



THE IMPACT OF ANCIENT ARMENIAN TRADITIONS AND WORLDVIEW ON THE COGNITIVE CORE OF NORDIC CULTURE

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Introduction

The historians refer to the records on the origin or genesis of the world civilizations, analyzing individually the given archaeological data, the processes and language of the indigenous population. More frequently, the data is incomplete and wide open to criticism. Human thought formation is based not only on the categories and units of a particular language, but rather on the universal content structures of logical and figurative thinking in their constant interaction and reciprocal influence. People more frequently use words not on their semantical level (**in the integrity, in the cognitive concept of the knowledge spiral**), but on the level of transmitted meanings, i.e. concepts and conceptual features in an entirely different, non-respective contexts, without conceiving the way a particular word is formed, which serves the basis for the recipient to perceive the meaning. A language reflects contemporary culture; still it also bears the imprint of its previous forms, which secure a universal worldview, the system of sustainable figures, reflecting the cognitive abilities of our ancestors in the historical context.

Through cognitive linguistic and mythological analysis of the archetypes of old Armenian and Nordic cultures, the authors have identified a number of provisions proving the impact of the Armenian language and culture on European cultural and civilization formation, particularly on mythology and worldview of the Nordic countries. The article summarizes the results of the research in comparison with the works of Medieval Armenian and Scandinavian, and ancient Greek historians.

The identified linguistic, cultural and ideological cohesion (similarity) is manifested not only in the toponyms, in language and mythological motifs, but is also identified in the artifacts of material and non-material cultural monuments: in rock art, dragon- and cross-stones, ornaments, etc. The revealed data is an important source for comparative historical and cultural, psycho-linguistic, anthropological studies. The origin of the royal descents (konungs) stems to

the native speakers of old Armenian - the substrate language, to the descendants of the Aesir and the Vanir.

Methodology

Mythological, religious and historical models of the worldview are constructed through transformation of the archetypes of historical events and developments, religious patterns, which study myth as a concentrated (condensed) story about the history. Myth is a tool, available for cognitive abilities of ancient man, to perceive fractals, the most fundamental events and notable characters, heroes in history and traditions of particular people or tribes.

The visual model of the worldview is a multi-dimensional, figurative picture, which implements common, typical motifs of rock art, graphic symbols and signs of rock and fine arts of different nations. Contrasting, analyzing, assessing and evaluating linguistic, mythological, historical and visual patterns of culture in the frameworks of invariant multi-dimensional knowledge system, makes it possible to reconstruct **a unified worldview adequate to the reality, which was perceived, reflected in collective or social consciousness of particular people or a nation in time and space.**

It is well known that the names of geographical areas and waterbodies are formed as a result of a sequence of related historical events and thinking process of culturally developed/advanced nations inhabiting this territory. The steady geographical area names have become a peculiar historical monument. For their perception and accurate interpretation, we should reconstruct their original forms. Some of them, however, absorb to some extent not only the processes that are typical for cognitive abilities of the indigenous population, but often are the result of mental activity, worldview and culture of migrants, particularly either the Aesir (house of **Askanaz**) and the vanir (**house of Torgom**) or from the Caucasus – the Black Sea shore. According to the authors, the Old Armenian Civilization, the old Indo-European or Japhetic Armenian language and respectively the old Armenian temple of knowledge (known also as the **Dwelling of God**) are the very initial quintessence, archematrix of knowledge, which affected the development and formation of human culture in different parts of the world. According to the Edda [1], the Aesir, the descendants of Odin and the Vanir, settled in the Saxon Lands and conveyed the ancient language and cultural traditions from Asia.

The Armenian Origins of Norse Toponyms and the Dynasty of the Ynglings

The authors present a number of steady toponyms retaining linguistic features of the old Armenian language. The most capacious and core designations are the names of **Scandinavia**, **Noatun**, **Sveygdir**, etc. The earliest identified source for the word form *Scadinavia* is Pliny the Elder's "Natural History" [2]. Researchers consider that the goddess and the giantess **Skadi** might have once been a personification of **Scandinavia**, it goes back to Proto-Germanic *skadinaujo* – "the Island of (goddess) Skadi" ¹. According to the authors, the etymology of this toponym stems back to old Armenian semantic components ***hska** (Armenian *giant*) and ***nav** (Armenian *ship*). According to Norse mythology, Aesir **Odin** came to Scandinavia with sage Vanir **Njord**, who settled in **Noatun**. The shipyard **Noatun** goes back to old Armenian semantic compounds ***nav** (Armenian *ship*) and ***tun** (Armenian *home/house*), and is translated literally as the *ship house*.

The name of the forefather of the **Ynglings Njord** goes back to the Armenian morpheme ***nord** – *leading, prevailing, predominant, superior*. The semantic basis of this notion (**Njord, nord**) is identified in the Armenian word ***arachnord** – *literally leader, chief, guiding, going ahead*. The transformational transition of the given two components ***nord** and ***van** is also

¹ The belief that Scandinavia was an island became widespread among classical authors and the name Scandinavia roots back to this notion.

identified in English **vanguard** (compare Swedish **van** – *experienced, skilled*) – *progressive, leading*. The word **Nord** has an identical semantic basis.

The first historical rulers of Sweden and Norway descended from the **Ynglings**, a Scandinavian dynasty of *konungs*. This name goes back to the Armenian ***inqn/ingn** (Armenian *self, inknutyun* (Armenian *identity*), *origin*).

The name of **Sveigðir** (the son of **Fjölfnir**²) goes back to the Armenian morpheme ***dir** with a semantic content *establish/found, put* (compare Armenian **hinnadir** – *founder*). The semantic components of the name **Vanadis** (Freyja – daughter of Njord) stem back to the Armenian ***van/a** (Armenian *coming from Van*) and ***dis** (Armenian ***dustr** – *daughter*) and is translated as *daughter of Van* (compare with Armenian ***dits** – *divine*).

Of particular interest is the etymology of the musical instrument **Lur**, discovered at Nordic excavation and depicted in rock art. The given cultic and ceremonial instrument was used either for ritual purposes or to attract attention, report some news, etc. In Armenian language the morpheme ***lur** means *news, rumor* (compare with Armenian ***lur** – *silent, noiseless*).

The etymology of the term **runes** goes back to the old Germanic root ***run** (*secret*). This name is derived from the fact that the ancient Germanic people attributed certain mystic properties to the runes. According to Norse mythology, Odin originally inscribed the runes with a spear on a tree using his own blood. The authors identify relations of the word **rune** with the Armenian morpheme ***arun** (*blood*).

The name of the world tree **Yggdrasil** derives from the Armenian morpheme ***ig(eg)** – *feminine*, and ***dir** with a semantic content *establish/found, put, lead*. **Havet** (Swedish *sea*) is identical to Armenian ***havet** – *eternal, endless/infinite*.

Nanna (Old Norse **Nanna** – “mother”) is the daughter of Nepr, **wife of Baldr** (son of **Odin and Frigg**), mother of **Forseti**³. The goddess from the Aesir clan of Norse deities lived with his husband in Breidablik Castle in Asgard. Tricked by **Loki**, blind **Höðr** kills **Baldr** and Nanna throws herself into the funeral pyre of Baldr (**Frigg**⁴ – mother of the gods **Baldr, Höðr** and **Hermóðr**⁵).

According to modern researchers, the etymology of the name of the goddess **Nanna** is debated. Some scholars have proposed that the name may derive from the word *nanna*, meaning “mother”. The name *Nanna* is connected to the root **nanþ-*, leading to “the daring one”⁶. A common noun may have existed in Old Norse *nanna* that roughly meant *woman*⁷. *Nanna* might have the meaning “*she who empowers*”⁸.

Some scholars have attempted to link Old Norse goddess *Nanna* with the Sumerian goddess *Inanna*, the Babylonian goddess *Ishtar*, or the Phrygian goddess *Nana*, mother of the god *Attis*. Some scholars opine that identification with *Inanna*, *Nannar* or *Nana* is “hardly likely” due to the large distances in time and location between the figures⁹; and the idea of a link with Sumerian *Inanna*, “Lady of Heaven” seems unlikely. On the other hand, considering the records provided by G. Dumézil¹⁰ on the twin gods (*the Ashwins - Ašvieniai*) and the fact that in Armenian *Asvien* = **as + *van* (i.e. *Aesir from Van*) and a number of other arguments, the argument of geographical distance is not tenable.

² Fjölfnir (c. I century BC – I century AC) – legendary ruler of Uppsala from the Yngling dynasty [3].

³ Forseti (Old Norse – “the presiding one”) – in Norse mythology is the son of Baldr and Nanna, the god of Justice and reconciliation. Forseti was one of the wisest and most eloquent among the Aesir.

⁴ Freyja (Old German Frijja, “beloved”).

⁵ Hermodr (“brave”).

⁶ Simek R. Translated by Angela Hall. Dictionary of Northern Mythology // Jan de Vries' root theory, 2007, p. 227.

⁷ Lindow J. Norse Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Heroes, Rituals, and Beliefs. 2001, Oxford University Press.

⁸ McKinnell, John. Meeting the Other in Norse Myth and Legend, 2015, p. 144.

⁹ Simek, Rudolf. Translated by Angela Hall. Dictionary of Northern Mythology, 2007.

¹⁰ G. Dumézil compares the **Ashwins**, the Greek Dioscuri and Norse twins **Freyr and Njordr**, considering them the personification of the social function – fertility and welfare. According to Dumézil, these mythological figures of twin deities date back to the common Indo-European period. The Ashwins are mentioned in the Rigveda.

The Old Norse goddess *Nanna* can be associated to Sumerian *Inanna*, Babylonian *Ishtar*, or Phrygian *Nana* considering the cause-effect connection of the following key facts: the Old Armenian goddess of maternity **Nane** – as the *great mother of the Aesir and the Vanir* (the name is also used among the people as a common noun, meaning *grandmother, mother*); **Nane** is the transformation of **Anahit** (the goddess of fertility, healing, wisdom and water in Old Armenia); Anahit goes back to **Astghik** (Armenian *little star*; associated to Greek Venice and Roman Aphrodite) – the beloved of Vahagn. According to Sumerian and Akkadian mythology, Astghik/Anahit/Inanna was abducted from the Kingdom of **Aratta**.

Later, she was transformed into Sumerian *Inanna*, Akkadian *Ishtar* and Semitic *Astarta*. Considering the Phrygian goddess *Nana*, it should be mentioned that the ruler of Phrygia **Tiras** is the father of **Askanaz** and **Torgom**. According to Herodotus, one of the Phrygian tribes spoke a language similar to the Armenian language. Apparently, the father and the sons shared the worldview and followed the same cultural traditions.

According to the Swedish National Encyclopedia, *tumulus* is an absolute synonym of the word *kurgan* (Swedish - *gravhög*)¹¹. The etymology of this toponym goes back to old Armenian language: to the semantic components ***grav** (Armenian *sign, affirmation*) and ***hogh** (Armenian *land*). The name of the toponym **Tanum**¹² (Norse **Túnheimr**) goes back to the components ***tun** (Armenian *home, land*, compare with Armenian ***tanel** – *lead, take*) and ***hem** (Armenian *now, current*), forming the semantic core “*current home*”.

Linguistic Affinity

In addition to the above-mentioned semantic field of the key words with cognitive content, such as toponyms, names of sages and leaders, the authors identify a number of other related words: father - Swedish **here**, Armenian ***her**; mother – Swedish **mor**, Armenian ***mer**; eye – Swedish **öga**, Armenian ***akn**; heart – Swedish **hjärta**, Armenian ***sirt**; moon – Swedish **måne**, Armenian ***lusin**; donkey – Swedish **åsna**, Armenian ***esh**, paradise – Swedish **lustgård**, Armenian ***lu(y)s** *свет/светлый*; city/settlement – Swedish **gard**, Armenian ***qaghaq**; smart – Swedish **klok**, Armenian ***xeloq**; fool/stupid – Swedish **dumbum**, Armenian ***dmbo**.

Table 1 shows **36** (out of **100**) basic key related words and notions in diverse thematic range, illustrating the cognitive abilities, experience and knowledge, capacities and skills, power and wisdom of the **Aesir** and the **Vanir**, which penetrated into the nature of the cultural space of the Old Scandinavians and have been factual, cognitive and linguistic evidence of the unity between Old Armenian and Norse cultural values, when the values formed at a relatively later period are the factor of influence and the source of origin of the others.

Table 1

BASIC KEY WORDS AND NOTIONS			
N	Swedish	Meaning in Swedish	Meaning in Armenian
1	älv	river	*ali (<i>wave, oscillation</i>), *al(q) (<i>deep</i>)
2	Asgardr (Asgard) (Heim der Asen)	enclosure of the Aesir	*as + qar + dir (<i>city, founded by the Aesir</i>)
3	berg	mountain, rock	*burg (<i>pyramid, tower</i>)
4	Bohuslän	the historical area in Sweden	*boh (<i>bah, vah, Vahagn, Bahavan</i>)
5	brasa	fire (fire brought by the Aesir)	*b(e)r (<i>bring</i>) + *as (compare with Askanaz)
6	gå (old Norse)	go, walk	*ga(l) (<i>come</i>)
7	gravhög	kurgan/tumulus	*grav (<i>sign, confirmation</i>) +

¹¹ Online available from: <http://swordmaster.org/2013/10/27/bolshie-kurgany-letopisnogo-plesnecka.html>

¹² The first church built in Tanum.

			*hogh (<i>land</i>)
8	hakkors	swastika	*hak (<i>oblique, opposite, reverse</i>) + *kor (<i>crooked, bent, curved</i>)
9	havet	sea	*havet (<i>eternal, infinite</i>)
10	Iggdrasil	life-giving	*ig(eg) (<i>feminine</i>) + *dir (<i>found, put</i>) + *as
11	jord	land, ground	*hord (<i>trampled, straight /the way/</i>)
12	klok	smart, clever	*xeloq (<i>smart, clever, intelligent</i>)
13	kod, caudex (<i>kernel, stem, tree trunk, stump, ash tree</i>)	code, sequence, turn, line (<i>runic code – cryptography</i>)	Old Armenian *hatsi (<i>ash tree</i> , cf. *hatsut – <i>ash forest</i>), *Kadm (Cadmus) – grandson of Hayk, creator of Phoenician and Greek alphabets. Moreover, *hatsabekor – <i>piece of bread</i> , in Phrygian bekos means bread ¹³
14	lär	teach	*larel (<i>tune, incline, adjust, organize</i>)
15	ljus	light	*luys (<i>light</i>)
16	luft	air, atmosphere	*lurt (<i>open, light, dark, blue</i>)
17	lur	news	*lur (<i>news, tidings, fame</i>)
18	måne	moon	*man (<i>oblique, crooked, bent, curved</i>)
19	mot	near, besides	*mot (<i>near, besides, nearly</i>)
20	Njord	leader, chief, leading, going ahead	*nord (<i>leading, prevailing, superior, predominant</i>)
21	Noatun	ship enclosure	*nav (<i>sjip</i>) + *tun (<i>home</i>)
22	norr	north	*nor (<i>new</i>)
23	Odin	the main god	*v(w)an (transformation of - *odin – <i>first, unified, one</i>)
24	runes (runor)	Runes (bloody, colored in red)	*arun (<i>blood</i>)
25	Scandinavia (Skandinavien)	huge ship	*hska (<i>huge, giant</i>)+ *nav (<i>ship</i>)
26	Skadi	giantess/goddess	*hska (<i>huge, giant</i>)
27	slag	fight, battle	*sraq (<i>arrow, arm</i>)
28	Sveigdir (Sveigder)	the founder of Sweden	*shve + *dir (<i>found, put</i>)
29	tänder	light, burn	*tonir (<i>tonir - печь, сооруженная в земле</i>)

¹³ Herodotus mentions a “linguistic experiment” conducted by Egyptian pharaoh Psammetichus I to discover the oldest language. He gave two newborn babies to a shepherd, with the instructions that no one should speak to them until they utter the first word. *Bekos* was the first word uttered by the child. It was the Phrygian word for bread, and the pharaoh stated that Phrygian was the oldest language. The historian points out that one of the Phrygian tribes spoke a language similar to the Armenian language. The Armenian medieval historians (M. Khorenatsi, H. Draskhanakertsi) mention that the Phrygians are the descendants of Phiras/Tiras, the father of Askanaz – the founder of the Armenian house, which he passed over to his younger brother Torgom. This house locates the territory near Lake Van. Askanaz settled on Black Sea coast and became the leader of the Sarmatians.

30	Tanum	commune in Sweden	* tun (<i>home, country</i> , cp. * tanel – <i>lead</i>) + * hem (<i>now, currently</i>)
31	tar ¹	touch	* tar (<i>letter</i>)
32	tar ²	take/carry away	* tar' (<i>far, distant</i>)
33	Tor (Thor)	god of thunder	* tir (cp. * tor – <i>grandchild</i>), Tup- <i>god of writing</i>
34	Vanadis (Freja)	daughter of the Vanir	* van/a (<i>from Van</i>) + * dis (* dustr – <i>daughter</i> , compare with Armenian * dits – <i>divine</i>)
35	Vanlandi	konung fro the land of Van	* van (compare with <i>Yervand, Vahagn, the Kingdom of Van, Lake Van, Van city</i>)
36	Yngling (Ynglingaätten)	dynasty of konungs	* inqn (<i>self, identity</i>)

Thus, the contrastive analysis of the cognitive meanings of the related Armenian and Swedish key notions and words (Table 1) highlights the main directions of the semantic core of the relations and transformation of the main motifs of cultural origin in the projection of the worldview picture of the Norse world. They include fragments and projections of knowledge frames and archetypes of cultural heritage of old Armenian Civilization. **Thus, the authors first distinguish a common layer of the relation matrix between Armenian and Swedish linguistic frameworks.**

The Armenian Patriarchs and Sages – the Heroes in Norse Myths, the Forefathers of Konungs

According to Scandinavian historians [1, 4], the **Vanir** and the **Aesir** are groups of gods (sages). The **Vanir** settled **Vanaheimr**¹⁴ (Old Norse “*home of the Vanir*”), and the **Aesir** – **Asgard**¹⁵ (one of the three roots of the **World tree - Yggdrasil** – stretches towards Asgard). In the Armenian tradition **Yggdrasil** goes back to three roots – ***eg/ig** (*feminine*), ***dir** (*plant, establish/found*) and ***as** (*from the Aesir, from the house of Askanaz*). There are descendants from Njord among the rulers of Sweden, Norway, England and Ruthenia.

The study of the records provided by the Armenian medieval historians shows, that the **Aesir** and the **Vanir** are the descendants of the sons of **Tiras**¹⁶ (the forefather of the Phrygians) – the father of Askanaz/Ashkenaz, Riphath (the forefather of the Sauromats), Torgom/Togarmah (the forefather of the Caucasians, particularly, his son Hayk – is the patriarch of the Armenians) and Javan (the forefather of the Greek people). Armenian historian H. Draskhanakertsi (10th century) mentions, that **Tiras** and **Javan** moved to Europe, the Balkans, **Tiras** ruled **Phrygia**, **Javan** – Greece, and his son **Elishah** is the ancestor of the Sicilians and the Athenians [4]. Askanaz moved to the coast of the Black Sea (further to the Sea of Azov), the Aesir settled down in the **Tanais** river delta (**Vanakvisl**, present-day **Don**)¹⁷. According to ancient historians, this river separated Asia from Europe.

A number of sources [1, 3, 4] mention that the Aesir have descended from Asia. Through comparative historical analysis the authors managed to convincingly substantiate the hypothesis

¹⁴ Located in the North Black Sea region, westwards of Vanakvisl (Don) [1, 4].

¹⁵ On the Black Sea shore, eastwards of Tanais [1, 4].

¹⁶ Son of Japheth.

¹⁷ There is a district in Rostov on Don (Russia), founded by Armenian migrants, which used to be a city - **Nor Nakhichevan**. Its etymology is adequately interpreted as Armenian ***nor** (*new, original*) ***ijevan** (lodge, possibly from a ship) city (*Ijevan* – city in Armenia), founded by the migrants, newcomers. There is another city **Nakhichevan** in Historical Armenia (currently the capital city of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, Azerbaijan).

that the **Aesir** are the descendants of **Askanaz (founder of Sarmatia**, 2 Sarmatias are differentiated – European and Asian), and the **Vanir** are the descendants of **Torgom** [5-8]. Their lands **Vanaheimr/Vanaland** were located on the territory of the **old Armenian Kingdom of Van** near **Lake Van** (present-day Turkey). Norse sagas mention **Turkland – the country of the Turks**, but before the Turks settled Asia, this territory was a part of the Armenian State and belonged to the Armenians.

The description of European Sarmatia in “Ashkharatsuyts” by Armenian scientist, astronomer, mathematician, philosopher A. Shirakatsi (VII century) [13] is of great importance: *“Ninth part of Europe locates the European Sarmatia, to the east of Germany, from Histuli/Vistula River and the mountains with an identical name, (i.e. Sarmatian). It stretches along the shore of the Arctic Ocean to an unknown country and to the eastern end of the mountain Riphah, where the River tanais takes its source, which flows to the south, dividing Sarmatia into 2 parts: the eastern in Asia and the western in Europe, and further flows into Meotian Sea... It borders along Pontus to the River Tanais (Tyras), which separates Dacia from Sarmatia. There are several small countries in Sarmatia. The Tauric peninsula (Chersonesus) belongs to the Christians. It is located between Lake Byuke (Vuse), Meotian Sea and Pontus Sea, before the point where River Karkinit flows into Karkinit Bay. The other part of the area belongs to the pagans. Some of them are called the Amaksads, i.e. living in carts. There are seven round mountains in Sarmatia, of which take their source several rivers, flowing into Pontus. Some of them form another river called Koco. There is a small lake, two islands and two pagan temples”*¹⁸.

According to a number of references in Norse mythology and legends, the origin of the Norse forefathers is also associated, as mentioned above, with the tribe of the Vanir, inhabiting the country of **Vanaheimr** and with the **Aspurgiani** (compare with Armenian Principality near **Lake Van - Vaspurakan**). The people or the “tribe” Van indicates directly the homeland of the Armenians – Lake Van and the land of Van. The “tribe” (people) of **Aspurgiani** may also be interpreted as the oldest Armenian from the Principality of Van, **Vaspurakan**. Ancient authors [10] mention the **Aspurgiani** - one of the tribes of the Maeotae, dwelling on the east and south-east coast of the Sea of Azov during I millennium BC. Some historians believe that the **Aspurgiani** are not a nation, but a class of heavily armed warriors and riders in the service of the Bosporan rulers [11]. Gumilev's followers argue that the Aspurgiani is the ruling dynasty of the Sarmatian tribe of Siraces¹⁹.

The history of the Aesir and the Vanir [1, 3] and their resettlement from Asia to Sweden includes the description of Odin's (the chief god of Norse mythology) visit to Scandinavia. The proper noun **Óðinn** or **Wōdan/Wōtan** stem from **Wōdanaz** or **Wōdinaz**, which go back to Proto-Germanic **Wōdaz** (*seer, prophet*). In fact the name **Wōdan** or **Wōdanaz/Wōdinaz** include Armenian components ***vo (va/wa/ua – Van)**, ***da/di (*dits – divine)** and ***az/as** (from Askanaz – name of the founder of first Armenian home (Armenian ***tun/tan - home**)).

Considering two compounds “wo/wa” and “tan/tun”, the name **Wōdan/Wōtan** may as well be interpreted as the home/house (Armenian *tun*) of water (living, sacred, life-giving water), which conceptually identifies its affiliation to the people in the Kingdom of Van – the house of the Vanir, or initially the house of Askanaz, considering the fact that before moving to Sarmatia, **Askanaz** founded the house (Askanazi tun), which he passed over to his younger brother **Torgom**. It was later renamed to the *tun of Torgom* (the house of the people in the Kingdom of Van, located near the legendary Lake **Van**, eponymously named the **Vanir**). Thus, the **Aesir** and the **Vanir** should be considered as the successors of the two patriarchs – the blood brothers **Askanaz** and **Torgom**, whose son **Hayk** is the legendary patriarch of the modern Armenians.

¹⁸ Translated by Patkanyan, published in N XI “Journal of the Ministry of Public Education”, 1885.

¹⁹ Bulat V.. Ethnopolitical atlas of Eurasia of the Antiquity and the Middle Ages. Online available from: <http://gumilevica.kulichki.net/chronosphy/atlasIAD.htm#atlasIAD-063>

Odin²⁰ is referred to more than 200 names, such as **Alföör** (*father of all*), **Ygg** (compare *Yggdrasil*), **Har** (*high*). According to the authors, one the names of Odin – **Veratyr** – stem from Old Armenian semantic components ***ver** (Armenian *supreme*, compare with Armenian ***vera** – *again, anew, afresh*) and ***Tir** (Armenian *god of written language and prophecy*); **Har** – from Armenian ***hayr** (*father*). In Norse tradition **Asagrim** is interpreted as “*the ruler of the Aesir*”. The name also goes back to the Armenian components ***as** (*as*²¹, compare with Armenian ***astvats** – *god, diety*) and ***qurm** (*priest, sage*)²². Through the analysis of the mythological motifs describing Aesir Odin, the authors distinguish a number of archetypes depicted in cultural artifacts having their prototypes in the Armenian rock art and old Armenian song “The Birth of Vahagn” (M. Khorenatsi).

Vanir **Njord** is the ancestor of the **Ynglings** (the oldest dynasty of Scandinavian konungs), to which belonged first historical rulers of Sweden and Norway. His power passed to his son **Freyr**. In “Ynglinga saga” **Snorri Sturluson** [3] refers to them as the descendants of vanir Freyr and describes detailed geneologies. Galma Uppsala was the residence of the first Swidish kings of the Yngling dynasty. The son of **Fjölfnir**²³ – **Sveigðir** – is the founder of Sweden [3]. He vowed to find the **Dwelling of the Gods** (cf. **the Dwelling of the God/the Temple of Knowledge**, founded by Hayk near Lake Van) and old **Odin**. With his 11 companions Sveygdír traveled to different countries for five years, including “Great Sweden” and the “Land of the Turks”. The country of the Vans was in the Araratian Kingdom. The Turks occupied this territory after XI century.

Askanaz founded the country of the Vans (**house of Askanaz**), passed it over to his brother Torgom (**house of Torgom**) and moved to **Sarmatia**. This country of the Vans (**the Kingdom of Van, Vaspurakan**), **Nairi**²⁴, **Vanaland** or **Vanaheimr** was reestablished and extended by **Hayk** (**son of Torgom**) and his descendants after their resettlement from Babylon. Later, the Greeks named the country Armenia after **Aram** – one of the descendants of Hayk.

According to the “Ynglinga saga” [3], **Sveigðir** was married to **Vana** of Vanaheimr - the **Dwelling of the Vans**. He was succeeded by his son **Vanlandi** (Swedish konung). **Vanaheimr** (probably the second country of the Vanir, who resettled with Askanaz on the Black Sea shore, where a new habitation of the Vanir was founded) according to several sources was located on the Black Sea shore in **Sarmatia** near the mouth of the **Tanais**, which was also referred as **Vanakvisl** [4]. According to some researchers, including the Armenian scientist, philosopher and mathematician A. Shirakatsi (VII century), **Vanaheimr** geographically accurately matches the description of **Sarmatia** [13]. The River **Vanaksvisl** is the road, leading the Aesir and the Vanir, who had settled in Europe (Asaland and Vanaland), to their homeland – the Araratian Mountains, to the shores of the Sea of Van²⁵.

The illustrations (maps) of the Norse myths [3] depict with documentary precision not only the Mountains of Ararat with its two peaks, but also Van Sea, which after the flood as a result of upwelling through the formed Strait merged into the Black, Mediterranean and Caspian Seas. The maps (Fig. 1) depict the figure of a huge dragon (symbolizing the catastrophic volcanic eruption), leaving no doubt that these illustrations also describe terrestrial volcanic and

²⁰ Wikipedia // List of names of Odin. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_names_of_Odin#cite_note-2

²¹ French – master.

²² According to M. Khorenatsi, the first priest of the dwelling of the God, founded by Hayk, was his grandson – Cadmus.

²³ Fjölfnir (c. I century BC and I century AC) – the legendary ruler of Uppsala from the dynasty of the Ynglings [4].

²⁴ The name of the country of Nairi (Urartu or Ararat) sounded Urashtu in Babylon. It is associated to the name Urash (earth) in the Sumerian legends. In the biblical tradition it could coincide with the name of the country Rosh (or Ros). Faustus of Byzantium [12] refers Lake Van as the Rshtuni Sea.

²⁵ According to the Greek tradition beautiful Europa (sister of Cadmus, granddaughter of Hayk) was abducted by Zeus. Her name is associated to the name of Europe. The name of Askanaz is associated with Asia and the Sea of Azov. East is the direction toward which the Earth rotates about its axis. The word east means “(sun)rise”, which is semantically associated with Vaspurakan and the motif of the birth of Vahagn (the first man, dragonslayer, thunderer). At the equinoxes, the sun rises due east.

submarine eruption on the Mountains of Ararat, which correspond to the motif of the song of the birth of Vahagn [9]. Thus, the authors who created these illustrations, were assured that the Aesir and the Vanir, who had survived, moved with their goods and chattels in their ships through the Strait of Van Sea to the shores of the Black Sea, and then to Scandinavia.

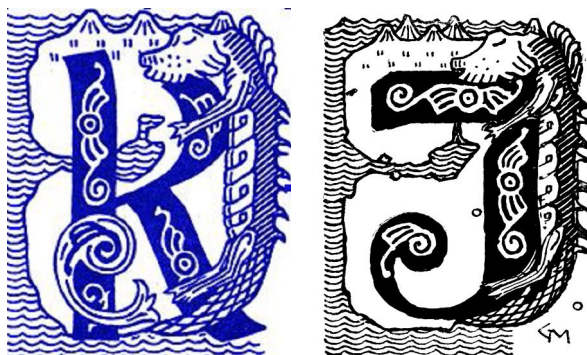


Fig. 1. Unique illustrations in Scandinavian sagas²⁶.

Traces of historical ties and relations of the ancestors of the Armenians to the territories in the vicinity of the river **Tanais** (Armenian **tun* and **nai* – *look into home*, compare with **Nairi**, **apn* – Armenian *come*) are also identified in the name of the Armenian town Nor Nakhijevan.

The Armenian Rock Art²⁷ and the Nordic Runes

The authors (Vahanyan G.A., Vahanyan V.G.) have put forward and substantiated the hypothesis that the signs, identified in the Armenian rock art, formed the basis for “ethnogenesis” of the signs of the cultures of Old Europe (Starcevo and Vinca), and the Hittite, Urartian, Indian and Egyptian ideograms and hieroglyphs [36, 37]. Moreover, the idea has been substantiated that signs in Armenian rock art are the prototype of the signs of the Phoenician and Greek alphabets and the Scandinavian Runes. According to Herodotus [17], **Cadmus** created the Phoenician and Greek alphabets. It should be mentioned, that according to Armenian historians, **Cadmus is the grandson of Hayk, the forefather of the Armenians.**

The authors refer to a number of examples and illustrations, denoting that a number of old Armenian traditions of stone culture, e.g. **rock art, art of vishapakars (dragon-stones) and cross-stones**, the art of depicting diverse forms, styles and compositions with **crosses and swastikas**, etc., were the prototype for the construction of the Nordic dragon-stones and cross-stones, diverse petroglyphs, etc.

The Armenian Rock Art, Vishapakars and Nordic Dragon- and Cross-Stones

According to Norse mythology, Odin received the runes through self-sacrifice: he run himself through with a spear, hanging on the **World Tree** for nine days and nights without eating or drinking. He then quenched his thirst with sacred (shamanic) honey from his grandfather Beltorn, heard the runes and inscribed them with a spear **on the Tree, using his own blood.** The concept of genesis with the image of the tree of life in the terrestrial sphere is represented by the ancient Scandinavians in the images similar to the ones identified in the Armenian rock art.

²⁶ Author: Gerhard Munthe, KringlaHeimsins <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heimskringla>

²⁷ Vahanyan G., Petrosyan S. Karedaran - The Database of Armenian Rock Art (Tracce #12, Online Bulletin by Footsteps of Man), 1991, Italy.



Fig. 2. Armenian vishapakars (dragon-stones – basalt steles depicting dragon)



Fig. 3. Scandinavian runic stones depicting dragon, Sweden (Photo: internet resources)

There are about 5,000 runic inscriptions (Fig. 3), mostly found in Sweden.





Fig. 4. Armenian khachqars (cross-stones, stone steles depicting cross)



Fig. 5. Scandinavian runic stones depicting cross, Sweden



Fig. 6. Depictions of crosses and swastikas in the Armenian rock art



Fig. 7. Swastika symbols in the Armenian cultural artifacts, rock art, on relief depictions of Christian churches, on ceramic.: Dagger with swastika depictions, 1 millenium BC, Ijevan. Swastika depictions on the carpet of Urartian period (9-7 centuries BC) in the medieval Armenian manuscripts.

Of particular interest is the stone from Uppsala (Fig. 4), depicting runes in the body of a huge dragon. A winged cross-symbol of the tree of life is depicted on the Armenian cross-stone. The firmament of heaven is depicted above the cross. Presenting the Scandinavian runes in the body of a dragon symbolizes the concept of life-giving blood, running through the body of a dragon. The savor fights the dragon and releases water.



Fig. 8. Swastika depiction on the Scandinavian runic stone and other cultural artifacts: golden bracteates, depicting a youth in a horned helmet, a horse, birds and swastikas, Denmark, 685²⁸; Viking sword with swastika depictions, 9 century AC.

²⁸ Davidson H. Pagan Scandinavia.

Fighting a dragon is a universal motif, symbolizing the release of water, life-giving water or knowledge (cf. knowing “the tree of good and evil” and salvation of the tree of life; cf. the motifs of Armenian Vahagn fighting a dragon near Lake Van; Cadmus and the Greek hero Jason fighting a dragon; and abduction of the Golden Fleece (ancient knowledge, preserved in cryptography – the runes).

The Armenian Rock Art and the Signs of Cultures of Old Europe (Starcevo and Vinca)

The individual and complex analysis of the signs in each group shows that Vinca signs and the typical signs, identified in the Old Armenian rock art (archetypes of the signs of the pictorial writing system), are identical [8]. The level of identity is higher in earlier symbols.

Complete (100%) identity is observed in 28 symbols of Vincha of the early period, 90% - in 37 common symbols and about 80% in the rest 142 symbols [8]. Studying the 142 signs, the authors came to the conclusion, that the Vinca signs go back to the culture of the signs of the Armenian rock art – the prototype of the pictorial writing system. This firmly indicates on the existence of the earliest network of intercultural communication between Old Europe (presented in the cultures of Starcevo and Vinca, 6-5 millennium BC) and the Armenian Highlands (presented in the culture of old Armenian civilization, 7-6 millennium BC).

The Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil

A number of mythologies consider the moment of the separeation of heaven and earth the very instant the Tree of life (egg, mountain, rock, lotus) arises. It gives birth to the man (Fig. 9a). In Norse mythology, **Yggdrasil** (Fig. 9b) is an evergreen tree of life, saturated with life-giving holly honey. It is an immense ash tree (yew tree), which the Scandinavians considered to be the model of the universe. The tree is the structural framework of the matter and life, combining nine worlds. An eagle is depicted atop the tree, serpants and the dragon Níðhöggr coil around nibbling the roots of the tree.



Fig. 9. (a) Armenian rock art: the World Tree, (b) Yggdrasil.

According to the Armenian tradition, the Tree of life – **Kenats Car** – is a prevalent religious symbol, depicted on walls of fortresses and carved on the armor of warrior. The branches of the tree are equally divided on the right and left sights of the main trunk, with each branch having one leaf and one leaf on the apex of the tree. Winged angels are depicted standing on each side of the tree, stretching their hands towards the tree as if they are taking care of it (Fig. 10).



Fig. 10. The helmet, depicting the Tree of Life, Urartu (Ararat), Armenian miniature depicting the Tree of Life, cross-stone depicting the Tree of Life.

According to the Bible, the tree of life was located in the Garden of Eden, on the site of the original habitat of the people. The garden was irrigated by the four rivers. This description corresponds to the Natural Philosophical motif of the four elements, and the motif of the song of the birth of Vahagn, describing the interaction of the four classical elements, the four forces of nature (earth, water, air and fire) giving birth to the first man, who saves the world and the people fighting the dragon and releasing water.

Husaby Church is the first stave church, where Olof Skötkonung, the first Christian konung of Sweden, was baptized in the XI century. According to the authors, the motifs in the depiction of the tree of life near the church in Husaby (XI century) (Fig. 11b) resemble old Armenian motifs. Such depictions of a stylized tree of life and dragons are identified in Echmiadzin Cathedral (IV century) – the mother church of the Armenian Apostolic Church (Fig. 11a). The prototypes of the main pictorial elements of the motifs of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and the tree of life are identified in Armenian rock art. This tradition was used in Chetian culture (Fig. 11c).

The vishapakar (dragon-stone), discovered near the temple of Ulguri (Fig. 4), depicts the tree trunk – a stylized winged eight-pointed cross with fruitage. The tree arises out of the top of the stepped-mountain (house, gkhhatun). Two intersected wings of a cross (symbolizing the four elements, the four cardinal directions) with fruitage are depicted on the trunk. The circle wreath-shaped (disc) is depicted on the head of the bull (vishap – horned dragon). Inside the wreath a winged cross with arms of equal length is carved. The mentioned plot composition is the artistic depiction of the model of the universal concept of the world, described in the song of the birth of Vahagn. A unique cross-stone from South-Eastern Anatolia is excavated in the vicinity of Van (Fig. 4). It includes elements of the motifs, depicted on the dragon-stone from Eghegnadzor (Fig. 4). The motifs of the cross-stone (Fig. 4) and the stele from Talin (Fig. 4) repeat the concept of the cross- and dragon-stone. The pictorial elements, their shape and proportions are transformed.

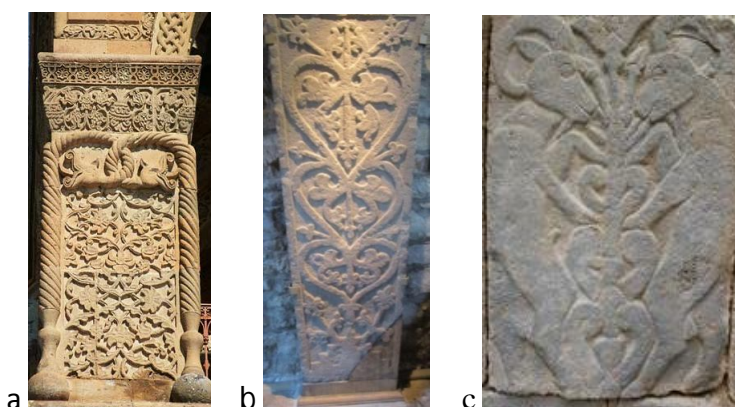


Fig. 11. (a) Stylized Tree of Life and the dragons, Echmiadzin, (b) Stele, depicting the Tree of Life, Husaby Church, XI century, Sweden; (c) two goats by the tree of life, Chetia.

The eight-pointed cross on a stepped-mountain, depicted on the cross-stone from Geghard (Fig. 10), is similar to the eight-pointed cross, depicted on a vishapakar (Fig. 4). Wings of the cross are intersected in its centre, blooming, fructifying. The cross is framed in a cartouche, with the upper convex part symbolizing the firmament. The ornamental composition has the following pattern: calvary – column – cross in a round frame. This pattern is widely spread in the Armenian decorative-applied arts, the art of manuscript miniatures (Fig. 12).

The “Ynglinga saga” [3] describes a folding ship of Odin. Norse mythology attests that the finest of the ships of the Aesir is owned by the god Freyr. **Skíðblaðnir** “sailed over seas and by land”. It could hold the whole warrior host of **Asgard**. The ship was skillfully constructed of many small particles and was attributed the ability to be folded up – as cloth may be – and bagged when not needed.

Describing the unique designs of folding ships made in Armenia, Herodotus (V century BC) mentions: “*there are perfectly round ships made of leather that float down the river to Babylon. In Armenia, which lies above the Assyria, the Babylonians cut willow twigs for the edge of the ship. The largest can accommodate up to 5000 talent of load. There is a donkey in each ship, and a few of them in larger ones. Sailing to Babylon, the merchants sell their goods and [woven] frame of the ship, and all the straw. Then they return to Armenia, loading the skin on the donkey. When the merchants reach Armenia on their donkeys, they build new ships with the same technique. These are their [river] ships*” [17].



Fig. 12. The World Tree, manuscripts, Armenia, 1668-1673.

Ships, Seagoing Vessels and Boats, Skíðblaðnir

The Armenian rock art exposes earlier prototypes of such ships (Fig. 13a, 14, 15). Thus the prototype for creating folding and light ships resembling **Skíðblaðnir** is the ship design, used in the homeland of the Aesir and the Vanir, Askanaz and Torgom. Ships are most common in the Scandinavian rock art. In a number of images, it is hold by a man (Fig. 13b). According to the images, the cultic ships or their depictions were carried during sacred processions. The Egyptians considered that the solar ferry travels in the sky and under the ground. Boats/ships were put into the tombs, and real size ships were found not far from the pyramids of the rulers of ancient date.

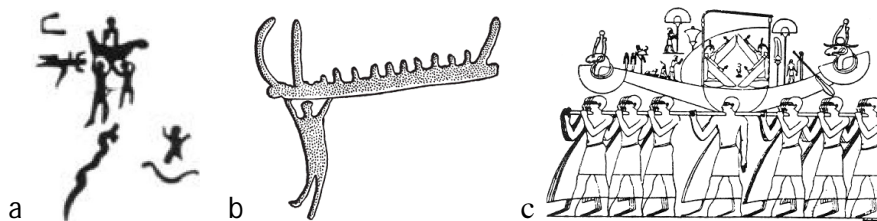


Fig. 13. (a) Petroglyph, depicting ship, Mount Aragats, Armenia; (b) Antropomorph, carrying a ship, Himmelstalund, Norrköping, Sweden²⁹, (c) proests carrying the barque of Amun

The emergence of the notion that the divine ferry travelling under the earth can explain the reason the ships played such an important role at the burials: the son god was to take care of the dead and carry him through all the trials of the underworld. During the bronze age, the ships were related not only to the mens’ burials, as women and children were buried in wooden coffins as well.

The spread of cremation, may possibly be associated with the notion of traveling of a dead in the afterlife (and with an increase in the number of collective burials), because many of those who recourse to it, believed that the deceased must be freed from the flesh, to reach the boundaries of the afterlife. The wings of birds, which are often found in the cinerary urns of the deceased, are also associated with the dissemination of the conception of the wandering spirit. This idea is reflected in the fact that sculptures of birds were placed into the sacred chariots distributed in the Middle and Southern Europe. Among the petroglyphs in Ughtasar (Armenia),

²⁹Online available from: http://historylib.org/historybooks/KHilda-Ellis-Devidson_Drevnie-skandinavyy--Syny-severnykh-bogov/14

ship images facing west (Fig. 14) are discovered. Both images have similar representations to the images of Scandinavian vessels (Fig. 12) [18, 19].



Fig. 14. Rocks (a, b) and figures (A, B) depicting ships, Ughtasar (Armenia). Petroglyph (C) depicting Scandinavian ships, Litsleby (Tanum, Sweden).

Studying the images put in a symbolic context in relation with other petroglyphs of the site, depictions of snakes are identified, which are also associated with the ships according to Scandinavian tradition [19]. Other images of ships and boats (Fig. 15) are found among the petroglyphs.



Fig. 15. Petroglyphs: ships and boats, Ughtasar, Armenia.

Transgression of the Caspian Sea

During the last transgression of the Caspian Sea about 20-17 thousand years ago, its waters reached the region of Mountainous Karabakh. Syunik (Armenia) had become a peninsula by that time with a number of sea trenches through its territory, which were linked to the northern part of the land. This system of large lakes was disintegrated in the beginning of Holocene (10th millennium BC). The studies carried out by the scientists exposed the existence of a lake on the territory of the Ararat Valley (after the volcanic eruption, lava overlapped the River Araks). The lake completely dried up in the 8th millennium BC, as the first settlements appeared on this territory by that period. Thus, considering that the above-mentioned lakes were still apt for sailing in the 12th-11th millennia BC, the petroglyphs of the sailing ships from Ughtasar-Djermadzor (Syunik) may date back to the 12th-11th millennia BC [18].

Mountains and Kurgans/Tumuli

In the “Prose Edda” [1] Snorri Sturluson states that the Nordic gods are the leaders and kings of antiquity. With a large group of people, aesir **Odin** moved to the North and whatever countries they passed through “*they seemed more like gods than men*”. According to “Ynglinga saga”, a dwarf lured **Sveigðir** into a huge stone like a large house, telling him that he could see Odin there. **Sveigðir** ran into the stone and he never came back and did not come out of this stone [3]. Similar parallels can be drawn: the Armenian epos “Daredevils of Sassoun” - the hero **Mher** rides into the mountain; the Greek myth describing **Cadmus** (grandson of Hayk) and his wife Harmony turned into stone. According to the Armenian legends, the mountains were once men. Archaeological researches confirm that **kurgans/tumuli** (Fig. 16) are burial mounds (cf. the tumulus on Mount Nemrud³⁰).

³⁰ Built by the descendant of the Armenian house of the Yervanduni (Orontid) dynasti, Antiochus I (69-38 BC).

As mentioned above, *tumulus* is an absolute synonym of the word *kurgan* (Swedish - *gravhög*)³¹. The etymology of this toponym roots to old Armenian language: to the semantic components ***grav** (Armenian *sign, affirmation*) and ***hogh** (Armenian *land*).



Fig. 16. (a) Tumulus on Mount Nemrut, (b) the three large “royal mounds” in Galma Uppsala.

Among the complexes of funerary monuments, the kurgans of konungs stand out for their architectural structure and ideological concept, related to the special group of the same ritual of “burials in a ship” (Fig. 16b).

Mythological Motifs, Agriculture and Hunting Scenes, Animal Species (Horses, Snakes/Serpents, Fish), Weapons, Astronomical Symbols and Observatories

Comparison of the images of astronomical symbols, carts, deer, hunters, snakes (conceptual models of volcanic eruptions and lava flow), spearmen and horsemen³² in Armenian rock art and rock arts of Nordic countries, proves their common roots and is an indisputable determinant of the outcomes of intercultural communication (Fig. 17-30).



³¹ Online available from: <http://swordmaster.org/2013/10/27/bolshie-kurgany-letopisnogo-plesnecka.html>

³² Vahanyan G. Volcanic eruptions from Mountains of Ararat till Alps, Indo-European myths, Rock art and iconography. Convegno internazionale, L'ARTE RUPESTRE DELLE ALPI, Capo di Ponte - Valcamonica, Italy, 21-24 ottobre 2010.

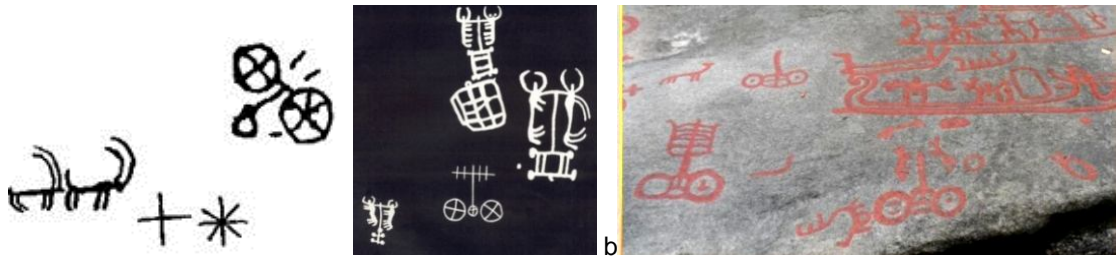


Fig. 17. (a) Rock Art: ploughs, carts, Armenia, (b) Rock Art: ploughs, carts, Sweden.

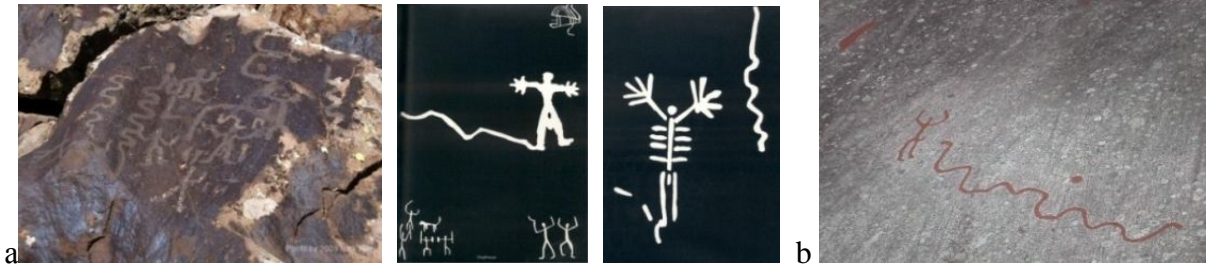


Fig. 18. (a) Rock Art: man and serpent, Armenia; (b) Sweden.



Fig. 19. Rock art: serpent swallowing the sun (conceptual model of the results of the volcanic eruptions and lava flow), Armenia

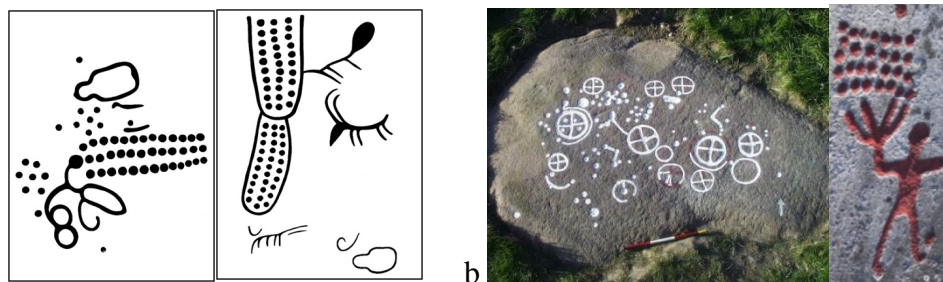


Fig. 20. Astronomical representations in Rock Art: (a) Armenia, (b) Sweden.

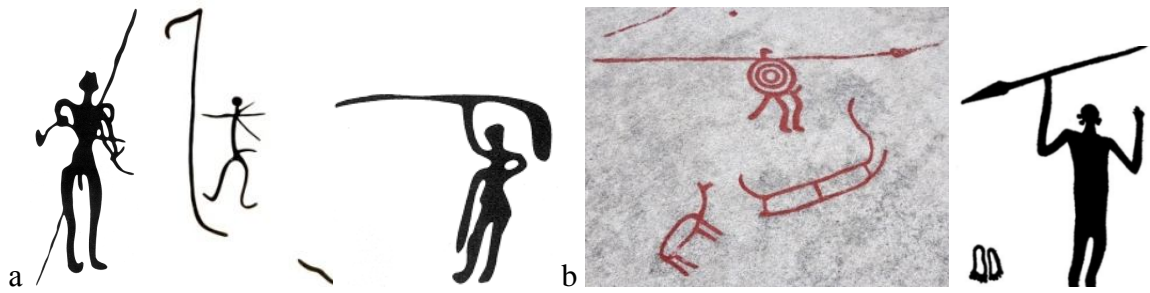


Fig. 21. (a) Rock Art: spearman, Armenia, (b) Rock Art: spearman, Sweden.



Fig. 22. (a) Rock Art: heroes with horns on their heads, Armenia, (b) Odin – spearman with horns on his head, Sweden.

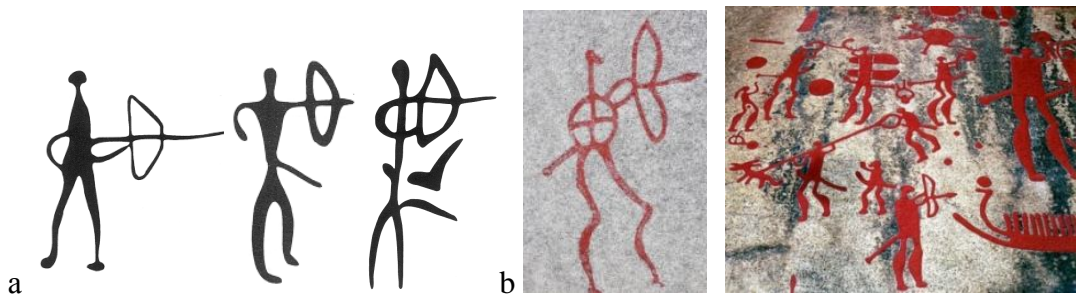


Fig. 23. Rock Art: archers (a) Armenia, (b) Sweden.

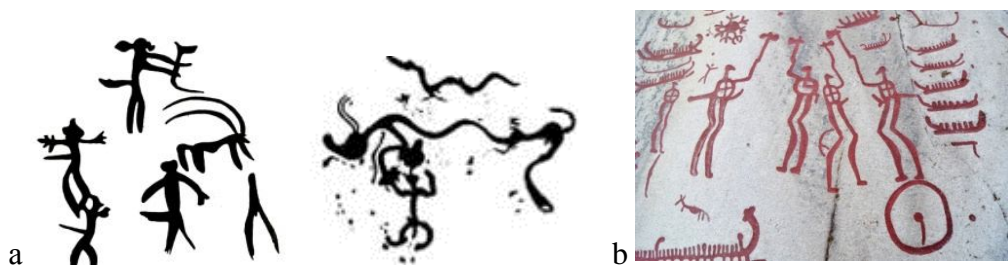


Fig. 24. Rock Art: men with axes: (a) Armenia, (b) Sweden.

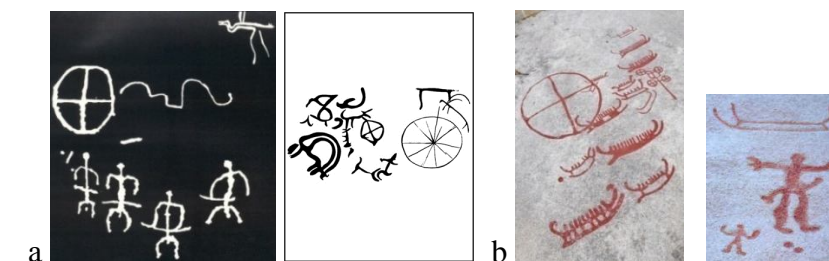


Fig. 25. Rock Art: heroes and the terrestrial sphere: (a) Armenia, (b) Sweden³³.

³³ Online available from: <http://www.rockartscandinavia.com/frontpage.php>



Fig. 26. (a) Fish-vishap, basalt, Armenia, III - II millennia BC, (b) relief depiction of fish sacrifice to vishap: from the right - the winged fish-like monster, beneath – the fish, Surb Khach Church, Akhtamar (915-921), (c) cilician miniature depicting vish-vishap, 1286, Matenadaran (Yerevan), (d) Icelandic manuscript of XVIII century. Thor trying to catch the Midgard Serpent



Fig. 27. Rock art and Medieval Relief, depicting horses and riders: (a) Armenia, (b) Bohuslän, Sweden – the historical province on the Skagerrak strait. Relief depiction of Odin on a horse fighting a dragon/serpent



Fig. 28. Deer depiction in Rock Art: (a) Armenia, (b) Bohuslän, Sweden



Fig. 29. Stone observatories: Armenia (a, c), Sweden (b, d)



Fig. 30. (a) Rock art: dragon with a trident-shaped paw, Armenia; (b) Sumerian goddess Inanna – the ruler of Aratta; (c) Hittite diety of thunderer (Teshub-Tarku); (d) helmet, depicting trident, Urartu (the Kingdom of Van); (e) stone seal with a winged solar disc and a trident, the Kingdom of Van; (f) Icelandic manuscript illustration: Odin with trident symbols, 18th century.

Conclusion

The unified cognitive interdisciplinary common core is identified in old Armenian and Nordic cultures, based on the comparative analysis of the results of historical, linguistic, mythological, religious and archeological data. The mentioned core allows to identified earlier tacit denotations of intercultural communication context, impact of old Armenian civilization and the people on genesis of culture and dynasties of Old Europe and Scandinavia.

The occurrence of the identical archetypes in the studied cultural monuments indicates on sustainability of the linguistic values, ideology, worldview and knowledge, cognitive abilities of the houses of Askanaz and Torgom, who managed to preserve it in a new ethno-linguistic and natural environments. The new approach provides definite interpretation and scientific rationale to a number of disputable mythological and historical facts.

The **law of thickening and spraying or concurrence** of the correlated units in the mythological thinking of the ancient inhabitants of Scandinavia and Armenia can be retraced in logics and genesis of wisdom of ancient people, which are modeled based on interpretation of motifs and scenes in the complexes of Armenian and Scandinavian rock arts, depicting common archetypes of old Armenian language, which left persistent traces in Norse linguistic thinking.

Chronological analysis of the historical data prove the undeniable fact of the impact of the civilization of the old Armenians (descendants of Askanaz – the Aesir, and Torgom – the Vanir) on the language, culture and everyday life of the people in Scandinavian countries, on the process of electing wise rulers - konungs, who had resettled from Sarmatia and the Kingdom of Van.

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