

COMPARISONS of LANGUAGES INVOLVED IN WALAM OLUM (MAALAN AARUM)

WALAM OLUM

lumow aki
 lowan aki
 tulpen aki
 el ow aki
 tulapiwi
 linapiwi
 |
 v
 In that ancient county
 In that northern country
 In that turtle country
 The best of the Lenapi
 were Turtle men
 ?no recorded sounds?

ALGONQUIN

wulamo aki
 lowan aki
 tou a ppu aki
 ei-ow aki
 tauohpewi
 linapiwi

OLD NORSE

framan akr
 raa-andi akr
 dau fr by akr
 eiga aki
 duufa buui
 hreina buui
 |
 v
 earlier ground (land)
 freezing ground
 deserted (solitude) ground
 he had (the) ground (land)
 (who) is immersed (in water)
 (to) be pure

WORD (PHRASE) BY WORD (PHRASE) DECIPHERMENT

(All references are to Sherwin's eight volumes of the *Viking and the Red Man*)

Original English
Recorded sounds
Algonquin words
Old Norse
Norse/English

In that ancient county
lumow aki
wulamo aki
framan akr
earlier ground (land)

v. 6 p. 56 & v. 1. p. 8

Original English
Recorded sounds
Algonquin words
Old Norse
Norse/English

In that northern country
lowan aki
lowan aki
raa-andi akr
freezing ground

v. 6 p. 56 & v. 1 p. 8

Original English
Recorded sounds
Algonquin words
Old Norse
Norse/English

In that turtle country
tul pen aki
tou a ppu aki
dau fr by akr
deserted (solitude) ground

v. 3 p.127 & v. 1 p. 8

Original English
Recorded sounds
Algonquin words
Old Norse
Norse/English

The best of the Lenapi
el ow aki
ei-ow aki
eiga aki
he had (the) ground (land)

v. 1 p. 45 & p. 8

Original English
Recorded sounds
Algonquin words
Old Norse
Norse/English

were Turtle men
tu la piwi
tauoh pewi
duufa buui
(who) is immersed (in water)

v. 3 p. 127

1'

Original English
Recorded sounds
Algonquin words
Old Norse
Norse/English

?no recorded sounds?
linapiwi
linapiwi
Hreina buui
(to) be pure

2*

v. 1 p. 169

COMMENTS

1* This phrase, “to immerse in water” may have been difficult for the Recorder to understand, so the Historian may have tried to convey the meaning by gestures, such as plunging a hand into water.

If something similar to “immerse in water” was originally recorded, Rafinesque’s focus on “turtles” may have been strengthened. So he may have replaced the phrase with “turtle men.”

2* Why was this phrase omitted in the WO English translation? One reason might be that the Recorder and Rafinesque apparently did not know “linapiwi” had a meaning other than the name of the Lenape tribe.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Rafinesque’s focus on turtles and the lack of knowledge about the meaning of “linapiwi” caused him to miss a key element in the Walam Olum story. The man (men) who had the land in the earlier country was (were) immersed in water to be pure. This description strongly implies that a Christian man (men) possessed the land.

Rafinesque probably did not even consider the possibility that the Indians may have migrated from a Christian land. His thinking reflected the national mindset of the early 1800’s. Americans, who were promoting “Manifest Destiny,” may not have been willing to consider a hypothesis that implied the people being shoved aside were descendants of Christians.

If Rafinesque could have published the correct concept of this verse of the Walam Olum sooner, the outcome of Indian/American relationships may have been improved. The harsh effects of those relationships still persist in America. Hopefully, a better understanding of the Walam Olum can still moderate the harsh effects.