

## THE INVENTION OF LUWIAN HIEROGLYPHIC SCRIPT

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### **The Hittites, an exemplary case of digraphia**

The Hittite Empire with its capital city Hattusa (modern Boğazköy) dominated large areas of Anatolia and North Syria from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> century B.C. The state archives preserve thousands of clay tablets which were inscribed with the cuneiform script and in several languages, chiefly the official language Hittite, further Akkadian, the *lingua franca* of the Ancient Near East, and predominantly in cultic context, Hurrian. Further, Cuneiform Luwian is documented at Hattusa but confined to ritual texts of the 16<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (see figure)

But Hittites were people with double writing: they used the cuneiform script, which they borrowed, and a hieroglyphic script, that they « invented ». First of all the second script was used both for a different language, hieroglyphic Luwian, and for a different purpose, namely for writing inscriptions on stone. With the exception of digraphic seals, the two scripts were never used together. (see figure)

The most elaborate of these seals, naturally those of the Hittite kings, tended to combine the two scripts : the name and titulary being written in Hieroglyphic in the centre, and in Cuneiform in concentric circles round the outside. (see figure)

When the Hittites came in Anatolia (approximately at the end of the third millenium B.C.), they probably didn't know any script. They borrowed the cuneiform script used in Anatolia by the merchants of the assyrian colonies. These one used an old-assyrian syllabary. But The Hittites don't seem to have made an important and constant use of this syllabary, which only transcribed the language of the Semitic merchants. The use of writing seems to have disappeared after the fall of the Assyrian colonies and during the troubled period following (around 1750 B.C.). We generally admit that the Hittites borrowed in a more recent period Cuneiform script, which they used until the end of the Empire, that is to say until around 1190 B.C. We traditionally situat this borrowing in the reign of Hattušili the first (1625-1600 B.C.) or Muršili the first (1600-1585 B.C.). After a military campaign, one of these kings return with scribes. So a school and a scribe tradition were formed.

As we can see, the Cuneiform script is a borrowed script.

In parallel to this cuneiform script, was created a hieroglyphic script, called wrongly « Hittit hieroglyphic » by Sayce at the end of the nineteenth century. In fact, it quickly appeared that this hieroglyphic language was different from the cuneiform Hittit of Hattuša, as well by its grammar as by its vocabulary. It was early categorized in Indo-European language from Anatolia. In fact, this hieroglyphic script transcribed essentially Luwian language.

I'm not going to speak here of the history of this difficult decipherment. I will only mention the discovery of the bilingual of Karatepe in 1947, which permitted to found on strong bases the decipherment of hieroglyphic Luwian script. (see figure)

The hieroglyphic script consists of over 500 signs (see figure), some with multiple values, which function as

- 1) Logograms : however, it is now conventional to transcribe logograms with Latin terms and in capitals ; two small hooks back to back indicate that the sign which follows has value of ideogram.
- 2) Determinatives, that is to know signs placed before the names to precise their gender, quality and function .
- 3) syllabograms : 60 signs in regular use : the syllabary includes the vowels signs *a*, *i*, *u*, and syllables consisting of consonant + vowel grouped in trio, *ha/hi/hu*, *ma/mi/mu*, etc. Consonants without vowels were normally rendered by the *a*-series, so *s* would be written with *sa*. In general, the syllabic signs are created by acrophony : the stretched hand is *pi*, from the verb *piya*, - which means « give ».

Logograms were usually written with « phonetic complements », syllabograms representing the grammatical ending of the word with one or more syllables of the root : thus *VIR-ti-sa* (= *zitis VIR*), where *-ti-* indicates the last syllable of the root and *-s(a)* the case ending, nominative singular, common gender.

The more we go on, the more we notice a greater tendency towards phonetic rather than logographic spelling (c. 1000 B.C.).

The old inscriptions, reduced to « cartouches », neglect the expression of the grammatical relations. Syntax hardly appears, or rather, it resides in the word order.

The hieroglyphic script may be written in either direction, and texts of several lines generally run *boustrophedon* « as an ox turns in ploughing », i.e. alternating from line to line. (see figure). The signs, laid out in columns, are read from top to bottom.

The system is open : according to needs, the scribe could create new signs. New phonetic uses appeared according to fancies of the scribes, regional characteristics, but especially under the influence of the material constraints<sup>1</sup>.

### **The language of hieroglyphic script**

The language of the majority of the hieroglyphic inscriptions is Luwian, an Indo-European language, related to Hittite, first spoken in the southern Anatolia. A good knowledge of hieroglyphic has two major consequences:

1) We measure today the perfect homogeneity of the Luwian language from 1500 to 700 B.C., which had an important place beside the hittite-nesite of central Anatolia.

2) We discover the importance of the use of Luwian on all the levels, fact unsuspected so far. Indeed, isn't it remarkable that the last Hittite Great King, established in Hattuša, namely Šuppiluliuma II, ordered the great inscriptions of the capital to be engraved in hieroglyphic Luwian script ? Let us evoke the inscription of Nišantepe dedicated to the memory of his father Tudhaliya IV (see figure), and especially the inscriptions of Südburg telling the serious problems of Šuppiluliuma II with the South and the South-west of Asia Minor (see figure). These facts highlight the success of the Luwian language in the Hittite empire, even in the capital, at the end of 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C.<sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, let us say that this script was used essentially to note Luwian, but also Hittite-nesite, Hurrian (Yazilikaya), and, as in Emar (Meskene), Semitic anthroponyms.

### **The mediums of hieroglyphic script**

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<sup>1</sup> E. Laroche, *Les hiéroglyphes hittites*, *op. cit.*, p. 253 : «Le lapicide cherche à faire coïncider la phrase avec la ligne, à régulariser le tracé des signes de manière à pouvoir encadrer les mots par des bandes horizontales de plus en plus en plus droites; à l'intérieur du rectangle ainsi créé (cadrat), l'unité du degré inférieur, le mot, dispose ses deux, trois ou quatre signes en succession verticale [...]. Le registre doit être aussi plein et dense que possible; à mesure que l'on descend dans le temps, et à raison du soin mis à l'exécution des reliefs inscrits, l'écriture se tasse, les signes se serrent jusqu'à l'enchevêtrement et parfois la confusion. Comme ils sont par eux-mêmes ou longs ou minces ou carrés ou triangulaires ou circulaires ou de schéma irrégulier, une certaine latitude est laissée à l'artiste dans la mise en place des éléments phonétiques constituant le mot.»

De là aussi, l'utilisation de signes bouche-trou. C'est peut-être aussi ce qui explique la naissance de l'homophonie. Par exemple, les 9 barres et la fleur (cf figure) représentent toutes les deux *nu* mais remplissent des surfaces très différentes. Le lapicide a, semble-t-il, été guidé dans son choix de l'un ou l'autre, par le souci d'utiliser au mieux l'espace qui lui était imparti. Il y a ainsi toute une série de signes équivalents, et il semblerait que les contraintes matérielles (ou un souci esthétique?) ait guidé le lapicide dans son choix.

<sup>2</sup> Il est légitime de se demander si cette langue méridionale ne s'était pas imposée en Anatolie centrale à la suite de l'exil momentané de la famille royale et des dignitaires à Tarhuntašša en plein pays louvite, et de la reconquête du hatti central par Hattušili III avec l'aide des princes louvites. Scribes et devins, officiers et prêtres d'origine louvite servaient à la cour de Hattuša. Dès cette époque aussi les textes hittites sont truffés de louvismes (souvent glosés) tant au niveau lexical que grammatical.

During long periods, we have testimonies only on seals. The documents of the Empire above all consisted in seals and inscriptions on stone, but, towards the end of the Empire, the hieroglyphic script was used for long epigraphs, such as inscriptions engraved in relief or intaglio engraving<sup>3</sup>. (see figure)

However we know that the hieroglyphic script was used on other supports and for other purposes. The recent discoveries let to us think that there were inscriptions on perishable materials, such as wood<sup>4</sup>, papyrus or leather, and valuable, reusable materials such as metal. These indicate clearly that the script did continue in use for everyday documents, such as business letters and economic documents on lead strips.

The script at this date may appear with the signs in relief maintaining their pictographic character, or in a linear incised style rendering the sign forms in a cursive style with diminished pictorial content.

See Figure : Letter written in Hieroglyphic on a strip of lead, from Assur. This document shows the latest form of the script at its most cursive.

As, this script was more frequently used than one could imagine. It is in use until about 700 B.C., when most Neo-Hittite states lost their independence.

### **Birth, life and death of the hieroglyphic script**

In fact, the question of the hieroglyphic Luwian script still currently causes of many discussions, concerning, in particular, its origin, the zone and the date of its appearance. What is the relationship between the Hittites and hieroglyphic writing ? And why is it confined to Luwian ?

As far as its origin is concerned, if the majority of the researchers agree on the fact that hieroglyphic is a Hittite creation, some choose a foreign origin. J.D. Hawkins, for example, notices many analogies with the Aegean writings<sup>5</sup>. Others turn to Egypt. Perhaps

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<sup>3</sup> Inscriptions gravées en relief ou en creux : orthostates, stèles, reliefs rupestres, sculptures animalières.

<sup>4</sup> A ce propos, il convient de signaler un support particulier des hiéroglyphes : la tablette de bois. Des scribes sont désignés par l'expression <sup>lu</sup>DUB.SAR.GIŠ « scribe sur bois » et plusieurs colophons de tablettes précisent ANA GIŠ.HUR handan « <tablette> conforme au dessin sur bois » ; il faut donc supposer que plusieurs textes étaient dans un premier temps écrits par des scribes spécialisés en écriture hiéroglyphique sur des tablettes en bois et qu'ils pouvaient ensuite faire l'objet d'une version cunéiforme à l'usage des tablettes d'argile.

<sup>5</sup> J.D. Hawkins, «Writing in Anatolia : imported and indigenous systems», *World Archaeology*, 1986, 17, pp. 363-376, p. 365. Ou encore I.J. Gelb, *Pour une théorie de l'écriture*, *op. cit.*, pp. 244-245 :

«Par la parenté des formes de signes entre hiéroglyphiques hittites et crétois, par la parenté de structure entre les syllabaires hittite, linéaire B et chypriote, et par la parenté de forme entre signes des écritures cyprïote et crétoise, nous pouvons atteindre la conclusion que tous ces écritures sont d'une façon ou d'une autre reliées les unes aux autres, et nous sentir ainsi pleinement justifiés de les rapporter toutes à une source commune, à chercher quelque part dans ces régions qui bordent la mer Egée.»

C'est une opinion qu'il avait développée dès 1931 dans *Hittite Hieroglyphs*, I, Chicago.

living outside the inevitable resemblances between two pictographic systems, some signs were borrowed from Egypt : for example the ansate cross meaning « life », comparable with the ankh, and the winged Sun, which means « royal majesty » (see figure). Both belong to the royal titulary, which, for the Hittites, was established only rather late, about the time of Šuppiluliuma. But the idea of a massive borrowing of Egyptian hieroglyphic by Hittites must be abandoned<sup>6</sup>.

In fact, the majority of the researchers thinks that the response to the problem of the origin is to be sought on the spot. However, the question remains : when have we got a writing system, strictly speaking ? Here is a possible chronology :

► The first examples date back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century B.C. But it seems that at that time, it's not an actual script, but a system of symbols used for communications of administrative or commercial nature. Moreover, the fact that, during more than two centuries, these signs are attested only on seals shows that they did not form an actual « writing system of words » like the hieroglyphic script of the imperial age, but rather a code related to the needs for the administrative and commercial recording. (see figure)

► And it's only towards the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century and at the beginning of 14<sup>th</sup> century B.C. that it is necessary to locate the creation of the conventionally definite system like hieroglyphic. C. Mora notes that :

« During this period, the writing would pass from a pre (or proto-) scribal phase to a scribal phase, with the organization of the symbols (partly already used on glyptic and partly new) in a system connected with the cuneiform one; with a standardization of the values ; with the extension of the use to other types of supports and inscriptions (in particular, the long inscriptions on stone become current during the imperial age).»<sup>7</sup>

This scribal phase thus shows several characteristics:

- 1) organization of the symbols in a system connected with the cuneiform one ;
- 2) extension to other supports ;
- 3) influence of a complex written system like the cuneiform one;
- 4) introduction of the fully syllabic written form for the names of the king.

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<sup>6</sup> De toutes façons, le titre <sup>D</sup>UTU<sup>š</sup>, «mon Soleil» est déjà utilisé dans certains textes de l'Ancien Royaume (par exemple, CTH 25, Traité entre Zidanza et Piliya du Kizzuwatna), ce qui rend l'influence égyptienne problématique.

<sup>7</sup> C. Mora, «L'étude de la glyptique anatolienne. Bilan et nouvelles orientations de la recherche», *Syria*, LXXI, 1994, pp. 205-215, p. 212.

► It is, indeed, only in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century B.C. and at the beginning of the 12<sup>th</sup> century that the use of the hieroglyphic script for long inscriptions on rock or stone spreads, with introduction of the grammatical suffixes which make it possible to recognize the language in which the inscription is written. During this period, too, the use of the hieroglyphic script develops for nonofficial documents.

► The Hittite Empire disintegrated about 1200 BC and the fall of its capital Hattuša brought an end not only to the central administration but also to cuneiform writing in the Hittite territories in Anatolia and North-Syria. Several smaller centres of political power emerged, some of them in imported cities of the Hittite Empire. Karkamiš, for instance, once the seat of the Hittite Viceroy and in direct control of the Syrian territories, shows no signs of disruption and continues to hold a position of power for several more centuries. The so-called « Neo-Hittite States » in many ways preserved the Hittite legacy and cultural traditions. They used Hieroglyphic Luwian as their sole writing system, causing the script to flourish. The extant hieroglyphic corpus consists to the largest part of stone inscriptions, the extreme durability of the material having insured their survival.

The hieroglyphic script would be thought to have originated in the interaction between a communication system of administrative nature and the cuneiform writing. The hieroglyphic system contained potentialities, the scribes had to become aware of, and exploited, by codifying it like an actual syllabic writing system, for inscriptions of propaganda.

Thus, there was on one side the Luwians with their traditional inheritance of symbols organized in communication system, and on the other side the expert scribes and their ideographic-syllabic cuneiform script. It is known that, for the period which goes from the 15<sup>th</sup> to the first decades of the 14<sup>th</sup> century, cultural contacts, other than military, intensified between Luwians and Hittites. Several authors insist besides on the analogies between the cuneiform system and the hieroglyphic system. For instance (see figure):

Šuppiluliuma (the name of a Hittite king), is in hieroglyphic as well as in cuneiform, « originating from Šuppiluliya », i.e. « of the sacred source », and the signs group together in the same manner :

cuneiform : <sup>m</sup>KÛ.(GA.)TÚL-ma / hiéroglyphic : PURUS.FONS-ma

(The signs, laid out in columns, are read from top to bottom)

### The proto-scribal phase

It is obviously difficult to reconstitute the process which brought to the formation of the graphic system in Anatolia.

During the Old Kingdom, the signs which can be found on the seals - only testimonies we have - are not part of the hieroglyphic written system. But they are neither isolated or accidental signs. They concern rather a system of symbols. Those, as I said before, will be recodified to make a true written system of it.

Cf figure: the rosetta is a very interesting example of this ambivalence and complexity of the signs.

In a certain number of old seals, it does not seem to have any function, if not decorative (for example, on certain old seals, it is associated with other motifs, animals or plants, to form the frieze of the external circle). But variations can be noted on the « tabarna-seals » of the Old Kingdom, as showed it J. Börker-Klähn<sup>8</sup> :

- at the time of Alluwamna, the rosetta is presented with 8 petals ;
- Huzziya II's rosette has only 6, but it is encircled by a toothed wheel ;
- Zidanta II's and Muwatalli's rosettas have the same double circle of petals, but the external circle of petals of Zidanta's has 13 and Muwatalli's 12 ;
- Tahurwaili's rosetta finally is rougher and in spite of the fact that it presents petals like the preceding ones, it is easy to distinguish from the others.

Obviously, as the author notes, « the bureaucracy wanted to avoid any confusion and to be able to identify the date of the signed document at a single glance ».

This example shows that the rosetta can be named according to what it represents, but allows the referenciation to a person, by another means than the transcription of the name<sup>9</sup>. Thus, it refers to a plan of the Signified whose elucidation differs according to the degree of knowledge of the observer.

It is no longer a picture, but not yet a sign of writing. This example shows that there is a common base between the formants of the writing and those of the decorative one. It is about a repertory of formants specific to a cultural area, a repertory from which each graphic designer or scribe draws, to decorate, represent or write. But as far as I'm concerned, the first signs of writing remained pictures and, at the same time, they imposed a function which had

<sup>8</sup> J. Börker-Klähn, « Vivat Rex ! », *Syria*, 70, 1993, p. 99-108.

<sup>9</sup> Les signes n'indiquent pas des noms mais font partie d'un système de symboles/titres/emblèmes/insignes, utilisés dans un but bureaucratique/commercial, ou de toute façon de caractérisation/reconnaissance personnelle, plus pratique et immédiat par rapport à la complexité de l'écriture cunéiforme, et plus utile dans un territoire qui est organisé politiquement sous un pouvoir unique, mais qui est toujours morcelé en de nombreuses ethnies locales.

not been theirs until now (here, referenciation with a person, by another means that the transcription of the name).

C. Herrenschmidt, about the « calculi », raised the following question :

« Is it about writing? Without any doubt. What is a writing? A whole of signs whose value can be identified with good reason by another person than who traced them. »

And, a little further,

« There is writing when, the script writer being absent, another person can read and know the contents of the text. »<sup>10</sup>

But it is not yet a true « writing of words » like the script of the imperial age. Because, as still C. Herrenschmidt says, « any writing requires an analysis of the language »<sup>11</sup>.

At all events, in the current state of our knowledge, the oldest seal revealing a script carrying the same values as the imperial hieroglyphic script is the seal of the queen *sà(-)tâ-tu-ha/e-pa*, known thanks to the prints on tablets of Maşat Höyük ; the seal of this queen established in Hattuša would go thus back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century and would testify clearly to the recodification of the Anatolian signs mentioned above. (see figure)

Let us mention also the seal of Išputahšu, found in Tarse ; Išputahšu was the king of Kizzuwatna in the 16/15<sup>th</sup> century B.C. (contemporary of the Hittite king Telibinu). This seal has been often regarded as the oldest « hittite-hieroglyphic » document, but there are not actual syllabograms ; indeed, the name of the king, surrounded of the signs symbols for VITA (LIFE) and BONUS (WELL), is composed of the sign DEUS TONITRUS (god of the storm) surmounting the sign REX. Carruba had proposed the reading *Taruhsu* (different certainly from the name perfectly assured Išputahšu), anthroponym theophore composed of *Taru*, a Hattic denomination of the god of the storm, with *hassu-* reduced on *hsu-* in composition, which represents the Hittite name for king (= Latin *natus*). (see figure)

One cannot overlook two documents highlighted during the second International congress of Hittitology held in Pavia in 1993, by Jutta Börkner-Klähn : it's about a seal going back to approximately 1600 B.C in the name of king Hattušili, noted *HA x LI*, as it was often the case under the Empire<sup>12</sup>. (see figure)

Dating back to the Old-kingdom, we still have the print of a seal (cf figure) comprising the logogramme SCRIBA + the sign -LA, the whole with reading *tup(p)ala-* « scribe » in Luwian.

<sup>10</sup> C. Herrenschmidt, *Les trois écritures, langue, nombre, code*, Paris, Gallimard, 2007, p. 75.

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit, p. 29.

<sup>12</sup> J. Börkner-Klähn, « Archäologische Anmerkungen zum Alter des Bild-Luwischen », *Atti des II Congresso Internazionale di Hittitologia, Pavia, 28 giugno-2 luglio 1993*, Pavia, Iuculano, 1995, pp. 39-54.

Thus, these two seals tend to prove the existence of actual syllabograms since 1600 or, in any case, the 16<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

### **Which consequences can we draw from such a reconstruction ?**

I will evoke two points : the question of the origin and that of the digraphia :

#### **1) the question of the origin :**

This idea of the origin of the graphic signs - i.e in the form of an interaction between a system of symbols and a script already made up - is not specific to our case. Salem Chaker<sup>13</sup>, studying the origin of the Berber script, puts the question - sensitive : borrowing from the Phenician or indigenous origin ? Without entering in detail of the argumentation of the researcher : after having noted that in the caballin period a tendency to the development of more and more simple geometrical forms, Chaker says :

« one attends a true drift of graphics towards a register where the stress is less and less laid on the Signifier, to undoubtedly support the Signified. »

« This movement of geometrical schematization, obviously endogenous, will place at the disposal of the representation all the stock of signs and symbols whose multiple and various combinations will constitute all the iconographic tools of Berber sub-figurative art : tattooings, motifs of pottery, murals, tapestry, jewellery, etc One will thus postulate the presence in the works of the caballin period of all the materials likely to give rise to the Libyc alphabet. [...] The caballin representations thus seem the melting pot, the vector of a type of knowledge, new, codified, of which one suspects the intervention in at least three fields of activity : the decoration of Berber art, the marking of the herds, and finally, the alphabetical writing. »

And especially, in conclusion, S. Chaker notes that

« it is in the passage of these old practices of marking towards the alphabetical use that it is undoubtedly necessary to recognize, not the borrowing of the script, but the influence of the Phenician or Punic writing practices : most probably, in contact with the Phéniciens-Punics, the Berbers had to engage in the 'refunctionnalization' of an old stock of preexistent signs of which they made a national alphabet. »

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<sup>13</sup> S. Chaker & S. Hachi, « A propos de l'origine et de l'âge de l'écriture libyco-berbère. Réflexions du linguiste et du préhistorien », dans *Etudes berbères et chamito-sémitiques*, éd. S. Chaker, Paris-Louvain, Peeters, 2000, pp. 95-112.

This parallel is certainly not a justification of our Luwian case. But it is noted that, often, to similar problems, extremely different cultures bring similar answers.

Therefore, if this assumption is admitted, it has a consequence on the origin of the signs. As C. Mora concludes :

« The assumption of the formation of the hieroglyphic written system through the contact between, on one hand, a communication system to administrative office used in the Western areas of Anatolia, and, on other hand, the cuneiform script, makes less acceptable the possibility of an Egyptian influence, at least as regards the direct impact of Hattusa at the 15<sup>th</sup> century ; an Egyptian influence on the 'Luwian' zones at a previous time remains plausible, but very difficult to check. »<sup>14</sup>

Then, how to explain the relations which obviously exist with the Cretan script in particular ?

The evolution of Luwian hieroglyphic seems parallel to that of the Cretan script : in Crete also, the script appears initially, at the beginning of the second millenium, on seals in a hieroglyphic form. Then, it develops in a linear form, A and B, on clay tablets<sup>15</sup>. The original appearance of both scripts on seals is doubtless significant, suggesting an early use if not an origin in writing personal names. Anatolian however went on to develop the practice of writing long, monumental stone inscriptions late in the Empire period, something which Minoan-Mycenaean did not.

Hawkins pleads for an Luwian origin of the hieroglyphic script<sup>16</sup> :

« Another factor pointing to a western, Luwian origin of this Anatolian Hieroglyphic is the much closer typological similarity which it exhibits in relation to the Aegean scripts than to Cuneiform. [...] In internal characteristics too the Cretan and Anatolian scripts are much closer to each other than either are to Cuneiform. They share the same range and type of logograms drawn from the same spheres of the material world. The syllabaries too of Linear B and Anatolian Hieroglyphic are typologically similar, consisting, beside the vowel signs, of syllabograms of the type consonant + vowel (+consonant + vowel occasionally). This is in marked contrast to the Cuneiform syllabary with its consonant + vowel / vowel + consonant / consonant + vowel + consonant type, and its aligns the Cretan and Anatolian scripts ultimately with

<sup>14</sup> « L'étude de la glyptique anatolienne », op. cit., p. 214.

<sup>15</sup> Cf J. D. Hawkins, « Il geroglifico anatolico : stato attuale degli studi e delle ricerche », in *Il Geroglifico Anatolico*, a cura di M. Marazzi, Napoli, 1998, pp. 149-171, p. 157.

<sup>16</sup> « Writing in Anatolia », op. cit., p. 374.

Egyptian Hieroglyphic and its syllabary of signs of one, two or three consonants. Whereas Egyptian did not note the vowels, Cretan and Anatolian differ only in noting a five-vowel *a/e/i/o/u* system (Cretan) as against a three-vowel *a/i/u* system (Anatolian). The unsuitability of both the Linear B and Anatolian syllabaries for writing the Indo-European languages Greek and Hittite has been often noted, and this factor points to both systems, though indigenous constructs, being ultimately dependent on an external model, i.e. Egyptian Hieroglyphic. »

Such Aegean links of the Anatolian Hieroglyphic script strongly indicate a West Anatolian origin, rather than a central-eastern Anatolia one, where the influence of the Cuneiform script had been felt since the beginning of the II<sup>nd</sup> millennium B.C. Western Anatolia was Luwian territory, and it is this people who would have been in the position to absorb Mediterranean and Aegean cultural influences, including a knowledge of writing which led them to devise a script of their own. We may thus conclude that such concrete indications are combined with the historical and cultural probabilities, to suggest a Luwian origin of the Anatolian Hieroglyphic script.

The works of Fred C. Woudhuizen<sup>17</sup>, in particular in his last book, show well the relations which existed between these various cultures in the Mediterranean world - even if it seems difficult to me to follow Woudhuizen to the end of his demonstration. About an inscription in Linear A :

« The inscription starts in the *lingua franca* Semitic [...], but soon goes over to the language with which the scribe is more familiar, viz. Luwian [...], and hence provides us welcome supplementary evidence for the phenomenon of code-mixing in Cretan Linear A. »<sup>18</sup>

For Woudhuizen, in Minoan Crete, Semitic is used as a *lingua franca* by a basically Luwian population. And also :

« Notwithstanding the fact that Cretan hieroglyphic is basically related to Luwian hieroglyphic, there are a number of cases in which Egyptian hieroglyphic provides the closest comparative evidence. »<sup>19</sup>

It is obviously the geographical and political position of the Luwians which makes it possible to understand their connections at the same time with the Aegean world and the Hittite world. Hawkins perfectly highlighted this situation<sup>20</sup> :

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<sup>17</sup> *The earliest Cretan scripts*, Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft, 2006.

<sup>18</sup> Op. cit., p. 62.

<sup>19</sup> Op. cit., p. 72.

« The Luwians occupy a place of interest second only to that of the Hittites, though they are much less well known, certainly during the period of Hittite hegemony. They were clearly a widespread people occupying western and southern Anatolia, while the Hittites occupied the central area within the bend of the Halys river. At the height of their political c. 1400 B.C. they formed a powerful federation, the kingdom of Arzawa, a formidable rival to the Hittite state. Even when this was broken up by the Hittite king Mursili II, c. 1340 B.C., they never ceased to cause political trouble to the Hittites. Occupying as they did the coastal regions of Anatolia, they seem to have been seafarers, unlike the land-locked Hittites, and it is clear that they stood geographically and culturally between the Hittites and the contemporary Minoan-Mycenaean civilizations of the Aegean. »

As several researchers estimate, while admitting the possible borrowing of certain signs outside the Anatolian world (Egypt, Crete), it is undoubtedly within the Luwian world (which covered all the Anatolian South of West in East) that took place the recodification from the cuneiform system, in fact the fixing of the phonetic value of the syllabograms. In its analysis of glyptic of Karahöyük, St P. Lumsden insisted on the importance of this city as a point of contact between the Luwian world and the administrative system of central Anatolia ; it is through this area that the Luwian world would have taken a better knowledge of this script and its potentialities<sup>21</sup>.

An argument of a philological nature in favour of the installation of fixed syllabographic values by the Luwians lies in the fact that, taking account of the acrophonic principle proposed by E. Laroche, the phonetic values of several signs are explained in a satisfactory way starting from the Luwian. Here are some examples (see diagram).

It is thus possible that the hieroglyphic written system being used to note words was structured in Lykaonie (area of Konya), i.e. at of the Luwians of the Mid-west in regular contact with Cappadocia and the Central Hatti. That would explain better the progression of the hieroglyphic script systematized in Hittite environment before the Empire. This script was to be felt like noble and national, and some, little by little, understood the visual advantage likely to be drawn from such a graphic use, in particular on the monumental level. As had pertinently observed E. Laroche, hieroglyphs, at the beginning, are related to the proper name (divine, royal, princely name, and name of civil servant), to a function (let us not lose sight of

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<sup>20</sup> J. D. Hawkins, « Writing in Anatolia : imported and indigenous systems », op.cit., p. 365.

<sup>21</sup> *Symbols of power : Hittite royal iconography in seals*, Dissertation (University of California at Berkeley), 1990, p.. 62 et 86.

the fact that the Hittite aristocracy is first an aristocracy of functions) ; the hieroglyphs are made to be seen and contemplated on rock faces, they animate the proper name.

This last remark brings me to my second point, namely 2) **the question of the digraphia**. It is an established fact that, during at least three centuries, the hieroglyphic script lived in Anatolia beside the cuneiform one, and constituted with him the double means of expression of the Hittite State. If one regards them as a whole, and not as two independent entities, one realizes that, not only there is not superposition but that there is complementarity:

- one is imported, the other is indigenous ;
- the support is different : the cuneiform script is used on clay tablets, the hieroglyphic one, for a great part, on rock faces. Moreover, whereas Mesopotamians, inventors of the cuneiform script, employed this one as well for monumental inscriptions on stone as on clay tablets, the Hittites used the cuneiform script only on clay tablets and noted the monumental inscriptions in hieroglyphs.
- their finality is different : one was used by the scribes for the official archives (palaces, temples), with the aim of storing, of recording and of memorizing information. The other was primarily shown, outside, on rock faces to act permanently on crowds.
- one would be « international », the other « national ».

Why this « specialization » ? The scribes of Hattuša, agents of the Babylonian tradition, formed, as one knows, a small privileged group which, only, had access to the literature and the documents on clay. It is truly about an elite, so much so that certain scribes were holders of the largest titles. But the tablet was all in all an inaccessible, prohibited, document

« which publicly did not proclaim the sublimity of the god, nor royal size. There was undoubtedly for the Hittites the feeling that these borrowed cuneiforms, with the mechanical and inexpressive layout, were to leave room to another script, more visual, more monumental, more suited to make the divine effigies and the royal profiles speak. »<sup>22</sup>

The hieroglyphs are shown, contemplated on rock faces, and in a certain manner accessible to everyone. One can say that Hittites were aware that the writing is a primarily public means of communication, thence the invention of a readable system (the glyphs are more suggestive than the cuneiform signs), visible (by the use of the hieroglyphs outside, on rock faces) and durable (the rock in opposition to clay).

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<sup>22</sup> E. Laroche, *Les hiéroglyphes hittites*, op. cit., p. 248.

But the hieroglyphic script was not only a « public » means of communication. It was a « political » act, as well as the cuneiform texts of the archives, but with completely different processes. The subject and the framework of this communication would be overflowed, but I had the opportunity to show how the writing operated this ideological function<sup>23</sup>.

## Conclusion

The question of the origin is complex, so we have to go beyond the definition of writing that Saussure and structuralism bequeathed us, namely writing as a code second intended to represent the speech (« parole »). Writing is a « configuration » and we must take into account several aspects. Clearly, it is difficult to treat writing as an abstract and isolable entity. The study of writing does not have for single object the identification of the characters, the definition of their statute, and their functions, the setting-up of a history, an evolution and a typology. We can separate it neither from a « before », nor from an « after », that is to say we cannot neglect the study of the material structure of the support and the way it offers the sender a surface of inscription, and with the destinatee, a surface of deciphering or action. To study the writing, it is thus to apprehend the support and the text as semiotic objects of writing, i.e. to study the conditions of realization, creation - cultural, material, political conditions-, it is also to rebuild all the conditions necessary to the deciphering, the recognition and the reading of the texts.

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<sup>23</sup> Voir, en particulier, I. Klock-Fontanille, « Ecritures et langages visuels sur les sceaux royaux digraphes de l'empire hittite : quelques propositions pour une rhétorique de l'écriture », *Akten des IV. Internationalen Kongresses für Hethitologie, Würzburg, 4.-8. Oktober 1999, Studien zu des Boğazköy-Texten*, Harrassowitz, 45, 1999, pp. 292-307. Et, « L'écriture hiéroglyphique hittito-louvite : une écriture publique au service du pouvoir », in « Les usages publics de l'écriture, de l'Antiquité au 20<sup>ème</sup> siècle », éd. M. Cassan & A. Heller, *Temporalités*, Limoges, Pulim, 3, 2006, pp. 17-35.