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CADMUS AND HERACLES IN SEARCH OF ORES

Abstract: This paper discusses the historical background of the legends on Cadmus and Heracles. These stories are recognized as the reminiscence on ancient search for ores in the areas outside the Aegean world.

From time immemorial, circulation of goods and ideas interwove a net of communications across the Mediterranean world. Not only Asia Minor communicated with the Iberian Peninsula and Adriatic coast with the northern African shore – the Mediterranean oecumene maintained contacts with its northern neighbourhood – the Balkans, and even further, with the northern Europe as well. These liaisons, dating back from the Neolithic period, became even more frequent during the course of time, reaching their peak in the Late Bronze Age, the so-called Heroic time. Many were reasons for undertaking less and more distant voyages – trade, migration, exploring, and even adventure – and not many dared to step out of the borders of the known world. Those men earned their place in stories which, retold by generations, eventually became legends.¹

Some legends are therefore the reminiscence of real ancient travels which gradually widened and intensified the knowledge of the Mediterranean world about distant areas beyond the oecumene, the “inhabited world”. These travels also initiated contacts which enabled circulation of people, goods, ideas, and influences of every kind. The first known entrepreneurs, registered in the legends,² were the

¹ Travels of similar kind were historically confirmed only from the end of the 5th century BC onwards, and only by few bold explorers such as Hanno (the west African coast), Pytheas (Britain and northern Europe) and Eudoxus (south India). The Heroic time voyages were a thousand years older.

² These are in the first place the Argonauts, whose returning voyage from the land of Colchys indicates very early inland navigations upstream the Danube and its southern tributaries approaching the northern Adriatic; next there are Daedalus

Mycenaeans, Homer's Achaeans, a vigorous and bold people who dominated the Mediterranean coasts from the 16th-12th centuries BC, during a period to which next generations would refer as the Heroic time. With very scarce land suitable for agriculture in mountainous Greece, the Mycenaeans took to the sea, becoming skilled seafarers and tradesmen. Trade was their primary interest, and their prosperity and power derived from trade as well as from their intermediary role in the international exchange of goods. Seeking raw materials – first of all ores (gold, silver, copper, and tin),³ as well as amber, timber, foodstuffs, cattle and slaves, the Mycenaeans in turn offered their pottery of fine quality, weapons and other objects which served to demonstrate owner's (high) social position and wealth; perhaps also some perishable items archaeologically undocumented. Mycenaean trading activities embraced the whole Mediterranean, their eastern market covering the Aegean, the Near East and Egypt,⁴ while their pioneering exploits towards the West involved the Balkans, Italy, Sicily and Spain, stretching even beyond the Pillars of Hercules (the Straits of Gibraltar) and aiming towards northern Europe.

Successive waves of the so-called Aegean migrations starting at the end of the Middle Bronze Age caused chaos in the Mediterranean world during the 13th century BC. These migrations involved movements on a wider scale, having the Pannonian basin as their starting point,⁵ and covered the great part of Europe, the main stream aiming towards the south – the civilized Mediterranean. Newcomers from the north, known as the Dorians, trampled down flourishing Mycenaean cities and caused total ruination of the Mycenaean civilization; other groups of invaders, whom Egyptian inscriptions mention

and Phaethon, protagonists of stories about amber originally purveyed from the Baltic and carried down to the northern Adriatic; there are Cadmus and Heracles too, who are the subject matter of this paper.

³ During the Middle and Late Bronze Age (the 16th-9th century BC) metal was the main article involved in the exchange of goods, due to a rather great demand concerning the manufacture of weapons, tools, vessels, jewellery and other items.

⁴ The eastern trade route is best documented by a shipwreck off the Turkish coast at Ulu Burun. This supposedly Mycenaean ship sailed along the eastern Mediterranean coasts in the heyday of the Late Bronze Age (most probably in the 14th century BC) mediating among local peoples and purchasing merchandise of various origin; see George F. Bass, *Oldest Known Shipwreck Reveals Splendors of the Bronze Age*, *National Geographic* Vol. 172, No. 6, 1987. 692-732.

⁵ The populations in Pannonia, who started these migratory waves, are known as the bearers of the Culture of Urn Fields. Its expansion caused a chain reaction in the form of further migrations aiming towards the Mediterranean and including the Aegean migratory waves as well as the expansion of the People of the Sea.

as the People of the Sea, ran over the east Mediterranean coasts, changing the balance of forces in the Near East. The coast between Egypt and Asia Minor was conquered and political picture of the whole Near East was changed – only a stretch of the Syro-Palestinian coast was left outside the dominion of the attackers, that is, the territory between Tell Suquas in the north and Acco in the south, corresponding approximately to modern Lebanon. The credit for this independence was due to the Phoenicians, the people dwelling in local coastal cities.⁶ Isolated and concentrated along the coastline and cut off from the mountain range of Lebanon in the hinterland, the Phoenicians turned their attention to the trade and handicrafts and committed themselves to the sea. As genuine successors of the Mycenaean thalassocracy, Phoenicians took the initiative in trading throughout the Mediterranean, and even farther away at the turn of the 12th century BC.⁷ Known as skilled seamen, masters of seas and of its routes and secrets, as well as expert explorers, they were also capable and astute merchants⁸ “skilled in deceit”, “rascal” and “weaver of swindles”, as already Homeric tradition claimed. It was a part of the negative image which Greek world fostered perhaps because of the envy and fear of competition on the market; indeed, a people of precisely such kind is only one capable of venturing far across the borders of the “inhabited world”; such were also the Mycenaean, the Phoenician’s predecessors. Phoenician ships frequented the same coastal regions as the Mycenaean ships did some one hundred years before. Phoenician trading activities were at first directed primarily to the east Mediterranean market and its neighbouring areas (Egypt and Near East), extending eventually to the West and embracing Cyprus, Crete, Aegean, Sicily, Malta, Sardinia, north Africa and

⁶ An excellent review of the Phoenicians as a whole is provided by the catalogue of the exhibition held in 1988 at the Palazzo Grassi in Venezia: *The Phoenicians* (under the scientific direction of Sabatino Moscati), Milano 1988; see also Michael Grant, *The Rise of the Greeks. History of Civilization*, New York 1988; Ora Negbi, *Early Phoenician Presence in the Mediterranean Islands: A Reappraisal*, *American Journal of Archaeology* 96/4, 1992, 599-615.

⁷ The oldest testimony of the Phoenician presence in the Mediterranean is the “temple A” from the settlement of Kommos, on the Cretan southern coast, dating from the 10th century BC (Negbi, *op. cit.* (n. 6), 609).

⁸ Herodotus described their manner of purchasing gold from the Libyans (IV.196) and Diodorus depicted Phoenician skill in taking the advantage of the Iberians’ unawareness of the value of local silver ore (V.35,4-5). Interesting and very indicative is the insight in the way of thinking of Phoenician merchants: they went so far as to replace their lead anchors with silver ones in order to exploit fully the carrying capacity of their ships (Diodorus, *ibid.*).

Iberian Peninsula.⁹ Phoenician enterprises (once again) stepped out beyond the Pillars of Hercules and set out for the north, along the west Atlantic coast, towards Britain and the Baltic.¹⁰ Seeking raw materials, especially ores (gold, silver and copper), Phoenician traders aimed to the Iberian Peninsula (Spain abounded in silver), while in the most distant areas they purchased tin (Cornwall, Devon) and amber (the Baltic),¹¹ metal ores and amber being the main trading articles in the Late Bronze Age Europe. Especially skilled in manufacturing objects of precious metals, Phoenicians were constantly in need of gold and silver, not neglecting non-precious metals as copper, iron, lead and tin, necessary for the production of tools, weapons and vessels designed for export. Items which Phoenicia could offer to the market were highly praised because of their quality and beauty – the Bible mentions household furnishings of ivory-inlaid cedar, finely chased bronze or silver bowls, sandcore glass vessels, purple cloth, as well as timber (cedar and fir).¹²

Phoenicians did not confine themselves to importing raw materials or exporting finished products – they were also carriers and mediators between various areas, unscrupulously and very efficiently guarding their monopoly on the market. Stories about various sea monsters and queer and hostile inhabitants of distant lands, preserved in many Greek myths and legends, when seen in this light, gain their logical explanation as the means of terrifying competitors and distracting other peoples from the sphere of the Phoenician interest.

While the Phoenician cities developed their trading activities throughout the Mediterranean and even beyond, continental Greece sank into the Dark Age which followed the destruction of the Aegean

⁹ The Phoenicians did not expand their trading activity towards continental Italy and the Adriatic because the Greeks blocked their access to these areas. The Phoenicians in turn closed routes to Spain and the Mediterranean West to the Greeks.

¹⁰ Among numerous mentions of the Phoenicians reaching to the West and North there are, for example, statements in Strabo (“Phoenicians ventured far beyond the Pillars of Hercules”, I.3.2), Diodorus from Sicily (“They began to navigate beyond the Pillars of Hercules, in the sea which men call Ocean”, V.20.1) and Pliny the Elder (“Tyre who founded Gades beyond the inhabited world”, *Naturalis historia*, V.19,76).

¹¹ Regarding their easter market, from the land of Ophir (very likely modern Ethiopia) the Phoenicians acquired sandalwood, precious stones, ivory, apes, peacocks and above all gold and silver (as in 1 *Kings*, 10.11, 10.25); from Cyprus they purchased copper, from Anatolia tin, and from Egypt linen.

¹² 1 *Kings* 5.20: on skilled woodworkers; 7.13-14: on making of bronze objects with no equal in the Mediterranean world.

civilization. That period lasted three or four hundred years during which time the memories of the lost Mycenaean glory gradually faded away, and turned into legend. As the use and the knowledge of writing diminished, the memories were carried on verbally, through wandering bards singing about the long gone days of Mycenaean kings and distant travels and the deeds of Mycenaean heroes. The most famous examples are the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*; in the former, the image of the Mycenaean civilization is preserved in the description of the life in the palaces, while the latter contains various travel adventures by land and sea, echoing the time when the traffic throughout the Mediterranean was rather intensive, and in which the first enterprises far beyond the known world should be dated. During the Dark Age, trade and other activities with distant areas ceased and the Greek world considerably restrained. To Homer, the known world embraced only a part of the Mediterranean, its western border being Sicily and eastern the Hellespont, leaving the Epirus on the northern edge of the oecumene.¹³

As it was already said, trading enterprises of the Mycenaean as well as of the Phoenicians found their place in Greek legends. Two of these stories should be associated with the exploitation of natural sources (especially of ore, and of stone) in the area between the Danube in the north, the Alps in the west and the Adriatic in the south (in this paper, this area will be tentatively mentioned as the Balkans). These stories include the legends on Cadmus and on Heracles. Although both are considered to be of Phoenician origin (Cadmus is explicitly mentioned as “the Phoenician”, or “the Sidonian”, and Heracles is the native of the Phoenician city of Tyrus), the actions narrated in these stories should be placed in the Mycenaean milieu,¹⁴ that is, roughly in the 14th century BC, the period of the Mycenaean heyday. The stories on both heroes originated from the Dark Age of the Greek history, beginning in the 12th century BC and covering the Homer’s time as well. Some of the archaeological material corroborates intensive liaisons between the Aegean and the rest of the

¹³ *Od.*, I.259-262; *Od.*, II.328-330. Numerous toponyms in Epirus, taken from the mythical topography of the world of the dead, indicate that Epirus was then on the edge of the known world; this was further corroborated by the written sources, for instance Hesiod, who says that the famous oracle at Dodone is at the end of the world (frg. 134). See also Radoslav Katičić, *Illyricum mythologicum*, Zagreb 1995, 86 and 300.

¹⁴ The problem of the dating of both heroes will be touched later in this paper.

Mediterranean world, as well as the Balkans (its immediate neighbourhood), in the time corresponding to the exploring activities ascribed to Cadmus and Heracles. The scope of the mutually exchanged merchandise is unknown – Mycenaean traces are scattered in the form of fine pottery, bronze weapons and tools, and the other side (barbarian communities) offered their foodstuffs (wheat, salted meat, cheese), hide, wool, resin, timber, medicinal plants, slaves, and especially ore (bronze, silver, and gold).¹⁵ Some elements in the stories about Cadmus and Heracles could indicate acquisition of cattle and of ore in the prehistoric Europe: Cadmus' purchase of cow in the Thrace, Heracles' pursue of the Gerion's cattle, and Cadmus' involving in the exploitation of the gold mines on the Mount of Pangaeus (as well as the silver mines in the Damastion area); Heracles' distant journey far north to the garden of the Hesperides could be interpreted as the quest for amber, and his itinerary across the Europe suggests the search of tin and silver ores.

One of the most ancient proofs of the contacts between the Aegean and the Balkans dates back from the European Eneolithic period, corresponding to the Early Helladic period in the Aegean (around 2300 BC) – in the grave-mound at Bare near Kragujevac (west of the Morava river, in Serbia) the golden jewellery was found, originating from the Near East. Next is the princely grave-mound from Mala Gruda near Tivat (Montenegro) containing Aegean objects showing the exceptional social and economic status of the deceased and dating from the end of the Eneolithic period (beginning of the Middle Helladic, 2000-1900 BC).¹⁶ Aegean items (mostly daggers, swords, pendants, and pottery) continued to be imported during the

¹⁵ Many classical authors mentioned items which the Balkan populations exchanged (or could exchange) for goods from the Mediterranean. Pliny the Elder, for example, claims that the Illyrian iris, which grows in the forests near the rivers Drim and Neretva, is of the best quality (*Nat. hist.*, XXI.40; see also Nicander, *Theriaca*, 607-609; Theophrastus, *De plantis*, IV.5.2), and mentions some other medicinal herbs (asarum, *Nat. hist.*, XII.27; gentiana, *Nat. hist.*, XXV.34; perpressa, *Nat. hist.*, XXVI.55). Several authors mention silver or gold ores (Polybius in Strabo, IV.6.12; Strabo, VII.7.8; Pliny the Elder, *Nat. hist.*, XXXIII.21; Statius, *Silvae*, I.2.153, III.3.89; Martial, 78.5), and Pseudo Scymnus indicates the trading in tin in the northern Adriatic (*Periegesis*, 391-393). Theopompus testifies the trade between the Aegean and Adriatic, in the form of the Chian and Thasian pottery which is sold at an emporium on the river Neretva (in Strabo, VII.5.9), and Strabo speaks of intensive trading across the southeastern Alpine slopes (IV.6.10).

¹⁶ Bare: Maja Parović-Pešikan, *Neki novi aspekti širenja egejske i grčke kulture na centralni Balkan*, *Starinar* n. s. 36, 1985, 19-49: 20; Mala Gruda: Maja Parović-Pešikan, *Najnovija istraživanja u Boki kotorskoj s posebnim osvrtom na problem ilirskih i predilirskih veza sa Egejom*, in: *IX. kongres arheologa Jugoslavije* (Zadar, 1972), *Materijali* 12, ed. Š. Batović, Zadar 1976, 77-87.

Early and the Middle Bronze Ages, as various sites extending from the northernmost part of the Adriatic to the Albanian coast and into the interior indicate, preceding the period in which the events mirrored in the stories about Cadmus and Heracles took place. Approximately in their time (the Late Bronze Age, corresponding to the Late Helladic III, 1300-800 BC) or a little earlier are dated swords, daggers and pottery fragments from several Albanian grave-mounds (Pazhok, Vajzë, Barç) (15th century BC), a fragment of a Mycenaean vase from Debelo Brdo near Sarajevo (Bosnia) (14th-13th centuries BC), some other fragments of Late Helladic pottery from Đevdelija (Macedonia) (13th-12th centuries BC) and a small ingot in the shape of a stretched ox-hide from Makarska (middle Adriatic coast) (12th century BC).¹⁷

Early Aegean interest in the Balkans was instigated by rich ore layers. Deposits of copper, silver and gold in the Adriatic hinterland were investigated and exploited at least from the time of the earlier phase of the Greek colonization (8th-5th centuries BC), since Herodotus described hydrographical situation of the Danubian fluvial system (IV.49). The middle and the lower Danube stretches, together with its tributaries, give access to the rich ore layers in modern Bosnia, Serbia and Transylvania, so Herodotus' description could be seen as a sort of ore map¹⁸ providing Greek colonists from the Black Sea with necessary information about the possibilities of ore exploitation.¹⁹

¹⁷ Albanian sites: Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 27-30; Nicholas G. L. Hammond, Tumulus-burial in Albania and problems of ethnogenesis, *Iliria* 4/1, 1976, 127-132. Makarska: Šime Batović, Kasno brončano doba na istočnom jadranskom primorju, in: *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja, IV. Bronzano doba*, ed. A. Benac, Sarajevo 1983, 271-373; 335-349; Parović-Pešikan 1985 (n. 16), 27; Aleksandar Stipčević, *Iliri. Povijest, život, kultura*, Zagreb 1989², 30.

¹⁸ On the problem of the "ore maps" see: Rastislav Marić, Prilozi antičkoj istoriji Srbije, *Starinar* n. s. 3-4, 1955, 25-44; Rastislav Marić, Spev Apolonija Rodanina o pohodu Argonauta kao izvor za istoriju Podunavlja, *Godišnjak Filozofskog fakulteta u Novom Sadu* 3, 1958, 39-43; indirectly also in H. A. Bankoff, Metal Ores and Trade on the Middle Danube, in: *Ancient Europe and the Mediterranean. Studies presented in honour of Hugh Hencken*, ed. V. Markotić, Warminster 1977, 13-18.

¹⁹ A little receptacle containing traces of melted galena, from the Late Neolithic settlement at Gornja Tuzla (Bosnia), testifies very early metallurgical activity inside the territory of the Vinča culture (Borivoj Čović, Praistorijsko rudarstvo i metalurgija u Bosni i Hercegovini – stanje i problemi istraživanja, *Godišnjak Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja Akademije nauka i umjetnosti Bosne i Hercegovine* 22/20, 1984, 111-144: 112). Eneolithic exploitation and production is quite well documented throughout the area of the Vučedol culture, in the watershed of the Drava, Sava and Danube. This culture belonged to wealthy cattle-raising communities whose surplus products were exchanged for copper, a very demanded item. For the Bronze Age mining and metallurgy in modern Bosnia, there are numerous traces of metallurgical activities from numerous settlements, among

Another ore map, pointing to the mineral layers in modern Serbia, is given by the Hellenistic poet Apollonius from Rhodes (*Argonautica*, IV.323-326), whose description of the middle Danube and its bifurcation towards the west (that is, the Sava river), as well as several geographical features (serving as orientational points) along the route of the Argonaut' return from the land of Colchis seem to show the way to the rich ore deposits in modern Serbia. The Laurian plain (recognized as Deliblatska peščara in Banat), the cliff of Cauliacus (the Kalemegdan in Belgrade), and the mount Angurum (Avala), as well as the divided stream of Ister (confluence of the Sava and the Danube) – all point to various ore layers in the Mount Avala region south of Belgrade, rich in iron, lead, mercury, silver and cinnabarite, an extremely rare mineral and a very demanded one.²⁰ Stories about Cadmus, Heracles and even the Argonauts indicate much earlier exploitation, beginning already in the Late Eneolithic (as examples in notes 18 and 19 prove). The story about Jason's venture in the land of the Colchis should perhaps be interpreted as mastering new metallurgical technologies: two bronze bulls belching fire whom Jason had to tame in order to saw the dragon's teeth could be a symbol of metallurgical kilns.²¹ So the story of the Argonaut' return from the Colchis could also be seen as a part of the memory on ancient quest and exploitation of ores – a hypothesis encouraged by the fact that the Argonauts ventured far north to get hold of the golden fleece (symbolizing the search of gold).

The most famous ore layers in the area northwest of the Mycenaean world were the gold mines on the Mount of Pangaeus in Thrace (east of the Struma river, above the promontory of Chalcidice) and mysterious silver mines in the Damastion area, in modern Macedonia, somewhere north of the lakes of Ohrid and Prespa, or maybe even farther, along the Crni Drim river.²² Damastion is

others Ripač and Čungar near Cazin on the Una river; Sanski Most and Zecovi near Prijedor on the Sana; Donja Dolina on the Sava; Pod near Bugojno on the Vrbas; Crkvina near Turbe and Alihodže on the Lašva; Varvara on the Rama; Debelo Brdo near Sarajevo on the Bosna river.

²⁰ Eneolithic exploitation of ores is testified in the mine at Šuplja stijena on the Mount of Avala, and at Rudna glava near Majdanpek, south of the Đerdap (Marić, 1955, op. cit. (n. 18), 36, 39; Borislav Jovanović, *Rudarstvo i metalurgija eneolitskog perioda Jugoslavije*, in: *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja, III. Eneolit*, ed. A. Benac, Sarajevo 1979, 27-54: 43-46).

²¹ Marina Miličević Bradač, *Stara Grčka. Grci na Crnome moru*, Zagreb 2004, 427.

²² On Damastion see for example: Petar Lisičar, *Legenda o Kadmu i veze Lihnida s Egejom i Jadranom*, *Živa antika* 3/1-2, 1953, 245-261:251; Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 45; Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 261-266.

mentioned only by Strabo, in connection with the Chalcidic exploitation of silver in the 5th century BC.²³ The facts that Strabo explicitly attributes this area to the Enchelaeans, that Stephanus of Byzantium placed the Pangaeian gold mines in the vicinity of Illyria, and that literary sources correlated the Pangaeian with Cadmus,²⁴ strongly suggest that Cadmus' voyage across the Thrace to the land of the Enchelaeans was stimulated by the exploitation of rich ore layers in the area northwest of Greece.

As for Heracles' wanderings through the western Europe and across the Alps, there is no explicit mentioning of his search of ores, but it is very indicative that he pursued Gerion's cattle from the Iberia and across the Alps, both areas being very rich in various ores. This gains credibility due to the fact that he also visited the garden of the Hesperides where he took three golden (amber?) apples; this garden, at the northern or the western edge of the world, could be located somewhere in the Baltics (rich in amber) or near the British island where rich tin deposits have been established.

The legend about Cadmus and his wife Harmonia, one of the most popular stories in the Greek world, was noted down by an unknown logographer in the times following Homer's heroic poems, and then reinterpreted by many subsequent Greek and Roman writers. Among the oldest preserved versions are those in Euripides and Herodotus (5th century BC) and in the *Bibliotheca*, a mythological hand-book from the 1st century AD, ascribed to 2nd century BC grammarian and historian Apollodorus of Athens. The most interesting part of the story is Cadmus' departure to the west and settling down

²³ Much older exploitation of silver ore in the area of the Lake of Ohrid is attested by traces of mining and metallurgical activities in the vicinity of Stariski Dol, Raleica and Prentov most (Lisićar. op. cit. (n. 22), 251; Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 45). It is believed that the exploitation began already in the Late Bronze Age, due to the Phoenician interest in and demand of precious ores: Cadmus' presence in the Thrace and in the land of the Enchelaeans suggests that this interest could be even older, originating from the Mycenaean period. In this light perhaps could be seen stone moulds for production of axes, from Malinica and from Kravari near Bitola, east of the Lake of Prespa, confirming the Early Bronze Age metallurgical activity in this area (Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 45).

²⁴ "(...) the silver mines of Damastium, around which the Dyestae and the Enchelei (also called Sesarethi) together established their dominion (...). It were the descendants of Cadmus and Harmonia who (in earlier times) ruled over the Enchelei" (Strabo, VII.7,8); "Illyria, a country near Pangaeus, named after Illyrius, the son of Cadmus" (Stephanus of Byzantium, s. v. *Illyria*); "Likewise the wealth of Cadmus arose from the mines round Thrace and Mount Pangaeus (...)" (Strabo, XIV.5,28); "Mining and smelting gold was invented by Cadmus the Phoenician at mount Pangaeus" (Pliny the Elder, *Nat. hist.*, VII.56,195).

in the land of the Enchelaeans, representing a mythological interpretation of actual contacts between the Aegean and the Adriatic, existing from the Neolithic period and culminating in the Late Bronze Age. The main interest of the Aegean world for western areas, on the border of the known world and even beyond, was the search and exploitation of natural resources, mainly copper, silver and gold, and the story about Cadmus fits well into this pattern.

It is not quite simple to place the story into a firm spatial and temporal framework. According to ancient genealogies, Cadmus lived in the period preceding the Trojan war (which, according to Eratosthenes, was finished in 1183 BC), most probably in the sixth generation before the war, which corresponds to the 14th century BC. According to Herodotus (V.57, V.61) and Pausanias (IX.5,13, IX.8,6-7), who speak about Laodamantus, the son of Etheocles (one of the Epigoni) and Cadmus' descendant in the seventh generation, placed in the 13th century BC, Cadmus would have lived in the 15th century BC, precisely during which time the first known import of the Mycenaean weapons and pottery reached Epirus and south Albania. Nevertheless, if one would rely on archaeological data concerning the development of Boeotian Thebes from the village into the city (Cadmus is said to be the founder of the city of Thebes), Cadmus should be placed in much earlier time, at the beginning of the Bronze Age (which corresponds to the Early Helladic II/III), that is in the 2000-1900 BC.²⁵ In any case, Cadmus should be considered of the Mycenaean, and not the Phoenician character (speaking in terms of chronology), since the Phoenicians entered the historical scene only in the 12th century BC, after the destruction of the Mycenaean cities and on the eve of the Trojan war. The fact that he was called Phoenician or Sidonian should not be an obstacle to this attribution, since he was an immigrant in the Mycenaean milieu. The name "Phoenician" (*Phoinix*) could mean "stranger" or "oriental" and does not have to indicate the Phoenician origin – there are suppositions that Cadmus was a Canaanite or a Carian, although literary evidence suggests his Phoenician origin²⁶,

²⁵ On ancient genealogies and dating of Cadmus see Marjeta Šašel Kos. Cadmus and Harmonia in Illyria. *Arheološki vestnik* 44, 1993, 113-136: 124-126. On dating of the Cadmaeans: Katičić. op. cit. (n. 13), 225-229, 236, 242. On archaeological corroborations: Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 46. On the founding of Thebes: Šašel Kos, op. cit. (n. 25), 120.

²⁶ On Cadmus' Canaanite origin: *The Phoenicians*, op. cit. (n. 6), 95. According to the Old Testament (*Gen* 90.15), Sidon was the first born of Canaan, and the Phoenicians are the descendants of the Canaanites (in fact, they are the Canaanites who managed to preserve their independence during the attack of the People of the Sea): see Grant, op. cit. (n. 6), 294. On Cadmus' Carian origin: Kurt

or even a Lybian, since Cadmus' father Agenor was the son of Lybia and Poseidon, and therefore presumably of Lybian stock; he immigrated to the Syro-Palestinian coast and became the king of the city of Sidon. Cadmus and his brothers were born there. Directions of their journeys in search of their sister Europe clearly show the route by which eastern Mediterranean influences reached Europe. Agenor have traversed the west – east section of this route, from Lybia via Egypt to Canaan (this land would later be known as Phoenicia, stretching along the Syro-Palestinian coast), and his sons turned again towards northwest, following the northeastern coast of the Mediterranean sea: while Phoenix, after visiting Lybia, settled in Canaan and gave it a new name (Phoenicia), Cylix went to Cylicia, the land in the northern corner of the Syro-Palestinian coast, Phineus migrated to Thrace, Thasus settled down on the island of Thasus, and Cadmus traversed Caria and Thrace to reach Illyria, the farthest northwestern destination reached by the sons of Agenor. Their sister Europe, whose kidnapping caused these movements, stayed on the island of Crete, the fact being very indicative since Crete (along with Cyprus) was the first station towards the west, during the Bronze Age navigations in Mediterranean.²⁷ Let us here mention again the shipwreck off the Turkish coast at Ulu Burun, whose cargo (its provenience and date) fits perfectly in the picture of the Mediterranean traffic during the Late Bronze Age, connecting all places associated with the story about Cadmus and his brothers in search of their sister.

As it was previously said, many elements point to the fact that Cadmus and his brothers belonged to the Mycenaean era – the most plausible period is the 14th century BC, the time when the Mycenaean civilization was on its peak. Their wanderings across the east Mediterranean and Cadmus' venture to the lands on the western border of the Aegean world indicate the scope of the Mycenaean trade activities leading to their thalassocracy in the Mediterranean and all other neighbouring seas. We should remember that the legend about Cadmus dates from the so-called Dark Age in continental Greece, a time corresponding to the rise of the Phoenician cities on the Syro-Palestinian coast. The elements connecting Cadmus with Phoenicia could be

Latte, s. v. Kadmos (no. 4), in: *Paulys Realencyclopädie der classischen Altertumswissenschaft* X₂, 1919, 1460-1472: 1462; Ivica Degmedžić, Amantini, *Vjesnik Arheološkog muzeja u Zagrebu* ser. 3, vol. 2, 1961, 139-180: 156, 161-162; see also P. Hr. Ilievski, The ancient Greek in contact with other Balkan languages, *Studia Albanica* 16/1, 1979, 139-161: 154. A review of various opinions regarding Cadmus' origin see in Šašel Kos, op. cit. (n. 25), 126-128.

²⁷ See, for example, Negbi, op. cit. (n. 6).

understood as a projection of the ancient Mycenaean thalassocracy on the current situation in the Mediterranean, with the Phoenicians as worthy heirs of the long-gone Mycenaean power.

Although there are various hypotheses regarding the motives of the east Mediterranean diaspora towards the west (migration, trade, exploration, individual escapes²⁸), the most plausible reason why Cadmus reached the south Adriatic coast and its hinterland is the search of ores, especially of silver and gold. Mycenaean and earlier Minoan exploring of new ore layers involved the island of Thasus, in the northern corner of the Aegean sea, and the land of Thrace, lying opposite (areas rich in silver and gold),²⁹ and literary sources explicitly mention Cadmus as the inventor of mining and metallurgy in the land of Thrace.³⁰ Except from Strabo (VII.7,8), ancient authors do not mention rich silver layers in the Damastion area, in the land of the Enchelaeans in Illyria, the western Thracian neighbour. Even Strabo does not explicitly associate the exploitation of the Damastian silver with Cadmus, but the story about Cadmus' sojourn among the Enchelaeans, retold by so many authors, gives enough elements to attribute the beginning of the extraction of silver to Cadmus (the Mycenaean), not to mention the literary attested Phoenician demand for silver – as in Herodotus who claims that the Phoenicians opened the first silver mines on the island of Thasus (VI.47). Thasus is opposite to the promontory of Chalcidice, and from there leads the way to the area of the Lake of Ohrid, where Damastion was located. In any way, Cadmus' presence in the area was a clear sign of ore exploitation, due to the fact that antiquity considered him to be the *heros archegetes* of mining industry, and even the one of the Cabryri, Pelasgic patrons of mining.³¹

²⁸ Exodus of the Cadmus' descendants, the Cadmaeans, from Thebes attacked by the Epigoni, dated in the time immediately preceding the Trojan war, and their passing the same route which Cadmus took seven generations earlier, is an example of such a flight (see Herodotus, V.57 and V.61; Diodorus of Sicily, XIX.53.67; Pausanias, IX.8.6-7; Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 45-46; Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 225-229).

²⁹ Šašel Kos, op. cit. (n. 25), 128. Herodotus speaks of Phoenician silver mines on the island of Thasus (VI.47).

³⁰ Strabo and Pliny the Elder are cited in the note 23; contrary to these two authors, the mythographer Hyginus stated that "gold in Panchaia, on the Mount Tascus" was discovered by Aeacus, the son of Iuppiter, giving to Cadmus the credit of inventing brass (*Fabulae*, 274).

³¹ Cadmus as the *heros archegetes* is attested by the sources cited in notes 24 and 30, as well as by Strabo (XIV.5.28) who lists the most famous gold mines in the Mediterranean attributing each of them to an individual founder – Cadmus is mentioned in connection with Thrace and Mount Pangaeus. Cadmus as the Cabyrus

Literary sources specify that Cadmus and his wife Harmonia crossed all the way from the Boeotia to the Adriatic in an oxen-driven wagon,³² which implies that they travelled by land, and not by sea as the Mycenaeans and the Phoenicians mostly did. Their itinerary includes the valley of the river Aliacmon (stretching west of the Chalcidice), northern side of the Lake of Ohrid, and the valley of the river Shkumbin which intersects Albania and reaches the Adriatic in the vicinity of modern Durrës (ancient Dyrrachium). This route (given the name “Cadmaean Road”) would later be known as the Egnatian Road (Via Egnatia), the most important land connection between the Aegean and the Adriatic, in function from the Eneolithic and very probably already from the Neolithic period.³³ Thracian and Illyrian areas, scenes of action of Cadmus’ very probable mining activity, were directly connected with the Danube by two rivers, Vardar and South Morava. In fact, the Aegean itself was thus linked with the Danube area, since Vardar (ancient Axios) empties into the Aegean sea, and South Morava, which rises from the river Pčinje (a short waterflow joining the Vardar south from Skopje), joins the Danube east from the mountain range to which Mount Avala belongs. Thus, Herodotus’ “ore map” and Apollonius’ orientational points gain in credibility, showing that the entire area between the Danube and the Adriatic (as well as the Aegean) belonged to the sphere of interest of the world described in Greek legends.

The mentioned route was not, of course, the only way to the interior. Another extremely important communication led upstream the Neretva river into the mountains of central Bosnia – from there, through the fluvial net (containing rivulets and two rivers, Vrbas and Bosna) one can quite easily reach the Sava river, which represents a

is mentioned in the scholium of Apollonius from Rhodes’ *Argonautica* I.917; see also Lisičar, op. cit. (n. 22), 250-251; Ivica Degmedžić, Sjeverna i istočna granica Ilira, in: *Simpozijum o Ilirima u antičko doba, Posebna izdanja Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja* 5/2, ed. A. Benac, Sarajevo 1967, 55-61: 55. Note the fact that the name of cadmium (Cd), soft, bluish-white metallic element occurring primarily in zinc, copper and lead ores, chemistry derives from *kadmeia ge*, “Cadmus’ earth”.

³² See Phylo from Byblus in Stephanus of Byzantium, s. v. *Bouthoe*.

³³ On the date of the route: Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16), 26-27; Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 301. The route is well documented by Neolithic and Bronze Age archaeological finds from Albania – the literature on this subject is listed in Aleksandar Stipčević, *Kulturni simboli kod Ilira. Građa i prilozi sistematizaciji, Posebna izdanja Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja* 54/10, 1981, 73, n. 46. Polybius’ description of the Egnatian Road is preserved in Strabo, VII.7.4. The name “Cadmaean Road” originates from Petar Lisičar (see Lisičar, op. cit. (n. 22)).

part of the Danubian water system and was regarded in antiquity as a southern branch of the Danube itself.³⁴

Cadmus' destination was the land of the Enchelaeans. His arrival in their territory, stretching from the Boka Kotorska along the coast to the Ceraunian mountains in the south and in the interior to the Lake of Ohrid, was mentioned by many authors, but only in outlines – the story was obvious widely known to all and there was no need to retell it over and over again. The most complete version is given in Apollodorus (III.5,4), and others mention only parts of the story, mostly concerning Cadmus' arrival and his leadership of the Enchelaeian army attacking the neighbouring Illyrians, and a later leadership of the united Enchelaeian and Illyrian armies attacking Greek cities and Apollo's shrine at Delphi.³⁵ According to tradition, Cadmus became the first Enchelaeian king, establishing the dynasty of which speaks Theopompus: "It were the descendants of Cadmus and Harmonia who – in earlier times – ruled over the Enchelaeans" (in Strabo, VII.7,8). It is believed that the establishing of the foreign dynasty among the Enchelaeans was due to the exploitation of silver ore in the Damastian area, a practice common in the Minoan and the Mycenaean times, when every artisanal activity (especially metallurgy) was under the control of the state power. There are indications that Cadmus was in fact of Carian origin and that the credit for the exploitation of Pangaeian gold mines as well as of Damastian silver ore should be given to the Carians – besides the Cadmus' itinerary towards the west (already mentioned in this paper), there is an indirect confirmation in Strabo, mentioning the owners of the most famous gold mines in the Mediterranean (XIV.5,28); if the imaginary line is drawn linking all mentioned places, the result is an extension of the "Cadmaean Road" (Via Egnatia) towards the east, as far as the middle Asia Minor (the land of the Carians).³⁶ Be as it may, the Enchelaeans

³⁴ The banks of the Neretva river were known as abundant in iris of high quality (see n. 14) and the area around its source was rich in rock-salt, extremely important in the ancient economy (Strabo, VII.5,11; Pseudo Aristotle, *De mirabilis auscultationibus*, 138). On the river Neretva (ancient Naro) there was an "upper emporium" in which tradesmen from the Black Sea, Greece and Illyria gathered, exchanging their products – Theopompus mentions Chian and Thasian pottery (in Strabo, VII.5.9), and Pseudo Aristotle speaks of Lesbian, Chian and Thasian articles and of Cercyraean amphoras (*De mir. ausc.*, 104).

³⁵ On Cadmus' arrival: Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, IV.567-568; Pausanias, IX.5.3; Stephanus of Byzantium, s. v. *Bouthoe*. On Cadmus' leadership: Euripides, *Bacchae*, 1330-1339 and 1354-1360; Herodotus, IX.43. Diodorus of Sicily offered another version of the story, claiming that the Enchelaeans attacked Thebes (which was ruled by Cadmus) after which Cadmus escaped in the Illyria (XIX.53.5).

³⁶ On the state controlling production: Parović-Pešikan, 1985, op. cit. (n. 16). 45; on the Carians: Degmedžić, op. cit. (n. 26). 156, 161-162.

kept alive the tradition of the foreign origin of their royal institution, because the connection with Cadmus provided them with a credibility in the eyes of the Greek world. Even a thousand years later, the ruling class of the Dassaretians, who inherited their territory and were perhaps of the Enchelaeian origin, kept alive tradition of ancient and long-lasting contacts with Greeks, as it is witnessed by their princely graves in Trebenište north from the Lake of Ohrid. What is more interesting, the snake head on the ornamental pins and bracelets could point to the deep-rooted tradition of Cadmus' sojourn among the Enchelaeians.³⁷ The Enchelaeians are widely considered as the worshippers of snake, and their (Greek) name could derive from the word meaning "Eel" (traditionally seen as a sort of serpent); on the other hand, Cadmus and Harmonia were eventually transformed into snakes, fitting thus well into the Enchelaeian religious world.³⁸

Cadmus' metamorphosis into the snake is one more popular episode in the story, concerning the end of his mortal life. His transformation was foretold, as we can learn from the dialogue between the god Dionysus and Cadmus: "Changing your form, you will become a dragon, and your wife, Harmonia, Ares' daughter, whom you though mortal held in marriage, will be turned into a beast, and will receive in exchange the form of a serpent (...)" (Euripides, *Bacchae*, 1330-1334). According to Greek didactic poet Nicander (2nd century BC), they still live in their snakelike form on the banks of the rivers Drilo (Drim) and Naro (Neretva) (*Theriaca*, 607-609), and the Hellenistic tradition (adopted by Ovid) claims that they are tame and benevolent toward the people (*Metamorphoses*, IV.600-603).

³⁷ On possible Enchelaeian origin of Dassaretians see in Strabo (VII.7.8). On Trebenište see, for example, Lisičar, op. cit. (n. 22), 252-257; Rastko Vasić, Centralnobalkanska regija. Ohridska oblast, in: *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja. V. Željezna doba*, ed. A. Benac, Sarajevo 1987, 724-733. On the Enchelaeian fostering of Cadmaean origin of their kingdomship see, for example, Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 300-301.

³⁸ Although there is still another explanation of their name, given by Degmedžić, op. cit. (n. 26), 157-159, who claims that the Enchelaeians owed their name to the Greek word *enchos* ("lance, weapon") and not to *enchelys* ("eel"), following the Greek lexicographer Hesychius (5th century AD) who stated that the (Cretan) word *kadmos* means precisely the same. On the interrelationship between the Enchelaeian serpent cult and Cadmus' snakelike fate see, for example, Stipčević, op. cit. (n. 33), 53-54. In this respect one should consider two interesting Hellenistic bronze plates, one from Selcë e Poshtme, on the Albanian side of the Lake of Ohrid, and another from Gostilj in Montenegro, near the Lake of Skadar. Both bear identical scene: beside a warrior with Illyrian helm and Macedonian shield there is a big upright snake – very probably a representation of Cadmus turned into snake and watching over people living there (both areas, around the Lake of Ohrid and the Lake of Skadar, once belonged to the Enchelaeians!); see Šašel Kos, op. cit. (n. 25), 123.

Besides the mutual dependence between the very widespread serpent cult in the southeastern Adriatic and Cadmus' ultimate fate, there is another indicative coincidence which unites these two elements. The snake is an animal of chthonic character which gives it competence of all the aspects of the underground world: fertility of nature, embodiment of dead ancestors who watch over domestic hearth, custody over underground wealth such as minerals of all kind.³⁹ The last one is the most interesting, showing that Cadmus the serpent had every reason to come to the land of Enchelaeans, rich in silver ore. His cult among the Enchelaeans was testified in classical sources, to begin with Strabo, who at the turn of the eras stated that "the scenes of the stories told about Cadmus and Harmonia are still pointed out there" (VII.7,8). Tradition mentions a sanctuary, two cliffs and their tombs somewhere along the southeastern Adriatic coast or in its hinterland,⁴⁰ testifying that the Enchelaeon territory was Cadmus' ultimate destination.

According to the legendary tradition, Cadmus and Harmonia were in their serpentlike form transferred to the Elysian fields, Cronus' land or land (island) of the blessed⁴¹ – all these names refer to the westernmost part of the world, the area beyond the Archaic Greek oecumene, where the setting Sun disappears from the sight of men, and where the abode of the blessed dead is located. As the horizons of the Greek world expanded during the time, the edges of the known space moved farther away – the western border, at first located in Epirus, was next moved to the Adriatic, as the story about Cadmus and Harmonia indicates.⁴² The Adriatic was the Sea of Cronus, the god ruling over the land of the blessed, reached only after death. The

³⁹ In the same manner the Roman god Pluto, ruler of the underworld, is in charge of treasures (that is of precious metal ores) kept under the earth, as his name indicates (Greek word *ploutos* means "wealthy"). Although with no direct mentioning, there is an indication of the correlation between the snake and the underground (mineral) wealth in Stipčević, op. cit. (n. 33), 47, 54, 58-59.

⁴⁰ Pseudo Scylax, *Peripl.*, c. 24; Callimachus in Strabo, I.2.39; Apollonius from Rhodes, *Argon.*, IV.516-518; Philarchus in Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae*, XI.6 (462 b); Dionysius Periegetes, *Periegesis*, 390-397; Stephanus from Byzantium, s. v. *Dyrrhachium*.

⁴¹ Dionysus promised to Cadmus: "Ares (...) will settle your life in the land of blessed" (Euripides, *Bacch.*, 1335-1340), and Apollodorus mentioned the Elysian fields (III.5.4).

⁴² To Homer, the island of Corfu at the south entrance in the Adriatic, was legendary Scheria ruled by the blessed people of the Phaeaces dwelling beyond the western border of the Greek world. To Pseudo Scylax, the territory of Epirus was Erythia, "Crimson land" shone-upon by the rays of the setting Sun (*Peripl.*, 26); see Degmedžić, op. cit. (n. 26), 151-152. On the land of the Enchelaeans as the western border of the world see Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 86, 300.

Adriatic, as the world beyond, was also the destination of some other legendary heroes, for example of Diomedes the Greek and Antenor the Trojan, who reached its coast after the destruction of Troy. Cadmus' transfiguration into the snake and his transportation to the Elysian fields was at first identical with his departure to the land of the Enchelaeans, which happened in his old age. Although not far from the Greek area, the southern Adriatic and its hinterland were unknown to the Greeks of the Dark Age, due to the political constellation at the beginning of the 12th century BC – during the Trojan war, almost entire area of the Mount Pindus and along the "Cadmaean Road" was inhabited by the populations hostile to the Greeks and friendly (even allied) to the Trojans, representing a sort of a barrier between the Greek and the Enchelaeian territory.⁴³ Even after the subsequent Greek naval enterprises moved the western border of the known world far west to the Strait of Gibraltar and the land of the blessed even farther, the legend about Cadmus stucked to the southeastern Adriatic.

Although, as we have seen, during the Dark Age the western border of the known world was not far away from the Greek territory, contemporary Phoenician sailors, as even earlier Mycenaean, ventured much farther away, daring to sail beyond the Pillars of Hercules (Gibraltar) as far as Britain and Scandinavia. These lands will be discovered again only during the exploring and colonizing activities that began after three or four centuries of the stagnation following the fall of Mycenaean civilization. Nevertheless, the Mycenaean knowledge of distant lands was preserved during those dark centuries, in the form of the legend about Heracles' wanderings.

Stories about Heracles circulated around the Mediterranean from the 8th century BC at least.⁴⁴ Tales of Heracles belong to the same circle of legends as the stories about Cadmus, meaning that both heroes were considered as part of the Mycenaean as well as of the Phoenician historical heritage. Heracles was a protagonist of the Aegean story about the rivalry between two neighbouring Mycenaean centres, Tyrins and Mycenae – he originated from Tyrins which seems to have been subjected to the city of Mycenae, whose king was Eurystheus, a man to whom Heracles had to subdue and accomplish

⁴³ On the barrier dividing the Greek world from its western neighbourhood: Degmedžić, op. cit. (n. 26), 158-159; on Cadmus' ultimate dwelling among the Enchelaeans: Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 300-301.

⁴⁴ Jaroslav Šašel, Tisućljeće prije rimskog osvajanja, u: *Keltoi. Kelti i njihovi suvremenici na tlu Jugoslavije*, eds. D. Božić, L. Bakarić, Ljubljana, Zagreb, Beograd 1984, 10-17: 11.

the famous twelve labours. On the other side, Phoenicians laid claim to Heracles considering him to be their progenitor and identifying him with their god Melqarth, protector of the city of Tyrus and originator of Phoenician navigation towards West.⁴⁵ The tradition held Heracles somewhat younger than Cadmus, and if we choose to believe Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I.34,1; I.44,3) and Herodotus (II.44), the time gap between these two is several generations wide – both authors dated Heracles one or two generations before the Trojan war (the middle or the second half of the 13th century BC).⁴⁶ Herodotus offered another datation: “Heracles, the son of Alcmena, (in my time) has about nine hundred years” (II.145), which puts him in the middle of the 14th century BC and makes him a contemporary of Cadmus.

As it was true for Cadmus, Heracles too was a personification of the Mycenaean and the Phoenician entrepreneurship. His legendary twelve labors are in fact a symbol of the Mycenaean trading activities present in considerable parts of Europe, as well as of Tyrian commercial activity covering the same areas.⁴⁷ Although the correlation between Heracles’ wandering (“circulation” is more adequate word) and quest of ores is not as obvious as in the case of Cadmus, some elements in the story about Heracles’ twelve assignments point to such conclusion⁴⁸ – as we shall see, his itinerary includes regions rich in

⁴⁵ Apollodorus offered a very detailed narrative about Heracles’ twelve deeds (*Bibliotheca*, II.5,1-12), from which transpires that Heracles was the native of the city of Tyrins; see also Grant, op. cit. (n. 6), 1-2, 129. On his Phoenician origin: Herodotus, II.44; Pausanias, V.25; *The Phoenicians*, op. cit. (n. 6), 48, 62, 108-110, 520. Note the similarity of the names of the two supposed Heracles’ home-towns: (Mycenaean) Tyrins and (Phoenician) Tyre – could it be one of the reasons for the confusion of his origin, or a sort of the *interpretatio GraecalPhoenician*a is involved?

⁴⁶ See also Justin, *Epitome*, XLIII.1; Jean Bérard, *La Magna Grecia*, Torino 1963³, 380, 392; Negbi, op. cit. (n. 6), 601.

⁴⁷ For the Mycenaean roots of the story about Heracles’ wanderings (besides the narrative of his twelve labors): Stane Gabrovec, Jugoistočnoalpska regija, in: *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja, IV. Bronzano doba*, ed. A. Benac, Sarajevo 1983, 19-96: 84; Stuart Piggott, A Glance at Cornish Tin, in: *Ancient Europe and the Mediterranean. Studies presented in honour of Hugh Hencken*, ed. V. Markotić, Warminster 1977, 141-145: 142; <http://members.tripod.com/~sondmor/index.html>. On the Phoenician origin of Heracles’ circulation (besides the sources cited in n. 45): *The Phoenicians*, op. cit. (n. 6), passim.

⁴⁸ According to some literary sources, Heracles’ activities are of a conquering character – Dionysius of Halicarnassus considers him a historical person, “the greatest commander of his age, who marched at the head of a large force through all the country that lies on this side of the Ocean” eliminating every kind of injustice and establishing lawful order (I.41; I.34). On the other hand, Pliny the Elder doesn’t believe in his historicity: “The stories related of Hercules, Pyrene or Saturn I regard as absolutely mythical” (*Nat. hist.*, III.1.8).

minerals of various kind, suggesting the main purpose of visiting those areas. Secondly, some of his tasks point rather clearly to seeking of metal ore and other minerals: he was chasing the Cerynitian hind with golden antlers and brazen hooves, and he ventured far north (or west) to fetch the golden (possibly amber) apples from the garden of the Hesperides. Thirdly, his tenth task was to drive Geryon's cattle along the Western Mediterranean to Greece. The fact that Heracles crossed one mountain range after another (starting with the Pyrenees, then Alps and Apennines) and that his wandering is followed by the cattle drifting, seems to indicate that (at least) this adventure contains memories on the routes which Bronze Age metallurgists made in their search of mineral deposits. Mining and transhumance were two interdependent activities since cattle-breeders were in a constant move in search for better pasture; wandering through mountaneous areas, they often hit upon mineral layers hidden in the places that others had not visited before. Their running into superficial ore deposits (which were first exploited) acquired them with precious experience regarding the correlation between the characteristics of soil and vegetation on the one side, and the sort of mineral ore on the other.⁴⁹ In addition, stories of distant travels from the Mediterranean to the continental Europe, personified in Hercules, point to very ancient trade routes touching areas rich in mineral layers. These routes were mostly forgotten during the Dark Age – the Archaic Greeks knew that somewhere beyond the Pillars of Hercules there was a vast Ocean,⁵⁰ and remembered the stories about far-away lands from where tin and amber came, but did not know anything about vast areas in the continental Europe, although in previous times were used several land routes connecting the Northern Sea with the Mediterranean. Heracles' traversing Europe could be regarded as a scarce evidence of memories on Bronze Age

⁴⁹ On the correlation between transhumance and mining: Degmedžić, op. cit. (n. 31), 55; Borivoj Čović, *Zaključna razmatranja*, in: *Praistorija jugoslavenskih zemalja, IV. Bronzno doba*, ed. A. Benac, Sarajevo 1983, 807-829: 817-818; Timothy Champion, Clive Gamble, Stephen Shennan, *Prehistoric Europe*, London 1984, passim; Šašel, op. cit. (n. 44), 11. On ancient geological knowledge: Piggott, op. cit. (n. 47), 141; *Ancient Egyptian Materials and Technology*, eds. P. T. Nicholson, I. Shaw, Cambridge 2000, 148.

⁵⁰ On the world beyond the Gibraltar Pindar (6th/5th century BC) says: "Beyond that the wise cannot set foot; nor can the unskilled set foot beyond that. I will not pursue it; I would be a fool" (*Odes*, III.5). Herodotus in the 5th century BC claims: "Concerning those in Europe that are the farthest away towards evening, I cannot speak with assurance; for I do not believe that there is a river called by foreigners Eridanus issuing into the northern sea, where our amber is said to come from, nor do I have any knowledge of Tin Islands, where our tin is brought from (...) nor for all my diligence have I been able to learn from one who has seen it that there is a sea beyond Europe" (III.115).

travelling and trading across the continent; the same route towards the Mediterranean will be followed by the Celts some thousand years later.

If we follow Heracles' footprints, they would lead us to some areas rich in ores. It seems that he did not venture to eastern ore layers in Germany, Bohemia, Slovakia and Austria. He restrained himself to the western half of Europe, visiting far north or west (depending on how the garden of the Hesperides is located) – perhaps Baltic and/or the British island, traversing France and along the Rhône valley reaching the northwestern edge of the Mediterranean; the next destination was the Iberian Peninsula, from where Heracles turned towards the Alps aiming to Italy. The only exception among these western geographical points is Caucasus mountain (rich in gold and iron), where Heracles asked Prometheus to show him the way to the garden of the Hesperides.⁵¹

According to the literary tradition, the garden of the Hesperides, where golden apples grew, was located on the northern edge of the world, although the name of Atlas' daughters (*hesperios* means “evening’s”, “western”) indicate that it should be searched far west. Literary sources placed the garden in the land of the mythical Hyperboreans, the people dwelling beyond the north wind, where are “the shady springs of the Danube”, as Pindar said, adding that Heracles “had seen that land beyond the cold blasts of Boreas” (*Odes*, III.5) pursuing the Cerynitian hind. This animal, let us remember, had golden horns and bronze legs (which could indicate the search for metals), and the fact that it was the female with antlers could point to the conclusion that it was in fact a reindeer.⁵² Heracles' sojourn far north and his travel across the land of the Celts (as Diodorus of Sicily said, “he passed into Celtica and traversed the length and

⁵¹ Let us mention his participating in the first phase of the travel of the Argonauts. With the Argonauts Heracles aimed to the land of Colchis (rich in gold) on the eastern coast of the Black Sea, but during the trip he left his comrades because of the twelve labours that were imposed on him.

⁵² The story about the Hesperides is told by the Greek historian Pherecydes (5th century BC) and his version was retold by many subsequent authors, for example Pindar, Apollodorus and Pausanias. Dionysius of Halicarnassus claims that Hesperia is the ancient name of Italy (I.35.3) and that Heracles from the land of the Celts brought “a certain Hyperborean girl (...) as a hostage given to him by her father” (I.43,1); she would become mother of the king Latinus. On the Cerynitian hind recognized as a reindeer see the commentary of Apollodorus' Library II.5.3 on the Internet site of the Perseus Digital Library (www.perseus.tufts.edu/cgi-bin/ptext?doc).

breadth of it”, IV.19,1)⁵³ perhaps could be recognized as a memory on the ancient acquisition of amber and tin. Amber of excellent quality was purchased on the Baltic coast from the very beginning of the Bronze Age, as numerous finds scattered all over the Europe testify. The apples guarded by the Hesperides, although referred to as of gold, perhaps were of amber which antiquity considered to be solidified Sun rays and called it “gold of the north”.⁵⁴ It is said that the garden of the Hesperides was located in the land of the Hyperboreans, and Herodotus mentioned votive gifts that the Hyperboreans each year send to Apollo’s shrine at Delos (IV.33) – what could be a more proper gift to the Sun god than amber? The Mediterraneans were very interested in the Baltic amber and purchased it in considerable quantities, as numerous finds and ancient tradition prove.⁵⁵ Later hesitations regarding the source of the amber could be the result of the Archaic oblivion of the earlier trans-European communications. The Greeks believed that amber was to be found in the northern Adriatic, on the “islands near the Absyrtides they designated the Electrides” (Pliny the Elder, *Nat. hist.*, III.26,152; see also XXXVII.11,32). At the Quarnero Bay the so-called Amber Road, traversing continent, reached the sea, but it is very indicative that it was the area where the oldest stories placed “the land beyond the north wind”.⁵⁶ In fact, so far as the Greek geographical knowledge is concerned, the whole continental Europe was on the other side of the bora, not to mention Britain at the northern edge of the world. Ireland abounds in gold and

⁵³ Heracles’ presence in the land of the Celts is documented by Pliny the Elder, who mentions at least two places in France (one is in fact in Monaco) associated with his name: “a town called Heraclea at the mouth of the river Rhodanus” (Rhône) (*Nat. hist.*, III.4,34) and “the port of Hercules of Monoecus” (*Nat. hist.*, III.5,47). There is also a story, retold by Timagenes, the Greek historian from Augustus’ time, preserved in Ammianus Marcellinus (XV.9,6), about several noble Celtic women who bore sons to Heracles; one of them was Celtine, daughter of Bretannus and matriarch of the Celts.

⁵⁴ Manuela Cattarsi, *Ambra: mito e realtà, Padusa* 31, 1997, 167-181.

⁵⁵ There is another story indicating an interest in and purchase of amber in the Mediterranean – the wide known tale about Phaethon and his sisters Heliads whose tears were turned into amber. A scrupulous geographer, as it was Strabo, very much doubts this tradition: “I must disregard most of the mythical or false stories, as, for example, the stories of Phaethon, and of the Heliades that were changed into poplar-trees near the Eridanus (the Eridanus that exists nowhere on earth, although it is spoken of as near the Padus), and of the Electrides Islands that lie off the Padus” (V.1,9).

⁵⁶ Katičić, *op. cit.* (n. 13), 40-43. The mythical land beyond the north wind, Hyperborea, was never, of course, identified with the area north of the mountain range separating the Mediterranean region from the continental Europe (that is, the Quarnero from the Gorski Kotar in the western Croatia) – the intention was just to point to the range of the ancient Greek knowledge of geography.

Britain in tin, purchased by the Phoenicians and very probably already by the Mycenaeans.⁵⁷ Heracles, according to Diodorus of Sicily, probably did not step on the British island (V.21,2), but his relationship with Bretannus' daughter (see note 53), and his presence in the land of the Celts and on the Iberian Peninsula could point to the Mediterranean search of tin, one of the two constituent elements for obtaining bronze.⁵⁸ Although Herodotus claimed that "all we know is that our tin and amber come from the most distant parts" (III.115), and two geographical manuals stated that tin originated from the northern Adriatic (note also an information given by Pseudo Aristotle, that on the islands of Electrides, in the northern corner of the Adriatic, there were two statues, Daedalus' work, one of tin and other of bronze),⁵⁹ in the beginning of the 3rd century BC it was obvious that tin layers should be searched far north, thanks to Pytheas' naval expedition. Regardless the fact that Strabo at the turn of the eras did not believe in Pytheas' research results ("a statement which no man would believe, not even if Hermes made it", II.4,1-2), Pliny the Elder had quite clear picture of the area from where tin originated (*Nat. hist.*, IV.22,119-120).

⁵⁷ In the Antiquity tin from Cornwall and Devon was highly esteemed; from there it was shipped to the Isle of Wight (perhaps Cassiterides in ancient literary sources) and then to the north Gallic coast. Cargo was then loaded on horses or mules, traversing the continent in the south direction, along the Rhône valley. On Cornish tin: Piggott, op. cit. (n. 47). On the route across the France: Piggott, op. cit. (n. 6), 143-144; Ludwig Pauli, *The Alps. Archaeology and Early History*, London 1984, 27, 197; Grant, op. cit. (n. 6), 252. On other routes across the continent: *Stari svijet. Od 1200. do 500. god. pr. n. e., Historija čovječanstva. Kulturni i naučni razvoj 2/1*, eds. L. Pareti, P. Brezzi, L. Petech, Zagreb 1967, 43-44.

⁵⁸ From the Scilly Islands tin was shipped to Tartessus, a harbour city on the south coast of Spain, at the mouth of the Guadalquivir, but there were also other routes by which it was sent to the Mediterranean – one of these routes passed through France to reach the northwestern edge of the Mediterranean Sea, as it is mentioned in note 57. On purchase of tin: Lionel Casson, *Travel in the Ancient World*, Baltimore, London 1994², 117-118; Lorenzo Braccesi, *Grecità di frontiera. I percorsi occidentali della leggenda*, Padova 1994; www.theminer.com/minelaw/ancientsa.htm; <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tartessos>. According to Pliny the Elder, the credit for the oldest acquisition of tin goes to Phocaeen Midacritus, with no mention of Heracles (*Nat. hist.*, VII.56,196).

⁵⁹ "(In the land of the Liburnians) I can name these islands (...) Eistris, 310 stadia long and 120 wide, Kleitireilitria, Mentorides" (Pseudo Scylax, *Peripl.*, 21); "In their (sc. Histrian) territory there are two islands which are believed to provide excellent tin" (Pseudo Scymnus, *Perieg.*, 392-393). The *corruptela* κλειτρειλίτρια in Pseudo Scylax could perhaps be read as κασσιτεριδες according to Mate Suić. Istočna jadranska obala u Ps. Skilakovu Periplusu, *Rad Jugoslavenske akademije znanosti i umjetnosti* 306, 1955, 121-185:156-162. On statues made by Daedalus: Pseudo Aristotle, *De mir. ausc.*, 81.836a.

For our purpose, the most indicative story is the one about Heracles' sojourn in Spain. As the tenth assignment imposed by Eurystheus, Heracles had to lift Geryon's herd which pastured on Erytheia, an island in the Atlantic ocean off the Spanish coast. With its rich deposits of gold, iron, copper and lead (and even tin), the Iberian Peninsula exceeded all other lands and there is no wonder that its mineral wealth caused early interest of the Mediterranean world. On the island of Erytheia there was a Phoenician trading post at Gades (modern Cadiz) with the nearby city of Tartessus, at the mouth of the Guadalquivir, as the main supplier of silver ore originated from the mines in the vicinity.⁶⁰ Both places (Gades and Tartessus) were mentioned by Apollodorus (based on much older Pherecydes' story) when he speaks of Heracles' fetching the cattle (II.5,10). Phoenician undertakings on the Iberian Peninsula were perhaps preceded by Mycenaean trading activities, although the evidence dates only from the 12th century BC, that is, from the time of the Phoenician thalassocracy. The Phoenician origin of purchasing Iberian silver is illustrated by the widespread cult of Melqarth, identified with Heracles.⁶¹

Dionysius of Halicarnassus offered two versions of the story about Heracles' journeying to the Iberian Peninsula – legendary (I.39,1) and historical (I.34,1), the latter pointing to Heracles' conquest of Spain “and all the region that extends to the setting of the sun”. Leading the cattle from Spain towards Italy,⁶² Heracles reached the Alps in the region of the Ligurians, “a numerous and warlike people seated in the passes of the Alps”, and “defeated them and gained the passes”, as Dionysius of Halicarnassus said I.41,3 and I.42,1). The

⁶⁰ On the Phoenician settlement at Gades, “founded outside the confines of the world”: Pliny the Elder, *Nat. hist.*, IV.22,119-120 and V.17,76; *The Phoenicians*, op. cit. (n. 6), 228-229. Although it is believed to be the one of the earliest Phoenician trading points in the Mediterranean (possibly from the 12th century BC), archaeology can not corroborate it since excavations are not possible because modern Cadiz covered all traces; finds from the surrounding area belong to the 8th century BC at earliest (ibid.).

⁶¹ On the Phoenician origin of the exploitation of Iberian silver ore see n. 60; on the cult of Melqarth: *The Phoenicians*, op. cit. (n. 6), passim.

⁶² The trade route which links the Iberian Peninsula, Italy and the Adriatic was given the name “Heracles' Road” (*hodon Herakleian/Via Heraclia*); see Lorenzo Braccesi, *Greçità Adriatica. Un capitolo della colonizzazione greca in Occidente*, Bologna 1977², 119-123. The main purpose of the existence of the trade route along Italy could have been the transport of raw materials from continental Europe (especially of ores and amber) to the Aegean through Apulian centres which were under the strong Mycenaean influence (Anna-Maria Bietti Sestieri, Fulvia Lo Schiavo, *Alcuni problemi relativi ai rapporti fra l'Italia e la Penisola Balcanica nella tarda età del bronzo inizi dell'età del ferro*, in: *Premier colloque des études illyriennes (Tirana 15-20 septembre 1972)*, *Iliria* 4/1, 1976, 163-189: 177).

Alps are rich in iron, copper, lead and gold, and are one of the most important sources of ores in whole Europe; they are also natural link between the Baltic and the Mediterranean. According to archaeological evidences scattered all over the Europe, trade over the Alpine passes began in the Eneolithic, intensifying during the Bronze and Iron Ages, as Strabo's narrative about the pre-Roman trade route linking northern Italy and Pannonia shows (IV.6,10; VII.5,2). Livy and Pompey Trogus, two contemporaneous writers (from the turn of the eras), gave Heracles the credit of the first man who crossed the Alps. Livy is somewhat cautious in this respect: "Beyond stretched the barrier of the Alps, and I am not at all surprised that they appeared insurmountable, for they had never yet been surmounted by any route, as far at least as unbroken memory reaches, unless you choose to believe the fables about Hercules" (V.34,6-7). Trogus' account is similar, and both perhaps derive from the same source (very probably from Posidonius, the 2nd century BC Greek polyhistorian): "The Celts were the first after Heracles who surmounted the insuperable Alpine slopes and overwhelmed unbearable frosts" (in Justin, XXIV.4). Pliny the Elder, relying on Greek sources, stated that "the Lepontii are descended from companions of Hercules 'left behind' because their limbs had been frostbitten in crossing the Alps" (*Nat. hist.*, III.20,134), and Diodorus of Sicily offered the historical view of the story: "(Heracles) traversed the mountain pass through the Alps and made a highway out of the route, which was rough and almost impassable, with the result that it can now be crossed by armies and baggage-trains" (IV.19,3). The same route was crossed again at the end of the 3rd century BC by Hannibal, the Carthaginian army leader whose family (his family name Barca means "lightning") put itself under the protection of Melqarth, a hero traveller and leader of armies who, according to the legend, had crossed the Alps coming from Spain. Melqarth was already then identified with Heracles, as it is seen in the oath made by Hannibal in the treaty with Phillip of Macedonia. Barcas intended to conquer Spain in order to gain control over the Iberian silver mines, as Heracles' presence on the Iberian Peninsula, as we have seen, could have been identified with Phoenician acquisition of silver.⁶³

⁶³ According to Pliny the Elder, "History says that the Pennine pass was crossed by the Carthaginians and the Graian pass by Hercules" (*Nat. hist.*, III.17,123). On Hannibal see *The Phoenicians*, op. cit. (n. 6), 62. The text of the oath is preserved in Polibius (VII.9). Heracles (in the Romanized form as Hercules) was worshipped in the Alpine region (especially in its southeastern part) and in the northern Adriatic, his cult being one of the oldest and most popular in the region (Braccesi, op. cit. (n. 62), 121-123; Marjeta Šašel Kos, Pre-Roman Divinities of the Eastern Alps and Adriatic, *Situla* 38, 1999, 150).

In the Eneolithic and Bronze Age, wide parts of Europe (including the eastern half which Heracles did not visit) were populated by numerous communities of nomad cattle breeders and metal working tradesmen, generally known as the Bell Beaker People. Starting from Spain and Portugal, from the end of the 3rd millenium BC they began a peaceful migration in the continent and eventually covered the whole area from Scotland in the north to Corsica and Sicily in the south and Bohemia in the east. They exploited local sources of copper and tin and mediated in trade between the Baltic and Mediterranean,⁶⁴ their trading activities somewhat resembling Heracles' wandering across Europe. Heracles could therefore be the symbol of the Bronze Age trans-European exchange by which the North provided itself with copper and Mediterranean artefacts and the Mediterranean attains amber and tin and other ores. Although the exchange was primarily of the maritime character, Heracles' wandering and land routes, documented archaeologically and literally, testify the existence of the caravan trans-continental trade.

Although, as we have seen, it was believed that tin and amber could be found in the northern Adriatic as well, Heracles did not search it there. Nevertheless, some stories point to another Heracles' interest in the eastern Adriatic coast – the interest in stone quarrying. The central Dalmatian coast and islands boasted of stone of excellent quality, and Pliny the Elder mentioned *Tragurium* (modern Trogir near Split) as “famous for its marble” (*Nat. hist.*, III,22,141). Two reliefs of Hercules were carved out in quarries at Škrip and Rasohe, both on the island of Brač opposite the city of Trogir. Although dating from the Roman times, both these testimonies point to the long-lasting exploitation of stone in this area, and Late Bronze Age finds on the hill-fort at Škrip, as well as the information on Cadmus as the inventor of stone quarrying testify to the Mycenaean and Phoenician interest in the same activity.⁶⁵

Literary tradition mentions Heracles' son Hyllus,⁶⁶ born in the land of the Phaeacians (the island of Corfu) and migrated to the

⁶⁴ On the Bell Beaker People: Champion, Gamble, Shennan, op. cit. (n. 49), passim; www.geocities.com/historyofaustria/history.html.

⁶⁵ On the finds at Škrip: Branko Kirigin, *Novosti o Grcima u Dalmaciji. Godišnjak Centra za balkanološka ispitivanja* 32/30, 2002, 363-383: 367; on Cadmus: Pliny the Elder, *Nat. hist.*, VII,56,195.

⁶⁶ On Hyllus: Petar Lisičar, *Crna Korkira i kolonije antičkih Grka na Jadranu*, Skopje 1951, 84-87; Suić, op. cit. (n. 59), 132-134, 141-142; Duje Rendić Miočević, *Iliri i antički svijet. Ilirološke studije*, Split 1989, 27-44; Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 91-100. There was another Heracles' son of the same name, born by Deianeira, who should not be confused with the first one, born by Melite; on the latter: Herodotus, IX,26 and Pausanias, I,41.

Cronian (Adriatic) sea (Apollonius from Rhodes, *Argonaut.*, IV.543-550). He was the eponymous of the coastal community of the Hyllaeans dwelling “on the peninsula little smaller than Peloponnesus” (Pseudo Scylax, *Peripl.*, 22). To this corresponds Pseudo Scymnus’ *Periegesis* (405-412) mentioning that Hyllus was the founder of fifteen settlements in the area, inhabited by the Hellens who later adopted the barbarian way of life – an information taken from Timaeus and Eratosthenes. Hyllaeans peninsula, to which Pliny the Elder gave the name of the Greek hero Diomedes (*Nat. hist.*, III.22,141), one of the returnees from the Trojan war, should be recognized as Cape Planca (Ploča), the promontory flanked by Šibenik and Split and in the very same area mentioned in connection with stone quarrying. Hyllus was eventually murdered in a conflict with the Mentores, a neighbouring Liburnian community (Apollonius from Rhodes, *Argonaut.*, IV.550-551), and the story about Hyllus could be the reflection of the actual historical situation due to the early Greek presence in the Adriatic, following the Heroic time of his father.

Here in the Adriatic, somewhere between the Hyllaeans north of the river Neretva and Illyrian communities south of its flow, lies the boundary between the “interest zones” of Heracles and Cadmus. The line could perhaps be drawn even further north, somewhere on the northern edge of the Bosnian mountaneous area, where two large prehistorical cultural entities meet – the Urnfield Culture which covers vast areas in the north and west, and Illyrian communities in the Balkan area and in the southeastern Adriatic.⁶⁷ The spiritual world of the former included worshipping of Apollo, the personified Sun driven by water birds in a boat (or by deers in a cart) towards the resting-place in the west, while the latter adored serpent as the chthonic deity with all the range of its meaning. Heracles ventured to the land of the Hyperboreans and to the garden of the Hesperides, the areas where Apollo reigns, not to mention that he used Helios’ golden goblet as a boat when travelling to Erytheia, while Cadmus himself was transformed into the snake and gained his own sanctuary in the land of the Enchelaeans. Regardless of the fact that Heracles’ and Cadmus’ areas did not coincide, some elements brought Heracles to Cadmus’ sphere of action. Let us mention three examples: a part of the ancient geographic tradition puts Erytheia (and Gerion’s cattle with it) in Epirus beneath the southeastern slopes of the Ceraunian Mountain

⁶⁷ An excellent review of various prehistoric cults is given by Stipčević, op. cit. (n. 33).

(Pseudo Scylax, *Peripl.*, 26), beyond which dwelled the Enchelaeans, Cadmus' subjects. Secondly, Appian informs us that Heracles, returning from Erytheia, founded the city of Dyrrhachium (*Bellum civile*, II.39) which was in fact in the territory of the Enchelaeans. And thirdly, Heracles went to Crete to the king Minos, son of Cadmus' sister Europe, in order to fetch the bull which was ravaging the land; according to the Greek mythographer Acusilaus (5th century BC) who adopted Hesiod's information, "this was the bull that ferried across Europa for Zeus" (Apollodorus, II.5,7).⁶⁸

As we have seen, Heracles and Cadmus belong to the same circle of tales originating from the Mycenaean civilization of the Late Bronze Age. The protagonists are venturers, sailors and tradesmen who wandered around the Mediterranean and even outside the boundaries of the known world. They meet each other, their paths often intersecting, which indicates their same goals – the search of raw materials (especially of mineral sources) further north and west from the Mediterranean oecumene. They boldly stepped outside the oecumene into the unknown world where scenes of some stories eventually took place, leaving to posterity a heritage of memories on the earliest foreign ventures of the Aegean world.

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⁶⁸ Some other very interested links in Boeotia were mentioned by Katičić, op. cit. (n. 13), 224-225.

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SAŽETAK

Alka Domić Kunić: KADMO I HERAKLO U POTRAZI ZA RUDAMA

Sredozemljem se putovalo i trgovalo od davnine – mreža komunikacija (kopnenih, a još više pomorskih) pokrivala je čitavo područje od Iberijskog poluotoka do siropalestinske obale te od jadranskog prostora do primorskog pojasa sjeverne Afrike. Intenzivan promet datira se u brončano doba, s vrhuncem u njegovom završnom dijelu, uoči velikih promjena koje će zahvatiti čitavo Sredozemlje (nestanak mikenske civilizacije) i odraziti se i na europski kontinent (velike seobe prema jugu). No, prije nego li je u Grčkoj s padom Mikene nastupilo tzv. mračno doba, egejski su pomorci i trgovci doprli do krajnjih europskih područja – obale Baltika i britanskog otočja, izašavši iz okvira poznatoga svijeta i proširivši njegove granice daleko na sjever i na zapad. Sjećanja na njihove smione poduhvate i na putovanja u dotad nezamislive daljine ostala su zapisana u obliku mitova i legendi Grkâ mračnoga doba. Među tim pričama su i one koje se tiču traganja za novim izvorima sirovina, osobito ruda (zlato, srebro, kositar i bakar) i minerala (jantar, kamen) koji su obilježili

ekonomiku brončanoga doba i bili među najtraženijim artiklima na Sredozemlju. Između nekoliko priča izdvajaju se dvije – pripovijest o Kadmu i Harmoniji, te ciklus legendi o Heraklovim lutanjima. Obje su shvaćene kao reminiscencija na mikenske (i na kasnije feničke) poduzetničke aktivnosti koje su pokrivala čitavu Europu, dopirući do njenih krajnjih sjevernih i zapadnih granica. Mikenjani su ujedno i istinski protagonisti zbivanja zapisanih u pričama, zbivanja koja su se u poslijemikensko doba (otkad datiraju spomenute priče) projicirala na suvremenike Feničane kao na mikenske “nasljednike” i nastavljače njihovih dalekosežnih aktivnosti. Te su aktivnosti posvjedočene i arheološki, nizom nalaza mikenskog i kasnijeg, feničkog podrijetla razasutih (iako ne u velikom broju) po čitavoj Europi, pa tako i na području između Alpa, Dunava i Jadrana, koje se u ovome radu uvjetno naziva Balkanom.

Zanimanje egejskog svijeta za Balkan potaknuto je postojanjem brojnih ležišta ruda u tome području. U grčko doba bilo je pokušaja da se načini neka vrst “rudne karte” koja će poduzetnicima s Crnoga mora i iz matične Grčke olakšati posao oko nalaženja i eksploatacije rudnog blaga. Tako se, naime, tumači Herodotov opis donjeg i srednjeg toka Dunava i neke važne orijentacijske točke u području utoka Save u Dunav spomenute u spjevu Apolonijâ iz Roda. Na još ranije zanimanje za rude u zapadnom susjedstvu grčkoga svijeta upućuju i dvije spomenute legende – ona o Kadmu i Harmoniji tiče se bogatih zlatnih rudnika u tračkom Pangeju i nalazišta srebra u području Damastija (u blizini Ohridskog jezera), a ona o Heraklu mogla bi biti odrazom potrage za kositrom i jantarem daleko na sjeveru i zapadu kontinenta, te traganja za rudama u Pirenejima i Alpama, nadomak Jadranskoga mora.

Legenda o Kadmu i Harmoniji jedna je od najpopularnijih grčkih priča. Najstarije očuvane inačice su Euripidova (uklopljena u obliku proročanstva u tragediji *Bakhe*) i Herodotova, obje iz 5. st. pr. Kr.; izvorna priča pripisuje se nekom nepoznatom logografu iz vremena koje je uslijedilo nakon sastavljanja *Ilijade* i *Odiseje*. Za ovaj rad nije toliko zanimljiv prvi dio pripovijesti, koji govori o odlasku Kadma i njegove braće u potragu za Europom (iako je i on znakovit zbog toga što prati put i širenje stvarnih utjecaja, kulturnih i drugih, s istočnog dijela Sredozemlja prema jugoistočnoj Europi), koliko drugi, u kojem se opisuje dolazak Kadma i njegove žene Harmonije u zemlju Enhelejaca (Ilirija). I dok je Kadmovo zanimanje za ležišta zlata u Pangeju izravno potvrđeno (Strabon, Higin, Plinije Stariji, Stefan Bizantinc), o njegovoj povezanosti s eksploatacijom damastijskog srebra zaključuje se posredno, prema navodu kod Strabona i prema činjenici da su se rudnici nalazili u zemlji Enhelejaca, u kojoj su se Kadmo i Harmonija nastanili i u kojoj je potvrđen njihov zmijski kult. Put kojim su stvarni poduzetnici iz Egeje stizali u Iliriju u rimsko se doba zvao *Via Egnatia*, a u današnje vrijeme nadjeveno mu je ime “Kadmejski put”. Ta je kopnena komunikacija, u funkciji već od eneolitika, povezovala Halkidički poluotok s jugoistočnim jadranskim primorjem, slijedivši tokove rijeka.

Priče o Heraklovim lutanjima vezanima uz dvanaest poslova koje mu je nametnuo mikenski vladar Euristej (također vrlo popularne u antici) u sebi sadrže sjećanja na potragu za izvoristom ruda korištenih tijekom brončanog doba. Heraklov odlazak u vrt Hesperida (u zemlji Hiperborejaca) mogao bi biti simbol nabave jantara na krajnjem sjeveru kontinenta, a prolazak kroz zemlju Kelta upućuje možda na potragu za izvorom kositra koji su Feničani, a možda već i Mikenjani, nabavljali s britanskih otoka. Putovanje na Iberijski poluotok (vezano uz obavljanje desetog zadatka, otimanje Gerionovih goveda) vrlo jasno sugerira eksploataciju srebra kojim taj prostor obiluje, a prelazak preko Alpa (s Gerionovim stadom) mogao bi biti slika brončanodobnih nomadskih stočara koji se smatraju prvim otkrivačima rudnih ležišta u planinskim prostorima. Zanimljivo je spomenuti da je antička tradicija izvorista jantara i kositra (pogrešno) tražila u sjevernom kutu Jadrana, koji u stvarnosti

predstavlja područje u kojemu se završavala karavanska etapa prijevoza tih sirovina sa sjevera Europe i počinjala pomorska etapa s odredištem u Egeji. Heraklo je prisutan i na Jadranu, točnije na dalmatinskom primorju, i to u vezi s branjem kamena u području koje je antička tradicija poznavala kao Hilejski poluotok (potez obale između Šibenika i Splita) i na otoku Braču koji mu leži nasuprot. O tome svjedoči genealoška veza između Heraklova sina Hila i tamošnjih stanovnika s jedne, te arheološko svjedočanstvo vrlo živog rimskodobnog Herkulova kulta u bračkim kame-nolomima s druge strane.

Upravo tu na Jadranu, negdje između Hilejaca zapadno od Neretve i ilirskih zajednica (među kojima su i Enhelejci) istočno od rijeke, treba tražiti granicu između “interesnih zona” Herakla i Kadma. Tu granicu dalje prema sjeveru određuje doseg utjecaja dvaju pretpovijesnih kulturnih kompleksa – nositelja kulture polja sa žarama i pripadnika kulturnog kompleksa koji se označava kao ilirski. Razgraničenje je provedeno na temelju glavnih karakteristika njihove duhovne kulture: u prostoru koji pokriva kulture polja sa žarama izrazit je solarni kult sa simbolima koji su utkani u priče o Heraklovim lutanjima, dok je za ilirski kulturni krug karakteristično štovanje zmije, bića povezanog (između ostalog) i s čuvanjem bogatstava skrivenih u utrobi zemlje. Obje priče, ona o Kadmu i ona o Heraklu, vidjeli smo, pripadaju mikenskom krugu legendi i ilustracija su brončanodobnih putovanja čija je svrha (između ostaloga) bila eksploatacija rudnog bogatstva dalekih krajeva i čiji su protagonisti bili Mikenjani i njihovi nasljednici Feničani.