

A preliminary attempt to reconstruct the lexeme of “man” / “person” of the Ainu-Minoan proto-language

Tresi Nonno

independent scholar; Chiba, Japan; e-mail: tresi_nonno@hotmail.com

Abstract

The paper is devoted to a preliminary attempt to reconstruct the Proto-Ainu-Minoan lexeme “man” / “person”. The Ainu-Minoan stock is formed by the following languages and/or language families: Ainu, Great Andamanese, Sino-Tibetan family, Hattic, North Caucasian, and Minoan. And also Yeniseian family belongs to the same stock. Using Sino-Caucasian reconstructions made by the group led by S. A. Starostin: Proto-Yeniseian **keʔt*, Proto-North Caucasian **kwǎnVtV* (**kwǎnVtV*), Proto-Sino-Tibetan **wǎH*, Proto-Sino-Caucasian **[k]wǎn[t]V*, and also Ainu *kur*, and Great Andamanese *lao* it is possible to reconstruct Proto-Ainu-Minoan form **[k]wVd[V]*. I suppose that a reconstructed proto-form should not be just mechanical compounding of different local proto-forms.

Keywords: Ainu-Minoan stock; Proto-Ainu-Minoan lexicon; linguistic reconstruction

1. Introduction to the problem

Previously it was proved that Ainu is a distant relative of Great Andamanese (Akulov 2015) of the Sino-Tibetan family (Akulov 2016), and the Sino-Tibetan family in its turn is a distant relative of Hattic and Northwest Caucasian languages which in their turn seem to be relatives of Minoan/Keftiw language (Akulov 2018). Thus, it is possible to speak about the Ainu-Minoan stock (or about the Ainu-Minoan macrofamily).

And recently it was shown that Yeniseian and Northeast Caucasian languages also belong to Ainu-Minoan stock (Akulov 2019, 2021a).

Also it is supposed that people who lived in the Neolithic period on the East European plain spoke a language that also belonged to the Ainu-Minoan stock (Akulov 2020a, 2020b, 2021b; Akulov, Efimova 2019), a group of this Neolithic population lived in the territories of Northwest of Russia is conventionally named The People of Big Water or Paja Ul Deʔη in their hypothetical reconstructed language (for more details see: Akulov A. 2020a).

It is supposed that the proto-language of the Ainu-Minoan stock existed about 50 – 60 thousand years BP (Akulov 2018: 19), and so it can be a pretty hard task to try to reconstruct some lexical items of this language.

However, in the current paper I am going to try to reconstruct a lexical item of this proto-language, namely the lexeme of “man” / “person”.

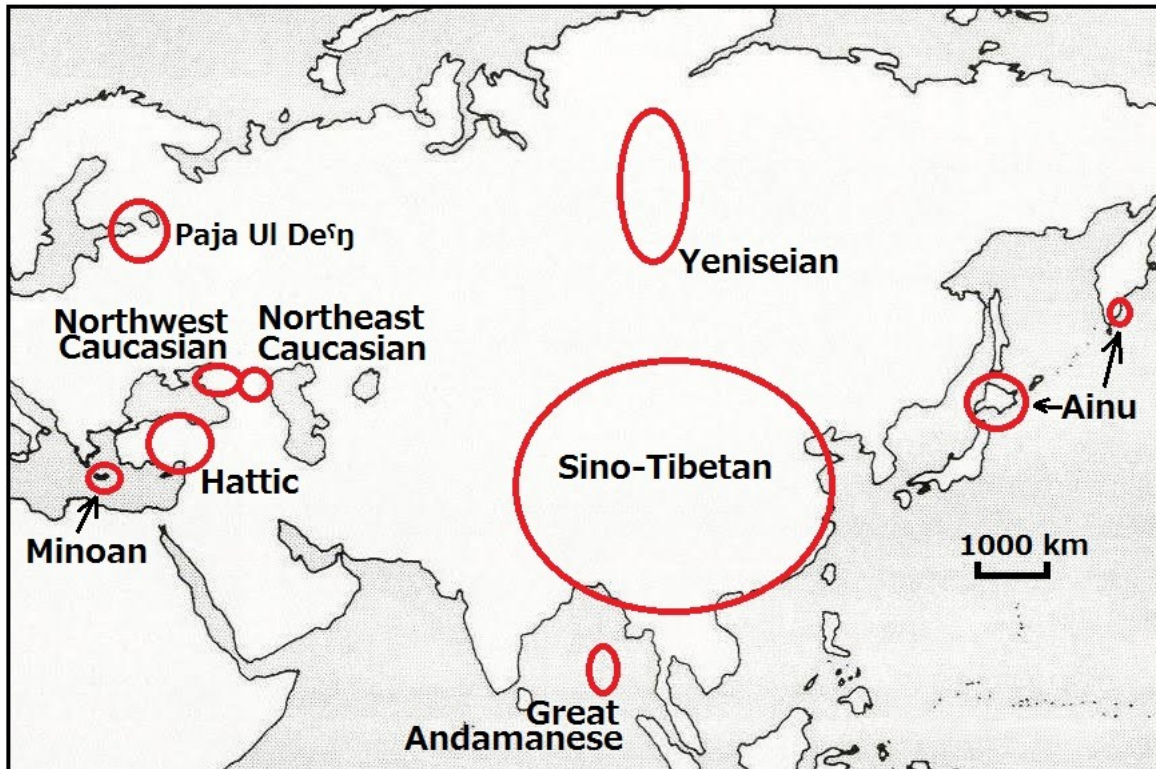


Fig 1. Geographical locations of languages forming the Aino-Minoan stock (drawn by the author)

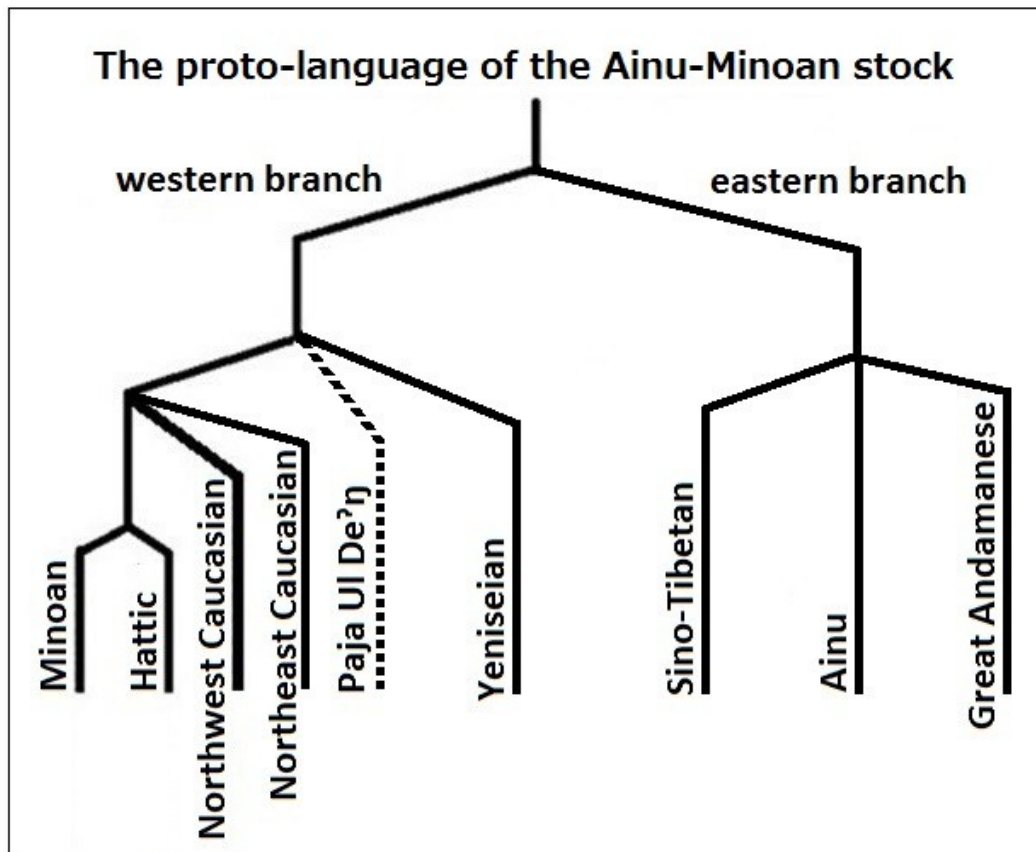


Fig. 2. The actual scheme of the Aino-Minoan stock (image source – Akulov 2021b: 20)

2. Material for the reconstruction

Previously a group of linguists led by S. A. Starostin made some reconstructions that can be used in the current reconstruction.

Proto-Yeniseian form “man” / “person” is **keʔt* (see: Proto-Yeniseian etymology “man”, “person”).

Proto-North Caucasian form **kwǎnVtV* (**kwǎnVtV*) meaning “male”, “young man”, “hero” (see: Proto-North Caucasian etymology “male”)

Proto-Sino-Tibetan **wǎH* meaning “father”, “man”, “male” (see: Proto-Sino-Tibetan etymology “father” ...)

And all these forms result in a Proto-Sino-Caucasian form **[k]wǎn[t]V* meaning “man” (see: Proto-Sino-Caucasian etymology “man”).

I am to note that this Proto-Sino-Caucasian form actually looks much like a mechanical compounding of Proto-Yeniseian, Proto-North Caucasian and Proto-Sino-Tibetan forms.

This reconstructed Proto-Sino-Caucasian form can be correlated with Ainu word *kur* [kur] meaning “human being”, “man”, “person”.

This Ainu word is very ancient, it was fixed in Old Japanese chronicles (for more details see Nonno 2017).

Also Andamanese material is very important for reconstruction since Andamanese languages were the first that separated from the Ainu-Minoan proto-language. However, should be taken into account fact that the material of Great Andamanese is still insufficiently structured. Great Andamanese word for “man” that would correlate with above-shown forms is *lao*. As I can see this form can be correlated with Proto-Sino-Tibetan **wǎH*.

I am to note that in the current reconstruction are used only materials of those languages which lexicons have been sufficiently described.

3. The reconstruction

Thus, we have the following three forms: Proto-Sino-Caucasian **[k]wǎn[t]V*, Ainu form *kur*, and Great Andamanese form *lao*. In the current case Ainu and Andamanese forms can be used for rectification of the previously proposed proto-form.

I can't say that Great Andamanese and Ainu forms can add much to the form reconstructed by Starostin's group since they actually already exist in this reconstructed form.

However, I don't suppose that a proto-form was just a compounding of late forms. I would rather say that the Proto-Ainu-Minoan form was something like **[k]wVd[V]*.

I am especially to note that in the current I describe the very first attempt to reconstruct the Proto-Ainu Minoan lexeme “man”/ “person” and further research can specify this issue.

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