

THE ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF THE DORIANS

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Having shown that earlier explanations of the name are untenable, the author first examines the thesis recently advanced by several British scholars that the Dorians did not come to the Peloponnese after the collapse of the Mycenaean empire but were present in it - as a subject population - and asks whether in that case their name could reflect that status (cf. *do-e-ro*). If this view be rejected, he puts the question whether the name represents *doseros* 'man' (now well known from Indo-Iranian documents), showing a kind of name-giving frequently encountered in history (cf., e.g., allemand).

1. The ancients unanimously believed that the Dorians were named after Dōros, son of Hellen, grandson of Deukalion, but in modern times this view has met with little favour. Wilamowitz (1931, 70), in his apodictic manner, declared: "Δωριεῖς kann von Doros nicht stammen, entzieht sich der Deutung". And our century has produced, in several variants, a novel explanation which is based on the assumption that the name is derived from a noun which in Greek δόρυ appears with the meaning 'spear', and in δρῦς as 'oak', both representing an Indo-European *doru/dru* 'tree, wood'¹, which is also preserved by Sanskrit *dāru* 'tree' and English *tree* (: IE **drewom*).

1.1. In 1910, Wilhelm Schulze suggested that the ethnic was abridged from a form *Δωριμαχοι 'spearmen', 'Speerkämpfer', which he posited on the strength of a personal name Δωριμαχος, attested in North West Greek and Doric areas. He traced Δωρι- to early **dōrwi-* and referred for the lengthened grade of the latter to γωνία as compared with γόνυ (1910, 805 = 1966, 127).

But it is hard to see how this personal name and some others of a similar structure - but none of which is earlier than the 3rd century B.C.² - could really support the explanation suggested for an ethnic of the 2nd millennium B.C. Besides, even if one were to admit a lengthened grade for the nominative, i.e. **δωρυ*³, this would not guarantee an oblique form (locative = instrumental?) with the same degree - quite apart from the fact that it

¹ It is immaterial from our point of view what the ultimate origin of this word is. But since the view that the basis of 'tree' is a root meaning 'firm', 'solid' is now usually ascribed to Benveniste (1954, 257-9; 1969, 104-108), it is perhaps fair to point out that this had been stated by Specht as far back as 1938: *dāru* was originally 'das Feste', later 'Hartholz' (p. 201).

² See Schulze 1910, 127 fn. 5 = 1966, 805 fn. 5; Bechtel, 1917, 144.

³ Note the vacillating explanations advanced by Kuryłowicz in various works, e.g. 1956, 58. 336; 1968, 287; and 1977, 170f.

would no doubt have been shortened by Osthoff's law very early. Nor is the alleged use of the instrumental (?) self-evident in a name, cf. such early formations as Hom. πύγμαχος, ἱπτόμαχος, Hesychius' ῥοπαλόμαχος, and the name Ἀνδρομάχη. Finally – and to my mind this is a decisive objection to the explanation – the alleged prototype would not have lost all trace of its second component; the result would have been Δωριμος or -μῆς or something similar but certainly with *-m-*, and the second element certainly could not be replaced by the suffix *-eus*.⁴

1.2. A further argument against Schulze was advanced by Kretschmer (Gl. 4, 1913, 343 f.; 22, 1934, 255) who insisted that the spear was so widely used in early times that it could not have been restricted to denoting the Dorians only. He therefore suggested that Δωριεύς was derived from the toponym Δωρίς “Waldland, Baumland” and meant “inhabitant of the region called Dōris”. This still presupposes a basic form with *ō*, but a feminine adjective **dōrw-i* ‘connected with, furnished with trees’ would present no difficulties with its lengthened grade, except of course that it would also have been shortened to **dorwī* by Osthoff's law.

1.3 The more recent attempt of Ramat (1961) also starts from *tree* as an established verity: “sull'etimologia del nome dei Dori pare che non possano sussistere dubbii: esso proviene dalla ben nota radice indeuropea *DERW” (p. 63). But in his view the name reflects the Indo-European belief of a descent of humans from trees and means “quelli nati dell'antico albero originario” or rather “quelli che hanno come *totem* il δόρυ” (64). There is, however, no attempt to account for the formation.

1.4. For this aspect of the problem we must return to Bosshardt who had suggested (1942, 102 f.) that the name of the Dorians was formed from a toponym Δώριον, an explanation already envisaged by Monro in his commentary on the Odyssey. He had pointed out (1901, 156 f.) that the Cretan tribe mentioned at Od. 19, 177 (Δωριέες) were simply the “people of Δώριον”, a place-name attested not only for Nestor's empire in Messenia (Il. 2, 594) but also for Doris, the area around the source of the Kephisos which was always considered as the metropolis and homeland of the Dorians, so that it could be presumed for Crete as well.

1.5. We can, then, conclude that, of the explanations offered in our century⁵, Schulze's must be ruled out on formal and semantic grounds, while the derivation from a place-name remains the only reasonable possibility. It is, however, worth noting that, whereas names of inhabitants formed from names of cities are found in large numbers (cf. Μαντιεύς, Μεγαρεύς, Πατρεύς), the category of ethnic names is only represented by two

⁴ On the various possibilities of the shortening of compound names see Fraenkel (1935, 1626-1630) who, for Greek, goes too far in assuming the process; the norm is well illustrated by the reduction of Ἄλκιμέδων, Εὔρυσθένης to Ἄλκιμος, Εὔρυσθές.

⁵ For a survey see also Perpillou (1973, 335-6).

forms, Δωριεύς - Αἰολεύς⁶. And just as the latter must be traced to Αἰόλον (ὄρος ?) or Αἰόλα (χώρα ?) but certainly not to Αἰολίον⁷, so the former must be derived from Δωρίς or Δωρίον which may, of course, in their turn, be derivatives of a primitive Δωρος.

In any case, at this stage it remains an open question where the name-giving should be assumed to have taken place, and it is on this point that recent developments might have a bearing.

2. Until recently it had been almost unanimously assumed that the well-known Greek tribes, represented and defined by dialects well known in the first millennium B.C., came in successive waves into historical Greece. An impressively developed form of the theory was advanced by Paul Kretschmer early in our century. According to this view, the Greeks arrived in three main waves: first came the Ionians⁸ around 1900 B.C., next the Achaeans (embracing the Aeolians?) around 1600, and last the Dorians around 1200, but certainly after the collapse of the Mycenaean empire, whose end may even have been brought about by this last wave of invaders.

2.1. But this view has recently been challenged by several scholars, particularly clearly and emphatically by John Chadwick⁹. In his view (1976b, 112-115) the Dorians – whose Greek was so close to that of the Mycenaean of the Linear B tablets – “must have been inside the Mycenaean-speaking area of Greece”. This being the case, he thinks that “we might expect to find traces of this proto-Doric in the written documents” and suggests that of the two dialects distinguished by Risch in 1965, the “inferior dialect”, which was termed “special Mycenaean” by Risch, “was in fact proto-Doric”. More precisely, we can recognize here a broad canvas: “a picture of a very narrow aristocracy using the normal Mycenaean dialect”, that is of Mycenaean affected in language and other matters by a Minoan superstrate, and “a widespread middle and lower class speaking proto-Doric”. The Dorians did not encompass the downfall of the Mycenaean realm, but “the Dorians who had for so long lived under the heel of the Mycenaean aristocracy would not have been slow to take advantage of the disasters to the palaces”.

That the Dorians excluded from the Mycenaean empire is also maintained by James Hooker (1977, 171); they were not, as is usually thought, the destroyers of Mycenaean culture, on the contrary: “We may boldly postulate that there never was a ‘Dorian invasion’, in the sense that speakers of Doric forcibly entered some of those areas of Greece previously occupied by Mycenaean” (1979, 359). In other words: “there is nothing to prevent our making a very different supposition, namely that they were there all the time, that, in the time of the Mycenaean ascendancy, they formed a lower class,

⁶ See Schwyzer (1939, 79).

⁷ This derivation is, without further ado, presented by Bosshardt (1942, 103).

⁸ This name is of course a misnomer at this early date, especially as Ionian in all likelihood represents a Luwian coinage *Iā-wana-* (source of *Ἰᾶ-Ἰων>ἸηἸων>Ἰών*), see Szemerényi (1974, 154); differently Chadwick (1977).

⁹ See Bartoněk (1973, 310), Chadwick (1976ab); Hooker (1977, 171; 1979; 1980, 44); Thomas (1980, 308).

speaking their Doric in contrast to the 'Achaean' of their masters... The return of the Heraclids would then be seen not as the arrival of a new stock from outside but as the uprising of a depressed part of the populace" (1980, 44).

This view is now codified in the synthesis presented by Elizabeth Craik (1980, 29): "it is now believed that the Dorians came in a series of forays... rather than in a single sudden dramatic influx; or even that they were present alongside the Mycenaeans in the Peloponnese as a subject population".

2.2. The case for could be regarded as proved if the Linear B tablets presented the name of the Dorians. And in fact on one Pylos tablet at least (PY Fn 867, 5) the form

do-ri-je-we

has been read (replacing the previously read *pa-ri-je-we*) which could be interpreted as ΔωριῆϜει but also as ΔολιῆϜει¹⁰. But it is precisely this ambiguity of the Linear B spelling that makes one wonder how Chantraine (1968, 305) could say that the form "prouve que le mot existait avant l'invasion dorieenne".

The context of the tablet is:

line	4	mi-jo-qa do-e-ro	{HORD
	5	do(?)-ri-je-we	{HORD
	6	me-ri-du-ma-si	{HORD

and there is nothing to suggest in line 5 an ethnic or even the name of an inhabitant. Whereas in the case of *I-ja-wo-ne*, found in Knossos (e.g. KN B 164, 4), one might (?) be justified in thinking that the form can hardly be anything else but the antecedent of ἸάϜων (see fn. 8), just as for *qa-si-re-u* identification with βασιλεύς can, in spite of the semantic difficulties, hardly be doubted, for *Do-ri-je-we*, if this reading be correct, there is no such cogency, on the contrary: it would be the only tribal name.

2.3 If, then, this possibility is rejected, we can ask whether the new views concerning the place of Dorians in Mycenaean society suggest an alternative.

It seems to me that, if the Dorians of the Mycenaean empire were an "inferior" stratum, a "depressed part of the populace", "a subject population", then their name might very well perpetuate this status. In other words, *Dorian* might be simply a derivative of Mycenaean *do-e-ro* 'slave'.

Since *do-e-ro* in later time appears as Attic-Ionic δοῦλος, this could mean one of two things. On the one hand, *r* in *Dōr-* could reflect the "Minoan" peculiarity of confusing *l* and *r* (also seen in the syllabary?); this could suggest that the word *doelo* was adopted by the Minoan overlords as *doero*, and the subject population later accepted this form as its own name. Alternatively, *doero* could be a by-form of *doelo*, i.e. the variant used by the

¹⁰ See Chadwick (1960, 143); Ventris-Chadwick (1973, 541). No doubt other interpretations (e.g. *dō-li(j)eu-* or *dō-ri-*) are also possible.

Dorians themselves — obviously a much less likely assumption, seeing that for “slave” only *doelo* is guaranteed.

2.3.1. Both alternatives raise the question whether the antecedent assumed could account for the historical form Δωρ-, that is to say whether early *oe* would appear as ω?

As is known the Doric dialects exhibit two types of development from the original vowel-groups *e - e* and *o-e/o-o*, i.e. η/ω or ει/ου; Ahrens called the Doric of the first type *Doris severior*, the second *Doris mitior*. The first is represented by Laconia (plus the colony Tarent), Creta and Cyrene, the second by the other Doric territories¹¹.

Accordingly, the contraction to Δωρ- would represent the pronunciation of the most important Doric areas, Sparta and Creta, a pronunciation which prevailed over the alternative *Δουρ- both in the Doric areas themselves and in the non-Doric parts of Greece.

A slightly different explanation would be required by the theory advanced in Thumb-Kieckers (1932, 317-320). According to this view, the difference between η/ω and ει/ου is not geographical but chronological: the development in all Doric dialects was originally η/ω but, except in Laconian, Heracleian, Messenian, Cretan, and Cyrenean, this was later, under the influence of the Koine, replaced by ει/ου. In that case the form Δωρ- was due to its becoming general, even in non-Doric areas, at an early date.

2.3.2. There can be little doubt that this explanation implies the following stages in the development:

- (1) Δοερω is used of part or all of the subject population;
- (2) from it an adjective of appurtenance, Δοερω-ιος-ς, is formed;
- (3) on this a place-name Δοερωιον (ἄστυ?) or the name of a region Δοερωις (sc. χώρα, γῆ) is built;
- (4) from one of these local names a new type of inhabitant's name is formed, Δοερωι-εὺς; an excellent Mycenaean parallel is presented by *pedijewe* ‘plainsmen’, derived from πεδίων¹².

It is obviously of some importance to know whether *doero*/δοῦλος, underlying the whole structure, can be securely anchored etymologically. As long as not even the early form of the word was known (for certain), it was justifiable to see in it, a.o., an Aegean loanword. But it remains surprising that the “French school” should have maintained this view even in the late sixties¹³. For as far back as 1955, Pisani had already suggested the evident truth (1955, 6) that the nearest cognate of Mycenaean *do(h)ero* is to be seen in Sanskrit *dāsa*- ‘servant’, a view shared by Chadwick (1955, 14) and reported in Ventris-Chadwick (1959, 391; ²1973, 541)¹⁴.

¹¹ Cf. Bechtel (1921, 20); Schwyzer (1939, 249).

¹² See Ventris-Chadwick (1973, 430).

¹³ Cf. Chantraine (1968, 295: “le mot n’a aucune étymologie indo-européenne, ce qui n’étonne pas, s’agissant du nom de l’esclave”) and Benveniste (1969, 358-9, who compounds the semantic doubts with the surprising phonetic error that *doero* could represent **doselos* or **dowelos*, the latter being quite impossible!).

¹⁴ In the light of the last reference one can only see a passing uncertainty in the opinion expressed at Chadwick-Baumbach (1964, 187).

3. But this “new” view of the role of the Dorians in the Mycenaean social structure – which ultimately can be traced to Beloch¹⁵ – has not gone unchallenged. Both the linguistic and the historical assumptions have been severely criticized.

3.1. The suggestion that the “special” Mycenaean dialect was in fact “proto-Doric”, has been reexamined by Risch with the following result (1980, 103):

so fehlt vorläufig jede Evidenz für das Vorhandensein eines dorischen Dialektes im pylischen Raum, oder gar dafür, daß das ‘mycénien spécial’ dorisch ist; alle entscheidenden sprachlichen Fakten eindeutig dagegen sprechen, daß die dorischen Dialekte des 1. Jahrtausends im wesentlichen von einer schon seit etwa 2000 v. Chr. im Peloponnes gesprochenen Form des Griechischen abstammen und nicht erst nach 1200 dorthin gelangt sind.

Giving his argument a more positive turn he says (110 fn.50):

Angesichts dieser Übereinstimmung zwischen Dorisch und Ionisch-Attisch wäre zu erwägen, ob man die Dorier des 2. Jahrtausends nicht am ehesten im böotisch-phokischen Raum, wo sich ja auch die Landschaft Doris befindet, lokalisieren könnte¹⁶.

One, and perhaps the principal, linguistic obstacle is, of course, the fact that Mycenaean develops the final group *-ti* into *-si* and there is no trace of such a change in the Mycenaean documents. To “save the phenomena” we would have to assume that the Dorians were there but their language could leave no trace in the official documents.

3.2 But the new view has been challenged by historians as well.

As is known, the Greeks themselves were firmly convinced that the Dorians were late-comers in the Peloponnese – they spoke, however, of a “return” of the Heraclidae¹⁷ – and most modern historians have been ready to connect the downfall of the Mycenaean empire with their arrival or invasion¹⁸. Thus, e.g., Eduard Meyer (1954, 246) stressed that the view that the Dorians were invaders in the Peloponnese, was firmly established in the Greek tradition, and drew the conclusion:

¹⁵ See Beloch (1913, 76: “Die ‘dorische Wanderung’ ist eine Erfindung der Neueren”, 96: “hindert uns nichts, die Einwanderung der mittelgriechischen Stämme in die nördlichen Landschaften des Peloponnes vor der Blütezeit von Mykenae, also im XVII. Jahrhundert, oder noch früher, anzusetzen...”); De Sanctis (1942, 154: “la prima ondata dei migratori dorici nel Peloponneso, quella che portò all’occupazione dell’Acaia e dell’Argolide, non è posteriore al 1600 a.C. circa”). The statement: “Nach diesen Forschern wären die Dorer (zs. mit den andern griechischen Stämmen) im frühen 2. Jahrtausend eingewandert” (Bengtson 1977, 52³) goes beyond what these scholars maintained.

¹⁶ According to Thomas (1980, 390) “a talk by Lejeune is reported who doubts presence of Dorians in the time of Linear B tablets”.

¹⁷ For the Greek literary tradition see Hammond (1975) and Hooker (1977, 213-222); also Schachermeyr (1980, 403 f.).

¹⁸ It is of course possible to lower the date of the Dorian migration even further, cf. Rubinsohn (1975 – the invasion, around 1000 B.C., did not bring about the end of the Mycenaean world) and, against him, Hooker (1979).

Wir können daher die *dorische Wanderung* als eine der wenigen zweifellos feststehenden Tatsachen der älteren griechischen Geschichte betrachten.

And according to Bengtson (1977, 52):

Der 'dorischen Wanderung' die historische Realität abzusprechen, ist eine arge Verirrung der modernen Hyperkritik, die sich dadurch den Zugang zu einer historisch begründeten Erkenntnis der Formung des Griechentums im 2. Jahrtausend verbaut.

This position has been repeatedly, and most forcefully, been defended by Schachermeyr (cf., e.g., 1967; 1980 Chapters 24, 27). In his view, part of the Indo-European tribes around 1950 B.C. invaded their later homeland and became the bearers of the Middle Helladic/Mycenaean culture, while the rest remained in Northern Greece and Epirus and later organized themselves as the Dorian tribe. In Mycenaean times there were no Dorians in the Peloponnese (: Beloch's thesis is no longer tenable!) but they had successively settlements at Mt. Ossa and Olympus, later at the Pindos mountains, and finally, before the invasion of the Peloponnese, in the land of the Dryopes and in the later province Dōris, although this sequence of events, reported by Herodotus (I 56) is not perhaps entirely reliable. Nonetheless, the final result is "im Grunde recht peinlich". For Greek dialectology, archaeology, and literary tradition do not point unequivocally in one direction, in fact it seems that

die Dorier kein Gewicht darauf gelegt haben, sich für uns genügend archäologisch zu dokumentieren (1980, 416).

This unsatisfactory situation is admitted by Desborough (1975, 660) also: if the catastrophes (around the end of the 13th c.B.C.) were caused by invasions from the mountainous districts of NW Greece, "there might seem no objection to an immediate link with later tradition, in its equation, at least so far as concerns the Peloponnese, with that of the Dorians" — although there is no archaeological evidence!

33. Since the absence of archaeological evidence might — especially to the layman — seem utterly damaging, it should be pointed out that there are such cases known, some of them extremely well authenticated.

Thus, e.g., the Celts, better known as Galatians, indubitably invaded Asia Minor in the 3rd c. B.C., but they seem to have forgotten to bring with them any "artifactual evidence" of their arrival and presence¹⁹.

And concerning the arrival of the Israelites in Palestine in the 13th c.B.C. it must also be admitted that

"there is no [archaeological] evidence, in the proper sense of the word, that a new ethnic group was taking over power in the land at this time" (CAH 332) and "the archaeologists would be totally unaware of any important ethnic changes at the end of the Late Bronze Age were it not for the biblical traditions" (ibid. 337).

3.4. If, then, in spite of the lack of (decisive²⁰) archaeological evidence we are still

¹⁹ See Thomas (1980, 303 f.).

²⁰ Cf. Schachermeyr (1980, 413).

prepared to admit that the "old view" has something to recommend it, we must put anew our question about the origin of the name.

We can no longer assume that the name expressed the inferior social status of the Dorians but we can try to see whether the form assumed in our earlier discussion can yield a satisfactory solution in the new perspective. In any case, we can be fairly certain that the name of the Dorians was not formed on the coasts of Asia Minor but in mainland Greece, in the words of Eduard Meyer (1954, 245):

der Doriename ist nicht... erst bei den kleinasiatischen Kolonisten entstanden²¹: er ist im Quellgebiet des Kephissos heimisch...

Now the Sanskrit *dāsa*- 'servant' mentioned above (2.3.2.) is not the only cognate of *δοελος*. There is also *dasyu* 'the stranger', and in Iranian we find not only the correspondence to the last form in Old Persian *dahyu* 'land' but also Khotanese *daha* 'man', and, what is even more striking, the name of an Iranian tribe was in antiquity *Dahae*. This reflects the widespread custom that people simply call themselves *men*. And it may be recalled here that the name of the Dacians in Transylvania (*Δᾶκοι*, *Daci*) also represents Iranian *Dahaka* or *Dāhaka*²².

This suggests that the Indo-European form **doso-* developed two derivatives in Greek: **dospelos* assumed the meaning 'man, servant, slave', while **doseros* kept the original meaning and became the name of a tribe.

But now even the ramifications of the name become clear. As is reported by Tacitus (*Germania* 2, 3) the Germanic peoples regarded *Mannus* as their ancestor; this is simply the word *man* which has a cognate in faraway India in the mythical person of *Manu*, the forefather of mankind.

This throws unexpected light on *Δῶρος*. He is first mentioned by Hesiod (1970, 115 frg. 9) when he says that the three sons of Hellen were

Δῶρός τε Ξοῦθός τε καὶ Αἴολος ἱπποχάρμης.

Thus *Dōros* was simply 'man', who became the eponymous heros of the Dorians.

From his name was formed *Δῶριος* 'connected with *Dōros*', and this could be used with a neuter noun (*ἄστυ*?) as a place-name *Δῶριον* or on *Dōros* a feminine *Δωρίς* 'the Dorian district' could be built. Finally from either of these a name of the inhabitants could be formed as *Δωριεύς*.

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²¹ This idea was advanced by Beloch (1912, 141; 1913, 92f.) but, as far as I can see, without any serious argument.

²² See Szemerényi (1980, 43).

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