

Is the inscription on the Ezerovo ring finally deciphered? Yes.

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Abstract

A new translation and very probable accurate decipherment of the inscription on a gold ring found in 1912 in Ezerovo, near Plovdiv, Bulgaria, which is generally presumed to be a 5th century BC example of at least one dialect of the Thracian language, a Palaeo-Balkan Indo-European language which went extinct over a thousand years ago, though the exact century when the language ceased to be spoken is not yet known.

Keywords: Thracian, Palaeo-Balkan, Dacian, Ancient Greek, Proto-Albanian, Balto-Slavic, Indo-European, Proto-Indo-European, Etruscan, Pre-Greek, Artemis

1. Introduction

In 1912, in a place called Pärženaka in a village called Ezerovo (the village of Ezerovo takes its name from a lake in the area), near Plovdiv, Bulgaria, a gold ring inscribed with a text in Greek letters was found by happen-stance while a mould/burial mound was being excavated. The ring weighs 31.3 grams and the surface on which the letters are engraved (the last four letters are engraved on the other side) has an elliptical shape measuring 1.7 x 2 cm. In the same neighborhood besides the ring there were found other items considered to be belonging to a burial – a golden diadem, a small golden spoon, two triangular golden plates, a broken bronze vessel, a round bronze mirror and a broken bronze bracelet. Thus the golden ring was probably for the burial of a Thracian of means and status. The ring is considered to date back to the 5th century BC.

The language of the inscription is most likely Thracian, in the opinion of nearly all of the scholars of the past who have examined the inscription, and in my opinion as well. This conclusion is based on a number of factors, of which the most important are: 1) the inscription does not make sense in Greek; 2) the area where the ring was found was not an area where Greek speakers predominated at that time, and indeed Greek is thought to have been spoken natively by only relatively few in that area at that time; 3) it is not as likely to have been written in Paeonian or Illyrian or Macedonian (Greek dialect or not: but if Macedonian was a Greek dialect and this inscription was written in a Macedonian Greek dialect, then the inscription should be intelligibly Greek, but it is not), because in the inscription we find *Rolis* (a variant of the well-attested Thracian and Daco-Getic anthroponym *Roles/Rholes*) as the first part of the inscription, a name not attested among Illyrians, Paeonians or Macedonians/Greeks, nor to my knowledge among any besides Thracians and Daco-Getians. 4) There is no evidence that Paeonian was a Satem language, and the language in the inscription to me indicates a Satem language. 5) Neither Illyrian nor Paeonian nor a hypothetical non-Greek Macedonian language can be ruled out, but various archaeological evidence and other indications suggest a Thracian language, not Illyrian nor Paeonian, though so little is known of Illyrian and Paeonian.

Few have found the previous translation attempts satisfactory; nor have I found them satisfactory; indeed, the only two translations before mine which I find noteworthy are: 1) the translation essayed by Dimitar Dechev, published in 1957; and 2) Vladimir Georgiev's translation, which dates back to the 1960s or 1950s. I find Vladimir Georgiev's translation to be more unlikely than Dechev's, and among the number of reasons for that determination is Georgiev's interpretation that Thracian "as" meant "I" in the inscription (referring here to the English pronoun "I"), which Georgiev extracted from "Rolistene/as/nerenea" in the inscription (the forward slashes indicate Georgiev's parsing, not any word-breaks found in the inscription; the inscription does not indicate any word-breaks). It's not that "as" is unlikely to have been the Thracian word for "I"(English)/"ego" (Latin)/"ich"(German), (etc., all from PIE **éǵh₂*, meaning "I"): that's likely enough, as seen in Old Prussian where "as" meant "I", deriving from PIE **éǵh₂*, the **gh** sound having been sibilized to *s*, and Thracian can be expected to have sibilized that gh there as well (though it's not certain that Thracian

actually did that in this particular word, since this pronoun is not yet attested in Thracian, Georgiev's translation being too unlikely on this point of "as" from *Rolisteneas*, and his interpretations of the other elements are also unlikely); my problem with Georgiev's interpretation is that he extracts that "as" from *Rolisteneas*, which makes his interpretation of this "as" meaning "I" in the inscription very unlikely as will be seen.

I have therefore essayed my own translation, which has a high likelihood of being the first correct and accurate translation and decipherment of one of the two longest of the Thracian inscriptions discovered so far. If so, this provides us with the first advanced look at the Thracian language, beyond the short phrases translated before, and beyond the small number of glosses from ancient authors, and beyond anthroponyms, theonyms, toponyms, phytonyms (from the afore-mentioned ancient glosses), et al.

I agree with the order of the words and the sound-values of the letters which most or all past investigators have followed, and I agree with the reading direction, which is from left to right:

ΡΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕΑΣ ΝΕΡΕΝΕΑ ΤΙΛΤΕΑΝ ΗΣΚΟ ΑΡΑ ΖΕΑ ΔΟΜΕΑΝ ΤΙΛΕΖΥΠΤΑ ΜΙΗ ΕΡΑ ΖΗΛΤΑ (the letters on the ring itself are sometimes different from the letters indicated here, but the sound-values correspond to what is shown here). My parsing of the words is I think identical to Dechev's parsing; indeed it can be said that when it comes to parsing, we only perhaps disagree on the last word in the inscription. However, as will be seen, we disagree about the meanings of most of the words and elements thus parsed.

I agree with Dechev et al. that *Rolisteneas* in the inscription is a male Thracian anthroponym, and that we should parse it as *Rolisteneas*, not *Rolistene*, nor stopping at *Rolis*. I have not yet tracked down the name of the first person to recognize this *Rolisteneas* in the inscription, nor who was the first to end the parsing after the second S (*Rolisteneas*...); it may have been Dechev, but likely not. For anyone with a decent knowledge of Thracian anthroponyms, this was obvious; due to the known/attested Thracian names *Roles* and *Oroles* (and some other variants); as well as the *-sthénēs/-sthénē* (meaning "strong" in ancient Greek, from ancient Greek *σθένος*, *sthénos*, "strong") element from ancient Greek names (Alkisthénē, Androsthénēs, Kallisthénēs, Sthenélāos, et al.) being known to have been either adopted by Thracians, or perhaps Thracians had the word as well from Proto-Indo-European or from a Non-IE language of the area and time: the etymology of Greek *σθένος* (*sthénos*) is not agreed upon in the literature, with some preferring a Non-IE derivation.

Some interpreters--though agreeing about the Greek cognate/loanword *-sthenes*---prefer the parsing *Rolistene*, believing either, like Georgiev, 1) that *Rolistene* is an ablative case inflection of a proper name, as in Latin and Greek (see Georgiev's translation for this usage and interpretation), if Thracian had an ablative inflection like that identical to Latin (though Thracian and Dacian may well have had that kind of ablative inflection, the inscription on the ring is almost certainly not an example of that usage); or 2) believing that *Rolistene* is a Thracian genitive form. I don't subscribe to either of those two interpretations; for the genitive interpretation some cite *Ebaroze*, extracted from the Kjolmen inscription: but there is no convincing reason to think that *Ebaroze* is the correct way to parse that portion of the Kjolmen inscription (found in the Preslav region, north of the Rhodope mountains, in Moesia, where the Thracian population was probably mostly of the Getean/Moesian/Daco-Getean kind, who spoke a dialect which had a number of differences compared to most Thracians of the Ezerovo area), which more likely should be connected to the SAS letters that occur next, so that the full name is *Ebaro Zesas*¹; nor is there any evidence that *Dadaleme* found inscribed on some silver phylia is a name showing such a genitive (as I plan to detail in future versions of this paper or in a separate study; for now, the *Da Dale Me* inscriptions are discussed later in this work): *Dadaleme* very likely (most likely/more likely, in fact) represents a Thracian phrase *Da Dale Me*, not a name (see discussion of that later in this work). I do have to find more examples of the *-eas* ending in Thracian names; since I have not yet compiled a catalog of Thracian names, nor have I reviewed all of the attested Thracian names (nor have I undertaken an extensive review; I last did a rather extensive review of Thracian and Dacian names many years ago, and I had access to only a smaller number of them), I do not currently have another example of a Thracian name ending with the adjectival suffix *-eas* (found in Greek and in Greek names) to include here. Yet Dacian names ending with *-eus* (*Decaeneus*; *Diurpaneus*) may be Romanizations of *-eas*; or *-eus* may be

1 See my translation of the entire Kjolmen Moesian inscription. My translation of that inscription was published on March 6th, 2022, on Zenodo. See also the Conclusion section of this paper where I discuss my translation of the Kjolmen inscription vis-a-vis my translation of the Ezerovo ring.

the Dacian version of the scarcely (?) attested Thracian *-eas* (or the Thracians living close to and among the Greeks may have adapted their native suffix so that it became identical to the Greek *-eas*). The name ending *-ais* (*Dekinais*, *Diernais*, etc.) is well-attested in Dacian, and I recall *-ais* in Thracian as well.

Second, I agree with a number of previous translators, including Dechev, that *Nerenea* likely was the genitive form of the name of the father of Rolisteneas or the genitive form of Rolisteneas' gens/family name; so that *Rolisteneas Nerenea* likely means "Rolisteneas, son of Nereneas", or "Rolisteneas of gens Nerenea". The Thracian name **Nerenea/*Nereneas* has to my knowledge not yet been attested elsewhere, but it looks very likely to be a name with that very form, since there is a Proto-Indo-European root word **h₂n^{ér}*, which meant "man; power, force, vital energy", from whence comes ancient Greek *aner*, meaning "man", and Albanian *njeri* (from Old Albanian *njer*, from Proto-Albanian **nera*) meaning "man; human being", to name a few cognates. There is also a Latin gens name *Neria*, a Latin nomen *Nerius*, and a Latin name *Nero*, all three of which were traditionally believed by the Romans to mean "strong and sturdy", matching the meaning of the PIE etymon.

There is also a reminiscence of the Ancient Greek name for a particular sea-god, *Nereus*, whose name is of unknown origin and unknown etymology. I think there's a chance that Ancient Greek *Nereus* is akin to Etruscan *neri* (the attested Etruscan element *neri* =water, according to some interpreters of Etruscan inscriptions); or *Nereus* could derive from PIE **h₂n^{ér}*, meaning "man", as in "the first man", which could have been a reference to a forgotten myth-cycle, perhaps also reflected in the name of another Greek sea-god, Proteus (this "forgotten" mythology about "the first man" being a sea-personage is actually encountered in the mythologies of peoples of various parts of the earth, and thus it is quite likely to be embodied in the name of Nereus). I know that some have already noticed the similarity to Etruscan *neri* (though I noticed that resemblance on my own, before I knew that anyone else had noticed that, though it was an easy thing to notice) but I may be the first to suggest an etymology involving the „first man“ mythology surrounding Proteus and other sea-deities. My preferred theory is that Nereus derives from **ner* referring to the strength and power of the sea, of water: PIE **h₂n^{ér}* is reconstructed as having meant „man; power, force, vital energy“.

2. The new translation

Here now is my translation, actually two translations because I have two theories regarding one of the words: my two translations are very different from any previous translations (besides agreeing with many translators about the meanings of the elements *Rolisteneas* and *Nerenea* and *mie*, and agreeing with Dechev about the meaning of *domean*): **ΡΟΛΙΣΤΕΝΕΑΣ ΝΕΡΕΝΕΑ ΤΙΛΤΕΑΝ ΗΣΚΟ ΑΡΑ ΖΕΑ ΔΟΜΕΑΝ ΤΙΛΕΖΥΠΤΑ ΜΙΗ ΕΡΑ ΖΗΛΤΑ:**

1) *Rolisteneas Nerenea, tiltean*, = "Rolisteneas Nerenea, fallen/buried (fallen in the sense of deceased)"

ēsko Ara-Zea Domean Tilezupta = "Petitions Ara-Zea, Lady Carrying the Bow"

miē era-zēlta = "to make me again bloom"

2) *Rolisteneas Nerenea, tiltean*, = "Rolisteneas Nerenea, fallen/buried (fallen in the sense of deceased)"

ēsko Ara-Zea Domean Tilezupta = "Petitions Ara-Zea, Lady of the Covered Breasts"

miē era-zēlta = "to make me again bloom"

So the entire inscription reads either: 1) ***Rolisteneas Nerenea, fallen/buried, petitions Ara-Zea, lady carrying the bow, to make me bloom again*** ; or 2) ***Rolisteneas Nerenea, fallen/buried, petitions Ara-Zea, lady of the covered breasts, to make me bloom again.***

The inscription is thus a religious/magical formula for the deceased, who is seeking either a

ressurrection on this earth; or reincarnation; or a good afterlife. The ancient Greek writer Herodotus detailed how the Getae (a northern group of Thracians) believed that they were immortal, meaning that they didn't believe that they actually died even though they corporeally died (see Herodotus, *The Histories*, 4.94), so Herodotus furnishes some important proof there, but I recall some more proof from reference works on the Thracians, which I will detail in future versions of this paper.

The theonym *Ara-Zea* meant „Arrow Goddess“ or „Bright Goddess“ or „Woods Goddess“: this will be fully detailed further in this work. I have found that the *Ara* in *Ara Zea* is most likely cognate to the *Ara-/Arak-* in the Aetolian toponym *Arakynthos*, which is considered to be a Pre-Greek toponym; in this toponym, I have found it very likely that *Arak-/Ara*=“chestnut tree“ or „oak tree“ (this will be detailed further in this work). The geographical range across which cognates to this *Ara* word (found in *Ara Zea*) are to be found has not yet been determined, but an inscription in Linear A (which I will detail further in this work) strongly indicates that the word was also found in a Pre-Greek Minoan language of Crete, and so is most likely from a root-word that was of Non-IE origin, which entered some branches of IE after the time when the Proto-Indo-European language was spoken (though I would not be surprised if one finds a cognate or several cognates in the Proto-Indo-European language: at least one likely PIE cognate will be discussed later in this work). I know that a word *Ara-/Arak-* meaning „arrow“ or „bright“ or „trees/woods“ is not found in any surviving Ancient Greek manuscripts, but in Pliny's² *Naturalis historia* (written in Latin in the first century AD, the first 10 books were published AD 77) there is found, in a number of passages of the NH (= *Naturalis historia*), mention of *aracia* meaning “a variety of figs that are white figs“, a word which is of unknown etymology; and in Ptolemy's *Γεωγραφικὴ Ὑφήγησις*³ (book 6, chapter 4), written in Ancient Greek, we find *Arakia* referring to an arrow-shaped island in the Persian Gulf, nowadays known as Qeshm: yet in that area of the island, no such toponym *Arakia* is known outside of Greco-Roman writings, so I expect that *Arakia* was a name given to the island by certain people from the Italy of Roman times, and from the Romans passed into the Greek of Ptolemy's *Geographia*. The Italic *Aracia* and Ptolemy's *Arakia* are both of unknown etymology, are both are very likely from Non-IE as well, while the *Ara* in *Ara Zea* almost certainly entered Thracian from Pre-Greek (considering the Minoan/Linear A cognate *A-Ra-Ko*=“bowl“ occurring on Linear A/Minoan inscription KO Zf 2: Khania Mus. 1385, which is an inscription on a bronze mesomphalos bowl; the *A-Ra-Ko* syllabograms are the first 3 syllabograms of the inscription on the bowl, and due to Ancient Greek ἀράκη=“bowl”; ἄρακις=“bowl, a pan”, ἀράκτης=“bowl; a pan” and ἄροκλον=“bowl; a pan”, which are all considered Pre-Greek, I'm sure that *A-Ra-Ko*=“bowl” in this Minoan inscription, even if no one before me has stated that; later in the *Ara Zea* portion of this work, I show that all those bowl and pan words come from “hollowed out”<cut out”<“pointed”, and so are cognates, and the Minoan attestation indicates Non-IE). If the word has cognates in Proto-Indo-European (see my detailed discussion of the *Ara* component further in this paper), then that would indicate that these Pre-Greeks must have been at the least in close contact with speakers of the Proto-Proto-Indo-European language: alternatively, one or more Pre-Greek languages split off from Proto-Proto-Indo-European (which can be called Eteo-Indo-European) at a time before Proto-Indo-European. Later in this work I discuss many likely cognates for this Thracian *Ara* in the Ancient Greek lexicon, and elsewhere, including Albanian.

Though the theonym meant „Arrow Goddess“ or „Bright Goddess“ or „Woods Goddess“, not „Earth Goddess“, the inscription is asking *Ara-Zea* to make the fallen or buried (*tiltean* meant either „fallen“ or „buried“ or both) man bloom again, which indicates to me that this goddess had qualities that among the Greeks were more associated with Demeter rather than with Artemis (but the moon was often thought of as the abode of souls in the Greco-Roman world, so that likely has something to do with the Thracian conception of Bendis/Kottyto/Kotys/Artemis). So *Ara-Zea* could be thought of as a conceptual combination of an earth-goddess like Demeter and a goddess like Artemis (a goddess corresponding to Artemis has been attested as Bendis and also as Kotys/Kottuto among the Thracians), a conceptual combination already known and identified among the Greeks, Anatolians and Minoans (see the literature on the subject; of course, I'm not saying that the Thracians consciously combined Demeter and Artemis, which was not the case; nor am I saying that they consciously combined two Thracian goddesses; rather that the Thracians had at least one goddess, *Ara Zea*, who had qualities of both Demeter and Artemis, but those qualities were not taken from

² The Roman/Latin form of his name was/is Plinius; his full name was Gaius Plinius Secundus. He was born AD 23 or 24, and died AD 79.

³ *Γεωγραφικὴ Ὑφήγησις* literally means „Guide to Drawing the earth“. The work is usually known as the *Geographia*, using the Latin name, and in English it's often called the *Geography*. The work is considered to have been written around AD 150.

Greek religion, though some later Greek influence, and vice versa, is possible: but mostly the similarity is due to a common source, including Pre-Greek religion and mythology).

Of the Thracians, Herodotus in chapter 5.7 of *The Histories* says: "*They worship no gods but Ares, Dionysus, and Artemis. Their princes, however, unlike the rest of their countrymen, worship Hermes above all gods and swear only by him, claiming him for their ancestor.*"

In the immediate region where the gold ring was found, archaeological artifacts record that a cult of Apollo, the Kendreiseian Apollo (Kendriso Apollo; Kendreiseia was apparently an ancient name for Pulpudeva, which became the modern Plovdiv), was particularly important there. And the worship of Apollo in those days was usually accompanied by the worship of his sister, Artemis. In a scholarly source discussing the Thracians, I have found that Kendrisia⁴ is considered to be the name of a Thracian goddess (I have also found sources saying that Kendreiseia was an ancient name for the town of Pulpudeva; the town was known by several different names in ancient times). And I have found sources which say that Kendriso (and Kendros) may be a Thracian name of Apollo. I could find no etymology given for this group of kindred attestations (Kendreiseia, Kendrisia, Kendriso, Kendros and even Kendrisi, the latter being the name of a Thracian tribe of the area), so I studied the forms and discovered the most likely etymology myself: the PIE root is ***(s)kand-**, "to shine, gleam, glow", from which comes ancient Greek κάνδαρος (kándaros, "charcoal"), Albanian hënë ("moon"), Sanskrit चन्द्र (candrá, which as a noun meant "moon" and as an adjective meant "gleaming, shining"), Old Armenian խաւիղ (xand, "fiery emotion/passion"), Latin candeō ("to shine, gleam").

The form Kendrisia is a theonym, and is best understood as a feminine adjectival epithet of the Thracian Artemis, an adjectival epithet which meant "shining; gleaming". The form Kendreiseia may be a toponym (= "(city) of Kendrisia and Kendriso") formed from the theonym/adjective Kendrisia; or Kendreiseia may be the actual attested form of the theonym (rather than Kendrisia), and could have been used as a theonym and as a toponym; I am working on clarifying the attestations. The masculine adjective forms Kendros and Kendriso have the same meaning yet probably with a slight difference ("shining, beaming, burning") to emphasize the burning hot energy of the sun, instead of just the radiance of the moon. Thus it's most likely that in the very place where the gold ring was found, the cult of Apollo (Kendriso, Kendros) and Artemis (Kendreiseia or Kendrisia; also known there and elsewhere among the Thracians, I hypothesize, as Ara-Zea: as I will detail later in this work, Ara-Zea more likely meant „Arrow Goddess“ or „Bright Goddess“ or „Woods Goddess“, rather than „Goddess of the Earth“) was very important, so much so that the tribe of Thracians native to the locale were known as the Kendrisi, worshippers of the Thracian Artemis (who was associated with the moon and the wild woods, with nature, with wild animals and with the earth, as well as with the hunting of wild animals; with childbirth; and more) and her brother, the Thracian Apollo (associated with the sun and more). There will be more about the archaeological evidence in a future version of this paper; some of the archaeological evidence is in the form of images and/or inscriptions on ancient coins minted in the area.

Among the Greeks, Artemis had a rather long list of epithets/epicleses, including *Thērasia*, an epithet which had the implied meaning "the Huntress" (from Ancient Greek *thēraō*="to hunt, chase"), an epithet attested on its own (without the name of Artemis appearing in the attestations), in Mycenaean Greek Linear B texts from Knossos in Crete as *Qe-ra-si-ja* (= *Khwerasia*, „The Huntress“, from PIE **ghwer-*, "wild animal"); *Khwerasia* later became *Thērasia* in several dialects of ancient Greek, due to a well-known phonological shift in ancient Greek, where Mycenaean Greek *khw-* became/corresponds to ancient Greek *th-* in most dialects and in most situations, but in some dialects *khw-* shifted to *ph-*; and in some cases within the same dialect, *khw-* shifted to *th-* or *ph-* depending on the phonological situation of a particular word in the same dialect. Another of Artemis' many epicleses/epithets among the Greeks was *Chitone* ("wearing a chiton", which can also be translated as „the well-clothed/well-covered“, since this was emphasized by the Greeks and Thracians: the Thracian Bendis is always depicted with her body fully-covered by a chiton). For the explanation of *Tilezupta* as a Thracian epithet of Artemis, see the following paragraphs where that element is analysed in detail.

⁴ I found the form *Kendrisia* in Bruce M. Metzger's *The Problematic Thracian Version of the Gospels*. I will soon clarify whether *Kendrisia* is an alternative rendering of the possibly more accurate rendering *Kendreiseia*, or whether both forms are attested; and I will clarify whether or not the two forms have slightly different usage: the form *Kendrisia* may be exclusively a theonym; the form *Kendreiseia* may be a toponym; if only one form from those two is actually extant in ancient sources, I will find out whether the extant feminine form (if only one of them is attested) could be both a theonym and a toponym.

Now for my proposed etymologies and other evidence for my translation given above:

Roli: this is probably the same as the well-attested Thracian and Getic male anthroponym *Roles/Rholes* (and also attested as *Rolis?*), *Rolouzis* (attested as a Dacian name); whether the *Roli-* in this ring inscription comes from the form **Rolis* or from a variation thereof is not clear, but what is clear is that in 2021 I found the etymology of the *Roli-* in this inscription, and also most likely the etymology of the elsewhere-attested Thracian name *Rholes/Roles* and Dacian *Rolouzis*: all three meant “virile, potent, boisterous, strong-blooded” and those meanings derive from the meaning of “blood/rushing”, which derives from the cluster of meanings “blood, sap, ichor, juice; to flow, to stream, to rush”; however most likely these Thracian forms do not derive from **hréyyō*, from PIE **srew-*, “to flow, stream, rush”, as do Ancient Greek *ῥέω* (*rhéō*)=“I flow, stream, rush, gush”; *ῥεῦμα* (*rheûma*)=“stream, flow, current”; *ῥεῦσις* (*rheûsis*)=“flowing”; *ῥύσις* (*rhûsis*)=“flow; the course of a river or stream”; *ῥοή* (*rhoé*)=“a river, a stream”.

Most likely the Thracian forms do not derive from PIE **sreu-* because I doubt that PIE **sr-* became **hr-* in Proto-Thracian: I doubt that because the name of the Thracian river Στρῦμών (*Strūmōn*) derives from Thracian, due to its location and due to the fact that it does not match Greek, where **sr-* became **hr-*: in the linguistic literature, that much is already established regarding Στρῦμών (*Strūmōn*). There is no need to force a derivation from **sreu-* for those Thracian forms *Roli-*, *Rholes/Roles*, *Rolouzis*: because in Ancient Greek, we find such forms as *ῥόχθος* (*rhókthos*)=“roaring of the sea”; *ῥόθος* (*rhóthos*)=“rushing noise”; “roar of waves”; “dash of oars”; “any confused, inarticulate sound”; “any rushing motion”; (in Boeotia) “a mountain path” (this surely derives from “sinuous, winding like a river<river<rushing, noisy”; *ῥάθαγος* “rushing noise”; *ῥυβδέω* “to slurp in”; *ῥοῖβδος* “any rushing noise or motion”; “whirring of wings”; “rushing of the wind”; *ῥοῖζος* “rush of wings, of the sea or of a stream”; “whistling or whizzing of an arrow or of a scourge”; “any whistling or piping sound”; “hissing of a serpent”; “rushing motion, rush, swing”; in Hesychius we find a gloss of his saying that *ῥοιλιαῖς* (*roiliais*), *ῥοιδνας* (*roidnas*) and *ῥοιδμός* (*roidmos*) all meant “a rushing noise”, and these forms are cognate to *ῥοῖζος/ῥοιζέω* and *ῥοῖβδος*, words which denoted both whistling and rushing noises: *ῥοιζέω* was used for the rushing of a stream/river⁵; *ῥοιζήτωρ*=“one who moves with a rushing sound”, and you can check Ancient Greek dictionaries for more *ῥοιζ-* words meaning “a rushing sound”.

So now we have *Roil*=“rushing noise”, attested in *ῥοιλιαῖς* (*roiliais*). But can I show an easy progression from “rushing noise/rushing motion” to “blood”? Yes, I can. Observe: PIE **kres*, “water-spring, surge, wave”, source of Doric Greek *κράνα* and Aeolic Greek *κράννα* and Attic Greek *κρήνη* “(water-)spring, fountain, well; waters”, Albanian *krua* “spring (of water)”, Proto-Germanic **hraznō* “wave”. Compare PIE **kréwh₂s*, “blood (outside of the body, e.g., blood rushing/spilling out)”, from PIE **krew_h2-* “blood (outside of the body, e.g. blood rushing/spilling out)”, which is, I posit, cognate to PIE **kres*, “water-spring, surge, wave”, as I detail more in one of my other papers. See also Ancient Greek *κρούνισμα*, “gush, stream”, *κροῦμα* “sound produced by striking stringed instruments with the plectron; also the sounds of wind instruments”. So then: I posit that Thracian *Roli-* is a Thracian form of Ancient Greek *Roil-* meaning “rushing noise; rushing motion” in Ancient Greek; and in the name *Rolisteneas*, I posit that *Roli-* means “blood”.

Ancient Greek *ῥόα* (*rhóa*)=“pomegranate fruit; pomegranate tree” is thought to very likely derive from PIE **srew-* “to flow” because of the richness of the juice; but what previous researchers have not realized is that there is more to that derivation: not just because of the richness of the juice, but also because the word *ῥόα* (*rhóa*) and some of its kindred cognates developed the meaning “blood/red”: and I am about to present my evidence for the existence of those meanings in *ῥόα* (*rhóa*): another word for “pomegranate” in Ancient Greek was/is *σίδη* (*sidē*): and that word is very likely cognate⁶ to Ancient Greek *σίδηρος* (*sidēros*)=“iron”, both likely deriving from the older meanings “blood; liquid; sap; juice; water” from another root which meant “to flow” (not from PIE **srew-*, but from a different root-word with the same meanings). The “iron”

⁵ See any good Ancient Greek dictionary for the attestation(s) of that use.

⁶ That *σίδη* (*sidē*) and *σίδηρος* (*sidēros*) are surely cognates has been noticed before, I am not the first to say this, and this idea of them being cognates is without any real contenders, and there is no data that indicates otherwise.

word likely comes from there because of the redness of iron likened to the redness of blood, and it is thought that the English word “iron” also comes from an earlier meaning of “blood”, from another root-word of probably identical meanings. The Ancient Greek *σίδη* (*sidē*) also referred to a water plant, thought to probably be a water lily: another indication that there was a *sidē* in Ancient Greek/Pre-Greek that meant “water; to flow, rush”. The Ancient Greek *σίδη* (*sidē*) was also found in many interesting variant forms, which however are not of import to this current work, and so I advise the reader to look for those variants elsewhere.

The kinship of the “rushing noise” words (*ρόιλιαῖς*, *ροίδνας*, *ροιδμός*, *etc.*) to the “red/blood/juice/water; to flow, rush” words is further indicated with no doubt by the following Ancient Greek words: *ροῖδιον*=“small pomegranate”; *ροιδάριον*=“red rouge/red lipstick/a red cosmetic”; and Modern Greek *ρόδι* (*ródi*) and Romanian *rodie* both mean “pomegranate”: compare these forms to *ροίδνας* (*roidnas*) meaning “a rushing noise” and *ροιδμός* (*roidmos*) also meaning “a rushing noise”.

One semantic branch led to “rushing sounds/rushing noises”, while another branch led to “rivers, streams, water, juice, blood”, and from the meaning “blood” developed the meaning of “things the color of blood” (pomegranates, red rouge, etc.). The form *ρόιλιαῖς* (*roiliais*) shows clearly that the *-L-* sound can and did appear in some words of this nature, and that brings us back to the *Roli-* seen in this inscription, and to the Thracian name *Rholes/Roles* attested elsewhere, and the Dacian name *Rolouzis*: I’m quite sure that time will show that all those derive from “to flow, rush”>“blood/rushing”>“virile-blooded/rushing”. *Rolisteneas* meant “(Of)Blood strong/mighty”=“(Of)Mighty/strong blood”. Any translation that thinks “*Roli-*” is not the first part of a compound name which has at least the form *Rolistene* is absurd (and there are strangely many such completely wrong “translations” out there). And not only was it *Rolistene*, it was *Rolisteneas*, as I argue here, after Dechev et al. (not sure who was the first to say that). The Daco-Getic (and Thracian?) male names *Oroles*, *Orola* (both *Oroles* and *Orola* are attested as men's names) could have a different etymology from *Rholies/Rolis*.

While *Rha*, an ancient name for the Volga river (see Ptolemy’s *Geography, Book 5, Chapter 8*) may have the same kind of origin as *ρόθαγος* “rushing noise” and *ροιδμός* “rushing noise” etc. and so *Rha* could be a Thracian hydronym; or it may derive from PIE **sreu-*, “to flow, rush”---but if from **sreu-*, then it’s most likely not from Daco-Getic, but could be from Scythian.

steneas: this is likely a loanword, from ancient Greek *σθένης* (*sthenes*)/*σθένος* (*sthenos*), meaning “strong”, which the Greeks used for the termination of a number of their attested anthroponyms. Or alternatively, the Thracians had the word as well in an almost identical or identical form as the Greek. Beekes (2010) states that the etymology of Greek *σθένος* is unknown, though there are Indo-European etymologies proposed, which Beekes did not find convincing, so he chose to list the word as being of still undetermined and/or unknown origin. To me it seems quite likely that *σθένος* is cognate to another Ancient Greek word, *στενός* (=“narrow, tight”) somehow, despite the „th“/“t“ difference, and despite the arguments that they cannot be derived from one root-word: I think they can be if one takes into consideration that one of them is likely a loanword from a Non-Greek language: and via different paths, both words may lead back to the same root-word. In such a way also, both *σθένος* and *στενός* may be cognate (as has been suggested in the literature) to English “stith” (=“strong, stiff, rigid”), which is from Proto-Germanic **stinþaz*. Likewise as a loanword, *σθένος* may derive via an unknown language from PIE **steyh₂-*, “to stiffen”, the source of English “stone”, German “Stein”, Proto-Slavic “stena” (=“conglomeration of stones”; “wall”; “rock”; “cliff”;), and the likely source of Ancient Greek *στία* and *στίον* (which are probably directly from **steyh₂-*, rather than being loanwords) both meaning “pebble; small stone”. A derivation directly---as a native Greek word---from PIE **seǵh-* “to hold, to overpower”, suggested as far back as 1900, is unlikely because, though many Ancient Greek words are considered to derive from that root, none begin with *st-* nor with *sth-*, rather they begin with *skh-*, *ekh-*, *iskh-*, *hek-*, *eks-*, etc. It may be that *σθένος* is one of those words that, though having close cognates or close parallels in Indo-European, actually derives from a Non-IE language. If Non-IE, the likelihood that Thracian and Greek had the word as a Non-IE loanword in the same form and meaning increases; though even if from PIE, Thracian and Greek could have both had it inherited from PIE in nearly identical or even identical form and meaning; however, if the word is from PIE that becomes less likely. I have no problem considering the Thracian form to be a Greek loan.

Nerenea: the first part *Ner-* is from PIE **h₂nĕr* (*masculine*), meaning “man; power, force, vital energy”; cognates include Albanian *njeri* (=man; human being), from Old Albanian *njer*, from Proto-Albanian **nera*; and ancient Greek *aner* (=man). The Thracian *Ner-* is also cognate to the *Ner-* seen in the Roman nomen

Nerius (gens *Neria*), and the Roman praenomen *Nero*: all of which Latin/Roman names (*Nerius*, *Neria*, *Nero*) were traditionally described as meaning *fortis ac strenuus*, "strong and sturdy", matching the meaning of the Proto-Indo-European etymology.

The second part of *Nerenea* shows the same element seen in Thracian *Esbenis* ("horseman"). The first part of Thracian *Esbenis*, namely *esb-*, is known to be from PIE *h₁ék_wos (*masculine*), meaning "horse, stallion": and just as the noun *esb-* has received the suffix *-en-* seen in *Esbenis*, likewise the noun *Ner-* has received the suffix *-en-* in *Nerenea*. The same *-en-* noun suffix is also seen in *Mezenai*, another Thracian term also meaning horseman/horserider/chevalier/cavalier (as *Esbenis* meant), but the *Mez-* in *Mezenai* derives from a different root, not from *h₁ék_wos (the certain etymology of *Mez-* is well-known in the literature on the Thracian language, and so I will not go into that in this paragraph; suffice it to say that there is no doubt about the etymology of *Mez-*). It's likely that after going more extensively through the Thracian and Dacian language material, I will find more examples of the *-en-* noun suffix.

The third and final part of *Nerenea*, the ending *-ea*, is the genitive suffix, which is in feminine form as we see in Latin *gens/gentes* names (note: the plural of *gens* is *gentes*). In Latin, the *gens* (family name) is always in feminine form: cf. Roman *gens* names such as *gens Aurelia*, *gens Nasennia*, *gens Neria* (noted above), *gens Valeria*: and many more, because all the Latin *gens* names have the feminine ending, even when the name itself has a "masculine" etymology. The Thracian *gens* name *Nerenea* is from the Thracian nomen **Nereneas*. One can posit from *Esbenis* ("horseman") a Thracian nomen **Esbeneas* (feminine **Esbenea*) and a Thracian *gens* name **Esbenea*. A form **Nerenis* may have also existed in Thracian, but probably not as an anthroponym, but as a hypothetical word deriving from the same PIE root. I do not currently have more examples of Thracian or Dacian names ending with *-ea*, for reasons discussed above: I've just begun again reviewing the Thracian and Dacian name evidence after not having done an extended review of their names in several years. The genitive suffix *-ea* is at the same time an adjectival suffix.

tiltean: is interpreted by me as having most likely meant „buried“ though possibly instead "fallen", with the meaning of "deceased": since many among the Thracian people didn't believe in actual death, it would make sense that they would here, in this religious formula which is seeking a type of resurrection or life after death, use the term "fallen" instead of "dead". But more likely *tiltean* meant „buried“ and deriving from PIE **telh₂-* = "flat ground, bottom", from where also derives Armenian *t'alem*="to bury"---and I will discuss that high-likelihood first.

Besides Armenian *t'alem* (=“to bury“), another proposed cognate is Latin *tilia*⁷, which meant „linden tree“, and is already believed to come from an older *til-* which meant „broad, flat“ (cf. PIE **telh₂-* = “flat ground, bottom“), because of the large, broad flat leaves of linden trees: and also because the tree is very often broad-spreading. There is also Latin *tellūs* which meant „earth, ground“: quite likely the older meaning was „the broad flat expanse of the earth“, and the shift of meaning to „to bury/buried“ is attested in Armenian, where it had to have developed from „earth“ and/or „flat“, since the consensus is Armenian *t'alem* (=“to bury“) derives from PIE **telh₂-* = “flat ground, bottom“.

If *tiltean* meant „fallen“ not „buried“, the meaning „the broad flat expanse of the earth“ could have led to „to go flat, to be laid flat“ in turn leading to „falling/tilting/falling to the ground/to be defeated“: probably those additional meanings developed quite rapidly, many thousands of years ago.

Further cognates from PIE **telh₂-* = “flat ground, bottom“ include Old Prussian *talus* (=“floor“), Lithuanian *tiles* (=“floor of a boat“). For the shift **telh₂-* to *Til-*, see the Delmato-Pannonian/Illyrian toponym *Tilurium*, most likely cognate⁸ to Latin *tellūs* /*tellūris*, well as Latin *tilia* described above. The shift from **telh₂-* to *Til-* is also seen in some words derived from PIE **telh₂-* „to bear, carry, support, undergo, endure“ (see the discussion of *Tilezupta* later in this paper), including in probably in the *Tile-* of Thracian *Tilezupta*, if *Tilezupta* meant „Carrying/Bearing-the-bow“, as in a bow used for arrows (see the discussion of *Tilezupta* later in this paper).

In 2022 I found two very likely additional cognates for *tiltean*: Ancient Greek *πετέλα* (*ptelēā*)=the elm tree, *Ulmus glabra* of the southern European subspecies (those found in Ancient Greece) about which I found this quote: „*Ulmus glabra* subspecies *glabra*: in the south of the species' range: broad leaves

⁷ I have known of that etymology of *tilia* for over 10 years, but somehow forgot to think to include that word and etymology in earlier versions of this work, and while I didn't forget about Latin *tellūs*, I have to admit that it took me some time (a number of months) to realize that Latin *tellus* is a very likely cognate to Thracian *tiltean*.

⁸ See Orsat Ligorio and Danilo Savic, „Illyrian and Slavic“, pg.27.

with short tapering base and acute lobes; trees often with a short, forked trunk and a low, broad crown.“ Therefore I posit that Ancient Greek *πελέα* (*ptelēā*) and Armenian *թելի* (*t'eli*) (=“elm tree”)⁹ are cognate to Latin *tilia* (=linden tree) and all three are cognate to Thracian *tiltean*, and cognate to many or all of those words that I cited above: *Ptel*=“broad, flat” in Ancient Greek, as does *t'el* in Old Armenian and *til-* in Latin *tilia*; and the *til(t)-* in Thracian *tiltean* had the older meaning “broad, flat, earth”, from which the later meanings “fallen” or “buried” (or both) developed. Because these elms remind people of weeping (as do the weeping willows) they were associated with graves and tombs; also because they spread broadly (like the earth) and provide good cover (they cover similarly to how tombs and graves cover the deceased); and maybe also because in some ancient languages of the Balkans and elsewhere, their words (or their neighbors’ words, like between Greeks and Thracians) for “earth” and “bury/buried” were similar to their words for “elm tree” (*telea/tilia/ptelea*, etc.): so *tiltean* may indeed have meant “buried” but it could also just as well have meant “fallen” for the reasons explained above and in following paragraphs.

This etymology of *πελέα* (*ptelēā*) is indicated by another Ancient Greek word that had no good etymology until I discovered one: the word *πέλας* (*ptélas*)=“wild boar”: this word is most likely from the meaning “earther”, which meant “digger in the earth”: a behavior that boars often engage in, looking for food: and PIE **pórkos* (pig/piglet) is already considered to have meant “digger” and to derive from PIE **perk-*“to dig”. So most likely **ptel/*tel* was an Indo-European word for “earth; the flat expanse of the earth”, and Thracian *tiltean* derives from there and this translation is accurate. See also (not cognates, but from a different with the same root-semantics) Ancient Greek *πλάτανος* (=planetree), *πλατάνιστος* (=“plane tree”), *πλάτυς* (=“wide, broad, flat level”): the plane-tree is a broad-spreading tree with large leaves as well. See also Ancient Greek *Πλάταια*, a toponym/city-name which may¹⁰ preserve an old Indo-European name for the earth-goddess, from “broad, wide, flat”.

Some possible cognates for “tiltean” are found in Germanic, and they mean “to slant down, slant/fall towards the ground”. This does not mean that Thracian was particularly close to the Germanic branch. English “tilt” is one of the Germanic cognates; English “tilt” from Middle English “tilte”, from Old English “tyltan” (=“to be unsteady”), from *tealt* “unsteady,” from a Proto-Germanic word reconstructed by not sure which linguist as **taltaz*. Cognates for the English and Old English words are given as including: Old Norse *tyllast* “to trip,” Swedish *tulta* “to waddle,” Norwegian *tylta* “to walk on tip-toe,” Middle Dutch *touteren* “to swing”; also believed to be a cognate is Icelandic *tölt* (used to describe the ambling gait of certain horses; and so also meant an ambling place for horses). Meaning “to cause to lean, tip, slope” (1590s) recorded for „tilte“ is from sense of “push over” or “fall over.” Intransitive sense “to lean, tip” first recorded 1620s. As stated a few sentences above, these Germanic words have not yet been linked to any Proto-Indo-European root word, but could be somehow derived from PIE **telh₂-* “flat ground, bottom”, maybe as loans into Germanic. The existence of Etruscan *TYLAR* (*tular*) meaning “earth; land, ground, country; boundary-cippus” shows that cognates of PIE **telh₂-* “flat ground, bottom” likely existed outside of PIE/IE, particularly in Etruscan and Pre-Greek.

Etruscan *tle-* (found in Etruscan inscription TLE 890)¹¹, may have meant “defeated”, perhaps from the earlier meaning of “knocked down or laid down” (in Etruscan inscription TLE 890, the meaning does not seem to be “killed”, though the meaning “killed” could have developed from the earlier senses, and that meaning may have been employed elsewhere in Etruscan usage, though probably not in inscription TLE 890). And also Cf. Hurrian *til-*, “to destroy”. The Etruscan and the Hurrian forms are possible cognates.

9 In the previous version, though this certain Armenian cognate was in my notes, I forgot to include it in the work, just as I had forgotten to include the parallel examples *Platanos*, *Platanistos*, *Platus* and *Plataia*.

10 See Burkert, Walter (1985 English translation and updated), *Greek Religion*, page 135.

11 I found Etruscan *tle-* and Hurrian *til-* in Arnaud Fournet's *A Tentative Etymological Glossary of Etruscan*. In that paper he argues that Etruscan *tle-* and Hurrian *til-* “to destroy” are cognates and that’s from where I took that idea of those two words being cognate to each other.

"Tiltean" may have meant in this inscription merely in bad shape ("unsteady"), but not deceased; in which case, to make him bloom again would mean to bring him back to good health. If that is so, the ring inscription would have been for a person who was still living when the inscription was made. But why wouldn't he have just left out the word "tiltean" in that case? Why inscribe in gold that he is sick? I'd imagine that that would not be considered a propitious or wise thing to do. So I think the translation that I gave above is more likely, that the inscription was for the deceased *Rolisteneas Nerenea*.

ēsko: meant to "ask, petition"; there are many Indo-European cognates for this word, including English "ask", Lithuanian "ieškoti" (=to seek), Armenian "hayc" (=demand, request; seeking); Sanskrit "icchati" (=to seek); all ultimately from Proto-Indo-European **h₂eys-*, "wish, desire". Why hasn't anyone before me linked the "ēsko" in this inscription to this root that I'm linking it to? If I'm correct, it was a big oversight (and a key oversight) of previous translators, due to the un-obvious nature of this inscription.

Ara Zea: the *Ara* found in *Ara Zea* most likely meant either "arrow"¹², "bright" or it meant "tree/woods"¹³; so *Ara Zea* meant either "Arrow Goddess (Goddess of the Arrow)", "Bright Goddess" (referring to the moon; compare *aracia*="white fig" in parts of ancient Italy¹⁴), or "Woods Goddess (Goddess of the Woods)". I don't think that in the language inscribed on the ring, "Ara" meant both "arrow" and "tree/woods" (even though both meanings easily derive from "pointed/sprouting"). It's more possible that *Ara* meant both "bright" and "arrow" in the language inscribed on the ring, considering the fact that the Thracians like all IE languages would have had many words meaning "bright" and so one of their words meaning "bright" could also have meant "arrow", considering the fact that in some languages there exist words that mean both "arrow" and "bright"¹⁵ at the same time. More likely, "Ara" meant "arrow" but not "bright" by the time the inscription was written, though both meanings were very likely in Proto-Thracian or in the possibly (and quite likely) Non-IE language from which the word came.

The "Arrow Goddess", "Bright goddess" and "Woods Goddess" readings are based mostly on my interpretation of the Aetolian oronym (oronym=mountain-name) *Αράκυνθος*: due to evidence and indications that I will detail in the following paragraphs, I have found that the *Ara*- or *Arak*- in *Αράκυνθος* most likely referred to either the chestnut tree(s) or to the oak tree(s). Due to my new (August 2022) interpretation of

12 Compare Ptolemy's *Arakia* referring to an arrow-shaped island, Qeshm. A discussion of Ptolemy's *Arakia* has been added to the portion of this work above the portion where I begin discussing Roli-

13 I have found great evidence that "Ara" does not derive from a word meaning "to curve, turn, bend, twist", and so I mention the possibility that "Ara" might have meant "bow" only here in this note, but it's not likely enough to include among the likely scenarios. The English word "bow" is known to derive from PIE **b^hewg^h-* "to bend; to curve, arch", but the Persian word for "bow", *taxš* (=crossbow; arrow), *taxša*, is thought to derive from the earlier meaning "arrow" (*taxša*) from the earlier meanings "to run, flow, fly" (<PIE ***tek^w-*), referring to the rapid flight of an arrow and to the rapidity with which some archers can shoot a series of arrows out ("flowing out"). So since I think that with "Ara" we are dealing with a root that meant "pointed, sprouting", "Ara" could have meant "bow" only if the earlier meaning was "arrow", later shifting to "bow". But I will explain why it is much more likely that "Ara"="Arrow", not "Bow". Supposing for a moment that "Ara" meant "bow", I don't think that in the language inscribed on the ring, "Ara" would have meant both "bow" and "tree/woods" (even though both meanings could easily come from a hypothetical "ara" meaning "to curve, bend, twist", leading to "bow" as well as to "tree", because most trees have curved/bending branches and curved roots, and many trees also have curved and/or bent trunks; though both "bow" and "tree" could develop from "to bend, curve, twist", I think it's unlikely that "Ara" would have meant both "bow" and "woods").

14 See the new discussion of *aracia*="white fig" added to this 10th edition, added to the portion above the portion where I begin discussing Roli-. I sometimes wonder whether *Arazea* does not contain a word *Zea* but instead is one word, *Arazea*, a Thracian (<from Pre-Greek) equivalent of Italic *Aracia*: I don't think that's the case, but it's not impossible. Note also Hattic *Araz*="earth". For all that is currently known, Hattic *Araz* ("earth") may derive from **Araz*="blooming, sprouting", referring to the earth. Compare also Proto-Celtic **ar(-akno-)*="bread" and Proto-Celtic *aranka*="grain": the flour made from wheat grain is white, and wheat itself is golden, bright: so these two Proto-Celtic terms may come from *Ar*="bright, white" and/or "to sprout, to rise, to grow". Unless this *Ar*- in these Celtic words meant "to strike, grind, crush" referring to grinding of wheat and the grinding some other grains: "to strike" would fit an *Ara* that meant "Arrow".

15 One example I can cite now is Sumerian *Mul*, which meant "bright", "star" and "arrow": the different meanings have the same etymology: "pointed" leading on the one hand to "bright" and "star" (because of the pointed rays/beams of light) and on the other hand to "arrow".

Ancient Greek *κολοκύνθη* (= *Citrullus colocynthis*) which I will detail in this edition, and considering the more likely scenario for Βερέκυνθος (more likely Βερέκυνθος represents a word Bere- plus the suffix unthos, rather than a word Bere plus a word kunthos), it's more likely that *Αράκυνθος* represents Arak plus the Pre-Greek suffix unthos, a variant of the more common Pre-Greek suffix -inthos. In the inscription on the ring, I don't think that Ara referred to a specific tree: because it seems less likely that a Thracian Artemis would be referred to as „Goddess of the oak“ or „Goddess of the Chestnut tree“ or as a goddess of any specific tree; so in one or more languages of Aetolia, „Ara/Arak“ likely (but not definitely) referred to a specific tree; but in the language of the inscription on the ring, „Ara“ most likely meant either „arrow“, „bright“, or „tree/woods/forest“---but not a specific tree.

So now to study the oronym *Αράκυνθος* and to study the specific mountain in Aetolia which bears that name: *Αράκυνθος* is a mountain in Aetolia which is still known by that name today in modern Aetolia (in Ancient Greece, more than one mountain was called *Αράκυνθος*, at least two: another one seems to have been in Attica: the exact location of the Arakynthos in Attica is as yet unknown): one Greek website describes the mountain *Αράκυνθος* of today (the one in Aetolia) like so: “*Arakynthos: Northwest of Varasova starts the relatively low Arakynthos Mountain. Its Northeast side is full of thick forests of various species of oak and chestnut, hosting numerous woodland birds and birds of prey. Although very close to cities, Arakynthos forest surprises us with its rich nature and wildlife.* “ Another Greek website describes the mountain like this: “*Arakinthos or Zygos* ¹⁶, *is a mountain of the Aetoloakarnania prefecture, south of Lake Trichonis and north of the Messolonghi Lagoon. It is 984 meters high. Arakinthos is located in the narrow gorge of Kleisoura through which the Messolonghi region is connected with the region of Agrinio. It is characterized by cedar forests, chestnut and oak trees, waterfalls, caves and a rich biodiversity of birds, reptiles, squirrels, turtles, deer, wild boars, foxes and wolves, composing a completely different landscape in such a small distance from the sea front of the municipality ICS Messolonghi.*“ Another Greek website describes the Arakynthos mountain like this: “*With an altitude of 984 meters above the lagoon of Messolonghi it is the natural border between the sea and the lake Trichonida. Evergreen with oak trees, bushes, walnuts and an impressive oak forest, it offers shelter to wild pigs, deer, squirrels, tortoises, eagles and snakes.*“

Those three quotes show part of how I determined that the *Ara/Arak* in *Arakynthos* meant either „woods/tree“ or else referred to a specific tree (the oak tree or the chestnut tree or the cedar tree), but the full story goes back to when I was trying to decipher the etymology of the Ancient Greek word *κολοκύνθη* (= *Citrullus colocynthis*): that was circa September of 2021. In September 2021, I came to the tentative conclusion (which I now think is less likely than my new conclusion, which I will detail after I discuss my earlier conclusion) that *κολοκύνθη* represents *kolo*= „vine“ (from the older meanings „to curve, turn, twist, coil, bend“) or instead „round melon“ (from the older meanings „round; to curve, turn, bend“) and *κύνθη* represents a word that meant „covered“; I had arrived at those conclusions after reading about *Citrullus colocynthis*, which is a very viny, melon-bearing plant native to the Mediterranean basin and Asia (especially Turkey), and Nubia. The melons are bitter, not sweet. The plant resembles a common watermelon vine, but bears small, hard fruits with a bitter pulp. The vine-like stems spread in all directions for a few meters looking for something over which to climb. And I found that Hesychius glossed an Ancient Greek word *κυνθάνω*, which he says was equivalent in meaning to the well-known and well-attested Ancient Greek

16 Zygos (ζυγός in current Greek and Ancient Greek means „yoke“, with many additional meanings stemming from the concepts of „paired“, „joined“, „a cross-bar or strap joining two parts“, etc., additional meanings which are not relevant to this study) refers to the mountain being seen as the joining point of two different regions. See the quote: „Arakinthos is located in the narrow gorge of Kleisoura through which the Messolonghi region is connected with the region of Agrinio“. And see also the quote: „[Arakinthos] is the natural border between the sea and the lake Trichonida“. For another even clearer example of Zygos being used like this, see the Zygos mountain in Thessaly, which is named so because of a very important (very important to that region) mountain pass that joins two regions and allows for land travel through there without climbing any mountains. So this alternate name Zygos for Arakynthos does not refer to trees or to any specific tree. In Ancient Greek ζυγία means „field maple, *Acer campestre*“, referring to the way the leaves of the field-maple grow in pairs from paired stems that shoot in opposite directions from the branch, and the point where the two stems join on the branch looks similar to a yoke. The field maple was named for the same quality in Romanian, where *jugastru* is the Romanian word for the field maple, deriving from unattested Latin **iugaster*= „field maple“, from Latin *iugum*=“yoke“. Zygos as an alternate name for Arakinthos does not refer to maple trees however, since the explanation „joining point of two regions“ is certain, and since maple trees are not found there in a number to attract attention, if they are found there at all. Nor do I expect that there were many maple trees there in ancient times.

word *κεύθω*, which meant „to cover, hide, conceal“: so, after looking at some other Ancient Greek words beginning with kol-/skol-, I tentatively concluded that *κολο*= “vine, rope, snaky root“ or „round melon“, from the earlier more general meaning „that which turns, curves, twists“, akin to or deriving either from PIE **k^wel-* “to turn”, from which Proto-Slavic **kōlo* = “wheel, circle” derives¹⁷, or from PIE **(s)kel-*, “to bend, crook” from which many Ancient Greek words are considered to derive; and I concluded that the *-κύνθη* in *κολοκύνθη* is a form of the verb *κυνθάνω*= “to cover, hide, conceal”, as glossed by Hesychius: so my hypothesis, which I first published here in February 2022, was that *κολοκύνθη*= “vine+covering”, because: “The vine-like stems spread in all directions for a few meters looking for something over which to climb”. Alternatively, I interpreted *κολοκύνθη* as “melon+covering”, with unattested/hypothetical *kolo*=“melon” deriving from one of those PIE roots mentioned above (“round” leading to “melon”). I cited Ancient Greek *σκολιός* (=“curved, bent, twisted, tangled, winding”) and Ancient Greek *κῶλον* (=“limb, leg, arm”), both considered to derive from PIE **(s)kel-*, “to bend, crook“, to support those conclusions, as well as the Ancient Greek word *κολοιός* (=jackdaw), which I was thinking may also derive from *kolo-* meaning “to curve, bend”, in reference to the curved beaks of corvids, but now I think that *κολοιός* derives from a *kolo*=“noisy”¹⁸, as indicated by Ancient Greek *κολῳός*=“brawling, noisy wrangling, racket” and Ancient Greek *κολουᾶν*=“to make noise” and likely also by Ancient Greek *κολοίφρυξ*=“a cock of Tanagra”: unless *κολῳός*=“brawling, noisy wrangling, racket” and *κολουᾶν*=“to make noise” derive from the corvid/jackdaw word, and the corvid/jackdaw word *κολοιός* and *κολοίφρυξ* the rooster word derive from a different meaning: but that’s not so likely (nor is it likely that the two avian words are not cognate to *κολῳός* and *κολουᾶν*). Compare also PIE **kelh₁-* “to call, cry, summon”, from which derives Ancient Greek *κἄλέω*, “I call, summon”. PIE **kelh₁-* “to call, cry, summon”, might even be the source of *κολῳός* and *κολουᾶν* and *κολοιός* and the *koloi-* part of *κολοίφρυξ* via a Non-Greek language.

After I interpreted *κολοκύνθη* in that way, I tried out my equation *κύνθη*= “to cover” on the mountain name *Κύνθος* (=Mt. Cynthus on the island of Delos): *Κύνθος* could have referred to a snow-covered mountain or fog/mist/cloud-covered peak, or all of the above. When I applied this equation to the mountain name *Βερέκυνθος*, the result was even more extraordinary and convincing: *Βερέκυνθος* (=Berecynthus) is a mountain located at Malaxa, on the island of Crete: *trypali* limestone is the dominant rock of the Berecynthos/Malaxa mountain: the mountain is part of the mountain chain known in Greece today as the White Mountains (Lefka Ori) and the Bare Mountains (*Μαδάρες*): bare mountains because they have scant vegetation, and the White Mountains from the perpetual white or off-white color of their peaks, because the off-white of limestone during the summer and fall interchanges with the snow that covers the peaks until late

17 There are a number of Ancient Greek words that derive from PIE **k^wel-* “to turn”, but they all begin either with the t- sound or the p- sound, because PIE **k^we-* becomes T and/or P in the Greek branch of IE (PIE **k^wu* becomes K in Greek, but we are not dealing with a **k^wu* root here): so if these *kolo-* words that I am speaking of derive from **k^wel-* they would have to be post-PIE loanwords (not sure how many centuries after PIE) from a language where **k^we* became K.

18 I had read Beekes’ assessment that *κολοιός* is cognate to those words indicating “noisy, brawling”, but I rejected that theory unduly because I was looking for more cognates for my *kolo*=“vine”/“round (melon)” theory, and so I was thinking that those “noisy” words were coined from the corvid/jackdaw meaning (in turn, in that scenario, from “curved, bent” referring to the beak: see the etymology of Ancient Greek *κορωνή*=“crow” which refers to the curved beak), not vice versa, and I went so far as to say that there was “no real evidence” or “no evidence” for the noisy words being older. It is true that there is no conclusive evidence yet, and that’s what I intended without being explicit/clear on that point. But for now it’s more likely that the corvid/jackdaw word derives from the *kolo*=“noisy” words. Another thing that influenced my decision at the time was the Romanian word *ciorovăi*=“to argue, bicker noisily”, deriving from Romanian *cioară*=“crow”, which in turn likely derives from PIE **k^rsnós*=“black, dark, dusky”, cognate to Albanian *sorrë*=“crow”, Friulian *çore*=“crow”, Calabrian and Tarantino *ciola*=“crow”, Neapolitan *ciàula*=“crow”, Sicilian *ciaula*=“crow”. So, if *cioară*=“crow” derives from the meaning „black”, but the crow word led to a word meaning „to bicker noisily”, then that shows why I treated Beekes’ theory in such a dismissive way in earlier versions, because I was thinking the noisy words could derive from *κολοιός*=“jackdaw”, rather than vice versa: but as I looked again at the material, I realized that Beekes was likely right about *κολοιός*, and the form “*kolo*=“noisy” is reminiscent even of the Romanian word *gălăgios*=“noisy” and Romanian *gălăgie*=“noise, uproar, racket”: so *koloios* (=“jackdaw”) vis-a-vis *gălăgios* (=“noisy”): probably not quite cognates, but quite similar. Those Romanian words are part of the basic vocabulary, and yet I did not consciously make the connection to *koloios* immediately. The word *cioară* and its cognates (Alb. *sorrë*, Calabrian *ciola*, etc.) may derive from “noisy” as well, because the derivation from PIE **k^rsnós*=“black, dark, dusky” has not been proven yet.

in spring. So then I thought, what if Bere/Βερέκ=white and/or snow? Well, there is PIE *b^herH₂g =”bright, shining”, so I think that Βερέκυνθος comes from Βερέκ=white/snow+ the Pre-Greek suffix υνθος, or alternatively Βερέκυνθος is from earlier Βερέκ (snow/white) + κυνθος=covered.

Then I applied my equation to the Aetolian mountain Αράκυνθος, and I found those three quotes which I quoted above, and I found additional very strong evidence which I will describe in this paper: and I came to the conclusion that Αράκυνθος either meant “Tree-covered” or else meant “covered” by a specific tree which was called “Ara(os)” or “Araie” or “Araia” or “Aris”, something like that. However, as of late August 2022, I have come to the conclusion that very likely the Βερέκ- in Βερέκυνθος derives from PIE *b^herH₂g =”bright, shining” (rather than just the Bere- portion deriving from PIE *b^herH₂g, as I was kind of indicating in earlier versions; or rather than assuming that *Beregkynthos or *Beregynthos became Berekynthos, though those two scenarios are also likely), and υνθος is just a Pre-Greek suffix of a certain kind, which had the same function as the Pre-Greek suffix inthos, seen in a number of Ancient Greek words (hyacinthos, etc.), toponyms (Korinthos, etc.), etc. I think that it is very likely that the Κύνθος of Mt. Kynthos derives from Kunth=”to cover” (see the Hesychius gloss κυνθάνω=”to cover, hide, conceal”), for the reasons explained above, but it is unnecessary for such a kunthos=”covered” word to be found in Βερέκυνθος and Αράκυνθος, and most likely such a word does not occur in κολοκύνθη nor in its variants: and in the next paragraph I will detail my new etymology of κολοκύνθη.

As of August 2022, I think it is more likely that κολοκύνθη is to be interpreted as a word kolok- suffixed by the Pre-Greek suffix unthos/unthe/unte, etc. Because my new theory is that kolok- in Pre-Greek meant “pointed”, with some other meanings developing from there (including “to sprout/sprouting”, “bitter”, “pungent/tangy”), and the kolok- in κολοκύνθη most likely meant “bitter”, referring to the bitter taste of the *Citrullus colocynthus* melons. This is more likely because the other kolok- words in Ancient Greek indicate a root meaning “pointed” rather than “to curve, turn, twist”: see especially Ancient Greek κολοκάνας and κολεκάνας, both meaning “a long thin person”¹⁹: I think that that meaning derives from earlier kolek/kolok=”a thin stick”, from earlier *kolok/*kolek=”pointed”, most likely cognate to Proto-Slavic *kòliti (=”to stab, sting”) and Proto-Slavic *kòlъ (=”a stake=a pointed wooden stick”) via a non-Greek language (the Ancient Greek proper cognate is κελεῖς=”axe”, from PIE *kelh₂-). See Ancient Greek κολοκώνας which Hesychius defined as “tas balbidas tines” by which he meant that κολοκώνας is another word for balbidas (the plural of balbis), which could mean both “a rope drawn across the race-course at the start and finishing point” and “posts to which this rope was attached”: while the singular balbis could refer to the rope as well as to the turning-post to which the rope was attached: so the “rope” meaning would indicate “to curve, turn, twist”, but the “posts”/”post” meaning would indicate my new etymology kolok/kolek=”pointed”. I now prefer the “pointed” option, because it’s more likely that κολοκύνθη meant “bitter” referring to the taste of *Citrullus colocynthis* melons. See also Ancient Greek κολόκυμα=”large heavy wave”, well-explained as deriving from earlier *kolok-kuma=”pointed/rising wave” (κύμα in Ancient Greek means “anything swollen; wave, billow, etc.”). The Ancient Greek word κολοκάσιον, κολοκάσιον has not been demonstrated to be a later foreign import (the words in Coptic, Hebrew etc. are likely loans from Greek or from Pre-Greek, because they have not been traced to Ancient Egyptian nor to any Hamitic or Semitic root-word²⁰), and they are likely to be of Pre-Greek origin, originally meaning “tangy/pungent”, later transferred to the rhizomes of *Nelumba nucifera* (which has a tangy/pungent taste) and later to the rhizome of *Nymphaea lotus* (which may not be tasty, nor bitter) and later also to taro and eddo tubers. From Proto-Slavic *kòlъ derives for example Russian κολόκ (kolok)=”pin of a string instrument”. From there may also derive Russian κόλοκ/ κολόκ=”a grove (mostly near a plain)”, which may be from kol=“that which sticks up, sprouts up”. My interpretation of κολοκύνθη=”bitter” matches my theory (not published until now, but dating back to early or mid 2021) that Latin *cucumis* (=Cucumis melo var. flexuosus, the sweet Armenian cucumber, not the less sweet cucumbers which were not known to the Romans) derives from *cuc (*kuk)=”sweet”, found also in Ancient Greek κικκίτζα=cucumis. So words beginning with *cuc/*kuk would be reserved for sweet melons/cucumbers, while words beginning with kolok- would be reserved for bitter ones and pungent ones. Likely so.

¹⁹ And so scientists in recent times used the Ancient Greek word κολεκάνας to name a genus of gecko lizards, *Kolekanos*, which have elongated thin bodies. See for example the species *Kolekanos plumicauda*.

²⁰ It’s also possible that Greeks changed a foreign imported word (having the form *kulkas*, something like that) to make it conform to the native Pre-Greek kolok-, due to an imagined affinity between them.

Therefore, it's very likely that Βερέκυνθος and Αράκυνθος represent Berek- plus the unthos suffix and Arak- plus the unthos suffix, a suffix likely also encountered in the Ancient Greek toponym Zakynthos, and in Ancient Greek ὄλυυθος="a winter fig" and Ancient Greek κόρυνθος="a kind of cake" (as well as an epithet of Apollo near Asine in Argolis). From the nature of the additional evidence that I found (which will be discussed in following paragraphs), I'm sure that the Pre-Greek word Αρά/Αράκ (which meant either "chestnut tree", "oak tree" or "trees, woods") derives from an earlier "ara-" that meant "pointed; to sprout; to strike" and likely also in some languages led to words meaning "bright/white". And I suspect that the Αρά (=Ara) that is inscribed on the Ezerovo ring is either the same word (meaning "woods" if they are the same word, unless the goddess was associated strongly with a specific tree, which is not likely) or else a close cognate (deriving from the same root-word) that meant "arrow" or "bright" or "trees/woods": any of those scenarios demonstrating that Ara-Zea=Artemis/Bendis/Kotus/Kottuto, Goddess of the Wild Woods/Goddess of the Arrow and bow and of the moon and the hunt. Just like in the case of my etymology of the *Roli-* in *Rolisteneas*, I found this new evidence long after I published my translation of the Ezerovo ring in November of 2020. It would be quite extraordinary and strange if this was all coincidence (consider all the evidence in this paper if you haven't read this entire work yet) : I'm sure that the answer is that my translation of the ring is correct.

If the Αράκ- in Αράκυνθος meant "oak tree" in a Pre-Greek language of Aetolia, then Arak- could also have meant "tree"; and "forest, woods", as is known to have happened in some languages where a word meaning "oak tree" also means "tree (in general)" and "forest, woods", as I will detail later in this work. And Arak- could have meant "chestnut tree" in Aetolia, but could have meant "oak tree; tree; woods/forest" in the language of the ring inscription. Those quotes from those Greek websites explain why I specify the oak, the chestnut tree and the cedar: all three of those trees are mentioned in the description of which trees are found growing on the slopes of Αράκυνθος in abundance. From the information I found, it rather seems that the oak trees are the most abundant on Arakynthos. But maybe the mountain was not named for the most abundant trees, but instead for a tree that was more rarely found in Greece, like the chestnut tree or the cedar tree: therefore when someone in the general area back then spoke of "Arakynthos", it may have indicated that mountain which has a lot of rather rare chestnut trees²¹ or even more rare (at the time) cedar trees growing on its slopes (but at what point were cedar trees introduced into Aetolia? Where they introduced too late to be the source of the Ara- in Arakynthos? Probably they were introduced too late): and Arakynthos was also the name of one or two other such mountains or hills in the Ancient Greek world/Pre-Greek world (which have not been located yet: I suggest that one searches for locations in Ancient Greece with many chestnut trees, or locations that used to have many chestnut trees). As Fauve-Chamoux states, chestnut trees are rare in Greece, and in the rare places where they are abundant, they give rise to toponyms named after chestnut trees: so most likely the Ara in Arakynthos meant "chestnut tree", with "oak tree" being the second-most likely option.

A study of numerous Ancient Greek words beginning with *ara-* points very strongly to a word *ara*="pointed; sprouting", meanings which fit the chestnut tree and oak and the juniper and the cedar trees very well, as I will detail: and a word meaning "juniper" could easily have been transferred to the cedar (which was very likely imported into Greece at a later date, maybe after Proto-Greek times, maybe after Homeric times), as I will detail in this work. Before I detail those Ancient Greek words beginning with *ara-* which indicate such a root-word *ara*="pointed; sprouting" in the Ancient Greek world, I will first detail more about why a word Ara- with a root meaning of "pointed; sprouting" is likely for the chestnut trees and for the oak, juniper and cedar as well.

First, the oak trees: I have found that words for oak trees more often derive from a root-meaning of "pointed; to sprout, to sprout up high" rather than "to turn, bend, curve, twist", and I have confirmed only one example coming from a root-meaning "to turn, bend, curve, twist" : the one confirmed example so far is Gaulish *cassanos* („oak tree; oak wood“), from **cass-* "twist" (compare Irish *cas*, „to twist“; Old Welsh *cas*,

²¹ Because they dislike chalky soils, chestnut trees are rare in Greece, except on some sedimentary or siliceous outcrops, where they can become so abundant that they determine place names, such as "Kastania" in Thessaly. In addition, the roots of chestnuts tend to decay in badly drained soils, which helps to explain why chestnut trees thrive on hills and mountainsides. This information is from: Antoinette Fauve-Chamoux. *Cambridge World History of Food*. Editor: Kenneth F Kiple & Kriemhild Conee Ornelas. Volume 1. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

„cord; to twist“), from Proto-Celtic **cassos*, „curly, twisted, gnarled, woven“. From *cassanos* derives French *chêne* („oak tree; oak wood“) via Old French *chesne/chasine/chasne*, in turn via Vulgar Latin **cassanus* (attested in Medieval Latin as *casnus*). From that Gaulish word *cassanos* and from at least one variant (**cassicu*) derive also words for oak tree found in Occitan, Franco-Provençal, Spanish, Galician and Aragonese. The reason that the Gaulish *cassanos* derives from such an earlier meaning is because very often (or sometimes, not sure how often) oak trees do not have very high, straight trunks, but instead shorter trunks, as well as curving/bending trunks: and such oaks with shorter trunks very often have very curved branches, and for such oak trees with shorter trunks, the most striking aspect of their appearance are those very curved branches.

Besides the words derived from Gaulish *cassanos* and *cassicu*, I have as yet found no other words for oak trees (nor for specific kinds of oak trees) that really derive from the notion of „curved, twisted, gnarled, bent“. For example, I am certain that Galician *carballo*, Old Galician and Old Portuguese *carvalho*, Portuguese *carvalho*, Asturian *carbayu*, Galician *carba*, Asturian *carba* („brushwood“), Sardinian *carba/carva* („tree branch“), and other variants in fact derive from an earlier meaning of “sprouting”, instead of from the earlier meaning “to turn, curve, bend, twist” as theorized in: Pittau, Massimo (2013), *La lingua dei protosardi e quella dei baschi*; and also in: Coromines, Joan; Pascual, José A. (1983–1991), „garabato“ entry in *Diccionario crítico etimológico castellano e hispánico*, Madrid: Gredos. The theory in those works is that those *carb-/carv-/garb-/garab* words cited above derive (via Iberian and maybe also Sardinian substrate languages) from PIE *(s)k_ṛ-wós, from which Latin *curvus* („bent, curved“) derives. But as I will explain in even more detail next time, they in fact derive (according to my findings) from *garb/carb*=“to sprout”, as indicated to me by the Basque *garbasta/garbazta*=“pole with branches” and by Galician *carba* having the meanings “oak stump” (oak stumps sprout out new shoots, except for stumps that are dead) and “heath” (it’s more likely for “heath” to refer to a place of sprouting heath-type plants rather than a reference to the twistings and turnings of such plants, because heath plants---of various kinds---don’t really tangle one up like an area of dense shrubbery does, therefore another indication that my theory is correct) and Asturian *garbu/gárbu* meaning only “small branch” rather than oak tree or large branch. And I also think those Iberian and Sardinian words (see Sardinian *carba / carva*=“tree branch”) are cognate to Umbrian *Grabovius* (=“oak tree”) and to Ancient Greek γράβιον (=“torch, brand”): Beekes (2010) states that γράβιον (=“torch, brand”) is from a non-Indo-European substrate word meaning “beech, oak”, and is cognate to Ancient Greek γάβρος =“hornbeam tree”, Russian *grab*=“hornbeam”, Ancient Greek κράββατος (=“couch, mattress, pallet”), and Ancient Greek γοβρίαι=“torches”. So what do we have here? This information solved the mystery for me: Armenian բնխի (*boxi*)=“hornbeam” and the correct etymology is that which derives *boxi* from *bol*, “*sprout, plant; a kind of plant”, with the botanical suffix *h*=(i), and therefore etymologically identical with homonymous բնխի (*boxi*)=“horse fennel” (as well as referring to other kinds of fennel), and that makes sense because fennel plants (at least most species) grow/sprout up to be tall/high plants, so that’s why (*boxi*)=“horse fennel/fennel” derives from “to sprout” (and I’ve been sure for over a month now that Ancient Greek μάραθρον/μάραθρον derives primarily from *Mara-* meaning “sprouting up tall” (rather than “aromatic”, as I published in April 2022²²) from earlier “sprouting, rising, projecting; pointed”: compare Ancient Greek μάραγοι (=“overhanging places, overhanging portions of cliffs, ravines, etc.”, another word of unknown etymology which I think derives from *Mara*=“projecting/pointed”, as does the glossed Ancient Greek word *Mara*=“hand”, since many words for “hand/arm” come from “projecting out/pointed”, and English “hand” has also been theorized to derive from such a meaning already.

So why would a word for the hornbeam tree---բնխի (*boxi*)---derive from “to sprout”, instead of a reference to the hardness of the wood? Because hornbeam trees produce shoots abundantly; the shoots and leaves are used as animal fodder²³. And Aliroev relates²⁴ that Chechens made arrows from light and firm young shoots of the hornbeam, hence the name of the arrow in Chechen is identical with that of "hornbeam" —*пха* (*pħa*); Chechens also make baskets and wattling out of hornbeam twigs (again the importance of the sprouts/twigs of hornbeam trees for people). Note also Karabagh Armenian dialect բնխ *box*, “tree shoot with buds used as animal feed” in dialectological notation պօխ (*pōx*); and note also Moks Armenian dialect պօղ (*pōl*) glossed as "hornbeam" in Orbeli 2002. Note also Armenian բնխալ (*boxal*)=“to sprout”. Attempts to

²² In the first edition of my work *On the Etymologies of Artemis, Hera, Heros et al.* 2022.

²³ Комаров, В. Л., editor (1936) *Флора СССР*. volume V, Moscow, Leningrad: USSR Academy Press, page 261.

²⁴ Aliroev, Ibrahim (2001) *Флора и фауна Чечни и Ингушетии* [*The Flora and the Fauna of Chechnya and Ingushetia*], Moscow: Academia, page 21.

derive Armenian բխի (boxi)="hornbeam" from PIE *b^heh₂gos (= "beech tree") are unconvincing not just due to the considerations noted above, but also because the expected form from that root is **puð (**bac). The root therefore is PIE *b^hol- from PIE *b^hleh₃- "to bloom, flower, sprout". Those are the conclusions of the modern experts on Armenian, and their correct conclusions match what I have noticed about the Grab-/Garb-/Carb-/Garab-/Krab- words described above: notice how κράββατος="couch, mattress, pallet" and in the older Proto-Greek times especially, couches, mattresses and pallets were often made from stacked layers of young softer shoots/twigs: I compare Etruscan *crapis*="ceremonial litter of twigs, shoots" which has already been connected with *Grabovius*, an epithet of Iove/Jupiter among the Umbrians, and Jupiter/Iove was very much associated with oak trees, mostly because oak trees were hit by lightning more often than many other trees. And note that Ancient Greek γρῦνός="bundle of sticks" as well as "torch, fire-brand": therefore, most likely Ancient Greek γράβιον ("torch, fire-brand") comes from the earlier meaning "shoots, sticks", from Grab/Garb="sprout", and γάβρος="hornbeam tree" is a dissimilation of earlier Garb/Grab, or else an ancient gabr- variant, a variant which may be akin to PIE/Post-PIE *kápros="he-goat/billy-goat", which has been theorized by (???) to come from the earlier meaning "penis", which in turn I would derive from the earlier meaning "pointed; to sprout": compare Etruscan *Capre*="April": I have seen a speculation that Etruscan *Capre* (=April) derives from the meaning "goat" referring to the constellation Capella rising/becoming visible in April during certain years in BC times²⁵; I have not verified how often that coinciding happened; my preliminary theory is *Capre*="to sprout; spring; springtime" in Etruscan, which seems quite certain if in fact the astronomical Capella coincidence in April happened only a few times in BC times.

And Latin *carpinus* ("hornbeam") I'm sure derives from the same Garb/Carb/Grab/Carb root (which is probably Non-IE, given its high occurrence in Iberia and attestation in Sardinia), not from PIE *k_hter-"hard". Again, compare Etruscan *crapis*="ceremonial litter of twigs, shoots" which has already been connected with *Grabovius*, an epithet of Iove/Jupiter among the Umbrians, which is thought to be a reference to oak trees (yes, I'm sure it is a reference to oak trees and to hornbeam trees, and I think it's also a reference to and a memory of far back times when "bright" and "to sprout" were identical words in many ancient IE and Non-IE languages, both deriving from "pointed": see the evidence in certain Pahlavi/Middle Persian words, et al.). Old High German *karpho-"carp (fish)" and its Germanic cognates I think derives from the same *carp="shiny, bright", referring to the bright (and often golden) scales of carp fish. The German *karpho- and its cognates are already theorized to ultimately derive from a non-Indo-European substrate native to the Alpine region and Danube basin. Sanskrit śaphara ("carp (fish)") and Lithuanian šapalas, both from earlier *keph₂elos ("carp") are not cognate to the Germanic words nor do I yet know of any other words deriving from *keph₂elos (the root-meaning of *keph₂- may also be "bright, radiant", but as yet I cannot say that it is). In newer versions of my work on the etymology of Kypros, I already theorize that the Kupr- in Ancient Greek κῦπρῖνος ("carp") meant "Bright/radiant" from the earlier meaning "pointed"; κῦπρῖνος ("carp") is of unknown etymology and considered Pre-Greek by Beekes, and I also consider it Pre-Greek from the Pre-Greek root Kupr="bright, radiant; pointed", which is most likely distinct from Carp/Garb/Carb/Grab/Carb (etc.). See also the Delmatae (or a tribe adjacent to them in the Middle Sava valley) name Carpius and Carvius, and the south Illyrian (*Illyri propre dicti*) name Grabon: each of these names may represent the Grab/Carp/Carb/Carv word (discussed above) in different Illyrian/Illyrian-like languages: the names could have meant "bright; sprouting; blooming": for a semantic comparison/equivalent, see Latin Florinus/Florina, Florianus, Florian, and see the Iranic name Spargapeithes="Bright/blooming-looking" (peithes="appearance; to look", and sparga="to sprout; bloom; bright; healthy; beautiful"). Or, the names (Grabon, Carpius, Carvius) could have meant "hard, firm", with Latin *carpinus* and Ancient Greek γάβρος="hornbeam tree" both referring to "hard, firm" as well as to "erect, sprouting", due the penis becoming hard when erect, and tree-trunks are hard and erect and cylindrical, and mountains are hard and rising and often end in conical peaks at the top.

So besides Gaulish *cassanos*, I have found no other words for oak trees that derive from "to turn, curve, bend, twist", nor have I yet confirmed any word for "tree (in general)" deriving from such a meaning: I see that usually words for "tree" derive from the meanings "to sprout up, rise, tall". So most likely, if Ara/Arak="oak tree" then Ara/Arak="to sprout/rise/high/tall" or "pole/pillar" or "pointed" ("pointed" referring to acorns), with all those meanings deriving from *ar/ara="pointed; a sprout; a shoot; rising; tall". If Ara/Arak="chestnut tree" then Ara/Arak comes from the "pointed" meaning. It's very likely that Ara="chestnut tree", because chestnut trees bear very spiky (and they're sharp spikes) cupules which contain the chestnuts, and chestnut trees as described earlier are rather rare in Greece, so a mountain/hill rich in rare

²⁵ I have not yet traced this Capella theory to a reliable source.

chestnut trees was likely named after the chestnut trees. I will detail the chestnut tree scenario more later in this work. Now I will continue detailing the Ara/Arak="oak tree" possibility.

I have identified, in one of my other works (*On the Etymologies of Kypros, Salmoxis, Gebeleixis, Zibelthiurdos et al.*, see the newer versions of that work) the following Daco-Thracian words (in at least three different dialects) for oak tree: *eixis*, *eizis*, *oxis*, all three deriving from PIE/Post-PIE substrate word **h₂eyǵ-* s="oak tree", from the older meaning of "penis": see the second version (and all newer upcoming versions) of my work on the Kjolmen Moesian-Thracian inscription for the evidence that the older meaning of PIE **h₂eyǵ-* was "penis"/"something pointed", with the older meaning being "pointed" due to reasons described in that work. "Penis" referring to the appearance of acorns (see such meanings in Latin *glans*, Ancient Greek *balanos*, etc.). In that paper, I also identified a South Thracian word *thiurdos* for "oak tree", most likely cognate with Romanian *țur*="pointed" (the *ț* is pronounced like the „ts” at the end of „cats”), again referencing the acorns, with both perhaps deriving from PIE **ker-/kerh₂-*, source of English "horn" and Latin *cornū* (=horn), and the "oak tree" meaning would derive from the pointed acorns. Ancient Greek *thursus* ("staff") likely derives from *Thur*="to sprout; a stick, staff; pointed", perhaps from **ker-/kerh₂-*, via Thracian, or from Non-IE. Otherwise, Thracian *thiurdos* and Ancient Greek *thursos* (due to the vines twisting around the thursos of Dionysus/Dionysian events) could be from PIE **ker-* "to weave; plait; rope, string", from a more basic meaning "to turn, twist, curve": see the etymology of Gaulish *cassanos* ("oak tree") discussed in this work. The Albanian word *thur* ("to plait, braid, interweave; to fence in, enclose") derives from **ker-*, "to weave; plait; rope, string", as does Armenian/Old Armenian *sard* ("spider") and (according to a theory of mine) perhaps Old Armenian *sard* ("cedar of Lebanon"): formally, *thiurdos* is very similar to Albanian *thur*, and also contains a D after the R as seen in Armenian *sard*. There likely were additional Daco-Thracian words for "oak tree" (there are a number of words for oak tree in Ancient Greek, and Daco-Thracian comprised a number of kindred languages and dialects), so the Romanian *stejar* and the Bulgarian examples may be from Daco-Thracian, rather than Slavic.

Many oak trees have high and straight trunks, and such oaks with high and straight trunks inspired the Romanian word *stejar* ("oak tree") and the Bulgarian words *stežer*, "pole, oak tree" and *stež* ("white oak") which are probably cognate to Serbo-Croatian/Slavo-Macedonian *stožer* ("pole; pillar"); *stožer* derives from Proto-Slavic **stogъ*, "stack, especially a haystack; rick", which probably derives from PIE **stegh-*, the root from which Ancient Greek *στόχος* "pillar; pillar of brick or wood" probably derives. The Romanian *stejar* and the Bulgarian *stežer* and *stež* have a different vowel evolution as compared to *stožer*, and I have not yet found such *stežer* and *stež* words for the oak tree in other Slavic languages: for the oak tree, Slavic languages instead primarily use words derived from Proto-Slavic **dǫbъ*="oak tree"; "oak wood". If absent from other Slavic languages, the *stejar/stežer* and *stež* words then are likely from Daco-Thracian, and quite surely cognate to Proto-Slavic **stogъ* and Ancient Greek *στόχος*, in which case they derive from a root-meaning of "pole, pillar; that which sticks up, rises up, etc.". Another possibility is that the root-meaning also included the meaning "penis", and the root-meaning of *stejar*, *stežer* and *stež* could have been "penis", referring to the fact that acorns look quite penis-like (in Latin *glans*=acorn and penis, as well as additional related meanings; and in Ancient Greek, *balanos*="acorn, oak tree; penis" as well as additional related meanings): acorns look like the heads of uncircumcised penises, or like the small (the smallness was probably a stylization/convention agreed upon for aesthetic reasons) unerect penises usually depicted in Greek and Roman statues of nude males. In the second edition of my work on the Moesian-Thracian inscription found near Kjolmen, I demonstrated that PIE **h₂eyǵ-* ("oak tree" and "goat") certainly derives from an older meaning "penis<pointed", as explained in that second edition; and I expect that PIE **g^welh₂* ("acorn") has the same older meaning ("penis<pointed"), as does, I expect, PIE **b^heh₂ǵos*="beech/oak/chestnut tree"²⁶: the beech has very pointed and three-faceted (triangular) nuts, borne in a cupule that looks very much like the cupule that houses the chestnuts on a chestnut tree; while chestnuts are not so pointed, but they are borne in cupules that have sharp and numerous spines; and for the oak, the acorns are pointed and are of a penis-like appearance as noted above.

Now for the even more likely (if the Ara in Arakynthos and Ara Zea had the oldest meaning "pointed", as I will show it most likely did) possibility that Arakynthos="Chestnut tree-covered" rather than "Oak-tree covered": more likely due to this information quoted earlier: "*Because they dislike chalky soils, chestnut trees are rare in Greece, except on some sedimentary or siliceous outcrops, where they can become*

²⁶ Compare Proto-Celtic **bekkos*="beak, snout", which is of undetermined origin.

so abundant that they determine place names, such as “Kastania” in Thessaly. In addition, the roots of chestnuts tend to decay in badly drained soils, which helps to explain why chestnut trees thrive on hills and mountainsides”. Here then is the reason why words for the chestnut tree would very likely derive from “pointed”, as would words for oak and beech trees: the chestnuts of chestnut trees are contained in round cupules (one cupule contains one to seven nuts according to the different species/varieties/cultivars), those cupules are very spiny (and the spines are very sharp-pointed), and I would expect some words for the chestnut tree to derive from „spiny“, but not from „round“: the chestnuts themselves are not round, though those spiny cupules are: but those spines on the cupules steal the attention away from the roundness of the cupules.

My theory, which I first publish here, is that Ancient Greek κάστανᾶ = “chestnut tree” derives from a stem *kast-* that meant „something pointed; sharp; to cut“: from this stem would also derive (according to my theory) Ancient Doric Greek κάστον=“wood”, in one of at least three ways (if not from a combination): A) from the earlier meaning of “that which is cut, chopped”; B) from a word for a specific tree, such as the oak, developing the additional meaning of “wood” (as often happened in IE languages), and the “oak” word would derive from “pointed” because of the pointed acorns; C) or from this semantic development: “wood<branch/tree<shoot/sprout<something pointed” (with “wood” being the newest meaning, “something pointed” being the oldest). There is also Sanskrit *kāṣṭha*=“wood”, already thought to probably be cognate to κάστον (and κάστον is already thought to perhaps be cognate to κάστανᾶ, but no one has identified/described the root-meaning that I am describing). Armenian *kask*=“chestnut tree” is most likely another cognate. I am looking for/trying to reconstruct a root-word that would fit all those words, so the PIE root-word cannot be **kes-* “to cut”, from where the Latin verb *castrō* (=to prune; dock; amputate; castrate) derives, because initial PIE **k* becomes *ś* in Sanskrit (see Sanskrit *śastra*=“sword, dagger” and *śastrām-*, *śastram-*, “cutting tool, knife, weapon”) and becomes *s* in Armenian. The hypothetical ancient (PIE or non-IE²⁷) root-word **ǵ^hasto-* “branch ~ spear, sharp spine” (also reconstructed as **ǵ^hasd^ho-*) would not work either, because initial PIE **ǵ^h* would yield initial *Kh-* in Ancient Greek, *H* in Sanskrit, and *Dz* and *Z* in Armenian. Most likely then the root-word began with *k* or with *kw*, not with *k̄*. Albanian *kashtë*=“straw” may be from earlier **kalstā* in turn from **kalsa*, in turn from PIE **kolH-*=“awn; something pointed”, in which case it would not be a cognate, but instead cognate with Albanian *kalli*=“ear/spike of grain; any spike type of inflorescence”²⁸. But there are quite more possible cognates for Ancient Greek κάστανᾶ, such as the *kustum-* in Sanskrit *kustumbari* and the *Costo-* in *Costoboci*: for more about those and other possible cognates, see my work on *kustumbari* ²⁹(though it needs an update, which is upcoming). Though the root-word and source language(s) of κάστανᾶ = “chestnut tree” and κάστον=“wood” are not clear, the root-meaning of “spiky/spiny” for κάστανᾶ is extremely likely, and the three different scenarios that I described for the development of the “wood” meaning in Ancient Doric Greek κάστον are also very likely. As noted earlier, PIE **b^heh₂gos* (from which derives at least one word for chestnut tree, Albanian “bung” which means both oak tree and chestnut tree) most likely had the earlier meaning of “pointed”. And the root-word (whether PIE or Non-IE or Eteo-IE) from which κάστανᾶ derives was most likely a variant of **ǵ^hasto-* “branch ~ spear, sharp spine”, a variant which began with the *K* sound, instead of *ǵ^h*.

It is also possible for words for juniper trees and cedar trees to derive from „pointed/bright“, due to more than one reason: 1) junipers and cedar trees have pine-needles instead of leaves³⁰, though the needles of

27 More recent linguistic works conclude that **ǵ^hast(o)/ǵ^hasd^h(o)-* was not a PIE root, but instead most of the various words once thought to derive from that root are now thought to derive from unattested non-IE words which were cognates of each other but had varying sonic form, explaining the irregular phonetic variation in the presumably cognate attested descendant words. See Lubotsky, Alexander (2004), „Avestan *siiazd-*, Sanskrit *sedh-*, Latin *cēdere*”; De Vaan, Michiel (2008); Kroonen, Guus (2013).

28 And Sardinian *castia*=“straw” may be from PIE **kolH-*=“awn; something pointed” as well, but I haven’t seen the evidence for that, just the fact that the word is formed like Alb. *kashtë* and apparently they both mean “straw”.

29 Available on Zenodo, and after I update that work it will be available elsewhere as well.

30 In previous versions of this work, I published two new etymologies for Latin *iuniperus*=“juniper”: one explaining „*iuniperus*“ as meaning „needle-bearing“, the other explaining „*iuniperus*“ as meaning „berry-bearing“, with „berry“ deriving from „round“, due to the shape of the juniper berries (which are technically not berries, though they look a lot like berries and can be included as such according to different, non-botanical informal definitions). Both of my etymologies equate the *-perus* in Latin *iuniperus* with the *-perus* in Latin *puerperus* (=“childbearing”), which is very likely as shown in the previous recent versions. That *-perus* in *puerperus* is known to derive from Latin *pariō*, meaning “bear, give birth, beget, generate”. Soon I will put those two etymologies of *iuniperus* in a paper of mine specifically for that purpose, till then they can be seen in the versions or version of this work immediately

cedars don't look very pointy-ended, but a word for the native juniper could have been transferred to the cedar tree regardless of that 2) it is known/confirmed in numerous cases that words meaning „pungent (smell)“ (as well as „pungent (taste)“ derive from the earlier meaning „pointed“, and juniper wood and cedar tree wood have a very aromatic/pungent smell, similar to each other 3) both junipers and cedars have bright yellow resin, so remarkable is the color of their resin that κέδρος (=“cedar”) seems to be the source of Latin *citron*=*Citrus medica*³¹, the fruits of which are of the color of cedar and juniper resin³²: words for “bright, yellow, golden” are known to sometimes derive from the earlier meanings “to sprout”, “to bloom” as well as “pointed”³³.

The Ancient Greek word ἄρκευθος=árkeuthos=1) juniper 2) Phoenician cedar 3) Prickly cedar); the word has a variant ἄργετος (a Cretan variant). The word is similar to Arakynthos, but the similarity is most likely a coincidence. But an analysis of ἄρκευθος will be included now to address this similarity: árkeuthos is, as has been previously suggested³⁴, cognate to the Ancient Greek word ἄρκυς (árkus)=“net”: the explanation is this: an explanation³⁵ which may be based mostly on an Armenian example that I will detail: árkeuthos derives from the meaning of “bending, pliable, flexible” because of juniper's flexible branches used in plaiting or weaving; the Old Armenian word *gi* (=“juniper tree”) probably derives from the same idea: Lidén derived that Old Armenian word from PIE *weh₁y- “to twist, wind, weave, plait”: the root has alternatively been reconstructed as *wītā (by Ačařean, who gives the root the meaning of “willow” indicating that he thought it may have a root meaning different from the meaning ascribed by numerous works); *wey(H)-t- (Martirosyan); *wīšo- or *weyso- or *woyso- from *wey-s- (“to twist, wind around”) (Lidén, Pokorny, Mallory/Adams). The Ancient Greek ἄρκευθος (árkeuthos) then probably derives from PIE h₂erkw- “bend”, as noted by Pokorny (1959), and is cognate to Ancient Greek ἄρκυς (árkus)=“net” and cognate to Proto-Slavic *orkyta=“willow” and “sallow tree” and “broom (the tool)” (brooms end in bending, flexible plant matter, used for sweeping). Hesychius mentions a word ἄρκηλα=“egg”, which very likely is (via a Non-Greek language) from PIE *h₁órǵʰis (=“testicle”), the root-meaning of which may not have been “round”, but instead “egg”; the ark- in arkeuthos may also derive from *h₁órǵʰis via a Non-Greek language, because in Ancient Greek ὄρχις referred not only to testicles but also to a type of olive and to the root-bulbs of orchids; so it's possible perhaps that ἄρκευθος and its variant ἄργετος referred to the round berries of the juniper trees, with ark- coming from *h₁órǵʰis. Note that Arkeuthis=“juniper-berry”³⁶, and it's much more likely that the Ark-/Arg- in Arkeuthos/Arkeuthis/Argetos derives from a root meaning “to twist, turn, bend” cognate to ἄρκυς (árkus)=“net”. I'm sure that Arakynthos is completely different from Arkeuthos, and the words have a different origin, so I'm quite sure that Arakynthos does not mean “juniper” nor “berry-covered”.

Words for „oak tree“ sometimes lead to words that mean „woods/forest“ and also „tree“: see Proto-Slavic *dǫbrava=“oak wood, oak grove” and also “forest in general/woods in general”, deriving from Proto-Slavic *dǫbъ (=oak tree); another example is Ottoman Turkish *meşe* (=forest) which derives from a Persian word that meant “oak tree”. In Ancient Greek δρῦς (drūs) meant “tree; timber; oak”; and I recall other examples as well. And since juniper/cedar words often come from „bending/flexible“, they could have had a cognate meaning „tree in general>woods/forest“, with „tree“ deriving from „to twist, turn, bend, curve“, referring to the branches and trunks and roots of many trees. But I'm very sure now that the Ara in Arakynthos comes from „pointed; sprouting; rising“, and so is part of the by far more numerous group of words for tree in general and for „oak“, „chestnut“ and „beech“ and many other types of trees which derived preceding this version.

31 The change from *Kedros* to *Citron* (*Kitron*) is thought to have happened outside of Latin, probably/likely in Etruscan.

32 It is not likely that citron refers to the aromatic quality of *Citrus medica*: note the color of the fruits of *Citrus medica*, then ask yourself why wasn't the word *Kedros* applied to other aromatic plants/trees? Then consider that citron in Latin also referred to the tree/shrub *Tetraclinis articulata* (=Thuja, though it's not the only plant/tree known as thuja, but this is the thuja referred to in Latin): the bright yellow sandarac is made from the resin of *Tetraclinis articulata*.

33 The confirmation of that is already out there in various authoritative sources. See my other works as well.

34 See Beekes (2010), where he mentions that the linguist Lidén has said that arkeuthos and arkus are cognates.

35 See Pokorny, Julius (1959) *Indogermanisches etymologisches Wörterbuch*, Bern, München: Francke Verlag, page 67-68.

36 As I knew before I published my discussion of Arkeuthos and Argetos, but I had forgotten to mention Arkeuthis=“juniper-berry“. Though one might say that the older-meaning of Ark in Arkeuthos (if it was berry/testicle/egg, as made possible by arkela=“egg“) was forgotten, and so later the word Arkeuthis was coined to refer to the berries.

from a root-meaning „pointed“ (ncluding trees that derive from a meaning of „pungent (smell/aroma)“ in turn deriving many times from „pointed“). Gaulish *cassanos* is unusual and an outlier.

Earlier I mentioned that I will discuss numerous Ancient Greek words beginning with *ara-* which point to a root-word *ara*=“pointed”, and which provide good reason to believe that my interpretation of the *Ἀρά/Ἀράκ* in *Ἀράκυνθος* is correct; the first such words that I will discuss are Ancient Greek *ἀράχνη* (arachne)=“spider” and *ἀράχνης* (arachnes)=“spider”, as well as Latin *araneus/aranea* (=“spider”), all of which I’m very certain derive from *Ara*=“venomous/poisonous”, in turn from *Ara*=“to strike, slay, kill”³⁷ in turn from *Ara*=“pointed”: see how Indo-Iranian **ǰaθrāH-* “poison” derives from PIE **ǰ^{wh}η-tr-éh₂*, from **ǰ^{wh}en-* “to strike, kill, slay” from which also derives Proto-Iranian **ǰaθrīH*=“thorn, prickle”. In my next edition I will show more examples of the meanings “to strike, kill, slay” developing from the earlier meaning “pointed”, for now I will cite Russian *κολότѣ*=“to kill, to slaughter; to prick, to sting; to stab, to thrust” (and additional similar meanings) from Proto-Slavic **kōl̥ti*, “to stab, sting”. The application of *ἀράχνη* to the plant *Heracleum sphondylium* (hogweed, etc.) derives from, I’m sure, the fact that the phototoxic sap of *Heracleum sphondylium* can produce phytophotodermatitis (burns and rashes) when contaminated skin is exposed to sunlight. Care therefore needs to be used when cutting or trimming it, to prevent 'trimmers rash'. *Heracleum sphondylium* looks very very much like the larger *Heracleum mantegazzianum* (giant hogweed), the sap of which is much more potently toxic: the sap of *Heracleum mantegazzianum* is also phototoxic and causes [phytophotodermatitis](#) in humans, resulting in blisters and scars. These serious reactions are due to the [furanocoumarin](#) derivatives in the leaves, roots, stems, flowers, and seeds of the plant. Consequently, it is considered to be a noxious weed in many jurisdictions: and likewise certainly in Ancient Greece and in the Proto-Greek and Pre-Greek world. The giant hogweed was probably known in Ancient Greece and/or known to some of the ancestors of the Greeks who probably came from Southern Russia, and/or known to some of the Pre-Greeks as well. This etymology is supported by much evidence that I will detail, including the fact that the Latin word *aranea* led in the Romance languages (see Romanian *râie*, French *rogne*, Italian *rogna*, Spanish *roña* etc.³⁸) to words that mean “rash, scabies, scab, mange, itch”. But one might think those were later developments...no, they represent the root-meaning: besides the *Heracleum* example, see also that in Ancient Greek words beginning with *Ara-* persistently and insistently refer to vetches and to *Lathyrus* vetches (and never to the non-toxic pea plant, for example), and the plants referred to are all known to be toxic to humans and animals when a certain amount is exceeded, causing a disease called lathyrism. This is the correct explanation for *ἄρακος*=*Lathyrus annuus*, a species of vetch; as well as for *ἄραχος*=the wild vetch, *Vicia sibthorpii*; and *ἀράχιδνα*=*Lathyrus amphicarpos*, another species of vetch; and *ἄραξ* (=arax/araks) is a synonym for *Lathyrus annuus*, mentioned above.

Ancient Laconian Greek *θήραφος* (=“spider”) meant either “venomous” or “hunter”, both options from *θήρ*=“to strike, attack”, from PIE **ǰ^hwer*, which I hypothesize had the older meaning “to strike, attack”, later leading to “wild animals” and to “to hunt”, because most wild animals were creatures likely to be struck by human hunters, and because many wild animals would strike/attack people (hence, *θήρ* often referred to the lion, see LSJ entry for *θήρ*). The LSJ Greek-English dictionary shows that *Ther-* words in Ancient Greek could specifically refer to poisonous/venomous animals, as well as to ferocious and dangerous animals; as well as to wild herbivore animals (not necessarily so dangerous, like deer) that were hunted by people. Eventually, *Ther-* came to refer to most wild creatures. If PIE **ǰ^hwer-* did not have the earlier meaning “to strike, attack”, then “wild animal” led to a verb meaning “to go after wild animals”>“to hunt, chase”, and from “hunt, chase” came “hunter/huntress”, leading to *θήραφος*=“hunter”>“spider”.

The usage of *ἀράχνη* (arachne) applied to a type of sun-dial is simply a reference to a segmented round sun-dial looking a like a segmented round spider-web. There are actually no words beginning with *Ara-* in Ancient Greek (or even with *Ar-?*) that demonstrably have anything to do with “to curve, turn, twist”: I’ve found better explanations for all the *Ara-* words: Ancient Greek *ἀραιός* meant “flank, belly” and *ἀραιά*=“belly” because the *Ar-* root meaning “pointed, sharp” led to *Ar-* words meaning “hollowed out, cut out, scooped out, hollow”, which led to the belly and flank meanings, the belly and flanks are a hollow part of the body (due to the hollow stomach and lack of ribs there) below the rib cage: for certainty regarding this

37 Compare also Ancient Greek *ἀράσσω*=“to smite, dash in pieces, beat”, and *ῥάσσω*=“to strike, dash in pieces, beat”.

38 The Romanian word *râie* is inherited directly from Latin *aranea*, while the other Romance examples are from a blend of *aranea* with Latin *rodere* („to gnaw”).

etymology, see the meanings of Ancient Greek κενεών=“hollow between the ribs and hip: the flank; the cavity of the abdomen; any hollow, vacant space”; see also the meanings of Ancient Greek λαγών=“hollow on each side below the ribs: flank; any hollow, *also cups*” (observe the Italicized words: “*also cups*”); and see also Ancient Greek λαπάρα=“flesh between the last rib and the hip”, deriving from Ancient Greek λαπᾶρος=“hollow, slack, loose”. So from (probably Pre-Greek) Ar=“sharp, pointed” there developed the meanings “cut out<hollowed out” which led to “hollow; a cavity”, which led to “belly, flank” and also to “bowl” and later even “a pan”: see ἀράη=“bowl”, as well as ἀράκη=“bowl”; see also ἄρακις=“bowl, a pan”, ἀράκτης=“bowl; a pan” and ἄροκλον=“bowl; a pan”.

The Ancient Greek word ἀραιός=“thin, narrow, slight, slender, infrequent, scanty, few and far between; not dense, of loose texture, porous; with intervals, intermittent” quite certainly derives from the same Ar- root by way of the semantic development “cut thin” leading to “thin, slight, slender, narrow, scanty, few and far between, not dense”: from “not dense/thin” developed “of loose texture, porous” and from “scanty” developed “infrequent, with intervals, intermittent”.

Ancient Greek ῥάξ (genitive ῥάγος)/ ῥώξ (genitive ῥωγός) which meant “grape”, “berry”, “fingertips” (fingertips are grape-like in shape) probably comes from “pointed” leading to “sweet taste that pricks the sense of taste”³⁹, or from a reference to grape-clusters which narrow down to a point. There are many possibilities⁴⁰ for ῥάξ/ ῥώξ. But the derivation from “sweet” in turn from “pointed” is very likely. Maybe even more likely is a root meaning Rag/Rax=“to sprout”, akin to Ara=“pointed; to sprout”.

The Illyrian toponym *Ragusa* (as has been previously suggested by someone in the recent past) may derive from a reference to the large jagged rocks along the shore of that city: see Ancient Greek ῥωγάς “ragged (of rocks)”, and compare also Ancient Greek ῥαγή (ῥαγάς) “fissure” (from “cut, cleft”), and ῥώξ, ῥωγός “narrow passage” (from “a cut trench, passage”). See also Proto-Balto-Slavic *rāgas=“horn”.

Athenaeus of Naucratis says that “ἀράκη=bowl” is an Aeolian word: I will have to check whether Athenaeus was referring to the Aeolian Greek tribe/dialect (a Greek tribe and dialect that originated from Thessaly), or to the inhabitants of the Aeolian islands off the northern coast of Sicily, inhabited largely by Tyrrhenians in ancient times. Both scenarios are likely: that “ἀράκη=bowl” was Aeolian Greek or Tyrrhenian, since Hesychius notes a word ἄρακος that meant “hawk/falcon”, and he says that this ἄρακος meaning “hawk, falcon” is a Tyrrhenian word⁴¹; though it would not surprise me to find such a word in Thessaly as well. This

³⁹ I expect that the meaning „sweet“ has sometimes developed from the older meaning of „pointed“, as is known to be the case for many words having to do with kinds of taste: words that mean „sour“, „acid“, „bitter“, „pungent“, „spicy“ and „hot“. That is indeed the etymology of „spicy“, „bitter“, „acid“, „pungent“, and no doubt also of the PIE root from which „sour“ derives.

⁴⁰ alternatively, those Ancient Greek grape words could be from a reference to the twisting vine (see Persian raz=“vine“, usually cited as a likely cognate, but it has no etymology, just as ῥάξ and ῥώξ do not have a definite etymology, only various theories, none of which have ruled out the others yet), only later shifting to the grapes; or from a reference to the way grape clusters were harvested sometimes, with a hooked blade/knife/cutting tool (see the etymology of the French-derived English word “grape”), and such a lost word for a hooked-blade tool would derive either from “to curve, bend” or from “pointed/sharp; to cut”; or the Ancient Greek grape words could derive from a meaning of “juicy”: two works (one by Vladimir Orel) have proposed that ῥάξ and ῥώξ derive from a PIE *sróh₂gs=“berry”: if such a word existed, I notice that it looks a lot like PIE *srew- “to flow” (neither Orel nor the other works noticed that similarity; but quite likely there was no such word as *sróh₂gs=“berry”). I do not think that the vetch nor the grape words derive from ἀράσσω, “to beat, strike”, which would be a reference to mashing legumes in order to make paste from them and mashing grapes to make wine: I have not seen anyone posit such an etymology, but I mention it here to be thorough: in many of its conjugations, the word ἀράσσω takes the form ἀράξ- with various suffixes and ἀραχθ- with various suffixes; nor do I think that ῥάξ and ῥώξ derive from the meaning of “crushed”, though grapes are crushed and stomped on to make wine. I have not seen anyone posit such an etymology for those grape words, but I mention that to be thorough. The meanings of PIE *h₁eyHw- (=yew tree; willow; grape, vine), a root which probably for sure had the root-meaning of “to turn, curve, bend, twist; round”, shows that the theory that ῥάξ and ῥώξ derive from the meaning of “round” is possible, but I find no Ancient Greek evidence for that and so an older meaning “sweet” (from “pointed” perhaps) is more likely, and an older meaning rag/rax=“to sprout” is also very likely.

⁴¹ And „arac“ is believed by a number of Etruscans to be an Etruscan word that meant „hawk“. And „arim“ is a word

ἄρακος meaning “hawk/falcon” is identical in sonic-form and spelling to the ἄρακος word that meant *Lathyrus annuus*, a species of vetch: I’m sure the vetch word derives “poisonous” in turn from “to strike”, and most likely the hawk word derives from the earlier meaning “to strike” as well, in the sense of “hunter” (many words for “hunter”/“hunt” are cognate to words meaning “to strike”) and it’s not impossible that the meaning “to snatch” could also have developed from “pointed”, maybe via “claws/talons”: “claws/talons” deriving from “pointed”, then “claws/talons” developing the meaning “to snatch, grasp”, referring to the rapaciousness of hawks and eagles and falcons and other such birds of prey. Many words for hawks derive from the earlier meaning “to snatch”, and Beekes (2010) derives Ancient Greek ἱέρᾱξ (hiérāx), Doric ἰάραξ (hiárax), Ionic ἴρηξ (írēx) from the earlier meaning “hunter”: and note the similarity of Ancient Greek ἄρακος (hawk, falcon) to Ancient Greek ἱέρᾱξ (hiérāx), Doric ἰάραξ (hiárax), Ionic ἴρηξ (írēx). Beekes’ etymology derives ἱέρᾱξ (hiérāx), Doric ἰάραξ (hiárax), Ionic ἴρηξ (írēx) ultimately from PIE *weyh₁, “to chase, pursue, hunt”; but as Beekes details, that derivation is not a smooth one due to a number of factors which he describes (see Beekes 2010). Leaving aside linguistic problems and addressing only the semantics: semantically Beekes’ etymology of hiérāx (and its variants) is very possible, since words for birds of prey often do come from the meanings of “snatcher”, “thief”, “grasper”, “grabber”, “taker”, “raptor”, etc., which are similar but of course not identical to the notions of “chasing, pursuing, hunting” (whether there are any words for birds of prey in any language which are confirmed to derive from the notions of “pursuer, chaser, hunter”, I don’t remember; I will look for such examples soon though).

Given the evidence discussed above, I find it most likely that ἄρακος derives from the meaning of “grasper”, “snatcher”, “taker”, “hunter”, etc.; nor do I think that ἄρακος refers to the cries/sounds of the hawks/falcons, though many words for hawks/falcons do refer to their cries/sounds⁴². So I don’t expect that ἄρακος (hawk, falcon) and ἄρακος (vetch) are homonyms with different etymologies: the vetch word derives from “to strike, kill, slay” and so does probably the hawk word⁴³.

believed by a number of Etruscans to be an Etruscan word that meant „monkey“: if so, „arim“ could well derive from Ar=“tree“ (in turn from Ar=“to sprout“), since I think all monkeys (in contrast to a number of apes) dwell mostly in trees; or, much less likely because I have no evidence for Ar=“to curve, turn, bend“ in Italy and Greece, it could derive from a reference to their curved tails (maybe „im“ meant „tail“: Ar+im). Of course, it may be a foreign word adopted by the Etruscans, or it may have meant something else, not „monkey“ (have not yet researched that Etruscan word myself, so it may be misidentified: or it may be correctly defined).

42 Some words for hawks/falcons/eagles (and other birds of bird of prey with a sharp-sounding call) might derive from a root that meant „sharp/pointed“, referring to the sharp quality of the sound; and/or some words for birds with a sharp point on their beaks (and sharp talons) could derive from „sharp/pointed“; and since eagles, hawks and falcons and many other birds of prey have very sharp vision, that also could lead to some words for such birds deriving from „sharp/pointed“. In my second edition of the work on the Kjolmen inscription, I described my theory that Ancient Greek αἰγῶπιός (vulture) derives from a meaning of „sharp-faced“ or „penis-looking“, since vulture heads and necks are reminiscent of a penis. It could also have meant „sharp-eyed“, referring to their vision, especially since in Ancient Macedonian Greek, αἰγίτωπ meant „eagle“. In my second edition of the work on the Kjolmen inscription, I explained how all those meanings are probably a folk-etymology reworking of PIE *h₃ǵi-pth₂-yó-S, which probably meant “straight-flying” (if not “circular-flying”), but likely the original meaning was lost and the words were reshaped to fit what they imagined that word meant, reshaped so that Arg- became Aig- and the second element reshaped to be like the Greek word ΟΨ (=face, appearance, eye): in that work I showed that certainly Aig meant “pointed” in Ancient Greek. I do not expect that ἄρακος (hawk, falcon) derives from “pointed”, nor from “to snatch”, nor from “to dart, spring” nor from any onomatopoeic rendering of their cries. There’s too much evidence pointing to the “circling” etymology.

43 In this note I will describe an alternative theory for ἄρακος (hawk, falcon): note the similarity of ἄρακος to PIE *h₃érō=„eagle/large bird“, and to PIE *h₃er, “to rise, spring”; so perhaps PIE *h₃érō=„eagle/large bird“ derives from PIE *h₃er, “to rise, spring”: because this semantic progression seems possible: “to rise/spring” leading to one or more words that came to mean “to rise into the air; to spring into the air”, later developing into “to fly/to be up on high” (PIE *h₃er- is the root-word that ὄρος (óros), the Ancient Greek word for “mountain; hill; mountain-chain” is known to derive from); see how even the laryngeal sound is identical in both roots: *h₃. And ἄρακος in the meaning of “hawk, falcon” could derive from either PIE *h₃érō=„eagle/large bird” via an unknown language or from PIE *h₃er, “to rise, spring”, via an unknown language, later being picked up by at least some Ancient Greeks, then later in Hellenistic times it appears in a Hesychius gloss as a Tyrrhenian word. Even if supposing such an etymology, ἄρακος in the meaning of “hawk, falcon” could still be a cognate to ara=“tree” or “oak tree” or “cedar” if any of those meanings for ara (“tree”, “oak tree”, “cedar”) developed from PIE *h₃er, “to rise, spring”. The Latin word *arbor* (tree) is considered by most linguists to derive from PIE *h₃erd^h-, “upright, high; to increase, grow”, and PIE *h₃erd^h- is a combination of PIE *h₃er (see above) and PIE *(é)-d^h(h₁)eti, a suffix which forms resultative verbs. If ἄρακος derives from an onomatopoeic “ἄρακ” used to imitate somehow the calls/cries of hawks/falcons, then again it would not be a cognate to the tree words. But the chances

The Ancient Greek word ἀρίς=“bow-drill”, “auger”, “a type of carpenter’s tool”, and has no etymology, and no Indo-European etymology. I’m pretty sure that it is from *ar*=“pointed”, referring to the pointed stick used as a drill to make fire. This is indicated by the fact that Aris also referred to fenced-off holy places/shrines (see aris=“phraktes: shrine”), a meaning which I’m sure derives from Aris=“shaft of wood” for making fences, not from “to encircle”. This etymology is also indicated by Ancient Greek ἄρον=the plant *Arum italicum*: plants of that sort were also called δρακόντιον (=“little dragon/little snake”) in Ancient Greek, because the prominent spadix that sticks out of the flower was likened to a snake: but no meaning of “curving” is warranted here given what I have found regarding Ar- in Ancient Greek and Pre-Greek: instead “pointed” is indicated, referring to the pointed spadix; for the same reasons the bow-drill word does not refer to the turning/rotating of the wood used to drill. That ἀρίς and ἄρον have the same etymology is shown by the fact that one of the definitions of ἀρίς was δρακόντιον μικρά, a plant related to *Arum italicum* which has the prominent spadix sticking out of the flower as well. So in other words Aron/Aris was an almost lost Pre-Greek word for something very much like an arrow.

The last problem would be the etymology of Ariadne: I believe that I have found the correct etymology of Ariadne, and Ari- does not derive from a root that meant „to turn, curve, bend, rotate“ (which would have been referring to a spindle: see my early hypothesis regarding Ariadne) : my updated theory is that Ari=“crown“ and Adne=“bright“, referring to the constellation Corona Borealis with which Ariadne was directly associated: Ariadne was in fact not a weaving goddess primarily or even secondarily, but instead a Cretan version of Persephone: her entrapment in the labyrinth with the minotaur is a version of the Persephone in Hades myth, the Minotaur representing winter due to the constellation Taurus being prominent in the winter months and receding in the spring-time: this is why Ariadne was the wife of Dionysus: Dionysus was the god of spring-time, and Ariadne is the goddess of spring and summer who disappears into the underworld in the winter. In my work „New etymologies for Andros island, Koriandron, et al.“, I explained how Andr-/Anthr-/Ath=“pointed; to sprout; bright“, and Adne/Adnon is a variant of Andr-/Anthr-/Ath/Athr: the Etruscan version of the name Ariadne was Areatha (Are + Atha). And just as the Ancient Greek word κόρυς (=“helmet“) comes from Pre-Greek Kor=“to project; pointed“, so too, I think, the Pre-Greek Ar=“pointed; to project“ led to a word on Crete meaning „crown“. So the Ari- in Ariadne likely meant „crown“.

So there is no data that presents a problem for my interpretation of Ara Zea as having meant „Arrow Goddess“, „Bright Goddess“ or „Woods Goddess“, and I really have no doubt now that Ara-Zea is an actual ancient Balkan theonym referring to a goddess corresponding to Artemis and embodying qualities of Demeter/Persephone as well. Besides the evidence I’ve found for Ara, the Zea word meaning "goddess" is expected (or even already attested?) in Thracian. The PIE root for Thracian Zea (if it meant "goddess") is PIE **dyéws*, meaning "sky; heaven", which according to some PIE source books (Watkins et al.) may derive from a verb which meant 'to shine, be radiant'.

It’s quite interesting that the evidence that I found for Ara=tree/woods (or =a specific tree: the chestnut tree or the oak tree, less likely the juniper/cedar tree) was found in an oronym from the part of Greece known as Aetolia: the Aetolian country has a level and fruitful coastal region, but an unproductive and mountainous interior. The mountains contained many wild beasts, and acquired fame in Greek mythology as the scene of the hunt for the Calydonian Boar. The perfect place where a Pre-Greek theonym for Artemis could have thrived. Tribes known as [Curetes](#) and Leleges originally inhabited the country, but at an early period [Greeks](#) from [Elis](#), led by the mythical [eponym Aetolus](#), set up colonies. Dionysius of Halicarnassus mentions that Curetes was the old name of the Aetolians and Leleges the old name of the [Locrians](#). The mountain tribes of Aetolia were the Ophioneis, the Apodotoi, the Agraeis, the Aperantoi and the Eurytians.

The primitive lifestyle of those tribes made an impression on ancient historians. [Polybius](#) doubted their Greek heritage, while Livy reports that they spoke a language similar to the Macedonians. Thucydides claims

are pretty good that ἄρακος in the meaning of “hawk, falcon” is a cognate to the Ara- in Arakynthos, one way or another. The sonic similarity between ἄρακος (“hawk; falcon”) and Sumerian *arak* (“stork”) is very likely to be a coincidence; for example, the Sumerian *arak* word likely denotes “white” (compare PIE **h₂erǵ=*“white, argent, glittering” or some other quality seen in storks but not in hawks/falcons (there are a number of white feathers on most hawks/falcons, but few of them are mostly white). The Armenian word for stork, *aragil*, is usually considered to be a cognate of Sumerian *arak*=stork. To return to PIE **h₃érō=*„eagle/large bird“, it may even derive from a Pre-PIE word or PIE substrate word that meant “circle; to curve, turn” referring to how eagles often circle in the sky.

that Eurytians spoke a very difficult language and ate their food completely raw. They were semi-barbaric, warlike and predatory. They worshiped [Apollo](#) as god of tame nature and Artemis as goddess of wilderness. They also worshiped [Athena](#), not as goddess of wisdom, but emphasizing the element of war – i.e. a goddess that was a female counterbalance to the god [Ares](#). They called Apollo and Artemis "Laphrios gods," i.e. patrons of the spoils and loot of war. In addition, they worshiped Hercules, the river Achelous and Bacchus. In Thermos, an area north of Trichonis lake, there was after the 7th century a shrine of Apollo "Thermios," which became a significant religious center during the time of the [Aetolian League](#).

In time, I'm sure the theonym Ara-Zea will be verified, as more and more new discoveries of ancient inscriptions (and other ancient writings) come to light.

Until then, I have found a figure in Romanian folklore and in Italian folklore whose name is so close to this Ara-Zea found on the ring, a folklore figure which is accepted as having absorbed much of the pre-Christian beliefs and some of the rituals regarding Artemis/Diana. I'm referring to the folklore survival of a supernatural woman named *Arada* in Romanian and *Aradia* in Italian; probably some linguists assume (have not yet identified which linguists, if any, believe/assume that) that both names derive from *Herodias* (*Herodias* is the Greek feminine form of Greek Ἡρώδης=*Hērōidēs*, which became "Herod" in English ⁴⁴), mentioned in the New Testament (in the Gospel of Matthew and in the Gospel of Mark); however, *Erodiade* is the usual form of Herodias in Italian, while *Irodiada* is the form of Herodias in Romanian; and deriving the Romanian form *Arada* from *Herodiade* or *Herodias* (if any linguists actually do so) is an assumption which has not been demonstrated to be true or that it fits the evidence well or the phonological evolution well. The historian/mythographer/anthropologist/folklorist Mircea Eliade considered *Arada* of Romanian folklore to be a metamorphosis of the earlier Diana/Artemis ⁴⁵(Diana being the Roman version, Artemis the Greek version), owing rather little or not much conceptually to Herodiade/Herodias, with whom Diana/Artemis was blended in the Middle Ages; while a derivation of the name *Arada* from Herodiade/Herodias does not seem phonologically sound; it seems in fact very debatable; I do not know what conclusion Eliade came to regarding the supposed (by whom?) derivation of *Arada* from Herodiade/Herodias.

The actual situation seems to be that *Erodiade* (Italian) and *Irodiada* (Romanian) became identified with and possibly code-names (in the dangerous climate of the times) for the earlier *Arada* (Romanian) and *Aradia* (Italian), explaining why both pairs are attested. The identification started from the similar names, and then from there at some point those pagan goddesses were linked conceptually to the historical/New Testament figure, due to the subversive role and reputation both of those female figures acquired in Christianity, and due to some other resemblances between the two which I intend to describe in an upcoming version of this paper. The Romanian form *Arada* most likely derives from Daco-Thracian. The Italian *Aradia* form probably derives from Etruscan, since much of the Italian traditions about Aradia may derive from Tuscany: the Etruscans quite likely (combining all the genetic, linguistic and historical evidence) migrated from Western Anatolia/the Aegean, where their kin the Lemnians were found on the island of Lemnos, where a Thracian tribe known as the *Sinti* also dwelt at some point.

Artemis was probably often identified with the Anatolian Cybele, both of them being the goddess of wild animals and nature; both being forms of the earth goddess. Artemis was also the goddess of the hunt, of maidens, was invoked for a safe and successful childbirth, and more. One well-known name for the Thracian Artemis is *Bendis*; *Kotys/Kottyto* was another Thracian equivalent of Artemis. We can expect she had more names among the Thracians, names not known yet, especially since the Thracians were not so unified. And obviously the equivalent goddess had distinct names among the various Pre-greek tribes and peoples. Here in this inscription, Ara Zea bears many similarities to Phrygian *Cybele* (the Phrygians used to live next to the Thracians) and to the Artemis of Ephesus in North-Western Anatolia; her function as earth goddess, like *Demeter* and *Gaia*, may be emphasized in this inscription (yet the moon was often believed to be the abode of the souls of the deceased in the Greco-Roman world; so petitioning a goddess who is both a forest-goddess and a moon-goddess to make him bloom again probably has something to do with that). Indeed, another of the

⁴⁴ The name *Erodis/Irodis* (in Greek Ἡρώδης=*Hērōidēs*) itself has a Greek etymology, either deriving from the Greek word ἥρως (=hērōs) combined with the Greek word ὀδή (*ōidē*, "ode"), or from the name of *Hērā* (in Greek: *Ἥρα*) combined with the same ὀδή, with *Hērā* of course referring to the wife of Zeus. The *Hērō-* element in *Hērōdotus* derives from *Hērā* as well.

⁴⁵ Eliade, Mircea (February 1975). "Some Observations on European Witchcraft" in *History of Religions*, Volume 14, Number 3. Page 160-161.

several known Thracian inscriptions reads "Da, dale me": with "Da" referring to Demeter; and that "Da Dale Me" inscription is, as I will further detail a bit further in this essay, an invocation/petition to Demeter which in essence is identical to the inscription on the Ezerovo ring, which instead petitions *Ara Zea* (=Artemis, Bendis) to do the same thing requested of Demeter in the "Da Dale Me" inscription.

Domean: meant "lady/mistress", either from 1) an older meaning of "of the household/of the home", from PIE **dóm-*, "house, home", from whence derive Latin *domus* (=home) and Slavic *domo* (=home). Or 2) from an older meaning „master“, from PIE **demh₂-*, „to tame, domesticate, subdue“. Likewise for Latin *domina* and *dominus*, either root/option is considered likely.

Tilezupta: my primary and most likely theory is that Tilezupta meant „Carrying/Bearing the Bow“, with „bow“ being the bow used for shooting arrows: Tile=“bearing, carrying“ and deriving from PIE **telh₂-*, „to bear, to carry, to undergo, to endure“, and Zupta deriving from PIE **gewp-*, „to curve, bend, arch“, or from PIE **kewp-*, „to curve, bend, arch“, showing the well-known tendency for Thracian to not only satemize (palatovelars becoming fricatives and affricates) but in this case more specifically showing palatalization of PIE initial **g-* or **k-*, and then the palatalized sound was sibilized: under what conditions did an initial PIE *g/k* ---or any PIE *g/k*---become palatalized and then sibilized in Thracian? I hope to be able to determine that if I can find additional high-certainty examples of that in Thracian.

A close cognate or semi-cognate (semi-cognate if from a kindred, variant root) of Thracian Zupta if it means „bow used to shoot arrows“ is Ancient Greek κύπτω (“to bend forward, to stoop down, to bow”), which is of unknown etymology, as is Ancient Greek κῦφός (“bent forward, stooping, hunchbacked; curved, round”): I’m not sure if a shift from initial PIE **g-* to **k-* in Ancient Greek is attested, but I know that that is not the usual, expected sound-shift for initial PIE **g-* to Ancient Greek. But what if the form κύπτω is from a Pre-Greek language (according to Beekes, the variation "κυφ-/κυπ-" points to a Pre-Greek origin) or a neighboring dialect/language (Ancient Macedonian, Phrygian, Paeonian) for which such a sound-shift was regular? Or, alternatively, what if κύπτω is from PIE **kewp-*, “to curve, bend, arch”? PIE **kewp-* is posited as the source for Proto-Germanic **hūbō*, “a covering for the head; hood; cow”; for Latin *cūpa*, “tub, cask, tun, vat”; for Sanskrit कूप (kūpa) “well; cave; hole” and for Ancient Greek κύπη /*kúpē* “hut, hole; ship”, *κύπελλον* and *κυπελλίς* “drinking cup, goblet” and is posited as the source for some other words as well.

Compare my theoretical Thracian Zupta (“bow used for arrows”) vis-a-vis Ancient Greek κύπτω (“to bend forward, to stoop down, to bow”) to English bow (as in a bow used for arrows) vis-a-vis English bow (as in “to bend oneself”, with the common more derived sense “to bend oneself as a gesture of respect or deference”): both of these English “bow” words are cognates, both deriving from PIE **bʰewǵʰ-* “to bend, curve, arch”.

To further see how close the variants **gewp-* and **kewp-* were, compare Ancient Greek κύπη “hut, hole; ship” to Ancient Greek γύπη=“hole in the earth”; “vulture’s nest” and Ancient Greek γύψ /*γυψ* =“vulture” (from “curved” referring to curved beak and curved neck of vultures), the genitive form of which was *γυπός*. The Ancient Greek κῦφός (“bent forward, stooping, hunchbacked; curved, round”) bears an aspirated P sound (the sound -φ-), and may require an additional variant or else the sound-shift happened in an unidentified language.

For the sound shift **telh₂--→Til-*, compare *Tiltean* for which I posit the *Til-* portion to be from the homonymous (and probably cognate/kindred) PIE **telh₂-* “flat ground, bottom”, a sound shift which, as one may recall from my discussion of *Tiltean*’s etymology above, is supported by the Delmato-Pannonian/Illyrian toponym *Tilurium*, because *Tilurium* is most likely cognate⁴⁶ to Latin *tellus*, “earth, ground, soil; land” with later semantic developments: “country, district” and “the Earth, the globe, the world”, the genitive of *tellus* is *telluris*, so similar to *Tilurium*. Latin *tellus* is

⁴⁶ See Orsat Ligorio and Danilo Savic’s paper, „Illyrian and Slavic“ (a paper which does not actually argue that Illyrian was very similar to Slavic), 2022, pg. 27 for the source of my statement that *Tilurium* is most likely cognate to Latin *tellus/telluris*.

from PIE **telh₂-* "flat ground, bottom". For the sound shift **telh₂-->Til-*, compare also Proto-Balto-Slavic **tīlʔta* "bridge", from PIE **telh₂*, "to bear, carry".

My alternative theory (which I no longer favor for reasons that I will detail in this edition) is that Tilezupta meant "Breasts + Covered" (= "Covered Breasts"), referring to her maidenhood/virginity/sanctity. In one ancient Greek mythical tradition, a male personage named *Actaeon* caught a sight of *Artemis* nude while she was bathing; for that invasion, he was transformed into a deer, a deer which was chased down and killed by Artemis' hunting dogs. Thracian depictions of *Bendis* always show her well-cloaked and well-clothed. One of the epithets of Artemis among the Greeks was *Chitone*, covered by a chiton (an ancient Greek style of tunic, worn also by ancient Romans and some others).

In this scenario, Thracian *tile-* (breasts) is cognate to Albanian *tul* (=piece of soft flesh without bones, etc.) and to ancient Greek *τύλη, tūlē* (=swelling; hump of a camel; cushion). In 5th Century BC Attic Greek, the pronunciation of *τύλη, tūlē* is said to have been *tý.lɛ*: (this is rendered in IPA). Albanian *tul* and Ancient Greek *τύλη, tūlē* derive, along with some other cognates, from PIE **túh₂-lo-* ("swollen, lump"), in turn from PIE **tewh₂-*, "to swell, to crowd, to be strong".

One of the additional cognates of Albanian *tul* and Ancient Greek *τύλη, tūlē* is Proto-Slavic **tǔlb*, the meaning of which has been reconstructed by some as "back of the neck, nape"; this Proto-Slavic word is the source of words with similar meanings ("back of the neck; nape; back of the head"; "back" "rear") in many Slavic languages; since in some Slavic languages the meaning is "back" and/or "rear", and since the PIE root **túh₂-lo-* means „swollen, lump“, the older meaning at the source of „back“/“rear“ was actually "buttocks" in Proto-Slavic, or in an earlier stage than Proto-Slavic: and the meaning older than "buttocks" would have been "bulge/fleshy bulge", with „bulge“ referring also the back of the head. Likewise, there is a bulge at the bottom of the back of the neck: unless „back of the neck, nape“ come from „back, rear“ in turn from „buttocks; back of the head“.

If Thracian (like Albanian and Ancient Greek and Proto-Slavic) indeed had such a word (not necessarily with the form *Tile-* in Thracian, since I now think that *Tile-* in the ring inscription more likely meant „carrying, bearing“) from PIE **túh₂-lo-*, „swollen, lump“, then quite likely in Thracian the word sometimes extended to the buttocks (especially the buttocks of many women) as well as to women's breasts (in Ancient Greek, no doubt *τύλη, tūlē* was sometimes applied to both women's breasts and buttocks, even though those meanings are not attested). If *Tile-* in *Tilzupta* is from **túh₂-lo-*, „swollen, lump“, then in the gold ring inscription, the breasts are referred to primarily, given the more important linkage of breasts to nurturing and fertility. Note also how the Artemis of Ephesus has her breasts covered by a garment which is covered with gourds of vegetables and/or fruits and/or bulls' testicles. But the Thracian Artemis' buttocks was very likely included as well in the epithet, if *Tile-* derives from **túh₂-lo-*, „swollen, lump“, but for some time now I've come to the conclusion that a shift of **túh₂-lo-* to *Til-* in Thracian is not so likely, even though the pronunciation of Ancient Greek *τύλη, tūlē* shifted to *Til-* by the 15th century AD in Medieval Greek, and even though we know so little about what would be the Thracian outcome/development of PIE **túh₂-lo-*.

If Thracian *zupta* meant „covered“, then the closest cognates that I recall now (at least semantically) would be Sanskrit *गुप्तं guptá*, „hidden, secret; guarded, protected“ and Sanskrit *गोपु / goptr*, „one who conceals; guardian“ both from PIE **gewp/*geup-*, "to curve, bend, arch". Other close cognates if Thracian *zupta* meant „covered“ may be Bulgarian *župa* (tomb), Polish *zupa* (mine), Ukrainian *župa* (salt mine), Old Slavonic *župište* (tomb). Ancient Greek *γύπη*="hole in the earth; cave". Albanian *gop* "cunt". The Slavic forms meaning „tomb, mine“ could derive from an earlier meaning of "arching over", and the meaning „tomb“ may come from „arching over“ leading to „covering“; otherwise from „arching over“ without the meaning „covering“ developing in Slavic. The Thracian *zupta*, whether it meant „bow (used for shooting arrows)“ or „covered“ is closer in form to the Ancient Greek and Slavic cognates than to the Albanian cognate: *gop*, „cunt“.

miē : is cognate to Latin *mē*, English *me*, Ancient Greek *μέ (mé)*, *ἐμέ (emé)*, "me", Sanskrit *मि (mā)*, "me". A very common Indo-European form and a very basic Indo-European form, from PIE **(e)me-*, **(e)men-* ("me").

era : is cognate to Latin *re-* and the meaning here was: "again". The Latin prefix *rĕ-* is from Proto-Italic **wre* ("again"), which has a parallel in Umbrian *re-*, but its further etymology is uncertain (cf. recent editions of the *Oxford English Dictionary*). While it carries a general sense of "back" or "backwards", its precise sense is not always clear, and its great productivity in classical Latin has the tendency to obscure its original meaning. Calvert Watkins proposes a metathesis of Proto-Indo-European **wert-* ("to turn"), while de Vaan suggests Proto-Indo-European **ure-* ("back"), which is related to Proto-Slavic **rakъ* in the sense of "looking backwards."

zēlta: derives from PIE **ǵʰelh₃-*, "to bloom, flourish, become green; green; yellow; gold". This shows an aspirated hard G becoming the sibilant Z again. The Proto-Slavic **zolto* (=gold, yellow) also derives from PIE **ǵʰelh₃-* by way of Proto-Indo-European **ǵʰólh₃tom* ("gold"), as does English *gold*. The Latvian and Lithuanian cognates are in this case closer to Thracian: Latvian *zēlts* ("gold"; "golden") and Lithuanian *zelt* ('to bloom; become green; make green'). Latvian, Lithuanian and Slavic show the sibilization which occurred so often in Daco-Thracian as well. And in Latvian, we find the verb *zēlt* which means "to bloom; become green; make green". My interpretation also gives new significance to the fact that the inscription was inscribed on a gold ring.

Compare the occurrence of *zēlta* in this inscription with the occurrence of *dale* and *dele* in two other Thracian inscriptions: "Da Dale Me" (= "Demeter, make me bloom" my own translation; instead of "Demeter protect me" as a previous scholar hypothesized) and "Euzie dele Mezenai" ("Horseman, make Euzie bloom/Horseman makes Euzie bloom", my own translation; instead of "Horseman, protect Euzie" or "Horseman protects Euzie". The Horseman in Thracian mythology was an important savior god to them, who was in time replaced by Christ and St. George after Christianity came). In these two inscriptions, *dale* and *dele* mean "to sprout, rise, bloom", from Proto-Indo-European **dʰelh₁-*, cognate to Ancient Greek θάλλω (*thállō*, "to grow, bloom, thrive"), Welsh *deillio* ("to emanate, derive) and to Albanian "dal" ("to go out, come out, exit"), as well as more cognates. So those two inscriptions, I think, back up my new translation of the inscription on the Ezerovo ring. The components *miēerazēlta* may alternatively be parsed as *miēe* ("me") and *ra-zēlta* ("again-bloom").

I have not yet read Dechev's 1957 monograph, *Die thrakischen Sprachreste* (published under the name of D. Detschew (Germanized form of Dechev); Vienna, 1957; written in German), which is unavailable in Los Angeles libraries (perhaps a university library around here may have a copy, but likely not; I've checked some) and unavailable online. From looking at his translation, Dechev seems to have been relying a lot on the supposition that *era zēlta* or *era+zēlta* (there's no word break in the inscription; the last four letters *-ēlta* continue on the other side of the ring, but that's not an actual definite word-break: a word-break in this context refers to specific points or lines that ancient scribes often used to indicate word-breaks) in the inscription meant "ground+delivered", in other words "delivered to the ground", a euphemism for "buried". Dechev's interpretation of *era* would be cognate to ancient Greek ἔραζε (*érase*), "to the ground". Note that I still have not yet found Dechev's book, but I think his interpretation is that *era zēlta* was two words, just as I think it was two words; but he thinks *era* meant "earth" and *zēlta* was a verb which meant "delivered to/sent to". However, it's unclear what PIE root he would derive such a *zēlta* from, as he imagined back then. It doesn't seem as if he was saying that *era zēlta* is a past-tense verb derived from a noun *era* or *eraz* meaning "earth", acquiring an unexplained suffix *-ēlta* or *-zēlta*: that would indeed be highly unlikely. I think Dechev actually realized that, and what he meant was that *era* and *zēlta* are two words, with his hypothetical meanings described a few sentences above. I think I know which PIE root Dechev intended as the source of *zēlta* in his interpretation, and if so the semantic link between them is very weak, and so his interpretation is very unlikely. When I verify which root (if any) Dechev intended as the source of his *zēlta*, I will analyze his hypothesis in more detail.

I have a different interpretation of *era* and *zēlta* (*zēlta* derives from PIE **ǵʰelh₃-*, and had the same meanings as Latvian "zelt", which also derives from that root; and many words for gold derive from that root, suggesting a direct link to the golden ring), and my translation makes good sense as a whole. The *era* in *era zēlta* did not mean "earth" and is not linked to ancient Greek ἔραζε. In Georgiev's translation, very different

from Dechev's, *era zēlta* does not have anything to do with "buried" or "delivered to the ground", so it shouldn't be assumed that most palaeolinguists accept Dechev's interpretation.

A big problem with Dechev's translation, as many people have noticed, is why was all this trouble taken to record that a woman from Arazea (no such place-name has been found, by the way) named Tilezupta (Dechev doesn't try to explain the supposed "name" Tilezupta, which is not attested as an anthroponym) is the one who took charge of the burial of Rolisteneas? Do we have support for that idea from Balkanic traditions, where a woman who was, it seems, not part of the family (in Dechev's translation, she is described as a woman from Arazea; Dechev believed that Arazea is an unattested toponym; I don't think it is a toponym, nor do I think it is a gens name: notice for example that the order is *Arazea domean Tilezupta*, not *Tilezupta Arazea*) officiates/takes ritual charge of the burial and of the sending off of the deceased (especially a deceased man) to the other world or to the earth? Do we have support from that in the inscriptions of any cultures? Dechev's translation sounds like a wrong translation. I don't think the ring records who took charge of the burial or of the sending off of Rolisteneas. I think it records a religious magical invocation meant to protect and help the deceased Rolisteneas. Georgiev's completely different translation is not convincing either.

The inscription may have been done by a hired Thracian poet ⁴⁷, since this parsing (identical to Dechev's parsing) and translation of the inscription shows a pronounced flowing metrical rhythm, as well as showing rhyme/assonance: *steneas/nerenea/tiltean/arazea/domean*; *tiltean/domean*; further assonance in the series of **-tea(n)/-ta/-ta** terminations: *Rolisteneas Nerenea tiltean/ēsko Ara Zea domean Tilezupta/ miē era zēlta*"; the alliteration in *zea* and *zupta* and *zēlta* and other alliterations elsewhere; and the recurring *til-*element in *tiltean* and *tilezupta*, even though the meanings of the two occurrences are I'm sure different (as discussed above), having different meanings and different etymologies. But I believe *tiltean* and *tilezupta* were chosen specifically so that *Tilezupta* can counteract *tiltean*. A type of verbal magic common in anthropological studies.

Linguistically, note the harmony between the adjectives *tiltean* ("fallen" or „buried“) and *domean* ("of the home" or alternatively „tamer“, „subduer“): *domean* is also a noun and yet also an adjective, since it originally meant "of the home" or „tamer, subduer“; and the *-steneas* name element is actually an adjective ("strong"), as is *Nerenea* (the name *Nerenea* quite likely meant "virile, potent"; see the cognates, including the Latin cognates). Even the noun *Zea* may be seen in an adjectival way, considering the likely PIE etymology of *Zea*: according to some linguistic sources (Watkins et al.) on Proto-Indo-European, the source was a verb which meant "to shine; be radiant", in which case *Zea* can be described as a feminine adjective ("the radiant one"), as well as a feminine noun. The Thracian adjective suffix *-ea* is nearly identical to Latin *-ia* seen in gens names (*Neria*, etc.) and to an adjective suffix found as far back in Greek as Mycenaean Greek, where it was represented as *-(~)i-ja (=i-ya)* (cf. Mycenaean Greek *Potnija*, *Qerasija* et al.) or *-(~)e-ja (=e-ja)* (cf. Mycenaean Greek *Ipemedēja* et al.).

The harmony between the forms *zupta* (a noun if it meant „bow used for arrows“; and a verbal adjective---an adjective derived from a verb---if it meant „covered“) and the verb *zēlta* (=to bloom, sprout), both ending in *-ta*, is also suggestive of intentional word-play/poetry. And the verb contained in *tiltean* we can reconstruct as **tiltea* or **tilte* or **tilta*, among other possibilities, or all of those depending on the grammar of the phrase. So, **tilta* and *zēlta*, two Thracian verbs? With *ēsko* being a verb of a different class. Of course, Thracian would have had a great diversity of verb forms, but it looks like verbs ending with *-ta*, for whatever reason (etymological etc.), were one category.

Conclusion

Future discoveries of examples of the Thracian language will hopefully clarify whether this new translation that I present here is correct. The way all these elements came together tells me that this translation is

⁴⁷ This aligns with the Greek traditions of the Thracians having many singers/bards (cf. Orpheus, Eumolpus, et al.) albeit most of them may have been only oral bards, though we can expect that quite a number of Thracian and Dacian poems were written down but have since been lost over the centuries.

actually correct, and such a correct translation was possible because the language of the inscription is a fairly conservative Indo-European language. My translation does not contradict any of the basic assumptions about Thracian. Nor does it show that Thracian was distant from Balto-Slavic and/or Albanian. It shows a language which bears many similarities to both Proto-Albanian and the earlier stages of Balto-Slavic, as well as to some other branches of Indo-European.

In this inscription on the gold ring, we see what is probably a Thracian verb *ēsko* meaning „to petition“; in my translation of the inscription found near Kjolmen, I identified a verb *aigekoa* (=“led“), past-tense of *aigeko*=“to lead“/“I lead“. The language uncovered from my translation of the inscription on the Moesian stone reveals a language very reminiscent of the language uncovered from this South Thracian ring, and both seem very Thracian. In both inscriptions, we also see what I’m sure is a Thracian tradition: using the first letter of a word to mark the end of a line, so that when the next line begins it is clear from where the next line continues: on the ring we see that in the case of *zēlta*, the Z is on the front of the ring, while the rest of the word is on the reverse; in the Moesian inscription, the first line makes two direction changes, creating three segments of one line: the last letter of the first segment, N, is the first letter of the word that continues in the next segment: combining them, we get the word *Nēn*; and the last letter of the second segment, A, is the first letter of a word that continues in the next segment, the third and final segment of that stream of text: combining them, we get *Aigekoa*. So even in the manner of writing, we see strong indications that we are dealing with two groups of people that were very close to one another.

Literature/Bibliography/References:

instead of references, I have included footnotes throughout the text which cite some additional sources that are not named in the body of the work.

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