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Luwians, Lydians, Etruscans, and Troy: the linguistic landscape of Northwestern Anatolia in the pre-classical period

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IVO HAJNAL, EBERHARD ZANGGER and JORRIT KELDER

**THE POLITICAL GEOGRAPHY OF
WESTERN ANATOLIA
IN THE LATE BRONZE AGE**

**Proceedings of the EAA Conference
Bern, 7 September 2019**



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BUDAPEST 2022

Front Cover

Electrotype copy of the silver boss of Tarkondemos, probably the top of a sword hilt, inscribed in cuneiform and in Luwian hieroglyphs round a figure of an Anatolian king.
Museum number 117907, © The Trustees of the British Museum

Back Cover

Map showing the cultures around the Aegean and in Anatolia (including ore deposits).
Illustrator: Atelier Guido Köhler & Co., Binningen, Switzerland

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Luwians, Lydians, Etruscans, and Troy

The Linguistic Landscape of Northwestern Anatolia in the Pre-Classical Period

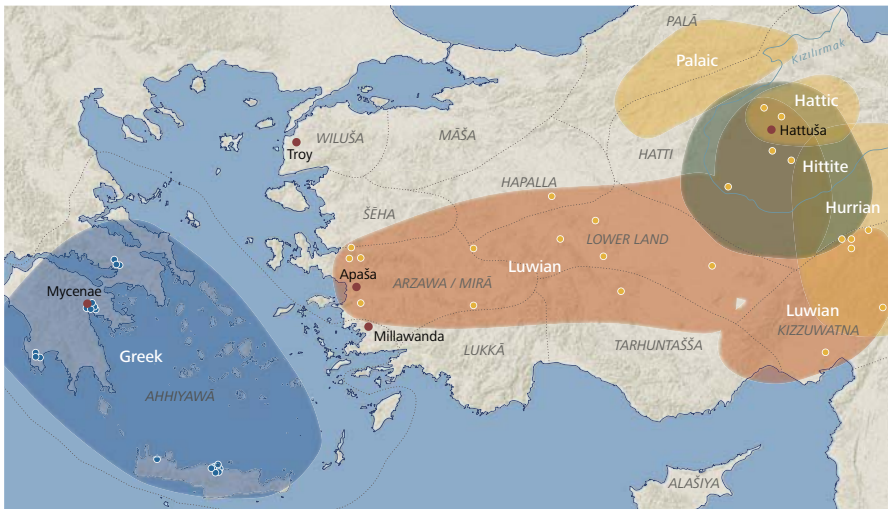


FIGURE 1: The linguistic landscape of Western Anatolia as determined on the basis of second millennium BCE sources. Yellow dots = Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions; blue dots = Linear B tablets (© Luwian Studies, #0126).

Abstract: It is debated which language or languages may have been spoken in the northwestern part of Anatolia – including the area where Troy was situated – during the second millennium BCE. This article will argue that at the end of the Bronze Age (the second half of the second millennium BCE) the eastern part of this region, the land of Māša, was home to speakers of an early version of Lydian, whereas in its western part, the land of Wiluša, the main language was Proto-Tyrsenic, the ancestor of Etruscan.

1 Introduction

The linguistic history of Anatolia is extraordinary, for several reasons. First, it is one of the few regions in the world that can boast a written history that spans almost 4000 years. Ever since Assyrian merchants introduced their writing system into Anatolia in the twentieth century BCE, people living in Anatolia have used all kinds of different scripts to note down whatever they found worthy of recording, either for everyday use, or for eternity. Second, Anatolia is the only passable land mass that connects Europe with Mesopotamia, and it therefore has seen many different population groups that migrated (or attempted to migrate) from the one region to the other. This makes the (ethno)linguistic history of Anatolia a fascinatingly complex topic.

Unfortunately, there are still some large gaps in our knowledge of the (ethno)linguistic situation in Anatolia, especially in the pre-classical period, i.e. the second and the first part of the first millennium BCE. In the present article, I will discuss the linguistic landscape during this period of the northwestern part of Anatolia, i.e. the region that in the second millennium BCE was home to the lands of Wiluša and Māša, and in the first millennium BCE consisted of the regions Troas, Mysia and, to a certain extent, Bithynia. I will argue that in the period before the so-called Bronze Age Collapse (which took place c. 1180 BCE), this region housed the languages Proto-Tyrsenic (the ancestor of Etruscan and Lemnian of the classical period) in its western part (Wiluša, including the city of Troy) and pre-Lyidian (a pre-stage of Lydian as known from the classical period) in its eastern part (Māša). After the Bronze Age Collapse, however, speakers of Phrygian and Greek entered these areas, causing these languages to become the dominant ones.

2 Northwestern Anatolia

The region we will be focusing on is the area that lies to the south and southeast of the three water ways that form the boundary between Europe and Asia: the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus. These areas, which form the Asian part of the so-called Marmara Region of present-day Turkey, were in the classical period home to the regions Troas, Mysia and Bithynia, and, in the second millennium BCE, to the lands called Wiluša and Māša. Since this region encompasses the site of the city

of Troy, the following discussion has repercussions for the language or languages spoken in this city as well.

Our knowledge of the (ethno)linguistic situation in this region in the pre-classical period is almost non-existent, due to the lack of direct sources. From the second millennium BCE we only know a single stamp seal with writing on it discovered at the site of Troy (discussed below), and from the first part of the first millennium BCE we know just a few written sources (likewise discussed below).¹ We therefore have to largely base ourselves on indirect sources.

3 Information from sources from the Late Bronze Age (c. 1950–1180 BCE)

3.1 Cuneiform sources

The cuneiform archives that are known from second millennium BCE Anatolia all stem from its central part. We are therefore relatively well aware of the (ethno)linguistic make-up of Central Anatolia during this period, and can roughly pinpoint where languages like Hittite, Hattic, Hurrian, Palaic and Cuneiform Luwian (also called Kizzuwatna Luwian) were spoken at that time (see Figure 1). When it comes to Western Anatolia, the cuneiform archives, especially the ones from Ḫattuša, give quite a lot of information on its geopolitical make-up, and we are fairly certain about names of countries, cities and rulers in this region, especially during the second half of the second millennium BCE. This is the reason that we know that the area of our interest at that time was home to the lands called Wiluša and Māša. When it comes to the languages spoken in these lands, the Hittite archives do not provide a direct answer, unfortunately. There is one piece of information that may be seen as indirect evidence, however, which is the fact that the names of three kings of Wiluša are attested in Hittite texts: Kukkuṇi, Alakšandu, and Walmu. Although, as far as I know, the names Kukkuṇi and Walmu have never been given a credible linguistic interpretation, the name Alakšandu is generally compared to

1 At the site of Troy also two Early Bronze Age spindle whorls with carvings on them have been found, which e.g. Godart (1994, 722–724) interpreted as Linear A signs. See however Zurbach (2003, 115) and Waal (2017, 115–117) for the view that these signs, although quite possibly writing, can hardly have been Linear A. As such, they do not provide any insight into the language that was spoken in Troy at that time.

the Greek name Ἀλέξανδρος, which may be seen as an indication that in Wiluša Greek was spoken. This suggestion would be supported by the fact that in the second half of the second millennium BCE Greek assuredly was spoken on Crete and the Greek mainland, where clay tablets containing Mycenaean Greek inscriptions in the Linear B script have been found (Figure 1). Moreover, in the fourteenth century BCE, the Mycenaean Greeks, who in that period had unified themselves into a federal state of several smaller kingdoms ruled by a single Great King (Kelder 2010; 2018), were manifesting themselves on the Anatolian west coast. The Hittite archives refer to several clashes with Aḫḫiyawa (the Hittite name for the Mycenaean federal state) and to the fact that some of the Western Anatolian kingdoms, including Wiluša, for some periods were allies of Aḫḫiyawa. We may therefore safely assume that in the second half of the second millennium BCE in Wiluša speakers of Greek were present, and it seems quite possible that even within the Wilušan royal house speakers of Greek could be found (through diplomatic intermarriage with Aḫḫiyawan royal families?, cf. e.g. Latacz 2004, 118), which would explain the Greek name of king Alakšandu. Nevertheless, it does not seem likely that Greek was the dominant language in this region at that time.

3.2 Hieroglyphic sources

The only direct source of information on the linguistic situation in Western Anatolia consists of inscriptions written in the Anatolian hieroglyphic script (see Figure 1 for their distribution).² Most of these inscriptions are graffiti and only contain personal names, and it therefore has sometimes been claimed that it cannot be decided what language these are written in. Nevertheless, in all contemporary Anatolian hieroglyphic inscriptions from Central Anatolia for which the language of writing can be determined, this language is Luwian. Moreover, it has recently been convincingly argued for by Oreshko (2013) that this is also the case in one of the Western Anatolian hieroglyphic inscriptions, TORBALI: although badly damaged, it definitely contains a Luwian sentence. I thus agree with Oreshko that these western hieroglyphic inscriptions indicate that in Bronze Age Western Anatolia Luwian was spoken. As we see in Figure 1, these inscriptions are only found in the central part of Western Anatolia,

2 For the textual evidence from Western Anatolia, see also the contribution of Waal in this volume.

roughly in the area where at that time the Arzawa lands (= Arzawa/Mirā, Šēḫa, and Ḫapalla, cf. Figure 1) were located. However, we do not find such inscriptions in the northwestern area that is of our interest. Nevertheless, in the past it has been proposed that also in the northern part of Western Anatolia Luwian was spoken, and that it may have been the main language of the city of Troy. This is based on several considerations, the most important ones of which are the following (see Yakubovich 2009, 117–129 for a critical discussion of some other considerations).

First, the only object with (assured)³ writing on it excavated at the site of Troy is a seal with Anatolian/Luwian hieroglyphs (Hawkins and Easton 1996): it contains the personal names BONUS₂.SCRIBA *sù[?]+ra/i[?]-tā[?]-nu* and BONUS₂.FEMINA *pa-tā[?]-x-x*. The value of this find should not be overestimated, however. Such seals with Anatolian (Luwian) hieroglyphs have been found at sites throughout the Ancient Near East, and this specific seal from Troy therefore cannot carry the burden of proving that Luwian was the dominant language in this area in the second millennium BCE.

Another argument in favor of the idea that Luwian was the main language of Troy was given by Watkins (1986), who points out that the names of some Trojans as attested in the epic works of Homer can be etymologized as Luwian. For instance, the name Πρίαμος would be the Greek adaptation of a Luwian name *Priyamuwa*, which means ‘excelling in courage’. Although ingenious, this argument is beset with problems. First, these names are first written down centuries after the time period in which the Trojan War was set, so it is fully unclear how authentic they are. Second, the linguistic interpretation of personal names is notoriously difficult (cf. e.g. Kloekhorst 2019, 13–15 for a methodological discussion). And even if it were true that e.g. Πρίαμος is a linguistically Luwian name, it does not necessarily prove that Luwian was the main language of Troy. Just like Alakšandu = Greek Ἀλέξανδρος may have entered the Wilušan (Trojan) royal house through intermarriage with royal families from Greek-speaking areas, it is possible that through intermarriage with royal families from Luwian-speaking areas (e.g. the Arzawa lands, which were the southern neighbors of Wiluša), Luwian names could have entered the Wilušan royal house.

3 Cf. footnote 1.

3.3 Bronze Age sources: inconclusive

All in all, the direct evidence that stems from the second millennium BCE is not decisive as to determine which language(s) was/were spoken in northwestern Anatolia in this period. We therefore have to look at evidence from a later period: the Iron Age and the classical period.

4 Information from sources from the Iron Age and the classical period (after c. 1180 BCE)

Sources on the linguistic situation in Western Anatolia stemming from the Iron Age and the classical period are somewhat more numerous than those from the Bronze Age. Nevertheless, we have to take into account an important caveat when using them. As is well known, around 1180 BCE the entire Eastern Mediterranean is in turmoil, and many Ancient Near Eastern states disappear, an event that has been called the Bronze Age Collapse (e.g. Cline 2014). In Central Anatolia, the Hittite Empire ceases to exist, and, in the area of our interest, Troy VIIa burns down to the ground. For quite some time, we do not know what events take place in Anatolia. For a period of c. 150 years we have no written records (the ‘Dark Age’), and when we do find sources again, we are confronted with a quite different geopolitical landscape than in the Bronze Age. It is therefore possible that also the linguistic landscape has in the intervening period undergone certain changes. We should therefore be cautious not to uncritically project the Iron Age situation back to the Bronze Age period.

4.1 Greek

When the fog of the Dark Age has cleared, we find a multitude of Greek-speaking settlements on Anatolia’s west coast, with speakers of Doric occupying its most southernly parts, speakers of Ionian its south-central part, speakers of Aeolic its north-central part, including the Troas, and Ionic speakers again along the shores of the Dardanelles and the Sea of Marmara (Figure 2). These latter two groups therefore fall within the area of our interest. It is generally assumed, however, that these speakers of Greek settled on the Anatolian west coast after the Bronze Age Collapse. Their presence therefore does not say anything about the linguistic landscape of Western Anatolia during the Bronze Age. The only exception

may be the city of Miletus, since its Bronze Age predecessor, Millawanda, seems to have fallen under Mycenaean (Aḫḫiyawan) influence already

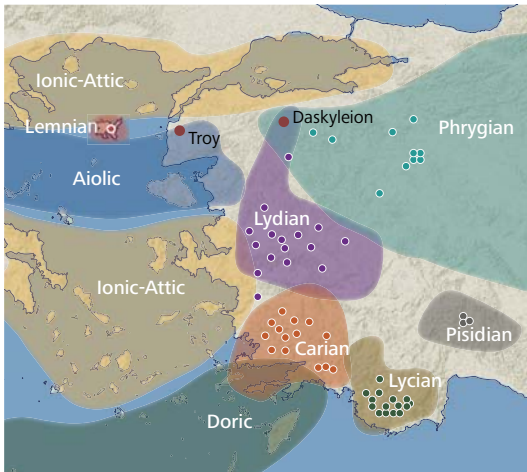


FIGURE 2: The linguistic landscape of Western Anatolia as determined on the basis of Iron Age sources (© Luwian Studies, #0127).

from the late fourteenth century BCE onwards, with several periods of direct Aḫḫiyawan control up to the Bronze Age Collapse (Bryce 2005, 58). It is therefore quite possible that, during the last centuries of the Bronze Age, (Mycenaean) Greek was spoken in this city on a large scale. Nevertheless, this has no repercussions for the linguistic situation in northwestern Anatolia.

4.2 Phrygian

Phrygian is an Indo-European language that is not a member of the Anatolian branch, but which is rather linguistically closely related to Greek. Its attestations, the oldest of which stem from the eighth century BCE, are found in a large area in Central Anatolia. However, we also find quite some examples from northwestern Anatolia. Particularly the inscriptions stemming from Daskyleion (two funerary steles and several graffiti on pot sherds) fall within the area of our interest (Figure 2). We may therefore conclude that during the Iron Age, Phrygian was spoken here. However, it is generally assumed that Phrygian entered Anatolia relatively recently, likely after the Bronze Age Collapse (e.g. Brixhe 2008, 69). Compare also Herodotus's statement (7, 73) that the Phrygians stem from Macedonia, and from there moved to Asia. This implies that Phrygian cannot have been a part of the linguistic landscape of Anatolia during the second millennium BCE (i.e. pre-1200 BCE).

4.3 Lydian

Lydian is the language of classical Lydia, and is attested in over one hundred inscriptions (seventh to fourth century BCE), mostly from the Lydian capital Sardis, but also from some other places (Figure 2). Lydian is a member of the Anatolian language branch, and thus directly related to Hittite, Luwian, Palaic, etc. It therefore is quite likely that (a pre-stage of) Lydian was spoken in Anatolia in the second millennium BCE as well. Although the bulk of its attestations stem from the central part of Western Anatolia, there are some attestations found in an area more to the north. The most prominent of these is a Lydian graffito found on a pot sherd excavated at Daskyleion in classical Mysia (Bakır and Gusmani 1993). Since this find is an outlier compared to the other Lydian inscriptions known at that time, and since all other graffiti from Daskyleion known at that time are in Phrygian or Greek, Bakır and Gusmani state that the pot to which the sherd belongs with the Lydian graffito on it may stem from Sardis and could have arrived in Daskyleion through trade (1993, 138, 142). However, the present excavator of Daskyleion, Prof. K. İren, has confirmed (pers. comm.) that the sherd on which this graffito is attested is made from clay that is assuredly from the region of Daskyleion itself. There can thus be no doubt that the graffito was inscribed locally. This fact is even more interesting since the sherd containing the graffito can be dated to the period 625–575 BCE (pers. comm. K. İren), which makes this particular inscription one of the earliest witnesses of the Lydian language. Moreover, during a 2012 visit to the site, Alexander Lubotsky and myself have identified two more graffiti attested on pot sherds from Daskyleion that we believe can be regarded as Lydian (we are presently working on a publication of all Lydian, Phrygian and Greek graffiti from Daskyleion). All this implies that, during the Iron Age – even as early as the end of the seventh century BCE – Lydian was spoken at some scale at the site of Daskyleion, next to Phrygian and Greek.

This supports the, independently formulated, opinions of several scholars that the Lydian language originally may not have been at home in classical Lydia but rather came from the north. For instance, Starke (1997, 475¹⁰¹) remarks that, since during the Bronze Age the region of classical Lydia was “zweifellos ... luwischsprachig”, at that time the speakers of Lydian must have lived elsewhere. Since the original Greek term for Lydians is *Mēiones*/*Maiones* (Homer; Herodotus 1.7, 7.74), and since a land *Maionia* is located to the northeast of classical Lydia (“im mysisch-lydisch-phrygischen Grenzgebiet”), Starke assumes they came from there.

Also Neumann (1999) comes to a similar conclusion on the basis of an analysis of onomastic material attested in Greek sources that deal with Troy and its surrounding areas. For instance, the personal name Τρωίλος is, according to Neumann, derived from the name Τρώς (a mythical early king of Troy) by adding a suffix *-ιλ-*, which Neumann compares to the Lydian patronymic suffix *-li-*.⁴ On the basis of this and other similar examples, Neumann proposes that “auch nördlich von Lydien, in Mysien und dann wohl auch in der Troas das Lydische ... geherrscht hat – vor dem Eindringen der Phryger und anderer aus dem Balkan herübergekommener Ethnien” (1999, 18; his emphasis). In the same vein, Beekes (2002) argues that the Lydian language came from the north. He analyses the Lydians’ original Greek name Μείονες < *Māiones as *Mā-iones, and compares its initial part to the element Mā- found in the name of the Bronze Age land of Māša (see Figure 1). Moreover, he ingeniously proposes (Beekes 2003a) that the stem *lūd-* of the classical name of Lydia (Gr. Λυδία, cf. also Λυδός ‘Lydian’) goes back to the Bronze Age toponym Luwya (Hitt. ^{URU}*lu-ú-i-ya*), through the specifically Lydian sound law **ī* > *d*, i.e. **luwiy-* > **luwid-* > **luwd-* > *lūd-*.⁵ As Beekes makes explicit, all this implies that “[t]he Lydians came from the east and the north [and, at some moment in time], probably forced by the Phrygians, went south and overran Luwian territory” (2003a, 49). This scenario is also supported by Oettinger (2004, 358, 367).

The combination of the archaeological evidence and these linguistic arguments, especially those of Starke’s and Beekes’s, make it indeed attractive to assume that during the Late Bronze Age, at least in the period preceding the Bronze Age Collapse, a pre-stage of Lydian was spoken in northwestern Anatolia, certainly in the area of the land of Māša, and possibly also in the land of Wiluša.

4 I find this comparison relatively weak, however. A better comparandum for the *-ιλ-* of names like Τρωίλος would be the Hittite suffix *-ili* which we find in names like *Hattušili*, *Muršili*, etc., and which was probably taken over from Hattic (e.g. Kloekhorst 2019, 66–67). This means that this suffix does not say too much about the linguistic situation of the Troas during the Bronze Age.

5 Personally, I think that the toponym spelled in Hittite as ^{URU}*lu-ú-i-ya(-)* (also ^{URU}*lu-ú-ya(-)* and ^{URU}*lu-i^o*) should be interpreted as /lūya-/ (not **/luwiyā-/), which would have directly yielded Lyd. /lūd-/ , without having to assume a syncope, as Beekes does.

4.4 Lemnian

There is one other first millennium BCE language spoken in the vicinity of the area of our interest: Lemnian. This is the indigenous language of the island of Lemnos (some 70 km directly west of the Troas shore), which is attested on four inscriptions and several graffiti dating to the sixth century BCE (cf. e.g. Eichner 2012; 2013). Linguistically, Lemnian is a complete outlier in the area: it is unrelated to Greek, Phrygian, or the Anatolian languages. Instead, it is closely related to Etruscan, the language that was spoken in Italy by the Etruscans and that is known from written records dating from c. 700 BCE to the first century AD (and which had a lesser-known sister language, Rhaetic, which we will treat in more detail below). Although Lemnian and Etruscan are clearly closely related to each other, at the same time they are too distinct from each other to be directly equated. Moreover, from a temporal point of view it is impossible that the one is a descendant of the other: the attestations of Lemnian overlap in time with those of Etruscan. This means that, phylolinguistically, Lemnian and Etruscan should be regarded as two sister languages that both derive from a single mother language, which was spoken some time before the earliest attestations of either language. According to Rix (2008, 142), this mother language, which he calls Proto-Tyrsenic (and to his mind was the ancestor of Rhaetic as well, see also below) can on linguistic grounds be dated to “the last quarter of the second millennium BC”.

This linguistic analysis of the relationship between Lemnian and Etruscan requires a geographical hypothesis about the location of Proto-Tyrsenic. In theory, there are three possibilities:⁶

Scenario 1: Proto-Tyrsenic was spoken in (an area encompassing) the region where Etruscan was spoken: this requires that in the period 1250–1000 BCE some speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic moved from this ‘homeland’ to Lemnos, where their language through time underwent innovations by which it developed into Lemnian, which made it distinct from the language spoken by the people who remained in the ‘homeland’, where Proto-Tyrsenic underwent a different set of innovations and developed into Etruscan.

6 A fourth option as argued for by Pallotino 1989, which sees Etruscan and Lemnian as the remnants of a large coherent linguistic area, including both Italy and the Eastern Aegean / Western Anatolia, is linguistically virtually impossible, cf. Beekes 2002, 218.

Scenario 2: Proto-Tyrsenic was spoken in (an area encompassing) the region where Lemnian was spoken: this requires that in the period 1250–1000 BCE some speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic moved from this ‘homeland’ to Tuscany, where their language through time underwent innovations by which it developed into Etruscan, which made it distinct from the language spoken by the people who remained in the ‘homeland’, where Proto-Tyrsenic underwent a different set of innovations and developed into Lemnian.

Scenario 3: Proto-Tyrsenic was spoken in an area different from both Tuscany and Lemnos: this requires that in the period 1250–1000 BCE two groups of speakers moved away, one to Tuscany and one to Lemnos, where their language underwent different innovations, which caused the rise of two language varieties, Etruscan and Lemnian, respectively. Moreover, we would have to assume either that none of the speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic remained in their ‘homeland’, or that they did remain there but that their language was never recorded in writing (at least, not in writing that has come down to us or that we understand as such) and at a certain point in time was replaced by a different language.

Of these three possible scenarios, the third requires the most assumptions (two instances of population movement), and is therefore less economical than the other two. Without evidence that specifically speaks in favor of it, it is for the time being best to leave it aside and focus on the first two scenarios. Given the direction of their assumed population movement, we may conveniently call these hypotheses ‘West-to-East’ (no. 1: Tuscany-to-Lemnos) and ‘East-to-West’ (no. 2: Lemnos-to-Tuscany), respectively.

5 The relationship between Lemnian and Etruscan: The origin of the Etruscans

Already in antiquity there was a tradition that the Etruscans in fact came from elsewhere and had only relatively recently arrived in Italy: Herodotus (1, 94) mentions that the Etruscans sailed to Italy from Lydia, and also Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I, 27) mentions a legendary account according to which Etruscans came from a foreign land and were led to Italy by a man called Tyrrhenos, who was a Lydian by birth. These stories would thus be in line with the ‘East-to-West’ theory. However, their trustworthi-

ness has always been debated: for instance, the fact that classical Lydia was a landlocked state (separated from the Mediterranean Sea by Ionia) made it hard to believe that the Etruscans would have sailed from there. Among modern Etruscologists it is therefore usually assumed that, as a population group, the Etruscans are native to Italy and that the presence of a language closely related to Etruscan on the island of Lemnos must be viewed as the result of a relatively recent colonization by Etruscans (e.g. De Simone 1996). This would be in line with the ‘West-to-East’ theory.

5.1 A case for ‘East-to-West’: Beekes 2002

In an elaborate article from 2002 (also published as a separate booklet: Beekes 2003b), Beekes argues extensively that the classical tradition stating that the Etruscans had a Lydian origin was in fact correct. To his mind, the only aspect of this tradition that needs to be adjusted is that at the time of the Etruscan population movement towards Italy the Lydians were not yet living in classical Lydia, but in fact resided in the region of the Late Bronze Age land of Māša (= *Mā-ionia), and thus lived at the southern shores of the Sea of Marmara.⁷ According to Beekes, it is from there that the Etruscans sailed to Italy. Beekes offers no less than 24 arguments in favor of the ‘East-to-West’ theory. I will not repeat them all here, but present and elaborate on those that I find the most important ones.

Argument 1: Etruscan and its cognate Rhaetic are almost fully surrounded by Indo-European languages that are closely related to each other: on their west side we find the Celtic languages Ligurian and Lepontic, on their southeast side the Italic languages Umbrian, Faliscan and Latin, and on their east side Venetic (Figure 3). The latter language is generally viewed as closely related to the Italic languages, and some scholars would even regard it as an Italic language proper. Moreover, the Italic branch is nowadays regarded as the closest sister to the Celtic branch, and most specialists even regard Italo-Celtic a single branch of Indo-European. This means that Etruscan and Rhaetic are found in the middle of an otherwise

⁷ According to Beekes (2002, 230), this is in fact literally what Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I, 27) says, when he states about Tyrrhēnos, the mythical leader of the Etruscan migration: τοῦτον δὲ Λυδὸν εἶναι τὸ γένος ἐκ τῆς πρότερον Μηονίας καλουμένης ‘he was a Lydian by birth from the [land] formerly called Maeonia’ (translation by Beekes *loc. cit.*).

contiguous Indo-European dialect continuum.⁸ Since the Proto-Indo-European ancestor language was spoken on the Pontic-Caspian steppes in the fourth millennium BCE, we know that at some moment in time after c. 3000 BCE speakers of Indo-European must have entered Italy. It would be odd if during this event they would not have spread to Tuscany as well: as Beekes

says (his argument no. 15), this region “is not a ‘withdrawal area’, where an ancient people may hold out when the country is invaded. On the contrary, it is a desirable area which the Indo-European peoples, had they come later [than the Etruscans], would certainly have occupied” (2002, 224). The implication is that the speakers



FIGURE 3: The linguistic landscape of northern Italy around c. 600 BCE (© Luwian Studies, #0128).

of Etruscan must have been the invading population group that entered Italy *after* the speakers of Indo-European had already settled there. Although it is not fully clear exactly when the immigration of speakers of Indo-European into Italy had been effectuated, it seems reasonable to assume that this did not take place until the end of the third millennium BCE. This would mean that the speakers of Etruscan could not have arrived at Tuscany before c. 2000 BCE.

Argument 2: The river Umbro (modern-day Ombrone) flows in its full length in Etruscan territory (cf. Figure 3). As Beekes points out (his argument no. 22), the name of this river must have been directly connected with the name of the Umbrian people: “[t]he river will have given its name to the people, or *vice versa*” (2002, 226). This implies that, originally, the river Umbro will have been part of Umbrian territory, and that “the Etruscans must have pushed the Umbrians out”. According to Beekes, this fits

8 Etruscan’s only possibly non-Indo-European neighbor is North Picene, a language that is only rudimentarily attested, and which has not received any linguistic classification yet (e.g. Woodard 2008, 4). It therefore cannot at this moment be used as an argument.

the fact that “Pliny (3, 112) states that the Etruscans conquered 300 cities from the Umbrians” (2002, 225). This implies again that the speakers of Etruscan were an invading population group in this area.

Argument 3: Archaeologically, the Etruscan culture is a direct continuation of the Villanova material culture (c. 900–700 BCE), which itself has developed out of the so-called Proto-Villanova material culture (c. 1150–900 BCE). As Beekes states (his argument no. 16) “[t]he transition between Proto-Villanova and Villanova appears to be a continuous one, but that between Proto-Villanova and the preceding Bronze Age Apennine culture, about 1200 [BCE], shows a serious break” (2002, 224). This is confirmed by a large overview article of the “Proto-Villanova-phenomenon” by Amann (2005), who describes how this material culture ‘pops up’ (“taucht ... auf”) on the Italian peninsula at the end of the Bronze Age, twelfth to tenth century BCE (2005, 15). She states that, when it comes to the continuity between the Early Bronze Age (before 1200 BCE) and the end of the Bronze Age (around 1200–1150 BCE) in the Po Valley “ein echter Bruch mit signifikanten Siedlungs- und Bevölkerungsrückgang zu verzeichnen [ist]” (2005, 23). In Central and South Italy there is more continuity between these two periods, although here, too, “Elemente der Instabilität zu erkennen sind” in the sense that at some sites “Zerstörungsschichten zwischen Jung- und Endbronzezeit existieren” (2005, 23–24). Moreover, some Proto-Villanova sites are “ohne direkte Vorgänger” (2005, 24). Interestingly, if we plot on a map of Italy the locations where the first Proto-Villanova sites start appearing (around 1150 BCE) as well as the areas into which later expansions take place (up to 900 BCE), we clearly see that almost all of them start at the sea shore and from there expand land inwards (see Figure 4a). In the north, we do find an early Proto-Villanova site in a land-locked area (Ascona), but in this case there may have been a link to the sea as well: we can easily envisage how, from the mouth of the river Po at the sea shore, population groups could have followed its course all the way up to the origins of tributaries like the Ticino in the Lago Maggiore, where Ascona is situated. The largest area where the Proto-Villanova culture has arisen and expanded is Tuscany, where a few centuries later (from 700 BCE onwards) the first Etruscan texts are found. The second-largest area is the Po Valley, for which an expansion northwards into the direction of the Central Alps is attested, where a few centuries later (from c. 600 BCE onwards) the first texts in Rhaetic are attested. All this would support the view that c. 1200–

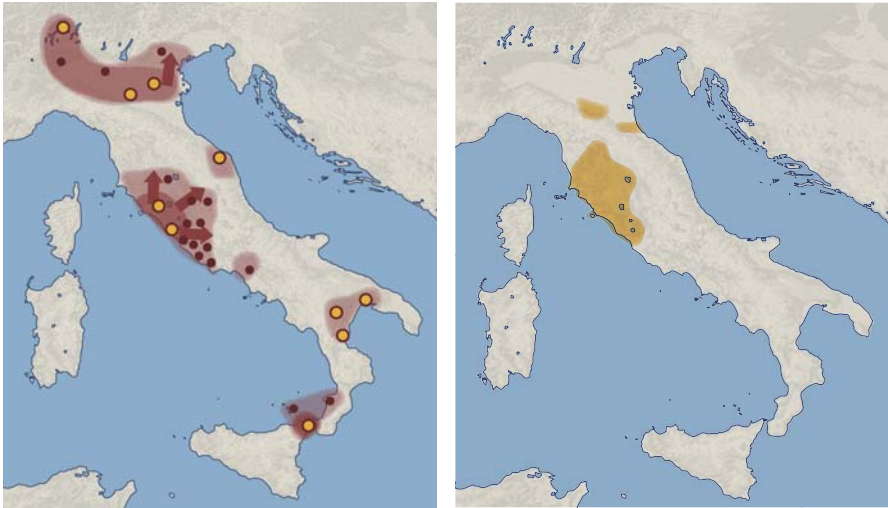


FIGURE 4a, left: The spread of Proto-Villanova sites in Italy (based on information from Amann 2005). Red dots with yellow core are early Proto-Villanova sites (c. 1150 BCE), completely red dots are younger Proto-Villanova sites (up to 900 BCE). 4b, right: The location of the Villanova culture (c. 900–700 BCE), the direct predecessor of the Etruscan culture (© Luwian Studies, #0129).

1150 BCE population groups from overseas settled at several places on the Italian shores and from there expanded land inwards, partly by (violently) taking over settlements from indigenous population groups, partly by building new settlements. The fact that archaeologically these expansions are found to have taken place in (or into the direction of) areas where later speakers of Etruscan and Rhaetic are attested would fit the idea that these incoming population groups were speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic.

Argument 4: According to Beekes (his argument no. 21), “we know from the abundant finds of ceramics in the 13th century, that the Mycenaean knew the sea-route to Italy” (2002, 225). Moreover, the findspots of Mycenaean pottery in Italy in the twelfth century BCE (see the map in Amann 2005, 24) correspond very well to the locations where around the same time Proto-Villanova sites start to emerge. This means that if these Proto-Villanova sites were founded by population groups coming from overseas, there is no objection to postulating that these groups originated from the Aegean area.

Argument 5: The emergence of the Proto-Villanova culture in Italy can be dated to 1200–1150 BCE, which coincides with the date that is assigned to the last stage of the Proto-Tyrsenic mother language of Etruscan and

Lemnian (Rix 2008, 142: “the last quarter of the second millennium BC”). Moreover, both dates match the date of the Bronze Age Collapse (c. 1180 BCE). We can therefore only agree with Beekes’s statement (his argument no. 17) that the idea that “[t]he 1200 crisis ... was the setting of the migration of the Etruscans ... fits very well in the general picture” (2002, 224).

Argument 6: One of the ‘Sea Peoples’ mentioned by the Egyptians is called *twrš*, which has been identified with the Etruscans (Tyrsēnoi) by several scholars. As Beekes (his argument no. 20) states, “[w]e have no confirmation [whether the *T(w)r(w)š* were the Tyrsēnoi], but it seems quite possible”. If correct, it would show that the Etruscans were one of the seafaring population groups during the times of the Bronze Age Collapse. This would certainly fit a scenario by which speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic sailed from northwestern Anatolia to Italy around this time. Note that strictly speaking, this point is not an argument in favor of the East-to-West hypothesis *per se*: it would also fit the West-to-East hypothesis.

Argument 7: As Beekes states (his argument no. 3; 2002, 221), the Greeks used the term ‘Tyrsēnoi’ not only to refer to the Etruscans of Italy, but also to some population groups living or having lived “in the extreme north-west of Asia Minor, on the islands and on the continent east of the Hellespont” (2002, 226). The map that he gives of the locations for which the (former) presence of Tyrsēnoi has been mentioned by classical authors (2002, 209–210) shows a contiguous area that includes the south shores of the Sea of Marmara, the Troas, the islands of the North Aegean (Lesbos, Tenedos, Imbros, Lemnos, Samothrake), as well as one of the peninsulas of Chalkidike (Figure 5). The fact that these references, from all kinds of different authors, cluster in a single, specific region and thus show a non-random distribution adds to their trustworthiness. Another interesting aspect is that in some of the passages that mention Tyrsēnoi, their presence is a matter of the past. This implies that they are not recent immigrants from Italy but rather represent the remnants of an ancient, disappearing, population group.

Argument 8: If Tyrsēnoi (Etruscans) were originally (i.e. before the Bronze Age Collapse) present in the Troas, this would imply that they were present in the city of Troy as well. In fact, this could mean that dur-



FIGURE 5: Blue dots indicate locations where, according to classical authors, Tyrsēnoi were living in Antiquity. Adapted from Beekes 2002, 209–210 (© Luwian Studies, #0130).

ing the Late Bronze Age the main language spoken in Troy was Etruscan (or rather: Proto-Tyrsenic). Beekes himself is hesitant as to whether this can really be concluded (2002, 232–233), but he does state that this idea “may be relevant to the origin of the Aeneas legend [in the sense that] the story was based on a story about Etruscans coming to Italy” (2002, 234). Although Beekes does not include this idea in his list of main arguments, to my mind it is in fact an important one. Its importance is enlarged by the fact that the earliest known Etruscan vase that shows a depiction of Aeneas stems from as early as the seventh century BCE (Palmucci 2001). This early date, combined with the fact that in Homer’s *Iliad* Aeneas is only a minor figure, implies that the Aeneas legend can hardly have been taken over in Etruscan culture through the spread of the works of Homer: it rather seems to be a different tradition. This would support the possibility that the Aeneas story is in fact a legendary account of the migration of ‘Etruscans’ (rather: speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic) from the Troas into Italy in the wake of the Bronze Age Collapse.

Argument 9: A connection between Etruscan and the Anatolian languages may be the Etruscan ‘hero’ Tarchon, who, according to Beekes (his argument no. 9) “is clearly [identical to] the Stormgod Tarhun(t)-, the highest god of the Luwians and the Hittites” (2002, 222).

Taking all these arguments (and the others listed by Beekes) into account, it seems fair to say that Beekes has built an extremely convincing case that the ‘Etruscans’ (rather: speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic) moved from north-western Anatolia to Italy at the time of the Bronze Age Collapse. Moreover, he has persuasively argued that the ancient tradition that sees the Etruscans as coming from Lydia (Herodotus, Dionysius of Halicarnassus) may be correct if we assume that with the term ‘Lydia’ the area is meant where speakers of Lydian were living before the Bronze Age Collapse, i.e. the region that at that time was called *Māša* (with the stem *Mā-* that is also found in **Mā-ionia* > Gr. *Mēionia*).

5.2 Recent criticism on the ‘East-to-West’ theory

In recent times, some new arguments have been added to the discussion of the relationship between Lemnian and Etruscan and Rhaetic, which would rather speak in favor of the ‘West-to-East’ theory. To my mind, they cannot withstand scrutiny, however.

Argument A: Oettinger (2010) focuses on the position of Rhaetic in the discussion. This language is attested in some 300 inscriptions dating from the sixth to the first century BCE that mostly stem from the Central Alps. Although our understanding of these texts is poor, it is generally assumed that Rhaetic was related to Etruscan: they share several linguistic features which makes a genetic relationship likely (Rix 1998; Schumacher 2004, 294–316). Nevertheless, as Oettinger states, there are also aspects, both morphologically and lexically, where Etruscan and Rhaetic seem to be fairly distinct from each other. In the case of Etruscan and Lemnian, Oettinger deems the situation quite different, however: he calls the agreement between these two languages “außerordentlich groß” (2010, 235). Oettinger therefore states that “das Etruskische der Sprache der weit entfernten Insel Lemnos enger verwandt ist als der geographisch relativ nahen Sprache Rätisch der Zentralalpen” (2010, 236). Since Oettinger assumes that, in general, languages undergo linguistic changes with a comparable pace, he concludes that the split between Etruscan and Rhaetic must have

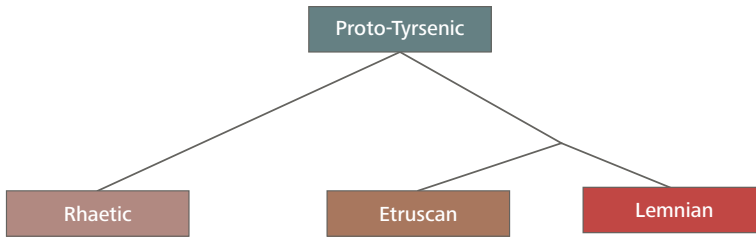


FIGURE 6: Schematic overview of the Tyrsenic language family tree according to Oettinger 2010 (© Luwian Studies, #0131).

taken place earlier in time than the split between Etruscan and Lemnian (Figure 6). Since both Etruscan and Rhaetic are spoken in Italy, it is likely that their split must have taken place in Italy as well, which, according to Oettinger, implies that Proto-Tyrsenic was likewise spoken in Italy. As a consequence, the presence of Lemnian on Lemnos must have been due to a West-to-East movement, which Oettinger proposes to have been part of the ‘Sea Peoples’ movements after 1200 BCE (2010, 237–239).

Upon closer scrutiny, Oettinger’s argument cannot be upheld, however. Our knowledge of Rhaetic is so rudimentary that it is difficult to say anything certain about the amount of its agreement with Etruscan. In the case of Lemnian, the one large inscription that has come down to us happens to contain topics that coincide with well-known Etruscan passages, so that the apparent level of agreement between Etruscan and Lemnian may only be a matter of coincidence of attestation. Moreover, Oettinger’s statement that, in general, languages show the same pace of change through time may be correct if languages are spoken in isolation. However, in contact situations languages can change much more rapidly than average. In the case of Rhaetic, hardly anything is known about its contact situation, so that it cannot be excluded that it underwent severe contact-induced changes. If so, this has no bearing on its position in the Tyrsenic family tree. In fact, a linguistic family tree can only be drawn on the basis of an analysis of shared innovations between languages, not on superficial similarities between languages: only if it can be shown that two languages have undergone a common, shared innovation, we may assume that they share a lower node in the family tree. Unfortunately, as far as I am aware, at this moment it is impossible to determine whether any two of the three known Tyrsenic languages underwent common, shared linguistic innovations. It thus seems too early to draw a family tree of Tyrsenic on the basis of linguistic arguments, and any such tree cannot therefore be

used as an argument in determining the location of the Tyrsenic homeland.

Argument B: A second argument put forward by Oettinger (2010) concerns the location of the speakers of Rhaetic: the Central Alps. According to Oettinger, this region can be regarded as a ‘Rückzugsgebiet’ (2010, 237), i.e. an area in which we would expect to find languages that have been present in the area for a long time, and not languages that would have arrived there relatively recently through the immigration of population groups. Since mountainous areas are generally relatively hard to live in, it is unattractive for newcomers to settle there, as a consequence

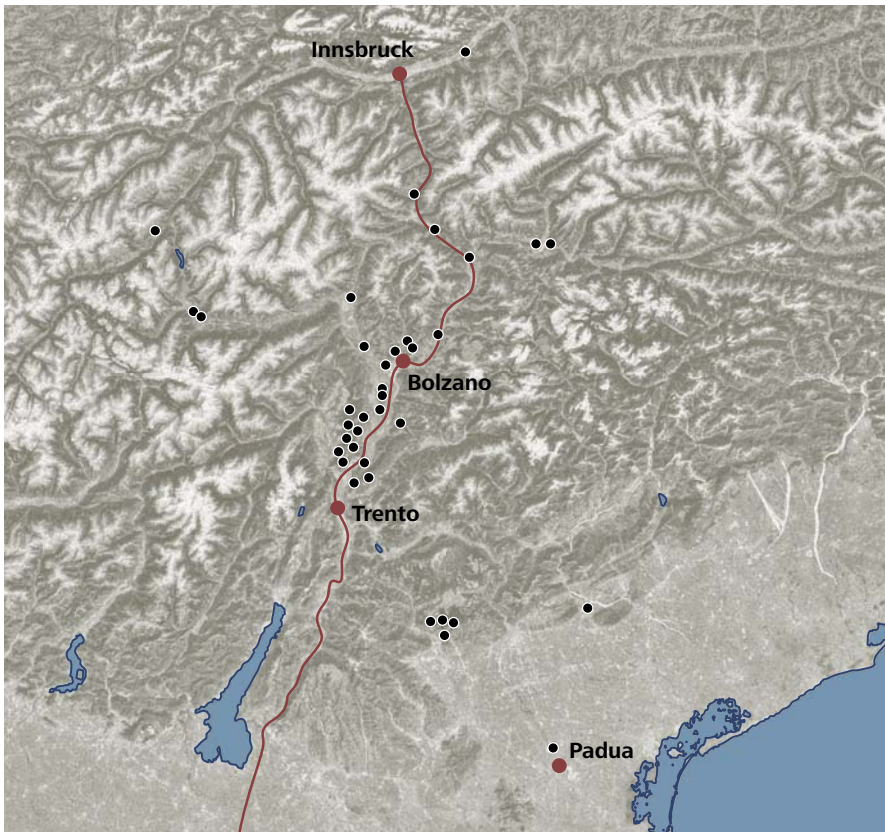


FIGURE 7: Map of the Central Alps in the region of the modern-day highway from Innsbruck to Trento through the Etsch Valley (red line). Black dots indicate the findspots of Rhaetic inscriptions, based on Schumacher 2004, 277 (© Luwian Studies, #0132).

of which such regions often retain archaic language situations (compare, e.g., the linguistic situation in large parts of the Caucasus, or the presence of Basque in the Pyrenees). However, this is not a universal truth: for instance, relatively recently, in the thirteenth century CE, the speakers of Ossetian fled from the lowlands of the North Caucasus into the high mountains of the Central Caucasus after attacks by the Mongols and settled there (Hewitt 2013, 22–23). In the case of Rhaetic we have to take into account that its speakers lived in the Etsch Valley (Figure 7), which was, and still is, one of the major passage ways through the Alps, and thus formed an important trade route. There can be no doubt that people living in this valley could dominate this trade route, which in fact made it an attractive place for newcomers to settle in. I therefore do not view the presence of the Rhaetic language in the Etsch Valley of the Central Alps a pressing argument to assume that Italy must have been the homeland of Proto-Tyrsenic.

Argument C: Another linguistic argument in favor of the West-to-East theory was recently presented by Eichner (2012, 28). The line of thought is that the Lemnian word *ναφοθ*, which he interprets as ‘grandson’, and its Etruscan cognate *nefts* ‘id.’ cannot be separated from the Indo-European word **nepot-* ‘grandson, nephew’, and thus must have been borrowed from an Indo-European language. Since this word is found in Latin (*nepos*, *nepotem*), but not in Greek (where no direct descendant of PIE **nepot-* is known), the presence of the word *ναφοθ* in Lemnian “weist nicht nach Altanatolien, sondern anderswohin, am ehesten doch nach Altitalien”. In other words, Eichner assumes that Proto-Tyrsenic must have borrowed the word **nepot-* from (a pre-stage of) Latin, which implies that it was spoken in Italy, not in the Aegean. Although this is indeed a clever argument, just after the publication of Eichner’s article new evidence came about that diminishes its value. In a 2013 article, Hämmig has been able to show that Phrygian, too, inherited the Indo-European word **nepot-*, which is attested in the Phrygian Vezirhan inscription as *nevos*, *nevoṭan*. Since in the period before Proto-Tyrsenic split up (c. 1250–1000 BCE), Phrygian was probably spoken to the north of the Dardanelles, the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus, it could well have been the neighbor of a language spoken in the North Aegean and/or northwestern Anatolia. It therefore cannot *a priori* be excluded that Proto-Tyrsenic borrowed its word for ‘grandson’ from (a pre-stage of) Phrygian, which would be compatible with the East-to-West theory. In fact, the bilabial fricatives of Etr.

nefts and Lemn. *naφoθ*, which point to Proto-Tyrsenic **nefots*, seems to be a better match with the bilabial fricative of Phryg. *nevot-* (phonetically [neφot-]?) than with the *p* of Lat. *nepot-*.

All in all, I conclude that the arguments of Oettinger's (2010) and Eichner's (2012) do not affect Beekes's scenario. Moreover, note that Oettinger (2010, 241) states that Etruscan may contain some loanwords from Anatolian languages, and he therefore posits that “[d]ie Tyrsener [from Lemnos -AK] sie [i.e. Anatolian loanwords] bei ihren engen Kontakten mit Westanatoliern und insbesondere den Lydern übernommen, und, was angesichts des kulturellen Gefälles im frühen ersten Jahrtausend nicht erstaunlich ist, an ihre Verwandten in Italien weitergegeben haben [dürften]” (2010, 242). This seems quite improbable to me: if one accepts that Etruscan contains loanwords from Anatolia, I would think it then follows that the language itself stems from Anatolia.

5.3 The status of Lemnian

We can conclude that the presence of Lemnian, a language related to Etruscan and Rhaetic, on the island of Lemnos smoothly fits in into a host of arguments according to which the speakers of Etruscan must have arrived into Italy relatively recently and had their origins in northwestern Anatolia. If Beekes's map of the locations where according to classical authors Tyrsēnoi, ‘Etruscans’, lived or had lived is a good indication of the former extent of the Tyrsenic linguistic area, the pre-stage of Etruscan and Lemnian, ‘Proto-Tyrsenic’, must originally have been spoken in the Troas and the northern part of the Aegean Sea (Figure 5). All evidence points to c. 1200–1150 BCE, i.e. the time of the Bronze Age Collapse, as the date that the speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic undertook their voyage to Italy. As a consequence, we can assume that during the Late Bronze Age, Proto-Tyrsenic was spoken in northwestern Anatolia, and more specifically in the land of Wiluša and the islands off its coast.

6 Conclusions

Taking all above considerations into account, we can reconstruct the linguistic landscape of Western Anatolia in the pre-classical period as follows. During the second millennium BCE, i.e. the period of the Late



FIGURE 8: A reconstruction of the linguistic landscape of Western Anatolia in the Late Bronze Age (pre-1180 BCE; © Luwian Studies, #0133).

Bronze Age (until c. 1180 BCE), we may envisage (cf. Figure 8) that Luwian was spoken in its central part (the Arzawa lands), with a pre-stage of Lydian to its northeast, in the land of Māša, and Proto-Tyrsenic to its northwest, in the land of Wiluša, and probably also on the islands of the North Aegean.

To the north of the Sea of Marmara and the Bosphorus, a pre-stage of Phrygian must have been spoken. We may assume that to the south of Luwian, a pre-stage of Carian and Lycian was spoken, which by that time may still have been a single language.⁹

When around 1180 BCE the Bronze Age Collapse takes place, the central authority of the Hittite state ceases to exist. This may have created a power vacuum in Central Anatolia, and possibly also in the central part of Western Anatolia, where the Arzawa lands are situated. In the wake of

⁹ Although not specifically treated in the pages above, the fact that Carian and Lycian (both attested in sources from the first millennium BCE) are members of the Anatolian language family, and more specifically, of the Luwic branch therein, makes it very likely that their pre-stages were present in Anatolia during the second millennium BCE as well. Moreover, there are no real reasons to assume that they would have undergone any specific movements through time.

this collapse, several population groups start moving. It is difficult to know whether these movements are the result of the collapse or instead were its cause, and whether some of these population groups pushed others out, or just made use of vacant areas because others before them died or moved away. When it comes to the linguistic side of these events, we may just observe which languages emerge in new places as a result of these population movements. First, from the north speakers of Phrygian cross the waterways that divide Europe and Asia (either the Dardanelles or the Bosphorus, or both) and enter Anatolia, making their way as far as its central part, where they start living in the areas that formerly belonged to the heartland of the Hittite Empire. They also settle in the area where the land of Māša used to be situated and where speakers of pre-Lyidian had been living. These latter instead end up in the former Arzawa lands, where later the Kingdom of Lydia emerges. To what extent the speakers of pre-Lyidian were pushed away by the speakers of Phrygian, or whether it was their own initiative to move southwards is unclear. Speakers of Phrygian also start settling in parts of the former land of Wiluša, where speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic used to live. These latter have instead migrated all the way to Italy, where they probably can be seen as the founders of the Proto-Villanovian culture, which in Tuscany later on develops into the Etruscan culture. Again, it is unclear whether the Phrygian speakers pushed the speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic out or whether there were other factors that caused these Tyrsenic migrations. At the coast of former Wiluša, like on the entire Western Anatolian coast, as well as on the North Aegean islands, also speakers of Greek settle into areas where formerly Proto-Tyrsenic was spoken. Note that some pockets of speakers of Proto-Tyrsenic remain present, however: these are the people that in later sources are referred to as Tyrsēnoi. This includes the population of Lemnos, where, through time, Proto-Tyrsenic had developed into a distinct dialect, Lemnian.

When after all these population movements the dust has settled again in northwestern Anatolia, we find the linguistic situation as pictured in Figure 2, at the beginning of this article.

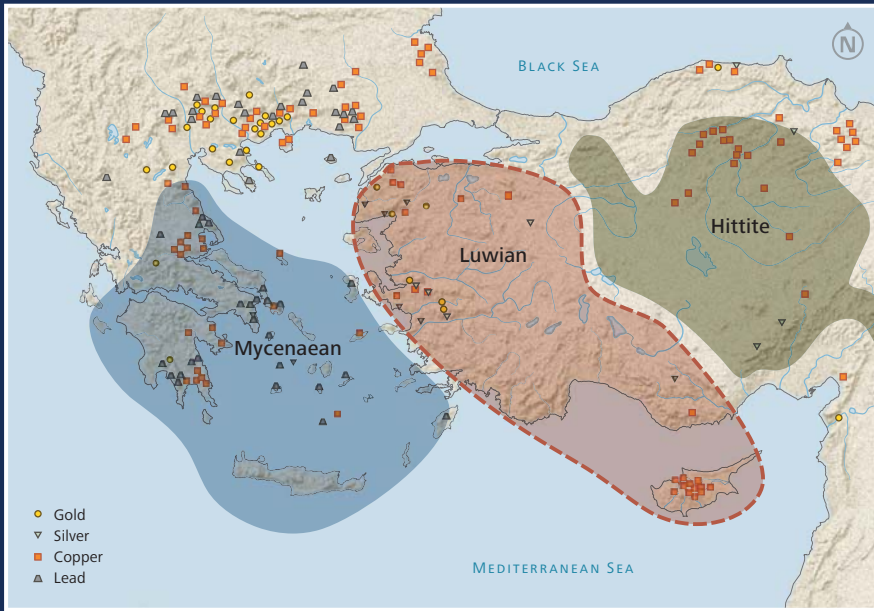
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This book contains most of the papers presented at the session of the same title held during the annual meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists in Bern in September 2019. Although we know of numerous Bronze Age archaeological sites in western Asia Minor, including some very large ones, remarkably little archaeological fieldwork has been done to uncover these sites and to illuminate their role in relation to their surroundings and other sites. Contemporary texts also suggest that the region was of great political and military importance, and that associations and states such as Assuwa, Arzawa and, toward the end of the thirteenth century BCE, Tarhuntassa seriously challenged Hittite hegemony over Anatolia.

“This volume aims to present a major step forward in our understanding of Late Bronze Age western Anatolia; its peoples, languages and cultures and the region’s position vis-à-vis contemporary states in the Near East and the eastern Mediterranean.”

From the foreword by Jorrit Kelder

