

Between Mycenae and Hattushas: The Emergence of the Luvian Civilisation, Eberhard Zangger, *Die Luwische Kultur. Das fehlende Element in der Ägäischen Bronzezeit*, Ege Yayinlari Istanbul, 2017, ISBN 978-605-9680-21-9, 330 pp. (book review by T. Polański)

In his captivating book E. Zangger, who specializes in historical landscape reconstruction, argues that an ancient and forgotten Luvian civilization once flourished between Mycenae and Hattushas in the Bronze Age. The Luvian civilisation developed its own original hieroglyphic and cuneiform script which preceded the Hittite and Mycenaean Greek writing systems and remained in use

for centuries after the Mycenaean and Hittite art of writing had been long since forgotten. We used to focus on the archaeology of Sardes, Aphrodisias, Iasos, Miletos, Pergamon, Ephesus from the 8th century BC on, that is from the start of the Greek colonization, while those well-known archaeological sites cover much more ancient layers (p. 34). Zangger observes that only two pre-Greek archaeological sites in Western Anatolia have been thoroughly searched – Troy and Beycesultan – although roughly a hundred others between Antalya and Troy have been identified so far, and 340 in Anatolia as a whole. They are still waiting for their researchers. Some of them are of impressively large dimensions (eg. Kaymakçı). It seems that Luvian was spoken from the valley of the Sangarios in North Western Anatolia up to the Euphrates (p. 39). At this point of his argument Zangger is certainly right. In A. Kuhrt's *History of the Ancient Near East*, an excellent reference book which has been widely and successfully used as the basis for university introductory courses for a decade or so, the reader will not find a Luvian chapter and even no 'Luvian' entry in the textbook's register. In the erudite and updated *Geschichte Kleinasiens in der Antike* by C. Marek there is no separate chapter on the Luvian civilization, although the Luvian culture and political geography have been discussed (cf. Zangger's comments on the *Cambridge Companion to the Aegean Bronze Age*, which does not have a separate chapter on Anatolia (2008), and the *Oxford Handbook of the Bronze Age Aegean* (2010) with its modest 12 pages referring to Western Anatolia in a total of 930 pages in that respected manual, p. 62). Zangger emphasises time and again that although we know a dozen names of Western Anatolian states from the Hittite documents, they do not appear on our standard maps of the Bronze Age world (p. 41). Those maps, he continues, show the Hittite Empire in its largest territorial extent at the time when the Hittite kings controlled a large part of Western Anatolia. However, he legitimately argues that 'diese Situation war jedoch untypisch und galt nur für relativ kurze Zeit. Die Bronzezeit umfasste zweitausend Jahre, das Großreich der Hethiter bestand nur für insgesamt gut vierhundert Jahre und beschränkte sich dabei im Wesentlichen auf Zentralkleinasien' (p. 41). I think that for an ancient Indo-European and Semitic-African scholar the territorial extent of the Luvian scripts and language is a sufficient reason to consider Zangger's argument on the original Luvian civilization seriously. The impact of Luvian felt in the Levant and Anatolia speaks of its role as one of the languages of communication (e.g. the famous Phoenician-Luvian royal inscription in Karatepe, the Warpalawa inscription in Ivriz, the Nisantaş monumental royal inscription in Hattushas etc.).

Zangger also adds his contribution to the long-lasting discussion on the origin, chronology and course of events of the great migrations ca 1200 BC, which brought a disaster to the affluent and highly developed Late Bronze civilisation in the Eastern Mediterranean (cf. his apt and concise review of the current theories which point to economic, political, cultural, social and

military factors which added to the fall of the Late Bronze world, p. 151ff.). The author challenges the historical value of Ramses III's war chronicle inscribed on the walls of Medinet Habu. He argues that the pharaoh boasted of earlier military successes which had actually been achieved by Merneptah (p. 181ff.). In Zangger's view Ramses III's great victory over the Sea Peoples in his 8th year (c. 1174) cannot be reconciled with the date of the fall of Ugarit (1192 BC), when the great battle with the invaders must have taken place (cf. Zangger's interesting discussion on the chronology of the last days of Ugarit, p. 146ff.). I do not think that those dates can be regarded as irreconcilable. For Egypt it was a thirty-year period of incessant wars. It is unthinkable that the mortuary temple constructed in the pharaoh's lifetime might have given an essentially erroneous sequence of events. The Egyptians were drafted to the ranks in unprecedented numbers. They fought literally for survival (cf. R. Drews' monograph *The End of the Bronze Age – Changes in Warfare and the Catastrophe ca. 1200 BC*, 1993, which has been included in Zangger's bibliography and referred to on p. 153). The temple praised the king's glory, however it was also a war memorial to the fallen and to those who won the war and survived. The impressive large scale reliefs were engraved on the outer walls of the royal precinct. In a way Zangger may certainly be right. It seems that Ramses III exaggerated the scale of his military successes on the battlefields. Some twenty years after his death the Egyptian Asian empire was already a thing of the past. Ramses III won his battles, however he did not manage to push the invaders out of the Egyptian provinces in Asia. He was compelled to pass on to the Peleset and Danuna a number of strongholds of key importance. They held them as 'mercenaries,' or to use anachronistic terminology – as 'foederati'. Actually they cut out states of their own out of the Egyptian empire in Canaan. Zangger remarks that an Egyptian chronicler from Medinet Habu mixed up and combined different wars and different chronologies when he enumerated in one breath the destruction of Alasiya, Hatti, Quadi, Karkemish and Arzawa. Zangger argues that these places were actually destroyed in different wars and by different invaders: Arzawa by the Mycenaean warriors, Hatti by the Kaska people, Alasiya and Karkemish by the Sea Peoples and Luvians (p. 167). In a way Zangger may be right. However, we should also remember that the Medinet Habu chronicle was not a field commander's log book, but an epic. In a short passage filled with the names of the fallen kingdoms the Egyptian chronicler gave a panorama of a historical disaster on an unparalleled scale, something he witnessed in his own times. We must admit that he sounds as he wanted it to appear impressive and epic to the readers. Zangger is also right when he writes that the Egyptian author was not exact historically. We know today that Talmi-Teshub, the viceroy of Suppiluliuma II, in all likelihood managed to defend his capital Karkemish against the invaders. Karkemish does not show any signs

of destruction, although the dangerous foreign warriors utterly destroyed Emar to the south of Karkemish on the River Euphrates and reached Norşuntepe in the Upper Didshla basin to the East of Karkemish (Drews 1995). Personally I am inclined to be more reticent and cautious as regards the identification of those who destroyed Hattushas and other centres of the Hittite empire (as for example its ancient religious centre of Alaca, which was strongly fortified). And who destroyed the kingdom of Arzawa? I hope Zangger is right in his suggestive reconstructions. He argues that the invasion of the Hittite empire and the Levant was carried out by a coalition of the Luvian tribes and the Shardana and Lukka mercenaries, who turned their arms against their Hittite lords (p. 160ff.). He also believes that there were Kaska mountaineers from Pontus who actually destroyed Hattushas in the invading coalition. The capital was left unprotected by the king and successively abandoned by its inhabitants. At the same time the royal army operated in the south of Anatolia, and on this point Zangger may be right in his reconstruction of the sequence of events. However, this is only one more hypothetical reconstruction, even if it sounds very likely.

Now and for a while I would like to focus on two or three selected details which have drawn my attention in Zangger's book. He aptly remarks that the complex cultural identity of the Aphrodisias site which consists of North Western, South Western and Aegean components cannot be simply explained unless we consider other Anatolian histories, not just the exclusively Hittite and Greek ones (p. 71). Another part of the book which I found worthwhile to read is the passage on a disastrous volcano explosion on Thera at the end of the Middle Bronze and the beginning of the Late Bronze Age as a popular explanation for the fall of the Minoan civilisation. Zangger, who is an expert geologist, concludes that the pumice layers of the Minoan times in the volcano's caldera were not tectonically distorted (p. 90). On p. 60 the reader will find L. Rietveld's translation of the Disc of Phaistos (2004). I am a student of an old traditional Vienna and Kraków school of ancient Greek and Latin and Semitic-African languages, and I feel unable to take that translation seriously. Armed with our grammars and dictionaries, we can read texts in many ancient languages. We can read Coptic, Demotic and Hieroglyphic Egyptian texts, Syriac, Hittite, Akkadian, Aramaic et cetera. But I think we have no tools to read the Disc of Phaistos. We can still feel quite hopelessly outwitted by Etruscan, Phrygian and Lycian. Etruscan is still an embarrassing challenge to every Latinist. I can also remember my frustration in the face of an extensive Lycian inscription of Xanthos which was cut as late as the beginning of the 4th century BC and with only too clear a Hellenic regular bloc script. In Midasshehri I once read the short Old Phrygian inscriptions which were written with characters clearly resembling Old Ionian script and consequently accessible to every Greek epigraphist ... and I understood

hardly anything, except for a word or two which seemed reminiscent of some Homeric words.

I would also like to draw the reader's attention to Zangger's reference to certain political ideologies of the modern age which are responsible for gaps and distortions in ancient studies. Zangger legitimately recalls the 'Hellenocentrism' of Western scholarship, which has dominated Aegean ancient studies since the 18th century (p. 61ff.). 'Plötzlich galt als Barbar, wer nicht Griechisch sprach' (p. 70). In this context I would like to recall two books which I hold in high esteem: Ekrem Akurgal's *Birth of Greek Art* (the title of the book's English version), and Clare Fawcett and Philip Kohl's valuable collection of papers *Nationalism, Politics and the Practice of Archaeology* (1995). An East European scholar burdened with the heritage of the totalitarian humanities in general and of the communist version of ancient history and archaeology in particular is certainly sensitive and responsive to the ideological perspective in Zangger's analyses.

'Gegen die Einwanderung aus dem Balkan spricht jedoch, dass die phrygische Sprache nicht mit dem Trakischen verwandt ist' Zangger comments on the origins of the Phrygians (p. 187). Thus he casts doubt on the traditional Herodotean view on the Balkan origin of the Phrygians (Hdt.7,73). Herodotus might have certainly been wrong, however, Phrygian and Thracian still remain illusive as languages, they are hardly known and only from a small number of short inscriptions and Greek glosses. It is risky to compare two unknown languages and draw conclusions. There are a number of scholars who believe that Herodotus preserved a piece of the authentic tradition which held that the Phrygians came from the North and successively passed from the Balkans into Anatolia, and that they were the ones who destroyed the Hittite empire ca 1200 BC. In the Mediterranean LB period Central Europe (present-day Slovakia, Hungary and Rumania) witnessed a flourishing and affluent Ottomani-Füzesabony archaeological culture which is characterized by an unparalleled amount of golden artefacts in its graves compared to East-Central European standards (Nižna Myšľa, Slovakia) and simultaneously by a strong influence of the Anatolian and Mycenaean LB world. At some stage the Ottomani-Füzesabony people crossed the Carpathian Mountains and settled on their northern slopes (ca 1650 BC according to the carbon dates). Some time, and not significantly long before the fall of Hattushas and Mycenae (ca 1350 BC), their well fortified settlements were utterly destroyed, once and forever like Emar and Ugarit. No one managed to return and rebuild them. In Brzezówka and Trzcinica (South-Eastern Poland) archaeologists have found clear traces of massive destruction and conflagration. Perhaps that destruction was symptomatic of the beginning of a historic crisis which developed ca 1200 BC. It seems that the dangerous warriors from Eastern Europe continued their march further south along the valleys of Juzhna Morava and Vardar (Axios). Ca 1200 BC they reached Mainland

Greece and put an end to the Mycenaean civilization. I would be inclined to agree with Schachermeyr, who is cited by Zangger (p. 151) (*Die Levante im Zeitalter der Wanderungen vom 13. bis zum 11. Jahrhundert v.Chr.*, 1982). I do not want to criticize or convince Zangger to adopt the East-Central European perspective. I would only like to say that the crisis of 1200 BC might have been more widespread geographically. It apparently exceeded the borders of the Late Bronze Age civilization in the Eastern Mediterranean and even reached far beyond its most extreme peripheries.

A Classics scholar will also find a lot of inspiring material when he reads Zangger's interpretations of the post-Homeric authors: Dictys, Dares, Quintus Smyrneus, whose narratives told the story of the Trojan war including many geographical, topographical and historical details (p. 217ff.). Zangger's reading of the post-Homeric poets and novelists goes against our traditional curriculum. As students we were instructed to regard their writings as purely literary fiction, while it is not unlikely that Dares and Dictys and Quintus of Smyrna made good use of the Archaic Cyclic poets. Unfortunately, all we have at our disposal are Proclus' summaries. However, we know that Pausanias, one of the most erudite of all the Graeco-Roman art and literary critics, read and held the Cyclic *Thebais* and *Aethiopsis* in high esteem. It cannot also be excluded that the Archaic Cyclic poets preserved a certain amount of the very ancient authentic historical tradition which can be traced back to the Late Bronze Age and that this Cyclic tradition was exploited by the post-Homeric authors of the Imperial age. If so, Zangger's book with its refreshing perspectives on the Luvians and their civilisation may prove invaluable for the philological Homeric scholarship (cf. Luvian names Priam and Paris, p. 25, following Reichel 2011). Zangger also questions the acknowledged archaeological picture of Priam's Troy. He argues that the real city of Troy remains hidden under the Scamandros and Simois River sediments. In his view, Hisarlik was only a quarter of a large Late Bronze city provided with its own waterways and a harbour (p. 113ff.). Zangger believes that the city of Troy should be searched c. 300 m west of Hisarlik and 5-6 m under the surface of the contemporary plain (p. 122 ff.).

Zangger's *Luwische Kultur* is supplemented with numerous maps, diagrams, drawings, landscape and architectural photos. It is a pleasure to open this richly illustrated and graphically aesthetic book. As a Classical Greek teacher and archaeologist, in conclusion to my review I would like to say that I have never read a book or paper which gives such a clear presentation of certain passages drawn from the Homeric and post-Homeric literary tradition and their relation to the age of invasions ca 1200 BC and to the geography of Troas, Aeolia and Western Anatolia and the topography of Hisarlik with the adjoining plain of the Scamandros and Simois, the plain which may cover the lower city of Troy with its water channels and harbours.