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THE CULT OF DIONYSUS IN THE LIGHT OF LINGUISTIC DATA

Scholars agree that the Dionysian cult entered and established in Greece either from Anatolia or from the regions in the northern part of the Balkans, and probably, from Thrace. It was believed for a long time that the process took place in a comparatively later period, or at least in the post-heroic age. Among the principal arguments in favor of such a hypothesis was Dionysus' pale presentation in the Homeric epics. However, after the name was attested in Mycenaean documents, it became clear that Dionysus was familiar in Aegeis as early as the Mycenaean age. So far, three Mycenaean inscriptions have been discovered with the name of the god represented as di-wo-nu-so-jo (PY Xa 102), di-wo-nu-so (PY Xa 1419) and di-wo-nu-so-jo (one of recent inscriptions from Khania, Crete). Evidently, the cult was spread not only in continental Greece but also on the Cretan island already in the Bronze Age. Remarkably, Mycenaean texts imply its links with both wine and Zeus.¹ It is difficult to argue whether Minoan culture was also familiar with a deity equivalent to Dionysus. As concerns wine, it should have been quite widespread in the Minoan civilization. As it is beyond any doubt that the cult of Dionysus existed in Aegeis in the heroic age, the most natural question that comes up sounds as: where did the cult originate from? I believe linguistic analysis can be very important to bring clarity into the matter. In this respect, the Dionysian world offers quite a number of interesting lexical formatives, which I will attempt to analyze below.

Let us start with the name of the god. Διόνυσος, perhaps, is the easiest term to understand among the Greek formatives connected to the cult. Its attested use in Mycenaean texts points to its fairly old origins. Evidently, the formative was

¹ For the review of the question, see Cf. DNP, 3, 651 ff.

established in the Mycenaean Greek language through its widespread and familiar variants; if di-wo-nu-so-jo is the genitive, its nominative should presumably be di-wo-nu-so.² The name is commonly believed to be a composite consisting of two components διός and νῦσος. The latter is reflected in one of Dionysus' epithets or by-names Νυσηίος, Νύσιος. Having in mind the form ΔΙΟΥΤᾶς attested in the Smyrna inscription, Furnée suggested that it 'wenigstens im Hinterglied vorgr.-kleinasiatischer Herkunft ist.'³ Evidently, after Greeks settled Aegeis, the term replaced the earlier one, which was used to refer to the Pre-Greek-Anatolian equivalent of Dionysus. If we admit that the name is a further development of *ΔΙΟΥΝΥΣΟΣ → *ΔΙΟΥΝΥΣΟΣ form as believed by part of scholars, then its first element should be considered either the genitive of the theonym Ζεός, or the nominative of διός 'divine, brilliant, heavenly' formative. Correspondingly, the νῦσος element can be understood as '(male) child, son, born', or as a proper name with certain semantics. I incline to identifying the first element with the name of Zeus, which suggests the second element should mean 'child'. In my opinion, such an assumption is substantiated by Mycenaean texts that apparently mention Dionysus and Zeus side by side.⁴ The supporters of the Thracian hypothesis point at Thracian proper names Deopus 'son of god', Deospor, Deisporis 'son of god', and believe both parts of the name are Thracian borrowings. Consequently, following the opinion of P. Kretschmer, they consider νῦσος the Thracian formative for 'child', although such a word has not yet been attested in Thracian.⁵ On the other hand, various place names with νυσ- root are known as early as since the Homeric epics. According to the mythological tradition, their origins may be linked to the name of Dionysus' nurse Νῦσα;⁶ the majority of sources mention Nysa (Νῦσα) as the place where Dionysus was brought up.

According to the *Iliad* (VI, 130 ff), Lycurgus, King of Thrace, incurred the divine wrath because he pursued Dionysus' 'nurses' in Nysa (presumably, a mountain or a certain place). However, this does not necessarily mean that Dionysus was brought up in that very place. Later, ancient sources mentioned plenty of Nysas that claimed the honor of being the place where the god was reared. E.g. Stephanos of Byzantium names ten cities with the same name and 'ambitions' located in Helicon, Thrace, Caria, Arabia, Egypt, Naxos, India,

² Cf. Казанскене В.П., Предметнопонятийный словарь греческого языка. Крито-микенский период, Ленинград 1986, 142, 157; Hallager E., Vlasakis M., Hallager B.P., New Linear B Tablets from Khania, *Kadmos* XXXI, Hft. 1. 1992, 61 ff.

³ WKE, 250.

⁴ Hallager E., ... op.sit.

⁵ Cf. Duridanov I., *The Language of the Thracians*, V. The Thracian vocabulary (<http://members.tripod.com>).

⁶ Cf. RML, III, 567 ff; DNP, 8, 1073 ff.

the Caucasus, Libya, Euboea; while Eustatius of Thessaloniki, apart from the Caucasus, mentions Nysas in Boeotia, Arabia, India and Libya. In my opinion, Νῦσος- can be a Pre-Greek formative meaning ‘child, born, created’. It should not be ruled out that the formative derives from a participial form and contains *ν* + voiced prefix and *-σ*, the root denoting ‘birth, origin’. In this case, a parallel can be drawn with Kartvelian languages where *šw- root goes up to the common Kartvelian level and with the help of *na-, *ne-, *ni- common Kartvelian either participial or derivational prefixes can produce different formatives denoting ‘child, born’ at either theoretical or practical level: Georg. na-š-ob-i/na- šw-i ‘born’; Mengr. na-sqv-i ‘born, placed’, etc.⁷

Evidently, Βάκχος is synonymous of the name of the god. Its etymology is not known.⁸ The Lydian Baki attested in adjectives Bakivalis, bakillis, corresponds to Greek Βάκχος, and can most probably be a borrowing from Greek itself or the third source, from which the name entered both Greek and Lydian.⁹ The semantics of the formative evidently reflects the impact connected with the earthly activities of the god. A person possessed with Dionysian ecstasy is called Βάκχη, Βακχίς, Βακχεύς. The majority of adjective or verbal stems derived from this stem refer to the noisy actions of individuals possessed with Dionysian ecstasy. I believe Furnée was quite right as he pointed to important parallels with Georgian formatives baki, bakiaoba, baki-buki, baxi, paxi, baxi-buxi, paxa-puxi, paxpaxi, paca-puci (‘idle boasting, blustering, aplomb, swagger, cockiness, showing off, rattling around, bustling, commotion’).¹⁰ According to Furnée, the stem is eastern Mediterranean and could have penetrated Georgian language after the split of Kartvelian languages. Recently, H. Fähnrich reconstructed the common Kartvelian *bak- archetype (Georg. baki, bak-ia, bak-ia-oba, bak-i-buki ‘idle boasting, boaster, boasting’; Mengr. buk-u-a, ‘hyping, puffing, overstating’, buk-ul-a ‘(a person) who overstates’, buk-ul-ob-a ‘blustering’, a-buk-ari, ‘blusterer’; Svan. bak, bāk ‘falsehood, lie’, bakáj, bakáraj ‘liar, swindler’).¹¹ In my opinion, expressive interchange of the initial stem could have produced plenty of versions with diverse semantic implications. The tendency to an expressive interchange on the part of the final stem consonant in Kartvelian can account for the formation of Greek geminate κχ-.

The most remarkable figures from Dionysus’ ancestry, apart from Zeus of course, are Cadmus and Semele.

⁷ EDKL, 548.

⁸ Cf. DELG, 159.

⁹ Cf. WKE, 211.

¹⁰ BGE, 22, 23

¹¹ BZK, 46.

The etymology of Κάδμος is ambiguous.¹² Although a lot of Greek sources say he moved from the East, Phoenicia in particular, as scholars have repeatedly stated, the earliest mythological tradition makes no allusion to the Phoenician origin of Boeotian Cadmus. Astour attempted to find a similar name in the Ugaritic tradition; however, its semantics is unknown.¹³ It was likewise repeatedly noted that the Cretan glossa κάδμος attested by Hesychius is its homonym, while the name Κάδμιλος of one of the Cabiri clearly refers to it. In my opinion, the initial stem is κάδμος. According to Hesychius, its should mean δόρυ ‘cudgel, spear’, λόφος ‘aigrette’, ἄσπις ‘shield’. Correspondingly, the formative apparently referred to armor and could mean a particular kind of weapon. The meaning could logically develop in the following way: weapon, armor → ornament → power → ruler → order. That is why I find it acceptable to link the stem to another Greek κόσμος formative. In my opinion, an interesting parallel can be drawn with common Kartvelian *>ad- archetype as reconstructed by H. Fähnrich (Georg. >ed-i/ >eṭ-i, ‘cudgel’; Svan. >ād-e/>ād-a ‘hatchet, axe’).¹⁴

Σεμέλη, according to commonly accepted interpretation, should be linked to sem(e)la, the name of the Thracian earth deity, which in Phrygian is presented as zemelō. On its own part, the stem attested in the Indo-European languages enables to reconstruct common Indo-European *d[h](e)g[h]om- or late Indo-European *dghem/*ghem- archetype.¹⁵ It should be taken into consideration that in Thracian, Phrygian and Slavic languages the stem is extended with -el element, which facilitates reconstruction of the late Indo-European *ghemel-. Th. V. Gamkrelidze and V. V. Ivanov relate Georgian-Zan *diq- stem to the Indo-European archetype.¹⁶ According to Furnée, the archetype is more likely to be related to Georgian-Zan *qam-/*qm- stem (Georg. xm-ob-a, qm-el-i ‘drying’, ‘dry’ *adj*; Mengrel. xom-af-a/xum-af-a ‘drying’; o-xom-in-u/o-xom-u ‘drying’). As concerns the late Indo-European *ghemel stem, in Furnée’s opinion, it could have originated from Paleokartvelian *qemel (?).¹⁷ I believe the occurrence of -el element allows to assume that the source for late Indo-European *semel/*zemel could have been Kartvelian *qm-el, which Klimov reconstructs to common Georgian-Zan language.¹⁸ In this case, the above-mentioned *qam- stem is presented with *-

¹² DELG, 478.

¹³ Astour M.C., *Hellenosemitica*, Leiden 1967, 147 ff.

¹⁴ BZK, 59.

¹⁵ ИЯИ, 821; PPE, App. I, 2.

¹⁶ ИЯИ, 877.

¹⁷ PPE, App. I, 2.

¹⁸ ЭСКЯ, 266.

el participial suffix, which on its part goes up the common Kartvelian level. Presumably, Paleokatvelian *qemel-/*qm̥el could have developed into *semel in Pre-Greek on one hand, and in late Indo-European on the other hand. However, this does not rule out the interrelationship between Kartvelian *qam-/*qem-/*qm̥- and Indo-European *ghem- stems at even an earlier chronological level.

Now let us consider the names of divine or quasi-divine creatures organically linked to the Dionysian cult.

Σίληνος, is among the most vivid figures associated with Dionysus. The etymology of the name is unknown.¹⁹ Some scholars try to link it to the Thracian glossa ζῖλαι ‘wine’ attested by Hesychius, which is also represented as ζελαῖς.²⁰ This assumption is supported by Silenus’ inseparability with hard drinking; however, it is difficult to say when exactly Silenus was linked to the Dionysian cult so organically. Evidently, the term initially corresponded to the essence of the seductive and sarcastic daemon and was used to indicate the whole clan of the demonic forces. Anyway, when describing mountain nymphs, the love goddess apparently says in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite²¹:

‘... and with them the Sileni and the sharp-eyed Slayer of Argus mate in the depths of pleasant caves;’ (262-63)

The individual figure of Silenus, who according to the tradition about Midas, had a reputation for practical wisdom, should have been distinguished among the Sileni quite early. Evidently, he possessed the feature typical of his kin – the ability to provoke laughter. Let us recall the passages from Plato’s *Symposium* that describe how Alcibiades gives glory to Socrates in a sarcastic manner. In Alcibiades’ opinion, most of all Socrates resembles Silenus– by his looks as well as by his character traits and abilities: his boldness, his skill for carrying away his listeners, seductiveness, originality, his speech, which at first sight provokes laughter but in fact is deep and godlike (215b ff). This appreciation included in Plato’s *Symposium* vividly presents the properties of ‘Silenism’, which should have been familiar to the Greek tradition at the latest from the archaic epoch, and which to a certain extent was prevailed over by the later image of the ever-drunk member of the Dionysian escort.

Hence, I support the viewpoint which links the name of Silenus to the stem attested in Pre-Greek σίλλος formative (‘light, mocking verse’) also found in the verb σιλλαίνω/σιλλόω ‘to mock, scoff at’. The etymology of the

¹⁹ DELG, 1003.

²⁰ WKE, 353.

²¹ For the date of the hymn cf. Гордзиани Р., Проблемы композиционной организации в раннегреческом эпосе (А. Ф. Лосеву к 90-летию со дня рождения, Тбилиси 1983), 74 ff.

formatives is unknown. Furnée drew parallels with Georgian *cil* ‘slander’ and suggested the existence of the Aegean **cil* or **c,il* stem.²² Nowadays the parallel is even more obvious. Fährnich reconstructed common Kartvelian **c,el-/cœil/cœl-* archetype (Georg. *c-t-om-a*, *še-c-t-un-eb-a*, *cil-i* ‘mistaking; erring; deceiving, being misled, leading astray, slander’; Mengrel. *čil-at-a* ‘misleading, seducing, error’; Svan. *li-č-d-in-e* ‘mixing, stirring’).²³ Evidently, Georgian *cil-ob-a*, *še-cil-eb-a* ‘arguing; rivalry, strife’, etc. derive from the same stem.

σάτυρος, ‘satyr’, is probably a common name for the demonic creatures which also include the Sileni. The tradition incorporated them into the Dionysian escort. The etymology of the term is not known.²⁴ According to Furnée, it may go up to Paleokartvelian **ceṭ-/*caṭ-* or **cœṭ-/*c,caṭ-* stem, which when attached with a suffix formed the term of our immediate concern in the Aegean linguistic domain. Furnée sees the stem in Georgian *ceṭ-i*, *cercet-i* forms (‘reckless, thoughtless, rushing headlong’).²⁵ The stem may go back to Georgian-Zan **ceṭ-* archetype (Georg. *ceṭ-a* ‘a small thick river fish’; Mengr. *ciṭ-u* ‘fry, small fish, sprat, fingerling’).²⁶ Evidently, stem initially denoted ‘hurry up without much thought, senselessly’, which later was generalized and became synonymous of ‘small river fish’ and ‘fry’ on the one hand and to ‘silliness, frivolity’ on the other hand. This is how satyrs are pictured in the Greek tradition starting with Hesiodus (fr.123).

τίτυρος, ‘goat’, ‘satyr’, ‘tailed monkey’. It can be a σάτυρος stem variant.²⁷ τίτυρος can also be related to διθυρ-stem found in the term di-thyramb. I will dwell on these parallels later. If this is true, then *σατ-**σιτ-/τιτ-/διθ- stem variation can be accepted as the basis for the development of phonetically and semantically similar formatives. If we take into account that *αῖξ* was the Aegean word for ‘goat’, we may assume that the stems concerned referred to properties pertinent to a particular kind of creatures rather than to a goat. Admittedly, satyrs were initially believed to be certain hybrid creatures distinguished for restlessness and recklessness and not goats in particular. Therefore, τίτυρος equally refers to a goat, a monkey, a satyr and Silenus. What attracts attention in case of both σάτυρος- and

²² PPE, 96.

²³ BZK, 99 ff.

²⁴ DELG, 990.

²⁵ PPE, 94.

²⁶ EDKL, 577.

²⁷ For the overview of the question, cf. WKE, 184.

τίτυρος-, is the -υρ suffix element which Furnée considers parallel to Georgian -ur suffix element.²⁸

διθύραμβος, a song for the Dionysian festival, is related to the cult in an original way. Its etymology is not known.²⁹ The same ending is found in Ἰαμβος ‘iambus’, θρίαμβος ‘a hymn to glorify Dionysus performed during the procession at the festivals in honor of the god’. Ἰαμβος admittedly splits into two elements: ια- a yell evidently found in the Greek interjections ἰή, ἰαι. and μβ-ος.³⁰ The term of our immediate interest is split in the same way – into διθυρ(α) and (α)μβ-ος elements. According to Furnée, it is most likely to be synonymous of τραγωδία formative ‘the song of a goat’.³¹ This leads to the thought that -μβ is not merely a suffix but a constituent element of the composite with certain semantics. Evidently, it implied the following approximate sense: ‘sound, stretching, singing’. If this is true, It can be associated to common-Kartvelian *bam-/bm- stem (Georg. v-a-b-am, ga-bm-a ‘stringing out’; Mengr. b-um-ap-a; Laz. go-v-o-b-u-am ‘(I will) string out’; Svan. li-b-em ‘tying’).³² Admittedly, b~m substitution is widespread in Kartvelian languages especially in the case of this particular stem: dambuli, gambuli. Apart from its primary meaning, the stem implies ‘stretching’ as concerns talking, shouting and singing. It should not be ruled out that βμ/μβ in Pre-Greek language could produce formatives denoting ‘singing’, ‘yelling’.

θείασος, ‘a festive procession in honor of a god (mostly Bacchus or Dionysus), noisy mob, cult gathering’. Furnée links it to common Kartvelian *zæw-i stem.³³ In my opinion, we should rather draw a parallel with Georgian-Zan *bwew stem (Georg. buev-a/bveva ‘inviting; visit’; Mengr. giša-bvi-al-a ‘calling up; inviting; challenging; provoking’).³⁴ Evidently, there existed an *bwiw allophone to the stem. In my opinion, θείασος, θῶσθαι ‘feast’, θοίνη ‘feast, party’ is semantically closer to this very stem.

θρινία, ‘bunch of grapes’ in Cretan speech, according to Hesychius. The version of the same stem can most likely be found in words τρνία ‘grape’ and τρνιος ‘wine’.³⁵ I would refer to common Kartvelian *twer-/tr- arche-type³⁶ (Georg. m-tr-av-s, da-v-i-tuer, m-tr-va-l-i ‘makes me drunk, I got

²⁸ PPE, 94.

²⁹ DELG, 289; WKE, 194, 191.

³⁰ DELG, 453; WKE, 184, 191.

³¹ WKE, 191 ff.

³² EDKL, 88 ff.

³³ PPE, 11.

³⁴ EDKL, 640.

³⁵ WKE, 191.

³⁶ EDKL, 236.

drunk, drunk?; Svan. li-tr-e ‘drinking’) to illustrate the links. -υν, could correspond to common Kartvelian *-in derivational suffix.

θύρσος, ‘thyrsos’, a bacchic staff covered with ivy vines and leaves and topped with a pine cone. Its etymology is not known.³⁷ Its synonym θύσθλα attested in Homer could be a derivative from the same stem (←*θυρσθλα).³⁸ Some scholars attempted to link the formative to the Ugaritic trš ‘must, fizzy new wine’ which itself goes up evidently either to Assyrian šerešu, serāšu, serāš stem ‘wine’,³⁹ or to tuwursa formative ‘bunch of grapes’ found in late Hittite (hieroglyphic Luvian).⁴⁰ It can be a version of the same stem as found in θρυία. In this case, common Kartvelian *twēr-/tr- can be suggested as the source.

σίκιυις, ‘dance of satyrs’. According to Hesychius, the plural Σικανοί referred to a certain kind of dances. There are attempts to link the word to the hypothetical Thracian-Phrygian source stem and detect its relationship with the stem found in Greek κηκίς (Dor. κακίς) formative ‘fire flame, stream of liquid’.⁴¹ Such etymology is not convincing for the following reasons: a) No reliable Thracian or Phrygian hypothetical source stem has been identified; b) The etymology of Greek κηκίς itself is ambiguous. Furnée noticed its links with Georgian ce>v-a stem ‘dance’; as concerns the formative found in Greek language, he considered it the derivative from the initial eastern Mediterranean *ci>in-i or *cœi>in-i form.⁴² Recently, Fähnrich and Sarjveladze reconstructed Georgian-Zan *cœe>- archetype (Georg. ce>v-a ‘dance’; Mengl. ča>-al-i ‘walking swaying, stamping, in a noisy manner’).⁴³ Georgian ci>an-i/ti>an-i ‘kid’, dialect. ci>in>ila (‘hop-scotch’) and Mengl. či>in-i ‘giving oneself airs, stretching legs – in dialectical use implies ‘putting on airs’, numbing, turning stiff’ compel me to suggest the existence of Georgian-Zan *ci>an-/*ci>in- archetype.

Κυβέλη, ‘great mother’, Rhea-Cybele. A cult spread from Anatolia, presumably, Phrygia. The etymology of the name is not clear. Its affinity with the Dionysian cult, especially in the orgiastic sphere, was detected already in Antiquity.⁴⁴ Several etymologies of name Κυβέλη have been suggested:

³⁷ DELG, 447.

³⁸ DELG, 448.

³⁹ Hellenosemitica, 187.

⁴⁰ ИЯИ, 902 ff.

⁴¹ For the overview of the question see: DEIG, 1003.

⁴² PPE, 88.

⁴³ EDKL, 591 ff.

⁴⁴ RML, II, 1658 ff.

a) Part of scholars associates it with the name Kubaba, which belongs to a deity of Carchemish city, located on the bank of the Euphrates River.⁴⁵ b) Furnée finds it possible to associate the name with the hypothetic Anatolian *kuβ stem, which in his opinion could mean ‘rage, madness, turning mad’.⁴⁶ c) Ivane Javakhishvili suggested its relationship with pagan Georgian Copala.⁴⁷ At the same time, he did not rule out parallels with ebel denoting ‘mother’ in some Caucasian languages.⁴⁸ In my opinion, to identify the meaning of the name, one should first of all closely consider the function of the deity itself. Cybele was apparently one of the appellations for ancient Mediterranean Great Mother. Considering the universal and comprehensive essence of the goddess, her name may denote ‘mother of all’. And truly, Μητήρ is found in most of her epithets. What is more, it is sometimes intensified with qualifiers that incorporate πᾶς ‘all’. Κυβέλη is presented not only as the creator (mother) of all, but also as the all-nourishing power whose comprehensiveness in fact incorporates the ‘competence’ of the earth, Gaea herself.⁴⁹ Having this in mind, I find it acceptable to suggest that the name of the deity implies the senses of either ‘mother, (a person) who brings up, breeds, provides nourishment’ or ‘all, every’. In this connection, close attention should be paid to Georgian-Zan *>web- (Georg. >ueb-a, feed; Mengr. >uab-u-a.)⁵⁰ on the one hand, and to Georgian-Zan *qovl- (Georg. qovl-i/qoveli ‘all’; Mengr. qir-i/ir-i ‘all’; Laz. ir-i ‘all’) on the other hand.⁵¹

Undoubtedly, formatives related to wine and winemaking are very important as concerns the analysis of terms associated with Dionysus. Let us consider some of them:

ἴβηνα – according to Hesychius, Cretans used the term to denote wine. Brown believes the formative originated in Pre-Greek language. Following the opinion of some scholars, Furnée connects it with Georgian-Zan *wenaq-stem (Georg. venaq-i ‘vine, vineyard’, Mengr. binex-i ‘vine, vineyard’; Laz. binex-i ‘vine’).⁵² Links between the Kartvelian stem and Indo-European *uein-āg-/*uein-āk dialectal stem admittedly found in hypothetical Slavic

⁴⁵ Cf. DELG, 594.

⁴⁶ WKE, 215.

⁴⁷ Javakhishvili Iv., *The History of Georgian Nation*, I, Tbilisi 1951, 137 ff. (in Georgian).

⁴⁸ Javakhishvili Iv., *Historical and Ethnographical Problems of Georgia, The Caucasus and the Near East*, Tbilisi 1950, 123 (in Georgian).

⁴⁹ Cf. RML, II, 1638 ff.; Burkert W., *Griechische Religion der archaischen und klassischen Epoche*, Stuttgart ... 1977, 276 ff.

⁵⁰ EDKL, 276 ff.

⁵¹ EDKL, 542.

⁵² VK, 31. Cf. also Brown R.A., *Evidence for Pre-Greek Speech on Crete from Greek Alphabetic Sources*, Amsterdam 1985, 61 ff.

*vinjaga were detected long ago. Part of scholars consider it the source for the Georgian-Zan stem⁵³; but in my opinion, despite the specific links between vin- and wen- elements, the Georgian-Zan archetype could be the source for Indo-European *uein-āk dialectal stem itself. Another fact to support the assumption is the vinac (Tabula Cortonensis) form found in the latest Etruscan inscription. I suppose the stem passed from the Kartvelian linguistic domain into the Indo-European one, and earlier into the Aegean one. Through the use of the prothetic *ι*-element, the glossa ἴβηνα produces a Pre-Greek formative denoting wine. Having this in mind, the most natural question that comes up concerns the composition of the Georgian-Zan stem itself. If links between the Cretan glossa and the Kartvelian stem are accepted as true, then we should assume that wenaq- stem consists of two elements: wen- and -aq. In Kartvelian languages, where w/b interchange is a typical phenomenon, w can be replaced by b not only in Zan language, but also in Georgian. This may naturally lead to the following questions: what is the origin of wen-element itself? Does it reflect the Indo-European stem or is it the Georgian *γwin- stem variant? I will return to these questions below while dwelling on *γwin- stem.

σταφύλη, ‘bunch of grapes’. Its etymology is not known. Furnée, who associates Kartvelian *bœ with Pre-Greek στ, believes that in this case a parallel can be drawn with bip-, m-bip-e stems meaning ‘ripe, mature’ that derive from the common Kartvelian *bœ; the scholar also suggests the existence of the hypothetic Pelasgian *bœapul ‘ripe, bunch of ripe grapes’.⁵⁴ In my opinion, it would be more accurate to link the word with Georgian-Zan *stw- archetype (Georg. stu-el-i ‘vintage, the season of picking grapes’, mostu-l-eb-a ‘picking grapes’; Laz. do-st-u-n ‘is torn, is torn off’, ma-stv-a-s ‘[may it] be torn off’).⁵⁵ It is very realistic to receive σταφ- from *stw-complex, while -υλ element should imply links with Georgian -ul participial suffix.

οἶνος, ‘wine’, is among the most interesting terms. The majority of scholars believe it is presented in many different language families through congeneric stems. Part of scholars suggest that the source for all the stems is Indo-European *uei-(*Huei-)⁵⁶. Correspondingly, Georgian γvino ‘wine’ formative that is reconstructed at the common Kartvelian level (Georg. γvino; Mengr. γvin-i; Laz. γ(v)in-i; Svan. γwin-äl) is also believed to be of Indo-

⁵³ ДИКЯ, 106 ff.

⁵⁴ PPE, 122.

⁵⁵ EDKL, 402.

⁵⁶ For the review of the question see: ИЯИ, 647 ff. see also ДИКЯ, 78 ff.

European origin. However, in other scholars' opinion, the starting point is either the earliest Mediterranean or even Kartvelian stem.⁵⁷ According to Chantraine, the stem at first could have entered one of the Indo-European languages in the archaic period and afterwards spread into quite a large group of Indo-European languages.⁵⁸ Walde-Hoffmann in fact have the same opinion.⁵⁹ It looks as if the stem entered different Indo-European languages independently and at different times from a certain source (or sources). Recently, Fähnrich put forward convincing arguments concerning the links between two common Kartvelian stems: *γwin- and *γun- (Georg. γun-v-a 'bending'; Megr. γun-u-a "id."; Laz. γun-i 'hive'; Svan. u-γwn-a 'elbow').⁶⁰ These facts imply organic links with Georgian linguistic domain and provide even stronger basis for assuming the South Caucasus as the fatherland of wine.

Linguistic data reveal intrinsic links between the cult of Dionysus and the Pre-Greek world. And one of the basic and most important linguistic components of the latter (at least from the II millennium B.C.) was presumably Kartvelian or quasi-Kartvelian language. This of course does not mean that the Dionysian cult was mechanically borrowed from the Caucasus. Its formation undoubtedly took place in Aegeis, and apart from Georgian components, the development process should certainly involve other components as well (Thracian, Greek, etc.). However, its relationship with Kartvelian language is distinguished for its highly systemic character at the linguistic level and evidently reflects the language environment of the 2nd millennium B.C. Aegeis-Anatolia.⁶¹

⁵⁷ For the review of the question cf. ДИКЯ, 78 ff.

⁵⁸ DELG, 784.

⁵⁹ LEW, II, 794 ff.

⁶⁰ BZK, 90 ff.

⁶¹ About relations between Pre-Greek and Kartvelian see Gordeziani R., Pre-Greek and Kartvelian, Tbilisi 1985 (in Georgian); Gordeziani R., *Mediterranea-Kartvelica*, vol. II (in Georgian, to be published in 2007).

Abbreviations

BGE	Furnée E. J., Beiträge zur georgischen Etymologie, Fasz. I, Leuven 1982.
BZK	Fähnrich H., Beiträge zur Kartwelologie, Jena 2005.
DELG	Chantraine P., Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque, 1-4, Paris 1968-1980.
ДИКЯ	Климов Г. А., Древнейшие индоевропеизмы картвельских языков, Москва 1994.
EDKL	Fähnrich H., Sardjveladze Z., Etymological Dictionary of Kartvelian Languages, Tbilisi 2002 ² (in Georgian).
ИЯИ	Гамкрелидзе Т. В., Иванов В. В., Индоевропейский язык и Индоевропейцы, Тбилиси 1984.
PPE	Furnée E. J., Paläokartvelisch – pelasgische Einflüsse in den indogermanischen Sprachen, Leiden 1986.
WKE	Furnée E.J., Die wichtigsten konsonatischen Erscheinungen des Vorgriechischen, Den Haag 1972.
ЭСКЯ	Климов Г. А., Этимологический словарь картвельских языков, Москва 1964.
VK	Furnée E. J., Vorgriechisch-Kartvelisches, Leiden 1979.
LEW	Walde A., Hofmann J.B., Lateinisches Etymologisches Wörterbuch, 3Bde. Heidelberg 1938-1956.
RML	Roscher W.H., Ausführliches Lexicon der griechischen und römischen Mythologie, Leipzig 1884-1937.
DNP	Der Neue Pauly. Enzyklopädie der Antike. Hrsg. Cancik H., Schndneider H., Bd. 1-15, 1996-2003.