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The Earth-Diver Myth (Mot. A 812) and the Apocryphal Legend of the Tiberian Sea*

I. Research of the topic: hypotheses of the evolution of the legend before Bogomilism

I. 1. In Hungary: Lajos Kálmány, Lajos Vargyas

In one of his early works, Lajos Vargyas (Vargyas 1947) first just raised the topic, then in 1977 elaborately worked out his concept of how the dualistic legend of the creation of earth could have entered Hungarian folklore (Vargyas 1977: 109-110. 120.). Later he republished this same study unabridged but not containing his notes (Vargyas 1984), and several times revived his results in shortened forms (Vargyas 1978: 22.; 1996: 8.9, and in popular elaborations.) All his works consider the Oriental elements of Hungarian folklore, more precisely those dating back to the times before Árpád's conquest of Hungary. Thus the above-mentioned legend is just one of the numerous folklore data – the related information is well worth discussing. Lajos Vargyas himself encourages further research: “So this is the picture I can show you now concerning our topic... Here is what we have had so far, here are the results up till now, and here is the past. Judging and further developing it is the task of those who come.” (Vargyas 1996: 10.) Lajos Vargyas listed the legend of the creation of earth among Hungarian Oriental folklore heritage relying on an incubus-myth collected by Lajos Kálmány at Magyarszentmihály and published in 1893. In his mythological study of great importance Kálmány outlines the Vogul (Mansi) legend of the creation of earth. Then, searching for its Hungarian equivalents he declares: “That is as much as we can introduce this time in this newly discovered, utterly Christian-tinted Hungarian myth: *‘When God created the World the Devil asked for the soul the drunkard. He said he wanted the souls of those who ever get drunk. Seeing that the drunkard repent on their death-bed God refused and told the Devil he would give him the soul of the drunkard if he brought up a rope of sand from the bottom of the sea. And so the Devil descended to the bottom of the sea but was not able to bring up the sand – thus did not get the soul of drunkards.’*

That the devil of our traditions wishes to share the souls of drunkards with God and is unable to fulfill his task can all be attributed to the influence of Christianity. We find a likeness of this in the devil-prince fable taken down by Munkácsi about four decades after Reguly had done so with the creation myth discussed above (Numi-Torum loves Elm-pi, the child of a human couple descending from the sky on a rope, helps him in creating the world. It is Elm-pi who emerges the earth from the seas. Kálmány 1893: 5.). And now it is not Elm-pi taking the role of the demiurge by the side of Numi-Torum but malicious, deceitful Kuly-Otir. Although in Russia Christianity was spread among Voguls by fire and sword at these times, still, the traces of Christianity in our linguistic traditions are necessarily more evident long after our nation had embraced the Christian religion. But we can derive no explanation from Christianity for that part of the legend where God sends the devil to fetch some sand from the bottom of the sea - that is the task of the demiurge devil and not that of the diabolic one” (Kálmány 1893: 6.).

Here Kálmány inserted a footnote: “The Hungarian variation of this myth is as follows: *‘Once upon a time there was a man who had an incubus (an evil spirit). One week this spirit was with him and obeyed all his commands – the next week it was his son’s turn. The spirit kept asking: What, what, and what? The man answered: Get me some corn now! The spirit got him enough corn to fill the whole farmyard. Then he said: Get me some money! And he got so much he was a very rich man now and got fed up with keeping the spirit. He turned to his neighbour for advice*

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on what to do with the spirit, because it was always under his arm. Just send him to the very middle of the sea to fetch a rope of sand. The man went home and the spirit asked: What, what, what? Go and fetch a rope of sand from the middle of the sea! The spirit left and never returned (Magyarszentmihály.) We must add to this, that ordinary folks regard an incubus as a demon.” (Kálmány: 1893: 6–7.).

Here Kálmány repeatedly mentioned the several versions of the legend of the “emerging of the earth” - the Vogul and Votyak versions published by Bernát Munkácsi, the Mordvinian, Cheremissian and Votyak versions published by Ferdinand Barna and the Bukovinian¹, Transylvanian Romanian², Buryat, Russian³ and finally Transylvanian Gypsy accounts (based on Wislocki: 1885: 64.) - and notes that the same theme occurs in the myth of the flood⁴. Kálmány continues his essay with the Vogul legend collected by Reguly that tells how Numi-Torum tied his own silver-buttoned belt around the world, Elm-pi finished the job and that is how the Ural Mountains were created. Kálmány draws a parallel between this myth and the Palots (Hungarian ethnic group) legend of how the dam of the lake at Endrefalva was formed. The latter story was collected by Kálmány himself at Ságújfalu (Kálmány 1893: 6–8.) and can be found in Vargyas’s abovementioned works - but we have nothing to add to it this time. Kálmány used a great number of texts to demonstrate the demiurge, and not diabolic, origin of the devil in Hungarian creation legends and arrives to the conclusion that “not counting the remains of the Islam and Christianity the data we collected prove our beliefs identical with that of the Voguls and show only an incidental similarity with the Turkish-Tatar, Mordvinian and Votyak mythology. We also have found elements resembling the Gnostic teachings” (Kálmány 1893: 27.) Why Lajos Vargyas did not mention Kálmány’s main text in his concise analysis and why he considered the incubus-myth (quoted in one of his footnotes) the only possible basis for comparison is yet to be explained – but that is just why we felt it absolutely necessary to introduce Kálmány’s abovementioned work in such detail. More precisely, although he mentioned fragments in the plural, he did not go into detail discussing the text about the drunkard’s soul. Vargyas too was searching for the Vogul legend of creation in Hungarian popular belief but knew that “in the most archaic versions God’s ally dives to the bottom of the sea to fetch some sand in the shape of a water-bird (Vargyas 1977: 109.) The incubus of Hungarian popular belief is mostly a chicken (still a bird if not a water-fowl), a creature known throughout the entire language area. The chicken-variant is widely known through the central and northern parts of the Hungarian-speaking territories, the eastern and southern parts of Transdanubia and the entirety of the Great Hungarian Plain. Both in this form and in different ones (a tiny man, a devil-lover, etc.) it is closely tied, in name and in the complex system of related beliefs, to the devil-image (Pócs 1980: 432–454.). As to the means of getting rid of the incubus, allotting an impossible task is a dominant feature throughout the entire

¹ Based on the *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde* I. 179. this same text would later be published by Dähnhardt too, although he refers to page 178. but does not specify the language of the original text. See Dähnhardt 1907: 43.

² Based on Müller, [Fr.]: *Siebenbürgische Sagen*. [2. Aufl. Hermannstadt, 1885].

Kálmány’s references in their original are excessively incomplete and inaccurate. Such is the case with the other early authors quoted in further parts of this study. Where ever I could I completed the data and made the necessary corrections [in brackets.] How ever, due to the inaccuracy of the referrals in many cases identifying and finding these old books in a library proved impossible. Thus in the main text and footnotes I used the bibliographic data of other authors, while the works used for the present study are listed in the bibliography.

The works I could not read personally I introduced here relying on the referrals but in a corrected version, whereas those I did actually worked on I present according to the original cyrillica.

³ Based on *Ausland*, 1866: 534; 1872: 1178.

⁴ Based on Andree [Richard]: *Die Flutsagen: [Ethnographisch betrachtet]*. Braunschweig, 1891.] 78–82.

geographical area. The “fetching of a rope of sand”-incentive appears frequently among these features, often combined with the “fetching water in a sifter”-motive. The motive of “fetching sand from the sea in a rope” is known only from the data collected by Kálmány in the Hungarian villages of Torontál county (today Serbia) and of those collected by Vilmos Diószegi from the Moldavian Csángó at Egyházaskozár (Baranya county, Hungary)). Similar motives include “fetching flour from the bottom of the sea” (in Szabolcs county), “fetching rope from the bottom of the sea” (Hungarian Ethnographic Atlas – MNA – Hertelendifalva, Szekler informant in Bukovina), and “fetching sand from the bottom of the river Tisza with the help of a rope” (MNA, Tizsasüly.)⁵ The incubus legend and the Earth Diver myth (the “sand fetched from the bottom of the sea”-motive) show largely identical geographical penetration: they are well-known primarily among the ethnic groups of the eastern territories (the Moldavian Csángó and the Bukovinian-Transylvanian; as we will later explain, in case of the legend of the genesis even Transylvanian Szeklers must be considered) but are sporadically spread in other areas as well.

So Vargyas’s opinion that the incubus-myth was shaped under the influence of the Earth Diver myth seems well founded, since the “fetching sand in a rope”-motive, even without linking it to the sea would have fulfilled the criteria of an impossible mission. The diabolical connotation of the incubus gives an obvious explanation to the substitution of the role (of the devil).

Introducing the Vogul creation legend Vargyas made the following comparison: “In Eastern European people’s culture this develops into a competition between God and the devil and during which the latter somehow manages to spoil the act of creation. For example, he fetches a piece of earth but hides a small part of it in his mouth. And when God orders the clod of earth to grow the mouthful begins to swell too. So the devil has to spit it out – and thus creates the mountains of the world. Or in another version when God falls asleep the devil tries to push him into the water. But in whichever direction he tries to carry God’s body to the shore – the land keeps growing in front of them in just the same direction; and several different concepts” (Vargyas 1977: 109.) The related footnote no.7 refers to the works of Adolf Strausz (1897: 5–23.), Dähnhardt (1907: 38–59.), Dragomanov (II. 1894: 3–21.) and Harva (1938: 114–127.) and declares that the legend has several parallels in other nations’ mythology: a Bulgarian, numerous Ukrainian and Russian, one Romanian (identical with the Bulgarian), Transylvanian Gypsy, Altaic Tatar and Votyak. He continues with: “These fragments are not present in a fifteen/sixteen-century Russian legend: God meets the Satan on the Tiberian Sea and asks him: – Who are you? – God – the other answers. – And what am I called? – The God of gods. And God does not punish him but sends him to the bottom of the sea to fetch some sand. The devil succeeds and thus creates the earth. Carpathian Russians speak of two pigeons bringing up the earth⁶, other texts include the devil in the act of creation” (Vargyas 1977: 109.) Lajos Vargyas also mentions some interesting versions: “In a Ukrainian Christmas carol God sends Saint Peter and Saint Paul to fetch some sand from the bottom of the sea, but in vain and eventually God fetches it himself. According to a Bulgarian legend – note number 9. Strausz 1897: 8–9 – God and the devil (born of God’s shadow) enter into a contract to divide the world between the two of them. Later God goes back on his decision and sends an angel to steel the contract. The angel shows the devil that he (the angel) can fetch some sand from the bottom of the sea and challenges the devil if is able to do so too. The devil sets off but turns back halfway to check if the angel had stolen his valuable treasure. Then he dives to the bottom of the sea but has difficulties returning with his heavy load. By then the angel flies off to

⁵ Institute of Ethnology, Hungarian Academy of Science, Archives of Popular Beliefs, courtesy of Éva Pócs.

⁶ Here footnote number 8. refers to Strausz (1897: 23.) and Dähnhardt (1907: 44–45.), most likely due to a misprint since the latter part tells about the Apokripha of the Tiberian Sea (we have just discussed in the previous sentence.) This legend is introduced on pp. 20–21 in Strausz’s book.

the sky with the document. Though the devil makes an attempt to follow but without avail – he manages to bite off a piece of the angel’s sole. It is the reason that all people have a hollow in the soles of their feet.”⁷ (Vargyas 1977: 109–110.)

It is clear that Lajos Vargyas knew the legend of the creation of the earth not only from the folklore of the Finno-Ugrian but also from that of the neighbouring Slavic and non-Slavic people. He referred to the written resource (the Apocrypha about the Tiberian Sea) and demonstrated through its examples and the legends discussed at the same place that the legend of the creation of the earth can not be viewed separately from the circle of other, especially dualistic creation myths - an idea we have to consider highly important. He quoted Kálmány’s text on the making of the man and the horse, the devil’s unsuccessful creative attempt as follows: the devil’s creations can never come to life, since it is for no one but God to give life or a soul, or the concept of animals holding up the earth, etc. In his work exploring the oriental roots of our traditions he reconstructed the state of affairs concerning our topic at the times before the conquest of Hungary. He wrote: “Fragments of our creation myths date back to the time of the Ugrian coexistence; the motive of the fetching of sand from the bottom of the sea and the conception of the world with a Leviathan, a buffalo or an ox (holding up the earth) originate from Volgan Turks“ (Vargyas 1977: 120.). He maintained this opinion in his later works: “The ‘bringing up earth’ has Turkish-Mongolian traditions in vast Siberian territories. ‘Being let down on a chain’, the devil-made man’s falling apart or the lake-dam at Endrefalva that is ‘long enough to embrace the world’ are solely Ugrian inventions. But these existed in just as rare, fragmentary forms in our folklore as the Turkish-Mongolian originated ‘bringing up earth’ did, which, on the other hand, is present in Ugrian culture. It is not impossible that we had already had them in our folklore when we survived this Turkish influence” (Vargyas 1996: 8.).

At the 1978 conference “*Myth and History*” held in the building of the Hungarian Academy of Science I delivered a lecture about the myth of the creation of the earth, based on three Moldavian texts published by Sándor Bosnyák in 1969. The sudden appearance of the legend that had been sought after for more than a century (true, mainly by Lajos Kálmány alone!) could have caused a real sensation, but at the time it provoked no reactions. After the lecture Lajos Vargyas walked up to me, heartily congratulated me and rejoiced that using different resources I had arrived to the same conclusions as he had in his study published in 1977, which, unfortunately, I had not yet been familiar with at the time. My only achievement was that I slightly questioned the enthusiastic comment of the collector-author on finally discovering the Hungarian version of the Vogul creation legend. I could do so primarily because I was familiar with the Bulgarian material. Besides Adolf Strausz’s works (which could have been enough) I knew some other Bulgarian works as well, some considerably new ones among them. At the Kliment Ohridzski University in Sofia I made a handwritten copy of a thesis, the motif-index of the Bulgarian creation myths (Mitseva 1968). So I can say that I had a good grasp of the full material, including J. Ivanov’s monograph (1925) and recent text editions.

Both the English edition of Dragomanov’s studies and Dähnhardt’s work convinced me that the dualistic creation legend of the earth cannot be researched without considering the similar legends of the people living nearby, and the written records of the Bogomil heresy. All the more so, since typologically the Hungarian texts indicate a closer relation to these, and not to the Vogul or other Finno-Ugrian people’s myths. I could refer to similar texts of American Indians thanks to a relatively recent study by A.B. Rooth (1957). The question whether being familiar with the

⁷ Vargyas’s footnote number 10: „For the Serbian version see: *Srpske narodne pripovjetke*. Beograd, 1863: 2 and.: *Srpske narodne pjesme* II. U Beču , 1845: 84–85, both by V[uk] St[efanović] Karadžić.”

'earth brought up from the bottom of the sea'-motive is part of our ancient inheritance or was passed on to us by our southern neighbours in medieval times I left open. "If we had brought it along from Asia we still have to take into consideration that, having lived right next to the radius of Bogomil doctrines this ancient tradition could not be left intact: it must have been fortified by them, if nothing else. As a third solution it is also possible that the popularity of Bogomilism was due to its incorporating the old Slavic and Bulgarian-Turkish traditions. Is it possible, that the common elements of Bulgarian-Turkish and Hungarian people's former culture live on, independently, in Hungarian and Baltic folklore? (Nagy 1979: 328.)

In the chapter denoted to legends of origin in the handbook *Hungarian Ethnography* I wrote about the myth of the creation of earth. I discussed Zolotarev's twin myth-theory (Zolotarev 1980) there (Nagy 1988). To the English version of that same study of mine I added A. Dundes's Jungian interpretation (Nagy 1989), so I do not think it necessary to go into further detail about it here.

The myth of the creation of earth has an incredibly rich research-history. A year after the Hungarian version of the present study had been published A. Johns issued an exhaustive treatise on the same subject. His proficiency in Slavic literature is truly fascinating. However, the considerable amount of Hungarian text corpus justifies a repeated survey of international research-history from the angle of Hungarian scientists. I focus on how these scientists utilized international results in researching the topic that intrigued them the most: the Finno-Ugrian originated traditions of Hungarians.

Lajos Kálmány was seeking evidences of a Finno-Ugrian relation in this legend. He set off a lasting aspiration: the similarity between Hungarian and Vogul, etc. texts has been proven since then. As there are no further developments in this field I excluded this material and the related literature from my survey, likewise the legends of the American continent(s).

I try to introduce the informational background that researchers of the topic could rely on in their attempt to explain the shaping and spreading of this text-type, and in what kind of concepts they had to integrate the Hungarian awareness of the legend. That is why I decided to include the reference data of the quoted studies throughout this study, as much as the aims render it necessary.

As it is evident in Lajos Kálmány's references, towards the end of the 19th century **comparative philology** possessed a great number of data about the dualistic legend of the creation of the earth. Obviously all the results of his research were followed with distinct, intense excitement.

M.P.Dragomanov wrote the best summary of the time.

I. 2. Abroad:

I. 2. 1. M. P. Dragomanov (1841–1895)

Earl W. Count (he wrote a dissertation about the earth-diver myth in 1935 at the University of California at Berkeley⁸) supported the English translation and publishing of Dragomanov's studies in 1961. He declared that the origin and history of this incomparable popular theory, the dualistic creation of the earth, was researched by such an outstanding - mainly but not exclusively Slavic - group of scientists in the 19th century who managed to integrate their profound material knowledge into the canon of western science in their works as no one else ever since

⁸ Count, Earl W. : *The earth-diver: an attempt at an Asiatic-American correlation*. Phil. Diss. (typescript) University of California at Berkeley. Idem: The earth-diver and the rival twins: a clue to time correlation in North-Eurasiatic and North American mythology. In Sol Tax (ed.): *Indian Tribes of Aboriginal America. Selected papers of the XXIXth International Congress of Americanists*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press (Lixfeld: 1971: 205).

(Dragomanov: 1961: vii.) The First World War brought an end this positivist or cosmopolitan, if you like, attitude that accumulated not only a number of mistaken ideas but also incomparable material knowledge in the spirit of comparative literature. Dähnhardt (1907) managed to complete the synthesis of 19th century research in time: the 20th century was mostly limited to live on the results of the two of them.

Ukrainian Mihajlo Petrovich Dragomanov wrote his series of studies in Bulgarian (a dedicated advocate of the Pan-Slavist movement, he worked as a university lecturer in Sofia and died there in 1895, see: Kirdan 1980: 838–841.).⁹

The studies he dedicated to the myth of the dualistic creation of the earth begin with examples. The first of the Bulgarian creation legends known by Dragomanov was issued in printing in 1868¹⁰, the second in 1884, published by Drinov¹¹, but he was aware of Russian, Finnish and Turkish versions too. He was also familiar with texts indicating a more distant relationship coming from the Slavic and non-Slavic people of the territories “from the Adriatic to Yakutland” (Dragomanov: 1961: 1–9.) He also published the Ukrainian Christmas carol that Vargyas referred to, relying on Strausz:

*„As it was ages ago,
Before the world began,
There lapped the blue sea;
On the blue sea
Stood three plane-trees,
On the three plane-trees three doves:
On the first dove
Sat the Lord himself,
On the other dove
Sat St. Peter,
On the third dove
Sat St. Paul.
The Lord said to St. Peter
'Dive, Peter, to the bottom of the sea,
Fetch, Peter, the yellow sand,
And carry it throughout the world.
Create, Peter,
Heaven and earth,
Heaven with the stars,
Earth with flowers.'
Peter dived and did not fetch sand,
And did not scatter it over the world,
And Peter did not create*

⁹In discussing Dragomanov's rich life-work this particular series of studies appears only as an item listed in a footnote. The author of this entry in the encyclopaedia probably was not aware of the American –issued English edition and never read the Bulgarian original.

¹⁰The resource: *Obščiti Trud*, III, 73–78: was put down by Bulgarian «colonist» Djenja in Bessarabia, see Ivanov 1925: 329. In the English version of Dragomanov's text the title of the periodical is consistently *Obšt Trud*, explained by the transcript-routine of the British Museum and the Library of Congress. Since in my experience it is not in use currently I refer to my resource based on the title published by Ivanov in Bulgarian.

¹¹ Strausz starts his book, published in Hungarian with the same two texts (1897: 5–9), likewise, Dähnhardt began his own book (1907: 2–3), quoting Strausz's first text (Strausz, Adolf: *Die Bulgaren*. Leipzig, 1898)

*Heaven and earth,
Neither heaven with the stars,
Nor earth with the flowers.”*

The same happened to Saint Paul, and then it was God himself who dived into the sea and created all that the two saints, substituting the Devil, could not.

A. Novosielsky published the text in 1857 in Vilna (*Lud Ukrainski I.*), and the French translation of one of its versions was issued in Paris, as early as 1864 (Dragomanov 1961: 9–10.) Mykytiuk (1979: 78-82)¹² introduced the unparalleled richness of the variational series of the Ukrainian Christmas carol (who sit on the tree, what kind of a tree, where that tree came from, what they fetch from the sea, what they create of that, etc.)

In this chapter, according to the title, I discuss Dragomanov’s ideas. Naturally, I make a clear distinction between the data borrowed from other resources and my own remarks. Dragomanov summarized the fervent research set off by the revelation of such an amount of texts. This was the time when the taking down of folklore texts and the exploration of the Slavic Apocrypha took place side by side (I. N.). Dragomanov acknowledged that the similarity of the two types of material had been discovered. This first brought about the recognition that the Apocrypha are a combination of Christianity and ancient **Slavic** mythology (e.g. **Slavic** dualism, the White God – Belbog - and the Black God – Chernobog – appear in these legends, especially in Afanasiev’s works and those of the Czech Erben¹³ written in the sixties). The traditions of non-Slavic people were regarded as traces of Slavic mythology kept by associated people. The development of the comparative method in folkloristics brought about the reconsideration of these views. In 1872 Alexander Veselovsky wrote: “Folktales taken down in Russia and Bulgaria originate from the Bogomil Apocrypha describing the dualistic creation of the world. These reflect oriental religious ideas”¹⁴ (Dragomanov 1961: 11.) In 1887 in the *Kievaska Starina* Sumtsov spoke of a Gnostic Iranian-Syrian province and named the Bogomils as mediators. He was also the first to draw up a parallel with a North-American Indian tale though he used it to demonstrate that even people having no connections at all may retain similar narratives (Dragomanov 1961: 10–11.) Léger¹⁵ was the first non-Slavic scientist who contradicted Erben and believed that the story had Christian or Manichean – but definitely not **Slavic** – origins. In fact, relying on an unspecified Midrash he assumed that it could even be Semitic. Dragomanov cooled this enthusiasm, looked into the matter but found no traces of it in Midrash-translations. French Americanist De Charency¹⁶, on the other hand, knew the Ukrainian pigeon-colinda and the apocryphal text telling the story about the Tiberias-Sea and concentrated on Vogul and American texts besides the numerous old world-new world parallels. He set up three categories: 1. The continental version: the earth was brought up from the sea by some kind of animal (a mammal or a bird), 2. The insular-version: peculiar to Japan and Polynesia, God himself draws up the earth from the water, as if it was some kind of fish, with the help of a fishing rod or other fishing equipment; 3. The

¹² A copy of this chapter of Mykytiuk’s book was given to me by Éva Pócs – I hereby thank her for it.

¹³ Aleksandr Nikolaevič Afanas'ev: *Poetičeskije vozzrenija [slavjan na prirodu]* [The Slavs’ Poetic Views of Nature] I-III. Moskva, 1866–1869]. Karel Jaromír Erben (1811–1870) Czech poet, historian and folklorist. His work under discussion: *Báje slovanská o stvoření světa* [The Slavic Legend about the Creation of the World]. *Časopis českého musea*, t. 40, 1866: 35–45. (Klima: 1982: 120–123).

¹⁴ *Slavjanskije skazanija o Solomone i Kitovrase [i zapadnye legendy o Moral’fe i Merline]*. Sanktpeterburg], 1872: 164.

¹⁵ Correctly: Leger, Louis - Paul - Marie (Toulouse, 1843 –): linguist, Slavist, still alive when (unknown to me) the great French encyclopaedia was published (*La grande...*21: 1144–1145.)

¹⁶ De Charency, Hyacinthe (Párizs, 1832 –): linguist, philologist (*La grande...* 10: 617.).

(East) Indian or mixed version combines the previous two concepts. Naturally, he considers the **Slavic** texts continental and believes the island-version to be the original, older one (Dragomanov 1961: 12–13.) De Charency's classification was so successful that Dähnhardt adopted it from Dragomanov's book, along with several other ideas. Later Lixfeld interpreted it as Dähnhardt's own idea (Lixfeld 1971:178.) And what is more, the esteemed researcher of Bogomilism, Dragoljub Dragojlović from Belgrade plainly introduced the concept as his own in his book written in 1970 (as implied in Károly Jung's interpretation: 1992: 164.) In 1888 in the French periodical *Mélusine* Dragomanov himself voiced his view that the differences of these legend-versions are not less significant as their similarities. He assumed that the basic story originated from Asia, the shores of the Indian Ocean (A.B.Rooth was of the same opinion in 1957.) Then, with the spreading of the Manichean teachings, through Babylonian and Iranian conveyance it reached the North of Asia and Eastern Europe somewhat transformed (Dragomanov 1961: 13.). Mochulsky's hypothesis that proto-Slavs were monotheists and their dualistic legends were merely adopted from the Apocryphal writings (imbued with Iranian concepts) Dragomanov believed unfounded. On the other hand he valued highly Veselovsky's two works, which serve as constant points of reference for topic-related research ever since: his two *Razyskanijas* (Veselovsky 1889; 1991) But he appreciated above all Veselovsky's third study, also referred to by Vargyas, written sometime between the other two (1890.) His 1889 publication is practically the first chrestomathy of the topic, in use to date. Dähnhardt listed it among his resources, as adopted from his main source, Dragomanov. In this study Veselovsky drastically changed his previous opinion of the Iranian –Gnostic origin of the legend. Influenced by Kaarle Krohn he now attributed the shaping of the story to the Finno-Magyar (sic!) and Ural-Altaiic tribes. Eventually he did not exclude the possibility that Gnosticism has influenced these Finnic legends as they spread to the South - that is towards the Slavs – and then the other way round: from the South back again to the North - from the Slavs to the Finns and the Ural-Altaians. This two-way movement was never documented with texts and Veselovsky's hypothesis was obviously too extreme for contemporary science even then. As the unidentified editor of the periodical *Russkaja Mysl* expressed his opinion in the July 1890 issue: it was high time to put an end to contemplating the rout of migration and accept the fact that the dualistic concept of creation could in fact evolve independently in physically separated ethnic groups – as a common phase in the religious development of several different communities. Veselovsky reacted with writing his third work. In this he almost repudiated the “Finnic theory” and recognizing the dualistic nature of American myths he acknowledged their comparability with those of the old world (Dragomanov 1961: 13–14.).

Of the South-Caucasian Suanitian texts (Trans-Caucasian in Dragomanov's and Dähnhardt's writings), identical with the Bulgarian ones, Veselovsky thought that in this case the Christian motive of the God–Satan brother-creators does not bring the solution any closer. It should be considered merely as a confirmation of the – in a wider sense – Finnic and Turkic versions, uninfluenced by Bogomilism as yet.

He refrained from accepting the concept of polygenetic development, saying: if in prehistoric times nephrite could get into Mexico (where it is untraceable in nature) than why should the case be any different with fragments of myths (Dragomanov: 1961: 15.)?

Dragomanov, unlike Veselovsky, separated the text taken from the Kalevala and American texts from the versions that spread among people living in territories from Bulgaria to Siberia – from Turkic groups to Yakuts. He believed that the latter had come from the same ancestry.

The common element in this group of texts is the antagonism between the two divine characters during the creation of the world. One of them sends the other to the bottom of the sea to fetch the material needed for creating the earth. In the Kalevala there is no antagonism between Veinämöinen and Ilmarinen, they do not create the earth, they do not use sand, etc. Likewise, the two creators and their conflict are not present in (American) Indian myths. In case of the people living by the Pacific Ocean and in America (at the Great Lakes or Lake Huron) the “oceanic character” of the legend reflects the natural circumstances of their habitat. Slavic and Turkic people on the mainland had been given this “oceanic cosmogony” from some source (Dragomanov 1961: 16–20.) He declared that the above-discussed myth could not be found in any of the different dualistic ideologies of pre-Islamic Iran. Simplifying the creation-stories of the sacred books: Ormuzd/Ahura- Mazda and Ahriman/Angro-Mainyus work independently - the first creates everything that is good, the latter - everything that is bad. The rich text-material introduced in Veselovsky’s works indicates that all that European folklore sustained of this is a general dualistic concept, whereas the dualistic legends of animal-creation known from Siberia to Britain were unquestionably the result of Iranian influence. According to Dragomanov the origins of “oceanic cosmogony” has to be looked for outside Iran. Below is one of his examples of Indian written records and folklore, a fragment from the *Taittiriya Brahmanából*:¹⁷

„*This [the universe] was first water, flux. Prajapati asked himself: 'How may it develop?' He observed a lotus leaf, which floated on the water and thought, 'There must be something on which this rests.'* In the form of a boar he plunged into the water near the lotus leaf. He found earth down below. After breaking off a piece of it, he returned to the surface of the water and placed it on the lotus leaf. As far as he spread it, so large is the extense of this broad object.” (Dragomanov 1961: 28–29.)

Dragomanov thought that it was possible that some such tale passed from India into the domain of Iranian influence mediated by the Chaldeans. The story that got into the Slavonic and Turkish dualistic creation legend is a combination of Iranian dualism and Chaldean “oceanism”. Gnostics and Manicheans further developed the Iranian-Chaldean concepts of cosmogony. From the third century on Mani’s followers and their descendants, sects preaching dualist beliefs, widely spread their views of the world from the Near East to Spain - not the least with the help of imaginative legends. These, just as Christian apocryphal legends, were regarded just as creditable as the gospels (Dragomanov 1961: 23–36.) Of the Turkic and Mongolian legends Dragomanov partly quoted one of Radloff’s texts (Radloff 1866: 175–184.) The same text Veselovsky published in full (1889: 23. ff. and 1891: 107. ff.) (Dragomanov 1961: 40–47.) Veselovsky wrote: “The (Russian) Raskolnik [Oldbeliever, I.N.] colonization may have brought (this narrative) to the frontiers of Russian soil, where it could be taken over and appropriated by the natives; but another assumption is also possible, as we have already surmised: for instance, in their development the Cheremiss, Mordvian, etc. and southern Slavic legends may have belonged at first to one and the same region and to one and the same religious world-view. The Bogomils may possibly have inserted into the cycle of their dualistic traditions which fitted their aims, and the Cheremiss and Altaians may have received back their ancient cosmogonic myth, heightened by Christian heresy and the apocryphas.” (Veselovsky 1889: 32; Dragomanov 1961: 48.) Dragomanov contradicted this theory minutely: he traces back the Altaic-Turkic texts to Iranian-Chaldean sources. These most likely found their way to the area with the Manicheans before the Russian colonization.

¹⁷ Resource of the text: Muir, J. (Coll., transl., and illustrated by): *Original Sanskrit Texts ... I–V*, 2nd ed. London, 1872–1873. I: 52–53.

In the texts taken down among the Yezids, South-Caucasian Grusians and Suanitians and Hungarian/Transylvanian Gypsies he pointed out the evidence, that the dualistic legend of the creation of the earth evolved from the East Asian myth in the Near East under Iranian-Chaldean influence.

„In the beginning the world was an ocean, in the midst of which was a tree created by divine power.

God lived on this tree in the form of a bird, for an unknown number of centuries. In a different region, far from the other, was a rose bush, covered with flowers. On one of these flowers was Sheik Sinn or Sheik Hassan el Baseri, whom the Lord had caused to emanate from himself.

After that, the Lord created from his own reflection the Archangel Gabriel, also in the form of a bird, and placed him beside himself on the tree. After a little he asked him, 'Who are you and who am I?' Gabriel answered, 'You are you, and I am.' With this proud answer the archangel wished to give God to understand that each of them had a special importance and that he, Gabriel, could consider himself the peer of his creator. When the Lord heard Gabriel's answer, he became angry, he pecked the archangel and drove him from the tree. Gabriel flew off and began to cut the air with his wings.

He wandered into every part of the world. He flew for several whole centuries, but finally he tired and returned to alight again on the tree. God asked him, 'Who are you and who am I?' The exile again answered the same as before, and again the Lord pecked him and drove him from the tree. Again he wandered over the desolate expanse, without a chance to rest. Once, when quite exhausted, he flew without realizing it, close to the rose bush of Sheik Sinn; the latter exclaimed, when he saw the archangel. 'Where are you going and why are you whirling about so?' The bird answered. 'Far from here there is a tree, and on the tree a bird; and whenever I try to perch on that tree, the bird drives me off.' 'What has it said to you,' asked Sheik Sinn, 'and what have you answered?' Gabriel then told him his conversation with God. So Sheik Sin taught him how to behave if he wished to get over his trouble. 'Go back to the tree,' he said to him, 'and when God again asks you the question, you answer, 'You are the creator, and I am your creature. You are the guardian, by your preëminence, while I am your protégé.'” Gabriel follows these directions and God asks him about his adviser – „Aha, [...] that is our Lord Al-Uarkani” – then allows Gabriel to sit beside him on the tree (Dragomanov 1961: 53–54.).¹⁸

This Yezid text suggests that Sheik-Sinn is a kind of god similar to Zervan¹⁹ (Dragomanov analyzed Zervanitic texts as well), God and Gabriel are his ancestors and Gabriel (Maluk Taus, in other Yezid texts) is his Satan, the devil of Christian and Turkic texts. So this is where the concept of the two opposing creators emerge, one of them more powerful and the creator of the other. Here we do not go into further detail about the question of God sitting in the world- tree in the shape of a bird (see: the Ukrainian Christmas carol), though Dragomanov did so, minutely. Grusian and Suanitian legends (the latter Dragomanov considered older, since these present God and Satan in an eternal co-existence), similarly to Bulgarian ones, contain the sharing of creatures between God and the devil, (live human beings, souls of the dead, animals, birds – see the above legend from the Szeged-region), and the contract between God and Satan. In the Slavic Apocrypha it is Adam who enters into an agreement with the devil, consequently the previous

¹⁸ Siouffi, N.: *Journal Asiatique*, 7e série, t. XX. 1882: 252–268. – the resource of the text quoted by Dagmarov.

¹⁹ Zervan, Zurvan etc.: in Iranian mythology the god of the Zurvanitic religion – the rival of the Mazdan religion, existing until the Sasanid period, from the 3rd to the 7th century, Supreme God (Tokarev 1988, II.: 147.).

texts must be older than the written ones. Dragomanov considered the Hungarian Gypsy text, which he published in full, even older (Dragomanov 1961: 67.).²⁰

So Dragomanov arrived to the conclusion that, since the two Bulgarian legends quoted in the beginning of his study, contain all the elements of the Asian, but most importantly of the Mesopotamian (Yezid) and Trans-Caucasian (Grusian, Suanitian) legends, the “oceanic motives” survived in them till those times.

In Trans-Caucasian legends the antagonism between God and the Satan is an important element, and the birth of God’s son, who regains God’s power for him. That the very same thing happens in Bulgarian legends proves that the motive must have been borrowed from there.

The Armenian sect of Paulicians spread its teachings in this direction, and in addition the Byzantine emperors relocated the Paulicians to Bulgaria. In Dragomanov’s time the sect still kept its original name (likewise the “Paltyan” who later moved to the Bánát region, cp. Jung 1992: 170–171.), though their native language was Bulgarian and they converted to the Catholic faith in the 17th century (Dragomanov 1961: 72–73.) The question is how much the Bulgarian dualistic creation myths reflect Paulician and Bogomil teachings.

Before discussing this issue in the second half of this study I offer a survey of how Dragomanov’s monograph (based on Veselovsky’s and others thorough exploratory work to some extent, itself a synopsis) appeared and was extended in the other great comprehensive study of the century, Dähnhardt’s *Natursagen*.

I. 2. 2. Oskar Dähnhardt (1870–1915)

Dähnhardt’s four-volume, gigantic work, attempting to collect the legends of origin of the entire world, remained a torso. Hannjost Lixfeld knew Dähnhardt’s work thoroughly and used it extensively in his own. He described Dähnhardt in a way that was usual at the end of the 20th century when writing about positivist predecessors who had followed geographical-historical methods: “His theoretical aims were typical of the period and are now many times outworn, yet the sketch he drew on a large scale is exciting and the vast amount of material he spared no efforts to collect and make accessible, is still valuable” (Lixfeld 1979: 217.). It is worth mentioning that Dähnhardt was first a secondary school teacher, then a principal. He was familiar with Dragomanov’s studies; he had them translated. He walked in the footsteps of the great Ukrainian scientist not only in the sources he used and his thoughts but also in the composition of his own work.

The first chapter in the first volume of his *Natursagen* is “The Genesis”; Dähnhardt begins it with discussing Eurasian legends. His analysis of the basis of the legends (Sagengrundlage) is similar to that of Dragomanov described in the previous chapter of the present study. Then he continues with examining the geographical spreading of the narrative in focus. In his opinion this process in Eastern Europe set off with the appearance of Bogomilism.

First he introduces two types of legends. One is the Bulgarian legend (see above), also published by Dragomanov, but Dähnhardt did not include the whole texts (He left out the episode of Mary and her brother, Jordan, the birth of Christ, the breaking-off of the 800yearlong partnership of God and the Satan, etc. Likewise, he omitted the scene when Christ demands the dead for

²⁰ Resource: Wlad. Kornel: Gypsy Anecdotes from Hungary. *Journal of the Gypsy Lore Society*, 1890. II., 2. April, 67–68., at least for the translator, Count it was easier to use the text already translated into English; since Dragomanov mentioned that one of its versions had been published as H. von Wlislöcky’s (sic!) text: 1886, 1: under the title „Die Erschaffung der Welt”. The two texts are the same (naturally the latter is in German, both are identical with Wlislöcki’s text published in Hungarian in 1885, see later at Dähnhardt!).

himself, as the contract granting the dead for the Satan and the live for God was valid only with God, the Father and not with his son. Dähnhardt quoted Adolf Strausz's text.).²¹

The other example is a Turkic text from the South-Siberian territories of the Altai; its source was Radloff's publication, and was included in Dragomanov's study too (1961: 40–47: see above). In the first example Dähnhardt explored the views of the bogomil sect reflecting the Gnostics' doctrines and Iranian dualism. In the second he found proof of the direct Asian influence reaching the "Slavic world" from the East (Dähnhardt: 1907: 1–6.).

Tracing down how the basis of the legend was shaped he, like Dragomanov, finds it very important to introduce the Iranian dualistic teachings. To point out similar motives he too quoted examples from the chapters of *Bundahish* (Genesis.) These he did not consider a result of a genetic relation (the creation of angels and the devil in the Bulgarian legend – Ahriman as the creator of demons in the other, etc.). Dähnhardt quotes Iranian myths about Ormuzd and Ahriman from 5th century Armenian author Eznik's book written against heretics and other contemporary resources. These introduce Ormuzd as bright and fragrant while Ahriman is dark and smells bad, he is deceitful and unable to create on his own – only if he follows Ormuzd's guidance, etc. (Dähnhardt 1907: 7–12.). So while the dualistic motives are the same, the oceanic ones are missing. Dähnhardt agreed that Babylon, that is the desert inhabited by the Chaldeans, is the territory that embraced these motives from the East as the locals had had oversea relationships since as early as 3-4 thousand years B.C. This also leads to the conclusion that they were familiar with the Indian Ocean (Dähnhardt 1907: 13.). The Babylonian myth of creation he did not quote from the Akkadian cosmogonic poem *Enuma elish*, but from Hugo Winkler's newly published work.²² Here Marduk is a creative demiurge but unlike the Satan or Erlik, he is benevolent. The world emerging from the sea appears in this myth too, Marduk creates this world in his own image (Dähnhardt 1907: 13–14.).

He too originated the sea-motive from India, and in accordance with Dragomanov he took his examples from old and new sources (ex. popular texts from Hindustan) to prove the existence of motives that are also present in the above mentioned basic texts: bringing up earth from the sea, the growth of the earth, the foam of the (milk) sea used for creation, etc.

Narratives about the opposition of gods, or two gods (Brahma and Vishnu) taking part in the act of creation (*Bhagavata-purana*) only faintly resemble the notion of dualism. In "oceanic" India the idea of the earth brought up from the sea came both naturally and necessarily. Other parts (omitted here) were added to the story during the migration (Dähnhardt 1907: 14–20.). The "core" of the Bulgarian and the Turkic legend is the concept that it was not God himself but the devil that brought up the earth; he is not God's equal but would like to be. The idea appeared first in the teaching of Gnostics (Jewish Ophites 1st-3rd century A. D., Marzionits 2nd-6th century A. D.) God is immaterial and inconceivable for the human brain, his opponents are his subordinates: hostile powers, among them the demiurge, creator of the material world.

The motive of the unsuccessful attempt to bring up earth from the sea occurs first in the creation legend of Mandeans (they lived in the Southern parts of ancient Babylon, their sacred book, the *Genzâ* was written between the year 300 and 600 A.D.): the demiurge Ptahil is unable to create the earth until he recognizes God²³ (Dähnhardt 1907: 22–24.).

²¹ Strausz, Adolf: *Die Bulgaren*. Leipzig, 1898: 6. ff.

²² Winckler, Hugo: Die babylonische Welterschöpfung. *Der alte Orient* VIII. 1. Heft 1906.

²³ Based on Brandt, A. J. H. Wilhelm: *Die mandäische Religion, ihre Entwicklung und geschichtliche Bedeutung*. Leipzig, 1889.

Though the narrative in focus cannot be found in Mani's (3rd century A.D.) teachings but – here Dähnhardt names Dragomanov as his predecessor through reviving the latter's idea – in Middle Eastern religious systems this was the time when picturesque narratives, “anthropomorphic legends” quickened the fantasy of crowds. At that time official and literary Avestism and legend-rich Zurvanitic religion flourished side by side in Iran (Dähnhardt 1907: 25–26.), while the Christian world saw the birth of apocryphal legends. The latter were considerably influenced by Manicheism (I. N.).

He did not exclude the possibility that Mani's followers, who earned much popularity for their doctrines (or Mani himself, who taught in Iran, Turkistan and Western China) enlivened their preaching with legends like the narrative of the dualistic creation of earth. Anyhow, Dähnhardt was convinced that the Asian ground form (Grundform) could have developed into a legend only in Iranian surroundings (Dähnhardt 1907: 26.) In this process of development he, like Dragomanov, included the legends of the people below: A/ the Yezids, B. / Trans-Caucasian people (Grusians, Suanitians), B/ Transylvanian Gypsies. He followed his predecessor in his choice of texts (for publication); perhaps he quoted more from the original sources. Or, as in the case of the Gypsy legend, he chose the shorter version indicated but not included by Dragomanov - all the more so since this had been published in German. He recognized the fact that Dragomanov's two texts (see above) both go back to the same source: Henrik Wislocky's text (Dähnhardt 1907: 34–35.).

Wislocky put it down among Transylvanian nomadic Gypsies, „word for word”, as told by Rózsi Pále „elderly Gypsy woman” – unfortunately we do not have any more information about the actual event – and published it translated into Hungarian “as accurately as possible”. I included here the English translation of Wislocky's Hungarian original:

„At the time when the world had not yet existed and there was only a great water, our God decided to create the world. He did not know what kind of world to create. That he had no brothers or friends vexed him too. In a fit of temper he threw his staff into the great water. And then he saw that a big tree sprung of his staff, and under that tree (or on a bench of the tree) the devil sat (at the time still white, like man, created by God somewhat later), and said laughing:

- Good day to you! My dear brother! You have no brothers, no friends; I want to be both your brother and friend...

God rejoiced and answered:

- Don't be my brother - just be my friend! No one can be my brother!

For nine days they were together walking up and down on the great water and God came to realize that the devil did not love him. Then one day the devil said:

- Dear brother! We both will have a bad life if there is only the two of us: I'd like to create others!

- Do so! - God answered.

- But I can't! - replied the devil. - I would create a great world, but I can't, dear brother!

- All right - said God - then I will create a world! Dive into the water and fetch some sand: I'll create earth from that sand.

The devil asked:

- How would you do that? I don't understand!

But God said:

- I say my name and sand turns into earth! Go and fetch that sand!

The devil dived into the water and thought that he would create the world himself. So when he held the sand in his hand he said his own name. But the sand scorched him and he threw it away. He returned to God and said:

- I can't find any!

God sent him back again:

- Just go and fetch the sand!

For nine days the devil went on searching for sand. He kept saying his own name, but the sand scorched him and he threw it away again. Every time the sand got red-hot and burnt his whole body so on the ninth day he turned black. He returned to God who said:

- You are black now! You are a very bad friend! Go and fetch some sand but do not say your own name or you'll burn up!

The devil left again and returned with the sand. Then God created earth and the devil rejoiced and said:

- Here, under this tree is where I live, and you, dear brother, go and find another abode for yourself!

That made God angry and he said:

- You are a terrible friend! I don't need you anymore! Off with you!

Then a bull came along and took the devil with him. [The devil was scared and in pain; he began to scream so hard that the tree burst into splinters and the splinters turned into people.] And flesh fell off the great tree on the ground and the leaves of the great tree turned into men. That is how God created the world and mankind..." (Wlislöcky 1884: 764–765)²⁴

We do not know the original Gypsy text but the German translation corresponds with Wlislöcky's Hungarian translation. However the unidentified English translator altered the style of the text to some extent and made the dialogues more flowing. Thus it is now impossible to decide whether the very few differences in meaning [included in brackets] that can be detected in the translated text indicate the translator's changes (this seems more likely) or is the signs of a genuine variant. Should the latter be the case, we have no chance to know how it was shaped. Dähnhardt believed that the story originated directly from Indo-Iranian sources (Dähnhardt 1907: 35–36.), because of the archaic elements listed below: 1. God is upset because he is lonely (vs. the Trans-Caucasian legend). 2. The devil coming from the abyss appears in the tree (vs. Altaic legend). 3. The dialogue in the tree, the promise of equality (vs. *Yezid* and Indian legend), 4. People made from the tree (*Bundahish*, cap. 15), 5. The bull defeating the devil (Parseeism: Ahriman fighting the bull.)

Summarizing his results Dähnhardt declared: The core of the dualistic creation legend of earth in the traditions of Eurasian cosmogony originated in Iranian territories. It was transformed by the influence of Indian and Gnostic doctrines and definitely brought to Bulgaria by the Paulicians. Supposedly the primordial legend (Ursage) spread from the Trans-Caucasian territories over the Caucasus to the Slavs - that means that it could reach Bulgarians from this direction as well. It got through to the Far East and America in the other direction. The medium of it's spreading could be – apart from migrations – both the far-reaching and long-standing Mongolian Empire and also the different commercial routes (Dähnhardt 1907: 36–37.).

II. Bogomilism and the legend of the creation of the earth

²⁴ Also published by Strausz, with slight stylistic alterations (1897: 18–19.), defining his resource as: „1. Wlislöcky: A[us] d[em] Volksleben d[er] Zigeuner. In Hungarian *Olcsó könyvtár* booklet no. 189.” Wlislöcky's 1885: 64–65. - text includes slight stylistic differences too.

The Bogomil heretic movement was born in the middle of the tenth century in Bulgarian territories, probably in Macedonia (bogo mili = those who love God; Bogomil was the name of the founder, pope Jeremija). The history of the movement had three phases: 1. the time of the Bulgarian Empire (from the birth of the sect to the Byzantine annexation of Macedonia/Bulgaria in 1018), 2. the age of Byzantine Bogomilism when it was formed both by Byzantine theology and other, secular effects, 3. the era of the Second Bulgarian Empire until the Turkish occupation of the country in 1393 (Lixfeld 1971: 182.)²⁵.

It is important to establish, declares Lixfeld following Obolensky (ib.), that contrary to Dähnhardt's ever so convincing assertion, Bogomilism did not come to the Balkans from Asia Minor: this territory was influenced by the Asian part of the Byzantine Empire only during the second phase. On the other hand, in Western Europe closely related sects appeared from the 12th century (Cathar movements, Albigenses), whose doctrines were closely related to those of the Bogomils. The Bogomil concept of the dualistic creation of the world was different of that of the Iranian. While in the latter the material, visible world is originated from two creators, the Bogomils put it down entirely to the demiurge Satan, who, in their beliefs is the creator of the whole visible world. Thus before discussing the correlations of popular creation legends and Bogomilism we have to examine the exact teachings preserved in the surviving written records. In popular texts there are two creators: one of them tries to compete with the other, but the genuine creator is God himself.

The sacred book of the Bogomils, the *Tajna Kniga* (Secret Book) was presumably written on the basis of a 10th century Bulgarian book, since lost. Its two still extant handwritten Latin copies indicate that the Lombardian Cathars and the Albigenses of Southern France accepted the dualistic bogomil doctrines.

This work is also known as *Interrogationes or Liber Sancti Johannis*. Its first manuscript was found in the archives of the inquisition in Carcassonne. It was published first by the Dominican Benoist in 1691 (*Histoire des Albigeois et des Vaudois ou Barbets*, t. I. Paris, 1691, 283 ff.), then republished in Leipzig in 1832 (Thilo: *Codex apocryphus Novi Testamenti*, t. I. Lipsiae, 1832, 884 ff.). The second manuscript dates back to the fourteenth century and was discovered in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna in parchment codex Nr. 113. Ignaz von Döllinger published it first in Munich in 1890 (*Beiträge zur Sektengeschichte des Mittelalters*. Bd. II. 85 ff.). M. R. James translated it into English: *The Apocryphal New Testament*. Oxford, 1924, repr. 1953, 187–197. Jordan Ivanov's book contains both manuscripts (1925: 73–86.), the manuscripts' abovementioned data: Santos Otero 1978: 198.

Relying on the results of modern research Santos Otero concluded that one could not be so sure about the Bulgarian origin of the Slavic apocryphal book as earlier (ex. J. Ivanov issued his collection of Slavic apocrypha under the title *Bogomil Books and Legends*; others simply called these stories "Bulgarian tales").

The theory that medieval Bogomil heresy had a crucial part in the birth and spreading of the Old Slavic apocrypha is unacceptable. It is only the case of the earlier mentioned *Tajna kniga* where Bogomil origins might be considered. However, its Bulgarian original did not survive, and, according to the author, it contains "utterly Manichean speculations" ("rein manichäische Spekulationen") about the genesis (Santos Otero 1978: 27–28.).

"*Liber Johannis*" contains the questions John asked Jesus Christ about the creation of the world at the Last Supper. The story of God and the Satan, the angels, the making of man, the birth of Jesus and the concept of redemption unfolds in the answers. Here I included only those relevant

²⁵ Based on Dmitri Obolensky: *The Bogomils. A Study of Balkan Neo-Manichaeism*, Cambridge–G. B., 1948.

from the point of our topic. Dragomanov recognized the similarities that point to the *Bundahish* and the books of Manicheans but also drew attention to the differences that are close to popular texts. Such are the motives of the Satan diving to the abyss and the raising of the earth (this time the whole of it) from the waters, the pact between God and the Satan, granting that for 7 days, until the coming of Christ, he has command of the world (Dragomanov 1961: 78.)

„II. *Et dixi: Domine, antequam Sathanas caderet, in qua gloria persistebat apud Patrem tuum? Et dixit mihi: in tali gloria erat, quod ordinabat virtutes coelorum; ego autem sedebam apud Patrem meum. Ipse erat ordinans omnem imitatore[m] Patris, et descendebat de coelo in infimum et ascendebat ab infimis usque ad thronum invisibilis Patris. Et observabat gloriam, quae erat moventis coelos, et cogitavit sedem suam ponere super nubes coelorum et volebat Altissimo similis esse. Et cum descendisset in aërem, ad angelum aëris dixit: aperi mihi portas aëris, et aperuit ei portas aëris. Et petens deorsum, invenit angelum, qui tenebat aquas, et dixit ei: aperi mihi portas aquarum, et aperuit ei. Et transcendens, invenit universam faciem terrae coopertam aquis. Et transcendens subtus terram, invenit duos pisces jacentes super aquas, et erant sicut boves juncti ad arandum, tenentes totam terram, invisibilis Patris praecepto, ab occasu usque ad solis ortum ...*”

(„And I said: My Lord, in what glory had the Satan resided with your Father before his fall? And he said to me: His glory was such that he was in command of all matters of the heavens; and I sat with my Father. He was in charge of all my Father’s likenesses [creations?], and he descended from the heavens to the abyss, and ascended from the abyss right to the throne of the invisible Father. And he saw the glory of the one who moves the heavens and decided to place his own chair above the clouds in the heavens, and wanted to be like the Highest of All. And when he descended to the air he talked to the angel of the air: Open the gates of the air for me! And the angel did so. And going down he met the angel holding the waters and told him: Open the gates of waters for me! And the angel did so. And diving down he found the earth, flooded with water in its entirety. And diving under the earth he found two fish lying outstretched in the water and they were like oxen harnessed for ploughing, holding up the entire earth, according to the word of the invisible Father, from sunset till daybreak.”) (Ivanov, based on Döllinger’s publication 1925: 73–74.)²⁶

Yet again, I do not find it relevant to discuss further the notion of fish/oxen holding the earth – along with several other parts of this text, not quoted here. But I would like to emphasize again that the legend of the creation of earth should never be examined isolated from other creation myths, if only because they belong together in written sources.

While a firm, absolutistic dualism was characteristic of Bulgarian Paulician sect (God is the creator and master of the heavens only, he has no power whatsoever over the underworld – the devil is the god of the underworld and God’s equal); in the moderate dualism of the Bogomils the devil is God’s subordinate. God created the spiritual, the devil the material world. This separation of the spiritual and material world, the idea of theodicaea (theological tendency: in spite of all the bad things present in the world it wishes to prove God’s goodness) supported the popularity of Bogomilism in the lower classes (Lixfeld: 1971: 184–185.) But the common characteristic of European popular creation legends, that all good things come from God – bad things from the devil (notably the two such groups of animals originated from these two oppositional creators) does not occur in any form in Bogomil doctrines. Legends of the dualistic creation of animals are also known in those parts of Europe where Bogomilism is known too. What is more, in these

²⁶ Translated from Ivanov’s Latin publication by the author, I. N.

territories both concepts appeared at the same time: such stories of animal-creation first occurred in French *Roman de Renart*'s medieval tales (around 1200 A. D.)

So we cannot exclude Bogomil influence that easily, all the more so since there is one, and only one single group of the dualistic creation myths, which unquestionably do have Bogomil sources: God breathes life into the devil's creation (Lixfeld: 1971: passim).

That is how the making of Adam is described in the *Acmonian Euthymios' letter* and Euthymios Zigabenos' *Panoplia dogmatica* around 1050. In his book written against the Bogomils, the Byzantine theologians introduced their doctrines. (Lajos Vargyas listed the related Hungarian legend among our Uralic inheritance.) Whether Bogomil heresy had an influence on the legend of the creation of earth or its version known in Eastern Europe is the only question left.

Dähnhardt saw an obvious similarity between the Bulgarian texts that spread in the orality and the Bogomil doctrines, but "not as much as one would expect" (Dähnhardt 1907: 41.)

He arrived to the conclusion that, unless we suppose the existence of popular but so far undiscovered books the following motives, present in Bulgarian legends, could originate from one place only: the Armenian old country of Paulicians. These motives include motives are: creating the world of a single grain of sand (in Bogomil beliefs, as we have seen, Satan brings the whole earth to the surface of the water), Satan's superiority over God and God's weakness (in the stern version of Bogomilism the world is divided by two equal principles, in moderate Bogomilism God has power over the Satan who is his creation and his subordinate as such.) This is reflected in the folk narratives in which God initiates the creation of the world; Satan is powerless against God and able to create in God's name only.

In this respect Dähnhardt considered the Bulgarian text (mentioned first) closely related to the Bogomil doctrines (see above; original: in *Obšči Trud*.) He included several Slavic data, which he considered identical with the Bulgarian one. In fact some of those are merely re-published, but not all, as, for example, he mentioned Karadžić's texts here (see above!) (Dähnhardt 1907:42. footnote no.1.) He listed in this group five more myths of creation and included their texts in the publication. One of these is a Russian legend; its time of publication preceded that of the Bulgarian one²⁷. A Latvian²⁸ myth follows and Drinov's Bulgarian text, quoted from Strausz. The text of the two legends left seems worth introducing here, with regard to the closeness of the place where the Hungarian versions originated. The first one is a Romanian text from S. F. Marian's book²⁹ (Dähnhardt 1907: 42–43); it was most likely collected in Bukovina.³⁰

"Before the creation of the earth God and the devil were alone on the surface of the water. When God decided to create the earth he sent the devil to the bottom of the sea to fetch the 'earth-seed' in his (God's) name. Three times the devil dived in the water but never fetched the earth-seed, because every time he took it in his own name. At last he dived for the fourth time in his own and God's name – this time he brought up at least a little bit of earth, as much as he had under his nails (claws).

God made of that some kind of scone (=a clod of earth) and settled on it to rest. The devil thought that he was asleep so he tried to roll him into the water, along with the clod, and make a

²⁷ *Etnografičeskij Sbornik* [izd. Imperatorskim Russkim Geografičeskim Obšestvom, Sankt-Peterburg], VI., 1864.

²⁸ [Anš] Lerhis-Puškaitis: *Latvešu tautas, teikas un pasakas*. [Bde. 1–7. 1891–1903] Mitau–Rīga. VI.: 24.

²⁹ Simeon Florea Marian: *Insectele în limba, credințele și obiceiurile românilor*, Studiu folcloristic, București, Edițiunea Acad. Rom., 1903: 122.

³⁰ The author whom Dähnhardt consistently identified as „Marianu” is Simeon Florea Marian (1847–1907.) Born in Suceava county, he became a teacher of religious instruction and natural sciences at the local secondary school. In many of his ethnographical chrestomathies he indicated in the title that it contains Bukovinian materials, ex. *Poezii populare din Bucovina. Balade române*, etc. (Datcu–Stoescu 1979: 271–276.).

Lord of himself. But whenever he reached out with his hand the clod of earth grew bigger, and eventually grew into a huge ball of earth. This compressed the water and when God woke up he saw that by then there was not enough room left for the water. As he had no idea of his own he sent the bee to the hedgehog, the wisest of all the animals God had created. But the hedgehog gave no advice, since God is omniscient. However, the bee hid and spied upon the hedgehog talking to himself: 'God obviously doesn't know that he has to create mountains and valleys to make room for the water.' -The bee returned to God with the news and God acted upon the hedgehog's words of wisdom. But the hedgehog cursed the bee for eavesdropping on him: the bee is to eat nothing but faeces. But God rewarded the bee and decided to make the bee's faeces not dirty and disgusting but worthy of eating it - and that is honey." (Vs.: Jung 1989: 178–179. 1992: 165–166.)

Dähnhardt considered „the eavesdropping bee”-motive Armenian and dating back before Bogomilism, whereas „the hedgehog aiding and advising God in creation”-motive he believed to be of Iranian origin (see *ibid*: 42–43.) So we know of this text that it was told in Romanian, probably in Bukovina, whereas about the other text we know only that it was taken down in Bukovina, but have no information about which ethnic group had told it³¹.

A precise translation may make the conventionalized character of nineteenth-century communication perceptible, as demonstrated in the collected materials. The words in [brackets] indicate where Afanasiev's text and Dähnhardt's differ.

„In the beginning there was nothing, but the skies above and the waters below. God sat in a boat, cruised about the sea and found a huge piece of solid scum in which the devil was hiding.

- Who are you? - God asked him.

- I feel no need to talk to you - answered the foul fiend - except if you take me into your boat. God promised that he would do so and he got the answer:

- I am the devil.

So now they traveled together, without talking to one another, but then the devil began:

- How pleasant and convenient it should be if we had a mainland!

- We should have one- God answered. - Dive to the bottom of the sea and fetch me a handful of sand, I'll make a mainland of that. But when you get down there and reach for the sand say these words: I'm taking you in the name of God.

The devil did not need to be told twice, he got to the bottom of the sea in no time. Down there he greedily grabbed the sand with both his hands saying:

- I'm taking you in my own name.

Reaching the surface of the water, filled with curiosity he looked down on his clenched fist and was astonished to find it empty. But God noticed what had happened, comforted him and ordered him to dive to the bottom of the sea again. So he did and on reaching for the sand he said:

- I'm taking you in his name.

But reaching the surface he brought with him no more sand than what he had under his nails.

³¹ Dähnhardt's footnote: „*Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie* I, 178. f. = Galician version in Afanasiev's work 460 (see footnote no. 13 of the present study.) and Erben 143–144.”, he did not identify this study either. Possibly the number of the page was misprinted so Erben's publication can be found at the place already given in footnote no. 13. The 2nd volume of *Zeitschrift für deutsche Mythologie und Sittenkunde*. Hrsg. von J. W. Wolf, Göttingen, Verlag der Dieterichsen Buchhandlung was the only book I personally had a chance to read, it was published in 1855. It includes two subsequent publications with the signature L. A. Staufe, Wien, the title is „Sagen aus Bukowina“, and both contain numbered texts only, with no additional data. Since this book begins with text no. 6 it seems likely that the text Dähnhardt took from the first volume (and published) was written by the very same author, as part of the very same series. Again, he added no information at all about the quoted text.

God took that little sand, sprinkled it over the surface of the water and thus created mainland, but no bigger than a deck chair.

When night fell God and the devil lay down to rest [God facing the East and the devil facing the West.] As soon as our Lord fell asleep the devil pushed his body eastwards so that he would fall into the water and sink. But in whichever direction the devil tried to push God, the land grew far and wide just there. The devil tried a push to the West, but the land stretched in the very same direction. That is how mainland was made in all the other directions. [Then God woke up and rose to the sky.] (Dähnhardt 1907: 43.)

As we saw, Dähnhardt (following Dragomanov) was of the opinion that the dualistic legend of creation originated from Iran (in light of Indian effects) and attributed its development to the influence of Bogomilism. On the other hand Will-Erich Peuckert believed that the “diving to the Tiberian Sea/primordial sea”-motive is known throughout Eastern Europe, North and South America, Australia and Polynesia; its westernmost appearance was registered in the Baltics, Eastern Prussia, Slovenia and Slovakia. „Contrary to Dähnhardt’s thesis, this is probably a kind of dualistic system of primitive people. It seems unwise to originate it from Iran, if only for geographical reasons.” – he wrote (Lixfeld 1971: 193.).³² At that time, that is in the thirties others were uncertain too (ex. Kurt Schier, Alfred Kühn, see Lixfeld 1971: 192–193.)

Twin-gods and cultural hero-twins are present in the myths of all sorts of people. Zolotarev was convinced that the basis of the legend was the reflection of a dualistic society, a tribe divided to two fraternities – this concept evolved independently in different groups of people. It is only the motives of “the clod of earth hidden in the mouth” and “the stone pillar growing out of the water” that he considered to be of Bogomil or, in general, apocryphal origin. The motive occurs “in the Balkans, among the Russian, Mordvin, Mari, Chuvash and Finno-Ugrian” (Zolotarev: 1980: 56–57.)

III. The apocrypha about the Tiberian Sea

So the sacred books of the Bogomils do not draw up the dualistic creation legend of the earth in the form it is known from the folklore: the only apocryphal document that actually contains that form is the one titled *Svitok bozhestvennykh knig* (Bundle of Divine Books), or *O Tiveriadskom more* (About the Tiberian Sea) – but it can be found under different titles as well. Its most comprehensive transcript was published by E. Barsov in 1886, based on a 17th century manuscript,³³ though by then fragments of the “Slepche version” were known too. The latter was transcribed from an 18th century manuscript by Russian Slavist V. Grigorovich in 1845 in the

³² Artikel „Schöpfung” in *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*. Bd. 9. Nachträge. Berlin, 1938/41, 276. alapján.

³³ DÄHNHARDT 1907: 45. identified Barsov’s manuscript as one of the 16th century, moreover he declared that *Svitok ...* (The Bundle of Divine Books) – including the story of the Tiberian Sea – appeared in manuscripts as early as the 15th–16th centuries. Since in his work he relied entirely on Dragomanov’s writings, Dähnhardt probably either carelessly read his original or used a superficial translation. Here is what Dragomanov wrote: „The narrative of the Tiberian Sea and *The Bundle of Divine Books* were found so far only in (Northern) Russia and in late (17th–18th century) manuscripts. That means they were most likely written down for the first time in Northern-Russia and fairly late, that is in the 16th century, from written sources like ‘*Paleia*’ (cp: footnote no. 40.) and ‘*Beseda triokh svatitelei*’

monastery of the Macedonian village of Slepche. It was published first by Shchapov in 1861 (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 65).³⁴ This latter manuscript, originally written probably in Church Slavic, is unknown, most likely has been destroyed since then – only the notes taken from it survived.

The research of this exciting manuscript-tradition should belong to the question of Bogomilism – if it was not still the topic of recent debates whether the above text could be linked to the Bogomils at all. Twenty different surviving manuscripts of this text are known to date, the earlier mentioned “Slepche-version” is the only one of South Slavic provenience, all the rest are of Russian. The question of the Old Slavic apocrypha is quite peculiar in itself. The term “Old Slavic manuscripts” usually means codices. Their original language is identified as “Old Slavic” or “Old Bulgarian” in case of 9th-10th century manuscripts; but if they date back to the 11th-17th and 18th centuries the term is “Church Slavic”. The language of the codices from this second phase bears the effects of the linguistic environment in which they were born, they are usually written in Cyrillic letters but Glagolitic manuscripts of both periods are significant as well. Their identification is extremely difficult and their text tradition is also rather complex. Their registration has a rich literature too: an index issued in 1957 included 664 (!) catalogs (SANTOS OTERO: 1978: 30). They are particularly important for folkloristics because, though a significant number of them are of Greek, and some of them of Latin origins – and there are originally Slavic apocrypha as well – these are considerably more recent than those and are tinted with local tradition.

The apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea survived only in Slavic manuscripts so far. Thanks to the collectors we know that six of the eight manuscripts which contain the earlier version (this is the North-Russian version in Kuznetsova’s opinion) were in the property of farmers and village priests who lived in the territories of the Vologda, Perm and Olonetsk provinces (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 65). This collection of documents is particularly important because there is always considerable uncertainty about verballity unsupported by written records. However, the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea is just one drop in an ocean of Slavic apocrypha; they are not even mentioned

³⁴ (Discussions of Three Fathers of the Church), or from the orality” (DRAGOMANOV 1961: 82). Similarly, Lajos Vargyas either misread Strausz’ correct statements („In a Russian cosmogonic work - its **contents** (my highlights, I. N.) were already known in the 15th and 16th centuries – titled ‘The Bundle of Sacred Books’ we find the following legend” – STRAUSZ 1897: 20 – or he adopted Dähnhardt’s mistaken dating.

Щапов А. П. *Православный собеседник*. Ч. 1. 1861. С. 262–263. He published it again two years later, than J. Ivanov issued its New Bulgarian translation (IVANOV 1925: 289).

in the most recent, monumental monograph of old Russian apocrypha (MIL'KOV 1999).³⁵ By the end of the 19th century the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea had a rich literature. First Mochul'skii, then Veselovskii introduced it in 1889, he also issued the first comprehensive bibliography of the topic and a newly discovered version – by favour of Porfir'ev – from the library of the Solovetskii monastery.³⁶ Veselovskii classified the then-known texts in two groups: in those of the first group the narrative begins with God appearing on the Tiberian Sea (that substitutes the primeval ocean) and meets the devil there. That is the Barsov–Porfir'ev - manuscript. According to the other type of text (the “Pypin-manuscript” – he published the manuscript of a *Svitok* – and the “Grigorovich and Mochul'skii - manuscript”) this encounter is just one episode in the creation-story that tells how the son of God and the Holy Spirit separated from the Father, and how Jesus Christ created the world by the order of the Father (the sky placed on top of iron columns, etc.) This particular encounter is the one that consistently appears in folklore texts (DRAGOMANOV 1961: 79–8).

Let us see now the text of the apocryphon, first after Dähnhardt, who adapted the Barsovian version from Jagić's German publication.³⁷ (DÄHNHARDT 1907: 45):

“When neither the skies nor the earth existed, there was only the Tiberian Sea and it was bottomless. The Lord stood above the Tiberian Sea in the air and noticed a water bird swimming in the sea bellow and that was Sataniel. The Lord spoke to him as if he had not known him:

– Who are you?

Sataniel introduced himself:

– I am god.

– And what do you call me?

Sataniel answered:

– You are the God of gods and the Lord of lords.

Had Sataniel not spoken to God in that manner, God would have destroyed him right there and then, on the Tiberian Sea.

³⁵ Although he quoted the text from one single manuscript, the one that survived in the library of the Solovetskii-monastery, (stamp No.925.) and described the appearance of this type of narrative in folklore, but did not name the actual apocryphon-type (MIL'KOV 1999: 97 ff.).

³⁶ The shortened form of the work *Skazanie o sedmi planitakh* was published by Porfir'ev, more about it later cp.: footnote no.47.

³⁷ JAGIĆ, Victor: *Slavische Beiträge zu den biblischen Apokryphen. I. Die Altslavischen Texte des Adambuches.* [Denkschriften der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-historische Klasse 42.] 1893, Wien.

And the Lord said:

– Sataniel, dive into the sea and fetch me some earth and a firestone!

Sataniel obeyed, dived into the sea and fetched the earth and the firestone. The Lord took the earth and sprinkled it over the Tiberian Sea and said:

– Let the earth on the sea be fat and wide!

And he took the firestone from Sataniel, broke it into two, kept the half in his right hand for himself and gave the half in his left to Sataniel. And the Lord took a stick in his hand and began to hit the stone with that saying:

– Let disembodied angels and archangels in my likeness come out of this stone!

And immediately the force of fire began to spread and the Lord created angels and archangels, all nine choruses of the angels. And, seeing what the Lord had done, Sataniel too began to hit the stone that God had given him from his left hand. Sataniel's angels too began to fly out of his stone and he created a whole army of them. And the Lord raised Sataniel above the order of all angels, and the Lord stopped at the ninth chorus of angels.³⁸ When Sataniel saw that all the angels gave glory to God he wanted to become God's equal. In his arrogance he arrived to this idea: 'I wish to raise my throne above the clouds and become equal with the Most High.' As God recognized his evil intentions, he wanted to thrust him with all his ferocious army down to the earth. God sent Michael against Sataniel. Michael came but Sataniel's fire burnt him. So Michael returned to the Lord:

– You see, I did all you ordered, but Sataniel's fire burnt me!

God made Michael a monk (that is he shaved his hair to make a tonsure) (Pypin: "a monk's habit with Christ's plain cross") and gave him the name Michael, and named Sataniel Satan..."³⁹

So Barsov's version does not contain the introductory episode that tells about the columns which Zolotar'ev, though vaguely, identified as Bogomil-originated motives (though nobody else did so). This episode tells roughly the following: God creates the sun and the moon. The Lord says: –Let there be darkness! – And columns are created in the air by the Word of the Lord. And those

³⁸ Dähnhardt's footnote no. 3 : „The German publication of the Grigorovich-version – PYPIN, A. N. – SPASOVIĆ, V. D.: *Geschichte der slavischen Literaturen*. Nach der 2. Auflage aus dem Russischen übertragen von Traugott Pech. Bd.e I-II. 1880–1884, Leipzig: 109. – contains the following complement: 'Then God made Satanael the head of all the orders of his angels and listed Satanael's army – his own creations – as the tenth among these orders.'

³⁹ Strausz had published this in Hungarian before as a fragmentary text from *The Scroll of Sacred Books*. He did not identify his sources but included further details (1897: 20–21).

columns have been unshakable since the beginning of the world. And then God saw that it was all going to be right.

– Let the earth rest on top of these unshakable columns and rock, and let there be iron gates and copper gates, and beneath that, in the ravine, the copper-hell, and beneath the ravine – hell (tartar). – Let the stormy and salty Tiberian Sea be on the earth! – And it had no shores. And the Lord descended across the sky to the Tiberian Sea, and saw the mallard/duck, etc. (DIMITROVA-MARINOVA: 1998: 51–52).⁴⁰ In the socialist countries during the Soviet era the research of the Slavic apocrypha, as a part of Slavic literary history, linguistics and folklore, was continuous but with moderate intensity: until the eighties, to my knowledge, hardly any folklore-researches were carried out in this field.⁴¹ This is worth noting only because from the nineties on we have witnessed an outburst of interest towards religious traditions, and in particular the apocrypha that take up a significant position in the cultural history of Slavonic people.

The outstanding 19th-century philologist authors' works and the literary and popular texts of the time serve as a base for the fresh discoveries of the late 20th century – after a hundred years of silence.

The creation legend of the earth had its own monographer too. In her first work, V. S. Kuznetsova (KUZNETSOVA 1994) had the opportunity to examine twenty manuscripts instead of the previously known six that is she added fourteen new written versions of the story about the Tiberian Sea. These date back to the 17–18th centuries but the most recent one is from the eighteen-forties and, as we have mentioned, were found in North Russian territories and contain

⁴⁰ Dimitrova-Marinoва presented the full text of an 18th century manuscript that can be found in the Archives of the Bulgarian Academy of Science, number 566. As she did not mention it in her study we do not know whether it is identical with the single Bulgarian manuscript, the Grigorovich-manuscript, that is supposed to be lost. The title of the manuscript is Сеи списокъ ис книги Пале (This is a copy from the Book Paleia.)

The so called 'Paleia' has great importance in the text tradition of the apocrypha of the Old Testament: the Greek word „palaia” means 'old', that is 'from the Old Testament'. This polemic text interprets the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament and has an anti-Judaistic character. There are two different Paleias: one is the commenting, explanatory (tol'kovaia), the other the historical (istoricheskaia) Paleia. The oldest manuscript of the first dates back to the 14th century, but since it is mentioned in the Nestor-chronicle its time of origin must be the 12th century or even earlier. Up till the 14–16th centuries it was considered the most prestigious and widely used religious encyclopaedic work in contemporary Russia (either the same applied to Bulgaria or a Russian manuscript found its way to the Bulgarian collection.) It contained numerous apocrypha from the Old Testament, thus substituting the Bible itself. The apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea was included in several manuscripts, as indicated by the above example (SANTOS OTERO 1978: 25; LIKHACHEV 1987: 285–288; MIL' KOV 1999: 130). For the translation of the Church Slavic text I have to thank Ágnes Kriza. Since this episode has practically no significance in the examination of the Hungarian myths I present its contents in an abridged, reduced form.

⁴¹ The expeditions organized in the eighties, nineties, and just recently registered a very rich tradition of biblical narratives in the territories of present day Russia, Ukraina, Belarus and Moldova. But the type in question now can only be found in a fragmentary form in the publication containing 1300 texts from this fieldwork and from other unpublished manuscripts of local archives (BELOVA 2004.).

episodes that are all known in Eastern Slavic folklore traditions. Of these Kuznetsova rendered the following the most important: 1. creation of mainland, 2. fight between the angels and demons, 3. Satan's expulsion from heaven, and 4. creation of man. Her second book was an analysis of popular texts (KUZNETSOVA 1998b), mainly from motivic point of view. She used more than 300 texts: apart from Eastern and Southern Slavic (Bulgarian and Serbian) peoples' legends their neighbours' (Finno-Ugrians from the North of the European part of Russia and the Volga-area – Karelo-Finnish, Zuryan, Votyak, Cheremis, Mordvin –, Obi-Ugrian – Ostyak, Vogul –, Buriat and Altaian) myths as well. In Eastern Slavic tradition she separated the Northern and Southern versions (she used the term “sujet”). The Northern one minutely details the motive of diving, retains the image of the demiurge appearing in the shape of a bird – either the bird sent by God brings up the earth or the anthropomorphous Satan, or the ornitomorphous Satan – the earth is created by two demiurges, together or separately (God creates the plains – Satan is unable to do that of the piece of earth dropped by God). The Southern “sujet” elaborates on the second part of the story: the sand brought up from the bottom of the sea used for the real creation; then adds motives to the story that are missing from the Northern version: the growing of the land when the Satan attempts to push God into the water. So the motive of diving appears in a laconic, short, reduced form and the ornitomorphous Satan is left out of the story (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 60–61). Kuznetsova prepared an index of motives of the available texts, which reflects a fascinating variability. Chapters related to our topic: *The appearance of the creators* (both of them in the shape of birds; God and a bird; God, Satan and a bird; God and Satan, in the form of a bird; God and Satan, who is not a bird but fictiously turns into one while diving; God, Satan and different types of devils [chort]; or simply two souls) – I do not include the subchapters of the titles below – *The friendly/fraternal relationship between the creators, The creation of Satan, The creators' state before the act of creation, First God dives to the abyss to fetch the material for the creation, Both creators dive, The bird dives, The second character hides a piece of the earth brought up, The means of bringing up the earth, The material used for the creation, The creation of mainland, Satan tries to push God into the water while he is asleep, God makes Satan fall asleep for the time of the creation of the earth, etc.* (KUZNETSOVA 1998b: 139-147).

Kuznetsova firmly believes that the shorter, Northern version is the older and more original. She sees its proof in the ethnic traditions of the people – predominantly Finno-Ugrians – living in the

area where this version is spread (this would be the core of the story), that got contaminated with the popular form of Christianity, passed on by Russians, and thus emerged the story of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea. The ornitomorphous earth-diver's myth got contaminated with a series of apocryphal and canonical stories, which linked the fight of the angels and the creation and deliverance of man to the original core of the story (KUZNETSOVA 1998b: 132–133). The creation legend of the world in the form it appears in Eastern Slavic folklore and in Old Russian written literature could not have come from Bulgaria since they are entirely different, both in their “sujets” and motives (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 72–73). She believes the peculiarities of the Belarussian and Ukrainian texts require some explaining, as these people do not have Finno-Ugrian neighbours. Either the Bulgarian texts got reshaped in these territories, or the details of the Northern version were substituted for the Southern ones – thus creating contaminated versions (Kuznetsova: 133–134.)

The story below was told by a farmer who came and went frequently in the Southern parts of Ukraine: Kuban, Odessa and Bessarabia. His narrative was published in the May 1887 issue of the *Kievskaja Starina*, pp.196–197 (DRAGOMANOV 1961: 86–87).

„Long, long ago, when there was yet in the world neither people, nor earth, nor trees, nor any kind of living creature whatever; there was water everywhere; and above it the first heaven, where lived God and his two servants, Mishka and Grishka ... And in the same heaven where now is the Mother of God, [since previously the first heaven has been mentioned, this must be the second] ... there lived Satanail, and he did everything perverse to God. Whatever the Lord wanted to do, Satanail would take it and mixed it up, the wretch. And the Lord began to think how to get rid of Satanail: but not to get rid of him, but to take away his shirt, in that was Satanail's power. Once Satanail undressed, put his shirt on a stone and began to swim in the sea, because the wretch liked to bathe; while the Lord sits in his heaven and watches. And the Lord began to tease Satanail. 'You cannot,' says he 'reach the bottom of the sea.' 'Yes I can too,' says the devil. And Satanail began to try diving and the Lord called Michael and ordered him to fly over the sea, and when Satanail dived, to blow on the sea.

So it happened. Satanail dived the first time, and Mishka began to blow on the water. Immediately the sea was covered with a crust; it had frozen. Satanail rose up and broke the ice with his head. The Lord says to him, 'Dive,' says he, 'once more!' They had an agreement to dive three times, Satanail dived once more, and Mishka blows, and even sat down on the water, he

wanted so much to please God. The sea again became covered with ice, even thicker. Satanail came out and again broke the ice with his head. The Lord says to him, 'Now dive the third time!' Satanail dived, and Mishka thought he would burst – he blows and blows on the water. And the Lord began to help him; he blows on the sea with all his strength. The sea became covered with such thick ice that Satanail, when he tried to come out, could not break through with his head, and in that time Grishka grabbed his shirt and started to lift himself to the sky. Satanail, when he saw that this business was not in fun, melted a hole and started after Grishka. He began to catch up, because Grishka had only two wings, and Satanail all of six. But luckily Mishka appears and cuts off Satanail's wings. Satanail fell into the sea, and Mishka and Grishka carried his shirt to God. It was in this same shirt that Jesus Christ was tortured on the cross; but the Lord made Mishka and Grishka the archangels Michael and Gabriel.”

Another Ukrainian text tells how the angel dived into the sea to bring some earth for God to create mainland, but using the little dust he had hidden in his mouth the angel made mountains and forests of his own. This dichotomy of “fertile plains made by God – infertile mountains, rocks and stones made by the devil” is so much a characteristic of Slavic and Caucasian myths (with the exception of Bulgarian legends) that Dähnhardt denoted a separate chapter to the related texts under the title “The Creation of Mountains” (DÄHNHARDT 1907: 52–58).

He too believed that they were the effect of some kind of direct near-eastern (perhaps Iranian) influence, not Bogomil. In his collection of examples there are Caucasian, Russian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Slovakian and Slovenian texts. His Ruthene/Ukrainian text from the territory of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy might be of interest for our topic. In the beginning there was only water everywhere. One day God ordered one of his archangels called Satanail to fetch a handful of sand from the bottom of the sea in God's name. But twice Satanael brought up the sand in his own name, and both times the sand disappeared from his hand. The third time he obeyed but hid a bit of the sand under his tongue. He wanted to copy what God would with his handful.

“Even so God knew what Satanael had done. He did not say a word but took the sand from Satanael's hand, kneaded it into a pie, laid it on the surface of the sea and blessed it. In that very moment the sand-pie began to swell in every direction. It grew until its edges reached the skyline. The very same moment the sand that Satanael had hidden under his tongue started to grow too and it surely would have choked him had he not began to run up and down on the earth and spit it out. This spitting made the mountains and rocks of the earth – otherwise it would have

*remained totally flat. Thus the archangel Satanael stayed alive but god punished him: he cursed and banished him from heaven to hell, where the devils enthroned him. That is why lands are sacred but mountains; especially rocks are the work of the devil. That is why no crops grow on them and that is why devils like so much to abide among rocks and mountains where they have their meetings with witches” (DÄHNHARDT 1907: 55).*⁴².

The variability of these texts is really high: the sand is hidden in different parts of the devil’s body (his eyes, ears, nose, etc.), by spitting out the sand he creates not only mountains but also other infertile territories (deserts, swamps, etc.) and different harmful things (tobacco or hop). The Slovakian legend that verbalized this notion has deviated considerably from the earth-diver type and does not include the motive of diving at all:

“In the beginning of the world God was flying about high and carried earth in his clothing. And wherever he spread it plains, mountains and fertile valleys were made. The devil set out in pursuit of him; he wanted a share for himself. But he couldn’t reach him, so he grabbed God’s clothes, and when he tore it rocks fell out. That’s why the peaks of the Tatra are barren and infertile“ (Ib.: 58).

Returning to Kuznetsova’s conclusions that deny the Bulgarian origin of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea, they comply with Dähnhardt’s views, as we saw. Thus it is no surprise that we find the same in Dragomanov’s works, whose ideas Dähnhardt adopted eagerly.

He too was of the opinion that the story of the Satan appearing in the shape of a bird had spread among Russians and in general among eastern Slavs much before the sacred Bogomil books arrived from the south. While the story of the “Russian Slavs” is rich in variations with elaborated details, Bulgarians have only one single manuscript (Dragomanov believed the Macedonian manuscript from Slepche to be Bulgarian), and it contains only one episode, in spite of the otherwise voluminous Bulgarian apocryphal literature (DRAGOMANOV 1961: 83). Dragomanov established that certain parts of the South Slavic (Bulgarian and Serbian) apocryphal books (some of these I mentioned in this study, the others need not be mentioned here one by one), fragmentarily refer to the dualistic creation of the earth or the creation of the earth of mud, and the sky and the earth of foam – but they do not include the story itself. About Serbia, where Bogomilism was widely spread, he declared that the dualistic creation legend of the earth

⁴²: *Zeitschrift für Österreichische Volkskunde* VII: 17, based on a publication by Gregor Kupčanko.

was unknown there;⁴³ although Afanas'ev, Veselovskii and others had all added to this category the two Karadžić-texts that we mentioned in the beginning of the present study in connection with Lajos Vargyas's references. Dragomanov did not recite the story word by word; instead, he retold it in his own words:

„The devils, when they left God, grabbed the sun, which the king of the devils bore stuck on the end of his spear. The earth began to pray to God that it was being scorched by the sun, and God sent the archangel to take the sun from the king of devils. The archangel began to go over the earth with Satan. Once they came to sea and started to bathe. The king of the devils stuck his spear with the sun into the ground. The archangel proposed to Satan that they dive, to see who could dive deepest. The archangel dived and brought up sand in his teeth. When it came the devil's turn, he created a crow out of his spittle and placed it to watch the sun while he threw himself into the sea. But when Satan had dived in, the archangel made the sign of the cross over the sea, so that the sea iced over; he seized the sun and flew god ward. The crow began to caw, the devil heard it, but he could not break through the ice; he dived back down into the depth, took a stone, and with it he broke the ice and took after the archangel. But the latter already had one foot in heaven, so that the devil succeeded only biting a piece of flesh out of the other sole. To comfort the archangel, God promised that all people should have hollowed soles”

(DRAGOMANOV 1961: 84).

The other Karadžić-text, a song from Montenegro, was based on this same story. In this song the Emperor Duklijan (Diocletian) substituted Satan and John the Baptist the angel. Diocletian's crown appears as the stolen object and it turns into the sun in the sky. Here we find the motive of the three times-repeated diving and saying of God's name, though it is present in the form of a false oath (DRAGOMANOV 1961: 83–85.)⁴⁴.

According to Johns "the narratives concerning „retrieval of a valuable object” from the devil present an interesting problem, since they resemble the Earth Diver myth (the competitive diving of an angel or John the Baptist and the devil or the Emperor Diocletian) but do not concern the origin of the earth.” So several researchers (Dragomanov, Kuznetsova, Petkanova-Toteva) are of

⁴³ Károly Jung published the Hungarian translation of the only truly „Bulgarian-type” Serbian legend. According to his study even Serbian researchers neglected this text publication and Jung rendered it to be probably of Bulgarian origin. Jung believed that typologically the Karadžić-texts did not belong to this group; otherwise he did not examine any written tradition, i. e. manuscripts (Jung 1989; 1992.).

⁴⁴ Károly Jung quoted a fairly recent publication on the topic: Nada MILOŠEVIČ-ĐORĐEVIČ: *Car Duklijan iKrstitelj Jovan*. In *Zajednička tematsko-sižejna osnova srpskohrvatskih neistorijskih episkih pesama i prozne tradicije*. Beograd, 1971. 163–175. (JUNG 1992: 246).

the opinion that they are not connected typologically. "Given the creativity and flexibility typical of oral literature, where episodes and motifs are freely developed and combined in new ways, it seems more likely that one source gave rise to the diving motif both in the Earth Diver and 'valuable object' narratives in Ukraine and Southeastern Europe, rather than two completely different ones" (JOHN 2005: 281–282).

Naturally, the motive of "stealing a valuable object" already incorporates the narrowed domain of the "stolen contract"-motive and this leads to Adam's contract and the New Testament. But this is no surprise: some of both the written and the word of mouth-texts include it. In my opinion the Karadžić-texts (due to their similarities with either the above quoted Ukrainian text and the Bulgarian one, quoted by Vargyas in the beginning of this study, or other similar texts not mentioned here) fit into that circle of variations in which the examined text-type appears, in spite of their differences. Dragomanov was of a different opinion, he kept to his conviction – which, as quoted above, Dähnhardt adopted in a slightly simplified version – that Gnostic (Iranian-Caldean, Mandeian and Yezid) creation-traditions shaped the Eastern Slavic apocryphal literature of the Tiberian Sea with the help of some unidentified agent but directly (DRAGOMANOV 1961: 89.). At the end of the 19th century Russian scientists had not yet refused the idea that the Bogomil apocrypha had been the source of Russian manuscripts. For instance, examining the then known manuscripts (among others a 17th century one from Kiev titled „*Slovo o zachamii neba i zemli*" – Words about the beginning of the sky and earth) Mochul'skii grouped them thematically as follows: 1. God creates the world of the earth brought from the four corners of the world, 2. God orders Satan to fetch some earth from the four corners of the world, 3. God interferes with the creation of the world by ordering Satan to bring up some earth and stones from the sea. He established that they all reached back to what had been written down in the first part of *Liber Sancti Johannis*, that is the doctrines of Bogomil heretics (MOCHUL'SKII 1896: 11).

Kuznetsova put down these hundred year-old opinions to the few data known at the time.

To further prove the Russian provenience of this group of manuscripts she pointed out their textological closeness to the two works of Old Russian written literature, regarding both the contents of the different episodes and the motives of the "sujet".⁴⁵ These two works, *Skazanie o sedmi planitakh* (Narrative of the Seven Planets) and *Povest' sviatogo Andreia so Epifaniem o voprosek i otvetekh* (Saint Andrew's Discussions with Epiphanius about Questions and

⁴⁵ In Russian folkloristics „sujet” does not stand for the context of the variant but, with the morphological interpretation, a kind of „object” – so that is a broader term than 'type'.

Answers).⁴⁶ Both contain the Satan's expulsion from heaven, the fight between the archangel Michael and Satan, but the latter also includes the duck-Satan's diving for earth, rather similarly to how it is presented in the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea. This work, just as the one about the Tiberian Sea, was written in the 17th century and its manuscript found in the library of the monastery on the Solovetskii Island. That is, the places where the written versions of the "sujet" appeared are identical with the territories previously identified: the north Russian and Upper-Volga areas, where, according to the apocryphon, it evolved (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 65–66). The Bulgarian, Serbian and Bosnian (called so by Ivanov) manuscripts (also mentioned by Dragomanov) Kuznetsova rates in accordance with Dragomanov: since, in spite of their references, they do not contain the "sujet" they cannot be considered as possible sources (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 66–67). In the chapter "Nineteenth Century Debates on 'Higher Powers' and the 'Secret Books'" of his monograph Mil'kov writes about the Bogomil influences at the time of the Kiev Rus. Though in this chapter he discusses the dualistic creation legend of the earth (MIL'KOV 1999: 97–100), his knowledge of the related literature and text-material is deficient. He proves the relatedness of the Slavic texts through Siberian Russian, Belarussian and Polish versions. Then, walking in Veselovskii's footsteps, he made the précis of Cheremis, Mordvin, Altaian and Yakut, and following Beliaev⁴⁷ – a Buriat text. He concludes that although these received some Christian varnish, they retained their original, pre-Christian meaning. As for the effects of Bogomilism, its strict version (two creators of equal rank taking part in the creation) he cannot find in the Russian material – neither in written, nor in oral tradition. So in his opinion we cannot talk of the direct influence of Bogomil doctrines during the time of the Kiev Rus but of their "transplantation" within certain limits (MIL'KOV 1999: 105).

But the debate is far from being over. Bulgarian Dimitrova-Marinova does not accept the Russian provenience of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea, that is the conclusions of Kuznetsova's dissertation (KUZNETSOVA 1998b.). They had the opportunity to personally express their differences of opinion at a Moscow conference in 1995. The topic of the conference was the reflection of the biblical sujets in Slavonic and Jewish popular culture. However, at the time

⁴⁶ Порфырьев И. Я. Апокрифические сказания о ветхозаветных лицах и событиях по рукописям Соловецкой библиотеки. *Сборник ОРЯС*. Санкт-Петербург, 1877. Т. 17. Кн. 1. С. 86–89. A study (with certain shortenings) had been published previously the text of *Сказание о семи планитах*: Щапов, А. П. *Православной собеседник*. 1861. Ч. 1. 258–260. (KUZNETSOVA 1998a: 77).

⁴⁷ Беляев М. В. *Происхождение народных легенд о миротворении*. // *Известия Азербайджанского государственного университета*. Общественные науки. Баку, 1925. Т. 4-5. С. 70–73 (MIL'KOV 1999: 119).

Dimitrova-Marinova was familiar only with the 1995 Moscow publication of the theses of Kuznetsova's dissertation. In her opinion one of the most important point of difference between Bogomilism and orthodox Christianity is the explanation of the creation of the earth and man. A great number of Bogomil literary works elaborate on the subject: *Tajna kniga* (Secret Book), the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea, numerous works on biblical subjects in a catechetical form⁴⁸ under the title beginning with *Voprosy i otvety ...* (Questions and Answers...), especially the ones belonging to the *Razumnik-* (Explanatory) type, the *Besedy triokh svatitelei* (Discussions of Three Fathers of the Church), *Bor'ba arkhangela Mikhaela s Satanailom* (The Fight of the Archangel Michael with Satan), *O vsej tvari* (Of All Creatures) etc. – all belong here.

The importance of these popular works that are so close to folklore, is all the more bigger since so far no Slavic manuscript of the Secret Book, considered to be the most significant work of Bogomil heresy, was recovered and it has no any recorded text-parallel in Slavic written literature. The works mentioned above contain the Christian interpretations of mythological archetypes. This interpretation was probably formed under the influence of Bogomil dogmatics, but not under the direct influence of the *Secret Book*. According to Dimitrova-Marinova there could be three possible reasons for this:

1. The *Secret Book* had no written text in Bulgarian. It was put down, and in Latin right away, only when it had to be transferred to Western Europe.
2. In old Bulgarian written tradition only a close circle of the initiates were familiar with the *Secret Book*. That is why the authors of the other works created in Bulgaria either did not know it or if they did, they deliberately ignored it.
3. The authors did not intend to set up a Bogomil cosmogony – they merely wished to convey a new cosmogonic model in the spirit of Bogomil doctrines that originated from the living mythological tradition.

Dimitrova-Marinova accepted this last, third possible explanation. She believes that the existence of moderate Bogomilism in popular traditions was the precondition, the reason why Bogomil doctrines appeared in Bulgaria first (DIMITROVA-MARINOVA 1998: 38–39).

Answering Kuznetsova's reasoning, that the manuscripts of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea were found in Russia, she claims that this fact on its own does not prove anything: Klement Okhridski's works survived only in Russia too. The great number of North Russian manuscripts

⁴⁸ Explanation of religious principles in question and answer form.

is not a decisive argument either since earlier Veselovskii published several, typologically similar legends from all kinds of different people (DIMITROVA-MARINOVA 1998: 47).

Examining the motives of the apocrypha (ex. whales holding up the earth) she arrives to the conclusion that these are on connection with one another, appear in identical cosmogonic contexts even when one or the other is missing here and there. For example Explanatory-type Catechisms contain text-borrowings from other apocrypha, which are determinant in old Bulgarian apocryphal tradition: the creation of the sky and the earth, Satan diving, the particulars of the story of Adam and Eve or how God and Satan planted a tree in Paradise, how they stole the seeds, etc. The homogeneous nature of these manuscripts implies the hypothesis that there must have been a common source somewhere that by all means could not be the *Secret Book*, since that is incomplete. However, the Explanatory-type could be a source of the *Secret Book* (DIMITROVA-MARINOVA 1998: 41–42). The apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea plays a definitive role in these examinations. Dimitrova-Marinoва is familiar with the complete and at the same time allegedly more recent redactions from the Barsovian and the so-called Archangelsk versions; she examined altogether 17 manuscripts. The short versions, which are supposed to be older, do not contain the whale-motive; instead they include the spreading of the earth, which is quite frequent in Slavic oral legends as well. The comparison of the different versions (ex. investigating the creation of the moon and the sun in different manuscripts: in the *Secret Book* they are made of the circle of angels ruling the air and water, in Catechisms of the Explanatory-type – of God’s tear drops and his divine throne, In the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea the sun is made of God’s undershirt, the moon – of his divine face) suggests that their authors “borrowed” from one-another. Thus she arrives again to the presumption of an unknown cosmogonic-cosmologic work as an original source (DIMITROVA-MARINOVA 1998: 42–43).

Unlike the author of the *Secret Book* who wrote a dogmatic work, the creator of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea intended to unite written and word of mouth traditions with a particular aim. In this Bogomilism undoubtedly served as the guiding principle but the author’s views were far more moderate than that. This work must have been created by a man of letters who had both a good literary and theological education and a broad knowledge of the world. The work reflects that tendency of legendarization, which was a characteristic of 11-13th century Bulgarian literature (DIMITROVA-MARINOVA 1998: 46).

The Russian reception of Bogomilism and its literature has usually not been part of the Russian-Bulgarian dispute. “Apocryphal, Bogomil and Anti-Bogomil literature penetrated Old Russian literature through different agents and quite intensively. Coming from the South Slavs it spread widely in Russian territories and had a perceivable influence on the shaping of Old Russian Christian culture”(SIMI 2003: 118). However, this does not decide the question of the Russian vs. Bulgarian provenience of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea. Making this decision definitely cannot be the task of Hungarian researchers – but following the course of the debate is.

IV. The Hungarian Creation Legend of the Earth

Summing up the research history of the dualistic creation legend of the earth it is not difficult to realize that of all the concepts of how this legend was shaped and spread and how it migrated, only the latest summative study mentions Hungarian creation myths (JOHNS 2005). Apart from the fact that until the late sixties such texts were unknown even in Hungary (unlike the above-quoted similar texts), this is not really surprising because not even the most outstanding experts had a full overview of the facts (although the topic has enormous literature).

The truly fastidious and thorough lexicographer of the similarly fastidious and thorough *Encyclopädie des Märchens* had no scruples writing down the following: „the earth-diver myth cannot be traced down in European narratives” (WARD 1982: 141). Sándor Bosnyák was the first to publish three legends in 1969 that included the motive of the earth brought up from the bottom of the sea. In 1987 he presented five more and mentioned that he had four more texts from Moldova. One of these was probably the fragment from Lészped (Lespezi, Romania), that he had published in 1980 (BOSNYÁK 1980: 19) Including the two fragments from Bukovina published in 1977 (BOSNYÁK 1970: 45) he collected fourteen texts altogether, three of them in Bukovina and one in Palots land (Northeastern Hungary).⁴⁹ János Ráduly and József Faragó published three versions from eastern Transylvania in 1990, thus there are 17 registered Hungarian popular

⁴⁹ I personally knew Ferenc Kelemen, artist of wood carvings from Hollókő, the only person outside Moldova and Bukovina who was familiar with the creation-legend of the earth. I first met him after Bosnyák’s publication in 1993, in the Paris building of the UNESCO (just like in a fairy tale) where the village of Hollókő, as part of the World Heritage, was introduced through a series of programs and an exhibition. All he could tell me was that he had heard the legend from „Auntie Terka”, their neighbour, who had spent her entire life in the village.

texts;⁵⁰ a number not to be underestimated even in comparison with the neighbouring Slavic⁵¹ and the somewhat more distant Baltic folklore. Ráduly and Faragó also gave a detailed summary of the Romanian parallels, based on the Romanian catalogue of myths published in the meantime (BRILL 1981). But the question of how to interpret the unexpectedly recovered Hungarian texts that are indeed among the most archaic pieces of our popular poetry, is still open. The 150 year long research of the topic, as I sketched out above, is at the same time a series of methodological experiments of folkloristics. Throughout this process the questions aimed at the origin of the myth-type were followed with incessant interest, though the latest Russian-Bulgarian debate focused only on the last phase of this process - the shaping of the actual text-type, and ceased to investigate the pre-bogomilist dualistic ideas. We cannot say that such a search for parallels is considered out of date nowadays. Introducing Lithuanian creation legends of the earth Laurinkienė lists their Babylonian and Ancient/Old Indian parallels randomly but does not attempt to define their genetic connections – she does so relying on the latent supposition of a common Indo-Iranian origin (LAURINKIENĖ 2003: 253). She considers The Lithuanian texts an organic part of Lithuanian culture and has no reservations about how they found their way into that culture. Similarly, in case of the Slovenian texts Monika Kropej does not raise the question of their being borrowed, although registered Slovenian texts may be very few in number (KROPEJ: 2003: 121). At the same time the most recent introduction and research history, compiled to satisfy the demands of a monograph (rich in data provided by authors not discussed in this study), apart from contrasting the comic elements of the myths with the seriousness of the ritual colinda-texts, is still trying to answer the questions of the origin and spreading of the earth-diver myth (JOHNS 2005: 280 ff.).⁵²

Likewise, in case of the Hungarian texts we could just ignore the problem of when and where they came from: they simply exist, are rich in variations, beautiful and a part of Hungarian culture. And yet, Hungarian researchers are constantly intrigued by this question; what sort of

⁵⁰ Zsuzsanna Erdélyi published a version that György Máris, Moldva born resident of Baranya county retold her. G. Máris was the source of the most beautiful and the most often republished Hungarian text, but in the present study its stylistic analysis must be left out of consideration (Zsuzsanna ERDÉLYI: „Móduvába hítták a szegényt” („The poor man was invited to Moldova...”). *Új Írás* vol. 30; 1990, 47–57. The text in question: 50-51. Republished by Jung: 1993: 12.)

⁵¹ Due to their Church Slavic literary origins, Romanian texts belong to the genealogical branch of Slavic apocrypha.

⁵² The answer was quite sceptical: „The question of the origin and diffusion of the Earth Diver myth is still unresolved, and will perhaps always remain so ...” (JOHNS 2005:280).

culture did we have of our own at the time of the conquest, what is the link that connects us to our relatives?

That is why Kálmány investigated the Vogul creation legend and Lajos Vargyas researched our folklore of the time when Hungarians occupied the Carpathian Basin. Still, he just refused to consider the publications of the earth-diver myth that appeared in a growing number after 1969. He gave his reasons in his letter to Károly Jung: “The quoted study, issued in 1977, I wrote and read at a conference on prehistory in 1971. After that, on Antal Bartha’s request I handed in my manuscript to the *Történelmi Szemle* (Historical Review). At the time I could not have been familiar with Bosnyák’s publication, since *Ethnographia*, written in 1969, was first published only in 1973. The reason why I did not add it to my study later - in a proof sheet perhaps - is that it made no contribution to my topic. It was clearly a recent borrowing from neighbouring people. It was also of exactly the same Bogomil character, and in parts even identical with the Balkanic data I had known from the literature and separated from Kálmány’s very fragmentary, altered and thus seemingly ancient data. I did so because my topic was the traditions of the times before the conquest of Hungary, and not Bogomilism. I can only express my appreciation of your present comprehensive survey of the latter. That Bosnyák’s data preserve such traditions may be rendered probable – but it cannot be proved beyond any shadow of doubt. Their completeness, their precise similarities with the Balkanic texts and the geographic location of their occurrences all imply a later conveyance (although we cannot exclude the possibility that Kálmány’s data was actually a fragment of these). Likewise, I can only suggest that this fragment is independent of the complete – but complete in a Balkanic respect – and geographically remote data and survived perhaps along with the other, similarly worn, fragmentary and altered Obi-Ugrian creation legend, independently of the texts that were taken up later by Hungarians in Moldova and Bukovina. That is, both our concepts are possible presumptions.” (JUNG 1992: 247) .

The last sentence of the letter is worthy of notice; it refers to Jung’s above-mentioned article. In that he committed himself to the Bogomil origin of the Hungarian creation legend but the basic specialized literature escaped his attention. The knowledge of that literature raises doubts about Jung’s conviction. One thing seems certain, and I quoted the legends of the areas that surround the Hungarian-speaking territories in a crescent from the Northeast to the Southeast to prove it: legends very similar to ours are known there. Bukovina and Moldva are especially significant since their texts are the most complete versions and typologically the easiest to identify in the

folklore of several other peoples in that region. (Romanian creation legends of the earth originated here; texts containing the exclusive motive of diving were discovered in Transylvania and in the Banat (RÁDULY–FARAGÓ 1990: 260). At the same time the fact that around the middle of the 20th century the collection of such materials was broken off in Romania (as everywhere else in Europe) strongly influences our concept of the geographic spreading of these texts. In this respect Hungary and Hungarian researchers living in Romania were the only exceptions: the works that began in the sixties altered the previous situation (József Faragó's text dates back to 1958). Where there is no research conducted – there are no texts to document, thus the concept (of the geographic spreading) is rendered incidental.

Vargyas made another significant statement: he admitted that his concept of the Ugrian origin was not more than an assumption. None of the opinions worded in possession of the information that piled up during a century and a half seemed irrefutable. And yet, we can rely on a more comprehensive approach in handling this truly exciting question. The text philology seems to be the key factor here, as in the other cases of the apocryphal textual traditions integration into folklore. In case of the apocrypha of the Tiberian Sea, Dimitrova-Marinova broght up linguistic and historical certainties in support of their Bulgarian provenience. Only when research definitively clears up these questions, may the analysis of the creative processes taking place in folklore follow. From this point of view we can declare that Lajos Kálmány gave proof of tremendous insight when he set up a parallel between the Vogul creation legend and the one about the drunkard's soul; since the ancient soureces link the act of God and the devil sharing the world and, primarily, human souls to the moment when the earth was created of the sand brought up from the earth-sea. Lajos Vargyas's ingenuity was no less significant when; on the other hand, he heightened the incubus myth from Kálmány's notes. As I mentioned in my detailed summary above, Veselovskii's opinion, that the ethnic traditions of the Finno-Ugrian people had a deffinitive influence on the shaping of the legend in the Eurasian region survived to date. It was the bird-motive that played a crucial role in the process. The semantic formula of the Hungarian incubus myth is identical with that of the earth-diver myth: the initially harmonic collaboration of the two parties goes sour and one of them wants to get rid of the other. The Ukrainian legend published in the *Kievskaiia Starina* (see above) uses the same notion of riddance. The chicken-incubus of Hungarian mythology could just as well take on the role of the devil as Velnias in

Lithuanian or Nifärtache in Romanian mythology.⁵³ Thus there is nothing to contradict Lajos Vargyas's hypothesis that this incubus-legend, which in fact has been organically integrated in the system of traditional Hungarian beliefs, possibly preserves the narrative elements of the earth-diver myth. The recently discovered texts about the creation of the earth belong to the very region where they were recovered: Eastern- and Central-Europe, where Hungarians live and have been in touch with the people surrounding them for the past thousand years. And when exactly did this myth appear in our culture? We were probably already familiar with it at the time of the conquest of Hungary and turned it into an incubus-legend. And, since we were familiar with it, we easily accepted its local Slavic redaction. In my opinion the most important factor is that this acceptance was made possible, even easy by the existence of the dualistic system of Hungarian creation myths. In case of the particular versions this reception could take place centuries ago - or just yesterday. Moldavian András Baka, a talented storyteller, told József Faragó in 1958 the following narrative:

*„Färtát and Nifärtát. (You can put it in parentheses: they mean brother and not-brother in Hungarian.) About ten-fifteen years ago I used to visit old Bogorica/Bogorics Jánku, or Mihajes/Mihăiaş Jánku, an old man of eighty, who had vineyards. And on one occasion when we had a drinking bout the question of the creation of the world came up. I told how, according to the Bible, the world began. But then the old man said that it had not happened the way it was written in the Bible – it happened the way he would tell me. And then he told me about the färtát and the nifärtát” (RÁDULY–FARAGÓ 1990: 262; FARAGÓ 2003: 33).*⁵⁴

Unfortunately, the 20th-century criteria of contextualizing were carried out only on the creation legends taken down by Hungarian collectors/ethnographers. Thus we are not familiar with the 'biology' of the many hundreds of texts from the Eurasian area. It makes the following data, informing us of the outburst of a lively debate on the question of the dualistic creation of the earth in 1978 in a train in Székler land (eastern Transylvania, Romania) all the more unique.

“Two years ago I took the train to work. A Hungarian man from Erdőszyörgy got on too, he went to work to Dicsőbe [Dicsőszyentmárton, Tărnăveni, Romania] too. From that man I heard that when there was no land, just clear water everywhere, God almighty sent some kind of devil

⁵³In the quoted legend „Not-brother” is the name of the devil, cp.: RÁDULY–FARAGÓ 1990: 259.

⁵⁴The texts in the two editions are different, here I unified them – I believe that this version is probably the closest to the authentic text. I used a stroke / to separate the different forms of the names.

to the bottom of the sea. He brought up some earth in his fist and put it down, and that's how all the mainland was made.

Now we wouldn't leave it at that: we all quarreled with him and said he wasn't right, we knew it otherwise, we knew better. We all ended up in a row but he just spoke his mind” (RÁDULY–FARAGÓ 1990: 260).

These data too question Johns's opinion (2005: 283–284) that these creation legends are meant to be humorous (both creators are imperfect, the devil is not frightening at all, etc.). Indeed, there are truly humorously phrased, humorously presented narratives among them, but due to their naïve charm the present day reader may mistakenly find something funny that the contemporary story-teller believed to be serious. The story itself got properly adapted in Hungarian folk culture both motivically and linguistically. This adaptation is indicated by the variational richness of the seventeen texts. The motive of “spreading” appears in them too. This motive occurs in a large number in the territories covered by the Northern-Russian manuscripts that are considered to be the most archaic of all, but it could also be the result of spontaneous variation. As Mrs. József Majlát, née Sára Ötvös from Kibéd (Cibed, Transylvania, Romania) told János Ráduly in 1980: *“In Noah's time the whole lot was covered by the Flood. On and on he went on the water but found no mainland. Then he met the devil. Noah spoke to him:*

– You, devil! Is it just water everywhere?

– Yes – the devil answered.

– Is there no land anywhere?

– No, not anywhere – said the devil – but I can get you some, if you want.

And with that the devil left, dived into the water and did not stop until he found some earth.

He fetched that earth in his fist; he clenched his fist really tight as he brought it up. Noah asked for it.

– I cannot give it to you – the devil said-- because I have to spread it.

Then he spread the handful of earth, and that dust turned into mainland. And it also made folks and all sorts of creepy-crawly animals.” (RÁDULY–FARAGÓ: 1990: 260).

Here the strict Bogomil principles undeniably succeeded: the two creators are each-other's equals, and what is more, when Noah, who substitutes God in this version, is at a loss and it is the devil who creates the world by himself.

It is not only in the versions of this type of myth that Noah takes God's place but in many different creation legends as well. It is logical, since these tell the story of the re-creation of the world after the flood. Moreover, in this case the concept of the flood and the primordial water link the two stories. The text does not end with the creation of the mainland but as in the apocryphal documents and numerous popular stories it continues with the making of man and other creatures. In apocryphal literature the narrative of the creation of the world includes the deliverance-story of the New Testament as well. Similarly, Hungarian texts may contain references to the New Testament too, like the one below, told by Bucovina-born Mrs. Antal Szegvári in 1961:

“God spoke to the angels from heaven and told one of them to dive to the bottom of the sea and fetch some sand. When the angel did so it slipped through his fingers. God sent him down for the second time but the angel failed again: the sand slipped through his fingers yet again. The third time God told him:

– Clench your hand tight and bring up that sand!

And the angel quickly brought it up. God said:

- Put it on the ground!

And then he said:

- Glory! In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, amen.

Let thy name be Adam! And get up now and go to the garden of Paradise and pray, make no mistakes, just pray and live and be!

Then in the garden of Paradise Adam started thinking about what he could do on his own. He was bored. And then he looked up to the sky:

- My God, do send someone to me!

And with that he fell asleep. And then God said:

– I would send the Virgin Mary, but I won't do that because she is too beautiful.

And then God created Eve. When Eve was made Adam startled and woke up and the two of them were happy and went to the garden of Paradise together.” (BOSNYÁK 1969: 403–404).

It is worth noting that similar texts, that include the Virgin Mary, are known from Bulgarian folklore as well.

To prove that Hungarian popular texts, thanks to their zealous collectors, parade almost all motives of the legends from the surrounding territories. I present the 18th Hungarian text here.

Although, just like the frequently mentioned Serbian Karadžić-version, or its alleged Bulgarian predecessor, it not one of the creation-legends of the earth, yet it is a well constructed, fine version of those. As I showed above, it is connected to the creation-legend of the earth just as much as the others:

“In the beginning, when God created the world, he created the first man: Adam. On one occasion Adam got very hungry but had nothing to eat. Then the devil told Adam that he would feed him if he betrayed mankind, his descendants, God’s likenesses to him. And indeed, the devil gave Adam some food and Adam drew up a contract and sold all mankind to the devil. But then Adam regretted what he had done, and in tears he complained to Saint Peter about his great sin, that he had sold mankind and now he didn’t know how to take them back from the devil’s captivity. And Peter felt sorry for Adam and asked God if they could do something to save mankind from the devil. Then God told Peter that the only way to save mankind from the devil’s captivity was to steel the contract. He told Peter to take service with the devil and work for him until they steel the contract.

So Saint Peter went and took service with the devil. But the devil would have the contract on him at all times, and Saint Peter couldn’t steel it. So he stayed with the devil, and then one summer it was so hot, so scorching hot, that the devil went to the sea to bathe. He took his servant with him to look after his clothing on the shore. The devil took off his clothes, walked into the sea and bathed and dived to the bottom of it. When he went down to the bottom of the sea, deep down to the bottom of the sea, Saint Peter stole the contract from the devil’s pocket and ran off with it to the heaven. When the devil returned from the bottom of the sea saw his servant gone. He looked to the left and to the right but couldn’t see him anywhere. The devil ran to his clothes and saw that the contract had been stolen from his pocket. Off he ran to the gate of heaven, after Saint Peter. Saint Elijah saw that and knew that the devil would catch Saint Peter.

Then Elijah struck a mighty lightning to the East. The devil believed that Saint Peter was there so he now ran on in that direction. But when he reached the East he couldn’t find Saint Peter there. Then Elijah struck a lightning to the West. The devil ran after it, but getting there he couldn’t find Saint Peter there either. Then Elijah struck a lightning to the North, the devil run there, but when he got there he couldn’t find Saint Peter there either. Then Elijah struck a lightning to the South. The devil ran there too, but when he got there he couldn’t find Saint Peter there either. While Elijah lured the devil this way and that, Saint Peter came close to the gate of heaven. Finally the

devil ran to the door of heaven and reached Saint Peter just as he was entering heaven. He tried to grab his foot with his claws but he couldn't catch it, he could only tear off a piece of flesh of his sole.

So thus the devil lost the contract and mankind was freed from the devil's captivity. But since then people's soles are hollow: there is no flesh in the middle of their soles" (FARAGÓ 1995: 50–51; 2003: 35–36).⁵⁵

The valuable object stolen from the devil, the contract between the devil and Adam, the two supportive saints, or the bitten sole are all motives that – as we mentioned earlier - are present in the creation legends of the surrounding Slavic people as well. That is why I must emphasize again that the creation legend of the earth cannot be examined as an independent typological unit. The Slavic apocrypha remain the basis for further research; the texts are supplemented with two important elements. First of all the whale-motive requires further elaboration, then the story of the creation of mankind and the Noah-legends require more comprehensive examinations. All the more so since Hungarian folklore, with the new results of research, presents an unbelievably rich collection of this kind of material. The -myth of the creation of the earth is an organically integrated element of the system of dualistic creation-legends in Hungarian folklore. Its variability indicates that, in spite of the individual, fresh borrowings, this system could not have been formed in a matter of seconds. This system goes by the surrounding peoples' culture but retains its local touch that is worth introducing.

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⁵⁵András Baka's earlier quoted story is unquestionably a fresh, indirect Romanian borrowing. He said he had learnt it from his father, who was born in Esztelnek, in the Háromszék area in 1831, but moved to Moldova in his youth; consequently this story appears to be a 19th century Romanian borrowing.

András Baka was born in 1894 in Ploskucén, Moldova. He lived in Gyosztén (Diosen) until his death in 1971. He told his above quoted stories there in 1958 (FARAGÓ 2003: 7, 169). I received the book from Katalin Benedek while still working on my manuscript. I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for her favour.

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