



## THE HUNGARIAN ORIGIN OF THE NIBELUNGENLIED (The Song of the Nibelungs)

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(Published by A Fáklya, Warren Ohio, USA)

### Foreword

It would be a shame to allow this very interesting little study to sink into oblivion, not only because it discusses a 200 year-old literary question worthy of consideration and sheds light from a totally different perspective than previous studies, but also because this study makes it necessary to reveal historical facts which were passed over by historical writings.

Adorján Magyar's conclusions seem correct in general and they are especially forceful when he analyzes Prof. Jiriczek's work. There is nothing in his conclusions, which we can contradict because his references are exact and his conclusions are consistent.

There is something that should be included in the text, where he quotes Amadée Thierry's "*Histoire de Atilla*"[1] because, on pages 200-201 of Volume II., this writer mentions historical facts concerning the fate of the inhabitants of Hunnia, after the victory of Charlemagne over the Avars. For this reason, we will show this as a true and totally representative picture of the times in a later segment of this study. We may also add here that Charlemagne did not annihilate the Avars, because they retreated only to the river Rába after their defeat. The invading Slavs could not annihilate the remnants of the Magyar population, which is totally understandable when one reads the data of the *Annales Mettenses*:

"Chaganus princeps Hunnorum propter necessitatem populi sui imperatorem adiit, postulans sibi locum dari ad habitandum inter Sabariam et Carnuntum quia propter infestationem Sclavorum in pristinis sedibus manere non poterat." ad.ann. 805

A significant number of Avars gathered in the territory between Szombathely and Petronell, where they could defend themselves more successfully against the attacks of these looting hordes.

Closer attention is needs to be paid to Adorján Magyar's statement: **"The Christian priests did not persecute with such vigor the memories of the past anywhere else, other than in our country."** (i.e. Hungary)

This is doubtless true but, in order to avoid misunderstanding, we have to know that the Hungarian Catholic priests were not to blame. The data which we have concerning this subject prove that the Hungarian writers, beginning with Anonymus, up to the first secular chronicler, Thúróczy, all belonged to the Catholic priesthood but they did not deny their Hungarian affiliation, moreover, they often strongly opposed Rome. Anonymus, for example, writes the following in the 9th chapter of his work: "Pannonia's land can rightly be called the grazing ground of the Romans because, even now, the Romans graze from the wealth of Hungary." It is also very interesting to note that, in connection with this, Lodomér, the Bishop of Esztergom, along with the entire priesthood, opposed Rome when she did not recognize István, the posthumous son of King Endre II. by his third wife, Borbála Estei (whom King Béla IV. accused of infidelity), as a legal heir of the House of Árpád, and his grandson Endre III. who was raised in Venice was awarded the Hungarian throne. When, after the death of King Endre III., Pope Boniface VIII. wanted to award the Hungarian throne to Károly Robert, and excommunicated the citizens of Buda who opposed his wishes because they wanted to maintain the legal order of selecting a King, these citizens excommunicated the Pope in return in 1302 (S. Szilágyi: Magyarország története vol. IV. page 15.1)

The Hungarian Catholic priesthood was hindered in maintaining the memories of the past by the 8th paragraph of the Conclave of Buda of 1297 which forbade them not only to visit pubs and engage in gambling but it also forbade them to see the plays of the Bards and to listen to the violinists. It is understandable that the priesthood – willingly or not – adhered to these rules, especially after the devastation of Mohács and under the Habsburg rule which followed.

The supposition seems likely too that, in the 17th and the beginning of the 18th century, under the influence of the Rákóczi Freedom Fight, in order to hinder the care of the Hungarian past by the Catholic priests, the decrees of the Conclave of Buda in 1742 were published in Vienna in the "Sacra Concilia", which was presented to Maria Theresa along with the "Krónika" written by Canon János Kovács. We know the goal of this latter from the infamous saying of the donors: "The proud racial self esteem will be quenched when we give this book into the hands of the Magyars" and this goal also informed the ruler how the priests are obliged to handle the Hungarian memories of the past...

It is my conviction that Adorján Magyar's study, the Hungarian Origin of the Nibelungenlied, is not only interesting but also valuable and, for this reason, I am bringing it to the attention of the public.

Warren, May 1963

Rev. Géza Kur

## **THE HUNGARIAN ORIGIN OF THE NIBELUNGENLIED**

### **(The Song of the Nibelungs)**

This mythology, which is believed to be Germanic, as far as I know, originated from the pre-Aryan indigenous population of the North, from Finns, Estonians, Livonians, etc., in other words from people related to Hungarians. These people were subjugated by the far more warlike Aryans, who assimilated their language into their own Aryan language and also took over a great part of their ancient culture.

It would be very lengthy to enumerate the complete linguistic proofs of the above; I bring up, as one example, that the name of the Germanic chief-deity ODIN (its corrupted version is WOTAN) originated in the Magyar word EGY, EGYEN and, according to this, the name ODIN originally meant the entire Universe, and so it was the

poetic and philosophical unification and personification of ÉG (Heaven, sky) into a unified Whole. As an introduction, I would like to explain a few words that support this subject, which form not only an intellectual relationship but which are linguistically related too.

EGY	One, unity, One-God
EGÉSZ	Whole. The unity of the Universe.
IGAZ	It is one. Truth.
ÉG	The Universe
OK	The Cause of the existing Universe, the Creator, which cannot be comprehended by the human mind.
ÜK	Personification of the Ancient Cause: Ancient Father, Ancient Deity.
AGG	Old. The chief deity of the people and his eternal existence was personified in the form of an old man. Only in Hungarian are the words for old (öreg) and eternal (örök) the same.

It is known that the older Germanic form of ODIN's name is written as YGG (see for example the book of the Swedish linguist, Frans G. Bengtsson: "Röde Orm"). This name can be read as the Magyar IGG, or ÜGG and we see in both instances the Magyar words ÉG, EGY, ÜKK (Universe, God, Ancient). We have to refer here to the approximately 900 year-old literary relic, the *Halotti Beszéd*, where IG was the same as EGY.

The name of the chief deity in the Finnish mythology is UKKO which corresponds to the Magyar words ÜK and OK (ancestor and cause) and it is also the same as the Magyar name UKKON, which was preserved in old manuscripts. Some of our historians believe that this was the name of a Magyar chief deity.

Germanic mythology talks about an IGGDRAFIL-TREE, which was believed to be immense, reaching into the sky. In the IGG syllable we recognize the word ÉG, or the name of the ÉG-God, if for no other reason than in Hungarian folk traditions there is knowledge of the Tree of God (ISTENFA), and also of the Tree which reached Heaven.

The ancient beings of Germanic mythology are called AS which corresponds to the Magyar ŐS (ancestor), a word which is also pronounced by our northern relatives as AS.

There is mention in Germanic mythology of the Göttliche Jungfrauen (Heavenly Maidens), who were also called IDISI (see Mayers Lexicon: *Deutsche Mythologie*). This name fully corresponds to the Magyar *édes* (sweet), in dialects *ides*, in the Csángó-Magyar dialect *iedesz*. So it cannot be accidental that the Magyar SZÜZ (virgin) is identical to the German SÜSS, meaning sweet, when the mythological virgins' name is IDISI. The association of the concepts of virginity and sweetness is understandable.

The Germanic Goddess of time (IDŐ in Magyar) was IDUN.

In Germanic mythology, the Goddess of Death (HALÁL in Magyar) was called HOLDA, HALJA, NEHALENNIA, and these names correspond with the Hungarian words HALÁL and HOLT (death and dead). I have to mention, in connection with the latter that, in old Magyar, the attribute was frequently used as a postposition (for example in Transdanubia Hegymagas = magas hegy = high mountain, Becskerek = kerek vár = round castle, since in our

older language the words becs, bács, becse, pécs, bécs meant the same as today's vár, meaning castle.). According to this, the name NE-HALENNIA meant Halálnő in Hungarian -- Woman of Death, (NE=woman, HAL = to die).

It cannot be accidental that so many names in the German mythology are identical to Hungarian names.

At the first superficial glance, the Nibelungenlied appears to be Christian but it contains many pre-Christian elements – as others have also noticed. It existed in ancient times in parts, which were assembled at a much later date and infused with the Christian philosophy.

More than fifty years ago, I read a Hungarian study, which stated that the contents of the Niebelungenlied originated in the ancient pre-Christian Hungarian legends from the region of Csallóköz and that the Germans tried to adapt these legends to their own Christian ideology. Unfortunately, I no longer know the title of the work, the name of the author nor where it was published but I can state that the data proffered can undoubtedly be proven.

It is well known that Siegfried, the main personality of the Song, is called *Sigurd* in the north and that the Song, according to all the experts, was born in the South, in Austria, from where it migrated to Germany and eventually to Scandinavia – a long time ago, of course – following a literary route.

This statement brings the whole thing close to Hungary, because the *Bécsi Síkság* (Marchlands) and the mountainous region south of this, in the time of the Avars, was called Hunnia. After the defeat of the Avars, many of the ancient populace, who were the same race as the Magyars, were driven out of this territory and Charlemagne settled *Christian Bavarians and Slavs in their place*.

Dr. Otto L. Jiriczek, in his book: „Die Deutsche Heldensage” (Sammlung Götschen. G.J. Göschen'sche Verlag, Berlin u. Leipzig, 1913) on page 111 writes: „*Nach 'Frankenland' reitet Sigurd, als er zu dem Walkürenfels kommt; er heisst 'der südliche, der hunnische Held'*” (*Sigurd rides towards the land of the Franks, as he comes to the Field of the Walküren. He is called 'the southern, the Hunnic hero'.*)

So, according to some Germanic epic, Siegfried was a “southern” and even a *Hun* hero. Unfortunately, Jiriczek does not reveal which epic or where it can be found but doubtless *he tries to explain the source*, when he notes in parentheses that, in his opinion, the “Hun” name refers to the Germans! . . . However, he neglects to state on what basis he connects the Hun name to the Germans. It is very unlikely that the northern Germanic peoples, who for a time were under the rule of Atilla, could have been so ignorant that they did not know who the Huns were and who the Germans were. The Germanic epics often spoke of the Huns and of Atilla. . . So if a Germanic epic states that Siegfried was a Hun, then that has to mean that the Germanic people of that time knew him as such and only later, purposefully, made him a German hero, in German literature.

I have to mention also that the name *Sigurd* is very close to the ancient Hungarian name *Zoard*. At that time, when there was no such thing as national chauvinism, if the folklore believed Sigurd to be a Hun, it never occurred to anyone to make him German. On the contrary, Jiriczek, from the German or any other point of view (Jiriczek is a Slavic name) clouds the facts or even falsifies them.

However, since he is an expert in Germanic mythology and epics, he undoubtedly knows that the Germanic epics mention Atilla and the Huns with nothing but praise, that is, there is hardly any statement in those songs which does not glorify Atilla and the Huns, whereas they speak badly of the German or Germanic heroes and princes. They even say that the treacherous killers of Siegfried were Germans.

The Nibelungenlied, just as other Germanic epics, is full of praise for the deeds of the Huns and even deifies Atilla himself, calling him the son of ODIN the father of the Germanic gods. On the contrary, Jiriczek calls the Hun armies “bestial”, as if he had never read the Nibelungenlied. It would be interesting to know on what he bases this statement, which is full of hate. It is well known that the Germans use the word “bestial” to mean worse than animal-like. According to Jiriczek this “bestiality” includes malevolent and dishonorable actions.

Jiriczek fails to mention that the Hun leaders or rulers belonged to the aristocratic class and their armies were manned with soldiers from the conquered nations, particularly Germans. If the Germanic epic states that Siegfried is a southern Hun hero, this indicates that the material in the Nibelungenlied originated from the ancient Hungarian territory of Csallóköz and there is no doubt that Siegfried was a mythological hero, who was changed to conform to the Christian ideology.

There are other data which support this theory. In the closing stanza of the Nibelungenlied, we read:

*Getichtet man ez sit hat  
dicke in Tiuscher zungen  
dei alten and die jungen  
erkennt wol diu macre  
sugt der Dichter der Klage von  
dem Kampfe und Untergange  
der Burgunder im Hunenlande.*

This can be found, translated into German, in a work by Heinrich Kurz: „*Geschichte der deutschen Literatur*” (Leipzig 1876, Volume I. page 479.):

*Gedichtet Mensch das später hat  
dicht in deutscher Zunge  
Die alten und die Jungen  
erfahren wohl die Erzählung... stb.*

We know that the Burgundians were Germans, so the Nibelungs, who killed Siegfried, were also Germans.

The last part of the Song in the Hungarian translation (Budapest, Lampel R. Publishers) reads as follows:

*A passai püspök, Pilgerin  
Öcséihez való jó szive szerint,  
Leiratá a gyász-mesét,  
Hogy tudja minden, hogy esék;  
Latin betűkkel még pedig:  
Ezt mindenkinek elhihetik...*

*Azt sorba leírta mind,  
Maga s világ tudásakint  
Konrád mester, íródiák.  
Azóta aztán átírák  
S megvan németül is a dal...*

(Rough translation: The Bishop of Passau, Pilgrim, out of the goodness of his heart, had this story written down, so that everyone might know what happened. It was written with Latin letters, so that everyone might believe it.

It was written down by the scribe, Master Konrad, so that the world might learn of these events. Since then this song has been rewritten in German.)

Károly Szász, in his introduction to the Epic, adds the explanation: "The scribe, Master Konrad, wrote his work in Latin and later someone else translated or reworked it into German."

Therefore, we can be sure that the original Nibelungenlied, at least the ancient form of that Song, was not German because there would have been no need to translate it into German. On the contrary, it appears that Konrad, the scribe of Pilgrim, the Bishop of Passau, on the orders of the Bishop, translated into Latin some kind of epic or more than one epic (in my opinion, Hungarian epics. A. M.) Later, perhaps during Konrad's life and with his knowledge, someone, most likely a poet or bard, translated this same epic into German.

There are some who would argue that the ancient, pre-Latin text, or the material of the Song was French. There is, however, no proof of this. On the contrary, it is a fact that Bishop Pilgrim was the first missionary to come to Hungary, who wrote to the Pope about the Hungarians: . . . "They do not reject the conversion to Christianity of those under their rule and the priests allow them to come and go at will. The pagans and the Christians agree so well, and the friendship between them is so strong that it would seem that the prophecy of Isaiah will come true: the wolves and the lambs graze together, the lion and the ox eat hay together. . . ." This reveals what the "pagan Magyars" were really like in time of peace and how tolerant they were to other religions, something we cannot say about other nations, even today.

Pilgrim and his scribe traveled extensively among the Magyars and, in the interest of their missionary work, they surely learned Hungarian and they had the chance to listen to Hungarian troubadours and bards all across the country and, of course, in Dunántul and Csallóköz too. The beauty of the songs of the bards probably gave Pilgrim the urge to have Konrad write them down in Latin. It is interesting to note that the Hungarian bards still existed in the recent past. Gyula Sebestyén collected the remaining songs in two books: *Regősök* and *Regős Énekek*. (*The Bards* and *The Songs of the Bards*)

It is common knowledge that Bishop Pilgrim was not living at the time of Atilla, but was living at the time of the conversion of the Magyars to Christianity, yet the Nibelungenlied states that Pilgrim lived at the time of Atilla. It is possible that Konrad, in admiration of his master, wove his name into the song, because the poetic license allowed him to do this and poets did not object to this, especially if he had a reason to do so. The poet, who later translated Konrad's Latin text into German, used the same poetic license and further embellished the story. These epics, which were now no longer folk-tales had as their goal to be as long as possible so that the bards would receive the acclamation of their listeners and keep their listeners' attention for a longer period of time, and as a result they would receive more money.

Jiriczek also mentions on page 93 of his book, that the translator added a lot to the song.

We know that, at that time, the Avars and the Magyars were called Huns by the Germans and other western nations, so the mention of Bishop Pilgrim among the Huns did not appear strange to the general public. Reading the text of the Nibelungenlied, it becomes clear that the poets tried to make it as long as possible, which is not a characteristic of the real folk epics.

There are some who believe that the writer of the Nibelungenlied was the poet, Konrad of Kurenberg (who lived at a later time), because he was a poet by vocation and would therefore be more able to write such an epic. It is more than likely that he added to the poem, beautified and lengthened it to the masterpiece it is today. It makes no difference whether it was composed by one man, in different sections, or whether it was compiled from a collection of songs, written by different people, one after the other. However, we can be sure that the many

horrifying tales are all later additions. Such tales were to the taste of a warlike people like the Germans, who demanded them, otherwise the epics would not be interesting enough for them. The ancient Germanic epics were all full of unbelievably horrifying killings, mercilessness and revenge. The ancient pre-Christian epics of the Hungarians – as is still the case with the folk-tales which survive to the present – had as their subjects the Otherworld, the Milky Way and the island which can be seen in it (Fehérköz), which is the heavenly Fairyland (the heavenly Milky Way and the island of Csallóköz). Only good, honest men moved here from their earthly life, and they lived happily ever after in the beautiful garden of the Fairy Ilona (Tündér Ilona).

The emphasis of the Afterworld in Germanic mythology was Walhalla, a huge building with 500 doors, in which the souls of the fallen heroes lived. Every morning these souls fought battles with each other, to pass the time. By noon, all their wounds had healed and they sat at Odin's table for a big feast, drinking beer and eating bacon from a wild boar. Taking all this into account – as Árnold Ipolyi, a Hungarian mythologist has stated – we can state that the Hungarian epics are much older. Without a doubt the garden is much older than a huge building with 500 doors.

In his book, on page 48, Jiriczek writes as if the Nibelungenlied had been translated from French to German. It is very improbable that that epic which talks so much about the Germans, the Huns and of Atilla, could have come from the French and, if such a French language epic had existed, it must have been taken from the Hungarians or the Germans. In Hungarian literature, such an epic could not have survived because, on the one hand, the warlike destruction was never so great as it was in Hungary (the Tatar invasion, the 150 years of Turkish rule, followed by the Austrian oppression which lasted several centuries) and, on the other hand because the Christian priests nowhere else destroyed the remains of the past as they did in Hungary. [2]

It is understandable, however, that not only the epics and legends could not reach the level of literature, but even the pagan historical data could not survive, except for those in the folktales, in which the Nibelungenlied can be found in its ancient form.

However, the fact that Bishop Pilgrim and his scribe were missionaries to Hungary, that they spoke Hungarian, and that the Germanic epic calls Siegfried a Hun, are all strong proofs that the ancient elements of the Nibelungenlied had to be in the Hungarian language.

From the Nibelungenlied, we learn that the wedding of Atilla and Krimhilda took place in Vienna and also that Atilla went as far as Krimhilda's city, *Tuln*, (in "Osterland", that is Austria) to meet her. This territory was not only part of Atilla's Empire but was also a part of Hunnia, where the Huns lived. From historical notations, we learn that it was only after the fall of the Avar Empire, – as we mentioned before – that Charlemagne forced the ancient Hun populace out of the entire plain around Vienna and the mountainous territory to its south and, in their place, he settled "more trustworthy" Christian Germans and Slavs from Bavaria.

This is why the dialect of the Austrian Germans is still identical to that of the Bavarians.

Amadée Thierry, in his work: „Histoire d'Attila”, Volume II., on pages 193-194, states that the goal of Charlemagne's settlement was to secure the military bases in Hunnia. He quotes that in the interest of this: „Cooperunt populi sive Sclavi, sive Bajoarii inhabitare terram unde expulsi sunt hunni.” (Auc. Anonym. Vita S. Virgil., Ann. 798).

We also know that, in the case of such an expulsion, only the ruling class of the defeated people was expelled, because they posed a danger for the conquerors. The lower classes of the people, however, remained and so, to escape being killed or harassed, they accepted the religion of the conquerors and learned their language to some extent.

In Volume II., of the above mentioned book, on page 200, Thierry writes: "After the victory of Charlemagne, Hunnia (that is, Hungary and the Viennese Plain which belonged to Hungary), from the actions of the Slavs and the Bulgars, became like a prey which injured wild animals had torn apart. Wends, White Croats, Czechs and Poles broke through the mountain passes and across the lower Danube. Bloodthirsty bands continuously attacked the villages, killing the villagers, burning everything, stealing the animals and made themselves rulers of this territory." [3]

The German scholars state definitely that the author or authors of the Nibelungenlied were Austrian because, in the epic, they accurately describe the geographical location of Austria, (which at that time was still Hunnia) but, at the same time, their description of the northern German territories is inaccurate and confusing.

Another important proof that the origin of the Nibelungenlied is "Hun", or, in other words, that it was originally a Hungarian epic, is that, in the epic, the "Burgundians" or Germans are not presented in a favorable light. First of all, they attacked and killed the original Nibelungs, a nation of dwarfs, so that they could steal their treasures. When they stole the treasures from the depths of a mountain, they took over the heritage of the dwarfs, occupied their territory and adopted their name "Nibelung". (This was an ancient custom of robbers so that they could establish themselves as rightful heirs.) After this, following a well-prepared plan, they treacherously attacked Siegfried from behind and killed him.

According to the folk-tales of the Hungarians, the dwarfs live in dark forests or in underground caves and they possess treasures of gold and precious stones. Those who steal from them, as is described in the Nibelungenlied, inherit bad luck, tragedy and even death. It can be seen here that the writers or translators of the Nibelungenlied, in order to lengthen the epic, actually collected ancient folk-tales. Those who are unfamiliar with folklore believe that these folk-tales originate from the Nibelungenlied.

However, it is not the treasure that is the problem, it is simply that the rich have many enemies, who desire the treasure and who develop wicked schemes to destroy the rich people, in order to obtain the treasures, just as the jealous people do. The ancient Hungarian philosophy is that there is an eternal law that God rewards the good and, at the same time, punishes all wickedness, and the treasure that is obtained by robbery or murder brings destruction or death.

The literal meaning of the name "Nibelung" is "*Sons of the Mist*" or "*Sons of the Dusk*", which is fitting for the dwarfs who live under the ground or in a dark forest, and is just as fitting for the treacherous killers, the Burgundians. On the contrary, in the epic, Atilla is presented as a good, noble ruler. Siegfried is killed by the Burgundian or German, Hagen and his friend, in an attack from behind and later, the Nibelungs are also killed in revenge, among them Hagen. Siegfried's widow, Krimhilda, who was also German, had them killed. The only reason that Krimhilda became the wife of Atilla after Siegfried's death was so that she could take revenge on Atilla. She cunningly persuaded the unsuspecting Atilla to invite the Nibelungs to be his guests. During the feast, she incited the Hun warriors and the Nibelungs to argue with each other and the Huns became so angry with the Nibelungs that they attacked them and killed them.

The poet who translated the epic into German and the later Scandinavian writers wished to tone down the wickedness of the Nibelungs and tried to blame Atilla for the defeat of the Nibelungs, and the present-day German nationalistic writers try even more to tone it down. In spite of all this, it is clear from the epic that it was originally an account of the wickedness committed against the Huns, because Siegfried, the "Hunnic hero" was killed and after him, the little son of Atilla was also killed. It also appears that the Nibelungs are called the Sons of Darkness, whereas Siegfried, the King of the Huns, as we will see later, just like Atilla, was called "the Son of Light", and was the descendant of Odin, the Father of the Gods. A more intensive study of the Siegfried legends,



if we do not silence the facts, will demonstrate that the Germans arbitrarily make Siegfried or Sigurd (maybe Zoárd) their own German hero, contrary to the facts.

We have noted that the name “Nibelung” means “*Sons of the Mist*” or “*Sons of the Dusk*” or some other similar name translated into German.

In the German language *Nebel*, in Latin and Italian *nebula*, *nebbia*, *nebuloso*, means fog, foggy, unclear, cloudy. The word *nubes* means *cloud*. This is the explanation for the fact that the translator of the Nibelungenlied called the Nibelungs Burgundian Germans. The Hungarian word *boru*, *borulás* (*cloudy*, *cloud cover*) and the word *köd*, *ködös* (*fog*, *foggy*) have the same meaning. From this it is clear that, in the original Hungarian epic, the nation of killers who killed *the Son of Light*, were called the *Sons of Boru or Buru*. (*The Sons of Darkness*)

There is no doubt that the words *boru* or *buru* are identical to the Hungarian words *borít*, *beborít* = *cover*, *leborít* = *cover up*, *burkol*, *beburkol* = *cover*, *hide*, *disguise*, so the original Hungarian word *boru* meant *cloud*, *dusk*, *darkness*. It is also well-known that the Finns and Voguls, peoples related to the Hungarians, in their mythology, consider the North to be the home of Darkness and Evil, which the Hungarian word *Észak* meaning *North*, more accurately *éjszak*, *éjszaka* meaning *night* demonstrates. The concept that *North* and *Evil* are identical, is expressed in the Finnish Kalevala, where “*Lady Night*” appears as an ugly, old, evil witch, who takes on the form of a woman. The Greek *Boreas* meaning *North* is completely identical to the Hungarian word *boru*.

It is also obvious that the Hungarian words *boru*, *buru*, *burkol* are identical to the name *Burgund(ian)* and furthermore to the Prussian expression *Prusz* for the Hungarian name *Burkus*.

In Latin the name of the state of Prussia is *Borussia*. It is also a fact that in ancient times the Germans and the Slavs lived just north of the Huns (*Északra*).

The home of the Nibelungs, according to the more recent Scandinavian legends, was *Nifelheim* and *Nifelhel*. The meaning of the former is *home of the fog* and the latter *dark underworld*, which can also be understood as *the Land of the Dead*, since the name of the Germanic Goddess of Death is *Hel*, *Halja* and *Nehalennia*, a name which is not only identical to the Hungarian word for *death* – *halál*, but is also identical to the German *Höle*, meaning *cave* and *Hölle*, meaning *Hell*. This German word means *cave*, *hole*, *emptiness*, which matches the Hungarian word *hőle*, meaning *sheath*, *scabbard*, and *empty*, like the Hungarian word *hólyag*, which means *balloon*. This takes us back to the Hungarian words *barlang* (*cave*) and *boru* (*darkness*), and furthermore to the name of Darkness – *Burgund(ian)*, that is the *Sons of Darkness*, the *Nibelungs*.

One of the characteristics and language laws of the ancient Hungarian language was that the monosyllabic words could be reversed, with a slight change. The Hungarian word *hől*, *hól* meaning *hole*, *empty*, or *cave* in its reversed form became in Hungarian *luk* and in German *Loch*, although this law of reversal does not exist among the Aryan languages. It is surprising then, that in Finn mythology, the personification of the North was the evil witch, *Louhi*, which is also the reversal of the words *hőle* and *halál* and is identical to the word *luk* (*hole*).

The Hungarian word *barlang* means *cave*, whose characteristics are *dusk*, *darkness*, and the word *barlang*, in the language of the Székely Hungarians (which they pronounce: *ballang*) refers to the dark forest and to darkness in general.

Contrary to all this, the name of the people of Siegfried, whom the Song states originate from Odin, are called “*Wölsung*”. Yet Siegfried himself is presented as the Son of Light. There is no doubt that the root of the name “*Wölsung*”, *völ* is the same as the Hungarian word *világos*, which means *light*, (in a dialect, *velágos*) and is also identical to the Sumerian word *vul*, which means *fire*. It is also well-known that, in the ancient Hungarian

language, the vowel “u” was often pronounced “ő” .

However, if the Nibelungenlied had been of Germanic or German origin, the Germans would obviously not have given to Hagen and the Nibelungs such a derogatory role, nor would they have called themselves the “Sons of Darkness”. It is even more unlikely that they would have called the descendant of Odin, “the Son of Light” a “Hun hero.”

It is probable that the translator of the Nibelungenlied translated the Hungarian proper names according to their meaning, and it is even more likely that many of these names were adopted with the German pronunciation. I will not give the etymology of these names, because it is unnecessary, but I will mention that the name *Hagen*, the name of the murderer, who so treacherously killed Siegfried, reminds us of the name of the biblical Cain, even more of the Hungarian word *kaján*, (*malicious, malevolent*) also pronounced *haján*, at one time.

However, the fact that Sigurd or Siegfried was the personification of Light, shows us that this is an ancient mythological motif, the everlasting struggle between Light and Darkness, Day and Night, between the Wölsungs and the Nibelungs, a theme of which the translator of the Nibelungenlied was totally unaware. Yet it is well-known that, in Egypt, there existed the myth of Osiris and Set. Just as in the biblical story, Cain (*Kaján*) killed his own brother Abel, in the Egyptian religious epic, Set killed his brother. The name *Set* is none other than the Hungarian word *setét, sötét*, meaning *dark*, which is identical to the name *Satan*. This name for the devil reflects the Hungarian word *settenkedik* too, (*sneak, prowl*) which indicates a treacherous attack from behind with evil intentions, so Hagen, (*kaján*) the malicious one, comes to mind. On the basis that the Hungarian low and high vowels are interchangeable, we can state that the Hungarian word *settenkedik* was at one time pronounced *sattankodik (sátánkodik)*, which preserved not only the name of Satan but also the German word *Schatten* (shade). The German scholar, Henrik Burgsch, who did not speak Hungarian, stated that the Egyptian *Set* meant *darkness*. The appearance of the Goddess *Hathor* was honored in Bubastis and the people called her “*Schetat*”, which Burgsch translated to German as *dunkle, verborgene* (*dark, hidden*). (Burgsch H., „Religion und Mythologie der alten Ägypter” Leipzig, 1885. p. 702.) Originally, Osiris was the Moon-God but later was also honored as the Sun-God, who was the enemy of Darkness and who was the personification of Light.

In the original ancient epics, Siegfried may have been the Sun-God, so we can conclude that, in the Germanic epics, he was not only strong but also handsome. This brings to mind the Hungarian expression *Szépisten* (*Beautiful God*) and the Greek representations of Apollo, who was also the Sun-God. Therefore Siegfried was the personification of strength and light, whereas the Greeks worshipped a separate god of strength.

In the German folklore, (not in literature, nor in the literary rendition of the Nibelungenlied) Siegfried was a huge giant just as Miklós Toldi was in Hungarian folklore, (and not in the literature) (See: Aladár Bán, *Toldi-monda alaprétége*, 1917, pp. 21-35.). Toldi did not fight with a sword but with a huge club, like Hercules, and with fearsome strength. He had a good nature and peaceful intentions. It appears that the name of Siegfried is just a translation of these characteristics: *Sieg and Friede* (*victory and peace*). It is also possible that these two German words were added to the more ancient names, *Sigurd or Zoárd*, in order to give the “hero” the characteristics of “victory and peace”.

In Jiriczek’s aforementioned book, on page 118, there is a note that, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, in a church in Worms, a huge wooden club was guarded, which was supposed to be the weapon of the „hürnen Seyfried”. This also identifies Siegfried with the Hungarian Toldi and also Hercules. It is also true that the club as a weapon is older than the sword.

The word “*hürnen*” comes from the German word “*Horn*” meaning antler, and meant “thick-skinned”. According to the Nibelungenlied, Siegfried bathed in the blood of a dragon and, in this way, his skin became so hard that it

was impenetrable, except for a small spot in the middle of his back, where the leaf of a linden tree touched him. Hagen knew this and aimed his spear right at this spot. Achilles, the national hero of the Greeks, was dipped into the waters of the River Styx and his skin became impenetrable except for one ankle, where his mother was holding him when he was submerged. The Germans have a similar story. Among the legends of the Voguls, a people who are related to the Hungarians, is one which states that the first man and woman had "skin like finger-nails" which protected them like armor, which they lost because of the cunning of Kuáter, that is the God of Death, or the Devil, and the armor remained only at the end of their fingers and toes. This legend, although the Hungarians and the Voguls have not been in contact for millennia, has remained in the Hungarian legends, but in a christianized form. (Kálmán Lajos: „*Világunk alakulása nyelvhatárainkban*”, and Kandra Kabos: „*Magyar Mitológia*”). The Hungarian legend states: “At the beginning, Adam had skin as hard as nails but, because he sinned, he lost it and the nails remained only on his fingers and toes.” [4]

The characteristics of the Vogul and Hungarian mythology are more ancient because their epics talk of the whole human race, whereas the German and the Greek myths mention only one or another national hero. The former talk of the ancient beginnings, whereas the latter speak of human society in later times. From the German epic, the Hungarian mythology leads back Siegfried, who was at one time the Sun-God, to the ancient origins of Mankind, to the time when he was Father of the Human Race, which means that he was identical to Adam. It is probable that as such, he was dressed in the skin armor, which protected the first man, but since the everlasting struggle between Good and Bad always caused a spiritual problem, there was always a spot in the good armor, where Evil, somehow through cunning and treachery, could attack the Good.

On page 95 and the following pages of his book, Jiriczek states that the first part of the Nibelungenlied is undoubtedly more ancient because it is totally a mythical epic or folk-tale. On the other hand, the second part is more of a historical legend, which features the Burgundians, the Huns and Atilla. He states that there is no doubt that the role of Atilla was a later addition to the original. In another part, he states that the Nibelungenlied was written in the 1200's and "the original is shrouded in darkness". (p. 67.) We may just add that the "darkness" often results from a purposeful cover-up of the truth, if the truth might cause some unpleasantness.

In the Nibelungenlied, we can find many motifs which also exist in the Hungarian folk-tales, but in a simpler form and with more ancient characteristics. For example: It is apparent that the only way a man might win a woman was if he were victorious in a struggle. In the Nibelungenlied, it is not quite so simple. In the Hungarian folk-tales, the hero has to win the woman or her mother. Another way was for the hero to steal the clothes of a fairy, while she was bathing. The hero often takes away the sparkling headdress that the fairy has left in the grass close to the river. Therefore, the fairy has to become his wife, because the headdress is the characteristic of virginity and whoever steals it becomes the husband of the one who was wearing it. Neither Konrad nor the later editors of the Nibelungenlied knew of the meaning of this story.

The cap which made the wearer invisible is a characteristic of the Hungarian folk-tales and also the ability to understand the language of the birds.

The most interesting is the story of Brunhilda, who was punished because she did not obey Odin, the Father of the Gods. Her punishment was that she was banished to a mountain peak and Siegfried managed to free her. However, the woman did not become his, because the later poet of the Epic, in the interest of altering the epic, intended to make Krimhilda the wife of Siegfried because the Christian philosophy would not accept the idea that Brunhilda and Siegfried could belong to each other before marriage. Undoubtedly, originally Brunhilda and Krimhilda were the same person, so there was no talk of two different women in the Song. The later poets did not know this. Jiriczek also states on pages 107 and 108 that this section of the Song was very confusing and the poets would have done better to omit it, but they could not because it was included in the original folk tale, in the story of Siegfried and, if it had been left out it would have caused a shock. It is doubtless true that Jiriczek

was right, but we might just add that the poet made additions in order to lengthen the epic and therefore there were some changes that did not agree with the folklore.

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[1] I do not write the name of the King of the Huns with “tt” like the western historians because this does not conform to the Hungarian pronunciation of the name. Atilla was not Roman, Greek or German. In ancient Hungarian the suffix “-illa” or “-ella” was a diminutive, as in “cip-ellő” meaning “little shoe”. In Transylvania, a child who is awkward is called “idilló”. The Russians, up until most recent times, called their Czar “Atyácska”, (Little Father), a name that probably belonged to one of the ancient Magyar peoples. According to this, Atilla was also “Atyácska”. In fact, in the German epics, Atilla appears as a just, good father and a ruler who has the characteristics of a kindly father.

[2] See the Foreword for further information. K. G.

[3] See the notes in the Foreword. The quotation from Amadée Thierry is as follows:

[4] These beliefs bring us close to the Babylonian Oannes mythology, according to which, preceding modern man was another human race, which was not mammalian, but amphibious, like a frog. According to this, when we talk of Adam and Eve, we are talking of ancestors with a different body form.

It is also a fact that, in ancient times, there were stegocephalic amphibians, which received their names from the fact that the front of their body was covered with armor-like horny scales. At the same time, there were, related to them, Chiroterium, whose whole body was covered with horny scales, just like their ancestors, the ancient fish. The scales that cover the modern fish are the remains of the ancient thick armor. It is interesting to note that there are some fish that kept the thicker horny armor, such as the sturgeon, which in its youth is covered by armor. This is how it got its name in Hungarian – tokhal . In Dalmatian, even today, “toka” means armor.

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Adorján Magyar's works kept in circulation by Susan Tomory per his request.