. modern Turkish *yutmak* 'to swallow, to gulp'.¹⁴²

KOPPÁNY was the great-great grandson of Árpád. His name may be a derivation from the Turkish title *kapyan*, *kapān*.¹⁴³ Its original form may be *qapayan*, cf. Chagatai *qopan* 'big, strong, tall, victorious'.¹⁴⁴

KURSZÁN was the name of a chieftain, second in charge but equal in rank to the supreme ruler. The name is of Turkish origin, it means 'vulture'.¹⁴⁵

KUSID. Before Árpád's people entered the Carpathian Basin in 896, the leadership dispatched an envoy to probe the state of affairs and contact the local leadership. The name of that envoy was *Kusid*. This name is definitely not Magyar, it cannot be etymologized in the present-day Magyar language. A phonetically close word is the Persian

¹⁴⁰ Anonymous c. 1200

¹⁴¹ Akdikmen 1986: 413

¹⁴² Akdikmen 1986: 413

¹⁴³ Németh 1990: 284

¹⁴⁴ Kiss 1978:77

¹⁴⁵ Ladó 1978: 183

khorshid 'sun',¹⁴⁶ which became a Muslim name spelled *Khurshed* 'sun'.¹⁴⁷ Though it is a female name at the present time in the Muslim culture, it cannot be disregarded as being the source of the envoy's name. According to old Hungarian chronicles, Kusid's father was called *Kund*, a variant of the Turkish *kende* or *künd(ü)*,¹⁴⁸ a high ranking Turkish title of Mongol origin: *kündü* 'heavy, serious, important, respected'.¹⁴⁹

OND. One of the tribal chiefs of Árpád's confederation. The name is derived from the Turkish *on* 'ten', bestowed on the tenth child in a family.¹⁵⁰

SZEMERE the name of a chieftain during the Árpád era is derived from the Turkish language. It means 'destroyer'.¹⁵¹

TAKSONY, the grandson of Árpád, derived his name from the Turkish language. It means 'fierce, violent'.¹⁵²

TÁRKÁNY, also spelled *Terken*, a title of Turkish high rank slightly inferior to *xagan*.¹⁵³

TAS. A grandson of chieftain Árpád. The name is of Turkish origin: *Taş* 'stone, rock'.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁶ Lambton 1988: 370

¹⁴⁷ Ahmed 2001: 277

¹⁴⁸ Ladó 1978: 183

¹⁴⁹ Benkő 1967: 441, vol. 2

¹⁵⁰ Ladó 1978: 199

¹⁵¹ Ladó 1978: 213

¹⁵² Ladó 1978: 216

¹⁵³ Clauson 1972: 544

¹⁵⁴ Akdikmen 1986: 358

TEVELI, Árpád's grandson, son of Tarkacsu.¹⁵⁵ A probable derivation from the Turkish *tevali* 'succession, continuation',¹⁵⁶ which denotes uninterrupted accession of the male lineage.

TÖHÖTÖM was a tribal chief in Árpád's confederation, his Turkish name means 'head-man'.¹⁵⁷

VAJK. The original pre-Christian Turkish name of St. Stephen, Hungary's first Christian king. Turkish spelling would be *Vayk*, derived from *bay* 'sir, rich' a variant of *bey* 'prince, ruler' to which the diminutive suffix *-k* is added to denote a 'little prince'. Wealth and power were synonymous in ancient Turkish society.

ZOLTÁN. One of Árpád's sons, the head of state from 907 to 947.¹⁵⁸ His name is derived from the Arabic *sultan* 'ruler, authority, power' the title of a Muslim king.¹⁵⁹

APPENDIX G

Sumerian, Magyar, Turkish word comparison

Same word present in all three languages

Sumerian	<i>bal</i>	'hatchet', ¹⁶⁰
(Akkadian)	<i>pâltu</i>	'hatchet', ¹⁶¹)

¹⁵⁵ Moravcsik 1988: 49

¹⁵⁶ Akdikmen 1986:371

¹⁵⁷ Ladó 1978: 220

¹⁵⁸ Ladó 1978: 220

¹⁵⁹ Ahmed 2001: 206

¹⁶⁰ Deimel 1939: cuneiform sign no. 8

¹⁶¹ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 595

Magyar	<i>balta</i>	'hatchet'
Turkish	<i>balta</i>	'hatchet'
(Old Turkish	<i>paltu</i>	'ax' ¹⁶²⁾
Sumerian	<i>sig</i>	'tight' ¹⁶³
Magyar	<i>szűk</i>	'tight'
Turkish	<i>siki</i>	'tight'
Sumerian	<i>šur</i>	'to gush, rain, shower' ¹⁶⁴
Magyar	<i>csur(og)</i>	'trickle, dribble
(Old Turkish	<i>çur</i>	'sound of liquid flowing in- to a pail' ¹⁶⁵⁾
Modern Turkish	<i>çirçir</i>	'trickling spring'

**Same word present in Sumerian and Magyar but not in
Turkish**

Sumerian	<i>gam</i>	'to curve' ¹⁶⁶
Magyar	<i>gamó</i>	'curved, hook'
Sumerian	<i>ir</i>	'ointment' ¹⁶⁷
Magyar	<i>ír</i>	'ointment'
Sumerian	<i>kar</i>	'devastation' ¹⁶⁸

¹⁶² Clauson 1972: 333

¹⁶³ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 592

¹⁶⁴ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 101

¹⁶⁵ Clauson 1972: 428

¹⁶⁶ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 362

¹⁶⁷ Deimel 1939: cuneiform sign no. 159

¹⁶⁸ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 376*

Magyar	<i>kár</i>	'damage'
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Same word present in Sumerian and Turkish but not in Magyar

Sumerian	<i>ur</i>	'root, origin' ¹⁶⁹
Turkish	<i>ur</i>	'outgrowth'
Sumerian	<i>zag</i>	'right' ¹⁷⁰
Turkish	<i>sag</i>	'right'
Sumerian	<i>gur</i>	'thick, dense' ¹⁷¹
Turkish	<i>gür</i>	'thick, dense'

¹⁶⁹ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 203

¹⁷⁰ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 332

¹⁷¹ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 483

BUDA: ITS ORIGIN AND MEANING¹⁷²***Conference paper***

ABSTRACT: The Hungarian proper name Buda was a title in antiquity and may have originated in the Sumerian language. The root bud matches with the Sumerian bad 'rod, scepter' the perpetual symbol of high office and the word-final element -a is identified as an old adjectival suffix present in both the Sumerian and Hungarian languages. The onomastic argument is reinforced by comparison of the Hungarian coat of arms with Sumerian pictographs and cuneiform signs that represent a tree having four branches. The symbol of the tree depicted a ruler in ancient Sumerian society.

One of the objectives of this paper is to demonstrate how helpful names are in the better understanding of linguistic evolution and historical factors that are either poorly un-

¹⁷²First published under the title "Nem oda Buda" in *Tárogató*, Vol. 29, No.11, November 1996: 52-55. *Tárogató* is a monthly periodical of the Hungarian Cultural Society of Greater Vancouver. The English rendering of the Hungarian text was presented to members of the Canadian Society for the Study of Names on May 25, 2002 at the Congress of the Social Sciences and Humanities, University of Toronto.

derstood or are a complete mystery. But the main purpose is to examine the Hungarian proper name *Buda* that is a frequent surname and forms part of many place names in Hungary. It is also present in an old maxim that cautions a *buda* to abandon his intention, otherwise he may put himself and others in jeopardy. The cautioning sentence goes like *nem oda buda* 'not that way buda' and every Hungarian understands it as a warning, but nobody can explain its origin or exact meaning. Yet, there is little doubt that at one time its true meaning was common knowledge, or else it would not have been kept alive by popular sentiment. It may have been coined such a long time ago that its original message was lost in the remote past. It is the word *buda* that makes it difficult to comprehend. Who was this *buda*? This study will try to find the answer.

Documentary evidences indicate that *buda* was part of the old Hungarian vocabulary and culture, but its original meaning has become obscure. Its conscious use is now obsolete in the spoken language, it only survives in old expressions, surnames and place names.

Buda was formed as a single personal name long before the custom of forenames and surnames commenced. Names originating during that period were descriptive in character and were adjectives. The formation of proper names from adjectives is one of the most prominent features of Hungarian naming practices, a trend still followed today in bestowing nicknames.

There are two ways of forming adjectives in the Hungarian language. The suffix *-s* [sh] is affixed to a noun by a

connecting vowel, or the participle -ó [o:] to a verb. Examples: *lant* 'lute' > *lantos* 'lute player' (spelled *Lantos* as a surname), *fon* 'to spin' > *fonó* 'spinner' (spelled *Fonyó* as a surname).

As the greater part of old Hungarian names are adjectives, the secret of *buda* may be unlocked if the word is treated like an adjective. In order to do this, the identity of the adjectival suffix has to be established. It cannot be anywhere else but at the end of the word, which in this case is an *-a*. Therefore, the specific question before us is: was it possible that at the time *buda* originated as a word, adjectives were formed by the suffix *-a* [a]?

We know that this suffix fell into disuse, but once must have played an important role in the formation of adjectives as evidenced by old words and names. Because Hungarians did not differentiate between verbs and nouns in antiquity,¹⁷³ this archaic suffix formed adjectives both from nouns and verbs. At one time in the history of the language the archaic *-a* was superseded by the current participle -ó and the adjectival suffix -s.

The one time concurrent use of the old *-a* and present-day *-s* may be demonstrated by two lexemes that are now common nouns: *gulya* 'herd of cattle' and *ménes* 'herd of horses'. In this case both adjectival forms were used in antiquity for expressing related concepts. More examples can be drawn from surnames such as *Gonda* and *Gondos*. The adjectival suffixes are attached to the root *gond* 'care' in both

¹⁷³ Hajdú 1975: 90

names and denote a 'careful, attentive' person. *Doba* – *Dobó* from *dob* 'to throw', *Bota* - *Botos* from *bot* 'bat, stick', *Dala* - *Dalos* from *dal* 'song'. The list could go on increasing the number of examples until this paper would reach inordinate proportions with no other objective but listing names both in -a and -s.

While there is abundant evidence for the adjectival suffix -a being active in the Hungarian language in antiquity, we cannot disregard the possibility of its presence in another language in the same capacity. In order to find its use in an older cognate language, a journey in time back to the Sumerian language is unavoidable. Cuneiform texts reveal that the Sumerians used the same suffix in the same capacity. This conclusion is largely based on Marie-Louise Thomsen's observation. Though she does not draw a parallel between the Sumerian and the Hungarian languages, she leaves no doubt for anybody, however little acquainted with Hungarian grammar, that fundamental similarities between these suffixes are readily recognizable.

Thomsen explains that "some adjectives occur always, others occasionally with the suffix /-a /"... and "adjectives do not differ morphologically from nominal or verbal stems..."¹⁷⁴ The *šag₅ - ga* [sha:ga] segment in one of her examples *munus šag₅ - ga* 'the good woman' is also present in an honorific form of Hungarian address *nagysága* [nadjsha:ga], which would translate as either 'abundant in goodness' or 'your highness'. The modern form *nagyságos*

¹⁷⁴ Thomsen 1984: 64

means the same thing. Thus, there is no doubt that the word-final element *-a* in *buda* is an adjectival suffix. After its separation from the preceding element, we are left with the root *bud* for further examination.

The search for the origin of the stem *bud* is as complex as the identity of the adjectival suffix *-a* was. Most names have clear meanings and tracing them to the language of their origin does not present a problem. Those names do not require detailed etymological explanations, but others like *Buda* provide scope for speculation and need to be examined closely.

At first glance, owing to its identical orthographic rendering in other languages, Buda appears to be an internationally shared word of various meanings. As a result, Hungarian scholars of the past thought it were derived from similar words in languages other than Hungarian.

As a proper name Buda has been compared with the Gothic *Bote* 'ambassador' and the Slavonic *buda* 'hut' without convincing results. The suggestion that it was fabricated from the Gothic personal name *Bleda* by a medieval chronicler has also been made. The Turkish equivalent of the Hungarian *bot* 'stick, staff' was also considered.¹⁷⁵

Most of these views were set forth in the early periods of onomastic scholarship and are weakened by insufficient historical and linguistic evidence necessary for a convincing argument.

¹⁷⁵ Ladó 1978: 143

This, however, is not the case concerning *bot*, where many unexplored possibilities are available.

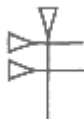
In contrast to all other old explanations, linguistic evidence point in the direction of the *bot* 'stick, staff', which may be the present-day variant of an older form *bud*. The concept that a stick or staff was at first a weapon and then became the symbol of power seems to be a viable path to explore. High-ranking titles may have been derived from the name of the stick and these titles became personal names or place names at later times in a nation's history.

The 'stick', originally a rudimentary weapon of the ancient warrior, slowly evolved from a wooden stick or staff to a bejeweled sceptre and became the symbol of power that endured to the present day. The sceptre of a king, the mace of a prince, the crosier of a bishop and the baton of a high-ranking military officer, all denote authority and demand respect.

This is the way it may have been always. The past is easily forgotten, but without it the interpretation of the present would be incomplete. The staff, as the symbol of authority, must have played an important role in the life of ancient societies. In some old languages, titles and ranks were derived from its name and its pictograph was used in their writing system for depicting the holder of a high office.

The Sumerian polyphone cuneiform sign, representing the trunk of a tree that has four branches (below), denoted such high office.¹⁷⁶

¹⁷⁶ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 295



Sumerian cuneiform sign for tree

This cuneiform sign represented a number of different vocal units, which had related meanings:

<i>bad, bat</i>	'bat, sceptre, stave'. ¹⁷⁷
<i>had</i>	'bat, sceptre'. ¹⁷⁸
<i>pa</i>	'tree, stick, staff'. ¹⁷⁹
<i>pa</i>	'main branch of a tree'. ¹⁸⁰
<i>pa</i>	'overseer'. ¹⁸¹
<i>ugula</i>	'chief, superior'. ¹⁸²

Other Sumerian pictographs of a tree with four branches that represent 'rule, ruler'¹⁸³ and 'prince'¹⁸⁴ reinforce the ancient reasoning concerning trees and leaders.



Ruler



Prince

¹⁷⁷ Waddell 1927: 23

¹⁷⁸ Deimel 1939: cuneiform sign no. 169

¹⁷⁹ Gostony 1975: 94

¹⁸⁰ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 295

¹⁸¹ Deimel 1939: cuneiform sign no. 169

¹⁸² Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 295

¹⁸³ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 86

¹⁸⁴ Labat 1948: cuneiform sign no. 87

There are three Sumerian words in the list above that are of interest to this subject: *bad*, *ugula* and *had*. Their present-day variants are still active as names in Hungary and the symbol of a tree having four branches was the logo of Hungarian kings, signifying their status as heads of state. This symbol is still part of the Hungarian coat of arms.



The Hungarian coat of arms

In addition to the Sumerian language the word *bat* can be found in old Egyptian also:

<i>pet</i>	'sceptre, staff'. ¹⁸⁵
<i>ba</i>	'staff, stick'. ¹⁸⁶
<i>bát</i>	'king of the north'. ¹⁸⁷
<i>bát</i>	'title of a very high official'. ¹⁸⁸

The staff held by a human figure, transliterated as *ur*, was also part of the early Egyptian hieroglyphic writing sys-

¹⁸⁵ Budge 1978: 253

¹⁸⁶ Budge 1978: 202

¹⁸⁷ Budge 1978: 211

¹⁸⁸ Budge 1978: 212

tem and denoted a prince.¹⁸⁹ So, there is at least one parallel use of this symbolism in another writing system.



Prince

The equivalent of the Sumerian *pa* is also present in the Uralic languages, having similar phonetic forms and identical meanings:

Finnish	<i>puu</i>	'tree'. ¹⁹⁰
Vogul	<i>pá</i>	'tree'. ¹⁹¹
Yurak-Samoyed	<i>pa</i>	'tree'. ¹⁹²
Hungarian	<i>fa</i>	'tree'. ¹⁹³

A shift from the voiceless plosive "p" to the fricative "f" is a common occurrence in all languages, cf. Latin *pater*, English *father*. Subsequently, a common origin of the Sumerian *pa* and the Hungarian *fa* is self-evident.

According to the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language the original meaning of the Hungarian *bot* may have been 'branch of a tree',¹⁹⁴ but the name remained unchanged after the branch was cut off and fash-

¹⁸⁹ Budge 1978: xcvi

¹⁹⁰ Papp 1978:608

¹⁹¹ Benkő 1967: 822, vol. 1

¹⁹² Benkő 1967: 822, vol. 1

¹⁹³ Benkő 1967: 822, vol. 1

¹⁹⁴ Benkő 1967: 353

ioned into a stick. It seems that ancient Hungarians did not differentiate between a branch and a stick; the same word was used for both.

The origin of the Hungarian *bot* 'stick, staff' does not seem to belong exclusively to any modern language group. It is present in many languages, in similar graphic forms and meanings. However, it is noticeably absent in the North Germanic language group.

English	<i>bat</i>	'stick, club'. ¹⁹⁵
French	<i>bâton</i>	'stick, staff'. ¹⁹⁶
Celtic	<i>bat, bata</i>	'staff, cudgel'. ¹⁹⁷
Turkish	<i>budak</i>	'twig, branch'. ¹⁹⁸
Polish	<i>bat</i>	'whip'. ¹⁹⁹
Polish	<i>batuta</i>	'baton'. ²⁰⁰
Russian	<i>bita</i>	'bat'. ²⁰¹
Croatian	<i>batina</i>	'stick, staff'. ²⁰²

After reviewing all the forms of *bad* and *bat* in many different languages, the unanticipated conclusion that the Sumerian language may explain the otherwise inexplicable meaning of *buda* has become inescapable. Involved here are

¹⁹⁵ Onions 1985: 60

¹⁹⁶ Larousse's 1976: 49

¹⁹⁷ Onions 1985: 60

¹⁹⁸ Akdikmen 1986: 60

¹⁹⁹ Grzebieniowski 1958: 470

²⁰⁰ Grzebieniowski 1958: 470

²⁰¹ Romanov 1964: 270

²⁰² Palich 1982: 120

the fundamental problems of the scale of name studies, a seemingly limitless task which, in this case, required a multi-faceted approach for solving the problem.

Buda comprised of the principal element *bud* and the adjectival suffix *-a* was the title of the head of state in ancient Hungarian society. His emblem was the tree with four branches; the two higher branches are shorter, like on a real tree. Therefore, *buda* in the old maxim is clearly a leader who made a wrong decision. The present-day equivalent of *buda* is the Hungarian *botos*, literally 'one with a stick'. It denotes an 'overseer' or a person holding an office, usually related to the maintenance of law and order.²⁰³ The *bot* as the symbol of power and authority is listed in the Dictionary of the Hungarian Language.²⁰⁴

Admittedly, it is a giant leap from the Sumerians to present-day Hungarians, from southern Iraq to the Carpathian Basin and from 2000 BCE to 1190 CE, when the tree having four branches appeared on coins minted during the reign of king Béla III (1147-1196). But archaeological finds and historical records attest its earlier presence in the Carpathian Basin.

The symbol of a tree having four branches is on one of three clay tablets found near Tartaria, Transylvania in 1961. The tablets were dated to originate from the end of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth millennium BCE.²⁰⁵ That would

²⁰³ B. Lőrinczy 1979: 574, vol. 1

²⁰⁴ Bárczi – Országh 1959: 698, vol. 1

²⁰⁵ Makkai 1990: 35

make them at least 1000 years older than the oldest Sumerian tablets found in Mesopotamia. The Tartaria tablets were made of local clay.



The Tartaria tablet

Additional early indication for the presence of the Sumerian *bat*, with reference to leadership in historical Hungary occurred in 6 CE, when the Pannonians²⁰⁶ and their neighbors the Illirs had risen against Roman rule. The leaders of the rebellion in both provinces were recorded by the name *Bato*.²⁰⁷ The identification of *Bato* as being derived from the Sumerian *bat* and as a variant of *Buda* would offer a new dimension to our understanding of names as sources of valid information.

Another leader called Buda lived in Hungary during the fifth century CE. This Buda, after whom the Hungarian city of Buda was named, is believed to be the brother of Attila, king of the Huns. He was executed for being Attila's rival for the throne, according to folklore. But strangely, the name of the city has never been changed and continued to be the

²⁰⁶ Pannonia was the Roman name for the part of Hungary west of the Danube.

²⁰⁷ Cook 1934: 369, vol. 10

Capital City of Hungary until 1873, when it amalgamated with Pest: thus the name Budapest.

The data assembled in this paper compels us to believe that *Buda* may have been a legitimate *buda* 'head of state' before Attila's rise to power. Buda was his title, not his name.

The Sumerian *bad*, *bat*, subjected to dialectal modifications, now appear in various graphic forms as names. The forms *Bot*, *Both*, *Bod* and *Bud* are still being used as surnames in Hungary. Suffixed variants include the archaic *-a* and present-day adjectival suffix *-s*: *Bata*, *Bató Bota*, *Boda*, *Buda*, *Bodos*, *Bodus*, *Botus*, *Bodus*, *Butus*. Patronymics are represented by *Bati*, *Batti*, and *Budi*. Other forms are *Bothu*, *Boton*, *Bodon*, *Bodun*, *Bodum* and *Budon*. Although these names may have been in use long before being registered for reference, there is written record of them in 1138, 1202, 1211, and 1226, according to one source.²⁰⁸

As mentioned above, another pronunciation of the Sumerian cuneiform sign for *bad* is *ugula* 'chief, superior'. A probable derivative from *ugula* is the Hungarian *Gyula*, a personal name derived from an ancient title held by the prince of Transylvania. The same as *Buda*, this title also survived in Hungarian surnames, forenames and toponyms, like the city of *Gyula* in Békés County.

The third and identical pronunciation *had* is still used in the Hungarian language in connection with weapons and war. For example: *hadsereg* means 'armed forces' comprised

²⁰⁸ Fehértói 1983: 41, 55, 56, 62, 63, 66, 67, 73

of *had* 'arms' and *sereg* 'troops', *hadianyag* 'implements of war' contains *had* 'arms', the derivational suffix *-i* and *anyag* 'material'.

The present form of Buda provides an interesting exercise in onomastic development. The search for its source has led us through the toponym Buda which honors its founder, the Pannonian leader Bato, the Transylvanian clay tablet that has the symbol of a four branched tree, to the speakers of the oldest recorded agglutinative language, the Sumerians. The presence of Buda and its variants in names in the Carpathian Basin prove to be more persuasive than theories that fail to offer reasonable arguments, thus rely on passion. Hopefully this study will persuade the overly cautious to recognize the Sumerian presence in old Hungarian names.

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