



# East of the Achaeans: Making up for a missed opportunity while reading Hittite texts

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## East of the Achaeans: Making up for a missed opportunity while reading Hittite texts

July 22, 2015 By Gregory Nagy listed under By Gregory Nagy, H24H

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In this posting, I focus on the Greek form Akhaioi, a name translated as 'Achaeans'. Together with the names Argeioi and Danaoi, translated respectively as 'Argives' and 'Danaans', this name Akhaioi refers in Homeric poetry to Greek warriors who lived and died in the epic world of a heroic age. But what does Akhaioi really mean? Or, to put the question in another way, what is the etymology of Akhaioi?



Figure 1. Hittite graffito: warrior with horsetail crested helmet, found at Boğazköy / Hattusa (HPC 308, following Vermeule 1987:146). Drawing by Jill Curry Robbins.

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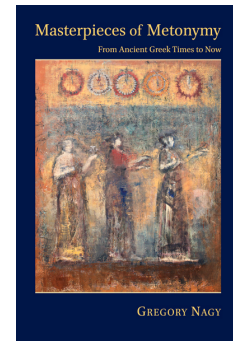
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Figure 2. Fresco fragment: warrior with horsetail crested helmet. From a fragment of a Mycenaean or "Achaean" painting (HPC 309, following Vermeule 1987:146). Drawing by Valerie Woelfel.



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## An etymology for the Achaeans

§1. In this posting of 2015.07.22, I focus on the Greek form Akhaiói, a name translated as 'Achaeans'. Together with the names Argeíoi and Danaói, translated respectively as 'Argives' and 'Danaans', this name Akhaiói refers in Homeric poetry to Greek warriors who lived and died in the epic world of a heroic age. But what does Akhaiói really mean? Or, to put the question in another way, what is the etymology of Akhaiói?

§2. Many years ago, I put much time and effort into thinking about this question in a book entitled [The Best of the Achaeans](#).<sup>[1]</sup> Now, so many years later, I think that the arguments I had developed back then about the etymology of Akhaiói 'Achaeans' are still valid. What gave—and continues to give—validity to these arguments is that they were based not only on the linguistic evidence of morphological patterns of word-building as reconstructed all the way back to the second millennium BCE. My arguments were based also on the evidence of the formulaic system that drove the making of Homeric poetry, the evolution of which can likewise be dated back to the same era, that is, back to the second millennium BCE.

§3. Without going into too many details, I can sum up my argumentation this way: the name Akhaiói originated from a Greek compound adjective referring to a very old epic theme centering on the complementarity of winning and losing as experienced by a warrior society. In the epic traditions of the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey, as I showed in Best of the Achaeans, this complementarity is expressed primarily by way of two es-stem nouns: (1) krátos, which refers to the 'superiority' or 'upper hand' that comes with the outcome of winning in any zero-sum contest, and (2) ákhos, which refers to the 'grief' that comes with the opposite outcome of losing in such a contest.<sup>[2]</sup>

§4. In terms of morphology, I reconstructed the form Akhaiói- as \*akhai-wi-ó-, meaning 'whose force (\*wí-s) has grief (ákhos)', where the 'force' is possessed by those who are winners while the 'grief' is afflicting their enemies as losers.<sup>[3]</sup> Correspondingly, again in terms of morphology, I reconstructed the form krataíoi- as meaning 'whose force (\*wí-s) has superiority (krátos)', where once again the 'force' is possessed by the winners—that is, by those who get to win the superiority that comes with winning.

§5. In terms of the formulaic system that drives the making of Homeric poetry, however, as I showed in Best of the Achaeans, the meaning of Akhaiói- may be two-sided. The ákhos or 'grief' that afflicts the enemies of the Achaeans may at times go into reverse gear, as it were, since the force that is possessed by the Achaeans may potentially be lost to their enemies, and then the loss of that force will become a source

of grief that afflicts the Achaeans themselves instead of their enemies. Such a reversal, as I also showed, actually takes place in the macro-narrative of the Homeric Iliad. But that is another story.<sup>[4]</sup> And I cannot delve into that story now, since there is no room for it here within the time-frame it takes to read the fifteen pages I am now presenting.

§6. In terms of phonology, I reconstructed (1) *krataiō-/κραταιό-* from *\*kratayyó-* from *\*krataiywó-* from *\*kratai-wi-ó-* and (2) *Akhaioi-/Ἀχαιοί-* from *\*akhayyó-* from *\*akhaiywó-* from *\*akhai-wi-ó-*. In formatting my phonological reconstructions here, I have used the symbols *\*w* and *\*y* to indicate the consonantal equivalents of the vowels *\*u* and *\*i*. Of course, I could have used instead the more conventional symbols *\*u* and *\*i*, which are more commonly written nowadays in reconstructing Greek forms all the way back to Indo-European proto-forms, but here my spotlighting stops short at an intermediate era of the Greek language—as it existed in the second millennium BCE. In other words, I do not need here to reconstruct further back—all the way back to the earliest era imaginable, which is an era that linguists would identify with the concept of “proto-Indo-European.” Instead, I stop my reconstruction at the second millennium BCE because there is a place-name attested in this era that is relevant to the Greek form *Akhaioi*. This place-name is attested in cuneiform Hittite texts dating from an era stretching from the fifteenth to the thirteenth centuries BCE. Spelled as *ah-hi-ya-wa-a* in the Hittite syllabic system of writing, this name is conventionally transliterated as *Ahhiyawa*.

§7. Back when I developed my explanation of the name *Akhaioi* as derived from an earlier Greek form shaped *\*akhai-wi-oi*, I said that the Hittite form *Ahhiyawa* was not relevant to my reconstruction, because I was at that time persuaded by those who thought that the form *Ahhiyawa* as written in Hittite texts had nothing to do with the Greek form *Akhaioi*.<sup>[5]</sup> Since then, I have changed my mind. So, I unsay what I had said then. I do so because I now realize that, in saying what I had said, I missed a big opportunity. Making up for that missed opportunity, I will now take the opposite point of view, arguing that the form *Ahhiyawa*, as written in Hittite texts, was a Hittite approximation of a Greek form related to the name *Akhaioi*. Further, I will argue that the form *Ahhiyawa* in the Hittite texts refers to the homeland of Greeks who actually identified themselves as *Akhaioi*.

## The use of the form *Ahhiyawa* in referring to the land of the Achaeans

§8. What radically changed my mind about the use of the form *Ahhiyawa* in Hittite texts was my reading the work of three experts—Gary Beckman, Trevor Bryce, and Eric Cline—who published in 2011 a book containing all extant Hittite texts that mention *Ahhiyawa*.<sup>[6]</sup> This book, entitled *The Ahhiyawa Texts*, not only shows the texts in both transliterated and translated forms: it also provides illuminating commentaries.<sup>[7]</sup> In what follows, my citations from these texts will be formatted by starting in each case with the abbreviation *AhT* followed by the text-numbers as given in the book, and then followed, wherever necessary, by the section-numbers (prefixed by the symbol §).<sup>[8]</sup>

§9. To start, I must highlight an essential conclusion that emerges from a new reading of all the *Ahhiyawa* Texts taken together. In these texts, wherever we see the name *Ahhiyawa* referring to a ‘land’ as indicated by the prefixed Sumerogram *KUR*, this ‘land’ is evidently to be located outside of Asia Minor.<sup>[9]</sup> So, the old arguments for a localization of *Ahhiyawa* somewhere in Asia Minor simply cannot any longer be sustained.<sup>[10]</sup> Further, by a process of elimination, it has been argued persuasively that this ‘land’ of *Ahhiyawa* is located west of Asia Minor and west of the major offshore islands such as *Lazpa*, which is Greek *Lesbos*, so that the only ‘land’ that fits all the references made in the Hittite texts is to be found even further west, across from the Aegean Sea, in the Helladic mainland that we know today as Greece.<sup>[11]</sup> Moreover, as the process of elimination gets extended even further, the only location on the Helladic mainland that fits the references made in the *Ahhiyawa* texts must be *Mycenae*.<sup>[12]</sup> In terms of this essential conclusion, then, *Mycenae* represents an empire situated to the west of the Hittites. Or, to say it the other way around, the Hittite empire is situated to the east of the Achaeans.

## Hittite protocols for referring to kings and to other personages of high importance

§10. The linking of the land of the *Ahhiyawa* with *Mycenae* can best be understood by examining how the Hittite *Ahhiyawa* texts refer to the king of *Ahhiyawa*. These references, as we will now see, are comparable to the self-references, made in the same texts, to the Hittite king himself.

§11. The Hittite *Ahhiyawa* texts, with three exceptions (*AhT* 27A–B, 28), come from the archives of *Hattusa*, the capital city of the Hittites, and most of them are written in the speaking persona of the ‘Great King’ or *LUGAL* of the ‘land’ or *KUR* of *Hatti*, that is, of the Hittite Empire. In such situations, the ‘Great King’ of the land as centralized at *Hattusa* is referring to himself as an over-king presiding over a whole empire, which is the Hittite Empire. And, similarly, the kings with whom the ‘Great King’ corresponds by way of written letters are diplomatically treated as his peers—as if they too were over-kings presiding over comparable empires.

§12. Such a mode of diplomatic communication in Hittite texts follows in many ways the protocols of Akkadian texts as used in other major administrative centers of the ancient Near East, though the language used in the *Ahhiyawa* Texts is not Akkadian but Hittite. Of special interest, in this connection, are the protocols of correspondences written in Akkadian as well as in Hittite where the speaker of the written text is supposedly the pharaoh of Egypt himself, who is notionally speaking in the Hittite language to the king of the Hittites by way of official letters written to the king, which are then stored in the royal archives of *Hattusa*, the capital of the Hittite Empire; and, conversely, the king of the Hittites speaks in the Hittite language to the pharaoh of Egypt by way of official letters notionally written by him to the pharaoh.<sup>[13]</sup>

§13. Similarly in the case of the Ahhiyawa Texts, the king of the Hittites is notionally speaking in the Hittite language to the king of the land named Ahhiyawa, as for example in AhT 4 (= CTH 181), dating from the 13th century BCE; and, conversely, in AhT 6 (= CTH 183), dating from the 13th century BCE, it is the king of Ahhiyawa who is notionally speaking, by way of a letter written in Hittite, to the king of the Hittites.

§14. In the Ahhiyawa Texts, then, we see diplomatic expressions of notional parity between the kings of the KUR or 'land' of the Hittites on the one hand and, on the other, the kings of the KUR or 'land' that is Ahhiyawa. In this connection, I note with special interest a reference in Ahhiyawa Text 2 (= CTH 105), dating from the 13th century BCE, to the kings of other empires whom the Great King of the Hittites considers to be his peers (§13): these personages include the rulers of Egypt, Babylonia, and Assyria. Also included in the text (again, §13) is the king of the Ahhiyawa, though this reference is subsequently erased by the scribe, as if by way of some kind of afterthought. [14]

## A Greek name for the realm of the Achaeans

§15. Here I have more to say about the KUR or 'land' that is Ahhiyawa. I highlight the fact that a shorter form of this place-name Ahhiyawa is attested in the older Ahhiyawa texts, that is, in AhT 3 (= CTH 147), dating from 14th century BCE, and in AhT 22 (= CTH 571.2), dating from the 15th-14th century BCE. The shorter form in these older texts is spelled a-ah-hi-ya-a, transliterated as Ahhiya, as opposed to the longer form ah-hi-ya-wa-a of the later texts, transliterated as Ahhiyawa. The optional suffixation of -wa in Hittite renditions of place-names is attested elsewhere as well. Parallel to the doublet Ahhiya / Ahhiyawa are such further doublets as Zalpa / Zalpawa. [15] The older form Ahhiya, as vocalized in Hittite, is most significant: it corresponds, more closely than the later form Ahhiyawa, to a Greek form that was used, I argue, as a name for the realm of the Achaeans in an era that is roughly contemporaneous with the era of the texts featuring the form Ahhiya. For the moment, I refer more generally to "the realm of the Achaeans," not to their "land," for reasons that will become clear as my analysis proceeds.

§16. Focusing on a Greek era that is roughly contemporaneous with the Hittite era of the Ahhiyawa texts, I reconstruct for this shared era a Greek form \*ákhayya (/ \*akhayyās) from \*ákhaiwya (/ \*akhaiwya) from \*akhai-wi-a (/ \*akhai-wi-ās). A morphologically leveled variant is attested in the first millennium BCE as Akhaiā = Ἀχαιῶν, epithet of the goddess Demeter. [16] An earlier phase of the form, \*ákhaiwya (/ \*akhaiwya), is attested already in the second millennium BCE: as we see in a Linear B tablet from Knossos (C 914), the form is spelled here as a-ka-wi-ja-de, to be transliterated as Akhaiwian-de and possibly to be translated as 'to Achaea'—though this particular attestation of the place-name cannot be identified as a marker for the realm of the Achaeans writ large. [17]

§17. I stop here for a moment to consider an interesting semantic convergence: we have just seen the use of the form Akhaia (/ Akhaiās) with reference both to the goddess Demeter and to a notional realm of the Achaeans. Such a convergence seems to me very old. For a parallel, I cite the Homeric use of the name Athēnē with reference both to the goddess Athena (Odyssey 7.78) and to the realm of the Athenians (Odyssey 7.80). [18] The same suffix -ēnē is visible in the name of the nymph Mukēnē, who presides over the acropolis of Mycenae. [19] It is also visible in the place-name Messēnē, which means something like 'Midland'. [20] I see a parallel situation in the use of the form Aswia (/ Aswiās) in the Linear B texts, where Aswia is evidently a goddess, as we see from the collocation po-ti-ni-ja a-si-wi-ja = potnia Aswia 'lady Aswia' as written on a tablet from Pylos (Fr 1208), parallel to the collocation a-ta-na-po-ti-ni-ja = Athānā potnia 'lady Athena' (or possibly 'our lady of Athens') as written on a tablet from Knossos (V 52). This form Aswia is evidently the prototype of the name Asiā = Ἀσία as used in the first millennium BCE with reference to the 'Asia' of Asia Minor. This region of Asiā corresponds to the region known as Assuwa in the Ahhiyawa Texts. The place-name Assuwa is mentioned in AhT 6 §3 (= CTH 183), dating from the 13th century BCE. As I already noted about this text, it is the king of Ahhiyawa who is notionally speaking here, by way of a letter written in Hittite, to the king of the Hittites. In his letter, the king of Ahhiyawa is following the etiquette of Hittite diplomatic language in a disputation with his 'brother', the king of the Hittites, over the rightful possession of islands situated offshore from the coast of Assuwa; there is also a fragmentary reference in this text to Millawanda, which is the Hittite name for the city known in Greek as Miletus = Milētos / Milātos.

§18. This region of Assu-wa, the name of which may perhaps show the same place-name suffix that we see at work in the name Ahhiya-wa, was once upon a time configured as a confederation of twenty-two states occupying the western coast of Asia Minor. [21] In the letter from the king of Ahhiyawa, he refers to the fact that this configuration had been undone when Tudhaliya, an early king of the Hittite Empire dating from the 15th/14th century BCE, destroyed the confederacy and subjugated its populations. [22]

§19. The confederation of twenty-two states that was known as the land of Assu-wa is analogous, it has been argued, with the confederation of states that was known as the realm of Ahhiya-wa. [23] So, the power of this realm of Ahhiyawa may not have been as centralized as was the power of the land of Hatti, that is, of the Hittite Empire. And the less centralized empire of Ahhiyawa in the second millennium BCE was not only land-based but also sea-based. Accordingly, this power has been compared to the sea power of the Delian League as organized by Athens in the fifth century BCE; this sea power then rapidly evolved into the Athenian Empire. [24] Thucydides (1.4) uses the word thalassokratia 'thalassocracy' in referring to this maritime empire of the Athenians, comparing it directly to the rule of the mythical King Minos over the Aegean Sea. Archaeologists have come to recognize the reality underlying the myths about this empire, and the concept of a "Minoan Empire" is by now recognized as an archaeological fact, which in turn can be seen as a prototype for the Mycenaean Empire. [25]

§20. I propose, however, that an even more apt point of comparison for the Mycenaean Empire is a thalassocracy that existed even before the organization of the Delian League by Athens in the aftermath of the Athenian naval victory over the Persian Empire in 480 BCE. Both Thucydides (1.13.6) and Herodotus (3.122.2) have a say when they apply the word *thalassokratia* to the maritime empire of Polycrates of Samos. This Greek ruler dominated the islands of the Aegean Sea during the late sixth century BCE before he was overthrown and killed by agents of the Persian Empire in 522 BCE; then, almost immediately, the maritime power that was thus lost by Polycrates went over to the Athenians—well before their successful naval victory over the Persian Empire in 480 BCE. [26]

§21. The sea power of Polycrates in the late sixth century BCE had radiated from Samos, one of the three major offshore islands to the west of the land mass of Asia Minor, which was at that time controlled by the Persian Empire. I propose that the see-sawing conflicts between the sea power represented by maritime realm of Polycrates and the land power represented by the Persian Empire can be viewed as recapitulations of corresponding conflicts that were already going on almost a millennium earlier between the maritime realm of Ahhiyawa and the land empire of the Hittites. And the picture gets far more complicated when we take into account the fact that the coastal regions of Asia Minor were dominated by Greek populations during most of the first half of the first millennium BCE. A shining example is the Ionian Dodecapolis, a confederation of twelve Ionian states that dominated the central coast of Asia Minor, especially during the late eighth and the early seventh centuries BCE: of these twelve states, I should emphasize, there were only two located on offshore islands, Samos and Chios, while the other ten states were all located on the coastline of the mainland. Eventually, the power of these twelve Greek states was eroded by the countervailing power of the inland empires of the Lydians and then the Persians—until the pendulum swung back toward the Greeks in the era of the Athenian Empire.

§22. But my point is, the pendulum was already swinging back and forth in the second millennium BCE, during the centuries that span the various datings of the Ahhiyawa Texts. We see, for example, that the offshore island named Lesbos in Greek and Lazpa in Hittite (AhT 7§4) was at various times a staging area for attacks against the Hittite Empire—attacks that were construed by their Great King as hostile acts initiated by forces working in collusion with the king of Ahhiyawa. And there are comparable accounts about the coastal state named Ephesos in Greek and Apasa in Hittite (AhT 1A §17; 1B §5), or about another coastal state named Milātos in Greek and Millawata / Millawanda in Hittite (AhT 1B §1; 4 §§4, 5, 12). In the case of these states as well, which we would describe in Greek terms as city-states, the Ahhiyawa Texts refer to ongoing disputes about the loyalties or disloyalties shown by the rulers of these states in their dealings with the opposing realms represented by the kings of Ahhiyawa and Hatti. A particularly interesting example of such disputes is a moment in the Hittite Ahhiyawa texts where the rebellious figure Piyamaradu eludes the reach of the Great King of the Hittites: this rebel escapes from his base of operations in Millawanda by boarding a ship and sailing off to safety—presumably, to a territory affiliated with the king of Ahhiyawa (AhT 4§5).

### What, then, is so ‘Achaean’ about the realm of Ahhiyawa?

§23. We are faced with serious difficulties in trying to understand the Achaeans as we read in the Ahhiyawa Texts the various details about the various exchanges that took place between the realm of Ahhiyawa and the Hittite Empire. Because the Ahhiyawa Texts are so deeply influenced by the diplomatic language of the Hittite Empire, the few attested communications between representatives of this empire and corresponding representatives of Ahhiyawa tend to picture the Achaeans as merely mirroring the culture of the Hittites. So, it is difficult to form in the mind’s eye a free-standing picture that shows clearly the differences between the cultures of the Hittites and the Achaeans. After all, the Hittite-speaking composers of records meant for the royal archives are highlighting those aspects of Achaean culture that seem to be the same in Hittite culture while shading over any other aspects that seem to be different. That said, however, I still maintain that even those aspects of Hittite culture that seem to be the same in Achaean culture can reveal a vast array of precious details about both cultures.

§24. Within the short space of time I have left here, I list as illustrations three categories of “sameness” in the two cultures. Each of these categories, I submit, can be mined for precious new information about the Achaeans as well as the Hittites.

§25. The three categories I have chosen to illustrate the notional sameness of Hittites and Achaeans are based on details we find in Hittite archival records and in Homeric poetry. In each case, I start with a Hittite detail, followed by a Homeric detail that I highlight for comparison.

1. In forming alliances, the Hittite over-king can make another king his vassal by forcing that king to marry his daughter (*AhT* 1B §12.37–40). Similarly in Homeric poetry, Achilles in *Iliad* 9 would be reduced to the status of a vassal if he accepted Agamemnon’s offer and agreed to marry one of that king’s three daughters.
2. In Hittite warfare, there are different maneuvers for charioteering in different kinds of situations: on rough terrain, for example, the chariot-fighters have to dismount from their chariots and fight on foot (*AhT* 1B

§9.39–50; 4§2.24–25). Similarly in the Homeric *Iliad*, chariot fighting at Troy is restricted to the plain of the river Scamander.

3. In speaking about successes or failures in war and in diplomacy, the speaker can speak of historical personages in terms that fit the mythical personages of epic—as well as the other way around. I cite for example a Hittite text (CTH 191) referring to a treaty between the Hittite king Muwatalli II, who can be dated to the 13th century BCE, and a vassal named Alaksandu who rules the state of Wilusa. The political linking of these names Alaksandu and Wilusa matches the epic linking of the names Alexandros and Ilion in Homeric poetry. In *AhT* 4 (= CTH 181), I should add, which is a letter from the Great King of Hatti to the king of Ahhiyawa, addressed here as ‘Great King’ in his own right and also as ‘brother’ and ‘peer’ (§6),<sup>[27]</sup> it is implied that there was eventually a resolution of a conflict between the two powers over the possession of Wilusa (§§12–13).<sup>[28]</sup>

### Viewing the big picture of Achaeans and Hittites through the lens of Homeric poetry

§26. The last of the three illustrations that I have just listed shows side-by-side a “historical” detail extracted from Hittite archival records and a “mythical” detail extracted from Greek epic poetry. But I qualify both these terms, “historical” and “mythical,” since the facts of history can become mythologized just as easily as the stories of myth can become historicized. And such mythologization and historicization must be studied empirically, especially in situations where different cultures come into contact with each other. In such situations, we need to look for patterns of contractual mythology, even contractual history, where two cultures that are in contact with each other—whether the contact is amicable or inimical—can evolve together contractually.<sup>[29]</sup>

§27. In projects that I plan for the future, I hope to study examples of such contractual mythology and history involving Achaeans and Hittites. I list here three projects for this hoped-for future.<sup>[30]</sup>

§28. The first project centers on two pictures. One picture, reproduced in the line-drawing of Figure 1, shows a Hittite graffito found at Hattusa, picturing an Achaean warrior wearing a crested helmet adorned with a plume of horsehair.<sup>[31]</sup> The second picture, reproduced in the line-drawing of Figure 2, shows a fragment of a “Mycenaean” or “Achaean” painting, picturing once again an Achaean warrior wearing a crested helmet adorned with a plume of horsehair. Both pictures, produced by way of visual art, evoke a most memorable picture produced by way of verbal art. I have in mind here the scene in *Iliad* 6 where the hero Hector, leaning over to kiss for the last time his infant son Astyanax, inadvertently frightens the child because he has neglected to take off his crested horsehair helmet. My late and sorely-missed friend Emily Vermeule had once remarked about these pictures:

In the *Iliad* the famous scene between Hector and Astyanax [6.466–470] could probably not have been created after the great floating horsetail crested helmet of the Achaian invaders of Anatolia went out of fashion about 1400 B.C. That it should be recorded in the Anatolian as well as the Greek images of the fifteenth century is remarkable [here she refers to the Hittite and the Mycenaean pictures], and the archaeological confirmation of a memorable poetic image. The later, post-1400 Mycenaean helmet with its flabby tab on top could not frighten the most unheroic infant.<sup>[32]</sup>

My friend’s reference here to Achaean “invaders” who are attacking Anatolia may perhaps be an overstatement. Maybe all they ever succeeded in doing was to make incursions from temporary strongholds like Lesbos and Ephesos. But I do see a deep truth in her vision of the heroic age as pictured by Hittite and Achaean viewers alike.<sup>[33]</sup>

§29. Now I turn to a second project I am planning. It is a huge project, with seemingly no end in sight. It has to do with my ongoing study of charioteering, already mentioned. I have also already referred extensively to charioteering in my posts for [2015.05.01](#), [2015.05.08](#), [2015.05.15](#), [2015.05.20](#). Here I confine myself to highlighting a single detail in the Hittite archives. In *AhT* 4 (= CTH 181), the Great King of Hatti is complaining to his notional peer, the Great King of Ahhiyawa, about an incident (§1). It seems that a rebellious figure named Piyamaradu, evidently a client of the king of Ahhiyawa, demanded to be escorted to a meeting with the Hittite king, and so this king sent out an unnamed relative of his to bring back to him this rebel Piyamaradu on a chariot. But the rebel defiantly refused the ride, apparently expecting the king himself to be his escort (also in §5). This convention, featuring a ceremonial ride for two on a chariot, reminds me of the moment in *Odyssey* 3 where Nestor the king sends his son Peisistratos to escort Telemachus on a chariot, and the two young princes ride off together on their way from Pylos to Sparta. I should add that, in the same *AhT* 4 (= CTH 181), the Great King of the Hittite Empire speaks of a man he holds in great honor, named Tapala-Tarhunta, a man who is described as the personal charioteer of the



king and who used to ride the chariot together with the king in their youth (§8); this man, the Great King goes on to say, even mounted the chariot, once upon a time, together with a man named Tawagalawa, who is described as the 'brother' of the king of Ahhiyawa (again, §8).<sup>[34]</sup> The personal relationship of the charioteer Tapala-Tarhunta with the Great King is underlined in this text by way of two further details: this charioteer is a relative of the king's wife (again, §8), and he serves as the king's official hostage in situations where safe conduct needs to be guaranteed (§§6, 8).

§30. As I come to the end of this essay, I signal a third project. One fine day, I hope to revisit a detailed study I undertook many years ago concerning the common linguistic heritage shared by the Hittite and the Greek languages in referring to practices of cremation. The main objects of study were (1) archived prescriptions concerning the funerals of Hittite kings and (2) narrated descriptions concerning the funeral of the hero Patroklos in Iliad 23. In that study, I concentrated on the shared Indo-European linguistic heritage of Hittite and Greek funerary traditions.<sup>[35]</sup> But now, in the new project I plan for the future, I hope to shift my attention to the mutual understanding of cremation in both Hittite and Greek social contexts.

§31. When I last considered the practices of cremation in a Mycenaean context, those practices were barely attested archaeologically. But now, with the discovery of nine cremations at the site of Chánia, some three kilometers southwest of the acropolis of Mycenae, the picture has changed.<sup>[36]</sup> I note with special interest the splendor of the tumulus that contained these cremations, dated to the 12th century BCE.<sup>[37]</sup> The archeologist of record, Heleni Palaiologou, describes as "monumental" the stone tumulus with its circular "cyclopean" enclosure, and she notes that the ritual moment of the actual cremation, which required vast pilings of firewood, must have been "spectacular."<sup>[38]</sup> This splendid tumulus, situated on a plain contiguous with Argos, was most visible to all: "it served as a landmark for the control of the commercial route to Argos and the cultivated area simultaneously."<sup>[39]</sup> By this time, in the 12th century BCE, the glory days of Mycenae and of its Achaean realm were becoming evanescent, but the vitality of Mycenaean culture was still a forceful presence, acknowledged and respected by the local population.<sup>[40]</sup>

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## Notes

[1] Nagy 1979, second edition published in 1999. In the Bibliography, this book *Best of the Achaeans* is listed by way of the abbreviation BA, which I will hereafter use in the footnotes whenever I cite relevant pages.

[2] BA 83–93, 349–54.

[3] BA 89–90.

[4] The story centers on the temporary withdrawal of the hero Achilles from the Trojan War and the resulting *ákhos* 'grief' that afflicts the warrior society of the Achaeans. For an updating of my analysis of the story, I cite HTL 131–37.

[5] BA 88, citing Steiner 1964.

[6] Beckman, Bryce, and Cline 2011. In my Bibliography here, this book is listed by way of the abbreviation BBC, which I will hereafter use in the footnotes whenever I cite relevant pages.

[7] BBC 1–6 give a comprehensive introduction, with relevant bibliography, to the history of the "Ahiyawa Problem."

[8] I will also cite, where available, the numbering of Laroche 1971 in the collection CTH, as listed in my Bibliography.

[9] BBC 3–4.

[10] BBC 3–4, with extensive bibliography. Here again I must now disagree with the article of Steiner 1964, who argues for the localization of Ahhiyawa in Asia Minor. BBC 4 have this to say about a reaffirmation of those arguments by Steiner 2007: he "remains almost the lone voice of dissent" in arguing against the localization of Ahhiyawa outside of Asia Minor. See also Kelder 2004–2005 and Melchert, forthcoming, with further references.

[11] BBC 3–4, with references to the arguments of Hawkins 1998 and others.

[12] Again, BBC 3–4, with reference to the arguments of Niemeier 1998 and others.

[13] The evidence is collected and analyzed by Edel 1994. I am guided here by further analysis provided by Melchert, forthcoming.

[14] Commentary in BBC 67 and 132. To be contrasted are other situations where we see expressions of parity between the Great King of Hatti and the king of the Ahhiyawa: commentary in BBC 122.

[15] Melchert 2007:512, with further comments on the innovative use of the Hittite suffix *-wa* as a formant of place-names.

[16] Documentation in BA 84–85, 88, 90–91, 114.

[17] Documentation in BA 88.

[18] Commentary in HTL 159–64.

[19] HTL 163; see also Palaiologou 2013:250n5.

[20] HTL 163n17, where I compare the place-name *me-za-na* written on a Linear B tablet from Pylos (Cn 3.1), and where I note: "I suspect that the suffix *-ēnē* is endowed with an elliptic function."

[21] Documentation in BBC 137–39.

[22] BBC 137–38.

[23] BBC 6.

[24] Again, BBC 6.

[25] Again, BBC 6, following Mee 1998:143.

[26] I analyze the thalassocracy of Polycrates of Samos, as described by Herodotus (3.122.2) and Thucydides (1.13.6), in HPC 222–23; also 362–65.

[27] BBC 122 give an analysis of the relevant contexts.

[28] BBC 101.

[29] On the concept of contractual mythology, I have more to say in Nagy 2011:59–61.

[30] I should also mention here comparable projects undertaken by others, such as the pioneering work of De Cristofaro 2014.

[31] Further documentation in BBC 272, where this artifact is dated to the 15th / 14th century BCE.

[32] Vermeule 1987:146.

[33] I offer further commentary in HPC 308–10.

[34] Commentary in BBC 276. On the possibility that Tawagalawa is a Hittite spelling of the Greek name Etewoklewēs, see BBC 120 (also p. 1, with bibliography).

[35] GM 85–121.

[36] Palaiologou 2013.

[37] Palaiologou 2013:274.

[38] Palaiologou 2013:251

[39] Palaiologou 2013:275.

[40] Palaiologou 2014 describes in lively detail the continuity of the culture in the environs of Mycenae during the 13th and the 12th centuries BCE. I note also the illuminating comments of Palaiologou on the afterlife of Mycenaean traditions in the environs of Mycenae during the first millennium BCE, especially with reference to the sanctuary of Hera and the hero-cult of Agamemnon.

Tags: [Achaeans](#), [Ahhiyawa](#), [etymology](#), [Hittites](#)