

A HISTORY OF HITTITE LITERACY

Why did the Anatolians remain illiterate for so long, although surrounded by people using script? Why and how did they eventually adopt the cuneiform writing system and why did they still invent a second, hieroglyphic script of their own? What did and didn't they write down and what role did Hittite literature, the oldest known literature in any Indo-European language, play? These and many other questions on scribal culture are addressed in this first, comprehensive book on writing, reading, script usage, and literacy in the Hittite kingdom (ca. 1650–1200 BC). It describes the rise and fall of literacy and literature in Hittite Anatolia in the wider context of its political, economic, and intellectual history.

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A HISTORY OF HITTITE LITERACY

*Writing and Reading in Late Bronze-Age
Anatolia (1650–1200 BC)*

THEO VAN DEN HOUT

University of Chicago



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voor Charlotte, Philip en Julia

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Preface and Acknowledgments

The beginnings of this book go back to June, 1995. On the first two days of that month the members of the *Oosters Genootschap in Nederland* (Oriental Society in the Netherlands) convened in Leiden at their annual *Huishoudelijk Congres* to read and hear a great variety of papers. Those of us belonging to the ancient Near Eastern section reflected on the topic *Tekst als Geschiedenis* (Text as History). The organizer of this particular gathering, Sumerologist Herman Vanstiphout, asked me to contribute on the Hittites, the dominating power in ancient Anatolia (modern Turkey) between ca. 1650 and 1200 BC. I had always had an interest in questions of the function of texts in society and the practical and graphic aspects of clay tablets with their cuneiform script, but I had not yet done any systematic research in that direction. The invitation to this conference provided the ideal incentive to start doing so. For the first time I stepped back and tried to oversee the corpus of Hittite texts as a whole, asking why they had been written down, why in many cases the Hittites had themselves held on to them for sometimes considerable time, and why in other cases they had not.

The *Oosters Genootschap* usually did not publish the proceedings of their annual meetings and eventually I submitted a version of my paper for the memorial volume for Fiorella Imparati (2002). Since then I have explored various aspects of text history in a range of articles and talks but over time the thought of a comprehensive monograph developed. It was not until my first sabbatical in 2011–2012 that I was able to make a start on the present book. Resuming duties as chair of the department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at Chicago in the fall of 2012 prevented me from finishing it and I had to put the project aside until my next leave. This came in 2016–2017 when a Fellowship from the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation enabled me to fundamentally revise what I had written earlier and to complete the manuscript. The forced break between the two leaves proved enormously beneficial. As books go, they do not

leave you alone. Although unable to spend any significant time on it, it never left my mind, I kept reading around the topic and continued jotting down thoughts and making notes. By the time the summer of 2016 came around I had changed my mind on a number of issues.

Intending to present an overview and a coherent picture of the function of writing in early historic Anatolia and in the Hittite Kingdom for a non-specialized readership I have had to rehash several topics that I already wrote about previously. In the earlier chapters the Hittitological reader may recognize much that sounds familiar – and I ask for their indulgence – but most of what comes after (Chapters 7–15) is new. But I also hope to attract a wider readership of colleagues working on other parts of the ancient Middle East or of the world, for that matter, as well as people interested in questions of literacy and scripts in general.

I thank the University of Chicago for providing an environment that stimulates profound research. The Humanities Division under then Dean Martha Roth granted me the two leaves, without which this book would never have seen the light of day. For my second leave, Courtney Guerra expertly guided me through the process of applications for fellowships and I had the good fortune to be awarded one by the John Simon Guggenheim Memorial Foundation, to which I will be eternally grateful. For my Guggenheim leave I rented a carrel at the Joseph Regenstein Library at Chicago where I would retreat every morning away from phone and email and would just sit down and write.

I am deeply indebted to Willemijn Waal and Mark Weeden, who read an earlier version of the manuscript. Michele Cammarosano, Thalia Lysen, Seth Richardson, and Cambridge University Press' two anonymous reviewers likewise gave me invaluable feedback. The Oriental Institute always has been an enormously stimulating environment where the answer to many of one's questions is never further than a few doors or a floor away. I am very grateful to its directors Gil Stein and Chris Woods for their support as well as to all my colleagues on whose doors I have often knocked. Without exception, they went out of their way to answer my queries and I always left their offices enriched. I want to especially mention Bob Biggs, Petra Goedegebuure, Rebecca Hasselbach, Janet Johnson, Kate Morgan, James Osborne, Dennis Pardee, Susanne Paulus, Hervé Reculeau, Seth Richardson, Matthew Stolper, Emily Teeter, and Chris Woods. The staff at the Oriental Institute has always been there to help out where needed and never without a smile. I want to mention especially the help of Charissa Johnson and Steven Townshend. The Oriental

Preface and Acknowledgments

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Institute's library (strangely known as the Research Archives) rarely let me down and I am indebted to its librarian Foy Scalf for his help on many occasions. I also remember in grateful horror the session with some of the members of Chicago's Society of Fellows where I presented a premature version of my Introduction. The treadmills at the Henry Crown Field House were the source of many ideas when I tried to alleviate the boredom of running by thinking through specific issues relating to my book. And there was always the reward of some good handball games afterwards.

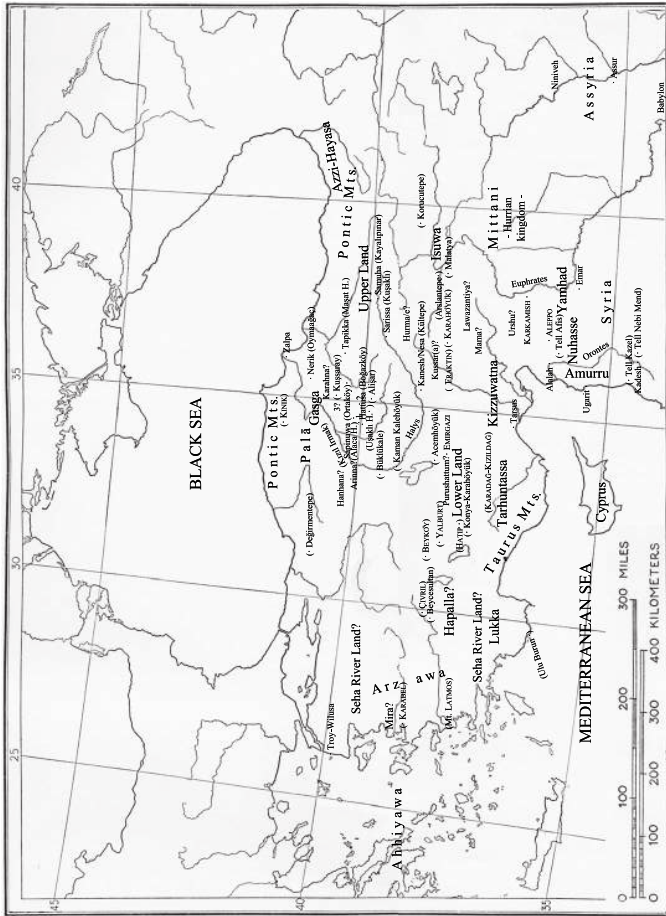
Eric Lindahl and Brian Zimmerle, former preparators at the Oriental Institute, advised me on practical questions concerning clay and the making of tablets, and they even had Willemijn Waal and me do some experiments. Over the years I also received the friendly support of colleagues at this University and from all over the world: Michael Allen, Clifford Ando, James Burgin, Yoram Cohen, Martien Dillo, John "Jay" Ellison, Mark Garrison, Wouter Henkelman, Barbara Jillson, Hakan Karateke, Jörg Klinger, Guido Kryszat, Jake Lauinger, Stefano de Martino, Craig Melchert, Jared Miller, Clelia Mora, Sarah Nooter, Peter Raulwing, Madadh Richey, Mirjo Salvini, Andreas Schachner, Jürgen Seeher, Daniel Schwemer, Ada Taggar-Cohen, Jonathan Taylor, Ben van Gessel, and Gernot Wilhelm. I also want to thank Cambridge University Press and Michael Sharp for accepting my manuscript for publication and guiding me through the process, and Juliet Wilberforce for her meticulous and invaluable editing work.

I am grateful to the Stichting Amstel 218 of the Six Collection in Amsterdam for allowing me to use the Rembrandt van Rijn drawing *Homer reciting Verses* from the so-called 'Pandora', *Album Amicorum* for Jan Six from 1652. In the detail shown here on the cover Rembrandt beautifully captures the concentration of the scribe sitting at Homer's feet as he takes down the blind bard's words, encapsulating the oral and the written. The image was not chosen for this reason only. My first archaeology classes as a young student in Amsterdam took me to what was then called the Jan Six Instituut, and in the Classics reading room back then stood the "Six kast", a book shelf in the shape of a Greek temple, once owned by a later Jan Six, the nineteenth century numismatist and Lycian specialist. For other illustrations I am indebted to Gina Coulthard of the British Institute at Ankara, Barbara Helwing of the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin-Vorderasiatisches Museum, Gerfrid Müller and Daniel Schwemer of the Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur,

Mainz, Andreas Schachner of the Deutsches Archäologisches Institut, Istanbul, as well as Mirjo Salvini and Klaas Veenhof.

Finally, I would never have been able to write this book without the never-ending support of my wife Lidwina, the love of my life. I dedicate this book to our children Charlotte, Philip, and Julia for sharing our American adventure.

Late Bronze Age Anatolia



Late Bronze Age Anatolia

Legenda: (Modern Turkish names; H. = Höyük) / ? = uncertain location / 1 = (Eskiyaşar), 2 = (Yassı H.), 3 = Katapa / KARABEL; small caps for Hieroglyphic inscription / Arzawa, Pontic Mts., Syria = land, mountain range, or province within or bordering on Hittite kingdom

Timeline and Hittite Kings

Kanesh 2 : earliest evidence for presence of Assyrian merchants	ca. 2000	
most Old Assyrian texts written	ca. 1900–1860	
End of Kanesh 2	1835	
Kanesh 1b	1832–ca. 1720	
Anitta	ca. 1750	
Hattusa		
<i>Kings</i>	<i>reign</i>	<i>relation to preceding or other</i>
Old Kingdom		
Huzziya	ca. 1700(?)	
Labarna		
Hattusili I	ca. 1650	grandson(?)
Mursili I	ca. 1600	grandson
Hantili I		brother-in-law
Zidanta I		son of Mursili I
Ammuna		son
Huzziya I		
Telipinu	ca. 1525	brother-in-law
Alluwamna		son?
Hantili II		son of Alluwamna?
Zidanta II		
Tahurwaili?		
Huzziya II		
Muwatalli I		
New Kingdom		
Tuthaliya I	ca. 1420	
Arnuwanda I		son-in-law
Tuthaliya II (Hattusili II?)		son
Tuthaliya III		son(?) Tuthaliya II
Suppiluliuma I	ca. 1350	half-brother?
Arnuwanda II		son

Timeline and Hittite Kings

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(cont.)

Mursili II	ca. 1320–1295	brother
Muwatalli II	ca. 1295–1275	son
Urhitessub/Mursili III	1274–1267	son
Hattusili III	1267–ca. 1240	brother of Muwatalli
Tuthaliya IV	ca. 1240– ca. 1215/1210	
Kuruntiya?		son of Muwatalli II
Arnuwanda III		son of Tuthaliya IV
Suppiluliuma/ Suppiluliyama (II)	ca. 1210–1200	brother

Sigla and Abbreviations

ABoT	Balkan, Kemal (1948), <i>Ankara Arkeoloji Müzesinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri</i> (Istanbul: Millî Eğitim Basımevi).
ALT	Alalah Texts (quoted after Dietrich/Loretz 2004, 2005, 2006).
CAD	Biggs, Robert et al. (1956–2010), <i>The Assyrian Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> (Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute).
CHD	Güterbock, Hans/Hoffner, Harry/van den Hout, Theo (1979ff.), <i>The Hittite Dictionary of the Oriental Institute of the University of Chicago</i> (Chicago, IL: The Oriental Institute).
ChS	<i>Corpus der hurritischen Sprachdenkmäler, I. Abteilung, Die Texte aus Boğazköy</i> (Roma 1984ff.).
CLL	H. Craig Melchert 1993, <i>Cuneiform Luvian Lexicon</i> (Chapel Hill NC).
CTH	Laroche, Emmanuel (1971), <i>Catalogue des textes hittites</i> (Paris: Klincksieck).
HED	Puhvel, Jaan (1984ff.), <i>Hittite Etymological Dictionary</i> (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter).
HEG	Tischler, Johann (1977ff.), <i>Hethitisches etymologisches Glossar</i> (Innsbruck: Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft).
HKM	Alp, Sedat (1991), <i>Maşat-Höyük'te Bulunan Çivi Yazılı Hitit Tabletleri/Hethitische Keilschrifttafeln aus Maşat-Höyük</i> (Ankara: Türk Tarih Kurumu Basımevi).
HW ₂	Friedrich, Johannes/Kammenhuber, Annelies (1977ff.), <i>Hethitisches Wörterbuch</i> (Heidelberg: Winter Verlag).
IBoT	<i>Istanbul Arkeoloji Müzelerinde Bulunan Boğazköy Tabletleri</i> (Istanbul 1954ff.).

Sigla and Abbreviations

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Konkordanz	Košak, Silvin, <i>Konkordanz der hethitischen Keilschrifttafeln, Online-Datenbank</i> www.hethport.uni-wuerzburg.de/hetkonk, Hethitologie Portal Mainz, Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur.
KBo	<i>Keilschrifttexte aus Boghazköi</i> (Berlin 1916ff.).
KUB	<i>Keilschrifturkunden aus Boghazköi</i> (Berlin 1921–1990).
KuSa	Wilhelm, Gernot (1997), <i>Keilschrifttexte aus Gebäude A</i> (Rahden/Westf.: Verlag Marie Leidorf).
MSL	B. Landsberger et al., <i>Materials for the Sumerian Lexicon</i> (Roma 1937ff.).
RIA	Reallexikon der Assyriologie und Vorderasiatischen Archäologie (Berlin 1928ff.).
TUAT	Kaiser, Otto et al. (eds.), <i>Texte aus der Umwelt des Alten Testaments</i> (Gütersloh: Gütersloher Verlagshaus).
VBoT	Goetze, Albrecht (1930), <i>Verstreute Boğazköy-Texte</i> (Marburg a.d. Lahn: im Selbstverlag).
Abb.	(German) <i>Abbildung</i> (“figure/illustration”)
abl.	ablative
acc.	accusative
Akkad.	Akkadian
cat.	catalog
cf.	confer(t), compare
Ch(s).	Chapter(s)
col.	column
com.	common gender
cun.	cuneiform
dat.	dative
DN	Divine Name
dupl(s).	duplicate(s)
ed.	edited
f.	and following page
forthc.	forthcoming
gen.	genitive
GN	Geographical Name
i, ii, etc.	columns on a clay tablet or Roman-numbered pages in the introduction of a book
ibid.	ibidem
instr.	instrumental
Kp.	Kayalıpınar

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Sigla and Abbreviations

Kt.	Kültepe
L.#	sign numbers in Laroche 1960
lit.	literature
loc.	locative
n.	note
neut.	neuter gender
nom.	nominative
obv.	obverse
pl.	plural
Pl(s).	Plate(s)
PN	Personal Name
RN	Royal Name
RS	Ras Shamra
rev.	reverse
sg.	singular
Sum.	Sumerian
s.v(v).	sub voce/vocibus
tr.	translation/translated by
unpubl.	unpublished
vel sim.	vel simile/similia (“or similar”)
w.	with
**	text between ** in transcription is written over erasure
*	unattested, reconstructed forms