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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>David G.Zanotti</i> - Varna: The Interpretation of the Evidence from the Necropolis	5
<i>V.N.Toporov</i> - Linguistic Commentary to Several Thracian Mythical Images	21
<i>Leonid A.Gindin</i> - Spatial-Chronological Projection of the "Original Homeland" of the Indo-Europeans	32
<i>V.L.Tsyburskiy</i> - Anchises-Serpent. An Early Thracian Motif in Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i>	45
<i>Angela Della Volpe</i> - From the Hearth to the Creation of Boundaries	56
<i>Ivan Marazov</i> - Aspects of the Royal Hestia. 2. Hestia, Wealth, Fire and the Sun	73
<i>L.A.Lelekov</i> - On the Semantics of Centric Plans during the Indo-European Archaic Period	87
<i>J.P.Mallory</i> - The Proto-Indo-European 'Sword'?	99
<i>M.N.Pogrebova, D.S.Raevsky</i> - On the "Breakaway Scythians" (Herod., IV.22)	102
<i>Miklós Szabó</i> - Thraco-Celtica	126
<i>Fred C.Woudhuizen</i> - The Earliest Evidence of Luwian Hieroglyphic Writing	135
<i>Lilia S.Bayun, Vladimir E.Orel</i> - The Inscription from Sitovo	144

LINGUISTIC COMMENTARY TO SEVERAL THRACIAN MYTHICAL IMAGES

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In his works, V.I. Georgiev devoted considerable attention to the Thracian language and, more specifically, to the analysis of Thracian theophoric names (Georgiev 1975: 5-56). Even the very fact that these names have been collected and accompanied by the respective documentation, in addition to the etymological explanations proposed by the cited scholar for many of them, is an important preliminary stage in the study of Thracian mythological names, opening new vistas in two spheres: linguistics (theophoric onomastics) and mythology proper. The role of linguistic evidence is greatly enhanced in view of the scarcity of the mythological material, resulting in a lack of clarity about many characteristic features of the various deities or some other mythological figures, their functions, links with concrete motifs and themes, etc. Moreover, it is true for most of the theophoric names collected by Georgiev that the only thing known about them is their *name*. We propose below several commentaries on some mythological names whose meaning will be demonstrated or clarified by additional details, on the basis of linguistic data and information from the mythology of other Indo-European traditions.

1. THE IMAGE OF THE 'SACRED FIRE' IN THEOPHORIC NAMES

Let us consider an inscription from Kyustendil (Pautalia): Κυρίω Ἀσκληπιῶ Σπιλοπυρηνῶ. The last word (Dat.) is connected with the name of Asklepios, also in the Dative. It is understood as a name given to Asklepios, which "bezeichnet die Beziehung des Asklepios zu dem heiligen Herdfeuer, welches das Leben der Generationen symbolisiert" (Detschew 1957: 477); cf. more specifically - Adj. poss. meaning "der zum heiligen Feuer Gehörende" (Georgiev 1975: 51). As regards the meaning of this word, its first elements was recognized to be a continuation of IE **k'uen-* (more specifically - **k'uen-to-*), defined as 'feiern', 'heiligen' and producing Avest. *spanta-* 'holy', Lith. *šventas*, Slav. *svęty* (Дечев 1952: 21; Detschew 1957: 477). The second part of the word was interpreted as a continuation of IE **pur-* 'fire' (Georgiev 1975: 51), although no explanation has been given whether it is a Thracian or Greek word (incidentally, the question about the existence of traces of this root in the Thracian language has not been discussed, except in the case in question). Earlier it was assumed (Топоров 1976: 138-141) that a number of Thracian proper names contain this root which denotes 'fire', cf. Πυρουλας, Πυρουλα, *Purula*, *Purula*, *Pirurus*, etc. (Detschew 1957: 377, 386-387; Velkova 1974: 73). The numerous Greek names reflecting this root (Πυρ-, Πυρο-, Πυρι- (never have the suffix *-ul-* (-ουλ-)) and this differentiates them sharply from Thracian names of the same root. It is possible that names of the type Πυρουλας were originally formed after the colour of the hair ('red', 'like flames'), which has been mentioned (Detschew 1957: 387 - "Der Name bezieht sich auf die Rothaarigkeit der Thraker"), or by the type of activities (a person dealing with fire; above all, a priest performing fire rituals, more specifically lighting the ritual fire). In the latter case the Thrac. *Puroulas* would correspond exactly not only to the Bulgarian *пълелуи*, i.e. those who kindle the fire during the fire-related rites, and to Rom.