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The Origin of the Rhaetians

Alfréd Tóth

I dedicate this article to the blessed memory of my unforgettable teacher and best friend in this world, Prof. Dr. Linus Brunner.

1 Towards a Relative Chronology of the Rhaetic Language

The existence of the Rhaetians and their language, Rhaetic, although known since the first mentioning of the Rhaetic wine in Cato (234–149 B.C.), de re rustica, fragm. 364 (Schönberger) = fragm. 8 (Jordan), and especially Pliny XVIII, 172 who tells us that the Rhaetic name for the plow with wheels was *ploum*, has not been deciphered correctly until 1982, when the Swiss linguist Prof. Linus Brunner (1909–1987) published the first readings of the Rhaetic inscriptions (Brunner 1981). In a long series of articles,[1] Brunner proved that Rhaetic was an Eastern Semitic language, most closely related to Akkadian, but also showing roots and grammatical features that are only known in Western Semitic languages, mostly in Arabic and Hebrew. Brunner also found 1 Ugaritic, 1 Phoenician, 1 Hittite, and a few other words of Indo-European origin (Tóth and Brunner 2007: 104 ff.). In Tóth and Brunner (2007) and in a few recent works (Tóth 2007a–o), I have assembled the additional information we have gotten about Rhaetic and the origin of the Rhaetians in the past twenty years. I will sum them up here briefly:

1. Initial Akkadian w- that has disappeared at about the time of King Hammurabi (1792–1750) (cf. Brockelmann 1908: 139). But we find it preserved in the Rhaetic inscription PNAKE VITAMU LAKHE "I have asked you for help, Vitam(m)u"[2] in VITAMU, the name of an Assyrian death-ghost which appears in Akkadian as Etem(mu), Itammu. Since this Rhaetic inscription was found on a granite boulder close to Vadena/Pfatten in South Tyrol (Italy), this proves that the Rhaetians must have left their Mesopotamian homeland before Akkadian w- > ∅-, i.e., before the end of the 18th century B.C.

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[1] Brunner 1982a–d; 1983a–d, 1984, 1985a–e, 1986, 1987a–d.
[2] PID 196; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 61; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 68. The numbers after "PID," "Bravi," and "Mancini" refer to the numbers of the inscriptions and not to pages.

2. Rhaetic must have been spoken in an area where Sumerians lived. This is proved by a Sumerian word in the Rhaetic inscription KALIP IST AL[U] PHUPER SUKH "Goddess Estu, I have brought white clothes" (Mancini 17; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 89), where PHUPER < Sumerian *babbar* (1109x: ED IIIb, Old Akkadian, Ur III, Early Old Babylonian, Old Babylonian) wr. babbar2 "(to be) white" (> Hungarian bíbor "purple, scarlet," originally "shining"), and this can only have been in Babylonia, i.e., in the South of Mesopotamia.

3. The about 200 Rhaetic inscriptions, only a few dozens of them are readable and which have been found in Switzerland, Italy, Austria, and Southern Germany, are written in a runic alphabet usually called "Northern Etruscan Alphabet" because the Etruscans used the same runes (as the Venetians and a few other ancient Alpine people did). But these runes show striking similarities to the Germanic runes on the one side and to the Hungarian (Székely) runes of Transylvania on the other side. A few of these Székely runes are already present on some of the Tartarian Tablets that were excavated in 1876 in today's Rumania and later dated using C14 method from the middle of the 6th millennium B.C. (Badiny 2001: 186). Labat and Zakar (1976) proved that these early Székely runes were most probably the basis from which the cuneiform writing originated at the beginning of the 4th millennium B.C. In 1963, Vlassa proved that the motives showing up on the Tartarian Tablets are identical with Sumerian motives from Uruku Warka IV (ca. 3500–3200 B.C.) and Jemdet-Nasr (ca. 3100–2900 B.C.) cultures. It thus seems that the Rhaetians took over their Runic alphabet from the ancestors of the Székelys, who must have emigrated to Mesopotamia in order to form the Sumerian people some time between the 6th and the 4th millennium B.C. This points to a much closer relationship between the Sumerians and the Rhaetians than between the Sumerians and the Akkadians, since otherwise the Rhaetians would without doubt have adopted the cuneiform writing instead of the Runic alphabet.

2 The Linguistic Landscape of Early Mesopotamia

Officially, it is assumed that the Semitic influence in Mesopotamia did not start before the 26th century B.C. (the oldest Akkadian texts are, however, only from the 24th century B.C. (cf. Ungnad and Matouš 1969: 4). It is also assumed that Sumeri-

an has ceased to be a spoken language already at the end of the 3rd millennium B.C. (Edzard 2003: 5). But acclaimed researchers like Lieberman (1977: 20) assume that is was still spoken in Old Babylonian time, i.e., between 1728 and 1686 B.C. Also the fact that we do not only find Sumerian borrowings in Akkadian, but also Akkadian borrowings in Sumerian, supports Lieberman's thesis, although also a language that is only used for writing can still adopt loanwords (cf. e.g., the German loanwords in Medieval Latin).

But already Hruška opposed against the idea of the Semites as latecomers in Mesopotamia: "Das einfache und bereits verbreitete Bild der alt-mesopotamischen Geschichte, nach dem zwischen Euphrat und Tigris zuerst die Sumerer und später Semiten regierten, ist durch die neuen Ausgrabungen in Abu Ṣalabīkh und Tell Mardīkh erheblich verändert worden. Die Semiten haben von Anfang an in der Kultur und im Staatswesen des alten Vorderasien entscheidend mitgewirkt" (1979: 337 f.). It is thus not true, that "the Mesopotamian plain was not conducive to a great variety of languages, as against Iran, Anatolia, or the Caucasus which, until our days, has been a veritable language museum" (Edzard 2003: 4). It follows that the oldest testified Semites in Mesopotamia, the Akkadians, may have been there already long before the 26th century B.C.

Between 2500 and 2230 B.C., the Amorites, after a long period of famine, emigrated from their native North African (Egyptian and Arabic) homeland to Mesopotamia (Paton 1901: 25). Mesopotamia with its two big rivers Euphrates and Tigris is vast and rich in fertile land, so people who had to emigrate found there a new homeland. It is thus only natural that such a prosperous landscape had attracted people of many different tongues. The Amorites spoke Amoritic, a dialect of Akkadian found on tablets dating from 1800–1750 B.C. showing many Northwest Semitic forms and constructions (cf. Streck 2000; Gelb 1980). The Amorites were seminomads first in the Middle Euphrates area and gradually became sedentary. They then penetrated deep into Sumeria and were believed to be one of the causes of the downfall of the 3rd dynasty of Ur (ca. 2112–2004 B.C). During the Ur III period (2100–2000 B.C.), the Amorites formed an identifiable ethnic component along with Sumerians and Akkadians. Between about 2000 and 1800 B.C. they covered both Syria and Mesopotamia with a multitude of small principalities and cities. Almost all of the local kings in Babylonia (such as the already mentioned Hammurabi) belonged to this stock. One of their

capitals was Mari, obviously derived from their name which appears as Martu in Sumerian and as Amurru in Akkadian and whose commonly assumed meaning is "westerner." Farther west, the Amorites' political center was Salab (Aleppo). In that area, as well as in Palestine, the newcomers were thoroughly mixed with the Hurrians.

The Hurrians or Hurrites settled in the 3rd and 2nd millennium B.C. in the South of the Lake Van. From there they expanded to Mesopotamia, Asia Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Palestine. Their language that is now considered "a language of their own" (Edzard 2003: 4) was earlier compared to Urartian and believed to be, under Phrygian influence, an ancestor language of Armenian (Diakonoff 1971). The Hurrians soon acclimatized to the Sumerian-Akkadian culture and played an important role in mediating this culture to the Hittites. The Hurrians seem to be the first people to use the horse in wars.

Between 1900 and 1600 B.C. the Indo-European Hittites penetrated Mesopotamia, and their invasion spelled the end of the Old Babylonian empire.

During the 12th century B.C., the Semitic Aramaeans began to settle in great numbers in Mesopotamia and Anatolia. As Akkadian was used in the early and middle 2nd millenium B.C. as lingua franca in Mesopotamia, at the end of the 2nd millennium Aramaic came to be spoken throughout the Mediterranean coastal area of the Levant and spread east of the Tigris. Although Hurrian words are not testified in Rhaetic – perhaps due to the very small number of inscriptions –, yet because we have at least one clear Hittite word in the Rhaetic inscription[3] and no Aramaic word at all, the Rhaetians must have left their Mesopotamian homeland between 1900 and the 12th century B.C., i.e., after the arrival of the Hittites and before the arrival of the Aramaeans in Mesopotamia.

It is interesting that the obviously mixed language that the Rhaetians spoke, namely, Akkadian with West-Semitic elements, was not only similar to the language of the Amorites (Streck 2000) but also to a few other languages that show similarly Eastern and Western Semitic elements, but all of them are based on Akkadian. Rainey (1996/I: 31) mentions for example: "The Taanach letters, dating from LB I, i.e., the mid-fifteenth century B.C., share the same Old Babylonian traits and lack of Middle Babylonian traits as the Amarna letters from Canaan. Whey also have a strong West

Semitic flavor, especially in the verbal usages." The Amarna letters that were found in 1887 by a peasant woman in Amarna, situated between Memphis and Luxor in Egypt, are next to the Amoritic language the best known documents of a Semitic language that is based on Akkadian but shows strong influence from West Semitic languages. The Amarna letters were written around the middle of the 14th century B.C. by kings and vassals of Babylonia, Assyria, Hatti, and Mitanni to Pharao Amenophis III and his son Amenophis IV (Akhenaton) (Knudtzon 1907–15; Izre'el 1991, 1998).

While the status of Amoritic as an own Semitic language is accepted since the thorough study of Streck (2000), the linguistic status of the Amarna and Taanach letters and some other documents is mostly assumed to be that of a "mixed" or pidginized languge (e.g., by Izre'el [1998], the leading expert in "Canaano-Akkadian"; cf. also Knudtzon 1907–15). Moreover, the language of the Amarna letters is considered to be an ancestor of Canaanite, a Western Semitic language closely related to Hebrew. Since the Arabic words in Rhaetic are overwhelmingly greater in number than the Hebrew ones, Rhaetic cannot have been a language that was related to the language or "dialect" of the Amarna or the Tanaach letters. Moreover, there is no relationship between Rhaetic and Canaanite. Therefore, Rhaetic must have been either a language of its own or Amoritic.

3 The Rhaetic and Amoritic Languages

In the 17th century B.C., the Amorites took part of the Hyksos movement and conquered Egypt in 1648 B.C. Since the Amorites originated according to Paton (1901) also in Egypt, their campaign can be interpreted historically as a reconquest of their ancient homeland. As a matter of fact, the Amorites were even the leaders of the Hyksos who were formed by various groups of Semitic people from Mesopotamia, Canaan and the today's Syrian-Libanese coast. This may point to the fact that the Amorites must have had contact to the so-called Pre-Canaanites, the bearers of the language of the Amarna and Tanaach letters, when they were are in Mesopotamia. In about 1540 B.C. the Amorites and the rest of the Hyksos were chased out of Egypt by Pharao Ahmose. We can date this event exactly because the battle that took place was engraved in two steles. One of which is almost completely conserved and is one of the earliest proofs of the presence of the horse in Egypt. Since

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3 PID 192; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 63; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 68.

obviously the Hurrians used the horse first, it must have been introduced to the Amorites already in Mesopotamia, which points to Amoritic-Hurrian linguistic contacts, although we have no written records about them. After the Hyksos time the Amorites wandered to Canaan, where they appear in the Bible (Deuteronomy 7: 1 f.). In the Levant they built their state Amurru that was occasionally independent and under Hittite or Egyptian rule.

To the Northern African origin of the Amorites points also that they were represented on the Egyptian monuments with fair skin, light hair, blue eyes, curved or hooked noses, and of great stature. They were fierce tribal clansmen who forced themselves into lands they needed to graze their herds. Though herdsmen, the Amorites were not peaceful pastoralists. They twice conquered Babylonia (at the end of the 3rd and the beginning of the 1st millennium). The decline of the Sumerian language in Mesopotamia was the time of their most famous incursions, so that the Amorites and not, as usually assumed, the Akkadians may have been responsible for the emigration of the Sumerians (or the death of the Sumerian language, as most scholars assume). At first the Amorites were merely a regular irritant to the Ur III empire, but eventually they undermined it to such an extent that the position of last king Ibbi-Sin (2028–2004 B.C.) was weakened to the point that his subjects were able to overthrow his rule. "In der altbabylonischen Zeit sind die Amurriter eine der bedeutendsten historischen Grössen" (Streck 2004: 350).

This double habit of the Amorites – at the same time farmers and conquerors – remembers most strongly to the description of the Rhaetians that we owe to Publius Annius Florus (ca. 70 – ca. A.D. 140) and Cassius Dio Cocceianus (ca. A.D. 165–229). In his "Roman History," Cassius Dio writes: "The Raeti, who dwell between Noricum and Gaul, near the Tridentine Alps which adjoin Italy, were overrunning a large part of the neighbouring territory of Gaul and carrying off plunder even from Italy; and they were harassing such of the Romans or their allies as travelled through their country. Now these acts of theirs seemed to be about what was to be expected of nations which had not accepted terms of peace; but they went further and destroyed all the males among their captives, not only those who had already come into the world, but also those who were still in the woman's wombs, the sex of whom discovered by some means of divination."

Given the many parallels between the Rhaetians and the Amorites – their languages which were Akkadian-based, but with strong West-Semitic influence, their close ethnical and linguistic affili-

ation to the Akkadians, their common status as farmers and brutal conquerors – lead us to the question if they are not one and the same people. At least the Sumerian name of the Amorites – Martu (whose etymology is debated, cf. Streck 2000) – could be interpreted as *Ma-rtu* (the Sumerian "spelling" *Mar-tu* is due to the two cuneiform signs used), and in *rtu* could be the same root that is in Akkadian *rē'ītu* "shepherdess" ("'" is unknown in Sumerian) that gave the Rhaetians' main-goddess Ritu/Reitu and the Rhaetians themselves their name. Both phonetically and semantically, this interpretation fits both to the Rhaetians and the Amorites. But then, what is the first part *Ma-*? In the Rhaetic inscription[4] we read: RITI EM[U] "Ritu, mother." Ritu is also often called "queen" or "goddess," and EM, UM are the Rhaetic words for "mother." Could this be the word that forms the first part of Martu? If so, then the name of the Amorites would be theophoric, meaning "(people/followers of) Mother Ritu," whereby "mother" stands for "queen" or "goddess."

May the new interpretation that I gave for the name of the Amorites be debatable, the linguistic facts that parallel strongly the Amoritic and the Rhaetic language are not. Both languages share the following features (Streck 2000):

1. The usual Semitic imperfect-perfect distinction includes a 3rd-person suffix *-a* (unlike Akkadian and Hebrew). This suffix is also present in Rhaetic: TUKINUA "you have been faithful"[5] < Akkadian *kānum* "to be honest, to be true" and RAKINUA "you have hoped"[6] < Arabic *rakina al* "to trust in."

2. Both Amoritic and Rhaetic had a verb-form with geminate second consonant[7]: ESIUNNE "heal (Imp. pl. m./f.?)" < Akkadian *asū* "physician," Arabic *'asā, 'āsā* "to heal."

3. The 1st-person perfect both in Amoritic and in Rhaetic is in *-ti* (sg.) and *-nu* (pl.) as in the Canaanite languages[8]: PHAKATI < Akkadian *paqādu* "to look after," Hebrew *pāqad* "to visit," SAKATI < Arabic *saḫā* "to be generous."

4. Streck (2000: 106) mentions the Amoritic verb *naḫālu* "übereignen (to make sth. over to

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4 PID 225; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 55; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 72.
5 PID 209; Bravi 82; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 65; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 69.
6 PID 233; Bravi 206; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 65; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 74.
7 Mancini 28; Bravi 97; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 65; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 81.
8 Mancini 111; Bravi 252; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 57; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 86.

sb., to transfer)" as typical for Amoritic, but it shows also up on the Rhaetic inscription[9]: RITAM NEHELANU "We have given Ritu a gift" < Arabic *naḫalu* "to give as a gift." Another lexical parallel between the 198 Amoritic and the less than half so many Rhaetic words that we know for sure is Amoritic *ṣūru* "Felsen (rock, boulder)" (Streck 2000: 117) that shows up in the Rhaetic river name of the Grisons Plessur "rock-river" < Hebrew *peleg* "river" + Hebrew *ṣūr* "rock" (with typical Semitic compound structure; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 123), while the other languages have *ṭ* instead of *ṣ* in the word for "rock" that is, however, also testified in the village name of the Grisons Maladers, old Maladirs < Semitic prefix *ma* + Arabic ʿalā *ṭūr* "on the hill" (Tóth and Brunner 2007: 120). The double existence of Semitic *ṣūr* and *ṭūr* "rock" in the Rhaetic language is an amazing proof of the mixed character of this language.

5. The diphthong *ay* is preserved both in Amoritic and in Rhaetic[10]: KAIAN "blacksmith" < Arabic *qain* "id."[11]: KHAIS "canvas" < Arabic *ḫaiš* "id." Besides these agreements of Amoritic and Rhaetic in all important points, we find, however, three features in which the two languages may disagree:

6. In Rhaetic, *w* does not change > *y* in verbs as it does in Amoritic[12]: VATHANU (for *VAKANU) "we are suffering" < Arab. *waǧiʿa* "to suffer."

7. In Rhaetic, *ā* very often > *i* (*ī*?)/*e* (*ē*?), while it stands in Amoritic[13]: ERIKIANU < Akkadian *arākum* "to be long"[14]: ETINU, ETINE < Arabic ʿaṭū "to give." However, according to Streck (2000: 170) there are no sure testimonies for the sound-change *ā* > *ō* that used to be believed as typical for Amoritic. It does not appear in Rhaetic, either.

8. An important difference between Rhaetic and Amoritic is the Rhaetic syncope[15]: APNU "let get rotten" < Arabic ʿ*afina* "to get rotten, to decay"[16]:

ELVA "god" < Hebrew *elōah* "id."[17]: LA SBABI "don't dry out" < Akkadian *šabābu* "id."[18] KNUSE "gather!" < Hebr. *kānas* "to assemble" (same syncope in "Knesseth"). Brunner (pers. comm., 1987) assumed back-jumping of the accent to the first syllable. His assumption seems to be right, since the Rhaetic syncope still works as substrate in Rhetoromance, the successor-language of Rhaetic (cf. Tóth 2007o: 227 f.).

The Rhaetic-Amoritic differences 6. and 8. can be due to the fact, that Amoritic is preserved in cuneiform, while Rhaetic is preserved in runic writing. And in the "North-Etruscan alphabet," there is no sign for *y* so point no. 6 can be dropped. Since the cuneiform-signs are syllabic, while the runic-signs are not, syncope could not or not easily have been expressed if it existed in Amoritic like it could be shown in Rhaetic, thus, point no. 8 can be dropped, too. What concerns point no. 7, the Rhaetic transgression *ā* > *e/i* may be a sound-change that happened only after the Rhaetians had left Mesopotamia. Since the oldest Rhaetic inscriptions dates from approximately the 6th century B.C. and the texts in which the Amoritic names show up are from the 18th century B.C., there are 12 centuries between these languages.

4 Conclusion

The Rhaetic and the Amoritic language agree in 5–7 of 6–9 important phonetical, morphological and lexical features that separate both languages either from Akkadian or from the West-Semitic languages or both from East- and West-Semitic. Since Rhaetians and Amorites correspond also in their social, cultural, and ethnical habits, I dare uttering the assumption that both people are one and the same. I speculate that after the Amorites were expelled from Egypt which they conquered after having left their Mesopotamian homeland, only a part of them wandered to Canaan, but another part stayed for about one century in the Mediterranean. This remaining group of Amorites may have taken part in the Sea-Peoples' wars in the 13th–12th centuries, since they had already proved their military experience during the Hyksos storms. With the Sea-People they may have reached Italy, where the arrival and settling of many Sea-people are testified. Possibly the Amorites wandered northwards and were first expelled by the Etruscans

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 9 PID 221; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 54; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 81.
10 PID 244; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 63; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 6.
11 Mancini 105; Bravi 257; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 58; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 84.
12 Steck 2000: 18; cf. Mancini 18; Bravi 87; Brunner 1985c: 66; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 79.
13 Mancini 24; Bravi 93; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 93; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 80.
14 Mancini 225; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 55; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 72.
15 Tóth 2007o; cf. Bravi 85; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 60; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 78.
16 Mancini 110; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 60; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 85.

17 Bravi 83; Brunner and Tóth 1987: 60; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 78.
18 PID 238; Brunner 1982b: 163; Tóth and Brunner 2007: 75 f.

from Tuscany as they were expelled later, in the 4th century B.C., by the Celts who entered the plain of the river Po (Aigner Foresti 1992: 77) and went even more to the north where much later their inscription were found. Their name "Amorites" could have easily shortened to "Rites" and, with adaptation of the Greek ending -*es* to the corresponding Latin ending -*i*, to *Riti, *Reiti, *Raeti. The first two forms are testified as name of the Rhaetians' main goddess.

Abbreviations

Bravi: Bravi, Ferruccio 1980–81
ESOP: Epigraphical Society of America Occasional Publications
Mancini: Mancini, Alberto 1975
PID: Whatmough, Joshua 1933

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1987a The Method in Deciphering and Explaining Unknown Languages. *ESOP* 16: 22.
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Ein verschollener Vorläufer der Ethnologie

Der Aufklärer und Sozialutopist Christian Gottlieb Priber (1697–1745)

Marin Trenk

"Glaub mir, werde Hurone!", lautete der Rat des indianischen Weisen Adario an den Baron de Lahontan (1981: 31) in dessen fiktivem Werk "Gespräche mit einem Wilden" aus dem Jahre 1703. Drei Jahrzehnte später befolgte der Anwalt, Aufklärer und Sozialutopist Christian Gottlieb Priber diesen Ratschlag. Vom naturrechtlichen Denken durchdrungen machte sich der radikalste unter den deutschen Frühaufklärern eines Tages auf, um selbst bei den Wilden die "süße Freiheit der ersten Naturgesetze" (Montaigne 1998: 5) zu genießen. Die Nachrichten von den neuentdeckten Völkerschaften Amerikas haben seit Thomas Morus die politischen Utopien der Neuzeit beeinflusst und das utopische Denken in Europa beflügelt. Aber nur selten hat die eigene Erfahrung indigener Kulturen den Anstoß gegeben, eine ideale gesellschaftliche Ordnung zu entwickeln. Der Frühaufklärer und Sozialutopist Priber war einer dieser seltenen Fälle. Er vollzog einen erstaunlichen Schritt, als er nicht nur nach Amerika auswanderte, sondern sich 1736 den Cherokee im Südosten anschloss. Und hier hat die Erfahrung einer Lebensweise, wie sie kein utopischer Denker jemals hätte erfinden können, ihm im Wortsinne zu denken gegeben.

Christian Gottlieb Priber kam am 21. März 1697 im sächsischen Zittau in der Oberlausitz als Sohn eines Tuchhändlers auf die Welt. Er besuchte das städtische Gymnasium, studierte in Leipzig die Rechte und kehrte 1722 als "Juris practico" in seine Heimatstadt zurück. Unmittelbar nach seiner Rückkehr verheiratete er sich mit Christiana Dorothea Hoffmann, und zwischen 1723 und 1732 wurden ihnen sieben Kinder geboren, von denen vier überlebten. Wahrscheinlich führte Priber in dieser Zeit ein Doppelleben: In der Öffentlichkeit war er der angesehene "Oberamts-Advokatus", während im Verborgenen ein ungewöhnlich radikaler Aufklärer über eine bessere Welt nachdachte. Als ihm die Obrigkeit auf die Schliche kam, musste er fliehen. Wahrscheinlich hat der England-Besuch einer Gruppe von Cherokee den Ausschlag gegeben, zunächst nach London und dann zu den Cherokee ins Exil zu gehen (Crane 1919; Mellon 1973).

Im Jahre 1730 traf eine Abordnung des Stammes in Begleitung eines gewissen Sir Alexander Cuming in London ein. Dieser exzentrische Schotte hatte gerade auf einer Rundreise durch das Land der Cherokee einen lokalen Dorfchef namens Moytoy zum Kaiser gekrönt. Der Auftritt der "sieben Cherokee-Häuptlinge" wurde zu einem gefeierten Ereignis. Ihre Anwesenheit in London belebte das Interesse an den Kolonien, und dies wiederum führte 1733 zur Gründung von Georgia. Auf der Suche nach einem Asyl spielte Priber anscheinend zunächst mit dem Gedanken, sich dort niederzulassen, weil Georgia ursprünglich als Zufluchtsort für alle Verfolgten gedacht war. Im Jahre 1735 tauchte er in London auf und beantragte die Ansiedlung in der neuen Provinz. Doch daraus wurde nichts, zum Jahresende bereits hielt er sich im benachbarten South Carolina auf. In dieser Kolonie der Sklavenhalter kann es ihm allerdings schwerlich gefallen haben. Im folgenden Jahr schon machte sich Priber auf den Weg in die von Cherokee bewohnte Bergregion der südlichen Appalachen.