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THE ETYMOLOGY AND CORRELATION OF THE ANCIENT MACEDONIAN GLOSS *LAKEDAMA* AND PHRYGIAN *LAKEDOKEY*

Abstract. – This is an etymological analysis of the Ancient Macedonian gloss *λακεδάμα* *lakedama* ‘salt water drunk by Macedonian peasants’, found in Hesychius and the Old Phrygian form *lakedokey* from the Areyastis inscription. We propose that in both cases we have compound words, where the shared first stem *lake-* should be derived from PIE **lak(u)-* ‘body of water, lake, sea’. We contend that the second components of both words, while of different origin, convey a basic meaning of ‘special, good, preferred; prepared’. While limited, this etymology points to a closer correlation between Phrygian (Brygian) and Ancient Macedonian.

1. Introduction

Very little is preserved of Ancient Macedonian (a Paleobalkan language, term put forward by Vladimir Neroznak (1978), (Katičić uses the term Ancient Balkan language (1976 and in the literature therein). There are approximately some 200 glosses and no inscriptions or running text. A large number of these glosses reveal a language that should be classified as separate from Ancient Greek, even though the issue whether Ancient Macedonian is a Greek dialect or a different language has provoked quite divergent analyses, some even diametrically opposed to each other (see the discussion in Katičić (1976).

A good number of these glosses have uncertain or problematic etymologies and some seem unique within Indo-European. A few may not be Indo-European at all, as they do not resemble anything in Proto-Indo-European as currently reconstructed. Some exhibit phonemic changes clearly not characteristic of any known Ancient or Modern Greek dialect. It is also evident (and expected) that Ancient Macedonian has borrowed from Ancient Greek (and Ancient Greek from Ancient Macedonian) due to intense and prolonged language contact.

The lexicographer Hesychius of Alexandria (5th century CE) has been the main source for these glosses and lexemes¹ from various “extinct” Paleobalkan languages, like Thracian, Illyrian, Paeonian (only 1 gloss), and especially Phrygian.²

Phrygian (< Brygian) was originally spoken in Central and Northern Macedonia (see Georgiev 1981: 212, or Petrova 1996). It appears only in inscriptions in Asia Minor, after the migration of a large populace of Bryges around the 13th century BCE from central Macedonia to Anatolia (Petrova 1996).

As stated by Herodotus of Halicarnassus, the name *Phruges* is the Greek version of the original ethnonym *Bruges*, which this population adopted after their migration to Anatolia (Anatolia).

We provide an etymological analysis of an Ancient Macedonian gloss and an Old Phrygian form extrapolated from an inscription (the so-called Areyastis inscription, see Lubotsky 1988). Both of these words do not have heretofore satisfactory etymologies, and they may provide still limited evidence of a correlation between Phrygian and Ancient Macedonian.

2. Ancient Macedonian *lakedama*

Lakedama is found as a gloss in Hesychius – ‘*lakedama*: bitter water made in the sea [poured out in salt flats] which the Macedonian peasants drink’, usually simplified in references as ‘some salt water drunk by Macedonian peasants’.

Our analysis of the etymology of this clearly compound noun (quite unique in meaning) proposes a segmentation {*lak-e-dam-a*}.

2.1. First stem *lak-e-*

We trace the origin of the first root (stem) *lak-* from PIE **lak(u)-* ‘body of water, lake, sea’ > Latin *lacus* ‘pond, pool, lake’, Old Church Slavonic *loky* ‘pool, puddle, cistern’ (Serbian and Croatian *lokva* ‘pond’), Ancient Greek *lakkos* ‘pit, tank, pond’, Old Irish *loch* ‘lake, pond’, German *Lake* ‘salt water’, Gothic *lagus* ‘lake, sea, [importantly] water’ (Pokorny 1959: 653). The Germanic semantic development [‘salt water’ and ‘water’ (general term)] is perhaps most indicative of the semantics of the Ancient Macedonian gloss.

¹ There are also Phrygian and Paleobalkan glosses in works by lexicographers like Neoptolemus and Clement of Alexandria.

² Phrygian has been preserved, apart from the glosses in Hesychius, in some 240 inscriptions which date from the VIII-III century BCE (Old Phrygian, to which the Areyastis inscription belongs) and approximately 100 inscriptions from the IV century CE. Some scientists believe it became extinct in the VII century CE (Mallory-Adams 1997: 418).

There is also Proto-Slavic **lokati* ‘drink a lot, gulp’ (that we correlate here, but does not seem to have a decisive etymology³) from which there is Macedonian *loka* ‘drink a lot, gulp down’ (an expressive form, sometimes referring specifically to ‘(excessive) drinking of alcohol’, also Serbian and Croatian *lokati*, Russian *lokát*, Polish *lokać* ‘same’, and further Croatian *podlokavati* ‘erode (of water)’ and Macedonian *podlokuva* ‘same’.

-e- in *lak-e-* is possibly a case form [genitive? < Proto-Indo-European **-e(s)*] or simply a joining vowel in a compound form.

2.2. Second stem -dam-a

We propose a derivation of *-dam-a* from PIE **dhabh-* ‘proper, suitable; to fit/put together’ > Old Norse *dafna* ‘competent, good’, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian *dobar*, Russian *dobryi* ‘good’, found throughout Slavic, and Lithuanian *dabinti* ‘to decorate’ and esp. *dabá* ‘quality’ (Mallory-Adams 1997:139) (Pokorny 1959: 233-234).

The Lithuanian noun corresponds exactly in form (with an ending *-a*) with the second stem of the Ancient Macedonian gloss.

The phonemic change *bh > m* needs to be explained.

This change has been proposed in the analysis of another Ancient Macedonian gloss: *dramis* ‘a type of Macedonian bread’ (yet also found in other areas). Fick, Pisani, Walde-Pokorny (1927-1932: I 876; 856) *apud* Barić (1948: 176) derive *dramis*⁴ from IE **dhrehb-* ‘to crush, to grind’, as in Greek *trophalis* ‘fresh cheese’, *thrombeion* ‘croquette’, Old Norse *drafl* ‘fresh cheese’ with, as they state, with the characteristic Ancient Macedonian change *bh > m*.

This etymology most likely reveals a meaning of *lak-e-* ‘(salty?) water from pond (sea?)’, + *-dam-a* ‘suitable, preferred, ~good’. The contemporary Macedonian verb *loka*, Serbian and Croatian *lokati* ‘drink a lot, gulp; sip’ (with an alternation *a:o*, seems to be closest semantically, in the sense of ‘water you drink a lot of (in hot weather, at harvest time for the peasants?)’.⁵ We also have Serbian and Croatian *lokva* ‘puddle, pond’.

³Hrvatski portal (Croatian Language Portal) [http://hjp.znanje.hr/index.php?show=search_by_id&id=e15iXBY%3D] puts forward the following etymological correlation.

◇ Proto-Slavic **lokati* (Russian *lokát*, Polish *lokać*), lit. *lakti: laptati* ? ≈ Greek *láptein*: ‘to lick’, which is not convincing and very tentative.

⁴A continuant of *dramis* is also found in Burushaski, which is closely related to Phrygian as we have shown in Čašule 2004, 2014; extensively and specifically on this correlation, also Čašule 2016, 2017, 2018) as *diram phiti* ‘a type of ritual bread, where *diram* is ‘a type of flour’ [Lorimer 1938: 131, Berger 1998: 120, for the etymological analysis of the Burushaski noun, see Čašule (2017: 120)].

⁵Macedonian peasants today, esp. in the hottest region of the Republic of Macedonia (in and around the township of Demir Kapija and elsewhere) still drink in summer a type of salt water (with garlic) when harvesting in extreme heat, which is extralinguistic evidence that should not be ignored.

3. Old Phrygian *lakedokey*

We find the Phrygian form (verb?) in the so-called Areyastis inscription for which Lubotsky (1988: 21) considers, but rejects summarily a segmentation *lake-dokey* because he cannot find an etymological explanation of *lake-* and thus leaves the form and the semantics unexplained.⁶

The second stem in the Old Phrygian *lakedokey*, that is, *dokey* can be derived from IE **dhōk-* ‘to do, to make, to set, to put’ (Pokorny 1959 235): the attested Phrygian form is *ad-daket* ‘afficit’ (Phrygian forms importantly also in **dok-* and **dik-*) and further in Indo-European Latin *facere* ‘to do’, Old Latin *fefaked* ‘to do’, Hittite *dakkezi* ‘makes’, Greek *theké* ‘receptacle’, (given here also Tocharian A *taka* ‘I became’). In Burushaski we have the verbal periphrastic expression *doók man-* ‘to put or set down’ or *doók étas* ‘to build; place, lift a stone’ (see the full analysis in Čašule 2017: 121-122).

Thus, the Phrygian (Brygian) form *lakedokey*, whether a verb meaning ‘to offer (salt?) water’ or of nominal or adjectival origin with the meaning ‘(salt) water’ obtains a semantics of ‘prepared (<made)’.

4. Conclusion.

The correlation (both phonemic and semantic) of Old Phrygian (<Brygian)⁷ *lakedokey* with Ancient Macedonian *lakedama* which share the first stem *lake-* from PIE **lak(u)-* ‘pond, lake, sea) is very close.

Both second components of the compound words have the same semantics of ‘*special, (home?)made water, preferred, +/- good*’ which results in a robust etymological solution.

Our etymological analysis provides a solid etymology for an Ancient Macedonian gloss heretofore labeled as “unknown”.

It also puts forward (albeit limited) evidence for the theory that Ancient Macedonian could be ultimately a language of Brygian origin in close contact with Ancient Greek.⁸

⁶ Italo Cucaro (p.c. on Academia.edu) proposes tentatively a possible semantics for the Old Phrygian word of ‘salt-water libation; an offering of salt-water libation’.

⁷ Future studies should refer to the Phrygian language also with the self-denomination of these people, that is, *Bryges*.

⁸ Hamp (1990) (2013) and Diakonoff-Neroznak (1985), also Neroznak (1978) even Orel (1997) also to a large degree Haas (1966) consider Greek and Phrygian quite distant. Hamp classifies it is a North-Western Indo-European language, a par with Germanic, Baltic and Slavic (Balto-Slavic ?), Thracian, Pre-Hellenic, Tocharian, Albanian and Italic and Celtic (see Hamp’s genealogical classificatory diagram in Čašule (2012: 124).

The Greek-Phrygian correspondences are mainly borrowings from Greek into Phrygian as a result of language contact. The idea of a Phrygian-Greek branch is not supported by respectable evidence. Scholars advocating this or a very close genetic correlation between Ancient Greek and Phrygian (like Lubotsky (1988) or Brixhe and Lejeune (1984), and in particular Brixhe (2002) and Blažek (2005), and most recently Obrador-Cursach

The possible genetic correlation between Ancient Macedonian and Phrygian within Indo-European should be investigated much more thoroughly.⁹

The study of the Ancient Balkan languages, not only of Phrygian, but even more so of Thracian and Illyrian, while of interest and in focus in the 1960s and 1970s, nowadays attracts much less attention by historical linguists and Indo-Europeanists, which is lamentable and should be remediated.

(2020) essentially tend to overlook and reject Phrygian material that does not fit the model of relatedness to Greek and fail to consult and ignore the cited works by Hamp, Diakonoff, Neroznak and even Orel to which their views are diametrically different.

They do not explain satisfactorily or do not even take into account especially glosses like *zemelos*, *zetna*, *zeuman*, *itimbos*, *dumas* (Greek *thomos*) etc. and many Phrygian forms from the inscriptions like *skeledria/skeredria*, glossed as ‘some funerary structure’, but not explained etymologically (see Čašule 2004, 2014 and especially Čašule 2021), which they reject as uncertain. They also do not take into consideration the Phrygian onomasticon and unfortunately tend to dismiss or ignore evidence that does not support their theory of Greek origin of Phrygian.

My upcoming book (Čašule 2021, in print) which covers and interprets *all* extant Phrygian glosses (totaling ~50+) shows decisively that we cannot speak of a Graeco-Phrygian branch (V. Blažek is perhaps the strongest proponent of this groupation which has led to a misguided Wiki entry *Graeco-Phrygian* (?) (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Graeco-Phrygian>)).

Furthermore, the Phrygian onomasticon is also very divergent from the Greek one and this is not due in most instances to input from the Asia Minor onomasticon but is autochthonous, possibly originating from Macedonia.

On the other hand, we find over 30 onomastic correspondences (analyzed in Čašule 2016: 64-65, or Čašule 2004: 85-92, i.e. section 4.3. Burushaski-Phrygian correspondences in onomastics) between Phrygian and Burushaski names (e.g. the most solid one: Phrygian *Arogomachos* (Catzopoulos 38) : Burushaski *Argumaaq* (Berger 1998: 486) Phrygian *Kuliyas* (Orel 1997: 439) : Burushaski *Kulio*, *Kuli* (Berger 1998: 501), Phrygian *Silenos* : Burushaski *Silum*).

Especially interesting is the correspondence between the Ancient Macedonian / Phrygian name *Brygos* or Ancient Macedonian *Byrginos* (Petrova 1996: 185) with Burushaski *Birgao*, *Birgan* (Berger 1998: 490), which once again shows the possible relatedness of Phrygian and Ancient Macedonian.

⁹ Phrygian linguistic studies are in my view, in a stage of stagnation. There are still Old Phrygian inscriptions which have not been analyzed or explained fully, and there are conflicting and even contradictory analyses which indicates that the extant method of their reconstruction has some serious fallacies. These insurmountable difficulties perhaps stem from the possibility that Phrygian is an ergative language, as the Burushaski material strongly suggests.

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