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ONCE AGAIN ON THE TROY'S THRACIAN ALLIES

MIHAIL ZAHARIADE

Keywords: Troy, Asia Minor, migration, war, Iliad, king, chieftain, Thracians, Mysians, Phrygians, Paeonians, Cicones.

Abstract: The issue of the Troy's allies produced a rich literature and a frenzy debate among the scholars. The most important Troy's allies during the ten years war between this powerful kingdom in the North-West of Asia Minor and the Achaeans were the Thracians. Homer mentions two categories of Thracians: the European and Asian Thracians living in the west of Asia Minor: Mysians and Phrygians which seems to have already migrated in the 13th century BC from Europe to these regions. The Dardanians, as inhabitants of the Troad, appear as the oldest emigrated group from the Balkan Peninsula. From the European Thracians in Iliad attested the *Paeonians*, the Cicones and 'Thracians' as a generic term for other Thracian groups are recorded. A significant number of Thracian kings or chieftains are also mentioned in the poem. The consistent military assistance offered by the Thracians to Troy was given on the ground of old agnation, but especially on common economic interests.

Cuvinte-cheie: Troia, Asia Minor, migratii, război, Iliada, rege, căpetenie, Thraci, Mysii, Phrygieni, Peoni, Ciconi.

Rezumat: Problema aliaților Troiei a produs o bogată literatură și o aprinsă dezbateră între specialiști. Cei mai importanți aliați ai Troiei, din timpul războiului de zece ani, dintre acest puternic regat din nord-vestul Asiei Mici și Acheeni, au fost Tracii. Homer menționează două categorii de Traci: tracii Europeni și tracii asiatici, din vestul Asiei Mici: Mysii și Phrygii, cele mai importante grupuri care se pare că migraseră deja la nivelul secolului XIII a. Chr., din Europa în aceste regiuni. Dardanii, ca locuitori ai Troadei, par însă cel mai vechi grup emigrat din Peninsula Balcanică. Dintre Tracii europeni sunt menționați în Iliada, *Paeonii*, *Ciconii* și cu un termen generic 'Thracii'. În poem, sunt menționați deasemenea, un număr apreciabil de șefi militari sau regi traci. Ajutorul consistent oferit de traci Troiei s-a făcut în virtutea unor vechi relații atât de rudenie, cât mai ales din rațiuni economice.

In the Chant (Book) II of Iliad, known also as the Catalogue of the Ships (816-852) Homer enumerates the name of Troy's allies during the ten years war with the Achaeans. Intriguing and in the same time complex, the topic was approached quite a few times thus far¹, as Homer's historicity and the reliability of Iliad gains more and more credibility among the modern scholars².

Some combined Near Eastern study of Anatolian civilizations with the analysis of the results of archaeological excavations, epigraphic inquires, linguistic investigation, and reassessment of the ancient historical sources brought to light the likeliness of the existence of a true Hittite confederation which had authority both on Troy itself and other communities of Western Asia Minor. Certainly this innovative hypothesis launched in a broad discussion as far back as the early 20th century needs more new arguments, solid evidence, and judicious analysis, for this approach brings a quite novel, revolutionary historical perspective of the Late Bronze Age in the western regions of Asia Minor and on the Greek-Trojan-Hittite political relations³.

It is far from my intention to get into the details of this absorbing debate. In what follows I will stress on another significant political component of the Trojan large scale coalition: the Troy's Thracian allies. Except the Achaeans and Trojans mentioned under more or less poetical forms, the Thracians, both those from western Asia Minor and from Europe have by far the

most numerous records in the poem.

The main component of the Trojan coalition was the populations of western Asia Minor and its European allies, mainly, if not exclusively, the Thracians of the Balkan Peninsula. There have been a number of studies focusing on the composition of the Troy's allies with particular stress on the Thracians⁴. The Thracians (Θρηῖκας, Θράκας) appear always as staunch allies of Troy. Apparently unproblematic to consider it as a good piece of evidence in its entirety, the information of the Homeric text becomes rather intricate and thorny when further consider the reference to the names of the kings, military leaders or chieftains. The difficulty comes when the historical evidence in Iliad, this 8th century BC epic poem attributed to Homer, construe on two chronological strata: on one hand the Trojan War (ca. 1194–1184 BC)⁵, as described from a Bronze Age (13th century) tradition transmitted and taken over orally to the posterity, and on the other the poet's own times when the political and social Eastern Aegean and Micro-Asian scenery was almost entirely changed with an implicit impact on the world wide dissemination of an account about some 400 years old events. However, Homer seems to have taken over a strong genuine tradition about the events and kept it almost unaltered until it was edited in a written form from political reasons at the court of the Pisistratids in the 8th century BC⁶.

The list of Troy's allies forwards facts which, at least partially, are supported historically, linguistically and archaeologically.

¹ Austin 1965; Alen 1969, *passim*; Crossett 1969, 241-245; Simpson, Lazenby 1970; Gindin 1990, 64-72; Lazova 1990, 149-152; Anderson, 1995, 181-191; Porozhanov 1995, 113-122; Visser 1997; Fol 2000, 101-107.

² Page 1959, 69-85; Luce 1975 *passim*; Latacz 2005, 56-78.

³ Page 1959, 106; Gütterbock 1986, 33-44; Gindin 1990, 27; Wood 1998, 169-209.

⁴ See note 1; see also Fol 1972, 44-45.

⁵ The dates given by Eratosthenes, roughly corresponds with archaeological evidence of a catastrophic burning of *Troy VIIa*; Wood 1985, 116-118; Bloedow 1988, 23-52 (a rigorous analysis from an archaeological perspective); Burgess 2004; Strauss 2006, 49-97; Castledon 2006, 56-88; Rutter 2007, 104-118; Thompson 2007, 14-56.

⁶ Simpson, Lazenby 1970, 158; Wood 1998, 123-144.

I. Thracian military leaders and kings in Iliad

The list of the Thracians as allies of Troy opens with the mention of two leaders: *Acamas* and *Peirous*.

II 844-845: “[...] *Acamas and the warrior Peirous commanded the Thracians and those that came from beyond the mighty stream of the Hellespont* [...]” (αὐτὰρ Θρηϊκῆς ἦγ’ Ἀκάμας καὶ Πείροος ἦρωσ ὄσσους Ἑλλησποντος ἀγάρροος ἐντὸς ἔεργει). Homer gives no hint, as he does in other instances, of what region *Acamas* originates from, but it is certain that ‘beyond Hellespont’ (....) means Thrace in its purest sense⁷.

V 461-462: “[...] *murderous Ares went about among the ranks of the Trojans, cheering them on, in the likeness of fleet Acamas chief of the Thracians* [...]” (δὲ στίχας οὐλος Ἄρης ὄτρυνε μετελθὼν εἰδόμενος Ἀκάμαντι θοῶ ἡγήτορι Θρηϊκῶν).

VI 5-11: “[...] *First, Ajax son of Telamon, tower of strength to the Achaeans, broke a phalanx of the Trojans, and came to the assistance of his comrades by killing Acamas son of Eussorus, the best man among the Thracians, being both brave and of great stature* [...]” (Αἴας δὲ πρῶτος Τελαμώνιος ἔρκος Ἀχαιῶν Τρώων ῥήξε φάλαγγα, φόως δ’ ἐτάροισιν ἔθηκεν, ἄνδρα βαλὼν ὃς ἄριστος ἐνὶ Θρηϊκεσσι τέτυκτο υἱὸν Ἐϋσσώρου Ἀκάμαντ’ ἦῦν τε μέγαν τε).

ACAMAS. Ἀκάμας. Except these mentions in Iliad, the PN is apparently unique in the Thracian onomastics, in any event very old; the root might be indo-european: *akm*-stone, peak, rock from where the variation: *aka*-(PN Akaibrias); *ake*-(PN Akesamenos); *aki*-(Acidava); *akm*-(Acmonia)⁸.

Acamas, son of *Eussorus*, portrayed as ‘fast legged’, seems to have been an important political and military personage for Homer insists several times on his personality. *Ares*, the god of war, even assumes the image of the Thracian king.

II 824: Another *Acamas* and his brother *Archilochus* “[...] *both skilled in all the arts of war* [...]” sons of *Antenor*, a famous hero, appear involved in the events at Troy side by side with the *Aeneas*-led *Dardanians* (see below).

PEIROOS, son of *Imbrasos*, originated from *Ainos*, town on the Lower *Hebros* River on the southeastern coast of Thrace, modern day *Emez* (Turkey). The town had been previously known as *Poltymbria*. The tradition of *Polty*s as a mythical town was known to *Strabon*, (*Ainos Poltymbria*) (VII 6. 1) and later in the *Scholastic* tradition (*Steph. Byz.* 52. 9). The place name contains the Thracian particle *bria* designating a town (βρία γὰρ τὴν φασὶ Θρηϊκες) (*Steph. Byz* 446. 15), possibly the centre of a Thracian kingdom to the mouths of the *Hebrus* River (*Maritsa*/

Evros/Meric), the territory of the later *Corpili*, *Sai*, and *Apsinthi*⁹. It would be reasonable to identify this *Peirous* with the one “beyond Hellespont”, although some doubts have been expressed on this issue.

IV 519-537: Homer describes vividly how *Peirous* defeated in combat the Greek warrior *Diores*: “[...] *Then fate fell upon Diores, son of Amarnyceus, for he was struck by a jagged stone near the ankle of his right leg. He that hurled it was Peirous, son of Imbrasus, captain of the Thracians, who had come from Aenus* [...]” (ἐνθ’ Ἀμαρυγκειδὴν Διώρεα μοῖρα πέδησε: χερμαδίῳ γὰρ βλήτο παρὰ σφυρὸν ὀκρίονεντι κνήμην δεξιτερῆν: βάλε δὲ Θρηϊκῶν ἀγὸς ἀνδρῶν Πείρωσ Ἰμβρασιδῆς ὃς ἄρ’ Αἰνόθεν εἰληλούθει).

Shortly after this episode *Peirous* was killed in the same combat by *Thoas* from *Aetolia*. His body was defended by “[...] *his Thracian comrades, men who wear their hair in a tuft at the top of their heads* [...]” (περίστησαν γὰρ ἐταῖροι Θρηϊκῆς ἀκρόκομοι δολίχ’ ἔγχεα χερσὶν ἔχοντες).

XX 484-485: A king or chieftain *Peires* is recorded, not directly involved in the war, but as the father of a Thracian chieftain, *Rhigme* “[...] *He (Achilles) then went in pursuit of Rhigmus, noble son of Peires, who had come from fertile Thrace* [...]” (αὐτὰρ ὁ βῆ ῥ’ ἴεναι μετ’ ἀμύμονα Πείρωσ υἱὸν Ῥίγμον, ὃς ἐκ Θρηϊκῆς ἐριβώλακος εἰληλούθει).

PEIROS. Πείροος and Πείρωσ; Thracian PN¹⁰. The name reappears slightly modified in *Πυρρός* (Lat. *Pyrrhus*, *Pyrrus*, *Pirus*) followed by an ethnonym in one case¹¹, or filiation. As a root, the particle *πυρ* forms different variants of names in Hellenistic and Ro-man onomastics¹². The Iliad mentions, without other specification, two chieftains, *Peiros* (IV 519-537) and *Peires*. The names are almost similar, but in the absence of any other evidence from Homer, it would be preferable to treat them separately, as two different military chieftains, one who fought on the battlefield and the other who sent his son to help Troy.

RHIGMOS. Ῥίγμος. Name otherwise unknown in the Thracian onomastics.

XI 221-229. A Thracian contingent is recorded under the leadership of *IPHIDAMAS*, son of *Antenor*. He was “[...] *a man both brave and of great stature who was brought up in fertile Thrace, the mother of sheep* [...]” (Ἰφιδάμας Ἀντηνορίδης ἠϋς τε μέγας τε ὃς τράφη ἐν Θρηϊκῆ ἐριβώλακι μητέρι μήλων).

The name is certainly Greek and Homer makes this refined observation that he was not a

⁷ Lazova 1990, 150; Porozhanov 1995, 117; Fol 2000, 103. Lazova supposes that the two Thracian kings, *Acamas* and *Peirous* had their kingdoms on Lower *Hebros*.

⁸ Russu 1967, 131; Dechev 1976, 10 f.

⁹ Danov 1976, 117-118. On *Peirous* and his place of origin see: Lazova 1990, 150; Porozhanov 1995, 118.

¹⁰ Dechev 1976, 361-362; Vlahov 1976, 69.

¹¹ IG 2² 8921: Πυρρίας Θρηϊκῆς.

¹² Dechev 1976, 385-387; Vlahov 1976, 39, 109.

Thracian proper, but educated (τράφη) in Thrace. Homer's indication on the place in Thrace where he was brought up is too vague. The 'fertile Thrace' (ἐν Θρηκῆνι ἐριβώλακι) could well refer to the Thracian plain between Sredna Gora and Rhodopi Mountains where the existence of a kingdom at that time is suggested by fabulous archaeological discoveries¹³. He was raised by his grandfather Kisses, who very likely married a Greek woman who had a daughter called Theano, Iphidamas' mother. Antenor therefore was Kisses' son, Theano's husband and Iphidamas' father (XI 21). That this is so, it results clearly from the fact that Kisses married him with one of his daughter, certainly from a previous marriage, avoiding a family blood mixture¹⁴.

Iphidamas had sailed from Thrace across the Hellespont with twelve ships, arrived at Percote where he left his small fleet and trod to Troy. In single combat he was killed by Agamemnon.

XI 248. COON (Κόων), was Antenor's eldest son and Iphidamas' brother. The name seems also Greek, but probably as an archaic variant (like in *Lao-coon*, *Hipo-coon*) of the later well known PN Κόνων. It cannot be said whether he was already in Troy at that date, or came together with his brother from Thrace. He was also killed by Agamemnon.

II 858-861: "[...] Chromis, and Ennomus the augur, led the Mysians [...]" (Μυσῶν δὲ Χρόμις ἦρχε καὶ Ἐννομος οἰωνιστής).

17. 213: "[...] Hector [...] cheered them on [...] Chromius and Ennomus the augur [...]" (Ἐκτορι... ὄτρυνεν δὲ ἕκαστον ἐποικχόμενος ἐπέεσσι... τε Χρομίον τε καὶ Ἐννομον οἰωνιστήν).

CHROMIS cannot be identified among the Thracian PN. Some toxic springs Κίγχρωψιν κρήνης and κρήνην ἐν Χρωψί are recorded in Thrace by Theopompos (FGH 115 F 270 a, c) and Vitr. 8, 3, 15: "[...] *Chrobisi, Thracia lacus* [...]. Any connection in the Thracian language between Chromis as PN and the place name in Thrace is hazardous, if not impossible. The name, though, could be eventually Lydian, a language of Hittite-Luwian origin¹⁵ which would be acceptable in view of his command on the local Mysians¹⁶. The PN Chromis should be examined in the future, especially that the Hittites' alliance with Troy has been maintained on some solid evidence (see below).

II 846-847: "[...] Euphemos, son of Troezenus, the son of Keos, was the captain of the Ciconian

spearsmen [...]"

EUPHEMUS certainly was not a Thracian, by name. Εὐφήμος, Εὐφημίος are Greek PN. His Greek origin is stressed by his filiation. He or his predecessors might well have been part of an Achaean elite established on the Ciconian coast and become later a local dynast due to successive local intermarriages¹⁷.

II 848-850. "[...] *Pyraechmes led the Paeonian archers from distant Amydon, by the broad waters of the river Axius, the fairest that flow upon the earth [...]*" (αὐτὰρ Πυραίχμησ ἄγε Παίονας ἀγκυλοτόξους τηλόθεν ἐξ Ἀμυδῶνος ἀπ' Ἀξιοῦ εὐρὺ ρέοντος, Ἀξιοῦ οὗ κάλλιστον ὕδωρ ἐπικίδναται αἶαν).

XVI 287-288: "[...] *He (Patroclus) hit Pyraechmes who had led his Paeonian horsemen from the Amydon and the broad waters of the river Axios; the spear struck him on the right shoulder, and with a groan he fell backwards in the dust; on this his men were thrown into confusion, for by killing their leader, who was the finest soldier among them, Patroclus struck panic into them all [...]*". (καὶ βάλε Πυραίχμην, ὃς Παίονας ἵπποκορυστὰς ἤγαγεν ἐξ Ἀμυδῶνος ἀπ' Ἀξιοῦ εὐρὺ ρέοντος: τὸν βάλε δεξιὸν ὤμων: ὃ δ' ὕππιος ἐν κονίησι κάππεσεν οἰμῶζας, ἕταροι δὲ μιν ἀμφεφύβηθεν Παίονες).

The information is remarkably accurate, for the Paeonians inhabited the upper and middle course of the river and Amydon was a town on that river (modern Vardar).

PYRAECHMES. Πυραίχμησ. The root πυρ-πυρις, -πυρις of which a wide range of PN is available to be formed is certainly Thracian¹⁸.

XVII 70-74: "[...] *Mentès chief of the Cicons [...]*" (ἀνέρι εἰσάμενος Κικόνων ἡγήτορι Μέντη).

MENTES. Μέντης. Μέντις, Μένθης or other variants (Μενδῖς, Μενδῖς, Μενδηῖς etc) is a Thracian PN known also in hellenistic and Roman times¹⁹.

II 862-863: "[...] *Phorcys, again, and noble Ascanius led the Phrygians from the far country of Ascania, and both were eager for the fray [...]*" (Φόρκυς αὖ Φρύγας ἦγε καὶ Ἀσκάνιος θεοειδῆς τῆλ' ἐξ Ἀσκανίης: μέμασαν δ' ὕσμῖνι μάχεσθαι).

PHORCYS. Φόρκυς. There is no analogy of such a PN in the Thracian onomastics. It belongs rather to the Greek onomastics with the closest analogy in Φόρμις. The "far country of Ascania" (θεοειδῆς τῆλ' ἐξ Ἀσκανίης) in relation with Troy was situated in southern Phrygia, suggesting a region where a small, if not a leading Phrygian kingdom was already

¹³ Fol 2000, 103.

¹⁴ In general see: Katincharov 1989, 86-105.

¹⁵ Watkins 1986, 45-62; Starke 1997, 447-487.

¹⁶ Danov 1971, 271-277; 1976, 115-116; Porozhanov 1995, 118; it is worth noting that Herodotus (VII. 74) vows that the Lydians, the Carians, and the Mysians were brother tribes. Both Lydians and Carians spoke Luwian (Yakubovich 2010, 117-129), but Mysians, whose origin was traditionally placed on or near the Mount Olympus, from where they had been driven away by the Phrygians, seem to have absorbed considerable Lydian elements.

¹⁷ Dechev 1976, 385 f.; Vlahov 1976, 39. On this king see: Lazova 1990, 151; Porozhanov 1995, 117; Jordanov 2000, 104.

¹⁸ Dechev 1976, 385 f.; Vlahov 1976, 39; Lazova 1990, 151-152; Porozhanov 1995, 117.

¹⁹ Dechev 1976, 294; Vlahov 1976, 38 f., 100, 117, 121; Porozhanov 1995, 117; Jordanov 2000, 104; on Homeric Cicones see: Spiridonov 1990, 218-222.

in existence at that time²⁰.

XXI 141-143; 157-160: “[...] *Meanwhile the son of Peleus, spear in hand, sprang upon Asteropaeus son of Pelegon to kill him. He was son to the broad Axios and Periboea eldest daughter of Acesamenus; for the river had lain with her [...]*” (τόφρα δὲ Πηλέος υἱὸς ἔχων δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος Ἀστεροπαίῳ ἐπάλτο κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος: τὸν δ’ Ἄξιός εὐρυρέεθρος γείνατο καὶ Περιβοία Ἀκεσσαμενοῖο θυγατρῶν πρεσβυτάτη: τῇ γάρ ῥα μίγη ποταμὸς βαθυδίνης).

ASTEROPAEUS. Ἀστεροπαῖος. The root *ast-* like *ασται-*, *αστι-*, *αστης-* is common in the Thracian onomastics²¹. As Homer states, the chieftain comes from Thrace, and was possibly the leader of a kingdom along the Axios (Maritsa) River, as the poet offers some hints on his noble origin. At least two important kingdoms on the Axios River who have afforded to send forces to Troy are represented in Iliad: one led by *Pyraechmes*, possibly centered on the town of Amydon, and another by *Asteropaeus*, possibly also along the course of the river.

X. 435-448: “[...] *There are the Thracians, who have lately come here and lie apart from the others at the far end of the camp; and they have Rhesus son of Eioneus for their king. His horses are the finest and strongest that I have ever seen, they are whiter than snow and fleetier than any wind that blows. His chariot is bedighting with silver and gold, and he has brought his marvellous golden armour, of the rarest workmanship- too splendid for any mortal man to carry, and meet only for the gods[...]*” (Θρήϊκες οἷδ’ ἀπάνευθε νεήλυδες ἔσχατοι ἄλλων: ἐν δὲ σφιν Ῥῆσος βασιλεὺς πάϊς Ἡϊονῆος. τοῦ δὴ καλλίστους ἵππους ἴδον ἠδὲ μεγίστους: λευκότεροι χιόνος, θείειν δ’ ἀνέμοισιν ὁμοῖοι: ἄρμα δὲ οἱ χρυσῶ τε καὶ ἀργύρῳ εὖ ἤσκηται).

474-475: “[...] *Rhesus was sleeping in the middle, and hard by him his horses were made fast to the topmost rim of his chariot[...]*” (Ῥῆσος δ’ ἐν μέσῳ εὔδε, παρ’ αὐτῷ δ’ ὠκέες ἵπποιέξ ἐπιδιφριάδος πυρμάτης ἱμάσι δέδεντο).

RHESOS, Ῥῆσος, with the variant: Ῥῆσος. On his Thracian origin one cannot cast any doubts. The name fits perfectly in the Thracian lexical pattern²². Iliad does not provide his origin in Thrace. According to Euripides (*Rhes.* 279) Rhesos was the son of the son of the Strymon, a transparent allusion to the Strymon (Struma) River. “[...] *His country, Thrace: men call his father Strymon [...]*” (Θρήϊκος: πατὴρ δὲ Στρυμόνος κικλήσκειται). That would be a good indication about the location of his kingdom. Rhesos is indeed a tragic figure. He must have arrived later

(**X 434**) (Θρήϊκες οἷδ’ ἀπάνευθε νεήλυδες ἔσχατοι ἄλλων) and brought a considerable cavalry force. The Thracian horses described by Dolon in front of Odysseus and Diomedes (**X 435-438**) must have represented a formidable military strength for Troy in the future operations against the Achaeans. Before even engaging his forces, Rhesos was assassinated by Odysseus in his own camp, while sleeping. Whether Rhesos was a contemporary king with the editing of the Book X and its interpolation, as has been vowed, from political reasons at the Pisistratids court or a real 13th century dynast allied to Troy, the tragedy dedicated by Euripides to the Thracian king mirrors the traditional presence of a significant Thracian military strength involved in the Trojan War.

II. Thracian warrior groups

Military chieftains or kings are recorded as leading important groups of warriors whose ethnonyms are specifically indicated. Apart from the generic designation as Thracians (Θρήϊκος) (*Il.* II 844) the following ethnic groups of Thracian stock or tinge, allied to Troy, are recorded in the Catalogue of the Ships:

II. 819-823: *Dardani* (Δάρδανοι), commanded by Aeneas, Archilochos and Acamas.

II. 858-861: **X. 430:** *Mysi* (Μυσοί), led by Chromis, Ennomus, and Hyrtios.

II. 862-863: **III.181-190;** **X 431;** *Phryges* (Φρύγας), led by Phorkis and Ascanios.

II. 849; **XVI. 288;** **XXIII. 807:** *Paeones* (Παίονος). The chieftain leading the warrior groups were Pyraechmenes and Asteropaeus (see above). Another warrior belonging to this group was “Euphorbus son of Panthous, a Dardanian, the best spearman of his time, as also the finest horseman and fleetest runner” (**XXI.141**).

II. 846-847; **XVII.73:** *Cicones* (Κικόνες) led by Euphemos and Mentos.

Troy could rely on a solid coalition which is labeled ‘brave allies’ (**XVII 14**) or ‘illustrious allies’ (**VI.111;** **XVII. 212;** **221**).

In assessing the Troy’s Thracian allies some thorny difficulties arise. As shown above the Homeric text of Iliad is built on different chronological stages based mainly on oral tradition, but the problem is how strong this tradition remained until the 8th century BC when the written variant seems to have acquired its final form²³. Homer kept alive and, as long as possible, intact this strong tradition. Even so, Homer introduces in the account of the unfolding of the events place names and geographical locations of his own time. Thracians, on the other hand were a patent reality of his period when the Thracian- Hellenic contacts were in full swing and the Thracian world had surpassed the epoch of great migrations to Asia Minor of the 10th -8th centuries BC.

Mysi, Phryges, and Cicones were Thracian tribes. The migration of Mysi²⁴ towards South East

²⁰ Porozhanov 1995, 118.

²¹ Dechev 1976, 32. On this king see: Porozhanov 1995, 119.

²² Dechev 1976, 393, 395-397; Russu 1967, 117; Vlahov 1976, 41, 70 f. On Rhesos see: Dimitrov 1930, 1-9; Danov 1976, 181; Porozhanov 1995, 119.

²³ Dalby 2006, 129-133.

²⁴ On the Mysians and historical sources see: Dechev 1976, 306-310;

of the Balkan Peninsula and beyond Hellespontus in North West Asia Minor was assigned by some researches to mid 2nd millennium BC. *Iliad* II 885, the earliest written source on the Thracian ethnic situation in Asia Minor places Mysia east of Aisepos (present day Ghinen-Çay), towards the future region of Bithynia. Although there is no topographic clue to localize the Homeric *Mysia* and their chieftains are not labeled as kings, they appear as a significant force on Troy's side, a sign that in the 13th century there was already a coalesced Mysian authority with its own identity. The Greek tradition knows another Mysian king, Euripyllos, the son of the mythical Telephos, recorded in *Ilias parva* (Ἰλιάς μικρά), a lost epic poem of the ancient "Trojan" cycle of which only thirty lines survived²⁵.

II. III. 184-187 states that the king of Troy, Priamos had already been in Phrygia as an ally of the Phrygians against the Amazons on the banks of the Sangarius River (ἦδη καὶ Φρυγίην εἰσήλυθον ἀμπελόεσσαν, ἔνθα ἴδον πλείστους Φρύγας ἀνέρας αἰολοπώλους λαοὺς Ὀτρῆος καὶ Μυγδόνος ἀντιθέοιο, οἳ ῥά τὸτ' ἐστρατώνοντο παρ' ὄχθας Σαγαγάρσιοιο). The "people of Otreus and of Mygdon" are the Phrygians. Without getting into details here, it must be noted that, as some scholars believe²⁶, the passage encompasses a tradition which converted historical facts into legend, that is the memory of a conflict of considerable importance mentioned in the Annals of Tudhalia IV (1250-1220 BC) between the Hittites, often assimilated with the legendary Amazons and the 'Arzawa' confederacy coalition. The latter seems to have comprised *Lukka* (Lycia), *Karakisa* (Caria), lands recorded also in the Tudhalia IV annals, the Phrygians (see the presence of Priam on the Sangarius River), Mysians and cities/regions among which two again rendered as *Wiluša* or *Wilušija* (=Ἰλιος, φίλιος=Ilion) and *Taruiša* (Τροίη, Τρώη, Τρωφισία)²⁷. The record

Danov 1976, 115 f.; Papazoglu 1978, 391-437.

²⁵ Editions used: Davies 1988 (Greek text with English translation); West 2003. The PN *Telephos* sends to the Hittite *Telepinus*, *Talipinu* while Euripyllos' brother, the Lydian *Tarkhon* suggests the Hittite-Luwian god of thunder *Tarhu* (Gindin 1990, 65). In both cases, the blood relation of Mysians and Lydians vowed by Herodotus (VII 74) seems to have a confirmation.

²⁶ Gindin 1990, 65 note 4 (with the bibliography).

²⁷ The military confrontation for western Asia Minor between the Hittite Empire, the Achaeans, and local kingdoms seems much earlier. The annals of Tudhalia I (ca. 1440-1410 BC) dated ca. 1420 BC record the defeat of a country called 'Arzawa' which is commonly assimilated to the Greek Ἀσία, meaning in fact western Asia Minor. It roughly comprised the regions of Lydia and south of the area of Troad. There has been much speculation lately on the name of the Troy and Ilion on the list citing towns from the south to the north: *Taru[ú]isa* corrected by some in *Taruiya* which allegedly could be Troy, and *Wilusa* or *Wilusija* (*Ilion*, *Ilium*) considered as Troad. There have been repeated conflicts between 'Arzawa' confederation and the Hittite Empire, during which apparently *Wilusa* was not attacked by the Hittites, a fact considered as a kind of independence maintained by this kingdom in the political relationship with the Hittites (Wood 1998, 188). A "town of *Aššuwā*" is recorded in the Tudhalia I's annals in alliance with other twenty-two other places which formed the 'Arzawa' coalition that opposed the Hittites (Wood 1998, 186-187). *Wilusa*, through its king *Alaksandus*, one of the four kings in the 'Arzawa', but astonishingly characterized in the pact as an *Ahhijawa* (Achaean) king, concluded a separate treaty (ca. 1280) with the Hittite king Muwattalis (1296-1272 BC) whose text was preserved in a number of tablets found during the 1906-

of *Wiluša* among the confederates means nothing in terms of a hostile attitude of Troy towards the Hittite state. It must be simply seen that Troy adhered to the confederation, without jeopardizing the 200 years old treaty with the Hittites. On the contrary, one of the Troy's ally were the *Keteioi* (Κήτειοι), recently considered as Hittites in the ten years war with the Achaeans²⁸.

The Phrygians (*Phryges*, *Bryges*)²⁹ were, in all appearance, rather new immigrants from the Balkan Peninsula in Asia Minor around 1200 BC shortly before the Trojan War had broken. However, they seem to have been part of the 'Arzawa' coalition against the Achaeans.

The *Dardanians* were the inhabitants of the Troad, the territory of undisputed authority of Troy.

The extension of the Dardanian control to the East seems to have made some progress in the 13th century BC, for the river Aisepos was a Dardanian River, the home of the sons of Antenor, Archelochos and Acamas, who accompanied Aeneas, the chieftain of the Dardanians (see above). If a significant part of the Dardanians migrated from the western Balkan Peninsula to north western Asia Minor that must have happened in the Early Bronze Age, in circumstances which are difficult to reconstruct, sometime between 2500-2000 BC, when a first urban – like settlement at Troy replaced the initial modest habitation on the Sea girt promontory³⁰, a moment possibly corresponding to the legendary king Dardanos who traditionally had founded the city³¹.

Paeones are often recorded in *Iliad* II. XVII 350 and XXI 154-158 shows that their native region was well known to the Greek tradition, and particularly the main route of navigation through the country, the Axios River³². Their origin has been much debated. The common view, although not certain, is that the Paeones were a Phrygian-Moesian tribe. Homer knows the European Paeonians. Herodotus (V 13) included them definitely within the Thracian stock. The events related to the participation in Trojan war refers exclusively to the Balkan Paeones, west of the

1907 excavations at the Hittite capital, Bogaz-köy; on the treaty see recently Gütterbock 1983, 133-138; Güterbock 1984, 114-122; 1986, 33-44 (with the bibliography); Wood 1998, 169-209; on the large and frenzy debate on the equation *Wilusija*-Ilion and *Tarusia*=Troy see also Gütterbock 1986, 39-41 and Wood 1998, 186-188.

²⁸ Gindin 1990, 64-69. On a possible although speculative clash of interests between the Achaeans (*Ahhijawa*) and the Hittite Empire over *Wilusija*-*Taru(ú)iša*=Ilion-Troy see Wood 1998, 188-205.

²⁹ Haas, 1966, 8-231; Danov 1976, 116 f.; Petrova 1997, 95-106.

³⁰ Korfmann 1986, 1-16.

³¹ The Dardanians are considered by Georgiev (1966, 156) as being Daco-Mysians. That a migration from western Balkans in Asia Minor occurred very early is suggested by the possible presence of *Drdny* considered as *Dardani* among the allies of the Hittite king Muwattalis in the battle of Kadesh (1275 or 1274 BC). As Wood (1998, 188) noticed the record is roughly contemporary with the treaty between *Wilusija* and the Hittite king. On the European Dardanians see Papazoglu 1975, 131-270 who is inclined more towards an Illyrian origin of the Dardanians; on the Asian Dardanians: Autenrieth 1891 s. v. *Dardanoi*; Wilkes 1995, 145.

³² On Paeones see: Katsarov 1921; Danov 1976, 117 f. and *passim*; Jordanov 2000, 107; on the historical sources see: Dechev 1976, 351-353; Lazova 1990, 151.

Strymon River, for the Asian Paeones known also by Herodotus were the result of a massive deportation carried out by the Persians in the 5th century BC³³.

III. Some final observations

Iliad, as the main literary source for the 13th century events in North-West Asia Minor credits Thracians (Θρήκεσσι, Θρήϊκας) with a significant presence in the Trojan War, if not playing the most important part of its alliances. Except the recent theory of an extended Hittite authority over western Asia Minor, the modern research agrees in general that a coalition of kingdoms from eastern Balkan Peninsula and North-West Asia Minor existed prior to the outburst of the Trojan War. However, while the Trojan league had mostly economic reasons, around a powerful city, Troy, which controlled the trade and navigation through Hellespont, and maintained close economic relations with partners in the Balkans and western and southern Asia Minor, the Achaean coalition seems to have been coagulated ad hoc, quite temporarily on a war basis, without consistency even during combats³⁴. Recently, scholars based on solid arguments, whose details go beyond our topic, suggest even a large scale clash of interests in North-West Asia Minor between the continental Achaeans and the Hittite Empire in its final stage, around Troy and the Straits³⁵.

There are two categories of ethnonyms of Thracian tinge involved in the unfolding of the events. Those which can be considered as belonging to the Asian Thracians: Dardanians, Mysians, and Phrygians and those identifiable with European Thracians of the Balkan Peninsula.

It is noticeable that the European Thracians remain a staunch ally of Troy, even if they came from far distances as it is case of the Paeonians, or Thracian groups living along the Axios or Strymon Rivers. It might be suggested, on this base, a common interest of Thracians and Trojans which must have functioned way before the Trojan War mainly in the economic field. The dynastic alliances through intermarriages were also a point of close friendship. Homer (*Il.* XIII 363-366) mentions a certain Thracian chieftain, *Othryoneos* from Cabessos, very likely a place name in Thrace, who had come shortly before the outbreak of the war to ask for Cassandra's hand from Priam and fell in battle "[...] *Idomeneus*, [...] *slew Othryoneus from Cabesus, a sojourner, who had but lately come to take part in the war. He sought Cassandra the fairest of Priam's daughters in marriage, but offered no gifts of wooing, for he promised a great thing, to wit, that he would drive the sons of the Achaeans willy nilly from Troy; old King Priam had given his consent and promised her to him, whereon he fought on the strength of the promises thus made to him. Idomeneus*

aimed a spear, and hit him as he came striding on. His cuirass of bronze did not protect him, and the spear stuck in his belly, so that he fell heavily to the ground. Then Idomeneus vaunted over him saying, "Othryoneus, there is no one in the world whom I shall admire more than I do you, if you indeed perform what you have promised Priam son of Dardanus in return for his daughter. We too will make you an offer; we will give you the loveliest daughter of the son of Atreus, and will bring her from Argos for you to marry, if you will sack the goodly city of Ilius in company with ourselves; so come along with me, that we may make a covenant at the ships about the marriage, and we will not be hard upon you about gifts of wooing." [...].

The circulation of the Thracians across Hellespontus knew probably an unprecedented frequency during the ten years war. The ships transported considerable number of warriors, chariots, and horses, like those the king Rhessos came with. Iphidamas landed with 12 ships at Percote, a harbor of Troy, or very close to the city.

The existence of a Trojan-Thracian league seems very likely in the light of the Homeric text. The bulk of the Troy's allies were Asian and European Thracians, although the military assistance must have been much more diversified as avowed by Homer, *Il.* 803-804 through the message attributed to goddess Iris: "[...] *There are many allies dispersed about the city of Priam from distant places and speaking divers tongues* [...]" (πολλοὶ γὰρ κατὰ ἄστῳ μέγα Πριάμου ἐπίκουροι, ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα πολυσπερέων ἀνθρώπων).

The Troy VII_a and VII_b pottery shows striking analogies until identity with the pottery found in Thrace proper. Some direct blood relationship lines between the Trojans and Thracians could be deduced³⁶ but has to be utterly demonstrated. It is true that the ancient sources speak of ethnic connections between Thrace and Troad and the Asian Dardanians who traditionally formed the basic population of Troad at the time of the Trojan War. They cannot be considered of other origin but a branch of the European Dardanians which could have emigrated much earlier in the Bronze age from their homeland on upper Axios River and settled apparently on the territory of future Troad. However, pottery, even similar to identity in its main features with that of Thrace, cannot be an argument for establishing blood relationships. We must recall on the other hand a fact ascertained by the modern linguists that the Trojan spoken language was the Luwian, doubtlessly an Indoeuropean language, but showing important lexical, phonetical, and glossary differences³⁷.

To conclude, in my opinion, the Thracian allies fought alongside Troy rather in the virtue of common economic interest, in defense of a common market and flourishing trade on either side of the Hellespontus, than an acknowledged kinship, it is true, but altered by almost a millennium of distant life.

³³ On this event see: Delev 2000, 49-53. An important stress on the early Paeonians as proto-Armenians is put by Gindin (1990, 69-71) who brings forth some literary and linguistic arguments.

³⁴ Wood 1998, 160 f.

³⁵ Wood 1996, 188-192.

³⁶ Katincharov 1989, 86; Porozhanov 1995, 121 f.

³⁷ See references 15 and 16.

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