

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	In that ancient county	
Recorded sounds	lumow aki	
Algonquin words	wulamo aki	v. 6 p. 56 & v. 1. p. 8
Old Norse	framan akr	
Norse/English	earlier ground (land)	

Original English	In that northern country	
Recorded sounds	lowan aki	
Algonquin words	lowan aki	v. 6 p. 56 & v. 1 p. 8
Old Norse	raa-andi akr	
Norse/English	freezing ground	

Original English	In that turtle country	
Recorded sounds	tul pen aki	
Algonquin words	tou a ppu aki	v. 3 p.127 & v. 1 p. 8
Old Norse	dau fr by akr	
Norse/English	deserted (solitude) ground	

Original English	The best of the Lenapi	
Recorded sounds	el ow aki	
Algonquin words	ei-ow aki	v. 1 p. 45 & p. 8
Old Norse	eiga aki	
Norse/English	he had (the) ground (land)	

Original English	were Turtle men	
Recorded sounds	tu la piwi	
Algonquin words	tauoh pewi	v. 3 p. 127
Old Norse	duufa buui	1'
Norse/English	(who) is immersed (in water)	

Original English	?no recorded sounds?	2*
Recorded sounds	linapiwi	
Algonquin words	linapiwi	v. 1 p. 169
Old Norse	Hreina buui	
Norse/English	(to) be pure	

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 descendents 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.