

READING OF THE LEMNOS ISLAND INSCRIPTION

(A preliminary report)

By

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1. INTRODUCTION

A stele, an upright gravestone with inscription and sculpture erected at the grave of a deceased person, was found in 1885 at Kaminia on the island of Lemnos in the Aegean Sea. This stele which is dated as having been made in the 6th century B.C., is now in the National Museum in Athens, Greece. A diagram of this stele and its inscription is given in References 1 and 2, [1, p. 51; 2, p. 39]. For the purposes of this study, it is also shown in Figure 1 of this paper. The inscription on this tomb-stone is written in an alphabet similar to some of the alphabets, such as the Chalcidian alphabet [1, p. 44], used at that time in the Hellenic world covering Greece, western parts of Asia minor and the islands in the Aegean Sea. Scholars believe that the language of the inscription on this stele is akin to that of Etruscan (Rasna) Language. The Etruscan language is not known to be an Indo-European language and neither is the language of the inscription written on the Stele from Lemnos. Scholars have not been able to identify the nature of these two languages with any of the known languages so far.

According to Herodotus, the pre-Greek population of the Lemnos island was Pelasgian, a non Indo-European people, and according to Thucydides they were Tyrrhenian [2, p. 38] which makes them kin to Etruscans. The Etruscan people who lived and ruled in the northern and central Italy (Etruria) between about 1000 B.C. and 100 B.C. created a very prominent culture from which the culture of the Roman Empire has heavily borrowed.

The inscription on the tomb-stone has 198 letters forming 40 words. In general, the words of the inscription are separated from each other by two dots and occasionally with one or three dots aligned vertically. However, some very long words seem to be combination of multiple words although they are not marked with separation dots.

H. H. Scullard describes the tomb-stone as follows [2, p.38]: "..... the tomb-stone (stele) of a warrior was discovered in 1885, not dissimilar from that of Avele Feluske of Vetulonia in Etruria (cf. Figs. 1 and 2 and p. 223). It not only shows his head in profile, but also bears two inscriptions in an alphabet which closely resembles that of old Phrygian inscriptions of the seventh century. The language has some analogies with the tongues of Asia Minor, but philologists are in general agreement that both in its morphology and vocabulary it has many similarities with Etruscan. When this document stood alone, it might have been dismissed as the epitaph of a foreigner who was buried in

Lemnos, but more recently other short inscriptions have been found on vases, and these show that this was in fact the language spoken on the island before its conquest by the Athenian Miltiades (c. 500 BC). Thus we have a very important document, pointing both to Asia Minor and to Etruria, and it comes from the very island where Thucydides placed the Tyrhenoi. Though it does not afford conclusive proof that 'Lemnian' and Etruscan were the same, or even dialects of the same language, it provides a valuable link for those who accept an eastern origin and suggests that some Etruscans from Asia Minor may have settled in this Aegean island instead of continuing further west. Those who reject an eastern origin have to explain away the similarities of language as due to survival from a hypothetical widespread pre-Indo-European linguistic unit which once occupied a vast area in Italy and the Aegean until it was broken up by the advance of Indo-Europeans: in Italy it was confined to Etruria, while in the Aegean, relics of it were left in Lemnos."

In this study, I have analyzed the inscription on the stele from Lemnos from an Asiatic point of view. I took this approach because during historic times, Eurasia and many parts of the Eastern Europe all the way to the Balkan Peninsula have been inhabited by Central Asiatic peoples at some time or another. In most cases, they are known to be the Turkic peoples from Central Asia who spoke an archaic Turkic language. There is no reason that the very same land masses should not have been similarly inhabited by the Central Asiatic peoples during the pre-historic times. In fact, it is highly probable that the pre-historic people of Europe were more Central Asiatic in origin than the Indo-European speaking Mediterranean people. After studying the Lemnos inscription, I am convinced by my findings that the language in which this inscription was written is indeed related to Turkic languages. My analyses regarding the reading of the inscription are given below.

2. GENERAL OBSERVATIONS ABOUT THE INSCRIPTION

The inscription consists of two vertically and one horizontally written parts. Text in each part seem to be similar in meaning to each other. This is indicated by the fact that a number of words are used in the same way in each part of the inscription, though with minor differences which will be discussed in detail in the body of this paper. The three parts, indicated as Text No. 1, 2 and 3 in this paper, [Figure 2](#), also seem to be dialects of one main language, but influenced by Greek language endings particularly in Text No. 3.

Although, the inscription on the stele seems to have been written in the Chalcidian type alphabet, it differs from this alphabet in some aspects. My proposed alphabet for this inscription is given in [Table I](#). In [Figure 2](#), I have the inscription reproduced word by word, in a way similar to its original written format, the corresponding transcription of the words in Latin characters and the meaning of the recognizable words, using the alphabet that I have charted in Table I. I have numbered the words of the inscription from 1 to 40 in order to facilitate comparison. In addition to this numbering, I have sub numbered the word Nos. 16, 21, 24, 25, 27, 37 and 38 as a) and b) although there is no separation shown in these words in the inscription.

The words No. 1 to 11 are written vertically in three lines on the face of the stele. One of the lines is written behind the head and the other two lines are between the face of the man and the spear that he is holding in his hand. I call this text of three lines as Text No. 1. Words in each line of this text are to be read from right-to-left direction as is the case in Etruscan.

Words No. 12 to 22 are written horizontally on the face of the stele above the head of the pictured man. I have named this part of the inscription as Text No. 2. This text constitutes five lines.

In this part of the inscription, there is a mixed right-to-left and left-to-right writing arrangement used by the scribe. Most likely, it is meant to be read boustrophedon (i.e., 'as the ox plows'). In this text, while word No. 12 needs to be read from right-to-left, word Nos. 13 to 19 must be read from left-to-right. Again, while word Nos. 20 to 21 must be read from right-to-left, the word No. 22 must be read from left-to-right direction. The double-dot word separators used in the inscription help in determining the direction of the reading.

The third set of words, word numbers 23 to 40 which I call Text No. 3, are written vertically on the side of the stele in three lines two of which are aligned in one way while the third one is upside down with respect to the other two. Again, these three lines were also meant to be read boustrophedon by the scribe. I consider the first line of this text the line which is next to the main frame of the stele. I have indicated this line as Text 3, Line No. 1. The base for this assumption is the fact that this line also starts with the name of the deceased man. The name of the deceased man also appears in Text No. 1, i.e., the word No. 1. To read the first line of Text 3, one needs to turn the page 90 degrees clockwise from the portrait position and in order to read the remaining two lines, one needs to turn the page 90 degrees counter clockwise from the portrait position. Hence the middle line becomes the Text No.3 Line 2 and must be read from right-to-left direction while the last line becomes Text No.3 Line 3 and must be read from left-to-right direction with one exception of the word No 38a.

Since word No. 35 in Text No. 3 is the same as the word No. 22 in Text No. 2, it must also be read in a similar manner.

The Lemnos island inscription seems to have considerable amount of features in common with the Turkic Orhun and Yenisei inscriptions of Central Asia. For example: a) right to left reading of the written text, b) separation of words from each other in general with two dots, c) style of composing the text of the inscription.

It should also be noted that vowels are not always present in the words of Lemnos inscription and proper vowels must be filled in to read the words. This feature is also similar to that of the Turkic inscriptions of Central Asia. In Turkic languages, the vowel harmony rule helps to fill in the missing vowels. Because of this Turkic linguistic rule, in the transcription given below, the upper case letters represent the original lettering present in the inscription and the lower case vowels represent the filled-in vowels. In the Turkish transcription (shown as Turkish below), some of the -s endings, which probably were due to Hellenic influence, of some words were removed. Translation in English (Eng.) is also shown below. Words whose meanings are not clear to me at this time are marked with a (?) mark.

The detailed analyses of the this inscription, the alphabet used, the words in their original ancient lettering and all the reasons for reading the inscription the way that I have read are given in a report entitled "A Study of the Lemnos Island Inscription (A preliminary report)", identified with ISBN 0-9696949-3-8.

Thus, in view of above described considerations, I have the following transcription and reading of the Lemnos Island inscription in Latin alphabet:

3. THE TRANSCRIPTION OF THE LEMNOS ISLAND INSCRIPTION

Text 1 transcription:

HaTaPASE : I : aNAaPaTaTa AKER : TAKARISTe QAM . APA .aNaSAP : IERaTa
aNASaMaTa eReSeNASaP

[Hatapase : i : anaapatata aker: takariste qam . apa . anasap : ierata anasamata eresenasap
]

Turkish : Hatapasa : iy : anaapa tata ak er : takariste kam . apa . anasap : iy erata anam
atasi er esen asap

Eng.: Hatapasa : O grandfather honest man : Thracian? shaman .father. thus lays? : O
brave father my mother's

father sound thinking? man

Text 2 transcription:

aNaSAIS : QAM : I. APAM : aNaSAP ieKeSi . I : AQaS : IEQiSeNTaTa IERaTa
aNASaTa ISaQAS

[anasais : qam : i . apam : anasap iekesi.i : aqas : ieqisentata ierata anasata isaqas]

Turkish : ana SAIS [= Sayas, Ais, Ak Ayas, Tengri, Zeus, Ajax] : kam : iy apam :
boylece yatip? i akasi .

iy : aga : iy ekesen [=ikiz?] tata [=dede] iy er ata anaata iy Saka

Eng.: thus Sais [=Ais, Zeus, Ajax] : shaman : O my father : thus laid? local's gentleman
[=local's elderman] .

O : Lord : O twins? grandfather O brave father my mother's father O Saka

Text 3, line 1 transcription:

HaTaPASaQIS : aPaTaKaS ANaSAPE : IERaTa IASaTa :EQeSeNTaTa: TaTaQER
aTaNA

[Hatapasaqis : apatakas anasape : ierata iasata : eqesen tata : tataqer atana]

Turkish : Hatapasa : apataka? boylece yatip? : iy er ata iy as [us, akilli] ata : eqesen
[=ikiz?] tata [=dede] :

tatak [atak?] er ata ana

Eng.: Hatapasakis : apataka=? thus laid? : O brave father O wise father : twins?
grandfather : fearless? man father mother

Text 3, line 2 transcription:

eRaTaM : HARAPaSaTa : ISAQAS : EPeTeISTe : ARAS : TaS 50? : aPaTaKE :

[eratam : Harapasata : isaqas : epeteiste : aras : tas 50? : apatake :]

Turkish : er atam : Harapas [falci] ata : iy Saqa : Epeteiste : aras?: tas [=yas] 50?:

apatake? :

Eng.: my brave father : haraspex father : O Saka : Epeteiste : aras=? : age 50? : apatake=?
:

Text 3, line 3 transcription:

ISaQAS : AQaSI : aNaSAP ieKeSI : APAM KaM : AQaSI : ATaMAS

[isaqas : aqasi : anasap iekesi : apam kam : aqasi : atamas]

Turkish : iy Saqa : agasi (beyi) : boylece yatip? iekesi[=yerin olgun kisisi]: apam kam :
agasi : atama

Eng.: O Saka : Lord : thus laid? local's gentlman [local's elderman]: my father shaman :
Lord : to my father

4. DESCRIPTION OF WORDS IN TURKISH AND IN ENGLISH:

Text No.1

Transcription/..... Turkish Definition//..... English definitions

1. HaTaPASE :/..... Hatapasa//..... [Hatapasa, name of deceased man] :
2. I :/..... i (=iy) ://..... [O] :
3. aNAaPaTaTa/..... anaapa tata [=dede].....//..... [grand father (from mother's side)]
4. AKER :/..... ak er ://..... [honest man; flawless man] :
5. TAKARISTe/..... takariste//..... [=Possibly ancient name of Thrace]
- NOTE : probably Takariste > Takar + ia? >> Tarak + ia? > Trakya]; [-iste (=ia?)
indicative of a place]
6. QAM/..... kam//..... [shaman] .
7. APA/..... apa//..... [father] .
8. aNaSAP :/..... anasap (=böylece yatip?):.....//..... [thus he is dead or laid?] :
9. IERaTa/..... i (=iy) er ata//..... [oh brave father] .
10. aNASaMaTa/..... anam ata(=anamin atasi)//..... [my mother's father]
11. eRSeNASaP/..... er sen asap (=ölüp?)//..... [you brave man died?]

Text No. 2

12. aNaSAIS :/..... ana Sayas {Sayas(Sais=Ak Ayas, Tengri)} ://..... [here
Sais(=Ais, Zeus)] :
13. QAM :/..... kam ://..... [shaman] :
14. I/..... i (iy)//..... [O] .
15. APAM :/..... apam ://..... [my father] :
- 16a. aNaSAP/..... anasap (=böylece yatip?)//..... [thus laid?]
- 16b. ieKeSi/..... iekesi (=yerin efendisi; yerin olgun kisisi)//..... [local's

gentleman; local's elderman] .

17. I :/..... i (=iy) ://..... [O] :

18. AqAS :/..... aka (=aga, bey) ://..... [lord] :

19. I/..... i (=iy)//..... [O]

20. eQiSeNTaTa:/..... ekisen (=ikiz?) tata: {tata (=dede)}//..... [twins? grandfather]
:

21a. IERaTa/..... i (=iy) er ata//..... [O brave father]

21b. aNASaTa/..... anaata//..... [mother's father]

22. ISaQAS/..... i (=iy) Saka//..... [O Saka! (Scyth as called by Greeks)]

Text No.3, line 1

23. HaTaPASaQIS:/..... Hatapasa ://..... [Hatapasakis, name of the deceased man]:

24a. aPaTaKaS/..... apaataka (?)//..... [apaatakas= ?]

24b. ANaSAPE :/..... anasape (=boylece yatip?)://..... [thus he is dead?] :

25a. IERaTa/..... i (=iy) er ata//..... [O brave father]

25b. IASaTa :/..... i(=iy) as (=us,akilli) ata ://..... [O wise father] :

26 EQeSeNTATA :/..... ekesen tata {(=ikiz? dede)}//..... [one of a twins? father]

27a. TaTaQER/..... tatak (=atak?) er//..... [fearless? man]

27b. aTaNA/..... ata, ana//..... [father, mother]

Text No.3, line 2

28. eRaTaM :/..... er atam ://..... [my brave father] :

29. HARAPaS aTa :/..... Harapas(=falci) ata ://..... [Haraspex (=diviner) father] :

30. ISAQAS :/..... i (=iy) Saka ://..... [O Saka] :

31. ePeTeISTe :/..... Epeteiste (birth place) ://..... [Town of Hephaistia in Lemnos island] :

32. ARAS :/..... aras (=?) ://..... [aras=?] :

33. TaS 50? :/..... tas (=yas) 50? ://..... [at the age of 50?] :

34. aPaTaKE :/..... apatake (=?) ://..... [apatake =?] :

Text No.3, line 3

35. ISaQAS :/..... i (=iy) Saka ://..... [O Saka] :

36. AqASi :/..... akasi (=agasi, beyi) ://..... [Lord] :

37a. aNaSAP/..... anasap (=burada yatip?)//..... [here lies?]

37b. ieKeSI :/..... iekesi (=yerin efendisi, olgun kisisi)//..... [local's gentleman; local's elderman] :

38a. APAM/..... apam//..... [my father]

38b. KaM :/..... kam ://..... [shaman] :

39. AQaSI :/..... akasi (=agasi) ://..... [Lord] :

40. ATaMAS/..... atama//..... [to my father]

5. NOTES ABOUT THE LEMNOS ISLAND INSCRIPTION

1. This study which is a first attempt by the author, does not provide a complete translation of the inscription from Lemnos. The meaning of few words still need to be determined. I am hoping that this will be filled in by linguists. Although, not all of the words in the text of the inscription are recognizable at this time, however, those which are recognizable are definitely Altaic words and are unquestionably Turkic.

2. The words No. 1 and No. 23 represent the name of the deceased man talked about in the inscription. It is read as 'HaTaPASE' in word No. 1 and as 'HaTaPASaQIS' in word No. 23. It seems that the word No. 23 is an Hellenized version of the No. 1. The name becomes clearer when we remove the word ending '-qis' in the second word which becomes 'Hatapasa' indicating that it is the same as 'Hatapase' in word No. 1. The Hellenic suffix '-QIS' or '-KIS' in the word 'HaTaPASaQIS' is an indication that the assumed values of 'Q', 'I' and 'S' for the corresponding letters in the inscription are correct.

3. Text No. 1, 2 and 3 have similar meanings, repeated in three or at least in two different dialects of the same language. Apparently same words, when written in different dialects, show some minor differences both in writing and their arrangements in sentences. In Text Three, Hellenic influence is highly visible by the presence of the Hellenic suffix -kis and suffix s.

4. Words numbered 6, 7 and 8 of Text No. 1 and 13, 15 and 16a of Text No. 2 and 38b, 38a and 37a in Text No. 3 are the same words respectively used in the inscription. They are read as 'kam apam anasap'. The words 38b, 38a and 37a in Text No. 3 are written in an order which is different than the previous two cases. The first two words read as 'kam apam' mean 'my shaman father' or in this case 'my shaman grandfather'. The Turkic word 'kam' (also gam or qam) means 'male shaman', [8, p. 4] and 'apam' means my father. The word 'kam' is written in the form of "QAM" in words Nos. 6 and 13, it is written with a downward arrow and M. The downward arrow symbol has the value of "K" in Turkic Orhun inscriptions. The word 'anasap' may also be read as 'ana sap' in which case 'ana' is also a known Turkish word meaning 'thus, this way' [4, p. 760]. The word 'sap' needs to be determined, possibly means "laid or died".

Here I would also like to note the following observation: In the inscription, word 7 is written as "APA" while the words 15 and 38a are written as "ARAM". I believe that the letter "R" in both of these words is a mistake and should have been "P". The error could have been made by the scribe while chiselling the inscription, or could have been made by the transcriber who copied the inscription into paper. Therefore, I have read these two words as "APAM" rather than "ARAM" in my reading of the inscription.

5. In Text 2, word Nos. 12 to 15 inclusive, the scribe writes: "O God SAIS, here is my shaman father". Here we should note that the Pelasgian Sais must be what Greeks called

as Zeus, Etruscans called Ais or Ac Ais or Tin, the Central Asiatic Turkic shamans called and still call Ak Ayas. They all have the Turkic word "Ai", the Turkic word for Moon, as the root word. However, they all represent the "Sky God".

6. I read word No. 31 as 'epeteiste' which seems to correspond to the ancient town name 'Hephaistia' which is a town in the northern coast of Lemnos Island [12, p.57]. 'Epeteiste', being probably same as the ancient name of 'Hephaistia', could be the birth place of 'Hatapasa' or "Hatapasha".

7. Word Nos. 22, 30 and 35 are the same word and read in Turkish as "i (=iy) Saka". When it is read together with the word No. 36, it addresses the deceased man as "i Saka agasi (Beyi)" meaning "O Saka lord".

Here one should note that the people to whom the deceased man and the scribe belonged, were known to Hellenic people as Pelasgians. In the inscription, the scribe identifies themselves as being from "Saka" people. This is understandable because of the fact that about 600 B.C. when Pelasgians were living in the Lemnos and Imbros islands and also in Thrace, the Turkic Saka people had an empire extending all the way from Altay mountains in Central Asia to Balkans in Europe. Greeks called them as Scythians. In view of the Lemnos Island inscription, we get the view that Pelasgians must have been among the earlier waves of Central Asiatic peoples and members of the Turkic Saka peoples. So this document written in stone identifies the language of both the Pelasgians and the Sakas as being a Turkic language.

8. Word Nos. 39 and 40 finish the dedication by saying "aga atama" meaning "to my Lord father".

9. In this Turkic inscription, we see that Pelasgians who called themselves SAKA, used both words 'apa' and 'ata' for father and interchangeably for 'grandfather' as well. We also see a word "tata" which is derived from the word 'ata'. "tata" would be equivalent to Turkish 'dede'. They also used the word 'ana' for mother. Hence, we again observe that these three words and their derivatives are the oldest living words of the Turkish language.

10. I read the word No. 33 as TaS 50? The symbol which is an upright arrow head and with a right slanting tail at the bottom is not present in Hellenic alphabets. However, it is most interesting to find this symbol in an inscription written on a silver bowl found in a Saka (Scythian) Kurgan (Issik Lake Kurgan) near Almati in Kazakhstan. Ihami Durmuß [9, p. 81-83] gives a transliteration of this inscription [9, p. 146-147] and attributes its description to Kemal Alişar Akişev [10]. This symbol appears twice in this Saka inscription. Olcas Süleymanov has read this inscription and has given the value of T1 in the alphabet that he described [11].

On the other hand, G. and L. Bonfante give a numeral value of 50 to an upright arrow symbol (without a tail) in Etruscan writings, [1, p. 64]. The symbol in the Issik Kurgan inscription is also a vertical arrow but with a right-slanting tail at the bottom as it is in the Lemnos island inscription. However, whether the Etruscan symbol and the Pelasgian symbol, i.e., Lemnos Island inscription, have the same meaning is not clear.

If we use a value of 'T' as done by Süleymanov for the Issik Kurgan inscription, then the reading of the word No. 33 would be as 'TaSaT' which needs to be identified yet. On the

other hand, if we use a numeral value of 50 as indicated by Bonfantès, then we would get a reading of 'TaS 50'. The word 'TAS' suggests us the Turkic word 'yas > yaß' meaning 'age'. Actually, in different dialects of Turkish, there is the replacement of "y" with "d or t". With this in mind, I believe it is safe to read this word as "yas = age". The inscription from Lemnos island being an inscription on a tomb stone, it is quite likely that this word may be referring to the age at which the man died. With this reasoning, I have temporarily assumed it to be 'TAS 50', indicative of 50 years of age at which he died.

11. The inscription on the stele from Lemnos seems to have been written by someone very close to the deceased man. The scribe sounds to be a grand child of the deceased person.

12. In the culture of Turkic world, it seems that it is a tradition to describe a newly deceased person in a way similar to the way that this scribe of the stele from Lemnos island has described his deceased grandfather by using descriptive words like: 'kam apa' [shaman grandfather], 'kam apam' [my shaman grandfather], 'er atam' [my brave father], 'er' [man, brave], 'aker' [flawless man], "i apam" [O my father], "i aga" [O Lord], "i Saka agasi" [O Saka Lord] and "agasi atama" [to my Lord father].

13. We should note that in this kind of description of a dead person, not only a sense of lamentation is being expressed but also a highly respected and esteemed grandfather is being honored. It is quite in line with the culture of Turkic peoples to do this.

14. The lamentation and 'honoring' expressed in this inscription points distinctively the presence of a cultural affinity between the people of Lemnos island and the Central Asiatic peoples like Turks. The meaning of the Lemnos inscription is very similar to the Turkic tomb-stone inscriptions found in Central Asia [4, p. 481-483]. Even some of the words used in the inscription of the Lemnos island tomb-stone and the inscriptions found on Central Asiatic tomb-stones are the same.

15. The ending in '-p' in words No. 8, 11, 16a and 37a is indicative of past tense in archaic Turkic languages like in words such as 'ölüp', 'gelip', 'gidip', etc.. It seems this is what we are observing in words No. 8, 11, 16a and 37a, particularly in the expression 'kam apam anasap'.

16. In word Nos. 15 and 26a 'apam', No. 28 'eratom', the ending '-m' is like the Turkic genitive ending (suffix -m) for first person singular which means 'my'. Thus the word means 'my father' or in this case 'my grandfather'. The word 'qam' or 'kam' is used to designate 'male shaman'. What we get from this bit of information is that the dead man was a 'shaman' and/or a 'learned man', and he was a respected person.

17. The word 'aker' in word No. 4 consists of two parts: for example in Turkish, the first part 'ak' means 'white' or figuratively 'clean, honest, flawless'; the second part 'er' means 'man', 'hero', 'brave', 'trustworthy' or 'dependable'. The word 'er' also appears as part of 'erata' and 'eratom' in word Nos. 9, 11, 21a, 25a and 28. Hence, 'aker < ak+er' in No. 4 means 'honest man' or 'flawless man'.

18. The word 'anapatata' in No. 3, is most likely "mother's father", not "mother's father's father". Similarly, the words 'anasamata', in No. 10, meaning "my mother's father" and 'anasata' No. 21b, meaning "mother's father" are combinations of Turkic words 'ana', 'apa' and 'ata' to express the grandfather from mother's side. The word 'atamas' No. 40 is the

final dedication word meaning 'to my father'.

19. The word 'eqisenata" in words No. 20 and No. 26 may be looked at as "eqe sen[] ata >> iki sen ata? = ikiz ata?", probably meaning that the dead man was one of a twins. Thus a grandfather that was probably one of a twin brothers or brother sister set. We should note that the first part of this word, namely "eqi" or even "eqe" suggests the Turkish numeral "iki" meaning "two".

20. The words 'apa' in No. 7, means 'father'; 'apam' in Nos. 15 and 26a means 'my father'; 'eratam' in No. 28 means my hero father. We should note that the ending -m in the words 'apam' and 'atam' is the Turkic genitive suffix for the first person singular.

21. We see similar words in word Nos. 10 and 21b as 'anasam ata' and as 'anas ata' respectively. In these last two words, the infix -s- and suffix -s respectively are clearly due to Hellenic influence. In the first one, the root word is 'ana' meaning mother, with the probable Hellenic suffix -s, word becomes 'anas'. The suffix -am has two parts. -a is the connecting vowel used between s of 'anas' and the Turkic genitive suffix -m. Thus, the word 'anasam' means 'my mother'. Additionally, we should note that the statement "iy Saka akasi" fits the Turkish grammar rules perfectly.

22. We should also note that the Runic symbol for Z which appears frequently in the Lemnos island inscription, also appears in the Issik Kurgan inscription as well as in Turkic Orhun and Yenisei inscriptions [4]. This is another 'symbolic' connection between the Lemnos island inscription and the Issik Kurgan's Saka inscription. Of course, one must not forget the fact that the words in this inscription, are also separated with two dots as is the case with other Turkic inscriptions. It is also read from right to left direction as is the case in Turkic inscriptions.

23. H. H. Scullard in his book, like in many of Western books about the Etruscans, labels the man in the picture as a 'warrior' [2 , p. 39], probably considering the fact that he is holding a spear in his hand. The Lemnos inscription does not suggest that the person depicted on the stele was a warrior. It is most likely that in the deceased man's time, he would normally carry with him either a stick or a spear for personal protection irrespective of him being a warrior or not. Therefore, as the text of the inscription states clearly, the person in the picture was not a warrior but was a 'learned shaman'. In word No. 29, we also have the words 'Harapas ata'. I believe the word 'Harapas' is the same as 'Haraspex' in Etruscan meaning a diviner.

6. THE PEOPLE WHO SPOKE THIS LANGUAGE

Historians tell us that the population of Lemnos island at about 600 B. C. were Pelasgians. In view of these revelations from the inscription on this stele, we may have to think of the Pelasgian population as people of Central Asiatic origin and also as people who spoke a form of Turkish language.

Pelasgians were pre-Hellenic, non Indo-European speaking people who inhabited the area long before the Greek migrations to the area started. In order to shed more light on Pelasgians, I have chosen to quote the entry on Pelasgians in the Encyclopedia Britannica [5, p. 448] by B. C. F. Atkinson, formerly Under-Librarian, University Library, Cambridge University, below (I have indicated in bold parts of Atkinson's entry in order

to highlight the relative importance of the Pelasgians in the area they lived and their identity with respect to the real Greeks):

"PELASGIANS. Various traditions were current among the Greeks with regard to the pre-Greek inhabitants of their country. They were inclined to call all these by the general name of Pelasgians, although they recognized Carians and Leleges as distinct. The Dorians claimed that the Ionians were Pelasgian or at least mainly so, and that they themselves were true Greeks. The inhabitants of Attica, who were regarded as Ionian, boasted that they were autochthonous, the original inhabitants of the land.

In the Homeric poems Pelasgians appear as allies of Troy. They appear to be settled in south-eastern Thrace close to the Hellespont in a district called Larissa (Il., ii. 840-843, x.429). Some suppose that the Larissa here mentioned is the town of that name in Thessaly, but the catalogue of ships, in which the passage occurs, appears to follow a definite geographical order. Larissa stands between the Hellespont and Thrace. The Iliad also refers to the district of Argos near Mt. Othrys in Thessaly as Pelasgic, and also uses the same epithet in a famous passage of the Zeus of Dodona (Il., ii. 681-684, xvi. 233-235). In the Odyssey Pelasgians appear in Crete (Od. xvii. 175-177). Hesiod refers to Dodona as 'seat of Pelasgians,' while Hecataeus refers to Pelasgus as king of Thessaly. To Aeschylus and Sophocles Argos in the Peloponnese is the Pelasgian land. Herodotus knows of actual Pelasgians at Placie and Scylace and the Asiatic coast of the Hellespont as well as near Creston on the Strymon. The islands of Lemnos and Imbros had also, he informs us, a Pelasgian population, conquered by Athens at the close of the 6th century. Apart from these actual instances of Pelasgians, both Herodotus and Thucydides appear to regard any survival from pre-Greek times as Pelasgic. A well known example of this is the prehistoric wall of the Athenian acropolis, anciently regarded and still commonly referred to as Pelasgian, and the epithet spread to all similar prehistoric masonry, especially that built of large blocks, in any part of Greece.

It has been held that the common Greek tradition arose from a misunderstanding, particularly perhaps by Hesiod and Hecataeus, of the two passages in the Iliad in which the Zeus of Dodona and the Thessalian Argos are referred to as Pelasgic. Where Homer used a general epithet meaning 'remotely ancient,' later writers have wrongly concluded that he referred specifically to actual Pelasgians as inhabitants of these places. If this is so, the problem is merely thrown farther back, for an explanation is needed of how the epithet Pelasgic had attained the general meaning of 'ancient' by the time of the composition of the Homeric poems. To certain people at a certain period 'Pelasgic' must have been a specific epithet. The Pelasgians must have been regarded either as very ancient people or as former inhabitants of the land. Much turns upon the meaning of the epithet Pelasgic as applied in the Iliad to the Zeus of Dodona. Zeus is the last one would expect to be referred to as Pelasgic, for of all the gods' names his is most certainly Greek. The simplest explanation is perhaps that there existed at Dodona a very ancient pre-Greek or pre-Achaean shrine occupied by Greeks who attached to the deity the name of their own god Zeus.

All instances of actual Pelasgians from Homer to Herodotus point to their being a northern people. Thrace, Epirus and Thessaly are their homes. It is certain that there were pre-Achaean inhabitants of Greece. The simplest view now held is that Greek-speaking peoples broke down into Greece from the North in three successive waves, Ionian,

Achaean and Dorian, subduing a previous 'Helladic' population and setting up, after a second invasion (i.e., of Achaeans), the Mycenaean civilization in the Peloponnese. If this is the simplest view, it does not solve all problems and it does not as yet rest upon a certain foundation of fact. An early stratum of population in Greece was in close touch with Anatolia. A large number of Greek place-names point to the conclusion that Greece was colonized from Anatolia. By whom we do not know, and we are also ignorant of what language these early people spoke. It is also possible that the Achaeans themselves were in Asia Minor before they were in Greece and that they brought thither the Anatolian place-names. It is no more than tradition that connects such early people with the Pelasgians.

The name Pelasgi which almost certainly stands for Pelak-skoi or Pelag-Skoi has been connected with pelagos, 'the sea,' and the people consequently regarded as sea-faring. The connection is not very convincing. It has also been related to the name of the semi-Illyrian Pelagones of Macedonia, and it is possible, though unproven, that the names do represent the same stem. Possibly the Pelasgians were no more than Vlachs, or Wallachian shepherds, who in classical as in modern times have been in the habit of wandering in large numbers down into Greece. The name is perhaps no more than Velak-Ski. If this were so, it would account for their being dotted over various regions in Thrace and the north and also, if their habits were the same at the dawn of history as afterwards, of their being an ancient and integral part of Greek tradition and life. G. Sergi describes as Pelasgian' one branch of the Mediterranean or Euro-African race.

BIBLIOGRAPHY.- Beloch, Griechische Geschichte I. 2 p. 162 seq.; E. Meyer, Geschichte des Altertums I., 2 p. 767 seq. (3rd ed.); A. Fick, Vorgriechische Ortsnamen (1905); J. L. Myers, 'A History of the Pelasgian Theory,' in Journal of Hellenic Studies XXVII., 171 seq. (1906); Treidler, 'Alte Volker der Balkanhalbinsel' in Archiv. fur Anthropologie XL. 101 seq. (1913); H. Ehrlich, 'Pelasger und Etrusker' in Verhandlungen d. 52 Phil-Vers. in Marburg (1913), p.150; A. Debrunner, 'Der Besiedlung des alten Griechenland im Licht der Sprachwissenschaft' in Neue Jahrbuch fur d. Klassische Altertumwissenschaft, XLI. p. 443 (1918). (B. F. C. A.)"

From Atkinson's well researched entry given above, we may infer and/or add to it the following points:

a) Could it be that only the Dorians represented the Greek identity while Carians (Kara + ian), Leleges (Lelek + es), Achaean (Aka + ean), Pelasgians (Pelesge + ian) which are all Altaic sounding words, were all non Indo-European and all probably Central Asiatic origin? Indo-European speaking Greeks had a way of Hellenizing foreign words that they could not say. Obviously, that is what they did in the case of the many names related to these non Indo-European people.

b) It appears that a good portion of mainland Greece, Thrace, western Balkans, western coasts of Anatolia and a number of Aegean islands including Crete were inhabited by Pelasgians. In these lands, after they were conquered by Hellenic people, Pelasgians eventually blended in with the Hellenic people and lost their non Indo-European Central Asiatic identity.

c) From the reading of the Lemnos Island inscription, It is now quite clear that Pelasgians called themselves SAKA and their "Sky God" as "SAIS". Thus, it seems that the Greek

name "Zeus" is nothing but an Hellenized version of this Pelasgian name. Similarly, 'Zeus of Dodona' is the Pelasgian SAIS. We should note that the Pelasgian SAIS also corresponds to 'Ais' of Etruscans [1, p. 142], a deity which is same as the 'Ak Ayas' or 'Ayas' of Central Asiatic people [8]. Hence, it is clear that Pelasgians brought their deity SAIS [= Ak Ayas or Ayas] to Balkans (e.g. Dodona) from Central Asia and eventually the epithet SAIS turned into Hellenic 'Zeus' by ancient Greeks. It seems that this Lemnos island inscription puts the 'Greek origin' of the Greek mythological god Zeus into question.

d) It should also be noted that all these divinity names such as "Sais, Zeus, Ais, and Ayas or Ak Ayas, represent the Sky God in the Pelasgian, Etruscan, Hellenic and Turkic Saka and Central Asiatic Turkic shaman cultures. The name of this divinity must have been brought all the way from Central Asia to the Balkans and Mediterranean coasts by the Turkic speaking SAKA peoples and their ancestors. For example, if some scholars find cultural affinity between the Etruscans and Pelasgians, and also find their inscriptions related to each other, it seems that this affinity between these two ancient peoples is due to the existence of a real kinship between them.

e) It is most likely that Greek culture borrowed considerably from and was built upon the Pelasgian culture during its well known development. However historically, Pelasgians did not get any credit for their achievements while Greeks took all the credit.

f) Historians say that in about 600 B. C., Athens fought against Pelasgians of Lemnos for the control of a town named Sigeion (Sige +ion) [12,p.56] on the Asian side of the southern tip of Hellespont (Dardanelles). We also note from Homer's Iliad and Odyssey that at about 1200 B. C. when Troy was attacked by the King Agamemnon of Mycenae, Pelasgians were allies of Troy. The reason for this alliance may be that either Pelasgians had land holdings next to Troy and did not want to lose it to Mycenaeans or they were kins of Trojans or both. In any case, Pelasgians must have been in control of not only the islands of Lemnos and Imbros in the Aegean Sea but also some land in Thrace and in Asia Minor between 1200 B.C. and 600 B. C.. This shows the extend of the Pelasgian presence in the area.

7. CONCLUSION

1. The people inhabiting the Lemnos island at and before 600 B.C. were called PELASGIANS, although according to the Lemnos island inscription, they called themselves as SAKA. The Pelasgians were a non Indo-European people and were speaking a non Indo-European language. The Lemnos island inscription represents the language of this people. This first time reading of the Lemnos island inscription clearly identifies the Altaic nature of the language in which the inscription is written. The readily recognizable words are not only Altaic in nature but are unquestionably Turkish. This study identifies the language of Pelasgians as an early form of Altaic languages, perhaps a year-600 B. C. version of Turkish.

2. Deciphering of this ancient inscription, as I have shown in this study for the first time, establishes the presence of Turkic speaking SAKA (Scythians) peoples and their kins PELASGIANS called as such by the Greeks, in the Aegean islands and in the Balkans during the pre-historic times from 1200 B.C. to 600 B.C.. Ancient Greek historians, like Herodotus, identify the population of Lemnos and Imbros islands as Pelasgians.

3. Turkic speaking Pelasgians must have been direct kins of Central Asiatic Saka people who arrived in the Balkans and then onto some of the Aegean Sea islands in waves of migrations from Central Asia long before the 6th century B. C. and adapted themselves to the environment conditions of the area. They became sea faring people as well as carried on their animal husbandry under the local conditions. It is most likely that they used the Eurasian landmass which has been one of the most active migration paths of the Asiatic people into the European continent.

4. The lettering found in the inscription from Lemnos island makes a definite connection to the Runic inscriptions from Central Asia: for example, a) to the inscription found in the Issik Kurgan near Almati (Alma Ata) in Kazakistan; b) to the Turkic Orhun and Yenisei inscriptions; c) to the Saka and Hun inscriptions, and d) to Pechenek writings. The Runic alphabet that Turks have used in their inscriptions does not seem to have originated in Europe, although it was used by Europeans. It seems that the Runic type of writing has spread into Central and Northern Europe from Eurasia. Surely, new studies will enlighten this further.

5. At the risk of attracting criticism, I will pose the question, "did the Pelasgians learn their alphabet from Hellenic people or did they bring it with them from their Asiatic homeland? There seems to be an unquestioned acceptance by some scholars that non Indo-European peoples (such as Etruscans and Pelasgians), living in Europe contemporarily with Indo-Europeans, took their alphabet from Hellenic people. How sure are we about such declarations? Have all the European and Asiatic artifacts been truly examined and appraised in fairness in a light other than the Indo-European light? Perhaps new scholars in the field could be more open minded and examine it from an Asiatic view point also.

6. It is said that there are many already discovered Pelasgian artifacts (some probably with inscriptions on them) and most likely, more will be discovered in the future. In trying to read such documents, the inquiry should encompass all possibilities.

7. It is hoped that scholars will complete translation of the inscription on the Lemnos stele and check out the validity of what I have described in this study.

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