The Pre-Greek Lexicon

In my EDG, I marked with \(<\text{PG}\rangle\) all words which, in my view, were of Pre-Greek origin. I found 1106 words. On the criteria see 2.2b. I here present the whole evidence, with a short indication why the words are considered Pre-Greek. For a full discussion of their etymology, I refer the reader to EDG. The material is presented in a semantic classification.

The largest categories are Flora (178) and Fauna (180). This does not really come as a surprise; together with the Landscape and Natural Phenomena (37) and the Minerals (27), they form the previously unknown natural elements of the new ‘home’ where the Greeks arrived.

An important segment refers to Agriculture (38). Many terms in this section pertain to Viniculture (20), which is one of the few categories that seems rather unexpected, but there is nothing against the assumption that the original inhabitants knew and widely practiced the technique of wine-making, perhaps with more advanced methods than the newcomers. Many words refer to Human Physiology (81). To everyday-life belong the terms related to Attire and Jewellery (21) and the many words referring to Equipment and Utensils (154). Well represented is Construction (34). The category Culture (51) includes terms referring to Musical Instruments and Performing Arts (18), Religious Festivals and Feasting (8), and Divine and Numinous Beings, Priests and Temples (12). To these we may add the Theonyms, Divine Epithets, Mythical Characters (26).

In the EDG, I have introduced a special category \(<\text{PG}?\rangle\). This category comprises words without a good etymology, for which I nevertheless could not find positive indications for Pre-Greek. I have not included these forms here, but they can be easily found in the EDG. It may be worthwhile to investigate these words (more than 780) more closely, since the indications for Pre-Greek origin may turn up at some point.

1 Landscape and Natural Phenomena

ἄναυρος [m.] ‘torrent’ (Mosch.); also a river name in Thessaly (Hes. Sc. 477) and Acarnania. No doubt, the word is non-Greek, and probably non-ie; note the suffix -αυρ-ο- (see 3.2.3.32).

ἀστεροπή [f.] ‘lightning’ (Il.). στεροπή (Il.); ἀστραπή (Hdt.); στροπά· ἀστραπή.

Πάφιοι ‘lightning (Paphian)’, στορπάν (cod. -τιάν)· τὴν ἀστραπήν ‘id.’ and στρο-
φαί· ἀστραπαί (H.). This word must be Pre-Greek because of the vocalic interchanges. See Beekes (1987).

βάραθρον [n.] ‘cleft, abyss’. Variants are βέρεθρον and βέθρον, the latter probably shortened from the former, and Arc. ζέρεθρον (representing δ-; cf. ζέλλω = δέλλω). The variations βε- / ζε- and α / ε point to Pre-Greek origin (see 2.5.6 and 2.6.1.1a).

βυθός [m.] ‘depth (of the sea)’ (A.). ἄβυσσος ‘bottomless’, further βυσσός [m.] ‘depth of the sea’. The variation θ / στ points to Pre-Greek *-tv- (see 2.5.5.9a).

γή [f.] ‘earth’ (II.). Dor. γᾶ. Probably related to γαῖα ‘id.’. Both may go back to Pre-Greek *gaya- (cf. 3.2.3.7 on the suffix -ay-a-). Another variant *δᾶ (with γ / δ, see 2.5.6) may be found in Δημήτηρ (Dor. Δα-) and Ποσειδάων, but in these cases the meaning ‘earth’ cannot be ascertained.

γουνός [m.] ‘hill’ (II.), acc. to em and Orion = υψηλός τόπος ‘elevated place’. The variants γῶνος and χῶνος prove Pre-Greek origin (see 2.5.1 and 2.6.1.3i).

δνόφος [m.] ‘darkness’ (Simon.). The group δν- seems to point to Pre-Greek origin (see 2.2a.6). Cf. κνέφας below.

δρόσος [f.] ‘dew’, often of several fluids; pl. also ‘young animals’. The word is probably of Pre-Greek origin; note the intervocalic -σ- (see 2.2a.15).

εἰαμενή [f.] ‘lowlands, humid pasture’ (II.), also ἴαμνοι [pl.] ‘id.’. The word is probably Pre-Greek, given the variation -μεν- / -μν-, which could not occur in a participle. Cf. 3.2.3.17 on the suffix -αμν-ο-.

Εὔρῑπος [m.] ‘straits, narrows’ (X., Arist.); especially the straits between Euboea and Boeotia (h. Ap. 222, Hdt.); later also ‘canal’ in general (D. H.); ‘ventilator, fan’ (Gal. 10, 649) is probably a homonym, derived from ῥιπή in the sense ‘blow’. The word may well be Pre-Greek, cf. Ruijgh (1967a: 172-374). Note that the long ι in this position is typical for Pre-Greek forms, cf. 3.2.3 s.v. -iβ-, -iγ-, -iδ-, -iθ-, -iν-.

θάλασσα [f.] ‘sea’ (Il.). δαλάγχαν· θάλασσαν (H.). The word, with its prenasalized variant, is typically Pre-Greek (see 2.5.2). The variation -σσ- / -ττ- / -χ- points to Pre-Greek *-κυ- (see 2.5.5.9a).

ἰδη [f.] ‘wood, wooded hill’ (Hdt., Theoc.). As a τн ἴδη, wooded hill in western Mysia (II.) and on Crete (D. P., Paus.). A Pre-Greek word without further etymology.

ἴρις, -ιδος [f.] ‘rainbow’ (II.), also of the halo of the moon, etc. (Arist., Thphr., Gal.), as a plant name ‘purple Iris’, etc. (Arist., Thphr.), see Strömberg (1940: 49); also name of a stone (Plin.). As a PN, Ἰρις, Ἰδος, Ἰν daughter of Thaumas and Elektra, messenger of the gods (II., Hes.). Furnée (1972: 356) compares ἔριδας· τάς ἐν οὐρανῷ ἴριδας (H.), and concludes to Pre-Greek origin, in view of the variation ε / i (see 2.6.1.2b).

χαιάδας [m.] ‘pit or cavern at Sparta, into which people sentenced to death (or