İskit – Saka – Meda (Neo Elamite)

The Sumerian, Ural-Altaic, Magyar Relationship: A History of Research – (Érdy Miklós, Ph.D., Gilgamesh, New York 1974, ISBN-13: 9780914246534 - ISBN-10: 0914246534
The Sumerian, Ural-Altaic, Magyar relationship: A history of research = A sumir, ural-altaji, magyar rokonsag kutatasanak tortenete (Studia Sumiro-Hungarica), ISBN-13: 9780914246534 - ISBN-10: 0914246534

Here's a few links of interest:

Behistun Rock Inscriptions
Old Persian Historic Monuments
Decipherment of the cuneiform
Median and Scythian links

The Sumerian culture pre-dated many earlier ones, especially in the Mesopotamian region. Learning about the Medians from several early Sumerologists, **E. Hincks, H.C. Rawlinson, J. Oppert, F. Lenormant, A.H. Sayce, P. Hunfalvy** and others leaves no doubt about ethno-linguistic affiliations of the Sumerians and Elamites with the Ural-Altaic language group.

Examination and analysis of the linguistic and ethnic relationship between the Sumerians and the Ural-Altaic peoples are as old as Sumerology itself, which passed the 150 year mark in the year 2000.The travesty is that during the past 50 years much of the earlier Sumerology research has been treated poorly, overlooked, or simply omitted. In the early years of the science, especially the first 75 yrs, found amazing correlations. They are not found much in most of the Western or American sources, however, this does not diminish the importance or validity of the earlier findings.

A number of historical terms, or their meanings, have undergone certain changes during the past 150 years. Many of the original expressions can still be used: the expression *Turanian*, in use during the 19th through the early-mid 20th century, since then has been replaced with the term *Ural-Altaic*. A complete change of meaning occurred with the term *Akkadian*, which first referred to the ancient Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* population of Mesopotamia, while presently it came to designate a Semitic people who migrated there many centuries later. The term *Scythian*, which until the early part of the 20th century was used exclusively to describe a group of Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* peoples, during few post-WWII decades converted to mean Iranian or Indo-European people. The historical writings that were written in the earlier time need clarifications for the original context to reflect the true meaning of the authors.

The following paraphrases and quotations are from a veritable compendium of early Sumerology with reprinted research papers compiled in a book titled: *The Sumerian, Ural-Altaic, Magyar Relationship: A History of Research* – (Érdy Miklós, Ph.D., Gilgamesh, New York 1974.)

‘Henry C. Rawlinson, a young British military officer, interested in the ancient Orient, began copying, with a great deal of acrobatic skill, the rock inscription at Behistun in 1835. (Behistun is a giant towering rock, slightly to the east of the midpoint between Lake Van and the Persian Gulf). The cuneiform inscriptions are positioned below and at the sides of a large relief that depicts the victory of Darius I over ten of his enemies. The trilingual cuneiform inscriptions stretch about 100 feet high and 150 feet wide. Today it is known that they were written in Old Persian, Neo-Elamite (Median) and Assyro-Babylonian, which were the three major languages spoken by the population of the Persian Empire. It took Rawlinson a total of four years to copy, decipher and translate what he had found. The full original text and its translation were finally published, in 1846-47 and 1849, in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Rawlinson 1847). In the meantime, others were also undertaking the task of decipherment, the most important among them being Edward Hincks, the ingenious Irish Orientalist. His paper on the decipherment of the Old Persian inscriptions from the Lake Van area was presented in 1847 (Hincks 1847), and was published the next year. In this paper, which incidentally was entirely independent, showed his interpretations and general conclusions to be identical with those of Rawlinson. In 1851 a third scholar, Jules Oppert would contribute some meritorious refinements to the understanding of the Old Persian cuneiform and language’. (Érdy pp. 42-46)

Classification of the Second Language of the Rock Inscriptions, the Median or Neo-Elamite

‘The fact that the inscriptions both at Persepolis and Behistun were trilingual indicates that these languages were in use in the Persian Empire at the middle of the 1st millennium B.C. Before discussing the decipherments of the Assyrian, which is important from the point of view of the discovery of the Sumerian language, let us summarize what had been done for the identification of the 2nd language of the inscriptions.

The second language of the tri-lingual inscriptions found at various places of the Persian Empire used 111 syllabograms, was also spoken in and around Susa and is therefore named Neo-Elamite today. Its decipherers established that it was also an agglutinative language as are Hungarian and Turkish; they were of the opinion that it was spoken by the Medians and that it was also related to the languages used by the Scythian or Turanian (Ural-Altaic) peoples.’ (Érdy 46)

The understanding of this second language was greatly advanced by the long text copied from the rock of Behistun by Rawlinson. The copy of the script was turned over to E. Norris who completed its decipherment and read a paper on the subject at a meeting of the Royal Asiatic Society on July 3, 1852, and it was subsequently printed in the journal of the society three years later (Norris 1852). The title of the paper, *“Memoir on the Scythic Version of the Behistun Inscription”* readily shows Norris’ opinion concerning the ethnic affiliation of the inscription.

Some of his important conclusions on page 2 of his paper were summed up as follows:

“The particular division of the class of language which I would compare it with, is one which has been called especially *Ugrian*, comprising as well the *Magyar* and the *Ostyak*, as the *Permian, Zyrianian, Cheremiss*, and others spoken by small tribes living on and near the Volga; it has analogies which occasionally may be nearer to the *Turkish* or *Mongolian*…”

And from page 3:

'There can be no doubt that the language was that of the pastoral tribes who inhabited the Persian Empire; and whether known by the appellations of *Dahae*, *Sakae*, *Mardi*, or any others, they were fundamentally the same people and spoke similar languages, which probably were allied to the language of Scythia Proper; that is to say, the Scythia of Herodotus, the extreme east of Europe and adjoining parts of Asia, where that branch of the Tatar languages *(i.e Türkic)*, especially called Ugrian, is still spoken by different tribes." He added that, according to his reading that these people called themselves Afarti or Avarti which could also have been pronounced as Avar or Abar. As a possibility he pointed out those Avars who dwelt on the Volga in the 6th century AD and later moved to the territory of today's Hungary.' The study of Norris was reviewed and analyzed by Antal Csengery a few years later, in an article titled: *"A Scythak nemzetisege"* (The Ethnic Affiliation of the Scythians) in the Journal Budapesti Szemle, 6, 243-263 (Budapest Review). Excerpts from the aforementioned article, discussing the correspondence of Scythian and Hungarian words determined by Norris are given in the Appendix (Csengery Antal 1859). (Érdy 48)

In conclusion it is clear that Hincks, Rawlinson and Norris uniformly identified the 2nd language of the rock inscriptions to be a Scythian language related to the Ural-Altaic languages.

Lenormant (1871) also wrote a major study on the monarchy of the Medes, their origin and their kings, based on Assyrian documents published in Series 1 of the - "*Lettres Assyriologiques*." Later, A.H. Sayce took sides in the Median issue, essentially supporting Lenormants opinion. Sayce pointed out that the majority of the inhabitants of Media, the common people, were Turanians *(Ural-Altaic)*, being in a somewhat distant relationship with the ancient Sumerians, but in a closer affiliation on the one hand with the inhabitants of Elam and on the other with the modern Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* peoples, as proved by their agglutinative language in the 2nd position of the inscriptions. Therefore the term "Elamite" correctly designates their language, while the word "Median" could pertain either to some tribes who settled among them, or to a ruling stratum (Sayce 1847).

Further analysis of this language was conducted by Jules Oppert. He discussed it in several books and lectures over a period of 30 years. His labors, in part, were focused on an unambiguous clarification of the affiliation of the 2nd language of the Achaemenian inscriptions. Summarizing, systematizing and supplementing the earlier results, Oppert pointed out that the 2nd language is not just simply Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* Scythic, but that it was specifically the tongue spoken by the Medes of the Persian Empire. According to his explanation, the Persian kings put their own language in the 1st position. On the other hand, the 3rd position is occupied by the Semitic language of conquered Assyria (612 BC). The contemporary people whose language was placed in the 2nd position had to be the Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* Medes, who had played a very important role in vanquishing Assyria. He confirmed this by the argument that the Medes called themselves Mada, which is the ancient Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* word meaning land or country in Sumerian *("land with law" in Türkic, a semantic cluster)*. The same word Media was the source for both the geographic location as well as the ethnic name of its inhabitants. Thus, Oppert summarized the results of his research at the Congress of the German Philologists and Scholars at Rostock in 1875. (Érdy 50)

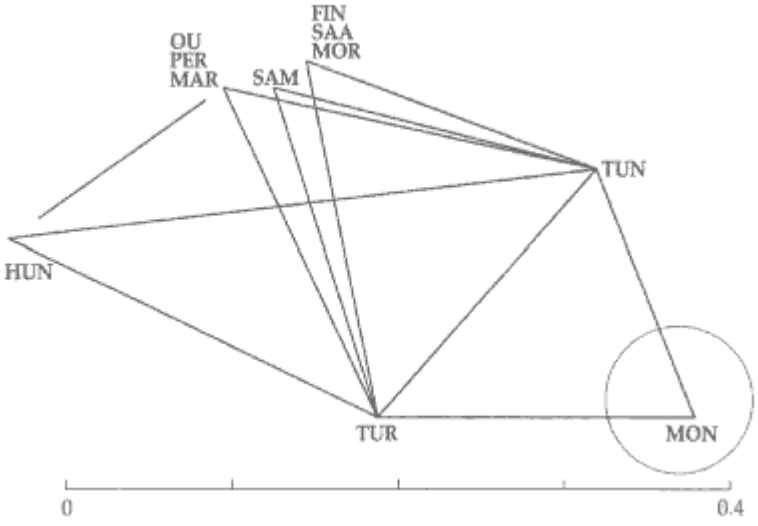
At the Congress of Rostock, he also announced his intentions of publishing a book on the same subject, titled – "Le peuple et la langue des Medes," which was in fact published four years later (Oppert 1879). In this work he summarized the results of thirty years of his research on the language of the 2nd inscription, reviewed his previous writings and frequently quoted them. In retrospect, he corrected his earlier stand of 1852, when he had argued against the use of the designation Median in favor of Scythian, saying that according to the Greek geographer, Strabo (1st cent. BC) the language of the Medes and Persians was the same. This fact according to Oppert's revised view pertains only to the ruling stratum of the Medes and their Persianized faction.

Furthermore, the analysis of the other sources makes it clear that the majority of the Median population, especially in the northerly direction toward the steppes, apparently spoke a Turanian *(Ural-Altaic)* language drastically different from the Indo-European, and these native Turanians *(Ural-Altaic)* are the ones whose writing and language is in the 2nd position on the Achaemenian inscriptions (Oppert 1879:6-8 and 1859:70).

This passage is presented in the Appendix of Erdy's compendium, together with an interesting and important linguistic comparison that Oppert made between Median words rendered in cuneiform and words in the modern Ural-Altaic languages. Surprisingly of which it was Hungarian that yielded the most numerous and cognitive analogies (A closer look would have to discriminate between the Hungarian and the rest of the Ugrian family: Hungarians are a 50/50 blend of Ogur *Türkic and Ugrians that were in the Türkic orbit for some time. The unique position of the Hungarian is demonstrated in its linguistic aspect as being a stand-out among the Ugrian languages, see A.Kunnapp, R.Taagepera 2005, "Distances among Uralic and other Northern Eurasian languages", and as a media that preserved the distinct language of the Ogur Bulgarians and Ogur Huns).*

Figure 4. Distances of Altaic and Uralic subgroups

from A.Kunnapp, R.Taagepera 2005, *"Distances among Uralic and other Northern Eurasian languages"*



FIN/SAA - Finnic-Saami Group
HUN - Hungarian language
MAR - Mari language
MON - Mongolic languages
MOR - Mordvin languagesOU - Ob-Ugric languages
OU - Ob-Ugric
PER - Permic languages

PMOH - Perm-Mari-Ob-Ugric-Hungarian Group
SAM - Nenets languages
TUN - Tungusic (or Tungus-Manchu) languages
TUR - Turkic languages

Below are a few translated examples from the Appendix, minus cuneiform syllabograms that constitute an oldest text written in the Scythian language.

English	Medo-Scythian	Ogur Tatar	Oguz Turkish	Hungarian
drop	sip		damla	csep
eye	se		süz (to look)	szem
father	at		ata	atya
feminine	nin		kadınsı	noi
fish	ha		balik	hal
foot	lub		ayak	lab
day	nap		gün	nap
horn	si		boynuz	szaru
nose	ar		burun	orr
number (count)	sam		sayı (sayı)	szam
ocean	tim		dingiz	tenger
pass (of time)	mu		(zaman) geçmek	mul
put to sword	pal		kılıçtan	pallos
reason (mind)	as		uslamla (us)	esz
relative	rak		bağıl	rokon
road	ut		yol	ut
slice (section)	gir		dilim (kesim	gerezd
two or (dual)	kas		iki	ket