

## HESYCHIUS ON ΛΥΚΟΦΡΩΝ

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According to Hesychian definition, the meaning of the adjective λυκόφρων, explained commonly as ‘wolf-minded’, is ‘high-minded’, adding not irrelevant evidence for the adjectival root \**luk* -, ‘high’.

In his glossary Hesychius, the well known lexicographer from Alexandria, explains the adjective λυκόφρων by means of two equivalents δεινόφρων and ὑψήφρων<sup>1</sup>. The former word δεινόφρων appears only once in the ancient texts and therefore it must be classified as *hapax legomenon*. However, we cannot treat this word as a corrupted form, as both components of the compound, δεινός and φρήν, are easily identified. It denotes nothing other than ‘clever-minded’. The latter word can be easily corrected into ὑψίφρων (an itacism) or perhaps ὑψηλόφρων. Both these adjectives mean ‘high-minded, high-spirited, haughty’. It is obvious that the same semantics (‘high-minded, clever-minded’ or the like) should be suggested for λυκόφρων. The traditional explanation of this adjective is based on the association of the first element λυκό- with Greek λύκος ‘wolf’. Thus the word in question is commonly explained as ‘wolf-minded’<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> *Hesychii Alexandrini Lexicon*, recensuit et emendavit K. Latte, vol. 2, Hauniae 1966 (henceforth: *HAL*), p. 613, λ-1401: λυκόφρων · δεινόφρων, ὑψήφρων.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. *A Greek-English Lexicon*, compiled by H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, revised and augmented throughout by H. S. Jones, Oxford 1996, p. 1065.

This etymology is probably wrong, as a number of ancient sources demonstrates the existence of the archaic adjectival root λυκ- meaning ‘high’ in Ancient Greek. This root is attested not only in the dialectal vocabulary, but also in many oronyms and toponyms. Now I would like to discuss both lexical and onomastic data.

### *Lexical evidence.*

Stephen of Byzantium, the Greek lexicographer of the sixth century AD, gives a double etymology of the place-name Λύκτος<sup>3</sup>:

Λύκτος, πόλις Κρήτης, ἀπὸ Λύκτου τοῦ Λυκάονος. ἔνιοι Λύττον αὐτὴν φασὶν διὰ τὸ κεῖσθαι ἐν μετεώρῳ τόπῳ. τὸ γὰρ ἄνω καὶ ὑψηλὸν λύττον φασί. τὸ ἔθνικὸν Λύκτιος, καὶ θηλυκὸν Λυκτηίς.

The first explanation, deriving the name from the mythical eponym Lyktos, Lykaon’s son, belongs to the so-called “folk etymologies”. The second derivation connects the place name Λύκτος with the positive topographical feature: the city is situated in a highland place (τὸ κεῖσθαι ἐν μετεώρῳ τόπῳ) and the appellative *lyttos* means ‘high, lofty, high-raised’ (τὸ γὰρ ἄνω καὶ ὑψηλὸν λύττον φασί). The same appellative is quoted by Hesychius (λ-1470): λύττοι · οἱ ὑψηλοὶ τόποι<sup>4</sup>. However, Pierre Chantraine does not exclude that the Hesychian gloss may be an invention to explain the origin of the Cretan place-name Lyktos<sup>5</sup>.

The dialectal word λύττος derives from hypothetical \*λύκτος, similarly as the place-name Λύττος develops from Homeric Λύκτος<sup>6</sup> and Mycenaean

<sup>3</sup> Stefanos of Byzantium ΕΘΝΙΚΩΝ. *A Geographical Lexicon on Ancient Cities, Peoples, Tribes and Toponyms*, Chicago, 1992 (a reprint of the German edition: *Stefani Byzantini Ethnicorum quae supersunt*, ex recensione Augusti Meinekii, Berlin, 1849), p. 422, sub. v. Λύκτος.

<sup>4</sup> HAL II, p. 615 (henceforth: HAL). See also R. A. Brown, *Evidence for Pre-Greek Speech on Crete from Greek Alphabetic Sources*, Amsterdam, 1985, p. 78; A. Th. Vasilakis, *Ti kretiko lexikologio*, Iraklio, 1998, pp. 112-113.

<sup>5</sup> P. Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque. Histoire des mots*, Paris, 1984, p. 652, sub. v. λύττος.

<sup>6</sup> Lyktos (or later Lyttos) was one of the oldest and most powerful Cretan city-states of Classical Greek times and a bitter enemy of Knossos. It was quoted by Homer in his well-known catalogue of ships among seven central towns of Crete (*Il.* II 645-649).

*ru-ki-to*<sup>7</sup>. Strabo remarks that the Homeric form Λύκτος differs from the actual Cretan name Λύττος. August Fick observes that the afore mentioned process, analogical to Ἀττικός < Ἀκτικός, is due to the regressive assimilation of consonants<sup>8</sup>. M. Schmidt explains this process as purely Cretan, referring to the Hesychian gloss διώττας · ἐργοδιώκτης. Inscriptions, found in the central part of Crete, register many other instances of the regressive assimilation -ττ- < -κτ-<sup>9</sup>.

It is clear now that the adjectival form λύττος, meaning 'high, lofty, high-raised', derives evidently from the suggested root \**luk-*. What is more, it must be the old superlative *luk-istos*. In my paper on the Mycenaean name of Lyktos I tried to prove that the Mycenaean spelling *ru-ki-to*, ethnic *ru-ki-ti-jo*, contains the suffix *-isto-* (like Φαιστός, Κάδιστον) and represents nothing other than *Lukistos*<sup>10</sup>. The Homeric form Λύκτος might be a straightforward continuant of the Mycenaean place-name, if we would accept an early (but post-Mycenaean) syncope of *-i-*<sup>11</sup>. A similar process appears in a Cypriote dialect, in which the Apollon's epitheton Μέγιστος was changed to Μέκτος (dat. sg. *me-ko-to*)<sup>12</sup>. It is clear that \*Μέγιστος, the syncopated form

<sup>7</sup> The form *ru-ki-to* is attested in many Knossian tablets, e.g. KN Da 1288, Dm 1177, Fh 349, and so on, cf. J. Chadwick, L. Baumbach, *The Mycenaean Greek Vocabulary*, *Glotta* 41, 1963, p. 219; A. Morpurgo, *Mycenaeae Graecitatis Lexicon*, Roma, 1963, p. 300; F. Aura Jorro, *Diccionario Micénico*, vol. 2, Madrid, 1993, p. 268.

<sup>8</sup> A. Fick, *Vorgriechische Ortsnamen als Quelle für die Vorgeschichte Griechenlands*, Göttingen, 1905, p. 13.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. J. Brause, *Lautehre der kretischen Dialekte*, Halle, 1909, p. 162-163; Brown (n. 4 above), p. 161. C. D. Buck, *The Greek Dialects. Grammar, Selected Inscriptions, Glossary*, Chicago, 1955, p. 73, adds: «Assimilation is most extensive in Crete».

<sup>10</sup> E. Kaczyńska, Remarks on the Mycenaean name of Lyktos, *DO-SO-MO* 3, 2001 (in press). The reading *ru-ki-to* = *Lukistos* was suggested e.g. by C. J. Ruijgh, *Études sur la grammaire et le vocabulaire du grec mycénien*, Amsterdam, 1967, p. 180, fn. 413, and R. D. Woodard, *Kadmos* 25, 1986, p. 63. Also J. L. Melena, *Minos* 15, 1976, p. 148, preferred a primitive form \**Lykistos*, hence *Lykastos* by influence of Gk. ἄστυ 'city'. There is no need to postulate the latter process in the case of Lyktos.

<sup>11</sup> M. D. Petruševski, *Zur Toponomastik Griechenlands im mykenischen Zeitalter*, in: *Neue Beiträge zur Geschichte der Alten Welt*, vol. 1: *alter Orient und Griechenland*, Berlin, 1964, p. 166.

<sup>12</sup> G. Neumann, Kyprisch «ὁ θεὸς Μέκτος Ἀπόλλων», *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung* 87, 1973, pp. 158-160; M. Egetmeyer, *Wörterbuch zu den Inschriften im kyprischen Syllabar*, Berlin-New York, 1992, p. 89.

of Μέγιστος, yielded regularly Cypr. Μέκτος, as the Greek sequence of -gst- (or -kst-) simplifies into -kt-, cf. Gk. ἕκτος 'sixth' < IE. \*swekstos (see Latin *sextus*, Germ. \*swehstaz). By analogy the Mycenaean toponym *ru-ki-to* (= Λύκιστος) developed to \*Λύκστος by the syncope of -i-, further to (Homeric) Λύκτος and consequently to Cretan Λύττος by assimilation of consonants.

The Mycenaean spelling suggests strongly that the ancient name of Lyktos was Lukistos. This form is, of course, a superlative derived from the newly identified adjective \*λυκ- denoting 'high'. This stem was preserved only in the dialect of Crete: in fact, λύττος (originally \*λύκιστος) was an adjective in the superlative grade and it meant ὑψηλότατος rather than ὑψηλός. However, the Mycenaean evidence appears a perfect proof that the Hesychian gloss λύττοι · οἱ ὑψηλοὶ τόποι, as well as the testimony by Stephen of Byzantium, registered an actual Cretan idiom. It is certain now that the word λύττος was not an invention of Greek lexicographers to explain the origin of the Cretan place-name Lyktos.

#### *Onomastic evidence.*

It is apparently certain that the place-name Lyktos must be etymologically connected not only with the Hesychian gloss (λύττοι · οἱ ὑψηλοὶ τόποι), confirmed independantly by Stephen of Byzantium (τὸ γὰρ ἄνω καὶ ὑψηλὸν λύττον φασί), but also with a number of Pre-Greek oronyms, which contain the same element \*λυκ- 'high' (different than λύκος 'wolf'):

- 1) Λυκαβηττός – mountain in Attica, now in Athens.
- 2) Λύκαιον – mountain in Arcadia «apparently not connected with λύκος»<sup>13</sup>, originally 'high mountain'.
- 3) Λυκώνη – mountain in Arcadia.
- 4) Λυκωρεὺς – a summit of Parnassos in Phocis.

It is highly probable that the same explanation should be suggested to explain some Greek toponyms, situated in the mountains, e.g.

<sup>13</sup> A. Bieleckij, *The Oronymy of Greece*, in: *Proceedings of the Thirteenth International Congress of Onomastic Sciences, Cracow, August 21-25, 1978*, ed. K. Rymut, vol. 1, Wrocław-Warszawa-Kraków-Gdańsk-Łódź, 1981, p. 190.

- 5) Λυκώρεια or Λυκωρεία – a town near Delphi in the Parnassos' massive; note a semantical equivalent Ἀκρώρεια – a summit in Sicyon and a town in Elis. Both names denote 'mountain heights'.
- 6) Λυκουρία – a town in North-Eastern Arcadia. This toponym is named after 'high mountains' (λυκ- 'high' and ὄρος 'mountain') rather than derived from the compound of λύκος 'wolf' and οὐρά 'tail' (literally 'wolftail').
- 7) Λύκαστος – a town in Crete. It denotes most probably 'an upper or higher city' (see λυκ- 'high' and ἄστυ 'town, city') by analogy to ἀκρόπολις ('upper or higher city', hence 'citadel, castle'). Similar formations are well known in the Greek toponymy (e.g. *Acro-polis* in Athens), as well as in the the onomastics of other Indo-European languages (e.g. *Acro-briga* – town in Lusitania, *Wyše-hrad* – castle in Praha).

The root λυκ-, seen in the Greek oronymy and toponymy, seems to be connected with the highly situated places. Thus the onomastic data strongly confirm the lexical evidence.

### *Conclusions.*

The Ancient Greek evidence for the adjectival root *\*luk-* 'high' seems firmly established. The Hesychian gloss λυκόφρων · δεινόφρων, †ὕψήφρων may be added to the testimony. The equation λυκόφρων = ὕψίφρων (or ὕψηλόφρων) suggests that the component λυκό- may be treated as the exact semantical equivalent of the Greek form ὕψι adv. 'on high, aloft' (as well as ὕψηλός adj. 'high, lofty, high-raised').