

Linguistics

The Origin of *Cuprum*, *Bakar* and *Var*

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ABSTRACT. The present research has been stimulated by the recent discovery of the earliest copper treatment in the regions of Bulgaria and eastern Serbia, and its aim is to establish the origin of some copper terms, the relative or approximate dates of their emergence, and at least some directions of their spread. In this article we have focused on three terms, represented by Latin *cuprum*, Balkan *bakar* and the root $\sqrt{*bar} \sim var$. © 2014 Bull. Georg. Natl. Acad. Sci.

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1. *Cuprum*. A name of a metal, just like any other material in general, can be derived from the name of a region. Therefore, it has been almost unanimously voiced by etymologists that late Latin *cuprum*, first attested in 301 AD in the Edict of the Emperor Diocletian, comes from the name of the island of Cyprus, which had massive exploitation of copper ore: Greek *Kypros* > Greek *halkos kyprios* > Latin *aes cuprium* ‘Cyprian copper’. The exploitation began relatively late, around 3200 [1]. The name of the island itself has been interpreted as ‘the island of cypress trees’ because cypress in Greek is *kypárisos*, of alien origin, perhaps from Hebrew *gópher*, as presumed by most etymologists. The Mycenaen Greek (15th c. BC) term for a Cypriot was *kupirijo*. As far as we could find out, the only scholars who believe that Cyprus got its name from the word for copper, rather than vice versa, have been George Hill [2], Kaulins and Georges Dossin. Dossin [3] thinks that the do-

nor could have been either a word from Eteocypriot (the language spoken in the Iron Age Cyprus, extinct around the 4th c. BC) or Sumerian *kabar*, while Hill presumes that it was Sumerian *zubar* (both meaning ‘copper, bronze’ or ‘brass’). Among the four recorded Sumerian variants *kabar*, *kubar*, *zabar* and *zubar*, judging by phonetic cues, *kubar* seems to be the earliest, meaning only ‘copper’, while *zabar* should have been the latest, meaning ‘brass, bronze’.

The Greek synonym for Aphrodite was *Kypris*, based on the image of this goddess as coming out from the foam of the Cyprian sea. Later in Rome she became *Cypria*, the epithet for Venus. But if *Kypris* was named after her island, whence the name of the Egyptian god *Khepri* (*Kheper*, *Khepera*), who was a god of creation, life and resurrection and the patron god of the Sun, believed to roll the Sun across the sky? How did the principal Etruscan goddess *Cupra* (a variant of *Uni*) that corresponds to Greek *Hera* and

Roman Junone get her name, and what about the origin of the name *Kubera*, the Aryan goddess of richness? All these names lead us to Cybele's name as a possible source for *cuprum*. The most likely source of this variant of Mother Goddess' name in Latin is the Etruscan *Cupra*.

Sumerian *kubar* ~ *kabar* in the meaning of 'copper' cannot have descended from *Kypros* since Sumerian is definitely older than Greek. Instead, the origin of both *kubar* and *Kypros* should be traced back to a variant of Cybele's ancient name, possibly **Kumbala* (but cf. discussion on *bar* in § 3, which may have brought about the appearance of /r/ instead of /l/).

The Classical Latin term for copper before *cuprum* was introduced, was *aes*, genitive *aeris*. It may be so that the Latin *aes* for some reason (perhaps owing to the near-homonymy with *aer*, genitive *aeris* 'air, mist') became inadequate and had to be replaced by *cuprum* (< *cuprium* < *Cupra*). This form widely spread over Europe and parts of Asia during the following centuries, as reflected in Old Norse *koparr*, Old English *coper*, *copor*, Icelandic, Nynorsk Norwegian *kopar*, Swedish *koppar*, Old High German *kupfar* (> German *kupfer* > Slovene dialectal *kufer*, kajkavian Croatian *kufar*), Kashubian *kóper*, Cymric *copr*, Gaelic *cobbyr*, Irish *copar*, Yiddish *kopper*, Finnish *kupari*. *Kupari* (a summer resort near Dubrovnik) is derived from *kuparica* 'brick kiln' [4], which points to melting and high temperature, a characteristic feature of copper reduction.

The image of Mother Goddess (Great Mother, Mother Earth), the deity of fertility¹, was quite complex. She was also the goddess of regeneration, beasts, and destructive elemental forces [6].

The native name of the Phrygian Great Mother Cybele was (*Matar*) *Kubela*, *Kubeleya* or *Kubileya*. There were variants in other languages of Asia Minor: *Kubaba* (Hittite, Luwian and Lydian), *Kumbaba*, *Kombaba*, *Kuvava*, *Cybebe*, *Kybelle*, *Sybella*, *Sabella*, and *Savanna*². The pagan Arabs worshipped the great matriarchal goddess of the Semites under

different names: *Kaber*, *Chabar*, *Choubar*, *Chabon*, *Ka'aba*. We suggest deriving the variants with /l/ from IE **kum* 'with' + *Bel* or *Bal*³ > **Kumbela* (literally 'Bel's follower'⁴) > Phrygian *Kubēleya* > Greek *Kybele* > late ancient Greek (at the beginning of the new era) *Kybila* > Latin *Kibila* > late Latin *Cibila* > Old French *Sibile* > English *Cybele*, *Sybille*; *Sibyl*.

Adopting and modifying beliefs of the surrounding peoples, in the course of time the Greeks changed the form and the meaning of *Kubela*, *Kybelle* 'goddess Cybele' to *sibulla* 'prophetess' (> Lat *sibylla*). The change [k] > [s] is easily explained as the well-known sibilization of a palatalized [k'].

The element *baba* appearing in *Kubaba*, *Kumbaba*, *Kombaba*, and with modifications in *Kuvava* and *Cybebe*, used to be a synonym for Great Mother among the Slavs (with the frog as her attribute) as well as with the Sumerians (according to Hrozný, d. ält. gesch. Vorderasiens 91, in [11]) and Assyrians. *Baba* must have replaced *Bela* at some time (Budimir [11] claimed that /l/ in *Kybele* replaced /b/ in *Kybebe* by dissimilation) and joined the first element *ku(m)* ~ *ko(m)*. A similar pattern seems to have been at work when naming the Slavic goddess *Dajbaba*, which had its male counterpart in *Dajbog*. We believe that the name of Mother Goddess *Baba*, as well as the same archi-morheme in other names of goddesses, is ultimately based on *baba* (alternatively *mama*, for 'mother') in baby babbling (cf. a similar view in [11]).

It seems that the earliest known variant of Cybele's name was *Baba* > *Kumbaba*, and we presume that the forms *Kumbaba* and **Kumbela* had been interwoven for a long time.

Cybele's cult spread from Anatolia and Palestine to Greece and other Mediterranean lands in the 5th millennium. Owing to the importance her cult exercised in these parts of the world, it would be no wonder for her Greek variant *Kypris* to have given impulse to Greek *kypárisos* 'cypress' and even the name for Cyprus; i.e., *Kybela* 'goddess Cybele' > **Kybla* > **Kybra* > *Kypris* 'Aphrodite' > *kypárisos*,

*Kypros*⁵.

Sumerian *kubabar* (blended with *Kubaba*) ‘silver’, Sanskrit *kapila* ‘kind of brass’ and Bengali *kapāra* ‘copper’ also indicate that metal terms connected with the name *Kubela* had been in use long before the Latin *cuprum*.

There are languages that in the cognates of *cuprum* contain /b/ either originally or, being intervocalic, secondarily voiced from /p/, like Danish and Bokmål Norwegian *kobber*, Gaulic and Portuguese *cobre*, Manx Gaelic *cobbyr*, Cornish Gaelic *cober*, Spanish *cubre*, Basque *kobrea* (beside *urreide*), Armenian *kabar*. French has *cuiivre* (/v/ < /b/).

Another Sumerian word for ‘copper’ beside *urudu* was *sibar*, with initial *si-* instead of *ku-*. In a text mentioned by Conder [13: 196] this word was preceded by the sign for deity! (There was an ancient Sumerian town Sippar near Babylon, meaning ‘city of birds’, and the bird was often identified with a deity [6].

Another variant of Cybele’s name that preserves /l/ probably appears in the names of the towns *Gubla* and *Kabyle*. *Gubla* (modern Jbeil), founded around 5000, is the ancient name of Byblos, a prosperous Phoenician town in the 2nd millennium BC. *Kabyle* was changed to Diospolis (town of Gods) during the reign of the Emperor Diocletian. In that strategic Thracian town, nowadays Yambol in south-eastern Bulgaria, fourteen sanctuaries were dedicated to Great Mother Goddess [14: 224]. Did Diocletian oust *Kabyle* because it had a tinge of a foreign goddess *Kubela*, and tolerate *cuprum* since it had not reminded him of this name?

Still another variant, with /r/, **Kobar*, may be hidden in the name of the Slovene town Kobarid near Italian border, which, judging by archaeological remains, was a cult place. Among other finds from the Iron Age and the Hallstatt and Roman periods, the region of Kobarid treasures several offering plates with Venetic inscriptions [15]. This fact indicates that the Venetes, with their presumed homeland in Anatolia [16], may have worshipped the memory of Cybele

and called their centre after her, altering the Phrygian name. The Italian variant of this town’s name, Caporetto still bears some likeness, while German *Karfreit* and Friulian *Gaurêt* do not. Moreover, the name of the metal *kobalt* is derived from *kobold*, the name of a family spirit (brownie, “good fellow”) in the German mythology since 13th c. AD. Its name may be easily associated with **kobol*, a variant of Cybele’s name, at the time when Germanic tribes got acquainted with Venetic gods. A kind of evil spirit was called *khobolos* in ancient Greece [17: s.v.el 27], possibly from the same source as *kobol*, and a group of chthonic Greek deities, based on Hittite, Thracian, Proto-Etruscan and Phrygian beliefs, were called *kabeiroi*, whose Dossin name connected with Sumerian *kabar* ‘copper’.

If Slavic *kobila* ‘mare’ (as well as its male counterpart in Latin *caballus*) is based on Cybele’s name, then it may be hypothesized that *Kubela* was originally **kon + Bella > *Knbela > *Kunbela* (a dvandva, coordinating compound), where *kon* is ‘horse’ < **Proto-Indo-European k^uon/k^un* < ***Nostratic k^uin-* ‘wolf, dog’. We have accepted this Shevoroshkin’s derivation of ‘dog’ [18: 232] and linked it with ‘horse’ because of the obvious formal similarity of *kon* and *kun*, and because dogs were domesticated before horses. Anyway, Vasmer [19] and Skok [4] voiced the opinion that Slavic words for ‘horse’ (*kon*) and ‘mare’ (*kobila*, cf. Upper Sorbian *kobla* and Polabian *küöbæla*) are related, but they postulated **koby* as the origin. The etymologists Maas and Kretschmer insisted that the origin of this noun should be sought in Asia Minor [19]. Geographical names with *kobil-* where Serbian is or was spoken are much less numerous than those with *konj* ‘horse’ [20: II, 127], but still they surpass one hundred, and at least some may have been dedicated to *Kubela*. There are quite a lot of Slavic place names in Germany with *kobyl-*: *Kobylica*, *Kobylin*, *Kobyła*, *Kobyłani*, *Kobylov* [21] and the number of these names highly surpasses those with *kon* ‘horse’. Petroviæ [20: II] has found Slovene oronyms and toponyms *Kobja glava*, *Kobdilj*, *Koblan* and *Koboli*,

all occurring near the Italian border. This can be accounted for by the still living memory of Cybele's name (and her cult) in the 1st millennium AD among the Venetes.

It is worth checking whether the surname of Miloš Obilić, a Serbian mythological hero of the Kosovo battle in 1389, which has been said to be derived from Kobilic, has also to do with *Kubela*. According to Serbian legends, Miloš Kobilic was born out of an affair of a dragon (*Zmaj*) and a shepherdess Janja [20: III, 89]. The suffix *-ić* means 'son of'. Why should a son of a dragon and a shepherdess be called son of a mare? It is more likely that originally he was believed to be a son of Great Mother's.

There used to be a custom to sacrifice children and young animals to Artemis, the Greek version of Cybele, the goddess of fertility and hunt, protectress of the young and weak, but also believed to attack children and women on some occasions. This or a similar custom, if practiced on behalf of Kubila, could lead to naming illegitimately born children as *kopil* 'bastard' in Balkan languages. In [20: II] there have been mentioned around ten toponyms with *kopil*, such as *Kopilovi* or *Kopilovac*.

Serbian *kurva* and Slovene *kurba* 'whore' may also have their source in the name *Kubela* (> **kubra* > *kurba* > *kurva*), as a case of deterioration of meaning, just like many other names of deities with the change of religion turned from godlike into demonic appellations [6]. Polish *kobieta* 'woman', at first used pejoratively, for which various derivations have been offered, may also come from a variant of the same root (*kobyła* with the feminine suffix *-eta*, as suggested in [22]).

The name of the horse has undergone a similar fate of semantic pejoration. *Hors* was a Slavic solar deity, visualized as a white horse [3: 73], or carried in a horse-driven coach. Horses are connected with the Sun, which is particularly evident in northern Europe [23: 97]. The Persians had the Sun god Horu, which is the same as Egyptian Horus ([24] in [3: 73]). But when the myth of *Hors* reached Anglo-Saxon tribes, they paid greater attention to the *Hors*' horse than to *Hors*

himself. After a lapse of time they reacted in a way similar to people who call a restaurant at Belgrade's Republic Square – "café at the horse" instead of "café at the prince Michael's monument", because the prince is represented as riding a horse and visitors are mainly not interested in history. E *whore* [hɔ:ʔ], dialectal [hu:ɔʔ], manifests a mixture of *horse* connoting a deprecated Slavic deity (in Gothic *hōrs* meant 'adulterer') and the stem *kur-* of *kurva*, *kurba* 'whore'. We find this etymology more plausible than the generally accepted one: Latin *cara* 'dear' > Germanic *huore* > Old English *hore* > English *whore*.

The clue to the ultimate African prehistoric source of *Kubela* might be the Candomblé cult of an Afro-Brazilian religion originating in Africa and brought to Brazil in the New Ages. This cult features aspects of Yoruba Orisha veneration mixed with the elements of Christianity, and Yoruba is a tribe living in the central part of the northern African state Niger. The Candomblé rituals (meaning 'dance in the honour of gods') involve offering of the minerals (!), vegetables and animals. Spirit gods evoked are called collectively *Baba* (!) *Egum* and priestesses called "mother (!) of the holy one" lead services. Therefore, a much older variant of *Candomblé*, perhaps **Kumbele*, inherited as a Nostratic form or by way of folk etymology on reaching Europe in prehistoric times, may have produced the attested variants of *Kubela*.

2. Bakar. Serbian, Macedonian *bakar*, Bulgarian *bakār*, Albanian *bakër*, New Greek *mpakri* [bakri], are widely held to be Turkish loans from Turkish *bakýr*. According to our hypothesis, the name for copper containing *bak-* may have originated among peoples who glorified the god *Bakh*: Etruscans (*Pacha*), Lydians (*Baki*, attested in *Bakillis*, *Bakivalis* 'Bakh's', *Bakivalid* 'of Bakh's') and Phrygians (*Bagun*, *Bagaios*, *Bakhi*). In Greece *Bakkhos* was a god of wine, synonymous with Dionysos, and in Rome *Bacchus* was a god of wine, vine and mystic elation, replacing Italic *Liber Pater*' (> *bacchanals*). The veneration of a foreign god *Bakkhos* spread in Rome under the influence of poor people from the south of Italy. The idea of such a deity originated in

the pre-Greek Balkans. “Dionysos, according to many scholars, probably originated in Thrace” [7: 223], and he had his cult on the territory of Serbia as late as the first four centuries AD [25]. “Ritual artifacts similar to those from classical Greece – phalli, cups with phallic handles, and bull-man sculptures – also surface in south-eastern Europe, dating from the sixth and fifth millennia BC. They suggest that Dionysian-like festivals existed five thousand years before classical Greek civilization, and that they endured for a very long time” [6].

The name *Bakh* or *Bakkhos* is usually derived from Greek *iakho* ‘I shout’(!), but it is worth considering the following reconstruction of Bakh’s name, following Skok’s ([4], s.v. *bak*) chain of derivations: $**\sqrt{wV}k$ of onomatopoeic origin⁶ (> Serbian. *buka* ‘noise’, *bukati* ‘of an animal: make low-pitched noise’) > Russian *byk*, Serbian, Slovene, Ukrainian *bik* ‘bull’, literally ‘booming animal’, > Proto-Slavic *bmk* > Old Slavic **bmk* > *bak* (Croatian ‘bull’, Slovene ‘ram’), not present in other Slavic languages, and Old English *buc*, *bucca* > English *buck* ‘male fallow-deer’. The same proto-root seems to be responsible for Latin *vacca* ‘cow’. Thus, various versions of Bakh’s name might have risen from the meaning ‘bull-like male deity’, and ultimately from the name for bull, as shown above⁷. The same origin (rather than the usual < **bhēgagos* ‘apportioner’ < **bhag-* ‘to distribute, share out’) may be posited for the general term for god in Balto-Slavic and Indo-Iranian languages: *bag*, Sanskrit *bhāgas* ‘master; distributor; god of wealth’, Lower Sorbian, Slovene, Serbian, Polish and Bulgarian *bog*, Czech *bůh*, Ukrainian *b’ih*, Avestan *baya*, Old Persian *baga* ‘master; god’, New Persian *bak*.

By associating the god Bakh with fire and red colour, **bagr* (a variant of *bakar*) ‘copper, red ore’ is likely to have led to Old Church Slavonic *bagrĭ*, Serbian and Bulgarian *bagra*, Russian *bagr*, Russian and Ukrainian *bagor*, meaning ‘scarlet colour’, as well as other cognates, Russian *bagrovyi* ‘dark red, scarlet’, *bagrovet’* ‘become red’, Ukrainian, Bulgarian and Russian *bagrit’* ‘paint crimson’, Russian

bagatiř ‘smouldering fire’, Old Church Slavonic *bagrm*, Russian *bagor*, *bagrovyř* ‘scarlet red’, Russian *bagrovetĭ* ‘become red’, and Russian, Ukrainian and Bulgarian *bagritĭ* ‘paint crimson’. The way of treating copper and the fiery impression of crimson colour come to the fore in Hittite *pahhur* ‘fire’⁸. Also, Serbian *božur* ‘piony’, Bulgarian ‘poppy’ (with bright red flowers) < **bogiur*, fits into this derivational picture. Skok [4] recorded the dialectal verbs *zabagret* ‘to rust with impurity’ and *obagret* ‘become red, to rust’, which are certainly of later date, arising at the time when the association with a deity had been lost while the association with metal, in this case with iron, had still been alive⁸.

We believe that in addition to the association of Bakh with copper, ‘the shiny red metal molten in fire’, there was also a similar association of Bakh and pitch or resin used for torches. The latter association produced **bakhel* ‘pine resin’ > **baki* > Serbian *baklja* ‘torch’, as well as **bakhel* > Common Slavic *p-klm* ‘resin for torches; tar’ > Serbian *pakao*, gen. *pakla* ‘hell’, Albanian *flakë* ‘flame’, Greek *fakla*, Gothic and German *fackel* ‘torch’, Latin *pix*, genitive *picis* ‘resin, gum’ (> French *poix*, Spanish, Portuguese *pez*, Occitan (Provençal) and Catalan *pega*, Old English *pic* > English *pitch*).

The form *baker* appears also in Slovene, which is notorious for the paucity of Turkish loanwords. Therefore, this may be another cue leading to the conclusion that *baker* is related to Lydian and/or Phrygian **bakher*, without Turkish mediation.

If after all we conceded that Serbo-Croatian *bakar* is a Turkish reimported loanword, it might be that *kufer* (< German *Kupfer*), which is nowadays dialectal in Slovenia, had been used before *baker* was introduced as a loanword from Serbo-Croatian *bakar* in order to avoid the homonymy with Slovene *kufer* ‘suitcase’. The acceptance of the term *bakar* seems to have been promoted in Slovene (along with Bulgarian, and ekavian Serbian) for one more reason: in order to avoid homonymy of *med* (a) ‘honey’ (masculine) and (b) ‘copper; brass’ (feminine)..

When tracing the importation of **bakher* to the east, it may be noticed that in addition to *bakýr* ‘copper’, there is another Turkish noun, *bakam* ‘face blusher, brazilwood’, which obviously has to do with ‘redness’. However, ‘red’ in Turkish and Azerbaijani is *kirmizi*, and in other Turkic languages (Tatar, Uzbek, Kyrgyz, Turkmen) *kizil*. And yet there might be a roundabout connection between *bakam* and *bakýr* in terms of redness because *bakam* comes from Arabic *bakkam*, *baqqam* ([4] and [26] s.v. *bakam*) with the same meaning. Škaljiæ adds information that in Persian this word reads *bekkem*. Thus the following succession might be suggested with a few missing links: Proto-Anatolian > Phrygian **bakher* ‘copper, red metal’⁹ > Old Arabic **bakk*, Old Persian **bekk* ‘red like copper’ > Arabic *bakkam*, Persian *bekkem* > Turkish *bakam*.

Presumably, Bakh’s appellation appears also in the name of the ancient town Bactres (*Bactra*), the capital of Bactria, which was the homeland of Avestan speaking Indo-European tribes who moved into Iran and north-western India around 2500 - 2000 BC.

The former name of the Turkish town Diyarbakir (‘land of copper’, as Kemal Attaturk interpreted it) was Amid (from Assyrian times), so that a semantic equivalence between (*a-*) *mid* (cf. Slavic *med* ‘copper’) and (*diyur-*) *bakir* can be established. Although etymologists believe that originally *Diyarbakir* meant ‘landholdings of the Bakr tribes’, Attaturk seems to have been right.

Thus, it appears that *bakar* is a word of ancient Anatolian origin, which through a neighbouring Turkic language was eventually carried over to Osmanli Turkish in a much later period.¹⁰

One of Sanskrit words for copper was *ambaka*, apparently a compound, where *ama* means ‘crude’, while the other element obviously has to do with the root $\sqrt{*bak-}$.

Names for copper: Indonesian *tembagal*, Lingala (a Malayan, Dravidian language) *mbengi*, Goujarati *tâ’bu*, < *tem* + *baga* also bear witness of $\sqrt{*bak-}$, or rather $\sqrt{*bag-}$, as a donor root, which makes sense if

associated with the Indo-Iranian term for god (*bag*), but also, less probably, may have spread through Muslim religion under the influence of the Turks. Chuvash *pahar* for ‘copper’ is probably a Turkish loanword because the Chuvashes are a Turkic ethnic group inhabiting the area between the Volga and Siberia, as well as *paxir* in Zazaki, a west Iranian language.¹¹

The names of *Bakar* and *Bakarac* (towns at Dalmatian coast of Croatia) come from Italian *Buccari* [4] and do not seem to have anything to do with ‘copper’. Also by sheer coincidence, the Balkan *bakar* shows a syllabic metathesis of Sumerian and Armenian *kabar*.

The ending *-ar* in *bakar* may have sprung from *ar* < **air* < *aes* < **hçyos* ‘ore’ to give *bak-ar* = ‘Bakh’s ore’.

3. War. The root $**\sqrt{wVr}$ > $\sqrt{*vVr}$ occurs in words denoting copper in Baltic and some Uralic languages: Lithuanian *varias*, *varis* and Latvian *varš* or *rudvaris* (*rud-* ‘ore’ + *var-*); Lithuanian *zhalvaris* ‘bronze’. This root also occurs in some Uralic languages like Lappish *vešš’k*, Estonian *vask* (probably not, as Stetsyuk [29] believes, solely from Sumerian *guškiu* ‘gold’; cf. Finnish *vaski* ‘iron’), Mari (with vowel harmony, spoken in the Russian Mari republic and eastwards to the Urals, as well as in the Tatarstan and Perm regions) *vürgene*, or Komi (spoken in the northeastern European part of Russia) *yrğön*. Old Prussian, a Baltic-Slavic language, had *wargien* (where *-gien* apparently appeared under the influence of Uralic). Finnish *kuparinvärinen* ‘coppery; copper coloured’ contains *kupari* and *var* with umlaut. Hungarian has *vörös* for ‘red’ (the basic colour term is *piros*). Akkadian *werium* ‘copper’ need not be brought into connection with Sumerian *urud* (as Whittaker [30] tentatively suggested) since the presence of \sqrt{wVr} is dominant. In Serbian, in Montenegro, *var* is used in the sense ‘heat of the day’ or ‘lava’, and in [31] it is recorded with the meaning ‘intense heat in which iron is smelted’.

The root $*\sqrt{war}$ often evolved as *bar* (cf. Ser-

bian *bariti* 'boil'). In Uralo-Altaic languages the same root has the meaning 'shiny' (cf. Turkish *barla*). Also, Sumerian *bar* meant 'shine', *anbar* 'iron' literally meant 'divine metal' (>Arabic '*anbar* 'ambergis' > 'amber'), while in Akkadian *bar* was 'smelt, refine', which indicates that *bar* was connected with smelting. This root appears in a number of compounds to indicate several metals. In Sumerian *sibar* was 'copper' (already mentioned under *cuprum* family section). Other *bar* words expanded by an initial fricative are as follows: Sanskrit *æabara*, Sumerian > Akkadian > Hittite *zabar* 'brass; bronze', Akkadian (ancient Semitic language) *siparru*, Hebrew *seper*, Arabic *sifrun*, and Kurdish *sifir*. Egyptian with *iffir* for azurite, a blue variety of copper, deviated from the original form and meaning, but has kept some traits that make the connection recognizable. Also, Arabic *sufir* 'brass; gold' with [u] may have originated under the influence of *Kubela* or even *cuprum*. In Sanskrit, one of the words for copper was *audumbara* [25], and early Persian *piring* 'copper', *birinj* 'brass' gave rise to Armenian *plinj* 'copper', Georgian *brinjao* and Medieval Latin *brundium* 'bronze'. Akkadian *abaru*, Arameic '*abara*, Arabic '*abarun* and Hebrew '*oparet* were names for lead. The same root can be recognized in *cinnabar* 'red form of mercuric sulphide', originally 'the most important ore of mercury' < L *cinnabaris*, Greek *kinnabaris*, *tinnabaris* < pre-Greek **tindabaris* [10].

The initial element in *sibar* and *zabar* resembles Sumerian *sa ~ si ~ su* 'red, brown' [30], which makes *sa/si/su + bar/br* 'red molten metal'.

The root **√bar* also occurs in the following (diachronically) compound words for silver, forming a compound with **√sir*, sometimes truncated to *si*¹²: Greek *sibros*, Sanskrit *æubra* (beside *rijra*), Old English *seolfor* /¹²se@lvor/, *siolfur* /¹²se@lvur/, Old Saxon *silybar*, Old Norse *silfr*, Old High German *sillabar*, Gothic *silubr*, German *silber*, Baltic **silabr-*, *sirabl-*, Old Prussian *sirablis*, *sirablan* (/bl/ < /br/), Lithuanian *sidābras*, Polabian *srebrú*, Lower Sorbian *slabro*, Upper Serbian *slbro*, Russian *slěbro*, Slovak

striebro, Serbian *srebro*. Sumerian *parzillu* 'iron' is obviously a compound, consisting of *par* (? < *bar*) and *zil-* (< *sir ~ sil*).

The original meaning of the Nostratic root ***√wVr* > **√war* > *var ~ bar* was, in our opinion, 'fire heat' (cf. Serbian *vreo* 'hot', *varnica* 'spark'). This sense produced 'defence by fire', as in northern Balkan place names denoting fortifications: *Varaždin*, *Daruvar*, *Bjelovar*, *Temišvar* 'Timișoara', and passed to 'attention, alertness' (as in English *aware*) < 'make fire with alertness in order to ward off enemy', as in Old Serbian *var* and in German *warten* 'take care', English *beware* and *ward* ([34] s.v. *var*) and in German *warnen* 'warn'. 'Fire heat' also produced 'boil' > 'hot and molten', 'smelt; boil; molten metal', as well as 'whirling/warm water' (as in Sanskrit *vari* 'water', Latin *urina* 'urine', English *whirl*, Serbian *vir* 'whirlpool'; Serbian *variti* 'weld, brew, cook') and 'turn' (Latin *vertere*, Serbian *vrteti* 'turn'). The ultimate source of ***√wVr* seems to be Proto-Nostratic, even archetypal, ***√bwr* 'hot', which in the form of *brrrr* is a spontaneous inarticulate reaction of persons who want to warm themselves when suffering from cold. The proto-root ***√bwr* produced also **√bhereu* > English *burn* and *broil*, and **√gwher* > English *warm*.

It is often the case that *bar* shows as an ingredient of the *cuprum* family words, like Sumerian *sibar* 'copper' or *zabar*, *zabra* 'bronze, brass', so that the convergence of the cognates of *cuprum* with *si~su~sa + b(a)r* compounds owing to both meaning and form is also possible.

4. Conclusion. Following internal and comparative reconstructions, as well as data on the copper treatment it can be stated that words for copper in Indo-European languages at some stage of development have been diachronically based (1) on the names of deities (*bakar*, of Anatolian Indo-European origin, *cuprum* probably from Greek or Sumerian, with a Nostratic root), and (2) on the name for smelting (*war*, in Uralo-Altaic, Semitic and Indo-European languages, with a Nostratic root recognized). The asso-

ciation of copper and its treatment with gods confirms the opinion that in the distant past the copper-smith's trade was a special activity veiled in the mystery of the supernatural [35]. There have been recorded cases of possibly coincidental occurrence or

blending of \sqrt{bVr} in, variants of *cuprum*. The findings are in accordance with the knowledge about copper as the first metal to be treated and the paths of its expansion from the Balkan-Anatolian region to other parts of the world.

¹ The myth of Mother Earth has been found among the Maoris of New Zealand, in the Oceania, Black Africa and other parts of the world [5]. Ma or Mawi (Lydian **Mavæ*) was a name for Mother Goddess in Asia Minor, Siva or Živa are Slavic (notably Wendic and Polabian) variants of Mother Goddess with a pronounced motherly aspect, related to Hindu god Siva, who is among other attributes, the lord of beasts.

² The name of the Thracian thunder god *Zibeleizis* probably derived from *Kubeleya* by means of sibilation (just as *Sybella* was from *Kubela*), with a male suffix added. Another Thracian and Greek deity *Semelç* and the Etruscan *Semla* (earth goddess) bear a coincidental similarity with *Sybella* and *Sabella*. "Compare the Greek (in origin, Thracian-Phrygian) *Semele*, mother of the vine-god Dionysos; she is related linguistically to the Lithuanian *Žemyna*, the Latvian *Zemes Māte*, and the Slavic *Mat' Syra Zemlya* 'mother moist earth'" [7: 225].

³ *Bel* or *Bal* was the name of a god in various Semitic cultures of the Old World, in Phoenicia, Syria and Palestine in the 2nd and 1st millennia BC, a deity of the Sun, thunder, fertility and agriculture, who later became a god of war and the protector of emperors' rule until the 7th c. BC. His name appears in *Beelzebub*, and in the names of the Dacian king *Decebal* (87 – 106 AD) and the Carthaginian leaders *Hannibal* and *Hasdrubal* [8: 47]. Here also belongs the pagan Arab god *Hobal*. We see the ultimate origin of this name in the phonaesthetic root ***bVl-* 'round and smooth' [9] > Indo-European ***bol/bel/bl* 'swell; round and smooth stone, boulder' > Greek *bôlos* 'clod of earth', Polish *ba³wan* 'boulder; clod', Russian *bolvan* and Slovene *balvan* 'wooden idol; tree trunk; clod'; Serbian *balvan* 'wooden idol; tree trunk', Phrygian *balen*, *palen* 'king, Old Norse 'a deity; prince', Old English *bealdor* 'ruler', Serbian *vladar* 'ruler'. River boulders (notice the form *boulder*!) were the earliest idols, found at Lepenski Vir near Belgrade, c. 6000 - 5500. "The Lepenski Vir sculptures [...] combine several regenerative symbols – egg and fish, or woman, fish, and water streams [...]" [6].

⁴ **Kum* 'with' + *Bella* is supposed to be formed on the pattern of Latin *concupina* or Russian *soplemennik* 'fellow tribesman'. Slavic *kum* 'godfather', etymologically related to *con* 'with', may have its role in this compound. We cannot state with certainty whether *Bel* in **Kumbel*- still referred to a female deity, which is more likely, or had changed to male, in which case *Kumbela* would be literally 'Bel's consort'. Budimir [10] mentioned *Kombabos* and *Kybebos* as male counterparts to *Kybebe* in ancient Anatolia. If any analogy can be drawn with *Kumbela*, goddesses in Kannada [, a Dravidian language spoken by about twenty million people, mostly in the state of Karnataka in India], are depicted in two ways: as consorts of male gods, and as independent deities. As consorts, goddesses are benign and subordinate; as independent deities (without husbands and children), they are fierce, powerful, and dangerous [11: 197]. In that case, *Kumbela* would have been ambivalent, as benign and malign.

⁵ In this way the word *kuparissos*, often quoted as non-Indo-European would reveal its true origin. Another name generally believed to be non-IE, *Athenai*, coming from *Atana* can be easily decomposed into Indo-European elements *a* 'without' + *tan-* 'death' (= 'the immortal one'). On the other hand, it is to be understood that a lot of Indo-European words are actually continuants of the Nostratic language.

The transition from **kubl-* to > *kupr-* can be explained as the alternation of liquids occurring across languages of the world, by the substitution of the sound [r] by [l] in children's speech, the presence of /l/ to the exclusion of /r/ in Chinese and vice versa in Japanese, complementary distribution of suffixes *-le* and *-re* for a repetitive activity in English (*rattle*, *wobble* ~ *patter*, *clatter*), and by the change Indo-European **l* > *r* in Indo-Iranian [12: 135], to mention a few examples. The Hawaiian word *keleawe* for copper (in the Hawaiian language /l/ is interchangeable with [r] in all words) perhaps also comes from some of *Cybele*'s variants, with the metathesis of syllables. Such considerable shifts are possible even within a single language family whenever the source form overrules the phonotactic rules of the receiver language, such as Spanish *Argel* /arhel/ for Algeria, *Londres* for London and *Ginebra* /xinewra/ for Geneva. See also the discussion in § 3 on *bar*, which may have contributed to the appearance of /r/ instead of /l/.

⁶ The minimum is onomatopoeic ***bu* (as in E *boo*), so it has to do with shouting after all.

⁷ "The bull epitomized regeneration during the Neolithic. In patriarchal religions, however, the bull symbolizes physical power and masculinity [...] Indo-European mythologies specifically identify the bull as an animal of the thunder god [...] Another year god [in Greece, beside Linos] is the bull-born or water-born horned Dionysos. He appeared in spring brimming with virility and was most favored by women" [6]. "The warrior god was represented by a bull in other ancient patriarchal religions as well; for example, the Semitic Ugaritic peoples of northern Syria called one of their gods «bull E» *tr ill* [...]" [7: 218].

- ⁸ Hittite *pahhur* ‘fire’ evokes association with ‘copper’ both in form and sense, which might lead us to the conclusion that **bakher* did not start with the Lydians or Phrygians, but that it had been present already in their common ancestor, Proto-Anatolian. However, it is more likely that *pahhur* is coradical with common Slavic *požar* ‘devastating fire’, where PIE **gwher-/*gwhor-* > Proto-Baltic-Slavic **ger-/*gor-* > Baltic *gar-*, *gor-*, Slavic *gar-*, *gor-*, *žar-* (cf. PIE **h2euh2os* > Hittite *huhhas*, Lith. *kuga* ‘grandfather’, where also Hittite *hh* corresponds to Baltic *g*, but from a posited **h2* rather than from **gwh*).
- ⁹ A plant called in English *asarabacca*, whose bell-shaped flowers are brownish purple and whose fragrant root was used for straining oil, was called *bakhar* or *bakar* in Lydian, which gave Greek *bakkaris*, *L. bacc(h)ar(is)* [27], Serbo-Croatian *bakarec*. Also, Latin *bacci* ‘berry’, which probably originally meant ‘grape’, is cognate with the Greek *Bakkhos* ‘the god of grapeberries’ [28]. This could easily be another link with the name of Bakh, in the way *perunika* ‘iris plant’ was named after the Slavic god Perun.
- ¹⁰ There is also a Turkish adjective *bakir* of Arabic origin meaning ‘untouched; virgin’ and a noun meaning ‘virginity’, which also appear in a number of male names: *Bachir* (Arabic), *Baq’ir* (Uzbek), *Bahir* (Arabic and Kazakh), *Bekir* (Arabic and Turkish), *Bakar* (Basque), *Kabir* (Uzbek and Hindi). This word seems to be unrelated to *bak’yr*, although an association with crude ‘untouched’ (ore) cannot be avoided.
- ¹¹ But notice the similarity with Hittite *pahhur* ‘fire’.
- ¹² The first element of these compounds occurs in Sumerian *æer/æir* ‘shine brightly’ Chaldean had *sar* ‘brilliant light’, as in *sarab* ‘silver’, Indo-Iranian languages *sera/sara* ‘bright; pure’ [32: 50-53; 62], and Sanskrit *saura*, *surja* ‘light, brightness’ [33: 84].

ენათმეცნიერება

Cuprum, Bakar და Var სიტყვების წარმომავლობა

ბ. ჰლებეცი

ბელგრადის უნივერსიტეტი, ფილოლოგიის ფაკულტეტი, ბელგრადი, სერბია

(წარმოდგენილია აკადემიკოს თ. გამყრელიძის მიერ)

სტატიამი განხილულია ლათინური “*Cuprum*” და ბალკანური “*Bakar*” ტერმინების, როგორც პირველნაწრთობი ლითონის აღმნიშვნელი სიტყვების, ადრინდელი ვარიანტის წარმოშობის, განვითარების, მემკვიდრეობისა და ნასესხობის საკითხი. გამოკვლეულია აგრეთვე ნოსტრატული ძირი **√wVr* თავისი განშტოებებით, რომელიც უკვე საკმაოდ ბევრ ენაში, განსაკუთრებით ბალტურსა და ურალურ-ალთაურ ენებში დამკვიდრდა სპილენძის მნიშვნელობით და რომელიც წარმოდგება “ნადნობი მადნის” აღმნიშვნელი ტერმინისაგან. საფარაუდოდ, სიტყვა “*Bakar*” წარმოიშვა პროტო-ანატოლიელთა მეტყველებაში, საიდანაც იგი ლიდიელებმა და ფრიგიელებმა გადაიღეს; მოგვიანებით კი იგი ისეთ ქვეყნებშიც გავრცელდა (თურქეთი, ინდოეთი, ინდონეზია), სადაც თავიანთს არ სცემდნენ დემერტ ბახუსს, რომლის სახელიდანაც ეს სიტყვა მომდინარეობს. შესაძლოა, ლათინური სიტყვა “*Cuprum*” კუნძულ კვიპროსის სახელწოდებას არ უკავშირდებოდეს, როგორც ეს ფართოდ არის მიჩნეული. ამ და სხვა მონათესავე სიტყვების სათავე, როგორც არის “კვიპროსი” და “კვიპროსი”, აზიის ქალღმერთ კუბელას სახელს უნდა დაუკავშიროთ, რადგან თავდაპირველად ბერძნულსა და შუმერულში სწორედ ამგვარად უწოდეს სპილენძს.

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