

CHAPTER EIGHT

The Adamic Place Names

From preceding discussions we are in a better position to search for Adam. I shall begin the search with place names scattered throughout Europe, the Near East, into India, and on into the South Pacific.

The most significant of these are carried by rivers in Europe and India. They bear the name *Don* or some variant of that name.

The famous *Don* River of Russia originates near Moscow and flows approximately 1200 miles southward into the Sea of Azov. Another *Don* River originates near Sheffield, England and flows eastward into the river Humber. A third *Don* River originates in the Grampian Mountains of Scotland and flows eastward into the North Sea near Aberdeen^{RHDEL}.

The *Danube* flows out of the mountains of Germany, through Austria and Hungary, between Rumania and Bulgaria, and on into the Black Sea. It is known as the *Donau* to Germans, and *Duna* to Hungarians. On its lower end it was known as the *Ister* since ancient times^{RHDEL, AE}.

Other rivers in Europe also carry the *Don* form. The *Donets* flows southeast into the *Don*. *Donets* is a local phonetic variation of *Don*. The *Dnieper* and the *Dniester* both flow through Ukraine into the Black Sea. The name *Dniester* can be explained from the two names for the Danube. If *Don* is married with *Ister* we obtain *Don-Ister*, and this is the *Dniester* name with a contraction of the *Don* syllable^{RHDEL}. However, the name may be a contracted form of an earlier *Danastris*^{AE}. This last name carries the same linguistic meaning with phonetic variation.

If we were to ask a native of Russia to explain the origin of the *Don* river names he probably would reply that they are Kimmerian, since the Kimmerians occupied the regions of southern Russia and the Ukraine in ancient times, circa 600 BC. He might even tell us the name meant *water* to those ancient people. But if one were to point out that, as far as we know, the Kimmerians did not inhabit the British Isles he would be at a loss to explain the names in England and Scotland.

Importantly, the ancient Greeks did not use the native names. Herodotus, the Greek historian, used *Borysthenes* for the *Dnieper*, *Tyras* for the *Dniester*, *Ister* for the *Danube*, and *Tanais* for the Russian *Don*. He acknowledged that he did not use the native names^{PW:IV}.

Dispersion of cultures over a wide geographical span from Ireland to the regions around the Black Sea is known from the middle of the first millennium BC for the Keltic tribes. Their influence extended from Ireland and Wales, to England, France, north Spain, north Italy, Austria, the Balkan peninsula, and into Rumania and Turkey. The word Celtic was originally pronounced Keltic from the

Greek *Keltoi*, their name for the Keltic tribes. The Apostle Paul wrote a letter to the *Galatians* of Asia Minor, a Keltic people. A city in modern Rumania is called *Galati*, a certain Keltic name. The name *Gaul* is Keltic, as well as the name for the *Gaels* of Scotland and Ireland. In classical mythology *Galata* was the ancestress of the Gallic people. The Keltic, Gallic, Galatian, and Gaelic names are all related linguistically. They derive from a common word root which I shall discuss in greater depth in a later chapter^{RHDEL, OED}.

The wide geographical dispersion of the *Don* river names agrees substantially with the dispersion of the Keltic tribes. This would suggest that the origins are Keltic. However, as Eilert Ekwall expressed it, *Don* is an old river name, Brittanian *Dana*, which is related to the name *Danube* and is really an old word for 'water,' found in Sanskrit *danu* for rain or moisture^{CODEPN}. *Don* river names beyond the Keltic regions are known by *Dhan*, *Dhon*, and *Dhansiri* in India^{TWIG}. These are much beyond the reach of the Kelts, the Kimmerians, or any other known historical groups from Europe or Asia Minor. If a common cultural influence existed over this region it is much farther removed in time.

A common cultural influence over this area is known from the Indo-European languages, including Teutonic, Romance, Keltic, Slavic, Iranian and Indic. Etymological studies show numerous common words and word elements across these varied groups of people, originating in some very ancient common language now lost to human memory^{RHDEL}. The river names display the same antiquity.

The common language and name elements, in turn, are related to the distribution of the so-called Caucasoid race over the same geographical regions. According to anthropological estimates the Caucasians are approximately 30,000 years old, appearing on the world scene at the beginning of the last ice age concurrent with the disappearance of Neanderthal man. From the evidence of language and race one is inclined to believe there must have been a common origin to these phenomena. The *Don* river names are merely another factor suggesting a common source. If the links in race, language, and river names date to such remote times they would, indeed, be very ancient.

Other ancient phenomena are common to these regions. The famous cave paintings of Europe extend from the Iberian peninsula and France into Russia. Recent studies also show notational systems for recording cycles of the moon on bone and stone throughout these same regions. Both the cave art and the notational artifacts date as far back as 30,000 years ago, coincident with the beginning of Caucasian man^{ROC}.

Thus we find five independent phenomena to indicate a cultural and racial dispersion over wide geographical regions from northwest Europe into India. Three of those date to 30,000 year ago: Caucasian man, cave art, and notational artifacts. Two are uncertain in date: the Indo-European languages and the river names.

One might argue that the river names are too tenuous a base on which to pursue study. The evidence is much too slim. However, the names contribute to cave art, notational systems, language and race. Furthermore, place names other than rivers contribute to this body of accumulating evidence, although the antiquity of the names is uncertain and the linguistics origins debatable.

Donmark (Denmark) is the marriage of *Don* with *mark*, a Teutonic word meaning boundary.

Doncaster is a borough of Yorkshire, England on the *Don* river.

Donauworth, Germany may have acquired its name from the river.

Donna Island in Norway displays a female form of the *Don* name.

Donnmore, Sweden is a compound also of two words, perhaps with the female form.

Donnenberg, Germany is another inflected form.

Donilov, Russia has the *Don* with *lov* as a suffix.

Domremy-la-Pucelle is a village in northern France, the birthplace of Joan of Arc. The interest for our tabulation is that the French pronounce the name as *Donremee*. The *Don* to *Dom* phonetic shift is common in French and is found in other languages. It appears often in *Don* names.

Donegal is a county of Ulster province in North Ireland, but *Dongola* is a town and former province on the Nile river in North Sudan. If the two names are related, deriving from a common origin, the *Don* influence extends across Arabia into northeast Africa. Similar names exist in *Danakil*, Ethiopia and as far away as *Donggala*, Indonesia^{AE,TWIG}.

We also find *Don* forms in *Dunbarton*, Scotland, *Dunkeld*, Ireland, and in *Dunkirk*, France. Here the *Don*-to-*Dun* phonetic change is very slight.

Linguistic scholars believe *Dun* is a Keltic word which means a place of protection, a fortified location. While it is phonetically close to *Don*, scholars do not see a semantic connection. This is an example of possible shifts in meaning which may take place over time as later cultures borrowed names from earlier cultures.

But *dun* is also a Teutonic word, found in Old Norse *duna* = thunder, whence also our modern English word *thunder*^{OED}. As we shall see these forms all come out of that most famous of all ancestors.

The following list shows possible *Don* names over wide geographical regions^{RHDEL,OED}.

Dan, Israel	Dan Lake, Ireland
Dana, Jordan	Dana, Japan
Dana, Nepal	Dana Adasi, Turkey
Danan, Ethiopia	Dan Gunu, Nigeria
Dana Island, Indonesia	Daddan Oilik, ancient site, China
Puntan Daddan, Marianna Islands	Danchin Huryee, Monogolia
Danubyu, Burma	Dondenong, Australia
Dan Sai, Thailand	Dongara, Australia
Dangrek Mountains, Thailand	

If we permit an “n” to “m” phonetic shift, as illustrated by the French names, we might add the following^{RHDEL,TWIG}.

Dam, Surinam	Dama, Viet Nam
Dam and Damman, Saudi Arabia	Damoh, India
Daman district, India	Dumai, Indonesia
Damar, Indonesia	Damas, Vietnam
Dam Doi, Vietnam	Dum Dum, India and Indonesia

These lists are intended only to illustrate the worldwide scattering of similar place names; they are not exhaustive, nor do I attempt linguistic rigor. Some of them may derive from local expressions and usages, not related to a common linguistic influence. They are part of an accumulating body of evidence that must be considered in any study of place name evidence.

If we permit a “d” to “t” phonetic shift we also pick up many other names. A few include^{RHDEL,TK}.

Tan, USSR	Tan, North Korea
Tana, Chile	Thann, France
Tan An, Vietnam	Tan My, Vietnam
Tana Fjord, Norway	Tana Lake, Ethiopia
Tana River, Kenya	Tana River, Alaska
Tanai, Pakistan	Tanah Rata, Malaysia
Tanacross, Alaska	Tanagrogot, Indonesia
Tanana, Alaska	Tanami, Australia
Thana, India	Thanh Hoa, Vietnam
Tana Island, New Hebrides	Tana River, Scandanavia
Tanamerah, New Guinea	

Many other *Tan*, *Tana*, *Tam*, *Tem*, *Tham*, and *Them* forms are known, such as the *Thames River*, England, *Thamsham*, Norway, and *Tam Ky*, Vietnam.

Note the *Tanais* river name given by Herodotus. This is the *Don*, and shows the linguistic connection between the *don-tan* forms.

If the *Don* name was carried to Southeast Asia it would suggest the same influence as that which spread across Europe, through the Near East, and into India. We do not recognize a Caucasoid racial tie. However, the light skins and features of the natives of Polynesia and Hawaii cause one to question the genetic origins of those people, other than through late European explorers.

Returning to the *Don* evidence we find forms which show a closer kinship to that familiar name. This is through a prefix. I mentioned that Athens, Greece came from a more ancient *Atana*. The same name is found across the Aegean Sea in Turkey where the city of *Adana* is still known by that name. Other names are^{TWIG}:

Aden, Arabia	Adonara, Indonesia
Adimi, USSR	Adama, Ethiopia
Adamawa, Nigeria	Adam, USSR
Adam Kiri, Nigeria	Adamana, Arizona

We know that other Adam names have lost a prefix. The biblical *Adamhi* in Jordan has become the modern *Damiya*. *Adom* on the Jordan River has become *Tell-ed-Damiya*, and the ancient *Adhaman-as-Zaur* water course in Iraq has become the modern *Damin-as-Zawr*^{TK}. This evidence shows that the Adon and Adam forms might have come from earlier Don or Dam. If a phonetic shift took place in one direction, it might also take place in the other.

These *don/dom/adon/adom/adam* names are the first to show a possible connection to the biblical Adam. (Adom is the Hebrew pronunciation of Adam.)

These several tabulations show common place names over wide geographical regions extending in an arc from Europe, across the Near East, through India, and into the South Seas. *Adamawa* and *Adam Kiri* in Nigeria extends this phenomena across Africa, while *Tanacross* and *Tanana* of Alaska, with *Adamana* of Arizona extend it into North America. *Danchin Huryee* and *Dandan Oilik* appear in Mongolia and China. The Don names patterns appear to cover wide areas of the globe.

Some persons may object to the random grouping of names that have no apparent linguistic connection except through some obscure phonetic similarity. While the Don River names may be intriguing how can we conclude that other Don names with the many phonetic variations are related? Is *Tana* related to Don, except through accidental phonetic similarity? Is *Adom* related to *Don*?

The objection is valid, and deserves attention. What criteria do we have for establishing relationships among the varied names? Although the wide patterns are phonetically similar, perhaps they are nothing more than accidental use of similar sounding names from different languages. How can one separate those names which are related culturally from those which are mere accidental homonyms? How do we know they came out of cultural assignments to ancient personalities or events?

If the names date to remote antiquity, long before recorded history, how can we show their cultural origins without written evidence? The earliest written records are no more than 5,000 years old from around the Near East, and perhaps a few stone monuments scattered across the Mediterranean and Europe. If the names originate from more ancient times the sources cannot be traced except through the study of linguistics.

The river names provide important clues to this dilemma. Clearly we have Don names in Scotland, England, Germany, Russia, and India. We might add *Dyfrdonwy* and *Trydonwy* from Wales. *Dyfr* in Old Welsh meant water, as the *don* form in the old Indo-European root system also meant water. *Dyfr* is then compounded with *don* and *wy*^{CH}. Remember *Manawydan* from Welsh mythology? Here *mana* is compounded with *wy* and *dan*.

Could the wide spread *don* names be from some source other than a very famous ancestor? What other cultural object or episode would provide such prominent influence? Did Henry Hudson get his name from the river, or did the river receive its name from the man? If people over such wide areas of the globe wished to honor a common ancestor might they not use the common name? How long ago did he live? What caused his descendants to migrate to such far regions? If the river names did not come from an outstanding personality did they come from some other social or religious influence? On the face of the evidence we cannot say with unreserved conviction that the river names came from an individual named Don.

However, we are forced back again to the evidence of race, language, and cultural artifacts. It seems reasonable to assume the Don name originated in some very ancient personality long before historic times.

Another possibility is that the name was borrowed from one region to another, but if so, it had to have profound significance, with active commercial trade across the face of the planet in ages now lost to human memory. It is far easier to propose that a very ancient common ancestor was the origin of that cultural memory.

Considerable evidence contributes to this body of accumulation information, and provides a solution to the linguistic dilemma. The *don* name carries a significance that casts a strong light on the origins. We can demonstrate more precisely that many of the place names derive from a personality named Don.