

Kar-da^{KI}-ka 21st ce. B.C.E. Karda Land of Valiant Mountain People Central Zagros East Terminological Analysis

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Abstract

The toponym “kar-da^{KI}-ka” (“ma-da kar-da^{KI}-ka”) means land of “Karda”, which derives most likely out of Akkadian “qarda” (“qurda”) for heroic, brave, valiant, and warlike (mountain) people. It was geographically located in ancient heartlands of the Guti(ans) in central Zagros east areas in North-west Iran of today, and was documented in several late Sumerian UrIII sources at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. from Girsu in south Mesopotamia. Origin and ethnic affiliations of the inhabitants of the land of “Karda” are not known. The term “kar-da^{KI}-ka” was one of the oldest cuneiform expressions used by Mesopotamians to denote various indigenous Zagros hilly/mountain nomads of multi-ethnic origin in the North and the (North-)East, whom they regarded as warlike and also as uncivilized because they were at the time mainly not urban organized in contrast to lowland Mesopotamians. Available cuneiform sources indicated that Mesopotamians saw “kar-da^{KI}-ka” in consecutive connection with Guti(ans): first, because of its location in the center of (former) dominating Guti power coalitions in areas of central Zagros (east); second, because of the image of its population as warlike, similar to Guti(ans) where (who) was (were) portrayed by Mesopotamians; third, because of further suggesting that its society(ies) could have been militarily organized, possibly migrating and temporarily prevailing inter-regionally (across the Zagros); and last but not least, because of its obvious geo-strategic importance even for far away late UrIII leaders of south Mesopotamia, regardless whether or not they effectively controlled the area which seems for the time in question unlikely. Mesopotamians used to describe the inter-connected ancestral habitat of various multi-ethnic Zagros mountain coalitions in a vague terminology, and in waxing and waning concepts who were influenced by changing policies. They did not see regions (lands) like “kar-da^{KI}-ka” as isolated single ones in a far north-east but embedded in an inter-regionally connected habitat of mountain nomad coalitions stretching from the North to the North-East of Mesopotamia. They also used a good number of different terms in particular assumed Sumerian “kur”-stem expressions (who later prevailed) to characterize them accordingly. In linguistic terms, the presumed Semitic (Akkadian) word-stem “kard-” (<qardu) like in “kar-da^{KI}-ka” is formally not identical with the presumably Sumerian rooted “kurd-” one (for Kurds, land of Kurds). However, the content of both

terms denoting (warlike) Zagros-Taurus mountain populations of multi-ethnic origins seems to be strikingly similar. Therefore, the explanation attempt of “kar-da^{KI}-ka” as land of heroic, valiant, and warlike indigenous central Zagros (east) inhabitants could indicate a local/ regional militarily organized autochthonous pre-IE (proto-non-Iranian) population, and could even possibly point to ancient forefathers of Kurds in NW Iran of today, interpreted as Zagros-Taurus mountaineers.

Keywords

Kurds, Kurdistan, Ancient Mesopotamia, Zagros Mountain Areas, Cuneiform Mesopotamian Terminology, Inter-Disciplinary Science of History

1. Introduction

The compound toponym “kar-da^{KI}-ka” (“ma-da kar-da^{KI}-ka”) is attested on various door sockets¹ found in Girsu (south Mesopotamia), attributed to Ir-Nanna (Arad-Nanna[r]), great minister, patesi of Lagaš etc. at the time of Šu-Sîn (2038-2029 B.C.E.). In the few cited available cuneiform sources it is geographically located between Ḫamaši & Karaḫar (central Zagros west up to areas near modern Khanaqin) and next to (most likely northwest of) the Šimaški (loose Elamite confederation), who are located by Piotr Steinkeller² in central Zagros east regions of NW Iran of today. Heartlands of “kar-da^{KI}-ka” seem to have encompassed areas of the modern provinces “Kordestan” and (parts of) Kermanshah. They could have included urban centres of today like Sanandaj, Saqez, Hamadan, and most likely also mountain regions in western parts of the central Zagros. The term “kar-da” apparently derived out of old Semitic expressions, notably Akkadian (Assyrian, Babylonian) for heroic, brave, valiant, warlike people and can be found in two versions: as “qarda” with root vowel “a” and as “qurdu” with “u”³. The assumed Akkadian rooted toponym “kar-da^{KI}-ka” is documented in late Sumerian UrIII sources some four hundred years before the first known evidence until today of oldest (militarily organized) Mesopotamian Semitic settlers in areas of NW Iran⁴, and roughly 1200 years before earliest traces for Old-Iranians there⁵. Since there is no evidence for an early Semitic and an Old-Iranian presence at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. in NW Iran (of today), therefore, available sources rather point to a local/regional multi-ethnic hilly/mountain-population of “kar-da” with (strong) connections to (central) Zagros mountain civilizations. They were dominated at the time by a variety of people mainly from Zagros mountain areas, whom Akkadian Mesopotamians started to call Guti(ans) in mid-third-millennium (ca. 2350-2200 B.C.E.)⁶. Yet, as Marc Van De Mieroop is pointing out since a good number of years now, “the term Gutian has no value as indication of a specific people and merely suggests uncivilized people from the Zagros. Any hostile group could be called Gutian. [...] In the first millennium Gutium could be used as a geographical designator to refer to all or part of the Zagros region north of Elam, interchangeably with other terms”⁷. That is why UrIII Mesopotamians have kept up in their characterizations of the “Karda” land located on ancient “Guti(ans)” soil a distinct martial image of the local population in the area at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E.⁸. This long standing military tradition as hilly/mountain (Zagros) warriors was at the time increasingly embedded in a newly emerging network of migrating militarily organized groups/elites/populations in NW Iran⁹. There seems to be no evidence (until now)

¹RIME 3/2.01.04.13, ex 01; ex 02; ex 03 und ex 04; cf. Frayne, 1993: pp. 124-125.

²Steinkeller, 1988: pp. 197-202, 2007: pp. 215-232; see also Curtis, 1990: p. 5.

³Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, vol 13, Q, pp. 129, 317, 319; see also: Akkadian Dictionary, Association Assyriophile de France, online: http://www.premiumwanadoo.com/cuneiform_languages/dictionary/list.php; Akkadisches (1959-1972), bearb. von Wolfram von Soden, Band I & II, Wiesbaden 1959-1972; Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, 1980-1989: pp. 1994-1997.

⁴Beckman 2007: 46 (mobile/migrating militarily organized Amorite Mandu-soldiers from Der in the south of Mesopotamia in Choga Ganaveh, ~60 km west of Kermanshah; source: Old Babylonian, early eighteenth century B.C., middle chronology).

⁵Inhabitants of Parsua 843 B.C. and of Media 834 B.C.

⁶Van De Mieroop (2012) Gutians, Elr online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gutians>, last updated February 24, 2012.

⁷Van De Mieroop, 2012: l.c., see also Van De Mieroop, 1999.

⁸Cf. ETCSL, c.2.1.5: The cursing of Agade, old Babylonian version, early 2nd me B.C.: “unbridled people, with human intelligence but canine instincts and monkey’s features”.

⁹East of the Zagros in various recorded distinct waves historically far apart: early 2nd me B.C. Semitic Amorite “mandu” soldiers from Der in Choga Ganaveh, later during the 7th ce. B.C.E. (Cimmerians in Neo-Assyrian sources) and the 6th ce. B.C.E. (Medians in Neo-Babylonian and groups/elites of unclear origin in Achaemenid sources).

for the toponym “kar-da^{KI}-ka” during the 2nd and 1st millennium B.C.E. in regions of central Zagros east. Nevertheless, the Greek expression “kárdakes” could have derived out of assumed Akkadian based “kar-da” (<qardu). The Akkadian root of the term was obviously later confirmed by Strabo[n] (ca. 63 B.C.E.—after 23 AD, Geography, XV.3.18). The expression “kar-da^{KI}-ka” is neither of Old Iranian nor of Greek or Latin/ Roman origin and can’t be explained out of these languages.

2. History of Term “kar-da^{KI}-ka”

2.1. Jean Geneviève François Thureau-Dangin (1872-1944) “Land Karda”

At about the same time, when oldest presumably Sumerian rooted “kur-” terms are documented in north Mesopotamian sources during the reign of Naram-Sîn (2273-2219 B.C.E.), denoting hilly/mountain populations of multi-ethnic origin in the far North, there are also expressions recorded at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. in south Mesopotamia during the UrIII period characterizing hills/mountain dweller civilizations in areas of central Zagros east, who could indicate further examples of ancient forefathers of Kurds in the far North-East of Mesopotamia: land “kar-da” (“kar-da^{KI}-ka”), as already mentioned.

They were found in inscriptions incised on (four) black stone door sockets excavated at Girsu in south Mesopotamia and were parts of records of the governor Arad-Nanna(r)’s construction of a temple dedicated to the deified Šu-Sîn (2038-2029 B.C.E.). The inscription on stone door sockets containing a “kar-da(ka)” land was for the first time published in Europe more than one hundred years ago by the French archaeologist, assyriologist and epigrapher Jean Geneviève François Thureau-Dangin (1872-1944). He edited the late Sumerian originals together with transcriptions and translations first 1905 in French published by Ernest Leroux in Paris, and in 1907 a German version appeared by Hinrichs in Leipzig¹⁰. Thureau-Dangin describes engravings on two “door sockets” which were found during excavations in the ancient Sumerian city of Girsu in south Mesopotamia, today Tello(h) in the South of Iraq. The incised inscriptions document that the Grand Vizier Arad-Nanna(r) had built a temple for the king of Ur. The list of his titles mentioned contains among others that one of a military governor (“šakkanakku”) of the land “kar-da-ka”. The long list reads in consecutive geographic order from the far North to the lower distant North-East as follows, cited first in the transcription and then in the French translation by Thureau-Dangin:

2.2. Transcription

“22) Arad-nanna(r)

a) PIERRES DE SEUIL A et B¹

(Col. I, 1) *dingir gimil-^{illu}sin* (2) *ki-ág dingir en-lil-la* (3) *lugal dingir en-lil-li* (4) *ki-ág ša(g)-ga-na* (5) *in-pa(d)* (6) *lugal kalga* (7) *lugal ur^{ki}-ma* (8) *lugal an-ub-da tab-tab-ba* (9) *lugal-a-ni-ir* (10) *arad-dingir nanna(r)* (11) *sukkal-mah* (12) *pa-te-si* (13) *ŠIR-BUR-LA^{ki2}* (14) *sangu dingir en-ki³* (15) *GÌR-NITA* (16) *ú-za-ar-gar-ša-na^{ki}* (17) *GÌR-NITA* (18) *ba-BI+šú-e^{4ki}* (19) *pa-te-si sa-bu-um^{ki}* (20) *ù ma-da gu-te-bu-um^{ki}-ma* (21) *GÌR-NITA* (22) *ti-ma-at-^{illu}bêl*.

(Col. II, 1) *pa-te-si* (2) *a-al-^{illu}gimil-^{illu}sin* (3) *GÌR-NITA* (4) *ur-bi(l)-lum^{ki}* (5) *pa-te-si ha-ma-ši^{ki5}* (6) *ù gan-har^{ki}* (7) *GÌR-NITA* (8) *i-ḫi^{ki}* (9) *GÌR-NITA* (10) *galu-su⁶* (11) *ù ma-da kar-da-ka⁶* (12) *arad-da⁷-ni* (13) *é-gir-su^{ki}-ka-ni* (14) *mu-na-dū¹¹*.

2.3. French Translation

“22) Arad-nanna(r)

a) PIERRES DE SEUIL A et B¹

(Col. I, 1) *A Gimil-sin*, (2) *aimé d’En-lil*, (3) *au roi qu’Enlil*, (4) *en aimé de son coeur*, (5) *a élu*, (6) *au roi fort*, (7) *au roi d’Ur*, (8) *au roi des quatre régions*, (9) *à son roi*, (10) *Arad-nanna(r)*, (11) *ministre suprême*, (12) *patési* (13) *de Lagaš*, (14) *prêtre d’En-ki*, (15) *gouverneur* (16) *d’Uzargaršana*, (17) *gouverneur* (18) *de Ba-BI+šú-e⁴*, (19) *patési de Sabu* (20) *et du pays de Gutebu*, (21) *gouverneur* (22) *de Timat-bêl*, (Col. II, 1)

¹⁰Thureau-Dangin, 1905: Les inscriptions de Sumer et d’Akkade. Transcription et traduction. Paris (Ernest Leroux) 1905, 212-213 (Revue d’Assyriologie RA V [1902], pp. 99 sqq., et VI, pp. 67-68); Thureau-Dangin, 1907: Die sumerischen und akkadischen Königsschriften. Vorderasiatische Bibliothek. I. Band Abteilung 1. Leipzig (J.C. Hinrichs’sche Buchhandlung) 1907, 148-151, 275.

¹¹Thureau-Dangin, 1905: p. 212.

patési (2) *d'Al-gimil-sin*, (3) *gouverneur* (4) *d'Urbillu*, (5) *patési de Ĥamaši*⁵ (6) *et de Ganĥar*, (7) *gouverneur* (8) *d'Iĥ-i(?)*, (9) *gouverneur* (10) *des hommes (du pays) de Su* (11) *et du pays de Kardaka*, (12) *son serviteur*, (13) *son temple de Gir-su* (14) *construisit*¹².

In an additional remark to Aradnanna¹³ Thureau-Dangin explains, he was first mentioned during the 9th year of the reign of Pur-sin and for the last time under Ibbi-Sin. The land “Kar-da(ka)” (“ma-da kar-da-ka”) is registered within the list of titles of the Grand Vizier at the last position. The connecting term prior to that is in the late Sumerian original (“galu-su ù ma-da kar-da-ka”) “galu-su”, translated by Thureau-Dangin in the French edition as “gouverneur des hommes (du pays) de Su”, in the German version with “des Su-Volkes”¹⁴ (“Su-people”).

Thureau-Dangin offers no explanation attempt where the land “Kar-da(ka)” could have been geographically located. In the original cuneiform sources toponyms are repeatedly combined with “and” indicating geographic neighbourhood: “Sabu and Gutebu”, “Ĥamašand Ganĥar” as well as “Su-people and land Kardaka”. The latter is consecutively confirmed in connection and after the listing of the “Su-people” at the end of the recital, which obviously suggests vicinity, however and quoted word by word adjoining to the “Su-people” and not prior of it. As further important lead can be seen the toponym “Urbillu”, most likely Urbillum, Arbailu or Arbela, modern A/Erbil, capital of the Autonomous Kurdistan Region Iraq. Therefore, the quoted late Sumerian sources suggest a chain and proximity of toponyms geographically up from the far North down in the direction of the lower North-East passing the land “Gutebu” (Gutium, Gutians?), “Urbillu” (A/Erbil) and ending with the phrasing “Su-people and the land Karda(ka)”.

2.4. Godfrey Rolles Driver (1892-1975) “Land Kardaka South of Van”

“Not unlikely the earliest trace of the Kurds” in the 3rd me. B.C.E.

The British orientalist, assyriologist and expert for Semitic languages, Godfrey Rolles Driver (1892-1975) from Oxford located 1923 the Su-people south of lake Van in south-eastern Anatolia¹⁵. The “land of Karda” existed “adjoined” to (that one of) the Su-people, Driver wrote and further assumed that, therefore, it would be “not unlikely, that thereby on a “Sumarian clay tablet” of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. “the earliest trace of the Kurds” could have been found. The toponym “land Karda” transliterated Driver not like the French archaeologist François Thureau-Dangin as “kar-da-ka” with uncertain reading but as “Kar-da” or “Qar-da” (indicating an Akkadian word-stem “qar-”). He also traced oldest linguistic roots of the term “Kurd” to Semitic Babylonian words like “qardu” or “gardu” (k > q > g), and noted terminological similarities in Persian of a much later time in expressions like “gurd” or “kurd”¹⁶. As for its geographic location, Godfrey Rolles Driver assumed that the land “Karda” could have been situated next to the Su-people south of the Van lake in south-eastern Anatolia, and he also suggested that it was most likely connected with the “Qur-tie” with whom the Assyrian king Tiglath-Pileser I (1115-1076 B.C.E.) fought in mountain areas west of the Van lake, as documented on a cylinder inscription:

*“It is not unlikely that the earliest trace of the Kurds is to be found on a Sumerian claytablet, of the third millennium B.C., on which ‘the land Kar-da’ or ‘Qar-da’ is mentioned. This ‘land of Karda’ adjoined that of the people of Su, who dwelt on the south of Lake Wân, and seems in all probability to have been connected with the Qur-ti-e, who lived in the mountains to the west of the same lake, and with whom Tiglath-Pileser I fought; the philological identity of these two names is, however, uncertain, owing to the doubt about the precise value of the palatals and dentals in Sumerian”*¹⁷.

In a footnote Driver emphasized that this (his) interpretation of “Karda” as assumed oldest land of Kurds south of the Van lake in south-eastern Anatolia had been accepted among six cited orientalists of his time by five. Only one rejected this explanation attempt, Driver noted¹⁸. Among the scientists who supported Driver’s geographical allocation of the land “Karda” south of Van in south-eastern Anatolia was the Russian orientalist Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky (1877-1966). Driver quoted Minorsky with the additional remark “there is an old

¹²Thureau-Dangin, 1905: p. 213; footnotes: 1. Publiées et traduites par Thureau-Dangin, RA V, pp. 99 sqq., et VI, pp. 67-68; 2. B ajoute ge. 3. B ajoute ka. 4. Ou bur (sic B?). 5. B: ĥa-a-an-ši-(ki). 6. B ajoutt > ki. 7. B ajoute a.

¹³Thureau-Dangin, 1907: I. 149: 22, 5.

¹⁴Thureau-Dangin, 1907: p. 151.

¹⁵Driver, 1923: The Name Kurd and its Philological Connexions. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1923, Vol. III, 393-404, 393.

¹⁶Driver, 1923: p. 403.

¹⁷Driver, 1923: p. 393.

¹⁸Driver, 1923: p. 393, footnote 3.

fortress Sūy in the region of Bidlīs (*Sharaf-nāma*, i. 146).” It would be “nothing really surprising in finding at the time of Xenophon an Iranian tribe settled to the north of the Tigris”, Minorsky wrote¹⁹.

However, the geographic allocation of the toponym “karda” south of Van in eastern Anatolia seems to be based on an obvious mistake in the correct interpretation of the late Sumerian source, because it doesn’t place “the su-people and karda” according to the exact order and sequence of these combined termini as they are consecutively mentioned in the original sources (Figure 1). Its geographic embedding starts according to custom protocol with the king of Ur in south Mesopotamia, though, consequently continues from there acknowledging his global claim to power over the four parts of the ancient world, but then proceeds to a chain of toponyms who can be clearly appropriated at the latest with the established position of “Urbillu(m)”, keeps further on a significant chronological order of additional cited termini from North to South, out of which it becomes evident that the next following toponyms “Ḥamaši and Karaḥar” could only be situated south (southeast) of “Urbillu(m)”, and that hence subsequently this must have been also true for the “Su-people and the land Karda” at the end of all quoted toponyms. In contrast to that, Driver discontinues the described order of the listed toponyms towards the end of the source, breaks the obvious north-south divide in the text unexpectedly off and leads after the quotations of “Urbillu(m)”, “Ḥamaši and Karaḥar” suddenly back again in areas far away in the distant North in the direction of Hakkari without explaining why he did that, and finally locates the “Su-people” south of Van in south-eastern Anatolia adjoined by the land of “Karda”. By that he possibly followed interpretations at his time of various vague terms like “Su/Sutians/Subir/Subartu” in cuneiform sources who were often mentioned in connection with areas in the far North. Hence, his explanation attempt of the land “Karda” does not live up to the obvious consecutive terminological order in the original cuneiform sources: “Urbillu(m)”, “Ḥamaši and Karaḥar”, “Su-people and land Karda”. As against, Driver interprets de facto contentual and geographically aberrant: [...] “Su-people and land Karda” [...] “Urbillu(m)”, “Ḥamaši and Karaḥar”.

2.5. Stephen Herbert Langdon (1876-1937) “Karda” Central Zagros

The quoted cuneiform sources for “Karda” were interpreted soon after in 1928 by the American-British assyriologist Stephen Herbert Langdon (1876-1937) in an entirely different way, not located in eastern Anatolia south of the Van lake, but in central Zagros. Stephen Langdon assisted already Jean Geneviève François

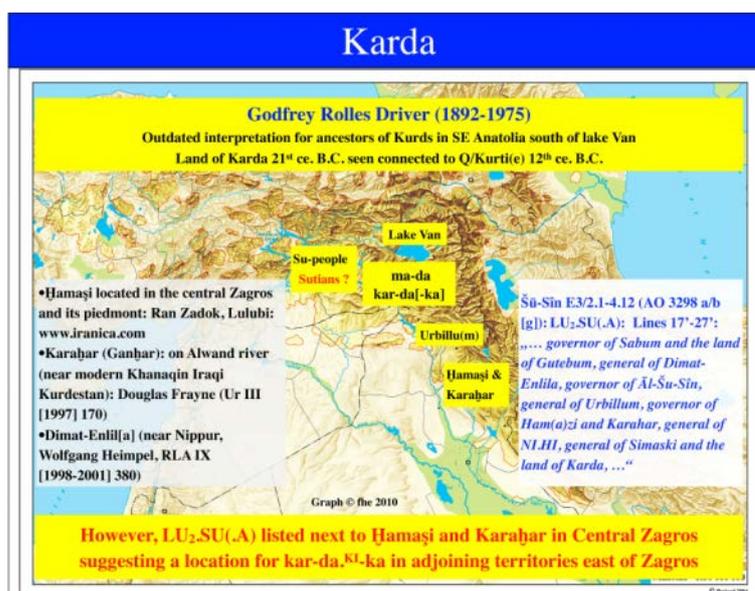


Figure 1. Outdated interpretation of land “Karda” south of lake Van; graph: Hennerbichler 2012: 268.

¹⁹Minorsky, 1927: Kurdistan, Kurds. In: *The Encyclopædia of Islam, 1st Edition, EII*, 4 vols. and suppl., Leiden: Late E.J. Brill and London: Luzac, 1913-38, Vol.2. E-K, M. Th. Houtsma, A. J. Wensinck, T. W. Arnold eds., 1927; cited online (liable to pay): http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-1/kurdistan-COM_0145, http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/entries/encyclopaedia-of-islam-1/kurds-COM_0146; Xenophon, 1850.

Thureau-Dangin 1905-1907 editing the “Sumerische und Akkadische Königsinschriften” and added for this German edition an index of personal names and cult objects²⁰. In his contribution “The Sumerian Revival: The Empire of Ur” published 1928 in the “Cambridge Ancient History” Langdon explained the cited sources on four stone door sockets of the Grand Vizier Arad-Nanna(r) at the time of Šu-Sîn (2038-2029 B.C.E.) differently distinct both to Thureau-Dangin as well as to Driver²¹.

Langdon transliterated “galu-su” [LU2.SU(.A)] with “Su(bartu)”, geolocated the “land Karda(ka)” “in the Zagros mountains” and assumed also the original home of the Kurds there:

“Gimil-Sin was obviously losing control of the restless lands of his far-flung frontiers, for in his second year he transferred several eastern patesi-ships and governorships to Arad-Nannar, patesi of Lagash. The door-sockets of the temple built by this patesi for the cult of the divine Gimil-Sin at Lagash are inscribed with the titles of Arad-Nannar. He was patesi of Lagash, high-priest of Enki, prefect of Uzargarshana and of Ba-U-shu-ey patesi of Sabum and the land of Gutebum, prefect of Timat-Enlil, patesi of the city of Gimil-Sin, prefect of Ur-billum, patesi of Khamasi and Gankhar, prefect of Isliar, prefect of the people of Su(bartu) and the land of Karda(ka) in the Zagros mountains (the original home, of the Kurds). [...] Even Subartu, or Subir(ki) including the rising state of Ashur, was attached to its patesi-ship”²².

The translation of “galu-su” [LU2.SU(.A)] with “Su(bartu)” explicated Stephen Langdon inter alia stressing, that it was common at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. during the UrIII period to shorten “Subartu” with “Su” or “Gutium” with “Gu”²³. Where “Subartu” could have been located geographically Langdon did not specify exactly, though he mentions repeatedly areas northeast of Sumer (territories eastward the upper Tigris including at the time Assur and the eastern Azuhinnun near modern Kirkuk). The “land Karda” Langdon sites in the neighbourhood “in the Zagros mountains”, and assumes in the Zagros also the ancient homeland of the Kurds since known origins. Yet, this interpretation seems also not entirely convincing and not fully in agreement with the wording of the inscriptions on the cited late Sumerian stone door sockets: if “Su”/“Subir”/“Šubartu” and the adjoining land “Karda” could be only assumed in areas further northeast of “Ḫamaši and Karaḫar” (modern Khanaqin), as the original text indicates, then “Su”/“Subir”/“Šubartu” could not have encompassed at the same time territories northwest on the upper Tigris, because they were northwest of the prior mentioned toponyms “Ḫamaši and Karaḫar”. Moreover, Langdon himself did neither indicate that “Su”/“Subir”/“Šubartu” would have stretched from the upper Tigris to territories northeast of “Ḫamaši and Karaḫar” into central Zagros east nor that its extent would only have started from areas northeast of Khanaqin of today into eastern Zagros slopes. This puts finally a question mark on the credibility of Stephen Langdon’s explanation attempt.

A short counter-check with findings of Piotr Michalowski, leading sumerologist of today who teaches at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, USA. Michalowski confirms in several newer studies regarding the time of UrIII, that in those days “Subir” (“Šubartu”) was used as (vague) “term for north-eastern territories” and designated “areas in the north-east of Sumer, probably in the Jebel Hamrin above the Diyala”²⁴. This findings also confirm that “Subir”/“Šubartu” encompassed at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. in the North-East areas around modern Kirkuk possibly in the Jebel Hamrin and above the Diyala, but not territories further northeast of modern Khanaqin in what is Northwest Iran of today.

To quote but one other example from cuneiform sources at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. indicating a geographic location of “Šubartu” (north-)west of “Ḫamaši”: The Sumerian legend “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta”, quoted here in a version of the 21st century B.C.E., contains both the toponyms “Šubartu” and “Ḫamaši” in consecutive order but explicitly not a “land Karda”. Nevertheless, the positioning of “Šubartu” north-west of “Ḫamaši” seems to support the already mentioned interpretation of Piotr Steinkeller that a) the “Su-people” cannot be identified as (inhabitants of) “Šubartu” (“Šubur”) because this toponym is listed on the cited late Sumerian stone door sockets northeast of “Ḫamaši”, and b) that “galu-su” [LU2.SU(.A)] needs to be translated differently, and c) must have been ultimately geolocated (together with “kar-da^{kl}-ka”) in areas of central Zagros east in Northwest-Iran of today. Background-information: The Sumerian legend “Enmerkar and the Lord of Aratta” tells the story of the conflict between Enmerkar, king of Unug-Kulaba (Uruk), and the king (not men-

²⁰Thureau-Dangin, 1907: IX.

²¹Langdon, 1928: The Sumerian Revival: The Empire of Ur. In: The Cambridge Ancient History, ed. By J.B. Bury et al., Chap. XII, 1st ed. 1923, 2nd 1924, cited reprint 1928, Cambridge University Press, 1928, pp. 435-463, cf. 452-459.

²²Langdon, 1928: pp. 458-459.

²³Langdon, 1928: 252 cf.

²⁴Michalowski, 1986: pp. 129-156, 1999: pp. 305-315, 2008: p. 113.

tioned by his name) of (the assumed mythical) Aratta. The toponyms “Šubur and Ḫamaši” documented in this legend are not fictive. The consecutive order of their recordings points on the one hand indirectly (because not listed in the form of “Su-people and land of kar-da^{KI}-ka”) to geolocations of the latter in areas of Northwest-Iran of today and on the other contains evidence that territories of north-eastern Mesopotamia and central Zagros (east) were “many-tongued” (Figure 2), multi-lingual, and that therefore, its various populations communicated at the time (end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E.) using and practicing a number of different languages:

2.6. “Šubur and Ḫamaši”

Enmerkar and the lord of Aratta, quoted source: ETCSL transliteration: c.1.8.2.3:

2.7. Transliteration

134. e₂-nun-e₂-nun-ba šir₃ kug nam-šub du₁₂-a-ba
135. nam-šub dnu-dim₂-mud-da-ke₄ e-ne-ra dug₄-mu-na-ab
136. ud-ba muš nu-ĝal₂-am₃ ĝiri₂ nu-ĝal₂-am₃
137. kir₄ nu-?al₂-am₃ ur-ma? nu-?al₂-am₃
138. ur-gir₁₅ ur-bar-ra nu-ĝa₁₂-am₃
139. ni₂ teĝ₃-ĝe₂₆ su zi-zi-i nu-ĝa₁₂-am₃
140. lu₂-u₁₈-lu gaba-šu-ĝar nu-tuku
141. ud-ba kur šubur^{ki} ḫa-ma-zi^{ki}
142. eme ḫa-mun ki-en-gi kur gal me nam-nun-na-ka
143. ki-uri kur me-te-ĝa₁₂-la
144. kur mar-tu u₂-sal-la nu₂-a

2.8. Translation

134-155. “Chant to him the holy song, the incantation sung in its chambers—the incantation of Nudimmud: On that day when there is no snake, when there is no scorpion, when there is no hyena, when there is no lion, when there is neither dog nor wolf, when there is thus neither fear nor trembling, man has no rival! At such a time, may the lands of Šubur and Ḫamazi, the many-tongued, and Sumer, the great mountain of the me of magnificence, and Akkad, the land possessing all that is befitting, and the Martu land, resting in security...”²⁵.

Short description of cited toponyms:

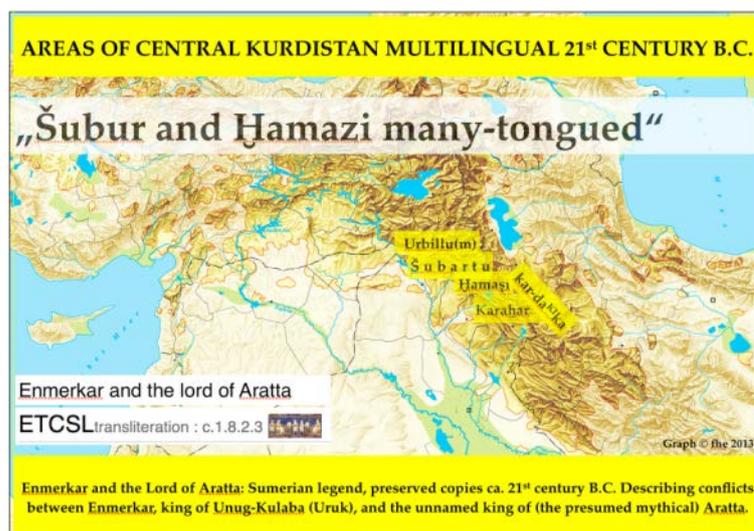


Figure 2. Source ETCSL c.1.8.2.3 end of 3rd millennium B.C.E. confirms Šubur NW of Ḫamaši, land “Karda” therein not mentioned.

²⁵Cited online: <http://etcs1.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcs1.cgi?text=t.1.8.2.3&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc&lineid=t1823.p9#t1823.p9>; retrieved 18 August 2014.

Urbillum: Arbela, A/Erbil: documented in late Sumerian cuneiform sources (UrIII) since the 21st century B.C.E. (cf. RIA 2 142 63): [Hennerbichler, 2011](#): pp. 174-175.

Šubur/Š(S)ubartu (including eastern Azuhinnu): at the time comprising areas between upper Tigris, Jebel Hamrin and western Zagros slopes: [Michalowski, 1986, 1999](#).

Ḫamaši: “located in the central Zagros and its piedmont”: Ran Zadok, Lulubi, www.iranica.com; last updated July 20, 2005.

Karaḫar (Ganḫar): “on Alwand river” (near modern Khanaqin Iraqi Kurdistan): Douglas Frayne 1997: (Ur III [1997] 170).

Dimat-Enlil[a]: “near Nippur”: Wolfgang Heimpel 1998: RLA IX [1998-2001] 38.

2.9. Ephraim Avigdor Speiser (1902-1965) Kurds = Guti(ans) K/Quṛti-Kurhi-Tribes of Guti(ans) “Third Ethnic Element in Eurasia”

1928, when Stephen Herbert Langdon located in a contribution to the “Cambridge Ancient History” the ancestral homeland of the Kurds “in the Zagros mountains” near Šubartu, he shuttled already a good number of years since 1916 between Oxford in England and Pennsylvania in the USA. In Oxford he taught Assyriology, at the University of Pennsylvania he worked as Curator at the Babylonia Section of the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. The UPenn was at the time already an internationally renowned center for ancient Mesopotamian research. One of its ambitious young academics was an Old-K&K-Austrian, Ephraim Avigdor Speiser, born 1902 in Skalat, Galicia, then Old-Austria/Hungary Poland, now Ukraine. Speiser did his PhD 1924 at UPenn’s Dropsie College, was after that awarded with a Guggenheim Research Fellowship and discovered 1927 Tepe Gawra north of Mosul. One year later he was appointed Semitic-Professor at the UPenn and achieved worldwide reputation for his excavations 1930-1932, and 1936-1937 at Tepe Gawra as well as Tell Billa. 1930 Ephraim Speiser, at the time still a young Assistant Professor at the UPenn, published the acclaimed study “Mesopotamian origins. The basic population of the Near East.” This comprehensive analysis is ranked until today among classics in ancient Mesopotamia research despite out-dated parts, especially regarding questions of Kurdish origins. Worth reading is further until today in particular introductory background information, in which Speiser for example disproved the German linguist Paul Kretschmer (1866-1956, eventually teaching at the University of Vienna) and criticised, that “a scholar of Kretschmer’s reputation” would try with dubious linguistic comparisons to establish historic connections between Elam and Sicily²⁶.

Speiser literally reprimanded in academic terms the Georgian-Russian historian and linguist Nikolai Jakowlewitsch Marr (1864-1934), mainly because of his controversial “Japhetic theory” postulating a common origin of (Kartvelian) Caucasian, Semitic-Hamitic, and Basque. Further, in 1924 he claimed that all (known) languages worldwide derive from one single proto-language. Japhet was, according to the Bible, one of the three sons on Noah, the tenth of the pre-Flood Patriarchs. Marr alleged that descendants of Japhet migrated via the Caucasus both towards (western) Europe and (the far east) Asia and established there already in antiquity various populations. Ephraim Speiser characterized Marr, though, on the one hand as “scholar with vision and foresight”, who partly made “important contributions” (although highly controversial)²⁷, but then sharply criticized him “it is Marr’s method that no trained scholar can possibly take seriously”²⁸ and finally concludes: “The fact remains, however, that Marr’s method is unscientific, and that his conclusions are strongly influenced by his beliefs rather than by his results”²⁹.

Astonishingly, only one page later after this crushing academic critique³⁰ and in sharp contrast to scientific criteria of whom he blamed Marr that he would have violated severely by his dubious “Japhetic theory”, Speiser abruptly approached it himself, and even adopted parts of it without elaborating or explaining his tilt: “Marr seems to have solved the problem satisfactorily by reviving the Biblical Japheth”, Speiser now wrote³¹, “the term ‘Japhetic’ or ‘Japhethite’ appears to be preferable to any other name hitherto proposed”, “would then be

²⁶Speiser, 1930: p. 9.

²⁷Speiser, 1930: p. 14, footnote 29 (asking himself whether he would be too hard on Marr criticizing him for working unscientifically).

²⁸Speiser mentioning as example for Marr’s alleged unscientific working methods: “the author starts with the assumption that Semitic and Caucasian (which he calls Japhethite) are related”.

²⁹Speiser, 1930: p. 14, footnote 29.

³⁰Speiser, 1930: p. 15.

³¹Speiser l.c.

inclusive of all the elements hitherto considered, which are not already placed with the Hamites, Semites, Indo-Europeans, or with any other well-defined group such as the Altaic, Dravidian, and the like”³². Ancestors of Kurds Speiser included in the (big) group of “Zagros Japhethites”, who were interrelated with “Mesopotamian Japhethites”, as he formulated³³, and therefore, would have been a significant part of what he called the “third ethnic element” “in ancient Eurasia”³⁴.

Rereading his assumptions today more than 80 years after he wrote them, they provide a mixed picture on the one hand of out-dated scientifically inexplicable trains of thoughts like the obscure “Japhetic theory”, as Speiser himself initially conceded, but his analysis provides on the other hand valuable evidence explaining origins of the Kurds, who are recognized until today. The most important findings: Speiser explains Kurds essentially as dominant groups of Zagros mountain populations (“large Zagros family”), who spoke originally “isolated” languages like the Guti(ans), characterizes them for that reason not as Indo-Europeans by origin but as indigenous Proto-Indo-Europeans, who represented in close connection with Guti(ans) “a third ethnic element in Eurasia”, constituted an “important subdivision of the Gutians” and established with them coalitions of Zagros mountain populations, who’s influence reached from Northwest-Iran of today across the Zagros up to the far North of Mesopotamia. Hence, Ephraim Speiser was one of the first leading scientists of the 20th century exploring ancient Mesopotamian roots who traced back origins of Kurds basically to aborigine (multi-ethnic) Zagros mountain civilisations, specifically pointing to areas east of Zagros in Northwest-Iran of today and to the crucial role of the Guti(ans) as one of their most important co-founders. “The original Kurds were one of the ethnic groups that belonged to the large Zagros family”, he summarizes, “at the same time we have found an important link for connecting the ‘Kurds’ with the Qurti or Gutians”³⁵. These “important links” Speiser substantiated in detail with relevant cuneiform sources and underlined, that those were at least in decisive parts at the time not available for Godfrey Driver and his research efforts to explain origins of the Kurds and their ancestral homeland, in particular:

Indication 1: Q(K)urti (in the far North of Mesopotamia) and Guti (power base mainly NW Iran and central Zagros) did not represent two different people, Speiser outlined, but the Q(K)urti were only a tribe of the Guti. Reason: the terms Guti und Q(K)urti had been used in cuneiform sources since the 13th century B.C. E. (in some occasions) identical and interchangeable, indicating one people (comprehensive population), for example in the following parallel-passage, as Speiser calls it, documented in inscriptions of the Assyrian ruler Tukulti-Enrta I (ca. 1250 B.C.E.):

Text:

*“On my accession to the royal throne, in my first year of reign, 28,800 warriors of the Hittites from the other side of the Euphrates I carried off, and in the mist of the Iaura mountains the Qurti, the Uqumani, as far as Sharnida (and) Mehri, my hand conquered”*³⁶.

Parallel-Text:

*“On my accession to the royal throne, 28,800 warriors of the Hittites from the other side of the Euphrates I carried off, and in the mist of the Iaura mountains the Quti, Uqumani, (the people of) Elhunia and Sharnida, the land Mehri, my hand conquered”*³⁷.

Speiser concluding: “This makes it reasonably certain that the two names were practically synonymous in meaning”³⁸.

Indication 2: The same would be true for the (uncertain) spelling “Kur-hi”: Speiser: Sometimes Q(K)ur-ti is transliterated as Kur-hi. The ending “hi” was “well represented in Zagros regions, and it can be also traced to the Hurrians of northern Mesopotamia and eastern Anatolia, Speiser noted³⁹ and summed up: “the fact remains indisputable that the Qurti, or Kurhi, were an important subdivision of the Gutians”⁴⁰. In other words: according to Ephraim Speiser (various) terms for Kurds in the far North of Mesopotamia (Q/Kurti, Kur-hi) and for those in

³²Speiser, 1930: p. 16.

³³Speiser, 1930: p. 172.

³⁴Speiser, 1930: p. 172.

³⁵Speiser, 1930: p. 119.

³⁶Schroeder, 1922: Keilschrifttexte aus Assur historischen Inhalts II, Wissenschaftliche Veröffentlichungen der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft WDOG 37 (= KAH II). Leipzig (Hinrichs) 1922, KAH II 60. 27-32.

³⁷Schroeder, 1922: l.c.

³⁸Speiser, 1930: p. 113.

³⁹Speiser, 1930: l.c.

⁴⁰Speiser, 1930:p. 114.

the far Northeast in areas of NW Iran of today (Gutians) denoted but one (multi-ethnically composed Zagros/Taurus mountain civilizations) people.

Conclusion: Ephraim Speiser demonstrated already in the 1930s, that Guti(ans), Q(K)urtri or Kurhi were used in ancient Mesopotamian sources as convertible, interchangeably documented terms for one and the same content: for (valiant, warlike Zagros/Taurus) mountain populations (civilizations) composed of various groups and tribes of hills/mountain dweller nomads. Q(K)urtri either derived from Guti, “under influences that cannot be nearer determined”, Speiser noted, “spreading ultimately to a large number of the Gutian tribes”, or Q(K)urtri could be “a totally different word, first used only by a definite group of the larger Gutian family, but gradually gaining in popularity”; and that “the latter explanation would also hold good for Kur-hi”⁴¹.

With this explanation attempt Ephraim Speiser made an important contribution to an appropriate understanding who the Guti(ans) were, whom they incorporated and how far their geo-strategic influence reached. The state of the art in science in this regard Marc Van De Mieroop summarizes in the “Encyclopaedia Iranica” online thus: a single specific people of Guti never ever existed; each and every as uncivilized regarded Zagros-people could have been denoted in Mesopotamian cuneiform sources as Guti, interchangeably used with other terms:

*“Thus the term Gutian has no value as indication of a specific people and merely suggests uncivilized people from the Zagros. Any hostile group could be called Gutian. [...] In the first millennium Gutium could be used as a geographical designator to refer to all or part of the Zagros region north of Elam, interchangeably with other terms”*⁴².

Van De Mieroop is neither addressing forefathers of Kurds in his EIr (online) Guti article not is he mentioning this term explicitly. However, it goes without saying that the same is obviously true e.o. for various Mesopotamian cuneiform terms denoting (brave, valiant, warlike) mountain populations in the far North and North-East as Kurds. They too can’t be likewise attributed to one specific single term, tribe or group of population, and can not be exclusively explained out of such. Even though, this insight seems to be still well on its way to gain common acceptance.

Ephraim Speiser published his innovative analysis “Mesopotamian origins” 1930 at the beginning of an aspiring academic career from an already well-established linguist and young scientist to a renowned archaeologist and discoverer of international reputation, who earned credit above all for the excavation and decryption of Tepe Gawra (Kurdish: “big hill”) north of Mosul. Even so, his explanation attempt of Kurdish origins was still shaped in the early 1930s predominantly by linguistic arguments. Speiser interpreted Kurds mainly based on linguistic considerations at the time as indigenous Zagros Proto-Indo-Europeans and (independent, indigenous ancestral) tribes of (various) Guti (loose Zagros mountain confederations). Assumed Guti-roots in areas of central Zagros east he did not interpret as allegedly exclusive ethnic single origin out of NW Iran of today but merely as temporary geostrategic power center gravity of hilly/mountain nomad coalitions at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. His proposition to understand Kurds as integral important part of widespread Guti-tribe-confederations (casual: children of the Guti) in Zagros/Taurus mountain areas north and northeast of Mesopotamia, was in contrast to the popular origin theory of its time that (still) defines Kurds mainly as descendants of the Medes (“children of the Medes”), based on assumed (linguistically never conclusively proven) close similarities of (a presumed ancient) Kurdish (of the first half of the 1st millennium B.C.E.) and “Median” of which only a few as authentic regarded words survived, and none are available for B.C.E. Kurdish. Main proponent of the (linguistic based) Kurds-out-of-Median theory was at the time Vladimir Fedorovich Minorsky (1877-1966). “The only way of explaining their consistency is, as I see it, by assuming that Kurdish speech is an offspring of the early Median language”, Minorsky wrote in 1945, but warned (again) to (automatically) equate language with ethnicity, or rather “race” as he then formulated verbatim: “But we cannot forget the danger, once more, of confusing language with race”⁴³.

In addition to his mainly linguistic based explanation attempt of Kurdish origins Ephraim Speiser included at least in rudiments also newly published, transliterated and translated important discoveries of relevant cuneiform sources. Thus, he briefly mentions the toponym “kar-da^{K1}ka” on stone door socket inscriptions of the Grand Vi-

⁴¹Speiser, 1930: pp. 113-114.

⁴²Gutians, EIr-online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gutians>, last updated: February 24, 2012.

⁴³Minorsky, Vladimir 1945: The Tribes of Western Iran. In: The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland. London 75. 1945, 1/2, 78, online: <http://www.jstor.org/discover/10.2307/2844282?uid=3738272&uid=2129&uid=2&uid=70&uid=4&sid=21102814009897>; see also idem 1940: Les origines des kurdes. In: Actes du XX^e Congrès international des orientalistes. Louvain 1940, S. 143-152.

zier Arad-Nannar in Lagash, which Godfrey Driver termed already 1923 the possibly most important indication for Kurdish forefathers south of the Van lake in south-eastern Anatolia. Speiser agreed with Driver writing that he “thus established a continuous chain that would link the modern Kurds [...] possibly even with a tribe mentioned in a Sumerian document dating from the time of the Third Dynasty of Ur”⁴⁴.

In a footnote (96) Speiser also quotes the original cuneiform source (Figure 3), which was published earlier in 1929 within the “American Oriental Society” in Yale by one of his colleagues at the UPenn, George Aaron Barton (1859-1942), a Canadian-American priest, Semitic-Professor and religious scholar, using submittals provided to him by the French archaeologist Jean Geneviève François Thureau-Dangin earlier on⁴⁵.

2.10. George Aaron Barton (1859-1942). The Royal Inscriptions of Sumer and Akkad, New Haven, 1929

A copy of the cuneiform original was, therefore, available to Speiser in an American publication close to him. Speiser also refers to Barton and quotes him, albeit simply repeating in a brief footnote the reference, the spelling of “Karda” would not be secured, the reading “Kardaka” would be possible too⁴⁶.

2.11. Albert Ten Eyck Olmstead (1880-1945) Critique

That is to say, that Ephraim Speiser in 1930 only marginally made scientific use of the cited cuneiform sources

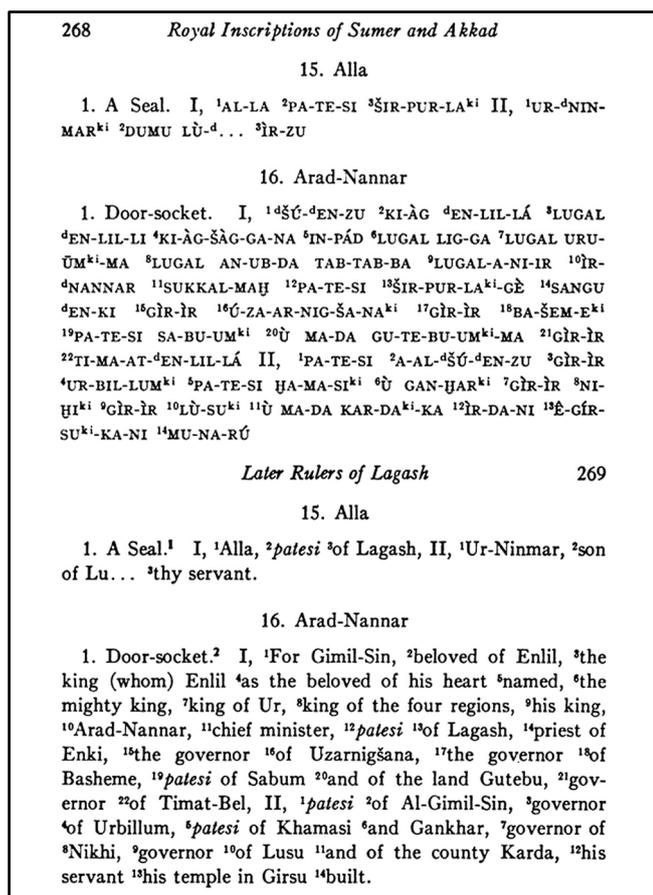


Figure 3. George Barton's US publication 1929 door socket "16. Arad-Nannar", New Haven, pp. 268-269.

⁴⁴Speiser, 1930: p. 115, cf. Driver, 1923: pp. 393-403; see for later explanations on The Origins of Kurdish also MacKenzie (1961).

⁴⁵Barton, 1929: The Royal Inscriptions of Sumer and Akkad. New Haven 1929, pp. 268-269.

⁴⁶Speiser, 1930: p. 115, footnote 96: "The land under discussion is, however, not definitely established as Karda; the reading Kardaka is also possible, in view of the fact that this text is not consistent in supplying the Sumerian genitive suffix in proper names."

in the USA by George Aaron Barton, 1929, and indeed others e.g. in Europe. Because of that the American assyriologist and orientalist Albert Ten Eyck Olmstead (1880-1945), who was teaching for many years at the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago, criticized Speiser in a (otherwise benevolent and appreciative) review of his book “Mesopotamian Origins” and accused him of “scandalous neglect” of already then available archaeological evidence. “Speiser does know the value of skeletal evidence, but he does not utilize what we have, notably the excellent collections from Gezer and Ur”, faulted Olmstead. It must be possible in the future, he stressed, to achieve by inter-disciplinary methods a correlation of “skeletal material and culture, with an added [...] amount of written documentation” and hereby aim at painting an adequate modern picture of Mesopotamian origins⁴⁷.

3. Land Karda NW Iran

3.1. Piotr Steinkeller

Assyriologist, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA “lú.SU.A” (Su-people) = Šimaški Zagros east “lú.SU.A and kar-da^{KI}ka” east of Zagros NW Iran (of today)

To briefly come back to Piotr Michalowski and its cited analyses on “S[Š]ubir-S[Š]ubar[t]u[m]”. Michalowski pays tribute to Piotr Steinkeller, assyriologist at Harvard University, chiefly for his scientific breakthrough in recent years to interpret the compound expression “lú.SU.A” completely new and identifying it with “Shimashki” (“Šimaški”, Elam confederation) in areas of Northwest-Iran of today. This discovery has two important consequences, writes Piotr Michalowski:

“... our understanding of the range of meanings of Subir in the Ur III period has changed profoundly in recent years. ... The critical moment came when Piotr Steinkeller demonstrated that the writing lú.SU.A, which had been interpreted as a writing for Subarians, was actually a playful rendition of the Iranian area of Shimashki. This discovery has two important consequences: first, it relieves us of the ethnic or linguistic designation ‘Subarian’, and second, it does away with all contemporary Ur III references to Subir”⁴⁸.

This means, that Piotr Steinkeller, Harvard, is the first leading expert of our time for ancient cuneiform sources who a) doesn’t translate “lú.SU.A” with “Su-people”, but with the Elam-dynasty “Shimashki” (“Šimaški”), and b) who locates it geographically neither south of the Van lake in eastern Anatolia nor in central Zagros, instead in areas east of Zagros in Northwest Iran (of today). This newest ground-breaking explanation attempt by Piotr Steinkeller follows for the first time ever precisely the consecutive order of (compound combinations of) terms listed in the mentioned stone sockets inscriptions of the Grand Vizier Arad-Nanna(r), namely: “Urbillu(m)”, “Ḫamaši and Karaḫar”, “lú.SU.A” “and the land Karda” at the end. Areas who are obviously addressed in central Zagros west come to an end with the combined toponyms “Ḫamaši and Karaḫar” (modern Khanaqin). With the following term “lú.SU.A” the list continues across the (central) Zagros stretching into eastern slopes of what is NW Iran of today, and at the same time ends up (somewhere) there with the closing citation of “the land Karda”. Where “the land Karda” might have been situated exactly in NW Iran of today apparently in close vicinity (=“and”) of the “Shimashki” (“Šimaški”) is not clear from Steinkeller’s explanation attempt, because until now he concentrated on the interpretation of “lú.SU.A” = “Shimashki” (“Šimaški”) only and did not elaborate in particular on the late Sumerian stone door socket sources containing also a “land Karda”.

However, the original cuneiform sources speak for themselves indicating a geographic allocation of “lú.SU.A” in all probability northwest of the “Šimaški”, virtually impossible south of them in the Southwest, because then “Karda” would have been situated in the heartlands of Elam, and there is no evidence for that. If it holds that the land “Karda” (“kar-da^{KI}ka”) existed northwest of the “Šimaški”, then most likely in areas comprising modern “Kordestan” and parts of Kermanshah, including urban centres of today like Sanandaj, Saquez and Hamadan. And if this can be further substantiated it would also suggest connections to ancient (Zagros mountain dweller) forefathers of Kurds in the area/region. Details for that will be provided in the following chapters.

Piotr Steinkeller proposed 1988 in a contribution to the Journal of the American Oriental Society to interpret “LU₂.SU(A)” as a writing for “Šimaški” (Figure 4).

Recently, he confirmed his findings 2007 against hesitations⁴⁹. Steinkeller vehemently opposed in particular

⁴⁷Olmstead, 1931: in American Anthropologist (1931) 33: 644-645, 645.

⁴⁸Michalowski, 1999: pp. 305-315, 311.

⁴⁹Steinkeller, 2007: New Light on Šimaški and Its Rulers. Zeitschr. f. Assyriol., 97, 215-232; idem: on LÚ.SU(A), in: JAOS 108 (1988) 197-202; LÚ.SU(A)= Šimaški, in: NABU 1990/7.

the assumption of François Vallat, “that LÚ.SU(A)^{ki} means ‘a man of Susa’ or the region of Susiana”⁵⁰ and rejects it as unscientific: “Needless to say, this position has no scholarly merit whatsoever”⁵¹.

In order to illustrate influence areas of the “Šīmaški” in the Northwest of Iran (of today) Steinkeller cites a graph adapted after the book “Ancient Persia” by John Curtis⁵². The caption reads: “Šīmaški Lands and Neighboring Territories”. It shows within a drawn circle indicating influence areas of the “Šīmaški” in the neighbouring North-West “KURDISTAN”, located between “Azerbaijan” further north and “Gilan” near the Caspian Sea in the North-East, and “Luristan” in the South-West.

This graph, with whom also Piotr Steinkeller identifies with by reprinting it, seems to confirm a direct connection (and indeed continuation of terms) between the ancient land “Karda” (“kar-da^{KI}ka”) in the north-western vicinity of (the land of) “Šīmaški” and the toponym “Kurdistan” (documented first in the middle ages AD) which did not exist verbatim at the time end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E., albeit in numerous other forms as “land of” “Kurds” (inhabitants of mountain areas N&NE of Mesopotamia).

3.2. LÚ.SU(A)^{ki} = Šīmaški

The on-going vivid scientific discussion initiated by Piotr Steinkeller now in some detail. Its acceptance could also be decisive for the assessment of Kurdish origins east of Zagros in what is the North-West Iran of today.

The interpretation of “LÚ.SU(A)^{ki}” as “Šīmaški” seems to be currently by and large accepted as state of the art. Already 1997 recognized Douglas R. Frayne, “NMC Prof. Department of Near & Middle Eastern Civilizations at the University of Toronto”, this newest explanation attempt in “volume 3/2” of the standard reference collection “The Royal Inscriptions of Mesopotamia. Ur III Period (2112-2004 B.C.E.)”, edited by him⁵³. The toponym “kar-da^{KI}-ka” is transliterated and translated under (text) “13, Šū-Sîn E3/2.1-4.12 (AO 3298 a/b[g])”.

Moreover, since then all so far known versions and interpretations of the toponym “kar-da^{KI}ka” are online available in a synopsis published by the “Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative CDLI” of the “University of California, Los Angeles, USA, and the Max Planck Institute for the History of Science, Berlin, Germany”⁵⁴. Base is the text provided by Frayne in 1997 (RIME 3/2.01.04.13, ex. 02). The relevant period is specified

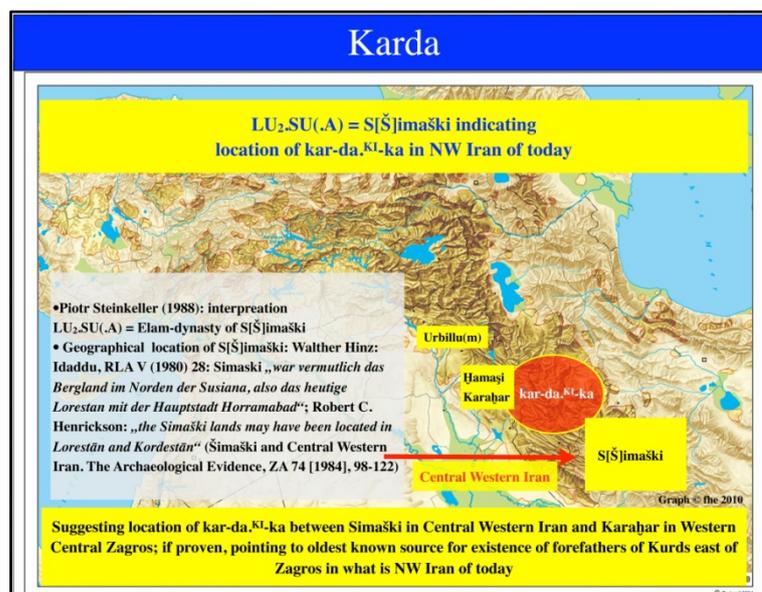


Figure 4. Piotr Steinkeller suggesting “Šīmaški” and (therefore indirectly also) “kar-da^{KI}-ka” in NW Iran of today.

⁵⁰Steve, M.-J./Vallat F./Gasche H. 2002: Suse, in: Supplement au dictionnaire de la bible, Fascicule 73 (Paris 2002) 432-440.

⁵¹Steinkeller, 2007: ZA 2007 (97) 216, footnote 3.

⁵²Curtis, 1990: Ancient Persia. Cambridge, MA, **Figure 1**, p. 5.

⁵³Frayne 1997: 13, p. 323.

⁵⁴http://cdli.ucla.edu/cdlisearch/search/index.php?SearchMode=Text&txtID_Txt=P227480

with: “Ur III (ca. 2100-2000 B.C.E.)”, “date of origin”: “Shu-Suen...”. The transcription of “column 1+2” of the reconstructed “door socket” reads as follows:

Column 1

1. {d}szu-{d}suen
2. ki-ag2 {d}en-lil2-la2!(ME)
3. lugal {d}en-lil2-le
4. ki-ag2 sza3-ga-na
5. in-pa3
6. lugal kal-ga
7. lugal uri5{ki}-ma
8. lugal an ub-da limmu2-ba
9. lugal-a-ni-ir
10. ARAD2-{d}nanna
11. sukkal-mah
12. ensi2

Column 2

1. ensi2 sa-bu-um{ki}
2. u3 ma-da gu-te-bu-um{ki}-ma
3. szagina di3-ma-at-{d}en-lil2-la2
4. ensi2 a-al-{d}szu-{d}suen
5. szagina ur-bi2-lum{ki}
6. ensi2 ha-am3-zi2{ki} (variant ha-ma-zi2{ki})
7. u3 kar2!-har{ki}
8. szagina# NI-HI{ki}
9. szagina szimaszgi{ki}
10. u3 ma#-da kar-da{ki}-ka
11. ARAD2-da-a-ni
12. e2 gir2-su{ki}-ka-ni
13. mu-na-du3

The presentation contains at the end three “Uploads and Revision(s)”: two by Prof. Robert K. Eglund, University of California, UCLA, and one by “cdli staff”⁵⁵. The two added by Robert Eglund approved 2011 and 2012 the interpretation “Shimashki” in form of “szimaszgi{ki}”:

9. szagina szimaszgi{ki}
10. u3 ma#-da kar-da{ki}-ka
9. szagina szimaszgi{ki}
10. u3 ma#-da kar-da{ki}-k

The older “cdli staff”⁵⁶ version of 2006 documents “lu2-SU{ki}”:

9. szagina lu2-SU{ki}
10. u3 ma#-da kar-da{ki}-ka

Altogether are six cuneiform sources mentioned documenting a land “Karda” (“kar-da^{KI}ka”), written in late

⁵⁵2012-09-21 10:09:18 by englund, credit englund:

<http://cdli.ucla.edu/cdlisearch/search/revhistory.php?txtversion=2012-09-21+10%3A09%3A18&txtpnumber=227480&>

2011-07-22 14:43:34 by englund, credit englund:

<http://cdli.ucla.edu/cdlisearch/search/revhistory.php?txtversion=2011-07-22+14%3A43%3A34&txtpnumber=227480&>

2006-10-12 12:36:02 by cdlistaff, credit cdlistaff:

<http://cdli.ucla.edu/cdlisearch/search/revhistory.php?txtversion=2006-10-12+12%3A36%3A02&txtpnumber=227480&>

⁵⁶The cdli server documents (retrieved 26 October 2013) all in all six known records for kar-da^{KI}: the four published by Douglas Frayne: RIME 3/2.01.04.13, ex 01; ex 02; ex 03 und ex 04; further additional two sources from the UrIII period: CDLI no. P118645 und P200591, both administrative files: erin2 kar-da{ki}; thereof cited the following example: CDLI P118645: First publication: David I. Owen, 1991, note: “Record of workers”. The content points to a people/population (erin) of a land Karda (kar-da^{KI}). A geographical allocation of the land Karda is not suggested. Whether or not there could be a context between this source and that one published by Frayne in RIME 3/2 is not clear. The mentioned six sources are available online under these links:

http://www.cdli.ucla.edu/cdlisearch/search/index.php?SearchMode=Line&ResultCount=1000&txtContent=kar-da{ki}&order=object_id&xtPeriod=ur%20III.

Sumerian⁵⁷. However, in the scientific discussions has been no attempt published until now to explain “kar-da”(^{KI}ka) out of Sumerian roots. The “Pennsylvania Sumerian Dictionary” online lists several Sumerian based terms with the initial word-stem “kar”, but all of them would not make sense interpreting the toponym “kar-da^{KI}ka” out of them⁵⁸:

kar [BLOW] (52x: Ur III, Old Babylonian) wr. kar₂-kar₂; kar₂ “to blow; to light up, shine; to rise” Akk. *Na-pāhu*; (52 instances)

kar [FLEE] (158x: ED IIIb, Old Akkadian, Ur III, Old Babylonian) wr. kar “to flee; to take away (by force), remove; to deprive; to save” Akk. *ekēmu*; *eṭēru*; *mašā’u*; *nērubu*; (158 instances)

kar [HARBOR] (251x: ED IIIa, ED IIIb, Old Akkadian, Lagash II, Ur III, Early Old Babylonian, Old Babylonian) wr. kar “harbor, quay” Akk. *kāru*; (251 instances)

kar [INSULT] (55x: ED IIIa, Ur III, Old Babylonian, unknown) wr. kar₂ “to insult, slander” Akk. *ṭapālu*; (55 instances)

kar [SENIOR] (1x: Old Babylonian) wr. kar “senior”; (1 instance)

The assumed lack of Sumerian linguistic roots in “kar-da”(^{KI}ka) further supports the hypothesis followed up in this analysis to explain origins of this toponym out of Akkadian (Assyrian, Babylonian) “qardu” (“qurdu”) for warlike, valiant (mountain) people (mainly multi-ethnically composed Zagros-Taurus populations). Hence, if this explanation attempt of an Akkadian based loanword in late Sumerian UrIII sources should be confirmed scientifically it would first of all be necessary to prove that there existed indeed a substantial Semitic influence in assumed geographical locations of “kar-da^{KI}ka” in the (north-western) neighbourhood of the “Šimaški” in Northwest-Iran (of today) at about times when both compound expressions were recorded. Evidence for that is summed up in the following part:

3.3. “Kar-da^{KI}ka”

Explained from Old-Semitic “qarda”.

Traceable Semitic connections in cuneiform sources of Choga Ganaveh (NW Iran of today).

Semitic contact features: Oldest traceable Semitic influence in areas NW Iran. Archaeological findings 1970 in Choga Ganaveh ca. 60 km west of Kermanshah. Content overview:

An early second millennium cuneiform archive from Choga Ganaveh in (north-) western Iran contains evidence for (until now) oldest discovered Mesopotamian militarily organized migrants (settlers) there east of central Zagros. The sources provide unique insights in so far less known militarily organized Mesopotamian migrant societies across the Zagros and their influence on indigenous local/regional hills/mountain populations.

Main sources cited: *Abdi & Beckman, 2007*⁵⁹. See **Figures 5-8**. Documented “mandu”-soldiers: ChG 5 and ChG 18: JCS 59 (2007) p. 51 and 54:

Kamyar Abdi, Dartmouth College, and Gary Backman, University of Michigan, give detailed explanations in the cited analysis of 2007:

3.3. Archeological Context by Kamyar Abdi, Dartmouth College⁶⁰

Time of discovery: “The epigraphic material presented here was discovered in 1970 during a series of salvage excavations in an architectural complex at the site of Chogha Gavaneh in the middle of the town of Shahabad-e Gharb (formerly known as Harunabad, renamed Islamabad-e Gharb after the 1979 Iranian Revolution), about 60 km to the west of Kermanshah in western Iran”⁶¹.

Excavator: “... the original excavator of the tablets is Mahmoud Kordevani of the Archaeological Service of Iran in 1970”⁶².

Dating: “The finds... led Kordevani (1971...) to date the complex to the late Iron Age II of the Central Zagros

⁵⁷CDLI, l.c.

⁵⁸<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd/nepsd-frame.html>.

⁵⁹Abdi, & Beckman, 2007: An early second-millennium cuneiform archive from Chogha Gavaneh, Western Iran. JCS 59 (2007) 39-91, cf. 51, 54; see also Adali, 2009: Ummān-manda and its Significance in the First Millennium B.C. Thesis. University of Sydney 2009, chapters 2 Appendix 1, 5-8; online: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/4890/1/sf-adali-2009-thesis.pdf>.

⁶⁰Abdi & Beckman, 2007: pp. 39-42.

⁶¹Abdi & Beckman, 2007: pp. 59, 39.

⁶²L.c.

ChG 18	
obv.	1. 7 <i>ma-an-di</i> ¹ A-mu-ur ¹ -[ri] 2. <i>ša</i> ^r BĀD ^{K1} 3. 3 ERÍN <i>pu-ḫu¹-um</i> 4. <i>ša A-ga-de</i> 5. ¹ 8 ¹ <i>Šil-lí</i> <DUMU> <i>I-di</i> 6. <i>ša A¹-tu-ša¹-ri</i> ^r [^{K1}]
rev.	7. 18 UGULA ^r IM ^r <i>ma-an-di</i> 8. ŠE

Seven Amorite *mandu*-soldiers from Der. Three substitute soldiers from Agade. Eight (soldiers) of Šilli(ya), <son of> Idi, of (the town) Atušari. (Total:) eighteen ... *mandu*-soldiers. (To be provisioned with^r) barley.

Cf. ChG 5.
obv. 5: Cf. ChG 19:3.

Figure 5. ChG 18 seven Amorite ones from Der, three substitute soldiers from Agade, and eight (soldiers) of Silli(ya), a total of eighteen provisioned “mandu”-soldiers. Further sources mentioning “mandu”-soldiers in NW Iran (of today): ChG 31 and ChG 34: JCS 59 (2007) p. 59 and 60.

ChG 5 (fig. 25)	
obv.	1. ¹ 2,1,0 ¹ NU[MUN ^r] 2. N[ÍG.Š]U ^d EN, ^r ZU ¹ -x 3. [na m-[ḫ]ar- ^r ti ¹ 4. ^m Be-el-šu-nu
LoE	5. ^{[UR]U} Pa ^r -lum ^{K1}
rev.	6. e-zu-ub 7. 7 ZÍZ <i>ma-an-di</i> ¹ ŠE ¹ 8. <i>ma-aḫ-ri-tim</i> ¹ 9. [Š]U.NÍGIN 15 <i>ma-an-^rdi</i> ¹ Š[E] 10. KA/SAG NÍG.GA x x

2,1,0 of seed, via Šin- ... , received by Belšunu (of the town) Palum, excluding the earlier ... for the *mandu*-soldiers (to be provisioned with^r) barley. Total: fifteen *mandu*-soldiers (to be provisioned with^r) barley ...

Cf. ChG 18.
LoE 5: Does the mention of the town Palum in connection with the recipient perhaps indicate that this was the ancient name of Chogha Gavaneh?
rev. 7: For *mandu* as a type of soldier, previously attested only in lexical lists, see *CAD* M/I, 209.

Figure 6. ChG 5 mentions a total of fifteen “mandu”-soldiers (to be provisioned with barley).

ChG 31	
obv.	1'. [0,0.1] <i>Wa-qar-t[um]</i>
	2'. 0,0.1 ^{rd2} UTU ²¹ - <i>na-wi-ir</i>
	3'. 0,0.1 <i>Ta-a-bu-ni</i>
	4'. [0,0.1 A]- <i>lⁱ-a-ḫi¹</i>
	5'. 0,0.1 ¹ A ¹ - <i>k[i²]-¹tum¹</i>
	6'. 0,0.1 ¹ Il ¹ - <i>ta-ni</i>
	7'. 0,0.1 <i>La-ma-sà-tum</i>
	8'. 0,0.1 <i>Iš-ta-a</i>
	9'. [0,0.1] <i>I-šu-ḫu-nu</i>
	10'. [0,0.1 K] <i>a-na-na-ya</i>
	11'. [0,0.1 M] <i>a-ta-¹tum¹</i>
rev.	12'. (traces)
	13'. 0,0.1 <i>A-lí-da-du-ya</i>
	14'. 0,0.1 <i>A-ḫa-Tu-tu</i>
	15'. 0,4.3 ¹ ma ¹ - <i>an-di ŠE</i>
	16'. x ¹ mu ¹ x zu ² x nu

rev. 15: For “*mandu*-soldiers (to be provisioned with²) barley,” cf. ChG 5, 18, and 34.

Figures 7. ChG 31 rev. 15': “*mandu*-soldiers (“to be provisioned with²) barley”.

ChG 34	
obv.	1. [0,0.2] <i>Ši-i-um-m[i]</i>
	2. ¹ 0,0.2 ²¹ <i>A-ḫi-gu-ul-lu-[ub]</i>
	3. [0,0.2] ¹ Be-e ¹ - <i>tu[m]</i>
	4. ¹ 0,0.2 ²¹ ¹ Nu ¹ - <i>ba-¹tum¹</i>
	5. 0,0.2 [<i>I-l</i>]- <i>a-sú-nu</i>
	6. 0,0.2 ¹ I ²¹ - <i>l[a²]-¹su¹-nu</i>
	7. 0,0.2 ¹ A ² - <i>ḫa²-at²-¹aḫ-ḫi</i>
	8. 0,0.2 ¹ Be-e ¹ - <i>ta-ni</i>
	9. 0,0.2 ¹ Iš ¹ - <i>ta¹-a</i>
	10. 0,0.2 ¹ Kal ¹ - <i>bi-¹tum¹</i>
	11. [0,0.2] ¹ Wa-qar ¹² - <i>be¹²-li¹²</i>
rev.	13'. (traces)
	14'. ¹ 0,0.2 ¹ ARAD- <i>ta-[</i>
	15'. 0,0.2 <i>Nu-úr-3[0]</i>
	16'. 2 TÚG. ¹ ḪIA ¹ [<i></i>
	17'. 9 <i>ma-an-d[i ŠE]</i>

rev. 17': For restoration, cf. ChG 31:15'.

Figures 8. ChG 34 rev. 17': “9 *mandu*-soldiers” (cf. note rev. 17': For restoration, cf. ChG 31:15').

(ca. 800 B.C.) and to interpret it as one of many settlements the Neo-Assyrian kings claimed to have sacked and burned in the Zagros.”

Historical timeframe: “The most prominent part of the site today is the ‘high mound’ [...], where one can find the longest preserved sequence of occupational deposits (as early as the Early Neolithic Period to the Middle Bronze Age...), The ‘lower town,’ where one might have expected to find deposits of later periods, is now completely covered by the town of Islamabad”⁶³.

Connections to Mesopotamia Zagros West: “The architectural complex [...] in which the tablets were discovered demonstrates the characteristics of a pre-planned and well constructed compound. In terms of general layout, the complex resembles a range of public and private buildings excavated at Mesopotamian sites such as Ur [...] and Tell ed-Der [...] dating to late third and early second millennia B.C.”⁶⁴.

Importance of the findings: “Despite extensive damage, Chogha Gavaneh is still the largest site of prehistoric and early historic times on the Islamabad Plain and one of the largest archaeological sites in the West-Central Zagros Mountains”⁶⁵.

3.4. Content of the Tablets by Gary Beckman, University of Michigan⁶⁶:

Correction of dating: Old-Babylonian, not Neo-Assyrian: “... paleographic analysis dates this archive to the Old Babylonian period, more precisely to the early eighteenth century B.C. (middle chronology). The script is similar to that of the letters of Hammurapi to Šamaš-hāzer...”⁶⁷.

Number of excavated tablets: “The archive consists of fifty-six tablets [... and] another twenty-eight fragments...”⁶⁸.

Languages used: “All of these documents are written in Akkadian, with a frequency of Sumerograms comparable to that of contemporary Mesopotamian usage. The syllabary is that of the Diyala region...”⁶⁹.

Onomasticon: “The onomasticon is overwhelmingly Akkadian, with a small admixture of Amorite names (13 of 180 complete names, or 7.2 percent...). There is no clear sign of Elamites or Hurrians (with the possible exception of Zuzzu), or for that matter of Gutians or Lullu”⁷⁰.

Geographic location(s): “The towns of Nikkum (RIA 9: 569-70), Me-Turan(?) (RIA 8: 150), Haburatum [...], Agade, and Der lead us down the eastern Diyala drainage through the Hamrin basin to the Tigris and into Mesopotamia... Our archive comes from further up the Great Khorasan Road than any other published group of cuneiform records... We are literally in unknown territory. ... However, if Nikkum is to be located at or near Haninquin (so Rollig, RIA 9 [1998]: 92; cf. also Frayne 1992: 64), then Chogha Gavaneh may well have been part of the land of Namar/Namri”⁷¹ (7).

Mesopotamian settlement in NW Iran (of today): “We can conclude that the settlement only partially excavated at Chogha Gavaneh was inhabited by Mesopotamians linked to the towns of the lower Diyala, and most likely to the kingdom of Ešnunain particular. It seemingly sustained itself through the raising of sheep and the cultivation of grain, as well as perhaps by the production of textiles in workshops staffed primarily by women”⁷².

Primary concerns agricultural and pastoral: “Letters deal with barley rations (ChG 3) and with draft animals (ChG 2), and we find an account of work performed by slaves and asses (ChG 16) and another of sheep (ChG 12). Among the few professional designations appearing in these records are SIPA, “shepherd” (ChG 20 v 4', 12') and NA.GADA, “chief herdsman” (ChG 20 i 17'; 23 i 7'). Other texts are concerned with textiles (ChG 3; 4; 17?) and with soldiers bearing the unusual designation mandu (ChG 5; 18; 31; 34)”⁷³.

Mandu soldiers: Gary Beckman just notes soldiers called by the “unusual” name “mandu”.

Classification by the author of this analysis: In the early eighteenth century B.C.E. Mesopotamians (obviously Semites) lived east of the Zagros in a seemingly self-sustained settlement at Choga Ganaveh in NW Iran (of today), raised sheep, cultivated grain, and perhaps also produced textiles in workshops staffed primarily by women, and were obviously protected by a type of (migrating) professional soldiers from various cities and the

⁶³L.c.

⁶⁴Abdi & Beckman, 2007: pp. 59, 42.

⁶⁵L.c. 40.

⁶⁶Abdi & Beckman, 2007: pp. 46-60.

⁶⁷L.c. 46-47.

⁶⁸L.c. 47.

⁶⁹L.c. 47.

⁷⁰L.c. 47.

⁷¹L.c. 48.

⁷²L.c. 48.

⁷³Abdi & Beckman, 2007: p. 48.

Amorites, called “mandu”, accommodated in addition individuals with Semitic names, who were also referred to as “mandu”, provisioned all the “mandu” with barley or clothing, and the whole ancient town was linked to others of the lower Diyala, most likely close to the kingdom of Ešnunain particular, as Beckman explains. He provides no clarification for “mandu”.

3.6. “Ummān-Manda”—From Far Away People

A detailed explanation who these “mandu” soldiers and individuals with Semitic names could have been, and what meaning the “mandu” could have had, is offered by the young Turkish scientist Selim Ferruh Adali in his thesis of 2009 at the University of Sydney “Ummān-manda and its Significance in the First Millennium B.C.”⁷⁴. Adali quotes the colleagues of the electronic ePSD at the University of Pennsylvania⁷⁵ who suggest that Akkadian “mandu” derived from “mandum” and denoted a type of soldier:

mandum [SOLDIER] (3x: Old Babylonian) wr. ma-an-du-um “a soldier” Akk. **mandu* (3 instances)



Selim Adali sees support for this view in particular in archival texts found in Choga Gavaneh, which he terms “intriguing”, because “this means it is possible for someone to have an Amorite background, be called a mandu-soldier, and be situated in areas unexpected for Amorites, such as western Iran”⁷⁶. He interprets the word “mandu” as a designation for a military profession and as a variant writing of the second component of the term “Ummān-manda”, indicating mobile “mercenaries” “from the terrain, distant land (mandum)” who could be employed in various sites such as Choga Gavaneh. Therefore, he basically understands them as migrating Semitic from far away soldiers, most likely as mercenaries, but also as expression used in the Choga Gavaneh texts for individuals with Semitic names. Their topic in the excavated texts is provisioning the “mandu”, Adali concludes and registers: “Each tablet mentions on average nine to eighteen mandu being provided with barley or clothing”⁷⁷. One archival text from Choga Gavaneh (ChG 18) mentions the provisioning of a total of 18 “mandu” (seven of the “Amor[ite] mandu” in addition to “three substitute soldiers of Agade” and “eight (soldiers) of Silli, son of Idi, of Atušari”)⁷⁸. ChG 18 indicates that “mandu” are soldiers coming from various cities and the Amorites. Adali concludes that all mentioned “mandu” were soldiers (mercenaries), and that it would be better to translate “mandu” in all sources as “mandu-soldiers”, as in “seven Amorite mandu-soldiers from Der”. They may be seen as mercenaries “from the terrain, distant land (mandum)” and could be employed in various sites such as Choga Gavaneh, the Turkish scientist notes. Their personal names are Akkadian or Amorite. For Selim F. Adali “an intriguing fact for a site in western Iran where one expects personal names from peoples such as the Elamites, Gutians or Lullubeans”⁷⁹.

4. Discussion

To fully understand the following conclusions to explain origin, meaning, geographic location and influence of “kar-da^{K1}-ka” it seems necessary to briefly outline a few key points in the terminological discussions so far since about the time when this toponym was first discovered, translated and published end of the 19th and at the beginning of the 20th century. As an introduction to that discussion which fully evolved at the end of the 19th century it should be noted that there was already around the middle of the 19th century a tradition established among leading scholars at the time who explained various different expressions pointing to forefathers of Kurds out of Semitic Assyrian roots based on early cuneiform findings. Among them was George Rawlinson (18012-1902), Professor for “Ancient History” at the University of Oxford, younger brother of Sir Henry Rawlinson (1810-1895), founder of the British Assyriology. In his new English edition of the “History of Herodotus” (Herodot of Halikarnass[os], 490/480—ca. 424 B.C.E.) George Rawlinson compiled 1858 a chain of ancient terms indicating forefathers of Kurds stretching over centuries like: “Carduchi, Gordiaei, Cordueni and perhaps Cardaces and Cirtii (Kurtioi)”. All of them he traced back to the Assyrian term “karadi” for “warlike youth”⁸⁰. Rawlinson

⁷⁴Adali, Selim Ferruh. Ummān-manda and its Significance in the First Millennium B.C. Thesis. University of Sydney, 2009; online: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/4890/1/sf-adali-2009-thesis.pdf>.

⁷⁵<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/epsd1/nepsd-frame.html>.

⁷⁶Adali, 2009: p. 36.

⁷⁷Adali, 2009: p. 106.

⁷⁸L.c.

⁷⁹L.c.

⁸⁰Rawlinson, 1858: The History of Herodotus. Vol I (of IV), London 1858, 576; See too Dandamayev (1990).

summarizing:

“Of these various tribes the one of the greatest name and note—which may be traced uninterruptedly from the time of Xenophon to the present day, and which has apparently absorbed almost all the others—is that which ancient writers designate under the slightly varied appellations of Carduchi, Gordiaei, Cordueni, and perhaps Cardaces and Cyrtii (Κύρτιοι), and which still holds the greater portion of the region between Armenia and Luristan under the well-known name of Kurds.” [...] “The ethnic title, whichever form we give it, is probably to be connected with the Assyrian term karadi, which is the only word used throughout the inscriptions for the ‘warlike youth’ of a nation. Strabo observes (xv. P. 1041) that Carda meant τὸ ἀνδρωδες καὶ πολεμικὸν”⁸¹.

One of few other European scientists in the 19th century who reasoned against the terminological mainstream at the time to either explain terms pointing to forefathers of Kurds out of Bible quotations or Old Iranian, respectively out of Greek and Latin (Roman), was the Czech-Austrian geographer and orientalist Wilhelm Tomaschek (1841-1901). Tomaschek insisted 1886 in a contribution to the popular “Brockhaus Lexicon” to trace back the term Kurd to “kardu” and not to Persian roots like “kurd” or “gurd” because the Semitic original form would be “the older one” (and not the other way round):

“Der Name der Kurden wird allgemein aus dem neupersischen Worte kurd, gurd, ‘tapfer, kräftig’ (=baktr. Vareda ‘erwachsen’, Varedhaka, Name einer Völkerschaft?) gedeutet. Einsprache dagegen erhebt der Umstand, daß die älteste Grundform—etwa Kardu—bereits den Gutturalanlaut besitzt”⁸².

The German geographer Johann Samuel Heinrich Kiepert (1818-1899) too explained in his “Lehrbuch der alten Geographie” the names “Kurd” (“Kurden”) out of oldest Syrian and Assyrian sources for “Kardu”⁸³.

A kind of a turning point in terminological discussions regarding Kurdish origins came about at the end of the 19th century when two German orientalists, Theodor Nöldeke (1836-1930) and Martin Hartmann (1851-1918), wanted to answer the key question conclusively whether “kur-” stem based terms like “kurd” or “kar-” rooted ones as in “karda” would lead to and represent an assumed one and only single specific origin of (forefathers) of all (known) Kurds at all times. Nöldeke and Hartmann came up with one conclusion that was welcomed among scientists literally unanimously and is still accepted until today. They basically determined: the expressions “Kurd” and “Ḳardū” are linguistically not identical and it is necessary to distinguish between them⁸⁴. Among those who agreed was Godfrey Rolles Driver⁸⁵, Vladimir Minorsky (“justifiable”, “philological necessity”)⁸⁶ or Ephraim Avigdor Speiser⁸⁷. However, virtually all major implications Nöldeke and Hartmann deduced from that (correctly) observed linguistic terminological difference (u/a word-stems) were rejected by scholars like Driver, Minorsky or Speiser, and are causing controversies until today, in detail:

Either SE Anatolia single (tribe) or NW Iran (of today) origin: Nöldeke and Hartmann construed out of the u/a root vowel disparity that a) only one of both versions could be true, b) and even then only the alleged true one could prove conclusively the existence of (all) the Kurdish people, and c) that the others (assumed wrong ones) would have “nothing to do” with Kurds and Kurdish origins (like the Καρδουχοι of Xenophon, 431-355 B.C.E.), and d) that (all) Kurds derived finally and exclusively out of the Κύρτιοι/Cyrtii mentioned in Greek and Roman/Latin sources (cf. Strabon, ca. 63 B.C.E.—24? AD, Str. 11, 523; 727) in areas of north-western Iran of today.

In terms of their times Hartmann and Nöldeke were searching for a specific single “Urheimath der Kurden” (aboriginal homeland) and therefore, for one assumed “Ur-Volk” (aboriginal Kurdish people)⁸⁸ out of that later

⁸¹Rawlinson, 1858: pp. 576-577; footnote 8, 576: “Strabo (XVI. P. 1060) identifies the Carduchi and Gordiaei with sufficient clearness, [...] Plini (H. N. vi. 15) identifies the Carduchi and Cordueni. Strabo’s Gordyéné [...] links together Gordiaei and Cordueni.

⁸²Tomaschek, 1886: Kurdistan, in: Allgemeine Encyklopaedie der Wissenschaften und Künste etc. II (H-N). Leipzig (Brockhaus) 1886, 336-341, cf. 336.

⁸³Kiepert, 1878: Lehrbuch der alten Geographie. Berlin 1878, S. 80; quote translated from German.

⁸⁴Nöldeke, 1898: Kardū und Kurden. In: Beiträge zur alten Geschichte und Geographie. Festschrift für Heinrich Kiepert. Berlin 1898, 71-82, 73; see also: Nöldeke, 1869: Untersuchungen zur Kritik des Alten Testaments, Kiel 1869, 148; Hartmann, 1897: Bohtan. Eine topographisch-historische Studie. Mitteilungen der Vorderasiatischen Gesellschaft. Berlin 1896.2 und 1897.1, 90-94, 91, 92.

⁸⁵Driver, 1923: JRAS, 402.

⁸⁶Minorsky et al., 1927: Kurdistan, Kurds. In: *The Encyclopaedia of Islam: A Dictionary of the Geography, Ethnography and Biography of the Muhammadan Peoples*, M. Th. Houtsma et al., eds., Vol. 2. E-K, Leiden (Brill) and London, 1927, cited online: <http://referenceworks.brillonline.com/browse/encyclopaedia-of-islam-1>.

⁸⁷Speiser, 1930: pp. 115-116.

⁸⁸Hartmann, 1897: p. 92.

all Kurds of today would have derived. As Kurdish “Ur-Volk” Hartmann identified the Greek-Roman documented *Κύρτιοι*/Cyrtii in NW Iran (of today), and guessed that from there Kurds spread “nach Westen über das Randgebirge Irans hinaus” (from Zagros east across the mountains into eastern Anatolia)⁸⁹.

These assertions prompted harsh critique and triggered on-going controversies:

Alleged Kurdish exclusive single origin NW Iran (of today): Driver charged an unscientific approach and stated “no shadow of evidence” for the claim that all Kurds would be descendants of Greek-Roman documented *Κύρτιοι*/Cyrtii in NW Iran⁹⁰. Minorsky too demanded evidence for the allegation “Cyrtii” Kurds could have “colonised lands west of the Zagros” from NW Iran:

*“The justifiable distinction between the names Kurd and Զարդū does not, however, decide the important question, how the Cyrtii (=Iranian Kurds) came to colonise lands west of the Zagros, the country of the ancient Զարդū and the mountains of the Anti-Taurus as far as northern Syria. The problem still requires careful research”*⁹¹.

Later, Minorsky kept on warning against trying to “prove” the existence of people like the Kurds claiming single term origins and (automatically) equating language, ethnicity and “race”⁹². Driver further emphasized that he was “unable to follow” another suggestion of Nöldeke in case of doubt to pick among all known ancient terms indicating Kurdish origins that one who encompassed geographically their biggest assumed habitat in antiquity⁹³. Hartman observed terminological chaos in the usage of supposed Kurdish origin terms noting: “Es gingen wohl schon früh die Namen durcheinander” (names were already early on confused/messed up), but he was not able to figure out that basically and most notably various different terms indicating Kurdish forefathers were often interchangeably used for one and the same content so that practically all of them could have meant Kurds (valiant Zagros-Taurus mountain people)⁹⁴.

Godfrey Driver himself traced back both Persian “Kurd” (“Gurd”) as well as “Qarda” to combined (old) Babylonian roots for “brave, valiant or warlike” people and further detected “a common origin with the Babylonian *gardu* or *qardu*”⁹⁵. “The resemblance between Kurd and Qarda, together with its descendants, is striking indeed”, he wrote and noted “many instances of the Semitic q passing over into Persian as gork”, “especially in foreign words” “e.g. Assyrian *gardu* or *qardu* = Persian *gurd* or *kurd* [valiant], etc.”⁹⁶. Persians adopted the term from Babylonians characterizing Kurds as brave, valiant, warlike people, and later this understanding was passed on to Arabs. After that the name Kurd gained acceptance in all over Europe, so Driver:

*“The Persian *gurd* or *kurd*, which seems to have been derived from a common origin with the Babylonian *gardu* or *qardu*, signifies ‘brave’, ‘valiant’, or ‘warlike’, and bravery and the love of fighting are the outstanding traits of the Kurdish character. From the Persians it passed into Arabic, whence it became the common European name of the Kurds”*⁹⁷.

Ephraim Avigdor Speiser called the suggestion by Godfrey Rolles Driver to link the term “kurd” with Persian and trace it back to Babylonian “a fantastic explanation”:

*“When Driver suggests that the modern name should be combined with Persian *gurd* or *kurd*, probably ‘derived from a common origin with Babylonian *gardu* or *qardu*,’ and that the original meaning of the word was ‘valiant’ or ‘brave,’ I feel that he has produced a fantastic explanation in place of one that is immediately appealing”*⁹⁸.

Moreover, Speiser continued to mention affirmative, Driver also realized that all (known) terms for Kurds in various languages could ultimately be affiliated to the cuneiform three consonant element “krd”:

“And it must indeed be admitted that all of the names listed by Driver contain the same element k r d (in several phonetic variants), while the endings are traceable to the various languages through which the name has

⁸⁹Hartmann, 1897: l.c.

⁹⁰Driver, 1923: The Name Kurd and its Philological Connexions. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland, 1923, Vol. III, 393-404, 402: “Against this it can be urged that there is no shadow of evidence for this assumed diffusion of the Kyrtili”.

⁹¹Minorsky, 1927: Elr online l.c.

⁹²Minorsky, 1945: p. 78.

⁹³Driver, 1923: p. 402.

⁹⁴Hartmann, 1897: S. 92.

⁹⁵Driver, 1923: pp. 401-402.

⁹⁶Driver, 1923: p. 401.

⁹⁷Driver, 1923: p. 403.

⁹⁸Speiser, 1930: p. 116.

*been handed down*⁹⁹.

To sum up briefly: findings out of these discussions: oldest traceable roots of Kurdish origin terms are going back to the cuneiform three consonant element “krd”. Out of that evolved a dual term structure u/a in the initial word-stem like in “kurda”/“karda”). Word-stem “u” composed terms can both be found in assumed Sumerian roots like in “kurda” (“kurti”, “kurhi”), as well as in presumed Semitic ones as in “karda”. Sumerian based ones seem to have “u” vowel in the initial word-stem only (“kurda”, but no “karda”), Semitic ones could have “a” and “u” (“qardu”, “qurdu”). Earliest known examples of both assumed Sumerian and Semitic rooted terms are documented during the UrIII period end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. (kùr-da^{KI} 23rd ce. B.C.E. in the North of Mesopotamia, kar-da^{KI}-ka 21st ce. B.C.E. in NW Iran of today, suggesting an early ancient use at the same time end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. in SE Anatolia and NW Iran, and not as repeatedly alleged either way)¹⁰⁰; Kur”-stem rooted terms like “Kurti” (“qurtië”) gained early temporary popularity during the 13th and 12th centuries B.C.E. in Assyrian sources. In early beginnings between the 23rd and 12th centuries B.C.E. assumed Sumerian based terms (“kurda”, “kurti”) are mainly documented in the North of Mesopotamia, Akkadian rooted ones (“karda”) in the far northeast in NW Iran (of today). Later, and in particular in descriptions of foreign Greek and Roman/Latin authors, various “u-” and “a-” composed terms were geographically used inter-changeably, uncoordinated and also messed up, depending on expressions they were introduced to by different local/regional speakers they encountered (Semitic, Old Iranian, Armenian and others) and changing policies. Whereas Mesopotamian scribes had developed a long-standing tradition and continuity since the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. to use a vague waxing and waning terminology according to ever changing policies to denote mountain people in the far North and North-East, noticeably in particular by using expressions like “Guti” or “Subartu”. Mesopotamians, though, never adopted an understanding of a specific single ethnic and geographic origin of Taurus-Zagros mountain coalitions either in the far North or in the North-East. Interpretation attempts of an either or geographic origin are of much later times and for the most part misconstruing original Mesopotamian cuneiform sources. Mesopotamian scribes rather characterized them with different terms as inter-connected nomad (non-urban and therefore uncivilized) multi-ethnic/cultural composed inhabitants of hilly/mountain chains in a coherent ancestral habitat stretching from the upper Khabur basin in the far North-West down to areas of central Zagros east of what is NW Iran of today.

5. Conclusions

The land Karda 21st century B.C.E. NW Iran is to be seen in historical context with the toponym kùr-da^{KI} 23rd, 18th centuries B.C.E. and the ethnonym Kurti (qurtië) 13th-12th centuries B.C.E. (Figure 9).

“Kar-da^{KI}-ka” is explained as Akkadian rooted loanword out of “qarda” (“qurda”) in various late Sumerian sources of the UrIII period 21st century B.C.E. as land of heroic, brave, valiant, and warlike people in areas of central Zagros east comprising territories of modern “Kordestan” and (parts of) Kermanshah. The ethnic origin and affiliation of the inhabitants of the “Karda” land are not known. It is unclear, whether the assumed Akkadian based name points to Semites or to indigenous populations of the “Karda” land. However, the lack of evidence for settlements of (Mesopotamian) Semites in the central Zagros east in the 21st century B.C.E. suggests a Semitic name in late Sumerian UrIII sources for indigenous local/regional ancestral hilly/mountain-populations. They dominated areas from the central Zagros into regions in the North-West, and were traditionally called by the waxing and waning term of “Guti” denoting uncivilized, warlike Zagros people. As for the geographic allocation of “Karda”: Piotr Steinkeller is indicating a (north-western) neighbourhood of the “Šimaški” in NW Iran of today. This could point to heartlands including the modern Provinces “Kordestan” and Kermanshah, and could perhaps also comprise urban cities of today like Sanandaj, Saqez, and Hamadan. Linguistically, the toponym “Karda” is not identical with the ethnonym “Kurd”. Yet, assumed Akkadian based “qarda” (“qardu”) terms were used by Mesopotamians since the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. together with presumed Sumerian rooted “kur-” ones (like “Kurda”, “Kurti”) to denote various multi-ethnic mountain nomad populations in a common coherent ancestral habitat stretching from the upper Khabur basin north of Mesopotamia down to areas in central Zagros east in NW Iran (of today). Out of various different terms “kur”-stem rooted ones prevailed over time. They denote Taurus-Zagros mountain people terminologically pooled already by ancient Mesopotamians as “Kurds” and

⁹⁹Speiser, 1930: p. 115.

¹⁰⁰Details are explained comprehensively in: Hennerbichler 2010, 2011, 2012.

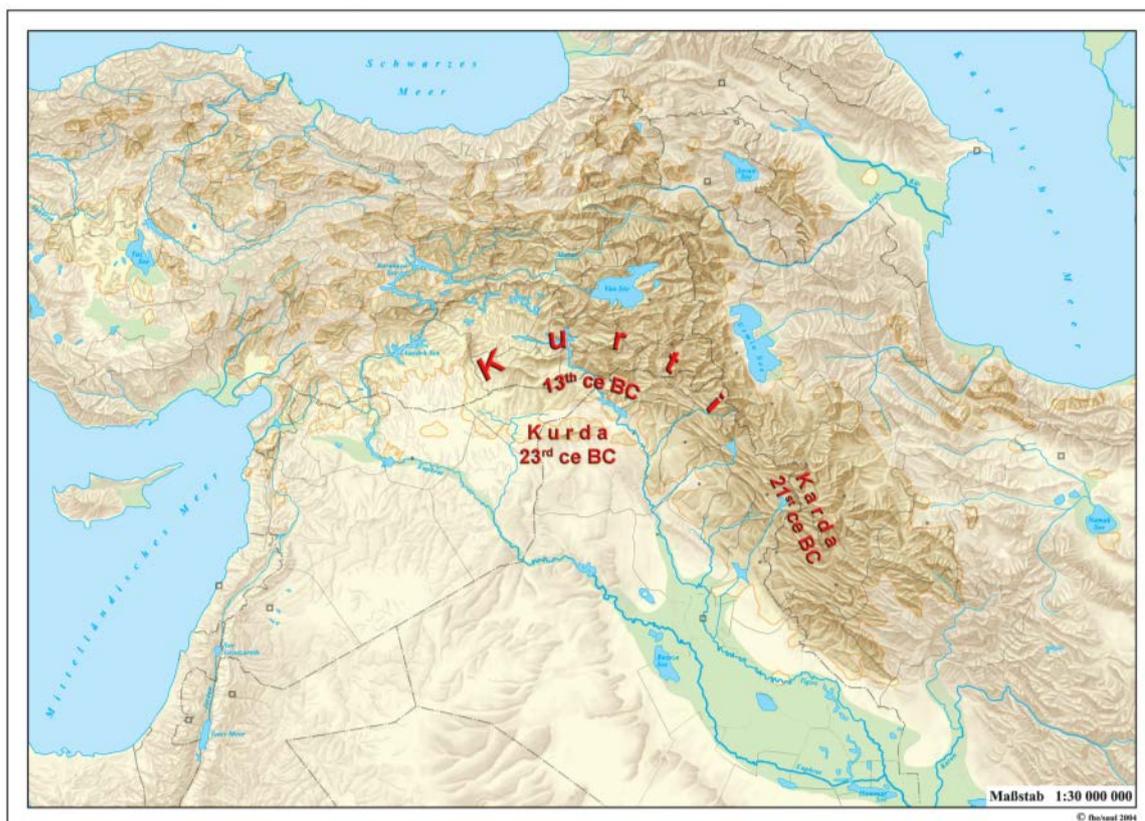


Figure 9. Earliest Mesopotamian terminology based on assumed Sumerian “kur-” and presumed Akkadian “qar-” wordstems denoting various Taurus-Zagros mountain populations in the far North and North-East; graph: Hennerbichler 2012: 209.

their homeland.

kùr-da^{KI} 23rd, 18th centuries B.C.E.

kar-da^{KI}-ka 21st century B.C.E.

kurti (qurtië) 13th-12th centuries B.C.E.

kùr-da^{KI} 23rd, 18th centuries B.C.E. in the Sinjar and its vast Hinterland up to the upper Khabur basin.

Note: “Kurda” in the Sinjar in the North of ancient Mesopotamia documented at the time of Naram-Sîn (2273-2219 B.C.E.) (**Figure 10**) in the 23rd century B.C.E. and later around 1800 B.C.E. in various Mari archive sources does neither mean “Kurds” nor their land or a ruling Kurdish tribe/family. Its possible affiliation to forefathers of Kurds at the time is only indirectly and rather vague indicated. The toponym suggests strong Hinterland connections to numerous local/regional hilly/mountain populations of multi-ethnic origin in the North and North-East of Mesopotamia. A number of the (indigenous) mountain populations could point to forefathers of modern Kurds of today¹⁰¹.

5.1. “Kar-da^{KI}-ka” Military & Geo-Strategic Importance

“Kar-da^{KI}-ka” reveals a strong military background and points to a network of militarily organized migrating groups/elites at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C.E. both in (south) Mesopotamia as well as in far away NW Iran (of today). This could make the interpretation credible that later in Greek, Roman, and Achaemenid sources documented migrating militarily organized groups/elites called “kárdakes” at the time could have derived out of the local/regional ancestral population of “kar-da^{KI}-ka”. Indications: Girsu, where the stone door sockets

¹⁰¹Terms “kurda”, “kurta”, “kurti” are comprehensively explained in: Hennerbichler, 2010: pp. 105-198, 2011: pp. 209-258, 2012: pp. 76-77 See to “kurda” e.o.: Durand, 1994; Fleming, 2004; Guichard, 2002; Heimpel, 2003.



Figure 10. Kurda at the time of Naram-Sîn (2273-2219 B.C.E.) and in various Mari archive sources around 1800 B.C.E. does not mean land of Kurds, and is only indirectly pointing to Hinterland mountain populations of different origins whom otherwise Mesopotamians later (13th-12th ce. B.C.E.) labeled Kurti meaning valiant, warlike mountaineers in the far North.

containing the inscription “kar-da^{KI}-ka” were discovered, was a “kind of a military establishment” in (south) Mesopotamia, as Bertrand Lafont explains¹⁰². The obvious principal of the door sockets and its inscriptions was a leading military commander of last kings of UrIII, Ir-Nanna (Arad-Nanna[r]), who called himself e.o. “general of Šimaški and the land of Karda”. The various (far away) lands and urban centres west and east of Zagros who are listed on the mentioned door sockets were under acclaimed predominance of him and suggest geo-strategic and military importance also of the “Karda” land (“kar-da^{KI}ka”) in NW Iran (of today), regardless whether or not he effectively controlled it at the time (which seems unlikely). The assumed Akkadian root of the cited cuneiform sources points to a valiant, warlike local/regional population most likely militarily organized. There are no connections what so ever of the presumably Akkadian rooted toponym “kar-da^{KI}ka” to Old-Iranians like Persians or to other Indo-Europeans in the area, for whom there is no evidence that they would have lived there at the time of the 21st century B.C.E. in NW Iran of today.

5.2. Guti Connection Indications for Warlike Zagros People at the End of 3rd Millennium B.C.E.

The land of “Karda” and its population is attested only roughly one hundred years after the expulsion of the Guti(ans) by Sumerians and Akkadians back to central Zagros mountain regions from territories in northern Mesopotamia, that the Guti occupied for a short time, and virtually in the same areas who were dominated by Guti(ans) since the 22nd century B.C.E. in NW Iran of today. In cuneiform sources of that time Mesopotamians did not denote Guti(ans) as particular single people but as variety of populations mostly from Zagros mountain areas (Marc Van de Mieroop) with no fixed occupied territories, and mainly as migrating nomadic Zagros tribes, who dominated from time to time territories from the Central Zagros east up to the upper Khabur region in the North of Mesopotamia¹⁰³. They gave them a bad image as uncivilized people from the Zagros and perceived

¹⁰²Lafont, 2009: The Army of the Kings of Ur: The Textual Evidence. Cuneiform Digital Library Journal 2009: 5, online: http://cdli.ucla.edu/pubs/cdlj/2009/cdlj2009_005.html.

¹⁰³Gutians, in EIr online: <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/gutians>; last updated February 24, 2012; see also Ran Zadok, The Ethno-Linguistic Character of Northwestern Iran and Kurdistan in the Neo-Assyrian Period. Iran 40, 2002, 90.

them as foreign and barbaric. Any hostile group from the Zagros could be called Guti(ans) by Mesopotamians (Marc Van de Mieroop).

This traditional bad image of militarily organized warlike Zagros people could have influenced Mesopotamian Semites also to use the Akkadian “qarda” to characterize “Karda” as land of valiant, warlike people on the far eastern side of the Zagros in modern NW Iran. Particularly within heartlands of migrating highland/mountain-nomads that Mesopotamians called before, at the same time, and also later by the waning, waxing and interchangeable name Guti(ans). “Kar-da^{KI}-ka”, therefore, could have preserved the warrior-image of the Guti(ans) virtually in their heartlands and in succession of militarily organized Guti(an) Zagros mountaineers with bad Mesopotamian martial image.

In one literary text from the early 2nd me B.C.E. telling a half fictional story of three kings called Sargon¹⁰⁴ ruling Assyria in different times are Guti Zagros mountaineers called “an unbridled people, with human intelligence but canine instincts and monkey’s features; see the following old Babylonian version (ETCSL: c.2.1.5) in **Figure 11**.

5.3. Migrating Semitic “Mandu” Soldiers

Unexpected Semitic “Ummān-manda” in NW Iran early 18th century B.C.E. Mobile/migrating from far away soldiers early eighteenth century B.C.E. (middle chron.) in areas of modern “Kordestan” and Kermanshah (**Figures 12-15**).

Early Semitic influence linguistically and militarily in areas of “Kordestan” and Kermanshah attested. Supports interpretation of “Karda” < from Akkadian “qarda” in NW Iran of early 18th century B.C.E.

An unexpected, new and intriguing find in the ancient archaeological site Choga Ganaveh 60 km west of Kermanshah confirms a longstanding tradition and continuation of mobile, migrating militarily organized groups

Background

Example for worst pejorative depreciation of mountain people (like) Guti as ape-like creatures with canine instincts/feelings

ETCSL transliteration : c.2.1.5

The cursing of Agade

Old Babylonian version

1. saĝ₂-ki gid₂-da ^den-lil₂-la₂-ke₄ (Cited in *OB catalogue from Nibru, at Philadelphia, 0.2.01, line 18; OB catalogue in the Louvre, 0.2.02, line 12; OB catalogue from Urim (U2), 0.2.04, line 17*)

Source: <http://etcsl.orinst.ox.ac.uk/cgi-bin/etcsl.cgi?text=t.2.1.5&display=Crit&charenc=gcirc&lineid=t215.p12#t215.p12>

151. ^den-lil₂-le nam e₂-kur ki aĝ₂-ĝa₂-ni ba-ḥul-a-še₃ a-na-am₃ im-gu-lu-a-ba

152. kur gu₂-bi₂-na-še₃ igi na-an-il₂

153. ḥur-saĝ daĝal teš₂-bi nam-ta-an-si-ig

154. uĝ₃-ĝa₂ nu-sig₁₀-ga kalam-ma nu-šid-da

155. gu-ti-um^{ki} uĝ₃ keše₂-da nu-zu

156. dim₂-ma lu₂-u₁₈-lu {ḡalga} {(some mss. have instead:) ar

157. ^den-lil₂-le kur-ta nam-ta-an-e₃

158. ŠID-ŠID buru₅^{mušen}-gin₇ ki am₃-u₂-us₂

Enlil brought out of the mountains those who do not resemble other people, who are not reckoned as part of the Land, the **Gutians, an unbridled people, with human intelligence but canine (instincts)** {(some mss. have instead:) feelings} **and monkeys' features**. Like small birds they swooped on the ground in great flocks.

Figure 11. Xenophobic denunciation of warlike Zagros mountain nomads.

¹⁰⁴See to Sargon also: Frayne (1993), Sargonic and Gutian periods (2334-2113 BC); Galter (2006). Sargon der Zweite; Horowitz (1998). The Sargon Geography.

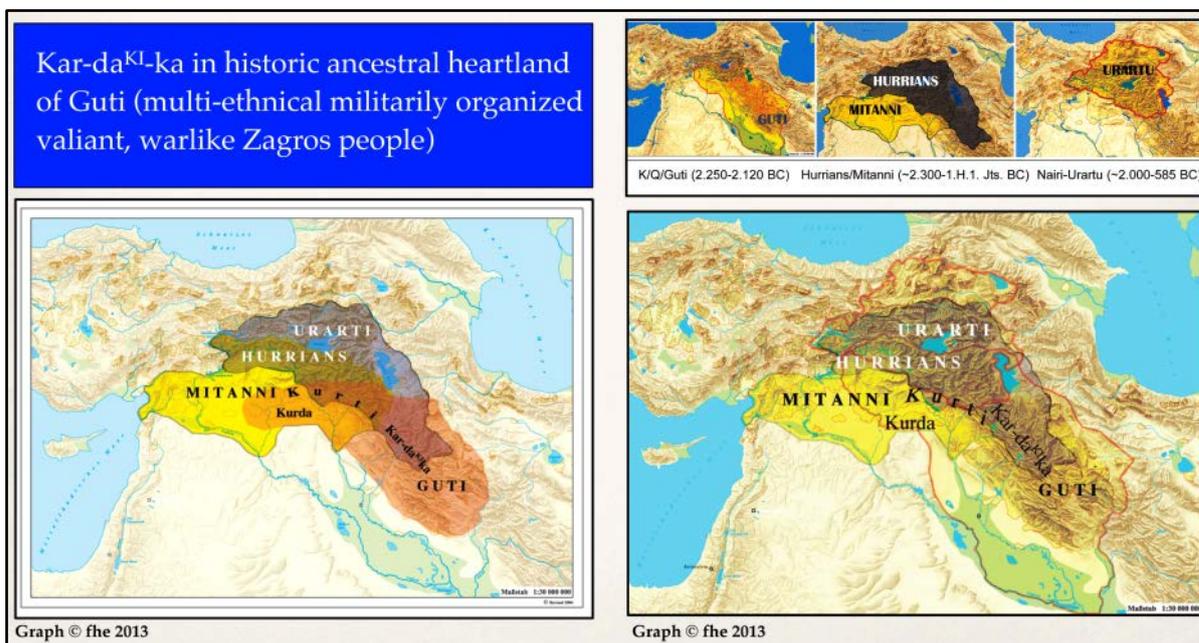


Figure 12. The toponym “Karda” in NW Iran (of today) was but one of many terms used by Mesopotamians characterizing uncivilized (because not urban organized) mountain populations of various origin in the far North and North-East.

in areas dominated by Gutu(an) Zagros populations, roughly within the geographical framework of modern “Kordestan” and Kermanshah in NW Iran of today. The cited excavated cuneiform tablets document various mobile/migrating professional Semitic “mandu”-soldiers in territories either very close to or indeed within the land of “Karda” attested as early as the 21st century B.C.E. This geographic affinity and contentual terminological meaning seems to make the interpretation of the land “Karda” and its local/regional population out of Akkadian “qardu” for valiant, heroic, warlike people additionally plausible and credible. Militarily organized local and “from far away” people retain historic significance in the area.

Activities of “Ummān-manda”, interpreted as militarily organized migrating from far away people of various ethnic origin and affiliation, are documented between the 21st to the 6th centuries B.C.E. mainly in the far North and North-West as well as in the center (Mari) of Mesopotamia, and only few in areas east of Zagros in NW Iran of today¹⁰⁵. As Gary Beckman and Selim Ferruh Adali are pointing out, the striking new finds of Choga Gavaneh document the existence of a military profession in NW Iran (of today) as early as the eighteenth century B.C.E. of mobile (migrating) soldiers, possibly “mercenaries”, and “from the terrain, distant land (mandum)”, as Selim Adali interprets. They were employed in various sites like Choga Gavaneh, a settlement of Semitic Mesopotamians east of Zagros that showed strong east-west Zagros connections in particular in the Diyala region. Hence intriguing, because such a strong presence of Semites within ancient Gutu heartlands in central Zagros regions in the early 18th century B.C.E. were not known before. The local and inter-regional background deciphered from the published cuneiform sources conveys the impression that Mesopotamians maintained a kind of a service and supply center for mobile, migrating professional Semitic soldiers there. Whether or not this was an exclusive service-supply center of Semitic Mesopotamians, who settled across the Zagros, for other Semites only, who provided a kind of a professional military security or protection service, is not clear from the sources. It is also not apparent, whether those mobile/migrating professional soldiers conveyed their services exclusively for other Semites in NW Iran of today or to others as well. However, different Semitic names mentioned in the sources indicate extensive inter-regional Zagros connections to various urban centers like Der or Agade, people like the Amorites or individuals like a certain Silli, son of Idi, of Atušari (a patron or influential local/regional personality, who commanded kind of personal? professional mercenary force? deployable also on demand?).

¹⁰⁵Hennerbichler, 2010: pp. 105-198, 2011: pp. 206-258, 2012: pp. 76-77; see especially: Adali, Selim Ferruh 2009: Ummān-manda and its Significance in the First Millennium B.C. Thesis. University of Sydney 2009, chapters 2, Appendix 1, 5-8; online: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/bitstream/2123/4890/1/sf-adali-2009-thesis.pdf>; further: Abdi & Beckman, 2007: An early second-millennium cuneiform archive from Chogha Gavaneh, Western Iran. JCS 59 (2007) 39-91.

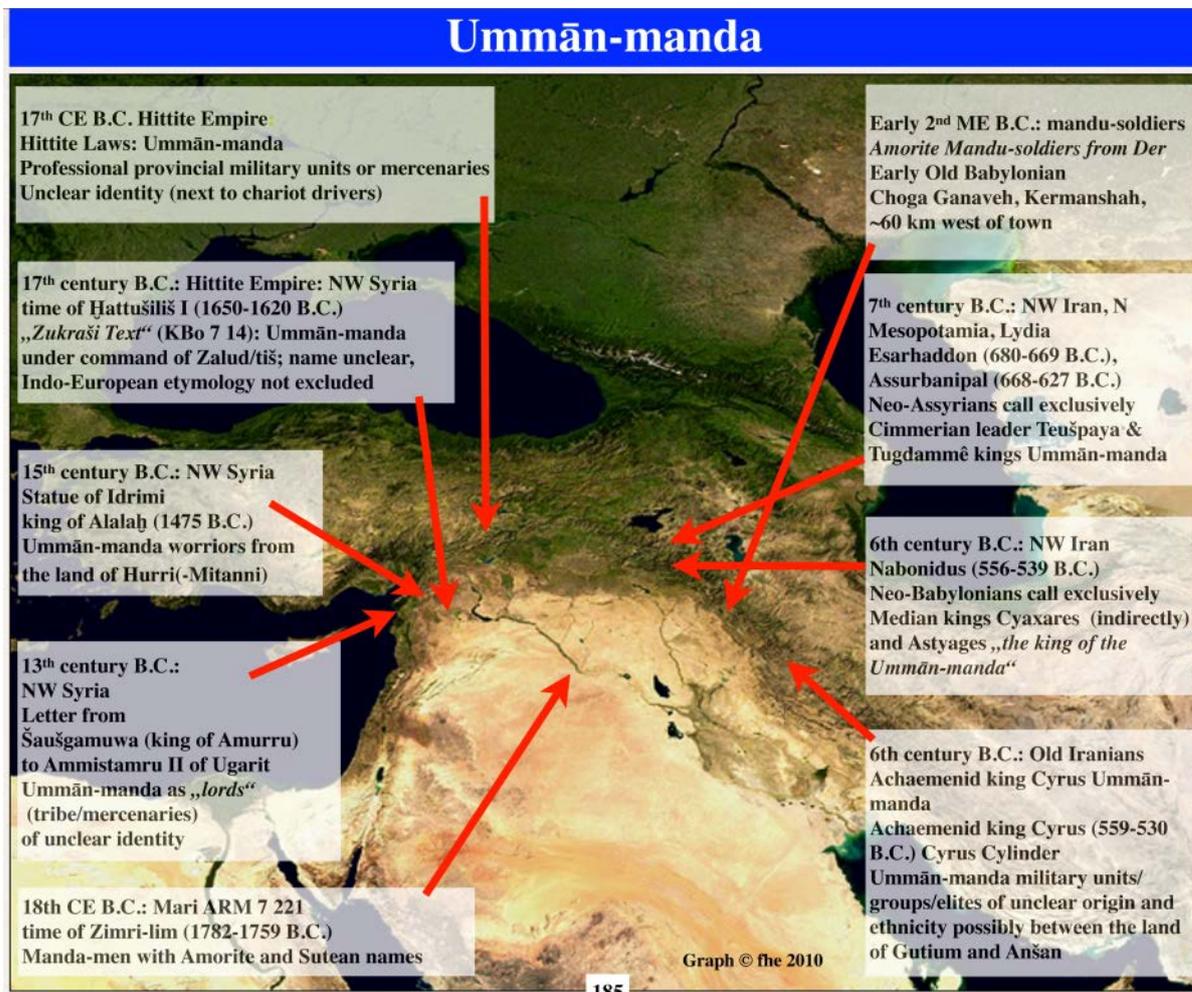


Figure 13. Rare early sources 2nd me. B.C.E. confirm Akkadian based terms and networks of migrating militarily organized elites in NW Iran.

The personal names are Akkadian or Amorite. Each cuneiform tablet mentions on average nine to eighteen “mandu” being provided with barley (and?) or clothing, possibly further indicating, that they could have been organized in groups of soldiers from (around) nine to eighteen, and in different ranks/functions of “soldiers” and (a smaller number of) “substitutesoldiers”. All mentioned “mandu” were obviously mobile/migrating soldiers (mercenaries) “from the terrain, distant land (mandum)”, as Selim Adali puts it, that could be employed in various sites, such as Choga Gavaneh, which suggests, that they were active not only there but most likely also elsewhere, mainly in what is NW Iran of today.

However, in none of the quoted (so far) published cuneiform sources of Choga Ganaveh (and elsewhere) at the time of the early 18th century B.C.E. are indications documented for direct connections between various (Semitic) “mandu” soldiers and the land of “Karda” (“kar-da^{Kl}ka”), which was mentioned for the first time already more than 200 years before in the 21st century B.C.E. That is to say, it is not known whether the people of the land of “Karda” had knowledge about “mandu” soldiers, or to be more precise, whether the population of “kar-da^{Kl}ka” could have been similar organized and could have been comprised of own professional military groups/elites, that could have performed security and protection duties not only for their land but (far) beyond.

Nevertheless, there are some indications pointing at least to the probability that the tradition and establishment of migrating “from far away” “mandu” soldiers could have been known to the people of the land of “Karda” and elsewhere in what is NW Iran of today. Even so, the available cuneiform sources including “Ummān-manda” indicate that they are a) in lesser numbers recorded in areas of NW Iran (of today) and b) in a rather different

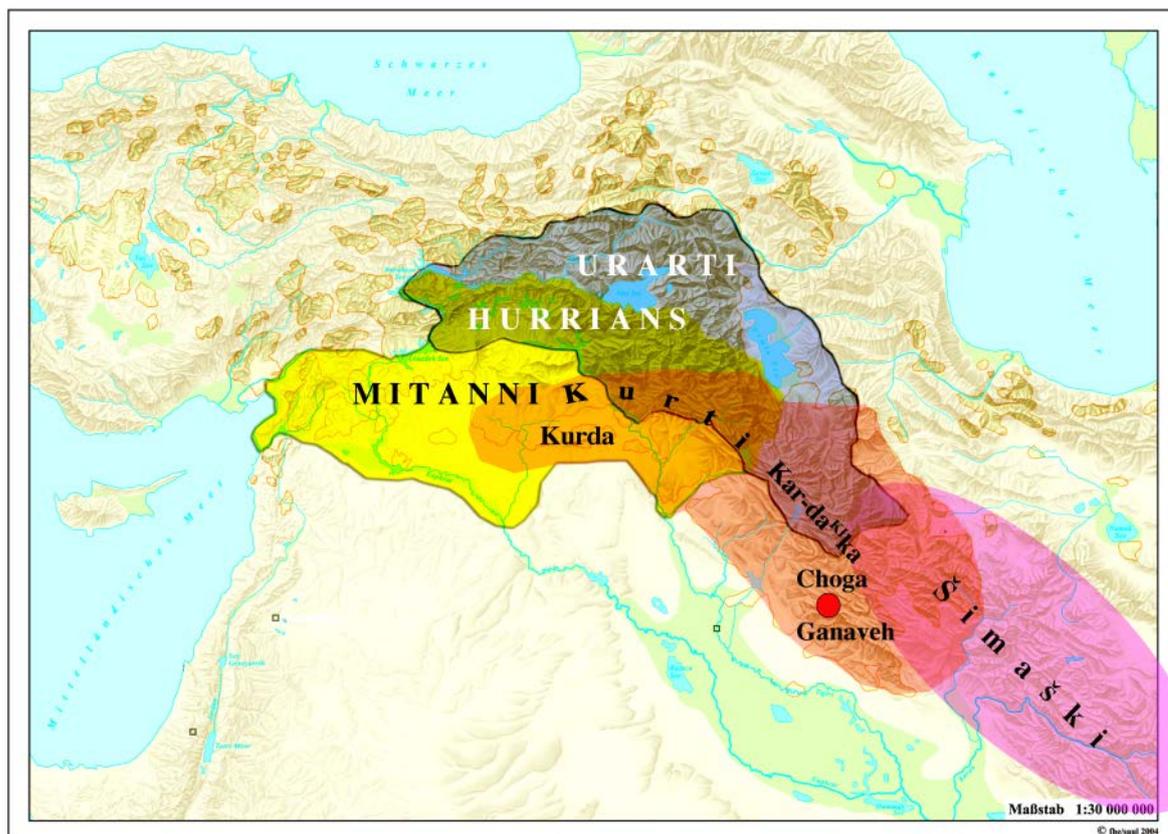


Figure 14. The localization of Šimaški in NW Iran (of today) by Piotr Steinkeller suggests a neighbourhood of land “Karda” NW of it.

timeframe compared to sources pointing to the far North/West and the center (Mari) of Mesopotamia:

Selim Ferruh Adali records in his well documented thesis of 2009 all in all 51 finds for “Ummān-manda” dated between the 21st and the 6th centuries B.C.E.¹⁰⁶. Out of them 21 show a historic background, mainly between the 18th and the 6th centuries B.C.E. Nearly all of them except for four were allocated to the NW and center (Mari) of Mesopotamia. The mentioned four are located in the far North-East across the Zagros in NW Iran (of today). Only one recorded points to the pre-IE (proto-non-Iranian) history in the area: that one of Choga Ganaveh near or within the assumed geographic location of the “Karda” land in the early 2nd millennium B.C.E. The remaining three confirm oldest available evidence for Old Iranian immigrants in NW Iran (of today).

The early Semitic source demonstrating direct connections between Der in south Mesopotamia and Choga Ganaveh east of Zagros seems to manifest a unique historic position. It shows a big historic gap of roughly 1000 years in cuneiform evidence for early Semitic Mesopotamian (Amorite) “mandu” soldiers and oldest migrating (immigrating) militarily organized Iranian groups/elites in NW Iran of today. This indicates a) a pre-IE, proto-Iranian indigenous population of the land “Karda” too, and b) suggests the existence of a network of pre-IE, proto-Old-Iranian migrating local/regional militarily organized groups/elites possibly including the ancestral population of “Karda” as well.

Moreover, it must have taken undoubtedly a considerable amount of time to built up an inter-regional infrastructure of a mobile, migrating military profession of “mandu” soldiers west and east of the Zagros, as Bertrand Lafont explains in his detailed and profound description e.g. on the army of the kings of Ur¹⁰⁷. It can hardly be assumed that such a military infrastructure and establishment could have been instituted within a few years time (including) NW Iran of today. Therefore, this aspect too could support the assumption, that a tradition of militarily organized groups/elites might have been known as well to the population of the land of “Karda” in the 21st

¹⁰⁶See Hennerbichler, 2012: Ummān-manda: 151-188.

¹⁰⁷Lafont, 2009: l.c.



Figure 15. Cuneiform sources indicate a long standing military tradition in NW Iran stretching from “Guti” Zagros coalitions to valiant, warlike population of the land “Karda”, Mesopotamian Semitic “mandu”-soldiers, and possibly to “Kárdakes” mentioned by several Greek and Roman authors predominantly in relation to the later Achaemenid period.

century B.C.E., further backed up linguistically by an Akkadian rooted term for valiant, warlike (Zagros) people in the region. The (mobile, migrating) soldier-group tradition was obviously further confirmed by the existence of Semitic “from far away” “mandu” in the area. Whether or not special local military units in the service of the Achaemenid Persian army, whom foreign Greek and Roman/Latin authors called “Kárda-kes”, could have been descendants of the ancestral people of “Karda” can not be said with scientific certainty.

The cited (but still questioned) explanation of “Kárdakes”¹⁰⁸ out of Akkadian “qarda” for valiant, warlike (youth) people by Strabo(n) could point in this direction. If it can be further substantiated, the Semitic “mandu” of Choga Ganaveh would provide a kind of a bridge in the interpretation and understanding of the term “kar-da^{KI}ka” of the 21st century B.C.E. and the later “Kárda-kes” in the service of the Achaemenid army. Finally, if indications for forefathers of Kurds in “kar-da^{KI}ka” denoting indigenous valiant, warlike hilly-mountain central Zagros east populations of multi-ethnic origins could be accepted then the explained historical connections, traditions, and continuations would suggest that they could consecutively at least not be excluded and that they possibly designated Kurdish ancestors in “Kárda-kes” as well.

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¹⁰⁸See to “kárdakes” discussion a.o.: Briant, 2002; Sheppard, 2008; Schmitt, 2012.

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