

Șerban George Paul Drugaș

Criteria for the Interpretation of the Thracian Inscriptions



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Introduction

The two chapters in this volume are two articles with certain ties between them. The first chapter is an introductory discussion, meant to be followed by other studies to complete the paths opened there. Apparently, the ch. 1 introduces a rather nihilist perspective over the interpretation of the Thracian inscriptions. However, making the point that the scientific criteria of such an endeavor are hardly met, I wish to open other possibilities, which were suggested here. Usually, scholars tend to defend their first intuitions or arguments. The pioneers Detschew and Seure, or Tomaschek (the latter's perspectives will be used rather in other studies), were more open to the fact that scholars navigate through possibilities with pretty equal chances. Ultimately a choice is made, and very rare emerges unequivocal evidence in the interpretation of the Thracian inscriptions, and many times in Thracian etymologies. This doesn't mean that a progress is not possible. This is why I would like to assure that the rather pessimist or nihilist ending of the first chapter does not mean abandoning the battle, but only a kind of reset that I think is necessary. Sometimes I will accept old solutions, sometimes I will reject them, and sometimes I will show they admit innovations. Why do I sometimes come with different solutions, for which I can't present harder evidence. The problem is: did the past solutions always come with hard evidences or were they accepted so many times because they came from consecrated scholars or, sometimes, only because they come from those who had first access to the physical evidences? Thus, if those solution were equally incomplete as mine, what real ascendent do they have over mine? It is harder to argue when you reveal from the start the weak points in your position, but more honest.

The second chapter is a development of an idea in the first chapter, regarding ΑΞΝ in the Thracian inscriptions as a possible Thracian pronominal morpheme. I give here rather a possible innovations to old solutions.

This volume is not finished in itself, but rather an opening for other studies I hope I will be able to present.

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Chapter 1. Criteria for the Interpretation of the Thracian Inscriptions

Abstract

The use of more than one scientific criterion is absolutely necessary in order to proceed on a correct way of approaching the interpretation of the Thracian inscriptions. I identified at least four such criteria: (1) the shorter phrases could have a better success in deciphering them; (2) the context of the inscription; (3) the repetition of the Indo-European form within the same language or in other (close) languages; (4) and the reference to a credible Indo-European root. I analyze how or if they may be applied to the Thracian inscription. Even when trying to follow scientific criteria of research, the Thracian epigraphy remains one of the most delicate subjects of the Indo-European studies. However, analyzing the alternatives in the light of such criteria is the only way in this field, as opposed to the complete randomness of some allegedly "straightforward" explanations.

*

The inscriptions that contain more than one word in Thracian are rare and among the most enigmatic. This is why the translation of those phrases is more than difficult and, sometimes, the guesses of the scholars are as bad as those of anyone. Therefore, another speculation on the subject would be superfluous.

However, the effort in understanding the Thracian phrases in inscriptions should start from sifting what is surer from what is less convincing. This would lead us to a list of criteria. Without them, one could interpret the Thracian sequences anyway one would please, in some "Old Bulgarian", "Old Romanian" or any other so called "straightforward" "translations" (e. g. Serafimov 2007; Croitoru 2009; Cogniarchae 2017).

The first criterion would be that the shorter phrases could have a better success in deciphering them. For instance, the sequence MEZENAI, from the golden ring of Duvanli (Plovdiv district) was interpreted by Georgiev as coming from the Indo-European root *mend(i)- "horse" (*mendiana 'horseman'). He gave for comparison "the

Messapian deity of (Iuppiter) *Menzana*, the ‘horse deity’ to which were sacrificed horses. It also corresponds to the Albanian *mes*, *mezi* (‘a stallion’) and the Romainian *mînz* (‘a stallion’).” (Georgiev 1977: 112). Duridanov accepted the same interpretation, “horseman, rider” (Duridanov 1985: 100). The text there is $\text{HY}\Sigma\text{H} \dots \Delta\text{E}\Delta\text{E} (\Delta\text{E}\Delta\text{E}) / \text{MEZENAI}$ (Duridanov 1985: 99). The obviously incomplete sequences before MEZENAI are, again, extremely foggy, with all the efforts of Duridanov to extract some explanations out of them. Nevertheless, MEZENAI has many arguments in its favor. The representation of the horseman on the ring pleads for the root taken to consideration. The specialists in Indo-European confirm the occurrence of the forms in *-d* or *-z*, with the meaning “(little) horse”, “young bull, cub”, “horseman”, from the root **mend-* “to suck (breast), to feed; breast”, as the Albanian and Romanian mentioned ones and others, as well as the Illyrian place names *Menda* “mare”, *Mandeta*; *mandos* “little horse”, the Messapic Juppiter *Menzana* (**mendjo-no-*), loans in Latin and Celtic forms that ensure the presence of the root in names, place names and river names throughout Europe – e. g. Tirol, Basque etc. (Pokorny 1959: 729). This features of MEZENAI ensure the other three criteria: the context of the inscription; the repetition of the Indo-European form within the same language or in other (close) languages; and the reference to a credible Indo-European root.

The first criterion is respected by the above mentioned inscription, but the majority contains only a personal name, or a place name, and maybe very few other elements. The shorter inscriptions succeeded better in becoming epigraphic evidence for Thracian and Dacian.

The four silver plates of Duvanli contain the inscription $\Delta\text{A}\Delta\text{A}\Delta\text{E}\text{ME}$. Although Detschew (1952) thought it was a personal name, it seems that Georgiev’s interpretation (Georgiev 1957; 1977: 114-119), followed by Duridanov (1985: 100-102), as an expression, is the case here. The last two authors consider ΔA “Earth”, as in Demeter, from the root **gh̥dem-* / *gh̥dom-* (Pokorny 1959: 414-416) – **dh̥égh̥om-* / **dh̥(e)gh̥em-* (Mallory & Adams 1997: 174, 419). The final ME would be the personal pronoun, 1st, sg. acc., and $\Delta\text{A}\Delta\text{E}$ “protect” impv. 2 sg., compared with “Hitite *dala-* ‘let, in peace’, Welsh *dala* ‘to hold’, Alb. *dalë* ‘to wait, hold’.” (Georgiev 1977: 119; Duridanov 1985: 102). The root would be then **del-*5 (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 820-821; Pokorny 1959: 196-197). On one hand, this root has convincing Thracian occurrences. From the extended form **(d)longhos* “long, tall” (cf. Greek *δολιχός*) there was the Thracian people named *Dolonci* / $\Delta\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\gamma\kappa\omicron\iota$ (“ $\Delta\acute{o}\lambda\omicron\gamma\kappa\omicron\iota$ ἔθνος Θράκης” Stephanus of Byzantium 2011: 54, 55; Herodotus VI.34-36.40 1938: 178/179-180/181, 186/187, Lycophron *Alexandra* 331, Arrian *Bithynica* 13, Herodian, Constantine Porphy., Pliny *NH* IV.41, Solinus 10.7; Tomaschek 1893: 67; Russu 1967:104). On the other hand, for the sequence $\Delta\text{A}\Delta\text{E}$ there are also other close Thracian forms that deserve our attention. For the personal names beginning with *Dal-* (*Δαλεις*, *Δαλεῖνος*, *Dalenis*, *Δαληπορις*, *Δαλητραλις*, *Δαληζαλις*, *Δαληζελμις*, *Dalus*, *Dalutius*) there is disagreement between Detschew (1952: 69), giving the origin **dhāl-* “to blossom, be green” (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 825; Pokorny 1959: 234), and Russu (1967: 100-101), who preferred **dhel-*2 “to light, shine” (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 865/2; Pokorny 1959: 246). For some personal and divine names beginning with *Del-* (*Deloptes* / *Δηλοπτες*, *Δηλοπιχος*, Phrygian *Delas Idaios*) there is agreement between Russu (1967: 102, 114) and Duridanov (1985: 132) for an origin in **del-*3 “to split, cut, chop with skill; to work, do, function” (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 809 sq.; Pokorny 1959: 194-196). The last group has examples of reduplication in Greek, convincingly close to the inscriptions on the plates of Duvanli. All the forms collected by Pokorny deserve our attention, but I will mention here only two directions. The first is that of *δαίδαλος* (-εος) “worked with skill, artistically”, *δαι-δάλω* “to work with skill or art”, coming from **δάλ-δάλ-* (an intensive reduplication – Pokorny 1959: 194). The second direction is that of *δαν-δάλ-ις*, *δενδαλις* “roasted cake of barley flour”, *δεν-δάλ-ιδες* · *ιεραὶ κριθαί* etc., suggesting that the Thracian inscription could also have referred to such cakes, most probably with a ritual purpose, as an offering, which might have been given on the respective plates. This might have some weight as the second criterion, the context of the inscription.

I believe that the last example, of a “simple” expression, repeated on four silver plates, demonstrates that such Thracian epigraphic evidences that contain more than just names, maybe expressions or phrases, are not at all easily translated. On the contrary, the comparison of all the available close forms must be preferred to a unilateral “straightforward” interpretation. After presenting the relevant Thracian close forms, I may say that I would prefer the last possibility, especially that the Greek examples demonstrate the possibility of the loss of the liquid (**δάλ-δάλ-* to *δαι-δάλ-*) or a nasal (*δαν-δάλ-*), which could also be the case in a Thracian inscription.

A medium size inscription is that on a golden ring from Sucidava (Celei, Romania), containing on the exterior the string $\text{BEINAPYHCOPYAPOYANON}$, and on the interior BPQAYΘPIC (Russu 1967: 41). Although Detschew (1957: 93) and Seure (1920: 11) tried some explanations, this text still awaits a reasonable interpretation.

Two of the Thracian inscriptions are particularly long and most difficult to translate: the inscription on the golden ring from Ezerovo (dating 5th century BC) and the text engraved on a stone, at Kjolmen (6th century BC), both in Bulgaria.

The Ezerovo golden ring has the inscription (Georgiev 1977: 107; Duridanov 1985: 90-91): ΠΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕΑΣΝ / ΕΡΕΝΕΑΤ.ΙΑ / ΤΕΑ.ΝΗΣΚΟΑ / ΡΑΖΕΑΔΟΜ / ΕΑΝΤ.ΙΑΕΖΥ / ΠΤΑΜΙΗΕ / ΡΑΖ // ΗΛΑΤΑ.

The text has no spaces, and the role of the rows in the delimitation of the sequences was usually interpreted as negligible.

D. Detschew offered the following lectures and translations:

(a) Ρολιστενας Νερενεα, Τιλτεαν Ησκοα ρα ζεα, δομεαν Τιλεζυπτα, μη εραζηλτα – “Rolisteneas, Sohn des Nereneas, Tilatäer vom Gebiete des Flusses Iska, Einwohner von Tilezypta, machte mich für sich (oder: ließ mich für sich machen).” (Detschew 1916: 86).

(b) *Rolisteneas Nerenea tiltean ěsko Arazea domean Tilezypta miě era zelta* – “ich bin Rolisteneas, Sprössling des Nereneas, Tilezypta, Arazerin nach ihrer Heimat hat mich der Erde übergeben (d. h. begraben)” (Detschew 1952: 88; see Russu 1967: 41).

P. Kretschmer read it as: Ρολιστενας νερενεα τιλτεαν ησκο / Αραζεα δομεαν Τιλεζυπτα μη εραζηλτα (Kretschmer 1916: 86-92).

VI. Georgiev read and translated: *Rolistene, as Nerenea Tiltea nesko arazea do mean tilezyptam, ie eraz elta* – “Rolistene (=You, Rolisten), I, Nerenea Tiltea, die peaceful next to [you] my dear deceased, [I] who nourished (brought up) the children.” (Georgiev 1957: 17; Georgiev 1977: 105-110).

The sequence ΠΟΛΙΣ has parallels in Thraco-Dacian personal names, as Rhōles (Ρώλης –Kretschmer 1916: 86; Seure 1920: 15; Georgiev 1977: 108), a Getian chieftain in the 1st century AD, in Scythia Minor (Dio Cassius *Roman History* 51.26.1, in Iliescu et al. 1964: 674-677), and the Dacian king Oroles (Pompeius Trogus *Iustinus Epitome* 32.3.16, in Iliescu et al. 1964: 359). *Rhōlē̃s* (Ρώλης), *castellum* τοῦ Ρούλου in Moesia, and Ῥολλι-γεραί in Dacia Mediterranea would have had a common origin (Tomaschek II/2 1894: 29), maybe the same as Oroles. For this, an origin in **er-1* / **or-* “eagle” (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 135; Pokorny 1959: 326) was advocated (Tomaschek II/2 1894: 10; Russu 1967: 114). Other close forms would be Ὀλορος (a Thracian dynast – Herodotus VI.39 1938: 184/185; the father of Thucydides – Thucydides IV.104 1920: 390/391, in Plutarch *Cimon* 4, written Ὀρολος, as well – Tomaschek II/2 1894: 10), the hyperborean *Olan* / *Olen* (Pausanias 10.5 1900: 227), the slave ὈλίπϚ, and *Oluper* (Detschew 1957: 374; Russu, 1967: 114-115; Duridanov 1985: 58). But these last forms (*Olan* / *Olen*, ὈλίπϚ, and *Oluper*) would rather have had different origins.

ΠΟΛΙΣ has a justified interpretation as a personal name or part of one, while those who considered ΠΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕ(ΑΣ) as the whole name, interpreted it in the manner of Gk. *Demosthenes*, *Eratosthenes* etc., or rather from the root **(s)ten-1* “to groan” (Pokorny 1959: 1021), compared to Gk. στένω, Στέντωρ, Στεντόριον βοῶν, Lat. *tonare*, Lith. *stenėti*, and Old Bulg. *stenati* (Detschew 1916: 81). It could be so or ΠΟΛΙΣ could stand alone, followed by another word. A comment under pseudonym, on a website (Massey 2009), considered ΤΕΝΕΑΣ as a separate word, but without abiding by any linguistic principle, it led to no other notable results.

The group ΑΣΝ, of the first line (ΠΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕΑΣΝ), is repeated once or twice in the inscription from Kyolmen. Two or three occurrences of ΑΣΝ in Thracian inscriptions would mean this is a significant particle in their language, in consonance with the third criterion considered in this paper (repetition). In the string ΖΕΣΑΑΣΝ of Kyolmen, ΑΣΝ appears with the character ξ (marked here as α□Σ) instead of Σ. In the string ΝΥΑΣΝΑ, of the same inscription, ΑΣΝ is with ξ (Σ). Georgiev thought that ξ (Σ) was *šd* of the Phoenician alphabet (Georgiev 1977: 122). The use of some letters fluctuated in Greek itself, as they were taken from Phoenician, and the signs used for the sibilants were creating many of such confusions (Sihler 1995: 19).

One could say that, coincidentally, ΑΣ was followed by an Ν, once on the ring of Ezerovo, and once on the stone of Kyolmen. Another coincidence is that in both cases ΑΣΝ ends a string, being followed by a line interruption or a gap until the following string. It is hard to know if the end of a line or some dot markings, appearing both on the ring of Ezerovo and on the stone of Kyolmen, have had or have had not any meaning, intended by the author. However, I believe that this aspect merits a discussion and not a summary dismissal, whatever explanation one would prefer about them. Dot markings are to be noticed, on the Ezerovo ring, in the line □ΕΡΕΝΕΑΤ.ΙΑ, ΤΕΑ.ΝΗΣΚΟΑ, and ΕΑΝΤ.ΙΑΕΖΥ, where all the dots are placed more central, those after Τ next to its vertical line, that after Α, near it, and the last one is actually inside Λ. A suggestion of Massey (2009) was that ΙΑ (considered a cognate of Lat. *ille*, *illa*, *illud*) is repeated, in each case after a dot marking. More than that, if the end of the line was usually intended as a marking, the dots could have stood for some supplementary internal markings. Then, the first ΙΑ is separated by a dot and an end of the line, and the second ΙΑ by a dot before, and a dot that fit only inside the Λ. If we admit this delimitation, ΕΑΤ and ΕΑΝΤ suggest verbs or verbal endings of the third person, singular and plural, respectively, as ““May that one go” (*eat il*) and “May they go” (*eant ile*)” (Massey 2009). If the dots were *iota subscript*, or a short *i*,

EANT.ΙΛΕΖΥ would be εαντῖλ,εζυ, maybe εαντῖ λῖ,εζυ. If εαντῖ and εαντῖ are to be considered as verbs, then an ending with a (short) *i* would be more convincing, as in Balto-Slavic and Indo-Iranian (*-ti*, *-nti*). If ΙΑ is to be considered a pronoun, this would be less probable without some Indo-European endings, since the names recovered from the Thracio-Dacian dialects show they preserved such endings.

Regarding ΑΣΝ, Georgiev (1977: 108) advanced an explanation for “ας or ασν”, compared with other *satem* words for “I”, but he applied it only to the possibility of ΑΣ, although it is followed by Ν and ΑΣΝ also appears in the inscription of Kyolmen. Georgiev didn’t keep ασν, but ας, so that he could interpret the following sequence, νερε, through Old Ind. *nārī* “man” (cf. Walde & Pokorny, 1927, II, 332; Pokorny, 1959, II, 765). The Thracian personal name Νάρης (Athen. XII 520 d-e) and the Phrygian αναρ “man” (see also Alb. *njer*) demonstrate the presence of such a word in Thracian dialects (cf. Detschew 1952: 78; 1957: 328; Russu 1967: 113). However, there are other possibilities for this text, and the sequence Νερε-νεα as “man – new” has not the right topic for Thracian, which should have the adjective first. Among the very few well known facts about the Thracian and Dacian composed words is that the determinative precedes the determined part. Numerous examples verify this law (e. g. *Germisara*, all the names in *-poris*, all the Dacian *-dava*, Thracian *-para* etc. – cf. Pârvan 1982: 153/260). A sequence without an initial Ν after an ΑΣΝ would be επεν. If this would have come from **erā-2/ *rē-/ *h₁erh₁-* “to be still; peace” (Pokorny 1959: 338-339; Mallory & Adams 1997: 474), this could make sense for a deceased person. If we were to consider ΕΠΕΝ as a separate sequence, the formation of **h₁erh₁-m* “silence, rest, quiet”, also metaphorically “death” (Mallory & Adams 1997: 474) would serve well to support it.

Among the lines of the inscription on the ring of Ezerovo, not any array is equally provided with appealing linguistic interpretations. I will go to the next one which, in my opinion, could benefit of an interpretation closer to a good Indo-European explanation: ΠΑΖΕΑΔΟΜ. P. Kretschmer published in *Glotta* (1916) his own interpretation, after that of Detschew, and there are many similarities in the way the two authors treat the text. Their sequencing coincide a lot: ρολιστενας νερενεα τιλτεαν ησκο(α), and δομεαν τιλεζυπτα μη εραζηλτα. The only difference is corrected by Detschew, in his second interpretation, according to Kretschmer: ησκο αραζεα instead of ησκοα ρα ζεα, and the final εραζηλτα is separated into ερα ζηλτα (Detschew 1952: 88). Other interpretations, such as that of Georgiev, presented above (Georgiev 1957: 17; 1977: 105-110), and that of W. Merlingen (1960: 179-192) demonstrated that different segmentations would also be suited to intelligible meaning. Kretschmer argued that Αραζεα would have a parallel in the Thracian city ἸΑραζος, mentioned by Stephanus of Byzantium, while Thracian εα would stand for the Indo-European *-jā* (Kretschmer 1916: 89-90). Before following Kretschmer, Detschew himself considered another sequence, ησκοα ρα ζεα, while ΠΑΖ- itself has other parallel forms in Thracian, as pointed out by Merlingen and accepted by Russu and Georgiev. These last authors assumed that *razea*, formed from the Indo-European root **reǵ-* / **h₃reǵ-* “to lead, to support” (Russu 1967: 41), cognate with Lat. *reg-* > *rex*, *regimen* (Pokorny 1959: 854 sqq. Mallory & Adams 1997: 329). The same element appears in some Thracian names, like: *Raizdos* (Κοτυς Ραιζδου, Thracian king, 3rd century BC), Ραζδος Ὑακίνθου, Ασκιπρασις / -ραζις?, some Scythian names, as Αθραζακος, Φανδαραζος, and in Rom. *razim-* “to support” (Russu 1967: 116). Other *satem* cognates might also be relevant: Proto-Iranian **raz(i)-*, Skr. *raṣ-*, Av. *rāz-* (Mallory & Adams 1997: 329). An origin in the *satem* root *raz-* “king” for any sequence in that place, αραζεα or ραζεα, is most appealing.

Both Detschew and Kretschmer thought that δομεαν (accusative?) would come from a cognate form to Latin *domus*, OCS *domŭ* etc. (Detschew 1916: 83; Kretschmer 1916: 88, 90), therefore originated in **dem-* / **demā-* (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 786 sq.; Pokorny 1959: 198-199), **dōm* / **dōm(h_a)os* (Mallory & Adams 1997: 281). However, ΔΟΜ could be a suffix, as in **uor-t-om* “gate” from **uer-* “to (en)close” (Pokorny 1959: 1160). Such a solution, where *razeadom* (*-om* neuter or an accusative from *-os*) would correspond to Lat. *regatus* (as in Eng. *kingdom*) or it could have meant “ruler”, and is encouraged by the Thracian forms in *-d*, Ραζδος and Ραιζδου.

The sequence ΠΑΖ appears, once again, in the end of a string, on the ring of Ezerovo. Both Detschew and Kretschmer divided the last sequences in τιλεζυπτα μη εραζηλτα. This way, εραζηλτα would have been an aorist medium, with augment (Detschew 1916: 82), from the root **rē-dh-* (OInd. *radhayati* “accomplish” – Pokorny 1959: 59-60) < **ar-1* / **h_aer-* (Pokorny 1959: 55-61; Mallory & Adams 1997: 362). Georgiev saw the same string as τιλεζυπταμη εραζ ηλτα, with εραζ explained by ἐρέας “τέκνα. Θεσσαλοί (Hes.), from an IE **eros* and ηλτα by Lat. *aluit*, *alo*, IE **āl-to-* (Georgiev 1977: 110). A repeated appearance of a sequence doesn’t guarantee a common origin, but it doesn’t exclude it either. If the final ΗΑΤΑ, engraved on the side of the ring seems as an ending that couldn’t have been included on the surface with the main text, then the choice to keep together a string as (E)ΠΑΖΗΑΤΑ could be right. However, if ΠΑΖ from this group is the same as that in ΠΑΖΕΑΔΟΜ, then the translation for εραζηλτα would be “reigned, ruled”, not “did”.

As belonging to the *satem* group, the palatals were assibilated in Thracian and Daco-Moesian: $*\hat{k} > s$, $*\hat{g}(h) > z$ (Russu 1967: 149; Georgiev, apud Polomé 2008: 877, 886-887; Clackson 2007: 49-53; Krahe 1985: 28-30; Meier-Brügger 2010: 261). “Comparisons such as Dacian *séb* ‘elder-tree’ and Lith *šeivā-medīs* ‘elder-tree’ from $*\hat{k}\hat{u}\hat{a}$ - support the argument that Dacian palatalized the palatal velars.” (Mallory & Adams 1997: 146). In some cases, occurred the change $*\hat{k} > k$. For this exception, to the series given by Clackson, “ $*h_2ek$ ‘mon-’ ‘stone’: Sanskrit *ásmān*-, Avestan *asman*-, Greek *akmōn*, Lithuanian *akmō* ‘stone’, *šmō* ‘knife-edge’” (Clackson 2007: 52), we might add “*Acmonia* [both in Dacia and Phrygia, my note], *Decebalus*, *Decaeneus* and *-docos* (if they have the IE root $*dek$ -)” (Russu 1967: 149). Clackson gave a significant parallel of the Baltic languages (Clackson 2007: 52). A contrasting example is that of *Asamus* (tributary of the Danube), formed from the same PIE root (Polomé 2008: 877). Other exception could be considered *argilos* “mouse” from PIE $*h_2rǵ-$ / $*h_2rǵ-$ “white, quick” (Tomaschek 1893: 4; Russu 1967: 91; cf. Clackson 2007: 197; Mallory & Adams 1997: 641) $> *h_2rǵ-rós$ “fast (of animals)” (Mallory & Adams 1997: 194). In the last example, the expected *satem* transformation $\hat{g} > z$ did not occur, as opposing to the occurrence *arzos* “white, shiny” in the river name *Arzos* (tributary to Hebros; Ptolemy III.11.6 1843: 188) and *castellum Arzos* (same place – Tomaschek 1894: 82; Russu 1967: 91).

Thus, with some exceptions, the transformation of IE \hat{g} - into a Thracio-Dacian z - is highly expected. As Georgiev himself formulated it, an equally largely accepted rule for the Thracio-Dacian dialects is that “Voiced aspirate stops become become voiced stops, e. g. $*dh \rightarrow d$ ” (Georgiev, apud Polomé 2008: 877; cf. Russu, 1967: 148-149). Therefore, both PAZ would be rather expected to come from the root $*r\hat{g}$ - / $*h_3r\hat{g}$ -, as noted by Merlingen, Russu and Georgiev for the first occurrence, and not from $*r\hat{e}$ - or $*eros$. The same phonetic rule could place the end of EANT. IAEZY in correlation with IE $*l\hat{g}$ - “to gather, see, notice; to convene (Lat. *lex* “law”), to read, to say” (Merlingen, apud Russu 1967: 41; the root – Pokorny 1959: 658; Mallory & Adams 1997: 346) for a AEZY lecture, or with IE $*h\hat{g}$ - (emphatic $*h\hat{g}óm$), for the sequence EZY. The last root generated similar forms in other *satem* languages, as “OPrus, Latv, Arm *es*, Lith *aš*, OCS (*j*)*azŭ*, (Alb *hë*), Av *az(əm)*” (Mallory & Adams 1997: 454). The personal pronoun of the first singular would even correlate with a verb at the same number and person, in the following line, ITAMI, rooted in $*pta$..., leading us to PIE $*pteh_1$ -: “‘fall’ (...) Grk (Doric) *ἀπτήης* ‘not falling’, *πτῶμα* ‘fall, calamity’, Hit *piddāi* (< $*ptih_1$ -neu-) ‘flees’, *pettinu*- (< $*ptóh_1ei$ -) ‘cause to run’. Cf. the derivative $*ptoh_1tós$ ‘fallen’: Grk *πτωτός* ‘fallen’, Av *tāta*- ‘fallen (of rain)’. Reasonably widespread, certainly old in IE. From $*pet$ - ‘fly.’” (Mallory & Adams 1997: 191; cf. Pokorny 1959: 825). It could refer either to a deceased (who may “fall” or even “fly” from this world) or for a fallen king.

The explanation from $*h\hat{g}(óm)$ is either good only for one of the two words, AEN or EZY, if they are to be considered as such, or they could represent different cases of the same pronoun. There is also the problem of ξ (Σ), in AEN of the inscription of Kyolmen, a letter that could represent a close sound to s (ξ ? ts ?).

There is another sequence in the inscription of Ezerovo that repeats in that of Kyolmen, namely KOA. Within the text of Ezerovo, it appears in the line TEA.NHΣKOA, while at Kyolmen one possible lecture has also a sequence ...EKOA (Dimitrov 2009: 5). For an interpretation of -KOA as a cognate of Latin *-que* and Greek *καί* “and” there are some external arguments. A Lydian inscription reveals the same use of *-k* “and” as a suffix: *fak-mł śantaś kufaw-k mariwda-k ěnslibbid* – “Sanda und Kubaba und (die) Mariwda-Gottheit(en) sollen ihm (dem Grabschänder) Schaden zufügen (vel. sim.).” (Gander 2015: 484, quoting Gusmani 1964: 252, Nr. 4a). And in a slightly different lecture: *fak=mł śantaś kufaw=k mariwda=k ěnslibb[i]d* – “Sanda and Kubaba and (the) *m*. shall do harm to him.” (Melchert 2008: 153, quoting Gusmani, 1986: 148.).

Conclusions

The possible legitimate intuitions about the interpretation of the Thracian inscription and the problems they are posing could only begin with an analysis of the alternatives, as in this paper. The inscription of Kyolmen, which is the longer, was only discussed here in a very small measure, mainly in relationship with some epigraphic sequences of the Ezerovo ring inscription. Nevertheless, even the use of the stone as a surface for the inscription of Kyolmen rises some problems, as some read the dots or other markings while others ignored them. What would be the correct direction of the lecture for these inscriptions?

All the Thracian inscriptions need, before reaching some answers, a discussion over the possible alternatives and about the degree of practicability of some reliable criteria. Any viable research needs to relate to such criteria. However, the use of only one criterion can easily lead us astray. We saw, for instance, in the examples given above, that the sole criterion of an Indo-European origin, even explained through Thracian or some related *satem* languages, can sometimes only propose alternatives, not unique answers. Do we have, in the text of the Ezerovo ring inscription,

a sequence POΛICTENEAS for a personal name, or is the personal name only POΛIC, followed by other words? Is there a NEPENEA or an EPEN (**h₃erh₁-*)? Have both PAZ (in PAZEADOM and in PAZ // HATA) the same origin (**h₃réǵ-*) or not? The pertinence of at least ten such questions, regarding only the Ezerovo ring, show that only one criterion, for instance, that of an Indo-European origin, is not enough.

Adding the criterion of repetition might increase the probability of an interpretation, but there is still no guarantee that a sequence didn't formed randomly in resemblance to another. The context of an inscription (burial, ceremonial etc.) could provide extra information (e. g. the representation of the horse next to an inscription that has relation to an Indo-European root for that animal – MEZENAI on the golden ring of Duvanli).

Deciphering the Thracian inscription remains delicate even when we think that more of the criteria proposed in this paper are fulfilled. However, without appealing to more than one of such criteria, there is not real progress, but only the illusion that lead to so many worthless “straightforward” proposals, not only of the insufficiently informed people, but also among the scholarly interpretations.

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Chapter 2. About ΑΣΝ as a Possible Thracian Pronominal Morpheme

Abstract

The sequence ΑΣΝ, which is repeated in Thracian inscriptions (twice at Kyolmen, 6th century BC, and once on the golden ring of Ezerovo, 5th century BC) is analyzed here for the possibility to cover a Thracian morpheme, as suggested by Georgiev and Dimitrov. I compared the methods of these two authors, noticing that Dimitrov is more consistent in assuming all the three forms, not only two, as Georgiev. As other authors also argue (Merlingen), there is no reason to keep Georgiev's divisions of the inscriptions' text, and therefore considering ΑΣΝ as the indication of a Thracian morpheme could have a larger and sounder argumentation. I consider that Dimitrov's explanations regarding the use of the character "⌈ ⌋" for N (also in ΑΣΝ), in opposition to H, where the cutter carves the hasta, is too pertinent to be avoided in further interpretations of the Kyolmen inscriptions. The absence (or a unique or very seldom use) of N in a relatively large Thracian inscription is also improbable. I argue that a relatively recently discussed Phrygian compound pronoun εσ'αυ could offer the model for an etymology of a Thracian *as⁽ⁿ⁾n, written ΑΣΝ. Whatever its origin (of three options), this was, most probably, a Thracian pronominal form.

*

The repetition of a certain sequence of letters in epigraphic witnesses does not ensure, *per se*, that the respective sequence represents a certain morpheme. However, certain sequences in Thracian inscriptions have been deciphered for the benefit of the Thracian morphology (Dimitrov 2009; Dana 2014).

The sequence ΑΣΝ, appears in the first line (ΡΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕΑΣΝ) of the inscription on the golden ring from Ezerovo (century BC), and it is repeated twice in the stone inscriptions from Kyolmen (6th century BC). In the sequence ⌈ ⌋y⌈ ⌋men ΖΕΣΑΣΝ (Georgiev 1977: 125; Dimitrov 2009: 5), ΑΣΝ appears with the character ⌈ ⌋ (marked here as ⌈ ⌋) instead of Σ. In the string ΝΥΑΣΝΑ (Georgiev 1977: 125) / ΙΛΑΣΝΑ (Dimitrov 2009: 5), also from Kyolmen, ΑΣΝ is with ⌈ ⌋ (Σ). Georgiev thought that ⌈ ⌋ (Σ) was ⌈ ⌋ of the Phoenician alphabet (Georgiev 1977: 122). The use of some letters fluctuated in Greek itself, as they were taken from Phoenician, and the signs used for the sibilants were creating many of such confusions (Sihler 1995: 19).

One could say that, coincidentally, ΑΣ was followed by an N, once on the ring of Ezerovo, and once on the stone of Kyolmen. Another coincidence is that in both cases ΑΣΝ ends a string, being followed by a line interruption or a gap until the following string. It is hard to know if the end of a line or some dot markings, appearing both on the ring of Ezerovo and on the stone of Kyolmen, have had or have had not any meaning, intended by the author. However, I believe that this aspect merits a discussion and not a summary dismissal.

Regarding ΑΣΝ, Georgiev (1977: 108) advanced an explanation for "ας or ασν", compared with other *satem* words for "I", but he applied it only to the possibility of ΑΣ, although it is followed by N and ΑΣΝ also appears in the inscriptions of Kyolmen. Georgiev didn't keep ασν, but ας, so that he could interpret the following sequence, νερε, through Old Ind. *nārī* "man" (cf. Walde & Pokorny, 1927, II, 332; Pokorny, 1959, II, 765). The Thracian personal name Νάρης (Athen. XII 520 d-e) and the Phrygian *αναρ* "man" (see also Alb. *njer*) demonstrate the presence of such a word in Thracian dialects (cf. Detschew 1952: 78; 1957: 328; Russu 1967: 113). However, there are other possibilities for this text, and the sequence Νερε-νεα as "man – new" has not the right topic for Thracian, which should have the adjective first. Among the very few well known facts about the Thracian composed words is that the determinative precedes the determined part. Numerous examples verify this law (e. g. *Germisara*, all the names in -*poris*, all the Dacian -*dava*, Thracian -*para* etc. – cf. Pârvan 1982: 153/260). A sequence without an initial N after an ΑΣΝ could be επεν. If this would have come from **erā-2/ *rē-1* **h₁erh₁-* "to be still; peace" (Pokorny 1959: 338-339), this could make sense for a deceased person. If we were to consider ΕΠΕΝ as a separate sequence, the formation of **h₁erh₁-m* "silence, rest, quiet", also metaphorically "death" (Mallory & Adams 1997: 474) would serve well to support it. However it could be considered the continuation to ΑΣΝ here, W. Merlingen (1960: 179-192) demonstrated that different segmentations than those of Georgiev would be suited to intelligible meaning.

The sequence ΑΣΝ is preceded on the Ezerovo ring by ΡΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕ. The first part, ΡΟΛΙΣ has clear parallels in Thraco-Dacian personal names, as Rholes (Ρώλης –Kretschmer 1916: 86; Seure 1920: 15; Georgiev 1977: 108), a Getian chieftain in the 1st century AD, in Scythia Minor (Dio Cassius *Roman History* 51.26.1, in Iliescu et al. 1964: 674-677), and the Dacian king Oroles (Pompeius Trogus Iustinus *Epitome* 32.3.16, in Iliescu et al. 1964: 359). *Rhōlēs* (Ρώλης), *castellum* τοῦ Ρούλου in Moesia, and Ρῶλλι-γεραῖ in Dacia Mediterranea would have had a common origin (Tomaschek II/2 1894: 29), maybe the same as Oroles. For this, an origin in **er-1* / **or-* "eagle" (Walde & Pokorny I 1927: 135; Pokorny 1959: 326) was advocated (Tomaschek II/2 1894: 10; Russu 1967: 114). Other close

forms would be Ὀλορος (a Thracian dynast – Herodotus VI.39 1938: 184/185; the father of Thucydides – Thucydides IV.104 1920: 390/391, in Plutarch *Cimon* 4, written Ὀρολος, as well – Tomaschek II/2 1894: 10), the hyperborean *Olan / Olen* (Pausanias 10.5 1900: 227), the slave *Ōlipor*, and *Oluper* (Detschew 1957: 374; Russu, 1967: 114-115; Duridanov 1985: 58). But these last forms (*Olan / Olen*, *Ōlipor*, and *Oluper*) would rather have had different origins.

ΡΟΛΙΣ has a justified interpretation as a personal name or part of one, while those who considered ΡΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕ(ΑΣ) as the whole name, interpreted it in the manner of Gk. *Demosthenes*, *Eratothsenes* etc., or rather from the root **(s)ten-* “to groan” (Pokorny 1959: 1021), compared to Gk. στένω, Στέντωρ, Στεντόριον βοῶν, Lat. *tonare*, Lith. *stenėti*, and Old Bulg. *stenati* (Detschew 1916: 81). It could be so or ΡΟΛΙΣ could stand alone, followed by another word, or rather by the Greek ending -σθενε(ς) (Dimitrov 2009:). An E-ending of ΡΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕ could indicate a genitive form (Dimitrov 2009: 14), dropping the ending -s of the nominative, as Dimitrov also interprets ΕΒΑΡΟΖΕ from Kyolmen and ΔΑΔΑΛΕΜΕ from Duvanlij (Dimitrov 2009: 11, 12, 14, citing Filow 1934).

Peter A. Dimitrov reissued the discussion about the possibility that ΑΣΝ / ΑΣΝΗ would unveil a Thracian morpheme, noticing its repetition in the inscriptions of Ezerovo and Kyolmen (Dimitrov 2009: 10). However, recent interpretations disregard Dimitrov’s arguments, based on the assumption that the mentioned inscriptions belonged to “an ancient non-survived Proto-Slavic culture, which settled in the southern part of the Balkan area during the 6th-5th cen. BC” (Stein & Tomezzoli 2017: 294-295). Interpreting the inscriptions in Thrace on the ground of the Thracian language and culture is already difficult enough, although Thracian culture and people are well attested in the area for the time and place of the inscriptions. The theory of a Proto-Slavic culture in the ancient Balkans is strongly supported by authors as Serafimov (2007), which would render “the deciphering of Old-Phrygian, South Balkan, Minoan and Linear A inscriptions based on their similarities with elements in the present, surviving Slavic languages” (Stein & Tomezzoli 2017: 294-295). I wonder if the noticed similarities (that could resist the critique) would not be rather proofs on a common Indo-European ground, while between Thracian and Slavic, traces of common *satem* formations (and even the influence of the first on the formation of the latter). Returning from the context of these interpretations to the subject, Serafimov kept Georgiev’s explanation for ΑΣ / ΑΣΝ, seen as “I”, through an Old Slavic lens (Serafimov 2007: 178). However, as Georgiev, Serafimov (2007: 180) divided the sequence in ΑΣ + ΝΕΡΕ-ΝΕΑ.

Stein and Tomezzoli, although they follow, in general, Serafimov and the old Proto-Slavic culture in the Balkans, they fail to see ΑΣΝ as a unitary sequence in the inscriptions of Kyolmen (Stein & Tomezzoli 2017: 292). The reason is a doubtful reading, according to which the character represented by two parallel strokes (| |) is seen as an /i/ (Stein & Tomezzoli 2017: 292, 293 – Figure 1). Beševliev (1965) and others saw the character “| |” “as a word-divider” (Dimitrov 2009: 8), while Georgiev (1957, 1966, 1977) and others read it N (Stein & Tomezzoli 2017: 290-291). Stein and Tomezzoli (2017: 292, 293) introduce a new reading of the character “| |” as the phoneme /i/, without explaining why either of the two traditions of reading should be discarded. The phoneme /i/ (and sometimes also /i/) is clearly represented by the character “I” in Thracian inscriptions, including those of Kyolmen and Ezerovo (Dimitrov 2009: 122, 146).

The character “I” is one of the most typical and undisputed among those used in Thracian inscriptions (beginning with the 6th century BC – Dimitrov 2009: 6). Thus, there would be contradicting and confusing for the author of the stone inscriptions of Kyolmen to decide to use also “| |” to render /i/, when the Greek alphabet already offered the solution with “I”, which is also far less to engrave in stone. The first character of the first row of Kyolmen containing ΑΣΝ is read either “| |” (thus N, by Georgiev 1977) or “I” (by Dimitrov 2003, 2009). Here there is a possibility for a second stroke, at the beginning of the row, which could have been poorly preserved. However, before the final sequence of the first row, ΔΑΚΑΤΡΟΣΟ, there is the character “I” (read as such by Georgiev and Dimitrov alike). The character “I” reappears in the stone inscriptions of Kyolmen in the sequence read “ΙΙΕΚ. Α” by Georgiev and ΙΙΕΚΟΑ by Dimitrov. On these considerations alone there would be no reason to read “| |” as /i/. The same simpler character “I” is used, without any doubt, on the golden ring of Ezerovo for /i/ (Detschew 1916: 86, 1952: 88; Kretschmer 1916: 86-92; Georgiev 1957: 17; Georgiev 1977: 105-110). On the ring of Ezerovo also appear the characters “N” and “H”, an opposition which would not be represented in the stone inscriptions of Kyolmen if here “N” would not be represented by “| |”. I find very convincing the argument of Dimitrov, that: “On several occasions and especially in the case with the sequence of ΑΣΝ ΗΝ there is clear indication that the cutter was capable of distinguishing between and (rendered by | |) since he painstakingly carved a horizontal hasta in Η. His attempt at writing the Η resulted in carving a rather wide chunk off the soft limestone rock. On the other hand, he was consistent not to make the connecting diagonal hasta in any Ν sign, as it was technically impossible. There is one more instance where he successfully wrote Η, precisely in the short nine-letter inscription ΝΑΒΑΒΑΗΓΝ.” (Dimitrov 2009: 8).

Georgiev and Dimitrov both reveal the possibility that ΑΣΝ represents a Thracian morpheme, but their line of argumentation is different. Georgiev saw ΑΣΝ as a possible candidate to a unitary interpretation only for the

Ezerovo ring, and he conceived a possible alternance $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ / $\Lambda\Xi$, where the final N could be elapsed (Georgiev 1977: 108). Although he read $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ in both their occurrences in the Kyolmen inscriptions (Georgiev 1977: 125), Georgiev read the same sequence only in its first occurrence $\text{ZE}\Sigma \text{A}\Sigma\text{N}$ (*Zes(a) aśn*), with the same explanation (*ego, I*), but divided the second as $\text{N YA } \Sigma\text{N}$ (*N ua(s?) sn*) (Georgiev 1977: 129, 130, 134). Dimitrov not only noticed the presence of $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ both on the Ezerovo ring and on the stone slabs of Kyolmen, but for him the repetition of this and other sequences both on the Ezerovo and on the Kyolmen inscriptions, as noticed by others in the past, constitutes an important argument to consider $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ as representing a morpheme, containing the phoneme /a/, a sibilant (most likely /s/), and a nasal /n/ (Dimitrov 2009: 10). The second reasoning is stronger, being based both on internal considerations regarding the division of the text and the argument of a sustainable consequent repetition. If Georgiev hardly extracted a meaning from his sequence $\text{N YA } \Sigma\text{N}$ (*N ua(s?) sn*), in Dimitrov's interpretation, the presence of $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ in the same sequence, that he read $\text{IA}\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ seems to bring meaning to that row, whatever the context. For Dimitrov, $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ / $\Lambda\Xi\text{NH}$ would come from "an indefinite pronoun, from **ios*, Old Indian *yas*, Greek *hos* and **ni*, Phrygian *ios ni*, Russian *kto ni*, etc. "whoever," see numerous examples in Pokorny and Haas." (Dimitrov 2009: 10). A consistent reception of $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ as an /a/+s/+n/ Thracian morpheme demands his complete form as such (not $\Lambda\Xi$), while $\text{POI}\Sigma\text{TENE}$, that starts the Ezerovo ring inscription could be regarded as independent (maybe a genitive), without an extension $\Lambda\Xi$. Through his hesitation, "Whatever the meaning of $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ - / $\Lambda\Xi\text{NH}$," Dimitrov (2009: 12) implicitly recognizes possible alternative explanations. Both *ios ni* "whoever" or **heġ-* (**heġóm*) "I" could be reasonable explanations for the Thracian $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$, with a close meaning. If $\Lambda\Xi\text{NH}$ is a declined word, then N most likely belonged to the root. The etymology given through **h₁eġ-* (**h₁eġóm*) could explain a final nasal in the root as a retention of the emphatic form (**h₁eġóm*). Similar forms appear in other *satem* languages, as OPrus. *as* / *es*, Latv *es*, Arm *es*, Lith. *aš*, OCS (*j*)*azŭ*, Av. *az* / *azəm* (Pokorny 1959: 291; Mallory & Adams 1997: 454), due to the assibilation of the palatals, which also occurred in Thracian (Krahe 1985: 28-30; Szeremenyi 1999: 61; Clackson 2007: 49-53; Polomé 2008: 877, 886-887; Meier-Brügger 2010: 261). If $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ came from PIE **h₁eġóm*, then an unwritten *schwa* /ə/ could be conceived between the sibilant and the nasal, on the model of Av. *azəm*. A possible origin of the Thracian $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ - / $\Lambda\Xi\text{NH}$ in the relative pronoun would place it within the group of "Aryan, Greek, Phrygian, and Slavic" that "uses **yos*, **yā*, **yod* as the relative: OInd. *yas*, *yā*, *yad*; Gr. *ὅς*, *ῆ*, *ὅ*; Phryg. *ιος*, Slav. *i-že*." (Szeremenyi 1999: 210). In order to support this view, additional phonological explanations would be needed, besides the possibility that the final nasal would have been attached on the model of Phryg. *ιος* *vi* (Brixhe 1993: 331, 332; Dimitrov 2009: 12; Ligorio & Lubotsky 2018: 1818; Obrador-Cursach 2018: 79). Remaining in the semantic area of the pronouns, the Phrygian demonstrative *εσ'αν* (*e* < **h₁e/o-* + *san* < **so-* – "with yet another pronominal stem *e-* added (type French *celui-ci*)", Ligorio & Lubotsky 2018: 1826; cf. Obrador-Cursach 2018: 78-79; demonstrative **se/so* – Brixhe 1993: 331) could represent a close form, but in this case the final nasal would not be a part of the root, but it would mark the accusative. The vowel /a/ in the initial position could have resulted the same way as other PIE roots beginning in **He-* gave not only a Thracian *e-*, but also an *a-*: Asbenoi vs. Esbenis from **h₁ekw-o-s*, and *Argiske* vs. *Ergiske* from **h₂erġ-* (Dimitrov 2009: 127). There are also *Arzos*, river (tributary to Hebros, Ptolemy III.11.6 1843: 188) and *castellum*, with assibilation (Tomaschek 1894: 82; Russu 1967: 91), vs. *argilos* "mouse" (cf. **h₂ġ-rós* "fast (of animals)" – Mallory & Adams 1997: 194), without assibilation (Tomaschek 1893: 4; Russu 1967: 91; Clackson 2007: 197; Mallory & Adams 1997: 641) Thus, such phonetic behaviors "suggests that the *e/a* alternation might be due to something within Thracian itself." (Dimitrov 2009: 127). In some interpretations, the demonstrative pronoun, **so* / **seh_a* (fem.) / **tód* (neuter), already had, in its PIE form, a certain affinity towards a **sə* form, with a mid central vowel (Mallory & Adams 1997: 457), a form that could be present in a Thracian compound word **as(°)n*, wrote as $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$. Thus, PIE **h₁o-* + **so-* + **m-* (accusative) could have given a Thracian **as(°)n*.

Conclusions

The sequence $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ repeats itself in Thracian inscriptions, occurring once on the golden ring from Ezerovo (5th century BC) and twice in the rows cut in stone from Kyolmen (6th century BC). Georgiev (1977) recognized two of the three occurrences (with doubtful explanations for the text of Kyolmen), while Dimitrov (2009) recommended that all the three instances should be considered as occurrences of the same Thracian morpheme. The context and the characters forming $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ led both mentioned authors to an etymology from a pronominal form. On one hand, in the first row on the Ezerovo ring, the complete form $\Lambda\Xi\text{N}$ should be retained, since the continuation with a word bearing an initial /n-/ (marked as N), as proposed by Georgiev, is not, by far, a secure solution. On the other hand, the possibility of extended form $\Lambda\Xi\text{NH}$, as it appears in one place at Kyolmen, could be considered.

The character formed by two parallel strokes in the inscriptions of Kyolmen (||) is the manner in which the cutter in stone represented N (which also belongs to AΣN), in opposition to H, to which he strove to add the hasta, as shown by Dimitrov. I think it would be very hard for someone to make valuable interpretations for the inscriptions of Kyolmen without taking into consideration the very pertinent explanations of Dimitrov for the character ||. Besides that, N is a frequent character in Thracian inscriptions (also on the Ezerovo ring), which would be very improbable not to be used at Kyolmen at all or only once, as suggested by those who read || as a word-divider (Bešliaev and others) or in other interpretations.

To the proposed etymologies, from **h₁eǵóm* “I” (?) or Phryg. *ιος υι* (**yos*), I added the resemblance of the form with the recently discussed Phrygian *εσ^οαν* (*e* < **h₁e/o-* + *san* < **so-*). The possibility for AΣN- / AΣNH to be a Thracian pronominal form is high, but further discussions should determine better its origin, and thus, its precise meaning. From **heǵóm* “I”, a Thracian **as^(o)n*, on the model of Avestan *asəm* could be conceived, while the assibilation of the PIE palatal is a satem feature that applies also to Thracian. A Thracian **as^(o)n*, wrote AΣN could also be explained in resemblance with the Phrygian *εσ^οαν*. The initial a- could be explained in this case due to a peculiar Thracian *e/a* alternation (pointed out by Dimitrov for other cases). Thus, PIE **h₁e/o-* + **so-* + **m-* (accusative), on the model of Phrygian *εσ^οαν*, could have given a Thracian **as^(o)n*.

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