

Mubariz J. Khalilov – Szabolcs (Sabolch) Nyitray

THE HUNS AND MAGYARS OF THE CAUCASUS

“The only small area that remained extensively under the Huns control in Europe was [following the death of Atilla in 453] the land of the Huns of the Caucasus, from Derbent to north of the shores of the Caspian Sea. According to the Armenian and Arab sources, the Caucasian Huns, later on fell under Khazar rule and, in the 8th century, they were still fighting the advancing Mohammedan Armies from the south.”¹ These statements are accepted in the circle of historians as viable facts, because they were jotted down by no other than *Károly Czeglédy*, who blindly followed the Finno-Ugric theory of origin.

It is obvious that we must question how, and especially why, the Huns of the Caucasus “disappeared” from the stage of history, when they were still mentioned as Huns in the great Arab-Khazar war in 722 A.D., in the region of Northeastern Caucasus. A second thought immediately comes to mind; how is it possible, no matter how great a pressure was exerted upon them, that they could all have vanished into thin air...?

The Finno-Ugric scholars have failed to give an answer to the most basic question, yet there is a significant fact² from this period in history. Just a few hundred kilometers south of this area, Magyars (Hungarians) lived in the 750s under the name Sevordi/Siyavurdi, who have been identified by historians throughout the world as Savard-Magyars.

So: what exactly does this mean? According to the entire Hungarian scientific community, in 722 A.D., the Huns were living in the Northeastern Caucasus and, around the same time, about 200 kilometers (!!!) south of today’s Azerbaijan, according to the maps of the Academy of Sciences “after 700 A.D.” (!!!) – and, according to Gyula Németh and Károly Czeglédy from 576 A.D.³ (!!!) – there existed the Savard-Magyar homeland; even so, they exclude the possibility that the Magyars have any connection to the Huns...

Taking into account the historical analogies, it should have been obvious that these Magyars might have come from the territory of Dagestan. The situation becomes even more interesting, when we see that, with exception of *Árpád Berta*,⁴ all the other scholars connect the Magyars’ other, original name – Savard – to the Savirs/Sabirs, who lived in the same territory, that is, in the Northeastern and the Southeastern Caucasus, which is the territory of today’s Azerbaijan (See the work of Menandros from 576.). *Géza Fehér, Kornél Bakay, István Kiszely, Zoltán Dolnics, József Bíró and Csaba Z. Tóth* have stated with authority that, not only was our name Savir/Sabir, but we, Hungarians, are identical to the historical Savirs (lately a lot of people say that); the scholars at the Academy vehemently deny what is self-evident. If we base our investigation on facts, instead of subjective theories, we can state with certainty that there has to be some relationship between the Magyars and the Caucasian Huns and also the Savirs, because there is a great overlapping connection in names, in territory and in time, which, based on statistics, could hardly be considered accidental... (*Tibor Halasi-Kun* came very close to the same conclusion, but it seems, he gave in to the Finno-Ugric censorship.)

Around 948 A.D. Termachu (Arpad’s great-grandson) and Bulchu led a delegation to the court of the Byzantine Emperor. The delegation made it known to Constantine Porphyrogenetos that the earlier name of the Hungarians was Savardi, which is, according to the official academic circle, synonymous with the name: Savir/Sabir. Even *Gyula Németh* believes that, in the forms from the Greek source, the

¹ Czeglédy Károly: *Nomád népek vándorlása Napkeletől Napnyugatig*. Budapest, 1969, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 91.

² Baladhuri; according to Gyula Németh: „Baladhuri’s information could not be argued, so the Savardis appearance in Armenia (*Arran in reality*) should be placed between 750 and 760.” (Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*. Budapest, 1991, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 302.)

³ Czeglédy Károly: Keleten maradt magyar töredékek. In: Ligeti Lajos (editor): *A magyarság őstörténete*. Budapest, 1986, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 173.

⁴ Berta Árpád: A szavárd magyarok rejtélye. In: *Élet és Tudomány* / 25. sz., 1989. június 23. pp. 771-773.

savardi/savarti/savartü, the *di* is only a Hungarian suffix.⁵ Therefore, the Hungarian name: Savar/Sabar is exactly the same as the Savir/Sabir form.

It is important to know that in ancient and middle Greek times, or in the Byzantine era, they did not make a distinction between the *b* and the *v*. In any case, it is not significant, because the sounds *b* and *v* are easily interchangeable.

The accuracy of the note of Constantine VII, in regard to the original Hungarian name: Sabir, is supported by the existence of more than one Hungarian place name. For example: *Szabar* (in Eng.: Sabar) in "Burgerland"⁶ (first mentioned in 1453 as *Zabar*); *Zalaszabar* which was originally *Szabar* (first mentioned in 1239 as *Zobor*; in 1335 as *Sabaar*); in *Baranya* County, *Székelyszabar* which was *Szabar* before 1907 (first mentioned in 1389 as *Zabar*) and in *Nógrád* County, there is a village named *Zabar* (first mentioned in 1332 as *Zabary*). In *Veszprém* County, within the boundaries of *Káptalan-tóti*, there is the *Sabar* vineyard, which is a reminder of the former settlement from the Middle Ages, named *Sabar*. **Moreover, this Sabar form is the oldest form of the Sabir name.**⁷ We have one Sabar name in the Volga Bulgar region on an epitaph from 1291. The person was the daughter of Burash bey and her full name is *Sabar Ilji*.⁸

In addition to this, there is a host of other settlement names, which could be mentioned as being connected to the original Savar/Sabar name of the Magyars; such as *Szováros* (first mentioned in 1507 as *Zowaros*), *Hajdúszovát* (f.m. in 1332-37 as *Zohad-Zowad*), *Magyarszovát* (f.m. in 1213 as *Zuat*), *Szovárhely* (f.m. in 1469 as *Zohanhegh*), *Szavata* (f.m. in 1602 as *Szováta*), *Rábaszovát* (f.m. in 1224 as *Zoac*), *Szalárd* (f.m. in 1291 as *Zalard*, cf. Liudprand: Prince Salard [in Hungarian: *Szalárd*] from the 10th century.) and also *Gyerekszovád* and *Szovád* Plain in *Hont* County.

In addition to this, there is a clan named *Sovard*, which, according to *Gyula Németh* and *György Györffy*, is derived from the earlier name of the Magyars: Savard. *Gyula Németh* extensively expounds on it, offering as proof four examples that the name of this clan [which is noted by Anonymus, *Kézai* and the *Illuminated Chronicle*] and the Savard people's name are not only etymologically identical,⁹ but their relationship can also be proved historically. According to Anonymus, *Zuard* [written in the Latin alphabet; which reads in Hungarian: *Szovárd* (Eng.: Sovard)]¹⁰ waged war in the Balkans, where he also took a wife for himself, >>and the people, who are now called Chaba's Magyars, after the death of *Zuard* remained in Greece.<< The history of the Savards has clearly been preserved in the memory of the people, that is the people named *Zuard* (Savard), (folklore changed it into a person's name, which often occurred) broke off from the Magyars.¹¹ (It can almost certainly be stated that the *Székel* Sovat branch is an adaptation of the Savard/Sovard name of the Magyars.)

György Györffy is also in agreement with this. He believes that the branch broken off from the Magyars, mentioned by Anonymus, can be identified with a people in the legend of origin of the ancient Gesta. If we take it into account that, in Hungarian legends, every historical event is connected to the name of a certain leader, and the names of peoples are personified... it is possible, in fact probable that, according to the 11th century legend of origin, the descendants of Menroth, who migrated to Persia, are known by their leader's name. The sons of Menroth, the ones who lived in Persia, could not have been other than *Zuard*. *Zuard* is also a personified people's name, which is the third and the oldest name of the Magyars, according to Constantine. Taking this into account, if we complete that section of the Hun history, which deals with the Savards with the fragment mentioned by Anonymus, we will arrive at the following reconstruction:

>>>...Menrot...absque Hunor et Moger plures filios generavit... Zuardu, qui introivit terram Persidem...Sui filii mortuo Zuardu in Persia remanserunt...et eorum posteritas Persidem inhabitant regionem statura et colore Ungaris similes, tantummodo parum differunt in loquela<<<.

⁵ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*. Budapest, 1991, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 303.

⁶ This is where the Sabari surname originated in the Middle Ages within the Hahot Clan.

⁷ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, pp. 152-153.

⁸ Kakuk Zsuzsa (editor): *Őrök kőbe vésvé: A régi török népek irodalmának kistükre a VII-től a XV. századig*. Budapest, 1985, Európa Könyvkiadó, p. 347.

⁹ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 304.

¹⁰ Ibid. p. 304.

¹¹ Ibid. pp. 304-305.

The eleventh century Magyar-Savardian tradition was preserved in such form. That is, the eleventh century tradition (the old Gesta) saved a memory of the part of the Magyars that moved to Persia in ancient times, and their descendants spoke a language similar to that of the Magyars at that time.¹²

In 2008 with less information, we also believed that the Savard name of the Magyars and the similar Savir/Sabir name are one entity, it is just a strong possibility, but nowadays we are certain that they are one and the same. We do have numerous place names in the form of Sabar/Zabar, which is without a doubt the historical name of the Sabirs. *Gyula Németh's* contention that, in the name *Savardi*, the *di* is a suffix must be correct. He brings up several concrete examples in his book. Also, the sounds *b* and *v* are twin sounds, and their parallels, to this day, are found in many Hungarian place names.

Then, there is *Derbendname* (Book of Derbent), which is a reliable and independent source, especially about the land of the Sabirs and the Huns of the Caucasus, that is Dagestan, where we find the cities of Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar, which came into being under the rule of Khosrau I Anushirvan (531-579).¹³ (“Kichi” is a Hungarian word, it means; little. It is in Turkish; *küçük*, in Azeri; *kichik*, in Kumyk; *gichchi* [гиччи]. “Ulu” means; big in the Turkic languages.) The last time Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar, which had independent rulers, were mentioned – as allies of the Khazar Khagan –, was in a collection of sources, which was compiled between the 5th and 11th centuries, in relation to the great Arab-Khazar war of 722.¹⁴ (*Kichi- and Ulu Majar have no connection to the city of Kummajar or al-Majar in Stavropol in the 14th century, which has often been proposed in the past.*)



Armenian map about the region and the KINGDOM of the HUNS with the Terek and Sulak rivers



Terek and Sulak (Szulak) rivers with the Huns (Hunok) in the Caucasus (Bertha 1988, 244.)

The number of examples weighs more heavily on the side of the truth, than on the side of accidental chance, and they also match up with time and area. Only some of the lesser issues need to be cleared up, in order to see just how and when the Savard-Magyars ended up in the territory of today's Azerbaijan (Caucasian Albania, then Arran), and also a majority of Magyars in Levedia, and another smaller group in Bashkiria. This is the time (722), when the Huns of the Caucasus finally disappear from written sources, and the Khazar Empire collapses. The result of this is that the political centrum moved, from the area of the River Sulak, some 100-kilometers to the north. (Could there be any connection between the name of the River Sulak, and the name of a Hungarian wild flower, Sulak: *convolvulus* or morning glory?) The new Khazar capital, Itil, is usually placed on the delta of the River Volga, but there are some who place it more to the north, around today's Volgograd.¹⁵

We know exactly when the major cities along the area of the River Sulak fell under Arab conquest, led by Jarrah, and when the conquered people, named Khazars, were moved to Arran in large numbers. It was the failure to connect the Magyar/Majar name to the data of the Savards that caused

¹² Tardy Lajos: *Kaukázusi magyar tükör*. Budapest, 1998, Akadémiai Kiadó, pp. 33-34. and 10. fn. - Ch. I.: p. 330. Györfly György: *Krónikáink és a magyar őstörténet*, Bp., 1948, p. 34.

¹³ *Тарихи Дербенд-наме*. Под редакцией М. Алиханова-Аварского. Тифлис, 1898, p. 31.

¹⁴ *Ibid.* pp. 76. and 107.

¹⁵ Petrik István: *Rejtélyek országa*. Budapest, 2008, Napkút Kiadó, p. 56.

the break. This void was filled by important information contained in *Derbendname*; therefore, we can consider it to be the “missing link” in the early history of the Hungarians, because there is the connection in area (Dagestan) and in time (6th century to 722 A.D.). It should also be mentioned that the name Magyar/Majjar to refer to the Magyars is used all over the world in the Turkic languages, in the Arab, Persian and some Caucasian languages. The name Majjar still exists in some of the Hungarian dialects of some regions such as: “*Őrvidék* in the county of *Vas* and the land of the *Székelys* in Transylvania, and also among the *Csángós*, Majjar still being used.”¹⁶ According to the accepted view of the philologists at the Academy of Sciences “the ancient *j*, at the end of that age, was already pronounced as *gy* [sound closest to *dy*].”¹⁷ For the *j*<*gy* development as an analogy just see the evolution of title name *jula*<*gyula* and other Hungarian words.¹⁸ Also, according to *TESz*, “the time of the change of the sound *j*>*gy* (~*dy*) in the word Magyar could not be more closely determined.”¹⁹ From this, one can conclude that the name Magyar originally sounded like Majjar in the Hungarian language and, therefore, this developed as a “two directional sound equalization” at the same time as, and in parallel with the *Megyer-Magyar* interchangeable sound.²⁰

Many scholars believe that the name of the Hun king, Mogyeri (*Mojari*) from 527-528²¹ is connected with the word *Magyar*. This appears to be supported by data in *Derbendname*, which is a totally independent source of information. In addition to this, the name of this Hun king matches, sound to sound, the “old Mogyeri form”.²² It is certain that, in the early Magyar language, the sound *gy* did not exist, just as it does not exist in Turkic languages; even the pronunciation of it is quite difficult for them. It also likely that the sound *gy* did not exist in the language of the Huns, just as it did not exist in the original Magyar. In the Turkic languages the vowel harmony (synchronization) is quite apparent, which means that any word that does not follow this pattern is mostly not of Turkic origin. In addition to this, even the prefixes are followed by the low and high vowel harmony.

In addition to this, in Greek, the name of a Hun king²³ exists in two variations: Muayeris and Muageris. Following *Bálint Hóman*, *Gyula Németh* and *György Györffy* believe that *Mogyeri* is the proper pronunciation, while *Dezső Dümmerth* insists on *Magor*.²⁴ The *Mojari(i)-Mojgar(i)*, or *Majjar-Majgar* pronunciation is more likely. The “*i*” in the Turkic languages is similar to the Hungarian “*i*”, but it’s a low sounding vowel, like the Russian *ы* (*yery*) –, which is pronounced “*i*” in the Greek and Hungarian, but in actuality this is not important, because the Greek names generally end with *is*, so the *Moj(g)ar/Maj(g)ar* is very possible. *György Györffy* writes: “It is widely believed that the name *Muageris* is the first appearance of the *Magyar* people’s name, but this has yet to be proven.”²⁵ He adds: “In this personal name many see the Magyar people’s name, and suggest that it is relevant to the Hungarian people.”²⁶ (Compare with *Tibor Halasi-Kun*.)²⁷ This was written by one of the most renowned members of the Academy and an expert in Hungarian ancient history. We believe that we have sufficiently presented our case, based on the independent sources and the data from *Derbendname*, about the (KICHI) MAJAR of the 6th century.

¹⁶ Bakay Kornél: *Őstörténetünk régészeti forrásai II*. Miskolc, 1998, Miskolci Bölcsész Egyesület, p. 22. and 10. fn. Baboss Ernő: A magyar népnév ősmagyar kori hangalakjához. In: *Magyar Nyelv*, 53. köt. (1957), p. 440.

¹⁷ *Magyar kódex I. Az Árpádok világa*. Budapest, 1999, Kossuth Kiadó, p. 145.

¹⁸ Gyula. In: Zaicz Gábor (editor): *Etimológiai szótár: Magyar szavak és toldalékok eredete*. Budapest, 2006, Tinta Könyvkiadó, p. 272.

¹⁹ Magyar. In: *A magyar nyelv történeti-etimológia szótára*, 2. köt., Budapest, 1970, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 817.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 195.

²² *Ibid.*, p. 196.

²³ Moravcsik Gy.: Malalász és Theofánisz. In: Györffy György (editor): *A magyarok elődeiről és a honfoglalás: kortársak és krónikások híradásai*. Budapest, 1986, Gondolat Kiadó, p. 56. and 36. fn.

²⁴ Balás Gábor: *A székelyek nyomában*. 1984, Panoráma, p. 22.

²⁵ Györffy György (author): *A magyarok elődeiről és a honfoglalás: kortársak és krónikások híradásai*. p. 275. and 36. fn.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

²⁷ Halasi-Kun Tibor: A magyarság kaukázusi története. In: Ligeti Lajos (editor): *A magyarság őstörténete*, p. 77.

In 1913, near Hasavyurt, there still existed a geographical name “Mazgar” and a village name “Mazgar-yurt”.²⁸ (The *з* is pronounced like in the French *jeton*, *Jean* or *measure*, intrusion in the English.) (*yurt* is a Turkic word, meaning: homeland, land, shelter, home.) These place names were written down in Russian in the 19th century, at the time when the Russian language did not have the letter or the sound *j*, so they used the *з* instead. The combination of the *d* and *з* (*d-з*) > *j* came into use during the Soviet era. Today that region is occupied by the Kumyks, but their Kipchak language also lacks the sound *j*, so they simply pronounce it *з*. It is quite possible that the pronunciation of Majgar and Majgar-yurt sounded pretty much as we know it in the Hungarian, and as Ibn Rosta wrote down as *Majgar* in the early 10th century. It is not as if a half-sound would make much difference, but to see the word Majgar, side by side in *Derbendname* and Arab sources, looking exactly the same, is very convincing. The discovery that these place names still existed at the beginning of the 20th century, could be considered to have significant historical value, because it underscores the findings of the earlier researchers who were on the right track, pointing out that the Magyars lived in the Northeastern Caucasus. However, from here on, the Savard-Magyar issue becomes really interesting.



The ruins of Shemkir

The 9th and 10th century Arab sources (Baladhuri, Masudi) mention a Siyavurdi/Siyavardi ethnic group, which, around 752, captured a city named Shemkir (Shamkhor or Shamkur) in Azerbaijan, and they destroyed it completely.²⁹ (The later city’s impressive brick and stone walls have survived to this day and, even in ruins, they are very imposing.)

²⁸ Пагирев, Д.Д.: *Алфавитный указатель к пятивёрстной карте Кавказского края, издания Кавказского Военно-Топографического Отдела*. Тифлис, 1913, р. 164.

²⁹ Артамонов, М.И.: *История хазар*. Ленинград, 1962, р. 349.; Джафаров, Ю.Р.: *Гунны и Азербайджан*. Баку, 1985, Элм, pp. 106-107.; Минорский, В.Ф.: *История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков*. Москва, 1963, р. 214.

The Siyavurdi tribes, mentioned by the Arab historians, are believed to be the same as the Sevordi ethnic group found in the Armenian sources from the Middle Ages.³⁰ The Byzantine Emperor, Constantine Porphyrogenetos (913-959), in his work: *De Administrando Imperio (the Governing of the Empire)*, calls the Magyars *Savardi-Asfalü* (asfalü or asfali means ‘unshakable’). The Sevordi people were first identified with the Savardi by Ya. K. Grot in 1881. Following this, numerous international and Hungarian historians accepted his statement (for example: *József Thury, Gyula Németh, György Györffy, Károly Czeplédy, Gyula Kristó, Vladimir Minorsky* and *Mihail Artamonov*). Based on written information by Constantine VII, in Levedia (most common opinion that from the Azov-sea to the River Kuban), after the Kangar-Pecheneg attack on the Magyars – called Turks – the Magyar Army split into two. One part of them moved to the east and settled in Persia, and they became known as Turks (Magyars) and, to this day, they are called *Sabartoi Asphaloi*,³¹ by their former name.³² Most historians believe that this happened significantly later than the occupation of Shemkir in 752, as was recorded in the previously mentioned Arab sources. Formerly, everyone accepted 889, the date given by Regino, the Abbot of Prüm, as the date of the first war between the Magyars and the Pechenegs. This seems to be supported by the statement of Constantine VII, that the first Pecheneg assault came in Levedia, and it was followed by numerous events within a short period of time, such as the meeting between the Khazar Khagan and Levedi, and later on, the election of Arpad. A few years later,³³ the Pechenegs attacked the Magyars a second time. We can state that this surely happened in 895, if we insert the conquest of the Carpathian Basin, into the greater historical picture.

First of all, we have 889 as the date of the Pecheneg attack, recorded by Regino, the Abbot of Prüm (he does not mention a second attack). Secondly, there is the conquest of 895, which was preceded by the Pecheneg assault, according to Constantine. Between 889 and 895, the difference is only “a few years”, but Regino referred to all the events, connected to the Magyars as taking place in 889,³⁴ so he mentions only one Pecheneg attack, unlike Constantine. György Györffy challenges the accuracy of the date 889, set by Regino as the first Pecheneg assault, and also the migration from Levedia into “*Etelköz*” (that name is only a possible reconstruction), today’s south region of Ukraine.³⁵ (According to Kálmán Szöllösy, Levedia is the region of River Kuma and *Etelköz* is between the Rivers Volga and Don. In the *Gesta of Anonymus Dentu-moger [Dentü-mogyer]*³⁶ means *Dontó-magyar*, because we have seven Hungarian place names³⁷ by backwater or creek with *tó* or *tű* suffix in estuary meaning. Furthermore *den* means river in Alan language.³⁸)

About thirty years ago, most researchers of Hungarian ancient history began to look for an earlier date regarding the migration from Levedia to *Etelköz*. We believe that this is significant because, according to Constantine, this is the time when part of the Magyars migrated to Persia, which is identified by all historians as a land southeast of the Caucasus.³⁹ The time frame for this migration was estimated to be from the 830s to the formerly generally accepted date of 889. For example: *János Harmatta*: 830, *Loránd Benkő*: 860, and so on.⁴⁰ Based on our present knowledge, this issue could not be solved satisfactorily. The second problem is that most historians do not agree on the date of the migration from Levedia. *György Györffy* sets the first Pecheneg attack in the 750s, the same time as the migration of the smaller Magyar group to Persia.⁴¹ This matches the notes of Baladhuri (Baladzuri), who stated that the Siyavurdis appeared in Azerbaijan, and in 752 looted Shemkir; if so,

³⁰ Артамонов, М.И.: *История хазар*. Ленинград, 1962, p. 349.; Джафаров, Ю.Р.: *Гунны и Азербайджан*. Баку, 1985, ЭЛМ, p. 106.; Минорский, В.Ф.: *История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков*. Москва, 1963, p. 214.

³¹ The pronunciation of *sabartoi asphaloi*: *savarti* (or *sabarti*) *asfali/savardi aszfali/szavartü aszfali*.

³² Moravcsik Gyula: *Az árpád-kori magyar történet bizánci forrásai*. Budapest, 1988, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 44.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 45.

³⁴ Györffy György (author): *A magyarok elődeiről és a honfoglalás: kortársak és krónikások híradása*, p. 29.

³⁵ *Ibid.*

³⁶ Bartha Antal: *A magyar nép őstörténete*. Budapest, 1988, Akadémiai Kiadó, p. 135.

³⁷ Marcaltó, Almás-füzitő, Vésztő, Foktó, Marostó, Aroktó and Nántú.

³⁸ Bartha Antal: *A magyar nép őstörténete*, p. 139.

³⁹ *Történelmi világtalasz*. A magyar nép vándorlása és a honfoglalás (map), Budapest, 1991, p. 107.

⁴⁰ Erdélyi István: *A magyar honfoglalás és előzményei*. Bp., 2002, Munkácsy Magyar Egyetemi Kiadó, p. 26.

⁴¹ Györffy György: *A magyarság keleti elemei*. Budapest, 1990, Gondolat, p. 100.

this contradicts Constantine's time and place, because it occurred 150 years earlier, somewhere in the bend of the River Volga, and not in Levedia.⁴²

Theoretically, we could accept the date and place given by Constantine regarding the consecutive Pecheneg assaults, as well as the fact that part of the Magyars purposefully migrated toward the southeast beyond the Caucasus Mountain range, in the – approximate – direction in which their relatives had moved some 150 years earlier, so that they could join them and live in security. In addition to György Györffy, Károly Czeglédy and Dezső Dümmerth also declared that the Pecheneg attack took place some 200 years earlier than Constantine recorded, reasoning that, in the collective memory of man, the events of the past are compressed.⁴³ Later on Czeglédy re-evaluated his previous view regarding the migration of the “Savarti Asfali into the Caucasus redating it to 854, when the two great passes through the Caucasus Mountains were secured for their passage. This migration was caused by the battle between the Kangar-Pecheneg and the Savard-Magyars.”⁴⁴

In any case, if M. I. Artamonov and György Györffy blame Constantine VII for confusing the time and place of the first Pecheneg attack and the migration of the Savard-Magyars into Persia, there is the possibility of a second wave of Magyars in the 9th century to the Southern Caucasus, which is quite acceptable (The first one was noted by Baladhuri). “Baladhuri's information shouldn't be rejected outright; therefore, the appearance of the Savards in Armenia (actually in Albania-Arran)⁴⁵ can be determined to be between 750 and 760.”⁴⁶



Fragment of academic map about the migration of Hungarians. (The location of Derbent is absolutely wrong)

Lately, some researchers pose a serious problem with the contention that there never was a “first Pecheneg attack”, because the Pechenegs first crossed the River Volga in 894, as a result of the Uz (kind of Oguz) attack upon them.⁴⁷ At this time, the Magyars had lived by the shores of the Black Sea for at least 150 years. So, these two peoples could not have confronted each other in Levedia or farther

⁴² Ibid., p. 101.

⁴³ Dümmerth Dezső: *Az Árpádok nyomában*. Budapest, 1977, Panoráma, p. 79.

⁴⁴ Tardy Lajos: *Kaukázusi magyar tükör*, p. 32.

⁴⁵ In the 9th and 10th centuries, the Baghdad Caliphate occupied all of the Trans-Caucasus region, and was divided into three different numbered (I-II-II) Armenian-named municipalities (provinces) and, from that point on, they were known by these names in the official administrative entries: (Ibn-Khordadbeh: *Kitab el-mesalik we-l-memalik*, §62). In addition to this, in Albania, the Christian Church – an Autocephaly Apostolic Church – which had existed from the 4th century, was eliminated for political reasons, and ordered to operate under the Armenian Church. So, thenceforward, the people of this region became known as Armenians.

⁴⁶ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 302.

⁴⁷ Györffy György (author): *A magyarok elődeiről és a honfoglalás: kortársak és krónikások híradásai*, p. 29.; *Történelmi világatlasz. A magyar nép vándorlása és a honfoglalás (map)*, p. 107.

east. There are no explanations for why part of the Magyars, keeping their earlier Savard name, migrated “after 700 A.D.” from Levedia to the Southern Caucasus, a theory which is accepted by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.⁴⁸ There seems to be a gross contradiction, which to this day has not been solved.

Therefore, on the territory of today’s Azerbaijan, regarding the historical events of the 8th century, the mentioned Sevordis could be connected to the Magyar colony in Dagestan in the 6th to the 8th centuries Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar. The geographical closeness and the historical connections (between Huns of the Caucasus, Sabirs, Khazars and Albania-Arran) could offer a logical explanation and solution. It should be mentioned that generations of historians have “blamed” Constantine for confusing the time and place: Yes, the break up of the Magyars could have happened, but not northeast at the bend of the Volga; instead, southeast on the territory of Alania-Dagestan (part of the Magyars migrated to the Southern Caucasus), and not as a result of the Pecheneg, but rather the Arab assault. A good 200 years later, Constantine could have made a mistake about this too...

The tenth century Armenian historian, John Katholikos of Drashanakert (Yovhannes Drasxanakertc’i), in regard to the events of the ninth century, writes about the history of Uti province near the city of Shemkir – also known as the country of the Utis – where Sevordis lived too; so one could theorize that there is some connection between the Utis and Sevordis.⁴⁹ (Some believe that the people named Udi, are actually the descendants of the Utis. Their number is less than 10 thousand. They have preserved their ancient Caucasian language and Christian religion. Most of them live in the villages of Oktenberi [in Georgia], Oguz and Nij [in Azerbaijan].) Baladhuri, in the 9th century, wrote that Shemkir was flooded by Siyavurdis from all directions.⁵⁰ This indicates that the Siyavurdis may have settled in great numbers on a large area.

The famed tenth century Arab historian, Masudi, places the Siyavurdis on the shores and valley of the River Kür (Kur or Kura) near Tiflis (Tbilisi). He writes of them as powerful and battle-tested people and, at the same time, he says, ethnically they are Armenians.⁵¹ (al-Istakhri writes of them similarly in *The Book of Roads and Empires*, in a later insertion: “Behind Barda and Shamkur there are the Siyavardis of Armenian extraction, a useless, rotten and pillaging people.”⁵²) The statement by Masudi, in regard to the Sevordis being Armenian, could be based on two observations. The first one is people-etymology.

The name *Sevordi* is a distorted form of the original and correct *Savar’d-i* people name in the Armenian language. The *sev* means black, the *ordi* means boy in the Armenian language. So, the original *Savardi* (*sav-ardi*) became *sev-ordi*, meaning ‘black boys’ (switching two vowels). *Savardi* is very close to *Sevordi* in pronunciation, but they have no etymological connection. It was also stated by Gyula Németh: “In the Hungarian word Savardi, the *di* is a Hungarian suffix... The *Savardi* form appears in the work of Constantine Porphyrogenetos and Balanduri in the 9th century. The *Savardi* form could be explained by the etymology of the Armenian language, meaning ‘black boys’. The Persian word *siyah*, meaning black, explains the *Siyavardi* in the Arab sources. The Armenian *Sevordi* found its way into the Greek language too. Constantine, in his work *De caerimoniis* mentions the Savards as Σερβοτι[ῶν] [=Σεβορτι-] (*serboti* [*seborti*]), and he translates their name as: Μαῦρα παῖδια ‘black boys’...The name of this people in Magyar was *Savardi*, from which came the Armenian form, *Sevordi*, ‘black boys’, a folk etymological switch.”⁵³

Contrary to Masudi, the Armenian historians do not consider the Sevordis (Savards) as Armenians. In a number of sources, they write that the Sevordis pillaged their land and rejected Armenian authority. They helped the Arabs and Turks to conquer and occupy Armenian lands.

József Thury (1861-1906), a philologist and turkologist, researched this subject extensively, and he was the first to collect important source material. His priceless pioneering work deserves a

⁴⁸ *Történelmi világtalasz. A magyar nép vándorlása és a honfoglalás* (map), p. 107.

⁴⁹ Джафаров, Ю.Р.: *Гуны и Азербайджан*. Баку, 1985, ЭЛМ, p. 83.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 107.

⁵¹ *Muruj ez-zeheb ve me’adin el-jevahir*, XVII, §31.

⁵² Kmoskó Mihály: *Mohamedán írók a steppe népeiről: földrajzi irodalom I/2*. Budapest, 2000, Balassi Kiadó, p. 24. and 102. fn.

⁵³ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 303.

direct quotation, in his own words, from his work of 1897: “When the rulers of the Dynasty of Pakraduni began to govern in Armenia, the Sevordis often attacked the territories of Armenia from the province of Udi, pillaging and causing a lot of destruction. Because of this, in 886, Ashod I (859-890) led an army against the people who lived in the Kukar and Udi provinces, and also in the passes of the Caucasus Mountains. He defeated them and that ended the looting. He also made them accept him as their ruler, and appointed governors over them. But within two years, in 888, they revolted against the oppression, and Ashod put together an army of Armenian and Georgian soldiers, and put his eldest son, Sempad (or Sembat), in charge. He was victorious in a number of battles, and in Armenia’s northern part (*the historical Albania-Arran Uti province, inhabited by the Sevordis*) he stayed behind as vice-roy until his father died in 890. Then he appointed governors over the Sevordis and moved to take over the throne. Under his rule, the Sevordis in the province of Udi revolted again, but Sempad’s luck must have held out, because Patriarch Yohn, in his work, writes that Sempad was able to expand his conquest along the River Kur all the way to Tiflis, in the province of Udi, and he advanced to the cities of Hunaragerd (*Hunarakert or, in the Arab source, Hunan*), Dus (*city of the Sevordis*) and Shamkhor. But the Sevordis did not accept him as their king; they preferred to fight on the side of the Arabs. In 909, Yusif, Governor of Azerbaijan from 901, led an army against Armenia and ravaged a significant portion of it. The following year, Sempad sent his own armies against Yusif, and put his two sons, Ashod and Musheg, in charge of a division of Sevordis, who were now fighting on his side. Sempad’s armies met the Arab armies beside Jegnavadsar (province of Nik) [*the western side of Lake Sevan/Göyche, northeast of Yerevan*] near River Hurasdan [today: Razdan]. [*In reality, ethnically they were probably completely mixed. Muslims of local Albanian ancestry, Arabs, Iranians and Turk soldiers composed Yusif’s army. The conversion of Arran to Islam began in the second half of the 7th century and ended at the end of the 9th century. Yusif himself, while a nominal member of the Central Asian origin Saj clan, was a ruler of Azerbaijan independent from the Caliphate.*] The two enemy armies attacked each other with great ferocity, resulting in the defeat of the Armenians, because the residents of the province of Udi and the army of the Sevordis, in the heat of the battle, switched over to the Arab side. One of the two leaders, Ashod, was able to escape, but Musheg was captured and he was taken to the city of Tovin.”⁵⁴

Later on, Yusif of the Saj (Yusuf ibn Abi’l-Saj) captured the Armenian King, Sempad, and in 914, hanged him in the city of Dvin, then conquered all of Armenia. This is an account recorded by the Armenians, which means that the Sevordis were not Armenians. In spite of being Christian, on the battlefield, they betrayed the Christian Armenians and joined forces with the Muslim so-called Arabs.

In the 10th century, Masudi mentions a battle-axe that was named after the Siyavurdis (Savard-Magyars), which was the special weapon of the Siyavurdi tribe (tribes). Later on, “other barbarian armies” used it, but it kept its *siyavurdi* name (*Muruj ez-zeheb ve me’adin el-jevahir*, XVII, §31). The reality is that we don’t know much of the life and history of the Magyars migrating across the Caucasus Mountains and settling in Azerbaijan. We should take into account that only some of the sources survived; others have perished in the ravages of time, but there still might be some, which give an account of the “unshakable” Savards and the feared Christian Kingdom of the Transcaucasus region. All we know definitely about the land of the Sevordis is that it was located in the valley of the River Kür (Kur-a), “behind Barda and Shamkur” and the western border was not far from Tiflis; so, one can draw a reasonably accurate borderline on the map. It is not a large area, but it existed, and the contemporary Armenian and Arab sources give reasonable information on its history. “Masudi mentions that he wrote the history of the Sevordi people. This work, sorry to say, to this day is unknown. He talks believably about the work named *Akhbar-uz-zeman*, which he mentions a lot, but so far only the first volume was found in Aleppo in 1849.”⁵⁵

Constantine VII mentions the ancient name *Savarti* when writing about the Magyars, because this is the name they used themselves.⁵⁶ “Back in those times, they weren’t called Turks [*the Greek name for*

⁵⁴ Thury József: A magyaroknak >>szavarti-aszfali<< neve I-II. In: *Századok*, 1897, pp. 326-327. Based on *A History of Armenia*, by Father Michael Chamich (translated from the original Armenian, by Johannes Avdall. Calcutta, 1827. Vol I. 411-412) (The original work was published in Venice in 1784-1786.)

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 323.

⁵⁶ Минорский, В.Ф.: *История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков*. Москва, 1963, p. 214.

the Magyars], but for some reason *Sabartoi Asphaloi* (Savarti Asfali)... Some of them settled east, in the territory of Persia and, up to this day, they are called by their old name *Sabartoi Asphaloi*.⁵⁷ All of this was written by Constantine around 950, and he took the information from Bulchu and Termachu, when they were in a delegation to the Court of the Byzantine Emperor. (Termachu; he was the great-grandson of Arpad; Bulchu received the honorary title of „Friend of the Byzantine Emperor” from Constantine VII.) *István Erdélyi*, under the penname “István Petrik”, called attention to the similarity of the name of “Prince Termachu”, the son of Teveli and the great-grandson of Arpad and the name of “a military leader, Tarmach, who is possibly the son of the Khazar Khagan, and was in charge of the army in 727 that defeated the Arabs in Azerbaijan.” [Artamonov 1962, 211. 48. j., according to Gevond].⁵⁸ Interestingly enough we know one more Khazar name Buluchan,⁵⁹ that is very similar to the Hungarian Bulchu. In addition to the information given by Termachu and Bulchu to the Byzantine Emperor, the reports of other delegates must have been valuable to the Emperor.⁶⁰ Since the authenticity of the information given by the Emperor is not disputed by any serious historian, we can be sure that the name *Savarti* is the one the Magyars used for themselves, and was not one attached to them by others (such as “Turk” by the Byzantines). Furthermore, it is supported by the second national name: *Savard*, which is the original name and found in written sources.

One interesting thing is about the Hungarian name of Kursan (He was the co-prince of Arpad as a *kende* [or *kündü*] and died in 904). That name appears as a hun superior; Zirdkin-Khursan in the compiled chronicle (7th-10th centuries) by Albano-Armenian historian(s) Moisey of Kalankatuk (Moses Kalankatvatsi).⁶¹ The same name, Khursan also appears in some sources from the 6th century as a fortress or province between Derbent and Shirvan.⁶² Later on regarding the Arab expansion the name of Khursan emerges again by Baladhuri and Yaqubi in the 9th century. Baladhuri says about the suzerainty of Lakz/Legz (Lezgin) shah, who is called Khursan and the territory situated on the boundary of Masqat (Massagetae). Masudi in 943 mentions that Muhammad ibn Yazid shirvanshah captured the ancient principality of Khursan. Look at this topic in more detail by Minorsky.⁶³ The azerbaijani historians say that the armenian Yeghishe (410-475) wrote earlier the Khursan name in History of Vardan and the Armenian War.⁶⁴

The early Magyars of the Caucasus were also known to foreign geographers; *Lajos Tardy* discovered the secret 16th century map, which is kept in the National Library of Vienna, on which Georgia is located, between the Black Sea and the Caspian-Sea (that is all of the Northern and Southern Caucasus), and called the former land of the Magyars. The original handwritten Latin text is as follows: *Georgia seu Hungaria antiqua*, which means: “Georgia, the former Hungary.”⁶⁵ This was marked in such a way that “Georgia” represented the whole of the Caucasus and was identical to the former homeland of the Magyars in Dagestan. It should be mentioned here, “according to an old Chechen legend, two of their tribes migrated with the Magyars from Asia to the Caucasus, and they consider us their relatives.”⁶⁶ Stephanos Orbeli archbishop of Sunik (Zengezur), in 1287, mentions an etymologically disputed place name in the donation letter of a vineyard, which “happens to be on the land of the Sevordis.”⁶⁷ This place name was Madsharaga/Macharaka-yor (Valley of Macharaka), in which the *-ka/ga* syllable, according to Thury, could be an assimilated Armenian plural, therefore it may mean the Valley of Magyars. It is certain that the Armenian language does not have the sound *j*;

⁵⁷ Moravcsik Gyula: *Az árpád-kori magyar történet bizánci forrásai*. Budapest, Akadémiai Kiadó, pp. 43-44.

⁵⁸ Petrik István: *Rejtélyek országa*. Budapest, 2008, Napkút Kiadó, p. 40.

⁵⁹ Minorsky, Vladimir: *A history of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th centuries*. Cambridge, 1958, W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, p. 106. and 1. fn.

⁶⁰ Györfy György (author): *A magyarok elődeiről és a honfoglalás: kortársak és krónikások híradásai*, p. 115.; Moravcsik Gyula: *Az árpád-kori magyar történet bizánci forrásai*, p. 32.

⁶¹ *История агван*. Санкт-Петербург, 1861, II:43-45.

⁶² Information by Borbála Obrusánszky.

⁶³ Minorsky, Vladimir: *A history of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th centuries*. Cambridge, 1958, W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, pp. 81-82.

⁶⁴ Quliyev, Nurbala: *Bura gülistani - irəm torpağıdır*. Bakı, 2005, “Şuşa” nəşriyyatı, pp. 82-84.

⁶⁵ Tardy Lajos: *Kaukázusi magyar tükör*, pp. 90-91.

⁶⁶ Horváth Gábor: *Úgy tűnt, biztonságban vagyunk*. In: *Népszabadság*, 1997. X. 28., p. 9.

⁶⁷ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 308.

therefore, they have substituted it with *ch* in the word Magyar/Majar (Machar). At the same time, Gyula Németh believes that the Armenian place name stands for the Valley of Cheese, which seems pretty far-fetched, to say the least, if we take into consideration the general rule of place name selection. It is most likely that Madsharaga/Macharaka means; *Majar-aga*, because in the 13th century – and even before that – the Turkic word *aga* (*aka*) was well-known and extensively used in the Armenian language. It means Sir, leader, boss; so “Magyar-aga valley” appears to be most likely. In the 13th century, an Albano-Armenian historian, Kirakos, lived in the city of Ganja (or Genje). In his Armenian language work, *History*, the word “aga/aka” appears in the names of leaders, like this: Tonguz-aga (chapter 29), Sadek-aga (chapter 39), Tora-aga (chapter 57). In addition to this, Kirakos, in chapter 32 states that “aga”, among the Mongols means “brother”. “We don’t know any other Mongolian words, but we do know this one”, remarks the author.

László Bendefy wrote the following: “The Sevortis of the region of Kur, the 11th century geographical name of the land of the Savards, could refer to none other than the Savard-Magyars, who fled to the vicinity of the River Kur, and settled in the province of Udi.”⁶⁸ Regarding the “assimilation” of the Savard-Magyars, there are different theories: According to György Györffy, the Papal Bull, issued by Pope John XXII in 1329, along with the Alans and the Malkaitas, mentions Prince Yeretan (or Yeretamir) of the Magyars in Asia – which is the last mention of the Savard-Magyars. Others think that these people were those, who were dragged away by the Mongolians in 1241, and settled in today’s Stavropol at the confluence of the Rivers Kuma and Buyvola (See the city of Kummajar or al-Majar in the 14th century). Everyone agrees that, at the “beginning of the second millennium” the district of the Sevordis was still in existence.⁶⁹

The expression *Savardi* (black-boy) in the etymology of the Armenian people became widespread in the Middle Ages among the neighbors of the Savards (Utis, Armenians, Albanians, Alans, etc).⁷⁰ In the territory of Azerbaijan the village name, Majar Garaoghlan (in Azeri: Macar Qaraoğlan,⁷¹ that is Magyar Black-boy), in the 19th (and 20th) century, could be led back to the people-etymology for sure (in the Azerbaidjani language, *gara-oghlan* means *black-boy*. The primary meaning of oğlan [*oghlan*] is *boy*, and the secondary is *child*). The use of the names Majar and black-boy at the same time strongly support each other, therefore, we can state that our contention is proven, in regard to village names. In addition to the village of Majar Garaoghlan, in the 19th century, there existed a settlement named Majarlı (Macarlı),⁷² meaning: from the Magyar Clan, or belong to the Magyar Clan. “Magyari” is an old expression, but it could be translated to “magyaros” also, which means: typically Hungarian. The village of Majarlı does not exist anymore, and the geographical location could not be determined. Two villages with the name Garaoghlan remained on the left bank of the River Kür (or Kura). One of them is in the county of Aghdash (Ağdaş), the other one in the county of Yevlakh (Yevlax), in that area, where the province of Uti used to be and where the Savard-Magyars settled. They are mentioned in the works of Istakri also, like wild thieves. They lived north of the imaginary line between Barda and Shamkur. The Arab source uses the word “behind”, looking north from Baghdad, where the two villages of Magyar origin still exist even today.

⁶⁸ Bendefy László: *A Magyarország kaukázusi őshazája*. Budapest, 1942, Cserépfalvi, p. 28.

⁶⁹ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarország kialakulása*, p. 302.

⁷⁰ It should be noted that, at that time, the population of Albania-Azerbaijan was ethnically very colorful.

Although the majority was Albanian, there were quite a few other ethnic groups besides them. One of these ethnic groups comprised of the Savardi/Sevordi Magyars, who had broken away from the majority of the Magyars in the first half of the 700s, and the Hungarian and international historians alike believe that, no later than the 14th century, these Savardi/Sevordi Magyars “assimilated”, without a trace, into the present-day Azerbaijani Turkic-speaking people. It would probably be more exact to talk of a mergence or ethnogenesis of the population, because there were many Turk peoples – related to the Magyars – around this area. In addition to this, the evolution of the present-day Azerbaijanis was a process which took place over centuries and, during that time, other ethnic groups blended with them. The Oghuz-Turk ethnic group gave their name to the language, even though they were an insignificant minority, just as the Roman settlers did in the case of the Celt-Iberian “Hispanics” (today’s Spaniards, Portuguese and Catalans).

⁷¹ The Azeri ğ is a guttural g sound as gh together.

⁷² Гейбуллаев, Г.А.: *К этногенезу азербайджанцев*. Баку, 1991, ЭЛМ, p. 129.



Location of Majar Garaoghlan. (Excerpt from the magnification of the large map on the next page)

On a detailed map of Azerbaijan as a Democratic Republic, reprinted in the 1920s (which was a copy of a map made during the rule of the Czars in the Russian Empire), in today's county of Yevlakh, the village of Garaoghlan appears as Majar Garaoghlan.⁷³ The disappearance of the word Majar is probably due to the Soviet anti-Hungarian sentiments during the World War II. The people-etymological name Sevordi (black-boy) in Armenian was probably widely known and spread in the Late Middle Ages among the Azerbaijanis, and this is why they used the two words (Savard-Magyar) in combination, although originally they had the same meaning: Majar.

This village name proves that the ancient Magyars, at that time – and this is supported by Constantine Porphyrogenetos – had two names. Moreover, the Magyars called themselves by these two names; Majar and Savard at the very same time, so these two names referred to the same people. This does not necessarily mean the ethnogenesis of two ethnically different peoples that blended into one. It is certain that both the Savard and Magyar names refer to the Magyars, as Constantine noted over a thousand years ago.

⁷³ Гейбуллаев, Г.А.: *Топонимия Азербайджана*. Баку, 1986, Элм, р. 45.; Qaraqoĝlan. In: *Azərbaycan toponimlərin ensiklopedik lüğəti*, 2. cild, Bakı, 2007, Şərq-Qərb, p. 34.



Special thanks to Rosa Arazova the leader of History and Archaeology Department of Khazar University (Baku)

In addition to these villages, settled by Magyars (their direct descendants still live there), in the county of Nakhchivan (Nahichevan) Sherur, beside the settlement of Dasharakh, there is, to this day, a territory named Majar-yeri, that is Magyar-place.⁷⁴

This is far from the territory settled by Savard-Magyars. Nakhchivan is not even connected to Azerbaijan proper by land, because it is an enclave, a wedge of land, between Iran and Armenia, some 13 km. south, where the Rivers Araks and Arpa (the word ‘arpa/árpa’ has the same meaning in Turkic languages and Hungarian) flow together, in the eastern Valley of Ararat. There is no known direct connection to this Hungarian place name, but there is an interesting note by *Győrffy*: “Rubruk, on his return journey in 1253, in the city of *Naxua* [Azerbaijani: Nakhchivan, Russian: Nahichevan], which lies beside Araks, met a Hungarian Dominican, who was going - *from Tebriz* - to Tiflis.”⁷⁵ (W. Rubruk: XXXVIII:5) *György Győrffy* supposes that this Dominican missionary from the Carpathian Basin might have met the Savard-Magyars, because he must have known of them; although Rubruk makes no mention of them, this supposition cannot be excluded.

In connection with the Sevordis, that is the Magyars of Azerbaijan, there is another outstanding piece of information: Abdul Fida names part of the Khazars – *Garajur*.⁷⁶ This people probably migrated to Azerbaijan between the 7th and 9th centuries, from the Northern Caucasus. In Karabah (Garabagh) in Azerbaijan, in the 19th century, there still existed the *Garachor* tribe, who were the direct descendants of the Garajurs as the Arabs called them. Within their population, at that time, there still existed a Clan named *Garavurd*.

⁷⁴ Гейбуллаев, Г.А.: *Топонимия Азербайджана*. Баку, 1986, Элм, р. 45.

⁷⁵ Győrffy György: *Krónikáink és a magyar őstörténet*. Budapest, 1949, Néptudományi Intézet, р. 86.

⁷⁶ Артамонов, М.И.: *История хазар*. Ленинград, 1962, р. 400.

The name of the Garavurd Clan is the same as the Armenian Sevordi, and the Persian-Arab Siyavurdi: *sev/siyah/gara*, which, in the languages of the Armenians, Persians and Azerbaijani-Turks meant: black. The *vurd*, the second part of the word *gara-vurd* goes back to the Persian-Arab word – Sijavurdi [siya(h)-vurdi], which is derived directly from the Armenian Sevordi. This, in turn, is the Armenian version of the original Magyar name – Savard. Therefore, we can safely say that Savard was the original form, from which all the other variations are derived.



Residents of Majar Garaoghlan

In Azerbaijan, besides the written sources and place names, there are some examples of material nature too, which indicate the Hungarian connections: Guba is an excellent example; in the counties of Khachmaz (on the border of Derbent) and Lenkoran, the people used the four-wheeled carriage named: *majar-(araba)*. The *majar* carriages, drawn by oxen, buffalos or horses, were different from

other carriages, because they were longer and higher.⁷⁷ The appearance and the spread of the Hungarian carriage in Azerbaijan are attributed to the ancient Magyars.



Residents of Majar Garaoghlan



*Gate in Majar Garaoghlan as just Hungarian gates in Moldavia (Romania).
There are no more any similar gates in the whole of Azerbaijan*

The rulers of Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar, who are mentioned in *Derbendname*, were subordinate to the ruler of Ithran (found in today's Avaristan), one of the ancient provinces of Dagestan. Moreover, Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar were located in the province of Gulbakh (!), which bordered the province of Ithran.⁷⁸ It is also worth mentioning that "the people of Dagestan, in their own language, called themselves: Maarulal (people of the mountains); others called them: Avar, which is the corrupted form of "Auhar" in the Russian language. Others believe the name is of Kumyk (Kumük) origin, and it means a restless, quarrelling man. There are no known links between them and the Avars of the Carpathian Basin. Some 270 thousand of them speak a different tongue, which is one of the Avar-Andi languages [It belongs in the Dagestan branch of the Caucasian language-family.]. Their country's name, in the Middle Ages (9th and 10th centuries) was Serir, and that was the name of their ruler too. It is possible that Serir was established by the remnants of the Huns."⁷⁹ The fact is that all the sources and other information regarding the Magyars (Savards) point in one direction, in the direction of the 6th century Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar, as was stated in *Derbendname*, and also in the note of Baladhuri, regarding the destruction of Shemkir in 752 by the Siyavurdis (Magyars).

⁷⁷ Macar. In: *Azərbaycan Sovet Ensiklopediyası*, VI. cild, Bakı, 1982, p. 398.

⁷⁸ *Тарихи Дербенд-наме*. Под редакцией М. Алиханова-Аварского. Тифлис, 1898, pp. 32. 76. and 107.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Without exception, all major Hungarian historians (*Gyula Németh, György Györffy, Károly Czeglédy, Gyula Kristó* and so on.) – based on the research of József Thury – accepted and acknowledged that the homeland of the Savard-Magyars was in the province of Uti (!), which was bordered on the north by Dagestan and the Northeastern Caucasus! Evidently, this suggests that the “first” wave of Magyars (it is uncertain whether or not there was a second one) came from Dagestan, and not from Levedia, which is 800 km distant, or Magna Hungaria (Bashkiria), which is 1500 km. distant as the crow flies.



Hungarian style female boots in Azerbaijan



Traditional homespun from Azerbaijan

The presence of the Huns and the Sabirs in Dagestan is well-known, and if we add to this, that the presence of the Magyars can be supported by reliable sources, then the key questions in the discussion will be answered, and all the uncertainty deliberately created by the anti-Hungarian scientific community, will be dissolved by this revelation. It becomes obvious just why the Magyars are known as Huns, in all of the foreign and domestic sources, as well as in the memory of the people, and why Arpad’s people kept Atilla in their memory as their great ancestor. Why did the “real” Huns of the Caucasus and the Sabirs (Savirs) disappear from the territory of Dagestan, where reliable sources mentioned them last (The Sabirs were mentioned, under the name *sab.r*, as one of the first peoples in the Khazar Empire, established in 650.⁸⁰), and right after that, the Magyars were known as Huns? Prior to this, why was it that the Sabirs (it is virtually certain that Sabirs and Magyars are one and the same people), like the Magyars after them, were known by contemporary historians as Huns?

⁸⁰ Szabírok. In: *Magyar nagylexikon*, 16. köt., Budapest, 2003, Magyar Nagylexikon Kiadó, p. 402.



Map of Sanson (1667) with the Sabar-Sabir people in the Caucasus (by Zsuzsa Darnai)

The second century Claudius Ptolemy indicates the *Sauar* people (Σάυαροι) in the European part of Sarmatia. (Geography III:5, §10)⁸¹ That *Sauar* name near to the Caucasus could mean the *Savar-Sabir* people very easily.

The Sabirs appeared for the first time in the foothills of the Caucasus in 515 and, after 558, they were not mentioned again – with the exception of 576, but by this time they were on the other side of the Caucasus (!) and, according to Németh and Czeglédy, they may not even have been Sabirs at that time, but rather Savard-Magyars.⁸² (?) – Gyula Németh notes, that this is the time (558) when the “Sabirs disappeared”.⁸³ From this point on, one can find references in the historical sources only to Khazars and Huns (of course, previous to that, there were references to Huns).

In reality, the question is no longer a question, because this whole issue is brighter than the Sun... Because, in the 6th century, the Huns, who were living in Dagestan and on the adjacent plains, blended with the Savirs, who migrated there in 515 and the Magyars (Savardis>Sevordis), who were also living there in the 6th century. It is very likely that the Savirs and Savards are one and the same people. (Everything matches up, the place – Dagestan; the time – the 6th century and the name – *Savard* or *Savir*, the former name of the Magyars.)

The Khazar Empire was organized and established around 650, under the leadership of the Sabirs – together with the Turks –, and in the beginning, the “young” Hun succession state successfully repelled the attacks of the Arabs. In this case, behind the exchange of the name, there could be a power switch within the Empire, in favor of another people or tribe, but the people that constituted the basic building block remained in place. This is why we used the word “young” to describe it.

⁸¹ Helilov - Nyitray: *Ősmagyarok Azerbajdzsánban*. Budapest, 2008, HUN-idea, p. 47.

⁸² Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 302.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 162.

The strength and viability of the Khazar Khaganate was proof that it was capable of blocking the powerful Arab expansion for over a half of a century, a feat of which only a few countries were capable.

The balance of power in this area and time could not exist forever, so, after a comparatively peaceful period, in the beginning of the 700s the hostility between the Khazar Empire and the Baghdad Caliphate was renewed, and it became an expanding and dragged out war. Therefore, the area north of Derbent, in the divide between the Caucasus Mountain range and the Caspian-Sea, the narrow land strip of Middle and North Dagestan – including the region of Eastern Caucasus – became a permanent battlefield. According to the Muslim Calendar, in the 104th year of Hijra [722/723 A.D.], under the leadership of Jarrah, the Arabs conquered Balanjar, the Khazarian capital city. Their first attempt in 652 had failed. This is the territory where the Magyars lived. Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar in Dagestan, as noted in *Derbendname*, was identical to the settlement of Indiri (Endrey), on the bank of the River Sulak, according to Bakikhanov.⁸⁴ The city of Balanjar was also in the “vicinity of River Sulak”, like the Khazars’ other big city, Semender.⁸⁵ (Some believe that beside the settlement of Upper Chir-yurt, the discovered big city walls and cemeteries could be Balanjar from the 7th century, while others believe that the city of Semender was located in the neighborhood of Mahachkala, where its ruins were found next to the settlement of Tarki – formerly Targu.). Independent of the above, the place names of Mažgar and Mažgar-yurt were found beside Hasavyurt. In addition, there are archeological proofs in support of this. Two kilometers north of the settlement of Endrey-aul – earlier name Indiri – ,⁸⁶ the Soviet archeologists discovered the foundations of a city. According to the science of archeology, this city was built in the 2nd and 3rd centuries, and it was depopulated⁸⁷ during the 8th and 9th centuries, at the time of the Arab-Khazar War.

Far south, in the city of Ardabil, the war went on for decades. According to Arab sources, the main Khazar Army numbered about 300 thousand, strong in the battle that took place by the Savalan Mountain in 731, and the Khazars annihilated the main Arab Army, massacred all the men and dragged the women and children into slavery. The leader of the Arabs, Jarrah, was also killed. Eventually, under the leadership of Marwan the Arab Army gained the upper hand, and crushed the Khazars and forced the Khagan and his Empire into submission.

According to the Arab sources, Marwan settled the Khazar prisoners onto the plain between the Rivers Samur and Sabiran, south of Derbent, in the territory of Lakz.⁸⁸ The 8th century contemporary Armenian historian, Gevond Vardapet, calls the Khazar fortress and the surrounding city, conquered by Marwan, Varachan, which was the „ancient” capital of the Huns. He calls the Khazar Empire the “Country of the Huns.”⁸⁹ Evidently he is in agreement with all the other contemporary Armenian, Albanian and Persian historians, who write of Huns and Khazars living north of Derbent and never of Savards or Sabirs. (These last two are known from the Byzantine sources.)

The name *Khazar* itself became prominent after the Huns’ power waned, and should be considered only as a collective name, under which there were people not even known by name. This is true even in the center of the Empire, which is noted in Masudi’s work, as well as in the works of other Arab historians. It is not clear to many historians just who the Khazars really were. Some believe they could have been any people from the Sabirs to the Turks, even the Kasars of Ancient Uyghuria (nowadays Mongolia). Masudi remarks that the “Khazars, in the Turkic language, are called Sabirs; in Persian, they are called Khazars.”⁹⁰ Earlier, Marquart, Tomaschek and Gyula Németh also represented this belief. Németh went on to say that the words, *Sabir* and *Khazar* have the same meaning.⁹¹ But, lately, this surmise has been strictly confined by the theory of Kasar-Khazar identity. There is one problem with the Kasars; no source about their migration from Central Asia to the vicinity of the Caucasus, yet some historians accept this idea. With the *Derbendname* and the “Mažgar” place names, we can prove

⁸⁴ Bakıxanov, A.: *Gülüstani-İrəm*. Bakı, 1951, p. 47.

⁸⁵ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 165.

⁸⁶ *История Дагестана*, том I. Москва, 1967, pp. 284. and 322. (maps)

⁸⁷ Магомедов, М.Г.: *Образование Хазарского каганата*. Москва, 1983, Наука, pp. 200-201.

⁸⁸ Bünyadov, Ziya M.: *Azərbaycan VII-IX. əsrlərdə*. Bakı, 2004, Pedaqogika, pp. 100. and 219. fn. – Chapter III.: p. 324.: Baladzuri 208; Ibn el-Esir V: 132; cf.: V. Minorsky: *A History of Sharvan and Darband*, p. 17.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100. and 220. fn. – Chapter III.: p. 324.: Gevond, p. 80-81.

⁹⁰ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 162.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

that the Magyars also took part in the establishment of the Khazar Khaganate, therefore they themselves were Khazars. Henceforth, this is not just a theory, but a proven fact, supported by historical sources, official maps and geographical works.

In reality, the only issue that needs to be clarified is whether – in a narrower sense – the Magyars (Savards) were the same people as the Savirs? Could it be that Gyula Németh is correct, when he writes: “The Savirs of Menandros [*the 6th century historian “also” mentioned them along with the Alans on the territory of today’s Azerbaijan, at the time when they met the Byzantine Army by the River Kur, in around 574 and 576*] could be Savards, but he is talking of Savirs and not Savards. It is also true that the Savards got their name from the Sabirs (Savirs).”⁹² So, if the two names – *Savir* and *Savard* – are in reality two names for one people (which is supported by the place names – Sabar/Zabar), then the Magyars received the name, *Savir*, because they were actually Savirs. We can prove that the Magyars of Dagestan and Azerbaijan lived in the same place as the Savirs, and at the same time. If Németh’s contention is factual, then the names *Savir* and *Savard* are etymologically the same – **according to him this is certain**⁹³ –, then in reality, we are talking of the same people, and not of the Magyars in the “Finno-Ugric” fairytale, with a tagged-on alien name, and for some unexplainable reason the Hungarians themselves still believe it. Furthermore, the Magyars (Savards) appear where the Savirs do, in different sources, in Dagestan and by the River Kur(a)...

Let us shed a little more light on this: Németh says that the names, *Savir* and *Savard*, used for the Magyars are the same, but that the Savirs have no historical connection with the Magyars. Then he contradicts himself. He brings up the possibility that in 576 (!!!), in the valley of the Kur, the Sabirs were Savards, in reality Magyars! This is unbelievable. We originally would not even dare to go as far as to say that the Sabirs in 576, by the River Kur, were actually Magyars. What is even more fantastic is that he suggests the possibility that, in 576 (!), Magyars may have lived that far south in the 6th century; whereas, based on *Derbendname*, they lived significantly north of there at that time. If we accept Németh’s contention regarding Kummajar, some 600 km. from the River Kur – where Kichi and Ulu Majar were located..., then one might ask, just why would the group of Magyars come from Magna Hungaria – note: before 600 A.D. – some 1500 km. to the south? This is no less than a gross contradiction.

Just to be sure that we did not misunderstand the words of Németh, he continues in this fashion: “There are two hundred years between Menandros’ remarks and the first written information, during which time there was no mention of the Savards [*he is speaking of the same Savards>Siyavurdis that were mentioned by Baladhuri in 752, who lived beside the River Kur – “interestingly enough” they were the neighbors of the Alans (!!!) –, and everyone considered them to be pure Magyars, including Gyula Németh*], which is most exceptional for such warriors...”⁹⁴ What is so “exceptional” to Németh, is obvious to all the historians of Azerbaijan and Armenia. The Albanian and Armenian historians called all the horsemen of the Eastern Caucasus, including the “real Huns”, collectively Huns – such as the Bulgars, Barsils, Alans, Haylandurs, Akatzirs, Banjars, Balanjars, Suvars/Savirs, Massagetaens, Khazars etc. They did not differentiate among them. It made no difference to them, which of the horsemen pillaged their villages; they suffered just the same. They could not determine any real difference among them, because the war they waged toward the south was fought in an alliance. It is not even clear just who the “real” Khazars were (the same could be said of the Burtases too); moreover, the Massagetaens in Albania and other horsemen, who moved in from the north and settled there, were called Huns.

This is the case in the works of Gevond, Moisey of Kalankatuk (in Armenian: Moses Kalankatvatsi)⁹⁵ or the 5th century Armenian historian, Faustus of Byzantium (Pavstos Byuzand), who states that the

⁹² Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 302.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp. 149. and 155-156.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 302.

⁹⁵ According to the Albanian historian, there was a law in Albania that Christian indigenous “Albanians” (in the wider sense all those who lived there, even those belonging to other ethnic groups, were considered to be Albanians – a collective name similar to the name “Hun”) could not marry the non-Christian Huns or those who did not want to be christened. In the 7th century, eight mixed (Albanian-Hun) families were completely annihilated, because of the secret marriage of a Christian and a pagan, yet one of the Albanian-Hun families was serving the Church (*History of Albania, II.32*). This law was taken off the books in 681 following – in

Massagetae king, Sanesan, was the commanding officer of the Hun Army (*History of Armenia, III:7*).⁹⁶ The explanation is quite simple, although Németh makes it seem incomprehensible, and it is so much more understandable than the Finno-Ugric theory of origin, which cannot be proven with written sources or archeological finds.



Derbent

Some believe that the first Hun groups migrated from Asia to Europe, and also into the territory of the Caucasus as early as in the 2nd century. There is some information about this in the works of Dionysius Periegetes (*ounni*) from the 2nd century and also in Claudius Ptolemy (in the form of *hounoi*). The Huns first appeared in Transcaucasia around 225 A.D. In the 5th century, Agathangelos mentions them in his book entitled: *History of Armenia*. Actually, the historian Movses Khorenatsi, also from the 5th century, mentions the appearance of the Khazars and Barsils a decade earlier, in 215, in the

the words of Moisey of Kalankatuk – the marriage of the daughter of a “Hun ruler”, that is the Khazar Khagan, Javanshir, to an Albanian king, in order to forge an alliance between the Khazar Empire and the Albanian Kingdom (II:26, 39).

⁹⁶ Minorsky, Vladimir: *A history of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th -11th centuries*. Cambridge, 1958, W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, p. 79.

Southern Caucasus, in the Chronicle of the same name. Yusif Jafarov suggests that the Khazars and Barsils were actually Huns, and he is probably right. The Massagetaens migrated quite early, around 270-280, from the Northern Caucasus to Albania, and settled beside the Caspian Sea in the province of Chol.

This whole Khazar, or as the historians called it: Hun state formation – which was the confederation of a number of different but related peoples – was destroyed by the Arab attacks in Dagestan, which caused the ethnic map of the Eastern Caucasus to be redrawn. The Huns were forced to move their capital city “at the beginning of the 8th century”,⁹⁷ from Dagestan, some 400 (!) kilometers north to the delta of the River Volga, that is to Itil in the vicinity of today’s Astrakhan. This actually became “the capital city of the Khazars in 729”.⁹⁸ This is a historical fact, which nobody denies.

Because of the expanded and merciless Arab-Khazar War – in which, according to *Derbendname*, the Magyars took part and became the victims, since their homeland was a battlefield for decades –, the smaller part of the Magyars (Savards) united with the Huns and, in the first part of the 8th century, they moved to the southeast and settled in the province of Uti, which was outside the hotbed of the Arab-Khazar War. (This is supported by the information of Baladhuri in 752, that the Siyavurdis [Magyars] looted Shemkir. Independent of Baladhuri, according to *Derbendname*, the history of Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar in Dagestan, along with their rulers, ended after 722, because of the Arab-Khazar War. The difference between 722 and 752 is right one generation.)

On this point, there are outstanding parallels in different sources, which all support each other. The Arab sources established that, in 722-723, after Jarrah, the leader of the Caliph, conquered the cities of Hamzi⁹⁹ (Hamlij), then Targu,¹⁰⁰ and eventually the fortress of Balanjar,¹⁰¹ the capital city of the Khazar Empire, he deported the inhabitants to the vicinity of Kabala (Gebele) in the province of Uti, and that is how the Khazar villages were established¹⁰² in Azerbaijan (on the territory of Arran). (That these strategic mass deportations and settlements were the practice of the Caliphate is shown by the deportation in 735, during the Kazar campaigns in the territory of the Volga, of some 40 thousand Khazar and Burtas prisoners,¹⁰³ who were also settled in Arran, that is in today’s Azerbaijan.)

It is known that Balanjar, the flourishing capital city, was located in the vicinity of River Sulak in the first part of the 8th century.¹⁰⁴ We also know from *Derbendname* that the history of Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar, and the history of their rulers, ended right after the Khazar defeat in 723. Bakikhanov also informs us that Kichi Majar used to lie on the banks of the River Sulak (if by any chance he is mistaken, it can be stated for certain, based on *Derbendname*, that the two Magyar cities were located in the Northeastern Caucasus). In 1913 the village of Mažgar-yurt still existed at the locale in question. There was also a geographical name: “Mažgar” identified at that time. This is supported by the fact that *Derbendname* makes a last note of the location of the two Magyar cities in 722, at the time of the Arab-Khazar War, which matches in time and in territory the Arab occupation of the area of the River Sulak in central Khazaria in 722-723, including the fall of the capital city of Balanjar. In addition to this, in 723, Jarrah conquered Alania, which was the central province of the Khazar Khaganate.

On this point, the different sources support each other as far as time and place are concerned. Yet, from other totally independent sources, we also learn that Magyar settlements (Hungarian villages still exist in the counties of Aghdash and Yevlakh), existed only 20-30 kilometers southwest of the city of Kabala (also the county of Aghdash bordering the county of Gebele in the northeast). To be exact, the city of Aghdash is exactly 45 kilometers from the city of Gebele (Kabala), and the Hungarian villages are not far from there. Keep in mind that the former Magyar settlements extended far beyond the three villages (Majar Garaoghlan, Garaoghlan and Majarlı). One might say

⁹⁷ Kazárok. In: *Magyar nagylexikon*, 10. köt., Budapest, 2000, Magyar Nagylexikon Kiadó, p. 686.

⁹⁸ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 165.

⁹⁹ Bünyadov, Ziya M.: *Azərbaycan VII-IX. əsrlərdə*. Bakı, 2004, Pedaqogika, p. 97. and 186. fn. – Chapter III.: p. 323.: Ibn Esam (180a): Khasin; Ibn el-Esir V, 84: el-Huseyn.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 97. and 187. fn. – Chapter, III.: p. 323.: Ibn el-Esir V, 84: Yarqu.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., p. 97. and 188. fn. – Chapter, III.: p. 323.: Teberi II, 1453; el-Mekin, p. 79.

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 97. and 190. fn. – Chapter, III.: p. 323.: Baladzuri, p. 194.; ld.: A. Bakıxanov: *Sitat gətirilən əsəri*, p. 55.

¹⁰³ Petrik István: *Rejtélyek országa*. Budapest, 2008, Napkút Kiadó, p. 41.

¹⁰⁴ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 165.

that some of the Khazar villages overlapped the Savard-Magyar villages, and vice-versa. “At worst,” they must have been close neighbors. Besides this, the place of their origin is the same: along the River Sulak in Dagestan.

All of this is of enormous importance, because it could not be a coincidence that all of the sources support each other in time, place and description of the final destination, which is the area of the River Sulak, and then, in 723, the province of Uti! Everything points to the theory that, from the vicinity of the three Khazarian cities, the Savard-Magyars were deported and then settled in the province of Uti in Arran. It should be noted that the Magyars were one of the major ethnic components of the Khazar Empire, because they were located in the central part of the Khaganate where the largest and oldest cities were located near the capital city, Balanjar, along the River Sulak. Semender was located here also, in which, according to Istakhri and Ibn Haukal, in the 10th century the Christian Church was still standing.¹⁰⁵ According to the account of the Arab geographer, al-Maqdasi (al-Muqaddasi), some of the residents were still Christians.¹⁰⁶ Many Huns of the Caucasus were converted to Christianity by Armenian and Albanian missionaries in the 6th-7th centuries.

Zacharias Rhetor, the Syrian historian of the 6th century, states that Kardost, the Albanian bishop, translated the Bible into the language of the Huns. Since the Albanians hoped that the conversion of the Huns to Christianity would stop them from pillaging their country, after Kardost had served 14 years in Dagestan, Varaz-Tradat, the Albanian king, with the help of the Albanian Catholicos of Yelizar, reorganized the mission in 681. They sent Bishop Israil from Barda to the land of the Huns beyond Derbent (Kalankatuk: *History of Albania*, II:39).

We know from the Albano-Armenian historian, Moisey of Kalankatuk that, when Bishop Israil crossed the Iron Gate of Derbent and arrived in the country of the Huns in 862 (*History of Albania*, II:39), they worshiped the god, Kuar, who was capable of delivering lightning strikes, and if anyone was struck down and died, they offered an animal sacrifice to their god in order to conciliate him (II:40).

The god’s name, Kuar, is an interesting name, because in today’s Slovakia (which used to be a part of Hungary) by the River *Ipoly*, there is a settlement named *Kóvár*. In 1257, it was called Kuar.¹⁰⁷ This underscores the correctness of the Albanian account, in regard to the name of the Hun-Sabir god. Furthermore, the name of the Alan leader, who migrated to Gaul (today’s France) in the 5th century, was Guar, and in the new homeland, the descendants of the Alans also used this name.¹⁰⁸ Since we know that the Alans were neighbors of the Sabirs and Huns (by the time of Bishop Israil they were more like *Hunsabirs*) in the Caucasus – north and south –, the parallel is inescapable. Beside *Székelyudvarhely* (in Transylvania), the natives call the Mountain Range opposite Mount *Budvár* “Kovar”. That is interesting, because this territory is supposed to be the area where the *Székelys* used to offer sacrifices in a pagan ritual, before the Magyar settlement of the Carpathian Basin.¹⁰⁹

The Hun ruler, Alp Ilitver (Alp Elteber), influenced by Bishop Israil, adopted Christianity, together with his people (II:41). The Albanian bishop, in his report of 682, mentions that “Christian Churches were built in the country of the Huns” – even before him –, and the city of Varachan (II:39), the headquarters of the Hun King, Alp Ilitve, was “magnificent”. There were streets and squares in the city, where skillful carpenters worked, who respected Aspandiat as a saint, and considered her the mother of the giant oak trees, out of which they carved a huge cross decorated with tulips¹¹⁰ and other motifs. Earlier, the Hun-Sabirs used to go to these sacred oaks – *trees of life* – to offer their sacrifices, which they sprayed with the blood of a horse, and then they hung the skull and hide of the horse on the tree (II:40-41). *Kornél*

¹⁰⁵ Ал-Истахрий: Книга путей царств. In: Перевод Н.А. Караулова – *СМОМПК*, вып. XXIX. Тифлис, 1901, р. 47.; Ибн-Хаукаль: Книга путей и царств. In: Перевод Н.А. Караулова – *СМОМПК*, вып. XXXVIII. Тифлис, 1908, р. 114.

¹⁰⁶ Ал-Мукаддаси: Лучшее из делений для познания стран. In: Перевод Н.А. Караулова – *СМОМПК*, вып. XXXVIII. Тифлис, 1908, р. 5.

¹⁰⁷ *Hazai okmánytár. Codex diplomaticus patrius (Hungaricus). IV.* Győr, Bp. 1865-1891, pp. 76-77. and 91.; Reiszig Ede: *Turul*, XXVII, 1909, p. 160.; Melich: *Magyar Nyelv* XXIV, 1928, p. 246.

¹⁰⁸ Bachrach, Bernard, S.: *A History of Alans in the West*. Minneapolis, 1973, University of Minnesota, p. 79.

¹⁰⁹ Szász Viktor: a researcher of *Székelyudvarhely*.

¹¹⁰ Moisey Kalakatuklu: *Albaniya tarixi*. Bakı, 2006, Avrasiya press, p. 174.

Bakay pointed this out – rightfully – as a partial horse-burial.¹¹¹ Let us see what *István Erdélyi* writes about this: “...mainly the men’s, but some women’s graves contain the hide of the horse and the bones of the legs and the skull, placed there after the mourners had consumed the meat of the horse.”¹¹² In most of the Turk graves, the complete skeleton of a horse can be found, which was the accepted custom of the Turks.

It should be considered very significant that the Bishop saw Varachan as “magnificent”, because he came from a country – Albania –, in which, well ahead of Northwestern Europe, there were huge cities with stone and brick buildings with sewer and water systems. (Many believe that the fortification discovered in the 1960s in Urtzeki in Dagestan used to be the city of Varachan.)

The conversion of the Huns of the Caucasus is significant, if we accept that, at that time, in the province of Uti, the Savard-Magyars were already Christians, so much so, that one of their leaders, Stephannos Kon, became a martyr of the Christian Church.

József Thury researched the works of the Armenian priest and historian, Mikayel Chamichyan (1738-1823). According to Chamichyan, when the Turk governor of Armenia, Bugha the Great (Bugha al-Kabir/al-Turki), launched a Transcaucasia campaign from the city of Tovin, in 854, and in the province of Uti, destroyed the Sevordis’ city of Tus (or Dus) the leader of the Sevordis, Stephannos Kon, was captured. (Prior to this, Bugha had captured the Uti leader and defender of the stronghold of Karich.) Following this, he continued his conquest through Alania, all the way to Tiflis. After the successful campaign, in the following year, 855, Bugha the Turk marched the Alan, Armenian, Uti, Albanian and Sevordi (Magyar) prisoners of war in front of the Caliph of Baghdad.

In the Palace of Baghdad, the Caliph gave them a choice: renounce Christianity and convert to Islam or be tortured to death. Among the faithful ones, who chose the latter, was Stephannos Kon, the leader of the Sevordis, whose bravery was exceptional.¹¹³ Those who stood by him were the Princes George and Arwes, who were brothers, and who became saints of the “Armenian Church”, although they were Sevordis (see footnote 45.). This proves that the Sevordis were Christians in the first half of the 9th century. *György Györffy* writes that the Savards “in 854 were Christians and most likely influenced by the Armenians.”¹¹⁴ If we consider that, in *Derbendname*, beside Hasavyurt, there are two places called Mažgar, then we might think that, even before the Magyars migrated to the province of Uti, they could have converted to Christianity in the territory of Dagestan, a part of the Hun Kingdom, where they were influenced by Armenian and Albanian missionaries. It is known from sources of Armenian language that the Armenian and Albanian missionaries succeeded in converting some of the Huns of Dagestan – perhaps many of them – to Christianity. This did not mean that, all of a sudden, they gave up their old traditions and beliefs completely. It was most likely that the old and the new religion existed side by side for some time.

In the case of the Magyars, Prince Geza (972-997) supported a stable central government based on Christian principles. His son, Saint Ishtvan (997-1038) joined the Church of Rome, and embarked on the “Christianization” of his people. Many more scholars are taking it upon themselves to study the “paganism” of the Magyars before Saint Ishtvan, because it is interpreted in different ways, while the Hungarian Chronicles are heavily influenced by the Roman Church and Western European views. From *István Baán* to *Kornél Bakay*, scholars have established that, in Hungary, before the conversion of Saint Ishtvan, there was a strong Byzantine Christian influence.

Therefore it is quite possible that the roots of Christianity stretched all the way to the Caucasus and its seeds were sown in Albania and Armenia. The Hungarian crosses worn in the 9th and 10th centuries support this viewpoint. They are quite individual and without parallel. Christ is not depicted crucified on them, but with outstretched hands.

¹¹¹ Bakay Kornél: *Őstörténetünk régészeti forrásai II.* Miskolc, 1998, Miskolci Bölcsész Egyesület, p. 78.

¹¹² Erdélyi István: *A magyar honfoglalás és előzményei.* Bp., 2002, Mundusz, p. 115.

¹¹³ Thury József: A magyaroknak >>szavarti-aszfali<< neve I-II. In: *Századok*, 1897, pp. 325-326.

¹¹⁴ Györffy György: *Krónikáink és a magyar őstörténet*, p. 87.



Anomalous cross from Pilisszántó



*The sabretache plate of Tiszabezdéd with Iranian senmurv and cross within palmetted tree of life.
(The confluence of all three elements is in the culture of Caucasus region)*

This information in itself should make one realize that, within the Caliphate of Baghdad in 854, there were Christians (!) – a fact, which is accepted by everyone from Gyula Németh to György Györffy¹¹⁵ –, yet we are told that, in the Carpathian Basin, surrounded by Christians on all sides, the early Hungarians, even in the 11th century, vehemently clung to their supposed “paganism”. Behind this, there must have been something other than what is generally accepted. Perhaps it was not that they were non-Christian but that they were “provincial” (according to Gábor Pap), or as Bakay says, the arrival of the powerful Magyars in 895 signaled the beginning of the ethnically and nationally charged east-west struggle and these clashes, later on, were characterized as anti-Christian, which is being held responsible as the major cause for that conflict even today.

According to tradition, Hungarians are the descendants of Nimrod. *József Thury*, who has extensively researched the Armenian sources, which write about the Sevordis, stumbled on an amazing information. This becomes particularly important, since we have proved that the Sevordis were really Magyars. Let us not forget that, even the members of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences have accepted this, which in itself is no small thing. Let us quote *József Thury* who, to his surprise, discovered this coincidence in regard to the belief of the Magyars of the Carpathian Basin: “I should mention the exceptional statement by the first Armenian writer, Patriarch John, who wrote about the Savartis, who says that the Savartis in Armenia were the descendants of Kush, who was the son of Nimrod.”¹¹⁶

Evidently this legend existed even before the Magyars came to the Carpathian Basin, and it was not a creation of the Arpad Dynasty, nor did it originate in the Hungarian Kingdom or in Western Europe. It must go back to the time before the Magyars separated into two groups, and before 752, when Baladhuri first mentions the Sevordis in the province of Uti. Therefore, it was not the creation of the Roman Church’s clergy either. It suggests some Christian and Biblical connection though, because these two names, „Nimrod” and „Kush” also appear in the Old Testament and in the Syrian traditions. Consequently, the Hungarians were not “pagans” after all. (There are even problems with the exact meaning of the Latin word.)

There are other sources supporting the information that the Magyars were one of the major components of the Khazar Khaganate: “According to 10th century sources, such as the works of Constantine Porphyrogenetos and Bruno of Querfurt, the Magyars were at that time bilingual. Emperor Constantine made his notes based on the information given to him by the Magyar leader, Bulchu. One of the two languages was of Turkic kind...” (*Dümmmerth*)¹¹⁷ “During the time of Arpad and his sons, the earlier leaders of the Seven Magyar Tribes... negotiated in Turkic in Constantinople. *Denis Sinor* points out correctly, in his presentation given at the Hungarian Academy of Sciences on the occasion of the 200th birthday of *Csoma Sándor Kőrösi*, that the Emperor or the writer of the chronicle could have made a mistake, but it is not likely that the interpreter made a mistake about the language he was interpreting from.”¹¹⁸ Among the Magyars, it was customary, to speak a second language (Turkic), besides the mother tongue, because it was necessary in the multi-national Khazar Empire, especially since they lived in the center of the Empire. If they had lived on the fringes, or near to the border, they would not have needed, nor would they have had the opportunity to learn the second language on a wide scale. According to Németh, “We must treat this issue very carefully, because we should not presume a direct language connection between the Khazars and Magyars.”¹¹⁹ Question: If this is so, why were the Hungarians bilingual on a wide scale?

Interestingly enough, at one time, *Gyula Németh* taught the same as *Kornél Bakay*, *István Kiszely* and others that the Magyars represented a major power in the center of the Khazar Khaganate, before the Arabs expelled them. This is the only possible explanation for why the Hungarians were speaking two languages, at least for two generations after they had settled in the Carpathian Basin. Gyula Németh writes: “According to Ibn Fadlan, the language of the Khazars is different from the Turkic and the Persian language, and it does not resemble any other languages. Istakhari and Ibn Haukal repeated this statement, but the latter writer adds a significant note to it: ‘the language of

¹¹⁵ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 302.

¹¹⁶ Thury József: A magyaroknak >>szavarti-aszfali<< neve I-II. In: *Századok*, 1897, p. 400.

¹¹⁷ Dümmmerth Dezső: *Az Árpádok nyomában*. Budapest, 1977, Panoráma, p. 30.

¹¹⁸ Balás Gábor (author): *A székely művelődés évszázadai*. 1988, Panoráma, p. 17.

¹¹⁹ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 229.

the REAL KHAZARS is different from the Turkic and the Persian language.’ It is not clear who the “real” Khazars were, as noted by Ibn Haukal but it is clear that there were many languages in the Khazar Empire. Ibn Haukal knew that the language of some of the Khazars had no connection either to the Turkic or the Persian, not even to any other language. In addition to this, Istakhri and Ibn Haukal state: ‘The language of the Bulgars is like the language of the Khazars.’ This contradicts Ibn Fadlan’s contention, that: **it does not resemble any other languages.** Therefore, the notes of Istakhri and Ibn Haukal are contradictory, but independent of each other.”¹²⁰

Many believe that the Arab sources refer to a single Khazar language, yet even Gyula Németh, who is anything but “partial” to Hungarian issues, points out that there are at least two different Khazar languages. Those researchers, who evaluate the sources with a lax attitude (by simply neglecting important information) and summarize their conclusion in an equally lax manner, such as in the Lexicon entitled: *A világ nyelvei (The Languages of the World)*, published in the year 2000, ignore the mention of the “real Khazars” in the Arab source. If there were “real Khazars”, then there must have been “non-real Khazars”: the lesser Khazars, who spoke a different language and these were those, whom the Arabs differentiated from each other on account of their language.

We can conclude the following: There were at least two Khazar languages; one for the “real Khazars”, and another for the “lesser Khazars”, just as in Belgium there are two languages: French and Flemish. It is rather strange, that the authors who published their books with the Academy Publishing Co. never came to this conclusion. Tibor Halasi-Kun wrote in 1943: „We may conclude from the Islamic sources, although they sometimes give conflicting information, that, in the Khazar Empire, there were many languages, and even the Khazars themselves spoke more than one language.”¹²¹

Later on Németh continues in this way: “After all, the note of the geographer Muqaddasi is quite interesting: ‘The language of al-Khazar is very ambiguous.’ These sources tell us that in the Khazar Empire, people spoke a language, which was different from any other known language. (Here we cannot help but think of the Hungarian language).”¹²² This was written by none other than Gyula Németh and, in this, he does not differ from the opinion of Kornél Bakay: „Is it not our language (Hungarian), which has not the least resemblance to any Indo-European or Slavic languages? According to Masudi, the Persians used the name *Khazar* for these people, and the Turks called the same people *Sabirs*. This is very important (for Hungarians), because it supports Emperor Constantine’s note, regarding our early Savard<Sabir name.”¹²³ The Byzantine sources differentiated the Magyars from the Khazars by calling them Western-Turks and Eastern-Turks. We can add to this more than ten place names like Kazár, Kozár, Kozárd, Kozárom, etc.¹²⁴

Besides the mentioned Arab sources that pointed out the unusual language of the “real-Khazars” (See Halasi-Kun, who quotes several researchers),¹²⁵ there is al-Maqdisi, who notes that, in the 10th century, when the Magyars (he calls them Turks, as most do) waged war against Andalus, several of them were captured, but no-one understood their language.¹²⁶ Just as there are no “real” Belgian or Swiss people, there were no “real” Khazar people either, because under this name, in reality, they included the Magyars. *Derbendname* proved with the Major place names that, in the Khazar Khaganate, the Magyars were the determining major component. That had to be the reason why, in his letter, Khagan Josef used the Hungarian word: “Úr” (Lord) to refer to the king.¹²⁷

The *Khazar* as a political name is widely used by foreigners, in a general sense (just see in the *Derbendname*), yet the word itself might originate from the name of an Uyghur or Turk tribe: *kasar/gasar*. It is significant that the name *Khazar* first appeared at the time of Khosrau I Anushirvan, who founded Kichi- and Ulu Majar in the Northeastern Caucasus, and none other than Gyula Németh himself calls attention to this.¹²⁸

¹²⁰ Ibid., p. 167.

¹²¹ Halasi-Kun Tibor: A magyarság kaukázusi története. In: Ligeti Lajos (ed.): *A magyarság őstörténete*, p. 93.

¹²² Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, pp. 166-167.

¹²³ Bakay Kornél: *Magyarnak lenni: büszke gyönyörűség!*, Pomáz, 2004, Kráter, p. 149.

¹²⁴ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 264.

¹²⁵ Halasi-Kun Tibor: A magyarság kaukázusi története, p. 94.

¹²⁶ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 161.

¹²⁷ Bakay Kornél: *Magyarnak lenni: büszke gyönyörűség!*, p. 150.

¹²⁸ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 162.

The majority of Magyars (Savards) migrated to the northwest from the land – in our legend called Eviláth, “which at the time was called Persia” (!!!) – to the territory called Levedia by Constantine (the territory of Kuban-Meotis), because of the relentless Arab advance, which eventually became the Arab-Khazar War. This does not contradict the notes of Constantine Porphyrogenetos: “The people of the Turks acquired a homeland for themselves near Khazaria, named after their first ruler, Levedi...”¹²⁹ The Emperor does not say that they settled in Khazaria, but instead “near” Khazaria. That means they could actually have come from Khazaria itself, too.

The memory of this history is preserved in the Chodasarvash-monda (The Legend of the wondrous deer) as it is noted by Kézai, and recited generation after generation. Persia is mentioned in the legend (just as in the writings of Constantine VII: “in the vicinity of Persia”, which is accepted as Southern Caucasus.): “The giant, Menroth, after the languages became mixed up, went to the land of Evilath, which was called Persia (!!!) [*Discount the mythical introduction, and this is written exactly as in Derbendname. See the establishment of Kichi Majar and Ulu Majar in Dagestan, which was part of Persia at that time, by the great King Khosrau I Anushirvan (531-579) of the Sasanid Persian Empire. What the legend actually says is: The land was called Persia at that time. It was not called Persia all the time, only at the time when the father of the Huns and Magyars migrated there, which is correct; because later on Dagestan became part of the Khazar Empire,¹³⁰ and in the beginning it was the central part of it. Therefore, the legend supports Derbendname, and it reflects the historical truth*], and there, Eneh bore two sons for Menroth: Hunor and Magor (Major), of whom the Huns and Magyars are the descendants. [*This is in line with the historical fact; the brothers represent the two peoples, and the Huns of the Caucasus lived in Dagestan, which, for a long time was part of the Persian Empire. At the same time, Derbendname proves, that the Magyars (Savards) lived together with the Huns. Since the Latin language does not have a sound j, and the unanimous opinion is that the personal name Magor goes back to the personification of the Magyar people’ name, which sounded Majar in the early Hungarian language, because the sound gy (~dy) did not exist. There are places where even today it is pronounced that way. Therefore, Mag’or (from Maj’ar; see Hun and Hun’or) is pronounced as Major (or Mojar), although it is written „Magor (or Mogor)” in the Latin alphabet. So, it is generally accepted that the personal name Magor represents the name of the Magyar people.*] Menroth had more than one wife, so, besides Hunor and Major, he had many sons and daughters. Their descendants still live in Persia; in stature and color they resemble the Huns, only their language shows a slight difference, as in the case of the Saxons and Thuringians. [*This could be accepted as fact also, because it is supported by the sources, which state that the first group of Savard-Magyars migrated from Dagestan to the province of Uti, which later on became Azerbaijan, which was part of Persia together with Dagestan.*] – Then the events continue with the chase after the wondrous deer, over the mountains and valleys, all the way to the swamps of Meotis. Following this, they returned to their father, to obtain his permission to move to Meotis, with all their possessions. [*This also coincides with the historical fact that the Hun-Magyar people migrated from Dagestan to Meotis, which is the Ancient Greek name of the Azov-Sea. In addition to this, if the brothers were the personification of the two peoples, and their father granted them permission, with the agreement of the Khazar Khagan, they could have migrated to the Sea of Azov from Dagestan, in the center of the Khazar Empire, where the Khagan himself had his headquarters, in the capital city of Balanjar, until the time of the Arab conquest in 722-723.*] There was also mention of the kidnapping of the wives and children of the sons of Belar (Bulgar) during a campaign. Among them, were the daughters of King Dula of Alania. The Bulgars and Alans also lived in the Northern and Southern Caucasus and, to this day, they are known by the names of Balkar and Ossetian. Obviously the legend does not mention anything about the defeats suffered at the hands of the Arabs. This would be undignified and demeaning to a proud and battle-tested people. The romantic tale of the two brothers pursuing the wondrous deer was much preferable.

¹²⁹ Moravcsik Gyula: *Az árpád-kori magyar történet bizánci forrásai*, p. 42.

¹³⁰ Gyula Németh himself writes that; “in the 7th century the Khazars ruled over certain northern parts and the Caucasus, which belongs to Persia”. (*A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 165.)

Discounting the mythical aspects of the legend, the historical segments of it are supported by a variety of written sources in time and place, such as those of Derbent, Byzantium, and also Arab and Hungarian sources. It is impossible to accept that this is a mere coincidence. It is also shocking, that certain circles, depending on their own needs, pick out some elements from the legend and disregard others. *György Györffy*, *Gyula Németh* and many other members of the Academy of Sciences accept the legend of the migration of the Savard-Magyars into Persia (but, even so there is a small discrepancy here because, according to the legend, the Savard-Magyars were living in Persia; it was Menroth, the father of the Huns and Magyars, who migrated into Persia), which could be considered as historical fact, because, in those days, Dagestan and Azerbaijan were part of the Sasanid Persian Empire. They also accept as “fact”,¹³¹ the intermixing of the Bulgars and the Alans, which is mentioned in the legend.

These scholars do accept that the Hungarians in reality migrated to Meotis but, their historical theory states that they came from the North from the tundra and the ice-fields beyond the Urals, as a Finno-Ugric people, and not, as the legend states, from the South, from Persia, as Hun-Magyar people of Turk origin. Since it has been proven that the Huns of the Caucasus, in other words the descendants of Atilla, in Dagestan blended with the Magyars, who were formerly called Savards, and who almost certainly were identical to the historical Sabirs, then we can say that we Hungarians are “twice” Huns, for all the contemporary historians consider both the Caucasian Huns and the Sabirs to be Huns.



Iranian-Sasanid jugs (Tehran and Hamadan) are the closest relatives to the Hungarian treasure of Nagyszentmiklós

¹³¹ Györffy György: *Krónikáink és a magyar őstörténet*, p. 18.

The question is, just how accurate is the information in the work of Constantine Porphyrogenetos? **Could he arbitrarily or by mistake attached the name of Savard (~Sabir) to Magyars, as some of “our big scholars”¹³² still believe?** The accuracy of Constantine is proven by village-names in Azerbaijan of Majar (Magyar) origin, which survive to this day; the villages of *Savardi*>*Sevordi* (black boy)>*Garaoghlan*, a short distance from each other, in two cases. This is why this must be taken seriously, such a strong proof cannot be regarded as a triple coincidence (*Majar*, *black* and *boy* together).

In the ancient beliefs of the Hungarians, the Persian elements are demonstrable: “Besides their declining shamanism, our ancestors may have preserved the dualistic views of the Iranian belief system. The word “*ármány*” (intrigue) points in this direction; it is derived from the name of Ahriman, who was the Iranian god of darkness, who had nothing to do with shamanism.”¹³³ Ibn Rusta and Abul Fida call the Magyars fire-worshippers. A number of cultural anthropologists have noted that there are numerous Hungarian customs and beliefs that could be connected to the fact that the Magyars honored fire.¹³⁴ *Gábor Pap* brings up the word “*varizsálás*”, and the “*kemence*” (oven, sacred fireplace), which is built in the shape of a church, with the cross on the top of its chimney (stack).¹³⁵ Besides the respect of the Sun and Moon, Moisey of Kalankatuk mentions fire-sacrifices among the Huns of the Caucasus and the offerings, which were placed by the water’s edge (II:40). See the law set down by St. Laslo: “Those who sacrifice in a pagan manner by the wells, or place offerings by trees, springs and stones, must pay one ox for their crime.” (I. Law book, §22)

According to *István Balassa* and *Gyula Ortutay*, the lighting of fire while some assorted verses are recited, on certain holidays, goes back to this ancient belief system.¹³⁶ On some holidays, the people jumped over a fire in order to cleanse themselves; this also goes back to this time.¹³⁷ By the River Galga, according to *József V. Molnár*, after the bride’s hair was gathered up in a knot, she had to jump over a fire of straw three times. Sometimes a young man lifted her over the small fire. These customs were also noted to exist among the Turks, noted by the Byzantines, who met them in 567/568 in Sogdia: before they could appear in front of the Khagan, “the possessions of the delegates were carried over a fire, and finally Zemarkhos himself was carried over.” (Similar cleansing customs were observed by Plano Carpini in Mongolia in the 13th century.)¹³⁸

This probably has no direct connection the Hungarian customs, but in Azerbaijan, the people jump over fires in a ritual cleansing on the holiday of Novurz (“Iranian new year”). Moreover, some Northern and Western European people practice this custom, too. Therefore, it is not possible to make a direct connection between the so-called “fire-worship” of the ancient Magyars and the Iranian-Caucasian customs.

According to the cultural anthropologists, besides some old verses and stories, a natural folk-cure refers directly to the respect for fire. Some believe that the Hungarian poet, *Ferenc Kölcsey* may not have lost his sight in his left eye in childhood exclusively as a result of smallpox. This was given as the explanation because the family did not want people to think that they were “superstitious”. They wanted to heal their son with a ritual folk remedy, but during the ritual, a spark jumped out of the fire into his eye, causing blindness. Another healing method in Csallóköz was to pick some charcoal out of the fire, and drop it into clear water. This holy water, purified by fire, became charged with healing properties, and it was used to stop a child from crying.¹³⁹ Another superstition was to light a candle on top of the head to cure mental illness, or to burn in a ritual the “*kisze-bábú*” (rag or straw doll) in the beginning of spring, to say farewell to winter. They cursed the doll with all evil and dreadful things, so it would burn and get rid of all the ills for good.¹⁴⁰

¹³² **Lóránd Benkő, András Róna-Tas, István Zimonyi, Kornél Nagy, Balázs Sudár, István Vásáry, László Kilma, Tamás Höbling, Péter Veres, István Erdélyi, Aybolat Kushkumbayev and the impostor Mihály Benkő.**

¹³³ Erdélyi István: *A magyar honfoglalás és előzményei*. Bp., 2002, Mundusz, p. 118.

¹³⁴ Balassa Iván - Ortutay Gyula: *Magyar néprajz*. Békéscsaba, 1982, Corvina, p. 614.

¹³⁵ Pap Gábor: *Jó pásztorok hagyatéka: magyar népművészet*. Debrecen, 1993, Magányos Kiadó, pp. 90-92.

¹³⁶ Balassa Iván - Ortutay Gyula: *Magyar néprajz*, p. 614.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 614 and 646.

¹³⁸ Vásáry István: *A régi Belső-Ázsia története*, p. 67.

¹³⁹ Information by László Rostás.

¹⁴⁰ Information by László Rostás.

The respect for fire was expressed in different ways, says *József V. Molnár*. For example, in some parts of the country, they would “feed the fire”. On Sundays, they gave a spoonful of chicken soup to the fire before anyone started to eat it. He also says that, to this day, in the Hungarian people’s customs, there are many elements expressing this respect, such as the belief that one should not throw rubbish into the fire or curse it. It was a huge shame if the family’s fire went out and only for a very serious reason would the family actually extinguish it. If a family member died, it was customary to put out the fire for three days, while they were in mourning.

Let us remember that, in the laws of St. Ishtvan, the only person, who was exempt from going to church on Sundays and holidays, was the one in charge of the fire. It is difficult to select just which customs are rooted in the old belief system, but we can be reasonably sure that they attributed physical and spiritual properties to fire, for example its cleansing and purifying power, which protected them from evil. This was probably part of the spiritual beliefs of the early Magyars, too.

If there really was “fire-worship” among the Magyars, as is stated by the Arab historians, the casual observers saw only the external expression of it, without understanding the spiritual meaning. However, this again proves that the Hungarians migrated first to Levedia-Etelköz, then to the Carpathian Basin, from the Southern and Eastern Caucasus, from an Iranian cultural circle, and not from Bashkiria and the Finno-Ugric “ancient homeland” beyond the Ural Mountains.

It cannot be excluded that the Magyars were the followers of more than one religion, for the simple reason that they were in the center of the crossroads of three religions in the Northeastern Caucasus. It is quite possible that there were some intermixing of these religions, like for example the Indian-based Christian culture in Latin America, and in the Caucasus itself.

It is not unusual for the Christian Georgians or the Muslims of the Northern Caucasus to honor the trees or observe other “pagan” rooted customs. The Ossetians mummify the bodies of their dead in the dry and windy caves of high mountains, with pagan rituals. These mummies are stored there for centuries. They still do this, in spite of the objections of their Christian or Muslim Churches.

We have presented ample evidence, based on reliable sources, that the Magyars once lived in the region of Caucasus, but the 11th century Andalusian al-Bakri put the crown on the top of our long line of verifications, in his work entitled: *Book of Countries and Roads*. In it he writes: “Remembrance of the country of Majgariya: They (Magyars) live between the country of Bajanakiya (Pechenegs) and the territory of Askl, which belongs to Bulkariya (Bulgaria, nowadays Balkaria in the Northwestern Caucasus). [*This agrees 100% with the aforementioned facts. The country of the “Bajanakiya”, that is the country of the Pechenegs, until 893/894, extended from the shores of the Caspian Sea to the lower part of the delta of the River Volga. The Bulgars lived in the territory of the Northwestern Caucasus within the Khazar Khaganate, so, between the two peoples, the territory in the Northeastern Caucasus to the western shores of the Caspian Sea was inhabited by the Magyars.*] The Magyars are idol-worshippers... Their country’s length and width is one hundred farsach. Their country borders on one side the country of Rum, on the other side, the desert. There is a mountain on their border, which is inhabited by the Abin (Alans)... On the lower part of this mountain, on the shores of the sea, live the Uguna (the Armenian name for the Albanians); they are Christians, and they border the Muslim countries in the vicinity of Tiflis; this is Armenia’s first border. This mountain extends to the territory of *al-Bab wa-l-Abwab* (Derbent), and it borders the country of the Khazars.”¹⁴¹ *Al-Bakri underlines the quoted independent sources such as Derbendname and the Legend of the wondrous deer, by stating that the Magyars migrated from the immediate vicinity to the land of the Albanians, because they lived together with the Alans and Bulgars within the Khazar Empire.*¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Kmoskó Mihály: *Mohamedán írók a steppe népeiről: földrajzi irodalom I/2*. Budapest, 2000, Balassi Kiadó, p. 256.

¹⁴² István Zimonyi following Kmoskó and Czeglédy tried to discredit certain parts of al-Bakri’s notes, the ones he did not like. We believe that we have satisfactorily prevented him from doing this. See: 2008, *Ősmagyarok Azerbajdzsánban*, pp. 87-91. Czeglédy concluded, “Gardizi and Bakri do not lead back to the same source. **The research in the case of Bakri is not yet finished.**” (A magyarság Dél-Oroszországban. In: Ligeti Lajos [editor]: *A magyarság őstörténete*, p. 111.) The authenticity of al-Bakri about magyars is proven by Derbendname and the Chodasavash-legend.

That's the reason why in the Hungarian language has a lot of Alan-Ossetian, a dozen Persian and two Caucasian-Avar words.¹⁴³

Just when and under what kind of circumstances the Magyars lived in Magna Hungaria, is only a secondary issue. There are no sources that mention them in connection to that region. *László Bendefy*, *Tibor Halasi-Kun*, *Kornél Bakay* and others point to the fact that the area in question has never been the homeland of the entire Magyar people, only part of them migrated or were forced to go to the elbow of the River Volga, along with the Bulgars, sometime later on. (They were probably the ones who met with Friar Julian the Dominican in 1236.) Interestingly enough *Gyula Németh*, back in 1930 accepted the same theory.¹⁴⁴

It may seem incredible but, we have early Bulgar settlements in Azerbaijan. In the 19th century, and in the first part of the 20th century, in the county of Bilesuvar, on the banks of the Bolgar River, the villages of *Bolgar*, *Bolgarkend*, and *Bolgar Göytepe* still existed.¹⁴⁵ However, the Bulgarians were allied with Germany in World War II, so these names disappeared from the maps.

Magyars and Bulgars were mentioned in the contemporary sources next to each other, because they were like brothers, the descendants of the same ancestry, and they lived together for a long time in the Northern Caucasus in the 6th century, as we see from the sources such as *Derbendname* and *al-Bakri*, where the place names *Mazgar* are mentioned to exist near Hasavyurt.

It is obvious from the notes of *Derbendname* that the Magyars were the southeastern neighbors of the Bulgars in the 6th century in the Northern Caucasus, as well as in the elbow of the Volga. It cannot be considered accidental that the Bulgarians, to this day, think of Hungarians as relatives. According to *László Kálinzky*, Professor of History at the University of Miskolc, the Bulgarians' national colors are the same as are the Hungarians', (although in a different order) because they adopted them from the Hungarians. *Gábor Pap* states the same thing.

Interestingly enough, the Kazan Tatars also say that their national colors are green, white and red, because their closest brothers are the Hungarians. One must know that the Kazan Tatars consider themselves to be the direct descendants of the Volga Bulgars (just like the Chuvashes) although, at the time of the conquest by the Mongolian Golden Horde, they changed their language to Kipchak and their name to Tatar. They are so firm in this belief that, after the Soviet Union fell apart, and the Russian Federation was established, they also use their older name Bulgarian, just as the Ossetians officially changed their country name to Republic of North Ossetia-Alania.

In spite of the fact that the Bulgarians of the Balkans lost their Turkic language because they conquered a Slavic people, they are still proud of their Turk ancestry. However, they do not like the Ottoman Turks, because they have lived under their rule for centuries. The third son of Khagan Kuvrat, Asparuh Khan, conquered the Eastern Balkans in 679 and, in 681, he established the forerunner of today's Bulgarian State. He considered himself to be a descendant of Atilla, just like the Hungarian Turul Clan. To be exact, the list of the Bulgar rulers starts with Irnek, the youngest son of Atilla, but the Hungarian Dynasty of Arpad derived himself directly from Atilla. This is supported by the fact that the Magyars lived in the Caucasus, southeast of the Bulgars in Dagestan, which was the seed of the European Hun Empire. That is the reason, why the Danube Bulgarian find material resembles Hungarian, but their belt mountings made by bronze, while the Hungarians' are gold plated silver.

Therefore, just as in the case of the Bulgars, it is possible that the Magyars in the 9th century broke into not two but three parts, following the Pecheneg attack, and one part fled to the northeast into Magna Hungaria, and another part to the southeast. The earliest certain mention of the Hungarians in Bashkiria is just from the 13th century. See the Bashkir-Magyar identity problem and the two kind of

¹⁴³ *Magyar kódex 1. Az Árpádok világa*. Budapest, 1999, Kossuth Kiadó, p. 134.; Harmatta János: Iráni népek hatása az ősmagyar nyelvre. In: Kovács László - Veszprémy László (editors): *Honfoglalás és nyelvészet. A honfoglalás sok szemmel 3*. Budapest, 1997, Balassi Kiadó, pp. 77, 80-81.; Veres Péter: Kaukázusi népek szerepe a magyar őstörténetben. In: Magyar Kálmán (editor): *A fordulat: A magyarság és a Kelet II. őstörténeti konferencia - Régészet*. Budapest, 2008, Magyarok Világszövetsége, pp. 234-236.

¹⁴⁴ Németh Gyula: *A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása*, p. 301.

¹⁴⁵ Гейбуллаев, Г.А.: *Топонимия Азербайджана*. Баку, 1986, ЭЛМ, p. 33.

Bashkir issue in the al-Balkhi tradition, moreover a Turk kind! But the 10th century source does not mention Bashkiria as the ancient homeland of Basjirts (probably Hungarians meaning here). The only mention of this is a slight hint in the report of Friar Julian in the 13th century. Moreover Julian first went to the Caucasus instructions of Friar Otto, who met with Hungarinas there in 1233.

Acknowledgements:

Some of our helpers deserve special thanks for helping me to obtain the visa to Azerbaijan, in order to visit the village of Majar Garaoghlan in the summer of 2009: I would like to mention especially Seyat Aran, the Chief Consul of Azerbaijan in Istanbul; Seftir Rehimli, a member of the Organizing Committee of the World Congress of Azerbaijan and also the President of the Committee of the Congress; Sevil Nur Aydin, the President of the Organization of the Asian Dialogue Society and the Presidents of the Media Centrum of the Caucasus, Ilkin Sadigov and Asif Abuzerov.

Translated to English from Hungarian: Géza Radics

Edited: László Andrikó and Miklós Bartha

Bibliography

- Baboss Ernő: A magyar népnév ősmagyar kori hangalakjához. In: Magyar Nyelv 53 (1957).
- Bachrach, Bernard, S.: A History of Alans in the West. Minneapolis, 1973, University of Minnesota.
- Bakay Kornél: Magyarok lenni: büszke gyönyörűség! Pomáz, 2004, Kráter.
- Bakay Kornél: Őstörténetünk régészeti forrásai II. Miskolc, 1998. Miskolci Bölcsész Egyesület.
- Balás Gábor (szerk.): A székely művelődés évszázadai. 1988, Panoráma.
- Balás Gábor: A székelyek nyomában. 1984, Panoráma.
- Balassa Iván - Ortutay Gyula: Magyar néprajz. Békéscsaba, 1982, Corvina.
- Bartha Antal: A magyar nép őstörténete. Budapest, 1988, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Bendefy László: A Magyarság kaukázusi őshazája. Budapest, 1942, Cserépfalvi.
- Berta Árpád: A szavárd magyarok rejtélye. In: Élet és Tudomány / 25. sz., 1989. június 23.
- Czeglédy Károly: Nomád népek vándorlása Napkelettől Napnyugatig. Budapest, 1969, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Dümmmerth Dezső: Az Árpádok nyomában. Budapest, 1977, Panoráma.
- Erdélyi István: A magyar honfoglalás és előzményei. Budapest, 2002, Mundusz Magyar Egyetemi Kiadó.
- Erdélyi István: Scythia Hungarica: A honfoglalás előtti magyarság régészeti emlékei. Budapest, 2008, Mundus Magyar Egyetemi Kiadó.
- Fodor István: A magyarok ősi vallásáról. In: Vallástudományi tanulmányok 6. Budapest, 2004.
- Gerevich Tibor (szerk.): Magyarország románkori emlékei. Budapest, 1938, Műemlékek Országos Bizottsága.
- Györffy György (szerk.): A magyarok elődeiről és a honfoglalás: kortársak és krónikások híradásai. Budapest, 1986, Gondolat Kiadó.
- Györffy György: A magyarság keleti elemei. Budapest, 1990, Gondolat.
- Györffy György: Krónikáink és a magyar őstörténet. Budapest, 1949, Néptudományi Intézet.
- Harmatta János: Iráni népek hatása az ősmagyar nyelvre. In: Kovács László - Veszprémy László (szerk.): Honfoglalás és nyelvészet. A honfoglalás sok szemmel 3. Budapest, 1997, Balassi Kiadó.
- Hazai okmánytár. Codex diplomaticus patrius (Hungaricus). IV. Győr, Bp. 1865-1891.
- Helilov - Nyitray: Hunok a Kaukázusban: A kaukázusi kereszténység. Budapest, 2011, HUN-idea.
- Helilov - Nyitray: Ősmagyarok Azerbajdzsánban. Budapest, 2008, HUN-idea.
- Horváth Gábor: Úgy tűnt, biztonságban vagyunk. In: Népszabadság, 1997. X. 28.
- Kakuk Zsuzsa (szerk.): Örök kőbe vésve: A régi török népek irodalmának kistükre a VII-től a XV. századig. Budapest, 1985, Európa Könyvkiadó.
- Kmoskó Mihály: Mohamedán írók a steppe népeiről: földrajzi irodalom I/2. Budapest, 2000, Balassi Kiadó.
- Kristó Gyula: Magyarország története 895-1301. Budapest, 1998, Osiris Kiadó.
- Ligeti Lajos (szerk.): A magyarság őstörténete. Budapest, 1986, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Magyar kódex 1. Az Árpádok világa. Budapest, 1999, Kossuth Kiadó.
- Magyar nagylexikon, 10. kötet, Budapest, 2000, Magyar Nagylexikon Kiadó.

- Magyar nagylexikon, 16. kötet, Budapest, 2003, Magyar Nagylexikon Kiadó.
- A magyar nyelv történeti-etimológia szótára, 2. kötet, Budapest, 1970, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- A magyar nyelv történeti-etimológiai szótára, 3. kötet, Budapest, 1976, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Melich: Magyar Nyelv XXIV, 1928.
- Minorsky, Vladimir: A history of Sharvan and Darband in the 10th-11th centuries. Cambridge, 1958, W. Heffer & Sons Ltd.
- Minorsky, Vladimir: Studies in caucasian history. London, 1953, Taylor's Foreign Press
- Moravcsik Gyula: Az árpád-kori magyar történet bizánci forrásai. Budapest, 1988, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Németh Gyula: A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása. Budapest, 1930, Magyar Tudományos Akadémia.
- Németh Gyula: A honfoglaló magyarság kialakulása. Budapest, 1991, Akadémiai Kiadó.
- Pap Gábor: Jó pásztorok hagyatéka: magyar népművészet. Debrecen, 1993, Magányos Kiadó.
- Petrik István: Rejtélyek országa. Budapest, 2008, Napkút Kiadó.
- Reiszig Ede: Turul, XXVII, 1909.
- Tardy Lajos: Kaukázusi magyar tükör. Budapest, 1998, Akadémiai Kiadó
- Thury József: A magyaroknak >>szavarti-aszfali<< neve I-II. In: Századok, 1897, A History of Armenia, by Father Michael Chamich (translated from the original armenian, by Johannes Avdall. Calcutta, 1827. I. kötet 411-412) alapján. (Az eredeti munka 1784-1786. jelent meg Velencében.) Történelmi világtasz. Budapest, 1991, Kartográfiai Vállalat.
- Vásáry István: A régi Belső-Ázsia története. Szeged, 1993, Magyar Őstörténeti Könyvtár.
- Veres Péter: Kaukázusi népek szerepe a magyar őstörténetben. In: Magyar Kálmán (szerk.): A fordulat: A magyarság és a Kelet II. őstörténeti konferencia - Régészet. Budapest, 2008, Magyarok Világszövetsége.
- Zaicz Gábor (főszerk.): Etimológiai szótár: Magyar szavak és toldalékok eredete. Budapest, 2006, Tinta Könyvkiadó.
- Zichy-expedíció: Kaukázus, Közép-Ázsia 1895. Szádeczky-Kardoss Lajos útinaplója. Budapest, 2000, Magyar Őstörténeti Kutató És Kiadó.
- Azərbaycan Sovet Ensiklopediyası, VI. cild. Bakı, 1982.
- Azərbaycan toponimlərin ensiklopedik lüğəti 1-2. Bakı, 2007, Şərq-Qərb.
- Bakıxanov, A.: Gülüستانی-İrəm. Bakı, 1951.
- Bünyadov, Ziya M.: Azərbaycan VII-IX. əsrlərdə. Bakı, 2004, Pedaqogika.
- Quliyev, Nurbala: *Bura gülistani - irəm torpağıdır*. Bakı, 2005, "Şuşa" nəşriyyatı.
- Məmmədov, Tofiq: Qafqaz Albaniyası ilk orta əsrlərdə. Bakı, 2006, Təhsil.
- Ал-Истахрий: Книга путей царств. In: Перевод Н.А. Караулова – СМОМПК, вып. XXIX. Тифлис, 1901.
- Ал-Мукаддаси: Лучшее из делений для познания стран. In: Перевод Н.А.Караулова – СМОМПК, вып. XXXVIII. Тифлис, 1908.
- Артамонов, М.И.: История хазар. Ленинград, 1962.
- Гейбуллаев, Г.А.: К этногенезу азербайджанцев. Баку, 1991, Элм.
- Гейбуллаев, Г.А.: Топонимия Азербайджана. Баку, 1986, Элм.
- Джафаров, Ю.Р.: Гунны и Азербайджан. Баку, 1985, Элм.
- Ибн-Хаукаль: Книга путей и царств. In: Перевод Н.А. Караулова – СМОМПК, вып. XXXVIII. Тифлис, 1908.
- История агван. Санкт-Петербург, 1861.
- История Дагестана, том I. Москва, 1967.
- Магомедов, М.Г.: Образование Хазарского каганата. Москва, 1983, Наука.
- Миновский, В.Ф.: История Ширвана и Дербенда X-XI веков. Москва, 1963.
- Пагирев, Д.Д.: Алфавитный указатель к пятивёрстной карте Кавказского края, издания Кавказского Военно-Топографического Отдела. Тифлис, 1913.
- Тарихи Дербенд-наме. Под редакцией М. Алиханова-Аварского. Тифлис, 1898.
- Ямпольский, З.И.: Об этнониме «севордии». Советская тюркология, № 1, 1973.