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SIMONIS DE KÉZA
GESTA
HUNGARORUM

SIMON OF KÉZA
THE DEEDS OF THE
HUNGARIANS

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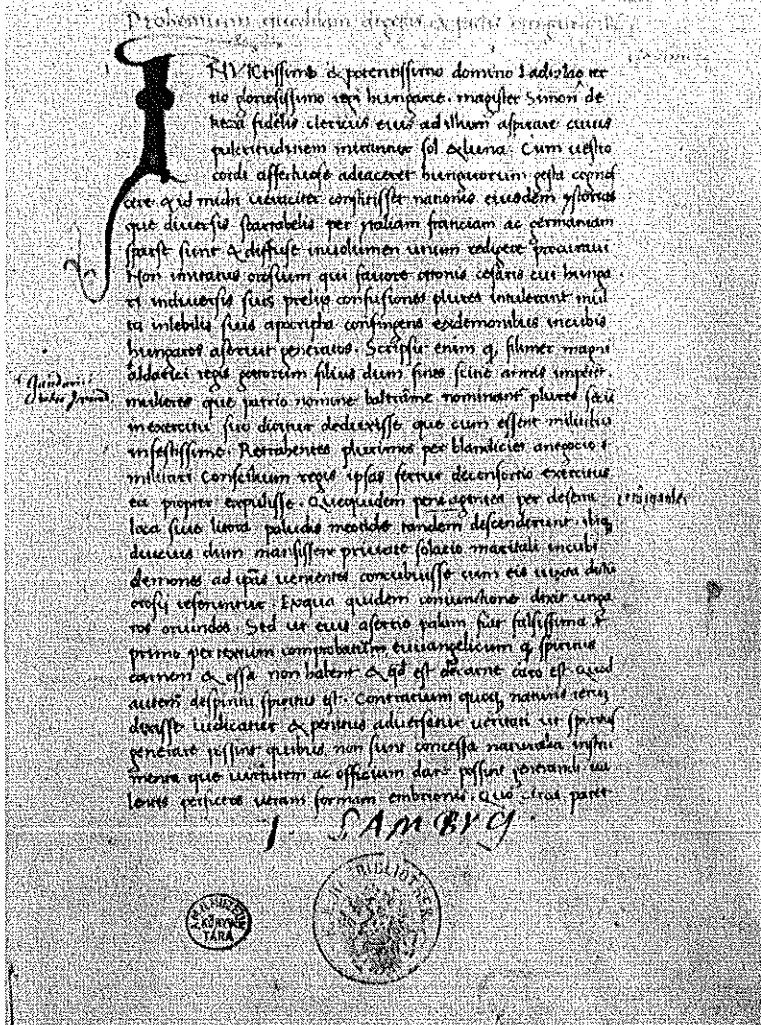
INTRODUCTION

The present work is the first bilingual annotated edition of the *Gesta Hungarorum* (ca. 1280) of Simon of Kéza (in Hungarian, Kézai Simon). Simon was court cleric to King Ladislas IV, and his chronicle is a highly important record of traditions, or fictions, relating to the origins of the Hungarian nation, the Huns and the Hungarians, and the immigrant noble families in Hungary. Based on his readings in Roman and canon law, French and German epic traditions, oral sources, and diverse other information gathered by sight or hearing in the course of his European travels, his account of Hungarian history not only exercised a long-lasting influence on his countrymen's view of their past but was read by Italian historians as well. The standard edition of the Latin text is in the *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum* series (henceforth, SRH).¹

THE MANUSCRIPTS

To the best of present knowledge, no medieval manuscript has survived of Simon's *Gesta*. We know, however, about one of them, which was used for the first editions and

¹ *Scriptores rerum Hungaricarum tempore ducum regumque stirpis Arpadianae gestarum*, ed. Emericus Szentpétery, 2 vols. (Budapest: Magyar Tudományos Akadémia, 1937).



Codex Sambucus
(OSzK, Ms. Cod. Lat. 406. f. 1 recto)

served as the basis of all the surviving eighteenth-century copies. This manuscript was described by Daniel Cornides (1732–87), professor of diplomatics at Budapest University, in a letter of 22 January 1782: “This is an almost square parchment manuscript of 35 folios, each of them having 22 lines.” The size was given by Cornides as 131 by 100 mm, but as he states that there were wide margins, these measurements must refer to the written space, which, as he noted, was marked by scratched-in lining. The space for initials had been left empty but the chapter titles were written in red. “The writing is of the late thirteenth-century, thick and rounded, and can be dated by the consistently used dot above the letter *y* and the occasionally accented letter *i*. The wooden boards of the codex were covered by pigskin, and fastened with clasps of which only the remnants survive. The mode of the binding also speaks for the age of the book.”²

This codex was first mentioned in the early eighteenth century. It was then in the library of the Esterházy family

² Quoted by Alexander (Sándor) Domanovszky: *Codex membranaceus fere quadratus, absolvitur foliis 35, quorum quodlibet 22 lineae continet. Foliorum magnitudinem subiectae duae lineae patefacient, quarum prior AB folii longitudinem, posterior ab folii latitudinem aequat:— AB: 13,1 cm, — ab: 10 cm. Litterae Capitum initiales omissae sunt, sed pro iis spatium vacuum relictum est, eo fine, ut olim expinguantur. Lemmata Capitum minio sunt exarata, margines undiquaque sic satis largi. Scriptura est saeculi XIII. exeuntis, id quod e litterarum characteribus crassis et pinguinulis, et littera (j) puncto semper notata et ex accentu acuto litterae (i) interdum imposito licet colligere. Theca codicis lignea, suilla obtecta, fibulisque, quarum non nisi vestigia supersunt, munita et modus Compactionis, venerandam pro se ferunt vetustatem* (“Kézai kódexéről,” 85).

in Kismarton (Eisenstadt), where the Jesuit Gábor Hevenesi (1656–1717), one of the founders of historical scholarship in Hungary, made a copy of it on 16 May 1701. This copy, referred to by the sigil H, is now in the University Library, Budapest (ELTE, *Collectio Hevenesiana*, vol. LXX). This copy was the basis of a further copy, referred to as P, made by another Jesuit historian, George Pray (1723–1801), and presently also in the University Library (*Collectio Prayana*, vol. XXIX). Finally, Pray’s copy was copied by Daniel Cornides, many years before he had the medieval codex in hand. This copy was purchased by Count Joseph Teleki, and is now in the Teleki Library in Tîrgu Mureş (Marosvásárhely), with the old shelfmark fol. 1030.³ Being a copy of copies, this manuscript was not cited in the SRH edition, nor is it in ours.

The original manuscript in the Esterházy collection—in 1713 bequeathed together with the entire family library to the Franciscan convent in Eisenstadt—was used by the editor of the first printed edition, the Piarist Elek Horányi (1736–1809). It can be assumed that Jenő Kósa, provincial of the Friars Minor, had noticed the codex in the Esterházy collection and took it with him to Bratislava (Pozsony, Pressburg) in 1768 in order to prepare an edition. He there showed it to Horányi and lent it to him for a day. Horányi printed an edition in Vienna in 1781, but having acknowledged its mistakes he prepared a second edition for publication in Buda a year later (to which Cornides offered his assistance); this *editio princeps* is referred to

³ We are grateful to Prof. György Györffy for affording us the opportunity to inspect a copy of this manuscript, even if it proved to be of marginal use for the present edition.

as E.⁴ Horányi did not have a good press among his contemporaries. Cornides, for example, wrote that “it is to be feared that Horányi will dreadfully distort Simon, not necessarily by ill will, but because of his usual haste and carelessness.”⁵ Indeed, his fears seem to be confirmed by the fact that Horányi attempted to “improve” upon the text he had in front of him in order to produce, with the help of the fourteenth-century chronicles, an “authentic” version. Horányi described his exemplar as a “parchment manuscript in Gothic script duodecimo size with 69 columns.”⁶ Judging by the already cited description of Domanovszky, this refers to the same codex which Cornides described as containing 35 one-column folios, in which the last page may have been left empty, leaving sixty-nine written pages. In short, Horányi clearly used the former Esterházy-library manuscript.

Finally, another eighteenth-century copy of unknown origin reached the library of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (present shelfmark Tört. in 4o 139) in 1838 from the collection of the Counts of Batthyány at Rohonc (Rechnitz). It seems to derive from the same medieval codex, but is more accurate than Hevenesi's, and was hence followed both by the SRH editors and in the present edition, except where badly corrupted. It will be cited as K (for Kézai).

⁴ For a detailed description of the editions see the Bibliography.

⁵ Quoted by Domanovszky, “Kézai kódexéről,” 85.

⁶ 2nd edition (Buda, 1782), 5: *characteres gotico in membrana . . . Codex hic in forma duodecima, novem et sexaginta columnis absolvitur.*

The history of the medieval copy can thus be followed till 1782, when it was still with Horányi in Buda. It was at that time that Cornides saw it. A year later the Franciscan provincial Kósa died, and apparently the Pressburg Franciscans forgot about the “one-day loan” and no one asked for the manuscript back from Horányi. At any rate by 1833 Joseph Podhraczky (1795–1870), historian and editor of a number of chronicles, could no longer find it and was forced to use H. Earlier this century, historians tried assiduously to locate the codex in one of the Franciscan or Piarist houses, but to no avail. Because of its small format this slim volume, or its medieval sisters, may have easily ended up in *colligata* and could be hiding undetected in Hungary or abroad. Beyond the borders of historical Hungary and Austria, Italy, perhaps, suggests itself, as Simon's work was certainly known there. Paolino da Venezia, father confessor of Pope John XXII, later bishop of Pozzuoli, quotes from him extensively; but so far no copy of the *Gesta* has been located in an Italian library.

However “ancient” (Cornides' word) the codex from the Esterházy library may have been, it was hardly an autograph, as can be clearly seen from the many misspelled toponyms in all the copies made from it, most of which must go back to earlier miscopyings (for an example see ch. 41, note 1). The many misreadings in the dedication and initial chapters also point to the same conclusion.

DATE AND INFLUENCE

Evidence for the date of the *Gesta* is provided by the fact that it notes the campaign against the Cumans in the autumn of 1282, but does not mention the victory over the Mongols who raided Hungary in the spring of 1285. It has been convincingly argued,⁷ based on the relationships of Hungary and the papacy around that time, that the work was originally commissioned for propagandistic purposes, specifically with a view to an Italian audience, and copies may have reached the peninsula soon after it was written. If this were the motive, Simon, a royal notary versed in the Italian language and familiar with that land, would no doubt have seemed a fitting choice as author, and Italian readers would presumably have appreciated the many Italianisms of the text. Simon is eager to present his king, Ladislas IV, as a Christian ruler of Hungary of a stature only comparable to Attila among the pagans. It is only Simon among Hungarian chroniclers who does not explicitly link the genealogy of the Árpádians (including his royal patron) to Attila.⁸ The whole structure of the work is influenced by the intention to demonstrate that Hungary was always a lawful polity, in which even its Hunnish predecessors lived and were ruled *Romano more*, and where the workings of government as well as the relations between free and servile elements were based on customary and statute law. The special chapter on the "immigrants" is

⁷ Cf. Szűcs, below, pp. LII–LIII.

⁸ The Hungarian Anonymus (c. 1200) as well as the fourteenth-century chronicles (*SRH* 1: 284–85) constructed a complicated and muddled genealogy for the native dynasty from Noah and Japheth through Bendegúz, Attila, and Csaba to Álmos, father of Árpád.

also aimed at pointing out that the foreigners who came to the kingdom enjoyed freedom and chances for advancement guaranteed by the laws of the realm. Simon implies, though never says so, that the Cumans, too, will one day find their place in the Christian Hungarian society. The commemoration of the victory over the rebellious Cumans at Lake Hód seems specifically included to reinforce the latter message; indeed, this may have been another of the motives behind the commissioning of the *Gesta*.

However, even if the work was originally aimed at an "international" audience, it was copied and survived in Hungary as well. This is obvious from the fact that the Hungarian chronicles compiled and/or copied in the fourteenth century regularly include passages from Simon's narrative. It seems that this was done not in one but in several stages, as the *Chronicon Budense* (in the Sambucus codex, Hungarian National Library OSzK Cod. Lat. 406, referred to as S) and the version in the so-called *Chronicon Pictum Vindobonense* (now OSzK Cod. Lat. 404, here V) include different fragments of the *Gesta Hungarorum*. Some passages are cited only in the one or the other redaction. Simon's prologue was copied into the fifteenth-century Sambucus codex⁹ at the beginning of the Buda Chronicle. Because of this, the chronicle was for long time

⁹ This codex, written in a fifteenth-century Humanist hand, was acquired by the bibliophile John Sambucus (Zsámboki) from the Abbot of Pistoia in 1563, whence it came into the Vienna Hofbibliothek and in 1920 to the Hungarian National Library. It contains a very good text of the *Gesta's* introductory passages, most of which (with the exception of the dedication to King Ladislas IV) was taken by Simon from older chronicle redactions.

ascribed to Simon: Wadding, who chanced upon S, described him as the author of this text,¹⁰ and Simon became known as such both in Hungary and abroad.¹¹ Since the best copy of the introductory parts of the *Gesta* is in S, the present editors have followed the editors of SRH in utilising this version to amend the text of the first three chapters.

SOURCES

It has been long debated whether Master Simon was the author of all or only parts of the historical work that came down to us in the late copies. His authorship of the entire "*opusculum*" was convincingly argued by, among others, Imre Madzsar, János Horváth Jr., and Jenő Szűcs,¹² though they acknowledged that Simon utilised and re-worked the texts of older (and in their original form no longer extant) Hungarian chronicles and gesta. However, it is still unclear which passages originate in these older texts and what was Simon's own contribution. The passages which appear in the so-called fourteenth-century compilation of chronicles (as in the *Chronicon Pictum* and other versions) will be identified in the notes by reference to the critical edition in the first volume of the SRH series (up to now the standard, and indeed only edition of Hungarian medieval narrative sources). Simon certainly "made notes" (as Szűcs

¹⁰ Wadding, Lucas, *Annales Minorum seu Trium ordinum a S. Francisco institutorum* (Rome: R. Bernabo, 1732), 2: 166; (1733), 7: 259.

¹¹ Cf. Domanovszky, *Kézai Simon*, 17.

¹² Madzsar, "Hun krónika," 77–79; Horváth, *Stílusproblémák*, 370; Szűcs, below.

aptly put it) from the thirteenth-century Hungarian Anonymus,¹³ of which a near-contemporary copy has come down to us, and most likely also followed his predecessors, among them Master Ákos, chancellor of King Stephen V (1270–72)—the original version of whose chronicle is lost—for Hungarian pre-history and the post-1000 events.¹⁴ There is, however, a reasonable consensus that certain parts of the work are Simon's own contribution: the introduction, the "Deeds of the Huns," the passages on the reign of Ladislas IV, the chapter on the *udvarnok*, and good parts of the list of the immigrant kindreds. The SRH edition attempted to identify the passages most probably "original" in Simon (those not found in any other manuscript than the copies of Simon's work), and marked these in italics.¹⁵ This is, however, somewhat misleading, because there are passages in the later chronicles that utilised Simon's text. Simon's own contributions are often recognisable by his Italicisms and by his extensive use

¹³ Szűcs, below, p. LX.

¹⁴ Mályusz, *Az V. István-keori gesta*, passim.

¹⁵ These were, according to Simon's chapters: 1–2, 74–75, 83, 89, 93, 95–99 in their entirety, and chapters 6, 26–7, 33, 39–41, 57, 61, 64, 73, 76–8, 91–2 in significant parts. This list would exclude in particular the Hun story (chs. 7–22), because this was fully taken over by the later chronicles, while they are clearly original to Simon, as proven by their appearance in Paolino da Venezia. In chs. 25–73 the situation is the opposite: Simon abbreviated, summarised, but also augmented with colourful details the older chronicles (which went then into the fourteenth-century texts), and re-worked chapters 3–6 according to his own experiences. In some cases Simon was the source for the later chronicles in chapters 25–73 as well, as for example when in ch. 48 he comments that the Austrians do not have dukes but margraves.

of Jordanes, Paul the Deacon, Godfrey of Viterbo, the Alexander-material, and the Hungarian Anonymus, as well as his own travel experiences.¹⁶

There are, however, scholars who wish to see the origin of the “Deeds of the Huns” in an earlier and no longer extant Hun history.¹⁷ We agree with Györffy¹⁸ that the Hungarian Anonymus and the *Chronicon Hungaro-Polonicum* (ca. 1220) contain certain elements of the history of the Huns which Simon also utilised, but Simon’s version, complete with references to Roman ruins, different local legends, and literary references to the Attila tradition and German poetry, is his own creation. It was, indeed, the most individual and original redaction of the Hungarian Attila and Hun tradition of his age and may claim, precisely because of its extensive use of local lore and etymologies, a unique place in medieval European literature. Modern readers—but medieval ones before them as well—have read Simon mainly for his Hunnish story and, of course, for the political theory expressed in the work.¹⁹

EDITORIAL PRINCIPLES

We have followed the SRH in using *Gesta Hungarorum* as the title of the work, even though the eighteenth-century editions occasionally referred to it as the *Chronicon Hun-*

¹⁶ See Szűcs, below, p. XLVIII.

¹⁷ E. G. Macartney, *Historians*, 89–108; Csóka, *Történeti irodalom*, 565–601.

¹⁸ Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 188–191.

¹⁹ See Szűcs, above, pp. XLI–LXXII.

garicum. However, as Horányi himself admitted, the latter title may be a later addition,²⁰ and we feel that the accepted title better reflects the genre of this work. Our Latin text does not claim to be a critical edition, but follows, with minor corrections, the text as printed in SRH (where full textual variants are cited). For easier reference to that edition, we note its page numbers in brackets; the chapter divisions and numeration introduced by Domanovszky in the SRH have also been retained. Since we have no medieval manuscript, we have usually followed the punctuation and capitalisation of the SRH edition, as well as their normalisation of *U* and *V*. However, we were able to add in the notes a number of references to Simon’s sources not available in the 1938 edition.

It is not always easy to make sense of Simon’s narrative, whether due to conscious or unconscious ambiguity on the author’s part or to the derivative textual tradition. His language shows a varied register, from classical and biblical vocabulary to borrowings from the contemporary vernaculars. The translation has not attempted to reproduce the original word for word, but rather to present a narrative which reads smoothly and intelligibly, while still retaining something of the rhetorical ornament of the original.

As the present edition is the first that contains a translation into a modern foreign language, we have also added explanatory notes for readers less familiar with central European history and literature. Our notes aim to identify toponyms and less well known persons, as well as to in-

²⁰ See *E* witness p. 17.

clude as many references as possible to the author's probable or possible sources. Moreover, in order to indicate the context of Simon's work in the development of historical and political thought in Hungary, we have included a study by the late Jenő Szűcs on Simon's work and its "theoretical elements."²¹ Finally, among the extensive Hungarian scholarly literature on Simon we particularly wish to draw attention to the important work of such scholars as Sándor Domanovszky, Sándor Eckhardt, Jakab Bleyer, Imre Madzsar, János Horváth Jr., and József Gerics, which we have consulted extensively, even if we do not refer to them at every instance. For the Hungarian chronicles (a great part of which overlap Simon's work, as discussed above), readers can now consult the up-to-date Latin commentaries (with ample bibliography) by Elemér Mályusz and Gyula Kristó in their critical edition of the Chronicle of Johannes de Thurócz.²²

The translation of the Latin text was primarily Frank Schaer's contribution; however, both he and the editor

²¹ We are grateful to Ms Elisabeth Szűcs for having permitted us to re-print—in a linguistically improved version, thanks to Frank Schaer's careful copy editing, for which he also utilised the German translation of the article—the study, originally published in *Études historiques* 1975. Readers familiar with Szűcs's oeuvre will recognise that in this study (the Hungarian version of which, published in *Századok*, is much more detailed) the author has adumbrated the ideas elaborated both in his later famous *Three Historical Regions of Europe* and his studies on medieval Hungarian national consciousness (cf. the studies in *Nation und Geschichte Studien*, Budapest: Corvina, 1981) and now also his "Zwei Fragmente," in *East Central Europe/l'Europe du Centre-Est: Eine wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift*, 20–23 (1993–96): pt. 2, 55–90.

²² Mályusz-Kristó, *Johannes de Thurocz*.

profited much of the discussions with graduate students in "translation seminars" at the Central European University in the academic years 1996–97 and 1997–98. Among the general editors of the series, János M. Bak assisted the translator and editor in establishing a "norm" that should serve as a guide for future volumes of the series. Finally, we all wish to thank the editor and staff of the Central European University Press for their help in producing a pleasing volume out of the manuscript we submitted.

Budapest, 1 January, 1999

L. V. – F. S.

[GESTA HUNGARORUM]^a

1. Invictissimo et potentissimo domino Ladislao tertio¹ gloriosissimo regi Hungariae^b magister² Simon^c de Keza, fidelis clericus eius, ad illum aspirare, *cuius pulchritudinem mirantur sol et luna*³.

2. Cum vestro^d cordi affectuose adiaceret Hungarorum gesta cognoscere, et id mihi veraciter constitisset, nationis eiusdem historias^e, quae diversis scartabellis^f per Italiam, Franciam ac Germaniam⁵ sparsae sunt et diffusae, in vo-

^a Simonis de Keza Chronicon Hungaricum elegans opusculum *K*

^b Hungarorum *K*

^c Symon *K*

^d nostro *K, H*

^e historias *E*, ystorias *S*, victorias *K, H*

^f scartabellis *E*, scartabelis *S*, sparsa bellis *H*, scartabris *K*

¹ Ladislás (László) IV "the Cuman," king of Hungary 1272–90. In calling him "the Third" the author disregards the infant Ladislás III, who died in 1205 soon after his coronation.

² Master: either because he was learned (he probably studied law in Northern Italy in the 1270s) or because of his office with the chancery. He is mentioned as Queen Elizabeth's cleric in 1272, then as Ladislás IV's *aulae nostrae notarius* in 1283 (Szűcs, above, p. II).

[THE DEEDS OF THE HUNGARIANS]

1. To the most invincible and powerful lord Ladislás the Third, most glorious king of Hungary,¹ Master² Simon of Kéza, his faithful cleric: may he approach Him "whose beauty sun and moon marvel at."³

2. As it was a matter dear to your heart to learn of the deeds of the Hungarians, and I had ascertained this fact for certain, I set about to bring together in one volume the stories of that nation scattered and spread in various sources⁴ through Italy, France, and Germany.⁵ However,

³ From the "Antiphonarium in festo S. Agnetis et Comm. virginum" (Hesbert, *Corpus*, 3, no. 3407); a much quoted passage, cf. St. Bernard, *Opera omnia* 4: 321.

⁴ The prologue is modelled after the *Pantheon* of Godfrey of Viterbo (ca. 1198) (*MGH SS* 22: 104). For an analysis of the prologue's prose rhythms see Horváth (*Stílusproblémák*, 386–87), who notes the contemporary Hungarian practice of employing mostly dispondaic and trispondaic sentence-endings. — The word *scartabellis*, from *scartabello* (*codex chartaceus*), is one of Simon's many Italicisms (see Szűcs, above p. LXIII etc.); Losonczi, *De latinitate*, 24–46).

⁵ In the 1260s and between 1268 and 1271 he may have visited parts of Germany, France, and Italy as the king's envoy; see Szűcs, above p. II, and Maps 1 and 2.

lumen unum redigere procuravi, non imitatus Orosium¹, qui favore Ottonis caesaris, cui Hungari in diversis suis praeliis confusiones plures intulerant², multa in libellis suis apochrifis confingens ex daemonibus incubis³ Hungaros asseruit generatos. Scripsit enim quod Filimer, magni Aldarici regis Gottorum filius, dum fines Scitiae armis impeteret⁴, mulieres, quae patrio^a nomine Baltrame^b nominantur, plures secum in exercito suo dicitur deduxisse⁵. Quae cum^c essent militibus infestissimae, retrahentes plurimos per blandities a negotio militari, consilium regis ipsas fertur de consortio exercitus eapropter expulisse. Quae quidem pervagantes per deserta^d, litora paludis Meotidae^e

^a patrio *S*, alio *K*, *E*, generatio *H*,

^b Baltrame *S*, *E*, Baltucme *H*, Baltranae *K*

^c cum *S*, dum *K*

^d loca sive *S* add.

^e Meotidis *H*, Moeotidis *E*

¹ The name Orosius is taken from the main source of this passage, Jordanes *Getica* 24.121. But Simon may have used Orosius' *Historia contra paganos* (1.1 and 1.2) directly, especially for the description of Scythia.

² Simon anachronistically refers to the German Emperor Otto I "the Great" (936–73), who defeated the roving Hungarians in the battle of Lechfeld, close to Augsburg, in 955. The Hungarians led some forty raids against western Europe, from ca. 899 to 955, and around ten pillaging campaigns against the south and east of Europe.

³ The story is borrowed from Jordanes *Getica* 24.121–22. The word *incubi* demonstrates the influence of the *Pantheon* (p. 183); for its meaning, cf. Isidore, *Etymologiarum libri* 8.11.103–4: *...Incubi appellantur sive Inui ab ineundo passim cum animalibus. Saepe enim improbi*

I have not imitated the example of Orosius.¹ For he concocted many apocryphal stories in his pages out of partiality towards the Emperor Otto, on whom the Hungarians had inflicted numerous discomfits in their various battles,² and claimed that the Hungarians were begotten of demonic incubi.³ Thus he writes that when Filimer, son of Aldaric the Great,⁴ king of the Goths, was attacking the borders of Scythia, he took away with him in his army numerous women known in their own language as Baltrame.⁵ These women were a great menace to the soldiers as they drew large numbers of them from their military duties with their blandishments, so for this reason, the story goes, the king's council expelled them from the company of the army. Thereupon they wandered through the wilderness and

existunt etiam mulieribus, et earum peragunt concubitum "They are called Incubi or Inui from their indiscriminate intercourse with animals; often they behave shamelessly to women and copulate with them too." — From this point on, Simon equates the history of the Huns with that of the later Hungarians, the two peoples being one and the same in his eyes. By the tenth century some West-European Latin and Byzantine chronicles had already taken for granted the identity of the Huns and Hungarians. The first serious and detailed argument for their common origin—not known to Simon—was written by Heriger of Lobbes (abbot 990–1007), whose work was continued by Anselm of Liège (d. 1056) in his *Gesta episcoporum Tungrensium, Traiectensium et Leodiensium* (PL 139, cols. 1021–24), based on the same chapters of Jordanes' *Getica* that Master Simon later made use of.

⁴ In *Getica* 24.122 Filimer (or Filemer) king of the Goths is referred to as the son of Gadaric (*Gadarici magni filius*) rather than as *magni Aldarici regis filius*.

⁵ The *Getica* (24.121) calls them "Haliurunnae"; glossed as *magas mulieres* "magician women" (Maenchen-Helfen, "Legends").

tandem descenderunt¹. Ibique diutius dum mansissent privatae solatio maritali, incubi daemones ad ipsas venientes concubuisse cum eis^a iuxta dictum Orosii² referuntur. Ex qua quidem coniunctione dixit Hungaros oriundos. Sed ut eius assertio palam fiat falsissima, [SRH, 142] primo per textum comprobatur evangelicum, quod *spiritus carnem et ossa non habeant, et quod est de carne, caro est, quod autem de spiritu, spiritus est*³. Contrarium quoque naturis rerum dixisse iudicatur et penitus adversatur veritati, ut spiritus generare possint, quibus non sunt concessa naturalia instrumenta, quae virtutem ac officium dare possint generandi valentes perficere veram formam embrionis⁴. Quocirca patet^b, sicut mundi nationes alias, de viro et faemina Hungaros originem assumpsisse. In eo etiam idem satis est transgressus veritatem, ubi solos sinistros praeliorum eventus videtur^c meminisse ipsorum Hungarorum, felices praeteriisse silentio perhibetur, quod odii manifesti materiam portendit evidenter. Volens itaque veritatem imitari, sic inprosperos ut felices interseram, scripturus quoque ortum praefatae nationis, ubi et habitave-

^a eis S, ipsis K

^b quocirca patrem K

^c videtur K add.

¹ The Sea of Azov. Simon takes the name from the description of Scythia in earlier Hungarian chroniclers such as the Anonymus, who in turn took it from the *Exordia Scythica*; see Harmatta, "Érudition."

finally settled on the shores of the Meotis marsh.¹ They remained there a long time, deprived of marital consolation, but then—according to Orosius²—demonic incubi are said to have come to them and had intercourse with them; and he maintains it was from this congress that the Hungarians sprang. However, that his assertion may be seen to be patently false is proved, in the first place, by the text of the gospels, which say that "a spirit has not flesh and bones," and "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit."³ One must dismiss it as against nature and quite contrary to the truth when he maintains that spirits can beget when they are not supplied with the natural organs which could provide the procreative ability and function capable of creating the true form of an embryo.⁴ From these considerations it is obvious that like other peoples of the world, the Hungarians owe their origin to man and woman. There is another respect, too, in which he strays in no little way from the bounds of truth, in that he seems to recall only the battles lost by the Hungarians, while passing over in silence those with outcomes favourable to them. This is an unmistakable sign of the overt bias in his writing. As I am concerned to reproduce the truth, I will include both the favourable and the unfavourable ones. I will also write about the origin of the aforementioned nation, where they lived, how many

² Jordanes (*Getica* 24.121) has instead: *ut Priscus historicus refert* "as the historian Priscus"—or, "an ancient historian"—"relates."

³ Luke 24:39, John 3:6.

⁴ The passage employs the terminology of scholastic disputation: *assertio, comprobatur, contrarium, adversatur*.

rint, quot etiam regna occupaverint et quotiens^a immutaverint sua loca. Illius tamen adiutorio ac gratia ministrante, qui rerum omnium, quae sub lunari circulo esse habent et ultra^b, vita quoque fruuntur creatione habita, est Deus opifex creator idem ac redemptor, *cui sit honor et gloria in saecula sempiterna*¹.

EXPLICIT PROLOGUS

INCIPIUNT HUNNORUM GESTA²

3. [*M*] *ultifarie multisque modis olim* in veteri testamento³, et nunc sub^c aetate sexta saeculi diversas historias diversi^d descripserunt, prout Iosephus, Isidorus, Orosius et Gotfridus⁴ aliique quamplures, quorum nomina exprimere non est opus. Ego autem in illo tempore illius mundi illud opus incoavi, quando *caritas refriguerat, iniquitas abundaverat* et *omnis caro* ad malum quam ad bonum pronior erat^{e,5}. [SRH, 143]

^a quoties *H*

^b ultra *S, H, E*, ultro *K*

^c in *S*

^d diversi istorias *S*

^e *K, H, E* omit the last sentence. Henceforth we follow *Ms K*.

¹ Rom. 16:27, 1 Tim. 1:17.

² Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 2, 239–40. Henceforth chapters of the so-called 14th-century Hungarian chronicles, which may have used the same sources as Simon or contained texts that were known to him, will be referred to.

realms they occupied, and how many times they moved to new lands—but ever with His help and grace Who is craftsman God, Creator as well as Redeemer of all things which have their being under the lunar circle and beyond, and enjoy life since creation; to whom “be honour and glory for ever and ever”¹ eternally.

END OF THE PROLOGUE

BEGINNING OF THE DEEDS OF THE HUNS²

3. “At sundry times and in divers manners in time past”³ in the Old Testament, and now in the sixth age of the world,⁴ different historians have written different histories, for example Josephus, Isidore, Orosius, and Godfrey, and others too numerous to mention. But I began this work at the time of the world when “love” had “waxed cold,” and “iniquity” had “abounded,” and “all flesh” was more prone to evil than to good.⁵

³ Heb. 1:1.

⁴ For the sixth age cf. *Pantheon* Introduction 105, and Rev. 20:10; also Isidore *Etymologiarum libri* 5.38. The chronological notion of the six ages follows the tradition in St. Augustine and Bede.

⁵ Direct borrowing from Josephus is unlikely, though not impossible. His name appears together with Orosius in the introduction of the *Pantheon* (*MGH SS* 22: 103). Simon obviously consulted the latter, and apparently also the *Etymologiarum libri* and the *Historia Gotica* and *Chronica* of Isidore. — For “But I began . . .” cf. Matt. 24:12; but these phrases are commonplaces, cf. e.g. *De vita s. Geraldi comitis* (*PL* 133: 641).

4. Porro cum per cladem diluvii praeter Noe et tres filios eius deleta esset omnis caro, tandem ex Sem, Kam et Iapheth^a LXX. duae tribus post diluvium sunt progressae¹. De Sem XXII.^b, ex Kam XXXIII.^c, a Iafeth vero X. et septem². Dum autem tribus istae, sicut refert Iosephus, lingua Hebraica uterentur³, ducentesimo^d primo anno post diluvium⁴ Menrot^{e,5} gigans filius Thana⁶ ex semine Iafeth oriundus, turrem construere caepit cum omni cognatione sua, attendentes periculum praeteritum, ut si contingeret diluvium iterari, possent evitare ultionis iudicium turris interfugio⁷. Divini vero mysterii arbitrata sententia, cui

^a Iapheth *E*, Iaphet et Kam *H*

^b 25 *H*

^c 37 *H*

^d ducentesimo *S*, decimo *K*, deinde *H*, dicto *E*

^e Nemroth *H*, Nemprot *S*

¹ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 4, 247–50. The scriptural basis is Gen. 7:21, 7:23, and 10:1.

² Cf. Isidore *Chronica* 429, where the numbers of tribes are: Japheth, 15; Ham, 30; Shem, 27. The other Hungarian chronicles (*SRH* 1: 243) have the same numbers as Simon.

³ Simon probably did not use Josephus directly but cites him via perhaps one of the earlier Hungarian chroniclers, in which the Biblical introduction to the Hunnish and Hungarian history was already elaborated, or via Isidore (cf. *Chronica* 428: *ut refert Iosephus*).

⁴ Simon's source had "ducentesimo uno," as in *SRH* 1: 247, written in full and not in Roman numerals. For the chronological problem see the note to Isidore, *Chronica*, *PL* 83, cols. 1019–22.

4. After all flesh had been destroyed through the disaster of the Flood save Noah and his three sons,¹ finally seventy-two tribes came forth after the Flood from Shem, Ham, and Japheth: twenty-two from Shem, thirty-three from Ham, and seventeen from Japheth.² Now, as Josephus tells,³ all these tribes spoke Hebrew. But in the two hundred and first⁴ year after the flood the giant Ménrót,⁵ son of Thana,⁶ of the seed of Japheth, began to construct a tower. Ever mindful of their danger in the past, he and his kin hoped that if the flood came a second time they could escape judgement and retribution and take refuge in the tower.⁷ But the mysterious judgement of God, which hu-

⁵ It is hardly likely that our *Menrot* is a variant of the "Nimrod" of the biblical text. Rather, the biblical Nimrod has been identified with "Ménrót," a legendary figure in Hungarian historical tradition. The *Gesta* of the Anonymus records a personal name Ménmarót, cf. *men*, Bulgarian-Turkish for 'great,' and *marót*, Hung. for 'Moravian' (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 207). In the Bible Japheth's son is Magog and not Nimrod. This suggests that the Magog who in the Anonymus (ch. 1, *SRH* 1: 35) gives his name to the Moger/Magyar was first conflated with Ménrót, and then identified with Nimrod. — Henceforth, as Simon's stories and especially names have often parallels or variations in the *gesta* of the Anonymus (P. Magister) of c. 1200—the use of which by our author has been amply demonstrated—we shall regularly refer to it for comparison.

⁶ A Scythian king called Tanaus is mentioned in Justinus (*Epitoma Historiae Philippicae* 1.1) and Isidore (*Etymologiarum libri* 13.21.24). Regino of Prüm also mentions in his geographical description of Scythia (ad ann. 889) the river Thanais, which, according to Isidore as well, was named after Tanaus (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 206).

⁷ Gen. 11; Isidore *Etymologiarum libri* 5.39.6 and 15.1.4: . . . *post diluvium Nembroth gigans Babylonem urbem . . . fundavit*. . . For the motive in building the tower see Josephus *Antiquitates* 1.4.2.

non sufficit resistere humanus intellectus, sic^a illorum mutavit loquelam ac confudit, ut dum proximus a proximo non posset intelligi, tandem in diversas sunt dispersi regiones. Fecerant enim in turri memorata, sicut dicit Iosephus, deorum templa ex auro purissimo, palatia lapidibus pretiosis fabricata, columnas aureas et plateas diversimode petris coloratis diversiusque^b astracatas^c. Et erat turris ipsa in quadrum sublevata, ab uno angulo ad alium habens passuum longitudinis millia XV. et latitudinis totidem¹. Altitudinis vero quantitas finita nondum erat, sed usque lunarem circulum, quem diluvii unda non attigerat, illorum cogitatu [SRH,144] debebat sublevari. Trecentorum autem passuum grassitudo^d fuerat fundamenti, sublevata siquidem paulatim artabatur, quod grassities^e inferior pondus prominens^f sustineret. Sita etenim erat inter Nubiam et Aegyptum, cuius antiqualia^g cernuntur usque hodie euntibus de Memphis Alexandriam². Dimissis ergo incidentiis, quae caeptae materiae dant colorem, redeundum est ad [M]enroth, qui^h gigans post linguarum incepta[m]ⁱ confusionem terram Eiulath³ introivit, quae regio Perside isto

^a sic *H, E*, sicut *K*

^b diversiusque *H*, duusuusque *K*, ductibusque *E*, diversisque *S*. *The editor of E mentions in notes, p. 29: "in Membrana legam: duusuusque astracatas"*.

^c abstractas *E*

^d grossities *H, E*

^e grossities *H, E*

^f praeminens *K*

^g antiqualia *H, E*, antiquilia *K*

^h lacuna in *K*, qui *H, E*

ⁱ lacuna in *K*, inceptam *H, E*

man intellect is powerless to oppose, altered and confused their speech; no man could understand his neighbour, and they were finally scattered over different lands. Josephus tells that in this tower they had built temples of purest gold to the gods, palaces wrought of precious jewels, golden columns and streets decked with all manner of different coloured stones. The tower itself was built square, measuring 15,000 paces from one corner to the other, and in breadth the same.¹ Its precise height was never fixed, but in their minds it was to rise as high as the lunar circle where the waters of the Flood had never reached. The foundation was 300 paces thick, and as it rose it narrowed gradually so that the thickness underneath might support the huge weight resting upon it. The site of the tower was between Nubia and Egypt, and its ruins can still be seen today by travellers going from Memphis to Alexandria.² But regrettably, we must set aside these details which enliven our theme and return to the story of Ménrót. After the confusion of tongues the giant entered the land of Havilah,³

¹ For the judgement see Gen. 11:7; also Josephus *Antiquitates* 1.4.2. Simon, however, or the author of the earlier Hungarian Chronicle, borrowed the story from Jerome *Commentarium in Esaiam* 5.14.22–23, expanding it probably from Isidore *Chronica* 430: *hanc turrem Nebroth gigans construxit, qui post confusionem linguarum migravit inde in Persas*. — For “in quadrum” cf. Herodotus 1.178–79. — For *diversisque* see Agnellus of Ravenna, *Liber pontificalis ecclesiae Ravennatis*, 302. — The Italicism *astracatas* comes from *lastricare* ‘to cover’ (also used by Agnellus *Liber pontificalis* 328, 363 in the forms *lastra, lasta*).

² An allusion to the pyramids of antiquity. Many authors, for example Otto of Freising (*Gesta Friderici*, 2.15 = *FvS* 16: 132), identified Memphis with Babylon.

³ Cf. Gen. 2:11, 25:18; 1 Kings 15:7 etc.

tempore appellatur¹, et ibi duos filios, Hunor scilicet et Mogor ex Eneth sua coniuge generavit², ex quibus Huni sive Hungari sunt exorti. Sed quia gigans Menroth uxores alias sine Eneth perhibetur habuisse, ex quibus absque Hunor et Mogor plures filios et filias generavit, hi sui filii et eorum posteritas Perside inhabitant regionem, statura et colore Hunis similes tantummodo parum differunt in loquela, sicut Saxones et Turingi³. Cum autem Hunor et Mogor Menroth essent primogeniti, a patre ipsorum tabernaculis separati incedebant.

5. Accidit autem dierum una venandi causa ipsos perrexisse in paludes Meotidas, quibus in deserto cum cerva occurrisset, illam insequentes, fugiit ante eos. Cumque ibi ab oculis illorum prorsus vanuisset, diutius requisitam invenire ullo^a modo potuerunt⁴. Peragratis tandem paludibus

^a used several times for "nullo"

¹ Isidore *Chronica* 21.

² The progenitress of the Hungarians in gentile historical tradition, but probably also a totem animal: "ünő" or "inő" is Hungarian for hind. This seems to confirm that the legend of the deer hunt (below, ch. 5) is rooted in the ancient oral traditions of the Hungarians, and is not a mere borrowing from Jordanes (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 35–38). A mythical hind is first mentioned in connection with the Huns by Sozomenos (mid-fifth century); a similar story is mentioned by Thietmar of Merseburg regarding the Saxons (*Chronicon* 2.37). Perhaps this hind also corresponds to the figure of "Emesu" mentioned by the Anonymus (ch. 3). — The name Hunor may come from "Onogur," the name of a people with whom the proto-Hungarians lived in close proximity in the eighth century (cf. *Getica* 5.37, where it appears in the form *Hunuguri*), or is simply an eponym made up from "Hun," just as Mogor is from "magyar" ('Hungarian'). — The suggested connection

which is now called Persia,¹ and there he begot two sons, Hunor and Mogor, by his wife Eneth.² It was from them that the Huns, or Hungarians, took their origins. However, it seems the giant Ménrót had other wives apart from Eneth, on whom he sired many sons and daughters besides Hunor and Mogor. These sons and their posterity inhabit the land of Persia and resemble the Huns in stature and colour, merely differing a little in speech, like the Saxons and the Thuringians.³ But as Hunor and Mogor were Ménrót's first born, they journeyed separately from their father in tents.

5. Now it happened one day when they had gone out hunting in the Meotis marshes that they encountered a hind in the wilderness. As they went in pursuit of it, it fled before them. Then it disappeared from their sight altogether, and they could not find it no matter how long they searched.⁴ But as they were wandering through these

between the legendary Mén(ma)rót of Hungarian tradition (see above p. LV) and our *Menrot* is further supported by the fact that Ménmarót had several wives in the Anonymus as well (ch. 11) (Kristó, *History*, 119–28).

³ Simon undoubtedly knew German (see chs. 10, 11). Riccardus (the Dominican who wrote down Julianus' travels in the east in the 1230s) makes a similar comment in linking the "Hungarians" he encountered in the Magyar's land of origin, *Hungaria magna* (somewhere in Bashkiria), with those in Hungary (Dörrie, "Texte", 157).

⁴ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 5, 250–52. Simon's account is apparently based on Jordanes (*Getica* 24.123–24), where the hind leads the hunters to Scythia. The Hungarian deer hunt motif already turns up in the Anonymus (ch. 34), but it is Simon who gives the first detailed version (Kristó, *History*, 119–28). However, as the Hungarian traditions of the deer hunt and the abduction of women seem to have had nomadic, oriental origins, perhaps only the stylistic framework is here borrowed from Jordanes.

memoratis, pro armentis nutriendis ipsam conspexerunt oportunitatem, ad patrem deinde redeuntes ab ipso licentia impetrata cum rebus omnibus paludes Meotidas intraverunt moraturi. Regio quidem Meotida Perside patriae est vicina¹, quam undique pontus praeter vadum unum parvissimum giro vallat, fluminibus penitus carens, herbis, lignis, volatilibus, piscibus et bestiis copiatur. Aditus illuc [SRH, 145] difficilis et exitus. Paludes autem Meotidas adeuntes annis V. immobiliter^a permanserunt. Anno ergo VI. exeuntes in deserto loco sine maribus in tabernaculis permanentes uxores ac pueros filiorum Belar² casu repererunt, quos cum rebus eorum in paludes Meotidas cursu celeri deduxerunt. Accidit autem principis Dulae Alanorum duas filias inter illos pueros comprehendere, quarum unam Hunor et aliam Mogor sibi sumpsit in uxorem³. Ex quibus mulieribus omnes Hunni originem assumpsere. Factum est autem, cum diutius in ipsis paludibus mansissent, in gentem validissimam succrescere inceperunt, nec capere eos potuit ipsa regio et nutrire⁴.

^a ibidem *H add.*

¹ The word *patria* in Hungarian Latinity of the thirteenth century had begun to acquire emotional overtones; see Deér, "Entstehung." — In the original source the phrase *fluminibus penitus carens* probably read *fluviis currens*, and was modified by Simon from the version in an earlier chronicle.

² The abduction of women also features in Jordanes *Getica* 24.123. The abduction of the bride, which the laws of the eleventh century Hungarian kings condemned, remained part of Hungarian folk custom, even if only in a symbolic form in later times (cf. Stephen I:27 *DRMH* 1:6). — The name Belar in Hungarian tradition refers to the Bulgarians,

marshes, they saw that the land was well suited for grazing cattle. They then returned to their father, and after obtaining his permission they took all their possessions and went to live in the Meotis marshes. The Meotis region borders on their Persian homeland,¹ and except from one very small ford it is cut off on all sides by the sea; it has no rivers but abounds in grass, trees, birds, fish, and animals; access and exit to this land is difficult. So they entered the Meotis marshes and remained there for five years without leaving. Then in the sixth year they went out, and when by chance they discovered that the wives and children of the sons of Belar² were camped in tents in a lonely place without their menfolk, they carried them off with all their belongings as fast as they could into the Meotis marshes. Two daughters of Dula, prince of the Alans,³ happened to be among the children who were seized. Hunor took one of them in marriage and Mogor the other, and to these women all the Huns owe their origin. And as they stayed on in the marshes, they gradually grew into a very powerful people, and the land was not large enough to contain them or to feed them.⁴

cf. the Anonymus, ch. 57 (*SRH* 1: 114): *de terra Bular* (referring to Bilyar, a city in the Volga region of Bulgaria).

³ The Alans are mentioned in Jordanes *Getica* 24.126 and in Riccardus' report (Dörrie, "Texte," 153). The name Dula seems to derive from ancient Danubian Bulgar or Alan traditions. Groups of Alans known as *Jazonici* (Hung. *Jász*) settled in Hungary in the second half of the thirteenth century (Kristó, *History*, 121).

⁴ The motive of "overpopulation" is frequently mentioned in reference to migrations (cf. Paul the Deacon *Historia* 1.1; Regino *Chronicon* ad ann. 889: . . . *ut eos genitale solum non sufficiat alere*), and is cited by all the Hungarian chronicles.

6. Exploratoribus igitur in Scitiam abinde destinatis, Scitiae regno explorato cum pueris et armentis ipsam patriam intravere permansuri. Regnum itaque ipsum dum adissent, Alpzuos et Prutenos in eo invenerunt habitantes¹, quibus deletis et expulsis usque hodie illud regnum pacifice dinoscuntur possidere². Scitica enim regio in Europa situm habet, extenditur enim versus orientem, ab uno vero latere ponto Aquilonali, ab alio montibus Rifeis includitur a zona torrida distans, de oriente quidem Asiae iungitur. Oriuntur etiam in eodem duo magna flumina, uni nomen^a Etul et alterius Togora³. Gentes siquidem in eo regno procreatae otia amplectuntur, vanitatibus deditae, naturae dedignantis, actibus venereis intendentes, rapinas cupiunt, generaliter plus nigrae colore quam albae. Scitico quoque regno de oriente iungitur regnum Iorianorum et post haec Tarsia et tandem Mangalia, ubi [SRH, 146] Europa terminatur⁴. Ex plaga vero aestivali subsolana gens iacet Corosmina, Aethiopia etiam, quae India Minor dicitur⁵, ac post haec

^a nomine *K*

¹ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 6, 252–55. The Alpidzuri (on their own) are mentioned in Jordanes *Getica* 24.126. The Prussians often appear in 13th-century historical sources (e.g. Bartholomaeus Anglicus *De proprietatibus rerum* 15.134 and 140).

² The route and chronology of the Hungarian migration is still disputed; for an up-to-date overview see Kristó, *History*, 85–203.

³ For the description of Scythia cf. Justinus 2.2; Regino *Chronicon* ad ann. 889. The Rifean mountains formed an essential part of this traditional geographical concept. Etul literally means ‘river’ in Turkic languages, but Simon, like many medieval writers, identifies it with the Don; descriptions appear in the Anonymus (ch. 7), Riccardus (Dörrie, “Texte,” 157), and Julianus (*ibid.* 173). The river Togora appears in Orosius *Historia* 1.2.44 in the form *Ottorogorae*.

6. They therefore sent off scouts to Scythia, and after reconnoitring the realm of Scythia they decided to move to this new home with their children and cattle and settle. But when they entered, they found it was inhabited by Alpidzuri and Prussians;¹ we know that they wiped these people out or expelled them, but thereafter held that kingdom in peace to this day.² The land of Scythia is situated in Europe but extends towards the east. Far from the torrid zone, it is bounded on one side by the Northern Sea and on the other by the Rifean mountains, while on the east it adjoins Asia. It is the source of two great rivers, one called the Etul and the other the Togora.³ The races this kingdom breeds are devoted to leisure, given over to vanities, scornful by nature, libidinous, and delight in raiding; in general they are more dark in colour than white. On the east the realm of Scythia adjoins the kingdom of the Georgians, and after this comes Tarsia, and then Mongolia, and there Europe ends.⁴ In the tropical zone, close to the sun, are situated the Chorasminian people, as well as Ethiopia, which is called India Minor.⁵ Farther, south of the course

⁴ *regnum Iorianorum* is “the kingdom of the Georgians,” or perhaps the land Russian annals refer to as *Yugra* (Monneret, *Leggende*, 160). — The word *Tarsia* comes from the Persian *Tarsa*; in the 13th century it was thought to be the land of the Tartars (Bezzola, *Mongolen*, 34–36). — The reference to Mongolia is proof of the author’s up-to-date geographical knowledge.

⁵ The Chorasminian people take their name from Khwarezm, a widely known geographical name at the time, referring to the area between the lower part of the river Volga and Lake Aral. Members of a Muslim people from the region, the so-called “Káliz,” lived in medieval Hungary, performing important military and financial services; see S. Balić, “Islam,” 19–35. — *India Minor* had been mentioned in John of Plano Carpini’s itinerary; for the origin of the notion see Monneret, *Leggende*, 219, and for *Ethiopia*, cf. Jordanes *Getica* 6.47.

inter meridiem et cursum Don fluvii desertum existit im-meabile. Fluvius siquidem Don in Scitia oritur, qui ab Hungaris Etul nominatur, sed ut montes Rifeos transit diffluendo, Don est appellatus. Qui tandem in planum effluens currit terram Alanorum postea vero cadit in Rotundum mare ternis^a ramusculis¹. Togora autem fluvius discurrit de Scitia exiundo per desertas sylvas, paludes ac montes niveos, ubi nunquam sol lucet propter nebulas. Tandem intrat Yrcaniam vergens in mare Aquilonis². Longitudo siquidem Sciticae regionis stadiis CCC. et LX. extendi perhibetur, latitudo vero CXC.^b Situm enim naturalem habet tam munitum, ut in solo locello parvissimo ibi aditus reperitur. Propter quod nec Romani caesares, nec Magnus Alexander, quamvis attentassent, potuerunt in eam introire³. Scitia enim solo laeta est, nemoribus, sylvis, herbis venustata et bestiis diversi generis mirabiliter dives ac referta. Habet etiam de occidente vicinos Bessos et Comanos Albos⁴. Sed circa mare Aquilonis, quod eidem

^a trinis *K*

^b centum viginti *H*

¹The Round Sea (*Rotundum mare*) refers to the Caspian Sea (Jordanes *Getica* 5).

²The Northern Sea together with the name Hyrcania and the term *plaga* come from Orosius *Historia* 1.1.2; cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 6, pp. 253–54. This fictitious sea is perhaps a bay of the North Sea; Fehér (“Beiträge”) identifies it with the *Scythicum mare* of Orosius and the *Scythicus Oceanus* of Isidore (15.13.2). Simon’s description was copied by later Hungarian chroniclers, cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 6, 252–55.

³According to Jordanes *Getica* 5.33 the territory (*circuitus*) of the Meotis marshes extended *passuum mil. cxliiii* (“144 miles”). — Roman emperors and Alexander the Great were mentioned in the *Exordia Scythica* (p.320) and by the Anonymus, ch. 1.

of the Don there is an impassable desert. The Don in fact rises in Scythia and is called Etul by the Hungarians, but when it makes its way through the Rifean mountains it is referred to as the Don; as it flows into the plains it crosses the lands of the Alans and then empties into the Round Sea by three branches.¹ The river Togora rises in Scythia and passes through wild forests, marshes, and snowy mountains where the sun never shines because of clouds; finally it enters Hyrcania, veering towards the Northern Sea.² The land of Scythia is reported to extend 360 stades in length and 190 in width. The region is well protected by nature and can only be entered by a very small approach. This is why neither the Roman emperors nor Alexander the Great were able to enter it, for all that they tried.³ For the soil of Scythia is fertile, with lovely woods, forests, and grasslands, and an amazing richness and diversity of wildlife. Its neighbours to the west are the Pechenegs and the White Cumans.⁴ But around the Northern Sea, which is on its

⁴The Pechenegs are also mentioned in the Anonymus, chs. 25 and 57. Before the Hungarians entered the Carpathian Basin, there had been a war between them and the Pechenegs in 895; the Pechenegs then invaded the land between the River Don and the Lower Danube and may have forced the Hungarians to move west. Later, in the second half of the tenth century, some of the Pechenegs came to settle in Hungary, performing military duties as a warrior people. — The White Cumans are mentioned in the Anonymus, ch. 8 etc. In the eleventh century, their territories were east of the Lower Danube. The Arab geographer al-Idrisi (1100–1166) located White and Black Cumania by the Northern and Eastern shores of the Black Sea respectively. In other languages the name given to some of the Cumans meant ‘pale, light, yellowish,’ in other words, something more or less “white” (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 90).

vicinatur, usque regnum Susdaliae est desertum sylvestre humano generi immeabile, quod ad magnum spatium extendi perhibetur, ubi nubium densitas per novem menses iacet. Ibi nec sol cernitur, nisi tantummodo in Iunio, Iulio ac Augusto, et id in tanta diei hora, quantum a VI. est usque nonam. In montibus etenim deserti memorati cristallus invenitur et grifo nidum parat, avesque legerfalc, quae Hungarice kerechet appellantur, procreare pullos dinoscuntur¹.

Sciticum enim regnum comprehensione una cingitur, sed in regna tria dividitur principando, scilicet in Barsatiam, Denciam et Mogoriam². Habet etiam provincias centum et octo propter centum et octo progenies, quae dudum per filios Hunor et Magor, quando Scitiam invaserunt, sunt divisae³. Centum enim et octo generationes pura tenet

¹ Susdal was a Russian principality east of Moscow which had gained considerable political significance by the end of the twelfth century. — As to the region with the limited periods of sunshine, similar remarks were made later by Marco Polo 3.44; see Macartney, *Early sources*, 125. — For the crystal see Solinus *Collectanea* 15.22, 15.29, 16.2. — For the griffon see Herodotus, books 3 and 4, and Pomponius Mela *De situ orbis* 2.1. — The name Simon uses for hunting falcons, *legerfalc*, comes from the German *Gerfalke* or *Jägerfalk*, apparently the bird of prey *falco venaticus*. The Hungarian equivalent, *kerecset*, of Slavic origin, survives in Hungarian geographical names referring to places where falconers were settled. The bird is also mentioned in the itinerarium of the Minorite Benedictus Polonus (fl. 1247) (*Sinica*, vol. 1, ch. 5).

² Fictitious kingdoms. Barsatia probably derives from Bascardia, land of the Bashkirs, east of Great Bulgaria, where thirteenth century travellers (Julianus, John of Plano Carpini, Benedictus Polonus, and William of Rubruck) found Hungarians in *Magna Hungaria*. For *Den-*

border, as far as the realm of Susdal there is a wilderness of forest impassable to human beings, which is believed to extend a vast distance; dense clouds cover it for nine months of the year, the sun being seen only in June, July, and August, and then only between the sixth and ninth hours of the day. In the mountains of this wilderness crystal is found, and there the griffon makes its nest, and the hunting falcons called in Hungarian *kerecset* raise their chicks.¹

In fact the Scythian realm has a single border, but administratively it is divided into three kingdoms, namely Barsatia, Dencia, and Mogoria.² As well, it has 108 districts, representing 108 families, which were divided among the sons of Hunor and Mogor long ago when they had invaded Scythia.³ For the pure Hungarian nation comprises a hun-

cia and *Mogoria* the probable source is the word *Dentumoger* in the Anonymus, ch. 1.

³ There are different explanations for the number 108. According to Györffy (*Tanulmányok*, 14–15), it derives from a no longer extant register of the Hungarian kindreds in King Coloman's time. Others have maintained that it is the sum of 100 and the seven Hungarian tribes plus the Kabar people, who came to Hungary around A.D. 895, or (e.g. Kulcsár, "Magyar ősmonda") that as a multiple of 54 it is a magic number of Jewish cabalistic traditions. The number of Hungarian clans at the time of the conquest is estimated to have been around 35 to 50, varying with the estimates of the number of chieftains and tribes (Kristó, "Néhány megjegyzés", 963). From the Middle Ages as a whole some 200 kindreds are documented, about 40% of which are only mentioned once. Simon's estimate of 108 clans is therefore reasonable. Simon is at variance with the Anonymus here, because the latter believed that all the later Hungarian clans and kindreds descended from the seven conquering chieftains.

Hungaria et non plures¹. Aliae autem, si quae ipsis sunt coniunctae, advenae sunt vel ex captivis oriundi, quoniam^a ex Hunor et Mogor in palude Meotida centum et octo progenies absque omni missitalia fuere generatae. Quorum ergo advenarum generatio in fine huius libri apponetur seriatim². [SRH, 147]

7. Igitur in aetate sexta saeculi multiplicati Huni in Scitia habitando *ut arena*³, anno Domini septingentesimo in unum congregati, capitaneos⁴ inter se, scilicet duces vel principes praefecerunt, quorum unus Wela^b fuit, Chele file^c filius ex genere Zemem^d oriundus, cuius fratres Cuwe^e et Caducha ambo capitanei. Quarti vero ducis nomen Ethela fuit, Bendacuz filius, cuius fratres Reuwa^f et Buda uterque

^a quum *K*

^b Vela *H*

^c Thelae filiae *H*, Thele file *E*; file *est omittendum*

^d Zemein *E*

^e Cuve *H*

^f Reuva *H*

¹ The expression "pure Hungarian nation" can be understood in the context of a common legal practice in Italian city-states at the time which made a distinction between original citizens (*cives veri, originarii*, etc.) and newly settled inhabitants. When talking about the mingling of these two groups, the verb *mischiare* was used, probably

dred and eight kindreds and no more;¹ any additional ones are immigrants or the descendants of captives, for 108 clans were begotten by Hunor and Mogor in the marsh of Meotis without any admixture. The family histories of these newcomers will be listed at the end of this book.²

7. In the sixth age of the world the Huns dwelling in Scythia had "multiplied like the sand."³ In the year of Our Lord 700 they came together and put themselves under the command of captains,⁴ that is, leaders or princes. Vela, son of Csele, of the clan of Szemény was one of these; his brothers Keve and Kadocsa were also captains. The name of the fourth was Attila, son of Bendegúz, and his brothers

the basis of Simon's strange term *missitalia* "admixture" (see Szűcs, above p. LXIII; Riesenbergh, "Citizenship"; Veszprémy, "Kézai"; Hoffmann, "Outsiders").

² Cf. chs. 76–94 below.

³ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 7, 255–57. "Like the sand" is biblical, e.g. Gen. 22:18, Ps. 138:17.

⁴ The year 700 is fictitious, though 445 A.D. for the murder of Bleda and 453 A.D. for Attila's death were known to medieval chroniclers (see also note 1, pp. 78–79); the date may have been chosen to make a closer chronological connection with the Hungarian conquest, in which Attila's grandsons are alleged to have participated. — The term "captain" may derive from Italian usage, where it applied to community leaders in communes elected for a fixed period, but was not unknown in Hungarian Latinity of Simon's time either; a charter from around 1280 uses the term *nobiles capitanei* for county magistrates (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 191–92).

duces exitere de genere Erd oriundi¹ ut simul uno corde occidentales occuparent regiones. Constituerunt quoque inter se rectorem unum nomine Kadar de genere

¹ There existed two forms in Hungarian for the leader of the Huns, Attila and Etela; the German equivalent of the latter is Etzel (*LexMA* 4: 61–63). The Attila tradition is for the first time linked to Hungary in the Annals of Lambert of Hersfeld (*Annales* ad ann. 1071, *MGH SS* 5:185 = *FvS* 13: 150), in which we are told that Attila's sword was presented to Otto of Nordheim by the widow of the Hungarian king Andrew I in 1063. On the basis of the *Nibelungenlied* Hungary was identified as the land of the Huns in the twelfth century. However, there was initially no mention of a specific town of Attila, *Etzelen bürge* (*LexMA* 4: 63–64). Before Simon all Hungarian chronicles, e.g. the Anonymus (ca. 1200), the *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum* (ca. the 1220s), and the History of Thomas of Spalato (d. 1268), assumed a relationship between Hun and Hungarian history. It is still a matter of debate whether the Hungarians learned of the legend of Attila from the Germans or whether they heard about it from other nomadic tribes while still roaming the steppes long before their conquest of the homeland (cf. Kulcsár, "Magyar ősmonda"; Kristó, *History*, 71–84). — Attila and Buda apart; the names of the Hunnish chieftains are fictitious. Of the clans named, no documents survive about the Érd; Érd is a settlement near present Budapest, mentioned in contemporary charters and notable for Roman ruins, but a clan of this name do not seem to have achieved distinction. — The identification of the Szemény clan or family is uncertain; a *Zemeyn centurio* appears in a legal suit about Tárnokvölgy in 1259 (Horváth, *Stílusproblémák*, 363; Mályusz-Kristó, *Commentarii*, 1: 87). Others suggested that they are identical with the Szemere, mentioned by the Anonymus (Bollók, "Kézai", 120). — The

Reva and Buda were also leaders; they were of the Érd clan.¹ And they were all united in their purpose to conquer the lands of the west. In addition, they chose from their number one judge, Kádár by name, of the kindred of

name Buda derives from the historical Bleda, mentioned in the *Getica*, the name of Attila's brother, but was influenced by that of the place commonly associated with Attila's headquarters in Hungary, Óbuda (now a district of Budapest). As a Hungarian personal name, Buda is documented from 1138 (Fehértói, *Személynévtár*, 66–67). — Vela could derive from a geographical name in Riccardus' itinerary (Dörrie, "Texte," 155): *venerunt in terram Sarracenorum, que vocatur Veda in civitatem Bundaz*. It has also been associated with a Hungarian given name, Béla, and with Veleg, a place in County Fejér (Horváth, "Hun-történet", 471, 475). — The name Csele also occurs as a geographical name. — Keve derives from Keveaszó or Keveháza (today Kajászószentpéter in County Fejér), mentioned in several contemporary charters (Györffy, *ÁMTF*, 2: 389–90); as a personal name Keve is documented from 1138 (Fehértói, *Személynévtár*, 192–93). — Kadocsa and Szovárd resemble the names recorded of Hungarians who, according to the Anonymus (ch. 7), stayed in the East. — Bendegúz, Attila's father, is called "Mundzucó" in the *Getica*, but the connection between the two forms is unclear. The name has also been associated with the "Bundaz" mentioned in Riccardus' itinerary (see above) and with a settlement between Érd and Százhalom (Horváth, "Hun történet", 469). — Reva is perhaps based on a name Roas in the *Getica* (35.180), or related to the word *rév*, Hungarian for 'ferry,' or is a corruption of the name Keve (Horváth, "Hun-történet", 469–70). Vela, Csele, Keve, Kadocsa, Bendegúz, Reva, and Buda are unique inventions of Simon (or of an earlier author of a Hungarian-Hunnish history), and do not appear outside Hungary.

Turda¹ oriundum, qui communem exercitum iudicaret, dissidentium lites sopiret, castigaret malefactores, fures ac latrones. Ita quidem, ut si rector idem immoderatam sententiam definiret, communitas² in irritum revocaret, errantem capitaneum et rectorem deponeret quando vellet. Consuetudo etenim ista legitima inter Hunos sive Hungaros usque ad tempora ducis Geyche filii Tocsun³ inviolabiliter extitit observata. Antequam ergo baptizati fuissent Hungari et effecti Christiani, sub tali voce precones in castris ad exercitum Hungaros adunabant: "Vox Dei et populi Hungarici⁴, quod die tali unusquisque armatus in

¹ The original source of the quotation "they chose . . ." is Lactantius *Institutiones* 1.1.12, borrowed by Isidore *Etymologiarum libri* 5.14, and later verbatim into Gratian (*Decretum* 1, Dist. 2, ch. 5, ed. Friedberg, 4, 7); however, the immediate source seems to be the Anonymus (ch. 53) (see Gerics, "Domanovszky"). — Kádár is again a fictitious name. It could be associated with the word *karcha*, i.e. judge, used at the time of the conquest, or with the title of similar form referring to a Khazar dignitary. The author may well have encountered the word in Hungarian geographical names. The office of *karcha* was in many ways similar to the later Hungarian count palatine (Istványi, "Congregatio", 54). — The assertion of the rights of the *communitas* against the dignitaries is thought to derive partly from the Golden Bull of 1222 (1222:14, *DRMH* 1:35) and partly from the behaviour of Italian communes towards their *podestàs* (Hörváth, "Hun-történet," 472; Gerics, "Kronikáink," 316–17). — The connection with the little known Torda (or Turda) clan is unclear; Simon was possibly inspired by a place-name Tordas or Turdas near Keveaszó (Györffy, *ÁMTF*, 2: 411).

² *Communitas* and *commune* are important technical terms in the *Gesta Hungarorum*, expressing Simon's political theories (see Szűcs, above pp. LXXXVI–XCVI).

Torda:¹ he was to mete out judgement among the rank and file of the host, to settle quarrels between those in dispute, and to punish wrongdoers, thieves, and brigands. But if the judge should hand down an inordinate sentence, the community² could declare it invalid and have the errant captain and judge removed whenever it wanted. This custom was the law and strictly observed among the Huns (that is, Hungarians) up to the times of their duke Géza, the son of Taksony.³ Thus in the days before the Hungarians had been baptised and became Christians, the criers in the camp would summon together the Hungarian host with the following proclamation: "It is the word of God and of the Hungarian people⁴ that on such-and-such a day every man

³ Simon dates the end of the old tribal (pagan) world by reference to Grand Prince Géza (d. 997). Taksony was a Hungarian prince, the grandson of Árpád and father of Géza; he is also mentioned by Constantine Porphyrogenitos, (*De administrando imperio* 40, p. 179): ". . . Zaltas had a son Taxis." The pronunciation of the name Géza is reconstructed as *Djeücha' or *Djeüsha' in old Hungarian, and is preserved in geographical names like Décs, Decső. The decision to lead Hungary into the European Christian world was indeed made by Géza. In 973 he sent envoys to the imperial diet at Quedlinburg and requested missionary bishops. In the 990s Géza secured a marriage for his son Vajk/Stephen with the Bavarian princess Gisela, sister of the future emperor Henry II; see Szabolcs de Vajay, "Grossfürst Géza."

⁴ Cf. *Vox populi vox Dei* (*Proverbia sententiaque latinitatis medii aevi*, 2: 5, No. 919, 34182); it also occurs in a charter of the Hungarian king Béla IV in 1253 (*RA* no. 991). — Royal criers are referred to in a letter of Charles IV, king of Sicily, dealing with Hungarian matters (Wenczel, *Diplomacziái emlékek*, 47–48).

tali loco praecise debeat comparere communitatis consilium praeceptumque auditurus". Quicumque ergo edictum contempsisset praetendere non valens [SRH, 148] rationem, lex Scitica per medium cultro huiusmodi^a detruncabat, vel exponi in causas desperatas, aut detrudi in communium servitutem¹. Vitia itaque et excessus huiusmodi^b unum Hungarum ab alio separavit, alias cum unus pater et una mater omnes Hungaros procreaverit, quomodo^c unus nobilis, alter innobilis diceretur, nisi victus per tales casus criminis haberetur².

8. Tunc de tribubus centum et octo elegerunt viros fortes ad bellandum, assumentes de quolibet genere decem millia armatorum, aliis in Scitia derelictis, qui eorum regnum ab hostibus custodirent elevatisque baneriis³ egredientes Bes-

^a huius *K*

^b huius *K*

^c quorum *K*

¹ This "Scythian law" is perhaps based on a Roman law, the *Lex Iulia maiestatis* (*Digesta* 48.1.1, *Institutiones* 4.18.3–11; see Szűcs, above p. LXXX), or the customary law of the Székely; for, according to 16th-century tradition, participants in their folk assemblies had the right to publicly kill by sword those persons who acted against their liberties and privileges (Horváth, "Hun történet," 473). — "Hopeless situations" corresponds to a technical term in Roman law referring to serious cases of criminal offence (*capitalia in causas desperatas*), see Szűcs, above p. LXXXI, and Gerics, "Adalékok", 112. Norman law in Southern Italy (*Assise di Ariano*) inflicted the same punishment on deserters (Cuozzo, *Normanni*, 71).

in arms shall present himself without fail in such-and-such a place to listen to the counsel of the community and to hear their instructions." If anyone dared to defy the command without being able to offer a reason, Scythian law decreed that he be cut in half, or exposed to hopeless situations, or degraded to communal enslavement.¹ Thus, it was such offences and excess that separated one Hungarian from another; otherwise, since one father and one mother were the ancestors of all the Hungarians, how could one be termed noble and the other not noble, unless he was judged to be proved so by such blameworthy behaviour?²

8. They next chose strong fighting men out of the 108 tribes, taking 10,000 men at arms from every kindred and leaving the others in Scythia to protect their land from enemies. Then the banners³ were raised and they set out.

² Bondage as a punishment for dodging military duties has precedents in French (*Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*; Philippe de Beaumanoir, *Contumes de Beauvaisis*) and in Catalan legal practice (Spiegel, *Romancing the Past*, 86; Szűcs, above pp. LXXVII–LXXVIII; Freedman, "Cowardice," 6–14). It is an open question whether the remarks of the French chronicler Alberic de Troisfontaines on Hungarian historical events in 955 (*totum populum, qui non exierat cum eis ad bellum, in servitutem redigerunt* "the whole people, who had not gone out to war with them were reduced to servitude"), quoted in *Chronicon ab orbe condito usque ad a. 1241* (*MGH SS* 23, ad ann. 957), are based on authentic information from Hungary or on the same legendary traditions as in France (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 191).

³ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 8, 257–59. This is the first datable occurrence of *ban(d)erium* in Hungarian Latinity, a borrowing from Italian. In the 14th century the term came to refer to the major part of the Hungarian armed forces, units (*banderia*) consisting of 50–400 men serving under the banners of the king, the queen, and the great lords lay and spiritual.

sorum et Comanorum Alborum terras transirent. Deinde Sosdaliam Rutheniam¹ et Nigrorum Comanorum terras ingressi tandem usque Tize fluvium salvis rebus², invitibus gentibus praefatis pervenerunt. Qua quidem regione circumspecta omni caetui complacuit non incedere ulterius cum armentis et familia. Cum uxoribus etenim tabernaculis et bigis descenderant de eorum terra. Cumque eo tempore Pannoniam, Panfiliam, Frigiam, Macedoniam, Dalmatiamque tetrarcha Macrinus³, natione Longobardus, urbe [SRH, 149] Sabaria oriundus gubernaret armis bellicis informatus³, audito, quod Hunni super Tizam resedissent et de die in diem lacerarent regnum eius, cum alumnis regni sui⁴ ipsos aggredi reformidans, ad Romanos suos nuncios

¹ Macritius K

¹ The Hungarians' route through the lands of the Pechenegs, the White Cumans, and Susdal follows the Anonymus (chs. 7 and 8). The Black Cumans and the White Cumans are both mentioned by al-Idrisi (see note 4, p. 21).

² The author denies the losses of the advancing Hungarians. According to Constantine Porphyrogenitus (*De administrando imperio* 40, p. 177), "the Petchenegs with Symeon [of Bulgaria] came against the Turks [i.e. the Hungarians] and completely destroyed their families and miserably expelled thence the Turks who were guarding their country."

³ The name Macrinus possibly derives from the name of the Caesar Marcianus (450–57), mentioned in the *Getica* (49.255) as *princeps orientis*; in some manuscripts Marcianus is a variant for Macrinus. Another explanation is that it was taken from Roman inscriptions bearing the names *Macrin(i)us* referring to *legati augusti* and *praefecti*

They crossed the lands of the Pechenegs and the White Cumans, passed through Susdal,¹ Ruthenia, and the lands of the Black Cumans, and in spite of the hostility of these peoples finally reached the river Tisza without loss of their possessions.² After surveying the region all the clans came to a decision not to advance farther with their herds and their people; for they had brought their wives, tents, and carts with them when they left their land. At that time Pannonia, Pamphylia, Phrygia, Macedonia, and Dalmatia were under the administration of the tetrarch Macrinus, a Lombard from the city of Sabaria experienced in military matters.³ On learning that the Huns had halted by the river Tisza and were daily plundering his territory, he was reluctant to retaliate with forces recruited only from his fellow-countrymen.⁴ Instead, he sent messengers to the Romans

of Pannonia Superior and Pannonia Inferior respectively in the 2nd and 3rd centuries (Mócsy-Fitz, *Pannonia*, 56–57, 75). On the other hand, Orosius (*Historia* 7.18) records the name *Macrinus* in a different context in connection with a geographic name (*apud*) *Archelaidem*; and Simon mentions a similar personal name later, cf. note 4, p. 59 — Simon connects Macrinus with Sabaria (modern Szombathely) perhaps because of the Roman ruins there or because he had read the Life of St. Martin, which mentions that Martin was born in that city. These ruins were impressive even in the fifteenth century: ...*Sabaria vetusta olim civitas, cuius apparent adhuc multa vestigia, inter quae spectantur columnae eximiae magnitudinis...* (Ransanus, *Epithoma*, 64–65). The source for the list of provinces ruled by Macrinus is the *Exordia Scythica* (p. 318), which lists: "Asia, Grecia, Macedonia, Syria, Iudea, Arabia, Dalmacia, Frigia, Pamphilia, Damascus."

⁴ For this use of *alumni* ("fellow-countrymen"), cf. the Legend of St. Stephen, *SRH* 2: 380, 405, and below ch. 60.

destinavit, contra Hunnos petiturus gentem et auxilium commodari. Ex parte etenim Romanorum in praedictis patriis imperabat. Tunc Romani Ditricum Veronensem, Alamannum nacione¹, illo in tempore super se regem praefererant voluntarie, quem petentes, ut Macrino subsidium importaret; Ditrico ergo animo gratanti^a annuente egressus cum exercitu Italico, Germanico ac caeteris mixtis gentibus occidentis, pervenit ad^b Zazholm, ubi ipsi Longobardi convenerant, ad Potentialiam civitatem², pertractans cum Macrino consilium, utrum Hunos in eorum descensu, Danubium transiendo, vel in alio loco congruenti invadere oporteret.

9. In istis itaque tractatibus Ditrico Macrinoque residentibus, noctis silentio super utres Huni Danubium in Sicambria transierunt³, exercitum Macrini et Ditrici, quem

^a constanti *H*

^b in *H, E*

¹ Simon conflates the Dietrich of Bern of the *Nibelungenlied* with the historical Gothic king Theodoric, just as the legendary cycles of Dietrich and Attila mingled in epics like the mid-12th century *Kaiserchronik* (Williams, *Etzel*, 149–50; *Gesta Theodorici regis*, *MGH SS* *Merov* 2: 202). Attila and Dietrich of Bern are linked from the eleventh century on (Williams, *Etzel*, 205). Possibly Simon was also inspired by a contemporary *ispán* Detricus (1243–75), whose reckless deeds of valor were commemorated in Hungarian royal charters (Györffy, *Krónikáink*, 190).

² Százhalom: modern Százhalombatta. The name means ‘one hundred hills,’ referring to burial hills of Celtic origin. There was a Roman settlement called Matrica between Érd and Százhalom, whose remains were still visible in Simon’s time. Százhalom is also mentioned by the Anonymus, ch. 46. — Potentialia (modern Polenza) was the site of a

asking them to provide people and help against the Huns; for Macrinus was governing the aforementioned countries on the authority of the Romans. At that time the Romans of their free will had chosen Dietrich of Bern, of the German nation,¹ to be their king, and they asked him to take aid to Macrinus. Dietrich agreed willingly. Setting out with a mixed army of Italians, Germans, and other Western peoples, he reached Százhalom, where the Lombards themselves had gathered, and the city of Potentialia.² He and Macrinus debated their strategy: whether to cross the Danube and fall upon the Huns in their settlement, or whether to attack them in some other more suitable place.

9. While Dietrich and Macrinus sat and deliberated, the Huns crossed the Danube at Sicambria in the silence of the night, swimming over on inflated bladders.³ The army of

famous battle in 402 between the Romans and the Goths (Jordanes *Getica* 30.154); the eleventh-century *Chronicon Novaliciense* 5.29 (*MGH SS* 7: 117) speaks of the Huns but confuses Potentialia with Aquileia; while for Pollentia as a site in Hunnish history see Cordt, *Attila*, 18.

³ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 9, 259–60. The Anonymus, ch. 7 also refers to the use of inflated bladders by nomads (cf. Eckhardt, “Pannóniai hun történet”, 611–12). — In the legends of the Trojan origin of the Franks, Sicambria was a place near the marshland of Meotis, in the area of *Pannoniarum*, where the roaming Franks sojourned for a time (Gerberding, *Rise of Carolingians*, 11–30, 173; Eckhardt, “Sicambria”, 166–97). In the 12th century, historical sources still identified Sicambria with Scythia—Godfrey of Viterbo describes it as *Ungaria Vetus* (*Pantheon*, 201)—but the same writer in his *Speculum regum* and *Memoria seculorum* already locates it in Hungary (*MGH SS* 22: 61, 104). From the fourteenth century (and in Simon) it is identified with modern Óbuda (e.g. *Anonymi Descriptio Europae Orientalis*, 44).

capere Potentia non potuit, in tentoriis campis commorantem crudeliter trucidarunt. Pro qua enim invasione Ditricus acerbatus in campum Tawarnucweg^a exivit¹ cum Hunnis committens praelium cum suorum et Macrini maximo interitu ac periculo. Fertur tamen Hunnos in hoc loco potenter devicisse. Hunnorum autem residuum [SRH, 150] in sua est reversum arrepta fuga tabernacula. In eo enim praelio ex Hunnis virorum centum millia et XXV. millia corruerunt, Cuwe^{b,2} etiam capitaneo ibidem interfecto. De militia vero Ditrici et Macrini, exceptis illis, qui in suis tentoriis ante urbem memoratam fuerant trucidati, ducentena millia et decem millia perierunt. Videns ergo Ditricus tantam caedem suorum accidisse, die altera post congressum praelii perrexit versus Tulnam civitatem³ cum Macrino. Tunc Huni intellecto, quod Macrinus et Ditricus de loco certaminis removissent sua castra, reversi ad locum certaminis, sociorum cadavera, quae^c poterant invenire, Cuwemque^d capitaneum prope stratam, ubi statua est erecta lapidea, more Scitico solemniter terrae commendarunt, partesque illius territorii Cuwe-Azoa^{e,4} post

^a Tawarnucweg *H*

^b Cuve *H*

^c qui *K*

^d Cuwemque *H*

^e Cuve Azoa *H*

¹ *Tárnokvölgy* (from Hung. *tárnok* 'a royal servitor in charge of supplies' and *völgy* 'valley'), 25 km South of Budapest. Mentioned in contemporary charters.

² For Keve see note 1, p. 27.

Macrinus and Dietrich was camped out in the fields, since Potentia was too small to hold them. The Huns fell upon their tents and massacred them without mercy. Incensed at this raid, Dietrich marched out to the field of *Tárnokvölgy*¹ to engage the Huns, and in spite of the peril and heavy losses to his and Macrinus's forces he is nevertheless said to have won a decisive victory. The remainder of the Huns fled back to their tents. 125,000 Hunnish warriors fell in the battle, including their captain Keve;² but 210,000 men perished from the forces of Dietrich and Macrinus, not counting those butchered in their tents before Sicambria. Seeing the massacre his men had suffered, Dietrich set out with Macrinus the day after the battle for the city of Tulln.³ When the Huns were sure that Macrinus and Dietrich had broken camp and quit the battlefield, they returned to the battlefield and gathered the bodies of the companions they could find, and then solemnly buried them and their captain Keve according to Scythian rites at a place by the highway where a stone statue is erected. Thereafter they referred to that part of their territory as *Keveaszó*.⁴ Having now experienced the fighting spirit and

³ Tulln: a city by the Danube north of Vienna; mentioned as *Tulne* in the *Nibelungenlied*. Simon probably visited it during his travels.

⁴ Till 1928 there was a two meter high altar stone with a dedication to Jupiter in *Keveaszó*; this, or some similar impressive Roman statue or milestone, possibly gave rise to a local historical tradition (*Juhász, "Baracskaikő"*). The stone statute is mentioned in the *Anonymi Descriptio Europae Orientalis* (44): *Ungari... pugnauerunt in campo magno . . . et in signum uictoriae perpetuum erexerunt ibi lapidem marmoreum permaximum, ubi est scripta prefata uictoria, qui adhuc perseverat usque in hodiernum diem. Keve* happens to mean in old Hungarian 'stone,' but this is a coincidence.

hac^a vocaverunt. Cognita itaque armorum et animi occidentis nationis qualitate et quantitate, Huni animum resumendo, exercitu resarcito adversus Ditricum et Macrinum versus Tulnam pugnaturi perrexerunt. Quorum adventum Ditricus ut cognovit, in Cezunmaur¹ eis contravenit^b, et a mane usque nonam praelium est commissum tam vehemens ac hostile, ut Wela^c, Rewa^d et Caducha, Hunnorum illustres capitanei cum aliis XL. millibus in ipso certamine interirent². Quorum etiam cadavera abinde removentes apud statuam memoratam cum caeteris sociis subterrarunt. Occubuit quoque Macrinus ex Romano exercitu ipso die et quamplures principes Germanorum Ditrico per iaculum in fronte lethaliter vulnerato et quasi toto exercitu occidentis interempto ac fugato.

10. Postquam vero exercitus se dispersit, Romano more³ Huni super se Ethelam regem praeficiunt, ipseque Budam fratrem suum de flumine Tize^e usque Don super diversas exterarum nationes principem constituit ac rectorem. Ipse autem seipsum Hunorum [SRH, 151] regem metum orbis, flagellum Dei a subiectis suis fecit appellari. Erat enim rex

^a hoc *H, E*

^b convenit *H, E*

^c Vela *H*

^d Rewa *H*

^e Tiza *H*

¹ Zieselmauer: between Vienna and Tulln, a settlement of Roman origin, *Zeizenmure* in the *Nibelungenlied* (Ploss, "Zeizenmure", 12).

strength of the Westerners in quality and numbers alike, the Huns found fresh courage, replenished their host, and set out for Tulln to do battle with Dietrich and Macrinus. Learning of their approach Dietrich marched out to meet them at Zieselmauer.¹ The battle lasted from morning to the ninth hour and was so furious and bitter that the illustrious captains of the Huns Vela, Reva, and Kadocsa were killed in the fighting along with forty thousand of their men.² Again they removed the bodies of the slain and buried them near the aforementioned statue with their comrades. The Roman army, too, suffered hugely that day: Macrinus perished along with a number of German princes, Dietrich was fatally wounded in the forehead by a javelin, and virtually the whole of the Western army was killed or put to flight.

10. After the dispersal of the army the Huns, following Roman custom,³ made Attila their king, and Attila named his brother Buda prince and arbiter over the different foreign nations from the river Tisza to the Don. Attila had his subjects address him as King of the Huns, the Terror of the World, and the Scourge of God. Attila's skin was an

² In ch. 11 we find the expression *a mane usque noctem* "from morning to night"; but the present reading is supported by Jordanes' account: *circa nonam diei horam proelium sub trepidatione committit* (*Getica* 37.196). — As historical references to these three captains were nonexistent, they are killed off at this point in the story. They were originally created to make up the number of the Hungarian chieftains, which together with Kádár was held to be seven.

³ Cf. *SRH* 1, ch. 10, 260–63. The meaning of "following Roman custom" is explained by the parallel in ch. 8: *Romani . . . super se regem prefecerant voluntarie*; see Szűcs, above p. XCV.

Ethela colore teter, oculis nigris et furiosis, pectore lato, elatus incessu, statura brevis, barbam prolixam cum Hunnis deferebat. Audaciae quidem temperantis erat, in praeliis astutus et sollicitus, suo corpore competentis fortitudinis habebatur. In voluntate siquidem magnanimus, politis armis, mundis tabernaculis cultuque utebatur. Erat enim venereus ultra modum. In archa sua aes tenere contemnebat, propter quod ab extera natione amabatur, eo quod liberalis esset ac communis. Ex natura vero severitas^a, quam habebat, a suis Hunnis mirabiliter timebatur. Nationes ideoque regnorum diversorum ad ipsum de finibus orbis terrae confluebant, quibus pro posse liberaliter affluebat. Decem enim millia curruum falcatorum in suo exercitu deferri faciebat cum diversis generibus machinarum, quibus urbes et castra destrui faciebat. Tabernacula etiam variis modis regnorum diversorum habere consueverat operata. Unum habebat sic celebre et solemne, ut ex laminis aureis mirifice coniunctim solidatum, modo solvi et nunc reconiungi ad tendentium staret voluntatem. Columnae cuius ex auro laboratae habentes iunctiones, opera ductilia, in medio tamen vacuae, in iuncturis suis pretiosis lapidibus iungebantur mirabiliter fabricatae. Sed etiam sua maristalla, dum pergeret in exercitum, equis diversarum patriarum replebatur, quos, quamvis visus esset habuisse [caros]^b, largiter egentibus tribuebat, ita quidem, ut vix duos haberet aliquando pro usu equitandi. Ista ergo maristallae ex purpura et bisso habebant paraturam. Sellae vero regales ex auro et lapidibus pretiosis fuerant laboratae. Mensa autem eius erat tota aurea, vasa etiam coquinarum. Thalamus

^a severitatem *K*, ex nimia vero severitate *E*

^b caros *add. Domanovszky in editione*

ugly colour; his eyes were dark and wild, his chest wide, his gait proud; he was short of stature, and he wore a long beard in the Hunnish fashion. He was daring but tempered in courage; with a reputation for astuteness and caution in battle and physical strength to match. He was magnanimous in the expression of his will. His arms were polished, his tents and his clothing clean. He was, in fact, inordinately lustful. Money he scorned to hoard, and on this account he was loved by foreign peoples, for being open-handed and free; whereas his own people marvellously feared the severity of his temperament. The people of different realms therefore journeyed to him from the ends of the world, and he dispensed to them freely of whatever he owned. In his army he had ten thousand scythed chariots as well as diverse kinds of engines of war for bringing down cities and castles. He had a variety of tents in the styles of different nations. One he often used was fitted with gold plates linked together in a wonderful way which could be taken apart and put together again as the persons putting it up desired; its poles were of gold and had finely-worked metal junctures but were empty in their middle, and were marvellously crafted and linked, with precious stones at their joins. When he went on campaign he filled his stable with horses from different countries; he evidently treasured them, but bestowed them freely on whoever had need of them, so that at times he barely had two to ride on. These stables were decked in velvet and fine linen. The king's chairs were wrought of gold and precious stones; his table and even his kitchen equipment were completely of gold; his bed was of the

quidem eius ex auro purissimo laboratu mirifico in exercitu secum ferebatur. Expositio autem eius praeter exterarum nationes decies centenarum armatorum millibus replebatur, ita quidem, ut si unum Sciticum decedere [SRH, 152] contigisset, alter pro ipso confestim ponebatur. Sed armamentis eius ex corio maxime et etiam metallis variis diversimode fuerant laborata, ferens arcus, cultros et lanceas¹. Banerium quoque regis Ethelae, quod in proprio scuto gestare consueverat, similitudinem avis habebat, quae Hungarice turul dicitur, in capite cum corona. Istud^a enim banerium Hunni usque tempora ducis Geichae^b, dum se regerent pro communi, in exercitu semper secum gestavere². In istis itaque et aliis pompis huiusmodi Ethela rex Hunnorum praeter ceteris regibus sui temporis gloriosior erat in hoc mundo. Civitatum, castrorum et urbium dominus fieri cupiebat et super illas dominari, habitare vero in ipsis contemnebat. Cum gente enim sua in campis cum tabernaculis et bigis

^a illud *H, E*

^b Geiche *H*

¹ The description of Attila is based on *Getica*, ch. 35, and *Pantheon*, ch. 17. Other details may come from a putative Hungarian version of the Alexander romance, which survived in a South Slavic translation (Hadrovics, "Nagy Sándor-regény"). The description of Attila's court—which according to Jordanes was plain and modest—may have been influenced by German epic tradition as in the *Nibelungenlied* (Williams, *Etzel*, 257). — The phrase "Scourge of God" is biblical (cf. Isa. 10:26) and was first used of Alarich's Goths in 410 by St. Augustine (*De civitate Dei* 1.8). — For *nationes* . . . ("the people of different realms . . .") cf. the Anonymus, ch. 43: *nationes . . . confluebant ad ducem Arpad*. A similar description occurs in the 13th *Liber Attila* (p. 111; see Cordt, *Attila*, 24–26). — The word *maristalla* ("stable") is from Middle

purest gold and of wonderful workmanship, and he carried it with him on his campaigns. His host consisted of fully a million men-at-arms not counting foreign nations, and if one Scythian happened to die he was immediately replaced by another. The armour of his soldiers, however, was of different materials, chiefly of hide but of various metals as well, and they carried bows, knives, and lances.¹ King Attila's banner bore the image of the bird the Hungarians call *turul*, with a crown on its head, and this emblem he carried on his own shield. In fact, until the time of Duke Géza this flag was always carried with the Hunnish army, as long as they had a communal style of government.² In all, in this and every kind of pomp and glory King Attila of the Huns surpassed all the monarchs of the earth in his days. His ambition was to become master of cities, castles, and towns, and to be lord over them; however, he scorned to live in them. Instead, he and his people travelled through

High German *marhstall* (modern German *Marstall*) (*LexMA* 6: 325). — The *expositio* ("his host") recalls the ten thousand immortals of Herodotus (7.83) and Quintus Curtius Rufus (3.3.13); this passage is only included in the Greek and Serbian versions of the Alexander romance (cf. *Historia de preliis* J2, 182, Ps.-Kallistenes 1.41; Hadrovics, "Nagy Sándor-regény," 288–89), but a similar sentence, *elegit C acies de viris probissimis*, appears in the Attila-story of the *Chronicon Hungarico-Polonicum* (SRH 2: 300–301). — The description of the "armamentis" ("the armour of his soldiers") comes from Herodotus (7.61), most likely through the Alexander tradition.

² The "turul" bird (commonly identified with a breed of falcon, *falco rusticolus altaicus*), was probably the totem of the Árpád clan. Unlike the Anonymus (ch. 3) Simon subtly avoids making an overt genealogical connection between the house of Árpád and Attila the Hun, but the common totem suggests close relationship.

incedebat, extera natio, quae eum sequebatur, in civitatibus et in villis. Indumentorum vero modus et forma sibi et genti^a modum Medorum continebat¹.

11. Postquam vero in praelio Cezunmaur Romani corruissent et fuissent dispersi usquequaque, rex Ethela est conversus in castra gentis suae et ibi in descensu ultra Tizam paucis diebus habitavit, tandem in Scewen^{b,2} curiam solemnem celebrare procuravit. Ad quam Ditricus de Verona cum principibus Germaniae accedens omne homagium Ethelae et Hunis fecisse perhibetur. Suggestit regi, ut invadere debeat regna occidentis. Cuius quidem consilium amplectendo exercitum statim proclamari iussit. Egressus de Sicambria primo Illiricos subiiciens, deinde Renum Constantiae [SRH, 153] pertransivit³. Abinde vero Renum inferius descendendo, rex Sigismundus⁴ apud Basileam cum ingenti exercitu eis^c contravenit^d quem devincens cum impetu, suo fecit imperio obedire. A loco autem illo egressus obsedit Argentinam civitatem, quam primitus Ro-

^a sibi et gente *K*, sua et gentis *H*

^b Sceven *H*, Scewem *E*

^c suo *H*, *E*

^d convenit *H*, *E*

¹ Cf. *Getica* ch. 34, and also the first paragraph of the 1279 law on the Cumans of Hungary: . . . *descendent et recedent a tabernaculis suis et domibus filtrinis, et habitabunt ac morabuntur in villis more Christianorum in edificiis et domibus solo fixis* "from now on they shall settle down and leave their tents and houses made of felt. They shall reside and remain in villages of the Christian sort with buildings and houses attached to the ground" (*DRMH* 1: 69). Similar phrasing regarding the

the open country with their tents and carts, while the foreign nations who followed him occupied the towns and villages. The type and style of clothing worn by Attila and his people followed the style of the Medes.¹

11. After the Romans were crushed at the battle of Zieselmauer and dispersed in all directions, King Attila returned to the camp of his people and spent a few days there at his settlement beyond the river Tisza. At length he called a formal court in Szőny.² History relates that Dietrich of Bern and the princes of Germany attended this court and did all homage to Attila and the Huns. Dietrich suggested to the king that he should invade the kingdoms of the west. Attila seized upon this proposal, ordering his army to be called out at once. Setting out from Sicambria, he first subdued the Illyrians, then crossed the Rhine at Constance.³ As they moved further down the Rhine their advance was opposed by King Sigismund⁴ with a huge army not far from Basle, but Attila fell upon him and defeated him, forcing him to acknowledge his overlordship. He then set out from there to lay siege to the city of Argentina. No

Goths occurs in Rodericus de Rada, *Historia*, 23. — The reference to the Medes may go back to the Alexander matter; see note 1, pp. 42–3.

² Szőny: on the Danube West of Esztergom; in Roman times Brigetio, but the Latin name was unknown in the Middle Ages.

³ The itinerary of the Hun army follows the settlements mentioned in the historical sources on the one hand and the itinerary of Simon's travels on the other (see Map 1).

⁴ For Attila's attack on Burgundy, cf. Paul the Deacon *Historia Romana* 14.5. — As king of Burgundy (reigned 516–23), Sigismund is mentioned in a different context in the *Getica* (58.298).