The Case for Euphratic

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ABSTRACT. It will be argued that the cuneiform writing system, the Sumerian and Akkadian lexicon, and the place names of Southern Mesopotamia preserve traces of an early Indo-European language, indeed the earliest by more than a millennium. Furthermore, this evidence is detailed and consistent enough to reconstruct a number of features of the proposed Indo-European language, Euphratic, and to sketch an outline of Euphratean cultural patterns.

Key words: place names of Southern Mesopotamia, early Indo-European language, Euphratean cultural patterns.

The Sumerian Question

For more than a century now a controversy has raged on and off around the question as to the ethnic identity of the population of Southern Mesopotamia in the 4th millennium B.C., a time when a revolutionary innovation, writing, was just beginning to have an impact on the city-states of the land we traditionally know as Sumer. In recent years, the debate has focused in particular on the language behind the first texts, the proto-cuneiform tablets of the Late Uruk period (ca. 3350-3100 B.C. in conventional, non-calibrated, dates). This is known as the Sumerian Question (Whittaker 2005).

The key issues of the Sumerian Question are:
- From what period on are Sumerians present in Southern Mesopotamia?
- Are they the original inhabitants of Southern Mesopotamia or did they enter an already populated land?
- If not autochthonous, which society (or societies) preceded them?

Landsberger’s provocative (1944, rev. 1974) essay addressing these issues was the first to argue on linguistic grounds that the Sumerians were preceded by speakers of an unrelated, and non-Semitic, language. The consensus of opinion among Assyriologists then and now, however, holds that the Sumerians were the original population and points to continuity in the archaeological record to buttress this opinion. Nevertheless, archaeologists have long been aware that continuity says little about the actual nature of an ethnic landscape. Sumerians and Akkadians of the 3rd millennium B.C. shared Mesopotamian culture to such an extent that it has not been possible to distinguish the remains of the one from the other, except through their written records, so there is little reason to be confident that the situation was significantly different a millennium earlier.

Those such as Englund (1998: 81), the foremost expert on proto-cuneiform writing, who argue that the archaic texts of Uruk provide little or no evidence for the presence of the Sumerian language in the 4th millennium are largely ignored or dismissed without careful consideration and discussion of their arguments. Those who do take issue in print with the concept of a pre-Sumerian
population, such as Rubio (1999, 2005), tend to pour scorn on the very idea without proper – in particular, unemotional – discussion of the evidence. It is widely seen as an assault on the integrity, dignity and achievements of the Sumerians to entertain such notions.

And yet conservative Assyriologists who have lent their voices in dismissal of the Sumerian Question are inconsistent in their stance. Thus, Michalowski (2005: 178), Rubio (1999: 6), and Edzard (2003: 4) suggest that a number of place names and deity names may well be of non-Sumerian origin, failing to recognize what this implies about the ethnic landscape of Southern Mesopotamia at this early date. Indeed, the major flaw in the standard view (defended vehemently by e.g. Steiner 2005, Wikel 2005) is the assumption that at the dawn of history Southern Mesopotamia was home to a pristine and pure population of Sumerians and that, if any evidence at all for the presence of the Sumerian language can be discerned in the archaic tablets of Uruk, all arguments for the presence of other languages and ethnic groups are demolished. This flies in the face of all that we know about the ethnic history of Mesopotamia down to the present day. The land has always been a crossroads of civilization and throughout the entire span of recorded history it has been home to a variety of ethnic groups living side by side. Why should it have been different in the 4th millennium?

Given the fact that Rubio himself, despite his polemical stance against any attempt to identify a non-Sumerian, non-Semitic element in early Mesopotamia, casts caution aside and declares “all” brewing terms in Sumerian to hail from such an element (1999: 6; no rationale or examples supplied), and the fact that the equally dismissive Michalowski insists that “most of the toponyms in Southern Mesopotamia are neither Sumerian nor Semitic” (2005: 178; here, too, without any rationale or examples), there must be some cause for doubt with regard to the supposed ethnic purity of 4th-millennium Sumer. Linguistic and epigraphic data has been put forward suggesting that many of the relatively few polysyllabic terms in Sumerian are of Akkadian, or other Semitic, origin. An examination of the proportion of polysyllabic lexemes in Sumerian literary texts (Whittaker 2005: 412-414) established that in one text from the mid-3rd millennium, the Ninmešarra of Enheduanna, only 54 polysyllabic lexemes out of a total of some 864 words occur. And if proper nouns and known Semitic loanwords are excluded, these 54 are reduced to a mere 28. Thus, Civil’s contention seems valid. As we shall see, many of the remaining polysyllabic terms in Sumerian betray an Indo-European origin. But, if language contact between Sumerians and speakers of an Indo-European tongue can be detected, what evidence might be brought to bear on the question as to where this contact took place – within Mesopotamia, or in an outlying region traversed by the Sumerians on their passage into the Land of the Two Rivers? Fortunately, there are several factors conducive to a solution.

In a series of recent articles (Whittaker 1998, 2001, 2004, 2004/2005, 2005), evidence based on both lexical and epigraphic data has been put forward suggesting that one major ethnic group contributing to the culture of the Uruk period was Indo-European in speech. This language, which manifests itself in all the areas suspected to have been influenced by a ‘foreign’ element, has been dubbed Euphratic, a term chosen for convenience to be similar to, but at the same time distinct from, those used by Landsberger and Oppenheim both in form and meaning. Traces of this language can be found preserved primarily in the technical and elite vocabulary of Sumerian and, to a lesser extent, Akkadian, and attest to a prolonged period of intensive contact. It is worth noting that two of the three leading theories on the location of the Indo-European ‘homeland,’ those of Gamkrelidze and Ivanov (1995 [1984]) and of Renfrew (1987), envision Indo-Europeans in a zone flanking the northern and western reaches of Northern Mesopotamia, namely Transcaucasia and Eastern Anatolia respectively.

Civil (1996; 2002) has argued that Sumerian is basically monosyllabic in its lexemic structure and demonstrated that many of the relatively few polysyllabic terms in Sumerian are of Akkadian, or other Semitic, origin. An examination of the proportion of polysyllabic lexemes in Sumerian literary texts (Whittaker 2005: 412-414) established that in one text from the mid-3rd millennium, the Ninmešarra of Enheduanna, only 54 polysyllabic lexemes out of a total of some 864 words occur. And if proper nouns and known Semitic loanwords are excluded, these 54 are reduced to a mere 28. Thus, Civil’s contention seems valid. As we shall see, many of the remaining polysyllabic terms in Sumerian betray an Indo-European origin. But, if language contact between Sumerians and speakers of an Indo-European tongue can be detected, what evidence might be brought to bear on the question as to where this contact took place – within Mesopotamia, or in an outlying region traversed by the Sumerians on their passage into the Land of the Two Rivers? Fortunately, there are several factors conducive to a solution.

In his famous overview of Mesopotamian civilization, Oppenheim (1977 [1964]: 49) already hinted at the extent to which an early non-Semitic population of Mesopotamia might have influenced Sumerian language, culture and society:

“It is quite likely that the Sumerians had adapted for their own use an already existing system and technique of writing. This seems to have been the creation of a lost and earlier, either native or alien, civilization, which may or may not

have had some relation to the foreign elements in the Sumerian vocabulary, the topographical names of the region, and, possibly, the names of the gods worshiped there. The Sumerians were only one of several ethnic groups …”

A ‘foreign’ or ‘alien’ element in the writing system would indeed argue for influence on Sumerian culture either in Southern Mesopotamia itself or in a neighbouring region. Such an element in the place names of Sumer, however, would necessarily situate this influence directly in Southern Mesopotamia itself.

Euphratic values in the cuneiform writing system

Among the earliest signs in the proto-cuneiform inventory are a number that depict clearly recognizable items. Since many of the signs in the inventory can be identified on the basis of their position in sign lists and thematic (“lexical”) lists copied and adapted from the Uruk period down to the end of Mesopotamian civilization, the main question revolves around the manner and sequence in which sign-value accretion takes place, that is, the question as to how individual signs acquire additional values over time. A primary value may name the item depicted or be connected to it semantically in some fashion. Further values may relate to this primary logographic value semantically or phonetically. However, in a good many instances there is no discernible relationship between the primary value or values in the Sumerian system of the 3rd millennium and the item depicted. In such cases the question arises as to whether an original logographic value has been replaced by one that is phonetically (but not semantically) similar to the original one, a pattern which we see when a writing system is borrowed by a new speech community, for example, in Mesopotamia by speakers of Akkadian. When systems with a high percentage of logographic signs are taken over and adapted, for example the Chinese system by a Japanese elite, the following phenomena can often be observed:

- a logographic value, that is, its linked phonetic and semantic values, in Language 1 are borrowed (as a loanword connected to writing) into the system of Language 2
- a logographic value equivalent to that in Language 1 is added from Language 2
- the pronunciation, that is, phonetic value only, of a logogram in Language 1 influences the selection of a new value or values in Language 2
- a phonetic, semantic, or logographic value of a sign in Language 1 is dropped or replaced by a new one in Language 2.

In the Japanese system, the high proportion of borrowed logographic values, alongside equivalent values from the language of the adopters, can be attributed in no small part to the powerful influence of writing as an instrument of prestige. In the Mesopotamian system, the same phenomena are at work. Not only has Akkadian borrowed a large number of phonetic, semantic, and logographic values (loanwords) from Sumerian, but also Sumerian itself would seem to have borrowed in its turn from a linguistically unrelated community, that of the Indo-European-speaking Euphrateans.

Among the earliest signs are a number of faunal logograms with values surprisingly similar to their Indo-European equivalents, beyond what might be expected from coincidence. These include:¹

- **ku**ₚ ‘fish’ : *(q)dعش ‘fish’ (IEW 416-417; Mallory and Adams 2006: 147). See Kuara below at the discussion of place names for an adjective derived from this word.

¹ Sumerian words and morphemes are cited as given in the Assyriological literature (see e.g. PSD, ePSD, MesZL, CAD, ETCSL). Directly represented in the syllabary used by Akkadian and Sumerian scribes to indicate Sumerian pronunciation are the vowels /a/, /e/, /i/, and /u/, which occur in both languages. Because the syllabary was largely developed by, or in close interaction with, speakers of Akkadian to meet the needs of the latter, only those phonemes in Sumerian that also occur in Akkadian are unambiguously represented in the system. Sumerologists have speculated that Sumerian may have had one or two further vowels. It has been suggested by Lieberman (1979), for example, that in one Old Babylonian tradition /o/ and /a/ may have been distinguished by the choice of **u** grapheme, but there seems to be no consistent pattern here. It has been argued elsewhere (Whittaker 1998, 2001, 2004, 2005) that a and **u** graphemes may both be used for /o/ and /a/, and that, in the various scribal traditions, specific words may acquire standard spellings with either graphemic type. More telling are variant spellings with both a and **u** graphemes, as, for example in **la-ah** and **lu-uh** for /la/ ‘wash, cleanse.’ On the basis of such variants as **iri/uru ~ iri₁ ~ uru₁** ‘city’ some scholars have argued for an /i/ phoneme as well. In the above-named articles I have proposed regarding a fluctuation between the choice of a, u and i grapheme as an indication of a more central vowel, /a/, phonemically equivalent to the previously proposed /i/. Thus, **sa/sas ~ si ~ su/su-** ‘red, brown’ suggest /a/. In Massachusett, an Algonquian language of North America, the phoneme /a/ could be written with any and all of the five English vowel graphemes, though with a preference for **u** and **i** (Goddard 1990: 228). A final note: in closed syllables there is no graphemic (and phonemic?) distinction between **e** and **I** in Sumerian.
The Case for Euphratic

• peš ‘be wide’ ≠ *pejsk- (or *pejsk-) ‘fish’ (IEW 796; cf. EIEC 604; Mallory and Adams 2006: 146). The Sumerian value has no connection with the item depicted. Of interest is the fact that this, like many other parallels to Indo-European, betray a strong lexical affinity to that area of the IE dialect continuum from which the Western (or Northwestern) languages emerged. See, for example, nerah below. By this, it is meant that in the dialect continuum of the so-called Indo-European homeland, the area from which Indo-European expanded in the 4th and 3rd millennia B.C., there was already a degree of at least lexical differentiation, such that a sub-area in or towards the west of this continuum already had many of the lexical features attributed to the later language families of the (North-)Western group.

• hu ‘(phonetic value)’ : *h₁əgʰ-i₂, 2 ‘bird’ (IEW 86). The entry _u₁₁_ ‘bird’ occurs once in a lexical list. Words borrowed at an early point, such as this short value, tend over time to lose their laryngeal-like _h_ at morpheme boundaries, especially in initial position. Their structure often shows a high degree of assimilation to Sumerian phonotactics. Loans that are recent at the time of phonetic attestation tend more often to be characterized by polysyllabic structure, a lower degree of assimilation to Sumerian phonotactic patterns, and Neo-Sumerian _h_ at word boundaries, but such terms exhibit erosion in the course of time. Thus, in the Old Sumerian (OS) of the Early Dynastic period and later we find _hirin₃ ~ hu-ri₂-in ‘cedar’ (< *h₂₁-em- ‘cedar, juniper’; IE 302-303; Mallory and Adams 2006: 161; Whittaker 2004: 409), which develops into vowel-harmonized Neo-Sumerian (NS) NS _eren ~ erin_ (Civil 1983: 3-4; cf. MSL 14 56). An _l_ ~ _r_ interchange, as here, is an occasional feature of Sumerian. To illustrate the effect of time on loan values, compare the process of reduction evident in the forms Ākku_sukudr > ūṣ-ku > ūṣ-ug, Akk. _šuku₂šu₂. ‘subsistence holding’ (vowel-harmonized from IE *ṣegʰ-os ‘holding’).

Moreover, the sign values šakar, šahar, and šar/sar of WRITE (SAR, cf. IE *sker- ‘cut’) suggest a progressive assimilation of a šk-cluster via šh to š. Thus, peš (above) can be regarded as an old loan, whereas NS _iskila ‘shell; river pebble’ (from *skel-) is recent.

A further indication that _hu ~ u₁₁_ originally meant ‘bird’ can be seen in its occurrence as the embed in Akk. _huhāru ‘bird trap’ (CAD 6 224), which must be a loan from Euphratic via Sumerian. Sum. *huhar, the intermediate source of the term, was lost and replaced by har-mušen-na (har ‘ring,’ mušen ‘bird’), lit. ‘ring/(fitting) of snare of the bird.’ Note that the required order of the latter’s components in Sumerian contrasts with Indo-European compounding order. The ultimate Euphratic source was probably *h₁əgʰ-i₂ ‘bird’ and *h₁or-o₂ ‘fit together’ (cf. Sum. har ‘ring; fitting (of a plough, etc.).’)Sum. _hu ~ u₁₁_ must come from an earlier *h₁wi in the same manner as NS _u₂ ‘ewe’ comes from OS _u₂-wi (from IE *h₁oɡʰ-i₂ ‘sheep’).

- lik ‘(phonetic value)’ : *g₁kl- ‘wolf’ (IEW 1178-1179; de Vaan 2008: 353). An orphaned phonetic value with no motivation in Sumerian. The sign is the logogram for DOG (Sum. _ur_, cf. ur-bar-ra ‘wolf,’ lit. ‘outer dog’). In the Sumerian cryptography known as UD.GAL.NUN the sign _KU_ substitutes for DOG (Krebernik 1998: 300; cf. *r₁b₅(n) ‘dog’).

- lub ‘(phonetic value)’ : *g₁lp- ‘fox’ (IEW 1179; de Vaan 2008: 353, 688). Again a phonetic value with no motivation in Sumerian. The sign is the logogram for FOX (Sum. _ka₃ ‘fox’). Further faunal names are:

- irib₂ ‘(unidentified animal listed right after a series of words for the ewe)’ (Gong 1993: 21) : *h₁ɛri₁-b₁ ‘-ram; kid’ (IEW 326). Cf. _estub_ from *h₁r₁- from below.

- sah₂ ~ _sah_ ‘pig’ : *s₁(e)suh₁ ‘pig’ (IEW 1038-1039; de Vaan 2008: 603). The vocalism is difficult; derivation from the expected IE _suh₁_ should lead to Sum. *suh. If the sign _š_ is original, it must come from an earlier _s_ before _e_. Alternatively, if the variant with _š_ is late, _sah_ may represent /soh₁/ or /sah₁/ with vowel harmony from a following, now lost, final vowel (depending on the case suffix of the borrowed form).

- gilim ~ _gilin_ ~ _gilm_ ‘mongoose,’ OS ‘rat’ (Ebla) : *gilh₁-m (acc.) ‘mouse or weasel sp.’ (IEW 367; de Vaan 2008: 264; cf. Lat. _gilis_ ‘dormouse,’ Greek _galē_)

2 Throughout this article all vowels will be rendered as ‘coloured’ by neighbouring laryngeals, that is, with the phonetic effect of these laryngeals visible, reflecting the situation in Late Proto-Indo-European. This is in contrast with usual Indo-Europeanist practice (an exception: IER, which usually leaves laryngeals unrepresented). Ablaut is obscured somewhat by this, but the result is closer to the original phonetic shape of the IE terms encountered by Sumerian. To find these words in the standard Indo-European dictionaries (IEW; IER), one should remove the laryngeals and lengthen any vowel immediately followed by a laryngeal.
weasel,’ Skt. giri ‘mouse’). The Sum. term, written with the RAT logogram, occurs compounded with nin ‘lady’ in the name of a deity. Note that in Indo-European languages the weasel is sometimes similarly named, as, for example, in Italian donnola ‘weasel,’ lit. ‘little lady.’

- **hurin** ‘(myth.) eagle’: *h₂or- (en)- ‘eagle’ (IEW 325-326; Kloekhorst 2008: 301-302; Mallory and Adams 2006: 143-144). Both this word and the term for ‘cedar’ are written in Old Sumerian with initial h, later without.

- **nerah** ~ **nirah**, ES **serah** ‘snake, adder’: *neh₂-tr-ah₂ ‘snake, adder; Nerah (snake deity)’ (IEW 767; de Vaan 2008: 402). The correspondence of Emegir (EG, the main dialect) n to Emesal (ES, a prominent sociolect and literary dialect; see Whittaker 2002) s indicates palatalization before /e/.

- **durah** ‘fallow deer (Civili)’ or ‘ibex’: *(d)jork-ah₂ ‘deer sp.’ or ‘gazelle’ (cf. IEV 513; Schrijver 1995: 61). The initial dental cluster may be reflected in the Greek forms zorks and zorkds, which, however, can come from either d₃ or f. Alternatively, one might reconstruct Euphratic *jork-ah₂ as a variant of *jork-ah₂ (the latter found only in Celtic) influenced by the verb *darker- ‘see, look, gaze’ (LIV 122), an explanation that has been proposed independently for Greek variants dorks, dorkds, etc. (cf. the English expression ‘doe-eyed’). For a fuller list of -ah₂-stems appearing as loans in Sumerian see below.

A well-known faunal sign with no obvious resemblance to the animal it names is:

- **u₃s₃, us₃s₃, OS u₃-wi ‘ewe’ (Ebla): *h₂or- (en)-s ‘sheep’ (IEW 784; see Kloekhorst 337-338 for the identification of the IE laryngeal as h₂). The form with final s occurs only in the NS compound usduha ‘sheep and goats,’ where it is non-final. Except in words with the final sequence sis, a conservative or perhaps assimilated variant of zir, IE final s regularly becomes Sum. dfr where retained.

The OX sign (GUD) is a prime example of a multivalent sign with values only partially understandable in connection with Sumerian. Among these are logographic gud ‘bovine, ox’ and estub ‘carp,’ and the following unglossed values apparently lacking Sumerian motivation: gar₃₄, gugarid, gidim ~ gudma ~ gadma, dipar(a) ~ dapor ‘sacrificial animal; cattle’ (IEW 222)

- **gud** ‘ox, bull’: *g₂rg₂-s ‘bovine,’ with regular correspondence of dfr to IE s in final position (IEW 482-483).

- **gara₃₄** (phonetic value): *g₂rg₂-r₃ ‘bovine; (by extension:) shining, reddish, etc.’ (cf. IEV 482-483; attested in Indo-Iranian). This is probably related to the second element in Indag(a)ra, wr. GUD and NINDAₓₓGUD, the name of the bovine son of the moon god.

- **estub** ~ **aštub** ‘carp’ (wr. BOVINE+FISH, GUD₃₄), Akk. ersupp₃ ~ arsup₃ ‘carp’: *h₂r-s-g-b₃ ‘steer’ (cf. Skt. rsabh₃ ‘steer’; IEV 336-337). This is one of many fish species named in Sumerian after an animal (on the basis of some characteristic of the latter).

The following are preceded by the DIVINE classifier but unglossed:

- **gugarid** : *g₂rg₂-k₃l-ı-s ‘herdsman’ (cf. IEV 483). The Akkadian rendition of gugarid is gugalità (MSL 15 34), which preserves the original liquid. For the suffix on *g₂rg₂-k₃l-ı-s see Schrijver (1995: 266-267).

- **gidim** ~ **gudma** ~ **gadma**: *(d)k₃ntom-g₂-y-ah₂ ‘sacrifice of a hundred oxen’ (IEW 483). The Sum. forms represent /gദm/, with vowel harmony from an earlier *(d)h₃g₃d₃m₃.

- **dipar(a)** ~ **dapor**: *d₃h₂p-ro-. *d₃h₂p-rah₂ ‘sacrificial animal; cattle’ (IEW 222)

A further sign of interest is EYE (IGI). Its primary logographic value in Emegir is i-igi ‘eye(s), face, front,’ corresponding to ibi (i-bl₂) in the Emešal dialect. It has long been recognized by Sumerologists that the g ~ b interchange, both between dialects and within Emegir, reflects a labiovelar or perhaps a gb coarticulation (Civil 1973). A curious aspect of this sign is that it sometimes occurs as the first element in a sign group representing words unrelated semantically to its own domain. One such example is the group EYE+PEG/NAIL (IGI.GAG) used for a series of sharp or tapering objects. There is no obvious relationship, phonetic or semantic, between the Sumerian word for ‘eye’ and any of the values in this group. If, however, we replace the Sumerian value with the Indo-European word for the same, *h₂ok₃-s ‘eye, face,’ *h₂ok₂-d₃h₃ (dual) ‘eyes,’ we arrive at a phonetic shape that can be related to one of the items in the group. The logographic values are:

- **ubrim(m)** ‘lance, spear’: *h₂ok₃(ḫ)-r₃-m (acc.) ‘sharp
point, sharp edge’ (IEW 18-22).

- šukur ‘lance, spear’: *šek-uh-r ‘axe’ < *sek- ‘cut’ (IEW 895-896). The Sum. form with initial š shows palatalization before /e/ in an earlier *šekur/, prior to the effect of vowel harmony on the first syllable.

- dal(i)₄θ ‘thorn, pin, needle’: *dʰolg-₀ ‘thorn, pin, needle’ (IEW 247) with regular Sum. reduction (or assimilation) of a medial liquid + stop cluster to the liquid.

By combining EYE as a phonetic indicator with PEG/NAIL, a semantic indicator (or classifier), it was possible to represent a term for ‘lance’ unambiguously. Here, as throughout the cuneiform system, further values have been added over time, so for phonetic reasons, others, as in the case of šukur and dala₄ (joining ubrim), on semantic grounds. Unfortunately, no concerted attempt has yet been made in Assyriology to work out the diachronical relationships among the values of a sign or sign group.

Behind the sign group EYE+TABLET (IGI.DUB) we find a possible compound:

- agrid, a pre-form of which was borrowed into Akk. as abarakku, ‘steward, housekeeper (of a temple or palace)’: *h₀ok’-h₁red (or *h₂ok’-h₁red) ‘one who directs the eye, overseas’ (IEW 775-777, 854-857). The compound is not attested in Indo-European, although other constructions based on ‘eye’ occur with the compound EYE+POLE/PLANT, which after Old Sumerian becomes, as a rule, an-os ābarakku (joining šu ‘hand’), and ubur ‘udder, teat; breast’ < *h₀(ol)uh-d₁ ‘udder’ (IEW 347; de Vaan 2008: 636 on Lat. über).

A derivative of the EYE sign, the so-called gun₄ (hatched) variant SIG₄, has, among other things, the values ig₄, sig₄, ~ seg₄, and ugor₄ ~ ukur₄. The second value, used for Sum. sig₄ (‘a class of worker’), is reminiscent of IE *sek₁. ‘follow; see (i.e. follow with the eyes).’ The third value is again suggestive of *h₂ok₄: ig₄ ‘eye(s), face’ (as above for IGI): *h₀ok₄ ‘eye,’ *h₀ok’-h₁th₁ (du.) ‘eyes’⁷ (IEW 775-777).

- sig₄ ~ seg₄ (phon. value): *sek₁ ‘follow; see (follow with the eyes)’ (IEW 897-898).

- ugor₄ ~ ukur₄ (‘a pot’): *h₂ok’-n-es ‘cooking pot’ (IEW 88). The Euphric heteroclitic noun corresponds to n-stem nouns in other IE languages.

- sumag₄ ~ simig₄ ~ sumug₄ ‘wars, mole, birthmark’; *sam₁-tl₂ ‘smear, spot’ (cf. Lat. macula ‘stain, spot’; or from an extended root *sme₁j₁k₄, *sme₁j₁g₄; IEW 966-967; de Vaan 2008: 357-358). The Sumerian variants indicate a pronunciation /sam/j or /samj/.

The sign group EYE+FORM (SIG₄,ALAN) delivers two further examples:

- uktin ‘appearance, form, facial features’: *h₂ok’-ti-m (acc.) ‘appearance, sight, expression’ (IEW 775-777).

- ulutim₅ ~ ulutim₆ ‘appearance, form, facial features’: *u₁ti-m (acc.) ‘appearance, facial features’ (IEW 1136-1137; LIV 675). This term is parallel to ulutim ~ ulutim, ES ilkiden, ‘written notice, notification of intentions’ < *u₁hi₄-t₁-m (acc.) ‘wish(es)’ (IEW 1137-1138; LIV 677-687). Note that in the latter instance the laryngeal is indirectly attested in the velar of the ES form.

⁵ Possibly a vowel-harmonized taboo loan. Cf. tibir ‘hand, cupped hand’ < *d₁en₄ ‘palms of the hand’; ubur ‘udder; teat; breast’ < *h₂uh₄θ ‘udder’; aruš ‘womb; compassion’ < *ug₄θ ‘breast’ (IEW 1165; Mayrhofer 2005: 71, 89). Given the final š, aruš must come from a non-neuter stem, unlike its Indic cognate. Its semantics (‘breast’ > ‘womb’ as a source of compassion) can be compared with a development in Romance: Lat. sinus ‘fold, inlet; lap; breast, bosom’ > Fr. sein ‘breast, bosom; womb.’
Feminine gender in Euphratic

Among the Indo-European loans in Sumerian are several sets with well-known derivational suffixes, such as -tī above. Evidence for inflection, indeed for masculine and neuter gender, are found in adjectives and nouns ending in -dr from IE -s (nom. masc.) and in am/bum from -om (nom./acc. neuter, or acc. masc.). These have been discussed elsewhere (Whittaker 2004). Of greater interest are the cases in which the suffix -ah₂, attested but only indirectly in Anatolian, occurs. A selection of these terms follows (see also nerah and durah, discussed above). The first item, a colour term, provides clear evidence that -ah₂ was already a marker of the feminine gender in Euphratic, since adjectives agree with nouns:

- **dara(h)₂** ‘dark-coloured, dark red’: *dorg-ah₂* ‘dark-coloured, red’ (IEW 251-252). This is an important colour term (also used for cows) in the archaic texts of Uruk (Green and Nissen 1987: 185). An OS variant from Ebla, de-ṣi-hum suggests an underlying *dorg-ih₂* (Steinkeller 1989: 3; CAD 3 74). The reduction of the liquid + stop cluster is regular. For further examples compare the following -ah₂-stems.

Another colour term was *huṣ ~ ruṣ*, Ack. *huṣša ~ ruṣša* ‘reddish, ruddy; furious, angry’ from *h₂rusto- (< *h₂ruṣu-to-) ‘red, ruddy’ (IEW 872-873; cf. de Vaan 2008: 515, 525, 528; IER 71). The latter term in Indo-European probably relates to the ruddy colour of copper (cf. Early Dynastic *h₂aJ-s-om* ‘copper,’ it seems possible that both derive from IE *h₂amh₂-s* ‘pour’ (or *h₂amh₂-t* ‘grip’; LIV 265-266; cf. Millar 1997: 50). The IE-stem neuter has been reconstructed in Euphratic on the analogy of *h₂ams-om* ‘gold’ and *h₂arpt-om* ‘silver’ (IEW 15-16). Early Dynastic *h₂ruṣ₂-da* ‘copper’ derives from IE *h₂ruds₂- ‘ruddy’ (rather than the reverse as occasionally suggested). Given the Akkadian equivalent, *verium* (with Ack. -um) ‘copper,’ it seems possible that both derive independently (with vowel harmony in the Sumerian) from an IE *gēθt-r₂-s* ‘wire’ (cf. IER 96), related to Celtic and Germanic terms for the same.

- **larah** (part of yoke harnessing of plough): *lorg-ah₂* ‘club; (wagon) shaft, thill’ (IEW 691-692). The Sumerian term can be preceded by the WOOD classifier of an ard, or sliding plough (cf. Potts 1997: 75-76). IE *lorg-* survives only in Celtic (as an -ah₂-stem) and in Germanic, designates a kind of club, cudgel or pole, but note Breton *lorch’enn* ‘shaft of a wagon, thill.’

- **larah** ‘narrowness, dire straits, esp. in childbirth’: *lorg-ah₂* ‘bent forwards’ (IEW 679; cf. *lērd-skō-* ‘curvature of limbs; back spasms’)

- **zarah** ‘grief, worry; dirge; vulva; eczema’: *surg₂-ah₂* ‘grief, worry; illness’ (IEW 1051)

- **zarah** ‘stork’: *storg-(ah₂)* ‘stork’ (IEW 1023; Mallory and Adams 2006: 145). An alternative reconstruction, *strg-(ah₂)* (Witczak 1991: 106-107), is less attractive because of the non-vocalization of the syllabic resonant before the medial stop.


- **kusah** ‘(myth.) bison’: *hus-r-ah₂* ‘dawn-red cow (also myth.)’ (IEW 86). This newly published Sum. term (MSL 15 188) is undoubtedly the equivalent of Akk. *kusaraku~ kusarišku~ husarišku~ kusarišhu* (‘myth.) bison,’ an independent loan (with Semitic -u) from Euphratic, perhaps reflecting variants in both -ah₂ and -ih₂. Lieberman once listed it among a number of terms that, in his opinion, “simply do not look like native Akkadian” (1977: 16 fn. 38). Given the similarities between the Sumerian and Vedic mythological associations of bovines, it need not be assumed that the semantic extension of a term for ‘dawn-red’ to name bovines is a post-IE development. The alternation k ~ h, corresponding to *h₂, occurs occasionally in both Sumerian and Akkadian. A similar alternation g ~ h corresponds to *h₂, Another one of Lieberman’s terms is *elumaku~ elamaku~ ‘(a precious wood; tree name)’ (1977: 16 fn. 38), comparable to IE *h₂elm- ~ *h₂jim- ‘elm’ (cf. IEW 302-303; de Vaan 2008: 637).

- **emerah** ‘bowl for storing and serving liquids’ (CAD 8 612): *h₂amhe-tlah₂* ‘drinking vessel(s)’ < *h₂amh₂- ‘pour’ (or *h₂amh₂-t* ‘grip’; LIV 265-266; cf. Mayrhofer 2005: 20). The initial Sum. vowel has been harmonized to the following e.

- **nitah** ‘male, man’: *h₂nir₂-t-ah₂* ‘manliness, virility’ (IEW 765). The Sumerian reflects regular *nitahi/.

An entire word family based, like the preceding word, on *h₂ner- ‘man; hero’ appears to have been borrowed into Sumerian. In addition to *h₂nir₂-t-ah₂* (above), this consists of:

- **ner ~ nir. ES šer, ‘lord, prince; hero’ (wr. NOBLE/NOBLE=PRINCE, NUN/NUN=NIR): *h₂nēr* ‘man; hero’ (IEW 765). The ES form shows regular palatalization of Sum. n before e. Cf. nerah, ES šerah, ‘snake, adder.’

- **ner ~ nir ‘authority, trust; confidence’ (Thomsen 1984: 305; Hayes 1990: 212): *h₂ner-t₂- ‘charismatic power’ (IEW 765)

- **ner ~ nir ‘princely’ (cf. also the phonetic value nira of PRINCE, NIR): *h₂ner-o-* ‘strong’ (de Vaan 2008: 406-407)
• nur ~ narax ~ narx ' (phonetic values) of PRINCE (NIR) (MesZL 140): *h₁nur-o- 'charismatic, strong' (IEW 765)

• lirum (wr. HAND+STRONG, ŠU.KAL) ~ nerx (wr. NOBLE+NOBLE, NUN×NUN) 'strength, force; strong, powerful, mighty, great; resistant, obstinate, quarrelsome; a noble; (crock of the) arm; wrestler' (ePSD; Gong 1993: 43): *h₁ner-o-m 'sth. virile, strong, charismatic' (IEW 765; cf. Lat. neriosus 'strong, resistant,' both of which meanings are found in the Sum.).

The adjectival values relate to the homophonous IE adjective *h₂ner-o-. Sumerian seems to have borrowed two unrelated IE terms which fell together as *nerom: this word and the term for 'testicle' (from *negro-m 'kidney; testicle'). To avoid awkward associations, each was apparently altered, the first by replacing n with l, for which there are a number of prominent parallels in Sumerian; the second by replacing it with its ES equivalent, šer (from /sērem/, yielding EG sirum, siru, šir (for /sērem, sēro, šēr/). An original Sum. *nerom/, vowel-harmonized to *nerom/, is suggested by the otherwise unmotivated Akkadian value nārum 'light' of the TESTICLE sign.

• šunir ('divine emblem') : *h₂su-h₁nér-o- 'mighty; fortunate' (Fortson 2004: 71, 118). The expression tukul šunir 'divine emblem' is composed of tukul 'tool; weapon; cudgel' and an adjectival šunir, which usually stands on its own in the meaning 'divine emblem.' Such symbols were embodiments of divine power and could take the form of weapons. The phrase appears to derive from an IE *tuk-lo- *h₂su-h₁nér-o- 'weapon imbued with charisma' or the like. For *tuk-lo- cf. Greek tākos 'hammer; chisel; battle-axe' (IEW 1032). The š of šunir reflects IE *h₂s (init. š would yield s). The NOBLE (NUN) sign has an orphaned phonetic value which, together with PAUPER (UKUR), provides an interesting pair of Euphratic antonyms:

• kurud ' (phonetic value of NOBLE) ' : *kuh₁ro-s 'powerful' (IEW 592-594)

• ukur, 'poor, pauper': *y₁-kuh₁ro- 'powerless' (IEW 757-758, 592-594)

**Place names**

As we have seen, Michalowski (2005: 178) has recently declared that “most of the toponyms in Southern Mesopotamia are neither Sumerian nor Semitic.” Unfortunately, he neglects to state his criteria and supplies no hint as to the toponyms he has in mind. Can, however, examples be found? The following parallels (a selection only) are suggestive:

• Kalama. ES kanaj, 'the land (of Sumer)': *kölḥ₂-m- 'reed,' for 'reedlands?' (IEW 612; de Vaan 2008: 150)

• Nibrum (wr. LORD+WIND+PLACE, EN.LIL.KI) ‘Nippur’: *neb- ḫ₂ro- ‘cloudy’ (IEW 315-316). Nippur was the seat of Enlil, god of wind and weather, who was li-kenned to a dungsu(d) dirig-ga ‘drifting cloud’ (ETCSL 4.05.1, l. 99; cf. *d₂g₁u₂-s ‘fog,’ d₂g₁u₂- ‘drift, draw’; IEW 248, 257, 273; LIV 154; Kloekhorst 2008: 829).

• Eridugu ~ Eridug (wr. CITY+SWEET, URU/IRI.DUG.U) ‘Eridu,’ lit. ‘good/sweet city’: *y₂r₁-ja₂h₂ d₂luk-ū- (or *d₂luk-ū-) ‘sweet (hill-)town’ (IEW 1115, 222). The noun is related to Thracian bria ‘city, hill-town,’ West Tocharian riye ‘city’ (Mallory and Adams 2006: 221).

• Kuara (wr. FISH+WATER+PLACE, HA.A.KI) ‘Kuara’: *(d₂) uyah₂- (cf. IEW 416-417; Greek ikhthuros ‘fishy’). In the Sumerian King List, the god Dumuzid is described as a fisherman coming from Kuara (Sjöberg and Bergmann 1969: 81).

• Karkara ~ Kaku -raka (wr. STORM+PLACE, IM.KI) ‘Karkara’: *perk₂-ro- (< *perk₁-ro- ‘pertaining to the oak (assoc. with lightning)’ (cf. IEW 822-823). As in Celtic, a sequence *p₁k₂ develops into *pk₁k₁ in Euphratic. This place name is unusual in attesting to -ro- rather than the expected -u- if the term indeed derives from *perk₁-u- ‘oak,’ the tree of the thunder god (for a possible *Perk₁-u-s; see EIEC 407, 582-583; West 2007: 238-247). The Sumerian suggests a development *karkaro > NS /karkaro/ > /kakro/. Karkara is the seat of the storm god Iskur (from *skur₂-h₂ro- ‘shower’; IEW 597). The typical weapon of the Indo-European storm god is the *yog₂-ro- (cf. IEW 1117-1118; LIV 660), which becomes Sum. ugor, a divine weapon sometimes described as a mace, sometimes a sword. For the latter equation, cf. *h₂a₂f₂-ro- ‘pasture, field’ (IEW 6), which develops into vowel-harmonized Sum. agar ~ ugor₂- ‘field.’

• Ararma ~ -am. Akk. Larsam (wr. SHINING +ABODE+PLACE, UD.UNUG.KI) ‘Larsa’: *h₂uf₂-ro-m ‘shining white’ (IEW 64). Related to this is aramim ~ ururim (wr. CITY×SHINING, URU×UD) ‘(?),’ from *h₂uf₂-ro-m (acc.), the feminine counterpart.

• Usab ~ Adab ~ Abab. Akk. Usab ~ Utab (wr. SHINING+NOBLE+PLACE, UD.UN.NU) “Adab”: *h₂a₂s₂-ro-m ‘of the sunrise’ (IEW 86). The emblem or standard of Adab was the solar disk (cf. Jacobsen 1967: 101).

• Tintir (wr. GATE+GOD+PLACE, KA₂.DINGIR. KI) ‘Babylon’: *deju₂-om d₂yr- (or *d₂ur₂-) ‘gate of the gods’ (IEW 278-279). The Akkadian equivalent, Babilu/tu, is composed of bāb ‘gate’ and ilu ‘god’ ~ ili ‘of the god,’ a slavish rendition of the signs employed for the toponym.

• Lagāš (wr. RAVEN+CITY-la, ŠIR.BUR.KI-la) ‘Lagash’: *le₂g₁-s₂- ‘storehouse’ (IEW 658-659). The city name is translated into Akk. na(?k)kumtu ‘storehouse (ePSD; CAD 11/1: 182). This š-stem appears not to have
been neuter in Euphratic: ᶀ indicates that IE s was non-final. The first Sum. vowel is the result of vowel harmony. Jacobsen (1967: 103) argues that the emblem ("clan-symbol," "totem") of Lagash was the raven. Cf. Gaulish loágos 'raven' < *leg- 'dark' (IEW 686).

**Grammatical features**

A number of grammatical features are reconstructable for Euphratic. Of particular interest are the Akkadian prepositions of Persargonic (ca. 2600-2350 B.C.) and Sargonic (ca. 2350-2150 B.C.) date:

- **in** 'in, to; from' (Presarg., Sarg.) : *en 'in' (IEW 311-312)
- **ana** 'to, for, at, according to' (Sarg.) : *ana ~ *an 'on, up (onto); according to' (IEW 39-40)

In Persargonic texts the preposition **in** is readily identifiable because it is written phonetically with the syllable sign in (Krebernik 1998: 270), rather than with a logogram. Later, in Ur III times (ca. 2150-2000 B.C.), it becomes **ina** on the analogy of **ana** (CAD 7 141-142). Like its Greek counterpart **and** 'on, upon, up (along): for (the price of),' the preposition **ana** (CAD I/1I 100-101) is also used in reference to rates and prices. These two prepositions are the only words in Old Akkadian that permit final short *a*

In Sumerian we have:

- **tukum** 'immediately, in a moment; as soon as; if': *tuk-kom, lit. 'with that' (cf. Hitt. takkam '?'), takku 'if, when' < *tuk-kom, *to-kwe; Kloeckhorst 2008: 432-433, 816). Such constructions occur widely in Indo-European (see esp. Wagner 1967; Eichner 1971). In English there is a parallel construction: with that 'thereupon; (obs.:) provided that, if.'

- **-PI** ('comitative postposition for 3rd pers. pl.'): *-bi (instrumental pl. suffix). In Old Sumerian economic texts **-PI** may occur in the so-called prefix chain of the verb in contexts where the comitative/instrumental postposition **-da** would otherwise be expected (Thomsen 1984: 225). This only happens in conjunction with the 3rd person plural. To date Sumerologists have failed to find a convincing explanation for this curious phenomenon, one that is all the more puzzling given the fact that postpositions like **-da** are immutable, lacking separate singular and plural forms. The solution seems to lie in perceiving the occasional use of **-PI** as a holdover from Euphratic scribal conventions. Just as Akkadian and Hittite texts employ Sum. **-MES** as a mere scribal convention (a Sumerogram) for the indication of a noun plural, it is probable that **-PI**, used originally in as yet unidentified Euphratic texts for the IE comitative/instrumental plural suffix *-bi, survived as an Old Sumerian device, a Euphratogram as it were, for the rendition of a comitative postposition attached to a 3rd person plural pronoun (see also Whittaker 2001: 24-25).

**Euphratic society**

Summing up: In the Late Uruk period, the reedlands (kalama < IE *kolh-m- 'reed'; cf. kilim 'reed bundle') of multiethnic Southern Mesopotamia were home to an Indo-European-speaking people living in city-states (urui/iri < *grii-ah-hu 'town') situated along rivers (id2(a) < *yedöl(r) 'water'), streams (uhrum < *uh-n-ro-m 'river') and canals (pad-d < *ppt- 'passage, way'), with nearby wetlands (dagrim < *sštarg-ri-m (acc.) 'marsh'). At the top of the social pyramid stood a lord (*ner < *h2nē r 'charismatic man; hero') functioning as city-state governor (OS GAR(A).PA.OTE.SI < *giri-pot-i-s 'lord of the enclosed settlement'). The community was sustained by teams of workers (**erin < *ger-n- 'band of men/warriors') in an agricultural/pastoral economy. Domestic animals such as the ewe (OS u2-wi < *h2og-i- 'sheep') and the pig (**sah < *suh- 'pig') were kept. The ox (**gud < *g2og-s 'bovine') was led by a rope (**saman/samun, Akk. **summa(n)mu, 'lead-rope, tethering rope' < *s(j)uh-marq 'strap') into the field (**agar < *h2ad-ro 'pasture, field'), where it pulled a plough (**apin < *yog-mi- 'ploughshare'). Grain collected in stacks of sheaves (**kgaradin < *k2h2i-m (acc.) 'wickerwork; something intertwined') was ground into meal (**mela < *mel-go- 'flour'). Wine (**idin/tin < *yih2-ti-m (acc.) 'vine') and barley beer (**kaš < *kath2-so- 'fermented substance') were produced. Supernatural protection from the environment was sought from divine personifications of such beings and forces as the serpent (**nerah < *neh2-tr-ah- 'snake') and storm (**iškur < *skah2-ro- 'shower'). To protect the community from human foes, the army (**ugnim). Akk. ummānām, vowel-harmonized < *h2ad-mq, *h2ad-men- 'train, warband on the march') went to war (**gigam < *girah2-ah-m (acc.) 'conflict, strife, war') armed with such weapons as the spear (**śkur < *sek-uh-t- 'cutting instrument; axe') and the axe (OS hazi < *h2ag-s-ti2 'axe').

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6 The phonetic spelling **mi-na-an-gu** 'my (n-gu) troops,' Akk. **um-na-nil-aa, for **ugmina-ju, in Sulgi’s letter to Išbi-Erra about the purchase of grain, l. 11 (ETCSL no. 3.1.13.2), exhibits the expected sequence **men found also in the Akk. loan. For the reversal of nasals in Sumerian, cf. also EG **min = ES **nim two.'
ჰუმანიტარული & საზოგადოებრივი მეცნიერება

ენთავურება და ფიქრწარმადგენლობა

“ევფრატი” სერბის სეგასი

ვირჯინობრივი კომპილაცია

(წერილობად ა.გ. ლ. ლ. გ. ვ. წ. ჩ. დ.)

“ევფრატი” სერბის სეგასის ენზომორფული სახელგანგებობა ართვით ჰუმანიტარული ტერიტორიის ინდუსტრიის ოთხების ყოფილი გეოგრაფიის სარგებლობითი არჩევამოსილი რეგიონზე სრულყოფილი ყოველთვიუთში მარაგავი შეტანილი პოლიტიკის წინააღმდეგ, ორთულ ართვით საზოგადოებრივი სამხედველო შეტანილი პოლიტიკის ოპტიმიზმზე სურის გავრცელება, რომელიც სერბი ახალგაზრდა ყოველთვიუთში ყოვლის არსებობა თანახმადა, გარდამდე აღწერილი ჰუნგარული ჰუმანიტარული სეგასი.

ავთო სკრიმშენ თანამედროვე შემოქმედინით ჰუმანიტარული მეტაფორა შეტანილი ახალგაზრდა სერბით შეტანილი პოლიტიკის წინააღმდეგ, რომლის სერბი ახალგაზრდა ყოველთვიუთში ყოველთვიუთში ირგვლივ მთავარი მარაგავი შეტანილი პოლიტიკის წინააღმდეგ, რომელიც თანამედროვე სერბით შეტანილი პოლიტიკის წინააღმდეგ

ABBREVIATIONS

EG: Emegir; ES: Emesal; IE: Indo-European; NS: Neo-Sumerian; OS: Old Sumerian


ePSD: Electronic Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary, at http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd/

ETCSL: Electronic Text Corpus of Sumerian Literature, at http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/


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