# THE ANCIENT HUNGARIAN RUNIC WRITING

## ADORJÁN MAGYAR
## Presented by Susan Tomory /Author's request

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The surest way yet to judge the cultural level of nations is to know about the proportion of literacy in their midst. Most of the peoples in Europe learned to read and write after the acceptance of Christianity. However, there are some among them, even today, where the number of illiterates is still quite high. Although the Germanic peoples had their own writing before the acceptance of Christianity, the RUNA writing, it has been proved without doubt, that it has originated from the Latin letters. Concerning this, it will be sufficient to compare a few Latin letters with the RUNA letters.

All doubts can be resolved by the fact that, just like the Romans, they read the letter “C” for “K”.

The Hungarians are the only nation in Europe who had their own writing, that may be called a writing, which had not been received from others before they accepted Christianity. On the other hand, this proves that they were literate before they were converted to Christianity; yet, it indicates that it is either a very big mistake or the sign of national hatred to label the Hungarians as an uncivilized, nomadic nation before they took up Christianity. An uncivilized nation has no writing, least of all has she an alphabet of her own; and in this respect the Hungarians can even be elevated above the Greeks and the Romans, who propoperly speaking, likewise had no letters of their own. It is well known that the Greeks received their letters from the Phoenicians and the Romans took them over partly from the Greeks and partly from the Etruscans. If you compare the Phoenician, Greek and Roman letters, this becomes instantly obvious.

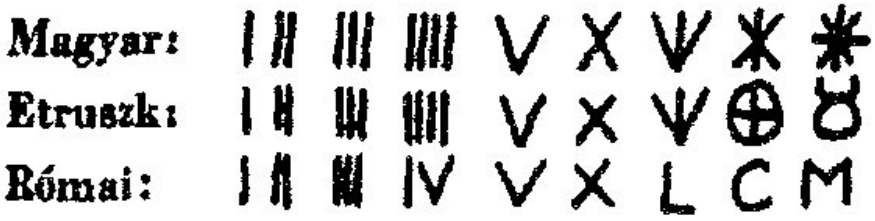

Phoenician, Greek and Latin writings

**NUMERICAL ROVÁS (RUNES)**

The letters of the Hungarian runic writing cannot be compared with the letters of any other writing. Therefore, it is a fact that a very long time ago the Hungarians created their own letters. The figures of the Hungarian numerical runes have a resemblance to the Roman numerical figures,yret this was not merely copying on the part of the Hungarians. It was simply based on a common origin which can be made clear by the following:

The greater part of the Roman culture was inherited from the Etruscans and not from the Greeks. As we all know, the Etruscans conquered Rome and the Etruscan Tarquiniuses became Roman kings. Later, however, the Romans managed to drive them away and conquered Etruria, and the Etruscans consequently became assimilated by the Latins. This did not hinder but furthered the Romans in taking over and learning the much higher culture of the Etruscans.

Furthermore, the Hungarian runic numbers agree much more closely with the Etruscan runic numbers than with that of the Romans. (See below the Magyar, the Etruscan and Roman numerals:)




Outside of the Etruscan and Hungarian figures of the number 50, you cannot find a similar figure for this number in the entire world. It calls, however, for an explanation as to how such an agreement was possible between the Hungarian and the Etruscan runic numbers, especially if the Hungarians came to Europe only 1,000 years earlier. In that case they could not have learned the numbers of the Etruscans who had already vanished 1,000 years before, but could have learned only that of the Romans.The only way we can understand this is to suppose that the Etruscans and Hungarians had the same origin in primeval times, or that the Hungarians already had lived in Europe when the Etruscans were there. If we can add to this supposition, either the Hungarians received their numerical figures from the Etruscans or the Etruscans from the Hungarians.[i]

There are still places in Hungary where the Hungarian people use the Hungarian runic numbers, while the runes of letters went out of practice about 250 years ago.

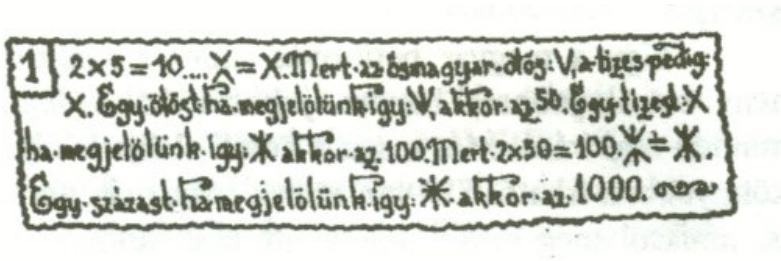
Because of Christianity, later the Austrian rule did not favorably look at the “pagan” Hungarian letters, they tried to outroot them; yet nobody eliminated the runic numbers for they thought it came from the Romans. This is why the Hungarian runic writing is known only from the fex recoreds that remain.[ii]

The lines of both the Hungarian runic letters and runic numbers proceed from the right toward the left and not from the left toward the right, as was the case with every ancient writing. Even the shape of the letters is such

that they are easier to write this way. However, there is another natural reason too, and I will return to say something about it later. For the time being, let me mention only that this is proof of the primeval origin of the Hungarian writing, called rovás.

As we can see from what we have said thus far, the ancient Hungarian system of numbrers was also based upon the decimal numerical system. The remnants of the numerical system that were based on six numbers are the 12 hours, the 12 months and also the “dozen” which consists of 12 units, that is of 2x6. In the oldan days the Hungarians had a coin called “*the sixter*” (hatos), which had a value of six “krajcár” (pence). This is another proof. The ancient Sumerians, who lived 5-6,000 years ago in Mesopotamia, knew no other system than that based on six numbers.[iii] Considering that this numerical system of figuring was much more difficult than the decimal system, it was natural that the decimal numerical system gained ground and took the place of the systems based on both the numbers six and eight. The Sumerians, besides using different counting means were able to solve problems in arithmetic wihout any supporting tools that today only some geniuses can achieve.

Returning to the Hungarian numerical system, we can see that the numerical sign compose a logical unity that are connected to each other; and, without mixing them up, it cannot be changed.



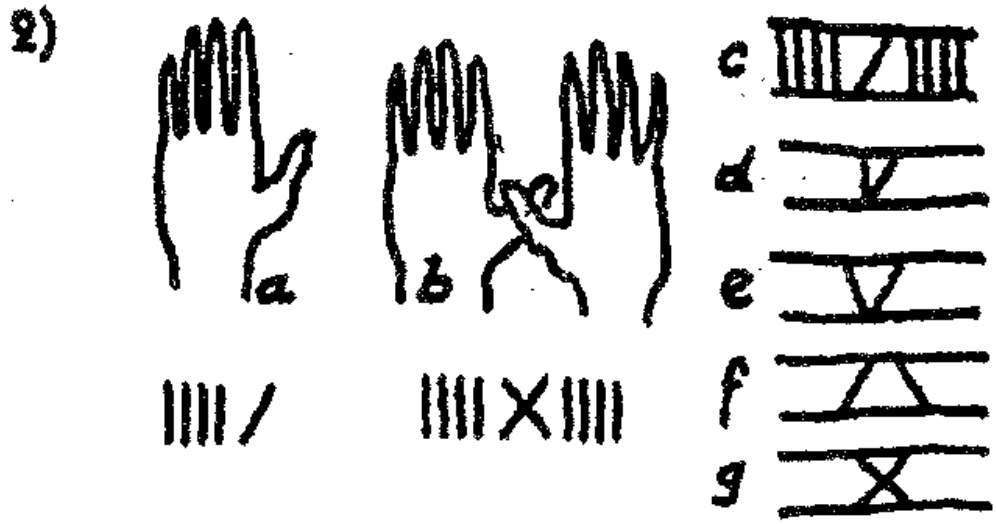

Please observe how the characters build upon one another

The Etruscans and even more so the Romans, made changes according to their own purposes though they did it later. For instance “C” (= centum= 100, M = mille = 1,000), but this way they spoiled the logical unity.

Hence, it follows with iron logic that the Hungarian numerical system is the original, ancient numerical system, 3,000 years after the extinction of the Etruscan and although the Roman numerals are no longer commonly used, the farmers and shepherds of the Hungary maintained it up to our days. There are some changes, minor diviations however, in the Hungarian numerical system according to the different regions in Hungary, but the general numerical system always remained the one as presented here.

A very strong proof of the genuineness of the Hungarian numerical system is the absolute, natural base of its origin.

The foundation of the numerical system, based on the numbers five and ten in ancient days was composed of the five-ten fingers of the hand, just as today sometimes we count and show numbers with the help of our fingers the way cavemen did millions of years ago. The minor numbers in the primeval numbers from one to four were marked by simple vertical lines. These four vertical lines signify the four fingers of the hand, while the diagonal lines signify the thumb; that is, the number five in other words, signified by the oldest form of the number five. This took the shape of the sign shown under “d” on our No.2 drawing by uniting with the side line of the number four, and only afterwards took the shape shown under the “e”. The number then was originally similar to the figure shown under “f” which later took the shape of the sign marked under “g”. Of course all this happened sometime in the primeval days of mankind. But we still can see these stages in the Hungarian numerical system. Anyone who has studied ethnography knows the development of such basic methods come from the most ancient times of human culture. Even the Romans did not know how such a “/” number five had developed into a “V”, while many of the Hungarian people still notch it this way with a diagonal line in some parts of the country.




evolution of rovás numbers.

In other words, the Hungarian people have kept the primeval shape of the number five up to date. According to this, it is clear that not only did the Hungarian runic numbers not develop from the Roman numbers, but they are more than ten thousand years older than the Roman numbers.

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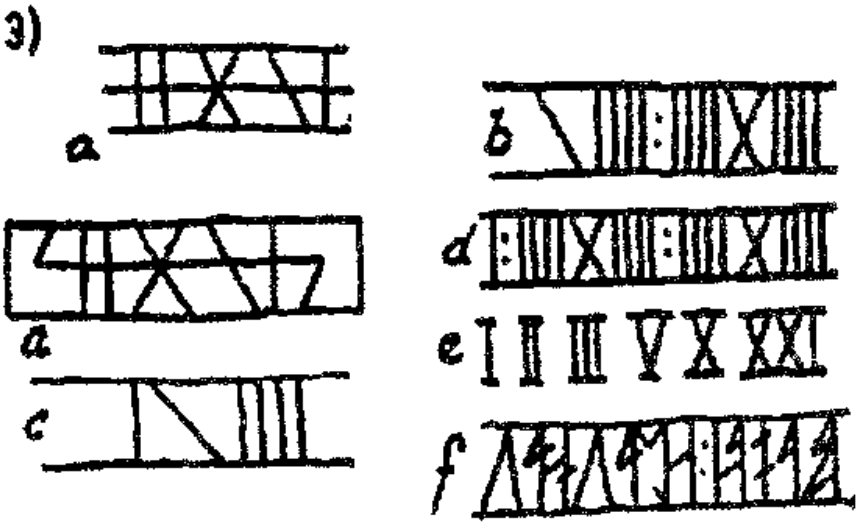
A further question is how did the symbols of the Hungarian rovás numbers get the shape that can be seen on our drawing? The reason for this is that the runes were marked on sticks cut into a square shape or on narrow little boards. The practice of notching was used when making some records or settling accounts between two persons. They split the stick lengthwise, accurately into two pieces, and one part was kept by the first party the other by the second party, that is, the crecitor and the debtor. To protect these documents against falsification whenever it became necessary to mark new debts — be it money, food, drinks, cattle, or anything else — they placed the two sticks or boards beside each other, and cut the rovás in such a way that they crossed both parts at once, as is shown on our drawing no.3 under “a”.

Falsification was impossible because the runes would not have matched when placed together.

Hungarians still use this notching of debts, especially in Transylvania. I have seen them myself in my younger years in restaurants and bakeries. The sticks were hung up in an orderly row. At the end of each stick there was some sign which referred to the name of the buyer. In this way they knew to whom the stick belonged. They applied the runes as shown on drawing no.3 under the letters “b” and “c”. (This explains the old Hungarian saying “There is much on his ’rovás’” which meant somebody had a large amount of debts. Figuratively it also meant that he had many sins.)

The horizontal lines, as you can see on the drawings indicated the edge of the sticks; and, at the same time, these horizontal lines explain why it is customary to write the Roman numbers between two horizontal lines even today, the way the letter “e” shows on drawing no.3. Yet the reason for this is not known by people who write Roman numbers this way, and even the Romans did not know it. It may be that the Etruscans did.

In order that the carving of numbers should be easier to look over, they put two periods between every ten numbers.




## Rovás abc

The alphabet of the rovás and the rules of abbreviation were kept by many writers in past centuries. It is useless to mention all the names of these writers, bevcause in greater part they took their information from each other, the exception is the alphabet of rovás written on parchment and discovered in the Dietrichstein Library of Nicholsburg. This was sold at an auction sale in 1933 in the city of Luzern, Switzerland, and looks somewhat older thatn dating from 1480. This one, beyond a doubt, came from an entirely different source.

There was an inscription in runic writing in a small Unitarian Church in Transylvania which was kept intact to date, that is until the outbreak of World War II. We do not know whether it survived the war and the Russian occupation or not; however there are many photographs of it. The date when the inscription was made was 1668.

There was another very interesting inscription in runic writing which was destroyed, that of Constantinople. A delegation of the Hungarian King Ulászló was sent to Selim, the Turkish sultan in 1515. One of the jockeys of the delegation, by the name of Tamás Székely carved an inscription in runic writing on one of the stones of the stableíd outer walls. The building was destroyed but, in 1553, when Emperor Ferdinand sent his ambassadors to sultan Sulejman, a member of the embassy, Hans Dernschwamm, saw and copied it. This copy was discovered by Ferenc Barbinger in 1913 in the Family Archives of the Fuggers, and believing that it was some ancient Turkish inscriprion in which arabic letters were not yet used, he sent it for deciphering to Vilmos Thomsen, the world-renowned savant of the old-Turkish writings. He instantly recognized that it was not a text written in Old-Turkish, but written in ancient Hungarian letters. He succeeded in reading it in part, while the full explanation was given by Gyula Sebestyén to whom Thomsen sent the copy.

The most interesting relic in runic writing, however, is the calendar using rovás, discovered in Bologna, Italy. This happened when an Italian scientist, Luigi Fernando Marsigli, while serving in the army in Transylvania in 1690, saw a Székely calendar. According to the remarks of Marsigli it was made for the newly baptized Székelys with

rovás on a stick, with the ancient rovás-letters. The scientist Marsigli was so interested in it that he copied it all, and later took the copy to Italy, where it was discovered by Endre Veress in 1913 in the University Library of Bologna. Marsigli's above mentioned remarks make it also plain that even in 1690 there still were Székelys who practiced the ancient Hungarian religion.

Ourreaders no doubt have noticed that although the rovás was in use for ages, yet its relics were mostly incidentally discovered and spread abroad by scientists of our times. the reason for this, as already referred to, was that this writing has been constantly persecuted from every side as being a remnant of pagan times. Later it was the Imperial Regime that intended to tear off every pride from the forehead of the Hungarian nation and to present the Hungarians as wild, uncivilized people. On the on hand, they could undermine the consciousness and resistance of the Hungarians, and on the other hand, that could justify their action before the nations of Europe. For these reasons it was necessary to exterminate and germanize the Hungarians, and it was important to settle foreigners into Hungary. It was very unpleasant for the Austrian regime that the Hungarian nation was literate before her conversion to Christianity, and furthermore, that they also had a writing of their own which had not been taken over from others. This explains why it was their intention to uproot it from public knowledge by any possible means. Stealthily they sent secret commissioners to trace and destroy everything that proved the ancient culture of the Hungarians. One of these was Strommer, a man born in Austria, who had learned to speak Hungarian perfectly. The Emperor had managed to get a leading role in the Hungarian Academy of Science for Strommer under the name of Thallóczy; he used this name but never made this change of names official. It was natural that these gentlemen did not care to take note of the ancient Hungarian rovás-texts appearing on the wall of a stable in Constantinople or in the dusty archives of foreign libraries.

**THE RULES OF ROVÁS WRITING**

We are presenting the rules of the rovás according to two aspects First as they appeared on old relics and notations and secondly as they develped conforming to contemporaneous requirements, both substanciated with strict, scientific research.

As already mentioned, the rows of rovás proceed from right to left, the reason for this being the following: nine-tenth of the people are right-handed. Our ancestors used a carving knife or some other sharp instrument to carve the letters onto sticks with four or sometimes even more sides. The carving was done with the right hand, the holding of the stick with the left hand.

It is just a natural consequence of the above that they started to carve on the right, free end of the stick, proceeding toward the left. And because this kind of rovás (lit.: carving) had been developed in very ancient, primeval times, the rows of the writing of most ancient peoples also proceed from right to left, except the Chinese, Japanese and Mongolian writings, whose rows read from the top down. According to the old data this style of writing occured in the Hungarian rovás also, because the stick could be held in a vertical way for reading. Not only did the oriental peoples practice right to left writing, but very old Greek writings and writings of the Etruscans in Italy practiced the same kind writing direction.

Direction of the rovás pending on the rovás stick's position

When carving the letters onto a stick when they reached the end of a row they did not turn back to start the next row but simply turned the stick to start the next row. This was actually on the other end, but the rows lead from right to left again. In case we would spread out the four sides of the stick, the rows would proceed in a snake-like line and the letters in every second line would stand upside down. This is the reason for similar row-leading on

very old Greek or Old-Turkish writings on relics preserved on stone or copper tablets.

The rows on these proceed in a snake-like line too, and the letters stand upside down in every second row. When the ancient people started to apply their writings on flat sheets instead of on sticks only, for a long time they did not find out how to interrupt the writing at the end of the row and start on the opposite end agin, as we write today by ending the sentence with a period. They wanted to continue the rows without interruption, the way they were accustomed to when they used carved writing on sticks. They never thought of interrupting the rows, and returning to the same edge of the sheet. Even on the sheet, they lead the rows in a snake-line, standing the letters in every second row upside down until they realized what they were doing and abandonned the custom. They kept the letters facing the direction in which the rows were proceeding without standing them upside down. It was not until much later they discovered that the rows could always be started on the same side of the sheet. We can see clearly on our drawing of the Old Greek writing shown uncer “C”, that the “B’ shaped letter, for instance, looks from right to left in the first row; but in the second row it looks from the left to right while the “M” shaped letter stands upside down in the second row, and in the third row it stands upright again. Scientists call this kind of row-leading: “bustrofedon”, that is “furrowing” way of row-leading. (See “a, b. c” on the drawing.) No one could understand nor explain why the ancient people turned letters upside down! Finally, a simple Hungarian farmer explained it to the Hungarian scientist, Gyula Sebestyén, because the farmer still practiced the old Hungarian rovás numbers. He showed the scientist how the stick must be turned — weather it ws the reding or the carving of letters or numbers when the numbers or letters become upside down in every second row. But, if we turn the stick at reading too, we will see the runes in their proper position.

Gyula Sebestyén then wrote a book about this, and by his work the scientists of the world have learned the solution of this puzzle from a simple Hungarian farmer. But they keep silent, just as they have kept silent about the book of Gyula Sebestyén, *“Rovás and Rovás writing”*.

In order to save space, when they arrived at the end of the row they did not divide the words according to syllables, but at any letter that happened to be at the end of the row. They could save space in rovás by carving the letters on top of each other, whenever possible. Of course, they did not exaggerate it and were careful that it should not make reading difficult nor disrupt its artistic appearance.

The ancient Hungarian language had a “K” and a “KH” sound. The latter, however, is pronounced only by the popultion of a few Hungarian villages in Slavonia. This explains why runic writing had two “K” letters. The first was used in the words, the second at the end of the words.

A very interesting way of saving space in the Hungarian rovás was the possibility of omitting vowels according to certain rules. Omitting vowels occured in other ancient, oriental writings too, but caused much confusion. In the case of Hungarian runic writing, this did not disturb the writing nor the reading of it. Of coulrse they did not omit a vowel where it might have caused confusion. Moreover, they write all vowels down when they were writing for an important occasion.

The rules are the following:

Since there are so many “e” and “é” sounds in the Hungarian language, these vowels can always be omitted. If no vowel was idicated in a word, it meant that “e” or “é” sounds were omitted. Neither these two vowels, nor other vowels, however, could be omitted from the end of a word or in case one vowel followed another. Examples: Instead of “gyermek” (child), they could write “gyrmk.” But instead of “gyermeke” (his child) or “gyermekeim” (my children) they could write only “gyrmke”, or “gyrmkeim”. The other vowels appear several times in the same word. In such cases, we have to write the first vowel while the rest can be omitted, except at the end of the word or in case another vowel is standing beside it. Examples: instead of “házamban” (in my house) and “fogorvos”

(dentist), you can write “házmbn” and “fogrvs”, but instead of “házakba” (into the houses), “házaim” (my houses), “házatokba” (into your houses) you have to write “házkba“, “házaim”, “háztokba“. Moreover, instead of “ökrökkel” (with oxen), you may write “ökrkkl”, etc.

There are no capital letters, but we thicken the first letters of proper names.

We use the long sounding vowels (í, ó, ú, õ û), the “dz” and “dzs” sounds, the interpunctuations and the sing of “million” is used according to the latest agreements.

It is one of the characteristics of runic writing that, other than the sign “thousand”, there are no horizontal lines in it, and this gives a beautiful and very artistic line-rhythm and because of this the rovás is one of the most appealing writings. Furthermore, if we write the letter between the two edgelines, as was customary in the olden days, then it even looks like an ornament. The reason why rovás writing has no horizontal lines is because they would coincide with the veins of the wood as well as with the two edgelines, that is, with the edges of the stick they write. On the ancient Greek inscription which we have shown here, though, there are some horizontal lines, yet there is noticeable effort to avoid them, which is another proof that the ancient form of this writing was carving applied on wood. Later when the ancestors of the Hungarians started to write on the bark ofthe birch-tree and on wash-leather, they developed variations in their letters which were more useful for that kind of writing. There are several such alphabets among the relics that were kept. These are not better than the older ones, but knowing the rules of omission and compressed writing, with a little practice one can write with the rovás faster than by using Latin letters.

**THE SPREAD OF THE WORD “ROVÁS”**

Without doubt the word “rovás” comes from the Magyar root-word “ró” (to carve), and from this many words have developed, such as RÓNI, RÓDALNI (to carve), ROVAT, ROVÁTKA (score) which the Hungarian people pronounce as RÚNI, and RÚ. The Germanic word RUNA, which meant writing especially when carved on wood, came from the Hungarian language although the letters of the RUNA writing also have a Roman origin. It is certain that this word has been received by the Germanic people from a Northern Finno-Ugrian people related to the Hungarians. Later they applied it to the Roman letters too because at that time carving in wood was customary everywhere, and that’s why they carved the newer letters according to old custums in such a way that whenever possible they eradicated the horizontal lines from it.

There are scarcely any nations in Europe who did not use the notching of numbers and letters on wood. In some cases they practiced it a long time ago, in other cases they still use it. But the expression for “carving” in the languages referred to as Gyula Sebestyén has pointed out, came undoubtedly from the Hungarian language and was used in the older way of pronounciation of the word “rovás” (carving). In the old Hungarian language and Hungarian dialects of even today the word ROVÁS still esists in the form of “ravás”. In the regions of Upper-Csík and Gyergyó, Erdély (Transylvania), they even pronounce it “rabus” and “rebus”. There are some people, however, who affirm that this word was received by the Székelys from the Rumanians, but the Rumanians pronounce the word this way only where they live closely together with the Hungarians of Csík and Gyergyó. Otherwise, the Rumanians pronounce it everywhere as “ravas”. Therefore it is obvious that they took over the old Hungarian word “ravás” a long time before, and this is the way they generally use it. The word “rebus” was learned later by those in that small area where the Hungarians pronounce it this way. Those who suppose that the Székelys adopted it from the Rumanians contend that this word exists in Latin too, although there it means “secret” or something “puzzling”. (Hungarians use this word in the form taken from the Latin up to this day, expressing the meaning “puzzle” or “picture puzzle”). But in old Hungarian documents the word “rebus” means numbers written with rovás, also rovás used for taxes. Since this ”Latin” word has such a meaning only in

Hungary proves Latin language — which was the official language for a time in Hungary — adopted it along with other words too, from the Hungarian language of the common citizens. These were not used outside of Hungary. It is a well known fact that taxes in Hungary were collected according to “tax rovás” carved on sticks, which was called “rebus” in the Latin language used in Hungary. In the old Germanic, the word RUNA meant writing but it had a meaning of something “mysterious”, ’puzzling”.
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**A Learned Opinion**
**Concerning The Hungarian Writing (Rovás).**
**Susan Tomory**

Professor Gelb — a much respected scholar of ancient writings — shows a graph at the beginning of his cited work concerning the development of writing. This graph shows a “proto-Sumerian pictographic” writing before 3,000 BC, which later was subdivided into Sumerian cuneiform, Egyptian pictographic and Proto-Elamite around 3,000 BC, and from these three ancient forms he brings forth the further subdivisions of writings. He mentions the “proto-Semitic” and Phoenician writings from around 1700 BC as a branch of the Egyptian pictographic writing, from which the ancient Hebrew alphabet sprang at around 900 BC. It is beyond the scope of this present note to discuss the further subdivisions of writings. I do have to mention that the “RUNIC” writing he mentions refers here to a system of writing adopted by the Germanic peoples. He originates these from the time of Christ, or from the year 0 of his graph. He does not include the Hungarian ROVÁS, although he makes up for this in his later text, which I quote below:

“The forms are freely invented, with new values, as found in a large number of writings such as Balti, Brahmi, Keltiberian, Korean, Glagolitsa, Hungarian, Numidian, ogham, runic, Yezidi, and many others created in modern times chiefly among **primitive societies** (p. 144)”[Highligts by the Ed.] A comparative table of alphabets brings only 12 rovás characters of the Hungarian writing under the heading “Ancient Hungarian” without any reference or place and date of origin. (*A Study Of Writing*, I.J. Gelb,The University of Chicago Press Chicago and London, The University of Toronto Press, Toronto 5, Canada, 1952)

[Note: I.J. Gelb is Professor at the Oriental Institute and the Department of Linguistics of the University of Chicago.]

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**SOME RELICS OF THE MAGYAR ROVÁS WRITING**
**From the manuscript no. 11 by Ferenc Fodor**
**(Including the find’s age and the time of its excavation.)**
**(The word runic was derived from the infinitive of the Magyar ró – róni – verb, meaning to carve.)**

Alattyán-Tulát — Grave no.164, on a closure of a bag carved from bone, with three holes. The rovás is on one side. (Erdélyi István *Az avarság és a kelet a régészeti források tükrében*”Akadémiai kiadó 1982)

Balatonszepezd: Memorial stone with rovás writing. It was discovered at the Kővágóörs stone mine and the huge stone was brought from here to preserve its rovás writing. The stone was erected in 1966, Gyula Sebestyén’s text was carved by a stone mason.

Battonya signet ring — material: bronze, 12 rovás characters from a 1242 (?) equestrian mass-grave. It is in

Miklós Froch collection, who is the Museologist of the Keszthely Balaton Museum.

Bernhardsthal — Grave no.16, at the Avar cemetary in a Slavic grave with pottery ware's signs.

Besztercebánya: Letters of the Bible — From the Besztercebánya archives, a rovás ABC

Békés: Rovás characters — from an equestrian grave, no. 45 from the Árpád age, with a bow with five plates, six rovás characters.

Bél Mátyás rovás ABC from 1718 and the rovás ABC of Lipcse from 1745. Found in Oxford, Bodley Library.

Bonyha (At the river Kis Küküllő) — a rovás remnant in the Reformed Church, found by Benczédi Albert ref. minister in 1965. Its image can be seen in the 1979 volume of the Művelődéstörténeti Tanulmányok. Photography was made of the original stone by ret. professor Györbiró István, resident of Sepsisyentgyörgy The above collection used this photography.

Bögöz rovás inscription found in the 14th c. gothic church, found by theologian Szigethy Béla and Kassay F. Pál in 1930, the six rovás characters are in the aura above Christ's head, its origin dates from 1530, the names mentioned in the rovás text can also be found in documents.

Budapest-Tihany tér — silver vessel, with tamga scratched in signs (Erdélyi István, a.a.)

Csíkszentmihály-Csíkszentmiklós, or Csíkszentmárton is the registered place of discovery, its copy is known onlya from the Ráday archives from the 18th century. The original was from 1500 with 82 rovás characters in three rows, the words are separated with four-four dots. Csíkszeredai székelykapu rovásfelirata, XVII-XIX sz. közötti kapun nyolc írásjel.

Dálnok – Rovás inscription in the reformed church — Damaged after the 1977 earthquake's restoration in Rumania. It was reported by rev. Bálint Mike, It contains 15 rovás characters. The church already stood in 1332. Full excavation was not done.

Deszki Rovás ring in the Árpád-age grave no. 87. It is a silver ring with two rovás characters.

Erdőszentgyörgy: Rovás inscription

Esztergom: Rovás ring. It has six rovás characters. It can be seen in the Balassa Museum of Esztergom, under stock list no. 57.12.

Énlaki Rovás inscription found by — Balázs Orbán in 1864

Felsőszemeréd Rovás relic from 1482 – found in 1968

Firtosváralja — Tászok tető rovás characters — carved onto stone blocks, presently in the museum of Székelyudvarhelyi Múzeumban. Archaeologist István Kovács István photographed them in 1913 and published them under the title „Tászoktetői sziklakarcolatok" in 1914 jelent meg within a larger work titled Dolgozatok az Erdélyi Nemzeti Muzeum Érem és Régiségtárából című műben. V. 1914.l. 229-265)

Gelencei rovás script — dated 1503-i was found in the Roman Catholic Church on a piece of plaster, which was not preserved.

Hódmezővásárhely: a ring with rovás characters. The ring was found in  Kenyeresér dűlő, made of elektron. It belongs to József Senyei József, resident of Hódmezővásárhely. It has twenty rovás characters.

Homokmégy-Halom — grave no. 102. A bone instrument (bogozó) with two rovás characters. (Erdélyi István, mf.)

Homoródkarácsonyfalva's Unitarian Church: A rovás inscription was found here on a block of stone. Originally it was not carved for this church, it belongs approximately to the 13th century rovás, with 15 characters. László Debreczeni discovered it in 1937. He did not publish it. István Szőke rediscovered it in 1944.

Jánoshida-Tótkérpusztai needle holders — grave no. 228. with inscriptions on three sides, on the fourth side a zigzag decoration.  (Erdélyi István, mf.)

Jászdózsa Needleholders — 1980, excavation by László Selmeczi

Jászság: red copper  staff — with sixteen rovás characters, which are in connection with the lettering of the  underlying yellow copper plate. It is stored in the Magyar National Museum, under no. MNM-ban 1852/5.61. Earlier it was in the collection of Miklós  Jankovich Miklós Its first publication by Károly Antal Fischer in 1889.

Kájoni János franciscan friar sketched the alphabet in  1673 Its original nk.

Kecskemét yellow copper— 15 rovás characters, in the MNM's antiquity collection.

Kismarton (ma Eisenstadt, Ausztria) — a bobbin with carved signs. (Erdélyi István mf.)

Kiskörös-Cebepuszta — grave no. 20., hengeres, cylinder shape, flat needle holder  (Erdélyi István, mf.)

Kiskörös-Vágóhíd — grave no.1.  Silver chalice, with tamga-like carvings at the base. (Erdélyi István, mf.)

Klárafalvai a ring with rovás. — grave no. 6, cemetery of Árpád age.  in György Faragó's garden, silver, open ring band, in ten frames 16 rovás characters.

Konstantinápoly rovás — carved by Tanás Keteji Székely in 1515

Környe rovás inscription — Avar cemetary, grave no. 60. It was carved into the mid--plate of a bow, 9 rovás letters. Erdélyi István, mf.)

Közép-ajta rovás inscription— discovered in the "old church", writen with "Scythian letters".

Kunkerekegyháza: rovás inscription on a ring from a grave of the Árpád age's cemetary. The ring is of silver, excavated by gyűrű — Kálmán Szabó in 1932.

Ladánybene vessel — from a Sarmatian grave with Magyar text, its excavation in 1909szarmata sírból, magyar nyelvű szöveg, feltárása 1909, listed in the Museum of Nyiregyháza's yearbook no. múzeum  XI. XXXVI.

Ladánybenei rovás inscription on a ring from a cemetary of the Árpád age — a silver band, with fourteen rovás characters. Excavated by Kálmán Szabó

Lipcse (Leipzich) rovás alphabet from 1743.

Lőcse rovás text from 1619, originated in Lőtse, it is on a yellowish aged paper with eight rovás characters, with Géza Szepessy's handwritten report, titled: "An interesting data to the history of Magyar rovás writing". Published by Dezső Csallány.

Margit Island Budapest: rovásinscription. Accorcing to Gyula László it was made in the 1920's.

Marosvásárhely rovás text from 1924 with 50 rovás characters, discovered by Ádám Dankovits in the Teleki-Bólyai Science Library in a language book, published in Ingolstadt. Published by Géza Ferenczi in 1981 in the periodical *Művelődés* .

Marsigli rovás calendar — the most extensive text of the rovás writing of Erdély. The first report by Endre Veress in 1906 in the *Magyar Könyvszemle*.

Mezőberény rovás text on a ring, which is a silver signet ring, its place of manufacture n.k., seven rovás characters.

Nagykászon rovás text in the sanctuary of the Catholic Church, behinde the altar, the church's oldest wall, carved with two scratches with rovás characters.

Nagyszentmiklós treasure's rovás text, found in 1799. Presently in the Kunsthistorisches Múzeum of Vienna. The rovás inscription of the cup no.21. the text are identical with the later coins' rovás inscriptions of Stephanus Rex .

Nagyszombat map of the American discovery route of Vikings — it is probable that it surfaced from the library of the Nagyszombat Jesuit Library. Bergsland, professor of the University of Oslo. called it Magyar runa, Published in the *Magyar Történeti Szemle* I.1. New York 1970. 92-96, the report of Géza Szepessy.

Nikolsburg rovás-alphabet

Parajdi rovás on stone — 21 characters, a text with 78 letters, found in 1941

Pomáz: Klissza-domb rovás. — It was found among ruins dating to the Middle Ages. Collected by István Erdélyi, 1960 manuscript.

Pomáz-klissza rovás ring with 16 rovás characters

Szarvas — needle holder, 58 rovás characters, found on April 27, 1983 , its first descriprion in March 1985 .

Szekszárd-Palánk — grave no. 120 sir, clay vessel (Erdélyi István mf.)

Szentes-Felsőcsordajárás, grave no.36. sir, a narrow plate made of bone. (Erdélyi István, mf.)

Szentesi temető: a little bone plate with rovás characters in the Avar cemetary's grave no.l 36, with five rovás characters, its excavation in 1905 by — Csallány Gábor.

Szentmihályi rovás inscription — with thirteen rovás characters carved into stone from the 16th-17th century. It was found in the reformed church in 1972.

Székelyderzs brick with rovás inscription, found in the Unitarian church in 1929. It was kept safe during the war in Olthéviz, later it was brought back to Székelyderzs.

Székesfehérvár-maroshegy ring with rovás writing, ten rovás characters from the 13th century. Its excavation by the Szűcs lot in 1913.

Tászok-tetői rovás characters, see the description under Firtosváralja.

Tokaj-region rovás characters. — Found: In the store room of the Tokaj Museum written on a gray piece of slate, with three rovás characters. One character corresponds with one of the Nicholsburg rovás characters.

Vargyas melting wessel with rovás characters — made a few hundred years ago as teaching tool in a school. Its descriprion is in the October1961 issue of Korunk magazine.

Zakariás János Jesuit missionary's rovás letter in Peruperu. Dated April 16, 1756 this writing was used as a secret writing and called it „hun-székely" writing. (Jósa A. Muzeum XII-XIV Évkönyve p. 155.)

[Remark: The above author mapped close to two thousand Avar excavation sites in the Carpathian Basin. Dating to the same age, excavations of Russia, Ukrain, Kazahsztán, Siberia brought forth somewhat less, but important burial sites. For further information see the authors manuscript in the Magyar Történelmi Társulatnál (no. 3. sorsz.) 1250 Budapest I. Uri u.51-53, in the Fővárosi Szabó Ervin Library (no. 6.sorsz.), Bdapest] VIII. Szabó Ervin tér I.
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For correct and up to date information on rovás writing's history and its further developments please contact Friedrich Klára - Szakács Gábor, Budapest, Hungary.

## HISTORICAL TRACES AND RELICS OF THE HUNGARIAN ROVÁS

Attila, kingof the Huns demanded Theodosius, the East Roman Emperor, to hand over to him the Hun deserters who remained in Bizantium. When Priscus Rhetor, Ambassador of the Emperor, appeared before the king of the Huns affirming that there were no more Hun deserters on the territory of Byzantium, the king summoned a scribe who read the names of the Hun deserters from a note. In Priscus Rhetor's diary of his jhourney, he tells many different and fine things about the Huns and their king. This proves that the Huns were by no means a wild and uncivilized people, as the falsifiers of history like to make them appear. The reason we cannot doubt the truth of Priscus' report is because the Huns were the most dangerous enemies of his country, therefore he woud have more reason to hate than to praise them and supposedly he would have preferred to write bad things about them. Irrespective of this, we also know that Christians at that time had a great deal of antipathy toward non-Christian nations.

From the narration of Priscus it also becomes obvious that the Huns had official scribes, who kept written files even of the deserters of the army. Although Priscus does not mention what letters were used for the list of names, still a nation that was able to organize such a large empire in a rather short time surely did not need to learn to write from others.

In 1488 János Thúróczi writes in his Chronicle that the Székelys (Siculi) wrote with their own letters and they used to carve them on little sticks. Bonfini, an Italian author in the 15th century affirms also that the Székelys

notched their letters on little pieces of wood and that with a few signs they conveyed a lot of information.

In 1653 István szamosi, who was born in Transylvania writes in one of his works issued in Padua, Italy, that the Székelys did not always write their letters inherited from their ancestors with ink, but carved them with the point of a knife on sticks planed into a square shape, and that the letters often stuck together. In the olden days they used to write with ink made of acorns onto parchment, and onto the fine, paper-like white bark of the birch-tree. This was an excellent material for writing, being thin as paper, and it was possible to even bind this “paper” into books similar to those we have today.

In the 16th century, tradesmen working on the church of Csíkszentmihály, notched their names on one of the beams they way carpenters or bricklayers still do in order to preserve their names for posterity. Although the original inscriptions were destroyed in the second half of the 18th century, probably because of careless repair or purposeful destruction, its copy was preserved by Imre Dezserinszky in one of his works issued in 1753.