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HESYCHIUS ON ΚΑΡΝΗΣΣΟΠΟΛΙΣ AND ΤΡΙΤ[Τ]Α

*The paper deals with two geographical glosses transmitted by Hesychius of Alexandria: Καρνησσόπολις · Λύκτος ἢ Κρητικὴ οὕτως ἐκαλεῖτο (HAL κ-840) and Τρίτ[τ]α · οὕτως ἢ Κνωσσὸς ὀνομάζετο (HAL τ-1434). It is suggested that Καρνησσόπολις and Τρίτ[τ]α cannot be identified with Lyctus and Knossos, respectively. Both of the place-names under discussion refer to separate settlements, strongly connected with the capital cities. The toponym Καρνησσόπολις should be identified with an ancient town located by the village of Κανασός (< Doric Greek *Καρνᾶσός) near Gonies, i.e. about 8 km north-east of the ancient city of Lyctus. The toponym Τρίτ[τ]α, attested as ti-ri-to in Linear B texts from Knossos, could refer to an ancient settlement with the sanctuary of Athena Tritogeneia, located near the modern village of Astritsi (Mod. Gk. Ασπίτσι), i.e. about 9 km south of Knossos.*

Key words: Cretan geography; Greek place-names; Hesychius of Alexandria

In his dictionary of rare and unclear words, Hesychius of Alexandria states that the Cretan city of Lyctus (Lyktos, Anc. Gk. Λύκτος) was called Karnessopolis (HAL κ-840): Καρνησσόπολις · Λύκτος ἢ Κρητικὴ οὕτως ἐκαλεῖτο (Latte, 1966: p. 415; Vasilakis, 1998: p. 95) “Karnessopolis: thus was called the Cretan city of Lyktos” (Vasilakis, 2000: p. 110).

Provided that the name was correctly transmitted, it is to be regarded as a compound from the morphological point of view, with the Greek appellative πόλις (f.) ‘city, town’ as its second member. August Fick (1905: p. 29) viewed Καρνησσόπολις as an epic form adopted from one of the works of the well-known Hellenistic poet Rhianus of Bene. In his view, the toponym Καρνησσό-πολις is cognate with the name of Halicarnassus (Ἀλικαρνασσός), the main city of ancient Caria and the native home of the father of history, Herodotus. He stressed that “die Stadt hieß also ursprünglich Καρνᾶσός, gleichlautend mit der karischen Hauptstadt, wo der Vorsatz Ἄλι- dasselbe ist wie in Ἄλι-σάρνα, Ἄλί-κυρνα” (Fick, 1905: p. 29).

Fick overlooked that a far closer equivalent of the name Καρνησόπολις was at hand, since a toponym Καρνάσιον (attested also in the form Καρνασός) is found in Messenia (Benseler, 1911: p. 625). In his *Description of Greece*, Pausanias provides the most valuable information on this Peloponnesian toponym, stating thrice that in his time the former Messenian Oechalia bore the name of Karnasion (Paus. IV 2, 2; IV 33, 4; VIII 35, 1). Below, I quote all of his relevant statements:

- (1) Paus. IV 2, 2: καί οἱ τῆς χώρας τὸ Καρνάσιον, τότε δὲ Οἰχαλίαν κληθεῖσαν, ἀπένειμεν ὁ Περίηρης ἐνοικῆσαι.

“Perieres assigned to him as a dwelling a part of the country now called the Carnasium [i.e. Karnasion], but which then received the name Oechalia” (translated into English by Jones, and Ormerod, 1926: p. 179).

- (2) Paus. IV 33, 4–5: τοῦ πεδίου δὲ ἐστὶν ἀπαντικρὺ καλουμένη τὸ ἀρχαῖον Οἰχαλία, τὸ δὲ ἐφ’ ἡμῶν Καρνάσιον ἄλσος, κυπαρίσσων μάλιστα πλήρες. θεῶν δὲ ἀγάλματα Ἀπόλλωνός ἐστι Καρνείου <καὶ Ἀγνῆς> καὶ Ἑρμῆς φέρων κριόν. ἡ δὲ Ἀγνὴ Κόρης τῆς Δήμητρος ἐστὶν ἐπίκλησις· ὕδωρ δὲ ἄνεισιν ἐκ πηγῆς παρ’ αὐτὸ τὸ ἄγαλμα. τὰ δὲ ἐς τὰς θεὰς τὰς Μεγάλας – δρῶσι γὰρ καὶ ταύταις ἐν Καρνασίῳ τὴν τελετήν – ἀπόρρητα ἔστω μοι· δεύτερα γὰρ σφισι νέμω σεμνότητος μετὰ γε Ἐλευσίνια. ὅτι δ’ ὕδρια τε ἡ χαλκῆ, τὸ εὖρημα τοῦ Ἀργείου στρατηγοῦ, καὶ Εὐρύτου τοῦ Μελανέως τὰ ὅστ’ ἀφυλάσσετο ἐνταῦθα, δηλώσαι με καὶ ἐς ἅπαντας οὐκ ἀπεῖργε τὸ ὄνειρον. ρεῖ δὲ ποταμὸς παρὰ τὸ Καρνάσιον Χάραδρος,

“Facing the plain is a site anciently called Oechalia, in our time the Carnasian grove, thickly grown with cypresses. There are statues of the gods Apollo Carneius <and Hagne>, also Hermes carrying a ram. Hagne (the holy one) is a title of Kore the daughter of Demeter. Water rises from a spring close to the statue. I may not reveal the rites of the Great Goddesses, for it is their mysteries which they celebrate in the Carnasian grove, and I regard them as second only to the Eleusinian in sanctity. But my dream did not prevent me from making known to all that the brazen urn, discovered by the Argive general, and the bones of Eurytus the son of Melaneus were kept here. A river Charadrus flows past the [Carnasian] grove” (translated by Jones, and Ormerod, 1926: pp. 355–357).

- (3) Paus. VIII 35, 1: αὕτη μὲν ἐπὶ Μεσσήνην, ἕτερα δὲ <ὁδός> ἐκ Μεγάλης πόλεως ἐπὶ Καρνάσιον ἄγει τὸ Μεσσηνίων.

“The road I have mentioned leads to Messene. Another road leads from Megalopolis to Carnasium in Messenia” (translated by Frazer, 1898: p. 418).

It is unclear how the name Καρνᾶσσός (Ionic *Καρνησσός) would subsequently develop into Καρνησσόπολις. Raymond A. Brown (1985: p. 161) stresses that the Greeks were not wont to add the noun πόλις (‘city, town, borough’) to foreign place-names that they adapted to their language. There is no denying that numerous compounds with πόλις are attested in Greek toponymy (Cousin, 1904); but the first element of the compound can only be a noun (e.g. Ἀκρόπολις), an adjective (e.g. Μεγαλόπολις, Νεάπολις, Χρυσόπολις), a numeral (e.g. Τρίπολις), a preposition (e.g. Ἀμφίπολις), a proper noun (e.g. Φιλίπποπολις) or an ethnic name (e.g. Περσαίπολις, Περσέπολις). Brown (1985: p. 161) prefers the possibility of deriving the toponym from the hypothetical personal name *Καρνᾶσσός, or the unattested ethnonym οἱ *Καρνᾶσσοί, but an explanation of *ignotum per ignotum* cannot be convincing. Mariani (1895: p. 238, fn. 4) assumed that the form *Karnessopolis* descended from the hypothetical hydronym *Καρνησσός, the alleged older name of the river nowadays called Aposelemis (Mod. Gk. Αποσελέμης). Guarducci (1935: p. 179) rightly points out the hypothetical character of the suggested connection: “Flumen hod. *Aposelēmis* Lytto praeterfluens quo nomine ab antiquis indicatum fuerit incertum est. Vix recte enim Mariani (... [1895] 238, adn. 4) nomen Καρνησσόπολις ab Hesychio traditum [...] ita interpretatus est ut Καρνησσός fluminis *Aposelēmi* nomen fuisse adfirmaverit”. Faure (1984a: pp. 43, 58; 1984b: p. 28; 1989: pp. 316, 331) followed Mariani’s line of thought; however, he connected the name Karnessos with the stream Xerokamares (Mod. Gk. Ξεροκαμάρες), a left tributary of the Aposelemis, flowing between today’s villages of Aski (Mod. Gk. Ασκού), Tichos (Mod. Gk. Τοίχος¹) and Kastamonitsa (Mod. Gk. Κασταμονίτσα) and approaching the site of the ancient city of Lyctus. The reference to the alleged hydronym is not convincing in view of the fact that the cognate appellations of Halicarnassus (the town in Caria) and Karnasos-Karnasion (the city and grove in Messenia) do not quite qualify as hydronyms (Kaczyńska, 2000a: pp. 10–11).

Contemporary researchers of the problem have attempted various ways to determine the etymology and meaning of the name Καρνᾶσσός

¹ In the village of Tichos, there are remains of an ancient aqueduct conveying water from a source called Kournia (Mod. Gk. Κουρνιά) to the Cretan city of Lyctus (Sanders, 1982: p. 147; Ikonomakis, 1984: pp. 66–99; Spanakis, 1993: p. 764). The modern village of Tichos was named after the massive wall of the aqueduct (ca. 4.60 m wide), cf. Anc. Gk. τοίχος m. ‘wall’ (Symeonidis, 2010: p. 1350).

/ Καρνησσός. Some of them point out the non-Greek suffix -σσός, which appears in many primeval Cretan names, attested already in the Minoan-Mycenaean period, for instance in the names *Knossos* (Myc. Gk. *ko-no-so* [Knōssós], Hom. Κνωσσός), *Amnissos* (Myc. Gk. *a-mi-ni-so* [Amnissós], Hom. Αμνισσός), *Tylissos* (Myc. Gk. *tu-ri-so* [Túlissos], Cret. Τύλισσος). A similar suffix -ššaš is also found in the toponymy of Asia Minor (Chadwick, 1969: pp. 87–88; Otkupščikov, 1983: pp. 61–66; 2001: pp. 196–202); hence, all these names were connected with some undetermined non-Indo-European stratum, or, alternatively, with the Indo-European population of ancient Anatolia, i.e. the Hittites, Luwians, Lydians, Lycians and other related peoples. However, the comparison of Καρνησσός (and Καρνησσόπολις) with Hitt. ^{GIS}*karnašaš* (c. and n.?) ‘[wooden] stool, chair, throne’ (see Puhvel, 1997: p. 91; Taracha, 1999: pp. 674–676), purportedly superimposable on one another, seems highly conjectural.

Others have attempted to prove the Doric origin of the name *Karnesso-polis* by referring to the alias of Apollo, Karneios (Bieleckij, 1981: p. 192). Indeed, the Dorians of Peloponnesus celebrated a holiday called *Karneia* (Gk. τὰ Κάρνεια), and had in their calendar a month called Καρνεῖος or Κάρνειος (Nilsson, 1941: p. 532; Geßbura, 1996: p. 61), Cret. Gk. Καρνήιος, also Καννήιος (Guarducci, 1945: pp. 72–75, 79, 82–84; Chaniotis, 1996a: pp. 22–23; 1996b: p. 294). They also worshipped a god under such a moniker (Gk. Καρνεῖος). However, this is a typical *obscurum per obscurum* explanation, inasmuch as the etymology of this alias of Apollo is not unambiguously clarified (Kazanskij, 2009: pp. 221–228). As far as I know, there are at least three equally possible etymologies of this by-name.

Firstly, the epithet Καρνεῖος can be connected with the Hellenic word κάρνος meaning ‘ram’, generally ‘sheep, small cattle’, see Hesychius’ gloss (HAL II κ-843): κάρνος · φθείρ. βόσκημα, πρόβατον (Latte, 1966: p. 415). According to that interpretation, Karneios was perceived as the primal god of the shepherds (Nilsson, 1941: pp. 532–533; Frisk, 1960: p. 790; Chantaine, 1970: p. 499; Beekes, 2010: pp. 646–647), identified over time with Apollo, to whom the festive games known as τὰ Κάρνεια in Sparta and Cyrene were dedicated. Among the proponents of this explanation are Blumenthal (1937: p. 156) and Otkupščikov (1988: p. 159), who even derived Καρνησσόπολις from the aforementioned Hesychian gloss.

Secondly, the by-name may just as well be derived from the Greek word κρήνη (f.) ‘source, spring’, given that both the grove of Apollo Karneios in Cyrene and the Karnasion grove (τὸ Καρνάσιον ἄλλος) in Oechalia in the Peloponnese were located in the vicinity of a sacred spring.

Thirdly, the ancient connection of Apollo’s epithet Καρνεῖος with the cornel tree remains a viable option, the more so because a deity *Kirnis* ‘the

god of cherry-trees / deus cerasiorum' is attested in the East Baltic (Old Lithuanian) pantheon. Furthermore, the Greek name κράνεια, Attic κρανέα, Ionic κρανέη (f.), also κράνος (f.) 'cornelian cherry-tree, *Cornus mas* L.' (Liddel, and Scott, 1996: p. 989; Montanari, 2003: p. 1125), which could form an excellent derivational basis for Apollo's by-name, has exact equivalents in Latin *cornus* (f.) 'cornel cherry-tree', *cornum* n. 'cornel-cherry' (= Gk. κράνον n. 'id.') and has an Indo-European etymology. The Greek and Latin forms derive from Indo-European **k̑ȓnos* f. 'cornel cherry-tree' and **k̑ȓnom* n. '[fruit of] cornel-cherry', cf. also Albanian *thanë* (f.) 'cornel, cornelian cherry, *Cornus mas* L.' (Newmark, 1999: p. 886). The Greek variants with -άρ- / -ρά- can then be explained as divergent reflexes of the syllabic sonant **ȓ* (Buck, 2009: p. 45; Bile, 1988: pp. 123–125; Kaczyńska, 2014: pp. 66–67).

It is not possible to decide with any certainty which of these three etymologies is correct. Since we do not know the original meaning of Apollo's by-name Καρνεῖος, our stance on the aforementioned name Karnessopolis must remain undecided.

In view of the many conflicting opinions, we should rather refrain from futile etymological speculation and conduct a thorough and profound analysis of the word Καρνᾶσσός / Καρνησσός. Especially close attention should be paid to the suffix -σσός, undoubtedly denoting the Pre-Greek provenance of the Cretan toponym (Symeonidis, 2015: pp. 24–26). The sequence -σσός is widely considered as non-Greek, specifically Anatolian (Otkupščikov, 1988: pp. 13–20). The suffix -σσός is recorded in numerous toponyms common for continental Greece and Asia Minor, such as Gk. Παρνασσός vs. Anatolian *Parnaššaš* (Huxley, 1961: p. 26; Otkupščikov, 1973: pp. 5–29; 2001: pp. 179, 196–202). Collaborative efforts of linguists and archaeologists have led to the conclusion that the Greek cities whose names ended in the non-Hellenic suffixes -*ssos*, -*ndos* or -*nda*, -*nthos*, -*ntha* rose to prominence in the Bronze Age (Haley, and Blegen, 1928: pp. 141–159; Hutchinson, 1962: pp. 56–58). As far as Crete is concerned, it is not easy to ascertain whether these cities date from the early Bronze Age or even from the Neolithic.

Thus, the name Καρνησσόπολις seems to be a continuation of an ancient, pre-Greek appellation. On the other hand, the name Lyctus is equally ancient: not only does it appear as Λύκτος in the Homeric poems (Autenrieth, 1887: p. 199) and other literary and epigraphical sources (Perlman, 2004: p. 1175), but also it is attested as *ri-k3-tj* in an Egyptian source dating back to the 14th century BC (Astour, 1966: p. 316; Edel, 1966: p. 40; Sergeant, 1975: p. 167; Stella, 1981: p. 601; Witczak, 1994: p. 68; 1995: p. 16) and in the form *ru-ki-to* [Lúkistos] in the Mycenaean tablets from Knossos

(McArthur, 1985: pp. 86–89; Aura Jorro, 1993: p. 268; Kaczyńska, 2001: pp. 5–9). Thus, it is difficult to assert that the name **Karnēssós* or Καρνησσόπολις is older than Lyctus.

In fact, it is hard to understand why a Hellenized name of foreign origin would ever become an alternative for the likewise non-Greek Λύκτος. The Minoan-Mycenaean (and Egyptian) attestation, just like the Homeric testimony, clearly indicate that the name Λύκτος is very ancient itself.

In the gloss, Hesychius uses the past tense in order to indicate that during some period before his lexicon was written Lyctus had been called Karnes-sopolis. Since toponyms of Anatolian provenance are dated back to the period before the arrival of the Achaeans and the Dorians in Crete, one should treat the information delivered by Hesychius with utmost caution. Using another example, I will prove that such wariness is well-founded.

At this point, I shall adduce another gloss by the Alexandrian lexicographer, who cites the form Τρίτα (or Τρίττα) as an alternative name of the Cretan city of Knossos (HAL τ-1434): Τρίτ[τ]α · οὕτως ἢ Κνωσσός ὠνομάζετο (Schmidt, 1862: p. 177; Brown, 1985: p. 170; Alpers, and Cunningham, 2009: p. 76). This identification should be considered as inaccurate, because the place-name *ti-ri-to* (= *Tritos* f. or perhaps *Tritō* f.) appears more than 30 times in the Linear B tablet corpus (McArthur, 1985: pp. 97–110), independently of *ko-no-so* (= Knossos). The majority of researchers currently treat Mycenaean *Tritos* (*ti-ri-to*) and ancient *Trita* (Τρίτ[τ]α) as a separate Cretan town, situated near Knossos (Hart, 1965: pp. 4, 23; Ventris, and Chadwick, 1973: p. 586; Chadwick, 1973: p. 586; Wilson, 1977: p. 106; McArthur, 1981: p. 151, fn. 11). After the discovery of the temple of Athena Tritogeneia (Davaras, 1972: pp. 30–32) at the source of the River Triton it was proved beyond all doubt that the ancient *Trita* is to be identified with the modern settlement of Astritsi (Mod. Gk. Ασπίτσει) and was located about 9 km to the south of Knossos (Faure, 1958: pp. 504–506; Detorakis, 1994: p. 103; Kaczyńska, 2000b: pp. 108–109). Thus, one can easily conclude that the town of *Trita* (associated by Hesychius with Knossos itself) was actually situated in the area of Knossos' sphere of influence and could be treated as an integral part of the latter *polis*. In other words, either the lexicographer himself is to blame, or his unknown source mistakenly identified the subordinate settlement with the superior city.

The above observations permit us to assume that the toponym Καρνησσόπολις could likewise refer to some nearby polis or settlement, closely tied with Lyctus and treated as a periphery of that city (Faraklas, 1998: p. 179; Kaczyńska, 2000a: pp. 13–15). It should be kept in mind that Lyctus was completely destroyed twice and there is no certainty that it was rebuilt in the same place. The location of ancient Lyctus between

the villages Ksidas (presently renamed to Lyttos again) and Aski is based on the findings from the Roman era. Thus, it is not out of the question that the name *Karnessopolis* referred to some earlier (nearby) location of Lyctus.

To the north of the Lasithi Plateau, in the vicinity of the modern village of Gonies (Mod. Gk. Γωνιές), there is a village nowadays called Κανασός, in which remnants of some ancient settlement (“tessons et ruines de site antique”) are visible even now (Faure, 1967: p. 58; 1989: p. 102). Faure considers this name to represent the Pre-Greek layer of Cretan toponymy. I am inclined to agree with this opinion, since we can readily connect the modern toponym Κανασός with the ancient (and Pre-Greek) appellation Καρνᾶσός, assuming the regressive assimilation of ρν to νν. Although sequences of liquid and nasal consonants were generally stable and resisted assimilation in Greek dialects, the Doric idioms of central Crete are exceptional in that they did conduct the simplification. It is sufficient to point out that Doric inscriptions from the central part of Crete attest numerous assimilated forms with the geminate -νν-, e.g. Cret. Gk. ἀννίοιτο < ἀρνέοντο, Cret. Gk. ὄννιθα < ὄρνιθα, Cret. Gk. Ἐλευθενναῖος < Ἐλευθερναῖος (Brause, 1909: p. 170; Bile, 1988: pp. 121–122; Buck, 2009: p. 74).

In an agreement concluded between Gortyna and Knossos, dating back to the 2nd cent. BC, there also appears the dialectal form Καννήϊω (= Καρνείου, gen. sg.) ‘in the month Karneios’ (Geßbura, 1996: p. 60), showing the Cretan regressive assimilation of [rn] to [nn]. The simplification of the geminate -νν- may have happened only in the modern age, because double consonants (former geminates) are pronounced as single in the Modern Greek literary language, as well as in the Modern Cretan dialect.

Place-names in Crete have frequently been stable from the Minoan age up to the modern times. A typical example is the city of Tyliisos (situated to the west of Knossos), recorded already in the Mycenaean period (*tu-ri-so*), and then in the Greek-Roman era (Τύλισσος), the Middle Ages, and the modern times (Mod. Gk. Τύλισσος [‘Tilisos]). The same kind of stability is exemplified by the town of Kantanos, located in the western part of Crete (Myc. Gk. *ka-ta-no* [Kantanos], Class. Gk. Κάντανος, Mod. Gk. Κάντανος [‘Kadanos]). Only minor and regular phonologic alterations can be observed in these names. In other cases the differences are slightly bigger; for instance, the settlement of Malla is attested in the Mycenaean period as *ma-sa* [Malsa], in the Hellenistic Period as Μάλλα [‘Malla], and in the modern age it appears (in the plural) as Μάλλες [‘Males] (Kaczyńska, 2004: pp. 97–105). Over the course of almost four millennia, all of these toponyms preserved their initial, Pre-Greek name. One can assume a similar continuation for the place-name Karnessos as well.

The identification of the present-day settlement of Κανασός with the place-name Καρνησόπολις, transmitted by Hesychius of Alexandria, seems to be correct not only in view of the linguistic, but also the geographical aspects. The settlement *Karnēssópolis* – falsely associated with the capital city by Hesychius – was situated in the direct proximity of the metropolis of Lyctus, evidently within the territory closely tied to it. At any rate, the location of Kanasos about 8 km to the north-east of the ancient city of Lyctus resembles the aforementioned relationship between Trita and Knossos.

Conclusions

The above-mentioned investigation made it possible not only to determine the location of the town of Karnessopolis and to stipulate its links with Lyctus, but also to demonstrate that Hesychius' reports concerning Cretan toponymy are not fully reliable. When compiling the glossary, the Alexandrian lexicographer presumably made use of certain unreliable sources – perhaps scholia to the lost work by Rhianus of Bene? – in which minor Cretan settlements were inaccurately identified with the respective capital cities. In this way, two flawed glosses came into existence: (1) Καρνησόπολις · Λύκτος ἢ Κρητικὴ οὕτως ἐκαλεῖτο; (2) Τρίτ[τ]α · οὕτως ἢ Κνωσσὸς ὀνομάζετο. These findings permit the additional conclusion that each of Hesychius' testimonies concerning the topography and geography of the island of Minos should be treated with caution and carefully verified.

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