

## From Ahhiyawa to 'Achaioi\*')

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The article purposes to show that the ethnicon *Ahhiyawa*, which repeatedly occurs in Hittite documents of the 14–13<sup>th</sup> centuries B. C., accurately reflects the contemporary Greek name whose development in accordance with the regular phonetic processes operative in Greek between the 14<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> centuries B. C. terminated in the classical *Ἀχαιοί*.

Although many and weighty reasons have been adduced for the identification of the ethnicon *Ahhiyawa*, repeatedly occurring in Hittite documents of the 14<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries B. C., with the Mycenaean Greeks, this identification is commonly held to be difficult from the purely linguistic point of view.<sup>1)</sup> The generally recog-

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<sup>1)</sup> See the excellent summary of the linguistic approaches to the 'Ahhiyawa problem' given by Ph. H. J. Houwink ten Cate in his contribution to the Sheffield Colloquium on Bronze Age Migrations in the Aegean Region: 'Anatolian Evidence for Relations with the West in the Late Bronze Age', in R. A. Crossland and A. Birchall (eds.), *Bronze Age Migrations in the Aegean* (Noyes Press, 1974), pp. 144–45. As far as I know, this summary is as up to date now as it was in March 1970, when the Scheffield Colloquium was held, the main reason for this being that, as D. F. Easton put it, 'nobody ... now seeks to prove that identification [Ahhiyawa = Achaeans] by means of the philological equation. What is relied on instead is the ability to show that the sphere of Ahhiyawan influence, judged from the texts, happens to coincide with the sphere of Mycenaean influence, known from archaeology': 'Hittite History and the Trojan War', in L. Foxhall and J. K. Davies (eds.), *The Trojan War. Papers of the First Greenbank Colloquium*, Liverpool, 1981 (Bristol, 1984), pp. 24–25. The important recent contributions to the latter issue are: K. Bittel, 'Das zweite vorchristliche Jahrtausend im östlichen Mittelmeer und im Vorderen Orient: Anatolien und Aegaeis', *Gymnasium* 83 (1976), pp. 513–33, H. G. Güterbock, 'Hittites and the Aegean World: Part 1. The Ahhiyawa Problem Reconsidered', *AJA* 87 (1983), pp. 133–38, *id.* 'Hittites and Akhaeans: A New Look', *PAPS* 128 (1984), pp. 114–22, M. J. Melink, 'Hittites and the Aegean World: Part 2. Archaeological Comments on Ahhiyawa-Achaians in Western Anatolia', *AJA* 87 (1983), pp. 138–41, I. Singer, 'Western Anatolia in the Thirteenth Century B. C. according to the Hittite Sources', *AS* 33 (1983), pp. 205–17. However, the view expressed by F. Schachermeyr, namely, that 'gegenwärtig scheint die Gleichung von Achiava mit den Achäern von den meisten Forschern anerkannt zu sein, nur die Frage ist noch strittig, ob es sich bei Achiava allein um Küstenpositionen im westanatolischen Bereich handelt, oder auch um das griechische Festland mitsamt einer eventuellen Hegemonie von Mykene' (*Die Levante im Zeitalter der Wanderungen* [Wien, 1982], p.

nized difficulty lies in the lack of correspondence between *-iya-* of the Hittite word and *-ai-* of the Greek stem *\*Akhaiw-*, represented in the words *Ἀχαιοί*, *Ἀχαιῆα*, and the like.<sup>2)</sup> However, there is also an additional problem, in that the two forms differ from each other also in the consonants of their second syllables: while the Greek consonant is a palatal aspirated plosive, that of the Hittite word is a velar spirant.<sup>3)</sup> Hence, when analysing the *\*Akhaiw--Ahhiyaw-* correlation, we have to account not only for the difference in the vowels but also for that in the consonants of these two forms.

The starting-point of any attempt at finding the linguistic correspondence between *Ahhiyaw-* and *\*Akhaiw-* is a tentative assumption

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24), still seems too optimistic; see the negative assessments of the same material in: G. Steiner, 'Die Ahhijawa-Frage heute', *Saeculum* 15 (1964), pp. 365–92, S. Košak, 'The Hittites and the Greeks', *Linguistica* 20 (1980), pp. 35–47. Another way of approaching the issue, which has no direct bearing on the 'Ahhiyawa problem', is through equating the Hittite toponyms Wilusa (Wilusiya) and Taruisa with *(Ἰ)ῶλιος* and *Τροίη* respectively, see especially H. G. Güterbock, 'Troy in Hittite Texts?', in: M. J. Mellink (ed.), *Troy and the Trojan War*. A Symposium held at Bryn Mawr College, October 1984 (Bryn Mawr, 1986), pp. 33–43, and C. Watkins, 'The Language of the Trojans', *ibid.*, pp. 45–62, cf. also *id.* 'Questions linguistiques palaites et louvites cuneiformes', *Hethitica* 8 (1987), pp. 423–26. (I would like to thank the Editor for drawing my attention to these publications.)

<sup>2)</sup> It is misleading to present *Ahhiyawa* as morphologically equivalent to the Greek toponyme *Ἀχαιῆα*: the Hittite *-a* is the ending of neut. pl., frequently occurring in the designation of ethnic names; on other IE parallels see J. Harmatta, 'Zur Ahhijawā-Frage', in A. Bartoněk (ed.), *Studia Mycenaea* (Brno, 1968), pp. 21–23. Another possibility is that the form *Ahhiyawa* may represent only the stem of the name, see Houwink ten Cate, *art. cit.*, p. 155 (n. 1). In either case, there is no morphological correspondence with the fem. sing. of the Greek word *Ἀχαιῆα*.

<sup>3)</sup> The issue is obscured when the Hittite word is wrongly transliterated as *Akh(kh)iyawa* or *Achiyawa*. On the Hittite *hh* as representing the voiceless velar spirant *x* see E. H. Sturtevant, *A Comparative Grammar of the Hittite Language*, rev. ed. (New Haven and London, 1951), pp. 17 (n. 21), 26, 47. I can see no explanation that has successfully answered F. Sommer's original objection that the Hittites would have rendered the Greek *kh* by the sign *kk* rather than by *hh*, see e. g. 'Ahhijawā und kein Ende?' *IF* 55 (1937), p. 267, cf. also Steiner, *art. cit.*, p. 384 and n. 196. To be more specific, if Hittite had the aspirated plosives (as is assumed by many specialists), the relevant phoneme must have been rendered either by the Hittite *k*, *g*, or *q*, written singly (if it still represented the IE *gh*) or by the same signs written double (if it already represented the Greek *kh*), cf. Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, pp. 56–59. Moreover, there is reason to suggest that it would have been rendered in the same way even if Hittite had no aspirated plosives: compare the case of the Romans who, possessing no aspirated plosives but having at their disposal the spirant *x*, preferred to render the Greek *kh* by the combination *ch* rather than by the letter *h*, viz. *Achivi*, *Achaeans*, *Achaia*, etc.

tion that the Hittite word somehow reflects the contemporary Greek original. In view of this, it is hard to explain why the extant approaches to the 'Ahhiyawa problem' are firmly presumed on the \**Akhaiw-* > *Ahhiyaw-* derivation. There is good reason to call in question the validity of the procedure which purports to derive a form already attested in the 14<sup>th</sup> century B. C. from a form which is firmly attested, at the earliest, from the 8<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>4)</sup> To presume that the loss of digamma is the only phonetic process to be taken into account in connection with the form \**Akhaiw-* is to ignore the fact that between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> centuries the Greek language underwent some of its most significant phonetic changes (e. g., the loss of the intervocalic *h* issuing from the IE *s*, or elimination of the *y*), which transformed the inherited IE forms in many and various ways.<sup>5)</sup> Consider now that, from the standpoint of the historical phonetics of Greek, *Ahhiyawa* looks like an extremely archaic form – not so much because of the digamma, which was lost in Greek at a relatively late stage, but because of the semivowel *y* and the velar spirant *x*. Of these two phonemes, the former was in a state of elimination by the end of the second millennium B. C.,<sup>6)</sup> while the latter, representing as it does one of the IE laryngeals,<sup>7)</sup> was already lost in the majority of the IE languages in the prehistoric period. Hence, if *Ahhiyawa* stands for a Greek word, this must have been one of great antiquity. Consequently, admitting the \**Akhaiw-* > *Ahhiyaw-* derivation amounts to admitting an impossible phonetic development in which a word assumes rather than loses archaic features. This is why I believe that, whatever the final results are, the methodologically sound procedure can only consist in taking the form *Ahhiyawa* as

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<sup>4)</sup> Following the accepted date for the Homeric *Iliad*. In the present state of our knowledge, there is insufficient evidence to determine whether or not the Cnossus form *A-ka-wi-ja-de*, most probably referring to a local Cretan town, should be regarded as representing the \**Akhaiw-* stem, cf. n. 15 below.

<sup>5)</sup> This is why, for example, as was pointed out by E. Forrer, in the equation Taruisa = Troy the *s* of the Hittite form, which could not be preserved in historic Greek, presents no linguistic problem, cf. P. Kretschmer, 'Alaksandus, König von Viluša', *Glotta* 13 (1924), p. 213, Güterbock in Mellink (ed.), *op. cit.*, p. 35.

<sup>6)</sup> On the Mycenaean evidence, the semivowel *y* has already been eliminated after consonants and was undergoing elimination in the intervocalic position, see C. J. Ruijgh, *Études sur la grammaire et le vocabulaire du grec mycénien* (Amsterdam, 1967), pp. 48–52, 64–65, and M. Lejeune, *Phonétique historique du mycénien et du grec ancien* (Paris, 1972), pp. 165–73. By the alphabetic period, the IE *y* had totally disappeared in Greek.

<sup>7)</sup> On the Hittite *x*, see Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, pp. 47–49.

representing a remote Greek ancestor of the form *\*Akhaiw-* and in attempting to derive the more recent form from the more ancient rather than vice versa.

Thus, if the Hittite *Ahhiyawa* reflects a Greek prototype, the syllable *-hhiya-* must be regarded as an ancient phonetic group, *-xiya-*, which could not have been preserved in Greek of the historic period. What could have been the possible directions of its phonetic development in ancient Greek?<sup>8)</sup>

It is generally admitted that the IE laryngeals in their consonantal function disappeared in Greek without having left any trace, and the same also holds good for the intervocalic *y*.<sup>9)</sup> Consequently, the derivation that most naturally presents itself is *-xiya-* > *-ia-*. One can see that if this development were the only possible one the idea of any connection between *Ahhiyaw-* and *\*Akhaiw-* must be abandoned for the simple reason that in such a case *Ahhiyaw-* could only yield *\*Aiaw-* and no other form. However, the historic phonetics of Greek abounds in examples of alternative developments, simultaneously realized in different groups of speakers. In the case of *-xiya-*, the possibility of such an alternative development is afforded by the fact that when the combination *i* + vowel was preceded by a consonant the postconsonantal *i* tended to become *y*, especially in Aeolic Greek. At the subsequent stage, this secondary *y* was eliminated, not however before the preceding consonant had undergone certain changes as a result of a common Greek process called the process of yodization:  $C_1iV > C_1yV > C_2V$  (C for consonant, V for vowel).<sup>10)</sup>

Thus, if *Ahhiyawa* represents a Greek word, under certain circumstances the *i* in the syllable *-hhiya-* could have become *y* and, even-

<sup>8)</sup> The attempts to base the *-iya-* / *-ai-* equation on the Hittite-Louvite alternation *-iya-* / *-aia-*, as represented in B. Čop, 'Notes d'étymologie et de grammaire hittites II', *Linguistica* 8 (1955), pp.61-62, and Harmatta, *art. cit.*, pp. 119-21, though attractive in themselves (cf. Houwink ten Cate, *art. cit.*, p.144), are untenable as far as one works within the limits of the *Ahhiyaw-* / *\*Akhaiw-* correlation: the alternation in question could only yield the form *\*Ahhaiaw-*, which does not account for the postulated Greek stem *\*Akhaiw-*, not to mention the fact that this theory leaves without satisfactory explanation the difference between the Hittite *hh* and the Greek *kh*.

<sup>9)</sup> See Lejeune, *op. cit.*, pp.203 (on the laryngeals), 168-69 (on the intervocalic *y*).

<sup>10)</sup> See e.g. Lesb. *ζά-βαις* (Att. *δια-βάς*), Lesb. *περρ-έχοισα* (Att. *περιέχουσα*), Hom. *ζά-θεος*, *ζα-τρεφής* (*ζα < δια*), Thessal. *γυμνασσαρχεισαντα* < *\*γυμνασσαρχ-*, Thessal. *κυρρος* < *\*κυρριος*, etc. Note, however, the Cypriot gloss *ζάει* (3 sing. of *δι-άημι*). See Lejeune, *op. cit.*, pp.173, 245-46.

tually, disappeared, provided that some change also occurred in the preceding consonant. Now the supposed *Ahhiyaw-* > *\*Akhaiw-* development does involve a consonant change from the velar spirant *x* to the palatal aspirated plosive *kh*. Note that the two phonemes are mutually opposed both by the place (velar : palatal) and the intensity (spirant : plosive) of articulation. That is to say, the supposed shift from *x* to *kh* involved both palatalization and reinforcement in articulation. To what degree can these two features be seen as compatible with the process of yodization?

As yodization presupposes palatalization of the consonant involved, the suggested shift from the velar *x* to the palatal *kh* does not seem to be at variance with our general suppositions as regards this process. Compare indeed yodization of the labiovelars, in which the palatal *k*, *g*, *kh* are postulated as the necessary intermediate stage in the evolution of the velar *k*, *g*, *kh* (or *gh*) into (*s*)*s* or *tt*.<sup>11</sup> However, in order to argue the *-\*xy-* > *-kh-* development, we have to postulate the palatal *kh* as the final rather than the intermediate stage in yodization of the velar *x*. Hence, the *-\*xy-* > *-kh-* development can only be maintained if we can provide the reason why yodization of the velar spirant *x* might take a route different to that of yodization of the velar plosives *k*, *g*, and *kh*. It seems that reinforcement in articulation, the second feature distinguishing between *x* and *kh*, affords the answer.

It can be observed that in yodization of consonants reinforcement often goes together with the final stage in elimination of the post-consonantal *y*. Thus, analysing the *-\*k(h)y-* > *-\*ty-* > *-\*ts-* > *-ss-* / *-tt-* or *-\*gy-* > *-\*dy-* > *-\*dz-* > *-\*zd-* > *-zz-* / *-dd-* developments, we can see that though palatalization of the original *-\*k(h)y-* and *-\*gy-* had already been achieved at the stage when they became *-\*ty-* and *-\*dy-*, it was only with their affrication into *\*ts* and *\*dz* that the *y* disappeared. The gemination accompanying yodization of liquids and nasals affords an additional example: this treatment, common to all the dialects in the case of *-\*ly-* and typical of the Aeolic dialect in the cases of *-\*ry-* and *-\*ny-*, shows that the *y* was eliminated as soon as *-ll-*, *-rr-*, or *-nn-* appeared (*ἄλλος* < *\*ἄλγος*, Lesb. *ἄερω* < *\*ἄφέρω*, Lesb. *κτένω* < *\*κτένω*, etc.). Now, as in the *t* : *ts*, *d* : *dz*, *l* : *ll*, or *r* : *rr* oppositions, *x* : *kh* is an opposition by the force of articulation. It can be suggested, therefore, that, upon the loss of the *y*, the *x* of the group *\*xy* was intensified and yielded *kh* (cf. the

<sup>11</sup>) See Lejeune, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

reverse process of the weakening of *kh* into *x* in post-classical Greek); naturally, this made *kh* the final stage in yodization of the spirant *x*.<sup>12)</sup>

Accordingly, the process as a whole can be recorded as *-xiya-* > *-\*xia-* > *-\*xya-* > *-kha-*. If this conjecture is correct, then the Greek derivative of the stem *Ahhiyaw-* would be *\*Akhaaw-* rather than *\*Akhaiw-*, which is usually assumed as the prototype of the Greek stem. This is not to say, however, that these two forms are mutually exclusive. To demonstrate this, it is sufficient to represent the ethnic name *\*'Αχαι-Φός* as having proceeded from *\*'ΑχαF-γός*.<sup>13)</sup> Considering that the formation of the toponyms *\*'ΑχαιFία* and *\*'ΑχαιFίς* almost certainly postdated the ethnicon *\*'ΑχαιFοί*,<sup>14)</sup> we can suggest that it was this modified stem, *\*'ΑχαιF-* < *\*'ΑχαF-γ-* (cf. *\*αίFετός* < *\*άFγετός*), that became productive in the formation of the words *\*'ΑχαιFία*, *\*'ΑχαιFίς*, *\*'ΑχαιFικός*, and the like.<sup>15)</sup> Of course, if it

<sup>12)</sup> It seems that the same model can be tentatively applied to a group of semantically overlapping verbs: *νάω/νήχω* (Dor. *νάχω*), *σμάω/σμήχω*, *ψάω/ψήχω*, cf. LSJ, s. v. *σμάω*. There is no explanation of the nature of these doublets, see E. Risch, *Wortbildung der homerischen Sprache*<sup>2</sup> (Berlin–New York, 1974), p. 279. However, if we assume the *\*xy > kh* development, each couple can be presented as descending from a single stem, e. g. *\*snexyo > snayo > (s)nao*, cf. Skt. *snāti*, *snāyate*, Avest. *snayeite*, Lat. *nāre* (the spirant *x* was eliminated, having left no trace) and, alternately, *\*snexyo > (s)nakho* (the spirant *x* became the plosive *kh* upon the loss of the *y*). Note that the laryngeal *x* changed a contiguous *e* to *a*, and upon its loss such an allophonic *a* gained phonemic value, see Sturtevant, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

<sup>13)</sup> On the inherited IE suffix *-yo-*, which ceased to be productive in Greek of the historic period, see e. g. P. Chantraine, *La formation des noms en grec ancien* (Paris, 1933), pp. 33–34, Risch, *op. cit.*, pp. 166–68.

<sup>14)</sup> Note that in Homer we actually do not find a clear concept of a territorial entity which could correspond to the ethnicon *'Αχαιοί*; as P. B. S. Andrews has pointed out, the toponyme 'Achaea' is attested for the first time in fr. 23 West of the iambic poet Semonides of Amorgos (7<sup>th</sup> century B. C.): 'The Mycenaean Name of the Land of the Achaeans', *RHA* 56 (1955), p. 3. (Steiner, *art. cit.*, p. 386, n. 213, was misled by the erroneous reference in LSJ, s. v. *'Αχαιός*, which misses this source, into thinking that our first attested occurrence of the toponym 'Achaea' is in Thucydides.) On the alternative toponyme *'Αχαιίς* see J. M. Aitchison, 'The Achaean Homeland: *'ΑχαιFία* or *'ΑχαιFίς*? *Glotta* 42 (1964), pp. 19–28.

<sup>15)</sup> Considering that the Mycenaean orthography is quite consistent in rendering the phonetic value *ai* by the sign *a<sub>3</sub>*, (cf. Ruijgh, *op. cit.*, pp. 27–28), it is obvious that the deduced form *\*Akhaaw-* fits the *A-ka-wi-ja-* of the Cnossus tablets better than the usual reading 'Akhaiwia'. However, on the accepted dating of the Cnossus tablets, this form must be contemporary to the Hittite *Ahhiyawa*, i. e. the Cnossus form can only be taken into account if we assume that the form *Ahhiyawa* reached the Hittites either earlier than it was fixed in writing, and was

was not for the deduced form *\*'AχaF-*, there would be no impelling reason to abandon the usual *\*'Aχai-Fός* (with the suffix *-Fo-*) for the sake of *\*'AχaF-yoς* (with the suffix *-yo-*), though it is worth noting in this connection that *'Aχa(F)ioί* was the form suggested by Ferdinand de Saussure long before the 'Ahhiyawa problem' had arisen.<sup>16)</sup> However, the obvious advantage of the present solution consists in that, while we cannot intermediate between *Ahhiyawa* and *'Aχaiioί* by means of *\*'AχaiFός*, the form *\*'AχaFyoς* does afford the missing link in the following chain of derivation: *Ahhiyaw-* > *\*Ahhiaw-* > *\*Ahhyaw-* > *\*Akharw-* > *\*Akhairw-* > *'Aχai*.<sup>17)</sup> Obviously, this deduction cannot supply conclusive proof that *Ahhiyawa* presents a Greek word, the more so as neither the etymology of this word nor its cognates are known to us.<sup>18)</sup> All that can be con-

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ossified, or that it reached them via a group of speakers whose Greek was phonetically less advanced than the Greek of the Cnossus tablets. (It would be another matter if a lower dating for these tablets, proposed by some scholars, is accepted, see e.g. L.R. Palmer, *Mycenaeans and Minoans* [London, 1961], pp. 156 ff.) On the whole, considering the uncertainties of the Mycenaean orthography, allowing one to read the form in question as 'Akawija', 'Akhawija', or 'Agawija', it might be better to adopt P. Chantraine's cautious attitude that 'il serait imprudent de faire entrer dans le dossier *akawijade* à Cnossos': *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* (Paris, 1968), s.v. *'Aχaiός*.

<sup>16)</sup> 'Mémoire sur le système primitif des voyelles dans les langues indo-européennes' (1879), in Ch. Bally, L. Gautier (eds.), *Recueil des publications scientifiques de Ferdinand de Saussure* (Genève, 1922), p. 66.

<sup>17)</sup> Since the crucial stage of this development, *-\*xia-* > *-\*xya-*, is firmly associated with Aeolic Greek (see, however, the Cypriot gloss ζάει, n. 10 above, and the Mycenaean evidence discussed in Lejeune, *op. cit.*, p. 246 and n. 5), there seems reason to infer that *\*Akhairw-* is originally an Aeolic form; note that this inference goes well with the fact that, as distinct from the *'Aχaiía* in northern Peloponnese, the *'Aχaiía Φθιώτις* in southern Thessaly was seen in Greek tradition as a land in which the 'Achaeans' constituted the indigenous population.

<sup>18)</sup> It is far from certain that the toponym *Ahhiya*, twice mentioned in Hittite sources, should be regarded as an alternative designation of *Ahhiyawa*, cf. Steiner, *art. cit.*, p. 370 (n. 28) and p. 384 (n. 197). Morphologically, *Ahhiya* relates to *Ahhiyawa* approximately as another toponym, *Arziya* in northern Syria, relates to *Arzawa*, the name of a great power in western Anatolia: though the two forms could well be etymologically allied, there was no other connection between them. As was pointed out by Houwink ten Cate (*art. cit.*, p. 145), it is doubtful whether the form *Ahhiya* would ever have been connected with the Achaeans if there had been no such form as *Ahhiyawa* (cf. also Košak, *art. cit.*, p. 39, who, maintaining the *Ahhiya-Ahhiyawa* equation, totally rejects that between *Ahhiyawa* and the Achaeans.) Anyway, since it is now widely recognized that the texts containing the form *Ahhiya* should be dated earlier than those containing the form *Ahhiyawa*, and as *Ahhiya* is the name of a town (cf. Steiner, *art. cit.*,

cluded is that it is possible to present the Greek stem *\*Akhaiw-* as derivative of the stem *Ahhiyaw-* by the application of phonetic regularities attested for the Greek language.

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n.28 on p.370, Houwink ten Cate, *art. cit.*, p.149), nothing prevents us from regarding *Ahhiyawawa* as an expanded form of *Ahhiya* ('the people of Ahhiya'); but, even if these two forms are mutually related, this does not make their etymology any clearer.