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BUDA: ITS ORIGIN AND MEANING

**Represented by the Sumerian cross with two
horizontal bars in the Hungarian coat of arms**

Paper read at the Congress of the
Humanities and Social Sciences on May 25,
2002, University of Toronto.
Last update May 2020

ABSTRACT: *It is proposed that the Hungarian proper name Buda was a title in antiquity and may have originated in the Sumerian language. The root bud matches with the Sumerian bad 'rod, scepter' the perpetual symbol of high office. The word-final element -a is identified as an old suffix that formed nouns and adjectives in both Sumerian and the Magyar language. The onomastic argument is substantiated by comparing the Hungarian coat of arms to Sumerian pictographs and cuneiform signs of a tree that has four branches. The symbol of the tree similarly depicted a ruler in both ancient Sumerian and Magyar society.*

The Magyars

This paper differentiates between the ethnonym *Hungarian* and *Magyar*. The appellation *Hungarian* denotes the Turkic speaking group that conquered the Carpathian Basin in 896 C.E. The ethnonym *Magyar* denotes both the subjugated people in the Carpathian Basin and their language which is unique to every language in the surrounding area. The uniqueness of their language suggest that they may be autochthon to the area.

Sir John Bowring (1792-1872) British philologist and statesman, whose translations, and anthologies of poetry from Oriental and European languages are highly regarded, supported this hypothesis in his *Poetry of the Magyars*.

The Magyar language stands afar off and alone. The study of other tongues will be found of exceedingly little use towards its right understanding. It is moulded in a form essentially its own, and its construction and composition may be safely referred to an epoch when most of the living tongues of Europe either had no existence, or no influence on the Hungarian region (Bowring 1830: vi).

Endre Neparácski, faculty member of the Department of Genetics at the University of Szeged, examined the genetic composition of the conquering Hungarians of 896 C.E. in his Ph.D. thesis. The data obtained from sequencing of whole mtDNA samples substantiates that the conquering Hungarians were not Magyars.

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[...] half of the conqueror population had Xiongnu origin, corroborating the statement of medieval Hungarian chronicles, which all declare Hunnic origin of the Hungarians. [The other half of] the conquerors with Scandinavian-German genetic affinity had most probably Ostrogothic origin, as this group was reported to have been integrated into the European Hun Empire hundreds of years before the conquest. Interestingly this European component also support the Hun affinity of the Hungarian conquerors (Neparáczki 2017).

These are two sources of similar documented evidence that support the distinction between conquerors and the local conquered population. The comprehensive paper on this subject is *The Names Testify* (Nogrady 2020) available at academia.edu electronic library.

Objective

A key objective of this paper is to demonstrate how names can provide a better understanding of phonological paraphasia and historical factors that have been lost with time.

This will be demonstrated through the Magyar proper name *Buda* which is a frequent surname and forms part of many place names in Hungary, the best known being *Budapest*. It is also present in an old Magyar maxim that cautions a *buda* to abandon his intention otherwise he may put himself and others in jeopardy. The cautioning sentence is 'not that way buda' and every Hungarian understands it as a warning. Yet, like adages in many cultures, the origin and direct provenance of the phrase is lost. It is the word *buda* that raises questions. Who was buda?

The investigation of this question with Magyar is required as part of this analysis.

Magyar-Sumer linguistic relationship

Samuel Noah Kramer, eminent Sumerologists, summarizes the connection of the two languages:

Sumerian is an agglutinative tongue, not an inflected one like Indo-European or Semitic. Its roots, by and large, are invariable. Its basic grammatical unit is the word complex rather than the individual word. Its grammatical particles tend to retain their independent structure rather than become inextricably attached to the word roots. In structure, therefore, Sumerian resembles no little such agglutinative languages as Turkish, Hungarian, and some of the Caucasian languages (Kramer 1971: 306).

Affirming Sumer-Magyar linguistic evidence was amassed in an unpublished list of 318 matching or similar lexical items, further demonstrating the relationship. The following 15 pairs are representative of the overall findings.

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Magyar:	állam	'state'
Sumerian:	kalam	'state'

Remarks: Deimel 1925-1939:177. Similar phonetic values, identical meanings. The Sumerian *kalam* also denotes the 'land of Sumer'. The Hungarian *állam* may be the aphetic form of the Sumerian *kalam*.

The Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language lists *állam* as a word coined during the language reform movement (1770-1872), (Benkő 1967: 137, vol. 1).

Magyar:	ár	'price, cost'
Sumerian:	ar₂	'price, cost'

Remarks: Deimel 1925-1939:173. Identical phonetic values, identical meanings. The reconstructed Uralic source of *arya 'value, appraise, think' (Benkő 1967: 168, vol. 1) is questionable.

Similar words are present in both the Uralic and Indo-European languages. Cf. Finnish *arvo* 'value', Estonian *arv* 'number', Persian *arzesh* 'value', Avestan *areja* 'value', Ossetian *ar(z)* 'price', Sanskrit *argha* 'price'. Also compare with Hungarian *ér* in *érték* 'value, worth'.

Magyar:	csiga	'shell-snail'
Sumerian	šika	'shell [-snail]'

Remarks: Labat 1948:55. Identical phonetic values, identical meanings.

Magyar:	csír(-a)	'germ, seed-bud'
Sumerian:	šir	'testicle'

Remarks: Labat 1948:71. Similar phonetic forms, similar meanings. The Hungarian *csíra* 'germ, seed-bud' is comprised of the root *csír* [chi:r] and the Sumero-Hungarian adjectival suffix *-a*.

Similar words are in the Ugric languages, cf. *širk* 'seed-bud' (Benkő 1967: 539, vol. 1).

Magyar:	dar(-a)	'groats'
Sumerian:	dar	'to split'

Remarks: Deimel 1939:93. Identical phonetic values, similar meanings. The Hungarian *dara* 'groats' is comprised of the Sumerian *dar* 'to split, to break up' and the result of that action is signified by the adjectival suffix *-a*. Cf. Hungarian *darál* 'to grind'.

Groats are produced by the splitting or breaking of grain into small pieces, the action expressed by the Sumerian *dar*.

The Turkic *tari*, *dari* 'millet', listed in the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language as the source (Benkő 1967: 593, vol. 1) may also be derived from the Sumerian *dar*. Compare with:

Magyar:	dar(-ab)	'portion, part'
Sumerian:	dar, dur	'portion'

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Remarks: Labat 1948:108, Deimel 1939:93. The Sumerian and the Hungarian meanings and phonetic values are identical. The word-final element -*ab* is an unproductive suffix of unidentified origin.

The Slavonic *drôb* 'piece, portion', listed in the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language (Benkő 1967: 593, vol. 1), is a probable derivation from the Sumero-Hungarian *dar(-ab)*, therefore an unlikely source. 'Piece, portion' is expressed by *kus*, *komad*, *kawalek*, etc. in the Slavonic languages.

Magyar: ***dar***(-ab-ol) 'to divide, to split'

Sumerian: ***dar*** 'to divide, to split'

Remarks: Labat 1948:114. Both Sumerian and Hungarian phonetic values and meanings are identical. The suffix -*ol* denotes the third person singular in the conjugation of verbs.

See above for etymology.

Magyar: ***ég*** 'to blaze, to flame'

Sumerian: ***èg*** 'to blaze, to flame'

Remarks: Labat 1948: 381. Identical phonetic values, identical meanings.

Magyar: ***fúr*** 'to drill, to bore'

Sumerian: ***bùr*** 'to drill, to bore'

Remarks: Labat 1948:411. Similar phonetic values, identical meanings. The Hungarian *fúr* may be derived from the Sumerian *bùr*. Sound change from *b* to *f* is a recorded occurrence in the Hungarian language, cf. *bodor* > *fodor* 'curl - frill'. The Hungarian verb *fúr* is also present in the Uralic languages having similar phonetic forms and similar meanings. The reconstructed Uralic proto word is **pura* (Benkő 1967: 987, vol. 1).

Magyar: ***bély***(-eg) 'stamp'

Sumerian: ***bil*** 'fire'

Remarks: Labat 1948:172. Identical phonetic values, identical derived meanings. The meaning of the Hungarian *bélyeg* is 'stamp, imprint, mark, brand'. The suffix -*eg* forms adjectives that are permanent results of actions (A. Jászó 1991: 291). The root *bély* was spelled *bil* in 1263 and *byl* in 1436 (Benkő 1967: 277, vol. 1).

The word may be a derivation from the Sumerian *bil* 'fire', hence animals and even humans were branded with hot iron in antiquity. Thus, the stamp was the permanent result of fire and heat.

The alleged Altaic *bil*- 'know' (Benkő 1967: 277, vol. 1) is not a convincing source. May be of interest to note that the Hungarian *bél* means 'wick'.

Magyar: ***gam***(-ó) 'hook'

Sumerian: ***gam*** to curve

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Remarks: Labat 1948:362. Identical phonetic values, identical meanings. The Hungarian *gamó*, *kamó*, *kampó* 'hook, crook' are the participle of *gam* and *kam*.

Magyar:	<i>kása</i>	'porridge'
Sumerian:	<i>kaš</i>	'beer'

Remarks: Labat 1948:214. The cuneiform sign for *kaš* is also pronounced as *pi*. Both phonetic forms mean 'beer', according to Labat. However, *kaš* is the root of the Magyar *kása* [ka:ša] 'porridge' and *pi* is the initial element of *pép* [pe:p] which means 'mush'. The word-final element *-a* in *kása* is the Sumero-Hungarian suffix that forms both adjectives and nouns.

People first consumed grains in their raw form during the food-gathering stage. While all grains were soft and easy to chew near their phase of ripeness, stored grain like barley become dry and hard. To make hard grains easier to consume, they soaked them in water and ate them in the form of porridge. Once, one batch may have accidentally fermented and made them tipsy, a condition they liked.

Eventually the brewing of beer was refined, the liquid that was part of the process, was drained from the porridge, but the original name *kaš* was retained because beer was 'porridge' for a long time at the beginning.

Thus, the Slavonic origin from *kaša* 'muddle, porridge', as suggested by the Historical-Etymological Dictionary of the Hungarian Language needs to be revised.

Magyar:	<i>nap</i>	'day, sun'
Sumerian:	<i>ud, utu</i>	'day, sun'

Remarks: Labat 1948:380. This Sumerian cuneiform sign has two similar phonetic values and two different meanings. *Ud* means 'day' and *utu* is 'sun'. The Sumerians, like the Hungarians, attached both terminologies to the same concept. In the Hungarian language *nap* means both 'day' and 'sun'.

Magyar:	<i>nap</i>	'sun'
Sumerian:	<i>nap</i>	'planet'

Remarks: Labat 1948:129a. The cuneiform sign of *nap* is also pronounced as *mul* 'to shine, star'. The Sumerian phonetic value *nap* is the same as the Hungarian *nap* and has an identical meaning.

Magyar:	<i>tar(-ol)</i>	'to devastate'
Sumerian:	<i>tar</i>	'to destroy, to cut'

Remarks: Labat 1948:12. Identical phonetic values, identical meanings. The Hungarian suffix *-ol* indicates action.

The Hungarian root *tar* means 'bare'. *Tarol* is an action noun meaning 'to make bare', i.e. 'to destroy, to devastate'. The derivation *tarló* means 'stubble-field', where stumps of grain are left sticking out of the ground after the stems were cut off.

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Identical words are in the old-Turkic languages, the reconstructed proto-word is *tar (Benkő 1967: 847, vol. 1).

Scholars theorize that the Sumerian language died out thousands of years ago. Though possible, this theory is in opposition with how other ancient languages have been integrated into languages that continue to evolve. As Latin Belonged to the Italic branch of Indo-European languages, later forming the bases of romance languages.

Every Sumerologist admits the imperfect understanding of the language. This may be due to the hesitation of linguists engaged in Sumerian research to consider the Uralic and Altaic languages for reference (Hungarian, Finnish, Estonian and the Turkic languages). These languages would provide the much-needed clues for understanding Sumerian. The same as Indo-European languages can be traced to Sanskrit, the Uralic and Altaic languages can be traced to Sumerian.

Old Hungarian names have conclusive Sumerian association, but there are only few members of the onomastic discipline who have chosen to pursue those associations. Research is complicated by several factors, one of which is reliance on the judgement of decipherers on the verbal information embodied in each cuneiform sign, a study made difficult without understanding the ancient spoken language. As a result, the vocalization and interpretation of Sumerian cuneiform texts at the present time is not as adequate as what was effectively used in everyday life in Sumer. Sumerology is far from being able to offer a coherent system in most aspects of the language. Yet, pursuing connection to Hungarian may open new avenues of discovery.

Language is a man-made method of verbally communicating mental activity and writing is the method of preserving it. Thus, getting familiar with the thought process that produced the writing should be of utmost importance. Therefore, the desired result in decoding a cuneiform text is that the reader's interpretation agrees with the writer's intention. The entire work of reconstruction by the decoder is relative to the linguistic information he/she possesses. The cuneiform string, which constitutes the written message, is subject to morphological and syntactic intricacies and the knowledge of that holds the key to an accurate decoding and translation. In other words, it would be beneficial if the decoder spoke the language the Sumerians spoke, which is impossible, but at least be familiar with a cognate language.

The suffix -a

Function of the word-final element *-a* is examined in this section and traced to the Sumerian language where it formed adjectives as discussed below.

Old Magyar names commonly end in *-a* thus, the enigma of *buda* may be unlocked if the word is treated as an adjective. For that, the identity of the adjectival suffix would have to be established. It cannot be anywhere else but at the end of the word, which in this case is *-a*. Therefore, it is possible that at the time *buda* entered the vocabulary of the spoken language, adjectives were formed by the suffix *-a* (IPA[ɒ]).

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This suffix fell into functional disuse, but once must have played an important role in the formation of adjectives as evidenced by old words and names. Because Magyars did not differentiate between verbs and nouns in antiquity (Hajdú 1975: 90), this archaic suffix formed adjectives both from nouns and verbs. The same applies to the Sumerian language.

Anton Deimel was an altorientalist and one of the founders of Sumerology. He points out that the adjective does not differ in form from substantive or verbal stem; depending on the content, the same root can have the same meaning as a noun, as an adjective or as a verb without any internal or external change.

Der form nach unterscheidet sich das Adjektiv nicht vom Substantiv- und Verbalstamm; dieselbe Wurzel kann je nach dem Zusammenhang ohne jegliche innere oder äußere Veränderung Substantiv-, Adjektiv- oder Verbalbedeutung haben (Deimel 1925-1932: 108).

The one-time concurrent use of the old Magyar *-a* and present-day *-s* is demonstrated by two common nouns *gulya* 'herd of cattle' and *ménes* 'herd of horses', where both adjective forms are used for expressing related concepts. More examples can be drawn from surnames such as *Gonda* and *Gondos*. The adjectival suffixes are attached to the root *gond* 'care' in both form of names and denote a 'careful, attentive' person. *Doba* - *Dobó* from *dob* 'to throw', *Bota* - *Botos* from *bot* 'bat, stick', *Dala* - *Dalos* from *dal* 'song'.

Interestingly, all major rivers in the Carpathian Basin have the ancient *-a* suffixed to them: *Duna*; *Tisza*; *Dráva*; *Száva*; *Lajta*; *Rába*; *Rábca*; *Mura*; *Zagyva*; *Kerka*. The *-s* and *-ó* are also present: *Maros*; *Temes*; *Szamos*; *Körös*; *Berettyó*; *Sajó*.

There are two ways of forming adjectives in the present-day Magyar language. The suffix *-s* (IPA[ʃ]) is affixed to a noun often by a linking vowel and the participle *-ó* (IPA[o:]) to a verb. Examples: *lant* 'lute' > *lantos* 'lute player' (spelled *Lantos* as a surname), *fon* 'to spin' > *fonó* 'spinner' (spelled *Fonyó* as a surname). At one time in the history of the Magyar language the archaic *-a* was superseded by the current participle *-ó* and the adjectival suffix *-s*.

While there is abundant evidence for the suffix *-a* being active in the Magyar language in antiquity, we cannot disregard the possibility of its presence in another language in the same capacity. To find its use in an older cognate language, a journey in time to the ancient Sumerian language is unavoidable. Cuneiform texts reveal that the Sumerians used the same suffix in the same capacity. This conclusion is largely based on Marie-Louise Thomsen's observation. Though she does not draw parallel between the Sumerian and Hungarian languages, but she leaves no doubt for anybody, however little acquainted with Hungarian grammar, that fundamental similarities between these suffixes are readily recognizable.

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Some adjectives occur always, others occasionally with the suffix /-a /, e.g. *ur-saḡ kalag ga* 'the mighty hero', *munus šag₅- ga* 'the good woman'. [...] Adjectives do not differ morphologically from nominal or verbal stems [...] (Thomsen 1984: 64).

The *šag₅ - ga* [sha:-ga] segment in *munus šag₅ - ga* 'the good woman' is also present in an honorific form of Hungarian address *nagysága* [nadj-sha:-ga], which would translate either as 'your greatness' or 'your highness'. The other form *nagyságos* means the same thing, but both are obsolete middle-class forms of address in Hungary.

Thus, at this point, there is no reason to doubt that the word-final element *-a* in *buda* is an adjectival suffix. After its separation from the preceding element, we are left with the root *bud* for further examination.

Etymology of Buda

Documentary evidence indicate that *buda* was part of the old Magyar vocabulary and culture, but its original meaning has become obscure. Its conscious use is now obsolete in the spoken language; it only survives in old expressions, surnames, and place names.

Buda was formed as a single personal name long before the custom of forenames and surnames commenced. Most names originating during that period were descriptive in character and were adjectives. The formation of proper names from adjectives is one of the most prominent features of Magyar naming practices, a trend continued when bestowing nicknames at the present time.

The search for the origin of the stem *bud* is as complex as the identity of the adjectival suffix *-a* was. Most names have clear meanings and tracing them to the language of their origin does not present a problem. Those names do not require detailed etymological explanations, but others like Buda necessitate full scale investigation.

At first glance, owing to its identical orthographic rendering in other languages, Buda appears to be an internationally shared word of various meanings. As a result, Hungarian scholars of the past thought it was derived from similar words in languages other than Magyar.

As a proper name Buda has been compared with the Gothic *Bote* 'ambassador' and the Slavonic *buda* 'hut' but without convincing results. The suggestion that it was fabricated from the Gothic personal name *Bleda* by a medieval chronicler has also been made. The Turkish equivalent of the Magyar *bot* 'stick, staff' was also considered (Ladó 1978:143). Most of these views were set forth in the early periods of onomastic scholarship and are weakened by insufficient historical and linguistic evidence necessary for a convincing argument. This, however, is not the case concerning *bot* where unexplored possibilities are available.

In contrast to all old explanations, linguistic evidence points in the direction of the *bot* 'stick, staff', which may be the present-day variant of an older form *bud*. The concept that a stick or staff was at first the simplest and oldest weapon and then became the symbol of status.

The stick, originally a rudimentary weapon of the ancient warrior for self-protection, slowly evolved from arm of combat to a bejeweled scepter and became the

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symbol of power that endured to the present day. The scepter of a king, the mace of a prince, the crosier of a bishop and the baton of a high-ranking military officer, all denote authority and demand respect.

In some old languages titles and ranks were derived from its name and its pictograph was used in their writing system for depicting the holder of high office. High ranking titles may have been derived from the name of the stick and these titles became personal names or place names at later times in a nation's history.

Such high office was denoted by the Sumerian polyphone cuneiform sign representing the trunk of a tree that has four branches (below). This cuneiform sign (Labat 1948: cuneiform no. 295) had more than one phonetic value but related meanings.



The table below shows the phonetic values and their meanings of this cuneiform sign.

Table 1

Sumerian phonetic value	meaning	source
<i>bad, bat</i>	bat, scepter, stave	Waddell 1927: 23
<i>had</i>	bat, scepter	Deimel 1939: No. 169
<i>pa</i>	governor	Labat 1948: No. 295
<i>pa</i>	tree, stick, staff	Gostony 1975: 94
<i>pa</i>	main branch of a tree	Labat 1948: No. 295
<i>pa</i>	overseer	Deimel 1939: No. 169
<i>ugula, ensi₂</i>	chief, superior, governor	Labat 1948: No. 295

There are three Sumerian words in Table 1 that are of interest to this subject: *bad*, *ugula* and *had*. Their present-day variants are still active in Hungary as mentioned above. *Bad* is 'bot', the equivalent of the English 'bat'. Another pronunciation of the Sumerian cuneiform sign for *bad* is *ugula* 'chief, superior'. A probable derivation from *ugula* is the Hungarian *Gyula* [djula], a personal name derived from an ancient title held by the prince of Transylvania. The same as Buda, this title also survived in Hungarian surnames, forenames, and toponyms, like the city of *Gyula* in Békés County.

The third and identical pronunciation *had* is still used in the Magyar language in connection with weapons and war. For example: *hadsereg* means 'armed forces' comprised of *had* 'arms' and *sereg* 'troops', *hadianyag* 'implements of war' contains *had* 'arms' the derivational suffix *-i* and *anyag* 'material'.

Another Sumerian pictograph of a tree with four branches that represents a 'prince' (Labat 1948: cuneiform no. 87) (below) reinforce the ancient reasoning concerning trees and leaders.



In addition to the Sumerian language the word *bat* can be also found in old Egyptian.

Table 2

Egyptian Phonetic value	meaning	source
<i>pet</i>	scepter, staff	Budge 1978: 253
<i>ba</i>	staff, stick	Budge 1978: 202
<i>bát</i>	king of the north	Budge 1978: 211
<i>bát</i>	title of a high official	Budge 1978: 212

The staff held by a human figure, transliterated as *ur*, was also part of the early Egyptian hieroglyphic writing system and denoted a ‘prince, chief, noble’ (Budge 1978: 170) (below). So, there is at least one parallel use of this symbolism in another writing system in the same region.



The equivalent of the Sumerian *pa* survived in the Uralic languages, having identical forms and identical meanings.

Table 3

Uralic languages	phonetic value	meaning	source
Vougul	<i>pá</i>	tree	Benkő 1967: 822, vol. 1
Yurak-Samoyed	<i>pa</i>	tree, bat	Benkő 1967: 822, vol. 1

According to Benkő the original meaning of the *bot* may have been ‘branch of a tree’, cf. Turkish **bud*, *budak* ‘branch of a tree’ (Benkő 1967: 353, vol.1). The name remained unchanged after the branch was cut off and fashioned into a stick. It seems that ancient Magyars did not differentiate between a branch and a stick, the same word was used for both.

The symbol of a tree having four branches was the insignia of Magyar indigenous leaders before the Hun, Avar, and Hungarian invasion, signifying their status as heads of state. This symbol is still part of the Hungarian coat of arms. The symbol of the tree is resting on a three-mount, the Sumerian pictogram for ‘country’ (Labat 1948: 366). Their compounded meaning is *országfő* ‘head of state’, (see below).



The Hungarian coat of arms symbolize the amalgamation of the local Magyar population with the conquering Hungarians. On one side it displays the symbol for buda resting on a three-mount, meaning 'head of state'. On the other side are the red-white stripes of the Árpád dynasty.

In an investigation of Euro-based languages, the word for stick is similar in a number of modern language groups.

Table 4

language	word	meaning	source
Magyar	<i>bot</i>	Stick, staff	Országh 1974: 239
English	<i>bat</i>	stick, club	Onions 1985: 60
French	<i>bâton</i>	stick, staff	Larousse's 1976: 49
Celtic	<i>bat, bata</i>	staff, cudgel	Onions 1985: 60
Turkish	<i>budak</i>	twig, branch	Akdikmen 1986: 60
Polish	<i>bat, bauta</i>	whip, stick	Grzebienowski 1958: 470
Russian	<i>biota</i>	bat	Romanov 1964: 270
Croatian	<i>batida</i>	Stick, staff	Palich 1982: 120

The consistency of the forms of *bad* and *bud* in different language groups supports two ideas: that an ancient language, Sumerian, is the common source for these words of similar forms and meaning; and through this investigation, the words provide a significant connection to the meaning of *buda*.

Buda comprised of the principal element *bud* and the adjectival suffix *-a* was the title of the head of state in ancient Magyar society. His emblem was the tree with four branches; the two higher branches are shorter, like on a real tree. The present-day equivalent of buda is the Hungarian *botos*, literally 'one with a stick'. It denotes an 'overseer' or a person holding an office, usually related to the maintenance of law and order (B. Lőrinczy 1979: 574). The *bot* as the symbol of power and authority is listed also in the Dictionary of the Magyar Language (Bárczi-Országh 1959: 698, vol. 1).

Admittedly, it is a giant leap from the Sumerians to present-day Magyars, from southern Iraq to the Carpathian Basin and from third millennium B.C.E. to 1190 C.E., when the tree having four branches appeared on coins minted during the reign of king Béla III (1147-1196).



Címer,<https://hu.wikibooks.org/w/index.php?curid=3>

Earlier symbol in the Carpathian Basin of the tree having four branches is attested by archaeological finds and historical records.



Enhanced replica of the Tartaria tablet.

The symbol of a tree having four branches is on one of three clay tablets found near Tartaria, Transylvania in 1961 (above). The tablets were dated to originate from the end of the sixth or the beginning of the fifth millennium B.C.E. (Makkai 1990: 35). That would make them at least 1000 years older than the oldest Sumerian tablets found in Mesopotamia. The Tartaria tablets were made of local clay.

Additional early indication for the presence of the Sumerian *bat*, in reference to leadership in historical Hungary occurred in 6 C.E., when the Pannonians (Pannonia was the Roman name for the western part of Hungary) and their neighbors, the Illirs had risen against Roman rule. The leaders of the rebellion in both provinces were recorded by the name *Bato* (Cook 1934: 369, vol.10). *Bató* is a last name in present-day Hungary at the present-time (Kálmán 1978: 66). The identification of *Bato* as being derived from the Sumerian *bat* and as a variant of *Buda* would offer further evidence to our understanding of names as sources of valid information.

A leader called *Buda* lived in Hungary during the fifth century C.E. According to folklore, that Buda, after whom the Hungarian city of Buda was named, is falsely believed to be the brother of Attila, king of the Huns. He was executed for being Attila's rival for the throne. The name of the city has never been changed and continued to be the Capital City of Hungary until 1873, when it amalgamated with Pest, thus the name *Budapest*.

Buda was first mentioned as a toponym in section 1 of the *Gesta Hungarorum* (c. 1200 C.E.). Spelled *buduuar* in the Latin language *Gesta*. The name appears distorted by the application of the grammatically required vowel

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harmony (*Budu* < *Buda*) and the Roman custom of using 'u' for 'v' (*uar* < *vár*), meaning 'fortress of Buda'.

The data assembled in this paper demonstrates that Buda was a legitimate *buda* 'head of state' of the local Magyar population before the arrival of Attila's Huns. Buda was his title, not his name.

The Sumerian *bad*, *bat*, subjected to dialectal modifications, now appear in various graphic forms as names. The forms *Bot*, *Both*, *Bod* and *Bud* are still being used as surnames in Hungary. Suffixed variants include the archaic *-a* and present-day adjectival suffix *-s*: *Bata*, *Bota*, *Boda*, *Buda*, *Bodos*, *Bodus*, *Botus*, *Budus*, *Butus*. Patronymics are represented by *Bati*, *Batti*, and *Budi*. Other forms are *Bothu*, *Boton*, *Bodon*, *Bodun*, *Bodum* and *Budon*. Although these names may have been in use long before being registered for reference, there is a written record of them in 1138, 1202, 1211, and 1226, according to one source (Fehértói 1983: 41, 55, 56, 62, 63, 66, 67, 73).

The present form of Buda provides an interesting lesson in onomastic development. The search for its source has led us through the toponym Buda which honors its founder, the Pannonian leader Bato, the Transylvanian clay tablet that has the symbol of a four branched tree, to the speakers of the oldest recorded agglutinative language, the Sumerians. The presence of Buda and its variants in names and lexical items in the Carpathian Basin bear witness to that.

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