



## Research Article

# The Eteocretan Substratum in Late Ancient Greek Nomenclature

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**Abstract:** Since the development of historical linguistics, it has been observed that the Ancient Greek language contains a significant number of words with no Indo-European etymology, which have been designated as a Pre-Hellenic substratum in the Indo-European Greek language. These words include toponyms, anthroponyms and divinity names, among other loanwords. The present study enquires into the origins of this substratum in the Ancient Greek language of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE. Although mainstream archaeolinguistics argue mainly for an Anatolian origin of this substratum, linguistic evidence will be presented herein for an Eteocretan influence in the formation of a significant part of it. Several examples are provided for well-known cases of proper nouns and other loanwords, along with examination of some linguistic data and, finally, conclusions, concerning the linguistic characteristics of this substratum and of Ancient Greek.

**Keywords:** Ancient Greek, mythology, Eteocretan, substratum, adstratum, pre-Greek languages.

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## INTRODUCTION

The international scientific interest in the study of Ancient Greek language is long-lasting and multifarious. According to Robins (1990: 13), the intellectual life of Europe as a whole, namely the philosophical, moral, political and aesthetic thought, draws its origin from the work of the Ancient Greek thinkers. The post-classical Koine dialect of Greek had been the first European *lingua franca* and a cultural dialect (*Kultursprache*), before and during the Roman Empire's era, as well as the original language of the New Testament (Babiniotis, 2002: 8). In historical linguistics, the first oral form of Greek is called Proto-Greek, conventionally dated before the 15<sup>th</sup> century BCE, while the term *Ancient Greek* refers approximately to the period from 1500 to 300 BCE (Babiniotis, 2002: 46). So far, the oldest attested Indo-European (henceforth, IE) language is the Hittite, since the 16<sup>th</sup> century BCE (Finkelberg, 1997), extinct by the 11<sup>th</sup> century BCE. On the contrary, Ancient Greek, first attested on Linear B tablets since 1450 BCE (Del Frego, 2018), makes Greek the IE (and European in general) language with the longest recorded history (Horrocks, 2010: 10), valuable for the study of language evolution

(see e.g.: Baumbach, 1964), by being continuously and patently spoken during the last 35 centuries. Therefore, the present study also contributes directly or indirectly to other linguistic issues, related, for example, to the origins of the IE protolanguage (Anthony & Ringe, 2015).

In this context, it has been recognized by eminent Greek and foreign linguists (Christidis, 2005) that a linguistic substratum existed in the Aegean region during the 2<sup>nd</sup> millennium BCE, evidenced especially by the etymology of toponyms (Andriotis, 1995). Other approaches suggest an adstratum instead (Renfrew, 1998), although this viewpoint does not change the essence of the argument herein, concerning the Greek language of the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium BCE within an ethnological frame (Giannopoulos, 2012). This substratum is regarded either as IE (mainly Anatolian), based on the unknown etymology of plant-names and toponyms (Faure, 1968), or non-IE, linked to early Minoan culture (Gamkrelidze & Ivanov, 2010: 796). Two of the primary sources for these linguistic studies have been the Minoan scripts Linear A and B (Finkelberg,

2013) and Homer's epic poetry. The latter still attracts an international interest from scholars in various ways, some even rejecting the Greek origins of the epic stories (Manher, 2004; Vinci, 2001; 2017). Another important point in discovering the linguistic substratum of Ancient Greek is the identification of the underlying language(s) of Linear A; the relevant proposals include:

1. the Luwian (Brown, 1992-1993; Woudhuizen, 2002), the Hittite (Davis, 1967) and the Lycian (Finkelberg, 2000; Kazansky, 2012), as the most probable Anatolian languages;
2. the Pelasgic (Katicic, 1976) or Proto-Ionic, as an IE language closely related but not identical to Proto-Greek (Owens, 2000; 2007), or Proto-Aeolic Greek (Tsikritsis, 2001; 2006);
3. the Proto-IE language (Georgiev, 1966; Hicks, 2005);
4. of non-IE languages, a Semitic/Akkadian for Linear A (Gordon, 1981; Woudhuizen, 2005) and Egyptian for the substratum itself (Bernal, 2006), which have been refuted as the purported evidence amounts to no more than 30 words per case (Haarmann, 2010);
5. Hattic (Akulov, 2016), Hurrian (Anthony & Ringe, 2015), Urartian and North Caucasian non-IE languages (Tardivo & Kitselis, 2017), mainly based on the notion of Neolithic migration (6700-6500 BCE) of farmers from Anatolia to Greece.

In a reconstruction of the pre-Greek substratum (Beekes, 2014) there are cases for which an IE (i.e., Anatolian) origin is not possible. The diversity of the above proposals is as expected, considering that the unity of "pre-Greek" has always been very questionable, difficult to assume that it was either massively IE or non-IE (Katicic, 1976: 87).

Nowadays, it is a generally accepted and usual practice for a linguistic reconstruction or discovery of an evolutionary process to be accompanied by non-linguistic evidence, such as genetic, cultural and archaeological data (Woudhuizen, 2017). In this respect, the alleged Anatolian origin for the pre-Greek substratum has been strongly criticized, considering that it presupposes extended cultural influence, which is absent (Oreshko, 2018). On the contrary, there is a plethora of evidence for the Minoan cultural influence (Weilhartner, 2017) that includes, for example, trade (Marthari, 2009; Roberts, 2018), language or burial customs (Perna, 2003). Subsequently, Renfrew (1998) identified the "Minoan" language of the Cretan palaces as the principal contributor to the substratum of the Greek language (considering it an adstratum, rather). Homer (Odyssey 19: 176) mentions the "great-

hearted Eteocretans" as one of the main ancient ethnic groups of Crete, being the oldest one according to Strabo (10: 475) and the clear etymology of the term "*Eteocretan*" = "genuine Cretan". As the Eteocretans were the predominant ethnic group of Bronze Age Crete (Kenanidis, 1992), their language is considered here too the "Minoan language of the Cretan palaces" (Renfrew, 1998).

### ***The Eteocretan Contribution***

The Eteocretan language is considered isolated and non-deciphered by mainstream archaeolinguistics (Beekes, 2014). It has been merely associated with a few inscriptions written in Greek alphabet and dated from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 3<sup>rd</sup> century BCE (Brown, 2003-2018). Yet, it has been demonstrated that at least one of these inscriptions (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2015b) renders a conservative Sumerian dialect (Kenanidis, 1992; 2013; Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2017a). Moreover, it has been demonstrated that the same Sumerian dialect provides meaningful and consistent (with the context) interpretations in Cretan Hieroglyphic epigraphy (Kenanidis, 2016; Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2017b; Papakitsos & Kenanidis, 2016). However, it is not claimed that Eteocretan or Sumerian is the language conveyed by the main body of extant Linear A documents (Papakitsos & Kenanidis, 2016).

The linguistic affinity of the Archaic Sumerian language and pictography to the Eteocretan ones had been suspected (Castleden, 2002; Fischer, 2004: 34-40) or observed (Davis, 2011; Glarner, 2002; Szalek, 2008; 2015; Woudhuizen, 2005). This affinity has also been repeatedly attested (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2015a; 2017c; 2018a-e; Papakitsos, 2018a-b; Papakitsos & Kenanidis, 2015; 2018b). In this linguistic context that identifies Eteocretan with a conservative Sumerian dialect, the etymology of some words of the Ancient Greek substratum will be presented, as suggested by Kenanidis (2013). These words are classified under geography (toponyms), ethnology, religion, mythology, institutions and general vocabulary.

### ***2.1 Geography & Ethnology***

This subsection deals with the etymology of Crete, Cyprus and other place-names, as well as names of non-Achaean ethnicities of Minoan Crete besides Eteocretans, namely Kydones and Pelasgians (Homer, Odyssey 19: 172-177). The importance of toponyms has been recognized for tracing back the origins of nations (Perono Cacciafoco, 2014: 82). However, in the case of Anatolian origins of many Greek place-names, it is not guaranteed that they belong to the same language or that they all should be explained in the same way (Morpurgo Davies, 1986: 114).

### 2.1.1 Crete.

Crete was well known to the Mesopotamians by the name “*kap-ta-ra*” (in Cuneiform), which for the first time in the world is attested in the inscription (written in Sumerian) of the Akkadian King Sargon: “the land of copper (= Cyprus) and **kaptara** (= Crete), countries lying far away in the upper sea (= Mediterranean) - the hand of Sargon reached” (Drandakis, 1956). In Egyptian texts, the Cretans are referred to as “*keftiou*” that is written (without vowels) “*k-f-tj-w*”. The Egyptians always referred to the “*keftiou*” as strangers and their language (of which some texts they quoted) as purely foreign. The equivalent Hebrew term was arguably “*kaftor*” (Strange, 1980). To trace the original form of this name (*kap-ta-ra* / *k-f-tj-w* / *kaftor*):

- “k” was palatal; the vowel after “k” was probably not round, based on the forms [kap-ta-ra] and [kaftor], and the fact that neither Hebrew nor Egyptian use a “w” that often stands for round vowels.
- “p” was aspirated, that is why “f” in the Egyptian and Hebrew; it is well known that Sumerian “k, t, p” (all voiceless stops) were aspirated (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2013).
- “t” was probably voiceless (therefore aspirated), not purely dental but alveolar (approaching to palatal); that is why indicated by Egyptian “tj” and Mesopotamian “t”, while Mesopotamian Sumerian “d” was pronounced more front, i.e., interdental (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2013).
- “-or” is testified by Hebrew “*kaftor*”; “-r” is also in Cuneiform but absent in the Egyptian form because it was not pronounced unless followed by a vowel, as all consonants in Sumerian; “o” in “-or” is confirmed by the Egyptian “w”.

Now let us examine the original form of “*kenger*” or “*kejer*”, the autonym of the Sumerian nation, which turned to /çøme:r/ (written “*Sumer*”) in Emesal (the feminine sociolect of Sumerian):

- “k” was a palatal that was converted to palatal “š”; /c/ to “š” is not a regular change in Sumerian, so a semivowel is suspected after “k” to prompt the spirantization; that was /w/ (labial) because it rounded /e/ to /ø/.
- In ancient dictionaries (the Mesopotamians were the first known lexicographers), the word is glossed KI-EN-GI (Kenanidis, 2013), which indicates that originally it was “*kenger*” rather than “*kejer*” (approximately /ŋ/+g/ that became later only /ŋ/).
- In the Sumerian of Cuneiform, a non-coda “ŋ” most often originates from “p”; particularly in the word “*kenger*”, the “ŋ” is quite unlikely to be an old “ŋ”, because if it was old, it would have

earlier assimilated the following “g” making “*kenger*” to “*kejer*” so early that “*kenger*” would have never been documented (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2013).

Consequently, the original form of the word “Sumerian” was approximately /cwép<sup>h</sup>eger/; the exact nature of “g” is not known, but “*cwep*” is the archaic Sumerian word for “bow”, retained in the Sumerian dialect of Crete, i.e., Eteocretan (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2013). The second component must have been a verb, approximately “*ger*”, because words describing people according to their activities were of the type “object + verb root”. That verb was, in all likelihood, an old form of Turkic /cer/- (to stretch), which in turn is cognate to Greek χορδή (hence “chord” etc.). This means that the Sumerians’ autonym was originally \*/cwépejer/- (“those who stretch the bow”). The word is very close to \**kaptor*, as the name of Crete is documented. The change of “k” to “t” in the Cuneiform Sumerian (mainly in Emesal, the feminine sociolect) was not so rare, and in Eteocretan dialect as well (Kenanidis & Papakitsos 2013).

That ancient \*/cwép<sup>h</sup>ejer/ became approximately /cwép<sup>h</sup>etor/ in Minoan Crete and its colonies. The change of “-er” to “-or” (-/ør/?) can be due to influence from the preceding labials (w, p) and it demonstrates Emesal (the feminine sociolect) traits (tending to round front vowels and move palatal consonants further front to an alveolar position). The “e” after /p<sup>h</sup>/ was epenthetic (to enable pronouncing the preceding consonant) and hardly audible. So this autonym of Eteocretans was applied to their homeland, which was mainly Crete, and subsequently could be used by other, or for other, ethnicities that inhabited Crete: so it was as natural for the biblical Philistines (probably of Akkadian origin) to be called “the people from Kaftor”, as for the Eteocretans themselves (of Sumerian descent) to be named “*k-f-tj-w*” by the Egyptians.

The name carried a glorious tradition of archery, which continued in Crete until the time that bows were replaced by portable firearms. Cretans had a reputation in the ancient world as great archers and precious mercenaries (Skoulikas, 2001); they were mentioned as warrior archers in the Trojan War (Iliad), the Descent of the Myriads with Xenophon (401 BCE), the campaign of Alexander the Great (334-323 BCE) and the wars of Hellenistic Age (323-67 BCE). After the Roman conquest of mainland Greece (146 BCE) and of Crete (67 BCE), the Roman Empire employed thousands of Cretan archers (“*Sagittarios ex Creta*”) to strengthen the Roman Legions. The Cretan archers fought bravely against both the Venetians, who eventually

conquered Crete (1204-1669 CE), and the Ottoman Turks (1669-1898 CE; a certain area of Crete was never conquered).

### 2.1.2 Cyprus.

At the entry “*urud* [COPPER]” of PSD (2006), among excerpts containing the word “*urud*”, two instances contain the term “*ku<sub>3</sub> uruda*”, where “*ku<sub>3</sub>*” (metal) is the main noun and “*urud*” a specification. The word “*urud*” (= copper, or “reddish”) could have earlier been \**purud* (or \**porod*), as, rarely in the Sumerian of Cuneiform, a *p*-can be silenced. But it is much more probable that the word “*ku<sub>3</sub>*”, same as “*kug*” (/kuŋ/) was originally /kup/, as the majority of old “*p*” has turned into “*g*” (/ŋ/) in Cuneiform Sumerian. This means that the word for “copper” was usually pronounced “*kuporo(d)*” (stressed on the first component after the regular manner in Sumerian) and this was used as a nickname for Cyprus: the island of copper. The real name of Cyprus was “*alašija*”, which must be related to Hittite “*aššuwa*” (Asia Minor), i.e., “*alašija*” meant something like “near Asia Minor” or “south of Asia Minor”.

### 2.1.3 Other place-names.

The Sumerian non-emphatic consonants /k, c, t, p/ were not only aspirated but often nasalized, as well (Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2013), and this nasalization is evidenced in many “pre-Hellenic” Greek place-names (of Eteocretan origin) mostly ending in “-nthos”, such as Olympos, Berekynthos, Korinthos, Zakyynthos, Amarynthos, Apeiranthos and many other words, which usually exhibit some additional common features: they are stressed on their first syllable or first component, their consonants are voiceless, every consonant followed by a vowel. In some cases, their Eteocretan (archaic Sumerian) etymology is recognizable:

- Olympos (Ὀλυμπος), parallel to Cuneiform “ul.he” (= the bottom of the celestial dome; once again, note the usual change of old “b” to Cuneiform “g” and then “h”).
- Berekynthos (Βερέκυνθος) // Cuneiform “*pirig-utu*” (= the lion of the Sun-god), a divinity analogous to Hindu “Narasingha” (= “man-lion”).
- Korinthos (Κόρινθος), the first compound being /ko(r)/ (“kur”= mountain).
- Zakyynthos (Ζάκυνθος) // “*šag-utu*” (= the goodness of Sun(-god)).
- Amarynthos (Αμάρυνθος) from “*amár-utu*”, a very significant Eteocretan and Mesopotamian deity, who was believed that incarnated to bring justice to the world, was sentenced to death along with two common criminals and then was resurrected; the Sumerian name “*amár-utu*”

became Akkadian “*Márduk*”, who came to be the most important deity of Babylonians.

The Eteocretan place-names were often of religious origin, not unlike Modern Greek place-names. Words of the type seen were not only place-names but also signified objects like *asaminthos* (ασάμινθος = bathtub), where the first component was probably “*anzam*” (= bowl) (Papakitsos *et al.*, 2018: 59).

### 2.1.4 Kydones.

There was surely a Semitic population in Minoan Crete (Kenanidis, 2013) and those Semitic people were probably Akkadians, neighbors of Sumerians in Mesopotamia too (see subsection 2.1.1). Indeed the bulk of Linear A clay-tablets available today comes from Semite (probably Akkadian) merchants or their accountants, but not from palaces, judging from the general ignobility of Linear A clay-tablets compared to the palace tablets of Linear B. The whole territory of Crete is known to have been governed by one king only, the Eteocretan Minos in Knossos. It is noteworthy that on a couple of those Linear A tablets (Kenanidis, 2013) the word “*cudoŋi*” is found, which is obviously related to the ethnicity of Kydones. It must have been an Eteocretan word “*cudoŋ*” that named the Semites of Crete (Akkadians), a really depreciating name, being most probably the origin of the word that wandered in the Middle East, until it arrived in Turkish as “*cüdam*”, meaning a vile person. It is proverbially used in “*adam değil cüdam*”: “he is not a man, but a *cüdam*”, and the etymology is apparently from Sumerian “*gudu*” (anus), same as of Turkish “*kötü*” (“useless, especially a man useless in battle; a coward”). So, this name was informally used even by those Semites among themselves, but they would rather introduce themselves to foreigners as “the people from *kaptor* (/cwéphetor/), hence “*Kaftor*” in the Bible.

### 2.1.5 Pelasgians.

This work is concerned primarily with Eteocretans; Pelasgians were an ethnic group not related to Eteocretans. Pelasgians are generally (and quite reasonably) considered one (or more) ethnic group(s) that came from Asia, moved by the changes brought by the “agricultural revolution”, about the 7<sup>th</sup> millenium BC, and spread on Asia Minor, Greek islands and coasts, and Cyprus (Woudhuizen, 2013). Throughout Asia Minor, there were ancient toponyms ending in “-sós”: Sinasos, Amisos, Issos, Alikarnassos and many more. Many such place-names exist, until today, in Greece (e.g., Ierissos, Volissos, Ialysos, Knossos, Tyllisos, Amnisos) and in Cyprus (e.g., Tamasos, Lemesos). It is obvious that all place-names given by that people ended in -sós, therefore that -sós meant “place”. This -sós can easily be traced back to a Proto-Sapiens language root

\*SJ(O)W, hence Chinese 所 (Mandarin “suǒ” = “place where”) and the Proto-IE plural locative suffix \*sju (for the Proto-Sapiens language see: Papakitsos & Kenanidis, 2018a).

The rejection of the existence of a Pelasgic language (Hester, 1964) was premature (Woudhuizen, 2013). All those words ending in “-sós” clearly show some distinct phonological and grammatical features: they are all accented on the last syllable (-sós), which is realized as stress in Modern Greek but as a higher pitch accent in Ancient Greek; words were often compound, as they could be long; words sometimes started with /j/-, rendered by Greek “i”; clusters of two consonants were only permitted when at least one of the consonants was a nasal; there were both “r” and “l” in the language, as the Greek perceived the sounds; and most importantly, that “-sós” (“place”) being always at the end of words reveals a head-last syntax (in which the head-noun comes last, preceded by the modifiers like adjectives or genitive). All these features reveal a language quite different from Eteocretan (see subsection 2.1.3 above).

Ancient Greek historians could be right when they said that Carians were among the Pelasgian branches. There were varying, and sometimes contradicting, traditional beliefs about the Carians and Pelasgians. Homer attaches the attribute “*dioi*” (anciently “*diwoj*”, meaning “divine”) to the Pelasgians; but then the name of Carians is used pejoratively (Iliad 9.378), and there were proverbs about Carians as people of little worth, proper only as slaves and mercenaries to be set at the battle front to lessen the danger to the better warriors; for Greeks, Carians were the first people known to serve as mercenaries. Thucydides (Book 1, Chapter 8) says that Carians were a tribe of bandits and pirates. Herodotus of Halicarnassós (himself half Carian as his father was Lyxis, a non-Greek name starting with *Lug-* like that of his home city tyrant Lugdamis) said that the Carians made remarkable inventions, such as the plumes on helmets and handles of shields - strange indeed if the warlike Greeks did not invent such things themselves. Referring to Pelasgians, Herodotus says that he cannot be certain about the language they spoke, but judging from some remnants of Pelasgian speaking people and various place-names left in Greece, he concludes that they spoke a barbarian (i.e., non-Greek) language.

All the above information shows that Carians were not Pelasgians, but sometimes the term “Pelasgians” was used loosely so as to include different pre-Hellenic ethnicities, so encompassing the Carians. The etymology of the name Carians

(*Kᾱρες*) seems to be from a Proto-Sapiens root meaning “coast” (Papakitsos & Kenanidis, 2018a), as they were inhabiting only coastal areas. As to the etymology of Pelasgian (*Πελασγός*), this looks like a purely Greek word; “*hoi pelas*” was a usual expression meaning “the neighboring people”, and the -g- of Pelasgians can be easily explained from the stem of *gaea* (land), if not from the IE root which is also found in English “*go*”. So, the name Pelasgians must have meant “those who occupy lands neighboring to us” (or: “those who have come to our vicinity”) and this explains perfectly how the term “Pelasgians” could include a different ethnicity, as the Carians.

Both Pelasgians and Carians fit well within the theory of Neolithic migration from Asia Minor (Finkelberg, 1997; Renfrew, 1987; 2002), which does not exclude the suggested Hattic, Hurro-Urartian and North Caucasian origin of the “pre-Hellenic” substratum (Tardivo & Kitselis, 2017), although see Kassian (2014) for an objection. Certainly, neither Pelasgians nor Carians were Eteocretans; Herodotus (1.171) clearly states that when the Cretans of king Minos conquered the Aegean islands, they subdued all the different nations inhabiting there and imposed on them no taxes, except providing rower crews for the Minoan fleet.

## 2.2 Religion & Mythology

This subsection examines the etymology of some Greek names and words pertinent to religion and mythology, well known until today. The questionable Greek (or even IE) etymology of some divinity names was noted many years ago (Baumbach, 1964: 3-4), while the Minoan origins of Athena has been convincingly argued for (Hicks, 2002).

### 2.2.1 Athena

Almost all Linear A inscriptions on libation stone tables (e.g., SY Za 2, TL Za 1, PK Za 11, KO Za 1) contain a word “*atanoroθuja*” that starts with “*a-ta-no-*”, while the stone table IO Za 8 has “*wanatiroθuja*”: within that religious context, it is apparent that “*atano-*” is a divine name, which in one case was substituted by another divine name, “*wanati*”. So, it is evident that “*atano*” is the deity that the Greeks assimilated by the name *Athānā* (later *Athēnā*); remember that Sumerian “t” was aspirated; -o was the genitive suffix in archaic Sumerian and Eteocretan, the same is -a in Cuneiform Sumerian; the well-known Sumerian goddess “Inana” (“*gašan-an-a*” in Emesal) must have been *at-an-o* in the Eteocretan dialect, as “at-” took the place of “in-” (believed to be from “*nin*” = “queen”, equivalent to Emesal “*gašan*”; the name meaning “queen of heaven”). That “at-” is not easy to

trace in the Cuneiform, perhaps it is “*a-tu<sub>5</sub>; a-tu<sub>5</sub>-a-tu<sub>5</sub>; <sup>l<sub>2</sub></sup>*a-tu<sub>5</sub>-a*, a type of priest” or “*a-za-ad*, head” (rather “chief, topmost”; the ordinary word for head is “*saĝ*”); the root of this word is found in all language families, e.g., Turkic /e:ði:/ “master”, ancient Egyptian “*aθi*” (master, ruler), Sanskrit *adhi* (“topmost”) and *atha* (an important mantra) etc.*

### 2.2.2 Dionysus

The name of Dionysus, attested as early as on Mycenaean inscriptions, is a loanword (influenced by some popular false etymology) from Eteocretan “*doηuθa*”, which is the best known of all Sumerian names, found in Cuneiform as “*dumu.zi*”, meaning “son-righteous”. Such names of the type “family relationship + -θa(t) (in Cuneiform “*zi(d)*” = right, ideal) were very popular with the Sumerians, aiming to make children fair to their family members. The deified Sumerian king “*dumu.zi*” was so important, that he is mentioned in the Bible, and his name survives today as Tammūz in Arabic and Temmuz in Turkish as the name of the month July.

### 2.2.3 Homer

Those who are even a little familiar with the literature of Mesopotamia are well aware that the word “Sumerian” there meant an erudite and refined man, as Sumerians themselves viewed all their neighboring people as unrefined if not brute, but also the other ethnic groups of Mesopotamia regarded the Sumerians as the founders of literacy and higher civilization - similarly to the way that the Romans and Renaissance Europe considered ancient Greek heritage. Even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century AD, the word “humanities” referred primarily to the study of ancient Greek language and culture. In ancient Mesopotamia, “humanities” meant the study of Sumerian language and culture. The word “humanity”, as the quality of being both humane and literate, has been found, for the first time in world history, in the Sumerian language as “*namlulu*”. At the time when Greeks began to emerge from their isolation during the Dark Ages, that is around the year 800 BCE, there was no other word in the whole Old World that could refer to a literate person who records the folk literature and wisdom - except the word “*Šumer*” /çøme:r/, accented on the first component after Sumerian pronunciation. This is what the Sumerian literati did: they recorded proverbs, folk myths and all the literature of the anonymous people; and this is what Homer did: he recorded the folk poetry. The very name “Homer” /home:r-os/ is /çøme:r/ in archaic Greek ears, a word borrowed from Mesopotamia, meaning “a scholar who records the folk literature” - it was not a personal name.

### 2.2.4 Minos

Just as “Homer”, the word “Minos” too was not a personal name; it was a title of the Eteocretan kings (Kyriakidis & Konstas, 1974: 2240); they ruled from the capital city of Knossos, mentioned by Homer. Homer gave a splendid etymology of “*Mīnōs*” as “*οαριστής Διός*”, but since Homer’s times until now nobody understood that. “*Oaristēs*” from the verb “*oarizein*”, from “*oar*” (“wife”), meant “a man who talks (as if) with his wife”. So, “*oaristēs Diwos*” (“*οαριστής Διός*”) means “a man who talks with the sky-God (Zeus in Greek) in an intimate friendly way, as if talking with his own wife”. This expression is a typical orientalism; no other expression like this has been found in the whole Greek literature; it was simply the closest possible Greek term that could translate the title “*Mīnōs*”, originally “*mi-e an-ō*”. On the other side, such poetic grandiloquence was common in the Orient, especially for titles of rulers and kings: for example, Dumuzi was called “*kuli Enlil*” = the friend of (the great God) Enlil”.

Falkenstein (1964: 42) gave a good example of how nouns could be used as adverbs in Sumerian: “*mi<sub>2</sub>*” = woman, “*du<sub>11</sub>*” = talk; so, “*mi<sub>2</sub> du<sub>11</sub>*” = talking the way women do, that is “talking in a friendly, intimate way”. Many Sumerian verbs were used in perfective aspect only, while other verbs were used for the imperfective aspect only. The verb “*du<sub>11</sub>*” or “*dug<sub>4</sub>*” (PSD, 2006) indicated the perfective aspect of the verb “to talk”, but for the imperfective aspect of talking the verb was “*e<sub>7</sub>*”. So, the perfective compound verb “*mi<sub>2</sub> du<sub>11</sub>*” corresponds to the imperfective “*mi<sub>2</sub> e<sub>7</sub>*”. For the title of the king, “*mi<sub>2</sub> e<sub>7</sub>*” was suitable (“the man who uses to talk with God”), not “*mi<sub>2</sub> du<sub>11</sub>*” (“he who once talked with God”). So, “*mi e*” is translated by “*oaristēs*”. What did “*Diwos*” (Διός) translate? This is easy to answer: the sky-God and highest God for the Greeks was *Zeus* (genitive: *Diwos*); the sky-God and highest God for the Sumerians was “*An*” (genitive: *anā* in Cuneiform Sumerian, *anō* in older Sumerian and in Eteocretan). Vowels were usually long in the end of Sumerian words so that they would not be taken as epenthetic; in the case of the genitive suffix it was surely long, because the genitive suffix was originally -o(k), and when the -k was silenced (as it ought without a following vowel), the “o” had the compensatory lengthening.

In conclusion, “*oaristēs Diwos*” = “*mie anō*”. Of course, pronouncing the 3 consecutive vowels of “*mie anō*” was hard even for the Eteocretans themselves; even harder in the Homeric Greek language that did not allow hiatus; so, “*mie anō*” soon became “*mīēnō*” and eventually “*Mīnō(s)*” in Greek. The perfective verb “*du<sub>11</sub>*” (in its older form “*de*”) must have been used in a similar title \**mi-de anō*, which probably became the toponym found as

ME-ZA-NA in Linear B and MIDANA in ancient Egyptian (Faure, 1968: 142).

Minos being a title, what was the proper name of the King of Knossos mentioned in Homeric *Odyssey* (xix. 178)? The Homeric text gives the King's proper name directly after Minos: "εννεωρος"; the extant manuscripts give different variants of this word, which has been utterly puzzling to all philologists since the antiquity until now. The form "εννεωρος" has prevailed in prints because of an imaginary connection to "εννεα" ("nine") and "ωρα" ("hour, specific time"). The original Homeric text had "hēneworos", rendering the Eteocretan \*hēne-woro, which means "the Lord guards" (Kenanidis, 2013: 199). "hēne" is the equivalent of Cuneiform Sumerian "en" (lord, ruler) with the ergative (active verb's subject) suffix -e; \*woro is the equivalent of the Cuneiform Sumerian "uru<sub>3</sub>" (= to guard). Given the cognateness of all languages, that \*woro is cognate to Greek *wora-* "see, watch". Another Sumerian etymology could be corresponding to Cuneiform "en-ur", meaning "lord-lion"; this is less convincing than the previous etymology, but still names of such a kind were rather common in Cuneiform Sumerian, e.g., "lugal-gu<sub>4</sub>" = "the king-bull", "nin-sun<sub>x</sub>" = the queen - wild cow (the name of Gilgamesh's mother).

There are more names in Greek mythology starting with "en" that was the Sumerian "en" (or \*hēn / hēn), mistaken for the Greek preposition "en-", such as Έγκέλαδος ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enceladus\\_\(giant\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enceladus_(giant))), a giant thought to cause earthquakes. His name is used allegorically even in Modern Greek language and it can be analyzed as "en" (lord) + "ke" (earth) + "dal/θα" (shaking) = the lord who shakes the earth. "en-" was a very common first component in the names of Sumerian deities.

### 2.2.5 The Nectar

In Greek mythology, nectar was the drink of gods. It is occasionally believed to be a compound word of IE etymology, from \*nek- (= death) + -tar (= crossing over), thus meaning "to overcome death" (Harper, 2018). This is not a convincing etymology, as "death" is "thanatos" or "moros" but not "nek-" in ancient Greek, while "tar-", known from Sanskrit in the sense of "crossing over", is not known in Greek with such a sense. Indeed there was a Proto-IE term for "overcoming death", that was \*n-mrto-, which has given "amrta" in Sanskrit, "immort-" in Latin, "ambroto-" and "ambrosia" in Greek, but that is clearly different from "nectar", a word with no cognates in other IE languages.

The syllabogram NE of the Aegean scripts depicts a libation vessel that was called "nek" in Eteocretan

(Kenanidis & Papakitsos, 2018b: 24-25). In Sumerian Cuneiform, it is found as "nigin", "ni<sub>6</sub>", and "nigi" (= a libation vessel), sometimes with an instrument-suffix -in (Kenanidis, 2013: 23). "What the libation vessel pours out" is translated approximately as "nek-de-a" or "nek-dar-a" in Eteocretan (Cuneiform Sumerian "dē" = pouring out; "dar" = to drip?); the -r in "nectar" is either from the second component or due to an influence from Greek neuter nouns ending in -ar, e.g., "piwar" (fat substance), "outhar" (udder) etc. "What the libation vessel pours out" is "what the Gods drink", i.e., the nectar.

### 2.3 Institutions & Culture

In this last subsection, the suggested Eteocretan etymology of several words (analyzed in: Kenanidis, 2013) related to material or conceptual culture is briefly presented:

- In Linear B, the word "da-ju-to" is found on five clay tablets from Knossos and the inscription on a stirrup jar (EL 1 1.2) from a Mycenaean palace reads "dajuto dapulašo wa" (Kenanidis, 2013; Tosa, 2011); "dajuto" is also found on the Cretan Hieroglyphic seal #290; it is an Eteocretan name meaning "the justice of the Sun (god)": *daj* being an older form of Cuneiform "di" (= *dej*) and "utu" the Sun, God of justice for the Sumerians and twin brother of the Goddess Inanna (Black & Green, 1992). "dapulašo", read "daj-phulazōn" (δαϊ-φυλάζων) is a hybrid title from Eteocretan *daj-* (justice) and Greek φυλάζων (classical φυλάσσων = safeguarding). So, the title means "who safeguards justice" and "wa" is a common abbreviation for Greek *wanakteros* (high minister to the king). In other words, it is the signature of an Eteocretan judicial high minister, serving an Achaean king.
- The word φίλος (*philo-s* = friend) is from the Eteocretan \*pile /p<sup>h</sup>i|e/, corresponding to Cuneiform "kuli" /k<sup>h</sup>y|e/.
- Greek νικύλεον (*nikuleon* = a variety of figs) is from Eteocretan /ɲi-c:u|a/ or /ɲi-c:ɹ|a/ (= big tree), i.e., figs from a large tree.
- Greek κρόκος (*crocus*), borrowed into other languages, originates from an Eteocretan word approximately /koru-c:e/, found in Sumerian Cuneiform as "kur gi-rin" (the product of *crocus*; *rin* or *rān* = flower). A synonym was \*sap-*rān* (hence "saffron"), referring to the stamens of the flower.
- Akkadian *daltu* means any kind of board, including writing tablets; borrowed into Greek as δέλτος ("deltos"). "Daltu" was borrowed into Europe through a Sumerian pronunciation /t:alə<sup>h</sup>o/, later /t<sup>h</sup>alə<sup>t</sup>o/ (with a weak epenthetic vowel after "l" which sounds like "r" to many European speakers, hence Italian



*tarocco*, French *tarot*) via the Sumerian settlers of Southern Italy. It is an indication that Akkadians accompanied Sumerian settlers everywhere in the Mediterranean.

- In Cuneiform Sumerian, the balance (load) and the talent (weight and currency unit) is “*gun<sub>2</sub>*” or “*gu<sub>2</sub>-un*” /c:won/, in Eteocretan /t:wo(n)/ (hence “*ton*” in English and related European words). The Linear B syllabogram depicting a balance is used for Greek “*dwo*”. It was one of the commonest words: 5551 occurrences recorded in the PSD (2006). The Sumerian talent was subdivided into 60 “*ma-na*” (an even more common word: 9459 occurrences), exactly like the ancient Greek talent, which was subdivided into 60 “*mna*” (an obvious loanword).
- The Eteocretan word for fat substances was “*je(l)*”, while /jø(l)/” in Emesal (the Cypriot Sumerian sign depicting butter is used for the syllable /jø/). With some adjective, it became the word that the Greeks borrowed as *έλαιον* (*elaiwon* = oil) and the Romans as “*oleum*”.
- Cuneiform Sumerian “*zalag* / *zalag<sub>2</sub>*” means “(to be) bright, to shine; (fire) light; (to be) pure”; there was also a stone (shiny or glittering) “*na<sub>4</sub>zalag<sub>2</sub>*”. As this “*zalag*” was a usual adjective for the sea (and usual adjectives can often substitute nouns), the Greeks borrowed it and adding the suffix *-ja* made /θalagja/ hence *thalassa* / *thalatta* (= sea), a very important word for the Greeks until today, but not an IE word.
- Then word “*barbarous*” (*βάρβαρος*) too has no IE etymology; those fanciful and chauvinistic people who imagined that all non-Greek people sounded “*bar-bar*” ignore Homer and all ancient Greek writers, who never attributed any “*bar-bar*” sound to any foreigners; also, they ignore that “*bar*” means “outside” or “foreign” in Sumerian, hence “*nu-bar*” (= “person outside” = foreigner; equal to Japanese 外人 *gai-jin*), then, with reduplication for superlative, “*nu bar-bar-a*” (= foreigner). The Sumerian concept of superiority and connection of Sumerians to “humanity”, discussed previously (see subsection 2.2.3), is clearly expressed in “*lú nu lú kúr bar-bar-a*” (“human no human, stranger of out-outside”). This “*bar-bar-a*” was borrowed by Greeks as “*barbar-os*”.
- Reduplication for superlative (a non-Greek grammatical device) is also found in *μάρμαρον* (*marmaron* = marble). “*Mar*” is ancient Sumerian for “white”, found in Cuneiform (reduplicated) as “*babbar*” (i.e., “*ba(r)bar*” with a frequent change of initial m- to b-). “*na<sub>4</sub>babbar*” (brightly white stone, i.e., marble) is also found in Cuneiform. Greeks borrowed the earlier form “*mar-mar*” from the conservative

Sumerian that is Eteocretan language. Until today, the white marble, along with the olive tree and the sparkling sea are the best known symbols of Greece.

- Greek *σέλινον* (*selin-on* = celery) too is from Eteocretan, where it was /θel-ij/ (Papakitsos, 2018a), the basic word being “*θel*” (= salad herbs) with a suffix (“*ij*”). The Linear scripts syllabogram for “*θe*” depicts rock samphire, a close relative of celery (note that Greek celery is much thinner than the west European variety).
- Greek *σίτος* (*sitos*) is well known as a loan of unknown origin (Chantraine, 1977); the word-initial “s” and then the long “i” are typical non-Greek and non-IE characteristics. Although *sitos* is known as “wheat” today, its ancient Greek meaning was basically “staple food”, which was not exactly bread, but flour. When ancient Greeks were thirsty but also needed to eat, they did not eat bread; it is impossible to eat bread when working under the summer heat, as Homer describes the workers depicted on Achilles’ shield. For those workers, they mixed flour with water, adding a little wine, herbs, cheese etc. (the semi-liquid mix was called “*kukeōn*”). The word *sitos*, meaning “staple food” (being flour) was borrowed from Eteocretan /θi:d/ = flour (“*zid<sub>2</sub>*” in Cuneiform).

The above list is only a very small sample from a large quantity of Eteocretan loanwords into Greek; still these loanwords name the most essential features of Greek-ness.

### 3. RESULTS & CONCLUSION

There are several “byproducts” (cultural, historical and linguistic) of this research, one of them deserves to be presented here:

As Eteocretan signs for aspirate consonants were used for Mycenaean Greek both *π* and *φ*, *κ* and *χ*, *τ* and *θ*, i.e., both for aspirates and traditionally supposed non-aspirate consonants, it means that those known as “non-aspirates” were in fact lightly aspirated, though less aspirated than the corresponding “*δασέα*” (aspirated), but then light aspiration versus heavy aspiration would not be enough (in Greek at least) to distinguish between the two kinds, if there was no additional feature. That additional feature did exist in the Proto-IE language: the aspirate consonants were also voiced (traditionally written as *gh<sup>w</sup>*, *g<sup>h</sup>*, *dh*, *bh*) and they turned to unvoiced aspirates in Greek - but already in Mycenaean Greek? Obviously no. The Proto-IE aspirates remained voiced in Mycenaean Greek, and even in Macedonian Greek until late times (Kenanidis, 2013); this is the only possible explanation why the Macedonian Greek *χ*, *θ*, *φ* were



described by other Greeks as  $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$ ,  $\beta$  respectively: since the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, in the southern Greek dialects, the process of turning  $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$ ,  $\beta$  from voiced unaspirated stops into fricatives (as in modern Greek) had started. Either affricate at first or already fricative in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the common, southern Greek “ $\gamma$ ,  $\delta$ ,  $\beta$ ” were identical or very similar to Macedonian Greek “ $\chi$ ,  $\theta$ ,  $\phi$ ”, which were voiced and aspirated, just as in Proto-IE and in Mycenaean Greek (being of all recorded IE languages the closest to Proto-IE and the oldest after Hittite). Macedonian Greek itself was a very conservative dialect, as the Macedonian Greeks had only little contact with the southern Greeks and very little admixture from pre-Hellenic populations: Alexander the Great was blond (a typical IE characteristic), while Homer describes only Menelaus as blond, implying that the other kings and nobles of the Achaeans were not known as blonds to Homer. Another characteristic connection of Mycenaean and Macedonian Greeks are the famous golden leaf masks of the dead.

Although pre-Hellenic populations, which were to unite with the IE Greek branches to form the ancient Greek nation, were of various racial, cultural and linguistic identities, the Eteocretan identity, far more than any other, has left its mark in Greek language and culture. It cannot be denied that an important part of the pre-Hellenic substratum is of Anatolian origin, as many archaeolinguists have argued. Yet, among all pre-Hellenic ethnicities, the Eteocretans were the dominant element (the others being a substratum to the Eteocretans) before the Greek conquest; if not because of the Eteocretan population's greater number, at least because of their political authority, power and superior culture (being the creators of the Minoan civilization). Also, of all the pre-Hellenic substratum, the Eteocretan (Minoan) element is the only one that can be identified (racially and linguistically) with certainty today, accompanied by some (significant since the Neopalatial period) Semitic (in all likelihood Akkadian) population; the Eteocretans are identified as the descendants of early Sumerian settlers from Mesopotamia, arriving since the beginning of the 3<sup>rd</sup> millennium BCE. Considering the Eteocretan (Minoan) contribution to the history, economy and culture of the Bronze Age Aegean, the contribution of the Eteocretan language to Greek and of the Minoan civilization to Mycenaean, it might be reasonable to speak of an adstratum, as stated by Renfrew (1998), instead of a substratum.

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