

Atila Grandpierre:

The Szekler Origins of the Scythians

According to popular belief, the Magyars, led by Árpád, entered the Carpathian Basin from the East; according to official historiography, they came from their ancient Finno-Ugric homeland and, according to the Hungarian Chronicles, they came from Asia and were of Asian origin. In the last few decades, particularly in the writings of K. Endre Grandpierre (1979, 1990, 1996, 2005 and 2006), a third theory has evolved (earlier, similar results were found by Szentkatolnai Bálint Gábor, 1901; Marjalaki Kiss Lajos, 1929; Magyar Adorján, 1930), according to which the Hungarians are autochthonous to the Carpathian Basin and Árpád's Magyars were merely returning to their ancient homeland. In recent years, a number of archeological studies have appeared that support the theory of the origin of the Magyars in the Carpathian Basin, their migration from their homeland and their return. The migration of the Magyars out of the Carpathian Basin and the migration of the ancestors of the Scythian people took place in the 6th millennium BC. In 2001, Douglas T. Price and his colleagues published the results of their examination of the strontium isotope in the archeological review: *Antiquity* (Price et al., 2001). According to these scholars, the people of the Linear Pottery brought the first advanced civilization to Western Europe, beginning in 5700 BC, in small groups of 10-20 people, comprising mainly of women. This civilization reached the Rhine in 5500 BC and later gradually spread their advanced culture throughout the entire territory of Western Europe. In contrast to this small migration to the West, the ancient populace of the Carpathian Basin made thorough preparations for the migration toward the East, because this was an undertaking of much greater proportions. Six hundred years after the migration to the West, the migration to the East began in incomparably large numbers. This fact is particularly important in the light of the newest discoveries.

In 2004, Blagoje Govedarica, Professor of Archeology at the University of Hamburg, published his monograph: *„Zeptertrager - Herrscher der Steppen“*. (People of the Sceptres – Rulers of the Steppes). One of his main conclusions was that, from 5100 BC, from the Carpathian Basin, more precisely from the Upper Tisza region of Transylvania (I) a large number of people migrated to the Lower Danube region (II), Lake Meotis (Sea of Azov) (III), the Volga Bend (IV) and the Caucasus (V) (Illustration 1).

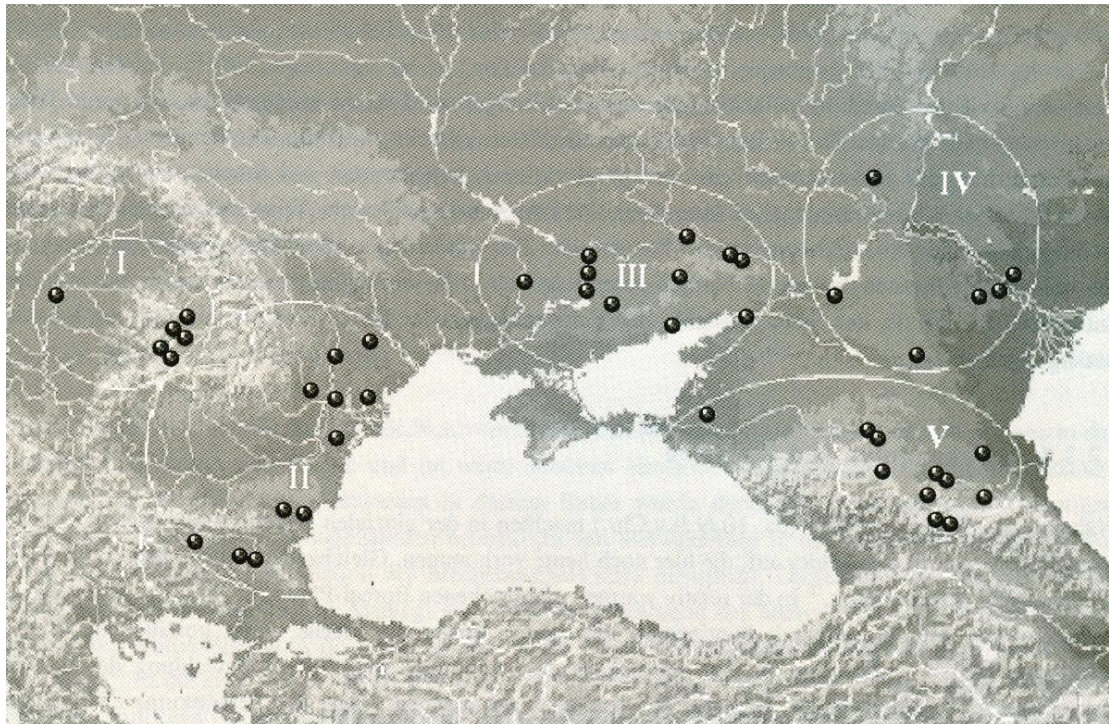


Illustration 1. The Transylvanian Civilization (I), the migration of the People of the Sceptres to the Eurasian Plain from 5100 BC.

For millennia these five centers of civilization influenced the development of Eurasia. These mass migrations, which began in 5100 BC, must have involved a population of millions, since we are talking of several thousands of settlements with an average population of several hundred to several thousand people. Igor Manzura, a Russian archeologist, published the results of his research in the Oxford Journal of Archeology in 2005 (Manzura, 2005), according to which, from the fifth millennium BC, large numbers of people migrated from Transylvania farther and farther toward the East in waves of settlements that they established in the western Eurasian Plain. The following question comes to mind: Why did the inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin at that time decide to send only small groups toward the West, whereas they migrated to the East in huge numbers?

The answer to this question first came to me when I realized that a similar situation occurred in AD 1492, when the Hungarian King Ulászló II sanctioned the until then unwritten, ancient law of the Szeklers that stated that the Szeklers were permitted to be conscripted in the case of a war but only one out of ten was to be called to serve against the West, whereas every other man could be called to serve as a soldier against the East. At first glance, it appeared surprising that, according to the ancient unwritten law of the Szeklers, it was not all the same to them on which battleground they had to risk their lives. I found the explanation to this phenomenon in the fact that there is a zone in the eastern Carpathian Basin that is part of the plant and animal life of the Eurasian Plain. (Illustration 2) The living conditions indicate that a similar connection has existed for millions of years, making it conceivable that not only the plant and animal kingdom of the ancient Carpathian Basin spread eastwards, but also Homo Sapiens, on a timescale of millions of years. Therefore, it is almost certain that, during the time of the migration of peoples, the ancient people of the Carpathian Basin initially chose to migrate toward the East.

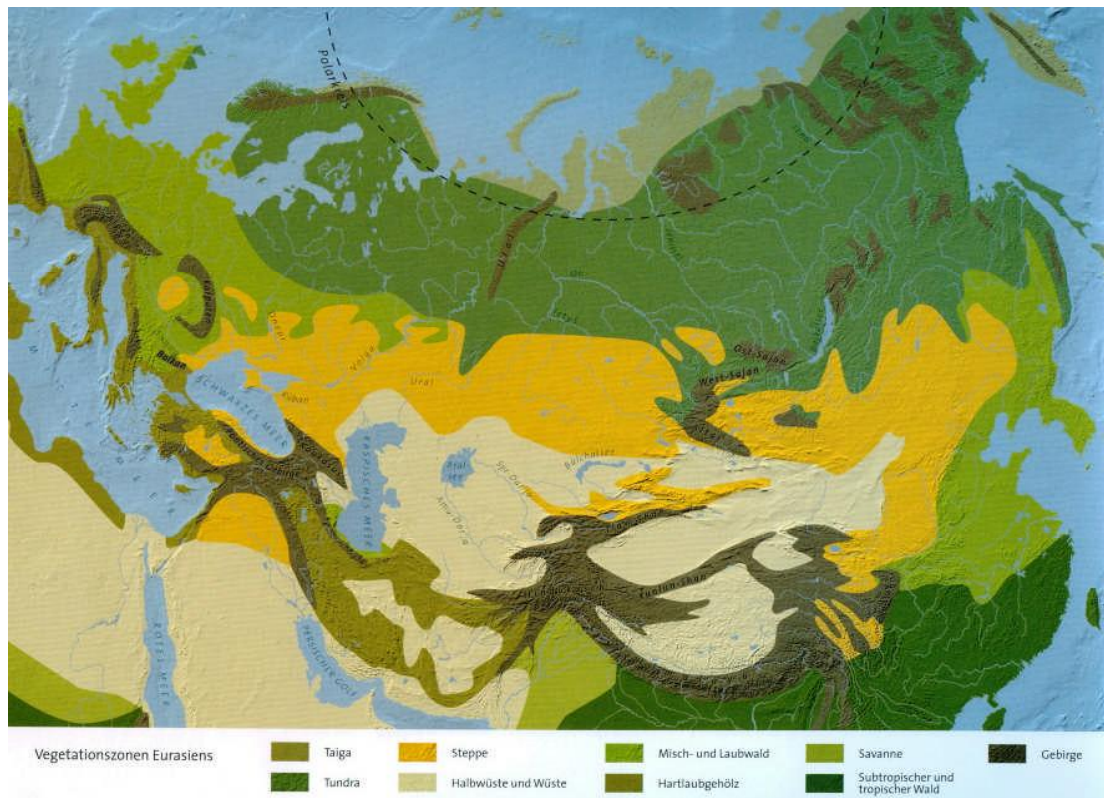


Illustration 2. The Eurasian Plain stretches from the Carpathian Basin to the Pacific Ocean

There is evidence of migrations of people out of the Carpathian Basin from the time of Rudapithecus to the Gravettian Culture. (Grandpierre, 2010) Thus the descendants of the ancient people of the Carpathian Basin, who honored their ancestors and the land of their ancestors, initially migrated to the East in order to ensure the continuation of their race. The ancient unwritten law of the Szekler people must also have originated from their ancient customs; this places the ancient origins of the Szeklers in a new perspective. If this conclusion is supported by additional new facts (see Orbán-Grandpierre, 2009), then the people, who received the name Scythians from the Greeks only in the first millennium BC, were descendants of the ancient Szeklers, who lived in Transylvania in the sixth millennium BC. This startling conclusion is supported by a whole list of significant facts. We shall mention some of them.

K. Endre Grandpierre (1996a, 22-36) and, following him, Dezső Orbán (Orbán, Grandpierre, 2009, 29-37) has shown that the names Székely and Szkíta are two variants of the same name. Furthermore K. Endre Grandpierre deduced that the Szeklers and the Scythians were the same people (1996a, 29 and the following pages). If this identification indicates the Szekler origin of the Scythians, then this calls for one of the greatest turnarounds in the writing of the history of the Hungarians.

It is noteworthy that Govedarica calls the „People of the Sceptres” the „Rulers of the Steppes”. The sceptre is without doubt a symbol of royalty; therefore the „People of the Sceptres” were a royal people. How numerous could this royal people have been? Manzura has recorded data about more than 800 settlements. The average number of

inhabitants was between 30 and 1000. At the time and place in question, the people occupied several thousand settlements, therefore the population must have been several hundred thousand, even millions, in the fifth millennium BC. Their new environment encouraged enormous growth, evidenced by the construction of the royal kurgans (see below). The culture of the „People of the Sceptres” lasted for 3000 years and was followed by the pre-Cimmerian culture (Timber-grave culture, Srubna culture) and the pre-Scythian culture (Andronovo culture) (Illustration 3.) in the huge territory between the Carpathian Basin and Korea (Govedarica, 2004).

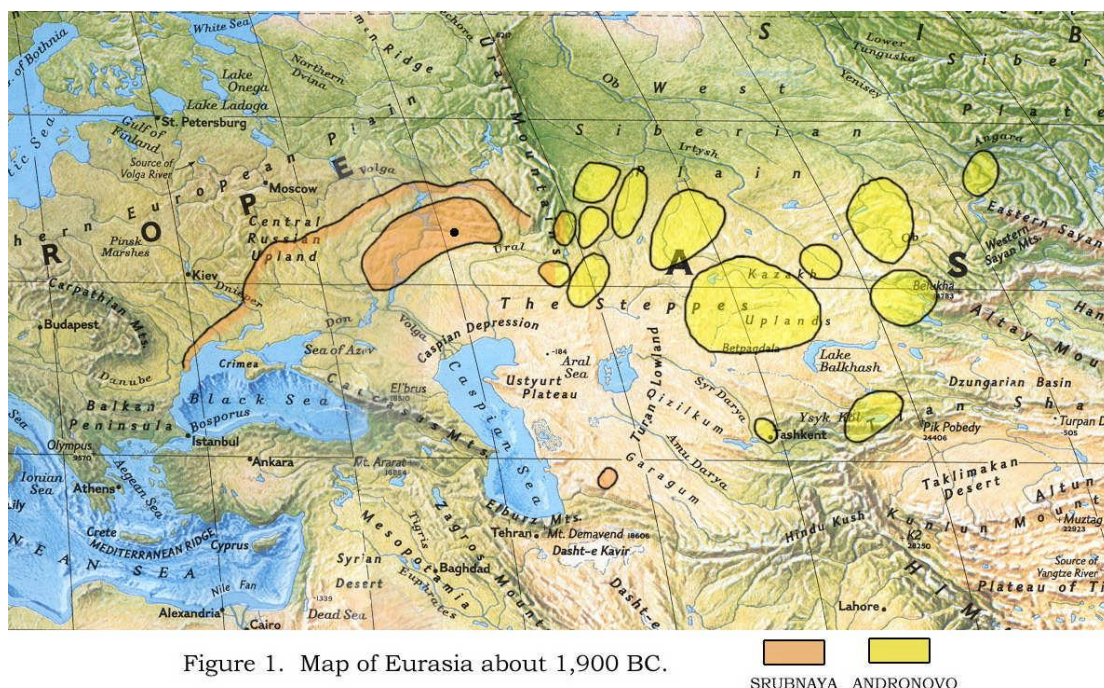


Figure 1. Map of Eurasia about 1,900 BC.

Illustration 3. The territory of the Srubna people (Timber-grave culture, pre-Cimmerians) and the Andronovo people (pre-Scythians or Magyars) in the entire Eurasian Plain about 1900 BC.

In the first half of the first millennium BC, the Cimmerians, Scythians and, in the East, the Huns, ruled the entire Eurasian Plain. According to every indication, these three names referred to the same people. According to Herodotus, at the beginning of the first millennium, the Royal tribe of the Cimmerians and the people of the Western Eurasian Plain, who co-existed with the Royal Cimmerians, were equipped with similar military strength. (We should note that in the Hungarian translation of Herodotus: The Greco-Persian War, Volume IV, § 11, 1989, p. 269, the English word „natives”, meaning autochthonous, indigenous people, was translated as „Cimmerians” and thus the original meaning of „autochthonous or indigenous” was lost.) Thus the population of the Royal Cimmerians and the population of the people who had been living on the Western Eurasian Plain for millennia should be considered as populations of a comparable number. Moreover, this royal people had a high level of culture and were extraordinarily rich in knowledge and wealth.

Govedarica noted that the people in territory (I), (II), (III), (IV) and those in territory (V), at least from 5 100 BC, were closely connected to one another. This means that, throughout several millennia and across thousands of kilometers, these people were

able to maintain their unified organization; in other words, they were endowed with an unusual ability to organize a state. This remarkable ability for state organization was a special characteristic of the „Magi” or wise-men in ancient times, just as the high level of culture, the respect for women and the remarkable level of knowledge possessed by the women. The combination of these characteristics indicates that, in the millennia before Christ, the Carpathian Basin was the center of the Magi, and also that it was the ancient homeland of the peoples of the Eurasian Plains.

Archeologists generally name the culture of an ancient people after the style of their pottery, their burial customs or the first important site of their finds. This people, which Govedarica names the „People of the Sceptres” after their burial customs, most other researchers call the Erősd (Transylvania), Cucuteni (today: Moldova), or Trypillian (Tripolye today: Ukraine) culture, after the location of their finds. This Erősd-Cucuteni-Trypillian culture (Illustration 4.) is today considered to be the first European civilization (History of Europe, 2010).



Illustration 4. Territory of the Erősd-Cucuteni-Trypillian Culture, 5500 – 2750 BC.

This people possessed a well-developed writing system at the end of the 6th millennium (Tordos, Tatárlaka and Vinca) and this writing system of Old Europe (Coppens, 2011) spread from here to southeast Europe (Fehérné Walter, 1975, Volume 1. p. 37; map by Todorovic, Illustration 5).

Todorović "iránytérképe" a vonalasjegyek terjedéséről.

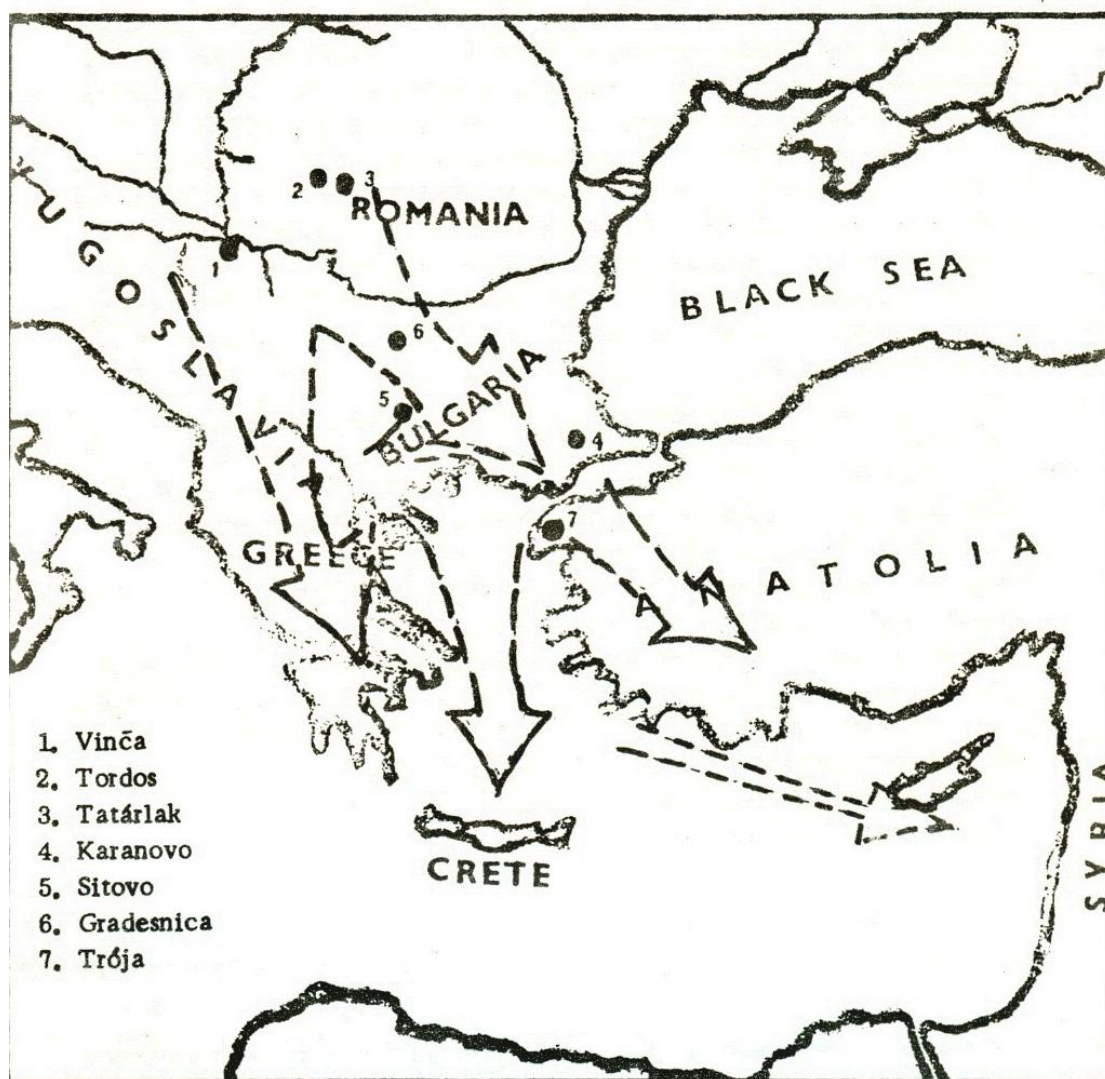


Illustration 5. Todorovic map, illustrating the spread of the Ancient European script from 5500 BC.

Natalia Taranec of the Sydney Powerhouse Museum, in her article that appeared in 2005, notes (Taranec, 2005) that the descendants of the Cucuteni-Trypillian people, living in the western part of the Eurasian Plain from 5500 to 2400 BC, were the Scythians. (Cucuteni-Trypillian Culture, 2010) Therefore, if the people of the Eurasian Plain were the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the Carpathian Basin, then the autochthonous people of the Carpathian Basin were the ancestors of the Scythians. Since the Szeklers speak the Magyar (Hungarian) language and preserve the ancient traditions and customs of that ancient people, then we must come to the conclusion that the ancient people of the Carpathian Basin, the Scythians and the Szekler-Magyars, were all the same people, who received different names at different periods in history.

They possessed particular characteristics and therefore, from their burial customs, they also received the name Kurgan or Tumulus Culture. Tumulus burials were common from the fifth millennium BC to the beginning of the second millennium AD, primarily in the Eurasian Plain that spread from the Carpathian Basin to Korea.

Archeologists divide this huge time-span into smaller sections. In chronological order, they are the following: the Sredny Stog culture that is connected to the Cucuteni-Trypillian culture (this includes the birth of the equestrian culture in the 5th millennium), the Pit-Grave, Timber-Grave, Scythian, Sarmatian, Hun and Kuman-Kipchak cultures. If the construction of kurgans can be attributed to one particular people, then this people is the Scythian-Sarmatian-Hun-Kuman-Kipchak people. Moreover, archeologists have counted 40,000 kurgans in the Great Hungarian Plain. The Kurgan people possessed remarkable knowledge, a superior intellect, and technical, cultural and material wealth. For example, around the period from 3500 to 3300 BC, they began to construct splendid, rich, obviously royal kurgans in the forested plain of the region of Kubán, which lies at the foot of the northern slopes of the Caucasus. Stone pillars surrounded the huge kurgans that had secret chambers deep within them, filled with treasures. In the chambers, 70-liter cauldrons were also found, which came from the Caucasus, made with bronze containing arsenic; beside them were vases made of gold and silver-plate, decorated with images of animals, silver rods decorated with golden bulls, bronze battle-axes and daggers and several hundred tools of gold, turquoise and chalcedony. (Anthony, 2007) Cauldrons are recognized as typical utensils of the Scythian, Hun and Magyar peoples. (Illustration 6. Hun cauldron from Törtel)



Illustration 6. Hun cauldron from Törtel, ca. 400 AD.

Archeologists label certain peoples after the characteristics of their artifacts, therefore they regularly limit certain people and artifacts to increasingly narrower time-periods and territories. (Grandpierre K. Endre – Grandpierre Atilla, 2006) It is obvious that the Hungarian people of today use different utensils than people used a hundred or a thousand years ago, yet we are still talking of the same people. Similarly, the historical names of peoples are often limited, particularly in the case of an ancient people living in a large territory over a long period, because those people, in different time-periods, were organized in different ways, and the neighboring peoples called them by different names. Moreover, a certain people might have several important characteristics and only one of them is emphasized when the people is named. The

People of the Sceptres (Govedarica, 2004) lived in the exact same time-period (5100 - 2400 BC) in the exact same territory (the Carpathian Basin and the Eurasian Plain) and displayed the exact same characteristics as the people of the Erösd-Cucuteni-Trypillian culture (Cucuteni-Trypillian culture, 2010), and the people of the Kurgan culture (Kurgan Culture, 2000); therefore, these three names actually refer to the exact same people. Is it possible among these separate peoples, recognized by historians, to identify whose ancestors we are talking about? Let us try to examine this question independently of the already mentioned facts. To do this we shall examine a different archeological characteristic – the huge cauldrons that are a distinguishing characteristic of the Huns (Bóna-Cseh-Nagy et al, 1993). It is interesting that, in the English Wikipedia, in the entry entitled: „Cauldron”, there is a picture of a Hungarian „bogrács”, (Cauldron, 2010). Scythian cauldrons have also been found in Transylvania (Illustration 7).



Illustration 7. Scythian cauldron from Transylvania, ca. 600 BC

The Kurgan people also produced huge cauldrons (Sylvia, 2000) and this indicates that the descendants of the Kurgan people were the Huns. From the depths of the huge Issyk Kul Lake, which lies at the foot of the northern slopes of the Tien-San Mountain Range, (today Kyrgyzstan), archeologists unearthed a huge cauldron, 2 500 years old, which was an amazing work of craftsmanship. According to the experts the separate parts fit together with such precision that could be achieved today only by

working the metal in an inert gas. It is a riddle how the two Royal Szaka-Scythian peoples, who lived here for more than 5 000 years were able to achieve such a high level of technological perfection. Of particularly high quality are the bronze mirrors, the ornamented horse equipment and many other objects. Under the water, they found small gold wire-rings and large six-sided nuggets of gold (Lukashov, 2008). This civilization was of at least of equal rank to the recognized highest level civilizations of old, the Greek and the Egyptian. The clothing of the Royal Szaka-Scythians also displayed extraordinary craftsmanship and wealth. (Illustration 8) We may add that, according to the most recent anthropological research, the characteristics of the skulls of the Timber-grave culture were identical to those of the Scythians, who succeeded them in that territory (Dolukhanov, 1996).



Illustration 8. Golden Szaka. Reconstructed ancient Szekler-Szaka costume from 500 BC. Found in the Issyk Kul kurgan.

Huns who arrived in the region of Ordos in the 8th to the 6th century BC, were called Scythians by the ancient Greeks (Gilbert, 2002, map 2; illustration 9); therefore, both names indicate the same people at that same time-period.

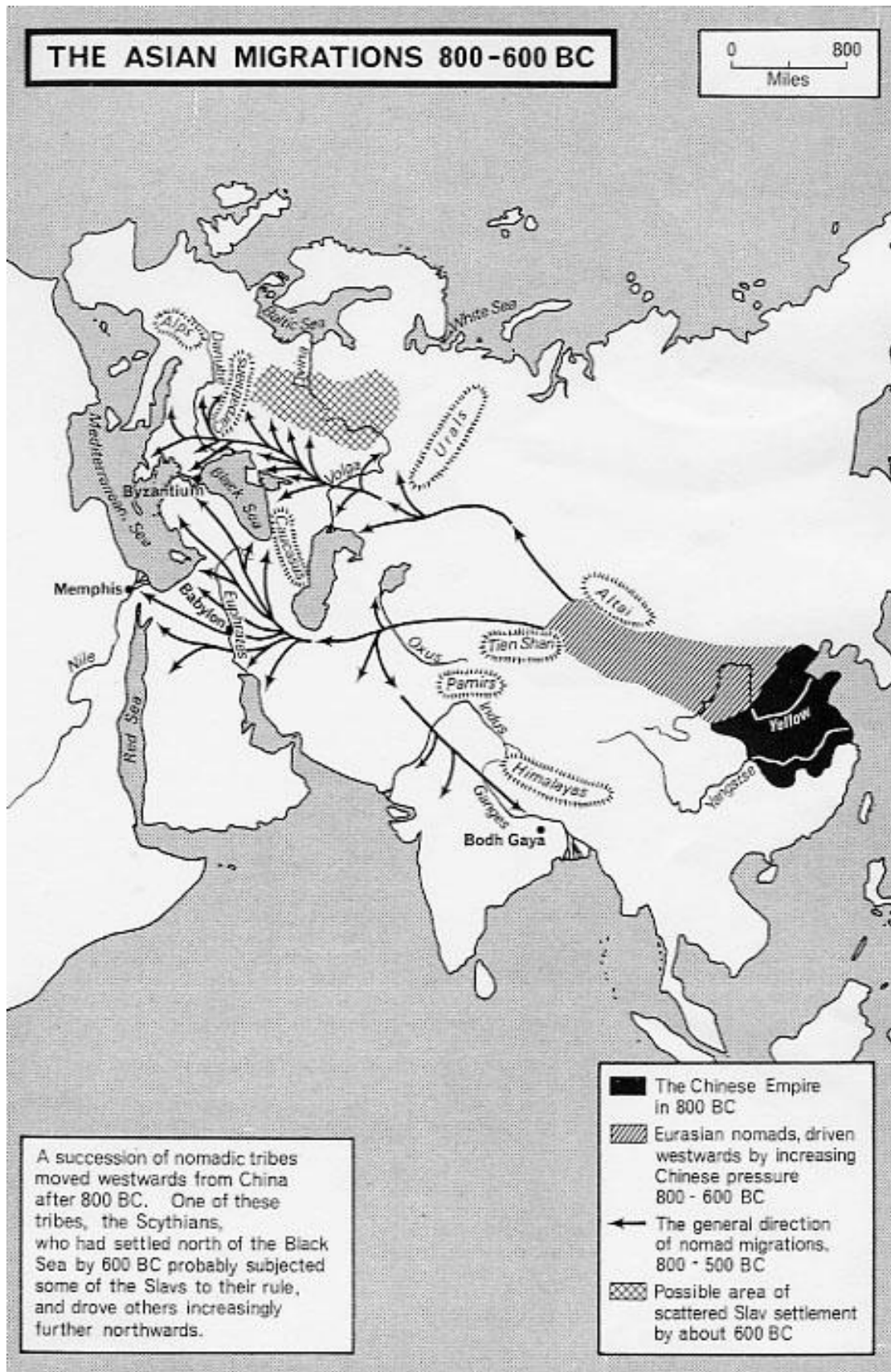


Illustration 9. The Huns that migrated from East to West into Hungary were called Scythians by the Greeks. (Martin Gilbert, 2002)

It is interesting, for example, that the Scythians arrived on the island of Cyprus in the 8th century BC. In their tracks, they left a flourishing society, with royal graves which, although they have been plundered, still dazzle us with their royal opulence. Traces of horse sacrifice, bronze trestles, huge cauldrons decorated with sirens and griffins, ornamental carts, horse equipment, ivory beads and thrones decorated with unparalleled elegance are all witness to their high level of civilization (Prehistoric Cyprus, 2010).

No doubt, those ancient place-names, which have not been changed by the linguistic imperialism of the conquering states driven by bias, can be counted as certain proof of the presence or absence of one or another people (Grandpierre K. Endre, 1996). The examination of the Eurasian place-names supports the theory of the Transylvanian-Szekler origin of the settlements of the Eurasian Plains. (Bihari, 2004) Herodotus writes that the Scythians called themselves: „Szkolota” or, if we remove the –ta suffix indicating the name of a people, we will arrive at the „Szkol, Szikul, Székely” people name. The computer examination of the several hundred million place-names indicates that variations of the place-name „sz*k*(l)” (here the * indicates the possible vowel) are found most often in Transylvania and Moldova, in the Carpathian Basin and then in Eurasia. In the wider search of all of Eurasia, the Transylvanian place-names come up in large numbers. Bihari writes (op. cit. p. 91) that, according to the witness of the place-names, the Szekler names are none other than the modern version of the ancient Szaka names. However, the above-mentioned facts would lead us to conclude that the situation is the reverse: the Szekler names are the older versions.

According to our examination, the Scythians are of Szekler-Magyar origin. From 5 100 BC to the time of the ancient Greeks, their population must have multiplied many times. In that geographical territory in which they lived for millennia, from 5 100 BC to AD 453, to the time of Atilla’s assassination, they spread from the Carpathian Basin to Korea and Northern India (Grandpierre K. Endre – Grandpierre Atilla, 2006; Grandpierre, 2007; Aradi, 2005). This fact is supported by the observation that the ancient historians considered the Scythians to be the most ancient people with the largest population. „For if the Scythians were united, there is no nation which would compare with them; I do not say in Europe, but even in Asia...” (Thucydides, 431 BC, translated into English by Benjamin Jowett, Volume 1, 1881, Clarendon Press, Book II, §97, p. 163). Terdzsüman Mahmud, the scholarly Hungarian interpreter of Sultan Suleiman I, in his ancient chronicle of the time of King Árpád, written in Hungarian: the *Tárh-i-Üngürüs* (History of the Magyars – the name „üngürüs” was the name of the Magyars in the Turkish language) similarly recalls the people found by Hunor in the Carpathian Basin in the time following the Deluge: Hunor, son of Nimrod – „left the Padisha of Adzsem (Persia) and, with his people, moved to the Province of Pannonia. When they arrived in this province, they saw that there was an abundance of fruit and grain in this country and, in their language (that is in the language of the people of Hunor), they were able to speak to the inhabitants.” The ancient chronicle, written by the bards (“regös”, in Hungarian) at that time (before 896 A.D.), proves that the „Üngürüs” people were descendants of the people of Hunor.

This is a perfectly clear line of reasoning that proves the thousand year-old antiquity of the ancient existence of the Magyar people, and it is a proof that the Magyars were living in the Carpathian Basin in the time following the Deluge, and that they

migrated from here in undetermined times to the other land of the Scythians, east of Europe. Endre K. Grandpierre (1979, 1990) has shown that our legends of the Wondrous Stag look back over several tens of thousands of years and bear witness to the return of the Magyars to their ancient home, the Carpathian Basin, according to the will of God.

In agreement with Thucydides, Xenophon also writes that the Scythians ruled Europe: “in Europe we find the Scythians ruling, and the Maeotians being ruled.” (Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, Book Two, cca. 371 B.C.) This statement is fully supported by the archeological finds (see the map of the Scythian archeological finds, Illustration 9).



Illustration 10. The map of Scythian archeological findings, 1 st millenium B. C.

The Scythian influence spread to Korea and Japan. Certain Korean artifacts, even some very important ones like the crown of the Korean Silla kingdom, show Scythian characteristics. Archeologists have found similar crowns with Scythian characteristics in the Kofun period of Japan (AD 250-538, or the so-called Hun age (Cambon et al., 2006, 282). The Chinese took over from the Scythians the animal style (Mallory, Mair 2000). The influence of the Hun-Magyar folk music on the Chinese folk music can be shown to be of great importance even today (Juhász, 2005). In very ancient times, before the dawn of the Chinese religion, there could have been organized parishes of the Magus religion (de Groot [1982, VI, II:1187]). In the millennia before Christ, the Magi played a leading role in the Chinese religion (Schafer [2005, 234]). Victor H. Mair, Professor of the Chinese language and literature, found archeological and linguistic proofs that the old-Chinese word „*myag” meaning magus, natural healer, philosopher, was not of Chinese but of Central Asian origin (Mair [1990]).

In China, the teachings of the Magi were primarily most important in the ancient royal religion. (Harper, 1995). The Chinese Universalism, Confucianism and Taoism were

built upon the teachings of the Magi. We learn from the book of Professor Modi (Modi, 1926) and Eva Aradi (Aradi, 2005) that the Scythian-Magyar-Hun culture had a very basic influence on the history and civilization of India (Grandpierre, 2007). The authoritative historian, Josephus Flavius (AD 37) writes in his work: *Antiquitates* (Flavius, 1957, 59) that the people of Magog and Gomer, after the Deluge, went „as far as the Tanais (Don) River, and in the West as far as Gadeir (today Cadiz), occupying the land which they came to and **which before them nobody had occupied**, and in their own language, they named the people. In his ancient legend about the Scythians, Herodotus notes that Hargita **was the first man to be born in the „uninhabited territory”**, in other words, Man appeared in the Carpathian Basin with the Scythians.

In the Hungarian chronicles of the Middle Ages and in Hungarian folk traditions, is preserved the belief that the Magyars were at one time the most populous people of the world. The ancient kings of the Magyars were the rulers of the four points of the compass; they organized the network of the guardians of the four points, including the four rivers and the four sections of the coat of arms of the lion of Esztergom. The affection for the ancient homeland is expressed in the Medieval slogan: „Extra Hungariam non est vita” (there is no life except in Hungary) (Grandpierre K. Endre, 1996). The several thousand year-old antiquity of the Szeklers in Transylvania has only recently come to light. (Orbán-Grandpierre, 2009).

In the light of all this, it is time that we recognize that it is more appropriate, in place of the Scythian-Hun origin of the Szekler Hungarians, to speak of the Szekler-Magyar origin of the Scythian-Hun people.

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