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CONTEXTUALIZING THE MOUNTED PASTORAL NOMADIC POLITICAL ECUMENE: THE CONQUERING HUNGARIANS' POLITICAL AND SOCIAL PATHWAYS

Ph.D. Dissertation

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Declaration

I, Cihan Şimşek, declare that the doctoral dissertation titled "*Contextualizing the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene: The Conquering Hungarians' Political and Social Pathways*" is my own original work. I confirm that all citations and references in this dissertation have been handled in accordance with the required guidelines.

Szeged, 2024

Signature

Acknowledgements

As in the Chinese saying used in a negative sense, "*May you live in interesting times*...," it seems I must say that the past few years have indeed been quite interesting. From the July 15th coup attempt and bombings to the global pandemic and two earthquakes—the second of which was among the most devastating in history—these interesting times come with their own unique stories. However, this is neither the place nor the time to delve into those stories. Here, I will acknowledge the people and institutions that have supported the completion of this dissertation during these remarkable times.

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1 Introduction

1.1 Opening Section

Mounted pastoral nomadism is one of the most critical developments in human history. Despite its significant impact on "world history," it was, until recently, disproportionately addressed in world history as well as world system studies. The Eurocentric perspective in this field has been increasingly criticized, particularly in the last quarter of the previous century, and, as will be discussed in this study, mounted pastoral nomads have begun to receive more attention in response to these critiques. This phenomenon has attracted the attention not only of historians but also of other fields of social sciences, particularly within frameworks of "world history," "world-systems" and the history of mounted pastoral nomadic systems.

In this context, a new approach has been adopted in this study, resulting in the creation of the "mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene" model. While the term *political ecumene* is typically used in the fields of political thought and world systems, this dissertation applies it specifically to the medieval period and mounted pastoral nomads. This approach is taken to avoid the semantic ambiguities associated with terms like "political ideology" or "political culture" and to provide a more comprehensive model for analysis.

The decision to focus on 9th and 10th-century Hungarian history is significant for two main reasons. First, the Hungarians are arguably the only pastoral nomadic society to have integrated into the Western Christian political ecumene and settled without experiencing a collapse of their political power, all the while originating from a mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene. The second point of significance lies in the fact that studies on the history of mounted pastoral nomadic systems typically concentrate on communities in Inner Asia, near the Chinese border. In this context, the present study shifts the geographical focus entirely to the west.

Another important feature emerged in determining the scope of the study, both temporal and geographical is the fact of "*natura abhorret vacuum*."[1] Europe, during the late 8th century to early 11th century, observed the establishment of the feudal system following the weakening and fragmentation of the Carolingian Empire. Meanwhile, the Khazar Khaganate on the Volga was transitioning from the height of its power to the beginning of

[1] "Nature abhors vacuum."

its decline. The Byzantine Empire, on the other hand, was compelled to contend with military threats from the west and expansionist forces from the east. Concurrently, the collapse of the Avar Empire[2] led to a "power vacuum" in the Carpathian Basin.

In this context, particularly during the 9th and 10th centuries, mounted pastoral nomads from the Eurasian steppes, notably the Hungarians, profoundly influenced Europe's political and military dynamics. The Hungarian campaigns into the heart of Europe and their subsequent settlement in the region reconfigured the continent's balance of power. According to Marc Bloch, the Hungarians constituted one of the three elements along with Northmen and Muslims that consolidated "Feudal Europe" from the "outside."[3]

Shifting from this "external perspective," this study employs two fundamental approaches to gain an internal understanding of the social structures, political formations, and economic systems of the mounted pastoral nomads, particularly the "Conquering Hungarians" during the 9th and 10th centuries. First, the perspectives of system histories and world history were considered, along with specific approaches from mounted pastoral nomad system histories. To better define mounted pastoral nomads within this dissertation, a framework was developed using the concepts of "political ecumene" and "core-periphery," drawing on the theories and works of scholars such as Eric Voegelin, Janet Abu-Lughod, and Peter Golden. Building on these theoretical foundations, the study engages with the works of focusing on phenomena such as "state formation," "sedentation," "social organization," and "social stratification." This methodology progresses from a general examination of mounted pastoral nomads to a specific focus on the Hungarian society of the 9th and 10th centuries.

This study adopts a similar approach by examining the 9th and 10th-century mounted pastoral nomadic Hungarian society and its political structure through the lens of these "systems histories." Thus, the scope of this study focuses on the period of 9th to the 10th centuries, identified as the final phase of early feudalism in Europe under classical definitions. This period witnessed significant transformations for Europe, Byzantium, and mounted pastoral nomads alike.

A multidisciplinary approach is emphasized throughout this dissertation; fourteen genetic studies conducted since 2007, related to the 9th and 10th-century Hungarian

[2] Here, we referenced Pohl regarding the use of the term "empire" in relation to the Avars, see: Walter Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822* (London: Cornell University Press, 2018).
[3] Marc Bloch, *Feudal Society*, trans. L.A. Manyon (London: Routledge, 2014), 5–10, 10–17, 18–42.

migration and Conquest period, are examined to assess their relevance in addressing the questions posed by the topics mentioned above. Similarly, recent archaeological studies on settlements and the process of sedentation in the Carpathian Basin during the 9th and 10th centuries, particularly regarding Hungarian settlement, are reviewed. Additionally, geographical factors such as rivers and climatic phenomena like the Medieval Warm Period are considered to evaluate their potential to answer some of these questions.

1.2 The Structure of the Study

The dissertation provides a discussion of mounted pastoral nomads in general with a specific temporal focus on the 9th and 10th-century Hungarians.

Chapter 1 "*Introduction*," begins by describing the structure of the dissertation, then discusses potential problems and challenges related to the study. This chapter also defines the scope and limitations of the dissertation. Following this, the purpose of the dissertation is clearly defined, along with its contributions to the field, and the research questions it seeks to answer are expanded upon.

Chapter 2 *"Overview of Scholarship and Historical Context*" introduces a survey sources and the literature, as well as reviews on selected studies. Hungarian scholarship is crucial for this topic. The mounted pastoral nomadism, which is one of the core parts of these dissertation is also described in detail, and explained its characteristics that distinguish them from other nomadic groups. The chapter follows examination of the place of mounted pastoral nomads in world history and world-systems, defining their "cores" using Abu-Lughod's restructuring approach.[4] Methodologically, this chapter includes an overview of the Khazar and Late Avar histories due to their relevance to Hungarian migration. After discussing key points about these periods, events are presented in a timeline format. To maintain the form and format of the dissertation, these timelines have been added to the appendix section. It begins with an examination of Hungarian ethnogenesis and reviews some arguments on this subject in light of recent genetic studies. Then, the 9th and 10th-century Hungarian history is presented as historical background.

[4] Janet Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony the World System A.D. 1250-1350* (Oxford University Press, 1989), 364–67.

Chapter 3 "*The Mounted Pastoral Nomad Political Pathways*" analyzes mounted pastoral nomadic state, a crucial topic of discussion in this dissertation. It begins by examining what constitutes a state in the early Middle Ages. Finally, the concept of the mounted pastoral nomadic state is analyzed, with an emphasis on how the Hungarians can be classified in terms of state formation and "empire" within mounted pastoral nomadic systems. Then the chapter introduces the concept of the "mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene." This chapter gives a new structure of political ecumene perspective and construct a mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene model.

Chapter 4 "*The Mounted Pastoral Nomad Social Pathways*" discusses the social organization of mounted pastoral nomads through concepts like social strata, "boys" (clans) These structures are analyzed in terms of kinship or administrative organization. Similarly, the Conquering Hungarian society is examined through these structures and distinctions. Then this chapter discusses the phenomenon of sedentation among mounted pastoral nomads, using the 9th and 10th-century Hungarian society as a case study. This analysis considers geographical, commercial, economic, and political factors of Hungarian sedentation, and provides insights into the settlements of the Conquering Hungarians.

Finally, the dissertation concludes with a "*Conclusion*" chapter, which summarizes the findings and contributions of the research.

1.3 A Note on Terms and Terminology

At the outset of this dissertation, it is essential to clarify the use of certain terms and terminology to prevent any potential misunderstandings.

Seven terms are vital in understanding early Hungarian history: "Proto-Hungarians," "Magna Hungaria," "Migration," "Levedia," "Etelköz," "Raids," and "Conquest." For Hungarian readers, this terminology is quite familiar; however, for the rest of the readers, it may be a little confusing. These terms can have different literal translations in English, and scholars sometimes prefer to use various English translations for these concepts.

The term "Magna Hungaria" or "Great Hungary," as explained by István Fodor, refers to the ancient homeland of the Hungarians. Fodor clarifies that the use of the word "Magna" in "Magna Hungaria" pertains to the ancient or original nature of the land, rather than its geographical vastness or the expanse of Hungarian territory. In this sense, Magna

Hungaria is similar to the German term "Urheimat," which also denotes an original or primordial homeland.

In this study, it is not deeply considered why these terms were created with their specific meanings in Hungarian. It is suggested by many that such "creations" were quite common and understandable during the Romantic and nationalistic movements of the 19th century.

Two terms have different literal meanings in Hungarian: "Kalandozások" and "Honfoglalás." "Kalandozások" literally translates to "adventures," but in English academic translation, it is rendered as "raids." The term "Honfoglalás" means "home occupation." However, in English academic use and in this study, the term "conquest" is used, referring to the Hungarian people of this period as "conquering Hungarians." It is essential to note that the term "conquering Hungarians" is used in a broader context, referring not only to Hungarians after 895 but also extending back to the 830s.

Other terms, such as "Proto-Hungarians," "migration," "Levedia," and "Etelköz," do not have differences in literal meanings between English and Hungarian. However, debates within Hungarian scholarship focus on the descriptions of these terms. Questions like "Who were the Proto-Hungarians?" and "How did the Proto-Hungarians migrate to the Carpathian Basin?" are central to these discussions. Additionally, questions arise about the historical place names Levedia and Etelköz, such as "Where is Levedia?" and "Where is Etelköz?"

As mentioned under the title "*Scope and Limitations*," this study does not deeply engage with these debates and questions regarding the migration of the Proto-Hungarians. However, to better understand the historical background, a brief description of these terms and a short historiography of migration theories are provided.

In this study, the progressive social perspective, which various researchers have described using terms like "unilinear" and "evolutionary," will be defined as "progressive," drawing inspiration from its earliest conceptual roots.

The term "Great Moravia" is also not commonly used in Hungarian historiography. This term appears primarily in the "De Administrando Imperio (DAI)," which somewhat justifies its use. Nevertheless, in this study, the period of Svatopluk is referred to as "Svatopluk's Great Moravia," while the term "Moravia" is used for other periods.

Another issue of terminology concerns the use of "Rome-Eastern Rome-Rum-Byzantium." The term "Byzantium" was coined in the 19th century by European art historians to distinguish it from "classical Rome." Despite this, the term has become widely accepted, often leading to the misconception that the actual name of the state was "Byzantium." Some researchers today still prefer to use the terms "Eastern Rome" or "Rome." However, in this study, the term "Byzantium" is used consistently. When citing historical texts, the original terms are Anglicized, such as "sea of Romans" or "visited the lands of Rum."

In this study, another term that requires explanation is the distinction between "sedentation" and "sedentarization" in the context of discussing the "settling" of the Hungarians as mounted pastoral nomads. Here, "sedentation" will be used to refer to the state of being settled, while "sedentarization" will denote the process of becoming settled due to external factors. This distinction aligns with the discussions in Hungarian scholarship on this topic, which will also be addressed.

Additionally, the distinction between "Turkic" and "Turkish" is not present in either Turkish or Hungarian languages. However, the direct use of the term "Turkish" in this context has not become established in English academic writing. Therefore, the term "Turkic" is preferred throughout this study.

Lastly, the term "Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene," which will defined and explained in detail in a later chapter, was initially considered for use as "Nomadic Turkic Political Ecumene." Although much of the terminology and structure of this political ecumene is derived from Turkic political experiences, the term is still in the early stages of conceptualization. Thus, its usage has been avoided in favor of a broader term.

1.4 Problems, Limitations and Challenges in the Study

1.4.1 Scope and Limitations

The study of early mounted pastoral nomadic societies presents several challenges for researchers. The first of these challenges is the lack of autochthonous primary written sources, which naturally leads to a scarcity of linguistic evidence concerning the groups under study. A related issue is the absence of heterochthonous primary written sources. This second problem is less significant for mounted pastoral nomadic societies that neighbored

China, as the Chinese tradition of historical recording is extensive compared to that of many other sedentary civilizations. This may be one of the reasons why global theories of mounted pastoral nomadic societies are often constructed based on examples from these particular groups.

In the case of this study, early Hungarians present a similar challenge, as heterochthonous primary written sources are scarce, and autochthonous primary written sources are almost non-existent except the un-crypted Hungarian runic texts are considered. Consequently, a multidisciplinary approach becomes necessary in reconstructing early Hungarian history. There are three key elements here: linguistics, geography, and archaeology. Additionally, recent advancements in genetics[5] have added another fourth dimension to this multidisciplinary approach.[6]

Each of these elements, however, comes with its own limitations and challenges. In the case of genetics, there is a problem that can be referred to as the "issue of median." The source of the genetic material is particularly important. If the source is collected from a narrowed field due to the nature of the study or limitations encountered during the study, this should be carefully considered when interpreting the results of these genetic studies in a historical context. Simply transferring data from another discipline, such as genetics, to the field of history can result in the misinterpretation of findings. The same "issue of median" applies to other disciplines within the multidisciplinary approach as well.

Other limitations on the study stem from the unique situation of early Hungarian history. The interpretation of the social and political organization of early Hungarians and their sedentarization is constrained by the available theoretical frameworks, which may not fully capture the complexity of these processes. The literature in this field, particularly from Hungarian scholarship, contains conflicting theories or hypotheses. This "conflict" serves as both a limitation and an opportunity, as analyzing or, more precisely, synthesizing these conflicts can lead to comprehensive conclusions.

[5] For a review of recent Hungarian studies on this field: Anna Szécsényi-Nagy et al., "Archeogenetika És Magyar Őstörténet: Hol Tartunk 2021 Elején?," *Magyar Tudomány* 182(2021)S1, no. 2021. Különszám (2021): 142–54.

[6] For recent prominent studies on this: Walter Pohl et al., "Integrating Genetic, Archaeological, and Historical Perspectives on Eastern Central Europe, 400–900 AD: Brief Description of the ERC Synergy Grant–HistoGenes 856453," *Historical Studies on Central Europe* 1, no. 1 (2021): 213–28; Stefania Vai et al., "Kinship Determination in Archeological Contexts Through DNA Analysis," *Frontiers in Ecology and Evolution* 8 (2020), https://doi.org/10.3389/fevo.2020.00083.

While the study aims to structure mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, the unique aspects of the Hungarian context—such as their integration into Western Christian Political Ecumene. Furthermore, the comparison is constrained by the diversity of nomadic experiences across different regions and time periods. The research employs a multidisciplinary approach, integrating historical analysis with insights from genetic studies, archaeology, and geographical studies. This methodology allows for a comprehensive understanding of the Hungarian migration, settlement patterns, and the broader environmental and climatic factors, such as the Medieval Warm Period, that influenced these processes. The study also incorporates system history and world history perspectives, using concepts like "political ecumene" and "core-periphery" to frame the analysis.

1.4.2 Challenges Studying Mounted Pastoral Nomads and Steppe Empires

The nature of the study presents a series of challenges due to the structure of the sources. Primary sources at hand often treat the pastoral nomadic societies as barbarians bereft of civilized manners or basic ethical values such as honesty. This depiction in a variety of geographies ranging from China to Western Europe from a vast array of sources sits in stark contrast to the depictions of the sedentary neighbors in these sources. This historical trend has so far seeped into the modern literatures and other genres and until recently dominated historiography albeit in a subtler way. Therefore, a more objective and scientific definition of the pastoral nomads in a medieval framework needs to be done with a critical reading of both the primary sources and the modern historiography.

Another trap in dealing with the pastoral nomadic polities or polities of recent steppe origin is the danger of romanticizing the nomads as naïve and pure peoples unspoiled by the evils of the city life. This approach can also be encountered especially in nationalist historiographies in countries such as Turkey, Mongolia, and more recently the central Asian republics. But it is important to note that western historians also sometimes fall into this trap.

Consequently, the primary aim of this dissertation is neither to vilify, nor to romanticize the historical entities that were established by nomadic societies, in particular the "conquering Hungarians."

Another challenge concerns ethnic identifications. In this context, Walter Pohl discusses several methodological difficulties in studying Huns, Avars, and Hungarians, focusing on the challenges of ethnic identification and the use of historical sources. Historical sources often provide multiple or ambiguous identifications for the same groups, making it difficult to establish clear ethnic identities. Pohl emphasizes that these uncertain identifications should not simply be discarded in favor of a more coherent one and suggests several methodological guidelines to address these difficulties.[7] Researchers should recognize that they reflect the complexity of ethnic self-identifications. Pohl asserts that some ascriptions of identity may be quite erroneous or imprecise, indicating that self-identifications were not as straightforward and unambiguous as a scholarly perspective might presume.[8] For example, ancient names such as "Scythians" were often used for ethnographic classification rather than precise ethnic labeling. This can lead to confusion about the true identity of these groups, as it is said that scholarly designations of ancient names mostly served for ethnographic classification, not for actual ethnic labeling.[9]

As Pohl suggests scholars should be cautious about broad linguistic categorizations and their implications for ethnic identities.[10] Instead, they should focus on the specific historical and cultural contexts of the groups in question.[11] Pohl argues that debates over whether Xiongnu or Avars were Turks or Mongols are futile. Researchers should analyze the frames of ethnic distinction in historical texts to understand how contemporary observers categorized and perceived different groups. Pohl indicates that it is not always possible to tell whether the outside ascriptions in texts at hand correspond to actual identifications.[12]

The validity of ethnic nomenclature in sources should be judged based on the evidence of communication and mutual perceptions between the described groups and their observers. Pohl suggests that researchers consider how likely it is that there was some exchange of information and what prejudices, pre-set cognitions, or misunderstandings may have shaped the outcome. [13]

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[7] Walter Pohl, "Huns, Avars, Hungarians - Comparative Perspectives Based on Written Evidence," in *The Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, 2015, 697; Pohl, 697–98.
[8] Pohl, "Huns, Avars, Hungarians - Comparative Perspectives Based on Written Evidence," 697.
[9] Pohl, 697–98.
[10] Pohl, 13.
[11] Pohl, 697–98.
[12] Pohl, 697–98.
[13] Pohl, 698.

For instance, a similar situation is observed in the *Annales Fuldenses*, where the Hungarians are referred to as Avars. In Géczi's translation, this is explained as being inaccurate and interpreted as the chronicler's own perspective.[14] While this explanation is certainly valid, it can also be interpreted, as Pohl suggests, that contemporary historians and chroniclers often used similar names for groups they perceived as belonging to the same "political ecumene." Similarly, this can be seen in the *Jayhani* tradition and other Islamic sources, where Hungarians are described as Turks or as a type of Turk.[15] Zimonyi explains this as the way Islamic geographers (or historians) identified groups living a similar nomadic lifestyle within the confederations of tribes that had once been part of the Turkic Khaganate.[16] In this context, Zimonyi also argues that the small group of Hungarians or Turkic Bashkirs living east of the Volga near the Black Sea in the early 9th and 10th centuries were identified as Turks by Islamic geographers.[17] This same interpretation can be applied in this context as well, where early Hungarians were classified by Islamic geographers within a similar political ecumene. While the concept of a "political ecumene" (in the context of this study, "Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene") helps to clarify the classification and understanding of these political entities, it also opens up another issue related to the problem mentioned by Pohl. The use of the term "political ecumene" as a broad categorization, while facilitating understanding of these political actors, does not entirely prevent the potential errors of generalization regarding ethnic or linguistic differences, as well as the risk of overlooking diversity and the different dynamics at play. The overall solution still lies in the methods proposed by Pohl.

1.5 The Purpose and Contributions to Science

The purpose of this study is to understand the process and dynamics of sedentation of nomadic societies in Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages also using the samples of the early Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin in 9th and 10th centuries for comparison.

[14] Gyula Kristó, ed., "Fuldai Évkönyv," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Lajos Géczi (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 193.
[15] István Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450 (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 83–89.
[16] Zimonyi, 101–2.
[17] Zimonyi, 102.

In this dissertation, the questions like “What is mounted pastoral nomadism political ecumene?” or “How can mounted pastoral nomadic political order described in global concept?” will be answered.

A more specific study of this dissertation is the context of “conquering Hungarians.” One of the descendant nations of mounted pastoral nomad societies is Hungarians. Unlike most of the other nations with mounted pastoral nomadic origins which are seen and accepted as Asian, now the modern nation of Hungarians is geographically, economically, and culturally part of Europe. Even solely in this case, understanding this unique feature makes possible answers to questions like “How the process of sedentation took place among mounted pastoral nomadic societies of the Eurasian steppe” and eliciting and verifying these in the example of “conquering Hungarian” interesting studies.

This research aims to provide a comparative analysis between the history of Hungarian nomadism and global theories on pastoral nomadism. These global theories are generally constructed around Eastern mounted pastoral nomadic communities, primarily those of Central and East Asia. By focusing on this comparison, the study will seek to elicit and verify these theories in the context of Hungarian nomadism.

Global historical theories regarding nomads have predominantly been formulated based on the nomads of Central and East Asia. This is largely due to the extensive written records maintained by China, which have made it easier to derive theories from these sources. However, when examining early Hungarian history, it becomes clear that the first encounters with written sources authored by the Hungarians themselves occur only after the transition from the 10^{th} to the 11^{th} centuries. This period corresponds to a time when Hungarian society was emerging from mounted pastoral nomadism. During this transitional period, many more primary handwritten records and documents about Hungarian society from other communities began to appear extensively.

In contrast, for an earlier period, specifically the 9^{th} and 10^{th} centuries, very few written sources are available. Therefore, this study becomes particularly valuable, as it will explore the period of the 9^{th} and 10^{th} centuries, when the mounted pastoral nomadic lifestyle was more prevalent among the Hungarians. Considering that these global theories were not primarily focused on the mounted pastoral nomads who lived predominantly in the western steppe belt and especially beyond, such as the Carpathian Basin, this study will test (verify and elicit) these global nomadic theories. These theories, which have been built upon the

mounted pastoral nomads of Central and East Asia and have extensively utilized Chinese sources, will be examined to determine their applicability to the Hungarians of the 9th and 10th centuries in the West. In doing so, this research will question the universal applicability of these theories, potentially contributing new insights to the academic study of the social and political pathways of mounted pastoral nomads.

By reevaluating existing perspectives and introducing new models, such as the concept of the political ecumene, this study aligns itself with synthesized approaches from scholars like Gyula Kristó and György Györffy. It aims to form a more coherent argument by incorporating recent scientific findings from various disciplines, including archaeology, genetics, and geography. This interdisciplinary approach is designed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the subject.

Furthermore, the study aims to enhance our understanding of human-nature interactions, especially within the context of nomadic societies. It places special emphasis on factors such as soil structure, pastures, and climate changes, which significantly impacted the lifestyles of pastoral nomads. By examining how pastoral nomads, particularly the early Hungarians, responded to climatic events like the Medieval Warm Period,[18] the research hopes to provide historical examples relevant to sustainable food economy studies. These historical insights are increasingly pertinent in the face of impending threats such as global warming and nutritional crises.

In addition to environmental considerations, this research seeks to identify the dynamics that defined the society of the conquering Hungarians. It examines the transformation from an early Turkic mounted pastoral nomadic social-political order to a more settled lifestyle within the medieval Western European social-political geography. This Hungarian example is unique among mounted pastoral nomadic societies, especially when contrasted with the nomadic Turkic social-political order. Such a comparison may help explain why mounted pastoral nomadism disappeared relatively early in Hungary, while in other political geographies, such as the Ottoman Empire, mounted pastoral nomads continued to exist until the modern era.

[18] *For medieval warm period see*: Malcolm K. Hughes and Henry F. Diaz, *The Medieval Warm Period*, Climatic Change (Kluwer Academic Publishers, 1994); Malcolm K. Hughes and Henry F. Diaz, "Was There a 'Medieval Warm Period', and If so, Where and When?," *Climatic Change* 26, no. 2 (March 1, 1994): 109–42, https://doi.org/10.1007/BF01092410.

1.5.1 Research Questions

The questions surrounding the mounted pastoral nomadic states revolve around the possibility of classifying these states and establishing a clear periodization for their development. Understanding when and why these nomadic groups transitioned from a mobile lifestyle to a settled one is crucial in comprehending their broader historical trajectory. This inquiry extends to the early Hungarians, whose integration with the settled populations of the Carpathian Basin raises significant questions. It is essential to decide whether Hungarian society is forming new classes or if existing social strata persist. The fate of the previously established aristocratic classes, whether they are being suppressed or integrated, and the nature of this integration are also pertinent issues. Moreover, the existence of a dual or unified legal system during this period, and how it was applied to the local or former aristocracy, adds another layer of complexity. The Carpathian Basin, as if a "frontier zone" of cultural interaction,[19] prompts questions about the cultural mixing that occurred during the 9th and 10th centuries, and how significant such interactions were. As well as, why mounted pastoral nomad societies might continue their existence in some political ecumene while they had to change their way of life.

In this dissertation, it is aimed to shed some light on several questions through genetic research. The most important of these is whether the "conquering Hungarians" intermingled with the indigenous communities, specifically the Late Avar and Slavic communities, who were present in the Carpathian Basin before them, and what kind of information can be obtained regarding this intermingling. If such intermixing occurred, when did it happen? Related to this question is whether the settlement process of the "conquering Hungarians" occurred by replacing the existing populations or by blending with them. How much of the settled Avaro-Slav population continued to exist during the era of the "conquering Hungarians?" How did this Slavic-Hungarian transition occur in the contact zones?

Another important question is what the inter-tribal genetic interaction among the "conquering Hungarians" in the Carpathian Basin was like. Was exogamy a widespread practice among the tribes of the "conquering Hungarians"? And did the Hungarian

[19] Peter C. Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia* (Harvard University Press, 2005), 41.

community that arrived in the Carpathian Basin come as a male-dominated warrior group, or did they arrive as a community?

Although not directly the focus of this study, questions regarding where the Hungarians came from and which ethnic groups the "conquering Hungarians" were ethnically related to are of secondary and tertiary importance in these genetic studies.

Regarding geography, what was the effect of the landscape structure on the "conquering Hungarians?" Is there a soil structure in the Carpathian Basin similar to the "chernozem" black soil found in the Khazar region? If so, how did this chernozem soil affect the settlement process? Another question is whether the directions and basins of rivers, especially the situation before the river regulation efforts of the 19th century, were significant enough to impact migration and settlement. If so, what kind of impact did they have? And did the Medieval Warm Period occur in the Carpathian Basin? If it did, did it affect the Hungarian settlement process? For example, did the disaster of the 955 Battle of Augsburg accelerate settlement for the Hungarians? If it did, did the previous semi-nomadic social structure facilitate settlement rather than dispersal? Did this create a situation that set them apart from the fate of the Late Avars? If such geographical and climatic changes occurred, can corresponding evidence be found in archaeological data, in the laws of St. Stephen from the early 11th century, or in any other written documents?

2 Overview of Scholarship and Historical Context

In this second chapter of the study, a conduct a general survey of scholarship and review some of the key works before defining the concept of the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene will be given. Following this, a historical background will be provided in a progression from the general to the specific. In this context, the questions of what constitutes a mounted pastoral nomad and what accounts for the differences with other forms of nomadism will first be addressed. Then, there will be a general overview on the "place" occupied by mounted pastoral nomads within the scope of the world systems and world history. Special attention will be given to unique analyses, such as the mounted pastoral nomadic "cores" in Western Eurasia and Eastern Europe. However, a detailed reconstruction of these concepts will not be pursued, as it would exceed the scope of this dissertation; instead, a more comprehensive discussion will be provided in the conclusion.

Another point to be mentioned is the hypothesis concerning the "Khazar Political Ecumene." One reason for this is to avoid unnecessary repetition by discussing the concept of "political ecumene" in detail in a later section. Svetlana Pletneva's progressive model regarding the Khazars will also be addressed in the context of the historical background, given its parallel to the Szabó-Györffy model, which will be discussed in the social pathways chapter.

The historical backgrounds will be kept as concise as possible, while the section on ethnogenesis will be somewhat more extended, aligning with the logic of a "scholarship overview." This is also because significant number of studies on ethnogenesis have often been a topic of debate in the context of nation-building in the past century. In this context, it is important to discuss ethnogenesis and share some ideas regarding the genesis or structure of medieval society. Thus, this section will also propose ideas about Hungarian ethnogenesis. Genetic studies related to the conquering Hungarians began in 2007. In this regard, genetic studies related to the history of the conquering Hungarians conducted from 2007 to 2022 will be reviewed in the context of the questions posed in the "*Questions*" section, serving as a survey of the field.

2.1 Literature and Source Survey

In this study, various fields of literature like from history, archeology to genetics were utilized to explore the concepts of Mounted Pastoral Nomads, Mounted Pastoral Nomadic

Political Ecumene, and, ultimately, the conquering Hungarians. It is fair to say that the most comprehensive work on the conquering Hungarians can be found in Hungarian scholarship due to the special attention given to this specific history within the nation building period. Over the centuries, Hungarian scholarship has developed a detailed body of literature covering this period, which is a significant part of their national history.

In this context, the literature review can begin by highlighting two key studies. First, it is important to mention Sándor László Tóth's academic doctoral dissertation, "A magyar törzsszövetség politikai életrajza (A magyarság a 9-10. században)" ["*The Political Biography of the Hungarian Tribal Confederation (The Hungarians in the 9th-10th Centuries)*"].[20] This dissertation provides a comprehensive analysis of the political evolution of the Hungarian tribal confederation from the late 830s to the early 11th century, focusing on the transition from a nomadic society to a Christian state. The work is notable for its comparative approach to Hungarian historical scholarship. Tóth systematically reviews and critically engages with a wide range of historical interpretations, utilizing a diverse collection of primary sources, including Byzantine, Latin, Muslim, Slavic, and Hebrew texts. This approach allows him to present a nuanced perspective of the period, integrating various viewpoints and highlighting underexplored aspects of Hungarian history. His effective use of Constantine VII Porphyrogenitus's "*De Administrando Imperio*" as a central source provides detailed insights into the 9th-century political organization of the Hungarians, revealing the structure and leadership of the confederation and its interactions with neighboring powers, particularly the Khazars.

Additionally, Tóth examines the social dynamics and processes of sedentarization that characterized the transformation of Hungarian society in the 10th century. He explores the internal and external political changes, such as the decline of the tribal confederation and the establishment of a centralized Christian state under Géza and Saint Stephen. This study was republished in 2015 with a new foreword as a facsimile edition under the same title.[21]

The other key study is Gyula Kristó's 1980 book, "Levedi törzsszövetségétől Szent István államáig" ["*From Levedi's Tribal Confederation to the State of Saint Stephen*"].[22] In

[20] Sándor László Tóth, "A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)" (Szeged, University of Szeged, 2014).
[21] Sándor László Tóth, *A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)* (Szeged: Belvedere, 2015).
[22] Gyula Kristó, *Levedi Törzsszövetségétől Szent István Államáig* (Budapest: Magvető Könyvkiadó, 1980).

this work, Kristó also examines the political and social transformations of Hungarian society from the 9th century up to the consolidation of the Christian state under Saint Stephen in the 10th century. The book provides a thorough analysis of the transition from a tribal confederation to a centralized kingdom, focusing on the development of political structures, social changes, and the process of sedentarization.

Kristó's work is particularly notable for its detailed discussion of the political organization of the Hungarian tribes during the period leading up to and following the conquest of the Carpathian Basin. He carefully explores the role of the dual leadership system, consisting of a spiritual leader (*kende*) and a military leader (*gyula*), and how this system enabled both effective internal governance and successful military campaigns. The analysis reveals how this political structure evolved in response to internal dynamics and external pressures, including conflicts with neighboring powers such as the Byzantines, the Eastern Franks, and the Holy Roman Empire. The book also emphasizes the process of sedentarization, detailing the shift from a nomadic lifestyle to more permanent forms of settlement. Similarly, Kristó's 1995 book, "A magyar állam megszületése" ["*The Birth of the Hungarian State*"],[23] examines the formation of a centralized kingdom, focusing on the transition from tribal confederations.

In this context, Kristó's detailed 1995 study published in *Századok*, "A honfoglaló magyarok életmódjáról (írott források alapján)" ["*On the Way of Life of the Conquering Hungarians (based on written sources)*"],[24] not only provides a comprehensive classification and evaluation of Hungarian scholarship in this field but also examines the structure of the mounted pastoral nomadic society of the conquering Hungarians through written sources, focusing particularly on the significance of the "horse" and "tent" Another work by Gyula Kristó in this field is "Hungarian History in the Ninth Century,"[25] published in English in 1996. In this study, Kristó presents his detailed views on the migration involved in the Hungarian ethnogenesis and other related debates.

Within the scope of studies in this field, an important historian is György Györffy, who developed the "semi-nomadism" theory regarding the conquering Hungarians, producing a significant series of academic works. This theory had a considerable impact on

[23] Gyula Kristó, *A Magyar Állam Megszületése* (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995).
[24] Gyula Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," *Századok* 129 (1995): 3–62.
[25] Gyula Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, trans. György Novak (Szeged: Szegedi Közepkorasz Mühely, 1996).

Hungarian scholarship, even according to Kristó, who did not share Györffy's views. Györffy, particularly in relation to settlements, expanded on the model developed by István Szabó in his 1966 book, "A falurendszer kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV század)"[26] ["*The Formation of the Village System in Hungary (10th-15th Century)*"], which focused on the transformation of summer and winter camps into villages for the conquering Hungarians. Building on this model, Györffy's detailed 1970 study, "A honfoglaló magyarok települési rendjéről"[27] ["*On the Settlement Patterns of the Conquering Hungarians*"],[28] proposed a dissertation regarding the settlement patterns of the Hungarian tribes in the Carpathian Basin. In this context, Györffy developed a model of conquering Hungarian settlements using disciplines and methods such as archaeology and historical topography to analyze both the settlements themselves and their broader historical and geographical implications.

Similarly, three other works by György Györffy are also worth mentioning in this context: "Honfoglalás, megtelepedés és kalandozások"[29] ["*Conquest, Settlement, and Raids*"], "István király és műve"[30] ["*King Stephen and His Work*"], and "A Kárpát-medence és Etelköz képe egy évezred előtt"[31] ["*The Image of the Carpathian Basin and Etelköz a Millennium Ago*"], co-authored with Bálint Zólyomi.

In "Honfoglalás, megtelepedés és kalandozások," Györffy examines the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin, and the subsequent settlement and raids carried out by the Hungarians during the 9th and 10th centuries. This work provides a comprehensive analysis of the political and social changes that accompanied the transition from a nomadic lifestyle to a more sedentary society.

Although "István király és műve" primarily focuses on the reign of St. Stephen, it also serves as a compendium of Györffy's views and theories on early Hungarian history, including the conquering Hungarians. In this extensive study, Györffy organizes and synthesizes the topics he had previously addressed and discussed, covering the period

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[26] István Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, Magyar Tudományos Akadémia Agrartörteneti Bizottsának Kiadványai (Akadémiai Kiadó, 1966).
[27] György Györffy, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Települési Rendjéről," *Archaeológiai Értesítő (Budapest)*, 1970, 191–242.
[28] Györffy.
[29] György Györffy, "Honfoglalás, Megtelepedés És a Kalandozások," in *Magyar Őstörténeti Tanulmányok*, ed. Antal Bartha, Károly Czeglédy, and András Róna-Tas (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1977), 123–56.
[30] György Györffy, *István Király És Műve* (Budapest, 1983).
[31] György Györffy and Bálint Zólyomi, "A Kárpát-Medence És Etelköz Képe Egy Évezred Előtt," in *Honfoglalás És Régészet - A Honfoglalásról Sok Szemmel 1*, ed. László Kovács and László Veszprémy (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1994), 13–36.

leading up to and including St. Stephen's reign to provide a holistic understanding of the era. This book was translated into English in a shortened form as "King Saint Stephen of Hungary" in 1994.[32] However, the translation primarily focuses on the parts related to St. Stephen, omitting much of the broader content on the conquering Hungarians and earlier periods.

In the work "A Kárpát-medence és Etelköz képe egy évezred előtt," co-authored with Zólyomi, the authors offer a detailed analysis of the region's geography, climate, and vegetation over a millennium. They provide insights into how these factors influenced the Hungarian tribes' transition from a semi-nomadic lifestyle to a more settled way of life. The study emphasizes that significant environmental changes, such as shifts in vegetation due to deforestation and climate fluctuations, were gradual and largely driven by human activities, including the expansion of agriculture and settlement.

In this book, "Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century,"[33] István Zimonyi not only conducts a detailed linguistic analysis and source review on the *Jayhani* tradition, a collection of Muslim geographical writings, but also revisits information from the *Jayhani* tradition to address questions concerning early Hungarian ("Magyar" as written in the book) history. In this context, he provides insights into topics such as the culture, politics, and economy of mounted pastoral nomads and, specifically, creates a scholarly work focused on the early Hungarian society.

Another book on source study is on analyzing Hungarian raids into Western Europe through contemporary Western sources. Dániel Bácsatyai's this comprehensive 2017 study, "A kalandozó hadjáratok nyugati kútfői"[34] ["*Western Sources of the Raiding Campaigns*"], is a crucial work for both describing these sources as. Bácsatyai's work is particularly strong in its critical assessment of Western chronicles, annals, and other Western Christian sources that document the Hungarian incursions. He meticulously evaluates the reliability of these accounts, considering their authors' biases and the political contexts in which they were written. In this study, Bácsatyai's perspectives from this work will be frequently utilized.

[32] György Györffy, *King Saint Stephen of Hungary*, trans. Peter Dohery (New Jersey: Atlantic Research and Publication, 1994).
[33] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*.
[34] Dániel Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői* (HM Hadtörténeti Intézet és Múzeum, 2017).

István Fodor's book, "In Search of a New Homeland: The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest,"[35] traces the origins, migration patterns, and conquest of the Carpathian Basin, highlighting the Hungarians' Finno-Ugric roots and their emergence as a distinct ethnic group.

Complementing these studies, Szabolcs Polgár's "Kelet-Európa kereskedelmi kapcsolatai az írott források alapján. 750-1000"[36] ["*Eastern Europe's Trade Relations Based on Written Sources, 750-1000*"] explores commercial interactions between Eastern Europe and its neighbors, offering insights into trade dynamics of the 9th and 10th centuries.

András Róna-Tas's book "Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History"[37] provides a comprehensive examination of the early history of the Hungarians, focusing on the period from their origins through the 9th and 10th centuries up to the formation of the Hungarian state. The book explores the political, social, and economic developments that shaped Hungarian society during this transformative period. Róna-Tas's analysis is particularly valuable for its detailed discussion of the political structures of the Hungarian tribes before and after their conquest of the Carpathian Basin. He carefully examines the tribal confederation and leadership dynamics that characterized early Hungarian society, highlighting the transition from a loosely organized group of tribes to a more centralized political entity under the Árpád dynasty. This transition was crucial for the establishment of a stable state structure capable of defending against external threats and managing internal affairs.

Adding to this scholarship, István Dienes's "A honfoglaló magyarok"[38] ["*The Conquering Hungarians*"] provides an extensive exploration of the social, cultural, and economic aspects of early Hungarian society during the Hungarian Conquest and subsequent settlement in the Carpathian Basin. Utilizing archaeological evidence, historical sources, and linguistic data, Dienes reconstructs the societal structure and daily life of the Hungarian conquerors, emphasizing the gradual shift from a nomadic to a settled existence, the development of agriculture, and the establishment of fortified settlements.

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[35] Istvan Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland, The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest* (Gyoma: Corvina Kiado, 1982).
[36] Szabolcs Polgár, *Kelet-Európa Kereskedelmi Kapcsolatai Az Írott Források Alapján. 750-1000* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2019).
[37] András Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, trans. Nicholas Bodoczky (Budapest: Central European University Press, 1999).
[38] István Dienes, *A Honfoglaló Magyarok* (Budapest: Corvina Kiadó, 1972).

Lastly, Péter Veres's "The Ethnogenesis of the Hungarian People: Problems of Ecologic Adaptation and Cultural Change"[39] explores the origins and early development of the Hungarians, focusing on their ethnogenesis and cultural transformations. Veres employs an interdisciplinary approach to examine ecological adaptation, economic practices, and social organization during the 9th and 10th centuries.

To highlight some of the key studies used in this work that focus on the political structure, state development, and social organization of mounted pastoral nomadic societies, outside of Hungarian scholarship, it is appropriate to begin with the works of Peter Golden. To begin with, Golden's article, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity Amongst the Pre-Ginggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," provides a nuanced examination of the political ideology and culture of mounted pastoral nomads. A key strength of the article is its exploration of how charismatic leadership and divine mandate served as foundational elements for political cohesion among nomadic groups. Golden argues that the legitimacy of nomadic rulers was deeply linked to notions of divine favor, which unified disparate tribes and provided a stable framework for governance. His detailed analysis of titles, ranks, and dual administrative systems within these societies further highlights the complexity of nomadic statecraft. In "Some Notes on the Comitatus in Medieval Eurasia with Special Reference to the Khazars,"[40] Golden explores the concept of the comitatus among mounted pastoral nomads. The article defines the comitatus as a military retinue composed of warriors bound by personal loyalty to a warlord or ruler, distinct from the broader tribal military forces. Golden illustrates how the comitatus functioned as both a protective bodyguard and an effective tool for centralizing authority. Golden's other article, "The Terminology of Slavery and Servitude in Medieval Turkic,"[41] offers a thorough analysis of the social structures and linguistic nuances associated with slavery and servitude among Turkic nomadic groups. The article's strength lies in its meticulous examination of the various terms used to describe slaves and servants, which reveals a deep understanding of social hierarchies and roles within these societies. Golden shows how these terms were

[39] Péter Veres, *The Ethnogenesis and Ethnic History of the Hungarian People: Problems of Ecologic Adaptation and Cultural Change*, Occasional Papers in Anthropology 5 (Ethnographical Institute of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, 1996).
[40] Peter B. Golden, "Some Notes on the 'Comitatus' In Medieval Eurasia With Special Reference To The Khazars," *Russian History* 28, no. 1/4 (2001): 153–70.
[41] Peter B. Golden, "The Terminology of Slavery and Servitude in Medieval Turkic," in *Studies on Central Asian History in Honor of Yuri Bregel*, ed. Devin DeWeese (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, Research Institute for Inner Asian Studies, 2001).

not merely descriptive but were integral to the political and social fabric of nomadic life, influencing everything from military service to domestic arrangements.

Svetlana A. Pletneva's book, "Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don und Wolga," ["*The Khazars: A Medieval Empire on the Don and Volga*"][42] presents a comprehensive study of the Khazar Khaganate, emphasizing its significance in the medieval history of Eastern Europe. One of the book's strong points is its meticulous analysis of the Khazar state's formation and development, highlighting the unique characteristics of this multi-ethnic, feudal state that thrived from the 7th to the 10th century. Pletneva provides a detailed account of the economic and political structures of the Khaganate, showcasing how the Khazars maintained a complex system of governance over a vast and diverse territory. Pletneva offers a detailed progressive model for Khazars sedentation, and in context of mounted pastoral nomads this model may may be used for foundation for progressive models for cross analyses.

Nicola Di Cosmo's article, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History,"[43] is a substantial contribution to the understanding of the political evolution of Inner Asian nomadic societies. One of the article's strong points is its analytical framework for state formation among nomadic groups, which combines both *endogenous* and *exogenous factors*. Di Cosmo convincingly argues that state formation in Inner Asia should be viewed not merely as a response to external pressures from sedentary civilizations but also as an outcome of internal social dynamics and crises. This approach provides a more nuanced understanding of how nomadic empires, such as those of the Xiongnu and the Mongols, emerged and sustained themselves. Additionally, Di Cosmo's periodization offers a refreshing perspective on the often-overlooked complexities within Inner Asian polities. By examining the political, economic, and social changes that shaped the trajectory of nomadic empires, the article effectively challenges traditional historical narratives that depict these societies as monolithic or static. Di Cosmo's emphasis on the militarization of nomadic societies and the role of charismatic leadership in unifying diverse tribal groups under a centralized authority adds depth to our understanding of nomadic statecraft.

[42] S.A. Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga* (Leipzig: Schroll, 1978).
[43] Nicola Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," *Journal of World History* 10, no. 1 (1999): 1–40.

Another article of Di Cosmo, "The War Economy of Nomadic Empires,"[44] offers a thorough exploration of the economic foundations that underpinned the rise and sustenance of nomadic empires. A key strength of this article is its examination of the war economy as a driving force behind the formation of political structures among nomadic groups. Di Cosmo adeptly demonstrates how the constant need for resources to sustain large armies and aristocratic elites necessitated a war economy that relied on raiding, tribute, trade, and taxation. This approach provides a fresh perspective on the motivations behind nomadic conquests and expansions, emphasizing the economic imperatives that shaped their political strategies. Furthermore, Di Cosmo's analysis of the transformation of war economies into more sophisticated economic strategies, such as trade and taxation, highlights the adaptability and dynamism of nomadic empires. By detailing how these empires transitioned from raiding and tribute collection to controlling long-distance trade routes and developing taxation systems, the article underscores the complexities of nomadic statecraft. This insight into the evolution of nomadic political economies enriches our understanding of their ability to maintain centralized power and manage diverse populations across vast territories.

Thomas Barfield established a theory on outer frontier strategy and nomadic empires, first introduced in his work "The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China, 221 BC to AD 1757."[45] He later developed this theory in a subsequent article, "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation Along the Chinese-Nomad Frontier"[46] and recently, he expanded on it further in his latest work, "Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History."[47] In his works he constructed a series of theories on mounted pastoral nomadic. Although the foundations and latest revisions of his theory will be described in detail in later sections of this study, the questions related to his theory mentioned as part of a comparative study of "global" theories on mounted pastoral nomadism, particularly in the context of early Hungarians.

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[44] Nicola Di Cosmo, "The War Economy of Nomadic Empires," in *Rebel Economies: Warlords, Insurgents, Humanitarians*, ed. Nicola Di Cosmo, Didier Fassin, and Clémence Pinaud (Washington DC: Lexington Books, 2021), 103–25.

[45] Thomas Jefferson Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China [, 221 BC to AD 1757]*, Studies in Social Discontinuity (Cambridge, Mass.: B. Blackwell, 1992).

[46] Thomas Jefferson Barfield, "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese-Nomad Frontier," in *Empires: Perspectives from Archaeology and History*, 2001, 10–41.

[47] Thomas Jefferson Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History* (Princeton University Press, 2023).

In particular, it is necessary to address, within the scope of the literature review, recent archaeological studies on settlement patterns and the settlements of the conquering Hungarians. Miklós Takács, in his various works, provides a thorough examination of settlement archaeology in Hungary and the Carpathian Basin, particularly focusing on the post-Hungarian Conquest period. In "The settlement archaeology of Hungary from the 8th to the 11th century, presented on the basis of several recently excavated sites,"[48] Takács challenges earlier historical assumptions by arguing that certain pottery and rounded-bottom clay cauldrons emerged in the latter half of the 10th century rather than during the early phase of the Hungarian Conquest. This reinterpretation suggests a more gradual cultural integration in Central Europe after the Conquest. Meanwhile, in "The Centuries of Transformation. Presentation of an early medieval settlement research project,"[49] he analyzes settlement patterns from the 8th to 11th centuries, reconstructing lifestyles and settlement strategies from twenty excavated sites. He emphasizes a multidisciplinary approach, incorporating geomorphological, paleoclimatological, and paleobotanical data. Furthermore, in "A honfoglalás kor és a településrégészet,"[50] ["*The Conquest Era and Settlement Archaeology*"] Takács critiques existing historiographical approaches and advocates for more comprehensive archaeological analyses, utilizing a range of scientific methods to better understand the socio-political transformations during the Hungarian Conquest.

Similarly, Takács, in his overview "The Archaeological Investigation of Settlements of the 7th – 13th Century AD in Hungary,"[51] highlights the key developments in settlement archaeology over three decades, underscoring the integration of environmental archaeology and interdisciplinary methods to reconstruct early medieval settlement dynamics. Moreover, in "The Ninth-Century Carpathian Basin on the North-Western Edge of the First Bulgarian State," he evaluates theories regarding the Bulgarian presence in the Carpathian Basin using

[48] Miklós Takács, "The Settlement Archaeology of Hungary from the 8th to the 11th Century, Presented on the Basis of Several Recently Excaveted Sites," in *Campagne Medievali. Strutture Materiali, Economia e Società Nell'insediamento Rurale* (Mantova, 2005), 277.
[49] Miklós Takács, "The Centuries of Transformation. Presentation of an Early Medieval Settlement Research Project," *Hungarian Archaeology, e-Journal* 2013 Winter (2014), https://files.archaeolingua.hu/2013T/Upload/Takacs_E13T.pdf.
[50] Miklós Takács, "A Honfoglalás Kor És a Településrégészet Települési Struktúrák, A Társadalmi Szer Vezet Értelmezései, Az Etnikai Azonosítás Buktatói," in *Magyar Őstörténet Tudomány És Hagyományőrzés* (Budapest: MTA Bölcsészettudományi Kutatóközpont, 2014), 134–49.
[51] Miklós Takács, "The Archaeological Investigation of Settlements of the 7th – 13th Century AD in Hungary," in *Medieval Settlements in the Light of Archaeological Sources* (Zagreb: Institut za arheologiju, 2017), 5–14.

both written sources and archaeological findings, thus offering insights into the geopolitical dynamics of the period.

Turning to Péter Langó, his article "A Kárpát-medence 10. századi emlékanyagának kutatása"[52] ["*Research on the 10th-Century Archaeological Heritage of the Carpathian Basin*"] critically explores how nationalistic ideologies have influenced the interpretation of 10th-century archaeological research in the Carpathian Basin. He argues for a more objective approach in understanding the material culture, particularly following the Hungarian Conquest, and critiques the relationship between archaeological evidence and national identity formation. Furthermore, in the study "*Byzantine Silk Fragments from a Tenth-Century Grave at Fonyód*,"[53] the authors analyze the discovery of Byzantine silk textiles, offering new data on textile production, trade, and cultural exchanges between Byzantium and the Carpathian Basin during the early medieval period. The analysis of these silk fragments sheds light on garment construction techniques and the luxurious nature of these materials.

Additionally, "10. századi temető Balatonújlak–Erdő-dűlőn"[54] ["*A 10th-Century Cemetery at Balatonújlak–Erdő-dűlő*"] provides a detailed examination of a 10th-century cemetery in Hungary, where the analysis of grave goods and burial customs reflects a transition from nomadic to more settled lifestyles among early Hungarian populations. Langó and András Patay-Horváth, in their work "Moravian Continuity and the Conquering Hungarians,"[55] further explore the cultural interactions between Moravians and conquering Hungarians through the continued use of grape-bunch pendants in the 10th century, suggesting assimilation rather than displacement.

Tibor Ákos Rácz also contributes significantly to this field. In "Az Árpád-kori települési formák változásai és terminológiája,"[56] ["*Changes and Terminology of Settlement Forms in the Árpád Era*"] he examines the transformation of settlement patterns from

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[52] Péter Langó, "A Kárpát-Medence 10. Századi Emlékanyagának Kutatása Mint Nemzeti Régészet: Kutatástörténeti Áttekintés," *Korall* 24/25 (2006): 89–117.
[53] Ádam Bollók et al., "Byzantine Silk Fragments from a Tenth-Century Grave at Fonyód. New Data on a Garment in the Tenth-Century Carpathian Basin," *Ars Decorativa* 27 (2010): 21–49.
[54] Péter Langó and Zsuzsanna Siklósi, "10. Századi Temető Balatonújlak-Erdő-Dűlőn," in *A Honfoglalás Kor Kutatásának Legújabb Eredményei : Tanulmányok Kovács László 70. Születésnapjára*, ed. László Révész and Mária Wolf (Szeged: Szegedi Tudományegyetem Régészeti Tanszék, 2013), 143–60.
[55] Péter Langó and András Patay-Horvath, "Moravian Continuity and the Conquering Hungarians - a Case Study Based on Grape-Bunch Pendants," in *FS Béla Miklós Szöke* (Budapest-Leipzig: Verlag Marie Leidorf, 2015), 367–80.
[56] Tibor Ákos Rácz, "Az Árpád-Kori Települési Formák Változásai És Terminológiája (Changes in the Árpád Age Settlement Forms and the Problems of Terminology)," *Studia*, 2014, 183–84.

nomadic to sedentary forms during the Árpád period, highlighting changes in settlement layouts and the development of fortified areas. Similarly, his analysis in "9–11. századi kerámialeletek a váci püspöki székhelyről"[57] ["*9th–11th Century Ceramic Finds from the Episcopal Seat of Vác*"] investigates ceramic artifacts from the medieval bishopric in Vác, providing insights into socio-economic aspects of the settlement.

Further enriching the discourse, "The Early Medieval Cemetery at Hortobágy-Árkus"[58] presents an analysis of burial customs and material culture from an early medieval cemetery, enhancing our understanding of the social dynamics of elite groups during the 8th to 10th centuries. Csanád Bálint, in "Gyula László's Theory of the 'Two-Time Conquest of the Magyars,"[59] critically examines the validity of László's theory through a comprehensive analysis of archaeological, historical, and anthropological arguments.

Attila Türk, in "The New Archaeological Research Design for Early Hungarian History,"[60] discusses a revised framework for studying early Hungarian history by integrating archaeological evidence from a broad geographic range. He critiques earlier interpretations heavily reliant on ethnic attributions and calls for a nuanced approach that considers cultural contacts and exchanges with neighboring groups. Moreover, his work "East European Connections and Roots of the 10th Century Archaeological Heritage in the Carpathian Basin"[61] delves into recent discoveries and employs a combination of archaeological and scientific methods to trace the origins and migrations of early Hungarian populations.

Finally, Norbert Berta, Flórián Harangi, Katalin E. Nagy, and Attila Türk, in "New Data to the Research on 10th Century Textiles,"[62] provide an analysis of textiles from a 10th-

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[57] Tibor Ákos Rácz, "9–11. Századi Kerámialeletek a Váci Püspöki Székhelyről," in *"A Cserép Igazat Mond, Ha Helyette Nem Mi Akarunk Beszélni" Regionalitás a Középkori És Kora Újkori Kerámiában* (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 2016), 103–14.

[58] Gergely Szenthe and Erwin Gáll, eds., *The Early Medieval Cemetery at Hortobágy-Árkus. The Heritage of an Elite Group from the 8th–10th Century Northern Transtisza Region* (Budapest: Magyar Nemzeti Múzeum, 2022).

[59] Csanád Bálint, "Gyula László's Theory of the 'Two-Time Conquest of the Magyars' and the Archaeology of the Avars," *Acta Archaeologica Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 74 (June 2023): 121–41, https://doi.org/10.1556/072.2023.00009.

[60] Atilla Türk, "The New Archaeological Research Design for Early Hungarian History," *Hungarian Archaeology, e-Journal* 2012 Summer (2012).

[61] Atilla Türk, "East European Connections and Roots of the 10 Centuries Archaeological Heritage in the Carpathian Basin by the Results of the Latest Investigations," *Археология Евразийских Степей*, no. 6 (2018): 241–51.

[62] Norbert Berta et al., "New Data to the Research Ont He 10th Century Textiles from the Hungarian Conquest Period Cemetery at Derecske-Nagymező-Dűlő," *Hungarian Archaeology. E-Journal* 2018, no. autumn (2019): 27–35.

century cemetery, revealing the variety and cultural influences of these materials, such as silk and linen, which reflect social status and trade connections during the Hungarian Conquest period. Their study, along with others discussed, illustrates the complex cultural landscape and evolving settlement patterns in Hungary and the Carpathian Basin during the 9th and 10th centuries.

As mentioned in the chapter on "*Scope and Limitations*," there are potential shortcomings in any study on mounted pastoral nomadism due to the absence of autochthonous primary written sources and the scarcity of contemporary heterochthonous primary written sources (hereafter referred to as "primary sources").[63] However, in the case of the Conquering Hungarians during the 9th and 10th centuries, there are a still a number of contemporary primary sources, which makes this study more feasible.

The history of the Hungarians in the 9th century has primarily been documented by Byzantine and Muslim sources.[64] While in 10th century especially in context of military activities the Western Christian sources become also important.

In this case, it could be "Islamic Sources," consists of three distinct categories. The most comprehensive source on early Hungarian history is known in historiography as the "*Jayhani* Tradition."[65] These sources are based on the now-lost work of the Samanid vizier *Jayhani* family. The second category includes references to early Hungarian history from the "School of al-Balkhi," which encompasses the works of al-Balkhi, al-Istakhri, Ibn Hawqal, and al-Maqdisi. In this group work of al-Balkhi and al-Istakhri take place. The third category comprises other Islamic sources that reference early Hungarian history, with particular attention given to the Andalusian Muslim scholar Ibn Hayyan and the works of Ibrahim ibn Ya'qub.

Other important sources are composed of Byzantine-Slavic sources. The most notable of these, and arguably one of the most important sources for early Hungarian history in overall, is Constantine Porphyrogenitus' "*De Administrando Imperio*." Other sources within this category include the 10th-century "*Georgius Monachus Continuatus*," the

[63] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 42.
[64] István Zimonyi, "A 9. Századi Magyarokra Vonatkozó Arab Források. A Dzsajháni-Hagyomány," in *A Honfoglaláskor Írott Forrásai - A Honfoglalásról Sok Szemmel 2*, ed. László Kovács and László Veszprémy (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1995), 49.
[65] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 7–26.

Taktika of Leo VI, "*The Life of Cyril-Constantine"*, "*The Life of Methodius"*, and the works of Ioannes Scylitzes.

The third group is Western Christian sources. The some of the principal sources in this group are the *Annales Bertiniani*, the *Annales Fuldenses*, the works of Regino of Prüm, and various French sources concerning the Burgundian raids.

In order to contextualize the exploration of Islamic sources, it is essential to first provide an overview of the history and characteristics of medieval Islamic historiography and geography. Ramazan Şeşen identifies several critical factors that contributed to the foundation of Islamic historiography. These include early inscriptions, such as those from Imru' al-Qays and South Yemen, which played a foundational role in establishing historical narratives. Additionally, narratives from "The Days of the Arabs" (ayyām al-ʿArab), recounting pre-Islamic battles between Arab tribes, significantly influenced the early historiographical tradition.[66] The formal study of genealogy ('Ilm al-Ansāb), which focused on preserving Arab tribal genealogies, alongside the poetry of the Jahiliyyah period, further shaped Islamic historiography. This poetry, often tied to the ayyām al-ʿArab, reflects the cultural values of pre-Islamic Arabia and serves as a vital historical source. The spread of literacy among the Arabs facilitated the recording and preservation of these historical accounts, thereby solidifying the tradition.[67] Moreover, the influence of neighboring historiographical traditions, such as those from Persian, Jewish, Assyrian, and Christian sources, introduced new perspectives and methodologies into Islamic historiography. Qur'anic narratives (Qisas) that recount the histories of prophets and the Banu Ismail, along with reactions against the Shu'ubiyya Movement—a cultural and political response to non-Arab influences—further enriched this tradition. Political fragmentation within the Muslim community, particularly concerning the issue of Imamate and leadership succession, also played a crucial role in shaping Islamic historiography.[68] However, Şeşen highlights that the most significant factor in the development of Islamic historiography was the social and political changes following the establishment and consolidation of the Islamic state.[69]

Islamic historiography can be divided into two primary forms, as noted by Rosenthal; the *habar* form and the annalistic form. The *habar* form is characterized by its

[66] Ramazan Şeşen, *Müslümanlarda Tarih-Coğrafya Yazıcılığı* (İstanbul: İsar Vakfı Yayınları, 1998), 16–17.
[67] Şeşen, 16–17.
[68] Şeşen, 16–17.
[69] Şeşen, 17.

narrative structure, which does not establish causal links between events. Each *habar* is a self-contained account, often vivid and reminiscent of short stories, with frequent inclusion of poetic insertions. This form prioritizes narrative color and situational detail over factual accuracy.[70] On the other hand, the annalistic form is a chronological approach to historiography, where events are recorded year by year, with simple transitional phrases used to connect the narrative across time.[71]

Before rise of Islam, the Arabs had rudimentary geographical knowledge, particularly concerning Arabia and its neighboring regions. However, geography as a formal discipline began to take shape only in the 8th century, following the establishment of the Abbasid Caliphate. This development was significantly influenced by the introduction of Greek, Persian, and Indian astronomical and geographical knowledge into the Islamic world. Notably, a delegation of Indian scholars brought Sanskrit astronomical texts to the Abbasid court around 771-773, including works such as Āryabhatīya by Āryabhatta and Brahmasphutasiddhanta by Brahmagupta. These translations exposed Muslim scholars to advanced concepts such as the earth's shape, its rotation, and the system of latitude and longitude.[72] During this period, numerous Pahlavi works on astronomy and ancient Iranian history, including *Zīj al-Shāh* and *Āyīn-nāma*, were also translated into Arabic. These Sasanian-era maps and land survey records laid the groundwork for the development of descriptive geography in the 9th century. The influence of Greek sources, particularly Ptolemy's works—*Almagest*, *Geographia*, and *Tetrabiblos*—along with Aristotle's *Meteorologica*, was profound in shaping Islamic geographical thought.[73] The translation of Ptolemy's works into Arabic in the 9th century played a crucial role in the spread of the system of climates, which eventually gained prominence over the ancient Iranian keshvar system. The Greek system, which divided the world into typically seven climatic regions, remained consistent with practical experiences and became widely accepted in Islamic geographical literature.[74]

[70] Franz Rosenthal, *A History of Muslim Historiography* (Leiden: Brill, 1968), 66–67.
[71] Rosenthal, 71–72.
[72] Sayyid Maqbul Ahmad, "Coğrafya," in *Tdv İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 1993), 50.
[73] Ahmad, 50–51.
[74] István Nyitrai, "A Magyar Őstörténet Perzsa Nyelvű Forrásai," in *A Honfoglaláskor Írott Forrásai - A Honfoglalásról Sok Szemmel 2*, ed. László Kovács and László Veszprémy (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1995), 61.

Medieval Islamic geography is notably divided into two distinct schools: the Iraqi and the Balkh schools, both of which developed during the 9th and 10th centuries.[75] The Iraqi School emerged in the mid-9th century and focused on general and descriptive geography, offering a comprehensive classification and description of the entire habitable world. Key figures of this school include Ibn Khurdadhbih (d. 912), recognized as the "Father of Islamic Geography," and Ya'qubi. Their works, such as Ibn Khurdadhbih's *Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik* and Ya'qubi's *Kitāb al-Buldān*, provided detailed insights into the known world, treating it as a cohesive whole.[76]

In contrast to the Iraqi School, the Balkh School, which emerged in the early 10th century in Khorasan, marked a shift towards a more regionally focused approach. This school, founded by Abu Zayd Ahmad ibn Sahl al-Balkhi, concentrated extensively on the geography of Islamic countries, often excluding non-Muslim regions. Al-Balkhi's work, generally known as "Suwar al-Aqalim," though not fully preserved, influenced later geographers such as al-Istakhri and al-Muqaddasi, who expanded on his methodologies. Geographers of the Balkh School divided the Islamic world into regions (climates) and created separate maps for each, often with Mecca at the center, reflecting their tendency to support geographical facts with concepts from the Qur'an and Hadith.[77] Although al-Balkhi's original works have not survived, it is widely accepted that al-Istakhri's "Kitab al-Masalik wa'l-Mamalik," which divides the Islamic world into twenty climatic regions, was an expanded version of al-Balkhi's work. However, al-Istakhri uses the term in this division of climates in a sense similar to the Persian "keshvar" system, referring to an administrative region.[78] Istakhri's innovative approach, which combined geographical data with Islamic perspectives, represents a significant advancement in Islamic geography.[79]

The *Jayhani* tradition, established by the Samanid vizier Muhammed al-Jayhani, offers significant information on the political structures of Central Asian and Eastern European peoples, including the Hungarians. Although *Jayhani*'s original works are lost, their content has been preserved through quotations in later Islamic geographers' writings.

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[75] Nyitrai, 62.
[76] Murat Ağarı, "Irak Ve Belh Coğrafya Ekolleri Ve İlk Temsilcileri: İbn Hurdazbih, Ya'kubî Ve İstahrî," *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi* 14, no. 34 (2010): 170–71; Ahmad, "Coğrafya," 53–54; Murat Ağarı, *Kitâbü'l Azizi (El-Memâlik ve'l-Mesâlik) Yollar ve Ülkeler Kitabı* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2023), 25.
[77] Ağarı, "Irak Ve Belh Coğrafya Ekolleri Ve İlk Temsilcileri: İbn Hurdazbih, Ya'kubî Ve İstahrî," 170–71; Ağarı, *Kitâbü'l Azizi (El-Memâlik ve'l-Mesâlik) Yollar ve Ülkeler Kitabı*, 52–53; Ahmad, "Coğrafya," 53–54.
[78] Marina Tolmacheva, "İstahrî," in *Tdv İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 2001), 203.
[79] Tolmacheva, 203.

Jayhani tradition, alongside Byzantine sources like *De Administrando Imperio* (DAI), provides critical insights into the political dynamics of the period.[80] The *Jayhani* tradition represents a significant body of Islamic sources that provides invaluable insights into the socio-political dynamics of regions surrounding the Samanid State, particularly in Central Asia and Eastern Europe, and offers detailed accounts of various peoples including the Khazars, Alans, Pechenegs, Burtas, Volga Bulgars, Hungarians, Danube Bulgars, Sabirs, Slavs, and Rus.[81] These accounts, derived from both written and oral sources, provide a comprehensive overview of the geopolitical landscape during the 9th and 10th centuries[82]

This tradition comprises a fragmented collection of state reports and geographical accounts compiled by various Islamic geographers, with the works of Muhammed al-Jayhani standing at its core. Despite being preserved only in fragments through quotations in later works, the contributions of al-Jayhani are crucial for understanding the early history of the Hungarians and other neighboring peoples. Muhammed al-Jayhani, a vizier in the Samanid State founded in Khurasan, authored four key treatises that are now lost: "Kitab al-Masalik wal-Mamalik" ["*The Book of Roads and Kingdoms*"], "Kitab al-ayin maqalat kutub uhud lil-khulafa wal-umara" ["*The Book of Contract Examples for Caliphs and Rulers*"], "Kitab al-ziyadat fi kitab ayin fi al-maqalat" ["*The Book of Additions to the Book of Examples*"], and "Kitab al-rasa'il" ["*The Book of Treatises*"].[83] The Jayhani family, a lineage of statesmen serving the Samanid State, included notable figures such as Jayhani's

[80] Both the Jayhani tradition, initiated by the Samanid vizier Muhammed al-Jayhani, and the works of Ibn Khordadbeh, who was originally the son of a Zoroastrian father.Sayyid Maqbul Ahmad, "İbn Hurdâzbih," in *Tdv İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 1999), 78. And they likely influenced by Persian cultural and historiographical traditions, provide substantial information on the political and cultural dynamics of the period. Ibn Khordadbeh's book, *The Book of Roads and Kingdoms*, can be regarded as a form of "state intelligence" or "military intelligence" report, and it is plausible that the Jayhani tradition served a similar function. Among the most valuable sources for understanding the political structure of the Hungarians are the Byzantine state document *De Administrando Imperio* (DAI) and the Jayhani tradition, which essentially represents a Persian-Samanid state perspective. According to Şeşen, the systematic study of 'foreign states and cultures' began during the Abbasid period, with significant contributions from the Baghdad school. Additionally, the Balkh school in the 'Persian lands' also played a crucial role in advancing this scholarly tradition.

[81] Zimonyi, "A 9. Századi Magyarokra Vonatkozó Arab Források. A Dzsajháni-Hagyomány," 52. For complete list of people mentions see: Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 26–27.

[82] Zimonyi, "A 9. Századi Magyarokra Vonatkozó Arab Források. A Dzsajháni-Hagyomány," 50; Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 8.

[83] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 26.

father Ahmet, who served as a vizier from 912/3, and his descendants who continued in prominent roles within the Samanid administration.[84]

Islamic geographers who utilized the lost works of al-Jayhani include Ibn Rustah, Gardizi, al-Bakri, Abul-Fida, al-Marwazi, Aufi, Shukrullah, and Katib Çelebi. These scholars preserved fragments of the Jayhani tradition in their writings, thereby extending its influence across centuries.[85] The "Ḥudud al-'Alam," an anonymously authored Persian geographical work written around 982, also falls within this tradition and has been translated into English by V. F. Minorsky and C. E. Bosworth as "*Hudud al-Alam: The 'Regions of the World.'*"[86] According to Nyitrai, this work contains the earliest reference to the Hungarians in a Persian source.[87]

Among the key figures who contributed to the preservation and transmission of the Jayhani Tradition is Ibn Rustah, originally from Isfahan. Although little is known about his life, it is recorded that he traveled from Isfahan to the Hejaz in 290 AH (903 AD) and authored the book "al-Aʿlâḳu'n-nefîse"[88] Another significant contributor is Abū Saʿīd ʿAbd-al-Ḥayy ibn Żaḥḥāk ibn Maḥmūd Gardīzī, known simply as Gardīzī, who served at the Ghaznavid court and completed his work "Zayn al-akhbār" ["The Adornment of Histories"] between 1050 and 1053. Gardīzī's work, particularly the 17th chapter dedicated to the Turkic peoples, includes important sections on the Hungarians, providing further evidence of the widespread impact of the Jayhani tradition.[89]

The significance of the Jayhani tradition in early Hungarian history is highlighted in the comprehensive studies by István Zimonyi. His 1990 work, "The Origins of the Volga Bulghars,"[90] and subsequent publications, such as his 1995 article on Arab sources

[84] István Zimonyi, *The Origins of the Volga Bulghars*, Studia Uralo-Altaica (Universitas Szegediensis de Attila József Nominata, 1990), 21; Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 10.
[85] Zimonyi, *The Origins of the Volga Bulghars*, 23, 30, 32–33; Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 18–25.
[86] Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky, trans., *Hudud Al-Alam The Regions of the World A Persian Geography* (Cambridge University Press, 1982).
[87] Nyitrai, "A Magyar Őstörténet Perzsa Nyelvű Forrásai," 67.
[88] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 18; Sayyid Maqbul Ahmad, "İbn Rüste," in *Tdv İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 1999), 253.
[89] Nyitrai, "A Magyar Őstörténet Perzsa Nyelvű Forrásai," 68; Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 19–20; Bilgin Orhan, "Gerdîzî," in *Tdv İslâm Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul, 1994), 29.
[90] Zimonyi, *The Origins of the Volga Bulghars*.

concerning the Hungarians[91], and his 2016 book "Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhani Tradition," thoroughly examine these sources and their impact on understanding the historical context of the Magyars.[92]

Besides *Jayhani* tradition, other Islamic source that offers valuable insights into the history and culture of early Central Asia and Eastern Europe. In this context, Ahmed Ibn Fadlan's travelogue, which provides a detailed account of the customs, cultures, tribes, and economic and administrative relations of the steppe nomads before the Mongol period could be mentioned. This travelogue is an essential complement to the fragmented state reports of the Jayhani Tradition, as it offers a firsthand narrative of the regions Ibn Fadlan encountered during his mission to the Volga. Ibn Fadlan's work has been translated into several languages, making it accessible to a broader audience. Ramazan Şeşen translated it into Turkish as "İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri" ["*The Travelogue of Ibn Fadlan and Its Appendices*"],[93] while J. E. Montgomery's English translation, titled "*Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, Mission to Volga*," was published in 2017.[94] The scholarly significance of Ibn Fadlan's travelogue was first recognized by Ahmet Zeki Velidi Togan, who introduced it to the academic community by publishing a critical edition of the work as "*Ibn Fadlan's Reisebericht*" ["Ibn Fadlan's Travel Report"] in 1939 in Leipzig, which served as his doctoral dissertation.[95]

As mentioned above, other main source for early Hungarian History are Byzantine sources. In context of "historical political ecumene" which will be dealt later in the dissertation, these sources not only include "Byzantine" sources but also "Byzantine and Slavic."[96]

When considering Byzantine chronicles relevant to the period and communities within the scope of this dissertation, it is essential to begin with Theophanes Confessor. A valuable Byzantine source for the history of early medieval Eastern Europe is his work,

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[91] Zimonyi, "A 9. Századi Magyarokra Vonatkozó Arab Források. A Dzsajháni-Hagyomány."
[92] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*.
[93] Ramazan Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 1st ed. (İstanbul: Yeditepe, 2010).
[94] Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to Volga*, trans. James E. Montgomery (New York: New York University Press, 2017).
[95] A. Z. V. Togan, "Ibn Fadlan's Reisebericht" (Leipzig, 1939).
[96] Peter Golden also when defining "political ideologies" of Western Eurasia, he adds Slavs in Byzantine with mention of "in its various Slavic reworkings." Peter B. Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi*, no. II (1982): 37.

"Chronographia," also known as "The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor." As is common in the chronicle tradition, this work draws heavily from earlier chronicles. Theophanes Confessor's chronicle continues from the "Chronicle of George Synkellos," a monk known for his work covering the period from the creation of the world to the accession of Diocletian.[97] Around the same period, Patriarch Nicephorus, who lived between 758 and 828,[98] authored "Historia syntomos" ["Short History"], which covers the years 602-769 and also relies on similar sources.[99] Theophanes, who died in 818, wrote his chronicle between 810 and 814. When the chronicle reaches the sections covering the 7th and 8th centuries, it incorporates accounts from eyewitnesses and contemporary writers. The chronicle was translated into Latin between 873 and 875.[100] Structurally, Theophanes' work is built on a chronological framework that combines data from both secular and ecclesiastical history.[101] This chronicle is crucial for examining the pastoral nomadic peoples of Eastern Europe and the Eurasian steppes from a Byzantine perspective. It provides critical insights into these mounted pastoral nomadic communities. The chronicle has been translated into English by Cyril Mango and Roger Scott under the title "The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor: Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813."[102] Another English translation was done by H. Turtledove, titled "The Chronicle of Theophanes, An English Translation of Anni Mundi 6095-6305 (A.D. 602-813), with Introduction and Notes."[103] The critical edition of this Byzantine chronicle, edited by C. de Boor and titled "Theophanis chronographia," was published in two volumes in Leipzig in 1883.[104] This chronicle, offering a Byzantine perspective, is invaluable for understanding the interactions between the Byzantine Empire and the nomadic peoples of the Eurasian steppes. Theophanes left a significant impact on subsequent Byzantine chronicles, including "The Chronicle of Logothete and others."[105] In

[97] Cyril Mango and Roger Scott, trans., *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813* (Oxford, 1997), xliii.
[98] *According to Róna-Tas, he died in 829, see:* Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 52.
[99] Róna-Tas, 52; Staffan Wahlgren, trans., *Chronicle of the Logothete*, Translated Texts for Byzantinists Series (Liverpool University Press, 2020), 3.
[100] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 53.
[101] Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, liii.
[102] Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*.
[103] Harry Turtledove, trans., *The Chronicle of Theophanes, An English Translation of Anni Mundi 6095-6305 (A.D. 602-813), with Introduction and Notes* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1982).
[104] C. de Boor, *Theophanis Chronographia*, vol. I–II (Leipzig, 1883).
[105] Wahlgren, *Chronicle of the Logothete*, 3.

this context, another important source to mention is "Theophanes Continuatus," a six-book continuation of "The Chronicle of Theophanes the Confessor." This work, which ends in 813, serves as a primary source for the Byzantine, Arab, and Latin-speaking worlds of the 7th and 8th centuries.[106]

"The Chronicle of George the Monk" covers events from the creation of the world to the restoration of Orthodox doctrine following the iconoclast period, extending up to 843[107] completed likely in the 870s, George's work has been preserved in over a hundred manuscripts.[108] Wahlgren notes that the structure of "The Chronicle of George the Monk" influenced many later sources, including "The Chronicle of Logothete," and had a profound impact on these texts.[109] A continuation of this chronicle, extending the narrative up to 948, has been preserved in various manuscripts. In modern academic studies, this continuation is often referred to as "Georgius Monachus Continuatus" ["The Continuation of George the Monk"].[110] The preface of Moravcsik's translation suggests that the author of this continuation was likely Symeon Logothetes.[111] From the perspective of Hungarian history, this work is notable for mentioning the Hungarians in the Lower Danube region around 836-838, describing the return of Macedonian captives, and recounting the Bulgar-Byzantine wars of 894-896, which foreshadowed the Hungarian conquest.[112]

John Skylitzes, also known as Thrakesios, was a high-ranking official in the Byzantine imperial court during the last third of the 11th century, holding titles such as *kuropalatēs* (palace steward) and *drungarios tēs biglēs* (commander of the guard). He was born before 1050 and likely lived until around or after 1100. Skylitzes had a significant career in the judiciary, reaching high positions during the reign of Alexios I Komnenos. Although little is known about his social background, it is believed that his education facilitated his rise to prominence, a common occurrence in the 11th century.[113] Skylitzes

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[106] Denis Sullivan, ed., *The Rise and Fall of Nikephoros II Phokas Five Contemporary Texts in Annotated Translations* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 1.
[107] His year of date is given as 842 as noted in the preface of Moravcsik's translation, see: Gyula Kristó, ed., "György Barát Krónikájának Folytatása," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 141.
[108] Wahlgren, *Chronicle of the Logothete*, 3; György Győrffy, ed., "György Barát Krónikájának Folytatása," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 102.
[109] Wahlgren, *Chronicle of the Logothete*, 3.
[110] Kristó, "György Barát Krónikájának Folytatása," 141.
[111] Győrffy, "György Barát Krónikájának Folytatása," 102.
[112] Győrffy, 102.
[113] John Wortley, *John Skylitzes A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), IX–X.

authored a historical work that chronicles events from 811 to 1057, organized by the reigns of individual emperors. For the period between 813 and 948, he primarily relied on *Theophanes Continuatus*, which itself drew from *Georgius Monachus Continuatus*. As a result, his accounts of the Hungarians during this period are not considered independent sources. However, his reports on the visits of Hungarian leaders Bulcsú and Gyula to Byzantium, including their baptisms, are regarded as more valuable and credible, though the exact source of this information remains uncertain.[114] Skylitzes is also thought to be the author of the continuation of his own chronicle, known as *John Skylitzes Continuatus*. He was associated with the Thrakesion theme in Western Asia Minor, which likely influenced his surname. Skylitzes' family continued to rise in prominence after his death, with several members attaining high positions in both civil and ecclesiastical roles throughout the 12th century. The family remained influential even after the turmoil of 1204, with members such as Theodoros Skylitzes serving in official capacities.[115]

Leo the Deacon, born around 950 in Kaloe, a small town in the Kaystros valley in western Anatolia, pursued his education in Constantinople. He was the son of a man named Basil and moved to the capital at a young age to continue his secondary education (*enkyklios paideusis*). Although destined for a clerical career, his *Historia* reflects a traditional classical education, showcasing his familiarity with ancient authors, particularly Homer, and his fondness for proverbs. His Christian upbringing is evident in occasional references to the Old and New Testaments and citations from the Church Fathers, though these are relatively few for a work by a deacon.[116] In 976, Leo entered the court of Emperor Basil II (976–1025) as a deacon. He participated in the emperor's campaign against Bulgaria in 986, where he witnessed the siege of Triaditza (modern-day Sofia) and narrowly escaped capture after the Byzantine army's defeat. He later left his court position and eventually became a metropolitan in Asia Minor. His principal work, *Historia*, was likely completed after he left the court, certainly after 992. The *Historia* is divided into ten books, covering events from the death of Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos in 959, through the reigns of Romanos II (959–963), Nikephoros II Phokas (963–969), and John I Tzimiskes (969–976), up until

[114] Gyula Kristó, ed., "Ioannés Skylitzés," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 151.
[115] Wortley, *John Skylitzes A Synopsis of Byzantine History 811-1057*, IX–X.
[116] Alice-Mary Talbot and Denis F. Sullivan, trans., *The History of Leo the Deacon Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century* (Washington, D.C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2005), 9.

Tzimiskes' death in 976.[117] The few facts known about Leo's life largely come from incidental references in his *Historia*. He lived through the 980s, as evidenced by his detailed accounts of the rebellions of Bardas Skleros and Bardas Phokas, including the Battle of Abydos in 989 and the Bulgarian campaign of 986. His narrative also mentions the earthquake in 989 that caused significant damage to Hagia Sophia, noting that its restoration was completed by Basil II in six years. This provides a "*terminus post quem*" for the writing of the *Historia* after 995.[118] While Leo the Deacon primarily relied on eyewitness accounts and his own experiences, he also drew upon official documents and possibly other sources, such as war diaries and histories of the Phokas family. His *Historia*, written in the tradition of ancient historical monographs, also incorporates elements of Byzantine memoir literature. Alongside Skylitzes' chronicle, it is considered one of the principal and most reliable sources for the period.[119]

Byzantine Emperor Leo VI, known as "Leo the Wise" (r. 886-912), was the son of Basil I and a student of Patriarch Photius. Although he did not personally lead military campaigns, Leo faced threats from Arabs and Bulgarians, with his generals often failing in their missions. Despite these challenges, Leo made significant contributions to Byzantine law and culture, notably completing the "Basilika," a 60-book legal code, and writing extensively, earning his title "The Wise."[120] In his work "Taktika," written after 904, he discusses the military organizations and tactics, and the work encompasses military tactics, strategies, observations, and reports[121] on various peoples including the Hungarians.[122] In this context, the "Taktika" primarily focuses on military and social phenomena and, unlike "De Administrando Imperio," does not provide detailed information on political events, figures, political activities, or migrations. In his military treatise "Taktika," Leo VI detailed the military tactics and organization of various peoples, including the Hungarians. The work heavily drew on Maurice's "Strategikon" (c. 600 AD), which described the tactics of the

[117] Gyula Kristó, ed., "León Diakonos: História," in *Az Államalapítás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Teréz Olajos (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1999), 35.
[118] Talbot and Sullivan, *The History of Leo the Deacon Byzantine Military Expansion in the Tenth Century*, 10.
[119] Kristó, "León Diakonos: História," 35.
[120] Gyula Kristó, ed., "VI. (Bölcs) Leó," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 101.
[121] George T. Dennis, trans., *The Taktika of Leo VI, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae* (Washington D. C.: Dumbarton Oaks, 2010), 311,313; Pal Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526* (New York: I.B Tauris Publishers, 2001), 8.
[122] György Győrffy, ed., "Bölcs Leó Taktika," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 106; Kristó, "VI. (Bölcs) Leó," 101.

Avars and Turks. Leo referred to the Hungarians as "Turks" due to the similarities in their tactics but added his own observations.[123] This could also stem from the practice of using common or interchangeable names for groups within the same political ecumene, as previously mentioned. He made six specific additions about the Hungarians, and there are elements in the text suggesting that Leo used direct information about the Hungarians.[124] The "Taktika" also discusses Hungarian warfare, lifestyle, and their role in the Bulgar-Byzantine War (894-896). The oldest known copy of this work dates to the 10th century.[125] Leo VI's reign is closely linked to the Hungarian conquest. His diplomatic efforts directed the Hungarians to attack Bulgaria, which led Tsar Simeon to incite the Pechenegs to raid the Hungarian homeland in Etelköz. This raid was a key factor in the Hungarians' migration to the Carpathian Basin.[126] Leo VI's "Taktika" was translated into English by George T. Dennis and published in Washington, D.C., in 2010.[127]

Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos, born in 905 within the imperial palace as the only surviving son from Emperor Leo VI's fourth marriage, was heir and successor to the Byzantine throne. Although he officially became emperor in 913, his true sovereignty over the Byzantine Empire was only exercised between 945 and 959. Constantine's reign was marked by significant diplomatic successes, particularly in maintaining peace with the nomadic peoples beyond the empire's northern borders, such as the Bulgarians, Pechenegs, Rus, Hungarians, and Khazars.[128] One of Constantine's most significant contributions to history is his work "De Administrando Imperio (DAI)," written as a guide for his son and future emperor, Romanos II. Based on references within the text, it is believed to have been written between 948 and 952. The work is an invaluable source for understanding the history and geography of the 9th and 10th centuries, especially regarding the Western Eurasian Steppe Belt and the Hungarian tribes. It provides detailed descriptions of the tribes and regions surrounding the Byzantine Empire, offering advice on how to manage relations with them, often illustrated with historical examples. The work, which can be seen as a "red book" on governance, was never intended for publication due to the sensitive nature of its

[123] Győrffy, "Bölcs Leó Taktika," 106; Kristó, "VI. (Bölcs) Leó," 101.
[124] Győrffy, "Bölcs Leó Taktika," 106; Kristó, "VI. (Bölcs) Leó," 101.
[125] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 53; Győrffy, "Bölcs Leó Taktika," 106.
[126] Kristó, "VI. (Bölcs) Leó," 101.
[127] Dennis, *The Taktika of Leo VI, Corpus Fontium Historiae Byzantinae*.
[128] Gyula Moravcsik and R. J. H. Jenkins, trans., *Constantine Porphyrogenitus de Administrando Imperio* (Washington, District of Colombia: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967), 7–8; Gyula Kristó, ed., "Vii. (Bíborbanszületett) Konstantin," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 110.

contents and was preserved in a single 11th-century manuscript now held in Paris.[129] The "De Administrando Imperio" contains detailed information about the names and numbers of Hungarian tribes, particularly from the period before 948, as well as other peoples connected with Byzantium. The information was gathered from various sources, including direct interactions with Hungarian leaders who visited Constantine's court and reports from envoys sent to Hungary. While some sections of the text are considered reliable, especially those written in the present tense or referring to recent events, other parts that discuss more distant events can be ambiguous or even erroneous.[130] The work was first published under the title "De Administrando Imperio" by Meursius in 1611, and it has since been commonly referred to by its Latin name. The Greek texts were edited by Gyula Moravcsik and translated into English by R.J.H. Jenkins, with the translation published in 1967.[131] "De Administrando Imperio" was meticulously compiled, with each section originally written separately and at different times, beginning around 948. Although the original versions were lost, a new copy was made around 979, and another copy produced between 1059 and 1081 has survived. Over time, various readers of the manuscript added notes, corrections, and marginal comments, making the work a complex and layered source. The critical edition by Moravcsik and Jenkins aimed to recreate the most accurate representation of the original text, taking into account the varying quality of the sections and the challenges posed by the transmission history.[132] Constantine's intention was initially to create a comprehensive encyclopedic summary of peoples (*peri ethnon*), but he later shifted his focus to compiling an academic collection specifically dedicated to his son. Despite the shift in focus, many sections written for the original purpose were retained in the final work, even if they did not seamlessly fit the later structure. Constantine was known for his meticulous use of sources, often verifying information from earlier works and supplementing it with reports from envoys and eyewitness accounts recorded by his scribes. This attention to detail is evident in the text, though it sometimes led to the inclusion of inconsistent information.[133] Each

[129] György Györffy, "A Magyar Törzsnevek És Törzsi Helynevek," in *Honfoglalás És Nyelvészet - A Honfoglalásról Sok Szemmel 3*, ed. László Kovács and László Veszprémy (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 1997), 231; Moravcsik and Jenkins, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus de Administrando Imperio*, 7–8; Kristó, "Vii. (Bíborbanszületett) Konstantin," 110.
[130] György Győrffy, ed., "Bíborbanszületett Konstantin A Birodalom Kormányzása," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. Gyula Moravcsik (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 112; Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 49.
[131] Moravcsik and Jenkins, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus de Administrando Imperio*.
[132] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 49–54.
[133] Róna-Tas, 49–54.

section that introducing new information always begins with "it is known" ("*isteon oti*").[134] Róna-Tas emphasizes that the questions addressed in the text are often highly specific, as seen in Chapter 40, where Constantine provides answers to questions like "Who is who in Hungary?" with six sentences beginning with "it is known" ("*isteon oti*"). This specificity suggests that there were likely other records on the Hungarians in the imperial archives, indicating that the information did not stem from a single source.[135] Constantine's broader contributions to Byzantine culture are also noteworthy. His efforts were part of the early Byzantine humanism movement, and they covered a wide range of subjects, including history, agriculture, medicine, and more.[136]

Constantine-Cyril and Methodius are considered the creators of Slavic literacy. Constantine, who is known by his monastic name Cyril, was the creator of the Glagolitic alphabet, the oldest Slavic writing system.[137] His biography was likely written by his brother Methodius or by a student between 869 and 885. Regarding Hungarian history, his biography mentions that Constantine encountered Hungarians in the region of the Crimean Peninsula around the year 860, while returning from a mission to the Khazars. Constantine died in Rome on February 14, 869. However, Methodius continued their work even after his brother's death, eventually becoming the Archbishop of Moravia, where he died on April 6, 885. Methodius likely contributed significant information to the writing of his brother's biography, as he was also a member of the mission led by Constantine to Moravia. His biography was likely written by a student after his death.[138] In Methodius's biography, there is a reference to an encounter with a Hungarian "king" in 882 while traveling from Moravia to Byzantium.[139] Unfortunately, due to the uncertainty of the exact route taken, the precise location of this event cannot be determined.[140] These biographies are collectively referred to as the "Pannonian Legends," as they were likely written in Pannonia or Moravia.[141]

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[134] Tóth, "A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)," 2014, 66.
[135] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 54.
[136] Kristó, "Vii. (Bíborbanszületett) Konstantin," 110.
[137] György Győrffy, ed., "A Cirill-Legenda," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. István) Kniezsa (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 123; Gyula Kristó, ed., "Pannóniai Legendák," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. István Ferincz (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 159.
[138] György Győrffy, ed., "A Metód-Legenda," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. István) Kniezsa (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 124; Kristó, "Pannóniai Legendák," 159.
[139] Győrffy, "A Metód-Legenda," 124; Kristó, "Pannóniai Legendák," 159.
[140] Győrffy, "A Metód-Legenda," 124.
[141] Kristó, "Pannóniai Legendák," 159.

The Hypatian Codex, which includes the *Povest' vremennych let* (PVL), provides the most extensive data regarding relations between Hungary and Kievan Rus (and its associated principalities) from the 10th to the 13th centuries. The PVL, covering Russian history up to 1117, was reconstructed by Aleksey Shakhmatov.[142] While there are doubts about whether the original compiler was indeed Nestor, a monk from the Kiev Pechersk Lavra, it is certain that the chronicle was written by a Kiev monk who drew on various sources, including traditions, decrees, Greek and Bulgarian historical records, and personal experiences. The earliest known copy was made by a monk named Sylvester in 1116, with the oldest surviving manuscript dating to the 14th century. This chronicle is considered a highly valuable historical source, particularly for its sections on the Hungarians, which are based on original records.[143]

The development of Russian chronicle writing was a complex process spanning several stages. The first stage dates back to the 1040s with the creation of an early compilation of Russian Christian history. The second stage occurred in the 1060s-1070s, when the monk Nikon began organizing events chronologically. The third stage, around 1095, saw the creation of the Primary Chronicle, which was further developed by Nikon's successor between 1073 and 1095. The final stage occurred around 1110, when Nestor revised the Primary Chronicle, aiming to place Russian history in the context of world history, using sources such as the Old Slavonic translation of the work of Georgios Hamartolos. The original version of this chronicle has not survived, but the second redaction, known as the Laurentian Chronicle (1377), and the third redaction, known as the Hypatian Chronicle (c. 1425), have been preserved in major Russian libraries. Additionally, the 16th-century Nikon Chronicle, compiled in the scriptorium of Metropolitan Daniil, is another significant source, drawing on several now-lost materials.[144]

Scholars have long recognized that the PVL's primary written sources include Byzantine historical compilations known as chronographs, particularly the chronicle of Georgios Hamartolos. Historians generally agree that the sections of the PVL dealing with

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[142] Márta Font, *The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes*, trans. Jason Vincz (Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, 2021), 21,25; Márta Font, *Árpád-Házi Királyok És Rurikida Fejedelmek Érdekek Találkozása És Ütköz* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2022), 17.

[143] György Győrffy, ed., "Orosz Évkönyvek (Nesztor-Krónikának)," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. István Kniezsa (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 121.

[144] Gyula Kristó, ed., "Orosz Évkönyyek," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. István Ferincz (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 170.

regulations for Rus merchants are based on commercial agreements between Rus and Byzantium, which can be traced back to Byzantine sources. Jana Malingoudi has shown that relevant texts from 907, 912, and 944 were added to the PVL during its early 12th-century redaction. These agreements contain references to "Rus laws," which are understood to refer to Viking (Varangian) legal traditions.[145] For source study as well as academic survey on Árpád era Hungary and Rurikid relations Márta Font's book "The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes"[146] is an exclusive source. Font which also describes the Russian chronicles in detailed while focuses on dynastic and political relations between two in detail.

Western Christian sources related to early Hungarian history primarily focus on the military activities of the Hungarians. These sources can be categorized under annals, necrologies, hagiographical works, diplomatic records, histories, and contemporary charters.[147]

It is necessary to mention a series of contemporary sources here. First, the *Annales Bertiniani* should be addressed. Written at the Abbey of St. Bertin in Saint-Omer, located in northern France, these annals are the most significant chronicle concerning the Carolingians and the Western Frankish Kingdom.[148] The first part of the "Annales Bertiniani," written by three different authors, continues the "Annales Regni Francorum" ("Annals of the Frankish Realm").[149] The first part covers the years 741-835, the second part from 835-861 was written by Prudentius, Bishop of Troyes, and the third part, covering the years 862-882, was written by Hincmar, Archbishop of Reims.[150] The work has been edited by Georg Heinrich Pertz, Georg Waitz, and prefaced Léon Levillain in French and translated into English by Janet L. Nelson.[151] The section of the work relevant to Hungarian

[145] Font, *The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes*, 25–26; Font, *Árpád-Házi Királyok És Rurikida Fejedelmek Érdekek Találkozása És Ütköz*, 17.
[146] Márta Font, *The Kings of the House of Árpád and the Rurikid Princes*, trans. Jason Vincz (Budapest: Research Centre for the Humanities, 2021); in Hungarian language: Márta Font, *Árpád-Házi Királyok És Rurikida Fejedelmek Érdekek Találkozása És Ütköz* (Budapest: Balassi Kiadó, 2022).
[147] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*.
[148] Bácsatyai, 39; Gyula Kristó, ed., "Szent Bertin Évkönyve," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Sándor László Tóth (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 1985.
[149] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 39; Kristó, "Szent Bertin Évkönyve," 185.
[150] Kristó, "Szent Bertin Évkönyve," 185.
[151] Georg Heinrich Pertz, "Annales Bertiniani," in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica Scriptores (in Folio)*, vol. I (Hannover, 1826); Georg Waitz, ed., *Annales Bertiniani, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum Ex Monumentis Germaniae Historicis Recusi* (Impensis Bibliopolii Hahniani, 1883); *Annales de Saint-Bertin : ["Annales Bertiniani"], publiées... par Félix Grat, Jeanne Vielliard et Suzanne Clémencet, avec une introduction et des notes par Léon Levillain, Annales de Saint-Bertin (Titre uniforme)* (C. Klincksieck

history has been translated into Hungarian by Sándor László Tóth.[152] Although the section concerning Hungarians is brief, it is nonetheless significant, furthermore, this source is the earliest known instance where the name of the Hungarians (in Latin, *Ungri*) is encountered.[153] Bácsatyai refers to the debate between András Róna-Tas and Ferenc Makk regarding the *Annales Bertiniani,* noting that Róna-Tas approached with skepticism the appearance of the ethnonym "Ungri" in Western narrative sources at such an early date, based on a 17th-century copy.[154] However, Bácsatyai points out that the 17th-century copy mentioned by Róna-Tas preserves a tradition entirely different from that of Saint-Omer and that he overlooks the significance of the copy. Furthermore, he argues that the preservation of the section concerning Hungarians in both traditions eliminates the possibility of the supposed addition at Saint-Omer.[155]

Another important annal is the "Annales Fuldenses," which is the most significant source concerning the 9th-century Eastern Frankish Kingdom.[156] The authoritative edition of the "Fuldenses" was published by Georg Heinrich Pertz in 1826 and by Fredrich Kurze in 1891.[157] Additionally, the English translation of the work was done by Timothy Reuter in 1992.[158] The sections of the work related to the Hungarians were translated into Hungarian under the editorship of Gyula Pauler in 1900, and these sections were also translated into Hungarian by János Horváth and Géczi Lajos.[159] According to János Horváth's translation, the "Annales Fuldenses" covers events from 680 to 901,[160] while in Géczi Lajos's translation it mentioned that the annals covers events from 714 to 901.[161] In Horváth's translation, it is noted that the section of the work covering the years 887-901 was not written in Fulda but in Bavaria, which suggests that the author might have had direct knowledge of events occurring on the eastern frontier. In Géczi's translation, it is mentioned

(Nogent-le-Rotrou, impr. Daupeley-Gouverneur). Paris, 1964); Janet L. Nelson, trans., *The Annals of St-Bertin*, Manchester Medieval Sources Series (Manchester University Press, 1991).

[152] Kristó, "Szent Bertin Évkönyve," 185–86.

[153] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 39,41; Kristó, "Szent Bertin Évkönyve," 185–86.

[154] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 40; András Róna-Tas, "Folytassuk a Vitát (Megjegyzések Makk Ferenc Könyvbírálatához)," *AETAS* 13, no. 2–3 (1998): 216–26; Ferenc Makk, "Gondolatok a Megjegyzésekre," *AETAS* 13, no. 2–3 (1998): 227–37.

[155] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 41.

[156] Bácsatyai, 41.

[157] Georg Heinrich Pertz, ed., *Annales et Chronica Aevi Carolini*, Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Scriptores (in Folio) / 1 (Hannover, 1826); Friedrich Kurze, "Annales Fuldenses" (Hannover, 1891).

[158] Timothy Reuter, trans., *The Annals of Fulda* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992).

[159] György Győrffy, ed., "Fuldai Évkönyvek," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. János Horváth (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 201–4; Kristó, "Fuldai Évkönyv."

[160] Győrffy, "Fuldai Évkönyvek," 201.

[161] Kristó, "Fuldai Évkönyv," 188.

that although the work was previously believed to have been written by three different authors at three different times, a more recent theory suggests that the section covering events up to 882 was written by a single author in Mainz.[162] Bácsatyai also discusses the significance of the "Fuldenses" and notes that the sections concerning the Hungarians are found in the third and largest manuscript.[163] According to Bácsatyai, without the "Annales Fuldenses," very little would be known about the battles leading to the Hungarian conquest of the Carpathian Basin.[164]

Regino, one of the renowned chroniclers of the 9th century, served as abbot at Prüm Abbey in Lotharingia from 892 to 899, before fleeing to St. Martin's Abbey in 899 due to his enemies. Up until the year 813, Regino's writings were almost entirely based on written sources; however, for events after 813, he relied much more on oral information, with far fewer written sources available.[165] His account of the Hungarians is summarized in the record for the year 889. By identifying the Hungarians with the Scythians, he describes their characteristics, lifestyle, and earlier "history," drawing on the account of the Scythians by the 2nd-century Roman historian Justinus. To describe the original homeland of the Scythians, Regino used Paulus Diaconus's work "On the Origin of the Lombards" ("*De origine gentis Langobardorum*").[166] Bácsatyai attributes the frequent use of Regino's work in Hungarian historiography to two main factors: first, the detailed description he provides of the Hungarians, and second, the fact that Hungarian historians, during the centuries when medieval Hungarian historiography was beginning to develop, directly used the narratives of Regino and his successor, Archbishop Adalbert of Magdeburg. However, Bácsatyai notes that Regino did not place significant importance on the reliability of the sources from his time.[167] The authoritative edition of Regino's work was published by Fredrich Kurze in 1890.[168] It was first published in Hungarian in 1900[169] under the editorship of Gyula Pauler, and the sections concerning the Hungarians were later retranslated by János Horváth[170] and

[162] Kristó, 188.
[163] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 41.
[164] Bácsatyai, 42.
[165] Gyula Kristó, ed., "Regino," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Zoltán Kordé (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 194.
[166] György Győrffy, ed., "Regino Évkönyve," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. János Horváth (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 196.
[167] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 46.
[168] Friedrich Kurze, *Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum.* (Hannover, 1890).
[169] Gyula Pauler and Sándor Szilágyi, eds., *A Magyar Honfoglalás Kútfői : A Honfoglalás Ezredéves Emlékére* (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1900).
[170] Győrffy, "Regino Évkönyve."

Zoltán Kordé.[171] Additionally, the work was translated into English by Simon MacLean in 2009.[172]

In case of chroniclers as mentioned two names Liudprand and Widukind are mentioned in detail in his work by Bácsatyai.[173] First of these chroniclers, Liudprand was born into a Lombard noble family in Northern Italy (circa 920-972). He completed his education in Pavia and was raised at the royal court there. He had strong connections with King Hugh of Provence. After Hugh withdrew in favor of Berengar (945), Liudprand's stepfather aligned with Berengar, leading to young Liudprand's entry into Berengar's chancery. During this time, in 949, he was sent on a mission to Emperor Constantine VII Porphyrogennetos. However, Liudprand later fell out of favor with King Berengar, particularly with his wife, and sought refuge at the court of King Otto I. Liudprand was a biased yet keen observer, and his work contains a wealth of original information largely derived from oral traditions.[174] According to Bácsatyai, because Liudprand makes no effort to appear objective, his work should be regarded as a memoir. Consequently, those researching the Hungarian raids should approach his work with caution due to its inaccuracies and contradictions.[175] The work was translated into English by Paolo Squatriti in 2007.[176]

The other chronicler, Widukind was born around 925 and lived as a monk at the Corvey Monastery in Westphalia. His work, "Res gestae Saxonicae" ("Deeds of the Saxons"), which consists of three books, is dedicated to glorifying the Saxon people and, in particular, the Saxon royal family, with a focus on Emperor Henry I and Otto the Great.[177] The work serves as propaganda for the Ottonian dynasty, celebrating their military achievements and reaching its pinnacle in the depiction of the Battle of Augsburg.[178]

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[171] Kristó, "Regino."
[172] Simon MacLean, ed., *History And Politics In Late Carolingian And Ottonian Europe The Chronicle Of Regino Of Prüm And Adalbert Of Magdeburg* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).
[173] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 161.
[174] György Győrffy, ed., "Liudprand," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. János Horváth (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 212; Gyula Kristó, ed., "Liudprand," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Ferenc Sebők (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 219.
[175] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 157.
[176] Paolo Squatriti, *The Complete Works of Liudprand of Cremona* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2007).
[177] György Győrffy, ed., "Widukind Szászok Története," in *A Magyarok Elődeiről És a Honfoglalásról. Kortársak És Krónikások Híradásai*, trans. János Horváth (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2002), 212; Gyula Kristó, ed., "Widukind," in *A Honfoglalás Korának Írott Forrásai*, trans. Tibor Almási (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1995), 219.
[178] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 168.

Widukind also briefly recounts the origins of the Saxons and their pagan myths, and for a long time, his work was considered a key source for the ethnogenesis of the German people.[179] Widukind was a classically educated historian who extensively used both ancient and medieval sources in his writings. For earlier periods, he compiled and synthesized information from sources such as Bede, Paulus Diaconus, Jordanes, possibly Liudprand, and the "Gesta Francorum."[180] Although his work does not include specific dates, it follows a relatively chronological order, and his three books on Saxon history are regarded as particularly reliable sources for information about the Hungarian raids. However, the author showed very little interest in the tribal confederation in the Carpathian Basin.[181] Widukind was unaware of the Hungarian Conquest, which had occurred a generation before his birth. For events that took place long before or close to his own time, he relied heavily on oral reports, which suggests that his accounts of the Hungarian raids may be based on contemporary information. Widukind passed away in 1004.[182] Widukind's work was also translated to English by David Bachrach in 2014.[183]

2.2 Survey of Genetic Studies

In this dissertation, as previously mentioned, insights from other disciplines are utilized. In this context, genetic research related to early Hungarian society is also reviewed. Therefore, it is essential to briefly discuss these genetic studies. Genetic studies from 2007 to 2022 have provided extensive insights into the complex origins and interactions of the conquering Hungarians and the indigenous populations in the Carpathian Basin. These studies primarily analyze maternally inherited mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA)[184] and paternally inherited Y-chromosomal[185] haplogroups[186] to explore the genetic relationships between ancient populations that migrated into the region and modern Hungarian-speaking groups.

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[179] Bácsatyai, 161.
[180] Győrffy, "Widukind Szászok Története," 212; Kristó, "Widukind," 219.
[181] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 163.
[182] Győrffy, "Widukind Szászok Története," 232; Kristó, "Widukind," 219.
[183] David S. Bachrach, trans., *Widukind of Corvey Deeds of Saxons* (Washington D. C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2014).
[184] mtDNA is a type of DNA found in the mitochondria, which are structures within cells. It is inherited only from the mother, making it useful for tracing maternal ancestry across generations.
[185] Y-chromosome analysis focuses on the DNA found on the Y chromosome, which is passed from father to son. This type of analysis is used to trace paternal ancestry and understand the male lineage of populations.
[186] Haplogroups are genetic populations that share a common ancestor on either the maternal or paternal line, identified by specific DNA markers, and Y-chromosomal haplogroups defined by variations in the Y chromosome, passed from father to son, used to study paternal lineage.

The results, and suggestions of these studies will be briefly discussed here. The articles were studied specifically for their potential to answer the questions mentioned in the previously noted "*Questions*" section. Also, throughout the dissertation, the reviews in here will be referenced in their relation to the discussed topic. For history readers unfamiliar with genetic terminology, brief descriptions of the terms will be given in footnotes.

The study titled "Comparison of Maternal Lineage and Biogeographic Analyses of Ancient and Modern Hungarian Populations"[187] examines the genetic relationships between ancient and modern Hungarian-speaking populations by analyzing mtDNA. Focusing on samples from the 10th–11th centuries, associated with the Magyar conquest of the Carpathian Basin, this research compares them with modern Hungarians and the Szeklers of Transylvania. This 2007 study provides valuable insights into the genetic diversity of the conquering Hungarians, especially when comparing different social strata as inferred from grave goods. The findings suggest that commoners exhibited more European genetic traits, while the so-called "classical Hungarian conquerors" showed more Asian characteristics. This suggests a mixed genetic heritage among the conquering Hungarians, although the reliance on mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) limits the conclusiveness of this finding, as mtDNA only reflects maternal lineage.[188] Further analysis reveals that commoner cemeteries, likely containing individuals from pre-existing populations, displayed haplogroups common in Western Eurasia, indicating genetic continuity with earlier Carpathian Basin inhabitants.[189] The study also discusses the intermixing between the conquering Hungarians and the local populations, suggesting that the Conquest was not simply a replacement of populations but involved significant integration.[190]

A critical observation in this study is the varied mtDNA haplogroups among high-status individuals, presumed to be part of the conquering Hungarians. These haplogroups

[187] Gyöngyvér Tömöry et al., "Comparison of Maternal Lineage and Biogeographic Analyses of Ancient and Modern Hungarian Populations," *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* 134, no. 3 (2007): 354–68, https://doi.org/10.1002/ajpa.20677.
[188] Tömöry et al., 355.
[189] Tömöry et al., 359.
[190] Tömöry et al., 365–66.

include rare types such as N1a[191] and X[192], which are uncommon in modern populations, hinting at practices of exogamy among mounted pastoral nomadic groups.[193]

Moreover, genetic differences between individuals from different burial sites, reflect potential inter-tribal diversity, indicating that distinct groups within the conquering Hungarians had unique genetic compositions.[194] However, the study's methodology of distinguishing between commoners and elites based on grave goods has been criticized, in the 2016 study, "Maternal Genetic Ancestry and Legacy of 10th Century AD Hungarians" suggesting that such classifications might be overly simplistic and not fully reflective of social status.[195]

The study "Y-Chromosome Analysis of Ancient Hungarian and Two Modern Hungarian-Speaking Populations from the Carpathian Basin,"[196] presents a detailed analysis of Y-chromosomal haplogroups, including both ancient Hungarian populations and modern groups such as the Szeklers. This paper aims to explore genetic continuity and the broader context of European genetic diversity. The research shifts the focus to paternal lineages, analyzing Y-chromosome markers in both ancient and modern Hungarian-speaking populations. This study indicates that Conquering Hungarians retained significant Finno-Ugric male ancestry, which was more pronounced in their Y-chromosomes than in their mtDNA, aligning with traditions in steppe societies where male lineages were preserved while females from various other tribes were integrated.[197] The presence of the Tat C allele, common among Uralic-speaking populations, in ancient Hungarian samples suggests that the early Magyars had closer genetic ties to Uralic groups upon their arrival in the Carpathian Basin. However, the subsequent decline in this allele among modern Hungarians points to significant admixture over time, diluting these Asiatic genetic traits[198]

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[191] "N1a" is rare mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) haplogroup found mainly in ancient European and Near Eastern populations. It is not common in modern populations and is used to trace maternal lineage.
[192] "X" is a mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) haplogroup that is widely dispersed but relatively rare globally. It is found in low frequencies in Europe, the Near East, and North America, providing insights into ancient human migrations and maternal ancestry.
[193] Tömöry et al., "Comparison of Maternal Lineage and Biogeographic Analyses of Ancient and Modern Hungarian Populations," 355,365.
[194] Tömöry et al., 362.
[195] Tömöry et al., 365; Veronika Csákyová et al., "Maternal Genetic Composition of a Medieval Population from a Hungarian-Slavic Contact Zone in Central Europe," *PLOS ONE* 11, no. 3 (March 2016): 8, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0151206.
[196] B. Csányi et al., "Y-Chromosome Analysis of Ancient Hungarian and Two Modern Hungarian-Speaking Populations from the Carpathian Basin," *Annals of Human Genetics* 72, no. 4 (2008): 519–34, https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-1809.2008.00440.x.
[197] Csányi et al., 528–30.
[198] Csányi et al., 519,528-530.

The study further reveals that only two out of eight ancient male samples exhibited the Tat C allele, compared to just one out of 197 modern Hungarian men, indicating a drastic reduction in this allele's frequency from ¼ to approximately 1/200. Over the past 1,000 years, the influx of other groups likely contributed to this reduction. This finding implies that the conquering Hungarians likely did not arrive in large numbers compared to the existing population.[199] The study concludes that although the male gene pool of the Conquering Hungarians persisted, it was significantly diluted over time, reflecting the blending of Asiatic genes into the broader Hungarian population. [200]

In 2016, the study "Maternal Genetic Ancestry and Legacy of 10th Century AD Hungarians"[201] explored the genetic interactions between the Conquering Hungarians and indigenous communities, such as the Late Avar and Slavic populations. The findings indicate that the settlement of the Conquering Hungarians involved substantial blending with these pre-existing populations, rather than their outright replacement. Genetic evidence suggests continuity between these populations, with certain Avar genetic lineages persisting into the era of the Hungarian conquest.[202] The study also notes stronger connections between 10th-century Hungarian conquerors and Central Asian populations, reflecting a complex pattern of migration and integration.[203]

The study contrasts with earlier research that classified Hungarian conquerors into "commoners" and "high-status" groups based on grave goods, arguing that material culture cannot reliably indicate social status, thereby rejecting this categorization concept.[204] Rather than an abrupt replacement, the study emphasizes gradual genetic and cultural integration that characterized the Slavic-Hungarian transition replacement which occurred over a century or more.[205]

In "Maternal Genetic Composition of a Medieval Population from a Hungarian-Slavic Contact Zone in Central Europe,"[206] researchers analyze mtDNA from skeletal remains found in medieval cemeteries in Nitra-Šindolka and Čakajovce, western Slovakia.

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[199] Csányi et al., 528.
[200] Csányi et al., 528–29.
[201] Aranka Csősz et al., "Maternal Genetic Ancestry and Legacy of 10th Century AD Hungarians," *Scientific Reports* 6, no. 1 (September 16, 2016): 33446, https://doi.org/10.1038/srep33446.
[202] Csősz et al., 6,9.
[203] Csősz et al., 8–9.
[204] Csősz et al., 8.
[205] Csősz et al., 9.

[206] Csákyová et al., "Maternal Genetic Composition of a Medieval Population from a Hungarian-Slavic Contact Zone in Central Europe."

This region, historically a contact zone between Slavic and Hungarian populations during the 9th–12th centuries, provides significant insights into the genetic interactions between these groups. The article explored the genetic interactions between the conquering Hungarians and indigenous communities, such as the Late Avar and Slavic populations.

The results show that the maternal lineages of this population were diverse and closely related to those of medieval Lombards and Slavs, as well as modern Europeans. This study also supports the notion of a mixed population in the Carpathian Basin during this period.[207] The study also acknowledges certain limitations, such as the small sample size and the focus on maternal lineages, leaving the paternal history unexamined.[208]

Principal Component Analysis (PCA)[209] reveals that the medieval population of Slovakia clustered closely with medieval populations from Poland and Hungary, suggesting significant genetic continuity and inter-tribal connections across Central Europe.[210] The data suggests that the conquering Hungarians were a coalition of tribes with diverse genetic backgrounds, including both Asian and European elements. This diversity, combined with the lack of strong maternal kinship ties within individual cemeteries, implies widespread exogamy practices among these groups.[211] Additionally, the study challenges the notion that the Hungarian conquerors were exclusively a male-dominated warrior group, instead suggesting that they arrived as a complete community that included women.[212]

Further insight into the genetic history of the Bodrogköz population is offered in the article "A study of the Bodrogköz population in north-eastern Hungary by Y chromosomal haplotypes and haplogroups."[213] This research examines Y-chromosome haplotypes and haplogroups, revealing the historical isolation of the Bodrogköz region and its significance for studying population genetics linked to the Hungarian Conquest period. The research offers a genetic historical analysis of modern samples from the Bodrogköz region. The study suggests that the Conquering Hungarians intermixed with local populations, including Late Avar and Slavic communities, present in the Carpathian Basin before their arrival based on

[207] Csákyová et al., 11.
[208] Csákyová et al., 11.
[209] Principal Component Analysis (PCA) is a statistical method used to visualize genetic relationships and differences between populations based on their genetic data.
[210] Csákyová et al., "Maternal Genetic Composition of a Medieval Population from a Hungarian-Slavic Contact Zone in Central Europe," 10.
[211] Csákyová et al., 9–10.
[212] Csákyová et al., 9.
[213] Horolma Pamjav et al., "A Study of the Bodrogköz Population in North-Eastern Hungary by Y Chromosomal Haplotypes and Haplogroups," *Molecular Genetics and Genomics* 292, no. 4 (August 1, 2017): 883–94, https://doi.org/10.1007/s00438-017-1319-z

genetic historical analysis of modern samples collected from 147 unrelated male individuals in 24 small villages in Bodrogköz.[214] The study references earlier research that identified a paternal connection between Hungarians and the Mansi people of Western Siberia through specific haplogroups, indicating deep genetic ties between these groups.[215]

This research references 2008 study, "Y-Chromosome Analysis of Ancient Hungarian and Two Modern Hungarian-Speaking Populations from the Carpathian Basin" that found the dominant haplogroup N1c-Tat, typically associated with Finno-Ugric speaking populations, was absent among the current inhabitants of Hungary, despite two out of four ancient samples from the Hungarian Conquest period belonging to this haplogroup. The researchers leading this study had previously identified a paternal connection between Hungarians and the Mansi people of Western Siberia through a sample from Bodrogköz belonging to the N1c-L1034[216] haplogroup. They also identified an N1c-Z1936 (xL1034) sample,[217] likely of early Ugric origin, as a reference point for tracing the genetic descendants of the Hungarian conquerors, showing a close genetic relationship with a sample from a Hungarian Conquest period warrior.[218]

Moreover, the research highlights the presence of R1b-M343*[219] haplogroups through Y-STR analysis[220], which could be of Avar, Onogundur (Onogur), Hungarian, or Cuman origin,[221] reflecting the complex Turkic influences in the region, though the study acknowledges that the exact timing of this genetic presence in the Carpathian Basin is

[214] Pamjav et al., 892.
[215] Pamjav et al., 892.
[216] N1c-L1034 is a subclade of the Y-chromosomal haplogroup N, specifically N1c, which is associated with Finno-Ugric-speaking populations. This haplogroup is often found in Northern and Eastern Europe and parts of Siberia. The presence of N1c-L1034 can provide insights into paternal ancestry and historical migrations of Finno-Ugric groups.
[217] A subclade of the Y-chromosomal haplogroup N1c that is part of the Z1936 branch, excluding (denoted by "x") the L1034 sub-branch. This haplogroup is often associated with Uralic and some Turkic-speaking populations in Northern Eurasia. Studying N1c-Z1936 (xL1034) helps trace paternal ancestry and genetic connections among ancient and modern populations in these regions.
[218] Pamjav et al., "A Study of the Bodrogköz Population in North-Eastern Hungary by Y Chromosomal Haplotypes and Haplogroups," 892.
[219] R1b-M343* is a major branch of the Y-chromosomal haplogroup R1b, which is one of the most common paternal lineages in Europe. The asterisk (*) indicates that the specific subclades within the R1b-M343 group are not further defined. This haplogroup is associated with the spread of Indo-European languages and has a strong presence in Western Europe, with historical connections to ancient populations such as the Celts, Germanic tribes, and others.
[220] Y-STR analysis is genetic testing method that examines short tandem repeats (STRs) on the Y chromosome. These repeating sequences are highly variable among individuals, making Y-STR analysis useful for studying paternal lineage, tracing ancestry, and identifying genetic relationships between males. It is particularly valuable in forensic science, genealogy, and population genetics.
[221] This sample represents a contemporary Turkic mixture within the R1b-M73 Kypchak (DYS390 = 19) cluster.

uncertain. Based on the Bodrogköz population, the study suggests that the paternal lineages of Finno-Ugric speakers may not have constituted more than 10% of the Hungarian population in the 10th century. The researchers clarify that this does not imply all these lineages arrived during the Hungarian Conquest or that all conquerors spoke Finno-Ugric languages. The proportion of Finno-Ugric-related paternal lineages decreased to 6.2% in subsequent centuries, likely due to the ongoing influence and assimilation of neighboring populations.[222]

The genetic origins of the early Hungarian conquerors are explored in the study "Genetic structure of the early Hungarian conquerors inferred from mtDNA haplotypes and Y-chromosome haplogroups in a small cemetery."[223] Focusing on a small cemetery in Karos, Hungary, the research uncovers a mixed genetic origin for the conquerors, with significant components from Central Asia, South Siberia, and European sources. This 2017 article underscores the mixed genetic origin of the conquering Hungarians. This analysis, incorporating both Autosomal and mtDNA, indicates that around 30-40% of the population originated from East-Middle Asia, as the Hg B network data[224] suggests that component may have derived from a common gene pool with today's Altaic-Turkic speaking groups.[225] The study notes significant genetic differences among different conqueror populations, possibly reflecting distinct tribal origins.[226] The genetic differences observed among different conqueror populations, such as the KAR population compared to the AH1 and AH2 populations, may reflect different tribal origins, with the KAR group showing a higher proportion of East-Middle Asian components and the other groups showing a higher proportion of European components.[227]

This study also provides detailed information about the social classes of the samples, with the Karos III cemetery showing a "surprisingly high proportion (64%) of males," many

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[222] Pamjav et al., "A Study of the Bodrogköz Population in North-Eastern Hungary by Y Chromosomal Haplotypes and Haplogroups," 892.
[223] Endre Neparáczki et al., "Genetic Structure of the Early Hungarian Conquerors Inferred from mtDNA Haplotypes and Y-Chromosome Haplogroups in a Small Cemetery," *Molecular Genetics and Genomics* 292, no. 1 (February 1, 2017): 201–14, https://doi.org/10.1007/s00438-016-1267-z.
[224] Hg B network data refers to genetic information related to haplogroup B, a mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) haplogroup. This haplogroup is most commonly found in East Asian, Southeast Asian, and some Native American populations. "Network data" in this context involves analyzing the genetic relationships and lineage connections within haplogroup B to understand migration patterns, genetic diversity, and historical connections between populations
[225] Neparáczki et al., "Genetic Structure of the Early Hungarian Conquerors Inferred from mtDNA Haplotypes and Y-Chromosome Haplogroups in a Small Cemetery," 212.
[226] Neparáczki et al., 212–13.
[227] Neparáczki et al., 212–13.

of whom were buried with warrior grave goods, indicating a strong military presence. This evidence suggests that the Hungarian community arriving in the Carpathian Basin was male dominated but also included other community members such as women and children, indicating that they migrated as a broader social group rather than just as warriors.[228]

The genetic analysis further indicates that while the first-generation conquering Hungarians who migrated had a high proportion of Asiatic genes, they also had a mixed origin with significant contributions from both Central Asian and European gene pools. This diversity could be attributed to exogamy, where tribes intermarried with other groups during their migration westward or within the Carpathian Basin.[229] Additionally, the study suggests that there was some level of genetic continuity between the conquering Hungarians and modern Hungarian populations, which contrasts with previous studies.[230]

However, the study does not specify where the AH1 (Ancient Hungarian) and AH2 (Hungarians 900 AD) clusters used for comparison were obtained, presenting a slight handicap for comparative analysis.[231]

In conclusion, the article highlights the mixed genetic origin of the Conquering Hungarians, combining contributions from Central Asian, South Siberian, and European sources. Although the exact percentage of European ancestry is not provided, the study clearly indicates that a significant portion of the genetic makeup of the conquering Hungarians was European, especially in terms of Y-chromosome and mtDNA haplogroups. Further detailed studies would be required to quantify the exact proportion of European ancestry.[232]

"Revising mtDNA haplotypes of the ancient Hungarian conquerors with next generation sequencing"[233] offers a detailed re-analysis of mtDNA from ancient Hungarian populations using Next Generation Sequencing (NGS)[234] technology. This study aims to refine the accuracy of mtDNA haplotypes identified in the ancient Hungarian conquerors.

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[228] Neparáczki et al., 203.
[229] Neparáczki et al., 206.
[230] Neparáczki et al., 209.
[231] Neparáczki et al., 203.
[232] Neparáczki et al., 206.
[233] Endre Neparáczki et al., "Revising mtDNA Haplotypes of the Ancient Hungarian Conquerors with next Generation Sequencing," *PLOS ONE* 12, no. 4 (April 2017): 1–11, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0174886.
[234] NGS is a modern DNA sequencing technology that allows scientists to quickly and accurately read large amounts of genetic material from ancient or modern samples. It's a faster and more efficient method than older sequencing techniques.

Investigating the genetic origins of the conquering Hungarians, the article "Mitogenomic data indicate admixture components of Central-Inner Asian and Srubnaya origin in the conquering Hungarians"[235] focuses on mtDNA extracted from ancient remains found in early Hungarian cemeteries. The use of NGS technology enabled the sequencing of complete mitogenomes from 102 individuals, shedding light on the admixture components of these populations. The researchers further explored the genetic origins and diversity of the conquering Hungarians. The research highlights the genetic diversity within the conqueror population, with significant contributions from Central-Inner Asia and the Srubnaya culture. This diversity challenges the notion of a homogeneous conqueror population and suggests complex interactions with various ethnic groups during their migration. However, their relatively small numbers and their minimal lasting genetic impact on the modern Hungarian population raise questions about their role in the origin of the Hungarian languages researchers highlight. The genetic heritage of the conquerors persists in modern Hungarians, but they contributed to less than 10% of the current Hungarian gene pool, as they were not the sole group to bring East Eurasian lineages into the region.[236] The study also discusses the "elite dominance" linguistic hypothesis, questioning its applicability to the Hungarian context and suggesting that the Hungarian language might have been present in the Carpathian Basin prior to the Conquest.[237]

The study also highlights the significant genetic diversity among the mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) haplogroups found in the conquerors. This diversity, along with the absence of identical haplotypes between the three Karos cemeteries, indicates that inter-tribal marriages or unions were likely common, contributing to the genetic diversity observed in the population. These findings suggest that exogamy was practiced among the conquering Hungarians, facilitating genetic interaction between different tribes. The study also notes that there were potential relatives with identical mtDNA genomes found between distant cemeteries, further supporting the idea of inter-tribal genetic interaction.[238]

Moreover, phylogenetic analysis revealed that the conqueror maternal lineages originated from two distant geographical regions: 31 lineages were derived from East Eurasia, while 60 were from West Eurasia. This significant portion of mtDNA lineages

[235] Endre Neparáczki et al., "Mitogenomic Data Indicate Admixture Components of Central-Inner Asian and Srubnaya Origin in the Conquering Hungarians," *PLOS ONE* 13, no. 10 (October 2018): 1–24, https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0205920.
[236] Neparáczki et al., 15–16.
[237] Neparáczki et al., 16.
[238] Neparáczki et al., 6, 14–15.

tracing back to Central-Inner Asia suggests that a part of the conquerors' ancestry is rooted in nomadic groups from this region, consistent with historical accounts linking the Hungarians to Asian steppe nomads.[239] The presence of both male and female as indicated by the diversity of mtDNA haplogroups, suggests that the conquerors migrated as complete communities rather than as solely male warrior groups.[240]

The paternal lineages of individuals from the Hun, Avar, and conquering Hungarian periods are examined in 2019 study, "Y-chromosome haplogroups from Hun, Avar, and conquering Hungarian period nomadic people of the Carpathian Basin."[241] This study analyzes Y-chromosomal haplogroups and autosomal loci from 49 individuals, exploring the genetic affinities and biogeographic ancestry of these nomadic peoples. The research examines the diverse genetic composition of the conquering Hungarians. This study contrasts them with the Avars, who exhibited more distinctly Asiatic genetic traits. The findings indicate that the conquering Hungarians were a heterogeneous group, likely composed of various tribal entities with genetic elements from both Central-Inner Asia and Eastern Europe.[242] This intermixing likely occurred before their arrival in the Carpathian Basin during broader movements within the Eurasian steppe region.[243]

Interestingly, the study shows that the genetic composition of the Conquerors' paternal lineages closely mirrored their maternal lineages, suggesting that both males and females of similar origins migrated together, supporting the notion of community migration rather than a solely male-dominated group (the composition of the conquerors' paternal lineages (Y-chromosomal haplogroups) closely mirrors that of their maternal lineages (mitochondrial DNA). Specifically, 20.7% of the Y-Hg-s originated from East Eurasia, compared to 30.4% for mtDNA, while the proportion of West Eurasian paternal lineages is 69%, compared to 58.8% for mtDNA.[244] This finding is consistent with previous research, such as the 2016 study "Maternal Genetic Ancestry and Legacy of 10th Century AD Hungarians," which also suggested that the group was not male-dominant.

[239] Neparáczki et al., 6.
[240] Neparáczki et al., 16.
[241] Endre Neparáczki et al., "Y-Chromosome Haplogroups from Hun, Avar and Conquering Hungarian Period Nomadic People of the Carpathian Basin," *Scientific Reports* 9, no. 1 (November 12, 2019): 16569, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-019-53105-5.
[242] Neparáczki et al., 7,9.
[243] Neparáczki et al., 7,9.
[244] Neparáczki et al., 8.

Further exploration of the Y-chromosomal DNA of 19 male Hungarian Conqueror remains is presented in "Genetic analysis of male Hungarian Conquerors: European and Asian paternal lineages of the conquering Hungarian tribes."[245] The results indicate a diverse distribution of haplogroups, suggesting that the Hungarian conquerors originated from multiple distant regions within the Eurasian steppes. This research from 2020 further explores the genetic diversity among the conquering Hungarians, identifying distinct haplogroups that reflect the varied origins of the tribes within the conqueror coalition. The study emphasizes that these tribes likely maintained their genetic identities within a larger confederation, suggesting complex inter-tribal relationships and alliances.[246] The research assumes the practice of patrilocal exogamy, common among mounted pastoral nomads, as a premise for understanding these genetic interactions.[247]

The article "Early Medieval Genetic Data from Ural Region Evaluated in the Light of Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Hungarians"[248] investigates the genetic origins and relationships of the ancient Hungarians, particularly the conquering Hungarians. By analyzing DNA from individuals in the Ural region and the Carpathian Basin, the study uses a combination of mtDNA, Y-chromosomal DNA, and autosomal SNPs[249] to trace their genetic connections. This article also published in 2020, identifies the conquering Hungarians as a genetically diverse group with contributions from Central Asia, the Volga-Ural region, and the Caucasus. The research highlights specific Y-haplogroups among the conquering Hungarians, such as N-Z1936, which is frequent among Finno-Ugric speaking peoples and also present in modern Hungarians.[250] This study underscores the heterogeneous nature of their Y-chromosomal gene pool, particularly among the elite, which exhibited significant diversity from regions like Inner Asia, Western Siberia, and the Black Sea-Northern Caucasus.[251] The results also suggest substantial inter-tribal genetic

[245] Erzsébet Fóthi et al., "Genetic Analysis of Male Hungarian Conquerors: European and Asian Paternal Lineages of the Conquering Hungarian Tribes," *Archaeological and Anthropological Sciences* 12, no. 1 (January 14, 2020): 31, https://doi.org/10.1007/s12520-019-00996-0.
[246] Fóthi et al., 5.
[247] Fóthi et al., 3.
[248] Veronika Csáky et al., "Early Medieval Genetic Data from Ural Region Evaluated in the Light of Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Hungarians," *Scientific Reports* 10, no. 1 (November 5, 2020): 19137, https://doi.org/10.1038/s41598-020-75910-z.
[249] SNPs (Single Nucleotide Polymorphisms) are small variations in a single DNA building block (nucleotide) between individuals. These variations can be used to trace ancestry, determine relationships between populations, and study genetic diversity.
[250] Csáky et al., "Early Medieval Genetic Data from Ural Region Evaluated in the Light of Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Hungarians," 2.
[251] Csáky et al., 2–5.

interaction among the conquering Hungarians, with shared Y-chromosomal sublineages indicating close genetic ties and possible intermarriage among the different tribes.[252] The study also discusses the Uyelgi population, which likely formed from groups that had experienced genetic mixing in the past, resulting in their mixed ancestry. Once established in the Uyelgi area, this population became relatively isolated, leading to genetic continuity over the centuries as they married within the group. By the time they began using the cemetery in the Uyelgi area, their genetic makeup was already established, and they experienced little additional mixing, resulting in observed genetic continuity from the 9th to 11th centuries.[253]

Focusing on commoner populations, "Maternal Lineages from 10–11th Century Commoner Cemeteries of the Carpathian Basin"[254] compares these groups to the elite of the same period. The genetic analysis of populations buried in commoner cemeteries from the 10th and 11th centuries provides valuable insights into the broader social and genetic landscape of the time. The study provides a different perspective by focusing on commoner graves, contrasting with previous research centered on elite graves. The genetic analysis reveals shared haplogroups between the conquering Hungarians and local populations, including Late Avar and Slavic groups, supporting the notion of significant intermixing rather than a simple replacement of the local population.[255] This intermixing influenced the demographic and genetic landscape of medieval Hungary, with both elite and commoner populations contributing to this complex genetic heritage.[256] Moreover, the study analyzed both male and female remains from the conquering Hungarian cemeteries, revealing that the arriving group included women as well, suggesting that the Hungarians arrived as a community rather than just a warrior band. The mitochondrial DNA analysis, which traces maternal lineages, showed diverse haplogroups among the female population, indicating that women were an integral part of the migrating group. Out of 182 commoner maternal lineages analyzed, 23 were derived from East Eurasia, 107 from West Eurasia, and 52 were

[252] Csáky et al., 2.
[253] Csáky et al., "Early Medieval Genetic Data from Ural Region Evaluated in the Light of Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Hungarians."
[254] Kitti Maár et al., "Maternal Lineages from 10–11th Century Commoner Cemeteries of the Carpathian Basin," *Genes* 12, no. 3 (2021), https://doi.org/10.3390/genes12030460.
[255] Maár et al., 2,11.
[256] Maár et al., 11.

widespread throughout Eurasia. Of the Western Eurasian lineages, 11 were primarily distributed in the Caucasus–Middle East region, indicating a sizeable maternal heritage.[257]

Finally, the 2022 studies "Tracing Genetic Connections of Ancient Hungarians to the 6th–14th Century Populations of the Volga-Ural Region" and "The Genetic Origin of Huns, Avars, and Conquering Hungarians"[258] delve into the genetic origins and connections of the conquering Hungarians. By analyzing genome-wide data from 271 ancient individuals "Tracing Genetic Connections of Ancient Hungarians to the 6th–14th Century Populations of the Volga-Ural Region" sheds light on the complex ancestry and interactions of these populations. The research identifies the Volga-Ural region as a crucial area of origin, highlighting genetic similarities between the conquering Hungarians and modern Bashkirs and Tatars, particularly in their paternal lineages, suggesting strong ethnic connections with these groups[259] The study also note that early Hungarian settlers initially retained much of their genetic makeup from the Volga-Ural region, with admixture increasing over time as interactions with local populations in the Carpathian Basin intensified.[260] However, the study notes that the admixture between the Conquering Hungarians and the local populations increased over time, particularly in later generations, as reflected in the KL-V and KL-VI groups.[261] The research highlights that the Conquering Hungarians were not a homogeneous group but rather a composite of different tribes with diverse genetic backgrounds, influenced by their mixed origins from the Volga-Ural region and Central Asia. Importantly, the genetic data indicates that both men and women were part of the migrating group, as evidenced by the survival of maternal lineages alongside paternal ones in the population.[262]

The "Conq_Asia_Core" genetic group identified in the "The Genetic Origin of Huns, Avars, and Conquering Hungarians" study reflects the elite class of the conquering Hungarians, showing genetic profiles closely aligning with modern Bashkirs, Volga Tatars,

[257] Maár et al., 3,7.
[258] Zoltán Maróti et al., "The Genetic Origin of Huns, Avars, and Conquering Hungarians," *Current Biology* 32, no. 13 (2022): 2858-2870.e7, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2022.04.093.
[259] Bea Szeifert et al., "Tracing Genetic Connections of Ancient Hungarians to the 6th–14th Century Populations of the Volga-Ural Region," *Human Molecular Genetics* 31, no. 19 (June 2022): 3266,3275, https://doi.org/10.1093/hmg/ddac106.
[260] Szeifert et al., 3274–75.
[261] Szeifert et al., 3275.
[262] Szeifert et al., 3275.

and ancient Central Asian groups.[263] The study's DATES analysis[264] links key admixture events to historical periods; the first significant event, around 643–431 BCE, likely reflects interactions between the ancestors of the conquering Hungarians (who carried Mansi-related ancestry) and early Sarmatians. Another key admixture occurred around 217–315 CE, possibly before the Huns' arrival in the Volga region, integrating local tribes east of the Urals, including the ancestors of the conquering Hungarians. So, it could be suggested that the intermixing with Late Avar and Slavic communities occurred after the Hungarians' arrival in the Carpathian Basin and continued through the early medieval period.[265] Despite this intermixing, certain tribal identities were preserved, particularly among the elite, supporting the hypothesis of a shared early history between the conquerors and groups like the Mansi.[266]

2.3 The Term Mounted Pastoral Nomad

Pastoral mounted nomadism and its sedentation phenomena have a difficult terminology. Researchers used different terminologies for defining the facts and phenomena for the description of topics related with pastoral mounted nomadism and its sedentation. As a result of our dissertation, this study will offer more explanatory terminology for future researchers who will conduct research on pastoral mounted nomads.

In this respect, theorization and clarification of the differences between mounted pastoral nomadism and other types of nomadism based on historical anthropology as well as its relationship with other anthropological and economical facts, phenomena and terms like horticulture, semi nomadism, transhumance, pastoral and pastoralism will be discussed.

The inquiries, "Who qualifies as a Mounted Pastoral Nomad?" and "What constitutes Mounted Pastoral Nomadism?" might naturally emerge as the subject of this study is delineated and its focal groups are described as mounted pastoral nomads. Therefore, the essence of mounted pastoral nomadism must be elucidated, and the mounted pastoral nomad must be identified. The foundation of this term for the dissertation is constructed from the very rudiments of economy as well as physiology.

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[263] Maróti et al., "The Genetic Origin of Huns, Avars, and Conquering Hungarians," 2863.
[264] DATES analysis is a genetic method used to estimate the timing of admixture events between different populations. "DATES" stands for "Distinguishing Ancestry and Temporal Evolutionary Signals," and it analyzes genome-wide data to determine when two or more populations mixed. This technique is particularly useful in historical genetics to pinpoint when significant genetic mixing occurred, helping to correlate these events with historical migrations, invasions, or other significant population movements.
[265] Maróti et al., "The Genetic Origin of Huns, Avars, and Conquering Hungarians," 2864.
[266] Maróti et al., 2866.

The term "nomad" covers a broad range of definitions. The online dictionary of Britannica defines a nomad as "a member of a community who moves from place to place, rather than residing permanently in one location."[267] Thus, a plain definition of the term nomad falls short of capturing the complexities of the peoples and societies under examination in our dissertation.

The term used in Turkish, which was formed within the language of a mounted pastoral nomadic society, highlights the distinct perceptions of mounted pastoral nomadism. The word "*konar-göçer*"[268] in Turkish is a compound word combining "*konmak*," which can be translated as "to perch" or "to settle temporarily," and "*göçmek*," meaning "to get up and move" or "to migrate." Together, "*konar-göçer*" literally translates to "someone who perches and then gets up and moves." The Turkish phrase "konar-göçer" focuses on "mobility," embodying the concepts of continuous settlement and movement. A fitting example of this perception can be found in the words of the Uyghur ruler: "*Between the lands of Ötüken and Teğreş, my valleys and fields are as follows: Eight Selenga, Orhon, Tuğla, Sebin, Teledü, and Karağa. I am the qonar-göçer of those lands and waters*."[269]

The subjects of this study were indeed nomadic, yet they necessitate further distinction. Barfield expands on this definition by posing the question, "What is nomadic pastoralism?" and succinctly explains it as communities specialized in animal husbandry necessitating periodic movement. This explanation liberates us from the narrow confines of the dictionary definition of "nomad." It thereby excludes groups like seasonal agricultural workers, hunter-gatherers, and Gypsies, who are nomadic but not pastoral. Similarly, it differentiates pastoral groups like Texan cattle ranchers who are pastoralists but not nomadic.[270]

Khazanov defines pastoral nomadism "*from an economic point of view as a distinct form of food-producing economy in which extensive mobile pastoralism is the predominant activity, and in which the majority of the population is drawn into periodic pastoral migrations*."[271] Furthermore, he explains pastoral nomadism through five characteristics.

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[267] "Nomad," in *Britannica*, accessed April 1, 2024, https://www.britannica.com/dictionary/nomad.
[268] "Konargöçer," in *TDK Sözlük*, n.d., https://sozluk.gov.tr/?ara=konarg%C3%B6%C3%A7er.
[269] Sencer Divitçioğlu, *Kök Türkler (Kut, Küç, Ülüg)* (İstanbul: Yapı Kredi Yayınları, 2000), 236; "*ötüken eli teğreş eli ekin ara ilgam tarığlağım sekiz selemga orqun tuğla sebin teledü qar ağa ol yerim in subum un qonar köçer ben.*" Talât Tekin, "Kuzey Moğolistan'da Yeni Bir Uygur Anıtı : Taryat (Terhin) Kitabesi," *BELLETEN* 46, no. 184 (1982): 806, https://doi.org/10.37879/ttkbelleten.1135223.
[270] Thomas Jefferson Barfield, *The Nomadic Alternative* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall, 1993), 4.
[271] Anatoly M. Khazanov et al., *Nomads and the Outside World* (University of Wisconsin Press, 1994), 16.

The first is pastoralism as the dominant economic form. The second is its character, defined by year-round free grazing without the use of stables. The third is the seasonal migrations between pastures or grazing areas based on economic needs of pastoralism. The fourth characteristic is that these migrations involve the participation of the entire population or the majority, rather than just a specialized minority group of shepherds. The fifth is that production is oriented towards meeting the community's own needs.[272]

These characteristics can actually be summarized more briefly and simply into two basic principles: pastoral livestock raising primarily through pasture grazing for subsistence needs, and regular seasonal migrations conducted collectively to utilize these pastures.[273]

To understand the ecological relationship of mounted pastoral nomadism, it is necessary to delve into the fields of physics, biology, and geography. Life on Earth is predominantly sustained by the rays of the sun, the principal source of energy for our planet. From basic nutrients to fossil fuels, the sun is the origin of nearly all the energy available for life on Earth. However, the human physiology lacks the capability to directly transform this form of energy; instead, we derive it from nature, through nutrients. These nutrients, however, are not uniformly available across the globe in forms readily processable by human physiological means. Consequently, humanity, akin to numerous other life forms, has evolved methods to harness this energy for its own use.

Unlike most life forms on Earth, humans have developed more intricate systems to extract energy from the environment for fundamental needs, such as sustaining life. A quintessential example of this is cultivation, followed by pastoralism.

Humans are inept at digesting cellulose efficiently, despite a significant portion of the Earth's surface being covered with grass, weeds, and similar plants that store solar energy. Pastoralism, however, has enabled humanity to utilize ruminants to convert the energy stored in these plants. In essence, ruminants act as "refineries" in this energy transformation process.[274] They extract energy from cellulosic sources, which humans then obtain from ruminants. Barfield also emphasizes that such natural grasslands are "unproductive" in the sense that they cannot be directly consumed by humans. He highlights

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[272] Khazanov et al., 16.
[273] Britannica, T. Editors of Encyclopaedia, "Pastoral Nomadism," in *Encyclopedia Britannica,* December 22, 2023, https://www.britannica.com/topic/pastoral-nomadism.
[274] Charles J. Halperin and Cherie Kartchner Woodworth, "Editor's Introduction - Cherie Kartchner Woodworth, 'Politics, Pastoralism, and Currents of World History on the Central Eurasian Steppe,'" *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 25 (2020 2019): 68.

how these rich energy resources are made "productive" through animal husbandry and pastoralism, transforming the energy into a form that supports human sustenance.[275]

This form of energy transfer extends beyond basic nutritional needs, facilitating the creation of complex nutrient forms such as dairy products—cheese and yogurt—to optimally store the energy derived from ruminants, thus aiding in their battle against entropy. Unwittingly, without the theoretical knowledge of physics, pastoralist humans have been combating the renowned second law of thermodynamics.

Barfield notes that the majority of pastoral nomads' herds consist of six or fewer types of animals, specifically sheep, goats, cattle, horses, donkeys, and camels. He also mentions that, in certain climatic or geographical conditions, other animals such as yaks in Tibet or reindeer in the Arctic North may be included. Ultimately, he emphasizes that animals in a pastoral nomad's herd must possess physical characteristics that enable them to traverse long distances. Therefore, short-legged and omnivorous animals like pigs are deemed unsuitable.[276]

Parallel to Barfield, Kradin also makes similar categorization for mounted pastoral nomadic livestock. He identifies five main types of livestock among pastoral nomads. [277] The first is the horse, which plays a crucial role in enabling lambs to graze by uncovering snow-covered ground, especially in winter. In Mongolia, pastoral nomads maintain a ratio of 1 to 6 between horses and lambs, meaning someone with one hundred horses would have six or seven hundred lambs.[278] He also mentions the nutritional value of mare's milk and its fermented form, koumiss, noting that the fermentation process increases the efficiency of food acquisition by addressing lactose intolerance and enhancing milk digestion. For some reason, Kradin does not differentiate between mare's milk and koumiss, and describe both as same. [279] The necessity of horses for this purpose in regions outside the Mongolian steppe, where winters do not have as much heavy snowfall, and whether such a ratio is needed could be a separate research topic.

Regarding other primary livestock, Kradin discusses cattle. He compares the milk yield of the Mongolian cow and the Dutch cow, noting that the Mongolian cow produces

[275] Barfield, *The Nomadic Alternative*, 12.
[276] Barfield, 6–7.
[277] Nikolay N. Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," in *Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE* (Bonn: Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität, 2015), 17.
[278] Kradin, 17–18.
[279] Kradin, 18.

400-500 liters of milk annually, while the Dutch cow (likely referring to the Holstein breed) produces 3800 liters annually. [280] This comparison might be considered unequal, as Holstein cows have been selectively bred for higher milk production, particularly since the 20th century, due to advances in genetic science. Kradin acknowledges the Mongolian cow's resilience to harsh climatic conditions. Additionally, cattle are also used as draft animals by nomads.[281]

Another essential type of livestock for pastoral nomads is sheep. Sheep are valued for their meat, milk, and wool and are easily cared for without requiring extensive special attention.[282] Kradin asserts that only a small percentage (5-10%) of goats are found among Central Asian pastoral nomads. Goats require even less special care than sheep but are generally considered less valuable among nomads.[283]

The fifth and final type of livestock is the camel. Due to their ability to survive for long periods without water and food, drink water with high salt content, and eat plants that other ruminants cannot, camels are primarily used as pack animals. Pastoral nomads also utilize camel meat, wool, and milk.[284]

Pastoralists also harness this energy for manual labor. However, the introduction of the term "mount" adds a third dimension to this definition. Horses, distinct from other ruminants, serve multiple purposes beyond nutrition. While oxen have also been employed as beasts of burden, horses exhibit unparalleled efficiency in energy transformation. Serving as a beast of burden, a draught animal, and notably as a mount, the horse has pervaded nearly all aspects of labor, excluding direct manual tasks. The term "horsepower" persists as a legacy of its indispensable role, even in the post-industrial age.

The utilization of horses for mobility endows pastoral nomads—referred to in this dissertation as mounted pastoral nomads—with distinctive capabilities.

Examining the basic dietary requirements of mounted pastoral nomads reveal the economic and social challenges they faced, especially when compared to settled societies. Insights into how these resources influenced the population dynamics, economic

[280] Kradin, 18.
[281] Kradin, 18.
[282] Kradin, 18.
[283] Kradin, 18.
[284] Kradin, 19.

sustainability, and sedentarization process of mounted pastoral nomads can be gained by studying their core dietary patterns and the availability or scarcity of food.

When examples and factors related to their basic dietary needs are considered, the dichotomy between pastoralism and agriculture must first be taken into account. The diet of mounted pastoral nomads primarily relied on livestock, depending on animal products like dairy, meat, animal fat, and even blood.

This provided a source of protein and fat, but their nomadic lifestyle limited their access to a wider variety of nutrients found in agricultural products like grains, vegetables, and fruits. We will evaluate how accurate this assertion is shortly. A dependence on a limited food base could impact population health and growth rates.

Seasonal variability also plays a crucial role in food supply. Pasture and water availability change greatly with the seasons, impacting livestock health and productivity and thereby affecting the food security of mounted pastoral nomads communities. In contrast, settled agricultural societies could potentially grow various crops throughout the year, ensuring a more stable and diverse food supply.

Trade and barter activities should also be considered. mounted pastoral nomads could have supplemented their diet with grains and other agricultural products through trade with neighboring farming societies. The efficiency and scale of these trade relations directly influenced the nutritional diversity and food security of nomadic populations. Any potential economic or political disruptions in these trade routes could further exacerbate food shortages.

Food supply is a natural part of population density and resource management. The sustainability of pastoralism is closely linked to land and pasture capacity, as well as the movement of the population. High population density can strain existing resources, leading to overgrazing and environmental degradation, which further challenges the ability of mounted pastoral nomads to meet their basic food needs.

Technological and economic adaptations also play a role in food supply. Pastoral nomadism and sedentarization are both examples of these technological and economic adaptations. Techniques such as drying and fermenting could enhance the availability of certain foods. Additionally, processing milk, a crucial food source, into various products could also address potential lactose intolerance issues. However, the innovation and

adaptability in food storage and production could offer more extensive possibilities for settled communities through more permanent solutions.

By studying these basic dietary needs, following questions about how managing dietary requirements and food resources impacted economic conditions, social structures, and population growth potential among mounted pastoral nomads can be explored. This analysis can reveal the extent to which nutritional factors contributed to the economic and social incentives for sedentarization and can shed light on the challenges and opportunities mounted pastoral nomads faced in maintaining their nomadic lifestyle amidst changing environmental and geopolitical conditions.

Kradin asserts that nomads primarily relied on the milk and dairy products of their livestock, as well as products like sheep soup, supplementing these with grains. He supports this claim with references and quotations from various periods, including the Xiongnu era, modern Mongolia, and medieval Tatars.[285] However, Kradin does not provide any information regarding the consumption of fish by pastoral nomads. Furthermore, he does not explain where the grains or millet mentioned in his references and quotations were obtained from.

It would not be incorrect to say that milk is among the primary foods derived from the energy transformation of ruminants by shepherding nomads. Although it was conducted on a different nomadic group, the 1992 study on African pastoralist groups concluded that their diets were low in energy and high in protein. By assuming that mounted pastoral nomads had a similar diet focused on milk and dairy products, we can make a similar generalization.[286] In case of considering that the fermentation of milk and dairy products, staple foods of mounted pastoral nomads, likely reduced issues like lactose intolerance,[287] it can be suggested that this increased their chances of survival from a natural selection perspective.

Additionally, Kradin does not clarify why protein was scarce in the diets of poor or "common" nomads, despite mentioning that mounted pastoral nomads consumed large amounts of dairy products. This lack of clarity is noteworthy, given that even if they consumed little meat or meat products, Kradin himself acknowledges the high dairy

[285] Kradin, 19.
[286] Kathleen A. Galvin, "Nutritional Ecology of Pastoralists in Dry Tropical Africa," *American Journal of Human Biology* 4, no. 2 (1992): 209, 215.
[287] Michael A. Little, "Pastoralism," in *Basics in Human Evolution*, ed. Michael P. Muehlenbein (Elsevier, 2015), 340–43.

consumption of nomads. Different sources were also referenced in this dissertation to support this point.

Kradin mentions that nomads consumed millet soup in the mornings, which brings to mind "*tarhana*," a type of grain soup known among the descendants of equestrian pastoral nomads today, despite its many variations. Regardless, the fact that these pastoral people drank grain soup in the mornings and considered it a staple of their diet raises another question: where did they obtain the grain? Although Kradin remains silent on this point, he notes that nomads engaged in agriculture.[288] However, he emphasizes that this agricultural activity was looked down upon by the nomads and was only a partial and temporary activity born of necessity. Drawing on Lattimore, he returns to the argument that nomads obtained agricultural products through trade and warfare. [289] Kradin also mentions that agriculture requires 400 mm of annual rainfall or the presence of large river systems, neither of which are found in present-day Mongolia. However, he does not provide information about pastoral nomads who lived in regions with such rainfall or river systems. Given that millet farming can be conducted with 400 mm of annual rainfall and that some varieties can thrive with even less, it is essential to note that the argument about rainfall alone is insufficient. [290]

However, a more recent study conducted in 2015, which directly focused on Bronze Age mounted pastoral nomads, presents different findings. This research suggests that Bronze Age pastoral communities in Central Kazakhstan included fish in their diets and consumed significant amounts of millet.[291] Additionally, the study suggests that two types of domesticated grains were present in the region.[292] Based on the analysis of 88 human and 76 animal bone samples, the research indicates that these pastoralists diversified their diets with fish and millet, as mentioned earlier.[293] Therefore, based on this, we can say that the mounted pastoral nomads are not the fish-ignorant barbarians that Rubruck described, or at the very least, Rubruck managed to find the nomadic communities with the least knowledge of fish.[294]

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[288] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 20.
[289] Owen Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China* (New York, 1940), 478–80; Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 20.
[290] David Baltensperger, "Progress with Proso, Pearl and Other Millets," *Trends in New Crops and New Uses*, January 1, 2002, 100–102.
[291] E. Lightfoot et al., "How 'Pastoral' Is Pastoralism? Dietary Diversity in Bronze Age Communities in the Central Kazakhstan Steppes," *Archaeometry* 57, no. S1 (2015): 232,234, https://doi.org/10.1111/arcm.12123.
[292] Lightfoot et al., 233.
[293] Lightfoot et al., 235, 245.
[294] "*The saide riuer was euen as broad in that place, as the riuer of Sein is at Paris. And before we came there, we passed ouer many goodly waters, and full of fish: howbeit the barbarous and rude Tartars know*

Compared to the previous inference, we can make a more accurate generalization due to the study focusing directly on the geography and communities of mounted pastoral nomads. In this regard, we can also support our argument that mounted pastoral nomads aimed to harness solar energy as much and as efficiently as possible using the technology they had available.

If we consider that small game animals and fish were part of early modern humans' diets,[295] it's reasonable to assume that fish remains a readily available food and energy source for mounted pastoral nomads, given its natural occurrence in any area with access to water. This simple generalization underscores the idea that fish remained a convenient and accessible part of their diet.

Returning to the question of who or what a mounted pastoral nomad is, we find that a shorter version of this question was previously posed by Barfield as "What is a pastoral nomad?"[296] Of course, the answer Barfield provided to the question, along with our response, illustrates why we have chosen to use the term "mounted" as we narrow or, more accurately, "focus" our research.

As Barfield rightly pointed out, using the terms "nomad" and "pastoralist" interchangeably is incorrect,[297] and we believe the term "mounted pastoral nomad" should be used distinctly and uniquely. As we will frequently emphasize throughout our study, mounted pastoral nomads hold a unique place in terms of state formation and the progressive nature of social structure in both its substructure and superstructural aspects.

Modern research indicates that pastoralism can be a sustainable lifestyle today;[298] however, whether mounted pastoral nomadism historically constituted a sustainable lifestyle deserves separate consideration. Researchers working on the subject have proposed a binary decision-making model whereby pastoral nomads classify grazing land as either

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not how to take them : neither do they make any reckoning of any fish, except it be so great, that they may pray vpon the flesh therof, as vpon the flesh of a ram." C. Raymond Beazley, ed., *The Texts and Versions of John de Plano Carpini and William de Rubruquis, as Printed for the First Time by Hakluyt in 1598, Together with Some Shorter Pieces* (London: Printed for the Hakluyt Society, 1903), 207; Peter Jackson, ed., *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253–1255* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1990), 109.

[295] Brigitte M. Holt, "Anatomically Modern Homo Sapiens," in *Basics in Human Evolution*, ed. Michael P. Muehlenbein (Elsevier, 2015), 186.

[296] Barfield, *The Nomadic Alternative*, 4.

[297] Barfield, 4.

[298] Jakob Zinsstag et al., "A Vision for the Future of Pastoralism: -FR- Une Vision de l'avenir Du Pastoralisme -ES- Una Visión Del Futuro Del Pastoreo," *Revue Scientifique et Technique de l'OIE* 35 (November 2016): 695, https://doi.org/10.20506/rst.35.2.2550.

"depleted" or "usable," and make choices accordingly.[299] However, such a simplistic binary decision model is insufficient for understanding the complexity.[300] It would be more accurate to approach this by considering the pastoral nomad as both an animal handler and a biotic technician, grounding the analysis in the concept of energy transfer.

The mobility of pastoralist nomads is of critical importance, as it requires accurate seasonal and long-term calculations by the pastoralist nomad.[301] From this perspective, we see no issue in evaluating mounted pastoral nomads in the same vein as other pastoral nomads.

To delve deeper into understanding pastoralists, particularly pastoral nomads, it is instructive to consider specific inferences and studies. Pastoral nomads do not "migrate for the sake of migrating"; rather, they move due to economic necessities dictated by the needs of their livestock. While pastoral nomads are capable of long-distance mobility, they do not frequently prefer such extensive movements. They undertake long migrations only out of necessity.[302]

Kradin notes that the material needs, clothing, and daily items of nomads were minimal and suited to their "mobile" lifestyle. [303] However, examining this from a modern perspective might lead to misunderstandings. It raises the question: how different was the quantity of daily items for a mounted pastoral nomad "commoner" compared to a medieval feudal European peasant? In fact, it is plausible to ask whether a mounted pastoral nomad, due to their mobile lifestyle, might need to carry more daily items than a settled individual. The settled feudal peasant, benefiting from the practicality and division of labor associated with a sedentary lifestyle, might not need to possess as many worldly items as a mounted pastoral nomad.[304]

An interesting aspect of Kradin's anecdote from Rubruck is that Rubruck mentions how everyone (each "captain" or "commander") knows their own pasture, their own

[299] Joshua Wright and Cheryl Makarewicz, "Perceptions of Pasture: He Role of Skill and Networks in Maintaining Stable Pastoral Nomadic Systems in Inner Asia," in *Climate and Ancient Societies*, ed. S. Kerner, R.J. Dann, and P. Bangsgaard (Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press, 2015), 264.
[300] Wright and Makarewicz, 265.
[301] Wright and Makarewicz, 266.
[302] Wright and Makarewicz, 268.
[303] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 21.
[304] Halperin and Woodworth, "Editor's Introduction - Cherie Kartchner Woodworth, 'Politics, Pastoralism, and Currents of World History on the Central Eurasian Steppe,'" 78.

boundaries, and uses summer and winter pastures accordingly.[305] Doesn't this indicate a form of land ownership contrary to what Kradin suggests?

Pastoral nomads can be viewed as a type of bio-technician. According to a 2017 study, this bio-technician role is defined through the technical knowledge derived from managing "soils," "forages," and "livestock" characteristics, a knowledge base referred to as "traditional ecological knowledge" (TEK).[306] This indicates that a pastoral nomad moves with a certain technical acumen and economic intent. This distinction also clarifies the difference between a pastoral nomad and a "wanderer."

2.4 The Role of Mounted Pastoral Nomads in World Systems and World History

In historiography, it is important to evaluate the emerging concept of "World Systems History" and, in relation to this, the place of mounted pastoral nomads within this framework—specifically, whether and how they fit into this concept. It is also necessary to distinguish theoretically between World Systems History and General Mounted Pastoral Nomad theories, as these are addressed as separate phenomena in this study. Although Barfield's theory, particularly with his latest book, aligns more closely with the World Systems History framework, his theory should still be primarily considered within the scope of General Mounted Pastoral Nomad theories in this study, taking into account its development.

At this point, it should be noted that Wallerstein, the intellectual father of the World Systems History "theory," has consistently argued that this term is not yet a fully developed theory.[307] Therefore, in this context, the term will be generally referred to as World Systems. It is worthwhile to examine McNeill's approach to "World History." McNeill critiques the traditional Eurocentric view of history, particularly the 19th-century liberal perspective that places Europe at the center of world history. He argues that this viewpoint artificially elevates European achievements—especially through the emphasis on concepts like Liberty—while marginalizing the contributions and histories of other civilizations. According to McNeill, this Eurocentric vision has created a "false global history," where

[305] *The Journey of William of Rubruck to the Eastern Parts of the World, 1253-55* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1900), 53; Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 22; Jackson, *The Mission of Friar William of Rubruck His Journey to the Court of the Great Khan Möngke, 1253–1255*, 72.
[306] C. Tamou et al., "Traditional Ecological Knowledge Underlying Herding Decisions of Pastoralists," *Animal* 12, no. 4 (2018): 831, https://doi.org/10.1017/S1751731117002130.
[307] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Uncertainties of Knowledge* (Temple University Press: Temple University Press, 2004), 83–92.

regions outside Europe are considered significant only when they interact with or are conquered by Europeans.[308]

He also critiques the persistent influence of religious narratives on historical interpretation, even in secular contexts. McNeill suggests that modern Western historiography is shaped by a secularized Christian epic, where concepts like Liberty have replaced God as the central actor. He sees this as a limitation that hinders a more objective and comprehensive understanding of world history.[309]

McNeill notes that historians, albeit reluctantly, have begun to respond to the growing evidence of long-distance interactions that transcend traditional academic boundaries. He points out that a group of scholars has emerged, striving to construct a more adequate world history that emphasizes Eurasian and subsequent global interactions, surpassing the visions of Spengler and Toynbee. This group is divided between those who, like Immanuel Wallerstein and Andre Gunder Frank, focus primarily on economics, and others, including McNeill himself, who believe that religious, artistic, and scientific encounters played a role roughly equal to that of economics and technology.[310]

Another criticism McNeill raises concerns the inadequacies of current terminology in world history. He argues that terms like "interaction zone," "world system," and "ecumene" fall short in capturing the complexities of global interactions that have historically shaped human societies. McNeill highlights the ongoing terminological confusion among historians and the lack of consensus on how to conceptualize and define these interactions.[311]

Despite its limitations, McNeill sees the concept of ecumene as a valuable tool for understanding world history, particularly in emphasizing the importance of cross-cultural encounters. He suggests that recognizing ecumene as a central framework could help historians create a more consistent and comprehensive narrative of human history that accounts for the diverse and far-reaching impacts of global interactions.[312]

Reflecting on his previous work, including "The Rise of the West," McNeill critiques the focus on civilizations as independent entities. He notes that within any

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[308] William H McNeill, "The Changing Shape of World History," *History and Theory* 34, no. Theme Issue 34: World Historians and Their Critics (May 1995): 12.
[309] McNeill, 12.
[310] McNeill, 13.
[311] McNeill, 14.
[312] McNeill, 14.

civilization, different groups lived in vastly different ways, united primarily by adherence to a set of moral rules embodied in sacred or semi-sacred texts. These privileged ruling classes provided a kind of iron framework within which a civilization could develop. However, within this framework, there was significant local, professional, and sectarian diversity in lifestyles among subgroups. What united them was a kind of implicit (or sometimes explicit) agreement that allowed each group to interact with others and particularly with the politically dominant segments of society without too many surprises.[313]

In summary, it can be said that McNeill proposes a "middle ground" among the three approaches to world systems history. While he acknowledges the concept of "ecumene," he also expresses reservations about the high degree of "spiritual" perspectives that often accompany it. However, McNeill overlooks a crucial element in his narrative of the "interactive Eurasian ecumenical world system:" the mounted pastoral nomads. Although he discusses the relationships between long-distance maritime and overland trade, the nomads remain, as it were, "like a shadow" in his account.[314] This is the closest mentioning that one may get.

In McNeill's later work, "The Human Web: A Bird's-Eye View of Human History" (2004), which can be seen as a revised version of his earlier ideas, he only briefly mentions mounted pastoral nomads in the context of the period before the 13th century. He notes that they learned to guard and extort long-distance trade,[315] a feature he suggests is perhaps their most significant contribution to world history. McNeill also describes them as groups that could quickly organize but just as quickly collapse.[316] Additionally, he points out their skill in extorting sedentary populations[317] and highlights their inability to build fortresses.[318]

2.4.1 Mounted Pastoral Nomads in World History in 9th 10th Centuries

After considering all these assessments, what can be said about mounted pastoral nomads and their role in the political ecumene within the context of world history? Firstly, it can be observed that the mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene underwent a wave of transformation

[313] McNeill, 16.
[314] McNeill, 16–17.
[315] J. R. McNeill and William H. McNeill, *The Human Web A Bird's-Eye View of World History* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2003), 101.
[316] McNeill and McNeill, 198.
[317] McNeill and McNeill, 100.
[318] McNeill and McNeill, 195.

during the 10th and 11th centuries. This shift can be attributed to a need for change, as traces of such tendencies can be observed as early as the Istemi Yabgu period and later among the Khazars. However, a detailed analysis of this transformation falls outside the scope of this study.

It is important to note that this wave of change resulted in mounted pastoral nomadic communities either integrating into Islamic, Western Christian, Eastern Christian, or Chinese political ecumenes, or experiencing a significant "leap" in their political ecumene with the Mongol revolution of the 13th century—although not in the sense of Voegelin's "leap in being."[319] In summary, during the period corresponding to the Late Middle Ages in classical European historiography, the mounted pastoral political ecumene either transformed or saw its communities absorbed into different political ecumenes.

Stepping away from the political ecumene perspective and focusing on the long period before this transformation, one could argue that the role of mounted pastoral nomads in world history was best characterized as that of a "catalyst" for humanity. This role is particularly ironic, as it likely reached its peak during the period following the fall of Rome—an era that, according to Voegelin, marks the end of the "Ecumenic Age."[320]

As McNeill alludes to indirectly, mounted pastoral nomads played a crucial role as managers of long-distance overland trade, maintaining economic and cultural exchanges across vast regions. In this context, it can be argued that they dominated and facilitated interactions between the two distinct ecumenes mentioned by Voegelin—namely, China and the West.

In various parts of the world, the effects on the formation of "we-consciousness" can be observed. In this context, which also falls within the scope of this study, a few examples can be given. First, Marc Bloch identifies the mounted pastoral nomadic Hungarians, alongside the Arabs and Vikings, as one of the three external factors in the formation of Europe.[321]

Another significant point is their impact on Europe, particularly the victories of Charlemagne over the Avars and, more notably, Otto the Great's victory over the

[319] For "leap in being" see: Muen Liu, *Eric Voegelin on China and Universal Humanity: A Study of Voegelin's Hermeneutic Empirical Paradigm* (Lexington Books, 2023), 36–46.
[320] Eric Voegelin, *The Ecumenic Age*, vol. IV, Order and History (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 2000), 188.
[321] Bloch, *Feudal Society*, 10–17.

Hungarians in 955. These triumphs were crucial for the Germans in terms of fostering a "we-consciousness" and, consequently, in the process of nation-building.

Hyun Jin Kim develops a theory based on Peter Golden's concept of the political culture of mounted pastoral nomads (as defined by Golden) and the steppe political tradition (the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene), proposing that traces of this influence can be observed in the medieval European political structure. The central question of his theory is whether the system of royal sovereignty and collective rule in medieval Europe resembles the system used by the Huns and other steppe peoples (mounted pastoral nomads). In this context, he argues that the concept of sacred charisma ("qut") and the sacral bloodline can be seen to some extent in the Merovingians, which, according to Ganshof's claim, does not align with the limited political leadership typical of early Germanic systems.[322]

Moreover, Kim argues that the concept of the sacred charismatic ruler ("qut") was introduced to Europe by the Huns and subsequently adopted by the Franks, as well as other Germanic and European tribes.[323] He also points out that the fragmentation of the Frankish Kingdom due to excessive expansion parallels the political practice of the "oath of fealty" ("oath of loyalty") and the relationship between the Huns and their subjects ("vassals").[324]

At this point, it is important to raise a few questions to critically assess Hyun Jin Kim's argument within the context of this thesis. First, were ceremonies similar to the oath of fealty not also present among ancient Romans and/or Germanic tribes? Is it accurate to attribute these practices solely to Hun influence? The second question is whether the "steppe influence" mentioned by Hyun Jin Kim can be explained through "political culture" or the political ecumene features that will be discussed later in the thesis, or if it should be understood as a phenomenon related to "proto-feudalism," which laid the groundwork for the emergence of feudalism in medieval Europe.

Returning to Hyun Jin Kim's views after posing these questions, he argues that in the early Middle Ages, the Franks, rather than employing "Roman-style taxation," collected tribute from the Gauls, viewed land as the communal property of the ruling family ("sacral bloodline"), and thus divided the country's territories among the male members of the ruling family. Additionally, following the Hun example, the Franks distributed feudal estates over manors, a practice characteristic of steppe (and Iranian) state systems, where reliable nobles

[322] Hyun Jin, *The Huns, Rome and the Birth of Europe.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 146.
[323] Jin, 149.
[324] Jin, 148.

were appointed to border territories, while members of the ruling family were placed in central positions.[325]

Kim also notes the existence of a council system similar to the "*kurultay*" among the Franks. To critically evaluate this claim, it is necessary to consider both supporting and opposing arguments. As previously mentioned, did the Germanic tribes and Gauls not have some form of tribal council that decided on matters of war? However, the point about the characteristics of Germanic leaders, as referenced by Ganshof and cited by Hyun Jin Kim, is significant. If this point is accepted as accurate, it suggests an influence on centralized leadership. It is also challenging to determine whether the practice of appointing reliable administrators to border regions was present in the political history of the Germanic tribes, who had not previously established a large empire, but Hyun Jin Kim's suggestion on this matter is plausible.

In this context, Hyun Jin Kim's assertion that "*the new feudal Europe of the German kings, like the steppe world, was characterized by the dominance of a military nobility, and that previously civilian secular Roman aristocratic hierarchies increasingly became more militarized under the new regimes, similar to the Xiongnu and other steppe militarized societies*," and his proposition that "*the 'political culture' of early medieval Europe was a version of the common Central Eurasian political koine derived from the Huns, combined with remnants of Roman political institutions*," seems relatively well-founded.[326]

Here, Hyun Jin Kim's mention of the "leudes," or military retinues, observed among the Franks, corresponds to the social military elite stratification that Golden describes as the "comitatus," aligning with the concept of buyruq/tarkhan/nöker[327]

2.5 Mounted Pastoral Nomads in World Systems in 9th and 10th Centuries

As Kradin mentions in his study, "Nomadism, Evolution and World-Systems: Pastoral Societies in Theories of Historical Development," nomadism is more frequently observed in the "World System Approach" by scholars like Janet Abu-Lughot or Christopher Chase-

[325] Jin, 146–47.
[326] Jin, 148–49.
[327] Golden, "Some Notes on the 'Comitatus' In Medieval Eurasia With Special Reference To The Khazars"; Jin, *The Huns, Rome and the Birth of Europe.*, 149.

Dunn.[328] On this context, among historians who narrate world history, Janet Abu-Lughod stands out for giving significant attention to the role of nomadism. Peter Perdue discusses the debates surrounding the distinctiveness of the European state system and highlights Janet Abu-Lughod, a world system theorist, who argues against the traditional Eurocentric view that presents the global economy as a unique European structure that expanded to encompass the rest of the world. Instead, Abu-Lughod posits that a global economy, encompassing a large portion of the Eurasian continent, existed long before Europe's rise to dominance.[329] She asserts that Europe did not create a new world system but rather entered an already existing one, centered on Asia and the Middle East, during the 13th and 14th centuries.[330] This pre-existing global economy was characterized by extensive trade networks that connected regions from Northwestern Europe to China, involving a variety of cultures and economies in a system of exchange well established before European expansion in the 16th century.[331]

Abu-Lughod's perspective challenges the notion that Europe's later dominance was due to any inherent superiority. She argues that Europe's rise was facilitated by the fragmentation and decline of previously dominant powers in the East, rather than by any unique European attributes. Regarding the emergence of a pan-Eurasian world system, Abu-Lughod situates its development in the 13th century, following the Mongol conquests, while asserting that Europe had no special economic features and was a late and sudden participant in a well-established exchange network.[332] She also critiques Immanuel Wallerstein's distinction between "external arenas" and "peripheries," considering it artificial in the context of her analysis of the 13th-century world system.[333]

Janet L. Abu-Lughod critiques Wallerstein's model, arguing that in the pre-modern world system, the boundaries between core, semi periphery, and periphery were not as clear-cut as his framework suggests. She points out that many regions and societies did not fit neatly into these hierarchical categories, and that interactions between different regions were

[328] Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony the World System A.D. 1250-1350*; Christopher Chase-Dunn, "Comparing World Systems: Toward a Theory of Semipheral Development," *Comparative Civilizations Review* 19, no. 19 (1988): 29–66; Nikolay N. Kradin, "Nomadism, Evolution and World-Systems: Pastoral Societies in Theories of Historical Development," *Journal of World-Systems Research*, no. VIII, III, Fall 2002 (2002): 368–88.
[329] Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 525–26.
[330] Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony the World System A.D. 1250-1350*, 361.
[331] Abu-Lughod, 38.
[332] Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 526.
[333] Perdue, 526.

more fluid and complex.[334] While Wallerstein describes a capitalist "core" hegemony in Northwestern Europe with a "semi-periphery" in Eastern and Southern Europe and the rest of the world as the "periphery,"[335] Abu-Lughod argues that the 13th-century world system featured multiple "cores" that coexisted, sometimes clashing and at other times cooperating. This system lacked a dominant center and did not fit into a singular hierarchical model. For example, she identifies the Mongol Empire and the Arabo-Persian imperial centers as distinct "cores," and contends that terms like "semi-periphery" are not particularly suitable when applied to the Delhi Sultanate or the mercantile societies on the Indian coast and Southeast Asian ports.[336]

The key idea in Abu-Lughod's analysis is that these systems were dynamic, reorganizing themselves in response to changes over time.[337] She critiques the conventional "rise and fall" narrative, arguing that world systems should be approached through a "restructuring" paradigm. As integration within these systems increased, they would "rise," and as connections through old transportation networks weakened, they would "decline." However, this decline did not result in a reversion to the previous state; instead, the existing components became materials for restructuring. During these transitions, actors on the periphery often gained stronger positions within the emerging system, and regions previously on the margins became centers of change.[338]

2.5.1 Conquering Hungarians in "Core"

Considering the early Hungarians and other mounted pastoral nomads from this perspective, one could evaluate them in terms of the "core-periphery" concept. For the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene from the 8th to 11th centuries, it is worth discussing whether "cores" existed. Based on Abu-Lughod's proposal of multiple structures, it can be suggested that some "cores" emerged during this period, a distinction tracing back to the era of the Türk Khaganate. For example, in the east, a "core" was inherited and continued by the Uyghurs.

Zimonyi identifies two key "centers" for mounted pastoral nomads in Eastern Europe during the Middle Ages. The first is the "Hungarian Plains," or the Pannonia-

[334] Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony the World System A.D. 1250-1350*, 364–65.
[335] Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern World- System Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century* (New York: Academic Press, 1974), 349–51.
[336] Abu-Lughod, *Before European Hegemony the World System A.D. 1250-1350*, 364–65.
[337] Abu-Lughod, 365.
[338] Abu-Lughod, 367.

Carpathian Basin, where the Huns, Avars, and Hungarians successively held power. The second is the towns of the Lower Volga region, which were under the control of the Khazars and later the Golden Horde.[339] Building on Zimonyi's framework, the "cores" within this study can be defined more clearly. The first "core" could be the one continued by the Khazar Khaganate, and another could be in the Pannonia-Carpathian Basin, continued by the Avars after the Huns.

Following Abu-Lughod's theory of dynamism, these "cores" underwent processes of formation and change, especially as the mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene began to transform in the 11th century. Regarding the early Hungarians, as they enter recorded history in the 830s, it can be argued that they were within the semi-periphery of the Khazar "core." According to Abu-Lughod's dynamic theory, the Pecheneg attack might have pushed them into the periphery. Kristó's observations about the Khazars' continued efforts to politically control the Hungarians during this period can be interpreted in this context. After 895, the Hungarians broke away from the Khazar "core" entirely, and within about half a century, the Khazars lost their status as a "core." In the new dynamics that emerged after 895, leading up to 955, it can be argued that the "conquering Hungarians" were attempting to establish a new "core" in the west, within the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, filling the void created by their departure from the Khazar "core" and moving into western "core" region, Carpathian Basin. However, this attempt was not a result of deliberate political or social engineering but rather a consequence of the natural dynamics created by geography, their political ecumene, and the political vacuum formed by the absence of Avar political power since the early 9th century. The defeat of the Hungarians in 955, particularly by Otto the Great, made it clear that such a "core" would not be allowed to form in this region.

2.6 Ethnogenesis of Hungarians

Scholarly works on the determination of Hungarian "we consciousness" are extensive. This concept becomes even more complex when considered alongside the question of Hungarian ethnogenesis.

[339] István Zimonyi, "The Nomadic Factor In Mediaeval European History," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*, Proceedings of the First International Conference on the Mediaeval History of the Eurasian Steppe: Szeged, Hungary May 11—16, 2004: Part I (2005), 58, no. 1 (2005): 35.

Sándor László Tóth, based on sources such as the Jayhani tradition and Constantine's account of a Hungarian (Turkic) ethnos settled near the Khazars, asserts that a Hungarian people with its own political organization existed in the 9th century, beginning from the first third of the 10th century and relating to the period before the Conquest. However, Tóth suggests that only partial information about Hungarian ethnogenesis can be gleaned from historical sources. The extraordinary stag myth, considered a foundation myth, is seen as a "wandering legend," and its dating, based on the names within it (Belár, Dulo, Hunor, Magor), may cover an extended period. Thus, the Hungarian ethnos can be identified at a point where it already had a distinct political organization and tribal confederation. According to Tóth, this does not exclude the possibility that the ethnic components of the Hungarian ethnos may have existed earlier within a clan-tribe organization.[340]

Kristó examines the formation of the Hungarian tribal union within the broader context of Eastern European history, emphasizing the significant gap between the disintegration of the Ugric linguistic unity and the first written records of the Hungarians in the 9th century. This gap reflects the region's relative isolation from the socio-political changes occurring in Western and Southern Europe at the time. The split between the Mansis, Khantys, and proto-Hungarians, which first appears in historical records in the 830s, is particularly important. By the 9th century, the Roman Empire had long since vanished, replaced by the Frankish Empire, which was also past its peak.[341]

In tracing the early presence of the Hungarians, Kristó relies heavily on linguistic evidence, referencing Tuomo Pekkanen's hypothesis that Ovid's *Metamorphoses* might contain references to the early ancestors of the Hungarians. He also considers 6th-century sources potentially linked to the Hungarians through personal and place names.[342] For instance, Ovid's mention of "Meterea(que) turba" in the Black Sea region may refer to the ancestors of the Hungarians, with the Latin word "turba" ("crowd, multitude") corresponding to the Hungarian "tömeg," and "Meterea" possibly relating to the Hungarian "megyerek."[343]

The role of myths and misunderstandings in early Hungarian history is also a significant aspect of Kristó's analysis. He discusses the Scythian myths propagated by

[340] Tóth, "A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)," 2014, 23–24.
[341] Kristó, *Levedi Törzsszövetségétől Szent István Államáig*, 11.
[342] Kristó, 14–15.
[343] Kristó, 14.

sources like Regino of Prüm, which depicted the Scythians—and by extension, the Hungarians—as living in wild steppes, engaging in hunting and fishing, and using animal skins for shelter. Regino identified the Hungarians with the Scythians, describing them as living like wild animals, eating raw meat, drinking blood, and consuming human hearts as medicine. These myths, which influenced both Western European chroniclers and later Hungarian historiography, portrayed Scythia near the Don River as a harsh, impassable desert inhabited by strange and dangerous creatures.[344]

Moving beyond these myths, Kristó engages with Jenő Szűcs's differing perspective on Hungarian ethnogenesis. Szűcs argues that the Hungarian people formed as a conglomerate of various elements by the end of the 9th century, within a "Turk-like" nation-organization. This interpretation, grounded in Constantine Porphyrogennetos's "De Administrando Imperio" and later Muslim sources, contrasts with the simpler view of an abrupt or late formation according to Kristó. He claims that archaeological and linguistic evidence suggests that the conquering Hungarians had a relatively homogeneous ethnic tradition with a longer, organic past. Rather than lacking a sense of ethnic identity before the Árpád dynasty, Kristó posits that a sense of community and ethnic tradition existed well before the political unification under Árpád.[345]

The continuity of ethnic identity among the Hungarians is emphasized as evidence that a sense of community existed prior to their political unification under Árpád in the late 9th century. This continuity is linked to linguistic and cultural factors and is further supported by traditions among the Bashkirs, who lived in the Volga region until the 13th century. These traditions suggest that ethnic consciousness, based on lineage and language, developed well before the 9th century. Additionally, the Sabir tradition among the Hungarians around 950 indicates that an internal sense of community had already formed by the time of their separation from other groups, which likely occurred before 750.[346]

Finally, the Khazar period played a crucial role in shaping the political and ethnic structure of the Hungarians. The Hungarian tribal confederation began to take shape during their interactions with the Khazars, a period critical to their ethnogenesis. The dual-principality system among the Hungarians, of Turkish-Khazar origin, further supports the notion that a distinct ethnic identity and political structure were already emerging during the

[344] Kristó, 11–12.
[345] Kristó, 27–30.
[346] Kristó, 29–30.

7th-8th centuries. The process of gaining independence from the Khazar Khaganate likely spanned several decades, culminating around 830. This gradual development challenges the idea that the Hungarian people were formed solely through the unification under Árpád, suggesting instead that the integration of ethnic traditions began much earlier.[347]

In this context, Fodor examines the issue through the lens of "people," deliberately avoiding the term "ethnos." He argues that customs, such as burial practices, may change, and material culture may undergo complete transformations. Thus, only when members of a community possess a clear awareness of "we" and a distinction of "they" can it be possible to speak of a unified people.[348] Fodor draws attention to the ethnonym and the language of the Hungarians to address this question. He begins his analysis with the ancient form of "magyar" as "mogyer." According to Fodor, this derives from Peter Veres' interpretation of the Hungarian word "mond," meaning "to speak," from the Ugrian period. Fodor further explains the second part of the word, "er," as an ancient Finno-Ugric term signifying "man." From this point, he constructs his argument about Hungarian "we" consciousness and provides the example of the Slavic word "nemet," used to describe Germans, which Fodor interprets as meaning "dumb people" (though its etymological meaning is "mute").

In this context, Fodor establishes the two elements of "we" and "them" based on language and ethnonym, and he claims that around 500 B.C., when the Hungarians were migrating southwards and encountered the Sarmatians, they had developed a distinct ethnos.[349]

Aside from the debates surrounding his perspective on migration theories and the linguistic definition of ethnonyms (such as the etymology of "er" or his construction of "speaking man" for "mogyer"), Fodor emphasizes that neither modern Hungarians nor the conquering Hungarians of 895 can be regarded exclusively as descendants of these ancient communities.[350]

In a similar fashion to Fodor, Veres bases the Hungarian "we consciousness" on language and the concept of the "talking man."[351] However, unlike Fodor, Veres argues that the use of the term "people" creates a problem due to its connotations with macrostructural

[347] Kristó, 30.
[348] Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland, The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest*, 167–68.
[349] Fodor, 174–75.
[350] Fodor, 174–75.
[351] Veres, *The Ethnogenesis and Ethnic History of the Hungarian People: Problems of Ecologic Adaptation and Cultural Change*, 39.

political organization and its association with nationality.[352] For this reason, Veres prefers the term *ethnogenesis*. Unlike Fodor, possibly due to his preference for the term ethnogenesis rather than "people," but more likely due to his dissertation on endogamous society, Veres places the ethnic consolidation of the ancient Hungarians at an earlier date, during the first millennium B.C.[353]

Veres reconstructs ancient Hungarian society as endogamous, suggesting that matrimonial preferences within the community led them to isolate themselves from other steppe peoples when they migrated southward to the steppe zone in the 7th century B.C., due to the Sub-Atlantic climatic period.[354]

Migration theories will be addressed in more detail later, but recent genetic studies provide some answers regarding the endogamous character of the conquering Hungarians.

One such study analyzed 36 human samples from the Uyelgi cemetery, associated with the late Kushnarenkovo culture, which was used from the late 8th century to the 11th century. Additionally, nine samples from the Carpathian Basin, dating from the 10th to the 12th centuries, were reanalyzed.[355]

The results showed genetic continuity over time, indicating that the population in this cemetery remained relatively stable genetically and likely represented an endogamous community. Conversely, samples from the Ural region displayed a mixed genetic ancestry, with lineages tracing back to both Eastern Eurasian origins (e.g., Siberian, Central Asian) and Western Eurasian origins. This mixture reflects the historical migrations and interactions in the region, situated at the crossroads of Europe and Asia. By the time this mixed population settled in the Uyelgi area and began using the cemetery, their genetic makeup was already established, leading to the observed genetic continuity during the 9th to 11th centuries.[356] However, while these findings provide insights into the era of the 9th to 11th centuries, it is challenging to draw definitive conclusions about this specific timeframe based solely on this research. Nonetheless, it suggests that the population in the Urals during this period continued or re-practiced endogamous behaviors.

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[352] Veres, 40.
[353] Veres, 41.
[354] Veres, 36,39.
[355] Csáky et al., "Early Medieval Genetic Data from Ural Region Evaluated in the Light of Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Hungarians."
[356] Csáky et al.

Returning to the original subject of Hungarian ethnogenesis, Róna-Tas provides a clearer definition of the terms "people" and "ethnos." He notes that while these terms may appear identical, "people" is typically used in narrative contexts, whereas "ethnos" is employed in theoretical discussions.[357] Róna-Tas identifies three key features as the most important properties when describing an ethnos: a common semiotic system, with language being the most significant aspect, and the conscious distinguishing of themselves, or "we consciousness," which includes permanent self-designation.[358]

As Róna-Tas describes these three features—common semiotic system, conscious self-distinguishing ("we consciousness"), and permanent self-designation—as *constituent elements* of an ethnos, he also identifies other features as *formative elements*. These include the consciousness of common descent, a common territory, a common political organization, and a common religion.[359]

Csanád Bálint's critical perspective on ethnogenesis is significant, particularly in the context of Hungarian prehistory research. He emphasizes that traditional multidisciplinary studies in Hungarian prehistory have not yet clearly separated ethnogenesis from true prehistory.[360] Bálint traces the root of this issue to the concept of ethnic and linguistic identity, which only emerged in the 18th century. He notes that works on the subject in Hungary typically begin with the linguistic relationships among Uralic and Finno-Ugric peoples and then construct a prehistory based on this foundation, leading to a theoretical "point zero" in the history of the Hungarian language. In contrast, he observes that European ethnogenesis studies do not suffer from this handicap; they do not confuse linguistic history with national history.

As previously mentioned, Bálint supports the approach of Róna-Tas, who examines "the theoretical questions of our becoming a people and what constitutes a people from a modern perspective and with methodological rigor." Bálint praises this as an exemplary approach within Hungarian research.[361]

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[357] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 6.
[358] Róna-Tas, 6,8.
[359] Róna-Tas, 12.
[360] Csanád Bálint, "Az Ethnosz a Kora Középkorban. (A Kutatás Lehetőségei És Korlátai)," *Századok* 140, no. 1 (2006): 279.
[361] Bálint, 279.

Bálint also references István Zichy's emphasis on the idea that "peoples" often have languages that have changed one or more times. He criticizes Hungarian researchers, with the exception of Róna-Tas, for overlooking this insight. Bálint rejects the notion of an imaginary "ethnogenetic zero point" and the associated "linear" perspective, arguing instead that Hungarian ethnogenesis should be viewed as a chronological process. This process, according to him, involves migrations across vast regions such as Western Siberia, North of Black Sea and the North Caucasus within the framework of homeland theories.[362]

When it comes to the topic of Political Ecumene and ethnogenesis, it is necessary to return to Kristó. He has presented an important argument that connects the concept of political ecumene with Hungarian ethnogenesis. The "Turkish" political framework in which the Hungarians developed, or in other words, the *mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene* of which they were a part, according to Kristó, indicates that the Hungarians had already achieved a form of relative autonomy and independence during the Khazar period. This framework could have served as a political prerequisite for the integration of centuries-old ethnic traditions of Hungarians. Simply put, in Kristó's view, the *mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene* was a crucial element in the formation of Hungarian ethnogenesis.

Certainly, while acknowledging this perspective as Kristó's own and finding it significant for this study, a more "humble" argument can be proposed, especially if we also consider Bálint's critiques within the discussion. Bálint's critical perspective highlights the risks of adopting a strictly linear or "zero-point" approach to Hungarian ethnogenesis, where cultural and linguistic developments are viewed as straightforward progressions from a theoretical origin.

If we consider the first stage in the formation of Hungarian ethnogenesis to be the Finno-Ugric period, then, despite the long interval that Kristó emphasizes and the ongoing debate about the exact timing, it can be argued that the inclusion into the mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene, particularly during the Khazar period, represents the second stage. The third stage could be the disaster marked by the Pecheneg attack, leading to the settlement in the Carpathian Basin and the unity this settlement brought. The fourth stage might be the aftermath of the 955 Battle of Augsburg, after which the Hungarians entered the Western Christian Political Ecumene and began the process of new sedentary state-building in new political ecumene.

[362] Bálint, 294–95.

Two key points need to be emphasized here. The stages mentioned above represent a gradual and "ongoing" process of transition, with some phases being relatively clear and others more diffuse over time. However, the concept of "genesis" naturally carries a more singular meaning. Both genetic research and historical sources demonstrate this process. For instance, the Kabars, who were likely Turkic-speaking, shared a "common fate" with other Hungarians after the Pecheneg disaster, exemplifying such processes. Simply describing this as "integration" would be insufficient.

To pose the question more directly, considering the example of the Kabars: Were the Kabars assimilated, meaning did this "genesis" continue through their demise, or did it persist as a continuous evolution, akin to Heraclitus' metaphor of a "flowing river," constantly changing and perhaps still ongoing? Due to the temporal scope and the "nationalism" issues briefly mentioned in the problems section of this dissertation, the debates surrounding the continuation of the "ethnogenesis" process as outlined above will not be addressed further in this study.

2.7 Historical Background

To understand the Carpathian Basin, the region where the Hungarians settled following their conquest, it is first necessary to briefly discuss the history of the Avars, specifically the Late Avar period, which saw the collapse of their rule and created a political vacuum in the region before the arrival of the Hungarians.

According to Béla Miklós Szőke, the 8th century was a slow and peaceful period for the Avars.[363] However, towards the end of the century, the situation would change. With Charlemagne's rise to power, this peaceful state would be altered. The Avars, in response to the Carolingian expansion and the defeat of their allies, the Lombards, by the Franks, pursued a series of policies aimed at "peace" with the Carolingians, though with minimal military engagement. However, they failed to achieve success in either peace or military matters. Pohl notes that this situation further weakened the position of the Avar Khaganate. Avar envoys, who attended the council in Worms in 790 to maintain their former borders, returned empty-handed, a situation which the Franks used as a pretext for war.[364]

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[363] Béla Miklós Szőke, "The Late Avar Period," in *Hungarian Archaeology At The Turn Of The Millennium*, ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Teleki László Foundation, 2003), 308.

[364] Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822*, 379.

In the autumn of 791, Charlemagne launched a campaign against the Avars, which, according to Szőke, ended in failure due to the Avars' attrition tactics.[365] However, Pohl views Charlemagne's actions during this campaign as effective and does not consider it a failure for the Franks.[366] After several years of other conflicts, Charlemagne set out again in 795 to repeat his campaign against the Avars. Pohl notes that during this time, likely in 795, a civil war broke out among the Avar nobility.[367] In this context, it could be argued that the Avar rule, as a mounted pastoral political ecumene, clearly entered a crisis of legitimacy. Additionally, in 795, the "tudun" sent an envoy to Charlemagne, indicating his willingness to convert to Christianity and submit. Pohl interprets this as a sign of disintegration originating from the center, reflecting the ancient behavior of mounted pastoral nomads to abandon an unsuccessful leader.[368]

In 795, during a raiding campaign, the Avars suffered a significant defeat. The "tudun" converted to Christianity and pledged allegiance. In the 796 campaign, the Franks, following the civil war among the Avars, forced the new khagan and his entourage, who had come to power, to submit to the Franks, and they completely plundered the Avars' central "ring."[369]

Referring to the campaign, Pohl, drawing from Einhard, who wrote Charlemagne's biography, notes that in the perception of the Carolingian court and, by extension, their political ecumene, the war against the Avars was considered the greatest after the wars against the Saxons.[370] Despite an Avar revolt in Pannonia, by 811, the disintegration of the Avar Khaganate had become irreversible.[371]

Very little was known about Late Avar period settlement patterns until the 2000s. Referring to Béla Miklós Szőke's observation that excavations of settlements from this period mostly uncovered ceramics, animal bones, and charred grains—which provide insight into the subsistence, diet, and lifestyle of the time—it can be inferred that the diet was primarily based on agricultural produce. Szőke also notes that, along with research on

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[365] Szőke, "The Late Avar Period," 308.
[366] Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822*, 379,382.
[367] Pohl, 383.
[368] Pohl, 383.
[369] Pohl, 384.
[370] Pohl, 376.
[371] Béla Miklós Szőke, "The Late Avar Period," in *Hungarian Archaeology At The Turn Of The Millennium*, ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Teleki László Foundation, 2003), 308; in Hungarian see: Béla Miklós Szőke, "A Kései Avar Kor," in *Magyar Régészet Az Ezredfordulón*, ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Teleki László Alapítvány, 2003), 308.

the settlements, there has been a reclassification of pottery previously categorized as Slavic, now classified according to function and decoration.[372] In this context, two other perspectives should also be mentioned. Michael Schmauder explains the near disappearance of elite burials during the Late Avar period as a sign of a stronger "cultural homogenization."[373] He also references Pohl's interpretation, which describes these luxury items, particularly gold, as a form of prestige economy.[374]

Pohl states that, for the Avars and other mounted pastoral nomads, these "luxury" items were a means of displaying prestige, serving to emphasize the pursuit of social status. These luxury items helped maintain the owner's social standing, both in life and in death, through the grave goods buried with them.[375] Since this "prestige economy" will be discussed in detail in the section on the mounted political ecumene, it will not be elaborated upon here.

After briefly discussing the Late Avar period and Late Avar settlements, another important point to consider is the Khazars. In the context of discussing the migration of the Proto-Hungarians, it is essential to also mention Khazar history. This is crucial to address either comparatively or simultaneously for three main reasons.

First, the migration history of the Proto-Hungarians is directly connected with Khazar history. Proto-Hungarians (or as described as Hétmagyar by Szabolcs Polgár)[376] were subjects of the Khazar Khaganate.

Second, the reconstruction of early Hungarian social and political organization significantly relies on sources from the Khazar Khaganate. Prominent Hungarian scholars such as Gyula Kristó, György Györffy, and István Zimonyi have used sources on the Khazars and conducted comparative analyses with sources on early Hungarians in their reconstructions of early Hungarian social and political organizations.

Third, this study also aims to understand and analyze "global theories on pastoral nomadism," which are mostly based on Inner Asian mounted pastoral nomads, along with

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[372] Szőke, "The Late Avar Period," 309,311.
[373] Michael Schmauder, "Huns, Avars, Hungarians - Reflections on the Interaction between Steppe Empires in Southeast Europe and the Late Roman to Early Byzantine Empires," in *The Complexity of Interaction along the Eurasian Steppe Zone in the First Millennium CE*, 2015, 680.
[374] Schmauder, 680.
[375] Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822*, 236.
[376] Szabolcs Polgár, "The Character of the Trade between the Nomads and Their Settled Neighbours in Eurasia in the Middle Ages," in *The Competing Narratives between Nomadic People and Their Sedentary Neighbours*, ed. Chen Hao (Szeged: University of Szeged, 2019), 260.

mounted pastoral nomad Conquering Hungarians, and ultimately aims to elicit and verify these theories on conquering Hungarians. Therefore, theories for the social and political organization of mounted pastoral nomads built on the Khazar Khaganate play a crucial role in the eliciting and verifying process of comparative study. In this context, another prominent researcher, S.A. Pletneva, and her theories on the social and political organization of mounted pastoral nomads based on the Khazar example will also be mentioned and analyzed. While Pletneva follows Artamonov's reconstruction of Khazar history, she developed a progressive social development model for the Khazars. This model has strong parallels with the Szabó-Györffy model for early Hungarian/conquering Hungarians.

Byzantine chronicler Theophanes had described Khazars as East Turks.[377] While the word in Byzantine chronicles "Turkoi" referred to Western Turk Khaganate,[378] during the 9th century, the term Turks was mainly used for Khazars.[379]

The emergence of the Khazar Khaganate involves inconsistent and overlapping information with chronological discrepancies.[380] The prevailing view regarding the initial appearance of the Khazars is that they emerged from the Western Türk Khaganate. The Khazars sided with the Byzantines in the Byzantine-Sassanian war of A.D. 627.[381] Artamonov takes a classical approach, suggesting that the Khazars broke away from the Western Türk Khaganate, which was in a state of internal turmoil, and even considers the possibility that the foundation of the Khazar dynasty may have originated from the Ashina clan.[382]

Syriac sources mention that even before this date, during the reign of the Byzantine Emperor Maurice (582-602), they had moved further west from Central Asia and settled within the borders of the empire.[383] However, an even earlier period, the 4th century A.D.,

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[377] Turtledove, *The Chronicle of Theophanes, An English Translation of Anni Mundi 6095-6305 (A.D. 602-813), with Introduction and Notes*, 22.
[378] Mihail Illarionoviç Artamonov, *Hazar Tarihi, Türkler, Yahudiler, Ruslar*, trans. Ahsen Batur, 3rd ed. (İstanbul: Selenge, 2008), 155; Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 281.
[379] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 282.
[380] Peter Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, vol. 1 (Budapest: Akademiai Kiado, 1980), 49.
[381] Douglas Morton Dunlop, *The History of The Jewish Khazars* (New York: Schocken Books, 1967), 4–5.
[382] Artamonov, *Hazar Tarihi, Türkler, Yahudiler, Ruslar*, 229–30.
[383] Dunlop, *The History of The Jewish Khazars*, 6; For the Syriac sources mentioned by Dunlop see: Gregory Bar Hebraeus, *Bar Hebraeus' Chronography*, trans. E. A. Wallis Budge (London, 1932), v.32b; Patriarche Jacobite D'antioche, *Chronique De Michel Le Syrien*, ed. J.B. Chabot, vol. 2 (Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1901), 381.

is mentioned in Armenian sources, which describe Khazar raids into Transcaucasia (Southern Caucasus).[384] But Artamonov opposed this idea and claims that Armenian chroniclers who had mentioned Khazars in these early times were born long after these dates and this early records by those chroniclers might fall into the category of anachronism.[385]

Another controversial issue concerning the Khazar Khaganate is their name. Dunlop supports the widely held view that the name "Khazar" is the same as the Turkish word for "nomad" (*khazar* = nomad).[386] However, the debate over the name "Khazar" has been a significant topic in Khazar studies, closely tied to discussions about their language. Before discussing other theories about the name, it is worth mentioning Dunlop's Uyghur theory regarding the origin of the name, which suggests that, aside from its meaning, the name and thus the tribe might have originated from the Uyghur Kesa tribe. He bases this on the works of various researchers, including Paul Pelliot, referencing *T'ang-shu*.[387] Dunlop even repeats Paul Pelliot's assertion that the Kesa and Khazar tribes are the same. It should be noted that the classical Chinese writing of Kesa is 可薩. The Chinese transcription of this word is *kʰaXsat̚*, while the Turkish transcription is *ħassat*.[388] From a phonetical perspective, at least, the similarity in sound seems to have some validity.

Although some researchers have debated whether the Khazars existed in the region before the period of the Türk Khaganate and might even have taken an independent political stance, it is more accurate to refer to the Khazars' existence alongside the rise of the Türk Khaganate. From 568 to around 630 or 650, the Khazars were under the dominance of the Türk Khaganate.[389]

Following the overthrow of Emperor Maurice by Phocas, the Byzantine-Sassanian war of 602-628 initially proceeded unfavorably for Byzantium amid the ensuing uprisings and chaos.[390] The overthrow of Phocas and the rise of Heraclius, the Exarch of Africa, did not prevent Byzantium from losing several important cities to the Sassanians in the war; in

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[384] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:49; For the Armenian source mentioned by Golden see: Movses Dasxuranci and C. J. F. Dowsett, *The History of Caucasian Albanians* (Oxford University Press, 1961), 81–88.
[385] Artamonov, *Hazar Tarihi, Türkler, Yahudiler, Ruslar*, 157.
[386] "…*qaz to wander or nomadize so that Khazar=nomad*" Dunlop, *The History of The Jewish Khazars*, 3–4.
[387] Dunlop, 35.
[388] Paul W. Kroll, *A Student's Dictionary of Classical and Medieval Chinese* (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 239.
[389] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:49–50.
[390] M.V. Levtchenko, *Kuruluşundan Yıkılışına Kadar Bizans Tarihi*, trans. Maide Selen (İstanbul: Özne, 1999), 109–10.

611, Antioch, in 613, Damascus, in 614, Jerusalem, and in 619, Egypt fell to the Sassanians.[391]

However, during Byzantium's war with the Sassanians, the Türk Khaganate became an ally of Byzantium. With this alliance, the Byzantines, supported by the Türk Khaganate, moved the war eastward into the South Caucasus.[392] Additionally, as a fresher source of military recruits compared to the war-weary and internally divided Anatolia, Byzantium began recruiting soldiers from the South Caucasus and launched an offensive alongside their new ally, successfully resisting the Avar-allied Sassanian siege of their own capital.[393]

The war eventually concluded, forcing the Sassanians to abandon the vast territories they had conquered from Byzantium, stretching as far as Egypt, and to engage in internal power struggles.[394] Byzantium narrowly escaped disaster.[395]

It is during this war that the Khazars are first mentioned in Byzantine sources. In 626, as allies of Byzantium, the Khazars raided Albania in the Caucasus, and later, in 627 and 628, they entered Georgian territory under the leadership of Yabghu Khagan and his nephew Shad, whom Peter Golden believes were likely Türk Khaganate.[396] Theophanes, a former Byzantine aristocrat, chronicler, and monk, describes the Khazars as "Eastern Turks" in these accounts.[397] He describes the leader of the Khazars, whom he calls "Tsevil," as second in rank to the Khagan.[398] In Armenian, this name appears as Jebu Khagan, and in Georgian as Jibğu/Jibğa, which aligns with the Western Türk Khaganate' status of vassalage under the great khagan in the east.[399]

Two years later, in 629-630, the Khazars again fought in the South Caucasus, this time under a leader named Ç'orpan Tarhan. Meanwhile, further east in China, the T'ang

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[391] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:50–51; Levtchenko, *Kuruluşundan Yıkılışına Kadar Bizans Tarihi*, 110.
[392] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:51; Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 448–49.
[393] Levtchenko, *Kuruluşundan Yıkılışına Kadar Bizans Tarihi*, 110–11.
[394] Levtchenko, 111; Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 457.
[395] Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 457.
[396] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:51.
[397] Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 446; Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:51.
[398] Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 447; Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:51.
[399] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:51.

Dynasty launched a campaign against the Eastern Türk Khaganate (Eastern Türks), ending the political existence of the Eastern Türk Khaganate in 630 AD. During this period, the Western Turkic Khaganate was also engulfed in a prolonged and exhausting civil war.[400] Concurrently, the Western Türk Khaganate plunged into a protracted and debilitating civil war, paving the way for the Khazar Khanate to emerge as an independent political force from the western branch of the Türk Khaganate.[401] This situation allowed the Khazar Khaganate to emerge as an independent political force, growing out of the western branch of the Turkic Empire.[402]

Khazar Khaganate had become a major political actor after the collapse of another mounted pastoral nomad state, Western Türk Khaganate. Geographically, their center of power was at more western regions compared to its predecessor. The political vacuum is quite common in histories of mounted steppe nomads and the political vacuum which had occurred after the fall of Türk Khanate in the west, Khazars had filled this political area as probably not legal but nominal successors. Unlike many other post Turk Khanates, Turkic people, and societies in their era, they had claimed the political state title Khanate. Their center of power, like their predecessors, was on the continental trade roads and they controlled trade hubs and cities along the way.

The history of the Khazars during this period is characterized by a series of prolonged wars with the Islamic Caliphate. During the rule of the Abbasid Caliphate, there was a period of relative peace, which intersects with the focus of this dissertation. It is important to mention that, during the reign of Khagan Obadiah, the Khazar Khaganate adopted Judaism as the "state religion." Rather than delving into the process and details of this conversion, it is necessary to discuss a few key points related to it here.

Pletneva, building on Artamonov's work, argues that the conversion to Judaism led to division and destruction within the Khaganate. Artamonov and Pletneva suggest that, while initially a clever move to adopt a third major world religion in opposition to both the Byzantine Empire and the Islamic Caliphate, the unique characteristics of Judaism ultimately caused significant internal conflict and the downfall of the Khaganate. They

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[400] Golden, 1:51–52; Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 448–49.
[401] Osman Karatay, *Hazarlar Yahudi Türkler Türk Yahudiler ve Ötekiler*, 1st ed. (Ankara: Kripto, 2014), 15; Ahmet Taşağıl, "Hazarlar," in *İslam Ansiklopedisi* (İstanbul: Türkiye Diyanet Vakfı, 1998), 117.
[402] Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:51–52; Mango and Scott, *The Chronicle of Theophanes Confessor Byzantine and Near Eastern History AD 284-813*, 448–49.

claim that Judaism's "divisive" and "destructive" nature stemmed from its identity as a national religion, which, rather than uniting the Khazar tribes, ended up dividing them.

It should also be noted that this perspective is not particularly relevant to the topic at hand. In this context, it is more appropriate to evaluate the situation based on the events experienced by the Khazars, focusing on themes of disruption, tribal uprisings, and division.

In this context, several points need to be addressed. Similar uprisings occurred when the Hungarians converted to Christianity. These uprisings did not bring down the Kingdom of Hungary, suggesting that such uprisings might be a common phenomenon among mounted pastoral nomads. Similarly, Pletneva mentions the uprising within the royal family of the Turkic Khaganate and the defeated group's refuge among the Khazars, after which the Khazars began to identify themselves as a "Khaganate." Naturally, any potential changes in jurisdiction, such as those associated with religious conversion, will be met with resistance. However, discussing the differences in response to Judaism, Christianity, or Islam requires more than the abstract inference that Judaism is a national religion and therefore causes a legitimacy issue among tribes.

It would be more appropriate to explain the situation in the context of a change in the political ecumene. As will be mentioned throughout the dissertation, by the 10th century, the mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene faced a crisis—a crisis of the "existing" mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene. During this period, mounted pastoral nomadic communities either integrated into other political ecumene or found themselves within the "new" mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene that emerged from the revolutions initiated by Genghis Khan.

The example of the Khazars can be hypothesized as a political maneuver made during this period of transition. In the context of this hypothesis, the following reconstruction can be made.

First and foremost, it should be noted that the identification of their political ecumene becomes somewhat more complex. During the "early" Khazar era, the Khazars were part of a mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, as understood from contemporary sources. They are referred to as "Turks," with sources not differentiating them from other Turkic groups. However, after the 10th century, descriptions of the Khazars in the sources began to change. They were described as a different kind of people, even speaking an entirely different language.

This shift is likely related to the reforms of Obadiah and the conversion of the Khazars (or the Khazar ruling elite) to Judaism. The Khazar political ecumene became distinct from that of other "Turks." This transformation may explain why the early Hungarians continued to be described as "Turks," while the "Khazars" began to be portrayed differently. The early Hungarians' connection with Khazar lands and administration had already been severed after the Pecheneg invasion and their subsequent migration to the west. Obadiah's reforms and the resulting change in the political ecumene likely occurred later. Furthermore, if the Kabars migrated to Hungarian lands due to a civil war stemming from the Khazar shift in religion and/or political ecumene, it is highly probable that this new Khazar political ecumene had little impact on the early Hungarians.

However, observing the characteristics of this political ecumene becomes quite challenging here, especially if it is assumed to be in a formative stage. Its features may not have yet fully developed, or if they had, there might not be sufficient data to gather. The collapse of this new Khazar Political Ecumene before it could fully establish itself further complicates this analysis.

In this section, it would be appropriate to also discuss Pletneva's theory of gradual sedentation. This theory is particularly important due to its parallels with the Szabó-Györffy theory.

Pletneva's theory outlines the stages of the transition from a nomadic to a sedentary lifestyle, highlighting significant economic and social changes, such as the emergence of cities, property differentiation, and small fortifications, indicating the development of a class society within the Khaganate.[403] Agricultural practices, supported by paleobotanical analyses, confirm historical accounts and emphasize the importance of agriculture in the Khazar economy. Pletneva notes that soil analysis and paleobotanical remains clearly demonstrate the presence of agriculture around these cities, with viticulture being highly developed, suggesting that Joseph's claims about irrigated agriculture are likely to be validated.[404]

Pletneva's theory on sedentarization begins with an examination of the first form of nomadism, which involved large-scale migrations with herds in search of suitable pastures. In this initial stage, the Khazar population was fully mobile, continuously migrating

[403] Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga*, 47.
[404] Pletneva, 43.

throughout the year without permanent dwellings or long-term settlements. Pletneva describes this form as involving the entire population moving constantly, not staying long in any one place. This phase is associated with periods of conquest and early territorial establishment. She notes that this form of nomadism, which was more common during the period of land acquisition, is rarely seen on the steppe. Additionally, she points out that almost no artifacts have been found from this period.[405]

The second stage is characterized by the establishment of fixed winter camps, reflecting a shift towards a more stable lifestyle. Archaeological evidence, such as scattered bones and pottery shards, supports this development. Pletneva indicates that this stage differs from the first by having fixed winter camps to which the nomadic population returned each year from April to December, marking a significant transition towards a semi-nomadic existence with more stable seasonal settlements.[406] The territory used for pastures decreased, with areas divided into summer and winter pastures. This stage includes two variations: semi-nomadism, similar to the camp nomadism of the first stage, and semi-sedentary, representing an almost entirely settled way of life. The "kuren" form of nomadism emerged first, characterized by the positioning of the tribe in a circle with the elder in the middle, followed by the "aul" form. The poorer members of the population remained in the winter camps even during summer, gradually turning these areas into permanent settlements or herding camps. These impoverished groups began to engage in agriculture and, in some cases, handicrafts such as pottery making. According to Pletneva, both variations of this nomadic economy can be considered the initial stage of the settlement of the Bulgar population in the Don area during the 8th century.[407]

In the third phase, "nomadism" was not practiced in the strictest sense, as most of the population had become sedentary, engaging in agriculture and various crafts. Pletneva notes that only a segment of the population, specifically those managing herds, continued a nomadic lifestyle. Initially, it was mainly the elderly, infirm, and the poorest members of nomadic societies—those unable to migrate—who began cultivating land near the winter camps, creating vegetable patches, gardens, and fields for survival. The larger and poorer segment could no longer sustain the nomadic lifestyle and sought alternative means of

[405] Pletneva, 38; Boris Zhivkov, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, trans. Daria Manova, East Central and Eastern Europe in the Middle Ages, 450–1450 (Leiden: Brill, 2015), 175.
[406] Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga*, 39.
[407] Pletneva, 39; S.A. Pletneva, *Kochevniki Srednevekov'ia. Poiski Istoricheskikh Zakonomernostei* (Mo: Nauka Publishing House, 1982), 37–38; Zhivkov, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, 176.

subsistence. According to Pletneva, a clear chronological distinction between the second and third stages of nomadism is difficult to establish. In Khazaria, this stage began during the 8th century, and she suggests that all three forms of the nomadic economy coexisted between the 8th and 9th centuries.[408]

In the fourth and final stage, the nomads could no longer be considered true nomads. The transition to fortified settlements along trade routes led to the emergence of economically and strategically significant centers. At this point, only the elite continued to engage in nomadic pastoralism. These developments illustrate the Khazars' shift towards a settled and economically diversified society. Pletneva emphasizes that identifying these fortified settlements with the names of Khazar cities mentioned in various sources has led to an ongoing debate among scholars.[409]

Regarding Pletneva's theory, especially concerning the third stage, a question arises: If these people were previously nomadic and only took up agriculture when they became physically incapable of migrating, how did they learn agriculture well enough to establish relatively sustainable agricultural settlements? Furthermore, as an anecdote derived from Pletneva's theory, this instance contrasts sharply with the general notion that "*a poor nomad is a true nomad*," given that it was typically the poorer individuals who took up farming.

In this context, a brief mention of the Volga Bulgars is warranted. Róna-Tas suggests that the Oghur (or Uighur) people, who spoke a Turkic language, originated from the steppes of what is now modern Kazakhstan and then moved west of the Urals around 460 A.D.[410] Initially falling under the hegemony of the Sabirs, the Oghurs, under Bulgar leadership, regained their independence from the Sabirs in the early 7th century A.D. According to Róna-Tas, the Bulgars are widely referred to as "onoghundur" (onogundur) in historical sources.[411] He argues that the probable location of "Bulgaria" before the 6th century was in the Kuban region, adjacent to the Caucasus.[412]

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[408] Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga*, 39; Zhivkov, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, 176; Pletneva, *Kochevniki Srednevekov'ia. Poiski Istoricheskikh Zakonomernostei*, 77–78.

[409] Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga*, 39–42; Pletneva, *Kochevniki Srednevekov'ia. Poiski Istoricheskikh Zakonomernostei*, 78–79; Zhivkov, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, 176.

[410] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 212.

[411] Róna-Tas, 215.

[412] Róna-Tas, 217.

Byzantine sources indicate that the Bulgar leader Khuvrat rebelled against the Avar chieftain in 635 and established the Bulgar Empire. However, Róna-Tas disputes this account, arguing that the influence of the Pannonian Avars could not have extended as far as the Kuban region (Róna-Tas 1999:219). Shortly after Khuvrat's death, around the 650s or earlier, his empire disintegrated. Some of his people migrated westward, while others moved eastward to settle near the Don River in Khazar territory after 670, where they lived under Khazar domination. Following the Khazars' defeat by the Umayyad commander (and later caliph) Marwan in 737, these events likely spurred the development of diplomatic relations between the Bulgars and the Islamic caliphate.[413]

In this context, it is necessary to briefly touch upon the history of the conquering Hungarians. Here, I will address a few points related to their migration and early period, followed by a discussion on sedentarization and state formation during the period of the raids and related topics. However, I will avoid a detailed chronological narration of events, as these are already provided in the "*timeline*" tables in the appendix.

In the historiography of the 20th century, a common view has emerged regarding the formation of the Hungarians, suggesting that Hungarian-speaking groups originated in the forested region between the Volga and Ob rivers.[414] However, the migration of the Hungarians from this region to the west remains a subject of debate, with no consensus reached.

The migration of the Hungarians can be discussed through two primary theories: the Northern Migration theory and the Southern Migration theory. According to the Northern Migration theory, Hungarian-speaking communities moved from the forested region between the Volga and Ob rivers to the north of the Caucasus, and after a period of residence, migrated to the north of the Black Sea. The Southern Migration theory posits that Hungarian-speaking communities migrated directly from the Volga region to the north of the Black Sea. Additionally, a third concept suggests that the migration might have occurred earlier, between the 5th and 7th centuries, as indicated by the appearance of Sevorti in Armenian sources from the 850s, which some scholars identify as Hungarians.

[413] Róna-Tas, 219–20.
[414] Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland, The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest*, 195; István Zimonyi, "Key Issues of the Early Hungarian History Theories in the Light Of Recent Literature," *Archivum Eurasiae Medii Aevi* 23 (2017): 299.

Zimonyi provides a summary of these migration theories and the perspectives of various researchers:[415]

József Deér[416] then István Fodor argue that the Hungarians migrated from the Volga to the Black Sea around 750.[417]

András Róna-Tas and Lajos Ligeti assert that the westward migration happened earlier, in the 7th century, with the Hungarians moving from the Ural and Volga region to the North Caucasus and then migrating along the Kuban River to the steppes north of the Black Sea.[418]

Gyula Kristó agreed on Károly Czeglédy, Gyula Németh and that the migration followed the same westward route, but he claimed that this occurring in the 830s.[419] In this context, Kristó's views, the absence of any mention of Hungarians in detailed accounts of the Khazars by contemporary chroniclers, such as Saint Theophanes and Patriarch Nikephoros I of Constantinople, is considered negative evidence. However, significant positive evidence is provided by Simon Logothete's account of the Hungarians fighting against the Eastern Romans (Byzantine) at the request of the Bulgars along the Danube in 836–838.[420] Further evidence comes from "De Administrando Imperio"[421] and Ibn Rustah's records, which note the construction of Sarkel by the Khazars on the eastern bank of the Don in 838 as a defense against the Hungarians, supporting the theory of Hungarian migration from Magna Hungaria in the 830s. [422]

Recently, in 2024 a new article based on archaeological research written by Atilla Türk. In this article, it is suggested by Türk that the ancestors of the Hungarians could have been located in the eastern Ural Mountains. A group of Hungarians is believed to have migrated westwards in the early 9th century, eventually appearing on the left bank of the Volga, with their settlement area extending to the border of Volga Bulgaria. Subsequently,

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[415] Zimonyi, "Key Issues of the Early Hungarian History Theories in the Light Of Recent Literature," 299–300.
[416] Zimonyi's article refers as "*János Deér*", which is likely due to an editorial error.
[417] "*at any rate up 730-750 Hungarians were still in Bashkiria*" Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland, The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest*, 208.
[418]"Moving southwest from the Ural region, the Magyars then occupied the Bulgars' former territory around the end of the 6th century." Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 322.
[419]"they abandon their homeland eart of the Volga around730 at the earlies, and 830 at latest" Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 39–41.
[420] Kristó, 86.
[421] Gyula Moravcsik, ed., *Constantine Porphyrogenitus de Administrando Imperio*, trans. Romilly J. H. Jenkins (Washington, District of Colombia: Dumbarton Oaks, 1967), 183.
[422] Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 86.

part of this group remained along the Kama River, while another group migrated further west before the 830s and settled in the northern foreland of the Black Sea.[423]

There are no written sources concerning Hungarian history prior to the 830s.[424] As a result, the study of Hungarian history before this period, particularly the search for the Hungarian ancient homeland (Urheimat), has become a critical area of research for Hungarian historians over the past century. In the absence of contemporary written records, archaeological and linguistic sources have been instrumental in addressing questions regarding early Hungarian history and their origins.[425] The study of loanwords, especially from Turkish, has also played a significant role in both Turkish linguistic research and the understanding of early Hungarian history.[426]

From these sources, it can be inferred that by the 9th century, the Hungarians were active in the Western Eurasian Steppe Belt, interacting with other nomadic pastoralist groups and political entities such as the Pechenegs, Khazars, and Bulgars, and coming under the political radar of the Samanid State and the Eastern Roman Empire. The early Hungarians were politically involved with the Khazar Khaganate, which included many other tribes.[427] However, during their westward migration through the Eurasian Steppe Belt, they eventually broke away from the Khazars. This period in Hungarian history is marked by conflicts with the Pechenegs, often resulting in Hungarian defeats. [428]

In "De Administrando Imperio," Emperor Constantine VII refers to the Hungarians living in a region called Levedia (Lebedia), adjacent to the Khazar lands and named after their first leader (voivode) Lebedias.[429] According to the account, the Khazar Khan offered a noble Khazar lady in marriage to Lebedias, but they had no children. Subsequently, when the Pechenegs were defeated by the Khazars and fled to Hungarian lands, they overpowered the Hungarians. Some Hungarians fled east to Persian lands, while others moved west to Etelköz, inhabited by Pechenegs during the time the work was written (mid-10th century). Shortly thereafter, the Khazar Khan summoned Lebedias and offered to appoint him as

[423] Atilla Türk, "New Results and Ideas Of The Archaeological Research On Early Hungarian History In The Eurasian Context," *The Volga River Region Archaeology* 47, no. 1 (2024): 234.
[424] Gyula Kristó, *A Kárpát-Medence És a Magyarság Régmúltja (1301-Ig)* (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1994), 270.
[425] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 9; Kristó, *A Kárpát-Medence És a Magyarság Régmúltja (1301-Ig)*, 62; Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 19.
[426] Kristó, *A Kárpát-Medence És a Magyarság Régmúltja (1301-Ig)*, 70.
[427] Peter B. Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East* (O. Harrassowitz, 1992), 262.
[428] Moravcsik, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus de Administrando Imperio*, 51,53.
[429] Moravcsik, 171.

prince over his people. Lebedias declined, recommending Álmos and his son Árpád instead. The Hungarians eventually chose Árpád for his superior qualities. Following another Pecheneg attack, Árpád led the Hungarian people to the lands of Moravia, where they displaced the previous inhabitants. [430]

It is noteworthy that the term "Turk" is consistently used for the Hungarians in this account. Both "De Administrando Imperio" and "Taktika" uniformly use the name "Turk" as an exonym for the Hungarians, except at the beginning of the narrative, where the group is initially referred to as "Sabartoi asphaloi" before being called "Turks." In High Medieval Hungarian chronicles, the story shows parallels but is somewhat more explanatory. Gyula Kristó describes the story as the chiefs (vezér in Hungarian), identified as the "Seven Magyars" ("Hetumoger"), convening a council and agreeing to lead their people to a new homeland that could better sustain their increasing numbers and free them from Pecheneg oppression.[431] While there is no reliable information on the extent of population growth before the migration,[432] the phenomenon of migratory movements due to increased population and political pressure is a well-documented historical pattern.

Additional insights are provided by the Jayhani tradition, where the Hungarians are variously referred to as a kind (jins) of "Turks" in Ibn Rustah, a nation (qawim) in al-Marwazi, a tribe (qabile) in Aufi and Shukrullah, or a type (naw') in "Ḥudûd al-'Âlam."[433] The Hungarian chief is said to have had 20,000 horsemen, residing in a vast country bordering the "Roman Sea" with two rivers larger than the Oxus (Jayhun) flowing into this sea. They engaged in trade with the Byzantine Empire and lived in tents, and Khazars were fortified against them. Information about two administrative titles among the Hungarians is provided: one is "k.nd.h," denoting the royal title, and the other is "j.l.h," the military commander's title.[434] Róna-Tas suggests that gyula (j.l.h) was purely a military commander, while Golden proposes that "gyula" (jula) and "kende" (kündü) were variations of the sacred kingship in the Khazar tradition.[435]

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[430] Moravcsik, 171,173,175.
[431] Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 87–88.
[432] Kristó, 93.
[433] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 83.
[434] Zimonyi, 38–43.
[435] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East*, 262; Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 343.

Since the number of soldiers and titles of the conquering Hungarians will be revisited later in this study, particularly in the context of administrative structure and state development, there is no need to delve into great detail here. However, a few points from Western Christian sources are worth mentioning. Western Christian sources from the earliest periods have referred to the Hungarians as "Huns" or "Scythians" in Latin literature.[436] The first Western Christian source mentioning the Hungarians is the Carolingian-era Frankish annals, "Annales Bertiniani," covering the years 830–882. The annals, written in Latin, mention an attack in 862 by a people referred to as "Ungri," previously unknown to the Franks, marking it as the earliest source concerning Hungarian raids into Frankish territories.[437] The term "Ungri" used in this source represents one of the earliest examples of the contemporary exonym for the Hungarian nation.

On the eve of the conquest of the Carpathian Basin, the Annals of Fulda described the Hungarians, who raided Pannonia and Bulgaria from Etelköz, as Avars. In 906, Abbot Regino of Prüm referred to them as Scythians coming from Scythia.[438] Györffy posits that this Scythian-Hun-Avar-Hungarian identification was not present in the biographers or clergy of King Stephen in the 11th century but was "discovered" by Hungarian chroniclers who delved into Western Christian annals.[439] The use of these terms can be considered examples related to the difficulties in defining mounted pastoral nomads, as mentioned in the introduction, as well as the different approaches taken. They also provide insight into how the conquering Hungarians were perceived by other political ecumenes from the perspective of the political ecumene concept.

In this context, when briefly discussing the place of Hungarian raids and campaigns in European historiography, Bácsatyai notes that in 20th-century historiography outside of Hungary—particularly in French and Italian scholarship—the destructive impact of the Hungarian raids is portrayed as being minimal. In contrast, in German historiography, the Hungarian raids are depicted as a catalyst for unity.[440]

According to Kristó, in 881, the Hungarians and Kabars were engaged in a joint military operation against the East Franks. They had likely come at the invitation of the

[436] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 9; Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 15.
[437] Nelson, *The Annals of St-Bertin*, 10; Waitz, *Annales Bertiniani, Scriptores Rerum Germanicarum in Usum Scholarum Ex Monumentis Germaniae Historicis Recusi*, 60.
[438] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 15.
[439] Györffy, 15.
[440] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 11–12.

Moravian ruler, Prince Svatopluk.[441] So in 881, they fought twice against the Franks as allies of the Moravian ruler Svatopluk.[442] Saint Cyril's brother, Methodius, met with the "King of the Hungarians" in 882 (or 884) somewhere in the Lower or Middle Danube, and As referenced by Kristó from Peter Király, this king is referred to as "künde" or "gyula."[443] Gyula notes that ten years later, in 892, the Hungarians reappear in written sources.[444] In 892, the Hungarians switched sides and began to support Frankish King Arnulf.[445] After consolidating his power in Germany, Arnulf went to settle accounts with Moravia and, with the help of the Hungarians, devastated the country in 892.[446]

The Frank-Bulgar alliance, still ongoing in 892, would end after Khan Simeon came to power in Bulgaria in 893.[447] This alliance would be replaced by Bulgar-Moravian cooperation.[448] In the autumn of 894, Simeon would launch successful attacks against Byzantium.[449] Byzantine Emperor "Leo VI the Wise" would send envoys to the Hungarians seeking their support.[450] According to Gyula these envoys sent in late 894 or early 895. The Hungarians had gained control of the eastern half of the Carpathian Basin sometime between 892 and 894.[451] Engel asserts that the conquest of 894 marks the end of their military activities aimed at supporting the Byzantines and Franks against Moravia and the Bulgarians.[452] Svatopluk's empire was held together by his personal authority. After Svatopluk's sudden death in 894, his sons' rivalry quickly led to the disintegration of the empire.[453] In 894, Árpád sent his eldest son, Prince Levente, against the Bulgarians as an ally of the Moravians to the Pannonian and Bulgarian frontiers.[454]

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[441] Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 175.
[442] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 10.
[443] Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 175; Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 10; Lubomir Favlik, ed., *Magnae Moravie Fontes Historici*, vol. II (Brno, 1967), 160–61; Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 331.
[444] Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 175.
[445] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 10; Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 177.
[446] Ferenc Eckhart, *Macaristan Tarihi*, trans. İbrahim Kafesoğlu (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1935), 11.
[447] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 11.
[448] Engel, 11.
[449] Gyula Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301* (Budapest: Osiris Kiadó, 2007), 48; Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 12.
[450] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 331.
[451] Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 177.
[452] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 11.
[453] Eckhart, *Macaristan Tarihi*, 11.
[454] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 28.

Regarding the conquest of the Carpathian Basin, the classifications within Hungarian scholarship show some variations. Róna-Tas divides the conquest into three phases, while Gyula Kristó divides it into two. According to Róna-Tas, the first phase begins in 895 and ends in 898, the second phase ends in 899-900, and the third phase occurs between 900 and 902.[455] Kristó, on the other hand, starts the first phase between 895 and 896, and begins the second phase, connected with the Italian campaigns of 899-900, concluding it in 907.[456] Györffy also divides the conquest into three stages. In first stage, Hungarians occupied the Upper Tisza region and Transylvania between 894 and 895, the area east of the Danube followed that in the second stage which was between 895 and 900; and finally in 900, the region from the Danube to the Fischa and Little Carpathians were occupied.[457]

During 899-900, Hungarian forces undertook ventures in Italy, as Arnulf's ally, they came to Italy against Arnulf's rival, King Berengar I, and participated in the battle by the Brenta River.[458] They were culminated in the Battle of Brenta on September 24, 899. Berengar saved his kingdom by paying them an annual tax.[459]

Bácsatyai notes that the "Annales Fuldenses" is the only source mentioning that during the Italian campaign of 899-900, King Berengar lost twenty thousand soldiers in the Battle of Brenta and that the Hungarians returned by the same route. He highlights the difficulty in translating the sentence regarding their return by the same route, as it is unclear whether the Hungarians devastated Pannonia upon arriving there or while passing through on their way back.[460] In light of Takács's recent excavations and research on settlements in the Carpathian Basin during the 8th to 11th centuries, which found no evidence of sudden and severe destruction in settlements from this period, it can be argued that the Hungarians most likely caused destruction while en route, rather than in Pannonia itself.[461]

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[455] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 334.
[456] Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301*, 50-51,54.
[457] Györffy, "Honfoglalás, Megtelepedés És a Kalandozások," 135.
[458] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 13.
[459] Engel, 13; Kristó, *Hungarian History in the Ninth Century*, 198.
[460] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 43.
[461] Miklós Takács, "Changing Political Landscapes in the Ninth-Century Central Carpathian Basin: Interpreting Recent Settlement Excavation Data," in *Imperial Spheres and the Adriatic: Byzantium, the Carolingians and the Treaty of Aachen (812)*, ed. Mladen Ančić, Jonathan Shepard, and Trpimir Vedriš (London: Routledge, 2018), 234; Miklós Takács, "Some Considerations at the End of a Big Settlement-Project," in *Inter Tempora. Th e Chronology of the Early Medieval Period Issues, Approaches, Results Proceedings of the National Conference Arad, 26 –29 September 2018* (Cluj-Napoca: Editura Mega, 2019), 263–64.

In this context, discussing the Saxon campaign related to the raids would be important for understanding the views on the tribal federation of the conquering Hungarians. As the Saxon campaign unfolded in 906. The Hungarians participated as allies of Berengar in his struggle against Emperor Louis III in Northern Italy. In 906, they launched their first campaign against Saxony.[462] Thuringia and Saxony were ravaged in 908 as result of their Alliance with Daleminci. During this campaign, they allied with the Daleminci, a Slavic tribe living along the banks of the Elbe River, against Duke Henry of Saxony (or the Daleminci hired the Hungarians). The Hungarians caused significant destruction in Saxony.[463] Bácsatyai has highlighted a debate within Hungarian historiography regarding the campaign initiated at the request of the Daleminzi. It is reported that two independent Hungarian units entered Saxon territory separately during this campaign. One unit entered under the pretext of aiding the Daleminzi, while the other, unaware of the first, also entered Saxon territory. Kristó interpreted this as evidence of an independent tribal foreign policy.[464] Bácsatyai, while acknowledging that the campaign operated somewhat autonomously, argues, based on Györffy's reference to Widukind's account, that the two Hungarian units acted in coordination—waiting for each other and then departing only after both had plundered Saxony.[465]

Another noteworthy point related to the raids and tributary relationships is the Italian raid of 922. According to Bácsatyai, the Hungarians were present in Italy in 922; the primary purpose of this raid was likely to demonstrate power and collect tribute.[466] Liutprand notes that the Hungarians had at least at one point regularly subjected Italy to tribute. Bácsatyai argues that Liutprand, who worked in the Italian royal chancery, had accurate information regarding the tribute paid to the Hungarians and that his accounts are based on direct testimony. Initially, Liutprand reports that Hugh paid the Hungarians "ten measures of coins" (ten modii of silver). Bácsatyai points out that this amount was the same as the sum paid by King Berengar five years later when "*the Hungarian king Taksony (Taxis) came to*

[462] Kristó, *A Kárpát-Medence És a Magyarság Régmúltja (1301-Ig)*, 83.
[463] Engel, *The Realm of St Stephen, A History of Medieval Hungary, 895-1526*, 13; Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301*, 56.
[464] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 164; Kristó, *Levedi Törzsszövetségétől Szent István Államáig*, 362–64.
[465] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 164; Györffy, "Honfoglalás, Megtelepedés És a Kalandozások," 144.
[466] Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 160.

Italy with a large army." However, Liutprand additionally writes that Berengar mixed copper with the silver to gather these ten measures of coins.

Bácsatyai, considering Liutprand's close ties to the royal court, believes the claim about the fraudulent coins given to the Hungarians is accurate, and this is further supported by the discovery of Italian coin finds in the Carpathian Basin.[467]

From this, it can be inferred that the Hungarians attempted to establish a tributary relationship, but 9th-century Northern Italy did not share the same political ecumene or the same perception of engaging with nomads as China did. Additionally, the incident of the counterfeit coins suggests that Italy did not possess the economic structure necessary to sustain such a relationship, like to that of China.

According to Kristó, the two major defeats of the Hungarians, the Battle of Augsburg in 955 and the Battle of Arcadiopolis in 970, prompted a shift towards a more settled lifestyle.[468] In this context, a reverse analysis can be made by evaluating what the Conquering Hungarian raids brought as an economic and social phenomenon, through the lens of what was "lost." Following this defeat, the halt in raiding campaigns resulted in a substantial reduction in the influx of wealth, which had previously been a cornerstone of the Hungarian economy. Kristó notes that raiding campaigns brought in valuable spoils, such as precious metals, treasures, and captives, which were essential for sustaining the nomadic state's economy and social order. He states that with the cessation of these campaigns, the loot and taxes that temporarily compensated for the lack of new conquests also ceased.[469]

This cessation also impacted the distribution of wealth within the Hungarian tribal state. Previously, successful raids allowed for wealth accumulation, which was then distributed among the elite and various social groups, helping to maintain a balance within society. Kristó observes that this balance, ensured by the raids, was disrupted, as the continuous influx of wealth ceased. Consequently, there was a decline in the quality and quantity of grave goods and a general "greying" and impoverishment of society.[470]

As external sources of wealth diminished, the internal social dynamics of the Hungarian tribal state began to change. The end of raiding campaigns meant the elite could no longer rely on external spoils to maintain their privileged positions and had to turn to

[467] Bácsatyai, 161.
[468] Kristó, *A Magyar Állam Megszületése*, 303.
[469] Kristó, 303–4.
[470] Kristó, 305.

internal sources of wealth and power. Kristó suggests that this shift led to increased social stratification and potential conflicts within society, as the elite sought to consolidate their power through internal means rather than external wealth.[471] The cessation of raids also contributed to the political fragmentation of the Hungarian nomadic state and its transition to a more fragmented tribal state. Without coordinated raiding campaigns, centralized leadership weakened, leading to the decline of the sacred dual princely system and the emergence of smaller, regional power centers.[472] Additionally, changes in natural conditions due to the relocation of their settlements emphasized the need for a lifestyle change, further highlighted by their military defeats, which underscored the risks of continuing raids.[473]

The economic pressures resulting from the end of raiding campaigns encouraged a shift towards a more settled lifestyle and an agrarian-based economy. Kristó notes that the relocation of their settlements intensified and emphasized the need for a lifestyle change, prompting the Hungarians to settle and adopt agricultural practices.[474] This shift facilitated cultural integration and transformation within the Hungarian tribal state. As the Hungarians settled in the Carpathian Basin and adopted agriculture, they increasingly interacted with and assimilated aspects of their neighbors' cultures, such as the Slavs and other non-nomadic peoples. Kristó mentions that this cultural integration is reflected in the numerous Slavic loanwords in Hungarian related to agriculture.[475]

The cessation of raiding also influenced leadership strategies and external relations. With the loss of income from raids, Hungarian leaders sought new ways to maintain power and secure their territories. This included adopting Christianity, forming alliances with neighboring Christian states, and engaging in diplomatic relations with powerful neighbors like the Byzantine Empire and the Holy Roman Empire. Kristó notes that the leaders made compromises, such as getting baptized and founding bishoprics and monasteries, to adapt to the changing socio-economic and political landscape.[476]

On the other hand, György Györffy offers a different perspective on the Battle of Augsburg and its aftermath. He argues that the battle did not immediately impact the Conquering Hungarians' way of life. He notes that only the middle class from Western

[471] Kristó, 305.
[472] Kristó, 303,307.
[473] Kristó, 303.
[474] Kristó, 303.
[475] Kristó, 303.
[476] Kristó, 315–16.

Hungary participated in the battle, and even if the army was reduced by half or two-thirds, ordinary people continued to work in their villages. Moreover, practices such as polygamy and marrying the widow of a deceased brother helped replenish the demographic gap in the middle class within one or two decades. The warrior class in other regions continued raiding for another fifteen years.

However, Györffy attributes the cessation of raids to the conquering Hungarians' belief in an afterlife and its psychological impact, suggesting a more spiritual interpretation. In contrast, Kristó's arguments, which focus on the economic and social aspects, appear more rational and grounded in worldly perspectives.[477]

[477] Györffy, "Honfoglalás, Megtelepedés És a Kalandozások," 152–53; György Györffy, "Honfoglalás És Megtelepedés," in *Magyarország Története*, ed. Zsigmond Pál Pach (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1984), 699.

3 The Mounted Pastoral Nomad Political Pathways

After discussing the differences between mounted pastoral nomads and other nomads, it is necessary to examine their distinctions from other societies. To do this, we must first consider one of the earliest conclusions of political thought: "man is a political animal," and "the state is a creation of nature."[478] If we consider Aristotle's definition of the "city" as emerging from his observation of communal life in nature, then this chapter will explore Aristotle's analogy of the city/state—though perhaps not in a way Aristotle would have approved of—through the lens of mounted pastoral nomads.

In this chapter, which examines the political structures of mounted pastoral nomads, the focus will first be on their states and, subsequently, on the state structures of the conquering Hungarians. Following this, theories concerning the state as they relate to nomadic societies will be discussed. Finally, the concept of the political ecumene and the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene model will be analyzed.

3.1 The Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene

3.1.1 Political Ecumene

The term "political ecumene" refers to a conceptual space or sphere of political activity, influence, and interaction that transcends local or national boundaries, encompassing a broader, often global, context. In modern political thought and the study of political history, the concept of "ecumene" often brings to mind the work of Eric Voegelin, making it essential to discuss his contributions in this context. Here, it is necessary to touch upon Voegelin's views on "civilization" and "positivism." His thoughts on "ecumene" will be discussed in later sections. As will be revisited, the concept of "political ecumene" used in this dissertation does not fully align with the "Voegelinian" concept of ecumene.

The idea draws from the Greek word "oikoumene," which originally meant the known or inhabited world.[479] Voegelin notes that during the period he refers to as "The Ecumenic Age," spanning from the founding of the Persian Empire to the fall of Rome, the term 'ecumene' also acquired the meaning of a power field that draws societies into its

[478] Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. Benjamin Jowett, n.d., Book I, https://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.html
[479] Voegelin, *The Ecumenic Age*, IV:187.

sphere. He explains that this term took on an expanding or contracting nature depending on the extension or contraction of imperial power.[480]

In the context of historical international relations, the political ecumene is essential for examining how grand strategies, political hegemonies, and tributary systems developed and interacted. For instance, the tributary system in East Asia, particularly under the Ming and Qing dynasties, created a political ecumene where various states recognized Chinese suzerainty in exchange for trade and protection, thus shaping the regional political order.

In historical and political studies, the political ecumene can refer to the interconnected political entities and their interactions within a specific era or region. For example, the ancient Mediterranean world or the medieval East Asian world can be seen as political ecumenes where various states, empires, and communities were engaged in continuous political, economic, and cultural exchanges.[481]

In this study, a general evaluation will be made by considering the following points when defining the political ecumene both from a "historical" perspective and in the general sense of the term. In this way, a more holistic perspective will be presented by incorporating the political ecumene into the study of medieval history, particularly in the context of mounted pastoral nomad history.

Voegelin argues that comparative studies of civilizations must start with the principle of "self-understanding," where each society is first understood on its own terms before being compared to others. This approach prevents the imposition of Western-centric frameworks onto non-Western societies. Voegelin criticizes the tendency of Western political theories to impose a universal framework derived from Western experiences on other civilizations, often neglecting their unique historical and cultural contexts. He suggests that scholars should first explore the order within each civilization using the "self-understanding" principle, which respects the distinctiveness of different cultures while avoiding cultural relativism.[482]

Voegelin criticizes positivism for its reductionist tendencies, which limit the understanding of society to observable, measurable, and quantifiable empirical data. He

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[480] Voegelin, IV:187.

[481] As an example *for study on modern political ecumene see*: Benjamin T Hourani, "Teilhard's Political Ecumene: Empire or Commonwealth?," *Science and Public Policy* 9, no. 6 (December 1982): 313–23, https://doi.org/10.1093/spp/9.6.313.

[482] Liu, *Eric Voegelin on China and Universal Humanity: A Study of Voegelin's Hermeneutic Empirical Paradigm*, 1–2.

argues that by adopting methods from the natural sciences, positivism neglects deeper aspects of human experience, such as consciousness, spirituality, and the search for order. Voegelin particularly challenges the assumption that natural science methods are the sole standard for academia, asserting that this focus distorts political and social reality by overlooking the inner experiences and symbolic expressions essential for understanding human societies.[483]

In response to the limitations of positivism, Voegelin advocates for the revival of classical political epistemology, drawing on the works of Plato and Aristotle. He distinguishes between two approaches to politics based on Plato's separation of "*episteme*" (true knowledge) and "*doxa*" (opinion).[484] Voegelin argues that true political science (*politike episteme*) should not merely catalog empirical facts but should focus on the essence of human existence and the order of being. His approach aims to revive a comprehensive science of humanity that includes both empirical observation and philosophical inquiry into the nature of reality and human existence.[485]

While Voegelin critiques Western-centric approaches, his concept of order aligns with classical Western political thought, particularly the works of Plato and Aristotle. He draws extensively on these ideas to develop his theory, emphasizing the relationship between political order and the moral and philosophical order of the soul. This focus on the inner order of the individual as the foundation of political order resonates with the classical Greek understanding of the "*polis*" and the importance of virtue.[486]

Voegelin's transition from traditional ideas and doctrines to a focus on symbols and experience as the basis of his political theory marks a move from positivist approaches to those emphasizing hermeneutics and self-interpretation.[487] However, a significant weakness in Voegelin's approach is the potential for subjectivity in interpretation. Since his methodology relies heavily on interpreting the symbolic and experiential realities of societies, it can be challenging to establish clear, objective criteria for analysis. This

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[483] Eric Voegelin, *Plato and Aristotle*, vol. III, Order and History (Columbia, Missouri: University of Missouri Press, 1999), 88–89, 241–42; Liu, *Eric Voegelin on China and Universal Humanity: A Study of Voegelin's Hermeneutic Empirical Paradigm*, 19–20.

[484] "when the episteme is ruined, men do not stop talking about politics; but they now must express themselves in the mode of doxa" Liu, *Eric Voegelin on China and Universal Humanity: A Study of Voegelin's Hermeneutic Empirical Paradigm*, 19.

[485] Voegelin, *Plato and Aristotle*, III:252; Liu, *Eric Voegelin on China and Universal Humanity: A Study of Voegelin's Hermeneutic Empirical Paradigm*, 19–20.

[486] Liu, *Eric Voegelin on China and Universal Humanity: A Study of Voegelin's Hermeneutic Empirical Paradigm*, 12–13.

[487] Liu, 17–18.

interpretative subjectivity can lead to disagreements over the meanings of symbols and the nature of experiences, making consensus and the replication of findings in political science difficult.[488]

In this context, Voegelin identifies two aspects of his concept of "ecumene." The first is the "jurisdictional" aspect, which applies to societies directly under the empire's control; the second is the "pragmatic" aspect, which pertains to those targeted by the empire's power projection—likely corresponding to "the rest of the known world" during the Ecumenic Age.[489]

Voegelin further notes that after the end of the "Ecumenic Age," new societies emerged, which created a terminological challenge. According to him, the term "civilization" was used to define these new societies. However, this term not only explains the fragmentation of multi-civilizational empires but also brings back the difficulties arising from the identities of these empires. This is because, according to Voegelin, empires were the formative forces of the Ecumenic Age.[490]

The concept of ecumene defines a space where powerful cross-border cultural encounters, flows, and integrations occur, and it is founded in discourses on world-systems, globalization, transnationalism, and cosmopolitanism.[491] On the other hand, in contemporary usage, "political ecumene" implies a holistic view of political systems, ideologies, and practices that interact and interconnect across different regions and cultures.

The concept is valuable in understanding how political dynamics operate on a global scale, considering factors such as trade, diplomacy, conflict, migration, and cultural exchange. It also helps in analyzing the diffusion of political ideas and institutions across different societies and the impact of such interactions on the development of political systems. Analytically, ecumene possesses descriptive, normative, and critical dimensions and can be empirically accessed through operational concepts such as triggers, centers, and types of cross-border coexistence.[492]

So, in context, it could be described a political ecumene has two aspects, *jurisdiction* which and *pragmatic*. Jurisdiction aspect includes jurisprudence, laws, in other words

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[488] Liu, 18.
[489] Voegelin, *The Ecumenic Age*, IV:187–88.
[490] Voegelin, IV:271.
[491] Paulo Castro Seixas and Nadine Lobner, "The Ecumene: A Research Program for Future Knowledge and Governance," *Encyclopedia* 4, no. 2 (2024): 799, https://doi.org/10.3390/encyclopedia4020051.
[492] Seixas and Lobner, 799.

organization of society or administration. While pragmatic aspect which can me described in other words "cause" or "ideal." This aspect includes "conquest" in other words "expansion" and external interactions; diplomacy and of course 'war' as in "*war is merely the continuation of policy with other means*."[493]

Another notable feature of a political ecumene is its inherently "multicivilizational" character. A political ecumene is not only multi-ethnic but also encompasses multiple civilizations. Additionally, two different political ecumenes may share similar socio-economic models, particularly in terms of their base and superstructure,[494] or within a Weberian structural framework.[495] So another "benefit" of the use of political ecumene in context of mounted pastoral nomads in this study will also to "free" from debates of "ethnocentric" or "civilization centric" arguments.

The Political Ecumene, despite undergoing various differentiations and evolutionary changes over time, creates a distinct set of "*political etiquette*" and "*symbolism*." In this context, although not as central as the aspects of the political ecumene itself, both the pragmatic and jurisdiction aspects contribute to the fabric of the concept of "*legitimacy*" which itself shaped by political etiquette and symbolism.

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[493] „*We see, therefore, that war is not merely an act of policy but a true political instrument, a continuation of political intercourse, carried on with other means. What remains peculiar to war is simply the peculiar nature of its means. War in general, and the commander in any specific instance, is entitled to require that the trend and designs of policy shall not be inconsistent with these means. That, of course, is no small demand; but however much it may affect political aims in a given case, it will never do more than modify them. The political object is the goal, war is the means of reaching it, and means can never be considered in isolation from their purpose*.„ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, trans. Peter Paret and Michael Howard (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1989), 87.

[494] *For base and superstructure see*: Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy* (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), 20–23.

[495] *For Weberian structure see:* Max Weber, *Weber's Rationalism and Modern Society New Translations on Politics, Bureaucracy, and Social Stratification*, ed. Tony Waters and Dagmar Waters (Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 41–58, 75–126; Lawrence A. Scaff, "Weber after Weberian Sociology," *Theory and Society* 22, no. 6 (1993): 202–3.

Table 1: Feature of Political Ecumene in Medieval Age

Aspects	
Jurisdiction Includes jurisprudence, laws, and the organization of society or administration.	**Pragmatic (Cause/Ideal)** Encompasses "conquest" (expansion), external interactions such as diplomacy, and war, which is viewed as the continuation of policy by other means.
Legitimacy Both the jurisdictional and pragmatic aspects contribute to the concept of legitimacy within a political ecumene, although it is not as central as the other aspects.	
Political Etiquette and Symbolism Each political ecumene has its distinct set of political etiquette and symbolism, which are crucial to its identity and legitimacy.	

3.1.2 Mounted Pastoral Political Ecumene

To understand the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene, it is first necessary to grasp its concept of "ecumene." In this context, if a geopolitical definition is required, Peter Golden's definition in this field is particularly important. In geopolitical sense, Golden divides "Western Eurasia" during Middle Ages into two cultural traditions with ideologies; Byzantine and Nomadic.[496] It should be noted here that instead of Golden's description of "*cultural tradition with their attendant ideologies,*" "*Political Ecumenic*" perspectives will used, like "Byzantine-Eastern Christian Political Ecumene" or "Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene." So, in geopolitical concept mounted pastoral nomadic Political Ecumene could be placed in this context within scope of this study.

The issue of "ethnicity and/or people" were be explored in greater detail in the discussion on the ethnogenesis of the Hungarians. However, within the context of a political ecumene, such as that of the mounted pastoral nomadic societies, it included a variety of ethnic groups or different "peoples," such as the Turks, Hungarians, Mongolians, and Alans,

[496] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 37.

each speaking different languages. Moreover, this ecumene also encompassed distinct civilizations, including the Turks, Uighurs, Khazars, and Hungarians.

One of the two aspects of "ecumene" as discussed by Voegelin, the "jurisdictional" aspect, is reflected in the concept of "törü"[497] within the mounted pastoral nomadic ecumene, which can be simply referred to as tribal customary laws.[498] There are indications and hypotheses suggesting attempts to solidify the Nomadic Turkic Political Ecumene by Turkic rulers, notably Istemi Yabgu. For example, Clauson conjectures that a specific alphabet, based on Irano-Aramaic and supplemented by Greek, was developed by Istemi Yabgu for use in diplomatic missions to Byzantium.[499]Additionally, Györffy's hypothesis about the origin of the Hungarian word "Isten" (god) being linked to Istemi Yabgu suggests that Istemi Yabgu may have tried to create a more codified system of law and jurisprudence to replace older customs.[500] Since religion was the main codification of law and jurisprudence in the medieval era, it is plausible that Istemi Yabgu sought to establish a new script and a more established religion.

The other aspect of political ecumene, idea/cause in mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene defined with "el." The concept of "el" has two different interpretations. The first is the nominal, "real," or "state" meaning. In this sense, the term "el" represents the territories under the dominion of a mounted pastoral nomadic state, while the other meaning, within the context of a political ecumene, relates to the idea/cause meaning. This second meaning is associated with an abstract "heavenly mandate."[501] The fact that the word "el" also aligns with "ecumene" in its literal sense could present an interesting area for discussion in the history of political thought.

Three concepts could be described under the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene for legitimacy which is like a "soubassement" that two aspects of the political ecumene sits (or rises) on. Three key points should be specifically addressed regarding legitimacy. These are sacral bloodline, "qut" and prestige economy.

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[497] As an interesting anecdote for 'törü', the modern form of the word "tore" in Turkish still means 'customary law' while modern form "törvény" in Hungarian means "law" in general.
[498] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 51.
[499] Golden, *An Introduction to the History of the Turkic Peoples: Ethnogenesis and State-Formation in Medieval and Early Modern Eurasia and the Middle East*, 152; Gerard Clauson, "The Origin of the Turkish 'Runic' Alphabet," *Acta Orientalia* XXXII (1970): 56–57.
[500] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 30.
[501] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 50.

As briefly mentioned in "*Historical Background*" chapter "the use of luxury" as in concept of "prestige economy." In this context, Pohl suggests that this prestige transformed the ruler's treasury into a tool of power for Avar leaders (and generally for mounted pastoral nomadic rulers). Pohl's characterization of "prestige" can be regarded as a fundamental feature of legitimacy in the context of the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, which is discussed above. Pohl argues that as long as this prestige was maintained, the status of the khagan was upheld, and the "traditional order" ("törü") continued.[502] Therefore, Pohl's conclusions are a significant example of how, in the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, legitimacy was directly supported by two aspects: jurisdiction and cause/idea. Pohl's theory of a prestige economy is foundational in defining the essential characteristics of legitimacy in a mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene.

When discussing "proto-feudalism," the concept of a "sacral bloodline" was mentioned. To avoid repetition, it will be addressed here from the perspective of the political ecumene. Similar to the concept of "el," the "sacral bloodline" also carries multiple meanings within different contexts. For the political ecumene, it should be understood as a fundamental component of legitimacy that upholds both aspects, intertwined with the concept of "*qut*".

As a feature of mounted pastoral nomad diplomacy encountered in the eastern Eurasian steppe belt is uncle-nephew diplomacy. Chinese dynasties established a form of diplomacy with their nomadic neighbors. The stronger side, that is, the head of the Chinese dynasty, would be the uncle, elder brother, or father, while the weaker side, the mounted pastoral nomad rulers, would assume the position of nephew, younger brother, or son. Thus, an imaginary family and familial ties would be established.[503]

Ibn Fadlan's journey and memoirs provide much more information about political etiquette and uncle-nephew diplomacy among the Volga Bulgars and Khazars than other medieval Islamic geographers. Ibn Fadlan also mentioned the relationship between the Khazars and the Volga Bulgars. The Volga Bulgars had to pay a tribute of a sable pelt for

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[502] Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822*, 239–40.

[503] Kubilay Atik, "A Comparison of Komnenos Era Byzantine and Song Era Chinese Diplomacy with Nomadic Neighbors," *Atatürk Üniversitesi Türkiyat Araştırmaları Enstitüsü Dergisi*, no. 70 (January 2021): 349; Jonathan Karam Skaff, *Sui-Tang China and Its Turko-Mongol Neighbors: Culture, Power, and Connections, 580-800* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 203–38; Cihan Şimşek, "Political Etiquette and Symbolism of Mounted Pastoral Nomadic State Formation in the Examples Of Volga Bulgars and Khazar Khanates," in *Metszéspontok Tanulmányok a Középkorról És a Kora Újkorról* (Debrecen: Debreceni Egyetem Történelmi és Néprajzi Doktori Iskola, 2023), 64.

every tent in their kingdom to the Khazar khagan. Additionally, the Khazar khagan held the son of the Volga Bulgar king hostage. Besides holding the Volga Bulgar king's son hostage, the Khazar khagan had a tradition of marrying twenty-five women from the daughters of the surrounding kingdoms. This may explain the differences in the behavior of subjects towards their rulers in the Khazar-Volga Bulgar political etiquette, as one was a supreme ruler, and his subjects had to show a more submissive etiquette compared to the nephew Volga Bulgar kings. These examples of Khazar-Volga Bulgar political etiquette from Ibn Fadlan's records demonstrate that they had a set of detailed political protocols.

These examples showed that one of the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene's diplomatic feature, uncle-nephew diplomacy method was also applied or attempted to be applied in the western part of the Asian steppe belt. The nomads again tried to become the nephew of a strong sedentary power. Therefore, we can say that this uncle-nephew policy was a universal feature of mounted steppe nomads and can be observed in different geographies among mounted pastoral nomads such as the Volga Bulgars and Khazars. Furthermore, it can be said that a type of political etiquette shaped around this nephew policy existed, in which the Khazar khagans were the uncles, and their subjects showed a more submissive protocol to their rulers compared to the nephew Volga Bulgar kings.

Since the topic of political etiquette has been introduced, it is necessary to mention that the Mounted Pastoral Nomad Political Ecumene also developed its own political etiquette and symbols. For example, the Byzantine chronicler Theophanes mentions the Khazars several times in his chronicle covering the years 634/5 to 731/2. The first of these records pertains to the Byzantine-Sasanian Wars between 602 and 628, while the others relate to events in the following century.

In the first record (entry 315), Theophanes writes that the Turkic leader "Ziebel" kissed the emperor's neck and paid him respects in front of his enemies, the Persians. Additionally, in the entry dated 634/5, to Theophanes' amazement, the entire Turkic army prostrated themselves, and even their commanders climbed rocks to do the same. Theophanes describes this act as an "*honor unknown among foreign nations*."

In the second record (entry 373), Theophanes writes that the Khazar khagan showed great honor to Justinian and even gave his sister Theodora to him in marriage. This entry is

dated to 703/4. After this event, the khagan refused demands to surrender Justinian to his enemies and sent protection for him.

Theophanes' astonishment in the first record is likely an exaggeration typical of a medieval chronicler or indicates that he did not expect any political protocol among the 'barbarians' encountered by the empire. In any case, the behavior of "Ziebel" and his army demonstrates that they practiced a set of political protocols.

It is also worth mentioning another third record in Theophanes. In this third entry (entry 410), the chronicler describes another marriage event between the Khazars and the Byzantines, dated to 731/2. Emperor Leo betrothed his son Constantine to the khagan's daughter, who had converted to Christianity and taken the name Irene.

The second and third records contain more interesting events. In the 8th century, the Khazars consolidated their position east of the Turkic Khaganate. We can assert that they occupied the territory of the Western Turkic Khaganate. These two events can be interpreted as attempts by the Khazars to establish an uncle-nephew relationship with a powerful neighboring state, as the Khazars were still an emerging power at that time and needed allies and legitimacy. It can be said that the Khazars practiced uncle-nephew diplomacy and displayed a series of political protocols.

From a medieval Christian perspective, marriages between pagan mounted nomads and a Christian emperor could be seen as inappropriate. The accuracy of this event can be questioned based solely on this chronicle. However, a later source from the 10th century, "De Administrando Imperio" written by Emperor Constantine VII, confirms that this event took place. The emperor briefly warned his son that the demands of the northern tribes would never cease and that they would ask for more in exchange for a small service. He also warned him not to marry a pagan, noting that an emperor named Leo had once made this mistake by marrying a Khazar princess. Therefore, we can claim that these marriages did indeed occur.

In "Mu'jam ul-Buldān," Yaqut al-Hamawi mentions a marriage deception between the Persian (Sasanian) King Anushirvan (Khosrow I) and the Khazar khagan. The king agreed to marry, but secretly sent a beautiful concubine instead of his own daughter when marrying the Khagan's daughter Kakum. Other records by medieval Islamic geographers offer brief insights into the political protocol among the Khazars. Zakariyya al-Qazwini, in

"Āthār al-bilād wa-akhbār al-ʿibād," writes that those who saw the ruler would prostrate themselves and would not lift their heads until the ruler had passed.[504]

Another brief record is from Istakhri's "Masālik al-Mamālik," where Istakhri writes that the Khazars would prostrate themselves to each other out of respect. Considering these brief and limited pieces of information, it can be said, as with the chronicler Theophanes, that they practiced a series of political protocols.[505]

An example of political etiquette can be drawn from the Cumans in Hungary. During the wedding ceremony of King Béla's son and the Cuman king's daughter, the Cumans swore an oath of loyalty by slaughtering a dog, symbolizing that if they failed to keep their word, they would be torn apart just like the dog.[506] Such oath symbolism is frequently observed in the mounted pastoral political ecumene. The explanation given by Kaşgarlı Mahmut regarding the word "temur" includes an example of a similar meaning in the oath "gök girsin kızıl çıksın,"[507] which is still well-known in modern Turkey.[508]

İnan lists six elements present in these oaths, with the first four being the most commonly observed: blood, weapons, the exchange of gifts, and the cutting of an object.[509] blood ritual and symbolism are also frequently observed in examples from the "Gesta Hungarorum" among the Hungarians. We will delve into this in more detail later when discussing the Hungarians and the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene.

In the Turkic Khaganate, the ceremonies for ascending to power are described in detail in Chinese sources. Similar symbolism would later be observed among the Hungarians as well which will be dealt later also.[510]

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[504] Ramazan Şeşen, ed., *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri* (Ankara: Türk Kültürü Araştırma Enstitüsü Yayınları, 1985), 129–46.
[505] Şeşen, 156–64.
[506] Nora Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), 98–99.
[507] *This phrase has another meaning. When the people of the Kyrgyz, Yabaku, Kipchak, and other tribes take an oath or make a covenant, they draw a sword and place it in front of them, saying, 'Let this (sword) enter (blue) and come out (red),' meaning, 'If I break my word (i.e., if I lie), let the sword be stained with my blood, and let iron take revenge on me.' This is because they revere iron*.[507]
[508] Abdülkadir İnan, "Eski Türklerde Ve Folklorda «Ant»," *Ankara Üniversitesi Dil ve Tarih-Coğrafya Fakültesi Dergisi* 6, no. 4 (1948): 280–81.
[509] İnan, 287–89.
[510] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 46–48.

Upon reaching the lands of the Volga Bulgars, Ibn Fadlan was greeted with offerings of bread, meat, and millet by the brothers, sons, and four kings of King Saqlibah.[511] Şeşen explained that these items were staple products of the Volga Bulgars, frequently utilized for such presentations. He further identified the four kings (beys) as the Eskil, Suvar, Bursula, and Bulgar beys, representing the four cardinal directions. Şeşen asserts that the Volga Bulgars, while still nomadic, were on the brink of transitioning to a settled lifestyle.[512] The king himself met Ibn Fadlan two farsakhs (approximately 6 miles) away, where he prostrated himself and distributed dirhams (silver coins) to Ibn Fadlan and his entourage.[513]

In Ibn Fadlan's account, the Volga Bulgar king's deference to the Abbasid political protocol is evident; he used a saddle sent by the caliph, wore the black robe of honor (hilat), and a turban provided by the caliph.[514] In the medieval Islamic world, the "hilat" symbolized sovereignty, indicating that the Volga Bulgar king willingly accepted these symbols of legitimacy from the Abbasid caliph. The king also complied with Ibn Fadlan's request that everyone stand during the reading of the caliph's letter.[515]

Ibn Fadlan also offered a detailed account of the dining ceremony at the Volga Bulgar court. The four beys were seated to the king's right, his sons were positioned across from him, and the guest was placed on his left. The Volga Bulgar king consumed the first, second, and third pieces of meat. He then personally cut a piece and first offered it to Sawsan, followed by Ibn Fadlan. The four beys received their portions after Ibn Fadlan, and some were given their own tables after receiving their piece of meat. Ibn Fadlan noted that this custom indicated that no one could eat before the king.[516] Analyzing this elaborate dining ceremony in light of each participant's rank within the ruling elite, it is apparent that the Volga Bulgars had developed a sophisticated political etiquette. This protocol also extended to diplomatic interactions, as significant envoys received their tables before the four beys, indicating an established hierarchical order within the dining etiquette.

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[511] Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to Volga,* trans. James E. Montgomery (New York: New York University Press, 2017), 18; Ramazan Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 1st ed. (İstanbul: Yeditepe, 2010), 20; *For the critical edition of the source*: A. Z. V. Togan, "Ibn Fadlan's Reisebericht" (Leipzig, 1939).
[512] Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 20–21.
[513] Şeşen, 21; Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to Volga*, 18; Şimşek, "Political Etiquette and Symbolism of Mounted Pastoral Nomadic State Formation in the Examples Of Volga Bulgars and Khazar Khanates," 66.
[514] Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 21.
[515] Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to Volga*, 19; Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 21; Şimşek, "Political Etiquette and Symbolism of Mounted Pastoral Nomadic State Formation in the Examples Of Volga Bulgars and Khazar Khanates," 67.
[516] Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 22–23; Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to Volga*, 22–23.

Ibn Fadlan's writings reveal a distinction between the political protocols of the Volga Bulgar King and the Khazar khagans. While the subjects of the Khazar khagan were required to prostrate themselves as the khagan passed by, the subjects of the Volga Bulgar King only needed to remove their "*calasüe*" (headgear) and hold it under their arm.[517] According to Ibn Fadlan, the Khazar Khaganate held supreme authority in the region, and the Volga Bulgar King was either a vassal or a subordinate ruler. Therefore, it can be inferred that a hierarchical political etiquette based on the ruler's position was already in place in the region.[518]

Table 2 Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Aspects</th></tr>
<tr><td>Jurisdiction
"törü"
A series of customary laws and administration practices</td><td>Pragmatic (Cause/Ideal)
The claim to dominion between the earth and the sky.
Example methods: uncle-nephew diplomacy, establishing tribute dependency.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Legitimacy
Sacral bloodline, heavenly mandate "qut," prestige economy</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Political Etiquette and Symbolism
Some examples: raising ruler on an object (carpet, shield), oaths on self-sacrifice and blood, show of luxury and "gift giving," cult places</td></tr>
</table>

3.2 State in Mounted Pastoral Nomads

To understand the nature of the state among mounted pastoral nomads, it is essential to first explore the broader concept of the state during the Middle Ages. Returning to the concept of "zoon politikon," if a stateless person is either at a stage "above humanity" or is a lawless, tribe-less, war-loving entity, it would be an overstatement to claim that mounted pastoral nomads represent a level above humanity.[519] Conversely, they cannot be considered lawless, tribe-less beings either, which leaves us with what can be termed an "old-fashioned" state.

[517] Şeşen, *İbn Fadlan Seyahatnamesi ve Ekleri*, 30; Ahmed Ibn Fadlan, *Mission to Volga*, 26.
[518] Şimşek, "Political Etiquette and Symbolism of Mounted Pastoral Nomadic State Formation in the Examples Of Volga Bulgars and Khazar Khanates," 67.
[519] Aristotle, *Politics*, Book I.

In this context, it is first necessary to focus on the concept of the state in the Middle Ages, or, more precisely, the medieval state.

To approach this, one must consider the origins of the "modern state" concept, which date back to Machiavelli, as suggested by Gyula Kristó.[520] However, the question here goes to earlier ages, like "what was the state before Machiavelli and Renaissance?" In this context, Walter Pohl engages with the various definitions of the state that are prevalent in historical research. He references Max Weber's concept of the state as a monopoly on legitimate physical coercion, Ernest Gellner's focus on the monopoly of violence and the social division of labor, and Quentin Skinner's notion of public power as being distinct from both the ruler and the ruled.[521] Pohl refers to Weber's idea that scientific concepts of the state are abstractions created for cognitive purposes, which help modern scholars understand historical states. Pohl's engagement with these definitions opens up a debate about applying modern concepts to medieval state structures.

In response to Weber's caution that these concepts should be used carefully to avoid projecting contemporary ideas onto medieval societies, Pohl argues that, in practice, the ideas that are believed and the ideal types formulated for cognitive purposes tend to run parallel and show a tendency to merge, even in modern debates about the Middle Ages.[522] In this context, Pohl questions the Weberian perception of the state in relation to the medieval state, challenging whether only political entities with a high probability of obtaining obedience to their rulers' commands throughout the entire country should be defined as states. As a counterpoint, he suggests that as long as there is an attempt at political enforcement, the political sphere where such unified and organized plans of action are directed could also fall within the definition of a state.

To illustrate this complexity, Pohl notes the fluidity and adaptability of political systems in medieval contexts. As an example of this inquiry, he notes that if the criterion is based on the effectiveness of the ruler's authority, then the state would have to disappear each time a succession struggle emerged after a king's death.[523] In this context, Pohl notes that using political success or failure, the enforcement of central authority, or resistance as criteria for the existence of a state structure is highly limited. He further argues that conflicts

[520] Kristó, *A Magyar Állam Megszületése*, 11.
[521] Walter Pohl, "Staat Und Herrschaft Im Frühmittelalter: Überlegungen Zum Forschungsstand.," in *Staat Im Frühen Mittelalter*, 2006, 10.
[522] Pohl, 9.
[523] Pohl, 15.

and failures themselves demonstrate whether a political system is permanently functional, and that a "state" is one that can survive the failures of its rulers.[524] In this regard, the framework proposed in this dissertation, which emphasizes dynamism and conflict, aligns with Pohl's concept of the early medieval state (and, to some extent, the nature of the state itself). Therefore, it is appropriate to consider Pohl's framework as the "backbone" for a study on the perception of the mounted pastoral nomadic state.

Building on this, Pohl argues that early medieval states should not be evaluated using the criteria of power associated with the modern state.[525] This approach contends imposes an anachronistic standard. This argument against using modern criteria for early medieval states should not imply that these states were part of stateless, archaic, or segmented societies. In this context, Pohl, while cautioning against the modern connotations and implications of the term, also suggests that the political system of *regna* can still be defined as a "state."[526] This brings us to Pohl's theoretical framework on the state, particularly his concepts of *gentes* and *regnum*.

To fully appreciate Pohl's framework, it is necessary to understand the concepts of "*populus*," "*gentes*," and "*regnum*" within the Roman framework. Pohl, referencing Patrick Geary, notes that in the Latin language, the term "populus" was used administratively in a legal ("constitutional") sense, while the term "gentes" was employed to define a "people" as an ethnic entity.[527] Additionally, Pohl points out that Rome's relationship with the concept of ethnicity was complex and filled with contradictions. When considering Pohl's definition through the concepts of *gentes* and *regnum*, he explains that, partly due to the organization of auxiliary units, the Romans referred to their "barbarian" neighbors as *gentes*, and over the long term, this classification led to the formation of ethnic structures as "barbarians turned into *gentes.*"[528] Following this definition, within the Roman "political ecumene" (which, from the perspective of Voegelin's *Ecumenic Age*, can also be directly referred to as the Roman Ecumene), the return of kings to power through 'gentile' titles could only emerge after the 5th century.[529]

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[524] Pohl, 35.
[525] Pohl, 27.
[526] Pohl, 27.
[527] Walter Pohl, "Regnum Und Gens," in *Der Frühmittelalterliche Staat - Europäische Perspektiven*, 2009, 435.
[528] Pohl, 436.
[529] Pohl, 436.

This framework challenges traditional definitions of ethnicity and political power. Pohl argues that the traditional definition of ethnicity and political power based on the German *regnum* and *gens* is problematic.[530] Additionally, Pohl critiques Reinhard Wenskus's view that not entire Germanic peoples migrated, but rather 'core' groups with their own traditions and legal structures did, leading to the dominance of a different mindset called 'gentilism' within the Roman Political Ecumene (or what remained of it). Pohl suggests that Wenskus's idea may only explain "name continuity" in the interaction between foreign and self-identification. He notes that as could be seen in the early Middle Ages on the Eurasian steppes ample evidence, within interactions of external and self designations "old and prestigious names" could be re-adopted even without a "core" group to maintain them.[531]

This insight aligns with Pohl's broader arguments about identity formation among nomadic and barbarian groups. Here, Pohl highlights several points that parallel the issues discussed in the introduction of this dissertation. For example, he notes that an external source (Byzantine) may refer to a mounted pastoral nomadic group (the Avars) by a different name, which the group readily accepts, as it instills fear in their enemies. He also addresses how the identities of migrating barbarian tribes, which established power within Roman territories, were formed, showing considerable variation in individual cases. He argues that tribes of migration period (*gentes*) utilized external sources of identity from Rome and that the names of barbarian kingdoms within Roman territories were never documented outside the borders of the Empire. Thus, Pohl's argument helps to debunk the assumption of continuous ethnic continuity in the foundation of these kingdoms.[532]

Moreover, Pohl examines the internal structures of early medieval gentes and regna. Pohl states that the internal structure of early medieval *gentes* and *regna* does not allow for clear boundaries to be drawn.[533] Pohl further notes that it is even more challenging to derive the concept of "regnum" from Germanic examples. He suggests that an "empire" could be established within Roman territory (political ecumene) only with a strong and loyal army, along with the Roman infrastructure. Pohl further states that until the time of Clovis, there was no established "union of tribes"; instead, the tribes maintained their unity primarily

[530] Pohl, 437.
[531] Pohl, 437.
[532] Pohl, 438.
[533] Pohl, "Staat Und Herrschaft Im Frühmittelalter: Überlegungen Zum Forschungsstand.," 29.

through agreements.[534] Considering that each agreement had to be negotiated in advance, as Pohl points out, it becomes clearer why there was no ancient Germanic model for Clovis to use as a reference for the "supra-regional" *regnum* he established.[535]

Pohl concludes by summarizing the concept of the medieval regnum and its relation to ethnic identity and state formation. Pohl summarizes the concept of the medieval *regnum* by stating that "the 'people' created the state", highlighting how the tribes during the Migration Period established their realms in conjunction with the Church and Roman infrastructures. Ethnic identities, in this context, played a structural role and were shaped more by the conditions of the newly formed situation than by traditions.[536] In this regard, there was a paradoxical trend of an increase in traditional ethnic titles over time, suggesting that *gens* and *regnum* represented two different 'social' states.[537]

He further explores the role of Christianity and ecclesiastical authorities in shaping these early states. He also notes that political actions were often attributed collectively to the *gens*, a role that became most evident when a king needed to be enthroned, as is clearly reflected in the sources.[538] Another characteristic of the *gens* is that it was not the center of early medieval state structures but rather an axis around which they revolved.[539] During this period, both *gens* and the king could be used interchangeably, while the king's title indicated his authority over both the *gens* and the *regnum*. Moreover, in these barbarian kingdoms of the migration period, the ruling elites were minorities in their own territories, necessitating a process of cohesion among the warriors who formed the *gens*, alongside other free members and their families.[540] Similarly, it was only through settlement that the supply of warrior barbarians could be maintained. Eventually, in the long term, the *gens* "merged" with the local population, and the ruling warrior class' ethnic which identity rooted in their barbarian origins was adopted.[541] Ethnic designation was therefore less about the unity of the existing population and more about the region governed by the *gens*. In this context, the title of power was related to the ethnic naming of the region. Consequently, the *regnum*

[534] Pohl, "Regnum Und Gens," 438.
[535] Pohl, 438.
[536] Pohl, 439–40.
[537] Pohl, 411.
[538] Pohl, "Staat Und Herrschaft Im Frühmittelalter: Überlegungen Zum Forschungsstand.," 29.
[539] Pohl, 32.
[540] Pohl, "Regnum Und Gens," 444.
[541] Pohl, 444.

acted as a "catalyst" in the process of ethnic transformation; Pohl cites the examples of the Franks becoming Romanized or the Bulgars becoming Slavic.[542]

Christianity, according to Pohl, provided the foundation for large-scale regna and played a critical role in political legitimization. In this context, another important actor is Christianity. Pohl argues that the stable formation of large-scale *regna* was made possible by the foundations provided by Christianity. Ecclesiastical authorities legitimized political power and wars.[543] In early medieval *regna*, there was a dual relationship between the people (*populus Christianus*) and the *gens*. In this context, the *gens* was defined as a collection of multiple church communities, each of which constituted a *populus.*[544]

This dual legitimacy, rooted in both divine and ethnic foundations, was a unique characteristic of early medieval states. With the legitimacy conferred by Christianity, a kingdom possessed dual legitimacy—both from God and from the *gens*. Pohl notes that this was also the case in the Islamic world and Byzantium, but the difference in the "Latin West" was that the Christian community (*populus*) and the *gens* intersected through a shared history and destiny. This intersection led to a shift in the concept of the *gens*, which retained its early medieval connotations while also merging with the politics of the Christian kingdom through the *populus.*[545]

Pohl's comprehensive criteria for the early medieval state provide a framework for understanding state formation in mounted pastoral nomadic societies. Pohl identified ten criteria regarding the structure of the early medieval state; (1) *Durability* was achieved by early regna on Roman territory by adopting Roman institutions, which allowed them to maintain stability. Even when their ruling gens fell, many of these institutions persisted. Furthermore, (2) *stability beyond rule* was not solely dependent on the enforceability of a ruler's power. The enduring presence of other not strictly state institutions, such as bishoprics, monasteries, noble lordships, cities, and communities, indicates that a regnum could establish a significant degree of security and continuity, rooted in the reciprocal actions of various power holders.[546]

These criteria, especially when applied to nomadic contexts, reveal the flexibility and adaptability of such political formations. Moreover, the (3) *self-referential system* of

[542] Pohl, 446.
[543] Pohl, 446–47.
[544] Pohl, 447.
[545] Pohl, 447–48.
[546] Pohl, "Staat Und Herrschaft Im Frühmittelalter: Überlegungen Zum Forschungsstand.," 36–37.

the regnum was distinguished by notions of identity and difference, enabling clear distinctions between internal and external perceptions. While political boundaries were not always clearly defined, their general configuration was widely understood, and areas of contested affiliation were actively negotiated. Additionally, the (4) *gens as an identity resource* served as another source of identity, even though it did not always align perfectly with the regnum. Early medieval kingship both relied on and reinforced a sense of belonging associated with the gens.[547]

The interaction between religious and political institutions further shaped the state's structure. The (5) *ecclesia as a community* also played a role, representing a broad concept that included all members of a realm and extended to the entire Christian community. In this context, the (6) *Christian discourse on power*—akin to the Roman state language—facilitated discussions on power and order. These discussions, often embedded in religious texts, had a significant impact on power dynamics. Furthermore, the (7) *political negotiation framework* of the regna provided a structure within which the status of the powerful ("symbolic capital") could be negotiated, ambitions managed, and conflicts contained, with rituals, gift exchanges, and symbolic communication playing vital roles. Elite integration would not have been possible without the broader context of the realm and the symbolic resources provided by ecclesia, gens, regnum and later the imperium.[548]

Conflict and power dynamics were integral to the political structure of early medieval states. (8) *Conflict as a test of power* also featured prominently in the regna, allowing for the testing and reaffirmation of power relations. Even if the central authority was weakened, the overall coherence of the state was often maintained. (9) In terms of *access to resources*, the central authority could draw on economic, personal, and military resources to varying degrees, despite the absence of a formal tax system, bureaucracy, or standing army. Finally, the (10) *role of the king and other actors* was significant, as they operated within their social roles but also exercised considerable political flexibility, which could lead to either success or failure depending on the circumstances.[549]

Pohl's framework allows us to compare nomadic and sedentary state formations and their adaptability to different historical contexts. Pohl compares his concept of *gentes* and *regnum* with Niklas Luhmann's systems theory, suggesting that if the *regna* were able to

[547] Pohl, 37.
[548] Pohl, 37.
[549] Pohl, 37–38.

employ the distinction between system and environment as an internal principle for orientation and knowledge production, they would become self-referential systems that define themselves in this manner. He further notes that conflicts within a political community were seen by contemporaries as internal power struggles within the kingdom, distinctly separate from external conflicts[550] Pohl also contends that, in the Middle Ages, the state functioned as an open system rather than a closed one, where identity and difference were oriented around interconnected yet distinct forms of community and meaning. These included ethnic identity, kingship, and ecclesiastical unity, which not only in confliction with one another but also facilitated political integration through their interactions.[551]

3.2.1 Mounted Pastoral Nomadic State

Shifting focus now to the formation of states among mounted pastoral nomads, Pohl discusses four criteria related to the formation of a mounted pastoral nomadic state. He notes that many steppe empires were established by groups who had been defeated in *earlier power struggles* and had fled from the domination of stronger groups. He points out that this is particularly evident in European steppe empires. For example, the arrival of the Hungarians in central Europe after their defeat by the Pechenegs illustrates this pattern, as they found the Carpathian Basin ideal for protection against more powerful groups dominating the Central Asian steppes.

Furthermore, these mounted pastoral nomad societies were often of *mixed origin*, with each component belonging to a previous group. For example, the Avars formed a new, heterogeneous unit that was conceptualized as having a dual structure.[552] The genetic studies mentioned in the studies also gives genetic evidence on this mixed origin.[553] This amalgamation of diverse groups under a common identity was central to the state-building process in the steppes.

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[550] Pohl, 36.
[551] Pohl, 38.
[552] Walter Pohl, "A Non-Roman Empire in Central Europe: The Avar," in *Regna and Gentes The Relationship between Late Antique and Early Medieval Peoples and Kingdoms in the Transformation of the Roman World*, ed. Hans Werner Goetz, Jörg Jarnut, and Walter Pohl (Leiden: Brill, 2003), 577–78.
[553] Tömöry et al., "Comparison of Maternal Lineage and Biogeographic Analyses of Ancient and Modern Hungarian Populations," 355; Neparáczki et al., "Genetic Structure of the Early Hungarian Conquerors Inferred from mtDNA Haplotypes and Y-Chromosome Haplogroups in a Small Cemetery," 212; Csáky et al., "Early Medieval Genetic Data from Ural Region Evaluated in the Light of Archaeological Evidence of Ancient Hungarians," 2; Maróti et al., "The Genetic Origin of Huns, Avars, and Conquering Hungarians," 3275.

A crucial element in this process was the emergence of a unifying leader, often termed as khagan, signifying a claim to independent power and an expansionist strategy. This newly formed group also needed a new name to foster a sense of identity among its followers. The *naming of new groups* of steppe riders often involved selecting from a repertoire of prestigious names that did not necessarily indicate direct affiliation or descent from similarly named groups. The choice of name involved both self-designation and external perceptions, linking them to prestigious traditions that conveyed political ambitions and required validation through success. In the fluid world of the steppe, where group alliances were often temporary, understanding how to interact with a new power was crucial. The symbolic hierarchy of prestige, expressed through names, offered guidance to both allies and enemies.[554]

Peter Golden's analysis further elucidates the formation of nomadic states by emphasizing the role of charismatic leadership. Peter Golden's comprehensive analysis of nomadic state formation elucidates the multifaceted and interwoven elements that facilitated the development of early nomadic states. Central to his theories is the pivotal role of charismatic leadership. Charismatic leaders, often possessing divine or semi-divine legitimacy, were essential in unifying diverse tribes under a cohesive political entity. This leadership was instrumental in establishing and maintaining the central authority, crucial for the formation and sustainability of nomadic states.[555]

However, Golden highlights a specific case among the Turks. He emphasizes that within the concept of charismatic rulership among the Turks, this divine charisma could only be attained if one belonged to the "royal family," as it required a "sacred bloodline." This strongly suggests that a powerful legitimacy was derived from lineage. This phenomenon is also observed among the Persians, who interacted closely with the Turks and were significantly influenced by them.[556]

Kradin proposes four key factors that should be considered important in the emergence of states.[557] First, he highlights that the low population density and the structure of the nomadic economy among pastoral nomadic peoples in Asia and Africa, coupled with the absence of a sedentary lifestyle, did not necessitate the development of complex social

[554] Pohl, "A Non-Roman Empire in Central Europe: The Avar," 578.
[555] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 45–46.
[556] Golden, 46.
[557] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 23–24.

stratification and state control. Economic activities were conducted within family and kinship groups, and therefore, according to Kradin, the leaders of steppe societies were unable to collect and redistribute basic taxes effectively.[558]

Second, a stable power structure in nomadic communities was only observed as a result of nomadic empires and similar "xenocratic" policies. In this context, nomadic empires, according to Kradin, can be defined as military-hierarchical organizations built to exploit neighboring territories. In this point, Kradin emphasizes the distinction between "classical" nomadic empires and "mixed agricultural-pastoral" empires, such as the Arab Caliphate, the Ottoman Empire, the Seljuk Sultanate, and the Volga Bulgars, as well as "quasi-imperial" entities like the European Huns, Avars, Magyars, Kara-Khitans, and post-Golden Horde Tatar Khanates.[559]

Third, he argues that the degree of centralization among nomads is directly related to neighboring agricultural civilizations. According to the "World-System" theory, nomads always occupy a "semi-periphery" position. Supporting this claim with researchers like Lattimore, Golden, and Khazanov, Kradin explains that this is why tribal confederations were formed to fight and trade with "oasis" cities and civilizations in North Africa and East Asia, or similarly, "quasi-imperial" state-like structures were established on the borders of Ancient Rus in the Eastern European steppes and Inner Asia. However, he also adds that nomads did not adopt the state structures of their neighbors but had their own unique political systems.[560]

Fourth, Kradin introduces the concept resulting from Thomas Barfield's studies on the periodization of the Inner Asian steppes. Using Barfield's example of China, Kradin conveys the argument that nomads did not aim to conquer their southern neighbors but preferred "distant exploitation."[561] According to this view, the rise and fall of nomadic empires (termed "shadow empires" by Barfield) were synchronized with the developments in China. The collapse of central power in China similarly led to crises in the steppe.

Kradin's work also presents a tiered model of political complexity among nomads. Kradin proposes three levels of "cultural integration" for mounted pastoral nomads

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[558] Kradin, 23.
[559] Kradin, 23–24.
[560] Kradin, 24.
[561] Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China [, 221 BC to AD 1757]*, 5–20; Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 24; Barfield, "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese-Nomad Frontier"; Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 118–51.

("pastoral nomads") in terms of evolutionary development.[562] Leaving aside how accurate the term "cultural integration" is to describe this evolutionary process, Kradin defines these as levels of political complexity. On the other hand this progressive-level exemplification was carried out more comprehensively and descriptively by Pletneva as it is also mentioned in this dissertation.[563] When defining the last of these levels, which he lists as headless ("acephalous," as preferred by Kradin) clans, secondary tribes, and finally nomadic empires, Kradin describes the nomadic empire merely (only) as the product of population growth through the annexation of conquered populations.[564] It would then be more accurate to interpret Kradin's "nomadic empires" as simply "larger nomadic groups," since he does not discuss any administrative or economic change or development. Just after his statement on "only" increase in population, he adds that "*the political system becomes more complex, and the total number of hierarchical levels increases*." It is difficult to interpret this. Probably Kradin may try to say, "due to 'only' population increase, political system become more complex."

Kradin further discusses recent Western theories on nomadic state formation, particularly focusing on external dependencies. According to Kradin, in recent decades fundamental discussions in the West (the United States and Western Europe) about the phenomenon of supertribal institutionalization have emerged. The first perspective, defined as "external dependency," traces back to Owen Lattimore's work "Inner Asian Frontiers of China."[565] According to this perspective, nomadic communities, with their low population density and distance from settled life, obtain the "missing products" they cannot produce themselves either through trade or by "extorting" them from settled communities. It is conveyed that nomads require a "supertribal" organization to achieve this, thereby creating a unique political system.[566]

This dependency framework is further analyzed through a critique of the core-periphery theory. Mounted pastoral nomads are as needy and as greedy as other people. To

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[562] Kradin, "Nomadism, Evolution and World-Systems: Pastoral Societies in Theories of Historical Development," 370.
[563] Peter B. Golden, "Khazar Studies: Achievements and Perspectives," in *The World of the Khazars*, ed. Peter B. Golden, Haggai Ben-Shammai, and András Róna-Tas (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 35–36; Zhivkov, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, 175–80; Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga*, 38–40.
[564] Kradin, "Nomadism, Evolution and World-Systems: Pastoral Societies in Theories of Historical Development," 370.
[565] Lattimore, *Inner Asian Frontiers of China*.
[566] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 13.

elaborate, the core-periphery theory was established as an economic theory after World War II. Later, Wallerstein developed this into a world-systems historical framework. Meanwhile, Lattimore, in his studies on nomads, presented an argument regarding the external dependencies of nomads. Here, dependency theories were also attempted to be adapted to nomadism. At first glance, this seems quite logical, as it suggests a structure that continuously takes from outside rather than being self-sufficient at the center. However, this continuous taking from the outside does not necessarily indicate dependence on external sources for production. Is there a "parasitic" situation here? They control all this trade, but even that is considered insufficient, and they achieve it through extortion, not by selling goods or enslaving others but by extorting them. If that is the case, they are not truly dependent. The dependence here is not based on the center-periphery dynamic. If we follow the post-World War II economic model where the theory first emerged, then, similar to the developed powers at the center that "extorted" from the periphery, isn't it a reverse form of 'extortion' where they are extorting from the 'center'?

To provide further insights into the social structure of these nomadic states, it is important to examine the roles within the hierarchical system. In addition, there were "beys," who were clan leaders. Although these beys served as de facto rulers of their clans in 'stateless' situations, it can be suggested that they lost these de facto leadership roles when a confederative or federative empire ("il") was established. From here, we can discuss another conflict within this mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, namely the conflict within the empire ("il") between confederative and federative structures. Although this conflict appears to be linked to the conflict between shared-dual rulership and charismatic leadership within the high ruling strata, it can be described more as a center-periphery conflict driven by the clans' (boys') resistance to centralization.

Beyond this, the rest of society comprised common nomads, or, as interpreted by Györffy in the context of the Turkic Khaganate, the "bodun." Here, bodun was divided into clans (boys) based on kinship. This kinship was not necessarily "blood-related" but could also be an "imaginary" kinship, which was a common occurrence among mounted pastoral nomads.

The division of society also reflected administrative and military organization, exemplified by the concept of the "tümen." Another division was based on the tümen. This can be described as a more administrative-demographic distinction that emerged within the process of state formation or empire-building. The term tümen was translated by Kaşgarlı

Mahmud as "many."[567] This does not entirely correspond with the number "10,000" associated with tümen.[568] Rather than interpreting this as mounted pastoral nomads being "unfamiliar with mathematics," this term appears to have been used as an administrative-demographic term in later periods when more detailed written records were kept. However, this could lead to some confusion, for example, sources from the Jayhani tradition mention that the Hungarians had 20,000 cavalry under their command which will be dealt below.

Golden's analysis also provides insight into the flexibility of titles and roles within nomadic political structures. Golden emphasizes the constant change in titles, likening it to a "kaleidoscope." In this context, he highlights two points: first, the positions and roles of men within the "noble family" could continuously change due to the administrative complexity; second, these titles were also observed among mounted pastoral nomad tribal confederations in other parts of Central and Western Eurasian steppes. The reason for this, according to Golden, is that they maintained the political traditions linked to Turkic political organization.[569] Walter Pohl also mentions a similar richness of titles, particularly for the Late Avar period.[570]

The practice of dual kingship among mounted pastoral nomads was a dynamic element of their political systems. Unlike the well-documented and bureaucratically established sedentary empires, the law and jurisprudence of mounted pastoral nomadic societies—particularly before their conversion to Islam, with the Mongols as a notable example—relied almost exclusively on unwritten customary law. Although these customs were robust and traditions likely well-established, they were subject to change during times of crisis or when political opportunities arose for a particular clan or individual. These customs could later revert to their previous forms. This adaptability was a significant feature of the "Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene," allowing for flexibility in both internal governance and external relations. The recurring appearance, disappearance, and reappearance of dual kingship titles are illustrative of this fluidity.[571]

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[567] Kâşgarlı Mahmud, *Divan'u Lugati't Türk*, trans. Besim Atalay, vol. IV (Türk Tarih Kurumu, 1986), 670.
[568] "The word 'tömény,' in Hungarian, in addition to its meaning corresponding to 'ten thousand,' still currently retains the meaning of 'many.' The word 'töméntelen,' which derives from the same root, means 'innumerable.' *See*: Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 114.
[569] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 52.
[570] Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822*, 355–60.
[571] Golden, "Imperial Ideology and the Sources of Political Unity amongst the Pre-Činggisid Nomads of Western Eurasia," 52.

However, the perception of these systems by sedentary neighbors often led to misunderstandings, as noted by Barfield. Chinese bureaucrats often failed to comprehend this flexibility, as Barfield points out in his analysis of the mounted pastoral nomadic state. Barfield's focus on the "charismatic, heroic leader" as the central figure in internal conflicts mirrors the Chinese bureaucrats' limited understanding of the system. However, the Jayhani tradition and the "De Administrando Imperio" provide more specific insights into the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene. Contrary to Barfield's assessment, Chinese bureaucrats were more adept at gathering information than he credits them for. Their characterization of these nomads as "barbarians" stemmed not only from cultural differences—after all, they had been neighbors for centuries—but also from the fundamentally different political ecumene adopted by the mounted pastoral nomads.

To summarize, the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene can be characterized by several key features. The features of the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Ecumene can be summarized as follows: a conflict between shared (dual) rule and the authority of a charismatic leader within the upper echelons of power; the role of military elites or retinues (*nökers*/*tarkhans*) in ensuring the stability and continuity of the ruling elite, which naturally led to conflicts between 'upstart' clans and the established military elite; and a demographic-administrative unit known as the *tümen* at the highest level, alongside a kin-based (though not necessarily blood-related) organization of "boys" (clans). These features will be examined in more detail in upcoming chapters.

In the economic sphere, two types of property ownership were prevalent among mounted pastoral nomads: personal private property and clan ownership. In the Mounted Nomadic Political Ecumene, two types of property ownership can be identified: personal private property and "clan" ownership derived from kinship ties. Personal private property included animals, particularly horses, weapons, valuable items, and personal belongings such as jewelry, furs, and silk. These can be observed in burial sites. Additionally, slaves could likely be included in this category, especially for the high-ranking administrative strata and military retinues.

The private property that was derived through the clan was based on "land." This land was collectively owned by the clan but was used communally within the clan. The pastoral use of grazing land, driven by herd management, differed from agricultural land use, and the practice of land management was adapted accordingly. Due to the mobility of

animals and the need for collective cooperation in both tending the herds and owning them, grazing lands were considered private property of the clan.

Hungarian scholarship has extensively debated these aspects of mounted pastoral nomadic states, particularly regarding the state formation of the 9th and 10th centuries. In the past century, there has been extensive research in Hungarian scholarship on the state of the mounted pastoral nomadic Hungarian society in the 9th and 10th centuries. It could be inferred from Gyula Kristó's accounts that there was a group he described as "Györffy and his followers," as well as another group of researchers, including Kristó himself, who were outside of this group.[572]

Gyula Kristó's analysis of military democracy in Hungary provides a useful case study for examining the intersection of militarization and state formation among nomads. Kristó begins by recognizing that the period of military democracy in Hungary, characterized by a strong military organization and frequent raiding campaigns, was crucial in shaping the society's development. He notes that these raids were driven by the need to acquire surplus wealth and that they played a significant role in both delaying and deepening social crises within Hungarian society. The military retinue, which was initially composed of armed freemen, became a more permanent fixture in society, contributing to the social differentiation that eventually necessitated the formation of a state.[573]

However, Kristó is cautious about fully equating the period of military democracy with state formation. He argues that while military democracy may have laid the groundwork for the state by fostering social differentiation and the emergence of a public authority separate from society, it did not directly lead to the establishment of the state. Instead, Kristó suggests that the concept of military democracy should be seen as a precursor to state formation rather than as a definitive stage in the development of the state itself.[574]

Kristó also critiques the notion that military democracy alone can explain the complexities of state formation in Hungary. He points out that while military democracy provided a framework for understanding the militarization of society and the emergence of social inequalities, it does not fully account for the internal and external factors that influenced the actual formation of the Hungarian state. For instance, Kristó notes that the end of the raiding campaigns in 955 and 970 marked a significant shift in Hungarian society,

[572] Kristó, *A Magyar Állam Megszületése*, 39–32.
[573] Kristó, *Levedi Törzsszövetségétől Szent István Államáig*, 421–23.
[574] Kristó, 430–32.

as the diminishing opportunities for plunder forced a return to productive work and further accelerated the need for a centralized state to manage the growing social and economic complexities.[575]

In his analysis, Kristó also draws a distinction between the period of military democracy and the era of statehood. He emphasizes that the military character of society, while crucial in the earlier stages, had to evolve to accommodate the needs of a developing state. This evolution involved the gradual establishment of territorial divisions and the formation of a public authority that was distinct from the population organized as an armed power, as described by Engels in his criteria for state formation.[576]

Gyula Kristó has made significant contributions to the study of the conquering Hungarians' tribal confederation state model, Gyula Kristó, one of the foremost Hungarian historians to conduct a comprehensive study on the state model of the conquering Hungarians' tribal confederation, has addressed the topic across several areas. Initially, he reassesses the existing theories in the field. These theories can be categorized under headings such as the Germanic model, Avar, Turkic, and Slavic influences.

Regarding the Germanic model, Kristó discusses the views of Henrik Marczali and Brackmann. Marczali argued that "the creation of the Hungarian court followed the Western Frankish model," suggesting that elements of the Hungarian state, particularly its court system, may have been directly influenced by Frankish practices. Brackmann, on the other hand, presented a more extreme view, claiming that "the initiative for establishing the Hungarian church came from Otto III" and that this was part of a broader German imperial governance effort. This assertion implies a significant German influence on the ecclesiastical and, by extension, the political structures of early Hungary.

Kristó cautiously acknowledges that the possibility of an Eastern Frankish or German (Bavarian) model "cannot be entirely dismissed," given that an Eastern Frankish (or simply German) state indeed existed in the last third of the 10th century, which could provide a plausible context for potential influence. However, despite the arguments for Frankish or German influence, Kristó emphasizes that "in the absence of evidence," these theories amount to nothing more than "a mere possibility." This statement suggests that

[575] Kristó, 425–27.
[576] Kristó, 428,431.

there is no concrete evidence directly linking the formation of the Hungarian state to Frankish or German models.[577]

Kristó also addresses Avar, Turkic, and Slavic influences, again approaching these theories with skepticism. Regarding the Avar, Turkic, and Slavic influences, Kristó also approaches the topic with skepticism. Kristó's emphasis on the argument for a Slavic influence is partly based on the presence of a large number of Slavic loanwords related to state and church life in the Hungarian language. He references scholars like Ignác Acsády, who suggested that the Moravian *župa* (county system) might have served as a model for Hungarian state organization. This linguistic evidence supports the notion that Slavic institutions could have influenced the early Hungarian state. However, Kristó casts doubt on this influence by pointing out that the Moravian and Pannonian Slavic states were destroyed by the conquering Hungarians in the early 10th century, with the Moravian state ceasing to exist around 902. He argues that since these states were eradicated, they could not have had a lasting impact on the formation of the Hungarian state.[578]

Concerning the Avar and Turkic models, Kristó references theories tracing Hungarian state origins to Turkic or Avar precedents. Regarding the Avar and Turkic models, Kristó mentions that some theories trace the origins of the Hungarian state to Turkic or Avar precedents. He cites György Györffy, who suggested that the institution of inheritance and the Hungarian principality had roots in Turkic state organization, and Gyula László, who argued that the Hungarian state was built on the foundations of the late Avars' state organization. However, Kristó contends that these Turkic and Avar influences are unlikely because the Avar Khaganate was destroyed by the Hungarians or Charlemagne's Franks by the turn of the 9th and 10th centuries. He further notes that regular institutional connections with Turkic-origin state formations, such as the Khazar Khaganate, had ceased by the end of the 9th century. The lack of continuity of these states into the late 10th century makes their influence on the formation of the Hungarian state questionable.[579]

Drawing on these discussions, Kristó presents his model of state formation based on Constantine's accounts in "De Administrando Imperio." After examining these views, Kristó develops a model for the state formation of the Conquering Hungarians based on the data from "De Administrando Imperio." Kristó utilizes Constantine's account to challenge

[577] Kristó, 435–36.
[578] Kristó, 437–38.
[579] Kristó, 438.

the notion that the Hungarian state evolved from clan-based structures, instead arguing that tribes played a central role in this process. He asserts that the account provides clear evidence that Hungarian society in the mid-10th century was organized into tribes. He lists eight Hungarian tribes, including the Nyék, Megyer, Kürt-Gyarmat, Tarján, Jenő, Kér, Keszi, and the Kabars, emphasizing their significant role in Hungarian society. Kristó argues that this evidence supports the idea that tribal structures, rather than clans, were the primary organizational units that laid the groundwork for state formation.

Constantine mentions that "each tribe has its leader," indicating the presence of tribal chiefs who wielded considerable power within their respective tribes. Kristó uses this to argue that these tribal leaders were likely precursors to the centralized authority that would later define the Hungarian state. For example, figures such as the Grand Prince, Gyula, and Karchas mentioned by Constantine are seen as holding leadership roles within the tribal confederation, which eventually contributed to the formation of a more unified state structure. Kristó suggests that the tribal organization described by Constantine points to a process of centralization within the tribal confederation. For instance, the position of the Grand Prince, likely held by the leader of the princely tribe, is viewed as a central figure within the tribal system, indicating an early form of centralized power that would later evolve into the Hungarian monarchy.[580]

Kristó's views have evolved over time, particularly regarding the role of class struggle and state formation among the conquering Hungarians. An interesting anecdote regarding Kristó's views in 1980 concerns his perspective on "class struggle." The idea that class relations developed within these tribal "states" suggests a more gradual internal social evolution rather than a sudden imposition of feudal structures. Kristó indicates that within the territory of the "gyula" in the mid-10th century, captured Christians were in a condition similar to slavery, and a military retinue formed around each tribal chief, reflecting early forms of class stratification and public authority. According to him, this challenges the view that state formation was solely the result of external conquest or feudal imposition, emphasizing instead a more organic development within existing tribal structures.[581]

However, after 1990 (as seen in his 1995 work, for example), Kristó shifted away from the idea of "class struggle" and developed a model based on the concept of the "pure

[580] Kristó, 442–43.
[581] Kristó, 475.

nomad." He also criticized historians like György Györffy for building their arguments on outdated theories, such as Marxism.

Tóth presents a model for the conquering Hungarians' state formation. Tóth has proposed a model for the conquering Hungarians. Tóth's model, which progresses from the smallest to the largest unit, is as follows: it starts with the nuclear family, followed by the extended family, then the "*aul*" and the "aul group," which Tóth also defines as a clan subgroup. This is followed by the clan, the sub-tribe, the tribe, and finally, the tribal confederation, which he refers to as the "nomadic state."[582]

However, Tóth's model raises several questions about its applicability to mounted pastoral nomadic societies. In Tóth's model, which follows a "perfect" hierarchical order, certain points appear confusing. For instance, it is questionable to what extent the concept of the nuclear family, a relatively modern phenomenon, fits into the structure of mounted pastoral nomads or should even be included in the model. While it is true that mounted pastoral nomads had "mother, father, and children," it remains uncertain how well this aligns with the "nuclear family" model.

Finally, the chapter examines the historical evolution of the Hungarian tribes and their political organization in Etelköz and beyond. In Etelköz, the unification of tribes under dual leadership, forming the "hétmagyar" or the confederation of seven tribes could be noticed. Although the Kabars still fought separately in the Hungarian army in 881, by 950, "De Administrando Imperio" noted that they were bilingual.[583]

This tribal organization is reflected in the septenary structure of Hungarian society. Traditionally, the Hungarians were organized not into decimal units but into septenary units. The seven Hungarian tribes—Nyék, Megyer, Kürt-Gyarmat, Tarján, Jenő, Kér, and Keszi—serve as the primary example of this structure. However, due to the lack of surviving written sources pinpointing the exact settlements of each tribe, we cannot definitively conclude whether each tribe settled in a single location. The names of the Hungarian tribes are found in 20-30 place names scattered throughout the Carpathian Basin.[584]

Györffy asserts that the military commander "gyula" and the sacred prince "kende," (künde) each with 20,000 cavalry, as seen in the Jayhani tradition, are corroborated by

[582] Tóth, "A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)," 2014, 396.
[583] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 28.
[584] Györffy, 30.

contemporary Byzantine sources. These sources claim that a Greek envoy negotiated with the two Hungarian princes, Árpád and Kusál.[585]

Drawing from the Jayhani tradition, Györffy notes that the Hungarians had a military force of 20,000 cavalry and, rightly so, emphasizes that they had more military forces than the Khazars according to the same Jayhani tradition.[586] Ibn Rusta, Gardīzī, Ḥudūd al-ʿālam, Al-Marwazī, and ʿAwfī all reiterate that the Hungarians had 20,000 horsemen.[587] It is worth approaching with some skepticism the claim that the Hungarians had more military forces than their Khazar overlords. By considering the event where the Khazars married off the first Hungarian "voivode" Lebedias to a Khazar noblewoman,[588] one might argue that the Khazars sought to leverage and retain this significant military power, although this claim would lack substantial grounding. Nonetheless, at least one of the Khazar ruling factions likely sought to strengthen ties with the Hungarians, for military, as a nomadic horsemen unit. Based on Ludwig's research, Zimonyi suggests that these Hungarians would be Khazar vassal units ("auxiliary troops" as the term Zimonyi used), with the Khazar army reaching a force of 40,000 soldiers when combined with the 20,000 Hungarians and the 10,000 cavalry from the Volga Bulgars.[589]

An intriguing point in the Jayhani tradition is the description of the Magyar lands and population. One of the records from the Jayhani tradition is particularly interesting. In *Hudud al-Alem*, this record appears as follows: "*In nāhiyat rā meqdār bīst hazār mard ast ke bā melikeshān bar neshinanded*." Minorsky translated this into English as "This country has some 20,000 men who take the field with their king," and Zimonyi used the same translation.[590] However, in "Hudud al-Alem," an almost completely different phrase is used to describe "Magyar lands" and "Magyar population" compared to other authors from the Jayhani tradition, and the word "nahiyat" is significant. In the translation of "Hudud al-Alem," it states that "*20,000 men were residing (in service) with their kings in this nahiyat*." "Hudud al-Alem" also uses the word "nahiyat" when describing the size of the country,

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[585] Györffy, 28.
[586] Györffy, 17.
[587] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 102.
[588] Moravcsik and Jenkins, *Constantine Porphyrogenitus de Administrando Imperio*, 171; Fodor, *In Search of a New Homeland, The Prehistory of the Hungarian People and the Conquest*, 235.
[589] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 106.
[590] Minorsky, *Hudud Al-Alam The Regions of the World A Persian Geography*, 101; Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 47.

whereas other authors in the Jayhani tradition prefer the word "vilayet" or "bilad." Furthermore, while the other authors describe these 20,000 "soldiers," they do so not in terms of a land unit or potential "administrative unit," but directly as soldiers or cavalry under the command of the ruler.

Interpretations of these medieval Islamic sources can vary, requiring careful analysis of terminology and context. Of course, there are various issues in the interpretation of medieval Islamic sources. Returning to the main topic, the word *tümen* was used in Turkish in the sense of "many," as noted by Kaşgarlı Mahmud. While clans formed a semi-political administrative-social division, the *tümen* was a demographic-administrative division and naturally also a military division. Later, the word *tümen* in Turkish and related cultures would become associated with the number 10,000 and would come to be used in this sense.

3.3 Conquering Hungarian in State - Empire Theories

To analyze the state formation of the Conquering Hungarians, it is crucial to understand how theories of nomadic empires have been conceptualized and categorized by scholars. Peter Perdue categorizes theories about nomadic empires along two main axes. The first axis considers internal and external factors, while the second axis differentiates between structural (cycling) and historical (progressive) elements.[591] Perdue's categorization provides a helpful framework for understanding these theories more comprehensively.

Table 3 Models of Nomadic State Formation[592]

	Internalist	**Externalist**
Structural/cyclical	Environmental/technological/psychological determinism (*greedy nomad*, desiccation thesis) (Qing officials, Ibn-Khaldūn, Ellsworth Huntington) Class conflict (Chinese and Soviet Marxists)	*Needy nomad* (Khazanov, Barfield, Lattimore)
Historical/progressive	Philological (Turks-Mongols-Manchus) (Sinor, Golden)	Technological change; fiscal resources (Di Cosmo)

Within this framework, Kradin offers further insights by classifying nomadic empires into three distinct groups. The first group, termed "classical" nomadic empires,

[591] Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 532–33.
[592] Perdue, 533.

includes the Xiongnu, Turkic, and Mongol empires, as deduced from Kradin's statements.[593] The second group consists of "mixed agricultural-pastoral" empires where nomadic elements played a significant role. Kradin includes the Seljuk Sultanate, the Arab Caliphate, the Ottoman Empire, and the Don and Volga Bulgars in this category. His inclusion of the Don and Volga Bulgars in this group is an interesting inference, as it is debatable whether these entities shared the same "mixed agricultural-pastoral" structure as the Ottoman Empire and the Arab Caliphate.[594] The third group consists of "quasi-imperial" nomadic state formations. This group includes the European Huns, Avars, Magyars, "Priazov Bulgaria," Kara-Khitans, and the post-Golden Horde Tatar Khanates. Notably, Kradin does not provide detailed information beyond the assertion that nomads living on the borders of "Ancient Rus" exhibited such "quasi-imperial" formations and were smaller than empires.[595]

Kradin also adds Di Cosmo's concept to his analysis. He then summarizes his views on the formation of empires by stating that the agricultural and "handicraft" products needed by nomads were in the hands of the settled populations (using the metaphor "south of the Great Wall of China"). Nomadic leaders pursued personal power and authority, thus uniting tribes and forming "imperial confederations."[596] Kradin's theory of the "Gift Economy" is based on external resources. In other words, it can be considered a continuation of the "external dependence" theories.

Given these categorizations, a natural question arises: "What kind of progression can be observed in the state formation of mounted pastoral nomads?" "Is there a way to periodize these formations based on their development, either independently or in connection with external influences?" In exploring this question, it is essential to consider modernist approaches, which suggest that increased complexity in state formation correlates with societal complexity. However, what kinds of periodizations or classifications have been made in the academic community, either outside of or by developing the "classical" modernist approach? On this subject, Perdue, in his work China Marches West, summarizes the theories on nomadic empires and the state formation of mounted pastoral nomads in general.[597]

[593] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 24.
[594] Kradin, 24.
[595] Kradin, 24.
[596] Kradin, 25.
[597] Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 532–36.

Building upon these foundational theories, Nikola Di Cosmo provides a comprehensive analysis of state formation among Inner Asian nomads. Di Cosmo examines the process of state formation among Inner Asian nomads by combining both endogenous and exogenous factors. He emphasizes the role of crises—whether environmental, like severe winters, or social, such as ethnic tensions—in destabilizing traditional tribal orders, thereby allowing new political structures to emerge. For instance, tensions between ethnic groups or between "enslaved" and "master" tribes often led to friction, which could eventually escalate into war.[598]

Moreover, Di Cosmo highlights the importance of militarization, where military ventures became a regular professional activity, increasing subordination and cohesion within tribes. This shift facilitated the rise of charismatic leaders who centralized power and established new hierarchies.[599] Furthermore, he discusses how interactions with sedentary societies influenced state formation among nomads, leading to the selective adoption of civil institutions and thus creating "mixed" institutions.[600]

In addition to militarization, Di Cosmo argues that the economic foundations of these empires were critical to their sustainability. The sustainability of nomadic empires, often achieved through war, depended on the procurement of resources by military means. Di Cosmo defines the state as a political structure with a central authority recognized by a body of subjects, relying on the institutionalization of government functions such as judicial, fiscal, and administrative tasks.[601] While militarization was crucial, the sedentarization process also played a vital role in the political and economic development of Inner Asian states. He argues that the transformation of endemic violence into organized military campaigns led to a highly militarized society, where the army played a central role in political and social transformations.[602]

This economic and political integration with sedentary societies marked a significant shift in the structure of nomadic empires. He explains that the economic foundation of these empires was essential for their state-building processes. A war economy had to support territorial and demographic expansion, maintain an effective army, and reward the

[598] Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," 17–18.
[599] Di Cosmo, 19.
[600] Di Cosmo, 10.
[601] Di Cosmo, "The War Economy of Nomadic Empires," 103–4.
[602] Di Cosmo, 104, 106.

aristocracy, necessitating resources beyond their pastoral economy.[603] This need, in turn, drove the expansionist policies of nomadic empires and their dynamic interactions with sedentary societies.[604]

The dynamic interaction between nomadic and sedentary societies also facilitated the integration of sedentary practices, further influencing state formation. Di Cosmo explores state formation as a complex process influenced by various factors, including militarization, which was essential for forming new political and social institutions. He notes that militarization led to the development of new armies, transforming tribal bands into complex military organizations, forming the basis of new institutions necessary for a more extensive government and population.[605]

Moreover, he discusses the challenge of balancing state needs with resource production, noting that when such balance could not be found, it often led to instability and potential collapse.[606] Although his discussion of sedentarization is less extensive, Di Cosmo acknowledges its role within the broader context of Inner Asian political and economic transformations. The integration of sedentary practices and the selective borrowing of institutions from sedentary neighbors was significant in shaping the administrative and economic structures of Inner Asian states.[607]

Sedentarization, or the shift from nomadic to more settled political organization, was a gradual and multifaceted process. It involved economic strategies such as raiding, tribute, trade, and taxation to sustain economies. This economic diversification often required developing bureaucratic institutions and incorporating sedentary populations into the empire, gradually leading to more settled forms of governance.[608] For instance, the Liao dynasty (907-1125) exemplifies this shift from a purely nomadic to a more complex socio-political organization, designed to extract resources from an agrarian population.[609]

In summary, Di Cosmo argues that the war economy was vital for forming and maintaining nomadic empires. The primary objective of this economy was to support the military apparatus and the political elite, necessitating a continuous resource influx.[610] also

[603] Di Cosmo, 104.
[604] Di Cosmo, 123.
[605] Nicola Di Cosmo, "China-Steppe Relations in Historical Perspective," 2020, 65.
[606] Di Cosmo, 64.
[607] Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," 10.
[608] Di Cosmo, "The War Economy of Nomadic Empires," 112–21.
[609] Di Cosmo, 120.
[610] Di Cosmo, 123.

challenges the rigid dichotomy between nomadic and sedentary economies, highlighting archaeological evidence of settlements and limited agriculture in the steppe, which suggests that nomadic societies were more adaptable than traditionally believed.[611]

To fully understand the dynamic nature of these societies, Di Cosmo proposes a periodization framework based on Inner Asian states' ability to gain access to external revenues. He identifies four major periods in Inner Asian imperial history: tribute, trade partnerships, dual administration, and direct taxation.[612] This framework demonstrates that acquiring resources from outside their productive bases was crucial for these states' survival and expansion.

This approach aligns with broader historical interpretations, as suggested by scholars like Perdue and Barfield. Di Cosmo further identifies three phases in the evolution of large nomadic polities: incipient statehood, expansion, and dissolution. The initial phase involves forming the empire, followed by expansion, consolidation, and institution building. However, these central institutions were inherently unstable, often leading to prolonged crises and eventual collapse.[613] He emphasizes the importance of historical contingencies, arguing against a simplistic cyclical model and instead advocating for a contextual approach that considers specific circumstances and historical variations influencing nomadic empires' development.[614]

Di Cosmo further identifies different periods in Inner Asian history, such as the Pre-Chinggisid Period, Chinggisid Period, Post-Mongol Period, and Early Modern Period, each characterized by unique political and economic transformations driven by the need for resources and interactions with neighboring civilizations.[615] He argues that the development of these states should not be seen as strictly evolutionary but rather as a process where earlier forms were integrated into newer ones as the states grew and adapted.[616]

His periodization framework also identifies four phases of Inner Asian imperial history based on how these states acquired resources: Tribute Empires (209 B.C.–A.D. 551), Trade Partnerships (551-907), Dual Administration (907-1259), and Direct Taxation (1260-1796). He stresses that these strategies did not evolve in a linear fashion; instead, earlier

[611] Di Cosmo, "China-Steppe Relations in Historical Perspective," 50.
[612] Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," 27.
[613] Di Cosmo, "China-Steppe Relations in Historical Perspective," 54.
[614] Di Cosmo, 61.
[615] Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," 5–6.
[616] Di Cosmo, 27.

methods were often retained even as new ones were adopted.[617] This dynamic adaptability was central to the formation and sustainability of Inner Asian states.

Perdue also engages with Di Cosmo's framework, providing a synthesis of these periodization theories. Perdue examines Di Cosmo's article "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History"[618] and accepts Di Cosmo's theory of periodization in his book.[619] According to Perdue, Di Cosmo claims to have liberated the study of Inner Asian peoples from the biological imagery and mechanical causation we briefly mentioned above, and developed a periodization based on the methods by which state builders obtained revenue from external actors.[620] He summarizes this theory in his book as follows:

> "*Nicola Di Cosmo's model of stages of steppe empire formation combines these historical and external orientations with attention to internal processes. In his model, crises of violent conflict in the steppe produce the general militarization that precedes state formation. One leader then gains victory in battle and proclaims himself Khan, invoking an ideology of sacred investiture to gain legitimacy. He then creates a centralized governmental structure with his own clan at the top, which requires increased revenue to support the new administration and its followers. Only then does he attack settled societies to obtain these additional resources. The nomadic empire obtains its resources in four different ways, each marking a new stage in state formation: tribute, trade partnerships, dual administration of nomadic and settled areas, and regular taxation*."[621]

Perdue's synthesis provides a clear outline of how these stages relate to broader historical dynamics. Perdue summarizes Di Cosmo's theory of "periodization of revenue extraction" developed from tribute collection: tribute period, "trade-tribute partnerships" period, dual administration of nomadic and settled peoples period, and fully developed procedures for taxing an agricultural base period.[622]

Adding another layer of analysis, Barfield presents his interpretations on the administrative models of nomadic empires. Barfield's initial attempt to apply anthropological models to the tribal and state development of Inner Asia is evident in his

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[617] Di Cosmo, 28.
[618] Di Cosmo, 1–40.
[619] Perdue, *China Marches West: The Qing Conquest of Central Eurasia*, 533.
[620] Perdue, 8.
[621] Perdue, 537.
[622] Perdue, 8.

work “The Perilous Frontier.” He correctly identifies the northern frontier of China as the site of the most extensive and complex nomadic polities.[623] As noted in this study, the availability of comprehensive written sources from China made such research more feasible, unlike in other regions like the western steppe belt or the Carpathian Basin. In this study, Barfield proposes that the history of mounted pastoral nomadic societies in Inner Asia and their interactions with the outside world revolve around five key issues, which he uses as the framework for his research: political organization, spheres of interaction, conquest dynasties in China, Mongol world conquests, and the development of nomadic pastoral (mounted pastoral nomad) societies.[624]

Barfield's approach emphasizes a dual hierarchy within the political organization of nomadic empires. Regarding the state organization of mounted pastoral nomads in Inner Asia, Barfield argues that their administrative hierarchy comprised three levels: the imperial leader and his court, imperial governors appointed to oversee the constituent tribes, and indigenous tribal leaders.[625] This arrangement, which can be described as a “dual hierarchy,” managed both tribal affairs and state administration.

According to Barfield, this dual hierarchy enabled effective governance of internal stability and external relations. The political organization of these nomadic states was uniquely adapted to their pastoral and mobile lifestyle, combining tribal and state hierarchies into what he describes as “imperial confederacies.”[626]

Barfield's conceptualization of nomadic states diverges from traditional interpretations. Barfield posits that nomadic states in Inner Asia fundamentally differed from sedentary states due to their reliance on external “relationships” rather than internal class structures. He suggests that these states were not merely the personal creations of powerful leaders destined to collapse upon their demise but rather structured entities with a sophisticated dual hierarchy. This organization allowed for an autocratic and state-like approach to foreign affairs while remaining consultative and federative internally. Furthermore, Barfield argues that the Inner Asian nomadic state sustained itself by exploiting China’s economy, organizing scattered mounted pastoral nomads to facilitate this economic exploitation rather than relying on internal pastoral production.

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[623] Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China [, 221 BC to AD 1757]*, X.
[624] Barfield, 4.
[625] Barfield, 8.
[626] Barfield, 8.

Barfield's theory, as laid out in The Perilous Frontier, centers on the concept of a "dual hierarchy." He refutes the notion of class conflict, instead proposing a form of state organization based on this duality. However, a paradox in his theory arises from the conflicting dynamics within this structure. While tribal leaders ostensibly lost autonomy within the state, they gained resources through the system of loot and trade rights enabled by the mounted pastoral nomadic state. In other words, this "harmony" is not a straightforward "win-win" situation but rather a "win-win and lose" scenario.

The inherent conflict within Barfield's dual hierarchy theory adds another dimension to the understanding of nomadic empires. This inherent conflict forms another pillar of his theory. When the mounted pastoral nomadic state fails, tribal leaders regain their power, leading to renewed struggles for dominance in the steppe. This cycle of power is intrinsically connected to the sedentary states that the mounted pastoral nomads exploited. Barfield explains that the tribal organization continues to exist, which allows tribal leaders to easily reclaim their autonomy during periods of instability.[627]

Thus, instead of focusing on class conflict, Barfield's dissertation in The Perilous Frontier suggests a "rise and fall" cycle within the system. His avoidance of class conflict is understandable within the historical context. When he wrote the work in 1989, the Eastern Bloc was still standing, albeit tenuously, despite bureaucratic corruption, and theories like "military democracy" for mounted pastoral nomads were still debated in contemporary scholarship. The nomadic "military democracy" theory will be debated in this study later but an interesting point should be pointed out here. The use of the term "military democracy" by Engels bears a striking resemblance to Barfield's description of mounted pastoral nomadic structures:

> "*The denser population necessitates closer consolidation both for internal and external action. The confederacy of related tribes becomes everywhere a necessity, and soon also their fusion, involving the fusion of the separate tribal territories into one territory of the nation. The military leader of the people, res, basileus, thiudans – becomes an indispensable, permanent official. The assembly of the people takes form, wherever it did not already exist. Military leader, council, assembly of the people are the organs of gentile society developed into military democracy*[628] –

[627] Barfield, 8.

[628] Due to Engels' style, he and also Marx used "military democracy" in a pejorative and allusive way, but in the political atmosphere of the Cold War, this terminology gained a different resonance.

military, since war and organization for war have now become regular functions of national life. Their neighbors' wealth excites the greed of peoples who already see in the acquisition of wealth one of the main aims of life. They are barbarians: they think it more easy and in fact more honorable to get riches by pillage than by work. War, formerly waged only in revenge for injuries or to extend territory that had grown too small, is now waged simply for plunder and becomes a regular industry."[629]

As Barfield himself notes, his work builds on Lattimore's hypotheses regarding cycles of nomadic conquest dynasties and rule.[630] Even the name of his theory, "Shadow Empires," likely draws inspiration from Lattimore:

"*Following the rule that the organization of states among pastoral nomads follows like a shadow the formation of neighboring civilized states, there arose in the steppe, in this period [Tang], a series of 'tribal' nations: the Orkhon Turks in Mongolia, the Uighur and other Turkish nations in Inner Asia, and the Khazar, Bulgar, and Pecheneg states in the Caspian–Black Sea steppe.*"[631]

Despite some limitations, Barfield's theory provides a compelling framework for understanding nomadic empires. Thus, despite his rejection of class conflict within mounted pastoral nomadic states and societies, Barfield's theory, as presented in The Perilous Frontier, remains strongly influenced by Marxist foundations.

In his latest work published in 2023, Barfield has further developed the "Shadow Empire" theory mentioned above. Here, he presents an "imperial reading" not only through the lens of mounted pastoral nomads but also through a general definition of empire. He begins by categorizing empires into two fundamental groups: endogenous and exogenous (shadow) empires.[632]

This updated theory allows for a more nuanced categorization of empires. The first group, endogenous empires, are defined as systems that are "internally" sustained, obtaining the resources they need through methods such as taxation or tribute. These empires manage large populations and possess a cosmopolitan structure. The second group, exogenous

[629] Friedrich Engels, *Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*, trans. Alick West and Mark Harris (Marx/Engels Internet Archive, 2010), 89.
[630] Barfield, *The Perilous Frontier: Nomadic Empires and China [, 221 BC to AD 1757]*, 11.
[631] Owen Lattimore, *Pivot of Asia Sinkiang and the Inner Asian Frontiers of China and Russia* (Boston: An Atlantic Monthly Press Book, 1950), 11.
[632] Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 2–3.

empires, are described as dependent on and interacting with endogenous empires. Empires in this group are founded on a series of 'external' factors such as tribute, raids, piracy, and the plundering of the remnants of fallen empires. Barfield refers to these exogenous empires as "shadow" empires and emphasizes that they should not be seen as a lower, worse version of endogenous empires.[633] Furthermore, although endogenous empires may engage in such activities, exogenous empires lack certain characteristics of the empires they shadow.[634]

To further understand Barfield's categorization, it is essential to examine the characteristics of endogenous empires. Barfield lists these characteristics in six points:[635] "(1) organized to administer and exploit diversity,[636] (2) an imperial project that imposed some type of unity throughout the system,[637] (3) centralized institutions of governance that were separate and distinct from the rulers,[638] (4) a primate imperial center with transportation systems designed to serve it militarily and economically,[639] (5) monopoly of force within their territories, and military force projected outward,[640] and (6) systems of communication that allowed the administration of all subject areas from the center directly."[641]

It can be observed here that Barfield, in his 2001 work, increased the number of characteristics of endogenous empires, which he had previously defined as "primary empire," from 4 to 6, adding the new features of "an imperial project that imposed some type of unity throughout the system" and "centralized institutions of governance that were separate and distinct from the rulers." As we will occasionally mention, Barfield has periodically revised and developed the theory he formulated in 1989 over the span of 34 years. Considering these two newly added characteristics, it can be said that he has moved closer to the concept of a political ecumene. In this context, with this shift from the definition

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633 Barfield, 3.
634 While it should be noted that there is something compelling about Barfield's term "shadow empire"—and one must acknowledge Barfield's success in naming and coining terms—in this expanded narrative of exogenous empires, some examples, particularly the concept of a vacuum empire that will be discussed later, do not fully complement this term. This is especially true considering that the term draws inspiration from Lattimore's depiction of mounted pastoral nomads in the steppes shadowing sedentary populations like a shadow, which does not quite capture the full scope here.
635 Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 20–25, 239.
636 Barfield, "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese-Nomad Frontier," 29; Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 20.
637 Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 26.
638 Barfield, 21.
639 Barfield, "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese-Nomad Frontier," 30.
640 Barfield, 32; Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 25.
641 Barfield, "The Shadow Empires: Imperial State Formation along the Chinese-Nomad Frontier," 31; Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 23.

of "primary" empire to "endogenous" empire, Barfield seems to be approaching a definition of a "super establishment" that encompasses both the concept of political ecumene and centralization in terms of transportation and communication (the "core"), as well as administrative and military centralization under the definition of "empire." Barfield categorizes exogenous empires into five types: "Maritime," "Mirror Nomadic," "Periphery" with subtypes "Vulture" and "Vanquisher," "Nostalgic," and "Vacuum."[642]

The typology of empires presented by Barfield allows for a more precise classification of various historical formations. This study will discuss the "Vacuum," "Mirror Nomadic," and "Vulture" empire types as they fall within the scope of the research. However, greater emphasis will be placed on the "Vacuum" empire type, particularly in the context of the Hungarian example, by eliciting and verifying a comparison.

Mirror Nomadic empires, as defined by Barfield, refer to mounted pastoral nomadic communities that coexisted in harmony with the imperial structure in China. These steppe empires displayed a parallel existence with the rise and fall of endogenous empires in China.[643]

In the context of Barfield's categorization, the early Hungarians provide an intriguing case study as a "vacuum empire." According to Barfield's categorization of empires in his book *Shadow Empires*, the early Hungarians are more appropriately classified as a "vacuum empire." From this, it can be inferred: "In the carcass of the Khazar Khaganate, itself an exogenous Steppe empire, three 'vacuum empires' arose: Kievan Rus', the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and the Kingdom of Poland (later the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth), and the Kingdom of Hungary." Unlike the other two "vacuum empires," the Avar Khaganate may also be considered a second "exogenous steppe empire carcass" for the Hungarians.

However, the term "carcass" is more accurately suited to "vulture empires." Given that the Hungarians are not classified as a "vulture empire," it might be more precise to state: "It may be questioned whether they are vulture empires, but according to Barfield's classification, they are not."

To understand the early Hungarian state formation better, it is helpful to compare them to other historical examples. In this context, the early Hungarians can be compared to

[642] Barfield, *Shadow Empires an Alternative Imperial History*, 3.
[643] Barfield, 118–19.

the Bulgars, another group emerging from two exogenous empires. In the post-Avar and subsequent post-Khazar period, the Bulgars were perhaps a step ahead of the Hungarians in terms of establishing an empire; however, they were unable to establish a lasting "vacuum empire." This could be attributed to their geographical position, directly within a "vulture empire" region, namely on the periphery of Byzantium. This position led them to attempt to become a "vulture empire" in place of Byzantium, an effort in which they ultimately did not succeed. In contrast, the early Hungarians' geographical location in the Pannonian-Carpathian Basin was not within the periphery of an endogenous empire, but rather, on the "periphery of the periphery" of the declining nostalgia exogenous Carolingian East Frankish Empire. In other words, the Hungarians' location provided them with the conditions necessary to become a "vacuum empire," whereas the Bulgars, as a candidate for a "vulture empire," were unable to defeat their rival, Byzantium.

From this perspective, it can be suggested that with the establishment of the German (Holy Roman) Empire by Otto the Great, which Barfield refers to as a "Nostalgia 2.0" exogenous empire, in the mid-10th century, the Hungarians politically transitioned into an endogenous empire following their defeat at the Battle of Augsburg in 955.

This transition raises important questions about the classification of the Hungarian state. Two important questions arise from this discussion. First, why can the "Hungarian Empire" be considered an indigenous empire rather than a "vacuum 2.0" like the Holy Roman Empire? Second, why cannot the early Hungarians, as a "vacuum" empire, be considered a 'nostalgia' exogenous empire like the Carolingians?

Addressing the first question involves examining the characteristics of endogenous empires. First Question: The Hungarian Empire as an Indigenous Empire. Barfield suggests that indigenous empires possess certain characteristics. When examining the Holy Roman Empire, Barfield notes that three of these characteristics are present in this empire: "organized to administer and exploit diversity, an imperial project that imposed some type of unity throughout the system, and centralized institutions of governance that were separate and distinct from the rulers." However, three other characteristics are absent: "a primate imperial center with transportation systems designed to serve it militarily and economically, monopoly of force within their territories, and military force projected outward, systems of communication that allowed administration of all subject areas from the center directly."

In line with these characteristics, it can be suggested that the state established by St. Stephen, although not directly the subject of this study, evolved to possess these six characteristics as well. However, this is a topic for another study. The fact that the state established by St. Stephen had a centralized governance structure, aimed to manage diversity, and create unity, are significant factors in considering it an indigenous empire. The Kingdom of Hungary, during and after the reign of St. Stephen, integrated into the Western European feudal system, while preserving and developing its own unique political structure.

The second question involves distinguishing the early Hungarian state from "nostalgia" empires. Second Question: The Non-Classification of the Hungarians as a "Nostalgia" Exogenous Empire. It can be explained that why the early Hungarians cannot be considered a "nostalgia" exogenous empire like the Carolingians by several reasons. First, the term "nostalgia empire" implies a phenomenon that continues from a past empire, which was not the case for the early Hungarians. They did not form based on the memory of an old imperial organization. Pannonia had been Roman territory, but how "Romanized" it became within the empire is debatable. More importantly, the legitimacy of the Hungarian "vacuum" empire did not derive from a Roman legacy. This legitimacy was still sourced from the Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene in which they were situated.

At this point, the question arises as to whether the events that took place in the later Árpád period, such as the "Bull of Andrew" and relations with the Cumans (especially during the reign of Kun László), stemmed from this past political experience after the Kingdom of Hungary transitioned to the Western European-Western Christian Political Ecumene. Alternatively, what unique elements reflecting this "vacuum" empire past can be found or might be found in the transition from the common tribal property concept to the property concept in the feudal Western European political ecumene during the time of St. Stephen? It would be highly speculative to claim a direct relationship with the first question, but it should be noted that Györffy approaches the second question in this vein, suggesting that traces from the previous period exist. Of course, Györffy made this argument without any connection to Barfield's theory. To better understand the evolution of the Hungarian state, it is useful to propose a periodization framework.

If we consider the early Hungarian political formation as a "vacuum" empire, the following periodization can be proposed:

- **830 - 895 Migration and Early Raids:** During this period, the Hungarians, a group affiliated with the Khazar Khaganate, expanded westward due to internal conflicts for the khaganate and events like the inclusion of the Kabars and attacks from the Pechenegs. During this time, they were engaged in military activities alongside other political actors.
- **895 - 907 Early Formation Period:** The Hungarians who came to the Carpathian Basin during this period, incorporating the Late Avar society and taking advantage of the vacuum created by the collapse of Svatopluk's Great Moravia, established a new "vacuum" empire under Árpád.
- **907 - 955 Raids and Vacuum Empire:** During this period, Hungarian raids reached their peak across Europe, and the "vacuum" empire accumulated great wealth as a result of these raids.
- **955 - 1000 The Beginning of the Transformation Period:** After the defeat at Augsburg, the Hungarian "vacuum" empire began the process of entering the Western Christian Political Ecumene, and this transformation was eventually completed with the Kingdom of Hungary under St. Stephen.

Barfield's theory offers a compelling framework but is not without its limitations. Barfield's theory on the classification of empires, particularly in the context of mounted pastoral nomadic empires, is intricate and often aligns well with historical and political perspectives. However, it has a significant shortcoming in its explanation of the "internal" dynamics of these exogenetic empires, especially those of the mounted pastoral nomads. This shortcoming arises from Barfield's tendency to define these empires almost exclusively as "dependent" entities. Unlike scholars such as Golden or Györffy, Barfield entirely dismisses the existence of social strata within mounted pastoral nomadic societies. While this approach may simplify the classification process, it fails to account for similar phenomena, such as why the Late Avars could not establish a vacuum empire, whereas the Hungarians could.

Moreover, Barfield's focus on charismatic leadership oversimplifies the complexity of nomadic state formation. Although Barfield develops a detailed staged administrative concept for mounted pastoral nomads, his framework ultimately remains fixated on the notion of the "charismatic, heroic, nomadic leader." This emphasis oversimplifies the complexity of administrative and political organization within mounted pastoral nomadic

societies. In this regard, the theories of Pletneva, Szabó, and Györffy offer more nuanced explanations. Golden's theory on mounted pastoral nomadic military retinues (comitatus) aligns with Györffy's similar theory on the military retinues of the conquering Hungarians. An interesting aspect of these parallel views is that Golden developed his ideas based on the Khazars and other Turkic peoples, including the Turk Khaganate, while Györffy focused on early Hungarians. It is noteworthy that in his work, Golden acknowledges Györffy's similar study on the "buyruq" in the context of the Turk Khaganate.[644]

Finally, it is necessary to address the model proposed by Gyula Kristó regarding the formation of the Hungarian state. According to Gyula Kristó's model, *the Hungarians, originally horse-riding nomads, have a history spanning centuries*, with characteristics typical of such societies. However, only the last few centuries of this roughly one-and-a-half-thousand-year period are well-documented. During this time, they were organized in tribal structures typical of nomadic life, with no centralized authority. The tribes consisted of Finno-Ugric and, to a lesser extent, Turkic-speaking peoples by the 8th century. Then a significant change occurred in the 830s when a federation of seven tribes, known as the Seven Magyars, was formed under the leadership of the Magyar tribe, or Levedi's tribe. This federation was heavily influenced by Turkic societal structures and followed governance practices summarized as "begs and people." *In the latter half of the 850s, a new state-like formation emerged* under Khazar influence, through the union of two tribal federations—the Seven Magyars and the Three Kabars. *Thus, the Hungarian nomadic state, a unique nomadic empire, was created.* During this time, the Hungarians were recognized among the peoples described in Turkish ruling systems as "peoples with an empire and a khagan." The society, primarily military, conducted regular campaigns to expand the empire, acquiring wealth and resources through taxation and subjugation of conquered peoples. *The Hungarian nomadic state reached its peak around the late 9th and early 10th centuries, as an independent political entity under a single ruler.* However, the conquest of the Carpathian Basin led to significant changes, as this environment did not support the continuation of nomadism. The state's decline began in the early 10th century.[645]

By around 950, *the Hungarian nomadic state had started to dissolve*, with power devolving to tribal chiefs. Nevertheless, many state-like structures from the nomadic period

[644] György Györffy, "Die Rolle Des Buyruq In Der Alttürkischen Gesellschaft," *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 11, no. 1/3 (1960): 169–79.
[645] Kristó, *A Magyar Állam Megszületése*, 359–60.

persisted. *The resulting formation was a tribal nomadic state, or a tribal state on the path to nomadic statehood.* Elements of the previous state structure remained, such as the taxation of foreigners, communal ownership, and social organization based on bloodlines. However, the end of raiding campaigns increased the importance of the Carpathian Basin and its agricultural populations, making a shift towards agriculture inevitable. *The formation of the European-style (feudal) Hungarian state is attributed to the time of Saint Stephen.* This new state did not arise from the Hungarian nomadic state, but from one of the tribal states, specifically the Árpád tribal state under Géza. Although it succeeded the nomadic state territorially, it represented a complete departure from the nomadic tradition. *Every aspect of the feudal state contrasted sharply with the structures and practices of the earlier nomadic state.*[646]

[646] Kristó, 360–61.

4 Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Social Pathways

To understand the complexities of mounted pastoral nomadic societies, particularly their socio-political structures and state formations, it is essential to explore various theoretical frameworks and historical case studies. This chapter examines the different interpretations of nomadism, semi-nomadism, and the development of political entities among the Hungarians and their contemporaries, such as the Khazars. Nikolai Kradin categorizes theories describing social systems into four main groups according to modern social sciences and history. The first group comprises unilinear theories of societal development, often referred to as modernist theories. The second group, known as "civilization theories," posits that distinct civilizations emerge from unique cultural activities rather than a single world history. The third group consists of "world-systems" theories, while the fourth group includes multifaceted "multilinear" theories. Among these, Kradin aligns himself with contemporary multilinear theorists, emphasizing the complexity of societal development.[647]

Kradin argues that social evolution has not been sufficiently conceptualized concerning pastoral nomads,[648] a conclusion with which we agree. He contends that mounted pastoral nomads frequently formed major political entities, established empires, and subsequently vanished.[649] However, the notion of a "nomadic empire" is debatable. Scrutinizing one aspect of this assertion may cause the entire claim to collapse; namely, is this vast social organization founded by nomads truly an "empire?" Comparing the imagery evoked in the mind of a general intellectual reader or a political science researcher regarding the concept of empire to that of the nomadic empires formed by nomads reveals significant differences. Fundamentally, whether one considers empires from before the Industrial Revolution or the "imperialist" empires afterward, the "short-term" mass movements of nomads do not bear resemblance. Kradin's attempt to explain nomadic empires remains ambiguous and lacks clear conclusions, leaving the debate open for further examination.

Moving from the theoretical framework to specific examples, proponents of the nomadic autonomy theory argue that nomads can establish states independently and that these nomadic societies are divided into aristocrats and "common people." According to

[647] Kradin, "Nomadism, Evolution and World-Systems: Pastoral Societies in Theories of Historical Development," 368.
[648] Kradin, 369.
[649] Kradin, 369.

this view, due to the importance of "genealogical" relations among nomads, such a state can be defined as a "consanguineal" state.[650]

Nevertheless, the understanding of nomadic state structures has evolved over time. Since the early 1990s, the concept of "chiefdom" has become a subject of criticism and has lost interest. In its place, the idea of "heterarchy" has emerged within anthropology and archaeology. Two strategies encountered in different cultures have been proposed. In the first strategy, defined as "hierarchical" or "network," the distribution and centralization of power progress on a vertical structure. In contrast, in the second strategy, defined as "heterarchical" or "cooperative," the distribution of wealth and power follows a broader, more distributed character.[651] Kradin questions the validity and value of these concepts and ideas for pastoral nomads. He questions the validity and value of these concepts and ideas for pastoral nomads, expressing doubt regarding the applicability of the "heterarchy-hierarchy" theory to "slab-grave" cultures.[652]

Drawing on the Mongol example, Kradin notes that a wealthy livestock owner finds it more "profitable" to give their animals to a poorer kinsman rather than risk losing their herd. This not only elevates the social status of the poorer kinsman but also resolves issues related to pasture and grazing. Consequently, Kradin argues that within pastoral nomadism, it is impossible to provide a regular surplus of food for large non-food-producing groups such as soldiers, priests, and the ruling aristocracy.[653] Kradin supplements his view by stating that only agriculture can provide an economic foundation sufficiently robust for state formation. He argues that this assertion has been tested using Korotayev's "cross-cultural" comparative method. The referenced study relies on George Murdock's "Atlas of World Cultures" and suggests that no culture reliant on pastoralism has demonstrated the conditions necessary for state formation.[654]

To deepen our understanding, we must now turn to specific case studies. To understand the socio-economic structure of the early Hungarians within the broader socio-

[650] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 14; Di Cosmo, "State Formation and Periodization in Inner Asian History," 18–19; Lawrance Krader, *Formation of the State*, Foundations of Modern Anthropology Series (Prentice-Hall, 1968), 83–103.
[651] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 14.
[652] Kradin, 15.
[653] Kradin, 16.
[654] Kradin, 16.

economic context of mounted pastoral nomads, a preliminary examination can be made, relatively speaking, of the Volga Bulgars but primarily focusing on the Khazars.

The role of the Khazars in facilitating trade is particularly noteworthy. In the early 9th century, Islamic dirhams were brought to Russia through the Khazar Khaganate, and the Khazars were instrumental in facilitating this Islamic trade.[655] Muslim merchants became active in the Khazar capital city of Atil (İtil or İdil) and extended their reach to the lower Volga region.[656] Following the fall of the Umayyads in 749, the Islamic caliphate halted its expansionist campaigns against the Khazars, and the transition from the Umayyads to the Abbasids allowed for the expansion of trade.[657] However, for the 9th century, only two Islamic sources provide information about the trade between the Rus, Khazars, and the Islamic world: Ibn Khordadbeh and Ibn al-Faqih.[658] It is noted that Rus merchants used Khazar territories to access Islamic trade centers through various routes.[659] According to one of these Islamic sources, "Kitāb al-Masālik wa'l-Mamālik," the 9th-century trade activities are described by Ibn Khordadbeh as follows:

> "*If the Rus follow the Danus(Danube) River, they visit Hamlic (Hanbalıg), the city of the Khazars. The ruler of the city collects taxes from them. From there, they reach the Khazar Sea and visit the lands surrounding it... Sometimes their goods are transported on camels from Gorgan to Baghdad. Slavic servants (slaves) are used as translators. They claim to be Christians and pay the jizya...*"[660]

This rich trade network influenced the social and urban development of Khazar cities. Istakhri's description of the city of Atil (İtil or İdil) shares similarities with other Islamic sources, such as "Hudud al-Alem," which provides a brief yet detailed account of the city. According to these descriptions, the city was divided by a river; on the western side lived the ruler, known as Tarkhan Khagan, in a walled section along with his troops, while on the opposite side, Muslims and pagans resided under governors, each representing a

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655 Thomas S. Noonan, "What Does Historical Numismatics Suggest About the History of Khazaria in the Ninth Century?," *Archivium Eurasiae Medii Aevi*, no. 3 (1983): 266.
656 Thomas S. Noonan, "Khazaria as an Intermediary Between Islam and Eastern Europe in the Second Half of the Ninth Century: The Numismatic Perspective," *Archivium Eurasiae Medii Aevi*, no. 5 (1987 1985): 179.
657 Zhivkov, *Khazaria in the Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, 147.
658 Noonan, "Khazaria as an Intermediary Between Islam and Eastern Europe in the Second Half of the Ninth Century: The Numismatic Perspective," 180.
659 Golden, *Khazar Studies, An Historico-Philological Inquiry into the Origins of the Khazars*, 1:107; Noonan, "Khazaria as an Intermediary Between Islam and Eastern Europe in the Second Half of the Ninth Century: The Numismatic Perspective," 180.
660 Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*, 184, 186; Murat Ağarı, trans., *Yollar ve Ülkeler Kitabı* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2019), 143–45.

different creed.[661] Istakhri also depicted the city as a walled settlement split into two parts by the river: one side housed foreigners, merchants, and common people, such as Muslims, while the other side was reserved for the ruler and his entourage. He further noted that only the ruler was permitted to have brick buildings, whereas the rest of the population, including ten thousand Muslims, lived in felt tents or mud structures. The city lacked villages, and agricultural fields were sparse. Istakhri also mentioned the term "pure" Khazars while describing the Khazar ruler living on the western side with his soldiers.[662]

Both accounts suggest that the city of Atil exhibited considerable complexity. This complexity indicates a well-organized and intricate social structure. The ruler and the "pure" Khazars displayed many characteristics of feudal nobility, contrasting with the traditional view of classical nomadism. The administration and legal systems of the city were described as multi-cultural, which aligns with the city's role as a significant trade hub. However, while the central city exhibited this complexity, the absence of rural settlements and the sparse distribution of agricultural fields provide evidence of mounted pastoral nomadism, reflecting its inherent social flexibility. This arrangement bears similarities to the "semi-nomadism" theory proposed by Szabó and Györffy.

By drawing a parallel between the Khazar and Hungarian social structures, I support the initial part of Györffy's argument. After the 9th century, Islamic sources provide significant data on Khazar trade activities. Khazar trade became so widespread that items like silk garments and mirrors from China were found in Khazar period cemeteries.[663] During this period, the Khazars acted as middlemen in trade. When possible, they collected tribute and tithes instead of goods. The Primary Chronicle mentions this practice through the tribute collected from the Russian princes between 956-964.[664] The Khazars even minted their coins.[665] Khazar and Volga Bulgar period coins spread throughout the Baltics, Russia, and Scandinavia.

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[661] Minorsky, *Hudud Al-Alam The Regions of the World A Persian Geography*, 161–62.
[662] Dunlop, *The History of The Jewish Khazars,* 91–92; Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*, 156; Murat Ağarı, trans., *Ülkelerin Yolları* (İstanbul: Kitabevi, 2020), 197.
[663] Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*, 184; Kevin Alan Brook, *The Jews of Khazaria,* 2nd ed. (Rownman/Littlefield, 2006), 79.
[664] Noonan, "What Does Historical Numismatics Suggest About the History of Khazaria in the Ninth Century?," 279; Samuel Hazzard Cross and Olgerd Sherbowitz-Wetzor, trans., *The Russian Primary Chronicle Laurentian Text* (Cambridge, 1953), 84.
[665] Roman Kovalev, "What Does Historical Numismatics Suggest About The Monetary History of Khazaria in the Ninth Century? - Question Revisited," *Archivium Eurasiae Medii Aevi*, no. 13 (2004): 129.

Such economic activities prompt questions about the utilization of accumulated wealth. Naturally, the first question any researcher might ask is how this wealth was utilized, a question also posed by Noonan.[666] In his articles, he answers this question by highlighting that the monetary accumulation was part of the equestrian pastoral nomadic state formations engaged in trade and settled life, involving both the Khazars and possibly the Volga Bulgars. By delving into Islamic sources and the Jayhani tradition, we can further explore the answer. Al-Mas'udi mentions that the Khagan's army comprised seven thousand well-equipped and salaried Muslim soldiers.[667] According to him, these Muslims came to Khazaria due to war and plague in their lands. Noonan refers to these soldiers as permanent mercenary units.[668] However, given their status and social rights as mentioned by Al-Mas'udi, it would be more accurate to describe these soldiers as military retinue rather than mere mercenaries. Furthermore, Ibn Rusta and Gardīzī provide an interesting detail about the Khazar army, noting that some soldiers of the Khagan's cavalry of ten thousand strong army were supplied by wealthy individuals.[669]

However, Islamic geographers and historians offer different perspectives on these soldiers. There were Islamic geographers and historians who also portrayed these soldiers less favorably. The Al-Balkhi tradition offers a similar but less comprehensive description. Istakhri's depiction of the Khazar army consists of twelve thousand soldiers who do not receive regular salaries. He mentioned that the soldiers received money infrequently and in small amounts, unlike the accounts of Ibn Rustah or Gardīzī, and he does not mention any particular skills or bravery of these soldiers.[670]

The described features do not conform to the traditional concept of a mounted pastoral nomadic army. The "classic" structure of a mounted pastoral nomadic military relied on an army formed by kinship and clan members. However, the description of the Khazar army, with soldiers provided by the wealthy, resembles either a feudal military structure or military retinue military concept. With more information about these wealthy individuals, a more precise conclusion can be drawn. Nonetheless, it can be asserted that the

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[666] Noonan, "What Does Historical Numismatics Suggest About the History of Khazaria in the Ninth Century?," 281.
[667] Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*, 46.
[668] Noonan, "What Does Historical Numismatics Suggest About the History of Khazaria in the Ninth Century?," 269.
[669] Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*, 36, 82; Ali Fuat Eker, trans., *EkerEl-A'laku'n-Nefise; Dünya Coğrafyası* (Ankara: Ankara Okulu Yayınları, 2017), 158.
[670] Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*, 156; Ağarı, *Ülkelerin Yolları*, 198.

Khazar military structure contradicts the "classic" mounted pastoral nomadic army concept, suggesting a more stratified society. Here, Györffy's response of "social stratification" as answer of his question needs to be reconsidered. The social structures of the Khazars and the Hungarians are compared by Györffy, and this comparison appears to align well with the examples given in the military context to military retinue or "comitatus" as described by Peter Golden.

To understand this comparison more clearly, I must briefly review the studies on the social structure of Hungarian nomads and the "forms of nomadism" from the mid-20th century. Gyula Kristó's brief evaluations of these studies can be considered. In this context, Kristó notes that, according to Sándor Domanovszky, the Hungarians continued their pastoral lifestyle in Lebedia while also engaging in agriculture.[671]

Another researcher Kristó draws attention to is Erik Molnár, who comes from a "Marxist" background Molnár describes the nomadic Hungarians as living year-round along rivers, staying in permanent winter camps, and driving their herds to pastures in the summer. He adds that while changing these summer camps, the nomads engaged in agriculture. He also includes certain class-based features, claiming that agricultural work was done by the poor and slaves, while adding the rather difficult-to-prove argument that animal husbandry was much easier than agriculture.[672] Based on Molnár's arguments, it can be said that, from a classical Marxist perspective, Molnár viewed the early Hungarians as a slave-owning society, where slave labor was a significant element in the socio-economic infrastructure.

Kristó points out that Gyula László, although he argued that the agricultural terms in Hungarian came from the Volga Bulgars and that the Hungarians engaged in agriculture, rejects the claim that the Hungarians consisted only of nobles and warriors, with the remaining crafts being carried out by foreign slaves.[673]

In this context, another researcher who is mentioned by him István Szabó further develops the semi-nomadic theory. He argues that the Hungarians retreated to winter camps surrounded by fields and crops at the beginning of winter, drawing a parallel with the

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[671] Sándor Domanovszky, "A Mezőgazdaság Szent István Korában," in *Emlékkönyv Szent István Király Halálának Kilencszázadik Évfordulóján*, ed. Jusztinián Serédi (Budapest, 1938), 311–12, 325–28, 332; Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," 6.

[672] Erik Molnár, *A Magyar Társadalom Története Az Őskortól Az Árpád-Korig* (Budapest-Szeged: Szikra Könyvkiadó, 1949), 45-48,116-117,162-163,170,171,264; Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," 6–7.

[673] Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," 8; Gyula László, *A Honfoglaló Magyar Nép Élete*, 2nd ed. (Budapest, 1944), 287,324,326-327.

Bashkir people of the 18th and 19th centuries, and claims that these settlements were actually village-like. In a similar vein, he suggests that during the Conquest period, the Hungarians were already in a transitional phase between settled life and nomadism.[674]

To delve deeper into Szabó's perspectives, Hungarian geographer and historians István Szabó and György Györffy have extensively explored the transformation of the Hungarian people from their nomadic roots to a settled agricultural society within the Carpathian Basin. Both scholars emphasize the gradual nature of this transition, influenced by internal developments, external interactions, and environmental factors. Szabó posits that this transformation occurred over approximately one to one and a half centuries following the Hungarians' settlement in the in the region between the Danube and Tisza.[675] Györffy, on the other hand, argues that the Hungarians were "semi-nomads" in contrast to view of "pure nomads," highlighting their complex social structure, which included military retinues, commoners, and enslaved servants—a structure resembling that of Germanic societies during their migratory period.[676]

Szabó's analysis is grounded in the fundamental aspects of semi-nomadism, agriculture, and settlement. He describes how, before settling in the Carpathian Basin, the Hungarians lived as "nomadic shepherds" on the Eurasian steppes like other mounted pastoral nomads. Arab, Persian, and Greek sources from the period depict them as nomads in search of the best pastures, migrating with their families and animals, and living in tents.[677] The practice of "semi-nomadism," involving movement to riverbank settlements or winter camps during the winter months, represented a transitional stage between full nomadism and settled life. These winter camps were initially located on riverbanks and gradually evolved into denser and more organized villages, often taking the form of horseshoes or semicircles, formed in the nearly circular bends of rivers, in corners or nooks. As a result, the inner sides of these bends slowly drew nearer to the settlement and its village buildings, while the opposite sides receded, necessitating the eventual relocation of the village. The lives of certain villages were defined by the patterns of the floodwater.[678]

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[674] Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," 8; Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, 26-28,34-35.
[675] Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, 10.
[676] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 16.
[677] Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, 7.
[678] Szabó, 7–13; István Szabó, *A Középkori Magyar Falu* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1969), 122.

One point Györffy highlights regarding the semi-nomadic lifestyle, straddling between agricultural and nomadic societies, is their winter fishing activities. From the Jayhani tradition, he infers this practice, with Ibn Rusta, Gardīzī, and Ḥudūd al-ʿālam all noting that they fished and consumed fish.[679] This supports the previously mentioned argument that fish was among the foods consumed by nomads. This also refutes Kradin's dissertation regarding the inability of nomadic societies to sustain themselves without external agricultural support.

Referring to Jayhani, Györffy concludes that the Hungarians had permanent winter camps, sowed grain in the spring, moved their livestock to pastures in the summer, and returned to their winter camps for the harvest.[680] Here, he draws a parallel between the Jayhani tradition and the information provided in the letter of the Khazar ruler Joseph regarding Khazar society.[681]

In describing the Khazars, Jayhani Tradition states that they (Khazars) did not have villages, but they had extensive farms, and they obtained crops from the river and steppe, and their main foods were rice and fish.[682] From the letter of Khazar ruler Joseph, one can foresee a similar semi-nomadic migration and settlement cycle as envisioned by Györffy for the early Hungarians. Zimonyi describes this economic activity of the Khazars as a "mobile agrarian economy," further supporting this semi-nomadic model."[683]

According to both Szabó and Györffy, water played a pivotal role in the formation of these semi-nomadic villages. Settlements were often located near abandoned riverbeds or water-rich floodplains, which were vital for agriculture and livestock.[684] Szabó, drawing upon the work of Gyula László, posits that the settlement patterns of the conquering Hungarians, akin to the aul of nomadic peoples, fundamentally represented an extended family unit. This unit would receive its winter settlement collectively, yet distinctly apart from other extended families.[685]

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[679] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 202; Minorsky, *Hudud Al-Alam The Regions of the World A Persian Geography*; Şeşen, *İslam Coğrafyacılarına Göre Türkler ve Türk Ülkeleri*.
[680] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 17.
[681] Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 174.
[682] Zimonyi, 174.
[683] Zimonyi, 174.
[684] Szabó, *A Középkori Magyar Falu*, 122.
[685] Szabó, 214; László, *A Honfoglaló Magyar Nép Élete*, 171–72.

In his exploration of the development of the Hungarian village system, Szabó compares the Hungarians to other nomadic groups, such as the Bashkirs and Kyrgyz, to highlight the stages and factors influencing the transition from semi-nomadism to a settled agricultural life.[686] This transformation of nomadic winter settlements into permanent villages is examined through historical and archaeological evidence. Szabó outlines a five-stage periodization of sedentation: initial nomadism, the emergence of agriculture, the reduction of pastoral areas, the formation of permanent settlements, and the semi-permanent winter settlements that eventually transformed into villages.[687]

This theory aligns with Györffy's broader socio-political analysis. Györffy's research aligns with Szabó's findings but also adds a broader socio-political context. He argues that the southeastern branch of the Finno-Ugric peoples established a symbiotic relationship with Iranian-speaking nomads in the forest steppes and later with the semi-nomadic Turkic Bulgars. This interaction led to the emergence of the semi-nomadic proto-Hungarians, who, through their relationship with the Turkic Bulgars, became part of the Khazar Empire and adopted Turkic political structures.[688]

A notable aspect of the semi-nomadic lifestyle described by both Szabó and Györffy is the integration of agricultural practices with traditional pastoralism. Szabó highlights the evolution of housing structures as an indicator of the shift from semi-nomadism to a more settled lifestyle. Early Hungarian settlements were characterized by single-room, dug-out houses, which later evolved into multi-room wooden houses by the 15th century.[689] He suggests that the dominance of dug-out houses in the initial phase reflects the adaptation of the conquering Hungarians to the conditions of the Great Hungarian Plain, where the soil and surface conditions were particularly suitable for this type of construction.[690]

Györffy expands on this by discussing the role of agriculture in the transition to a sedentary life. He notes that the Hungarians engaged in plowing and sowing grain near their winter residences in the spring, then moved their livestock to summer pastures, returning to their winter camps for the harvest.[691] This cyclical pattern of land use and animal husbandry is supported by both historical accounts and ethnographic analogies. Györffy incorporates

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[686] Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, 22.
[687] Szabó, 23–25.
[688] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 16.
[689] Szabó, *A Középkori Magyar Falu*, 29.
[690] Szabó, 30.
[691] Györffy, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Települési Rendjéről," 192; Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, 14–35.

Szabó's theories on winter camps, emphasizing that these agricultural activities were intricately linked to the seasonal migration patterns of the Hungarians.[692]

In addition to agricultural practices, the military organization of the Hungarians also played a critical role in their societal structure. The Hungarians maintained a complex social structure that included a military retinue. Györffy describes how this military organization was essential for the security and administrative control of territories. The retinue included not only warriors but also servants and craftsmen who supported the economic and military functions of the princely courts. This system of maintaining a military retinue, combined with the dual residency patterns, laid the foundation for the development of feudal structures in Hungary.[693]

The interaction with neighboring societies also shaped the Hungarian socio-political framework. The interaction between the Hungarians and the Khazars significantly influenced the political and social organization of early Hungarian society. Both Szabó and Györffy note that the Hungarians adopted aspects of the Khazar dual leadership system, which included a nominal ruler (kende) and a military leader (gyula), reflecting a blend of political and military authority.[694] Györffy elaborates on this by discussing the integration of Khazar traditions and individuals into the Hungarian nobility, facilitated by intermarriages between Khazar and Hungarian elites.[695] This integration helped solidify alliances and ensured the continuity of Khazar influence within Hungarian leadership.

One of the most significant contributions of the Khazars to Hungarian society was the adoption of the dual leadership system, which facilitated the integration of different tribes under a unified leadership. This system ensured both ceremonial legitimacy and military effectiveness, which were crucial for the stability and expansion of Hungarian territories.[696] Györffy references Anonymus to discuss the roles of Árpád and Kusán, with Árpád holding actual power as the chief commander, while Kusán served as the nominal ruler.[697]

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[692] Györffy, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Települési Rendjéről," 191; István Györffy and Károly Viski, *A Magyarság Néprajza*, vol. 2 (Budapest, 1934), 108–9.
[693] Györffy, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Települési Rendjéről," 195.
[694] Györffy, 196.
[695] Györffy, 217.
[696] Györffy, 196.
[697] Györffy, 196; Martyn Rady, J.M. Bak, and L. Veszprémy, *Anonymus and Master Roger*, Central European Medieval Texts (Central European University Press, 2010), 19; Imre Szentpétery, ed., *Scriptores Rerum Hungaricarum Tempore Ducum Regumque Stirpis Arpadianae Gestarum*, vol. I (Budapest, 1937), 41.

The gradual evolution towards feudalism in Hungary further illustrates this socio-political transformation. The establishment of permanent settlements and the division of land among nobles led to the development of a feudal society. Györffy explores the historical and archaeological evidence supporting this transition, noting that the transformation from nomadic to sedentary feudalism involved the establishment of structured feudal estates, marking a shift towards a more sedentary lifestyle.[698]

Both Szabó and Györffy emphasize that Hungarian feudalism developed organically from earlier nomadic practices rather than through the direct imposition of Western European feudal models. The dual camp system and the transformation of many winter court sites into permanent estates illustrate this continuity.[699] This method of settlement and migration reflects a blend of nomadic and sedentary elements, highlighting the adaptability and resilience of Hungarian society.

Györffy supports his analysis with historical records and archaeological evidence, particularly in the context of earthen fortresses. He views these fortifications as vital for understanding the organization of the Hungarian feudal state and believes that excavations will significantly expand knowledge of tenth-century Hungarian society. For example, the excavation of the Szabolcs fortress is seen as a crucial part of understanding the Hungarian conquest period, reflecting the socio-political organization and settlement patterns of the time.[700]

In conclusion, the transition of the Hungarians from semi-nomadism to permanent settlement was a gradual process influenced by both internal developments and external factors, including interactions with the Khazars and Slavs. This transformation aligned the Hungarians with the broader European trend towards feudalism and settled agricultural communities. The development of productive forces, economic growth, social stratification, and the influence of geography and climate played significant roles in this transition.[701]

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[698] Györffy, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Települési Rendjéről," 192.
[699] Györffy, 238.
[700] Györffy, 191.
[701] Szabó, *A Falurendszer Kialakulása Magyarországon (X-XV Század)*, 10–11; Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 24.

Table 4 Semi-Nomadism, Nomadism and Sedentary Model of György Györffy [702]

	Commoners		**Grazing**		**Foddering**	**Agriculture**
	Settlement	**Housing**	**Duration**	**Distance and Location of Grazing**		
Nomadic	Winter accommodation (possibly with relocation), varied accommodations from spring to autumn	Tent year-round	All day during winter and summer	Over large distances on sparse or seasonal pastures	Generally none (possibly for camels and privileged livestock)	Generally none (possibly millet in summer)
Semi-nomadic	Permanent winter accommodation, or village, with varied accommodations from spring to autumn	House or pen in winter, tent from spring to autumn	From spring to autumn, entire day, occasionally during the day in winter	Smaller distances, a few days' travel or near the village	Regular feeding in winter, adjacent to the village for more demanding animals	Subordinate to animal husbandry, on fertilized fallow land or rested, good soil (grain and hemp)
Settled	Village year-round	House or pen year-round	From spring to autumn, daily or periodically	Near the village, a few hours' distance	Regularly during the summer, constantly	Subordinate to animal husbandry in winter, crop rotation systems (various crops)

A critical examination of the semi-nomadism model reveals various scholarly debates. Describing himself as one of the researchers who view the small number of conquering Hungarians as mounted pastoral nomads engaged in animal husbandry (in the classical sense, as "pure nomads")[703] Gyula Kristó critiques Szabó and Györffy, who are prominent proponents of the concept of semi-nomadism. He particularly takes issue with Szabó's use of analogies from 18th-19th century Bashkir settlements and Györffy's use of 13th-century Mongol analogies to describe 9th-century Hungarian society.[704]

Kristó criticizes Szabó's analogy, arguing that there are no direct sources from this period that support such a characterization. Similarly, he finds the references made to the Jayhani tradition insufficient for establishing a permanent "winter camp" phenomenon.[705]

[702] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 403.
[703] Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," 11.
[704] Kristó, 13–14.
[705] Kristó, 13.

Furthermore, he points out that Szabó's dissertation leaves two questions unanswered: first, "is there agriculture outside the winter camp," and second, "is it possible that the agricultural work at the site of cultivation, whether at the winter camp or not, was performed by subjugated agricultural elements rather than by the Hungarians themselves?"[706]

After arguing that Szabó's analogy fails to answer these questions, Kristó moves on to critique Györffy's analogy. In this regard, Kristó's criticisms against Györffy are expressed more sharply. He contends that the analogy drawn between the conquering Hungarian nobility of the 10th century and the 13th-century Mongolian elites is entirely unfounded, as no systematic analysis was conducted to determine whether it is legitimate to draw such parallels between their ways of life.[707]

In this context, Kristó argues that Györffy's analogy drawn from the Mongolian steppes is unacceptable because, unlike the vast distances in Mongolia, the distance between the summer and winter camps proposed by Györffy in the Carpathian Basin is only a day's walk apart.[708]

Another critique by Kristó is the lack of consensus on the concept of "semi-nomadism."[709] One can undertake a series of readings based on Kristó's criticisms here. Interestingly, Kristó did not reference Pletneva in his work, even though Pletneva's studies on the Khazars—although criticized, as mentioned in this study—did not rely on an analogy. Instead, Pletneva defined models of gradual development within Khazar society, and created a "progressive" model for Khazars similar to the Szabó-Györffy "semi-nomadism" model. And her studies directly based on Khazar studies. Moreover, Kristó himself, like many others, develops various political, administrative, and other models related to early Hungarian society by making analogies with the Khazars, he somehow overlooked her in his article.

Another point is the lack of consensus regarding the definition of semi-nomadism. The Szabó-Györffy "semi-nomadism" model is internally coherent, with its own defined boundaries and a consensus regarding its definition. The fact that other theorists use the same terms while proposing different models and explanations relates to the position or argument of that particular researcher. A third point is István Fodor's observation that recent

[706] Kristó, 14.
[707] Kristó, 13.
[708] Kristó, 15.
[709] Kristó, 15.

archaeological excavations (relative to the period when Fodor published his study in 2002) have corroborated Szabó's theory, lending empirical support to the semi-nomadism model.[710]

The importance of material culture in understanding the socio-economic structure of nomadic societies cannot be overstated. In his study on the way of life of the conquering Hungarians based on written sources, Gyula Kristó discusses the topics of the "tent" and particularly the "horse" in detail. He notes that, for the conquering Hungarians from the late 9th century to the 950s, the horse was a fundamental asset for the "common free Hungarian." This asset could be both a personal possession and a communal one. The horse was essential for food, transportation, and warfare, forming the basis of the conquering Hungarian society.[711]

After 950, with the emergence of a new political order, the "free nomadic Hungarians" were introduced to a form of private property that came with this new order. Kristó suggests that this situation further worsened the conditions of the poorer half of the free nomadic Hungarians. From the 11th century onwards, as settled life in self-sufficient villages became more prevalent, a type of Hungarian feudalism, influenced by the new Western European order, took shape, leading to the disappearance of nomadism within social stratification.[712]

To draw connections to broader theoretical frameworks, from here, by making a comparative connection to the chapter "The Term Mounted Pastoral Nomadism" of this dissertation, where ruminants are described as "refineries," one can compare the perspectives of Szabó-Györffy and Kristó regarding the conquering Hungarians. In this context, Kristó views the horse as the primary resource, essentially the "refinery" for the society. This remained the case until the political transformation led to settlement.

On the Szabó-Györffy line, winter camps and nomadism continued together in a trajectory they termed "semi-nomadism." While the horse maintained its importance as a "refinery" for the conquering Hungarians, the exploitation of pastures and seasonal migrations allowed for some degree of agricultural activity, utilizing resources like the "sun" and other natural assets in these areas.

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[710] Istvan Fodor, "Changes in the Hungarian Economy during the Tenth Century," in *The First Millennium of Hungary in Europe,* ed. Klara Papp and Janos Barta (Debrecen: Debrecen University Press, 2002), 24.
[711] Kristó, "A Honfoglaló Magyarok Életmódjáról," 53.
[712] Kristó, 54.

4.1 The Social Strata of Mounted Pastoral Nomads and Proto-Feudalism

First and foremost, it is necessary to provide some terminological clarification. In this context, the term "proto-feudal" is more appropriate than "semi-feudal." The term "semi-feudal" is predominantly used in political science, particularly in Marxist and sometimes positivist social history interpretations, to describe situations where two models of production relations (for instance, semi-feudal and semi-capitalist) coexist. It is often associated with a period that lags behind its time and is used to define "abrupt socio-economic" conditions, frequently in conjunction with terms like "semi-colonial." Although it may appear as a temporal transition from one mode of production to another, it actually implies resistance to change. In this regard, the term "proto-feudal" is more suitable for the mounted pastoral nomads of the "early period" (specifically, from the late 8th century to the early 11th century, within the context of this study). This term not only exemplifies a historical transition but also provides a more appropriate historical contextualization. Indeed, the work of Hyun Jin Kim, which often draws on Golden's conclusions, is significant in the re-structuring of early mounted pastoral nomads and the formation of feudalism in continental Europe.

Another work that needs to be considered in this context is Györffy's study on the "Cuman Feudalization," particularly concerning the Cumans who settled in Hungary. While the Cumans remained in a proto-feudal stage, the Kingdom of Hungary was within a Western Christian-Continental European style of feudalism. As for the Mongols, it is necessary to state that they underwent (or initiated) a transformation, as highlighted by almost every scholar who has researched this topic from different perspectives (Golden, Barfield, Abu-Lughod, Voegelin, Di Cosmo, Perdue, among others). In this sense, it can be said that they moved from a proto-feudal stage to a "more advanced" feudal stage, in a progressive sense. (It should be noted here that, although these scholars discuss a transformation with the Mongols, not all of them agree on the characterization of feudalism, as seen, for example, in Barfield's work.)

In counter arguments against social strata, more precisely "classes" in mounted pastoral nomads, Kradin's arguments could be analyzed. Kradin argues that mounted pastoral nomads, in a way similar to the Marxist "Asiatic mode of production," impede the Marxist theory of historical progression (Historical and Dialectical Materialism). He justly critiques a range of researchers from the Brezhnev era who identify themselves as "true

Marxists."[713] Historically, only Ibn Khaldun included nomads in his historical schema.[714] From the perspective of modernization theories, only Gerhard Lenski[715] includes nomads in his schema. Marton Fried (1967) discusses a political organization consisting of four levels: egalitarian, ranked, stratified societies, and state. Elman Service provides a more detailed classification: local band, community, chiefdom, archaic state, and nation-state.[716]

Marxists, particularly "Soviet Social Sciences," have also paid special attention to the "periodization of nomadism" in the context of World History. According to the Marxist schema, specifically the "mode of production" schema, nomads are placed within five formations (stages of history). The Xiongnu, Turkic, and Mongol steppe empires are classified respectively as "slave-holding," "early feudal," and "mature feudal."[717] According to Kradin, this five-formation schema contradicts the historical reality of the steppe empires.[718]

Kradin notes a fundamental error in the adaptation of the Marxist formation to nomads according to Soviet Marxists. However, the part that Kradin does not mention is that in Marxist periodization, a slave society is not merely a slave society because it owns slaves; it is because slave labor is the fundamental production dynamic in the base structure. From this perspective, it seems that a formal approach, perhaps influenced by the political conjuncture of the period, has produced an argument that claims Marxism while actually opposing or not aligning with Marxist theory.

Fundamentally, pastoral nomads are considered "feudal" according to Marxist theory. Similarly, from this perspective, although there are new arguments, theories, and studies related to the European Huns and their formation of a Germanic societal structure and feudalism of Hyun Jin Kim as mentioned before previous chapter.[719] According to the Marxist approach, the sedentarization of mounted pastoral nomads before the industrial

[713] Kradin, "Nomadism, Evolution and World-Systems: Pastoral Societies in Theories of Historical Development," 370–71; Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 14.
[714] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 15.
[715] Gerhard E. Lenski, *Power and Privilege: A Theory of Social Stratification* (New York: University of North Carolina Press, 2013), 91–93, 98–99, 123.
[716] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 12; E.R. Service, *Primitive Social Organization: An Evolutionary Perspective*, Ethnic Groups in Comparative Perspective (Random House, 1971); E.R. Service, *Origins of the State and Civilization: The Process of Cultural Evolution* (Norton, 1975).
[717] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 12.
[718] Kradin, 12–13.
[719] Jin, *The Huns, Rome and the Birth of Europe.*

revolution can be seen as the reconstitution of a feudal society using different resources but with more complex superstructural characteristics.

According to Kradin, a less ideologically driven schema has been accepted in more recent times. This schema distinguishes between early and late periods of nomadism. The early period, as Kradin explains, includes pre-state, early-class, or early-feudal societies, covering the period up to the middle of the first millennium BCE. This early period contrasts with the "formation of mature statehood" that emerged in the medieval era in the form of nomadic feudalism.[720]

Kradin posits that "researchers" claim the "mobile" lifestyle of nomads makes land ownership "impossible." However, this assertion may warrant skepticism. This is evident even in Kradin's reference to the Xiongnu anecdote, where Modu, who sent his horse and wife, refused to cede his land. The refusal to give up land, while readily giving away a horse, may serve as a simple example that contradicts the idea of a community devoid of land ownership.[721] Referring to Khazanov, Kradin attempts to reinforce his claim with the argument that a "wealthy" nomad, possessing more animals and thus able to move more quickly (due to having more horses), could occupy more pasture.[722]

In similar context, Kradin categorizes theories about what drives nomads to undertake mass migrations and launch destructive campaigns against agricultural civilizations into eight groups. First, he cites climate changes. Second, he mentions the warlike and ambitious nature of nomads. Third, he points to excessive population growth in the steppes. Fourth, he identifies the Marxist concepts of the growth of productive forces, class struggle, and the feudal fragmentation that weakened agricultural societies. Fifth, he discusses the need of economies based on cattle breeding to raid more stable agricultural societies for replenishment. Sixth, he highlights the situation where settled societies are unwilling to trade with nomads, leaving the latter without markets for their surplus products. Seventh, he mentions the personal wealth of steppe society leaders. Eighth, he refers to Gumilev's concept of "passionarity," which is akin to Ibn Khaldun's "asabiyyah," or group solidarity.[723] Kradin notes that excessive importance has been attributed to some of these reasons. He particularly finds the Marxist concept of class struggle to be flawed.[724]

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[720] Kradin, "Nomadic Empires in Inner Asia," 12.
[721] Kradin, 13.
[722] Kradin, 13.
[723] Kradin, 22.
[724] Kradin, 23.

The class struggle among nomads could indeed be seen as including the conflicts between the aristocratic group, which emerges as the ruling elite, and the other nomadic masses who are marginalized or excluded and seek to reintegrate into the system. Examples such as the Oghuz rebellion within the Seljuk Sultanate could be included in this framework. This perspective aligns with the idea that internal social conflicts and power struggles within nomadic societies could drive significant upheavals and shifts, paralleling the dynamics observed in more settled feudal or class-based societies.

After addressing Kradin's counterarguments, it is worth expanding on Györffy's perspective regarding the feudalization of the Cumans. Györffy identifies the Cumans as a typical mounted pastoral nomad group, with animal husbandry as their primary occupation. While this is accurate, Györffy also notes, in line with his other views, that the Cumans were familiar with agriculture.[725] He further reveals that the Cuman clans were divided into noble families or branches, indicating a social stratification.[726]

Györffy summarizes this social stratification as follows: At the lowest level were the captured slaves and landless groups who joined them.[727] According to Györffy, this segment of society, viewed as inferior within the mounted pastoral nomad community, was engaged in agriculture, a task considered lowly. This view partially contradicts the concept of semi-nomadism that Györffy later developed, particularly concerning the early Hungarians, and which he based on sources from the *Jayhani* tradition. Indeed, Györffy suggests that semi-nomadism was a practice already inherent in the society. If we consider his description of the Cumans, it suggests that, according to his definition, they were more suited to a "semi-nomadic" structure rather than a purely "nomadic" one, further confirming this contradiction. It is worth noting, however, that despite the several years that passed between these studies, Györffy did not feel the need to revise this view in the subsequent reprints of his article. Tóth also points out a similar observation, noting that Györffy initially described the Hungarians as "nomadic" but later shifted to describing them as "semi-nomadic."[728]

Subsequently, Györffy identifies a rather broad middle class among the Cumans, based on contemporary Hungarian sources (as defined in the 1279 Cuman Laws as "nobiles

[725] György Györffy, *Magyarság Keleti Elemei* (Budapest, 1990), 274,278.
[726] Györffy, 274,276.
[727] Györffy, 278.
[728] Tóth, "A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)," 2014, 367; György Györffy, *Tanulmányok a Magyar Állam Eredetéről. A Nemzetségtől a Vármegyéig, a Törzstől Az Országig. Kurszán És Kurszán Vára - A Magyar Néprajzi Társaság Könyvtára* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1959), 142–53.

et universitas Comanorum").[729] This class included 'free nomads,' who owned a moderate number of herds and some slaves (or servants), as well as "nyögérs," who served the Hungarian kings as a military retinue.[730] The difference between the nyögérs and other "free nomads" suggests that, due to their military retinue role, the nyögérs were a type of professional or semi-professional soldier. In this regard, Györffy's later works draw a parallel with his similar definition of the military retinue. However, his later classification of the "buyruk-nöker" is closer to describing an upper-class privileged military elite group rather than a middle class, although he continues to refer to them as part of the middle class.[731]

As for the upper class, Györffy states that each clan had a leader chosen from the wealthiest families within the clan, and this wealthy aristocratic group governed the clan.[732]

As a result, whether within the upper echelons of the middle stratum or directly within the upper stratum (as Györffy notes in the example of the Cumans, who achieved nobility through royal service), a military elite exists, and because it takes the form of a military retinue (here, Golden's explanation using the term *comitatus* for mounted pastoral nomads provides a fitting definition), Györffy's model of the Cuman social strata could be presented as a general structure for mounted pastoral nomads. In his study, Györffy refers to this as the feudalization of the Cumans within the Kingdom of Hungary, emphasizing how the Cumans became "feudal." In fact, from a certain perspective, he pointed out that all the elements were present for a proto-feudal structure among mounted pastoral nomads in relation to the feudal transition, but he did not construct a theoretical framework around the concept of "proto-feudal," as "*he has all the ingredients, but hasn't baked the cake*."

Although Barfield almost disregards the social strata of mounted pastoral nomads and Kristó views the impact of social stratification as minimal, criticizing Györffy for using "outdated Marxist" theories, the existence of such a social strata can certainly be discussed. To briefly define this social strata, the high ruling strata conflicted between a shared-dual leadership and a charismatic leader, as we have identified in this mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene. Surrounding this high ruling strata was the military retinue or military elite, termed "comitatus" by Golden (though different terms were used across periods,

[729] In the meantime, it is also worth noting the interesting similarity between the phrase "nobiles et universitas Comanorum" and the term "begler bodun" found in the Orkhon inscriptions.
[730] Györffy, *Magyarság Keleti Elemei,* 282.
[731] Györffy, "Die Rolle Des Buyruq In Der Alttürkischen Gesellschaft."
[732] Györffy, *Magyarság Keleti Elemei,* 281.

sometimes with varying meanings, such as buyruq, tarkhan, nöker, etc.).[733] Their allegiance was directly to the high ruling strata. This strata was exempt from taxes and had a special status, but their loyalty was more to the person within the upper ruling strata than to a clan (boy) affiliation. This military retinue conflict was against the "upstart" clans or leaders who opposed the upper ruling strata. Additionally, although they were involved in the struggles within the upper ruling strata and in raids, they can also be seen as a diplomatic entourage and a symbol of the upper ruling strata's "legitimacy."

4.1.1 The Social Strata of early Hungarians in 9th and 10th Centuries

Györffy posits that, in the 9th century, the "new barbarian" groups in Eastern Europe that did not possess a "military retinue" eventually lost their state mechanisms over time. In contrast, those with a strong military retinue managed to secure a place for themselves within the feudal structure of Europe.[734]

According to this theory, nomadic peoples can sustain a state only as long as they establish settlements over subordinate populations and maintain an external tribute collection system through their military retinue. Györffy links the collapse of the Avar and Khazar states to external attacks that eradicated their ruling class, leading to the disintegration of their states.[735]

He asserts that in Asiatic nomadic empires, the friction between the ruling class and the governed peoples can only be resolved through the linguistic assimilation of the "ordinary people" and the development of a unified national consciousness. Györffy distinguishes the Hungarians by defining them as semi-nomads, setting them apart from other Asiatic mounted pastoral nomads.[736]

Györffy addresses the feature or distinction that enabled some Eastern European peoples to organize raids on distant lands, either on horseback or by ship, and subjugate foreign populations for tribute by referring to "social stratification." According to Györffy, a continuous military guard is necessary for a people to be ruled sustainably by a native clan

[733] Golden, "Some Notes on the 'Comitatus' In Medieval Eurasia With Special Reference To The Khazars," 153–69.
[734] Györffy, *István Király És Műve*, 23.
[735] Györffy, 24.
[736] Györffy, 24.

or an external group.[737] The foreign tribe names and people's names among the Hungarians in the 9th century, as Györffy points out, indicate that such processes were already effective in the pre-conquest centuries, and he suggested that a heterogeneous military unit in the formation of the Hungarian society by the 10th century.[738]

Ildikó Ecsedy presents the concept of "military democracy" as an ideal unity of nomadic society and its military, based on the "equal" demands for prestige and wealth (income) among the members of the mounted pastoral nomadic community, as well as the right of everyone in the society to bear arms.[739] The argument about relative equality in demands is difficult to address because it is situated in a very abstract context. Certainly, a mounted pastoral nomad warrior participating in a raid would demand their "share" of the loot, but under what democratic conditions and terms this is obtained remains a mystery.

On the other hand, Kristó, in his work written in 1980, acknowledges the Marxist concept of "military democracy" as a transitional phase between clan-based societies and the formation of more complex state structures. He discusses how Soviet scholars and intellectuals, such as Sergey Tolstov and Khazanov (as in 1980), have contributed to the understanding of this concept. For instance, Tolstov viewed military democracy as the final stage of primitive communal society and the first step toward a slaveholding society, emphasizing the rapid transition to feudalism in societies like the Hungarian and Mongol military democracies. Tolstov also suggested that these transitions were characterized by the accumulation of wealth, primarily through the acquisition of slaves.[740]

Kristó, however, seems to challenge the rigidity of this interpretation. He is cautious about fully adopting the Soviet framework, particularly the idea that military democracy directly leads to a slaveholding society or necessarily transitions into a state. He questions whether the concept of military democracy can be applied uniformly across different societies, including the Hungarians, suggesting that while it provides a useful framework, it may not fully capture the complexities of social development in Hungary.[741] Khazanov's interpretation, as discussed by Kristó, also differs slightly. Khazanov emphasized that military democracy did not directly transition into a state but rather into other pre-state forms that had already excluded large portions of the population from governance. He also

[737] Györffy, 21.
[738] Györffy, 21.
[739] Ildikó Ecsedy, "Nomád Gazdaság, Nomád Társadalom," *Magyar Filozófiai Szemle*, no. 5 (1969): 872–73.
[740] Kristó, *Levedi Törzsszövetségétől Szent István Államáig*, 408–9.
[741] Kristó, 421–22.

suggested that "military democracy" corresponds to societies where war became a regular feature of public life, but he argued that such structures could not easily evolve into a state due to the presence of armed free men who were not ideal subjects for exploitation.[742]

Kristó appears to agree with some of Khazanov's criticisms, particularly the idea that military democracy might not be the only pathway to state formation and that it should not be considered a universal stage in social development. He highlights the complexities and nuances in Hungarian society that might not fit neatly into the Soviet interpretation of military democracy, implying that a more nuanced understanding is necessary.[743]

Regarding military democracy, it is necessary to clarify a point from the perspective of mounted pastoral nomads. The concept of military democracy as addressed above from various researchers. However, for mounted pastoral nomads, preventing the right of society members to possess weapons was, in one sense, nearly impossible until modern times due to the natural structure of their society. Unlike settled societies, weapons such as bows and arrows were everyday tools used in the lives of mounted pastoral nomads. Additionally, weapons that were easier to produce, such as knives, long knives, maces, and, of course, the horse as an "instrument of war," can be added to this. In settled societies like Ancient Greece, the right of citizens to possess weapons in a "democratic" manner may have had theoretical significance; however, in later periods, this right to own weapons was brought under control by the ruling authorities in different political ecumenes within settled societies with various production relations. However, for mounted pastoral nomads, this situation was not only nearly impossible, as mentioned earlier, but such a practice was also not preferred by mounted pastoral nomad rulers, who viewed their society as a source of "warriors."

Nevertheless, it is important to address another issue. Unlike basic weapons and tools such as bows and arrows or the steppe pony, more advanced and heavy armor, along with strong mounts suitable for them, were exclusive to the upper ruling strata and their military retinues which can be described as the military elite. This situation is, of course, related to economic power, and it is at this point that the "democracy" within the "military democracies" of mounted pastoral nomads ends.

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[742] Kristó, 414–15.
[743] Anatoly M. Khazanov, "'Military Democracy' and the Epoch of Class Formation," in *Soviet Ethnology and Anthropology Today*, ed. Yu. Bromley (Paris: The Hauge, 1974), 143–44; Kristó, *Levedi Törzsszövetségétől Szent István Államáig*, 430–32.

4.2 Sedentation of Conquering Hungarians.

The transition of the Conquering Hungarians from a nomadic to a more sedentary lifestyle can be better understood by examining the nature of their settlements and the broader socio-economic changes they underwent. When discussing sedentarization, it is also necessary to first describe the settlements themselves. Information about the settlements of the Conquering Hungarians should be provided.

To begin with, the most common settlement feature of this period consists of "sunken houses," typically rectangular or quadrangular in shape with rounded corners, measuring approximately 2-3 meters by 3-4 meters.[744] Another type of structure is the "*earthen forts*," which mostly have a wooden frame, and ramparts reinforced with stones. Wolf notes that these forts display significant uniformity in their construction techniques.[745]

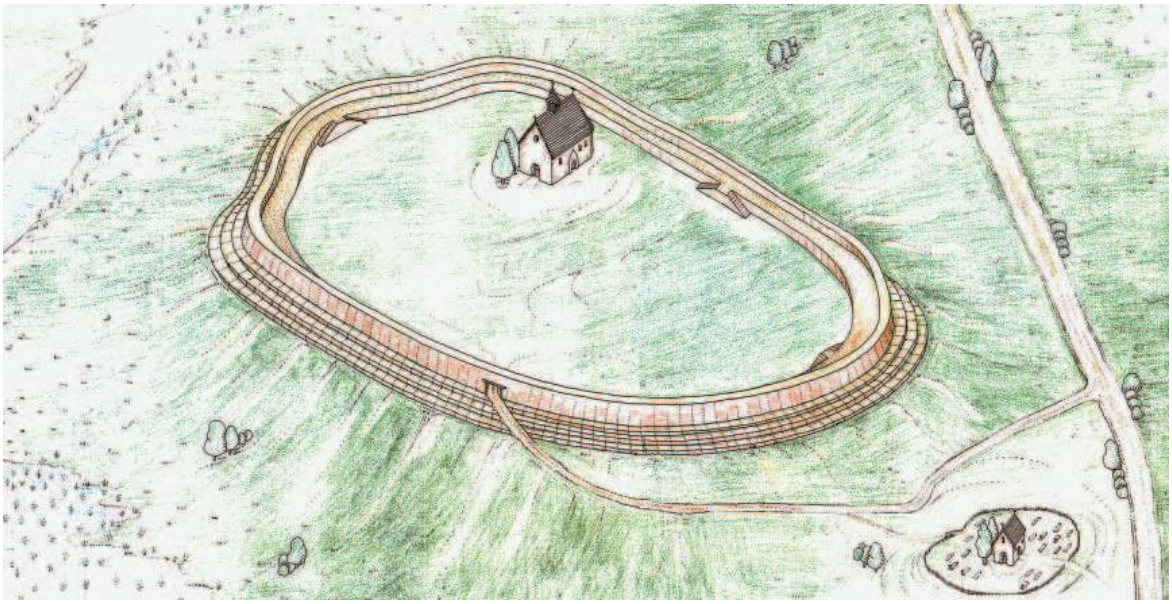


Figure 1 Reconstruction of the earthen fort at Borsod[746]

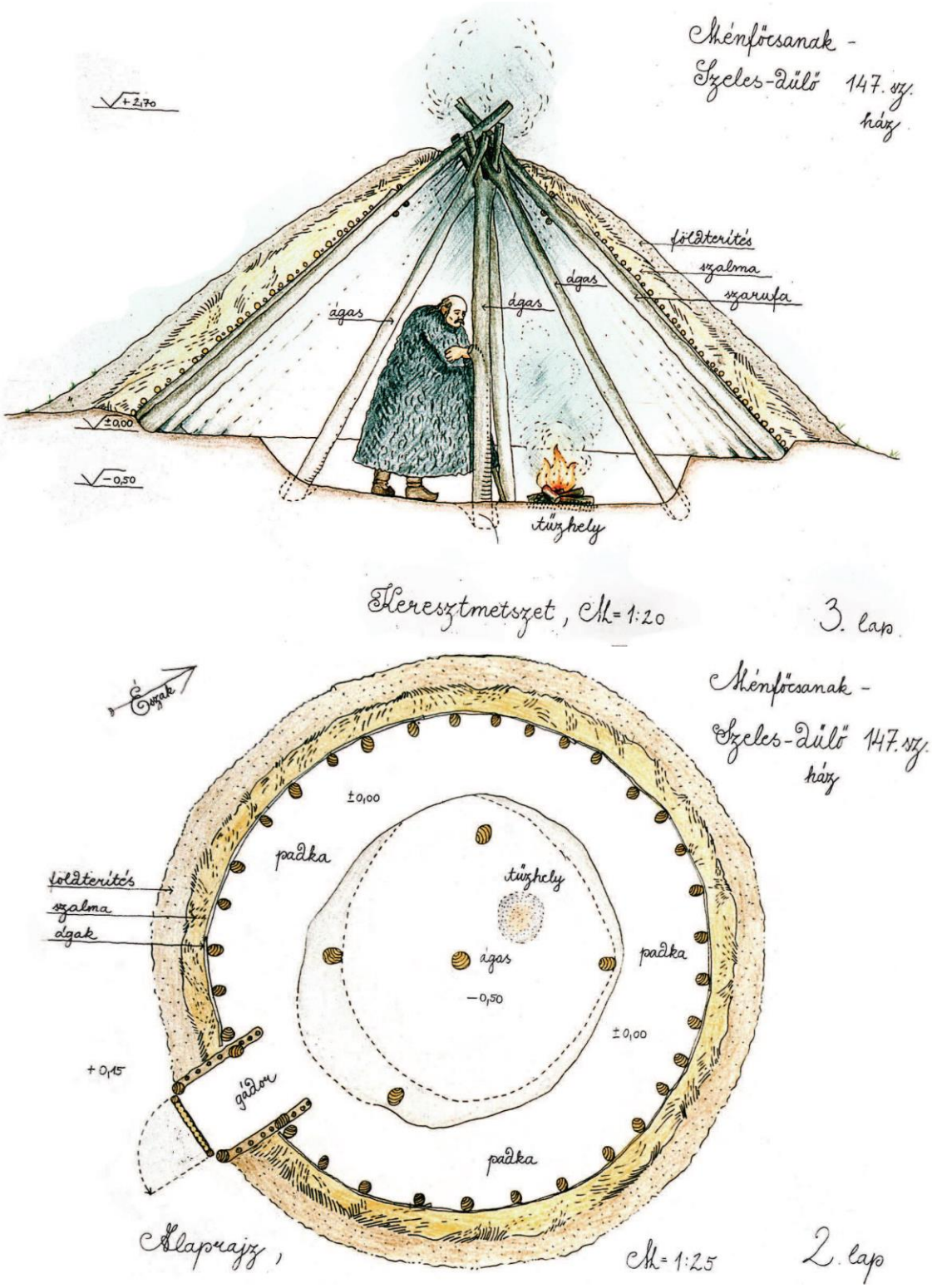
For instance, Figure 1 shows a reconstruction of the earthen fort at Borsod, illustrating these characteristics. In this context, it is necessary to mention an important aspect of settlement characteristics in the 9th and 10th centuries, especially in light of recent archaeological research.

[744] Mária Wolf, "10th - 11th Century Settlements," in *Hungarian Archaeology At The Turn Of The Millennium*, ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Teleki László Foundation, 2003), 326–27.
[745] Mária Wolf, "Earthen Forts," in *Hungarian Archaeology At The Turn Of The Millennium*, ed. Zsolt Visy (Budapest: Teleki László Foundation, 2003), 328–31; Mária Wolf, Miklós Takács, and Gömöri János, "Forts, Settlements and Crafts," in *Ancient Hungarians*, ed. Istvan Fodor (Budapest: Hungarian National Museum, 1996), 59.
[746] Wolf, "Earthen Forts," 330.

Such studies reveal that Rácz notes that the settlements from the 9th century continued into the 10th century without any destruction. In this context, as referred before from Takács,[747] it can be said that there was no significant destruction of settlements in the Carpathian Basin[748] Given that Avaro-Slav settlements continued to exist, it is possible to identify some differences in sedentarization between the Conquering Hungarians and the Late Avars. As previously mentioned, excavations of Late Avar settlements have revealed agricultural tools and food remains, suggesting a settled population that was likely mixed with Slavs. Similarly, as Kristó points out, the pattern aligns with post-955 interactions with Slavs concerning agriculture.

[747] Takács, "Changing Political Landscapes in the Ninth-Century Central Carpathian Basin: Interpreting Recent Settlement Excavation Data," 234; Takács, "Some Considerations at the End of a Big Settlement-Project," 263–64.
[748] Tibor Ákos Rácz, "The Hungarian Conquest and the 9th – 10th-Century Settlements of the Pest Plain," in *Settlement Change Across Medieval Europe Old Paradigms and New Vistas*, ed. Niall Brady and Claudia Theune (Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2019), 365.

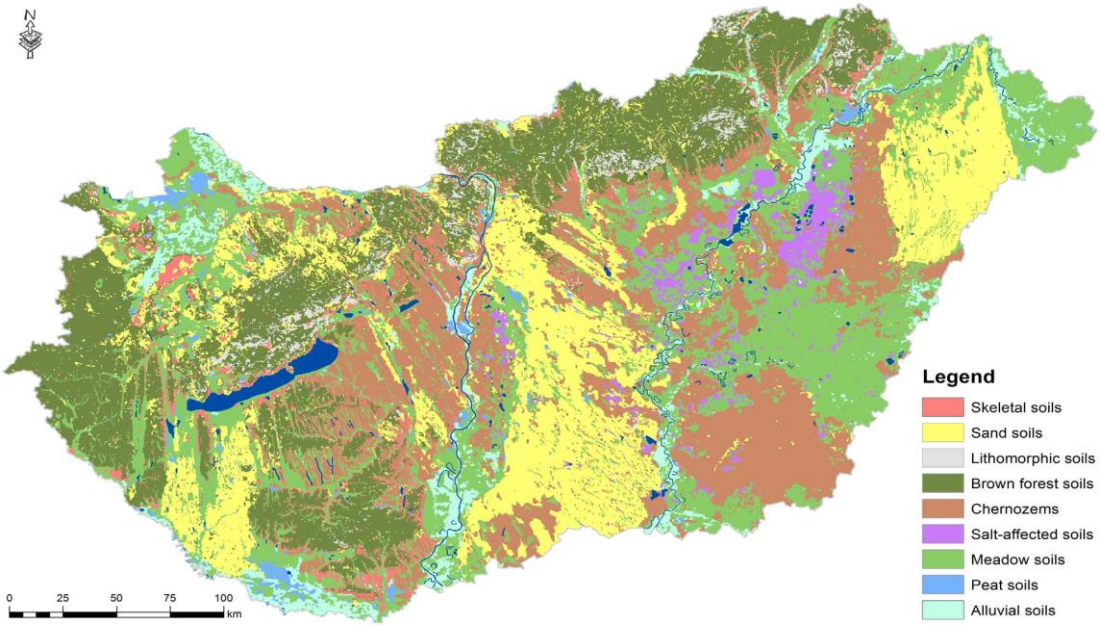
Figure 2 The round house at Ménfőcsanak-Szeles-dűlő (Object 147) according to the reconstruction by Tibor Sabján. [749]



[749] Takács, "A Honfoglalás Kor És a Településrégészet Települési Struktúrák, A Társadalmi Szer Vezet Értelmezései, Az Etnikai Azonosítás Buktatói," 142.

Understanding these diverse settlement forms is crucial when considering the different lifestyles within the Eastern European steppe. The Eastern European steppe was home to numerous mounted pastoral nomads. But we can observe that even same ethnic mounted pastoral nomads had practiced different social-economical lifestyles. For example, some Scythians belonging to a group called as "royal Scythians" were settled city dwellers compared to their kin "nomadic Scythians" which can't be described as "city dwellers."[750] Main difference between these two societies were the exact geographies where they had established their lives. So, one group of Scythians who had moved to coastal river deltas mitigated form mounted pastoral nomadic life even integrated into Hellenic sedentary city life while other groups which had lived in deeper steppe, continued their traditional pastoral nomadic life.[751]

Map 1 Soil types in Hungary[752]



A similar issue was true for Khazars. The Khazar Khanate had established its state on continental trade roads and founded their centers of power near river valleys of the Volga.

[750] Halperin and Woodworth, "Editor's Introduction - Cherie Kartchner Woodworth, 'Politics, Pastoralism, and Currents of World History on the Central Eurasian Steppe,'" 73; Zimonyi, *Muslim Sources on the Magyars in the Second Half of the 9th Century, The Magyar Chapter of the Jayhānī Tradition*, 183–86.
[751] Halperin and Woodworth, "Editor's Introduction - Cherie Kartchner Woodworth, 'Politics, Pastoralism, and Currents of World History on the Central Eurasian Steppe,'" 73.
[752] László Pásztor et al., "Compilation of a National Soil-Type Map for Hungary by Sequential Classification Methods," *Geoderma* 311 (2018): 101, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoderma.2017.04.018.c

These "black lands" are more favorable for agricultural life.[753] 22.4 percent of the Carpathian Basin also consists of "black lands" (chernozem) soil.[754]

This strategic placement highlights a recurring pattern among mounted pastoral nomads. The "cores" established by mounted pastoral nomads were usually at the "frontiers" of sedentary cores due to geographical reasons. So, this creates a phenomena of "frontier-periphery" conflict. While in context of "World System History" mounted pastoral nomads fated to be at periphery, while with Abu-Lughod's dynamic restructuring concept they could be established as "core" themselves but meanwhile a frontiers or periphery of another "core."

To illustrate this, one can consider the example of the Carpathian Basin during the Late Avar and Conquering Hungarian periods. As it is mentioned before in this study Pannonia-Carpathian Basin was the westernmost "core" in mounted pastoral nomadic peoples and political ecumene. But meanwhile it was "frontier" of "raising" continental powers namely Charlemagne's and Otto's Empire. Even it was organized as a "march" under the Charlemagne's empire. Thus, after the collapse of Late Avar pollical organization, vacuum created in this "core" region. As it was frontier for other "cores" they couldn't simply occupy this place as "nature abhors a vacuum." Charlemagne's empires in this period weren't in its highest power. Moravians were likely candidates but when they were about to eliminate this vacuum, it was already "conquering" Hungarians arrived this core. Thus, in the late 8th century to early 11th century medieval geopolitical context, the Pannonia-Carpathian Basin could be characterized as follows: a) It was the westernmost "core" for mounted political nomadic ecumene. b) Frontier of Western Christian Political Ecumene. c) Periphery of Charlemagne's and later Ottonian "cores."

Regarding the Byzantine Empire, during this period, this region was buffered by the Bulgarians. It could be said that this "vacuum" accelerated the state formation process of conquering Hungarians, initially as in mounted pastoral nomadic state formation; sacral bloodline for ruling family, land division of the region, establishment and de-establishment,

[753] Cezary Kabała et al., "Suitability of World Reference Base for Soil Resources (WRB) to Describe and Classify Chernozemic Soils in Central Europe," *Soil Science Annual* 70 (2019): 244; Halperin and Woodworth, "Editor's Introduction - Cherie Kartchner Woodworth, 'Politics, Pastoralism, and Currents of World History on the Central Eurasian Steppe,'" 81.
[754] Kabała et al., "Suitability of World Reference Base for Soil Resources (WRB) to Describe and Classify Chernozemic Soils in Central Europe," 250.

then re-establishment (due to the dynamism of the conflict within the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene) of administrative or ruling offices.

Map 2 Flooded Areas of the Carpathian Basin at the End of the 18th Century, Before the Initiation and Systematic Execution of Hungarian Water Regulation Works. Created Based on Contemporary Maps[755]

Furthermore, the geographical dynamics and trade routes played a crucial role in the socio-political evolution of these nomadic empires. The traditional east-west Silk Road was supplemented with the northern routes under the Western Türk Khanate and its successor state, the Khazar Khanate. The Kama silver items from Byzantine, Sasanian empires and Central Asia reflected the first steps in the formation of the northern route, which is also called the Fur Road. Approximately 800 silver dirhams started to flow from the central Muslim mints to Eastern Europe through Khazaria to Scandinavia. It is also called Silver Road. This silver stream attracted the Varangians or Rus' to Eastern Europe.

By the 10th century, new trade dynamics had emerged, with the Volga Bulgars playing a central role. From the 10th century onwards, the dirhams of the Samanid dynasty in Transoxania reached Eastern Europe. In the 10th century the Volga Bulgars became the main intermediaries of the northern trade.

In analyzing these interactions, it becomes evident that the Khazar Khaganate exemplifies a unique blend of nomadic and sedentary elements. As briefly mentioned above the Khazar Khaganate was a commercial, mercantile state. But this state was also mounted pastoral nomad society, and they had adapted sedentary life while still practiced mounted

[755] Ihrig Dénes, *A Magyar Vízszabályozás Története* (Budapest: Az Országos Vízügyi Hivatal kiadványa, 1973), 14.ihrig

pastoral nomadism. On contrary to the classical 'pure nomad' stereotypes and classical theories with similar approach, an active mercantile life was presented in various mounted pastoral nomad societies.

The evolution of these nomadic powers often followed a cyclical pattern of rise, expansion, and adaptation or collapse. The mounted pastoral nomadic people had established vast empires, political powers, states throughout the history. These great powers had maintained their mounted pastoral social-economical structure while had established their rule on a system based on expansion and forcing tributes from the neighboring states. The dilemma of these political powers is an important topic of debate. Two or three generations after the apex of their power either their political power which was based on tributes of neighboring states collapsed and often replaced by another mounted pastoral nomadic power or they had adopted sedentary life.

However, this transition was not uniform across different political and cultural contexts. It could be noted that in other political ecumenes (medieval political ecumenes), mounted pastoral nomadic way of life may continue to exists (even in "uneasy" existence) like Islamic Political Ecumene. In this context the Islamic Political Ecumene had a more flexible approach towards mounted pastoral nomadism. More specifically, the jurisdiction and jurisprudence of the Islamic Political Ecumene were more adaptable to the existence of mounted pastoral nomads, allowing them to coexist. However, the Western Christian Political Ecumene did not possess such "flexibility" towards the lifestyle of mounted pastoral nomads. The political and administrative organization of the Western Christian Political Ecumene was firmly based on a sedentary jurisdiction and jurisprudence, or more directly put, it was not structured to accommodate mounted pastoral nomad societies.

A compelling example of this is the case of the Cumans in Hungary. A compelling example of this is the case of the Cumans in Hungary. The Cumans in Hungary can be cited as a brief example of this. As Szilvia Kovács mentions the mounted pastoral nomadic way of life didn't seen to be reconciled with "Christianity."[756] Even the Church made great effort and encouragement to "settle down" mounted pastoral nomadic Cumans which were under its "jurisdiction."[757] Even in the 'Cuman Laws' which begins with first law as "*And they*

[756] Szilvia Kovács, "A Kunok Története a Mongol Hódításig" (PhD Thesis, Szeged, University of Szeged, 2012), 272.
[757] Kovács, 272; Zsigmond Jakó, ed., *Erdélyi Okmánytár Oklevelek, Levelek És Más Írásos Emlékek Erdély Történetéhez I. (1023-1300)* (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1997), 168–69.

firmly committed themselves to leaving and withdrawing from their tents and houses made of animal skins, and they will live and reside in villages, in buildings constructed into the ground, and in houses according to Christian customs. They also firmly promised that in everything, they will conform to Christian morals and customs."[758]

This phenomenon highlights a broader tension between nomadic lifestyles and sedentary religious and legal systems. This phenomenon is not solely related to religion. Although communities of different faiths, like Judaism, were able to exist within the Western Christian Ecumene, even if they faced significant challenges,[759] but mounted pastoral nomads, even if they were Christian, were swiftly dismantled and settled into sedentary societies. The "Christian customs" here summarized "jurisdiction" aspect of Western Christian Political Ecumene. In Hungarian historiography, there are views that attribute the rapid transition of early Hungarians to semi-nomadism or Finno-Ugric clan ties for fast transformation of mounted pastoral nomadic lifestyle to sedentary life, the effect "jurisdiction aspect" of new political ecumene also should played significant role as this change in political ecumene had strong impact on dissolution of mounted pastoral nomadic life to sedentary life.

Continuing with the example of the Cumans who settled in Hungary, the integration process was not without its complexities. the Hungarian Kingdom reorganized the Cumans based on their own social structure. The Cuman "ordus" were preserved, along with their own lords, and consequently, their social strata were maintained to a certain extent.[760]

The shift to a sedentary lifestyle was also evident in the policies implemented after the 10th century. As mentioned by Gyula Kristó new system didn't allow "free nomads" to continue their way of life after the changes that begin in second half of 10th century.

Examining the theories surrounding the identity of the Hungarians, Tóth offers an intriguing perspective on the White and Black Bodun. Regarding the theory of Tóth on the White and Black Bodun, he briefly constructs a theory based on the White Serbs and White Croats. Those who remained in their homeland are called "White," while those who migrated are referred to as "Black." Accordingly, it is believed that the identity of the White Hungarians mentioned in the sources is unclear, whereas the migrating Hungarians who

[758] Gyula Kristó, *Kun László Emlékezete* (Szeged: Szegedi Középkorász Műhely, 1994), 131; Nora Berend, "Az 1279-i 'Kun Törvenyek' Szövege Es Keletkezesi Körülmenyi," in *A Jaszkunsag Kutatasa 2000* (Jászberény- Kiskunfélegyháza, 2002), 147–53.
[759] Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 85–86.
[760] Kovács, "A Kunok Története a Mongol Hódításig," 272; Berend, *At the Gate of Christendom*, 97-98,100.

came to the Carpathian Basin took the name "Black Hungarians." Tóth develops a historical interpretation based on this tribe[761]. This interpretation raises several provocative questions about the origins and identity of the Conquering Hungarians. This raises two important and challenging questions: If the identity of the Whites cannot be defined and the migrating Hungarians are the Black Hungarians who rebelled, saying, "We will not be Christians," then does that make St. István and his "people" a "local" element? Are they natives of the Carpathians who remained there? This could lead to even more radical questions. For instance, does this mean they are an "Avaro-Slav" group? This is a very challenging question, and although we shall move past it here, such extreme questions can indeed arise.

Returning to the topic of the White Bodun-Black Bodun, the origin of the issue is the transition to Christianity and the initial break with the Koppány rebellion. This rebellion represents the transformation within the political ecumene and the conflict in the upper ruling strata, meaning the conflict at the center. The second rebellion is the Black Bodun rebellion. In the second rebellion, the conflict among tribes, or more precisely among "bodun" and perhaps even within the tümens, is more pronounced. Thus, this represents the second stage of the transformation. The White Bodun-Black Bodun example illustrates this situation quite well. There could be two reasons why the White Bodun is not mentioned. With this second rebellion, the first phase of the "transition" is completed.

Indeed, Tóth revisits this topic in his later thesis.[762] While he remains aware of the problem regarding the White Hungarians and maintains his argument, he makes the following inference: since all Hungarians "migrated" at that time, they should all actually be considered "Black Hungarians." However, reverting to Ademar's definition, which he mentioned in his previous article and did not fully accept, based on a religious distinction—"White Christians" and "Black Pagans"—he argues that this difference within the process was transitional and depended on the period.

It is essential to consider how the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic way of life interacted with these transformations. The rejection of this by the mounted pastoral nomadic way of life must be considered. Although other political ecumenes, such as the Medieval Islamic Political Ecumene, behaved more flexibly on this matter, the Western Christian Political Ecumene implemented more strict and definite sanctions. The Hungarian political elite, in

[761] Sándor László Tóth, "White and Black Hungarians," *Chronica* 9–10 (2010): 13–14.
[762] Tóth, "A Magyar Törzsszövetség Politıkai Életrajza (A Magyarság a 9-10. Században)," 2014, 416–27.

Kristó's terms, had “strengthened and gained autonomous power through a bloodline,” and, with Golden’s explanation through the Ashina tribe regarding the legitimacy gained from this bloodline, they managed to centralize power. Thus, following the great crisis after 955, they did not meet the fate of the Avars (even though the Avars had also converted to Christianity). Two key factors contributed to this divergence in fate. At this point, two aspects are important: Unlike the Avars, the political center did not collapse, and the early Hungarians, contrary to an acephalous view, had a serious state and political organization according to the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Political Ecumene during this period. Despite the destruction after 955 or the damage to the political elite, they managed to emerge from the political vacuum and the friction between their internal dynamics. Consequently, although these are not concrete and precisely dated events related to their transformations in the new political ecumene they transitioned into, three symbolic events that may express the transition related to the era of St. Stephan can be proposed: 1. The suppression of the Koppány rebellion against centralization within internal dynamics, 2. The brutal suppression by St. István of the group of people who remained from the old order and did not transition to the new political ecumene (the Black Hungarians-Black Bodun), and 3. The opening of the Pannonhalma monastery as a more symbolic act. Although these three symbols do not fully convey the transition, they are mentioned in the study for their symbolic values.

5 Conclusion

When organizing the dissertation, as I mentioned in the introduction, I developed a dissertation model inspired by the "contributions to science" approach often used in scientific projects, rather than following a "traditional" method. This approach allows for a form of "fact-checking" at the end of the dissertation, making it easier to verify the findings.

I chose to include the term "mounted" to further differentiate these nomadic groups from other pastoral communities. While scholars like Barfield and Khazanov have already made such distinctions by referring to them as pastoral nomads, adding "mounted" serves a dual purpose. Firstly, it helps differentiate the pastoral nomads of the Eurasian steppes from those in Africa. Secondly, it highlights the significance of being "mounted" for Eurasian pastoral nomads, whether as an integral part of their pastoralism or for conducting raids on sedentary communities to collect "extortion." This distinction is crucial for understanding their social and economic structures, which is why I felt the need to emphasize it and define it in this context.

I developed a "political ecumene" model within the scope of medieval history that can also serve as a useful framework for other researchers. Specifically, for the study of mounted pastoral nomads, I created a unique sub-model called the "mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene." While I drew on Voegelin's ideas on "Ecumene" as a starting point, it would not be accurate to describe this as a strictly Voegelinian model. This is primarily because Voegelin's approach eventually becomes heavily spiritual, to the point of diminishing concepts like positivism and scientific rigor.

In creating the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene, I was particularly influenced by the works of Peter Golden and György Györffy. Golden often uses terms like "political culture" and "attendant ideology" to explain these concepts, but I chose not to use these terms in developing my model. This decision was due to the potential confusion these terms could cause in model-building, as well as the semantic shifts and differences in interpretation they have undergone. Nonetheless, Golden's framework remains one of the most crucial works for understanding not only the political ecumene of mounted pastoral nomads but also their notions of state, economy, and social stratification.

In this model, I aimed to explain the concept by likening it to a building structure. The foundation of this structure is "legitimacy," and the cement of this foundation is a mixture of political etiquette and symbolism. Upon this foundation stand two pillars or "aspects:" jurisdiction and cause/idea. The doors of this building were open to multiple civilizations. It is also important to note that not every political ecumene necessarily has a unique socio-economic model. I evaluated the political and social pathways of the Conquering Hungarians within this framework of the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene. Even György Györffy and Gyula Kristó, who often held opposing views, agreed on the point of the "Khazar influence" in the political structure of the conquering Hungarians. Building on Hyun Jin Kim's argument about the role of mounted pastoral nomads in the formation of European feudalism, I propose a thesis suggesting that mounted pastoral nomads can be considered as embodying a "proto-feudal" system.

As I mentioned in the introduction of the dissertation, the selection of this period and geography relates to the concept that "nature abhors a vacuum." After the Late Avar period, a political vacuum emerged in the Carpathian Basin. The political authority of the Late Avars disappeared within 20 years, without being succeeded by another dynasty or a nomadic group, as is often seen among mounted pastoral nomads. Although the Avar society mixed with other Slavic groups, forming a community sometimes referred to as the "Avaro-Slav," politically, the Carpathian Basin remained in a vacuum from the 810s until 895.

I find this significant for several reasons. In the context of world systems theory, taking into account Abu-Lughod's "restructuring" model, which focuses on multiple "cores" instead of a single "center," along with István Zimonyi's concept of "centers" related to the mounted pastoral nomads in the Western Eurasian steppes extending into Europe, I reconstructed the Carpathian Basin as one of these mounted pastoral nomadic "cores." But this core remained vacant for 85 years, a period long enough to disrupt political traditions and continuity in the region.

According to Thomas Barfield's Shadow Empires model, which he has continuously developed over the past 35 years, the example of the Conquering Hungarians closely aligns with the "vacuum" empire model. However, Barfield's model does not adequately address certain questions about internal dynamics. Despite these shortcomings, Barfield's model remains one of the most applicable frameworks. Barfield's "vacuum" empire model, particularly as developed in his latest book published in 2023, shows promise, yet its practical application is limited by his cautious approach to evaluating internal dynamics and

by confining the concept of the "vacuum" empire to a narrow theoretical framework, such as the post-Khazar atmosphere and forest peoples. These limitations make the model's full applicability challenging, especially in regions like the Carpathian Basin.

This situation was also related to the sedentation/sedentarization paradigm. The Avars had become settled, but this process occurred without the intervention of political authority and coincided with the loss of their political power. After the 85-year vacuum, the conquering Hungarians maintained their power as mounted pastoral nomads and within a mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene for just over a century. This was quite short compared to Avar rule. And towards the end of their rule, the process of sedentarization accelerated and took place under the supervision of an existing Hungarian authority.

Takács Miklós notes that from the collapse of the Avars in the 8th to 11th centuries until the period following St. Stephen, there is no evidence of significant destruction in settlements. This suggests that the region did not suffer extensive devastation, at least in terms of settlements. This raises two questions: why did the Avars collapse? The first reason, proposed by Pál Sümegi and referenced by Pohl in 2016, is the climate crisis. The second reason is the series of political crises they experienced, despite their accumulation of great wealth, being part of a nomadic political ecumene, and (of course) facing a powerful external empire, even this empire was a shadow empire (nostalgia) of Charlemagne. Even Charlemagne's Avar campaign was also challenging for him (even though the annals depict it as a great victory). However, the internal turmoil within the Avars led to the western part of their territory being conquered by Charlemagne. Then this situation led the Avars to morph into an acephalous, "headless" state, post-imperial Avar groups surviving within the ruins of a Avar Empire, similar to David Sneath's model.[763] In the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene to which they belonged, the tribes were semi-autonomous, and when political power (such as the tümens) was absent or collapsed due to crisis, the ruling elite and the military retinue were no longer present, leading them into an acephalous condition. The Avars fell into this state. Together with the Slavic groups in the region, they transformed into an Avar-Slav society. Tibor Ákos Rácz describes a settlement in the 10th century turning into a village by the 11th century. This house likely existed within an extended family. This situation is similar to the description by Islamic sources about the Khazars, which described their villages as scarce, resembling camps rather than fully formed villages, living in an

[763] David Sneath, *The Headless State Aristocratic Orders, Kinship Society, and Misrepresentations of Nomadic Inner Asia* (Colombia University Press, 2007).

extended family structure. The Avars were unable to make the transition from this condition to either a sedentary new form of way of life or recycle with new dynastic power, a fate like the Khazars. - A factor of chance - The Hungarians, on the other hand, despite the disaster of 955, were favored by both climate (with the influence of the medieval warm period) and geography. The geography was suitable for this vacuum empire. The transition to villages likely paralleled the opening up of agricultural land (in later periods). There was also a forest society here (Avaro-Slav or Slavic). Considering the large river basins (swamps), they transformed a region where half or more was forest into a settled state from a vacuum empire. But the main reason for the sedentarization was ultimately the new political ecumene of the Kingdom of St. Stephen. This new political ecumene did not accept the mounted pastoral nomadic way of life due to its jurisdiction system which relied on the hearth denarius (hearth) tax. Even though they frequently critiqued each other, György Györffy and Gyula Kristó's views on the Conquering Hungarians' way of life and state formation could synthesize with each other.

As Csanád Bálint[764] mentioned "vulgar Marxism," introduced a forced model of historical progressivism, particularly during the second half of the last century, and included mounted pastoral nomads within this framework. This model, likely intended to align with the policies of the Soviet Union at the time, was characterized by a lack of dynamism. Nonetheless, both in the Soviet Union and especially in Hungary, there were efforts to 'soften' this "mechanical progressive-periodized" perspective by offering critiques or alternative viewpoints, particularly concerning nomads. On the other hand, mounted pastoral nomadism, with its inherent "dynamism," was perhaps the most effective way of life in addressing the "unique needs of unique circumstances" of its time. In this context, I find Pletneva's suggestion significant, which posits that in the case of the Khazars, the first three stages of her gradual model could coexist. This proposal aligns better with the fluidity and dynamism of life rather than a strictly progressive model where each stage is completed before moving on to the next. In this regard, there is no reason why both Györffy's concept of "semi-nomadism" and Kristó's notion of "pure nomadism" could not coexist within the Conquering Hungarians. For instance, it is not difficult to argue that during the years following the Pecheneg attack, when the Conquering Hungarians were migrating, their

[764] Bálint, "Az Ethnosz a Kora Középkorban. (A Kutatás Lehetőségei És Korlátai)."

society likely practiced “pure nomadism” rather than being concerned with winter and summer quarters.

Similarly, the presence of central and anti-central currents within their state structure illustrates this dynamism. My analysis of titles among mounted pastoral nomads, particularly the conflict between charismatic leadership and shared (dual) governance, also exemplifies this, with numerous instances evident throughout the history of the Conquering Hungarians.

Another point here is that the constant change of titles in the dual kingship or dual rulership among the mounted pastoral nomads is, in fact, indicative of an ongoing conflict. Rather than a simple comparison between “sacral” and “secular” rulership, this reflects a struggle stemming from a dynamic opposition to centralized authority, involving a charismatic leader within the high ruling strata. The meanings of these titles change as the amount and focus of power held by those who bear these titles shift could be explained as dynamics of struggle. We can also observe this in the Late Avar period. In this context, I find Róna-Tas's argument[765] that there was no “sacral kingship” among the Hungarians to be partially correct. During the period described in the “De Administrando Imperio,” when the conflict was more centrifugal rather than driven by a charismatic leader, it can be said that 'sacral kingship' was not very strong.

I derive two significant arguments from the genetic studies. The first is the refutation of the argument that the Hungarians were a closed culture maintained through endogamy, thereby ensuring their ethnic and cultural continuity. Conversely, exogamy, which is often observed in the social characteristics of mounted pastoral nomads, was practiced among the Conquering Hungarians. Both before and after the conquest of the Carpathian Basin, external marriages—exogamy—were practiced. In this context, inter-tribal marriages continued among the Conquering Hungarians in the Carpathian Basin, along with kinship relations. In other words, the seven Hungarian tribes and the three Khwarazm tribes formed marital and kinship relations, creating a bilingual environment in the Carpathian Basin where “Old West Turkic” and Old Hungarian were used together. To this picture, I must also add the settled Avar-Slav society engaged in agriculture.

[765] Róna-Tas, *Hungarians and Europe in the Early Middle Ages: An Introduction to Early Hungarian History*, 342–45.

Another significant argument derived from the genetic research is that the Conquering Hungarians migrated as a whole community rather than as a minority of military elites. The genetic research suggests that they migrated as a community. However, the existing Avar-Slav settlements in the region persisted and were not destroyed. An integration process occurred over approximately 150 years. As inferred from marriages, there was some mixing with local ruling elements, though it is likely that mixing within the upper ruling strata began towards the end of this 150-year period, around the time of St. Stephen, who is known to have married in this context. However, it can be said that the military retinue, which, as Györffy also noted, came from a multi-ethnic background, integrated more quickly. Likewise, the vertical mobility in social stratification of the local Avar-Slav community was facilitated through this integration. It is assumed that this accelerated in the period following the defeat in 955 when the population of the middle class, or "free nomads," increased rapidly through polygamy, and considering that language is transmitted through the mother, as Kristó stated, the increasing influence of the Slavic language during this period can be considered another example.

Thus, the Avar-Slavs, who were also politically active as allies of the Bulgarians, were able to rise to relatively higher positions within Conquering Hungarian society, especially in the period following the collapse of the military elite in 955.

However, the "free nomads" who created a new society from within were likely the most adversely affected by this change. The centralizing power, particularly due to policies like the Denarius Tax (Hearth Tax), paved the way for the decline of this "middle class" of free nomads. The so-called "Black Hungarians" revolt, although ostensibly a cultural reaction to a particular religion, was, in fact, more a response from these "free nomads," especially the lower strata of the middle class and the most devastated group, the "kara bodun" (commoners).

The seemingly opposing examples of Kristó and Györffy actually provide a foundation and material for my argument that multiple forms, as exemplified by Pletneva, could coexist. Roughly between the late 8th century and the 11th century, the mounted pastoral nomadic political ecumene was in a state of crisis, necessitating a change. Mounted pastoral nomadic groups either integrated into another political ecumene, as seen with the Oghuz Turks adopting Islam or the Bulgars aligning with the Byzantine political ecumene. The Khazars, on the other hand, likely attempted to create a unique political ecumene but were unable to succeed due to external factors. In contrast, the 13th century saw the inner Asian mounted

pastoral nomadic groups, particularly those in Inner Asia, emerge from this crisis through the "revolutions" of Genghis Khan. The Hungarians hold a unique position as the only example of a group that transitioned into the Western Christian Political Ecumene. The Carpathian Basin, which was the westernmost edge of the mounted pastoral nomadic "core" in Western Eurasia, ceased to be a core of the Mounted Pastoral Nomadic Ecumene and instead became a core area of the Western Christian Political Ecumene. However, this topic would be the subject of another study.

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7 Appendix

Timeline 1[766]

Year/Date	Event
787-791	Uprising led by John the Goth in Crimea.
790	Avar embassy in Worms; no consensus on the boundary.
Aug. 791	A Frankish-Lombard army takes an Avar fortification at the Italian border.
Fall 791	Great Avar campaign led by Charlemagne, departing from Lorch in September and proceeding to the Rába without much resistance; horse pestilence, return via Savaria.
791–end of 793	Charlemagne in Regensburg; preparations for an Avar war, works for Danube-Main canal.
793–795	Saxon uprising.
794/95	Inner conflict in the Avar Empire; death of the khagan and the iugurrus.
795	Envoys of the tudun meet Charlemagne at Hliune at the Elbe and offer submission.
Fall 795	A Frankish-Slav army under Woynimir advances to the "ring" of the khagans and sacks it.
796	The tudun comes to Charlemagne, submits, and is baptized; an army under Pippin of Italy and Duke Eric of Friuli sacks the ring again; the khagan submits; a synod at the Danube deals with the conversion of the Avars.
797	Campaign of Eric of Friuli in Pannonia; fights against Slavs.
End of 797	Avar embassy meets Charlemagne at Herstelle.
798	Bishop Arn of Salzburg is raised to archbishop with a view to the eastern missions.
799–803	Great Avar uprising against the Franks.
799	Eric of Friuli is killed by the residents of Tarsatica; Prefect Gerold I is murdered during a campaign against the Avars.
799-809	Reforms of Khagan Obadiah, official adoption of Judaism.
802	The counts Chadaloh and Goteram fall in a fight against Avars near the castellum Guntionis.
802/03–814	Bulgar khan Krum.

[766] Pohl, *The Avars A Steppe Empire in Central Europe, 567-822,* XVIII–XIX; Pletneva, *Die Chasaren: Mittelalterliches Reich an Don Und Wolga*, 164.

Year/Date	Event
803	The Franks finally put down the Avar revolt; the Tudun comes to Charlemagne at Regensburg and submits.
ca. 804	Campaign of the Bulgar khan Krum against the Avars.
Early 805	The Christian kapkhan Theodore visits Charlemagne in Aachen and asks for land because of Slavic attacks; he obtains the region between Carnuntum and Savaria but dies soon.
Sept. 805	The Avar khagan asks Charlemagne to reestablish his supreme rule; on September 21, he is baptized with the name Abraham in the Fischa river.
805	The capitulary of Thionville institutes Lorch as a toll post toward Slavs and Avars.
811	A Frankish army mediates in fights between Avars and Slavs in Pannonia; the canizauci, the tudun, and other Avar and Slavic princes are summoned to Aachen.
811	Emperor Nicephorus invades Bulgaria and falls in battle; in the Bulgar army, Avars are also attested.
814	Khan Krum plans to attack Constantinople; his army is said to have included Avar mercenaries; Krum dies before putting the plan into action.
822	Last attested Avar embassy at the Frankish court.
822-836	Advance of the Hungarians into the Black Sea region.
828	The administrative reform of the eastern territories of Bavaria removes the Avar tributary principality.
829-842	Reign of Byzantine Emperor Theophilos.
834	Construction of Sarkel.
Around 830	The Hungarians, separated from the Khazars, become independent in the region between the Don and Lower Danube, known as Etelköz

Timeline 2[767]

Year/Date	Event
Around 830	The Hungarians, separated from the Khazars, become independent in the region between the Don and Lower Danube, known as Etelköz (Györffy).
834	Construction of Sarkel.
837-838	First mention of them near the Lower Danube in Byzantine chronicles (Györffy).
Around 860	Encounter with Cyril in Crimea (Györffy).
860-862	Journey of Constantine (Cyril) to Khazaria.
862	First western raid in the Eastern Frankish Empire (Györffy) / The first news of Hungarian incursions into the Eastern Frankish Kingdom reaches Reims (Bácsatyai).
881	Battle of the Kabar and Hungarian army near Vienna (Györffy) / Hungarian and Kabar troops fight at Wenia and Culmite in the Alpine foreland (Bácsatyai).
883-885	Incorporation of the Drevlians, Severians, and Radimichians into the Rus.
889	Advance of the Pechenegs into the southern Russian steppes.
890	Proclamation of Arpad as prince of the Hungarians.
892	Alliance of Arnulf with the Hungarians; campaign in Moravia (Györffy) / Hungarians, in alliance with Arnulf, King of the Eastern Franks, ravage Moravian territory, though no battle occurs (Bácsatyai).
893 (end)	The alliance between the Eastern Franks and the Hungarians ends, followed by significant Bavarian-Hungarian clashes (Bácsatyai).
894 (first half)	The Hungarians loot Carolingian Pannonia (Bácsatyai) / Campaign in Pannonia. Death of Svatopluk (Györffy).
894	Campaign of the Hungarians to the Danube.

[767] Dienes, *A Honfoglaló Magyarok*, 72–73; Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301*, 309–10; Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 225–29.

Timeline 3[768]

Year/Date	Event
895	Byzantine-Bulgarian and Bulgarian-Hungarian war. The Pechenegs, allied with the Bulgarians, attack the Hungarian settlements from the east (Györffy) / A Hungarian army, in the service of the Byzantines, invades Bulgaria but suffers a serious defeat (Bácsatyai) / The first phase of the conquest (Kristó).
895-896	The Conquest (Honfoglalás) (Györffy) / The first phase of the conquest (Kristó).
895-898	First Phase of Hungarian Conquest of the Carpathian Basin (Róna-Tas).
898	The Hungarians reach Italy up to the Brenta (Bácsatyai).
899 (spring/summer)	The beginning of the great Italian campaign. June 29: Pietro Tribuno, the Doge of Venice, repels the raiding Hungarians at the Venetian Lido. Around this time, the Altino monastery in the Littorale is likely sacked. September 24: The Hungarians, advancing to Pavia, retreat to the Brenta, where they defeat the army of Berengar I, King of Italy. Autumn: The Hungarians raid Lombardy, entering Padua and Bergamo. December 13: The Hungarians penetrate Vercelli, killing members of the clergy, including the fleeing Bishop Liutward (Bácsatyai) / Italian ventures (Kristó).
899-900	Victory over Berengar's troops at the Brenta River, campaign in Lombardy. Alliance with Berengar. The Hungarians occupy Pannonia (Transdanubia) (Györffy) / Italian ventures (Kristó).
900 (January)	The Hungarians raid cities south of the Po River, including Reggio and possibly Piacenza. January 26: The Hungarians are around Modena and set fire to the Nonantola monastery. Spring: The raiders, possibly through the mediation of Frederick, Patriarch of Aquileia, make peace with Berengar I. Returning home, they ravage and occupy Pannonia. Second half: A Hungarian delegation visits Bavaria, possibly the court of Louis the Child or Margrave Liutpold, but instead of making peace, the Hungarians devastate the right bank of the Danube east of the Enns and then withdraw. Their forces advancing north of the Danube suffer a defeat by Liutpold at Linz. Construction of Ennsburg begins (Bácsatyai).
900	The second phase of the conquest (Kristó).
901 (April 11)	A Hungarian army is defeated in Carinthia (Bácsatyai) / Hungarian attack against Carinthia (Kristó).
901-902	Kusál is defeated near the Fischa River. During negotiations after the defeat—or possibly much later—the Bavarians trap and kill him and his entourage (Bácsatyai).
902	The Hungarian army attacking Moravia is defeated (Bácsatyai) / Moravian campaign. The fall of the Moravian Principality (Györffy) / Toppling of the Moravian Principality (Kristó).
902-904	Bavarian campaigns (Györffy).

[768] Dienes, *A Honfoglaló Magyarok*, 72–73; Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301*, 309–10; Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 225–29.

Year/Date	Event
903	Hungarian-Bavarian war near Fischa (Kristó).
903/906	Bavarian-Hungarian war (Bácsatyai).
904	Assassination of Kusál (Kristó) / Hungarian prince Kurszán is killed during peace negotiations with the Bavarians (Györffy).
904-905	Italian raid (Kristó).
905	The Hungarians defeat the Moravians in Moravia, opening the way to Saxony (Bácsatyai).
906	Saxon campaign (Kristó) / A Hungarian army reaches Saxony, where they ravage a locality on June 24 (Bácsatyai).
906/908	Two Hungarian armies ravage Saxony: the first allied with the Daleminzians, and the second independently (Bácsatyai).
907 (July 4-6)	The Battle of Pressburg, Hungarians decisively defeat the Bavarians (Kristó, Bácsatyai) / Severe defeat of the Bavarian armies sent to reclaim Pannonia at Braslawaspurc (Bratislava) (Györffy).
907	Death of Grand Prince Árpád (uncertain date) (Kristó) / The year of Grand Prince Árpád's death according to Anonymus (Györffy).

Timeline 4[769]

Year/Date	Event
908 (August 3)	Ravaging of Saxony and Thuringia (Kristó) / During another Hungarian campaign in Saxony, Duke Burchard of Thuringia, Bishop Rudolf of Würzburg, and Count Egino perish (Bácsatyai).
909	Military action in Swabia (Kristó) / The Hungarians' first campaign into Swabia (Bácsatyai).
909	Conquest of the island of Abesgun (in the Caspian Sea) by the Rus.
909-915	July 30: Hungarian raiders attack Freising. August 4: The Hungarians set fire to the churches of St. Stephen and St. Vitus near Freising. August 11: Returning home, the Hungarians suffer a defeat at the Rott River (Bácsatyai).
910 (June 12)	The Hungarians defeat the Swabian army in battle in Swabia, and Count Gozbert of Klettgau falls. June 22: The raiding army again triumphs, this time over the Franks and Bavarians. The Eastern Frankish army was led by Louis the Child. According to Liutprand, the battle between Louis IV and the Hungarians occurred near Augsburg, possibly referring to this battle. Dukes Gebhard of Lotharingia and Liutfrid of Alsace fall in the clash. After June 22: The returning Hungarians suffer a partial defeat by the Bavarians near Neuching or Loiching, close to Munich (Bácsatyai) / Victory over the Swabians and Franks (Kristó).
911	First raid beyond the Rhine (Kristó) / The Hungarians first cross the Rhine but only advance as far as the areas of Ahrgau and Mayenfeldgau directly west of Andernach (Bácsatyai).
911-912	A Hungarian army campaigns in Franconia and Thuringia (Bácsatyai) / Campaign into Franconia and Thuringia (Kristó).
913	Burgundian campaign, defeat at the Inn (Kristó) / The Hungarians campaign in Swabia but are defeated on the banks of the Inn River by Bavarian Duke Arnulf, Swabian Count Palatine Erchanger, his brother Bertold, and Count Ulrich of Bregenz (Bácsatyai) / Victory of Duke Arnulf of Bavaria near the Inn River. Arnulf makes peace with the Hungarians (Györffy).
914	Arnulf flees to Hungary with his family (Györffy).
915 (first half)	Raid up to the Danish border (Kristó) / The raiders devastate Swabia and reach as far as Astfalagau in Saxony. Before June 9: They reach Fulda in Franconia (Bácsatyai).
916 (Jun. 29) – 917	The defeated rebel Duke Arnulf of Bavaria finds refuge with the Hungarians (Bácsatyai).
917	Campaign into Alsace and Lorraine; Hungarian participation in the Balkan conflicts (Kristó) / A Hungarian army marches through Swabia, touching the northern border of the Kingdom of Burgundy, plundering Basel (possibly on July 20) and reaching Lorraine through Alsace (Bácsatyai).

[769] Dienes, *A Honfoglaló Magyarok*, 72–73; Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301*, 309–10; Bácsatyai, *A Kalandozó Hadjáratok Nyugati Kútfői*, 225–29.

Year/Date	Event
919	Raid into Saxony and Lorraine (Kristó) / The Hungarian raiders reach Lorraine, possibly as far as Beaulieu-en-Argonne, but Western Frankish King Charles the Simple and Archbishop Hervé of Reims try to resist them. On their way there or back, they plunder Saxony; King Henry I retreats to Püchau Castle from them (Bácsatyai).
919-920	Attack against Italy (Kristó).
920-921	Campaign against French territories (Kristó).
921-922 (October 3 – January)	Advance to Apulia (Kristó) / The Hungarian leaders Dursac and Bugat appear at Verona to assist Berengar I against the Italian nobles led by Margrave Adalbert of Ivrea and Count Giselbert of Bergamo, who plan to invite King Rudolf of Burgundy. They defeat the rebels at Brescia, capturing numerous cities, possibly including Bergamo, one of the rebels' strongholds (Bácsatyai).
922 (February 25)	Hungarian raiders appear in southern Italy in Apulia (Bácsatyai).
924	Raid into Italy, Gaul, and Saxony (Kristó) / Sack of Padua. Raid to the Atlantic Ocean (Györffy) / March 12: A Hungarian army arrives in Italy to aid Berengar I, led by Salardus. They set fire to the royal capital of Pavia, held by the rival king Rudolf, with forty churches falling prey to the flames. Bishop John of Pavia and the Bishop of Vercelli are among the victims of the siege. The townspeople buy their freedom with eight bushels of silver. After March 12: The raiders head for Gaul through the Alpine passes, but Hugh of Arles and Kings Rudolf of Burgundy and Italy block their way. However, the Hungarian army breaks out at an unexpected location and descends upon the southern French coast (Gothia). End of the year: The Hungarians ravaging Gothia, around Nîmes and likely Saint-Gilles, are decimated by an epidemic. It is possible that Count Raymond Pons of Toulouse and Gothia successfully confronts them (Bácsatyai).
926 (spring)	Encampment at St. Gallen, Hungarians reach the Atlantic Ocean (Kristó) / Sankt Gallen adventure. Raid through Lombardy to Rome (Györffy) / A Hungarian army heads for Swabia, plundering the area around Augsburg and forcing the city to pay tribute. May 1: The raiders take the monastery of St. Gall, killing the hermit Wiborada nearby. After May 1: The Hungarian campaign continues along Lake Constance and the Rhine: they unsuccessfully besiege Konstanz, but the Reichenau monastery is saved by its fleet. To the southwest, they reach Besançon, and to the northwest, they reach Voncq in Lorraine, devastating the area around Verdun as well. Summer: Hungarian raiders appear in Saxony, setting fire to the Westphalian monastery of Herford. August 30: The Hungarian army in Westphalia sets fire to the monastery of Obernkirchen. August 31: The Westphalian contingent plunders the monastery of Möllenbeck. Autumn: King Henry I withdraws to Werla Castle from the Hungarians and is forced to make a nine-year truce with them (Bácsatyai).
927	Raid in Italy (Kristó) / Arnulf, Duke of Bavaria, joins the truce between Henry and the Hungarians (Bácsatyai).
928 (before summer)	The Hungarians raid Tuscany and the area around Rome after Pope John X's brother, Peter, possibly prompted by King Hugh of Arles, asks for their help against Marozia Senatrix, who controls Rome, and Margrave Guido of Tuscany. In the summer, the Romans, led by Marozia and Guido, kill Peter and depose John X (Bácsatyai).
929	Peace with Duke Arnulf of Bavaria and King Hugh of Italy (Györffy).

Year/Date	Event
932	War of the Khazars against the Alans, victory of the Khazars.
932-933	Hungarian raiders clash with the Roman citizens under the city's St. John's Gate. The Hungarians—likely mercenaries of King Hugh—harass the surroundings of Rome and retreat to Rieti, where Count Giuseppe of Rieti defeats them (Bácsatyai).
933 (early in the year)	Italian and Saxon campaign (Kristó) / Henry I prematurely stops paying tribute, and the Daleminzians break their alliance with the Hungarians, leading to two Hungarian armies attacking Saxony. The Saxons and Thuringians defeat the western Hungarian contingent. March 15: Henry I triumphs over the eastern Hungarian army near Riade (probably near Merseburg) (Bácsatyai) / Henry the Fowler wins a significant victory over the Hungarian armies at Merseburg (Györffy).
934	Advance to France and Constantinople (Kristó) / Raid to Byzantium (Györffy).
935 (June–September)	Raid into Burgundy, Aquitaine, and Italy (Kristó) / A Hungarian army attacks the Duchy of Burgundy in the Western Frankish Kingdom. Upon hearing of King Rudolf's approach, they withdraw to Italy. They likely visit Bèze Monastery and Saint-Apollinaire near Dijon in July and certainly sack Savigny Abbey during this period (Bácsatyai).
937 (early in the year)	Hungarians reach the Atlantic Ocean again, ravage Italy (Kristó) / Raid through Southern Germany into France and back through Lombardy (Györffy) / A Hungarian army crosses Swabia and attacks Saxony from the west. After February 4: Otto I pursues the invaders all the way to Metz, where they cross the Rhine at Worms. February 21: The Hungarian raiders reach near Metz. February–March: The raiders devastate monasteries and estates around Reims, including Fismes, Verzy, Bouvancourt, and Orbais. Near Orléans, they kill Ebbó, Lord of Déols. They reach as far as Bourges and even the Atlantic Ocean. March 24: The Hungarians arrive near Sens, likely causing significant damage to the monasteries of Saint Columb and Saint Peter outside the walls. After March 24: The raiding army leaves the Western Frankish Kingdom and returns home through Italy. An Italian Hungarian contingent, possibly separate from the aforementioned army, reaches as far as Capua (Bácsatyai).
938	The last Saxon campaign (Kristó) / The Hungarians campaign in Saxony. They camp by the Bode River and overrun the area. One of their armies is defeated near Steterburg, with its leader killed. Another contingent is victorious against the Saxons at the Drömling marsh, 50 kilometers northeast, though their leader only regains freedom for a significant ransom (Bácsatyai).
940 (April)	Military action in Italy (Kristó) / The Hungarians return to Italy. In exchange for tribute, they soon renew peace with King Hugh of Arles (Bácsatyai).
942	Advance to the Iberian Peninsula (Kristó) / June 25 – September 15: Encouraged by Hugh of Arles, the Hungarians campaign on the Iberian Peninsula. They reach as far as Barbastro and Huesca. July 7 – July 14: The Hungarians unsuccessfully besiege the city of Lérida. Before September 15: Struggling with supply shortages and deciding to retreat, the Hungarian army is defeated by the Catalan counts (Bácsatyai).
943	Byzantine raid, attempted incursion into Bavaria (Kristó).
943-944	Campaign of the Rus to Berda.

Year/Date	Event
945 (August 12)	Baptism of Bulcsú and Termacsu in Constantinople (Kristó) / The Hungarians suffer a defeat at Wels in Traungau against Duke Berthold of Bavaria (Bácsatyai).
947	Advance to Apulia (Kristó) / Taksony's campaign in Italy (Györffy) / A Hungarian army led by Taksony campaigns in Italy to force Berengar of Ivrea, ruling as regent, to pay tribute. After making the treaty, they reach as far as Otranto in southern Italy, under Byzantine control (Bácsatyai).
948	Another incursion attempt into Bavaria (Kristó) / The Hungarians suffer a defeat by the Bavarians in Nordgau in northeastern Bavaria (Bácsatyai).
949-950	Hungarian-Bavarian skirmishes (Kristó).
950	The first attack against Hungarian settlements (Kristó) / The Hungarians achieve a victory over the Bavarians at a place or river called Lova. Summer: Otto I, having captured Prague, subdues the Hungarians as well (Bácsatyai).
Around 950	Gyula (Fali) becomes the Grand Prince (Kristó).
After 950	The Grand Princedom of Taksony (Kristó).
951	Raid into Aquitaine (Kristó) / Campaign in Lombardy and France (Györffy) / The raiders cross Italy and reach as far as Aquitaine via the Alps. They spend the summer there, then return home through Italy. On their way back, they confront Otto I, who is conquering the Kingdom of Italy, and his brother, Duke Henry of Bavaria, who takes control of the Patriarchate of Aquileia. The Italian route closes to the raiders. November 20: Duke Henry of Bavaria, pursuing the Hungarians, wins a battle against them in the southwestern Carpathian Basin (Bácsatyai).
953	Gyula converts to Christianity in Byzantium (Györffy).
954	Raid in France (Kristó) / Campaign in Burgundy and Belgium (Györffy) / During the two-year rebellion of Duke Liudolf of Swabia and Duke Conrad the Red of Lotharingia, the Hungarians led by Bulcsú—accused of being invited by the rebels—invade the Eastern Frankish Kingdom. After Otto I and Liudolf reconcile, Conrad hires Bulcsú's forces against his Lotharingian opponents. The Hungarians do not spare the rebels either, capturing more than a thousand people from the lands of Count Ernst of Sualafeld. February 8 – March 19: Bulcsú's army crosses the Rhine during Lent. March 19: Worms buys immunity from the Hungarian army. Before April 2: Conrad the Red escorts the Hungarian army to Maastricht, after which they raid Wintershoven. April 2: The Hungarians—perhaps in the service of Count Renier III of Hainaut—besiege and plunder Lobbes Monastery. April 6–10: The Hungarians—still as mercenaries for the rebels—begin the siege of Cambrai, an Otto-supporting city, but must withdraw unsuccessfully. After April 10: The raiding army continues its campaign in the Western Frankish Kingdom: after ravaging Vermandois, Laon, Reims, and Châlons-sur-Marne, they reach Burgundy, from where they return home through Italy (Bácsatyai).
955 (August 10)	Defeat at Lechfeld (Kristó) / King Otto I defeats the Hungarian forces at Augsburg, ending the western raids (Györffy) / Around July 1: A Hungarian delegation visits Otto I, who has returned to Saxony. Before August 8: The Hungarians flood the Danube Basin as far as the Black Forest, laying siege to Augsburg. August 8: The raiders launch an assault on the city's eastern gate, ending with the death of one of their leaders. August 9: As the Hungarian siege ring closes around Augsburg, they hear of Otto I's approaching army. August 10: The Hungarian army led by Bulcsú suffers a decisive defeat by Otto I

Year/Date	Event
	on the Lech Field near Augsburg (certainly west of the Lech River), while another contingent led by Lél is defeated by the Czechs (Bácsatyai).

Timeline 5[770]

Year/Date	Event
959	Advance to Constantinople (Kristó).
959-970	Raids in the Balkans (Györffy).
961	Thracian raid (Kristó).
963	The Pope sends a bishop to the Hungarians (Kristó).
967-968	Balkan military actions (Kristó).
970	Defeat at Arcadiopolis (Kristó).
Early 970s-997	Grand Prince Géza (Kristó).
972	First Western attempts to Christianize the Hungarians (Kristó) / Grand Prince Géza ascends the throne (Györffy).
973	Quedlinburg embassy (Kristó) / Géza's envoys appear before Emperor Otto I in Quedlinburg (Györffy).
Around 985	Hungarian deception in the territory of the Passau bishopric (Kristó).
991	Border Hungarian-Bavarian clash (Kristó).
Around 995	Adalbert in Hungary (Kristó) / Saint Adalbert visits Grand Prince Géza (Györffy).
996	Marriage of Vajk-István and Gisela (Kristó) / Géza secures the hand of Gisela of Bavaria for his heir apparent, Stephen (Györffy) / Founding of the Benedictine monastery in Pannonhalma (Kristó).
996-997	Establishment of the Veszprém bishopric (Kristó).
997-1038	Stephen I (Kristó).
997	Uprising of Koppány (Kristó) / Grand Prince Géza dies, and his son Stephen ascends the throne, becoming the last Hungarian grand prince (Györffy).
Turn of 1000-1001	Stephen's coronation as king (Kristó) / January 1, 1001: Coronation of King Stephen (Györffy).
1001	Establishment of the Esztergom archbishopric (Kristó).
1002	Consecration of the Pannonhalma abbey (Kristó).

[770] Dienes, *A Honfoglaló Magyarok*, 72–73; Kristó, *Magyarország Története 895 - 1301*, 309–10.