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BRYGES, PAEONES AND ANCIENT MACEDONIANS – MYTHICAL, ONOMASTIC AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL RELATIONS AND DIFFERENCES

Abstract: The author elaborates the problem of the paleo-Balkan populations inhabiting the southern part of the Balkans – Bryges, Paeones and Ancient Macedonians and their mutual relations and differences, as well as their relations to the surrounding areas and the other ethnic communities. The interdisciplinary approach is applied, treating these relations according to the historical sources, onomastic material and the archaeological finds.

The populations inhabiting the southern part of the Central Balkans were very often, especially in the past, related to the large ethnic communities that surrounded them: the Thracians on the east, the Illyrians on the west or the Hellenes on the south. The Bryges were related to the Thracians, the Paeonians to the Hellenes, Illyrians and the Thracians, and the ancient Macedonians also to the Hellenes. Those populations were often related to each other as well, primarily because of the common territory they occupied. The Paeones and the ancient Macedonians were related to the Bryges who were the basic substratum of the ethnic structure of those two communities.

The Brygian/Phrygian history, according to the Assyrian and Greek sources confirms that this population is related to a wide Mediterranean circle of ethnic communities.

According to the Iliad, the Phrygians inhabited Asia Minor long before the Trojan War¹. According to the mythological tradition, Tantalus and Pelopes were of Phrygian descent². In the tragedies of Eurypides everything that concerns Troy and the Trojans is considered as Phrygian³. The information from this period on the Bryges/Phrygians is most often mentioned by Herodotus⁴.

¹ *Il.* III, 181–190.

² Soph., *Aiex.* 1291–1292; Thuc. I, 9.

³ Euryp., *Hec.* 1–41; Euryp., *Rhesos*, 585–586.

⁴ Herod. I, 14.

The Phrygians are related to the Paeones who appeared rather early in the literary sources.

In the Iliad they are allies to the Trojans, who come from the lower section of the Axios river⁵. In recent years many scholars have done researches on their history, origin, material culture and spiritual life, but we are now most interested in the fact that their language probably belonged to the group of Phrygian languages, i. e., that the Paeonian language stemmed from Phrygian. The Illyrian or Thracian elements in the Paeonian are of later date, or a superstratum. W. Pajakowski believes that the Paeones were Phrygians with an Illyrian superstratum and with a Mysian and Thracian substratum⁶.

The Paeones are related to the Mygdonians whose eponym was a Phrygian king⁷. In his tragedy *Rhesos* Euripides mentions Mygdon's son Koroibos, who was a commander of the Paeonian guards⁸. If the Mygdonians are assumed to have had Phrygian origin and if the Mygdonians and the Paeonians were geographically, linguistically and ethnically connected, then the inevitable conclusion is that the Paeones were related to the Bryges. This conclusion is also supported by Strabo's statement that the Paeones were Phrygian Φρυγῶν ἄποικοι⁹. The relation between the Paeones and the Maeonians in Asia Minor was also established through the Phrygian element. Homer says that both the Maeonians and the Paeones were ἰπποκορυσταί¹⁰. The name of the last Maeonian king Kandaules can easily be connected with the name of the Crestonian God of War Candaon, and we know that the Crestonians were of Phrygian origin¹¹. The territory of Maeonia almost overlapped that of Phrygia Maior¹². The classical authors considered the Paeones as a distinct ethnic community, compared to the Trojans and the Pelazgians¹³. Homer relates them to the *Pelagon*, the heroic eponym of the Pelagones¹⁴, and similarly Strabo considers the Paeones related to the Phrygians and close to the Pelagones¹⁵.

⁵ *Il.* II, 848–850, *Il.* X, 428–429.

⁶ W. Pajakowsky, 1984, 201–209.

⁷ *Il.* III, 181–190.

⁸ Euryp., *Rhesos*, (Scholia ad 540).

⁹ Strab. VII, frag. 38.

¹⁰ Hom. *Il.* X, 431.

¹¹ W. Tomaschek, 1893–4, reprint 1980 II, 1, 56.

¹² W. Pajakowsky 1984, 56–57, N. G. L. Hammond 1967, 44–54.

¹³ *Il.* X, 428–29; Thuc. II, 98; Herod. VII, 185.

¹⁴ *Il.* XXI, 140–143, 159.

¹⁵ Strab. VII, frag. 38.

A considerable number of genealogies associate the Paeones to the Hellenic sphere¹⁶. The scholars from the 19th and the 20th centuries include the Paeones into the Hellenic sphere, but also relate their origin to the Illyrians and the Thracians¹⁷. Some twenty years ago the Polish historian and linguist W. Pajakowski¹⁸ launched the thesis on the Phrygian origin of the Paeones. F. Papazoglu's researches were complemented upon this assumption, first of all, from the onomastic point of view¹⁹. The onomastic material and the Paeonian glosses were mainly derived from Brygian roots. Thus, the Paeones have more Brygian/Phrygian elements in their ethnogenesis than any other population on this territory.

Brygian personal names *Annios* and *Annia* are confirmed on the inscriptions found on the territory of Macedonia and Paeonia²⁰. On the inscription in Stybera²¹ the name *Breucos* is witnessed and *Bastos*, *Basos* and *Basa* on several places in Macedonia²². Personal names *Getas*, *Dada*, *Delus*, *Dida*, *Mamia*, *Manta*, *Manties*, appearing on the territory of Paeonia, have always been related to the epichoric stratum of population in these areas, i. e. to the Paeones and, associated to them, to the Brygian substratum²³. Close relations to Asia Minor have been found out for a considerable number of autochthonous personal names for the territory of Macedonia and the obvious relations Bryges/Phrygians are confirmed. This is evident even in the toponomastics. The Brygian town *Kydrai* in Pelagonia has its parallel in *Kydrada* in Asia Minor²⁴. The same relation can be found between the toponym *Candavia* and the teonym *Kandaon*, pointing to the relations between the southern parts of the Central Balkans and Asia

¹⁶ Plin. *nat. hist.* N, 10, 35; Paus. V, 1, 3–5; W. Tomaschek, 1893–4, reprint 1980, I 13; App. Ill. 2, Ill. 14.

¹⁷ P. Kretschmer, 1896, 246–249; W. Tomaschek, 1893–4, reprint 1989 I, 13–27; A. Mayer, 1957, K. Krahe, I, II, 1955, 1964; Г. Кацаров 1924, 8–41; D. Detschew, 1957; R. Katičić, 1977; K. J. Beloch, 1924–27; I. Merker, 1965; V. Georgiev 1977; I. Duridanov 1966, 1970.

¹⁸ W. Pajakowsky, 1984, 201–209.

¹⁹ F. Papazoglu, 1964, 49–75; 1974, 59–73; 1979, 153–159.

²⁰ V. Toci, 1972, 77–84; 1976, 301–306, 1986, 123–135; L. Zgusta, 1964, 56–69; A. B. Tataki, 1988, 391; Н. Вулић, 1931, br. 226; N. Proeva, 1990, 194; 1991, 194–198, N. G. L. Hammond, 1967, 797.

²¹ V. Toci, 1976, 303; V. Georgiev, 1977, 223; (A. I. 4, 1963, 81) D. Detschew, 1957, 91–93.

²² F. Papazoglu, 1979, 162; L. Zgusta, 1964, 112, 122.

²³ F. Papazoglu, 1974, 62, 68; 1979, 158–9, 162, 163, 164; D. Detschew, 1957, 107, 111, 131, 285, 291; Б. Драгојевиќ Јосифовска, 1964, 139; 1971, 232, 513–521; L. Zgusta, 1964, 140–141, 146, 148, 291, 293; A. Mayer, 1957, 121; More extensively on these names see in E. Petrova, 1996, 182–183, footnotes 34–41, 45–46, 48.

²⁴ Strab. VII, 7. 9; D. Detschew, 1957, 462; L. Zgusta, 1984, 310.

Minor²⁵. Similarities between the archeological finds from the Brygian and the Paeonian territories have also been found, but they are in fact elements of the material culture of the wider territory, found on the entire area of the southern part of the Central Balkans. The influences from the south should be searched, perhaps, in the cultural tendencies from Lower Macedonia, directed, in a considerable extent, towards the Paeonian territory.

The ancient Macedonians inhabited a large part of the Brygian territory, and consequently, some scholars suggest that the Brygian territory was Macedonian since the end of the Bronze Age²⁶. This opinion cannot be accepted, as the Macedonians appeared on these areas rather late, and they were mentioned even later in the literary sources. It is a common opinion that the third wave of the Brygian migrations towards Asia Minor was related to the expansion of the Macedonians and Illyrians to this part of the Balkans, but that the remains of the Brygian population existed on these areas in enclaves during the Classical Period. Brygian influence could hardly be found in the sphere of spiritual and material culture of the Macedonians, but in the linguistic material, especially in the onomastics, a particular number of autochthonous personal names²⁷ considered to have Brygian root, is evident. Having in mind that both of these populations occupied same geographical area, it can be supposed that the Brygian substratum entered the ethnogenesis of the Macedonians.

The Macedonians settled in a good part of the Brygian land, in the territories to the west of the Axios, the lake district and the Pindus and Bermion Mountains where the legendary Midas's gardens used to be and where the Macedonians founded their first capital Aegea. They also settled in Mygdonia and Edonia²⁸.

In this context special attention should be paid to the tumuli in Vergina. Chronologically, these burials were dated from the sub-Mycenaean period to the 700 BC. The burials cannot be directly related to the Bryges, who settled the territory to the west of Vergina, but according to certain finds of arms, jewelry and the manner of burying in some tumuli, parallels to the area to the south-west could be made. Parallels could be made between the tumulus C in Vergina and the tumulus in Vajze in the common way of burying with circular rings of stones and the finds of swords, Catling type II group I and the iron sword from 1120–1100BC, as well as the iron sword with a

²⁵ Strab. VII, 7, 48; Plin. III, 145; D. Detschew, 1957, 225–226; A. Mayer, 1957, 178; W. Tomaschek, 1980, I, 36; Herod. I, 7.

²⁶ A. J. B. Wace, M. S. Thompson, 1912, 250–256; I. Vokotopulu, 1986, 376–377.

²⁷ A. B. Tataki, 1988, 312–331.

²⁸ Herod. VII, 73, VIII, 137.

fish tail. The labryses from the grave 37 in Visoi from Hallstatt A1, according to Reinecke, and the labryses from Vergina, from 900–800 BC. should be also mentioned here. The labryses from grave 16 in Visoi and the finds from Vojnik, near Kumanovo, belong to this period. Comparing the ceramic vessels, parallels in the shapes of jugs with a cut back neck in Vergina and Lower Macedonia could be stated, whereas the shallow vessels and the jugs with a cylindrical neck do not have parallels. The vessels in a shape of a kantharos with two handles rising above the rim are related to the area of southeastern and southern Albania. Parallels are found between Vergina and southern Albania with the vessels in the shape of kantharos with knobbed handles, but in Vergina they do not have Matt-painted decoration. The pottery, as well, has some common features with the area to the north and the territory of northern Albania²⁹.

Considering all these aforesaid data it cannot be supposed that the tumuli in Vergina had belonged to the Bryges. It can be concluded that the older stratum of population in Vergina may be Brygian according to the similarities in the burial and archeological finds to those from the territory to the west. The elements of the new material culture were probably brought by the newcomers from the north, who inhabited this area in the 13–11 centuries BC. The arrangement of graves in tumuli points to family burials. The fibula is dominant in the manner of dressing, similar to the Illyrian area. In the graves in Vergina 105 fibulae were found which, compared to the 12 pins found in the grave constructions, points to the dominant role of the first. The Matt-painted geometric pottery is rare; the armament consists of a spear and a sword, which do not appear together in the grave construction, indicating a complex military organization. The status symbols as the triple labrys is unknown on the rest of the Brygian territory, except Visoi and could be found only in female graves³⁰.

Vergina is not yet ethnically determined, but its relations to the ancient Macedonians are supposed and this component cannot be neglected. But the period when this necropolis ceased to be used anymore dated about 700 BC., when the majority of the sites on the south-western part of the Central Balkans were extinguished, or had an extreme decline of population (Vitsa, Boubousti, Pateli, Ohrid region) does not fit into this ethnic determination.

There is a close relation between the Brygian and the language of the ancient Macedonians according to Haas and Pudić³¹ beside the

²⁹ For Vergina, its parallels and the relevant literature see E. Petrova, 1996, 85–90.

³⁰ E. Петрова, 1996, 206; M. Andronikos, 1969, 227–235; K. Romiopulu, I. Kilian-Dirlmayer, 1989, 134–137, fig. 36–39.

³¹ O. Hass, 1966, 11, 234–235; I. Pudić, 1971, 207–223.

archeological and territorial closeness supposed to exist in Vergina between the Bryges and the ancient Macedonians. But the closeness between those two populations could be followed further on. They are bound on the grounds of history and myths in the relations Balkans – Asia Minor. The ancient Macedonians inhabited territories that had been Brygian in some earlier chronological periods. Consequently, the Bryges probably entered the ethnogenesis of the ancient Macedonians. On the other side, the ancient Macedonians appeared in the history about 700 BC. when the Bryges had already moved to Asia Minor, and when only remains of this, once numerous population were found on the territory of Macedonia. This information, confirmed by the archeological finds are not yet related, as it cannot be supposed with certainty that the movements of the Bryges were caused by the Macedonian expansion. The ethnic belonging of the Macedonians has not been cleared out yet. In their ethnogenesis there must have been elements from the north, as well as Epirus and Hellenic substratum, having in mind their original territory from the earlier periods. According to the linguistic remains a common use of the palatals and the phoneme *B* instead of *f* in the Macedonian and the Phrygian languages is stated. The closeness is most obvious in the onomastics. A considerable number of personal names in Macedonia are related to the ones in Asia Minor, which are supposed to have Brygian root³².

On the inscriptions from Beroia a large number of epichoric (personal) names from Macedonia, related to the Brygian substratum appear, such as: *Annia*, *Ammia*, *Bastos*, *Basos*, *Dada*, *Deidas*, *Manta*, *Manto*, *Mestis*, *Mestrios*, *Midon* and *Torkos*³³. They are found also in Macedonia and Paeonia and show that the Brygian ethnic element was deeply infiltrated in the ethnic structure of the Paeones and the ancient Macedonians.

All these points of contact show that there were indisputable relations among the Bryges, the Paeones and the ancient Macedonians in all the aspects of their existence and life. Closeness is stated also to the other minor ethnic groups inhabiting this area as the Edones, Mygdonians, Dassaretis etc. Anyhow, those indicators will help not to attribute this area to the Illyrian, Thracian or to the Hellenic sphere, but in particular chronological periods to treat it as a distinct region with indisputable influences from the south, the east, the west and the north. According to the recent researches, the Daco-Mysian elements should also not be neglected.

³² F. Papazoglu, 1979, 153–169.

³³ A. B. Tatakis, 1988, 312–331.

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