

Hadak Ura has very quickly leap frogged over my entire labels roster to become one of the most popular, successful & highest selling bands I've worked with. I also credit the music of Koppany Geczy (along with some of his friends in southern Wisconsin) for reinvigorating this label and returning it back to its core atmospheric/pagan sound. A goal of mine has been to either meet, do a podcast, interview, or any type of promotional content with Koppany for years to discuss his music, Wisconsin, and black metal in general. As "A sztyepp a mi örökségünk" is the most successful Winter Solace vinyl release to date, I think this would be the best time to provide a more in depth picture of the band. 10 questions will cover the band itself and then another 5 will cover some of Koppany's other activities.

1. I think before we discuss the actual works of Hadak Ura, can you please share with everyone a bit about your musical history? You've told me before that you've actually been on tour I think, and while Hadak Ura has been active since 2015, you were doing other things prior to that.

Sure. So, I started creating black metal seriously around 2008 or 2009. I was in a few local bands that had some mild success with either tours or recordings, most notably Sacrificial Massacre, which I really credit as my start in developing my skills and creativity. I had a defined role in that band writing the drums and lyrics as well as the concept and presentation in tandem with the other member. At some point the other member and I no longer saw eye to eye any more on the direction of the band and parted ways, which was 100% the cause of Hadak Ura being formed, so I really do see that split as a positive event in my musical and artistic history. After that I immediately started creating the Hadak Ura concept and wrote about three songs that ended up being the first half of the first album, that would be released later the following year.

2. Ideologically, Hadak Ura represents Magyar History which is Hungarian and I would request that you expand upon that, as well as the pagan themes of your music? You have a far more upbeat outlook compared to the tragic negativity that several of your counterparts have, which I also think warrants some discussion?

Yes, so racial and ethnic identity I believe is an essential factor in black metal of the pagan variety. I am Hungarian in heritage, along with many other things as most white people are, but that is the ethnicity I identify the most with. Chalk it up to loving goulash or Marblebog being my favorite band, for whatever reason that facet of my heritage always fascinated me the most, so when it came time to pick a direction for my main project that is where my inner-turul led me.

While I am predominantly interested in the pre-Christian religious beliefs of the early Magyars, I have also written songs about historical wars, the Hunic roots of the Hungarian people, and their political struggles.

While this is a theme that is forever present in the project, I want to highlight that often Hadak Ura is simply an outlet for nature worship, and many of the songs I have written have no historical, ethnic, religious, or political agenda, and are simply about nature and man's relationship to it.

3. Musically the earlier recordings (specifically the split releases) seem to show you experimenting more with different paths or influences, the one with Stonehaven specifically is a departure from some of the others. You've covered Arckanum + Absurd, self-released an Ambient demo & the entire range of your catalog was very broad with you only recently putting everything together. Please

explain your musical influences, the maturation process and anything else you feel listeners should know about the musical aspects of your work.

I think when the project first started, I emulated my influences a lot more and tried to really recreate specific atmospheres of bands I respected, whereas now when I write a song I don't so much ask myself what my influences would do, but rather what is the Hadak Ura way of doing things. I almost sort of parody myself in my writing now in that way, in that I am more so creating within the parameters of my own sound than trying to copy some other artist. It is definitely a formula, but I don't feel limited by it personally. I actually enjoy the challenge of trying to create something new, but still playing by the rules I have outlined for myself.

4. You've shown a very strong interest in making split recordings, be them either with your own projects or with several other people from either the USA or abroad. While I was the one who set up the Sunchariot/Hadak Ura split after you traded me some of your music/demos & the upcoming split with Volhshebrik, many of the others have been entirely your direction. Why do you prefer this type of recording? What goes into the selection process for finding other bands?

I know splits can be polarizing and some don't care for them, but I always really enjoyed them as a fan, and as an artist who doesn't perform live it feels like a way of collaborating with other bands outside of a live context. When I arrange splits the most important thing to me is that the other band has a similar subject matter or atmosphere, the sound or style is less relevant, although still somewhat of a consideration. I feel like most of my splits have been with other bands that are striving for the same goals as I am and have an appreciation for the same artists that inspired me to create black metal in the first place. I have done a lot of them at this point and will probably wind down on them for a while, but they will likely always be a medium I will use in my releases.

5. While the sound is different, your project musically took the torch of "underground midwestern pagan black metal" from Akashah and evolved into what that project should've become. In many small countries one guy always exists who is basically the leader of the underground scene, and you're the first person to really become that for an American state. I'll drive in the Northwoods for work, see some random scenery and think "Yeah that's Koppany's music" before leaving. Only one other album (Nachtkrieger - L'apogée du pouvoir blanc) I've ever released or listened to conveys such a feeling and your music is specific to here. People in Pennsylvania I think have put a more unified "state pride" on their music, but you've built something down there which I think is really special. It's shown in the customers' orders I've gotten and even connected me with somebody in the city I live in. So, I guess please use this opportunity to discuss Wisconsin in general and how it has influenced your work?

I don't know if I see myself as a leader necessarily, but I like to take an assertive approach with my music, so maybe that's why I have involvement with a lot of similar or like-minded artists in the scene and been part of organizing our success (modest as it may be). As far as Akasha goes, I see him as a trail blazer in Midwestern black metal, and while that project has slowed down a little, I still sort of see him as a role model.

As far as Wisconsin is concerned, relative to my art and personal life it is immensely important to me. Wisconsin is a unique place that somehow encapsulates the typical Midwest experience, yet it also has these strong European roots. It's been the stage to all my creation, and the root of my inspiration.

6. While “Honfoglalás” is I think currently your most well-known recording, it was recorded 5 years ago, and the release was delayed extensively due to the pandemic. I guess expand upon that and discuss the album, it’s recording process or anything else from there you feel should be shared. I’d also be curious to know how you feel about the album’s success.

I started work on Honfoglalás probably around 2018 and completed recording around 2020. As you stated, the pandemic had a large impact on the physical release of the record, so by the time the album was released, I had already put out a couple releases with newer material, including the A Sztepp a Mi Oroksegunk EP. The album’s response was better than I had expected and helped me to process my own feelings about the record, as it had shifted forms a few times before it was finalized. Originally the album was much longer and contained many of the songs that had appeared on the Sunchariot split. Due to the release being done on vinyl and a few other creative factors the album was shortened, and I had some ambivalence about whether or not I had done it justice. I do now in retrospect think the songs were paired perfectly and do a good job of communicating “the story” of the album.

7. “A sztyepp a mi örökségünk” was recorded 3 years afterward (yet released before) and was essentially either an EP or a demo set that I paid to have remastered. When we did the pre-order campaign for this, I told you after it sold out in like a day that this one is to date the most successful record I’ve released as a label. As with “Honfoglalás” I guess expand upon the process of recording this and then obviously the release.

This release was actually intended to be the start of the fourth full-length and was written mid-covid shut down over the span of a month. It is definitely my personal favorite material from the project and reflects an interesting time in my life. I made the decision however the following Summer to release it as an EP as the subsequent material I was writing lacked the same atmosphere. Due to the circumstances, I felt I wasn’t going to rekindle the feelings that were going on in my life when the material was written. Therefore, it seemed like the most logical thing to do was just let the material be its own standalone release.

It was originally released on cassette tape by Northern blood, which sold out quickly. Then the following year the CD version was put out by you, and I am happy to say we will soon be releasing an LP version with Bonus tracks taken from the 5 way split with Wolves Eyes, et al.

This interview was published 2 days before the physical release date of “A sztyepp a mi örökségünk” onto LP, with 75% of the pressing either already sold out or distributed to Europe/bands.

8. Much of the sales of the original CDs for “A sztyepp a mi örökségünk” were in places like Brazil, Argentina & I think Japan which aren’t really known for this type of music. I’d be curious to hear any thoughts you have on this subject and if you have any desire to promote in these areas or work with bands from outside the US & Europe?

I am very interested in working with any like-minded artist from almost anywhere. I see South America in particular as a growing ally and have a lot of respect particularly for the scene in Argentina. I know Brotherhood of Light has done a few trades with members of that circle for me, and I have received some help from E of Nachtgeblut on recordings and layouts. E actually co-wrote a song with me which will appear on the upcoming split with Volshebnik. As a longtime fan of his music it was a huge honor to

have him appear on a Hadak Ura song. I hope to continue to work more with that scene or any other similar bands from that part of the world.

9. Originally when I met you, you wanted to (& have) worked with several different labels ranging from larger labels like Darker than Black & Wolfspell, to extremely underground companies like mine (or others of different sizes) along with labels such as Death Hymns & Dread Records who cater to different clientele outside of the underground pagan black metal sphere your music belongs in. I guess reflect upon this approach and how you feel about this process in general? Or use this question as a means to vent any frustrations you may have with some of these things.

I think overall my experience has been positive with the labels I've worked with. I generally have had a lot of luck in working with strong labels and individuals, but obviously every owner has their own personal strengths and shortcomings. I have had the most success I think with the labels like Death Hymns and Winter Solace because it's clear there is more of a belief in the music they release. That along with the professionalism and ability to promote those labels have, seem to have reaped the greatest dividends for Hadak Ura. I appreciate all those that have had faith in my music and invested in it. Everyone that I have worked with has done right by the release with like maybe one exception, but that case had more to do with the label going under and not being able to promote it properly then never finishing print more than the artist copies. Out of respect I won't name names.

10. In closing, what are the future plans for Hadak Ura? Besides the upcoming split with Volshebnik & the new album you're working on, what else is in the pipeline or do you want to do with this project?

At the moment those are the only two releases in production. Volshebnik split is close to being completed, but artwork and layout are still in progress. The next full length I hope to have completed by the Fall of this year. I am about halfway through the metal material for the album and still to develop the art concept and writing the instrumentals. There is also discussion of a Circle of Wolves split, but that is going to be a ways off.

A split between Hadak Ura/Nawia Horda is also in the works to be released presumably in 2024 on LP/CD by the Winter Solace label.

The remaining questions don't cover necessarily Hadak Ura, however I feel them to be relevant to the discussion and will give an expanded context to Koppány's artistic catalog.

11. Now while we do not need to go as in-depth about your other projects to such a degree that we did with Hadak Ura, please tell us whatever you feel to be relevant about any of them, which ones are still active and any future plans you have or goals for these projects?

Right now, I have 4 other active projects, two are solo efforts and two I play drums in. The solo projects are Hermit and Draoidh. Hermit is the newer of the two and has only one release currently. Hermit is my attempt at more ambient or depressive black metal. The first release was put out recently on CD through Humanity's Plague and there are plans to reissue it on tape with Brotherhood of Light. I also have a new release in progress for that project as well titled "Inextinguishable Beacon of Negativity".

Droaidh Is similar to Hadak Ura but with a darker approach and more focused on Celtic paganism and magic. The project has a few releases currently, and I do hope to write a second full length eventually, but likely won't be anytime soon.

My two other projects, Circle of Wolves and Niedfyr, are more cooperative efforts. I play drums and keys in those projects and have some creative input, but they are really more the brain children of Wotanswolf (Niedfyr) and KR (Circle of Wolves). I appreciate those projects because they allow me to play and write in directions, I wouldn't really be capable of myself.

12. You've championed a heathen movement/group of bands known as "The Heathen Circle" for years and are likely its sole active member. Originally founded to be "The Pagan Front for people not retarded enough to be in The Pagan Front", it is now basically a dead movement that hasn't gotten much press outside of this interview in years. You probably don't know this but The Heathen Circle (I declined to join when I was asked in 2008-09) was founded by a kid (I think he was 16) from Serbia named Independor (the band Kagan) that quit music over a decade ago. I know that various people within the movement have basically just tried to get donations from people, but overall, the entire thing is basically going in a circle. Please explain this movement and why you still champion it?

I was unaware of most of what you said regarding its origins, however its period relating to Hadak Ura began a few years ago when Wotanswolf and myself joined after doing a few trades with Wolftry Records, who was the main one running the organization at the time. After about a year he said he was no longer interested in being a part of it and asked if we would take the reins. We did a small amount of work with the organization adding a few new bands such as Stonehaven (USA) and Necro Forest (Croatia). There was also discussion of a compilation that never came about. Nowadays I see it more as the group of bands I work with in WI, however it still doesn't fully encapsulate all those projects. I would like to create something formal that included not just the bands in my circle like Swerdthegan and Niedfyr but also Circle of Wolves, the Temple Fan Wolven projects (one of which I am obviously a part of, and the other I have worked with) and newer bands like Nawia Horda, but that has yet to be accomplished.

13. You are very similar in certain ways to Vožd Jovan Pogani of 1389, where you've basically become this leader figure in terms of character or a role model to certain bands/people out there. While this number is very small, it's still worth noting. A very large amount of this is due entirely to your more sedate demeanor, as you are completely void of the substance abuse, drug addictions, mental illness', narcissism, lack of English language comprehension or complete incompetence that plagues many of the people out there. How does it feel to basically be one of the few functioning adults in underground black metal and to inspire others in such a way?

Well, I can say I see a lot of that type of behavior in others, and how it impedes their ability to achieve all they are capable of, but I also don't believe I am the only one that is devoid of that type of degeneracy. I know a lot of respectable and honorable individuals in the scene that are making strides with their projects as well, and I am proud to say they are mostly my colleagues.

I do believe I had touched on what you are referring to however in a previous interview and I completely agree that it is an ongoing issue. I think I called it a "moron problem" in black metal or something like that. This is just the price of accessibility. Black Metal is out there like any other style of music and where you have people, you have idiots. It's just a reality of life.

The only thing about that that still occasionally astonishes me is when the music doesn't match the individual. I.e. The music is impressive, but the person isn't. It does seem to happen though often enough, and I guess that is yet another indictment of our social media culture. Perhaps we would all feel better not knowing the men behind the art.

14. I know you are an active consumer of black metal records and actually pay attention to what is going on, so please explain your thoughts on why this is important and the modern black metal music ~~circus~~ scene.

As much as black metal has been going off the rails for the last 20 years, I think we are seeing some of the best black metal being created in these times. There appears to me to be no shortage of new bands re-inventing the genre without betraying its roots. Sure, there may be 10 shit bands for every one good one, but with 3 to 5 new projects or releases coming out weekly that's still plenty of worthwhile new music to pursue in my opinion. I am perhaps not as on top of what's new as I used to be, but I still try to pay attention to the interesting newer stuff coming out these days.

15. In closing please list 10 items of media (be them likely albums but texts, movies, artworks or whatever you want) that have influenced you and your works.

I couldn't possibly limit it to ten. Here's a bunch of stuff that has had an impact on all of my art.

Music:

- Branikald- Rdyandalir
- Marblebog (whole discography)
- Brocken Moon- Das Marchen vom Schnee
- Bilskirnir- Atavismus Des Glaubens
- Burzum (whole discography)
- Lascowiec- Asgard Mysteries
- Lycia- The Burning Circle and then Dust
- Draugurz- A Yell From The Past
- Bergthron- Verborgten in den Tiefen der Walder...
- Paysage D'Hiver- Kristall & Isa
- Negura Bunget- Sala Molska
- Primordial- Journey's End
- Arckanum- Fran Marder

Film:

-Haxen- Witchcraft through the ages.

-Hagazussa

-Nosferatu the Vampire (1979)

-Angst (1983)

-Valhalla Rising

-The VVitch

-Nightmare Castle (1965)

-Hold The Dark

Books:

-Myths and Symbols in Pagan Europe by H.R. Ellis Davidson.

-Might is Right by Ragnar Redbeard

Thank you for conducting this rather lengthy interview and please make any closing statement you wish.

Thank you for the interview and your work with Hadak Ura. Hail the true Rural Midwestern Black Metal.

This interview was conducted between 7/28 – 8/2/23