

ANNA MESKHI

Kartvelian Etymology of Ethnic Terms *Basque* and *Baskles*

The ethnic name *Basque* has several variants, such as the Old Spanish *basko* and Old Castilian *vasco*.¹ The term *Basque* is said to be later than the terms *Vascones* and *Vascon* (Braun 1984: 11), but given the fact that “Pre-Basque had no voicing contrast in the initial position for plosives” (Trask 1997: 130), and that “[T]here is no trace of evidence that medieval Basque ever distinguished [b] from [v], in contrast to Old Spanish, which did” (Ibid. p. 133), it is difficult to assert the priority of the initial consonant, i.e. *v* or *b*.

Consequently, either variant of the ethnic name – whether starting with an initial *b* or *v* – has identical value for linguistic examination. Since scholars have already expressed their views regarding the name *Basque* (with an initial bilabial voiced plosive), I will start this analysis by addressing the latter form.

In one of his works, N. Marr states: “...their ethnic names boil down to a single term, namely, the ancient national name of *hayk*, it is *bask* or *mesx*” (Marr 1935: 300).² The scholar offers no linguistic analysis of the *bask* = *mesx* relationship, but it can be illustrated through simple phonetic changes.

The comparison of the Kartvelian *Mesxi* with the ethnic name *Basque* reveals the following differences:

- a) The Kartvelian root vowel *-e-* is replaced by the Basque *-a-*;
- b) The Kartvelian initial bilabial sonorant *m-* is replaced by the bilabial voiced plosive *b-* in Basque;
- c) The Kartvelian back velar voiceless fricative *-x-* is replaced by a velar voiceless stop *-q(u)-* in Basque.

The *e > a* change meets with no phonetic obstacles, since such shifts from *e* to *a* or *a* to *e* are often observed in diachronic studies. Moreover, the two patterns of sound change represent regular sound correspondences within Kartvelian languages, thus indicating an easy transfer from one sound to the other; cf.:

Common Kartvelian **e* Georgian *e* Megrelian *a* Laz *a* Svan *e*
(Fährnich, Sarjveladze 2000: 14).

Viewed from the Georgian or Svan perspective, or that of both languages, the sound pattern (or sound shift) is *e > a*, whilst from the Megrelian or Laz perspective the pattern is reversed – *a > e*.

The consonant difference of *m > b* is also easily accounted for, since we are witnessing the loss of a single differentiating feature – nasality.

The second consonant change is more complicated, because in it 2/3 of the differentiating features of the Kartvelian *x* /kh/ are lost and replaced by simpler features. Compare:

¹ http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=Basque&allowed_in_frame=0 (accessed regularly August-September 2015).

² N. Marr refers to two Armenian names “*hayk* and *hay* (Marr 1935: 300).

Kartvelian *x* /kh/: back velar, fricative, voiceless;

Basque *q(u)* /k/: velar, plosive, voiceless.

The described alteration belongs *not* to a mere change, but a *phonetic simplification*. This is a very frequent occurrence when Kartvelian words containing *x* are rendered in IE or other non-Kartvelian languages. My personal experience agrees with this statement, for my surname (Mesxi) is often spelled with either a *k* (as in Meski) or a *sh* (as in Meshki). Put differently, the phonetic processes taking place now also occurred, obviously, thousands of years ago, and were caused by the same difficulty with an archetype phoneme – a back-velar voiceless fricative /kh/.

Consequently, it can be stated with a high degree of certainty that the ethnic names *Basque*, *basco*, and *vasco* originated from the Kartvelian ethnic name *Mesxi* and developed through some simple and complex phonetic processes found “in place” at both ends of a huge chronological gap.

The semantics of the *-xi* component is similarly interesting. Many views have been advanced on the function of the Kartvelian suffix *-xi* /khi/. Some have equated it with the Armenian suffix of plurality (Marr 1912: 697); Iv. Javakhishvili regarded it an ethnicity forming suffix (Javakhishvili 1950: 54; 1951: 51), whilst in S. Janashia’s view the function of the suffix *-xa* is to denote surnames in Adyghean, i.e. Cherkessian (Janashia 1959: 102). G. Melikishvili believes that the suffix is of Hurri-Urartian origin (Melikishvili 1965: 104) and R. Abashia assumes a Common Ibero-Caucasian pertinence (Abashia 2004: 46). These views on the affixal nature of *-xi* are complemented by O. Xuxua’s article (Xuxua 2004: 277) where he convincingly demonstrates its derivation from the Megrelian lexeme *xi*, designating ‘land’ or ‘earth’.

The discussed interpretations are in agreement with the unanimously accepted general stance on affixal derivation, namely, that affixes develop from notional words. Consequently, the surname *Mesxi* and its variants of *Basque*, *basko* and *vasco* indicate not only ‘the land of the *Mes* (*Bas*) people’ (etymological meaning), but also the people of *Mes* ethnicity (derivational meaning).

Indeed, *La Reja de San Millán*, a document dated to 1025, records the variant place names *Mizquina* / *Mezkia* (Trask 1997: 42).³ The phonetic similarity of the place name with the Kartvelian *Mesxi*, as well as the presented linguistic analysis of *Basque* (*basko*, *vasco*), can be expressed in the equation *Mesxi* = *Mizquina* / *Mezkia*. Based on the root identity (*Mesx-* = *Mizqu-* = *Mezk-*) the latter can be structured as *Mizqu-ina* and *Mezk-ia* where *Mizqu-* and *Mezk-* are variants of the Kartvelian root and *-ina* and *-ia* are suffixes. The phonetic identity of the root morphemes (*Miz-qu-*, *Mez-k-*) with the Kartvelian *Mes-x-* is obvious (*Mes* = *Miz* = *Mez*; *-xi* = *qu* = *k*), and suggests the Kartvelian origin of the suffixes, too.

The Kartvelian languages contain 11 homonymous *-en* endings, of which 10 are used with verbs and verbal forms, whilst one “*-en*¹⁰ – is an ending imparting plurality to *names*, *surnames*, and *clan divisions* (Jorbenadze, Kobaidze, Beridze 1988: 149). Examples of this are numerous, and include “Gochi-en-i, Shiol-en-i, Shabur-

³ The transcription of the document at <http://www.celtiberia.net/es/biblioteca/?id=1721> contains not only *Mizkina*, but some other place names of interest: *Mussitu*, *Mesanza*, *Mazanos*, *Moscatuero* (accessed September 16, 2015). These will be discussed in a separate work.

en-i...” (Ibid.). It follows that the suffix *-ina* found in the ethnic name *Mizkina* is a complex unit consisting of *-in* + *-a*. The first component (*-in*) originated from the Kartvelian derivative suffix employed with names indicating families (surnames) or clan divisions and designated the members of the *Miz-k-in-a*, possessors of the common *Mesxi* surname, as a division of the *Mesxi* clan or *Mesxi* people.

The second suffix, *-a*, may have several archetypes. One of its etymons is *-aʹ*, which is a case extension element (emphatic particle) in four cases: dative (*bavshv-s-a* ‘to the child’), genitive (*bavshv-is-a* ‘of the child’), instrumental (*bavshv-itʹ-a* ‘with the child’), adverbial (*bavshv-ad-a* ‘as a child’; Ibid. p. 11).⁴ Scholars have expressed different views regarding this particle. Some (A. Shanidze, I. Imnaishvili) think that it is a remnant of a pronoun employed in the function of the article, others (N. Marr, A. Shanidze, Arn. Chikobava) believe that its function is that of article, still others (A. Potskhishvili, Sh. Apridonidze) are of the opinion that *-a* forms open syllables, while still others (Arn. Chikobava, T. Uturgaidze) consider that the formant serves a determinative function within attributive syntagmas (Ibid. p. 12).

It is clear however that most scholars view the emphatic *-a* as a kind of determinative, a type of a definite article. It is highly significant that the Kartvelian evidence corresponds to the rules of forming Basque surnames.

“The majority of modern Basque surnames fall into two categories:

- Descriptive of the family house. This usually either refers to the relative location of the home or the purpose of the building.
- First owner of the house. Usually this is a man’s name. These surnames are relatively recent.

“Surnames from either category are formed using nouns, adjectives, a number of suffixes and endings such as the absolute ending *-a*, the relational suffix *-ko* and the genitive ending *-ren*”.⁵

Surely, the functions of the Basque suffix *-a* and the Kartvelian *-a* serve the function of determination, defining the surname, clan or ethnicity a person belongs to. It follows that the Basque and Kartvelian suffixes (*-a*) are identical not only materially but functionally too. Hence, the place name *Mizkina* recorded in the 11th century manuscript (*La Reja de San Millán*) derives from the Kartvelian *Mesxi* and two suffixes of the same Kartvelian origin: *-in* < *-en*, *-a* < *-a*.

The other variant of the place name – *Mezkie* – has a different ending, the suffix *-ia*, which again has a Kartvelian origin. It is a widespread surname-building suffix in Megrelian appearing in *Pipia*, *Kiria*, *Mikaia*, *Chochia*, *Pachulia* and most importantly *Mesxia*, which is “the split image” of the Basque *Mezkie*. Consequently, both variants of the Basque *Mizkina* / *Mezkie* recorded in the 11th century (1025) derive from Kartvelian: the root morphemes *Miz* and *Mez* go back to the Kartvelian *Mes*, the suffix *-k-* comes from the Kartvelian lexeme and affixal derivative *xi* > *-xi*, the Basque *-in* stems from the Kartvelian *-en*, whilst the two other suffixes “the Basque *-a* < Kartvelian *-a*, the Basque *-ia* < Kartvelian *-ia*” are fundamentally identical. Moreover, the distributional pattern of the morphemes (root or affixal) is in keeping with typical derivational formulas in Kartvelian.

⁴ The emphatic *-a* was not used in the adverbial case in Old Georgian (Jorbenadze, Kobaidze, Beridze 1988: 12). (ბავშვისადრ ჩანს)

⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Basque_surnames (accessed regularly).

The Kartvelian etymology of *Basque* is proved not only by the evidence from native sources, but also by data recorded in Middle English (ME) manuscripts. The following (two nouns and an adjective) are recorded in English documents of different periods: *baskles* (plural noun, late 14c.), *Baskon* (mid-15c.), and *Basquish* (1610s),⁶ but the present discussion is devoted to the study of the first name, *baskles*, only.

The name *baskles* is mentioned thrice in the Middle English document (late 14th century) entitled the *Langtoft Chronicle* (1725: 242).⁷

“THAT tyme þat þis criē com of þise barouns,
[De domino Johanne Vescy, ve|nit cum
basklis & super Leu|linum.]

Com Sir Jon Vescy fro þe kyng of Aragouns,

Once it is recorded as *basklis* and twice as *baskles*. Since Old or Middle English had no standard capitalization conventions, the phrase “*baskles* & Gascouns”, in which Gascouns (‘Gasconians’) is capitalized and connected to *baskles* with the help of the coordinating conjunction, could imply that *baskles* belonged to either general or onomastic vocabulary. Cf.:

“baskle – Obs.

[a. OF. *Basclois* ‘a name given indifferently to all foreign peoples’ (Roquefort) = med. L. *Basculi*, *Basculones*, brigands or raiders from Vasconia: see Basque.] A Basque”.⁸

According to the dictionary definition *baskle* is an obsolete form of the modern ethnic name, whilst in Old French or med. Latin it demonstrates a semantic shift (*baskle* > strangers; *raiders*). In the coming pages, sometimes, the word *baskle/s* is capitalized to underline its ethnic nature.

Recorded in the late 14th century, *baskles* is a Middle English plural built with the suffix *-es*. The latter derives from the OE nom. and acc. suffix *-as*, with the same function (Rastorguyeva 1983: 223; Pyles, Algeo 1993: 156) and was a prevalent plural marker in ME (Rastorguyeva 1983: 228). This divides the name into two morphemes *Baskl-es*. The form differs from all the registered variants (*basko* OSp., *vasco* OCast. *Basque* Fr.) by means of the extra final *-l*, which points to its derivational status. Indeed, in Old English there were three native suffixes: *-el* and *-ol*, which replaced the Latin *-ell*, and *-ill* as in *ytel* (Lat. *catillus*) ‘cattle’, *mentel* (Lat. *mantellum*) ‘cloak’ (Campbell 1991: 207) and *-ul* (*tasul* > *tasol*, *teosol* ‘a small squared piece of stone, a die’; Bosworth-Toller).⁹ These suffixes may feature in place names, as in *Eotol* ‘Italy’. The first two affixes (*-ell*, *-ill*) originated from the earlier *-il* (*lebil* > *lebl* for *læfel* ‘cup, vessel, bowl’).

⁶ http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=Basque&allowed_in_frame=0 (accessed regularly August-September 2015).

⁷ “THAT tyme þat þis criē com of þise barouns,*. [De domino Johanne Vescy, ve|nit cum *basklis* & super Leu|linum.]

Com Sir Jon Vescy fro þe kyng of Aragouns, Brouht fote folk inouh of *baskles* & Gascouns, þat þe Walsh men slouh raumpand as leouns.

þorghē mountayn & more þe *baskles*”e þer weie, Oure nesch & hard þei fore, & did þe Walsch men deie.

⁸ http://useful_english.enacademic.com/657451/baskle (accessed regularly September 2015).

⁹ There is a similar suffix, *-ele* (*cagele* ‘cowl’, *ferele* ‘rod’...; Campbell 1991: 207, 145) declared to be foreign, but it is not discussed in this paper.

In order to determine the origin of the final *-l*, we need to address the phenomenon of vowel loss where the syllable V + l was involved.

In Old English, vowel loss was a widespread, albeit confusing phenomenon, which has been subject to different interpretations. A. Campbell calls it *parasiting* or *parasite vowels* (Campbell 1991: 151), implying the emergence of vowels in shorter base forms. Alternatively, I. Dahl, R. Hogg and R. Fulk and others term the phenomenon syncope (Dahl 1938: 63; Hogg, Fulk 2011: 95 ff.), designating vowel loss from fuller base units. Despite numerous studies devoted to OE declension the issue of vowel loss (both syncope and apocope) is not clear. Below I cite A. Campbell, who attributes the entire issue to prehistoric times:

“In OE there was considerable divergence whether syllabic *l*, *r*, *m*, *n*, arising owing to the loss of unaccented vowels of final syllables (...) were retained or developed a parasite vowel. This vowel, if developed, was *i* (later *e*) after a front vowel, *u* (later *o*) after a back vowel. Already *Ep.* has, for example, *se!il-* sail, *spinil-* spindle, (*h*)*aesil-* hazel, *tebel-* gaming-board (*W-S* *tæfl*).... Accordingly, the parasiting must be regarded as *prehistoric*, and the frequent early forms in which it is absent (e.g. *Ep.* *bebr* beaver, *ātr* poison) as due to inflected cases in which the liquid consonant was not syllabic, or to scribal neglect of the parasite vowel. Normal OE forms are *fugol* bird, *tungol* star, *cumbol* banner, *sāwol* soul, *næ!el* nail, *æppel* apple, *se!el* sail, *Þunor* thunder, *wundor* wonder, *winter* winter, *fæ!er* fair, *æcer* acre, *hræfen* raven, *ofen* oven, *bosom* bosom, *māþum* treasure, *wæstum* fruit. Forms without parasiting are, however, frequent...” (Campbell 1991: 151).

These forms feature in the following cases:

a) With *n* and *m* they are the rule after short syllables, frequent after long ones, e.g. *hræfn* raven, *fācn* crime, *tācn* token, *wāpn* weapon, *wolcn* cloud, *botm* bottom, *māþm* treasure, *wæstm* fruit;

b) They are the rule when *l* occurs after *t* and *d*, e.g. *setl* seat, *spātl* spit, *ād*l disease, *nædl* needle. Owing to the coexistence of the types *næ!l* and *næ!el*, the groups *el*, *er*, *em*, *en* became regarded as expressing syllabic consonants, and hence they frequently appear after back vowels, e.g. *fugel*, *wunder*, *wolcen*, *taken*, *breahtem* noise, and always *easter* city (Ibid.).

Following from this discussion it is clear that the suffix *-l* in *Baskle-* meets a single requirement, namely, it appears after a back root vowel. Therefore, in this instance, OE grammar fails to explain the presence of *-l* in *Baskl-*. The discussed instances (*a* and *b*) refer to disyllabic words, but originally *trisyllabic* nouns like *engel* also contained a final V + l syllable. Nouns like *engel* have come to lose the unstressed *-e-* after the accented long syllable and before a final liquid. The ME *Baskle*, recorded in the 14th century, meets all the requirements valid for OE vowel loss in trisyllabic nouns: (a) a long stressed vowel (*a + sk*); (b) the presence of a final liquid consonant (*-l*); (c) syncope of an unstressed vowel before a liquid. Also, *baskles* confirms with another criterion, namely, the loss of the vowel due to vocalic inflexions (Hogg, Fulk 2011: 95).

Since *Baskle* has preserved an entire environment for OE vowel loss, the lost sound, the vowel *e*, can be safely reconstructed. Thus, *Baskle*-’s full form should

be restored as **Bask-el-e*. The correctness of this analysis is confirmed by the trisyllabic nature of the reconstruction: *Bask + el + e*. The form thus derived (**Bask-el-e*) is identical to the Kartvelian *Bask-el-i* where the two final constituents (*-el, -i*) should be accounted for.

In his seminal work *The Oldest Structure of Noun Bases in Kartvelian Languages*, A. Chikobava revealed the derivative nature of numerous words that today appear simple. The author singles out V + C suffixes (*-al, -an, -av, -ar, -el, -en, -ev, -er*) that may occur in both, full or contracted forms (Chikobava 1942: 283). The suffix *-el* is among the most frequently used and most powerful stem formatives. It has two contracted variants: *-l* (*vaš-l* ‘apple’, *t’ap’l* ‘honey’, *ža!-l* ‘dog’) and *-e* (*d!-e* ‘day’, *lam-e* ‘night’); full forms include *u!-el* ‘yoke’, *c’xov-el* ‘animal’, etc. “In primary substantives, the function of these suffixes does not admit of exact definition; in all probability, they first appeared in substantives as *deictic particles* forming *nomen finitum* from amorphous roots” (Ibid. p. 286).¹⁰ They are termed *determinative suffixes* or *determinatives* (Ibid.) and have an interesting characteristic “they help *differentiate borrowed words from native lexemes* (Ibid, p. 287; emphasis added).

The author writes: “...the bases with final *al-...*, *ar-...*, *-el...* are Georgian and their final syllables represent base determinatives: in dozens of borrowed bases identical syllables appear to function as base determinatives...” (Ibid. p. 288). The latter drop a vocalic component (syncope) in all oblique cases in Georgian: Nom. sg. *u!-el-i* ‘yoke’, Erg. sg. *u!-el-ma*, Dat. sg. *u!-el-s*, Gen. sg. *u!-l-is*, Instr. sg. *u!-l-it’*, Adv. sg. *u!-l-ad*, Voc. sg. *u!-el-o*. Contracted forms are preserved in all plural forms; for instance, Nom. pl. *u!-l-eb-i*, Erg. pl. *u!-l-eb-ma*, etc.

In addition to the ancient stem determinative suffix *-el*, there is a homonymous derivative suffix *-el*, which “forms ethnic names from place-names” (Jorbenadze, Kobaidze, Beridze 1988: 140): *k’art’v-el-i* ‘Georgian’, *pariz-el-i* ‘Parisian’, *inglis-el-i* ‘Englishman / Englishwoman’, *k’alak’el-i* ‘city-dweller’, etc. Absence of capitalization in Georgian and its presence in English are caused by different orthographic conventions adopted by these tongues.

“Sometimes, names of origin in *-el* become surnames” (Ibid.); for instance, *Mač’ab-el-i*, *Zanduk-el-i*, *Mesx-el-i*, *Musx-el-i-švili*. These may undergo the same syncope in oblique cases, but not always. A good example in point is the surname *Mač’ab-el-i*, which loses *-e* in oblique cases; cf.: Nom. sg. *Mač’ab-el-i*, Erg. sg. *Mač’ab-el-ma*, Dat. sg. *Mač’ab-el-s*, Gen. sg. *Mač’ab-l-is*, Instr. sg. *Mač’ab-l-it’*, Adv. sg. *Mač’ab-l-ad*, Voc. sg. *Mač’ab-el-o*. In the plural, the contracted form is preserved: Nom. pl. *Mač’ab-l-eb-i*, Erg. pl. *Mač’ab-l-eb-ma*, etc. Understandably, the final *-l* in the English *Baskle* is a *derivative suffix forming ethnic names* like *Mesx-el-i*, *Mač’ab-el-i*, *Zanduk-el-i...*, whilst the small letter of the name *baskle* reflects the orthographic nature of the archetype system.

Identity and confusion of the Kartvelian determinative (*-el*) and ethnic (*-el*) suffixes throw a new light on several OE problems. The variant forms of the *determinative suffix (-el-, -l-, -e-)* account for the presence of *-el* in such OE nouns

¹⁰ Here and elsewhere translations from Georgian into English are mine, A. M.

as *en/el* ‘angel’, *br̄emel* ‘bramble’, *b3tel* ‘hammer’, etc. On the other hand, the same suffix explains the forms of several nouns that “have nom. acc. pl. in *-e* instead of *-as*. These are mostly names of peoples: *Dene* ‘Danes’, *Engle* ‘English’ ...” (Sweet 1992: 11). Consequently, the final *-e* in *Dene* ‘Danes’ or *Engle* ‘English’ represents *not* the traditionally agreed plural forming suffix, but *one of the short variants (-e) of the Georgian determinative morpheme -el*. In this scenario, *Dene* < **Den-el-i* ‘Danes’, *Engle* < **Eng-el-i* ‘English’. In this context, the ME *baskle* ‘Basques’ and OE *Dene* ‘Danes’ and *Engle* ‘English’ derive their formal similarity from the Kartvelian determinative suffix (*-el*), but are associated with plurality via the ethnic suffix *-el*.

The last morpheme to account for in **bask-el-e* (*baskle* / *Baskle*) is the final *-e*, which represents a reflex of the archetypical nominative ending *-i* featuring in the examples above (*Zanduk-el-i*, *Mesx-el-i*). The ancient *i* > *e* change fixed in numerous OE manuscripts (Dahl 1938: 188) reflects the replacement of the Kartvelian grammatical ending by *-e* in OE.

The accuracy of the reconstructed **Baskele* is confirmed by the Latin *Basculi*,¹¹ where the final *-l* is both preceded (*-u-*) and followed (*-i-*) by vowels. Consequently, the final *-e* should be corrected to *-i*, asterisk should be dropped, and *Baskeli* be defined as an *originally Kartvelian trisyllabic archetype*. The received *Baskeli* is a functioning lexeme in Kartvelian and designates ‘a Basque person’, ‘a person of Basque origin’. Interestingly, the Latin *Basculi* acquires significant semantic details from Kartvelian, where the suffix *-ul* has eight homonymous (*-ul*) and five *-ur* variants (Jorbenadze, Kobaidze, Beridze 1988: 389-392; 396-400). One of the suffixes, *-ur*² (Ibid. p. 397) with its allophone *-ulʰ* (Ibid. p. 391) denotes the origin or provenance of *an object*, building a *human – non-human* opposition with the suffix *-el* just as it is the case in Kartvelian. For instance, *Mesx-el-i* is ‘a representative of the Mesxi people’, but *Mesx-ur-i* is ‘something made or produced by Mesxs’; cf.: *Mesxuri saxli* ‘A Mesxian house’ (typical of Mesxian houses, built by Mesxs, etc.). Consequently, the Latin *Basculi* ultimately goes back to the Kartvelian *Baskuri*, a word denoting ‘*something* of Basque origin’.

From this discussion it can be concluded that *Baskle* consists of four morphemes: *Bas-k + l + e*. *Bas-* is the root, *-k-* and *-el-* are derivative suffixes and *-e* is a grammatical ending. *Bas-* derives from the root of the Kartvelian ethnic name *Mes*, *-k-* is a shortened and simplified form of the Kartvelian derivative suffix (*-xi*) stemming from the root *xi* ‘land, earth’, *-l* goes back to one of the shortened variants (*-l-*, *-e-*) of the Georgian determinative suffix *-el* mistakenly equated with *-el* forming ethnic names, and *-e* is the original Kartvelian nominative case marker *-i*. *Baskle-* is a contracted form of *Baskele* (< *Baskeli*) caused by the syncope in the suffix (*-el* > *-l*) inherited from its Kartvelian substrate (Meskhi 2013a). Thus, all the morphemes making up the ME *baskles* go back to Kartvelian archetypes that help reconstruct its case forms.

Table 1 below presents a comparative declension of *engel* and *baskle* (*Baskle*) in Old and Middle English to underline their morphological similarities:

¹¹ http://useful_english.enacademic.com/657451/baskle (accessed regularly September 2015).

Table 1
Declension of OE *engel* and ME *baskle* (*Baskle*)

Sg.	<i>engel</i> (OE)	<i>engel</i> (ME)	<i>baskle</i> (<i>Baskle</i>)
Nom.	engel	engel	baskel-e
Acc.	engel		
Dat.	engl-e		
Gen.	engl-es	engl-es	
Pl.			
Nom.	engl-as	engl-es	baskl-es
Acc.	engl-as		
Dat.	engl-um		
Gen.	engl-a		

One additional note on the plural *Baskl-es* is needed, namely, the loss the vowel in the plural in English is an inseparable phono-morphological process of Kartvelian morphology called *contraction* (Georg. *kumshva*).

To conclude, the presented study demonstrates the Kartvelian origin of the ethnic name *Basque*, its variants *basco*, *vasco* and related lexemes such as *Mizquina*, *Meskia*, ME *baskles* and L. *Basculi*. The Kartvelian language material accounts for their phonetic, morphemic, structural, and semantic features and treats them equally, irrespective of their chronology or language pertinence. Being the dominant and governing “actor” throughout the analysis, the Kartvelian evidence determines the morphemic status of constituent items and differentiates between subtle grammatical or lexical nuances carried by OE *-e* (< Kartvelian *-i*), *-el* / *-l* (Kartvelian *-el-*, *-l-*, *-e-*), L. *-ul* (< Kartvelian *-ur*).

All things considered, the Kartvelian origin of the ethnic name *baskles*, which derives from the term *Mesxeli*, transfers highly significant linguo-culturological information, namely, that *Basques are ethnically Meskhs or Kartvels*, who, unsurprisingly, named the land they inhabited in the same manner as their ancestors (*xi*) and spoke the same language. Therefore, the millennia-old Kartvelian-Basque hypothesis should be taken much more seriously, and the legacy left by R. Lafone, J. Braun, M. Kurdiani, and others should be acknowledged and developed at an international level.

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საბ მესხი

eTnikuri terminebis Basqueda Baskles qarTveluri etimologia

სტატიაში განხილულია ეთნიკური სახელის Basque, მისი ვარიანტებისა (*basco, vasco*) და მასთან დაკავშირებული რამდენიმე სიტყვის ქართველური ეტიმოლოგია. ამგვართ მიეკუთვნება 1025 წლის ერთ-ერთ ხელნაწერში (*Reja de San Millán*) დაფიქსირებული ტოპონიმები *Mizquina, Meskia*, საშუალო ინგლისურის პერიოდში შესრულებულ დოკუმენტში (*Peter Langtoft's Chronicle*) მოხსენიებული სახელი *baskles* და ლათინური *Basculi*. მთელი ანალიზის მანძილზე ქართველური მასალა, რომელიც დომინანტური და მაორგანიზებელი ძალაა, ხსნის აღნიშნული ერთეულების ფონეტიკურ, მორფემულ, სტრუქტურულ თუ სემანტიკურ თავისებურებებს. ნათელი ეფინება არა მარტო უძველესი ენობრივი ფორმების სტრუქტურირებას, არამედ თითოეული კონსტიტუენტის ლინგვისტურ სტატუსსა თუ “უფაქიზეს” სემანტიკურ და გრამატიკულ ნიუანსებს. აღსანიშნავია, რომ ქართველური მასალისთვის საანალიზო სიტყვების ენობრივი კუთვნილება ანდა ქრონოლოგიური მახასიათებელი წინააღმდეგობას არ წარმოადგენს. შესაბამისად, ბასკთა ეთნიკური სახელები *Basque* და *baskles* ქართველური ეტიმოლოგიისა და მომდინარეობს ქართველთა სატომო სახელიდან მესხი და მესხელი. ეს კი იმაზე მიუთითებს, რომ ეთნიკურად ბასკები, იგივე მესხები, ანუ ქართველები არიან, მეტყველებდნენ ქართველურზე და წინაპრების მსგავსად საკუთარ ტერიტორიას მესხთა მიწა ანუ მეს-ხი უწოდეს. ამიტომ, ათასწლეულების მანძილზე ქართველურ-ბასკური ნათესაობის შესახებ შემონახულ ტრადიციო-ჰიპოთეზას დიდი სიფრთხილით უნდა მოვეპყრათ და კვლევა საერთაშორისო დონეზე განვაგრძოთ.