CHAPTER 21

Lycian

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1. HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXTS

Lycian was the autochthonous language of the land of Lycia at least during the middle and late first millennium BC. Recent evidence from the Hieroglyphic Luvian inscription of Yalburt – specifically, forms of the place names for Tlos, Pinara, and Xanthos – has now proven that the "Lukka-Lands" of the second-millennium Hittite cuneiform texts do refer to historical Lycia, that is, roughly the mountainous peninsula on the southwest coast of Anatolia lying between the Gulf of Telmessos and the Bay of Attaleia (modern Gulf of Fethiye and Gulf of Antalya; see Poetto 1993). Obviously, without direct textual evidence from Lycia itself during the second millennium it is quite impossible to characterize with any precision the language of "Lukka" in that era.

Lycian shares a number of specific features, including innovations, with Luvian, and it is widely held that Lycian and Luvian form a subgroup within the Anatolian family; in other words, that they reflect a prehistoric "Proto-Luvian" language which had developed out of Proto-Anatolian along different lines from Hittite, Palaic, and Lydian, the other assured members of the Anatolian group (see, *inter alios*, Oettinger 1978). One may even read that Lycian is a later form of Luvian, though not necessarily of that form of Luvian which is directly attested in the second millennium. The shared features of Lycian and Luvian are undeniable, but several of these are also common to Lydian, while there are also crucial divergences between Lycian and Luvian (see Gusmani 1960 and Melchert 1992a). These divergences make it impossible to reconstruct a coherent Proto-Luvian language distinct from Proto-Anatolian. One should rather view the common features of Luvian and Lycian in terms of dialect geography. As the individual languages began to diverge in their development from Proto-Anatolian, they remained in contact, and innovations which arose in various places spread in the typical irregular fashion. Luvian, which occupied a geographically central position, unsurprisingly shares some isoglosses with Lycian (and to a lesser extent Lydian) to the west, and others with Hittite and Palaic to the east.

The extant Lycian corpus includes more than 150 inscriptions on stone, over 200 on coins (many not yet published), and a handful on other objects. The overwhelming majority of those on stone are sepulchral texts, with highly stereotyped content. Apart from several poorly preserved decrees, the most important exceptions are the inscribed stele of Xanthos, which describes the military exploits and building activities of a local dynasty, and the Lycian–Greek–Aramaic trilingual of the *Létôon*, which records the founding of a cult for the goddess Leto by the citizens of Xanthos at a temple a few miles south of the city. The latter text of some forty-one lines has predictably proven to be of immense importance in

advancing understanding of Lycian. Much of the text of the Xanthos stele remains opaque due to problems of vocabulary which result from the nearly unique subject matter.

Two of the Lycian texts (one of which is the last portion of the Xanthos stele) are written in a distinct dialect known either as *Lycian B* (vs. ordinary *Lycian A*) or as *Milyan*. The relationship of the two dialects is indeterminate. Milyan is more archaic than ordinary Lycian in certain features, and it is noteworthy that both Milyan texts are in verse (see Eichner 1993 with references). However, it would be dangerous to conclude from these limited facts that Milyan is merely an older stage of Lycian preserved for special literary purposes. This is only one of several viable possibilities: see Gusmani (1989–1990) for a useful discussion of the problem. Unless stated otherwise, the description which follows applies to both forms of Lycian, but the bulk of the evidence comes from Lycian (A). Extrapolation of the description to Milyan is often based on very limited evidence and should be viewed as highly provisional. Special features of Milyan will be explicitly noted where appropriate.

Thanks to the Létôon Trilingual and exploitation of the features shared with Luvian, understanding of Lycian has improved dramatically in the last two decades (with the notable exception of the Xanthos stele and Milyan). However, certain features of morphology and syntax cited below impose some quite serious limitations. One should regard the following description as intermediate in completeness and reliability between those for Palaic and Lydian on the one hand, and that for Luvian on the other.

2. WRITING SYSTEM

Lycian is written in an alphabet derived from or closely related to that of Greek. The details of the relationship remain unclear: for discussion see Carruba 1978a. The direction of writing is left to right. Use of word-dividers is frequent, but by no means absolutely consistent. This fact means that the status of certain morphemes as clitics is, strictly speaking, a matter of interpretation, which can be supported but not proven by the mode of writing. Problems involving individual letters will be dealt with below in the phonology.

3. PHONOLOGY

3.1 Consonants

The Lycian segmental inventory includes the following consonantal phonemes:

(1) Lycian consonantal phonemes

p		t	c	k<	k	k>	k^w	
		ts						
	θ	s						h
β	ð				γ			
m		n						
		l	r					
w			y					

Of the phonemes listed, /c/, /θ/, and /h/ occur only in Lycian (A), not in Milyan, due to different prehistoric sound changes. The sound very tentatively identified as /k^w/ is attested only in Milyan and in personal names. Its absence in Lycian (A) may or may not be due to chance.

Table 21.1 The Lycian alphabet

Character	Transcription
𐊀	a
𐊁	e
𐊂 𐊃	b (/β/)
𐊄	β (/k^{w}/?)
𐊅 𐊆	g (/ɣ/)
𐊇	d (/ð/)
𐊈	i
𐊉	w
𐊊	z (/t^{s}/)
𐊋	θ
𐊌	y
𐊍	k (/k</)
𐊎	q (/k/)
𐊏	l
𐊐	m
𐊑	n
𐊒	m̃ (/m$^{\neg}$/)
𐊓	ñ (/n$^{\neg}$/)
𐊔	u
𐊕	P
𐊖	(≈ /k</?)
𐊗	r
𐊘	s
𐊙	t
𐊚	τ(/c/)
𐊛 𐊜 𐊝 𐊞 𐊟	ã
𐊠 𐊡 𐊢 𐊣 𐊤	ẽ
𐊥	h
𐊦 𐊧 𐊨 𐊩	x (/k>/)

3.1.1 Stops

The stop phonemes given here as /p/, /t/, /k</, /k/, and /k>/ are spelled respectively *p*, *t*, *k*, *q*, and *x* according to the current standard transliteration (but one must be prepared to find *c* for *k* and *k* for *x* respectively in older works). There is a consensus that these stop phonemes have voiceless and voiced allophones. The conditioning is also straightforward: the voiced allophones occur after nasals (including nasalized vowels), the voiceless allophones elsewhere. Note, for example, *trqqñt-* (name of the Storm-god) for [tərkənd-], rendered in Greek as Τροκονδος/Τερκανδας.

There is on the contrary a decided absence of agreement concerning the further features of the stops aside from labial /p/ and dental/alveolar /t/. The rare sound defined here as /c/ (transliterated as *τ*) alternates with /t/ in all cases. We know that prehistoric **k^{w}* becomes Lycian (A) *t* before *i* (e.g., *ti-* < **k^{w}i-* "who, which"), and several plausible, but not entirely

compelling etymologies have been adduced for t/ $\tau < {}^{*}k^{w}$ before $^{*}e$ (see Carruba 1978b: 165ff.). If we accept this derivation, a palatal stop /c/ seems a plausible transition sound, since the development includes fronting and delabialization (the value /t^{w}/ suggested in Melchert 1994a:282 was an unfortunate lapsus). Note that in Milyan the result of a labiovelar before front vowel is *k* (*ki-* "who, which"), which will be argued below to be a front velar /k</. The development in Lycian (A) may be viewed as a further fronting to a palatal and eventually dental stop.

The characterization of the dorsal stops *k*, *q*, and *x* as front, mid, and back velar /k</, /k/, and /k>/ respectively represents a personal point of view, and one should compare the in part very different opinions of Rasmussen (1974:53ff.), Laroche (1979:84), van den Hout (1995), and Hajnal (1995:26ff.). Evidence for a relatively front value for *k* (formerly transliterated *c*) consists of its strong tendency to occur before (often between) front vowels and its rendering in Greek alternatively by *sigma* (*Tikeukepre-* = Τισευσεμβραν) and by *kappa* or *gamma* (Sbikasa = Σπιγασα). The predilection of *x* (formerly *k*) for appearing before back vowels suggests a relatively back consonant. The major point of dispute is whether it is an ordinary stop or instead an aspirated stop or even fricative. The only basis for the last assumption (hence the now standard transliteration *x*) is etymological: Lycian *x* in most cases corresponds to a cuneiform *ḫ*, both in names (*Xãkbi* = *Ḫinduwa*) and in inherited words reflecting the Proto-Indo-European second laryngeal (preterite first singular ending *-xa* < **-h$_2$e*). There is, however, not a shred of evidence for anything but a plain stop synchronically: Greek rendering of Lycian *x* in names is consistently either with *kappa* or *qoppa*, never *chi* (the single exception Μοσχᾶς for *Musxxah* [cited by van den Hout 1995:134, correcting Melchert 1993:105] says nothing, since the aspirate may be a Greek phenomenon conditioned by the preceding *s*).

The question of whether *q* is an ordinary velar stop /k/ as given here or is labialized depends on etymological considerations which cannot be treated here: see Melchert (1994a:306) for a discussion with references to other opinions. Even more problematic is the status of the sound represented by the rare letter 𐊡. The Létôon Trilingual assures that it is some kind of dorsal stop (personal name ArKKazuma = Greek Αρκεσιμα), but the tentative analysis as a labiovelar /k^{w}/ is based on etymological and distributional arguments which are merely suggestive, not compelling (see Hajnal 1995:25f. and Eichner 1993:145, among others).

3.1.2 Affricate and fricatives

Lycian *z* in at least some cases represents a voiceless affricate /ts/ (e.g., *hr-zze/i-* "upper" with suffix *-zze-* < Proto-Anatolian **-tsyo-* < PIE **-tyo-*). In other cases, however, a plausible case has been made for a voiced fricative /z/: see Melchert 1994a:314f. (with reference to Gusmani) and Hajnal 1995:21ff.

Lycian (A) *θ* is clearly the reflex of prehistoric **d*+*h*. Since **d* is spirantized to voiced [ð], it seems reasonable to assume that the outcome of the sequence is a voiceless interdental fricative, and the Lycian version of a Persian name *Miθrapata-* appears to confirm this. Lycian (A) *h* is ignored in Greek renderings of personal names, suggesting that it is probably ordinary /h/ (generally absent from Anatolian Greek). It reflects a conditioned change of **s* > *h* in Lycian (A) which did not take place in Milyan.

There is near-universal agreement that the Lycian letters *b*, *d*, and *g* stand for voiced fricatives. Evidence cited includes Λαπαρας for *Dapara* and the Lycian rendering of Darius as *Ñtarijeus-* (recall that voiceless stops are voiced after nasals). One may compare for the latter device Modern Greek. Neither of the cited spellings makes sense if Lycian *d* were a voiced stop [d].

3.1.3 Sonorants

Cases such as *hrppi* "above" or *sñta* (a numeral) seem to indicate that liquids and nasals had syllabic allophones, and the standard view is that the special letters *ñ* and *m̃* stand for syllabic nasals. This may have been true when the graphemes were invented, but this analysis cannot account for postvocalic occurrences such as *qãñti* "they slay." The gemination in *hrppi* (see below) argues that at the phonetic level the pronunciation was [hərp.pi] with an anaptyctic vowel. If one makes the reasonable inference that the same is true for nasals (*sñta* = [sənta]), then one may make the generalization that ñ and *m̃* occur only in syllable-final position. This distribution suggests that they are unreleased allophones of the nasal consonants.

The glides /w/ and /y/ are usually spelled with the letters transliterated *w* and *j*, but when they represent the second part of falling diphthongs they are spelled with the corresponding vowels: *ai*, *ei*, *au*, and so forth. Examples such as *ebeija* "these" (neut. nom.-acc. pl.) must apparently be interpreted as [eβej.ja]. Prehistoric **w* appears as *b* after a consonant, suggesting that it has become a fricative in this position (e.g., *esbe-* "horse" < **ek̂wo-*). Since this *b* never geminates after a consonant like ordinary /β/ (e.g., *erbbe-* "battle" or "defeat"), it should probably be treated as an allophone of /w/ synchronically.

3.1.4 Consonant gemination

One of the most striking and problematic features of Lycian consonantism is the widespread gemination of consonants (at least orthographically). No entirely satisfactory explanation has yet been presented: see for attempts Melchert 1994a:295f. and 316, and van den Hout 1995. Word-initial and some internal geminates probably reflect prehistoric processes (notably syncope) and must be synchronically analyzed as present in underlying structure: for example, *ttaraha*, adjective to *tetere/i-* "city"(?) (see Heubeck 1985 and Hajnal 1995:184ff.). However, the highly regular gemination of the second members of certain consonant clusters (versus its absence in others) is surely due to a synchronic rule in which syllable structure plays a crucial if not yet fully defined role: compare, for example, *hrppi* "above" (probably [hərp.pi]) versus *epre/i-* "back-, rear-" (probably [e.pre/i-]).

3.2 Vowels

Lycian has eight vowel phonemes: /i/, /u/, /e/, and /a/ and corresponding contrastive nasalized varieties of each. There are separate letters for /ã/ and /ẽ/, but not for the nasalized high vowels. Their likely existence is inferred from cases like Ιμβρος for Lycian *Ipre-* ([ĩbre-]). The non-high vowels form several falling diphthongs with the glides: *ai*, *ei*, *ãi*, *ei*, *au*, *eu*. There is no evidence that Lycian has synchronic contrastive vowel length.

3.2.1 Vowel assimilation

The most important process affecting Lycian vowels is a pervasive vowel assimilation rule which may be stated in its simplest form as: V [-high] > V [α back] /__C_0V [α back]. The rule applies iteratively from right to left within the phonological word (including sequences with proclitics): for example, *tese-* "oath" but collective plural *tasa*; personal name */Armanani-/ attested as *Ermm̃enẽni*. There are many exceptions to the rule as just formulated: thus, dative singular *ladi* (not **ledi*) to *lada-* "wife." Some of these may be attributed to paradigmatic analogy, but it is not clear what such a description means in synchronic terms. Furthermore, Hajnal (1995:80ff.), in the most thorough discussion of the phenomenon to the present,

rightly points out that not all exceptions may be attributed to "analogy" in any case. The existence of Lycian umlaut is assured, but a rigorous account of its diachronic and synchronic status requires further study.

3.2.2 Syncope

Lycian shows widespread prehistoric syncope. For two independent attempts at a comprehensive description see Melchert 1994a:318ff. and Hajnal 1995:175ff. The broad agreement between the two accounts, despite differences in detail, suggests that their general thrust is correct. Nevertheless, since our knowledge of Lycian accent is indirect, being based almost entirely on the effects of the syncope, the risk of circularity of argument is high, and neither analysis should be taken as remotely definitive.

3.3 Phonotaxis

The most noteworthy features of Lycian phonotaxis are the restrictions on initial and final consonants. Inherited word-initial voiced stops were devoiced prehistorically, so that neither /β/ nor /γ/ occurs initially. Initial *dd-* (virtually always spelled as a geminate) does unexpectedly occur. Its source remains unknown. Initial /r-/ occurs in Lycian (A) only rarely, as the result of aphaeresis, and the few examples in Milyan probably should be attributed to the same process. The absence of initial /y-/ may be accidental or systematic. Aside from a handful of cases with unexplained final (unreleased) nasal, Lycian permits only /-s/ in word-final position. Milyan adds *-z*. Initial consonant clusters are common, including stop plus stop (at least at the phonemic level). The limited number of medial clusters probably is due merely to the very restricted attested lexicon (for a list see Melchert 1994a:297ff.). No final consonant clusters are permitted. Vowels occur freely in all positions in the word. There are no assured examples of heterosyllabic vowel sequences.

4. MORPHOLOGY

Lycian inflectional and derivational morphology seems upon first examination to be rather impoverished in comparison with that of other ancient Indo-European languages, Anatolian and non-Anatolian. Closer scrutiny shows that this probably is a misleading impression, an artifact of the relatively limited corpus and the crucial absence of distinct signs for nasalized high vowels.

4.1 Nominal morphology

The noun inflects for two numbers (singular and plural), and two genders (animate and inanimate). Animate nouns may have a collective plural beside a count plural (e.g., *wawa/uwa* "cattle" beside anim. acc. sg. *wawã* and unattested nom. and acc. pl. *wawãi*/wawas** "cows"). Synchronically, there is evidence only for two genders. However, the contrast between animate nouns with nominative singular **-e*, accusative singular **-ẽ* < **-os*, **-om* (respectively), animate nouns with nominative singular *-a*, accusative singular *-ã* < **-eh$_2$*, **-eh$_2$m* (respectively), and collective *pluralia tantum* in *-a* < **-eh$_2$* argues that Lycian (and hence Proto-Anatolian) did inherit from Proto-Indo-European a feminine gender distinct from the masculine and neuter (see Melchert 1992a). There are at least five cases and perhaps six: nominative, accusative, genitive, dative-locative, and ablative-instrumental.

In some noun classes there may be a locative singular distinct from the dative (cf. *a*-stem *ladi* "for/to the wife" vs. *xupa* "in the grave"). The inanimate gender predictably has a single nominative-accusative, and the ablative-instrumental does not distinguish singular and plural, as elsewhere in Anatolian. While there is a genitive plural case, a corresponding genitive singular is found only in a handful of personal names. Possession is normally expressed by means of a relational adjective which agrees in number and case with the head noun and does not indicate the number of the possessor: *mahanahe/i-* "divine; of the god(s)." This usage is inherited from Proto-Indo-European, but its nearly complete replacement of the genitive case is a characteristic feature of the western Anatolian languages. The Lycian case endings are inherited or built on inherited material, but the loss of nearly all final consonants (especially postvocalic *-*s*) leads to a serious degree of homonymy between case forms.

An important feature of Lycian nominal inflection, shared at least with Luvian and Lydian, is *i-Motion* (better *i-mutation*), as established by Starke (1990:59ff.): many, indeed, most animate nouns and animate forms of adjectives obligatorily add a suffix *-i-* to the stem just in the (animate) nominative and accusative, singular and plural. When the base stem ends in *-e-* (< PIE *-*o*-), the suffix *-i-* replaces the stem-final *-e-*: for example, *hrzze-* "upper" inflects as anim. nom. sg. *hrzzi**, anim. acc. sg. *hrzzi* [hərt.tsī], anim. nom. pl. *hrzzi**, anim. acc. pl. *hrzzis**, but inan. nom.-acc. sg. *hrzzẽ*, nom.-acc. pl. *hrzza**, dat.-loc. pl. *hrzze**. The origin of this phenomenon is a matter of serious debate (see Melchert 1994b and Oettinger 1987), but its existence as a synchronic feature of the western Anatolian languages is beyond doubt. The effective inflection of most Lycian nominal stems as *i*-stems in the nominative and accusative has very serious consequences for understanding the Lycian texts. The *i*-stems happen to have the most genuine homonymy of any stem-class: anim. nom. sg., dat. sg., and anim. nom. pl. *-i*. The spelling of anim. acc. sg. [-ī] as *-i* as well completes the confusion.

There are clear reflexes of several Proto-Indo-European derivational suffixes, and absence of others is surely due to the restricted corpus.

4.2 Pronouns

Lycian attests typical Anatolian features in the first-person singular pronoun *e/amu* "I, me" with *u*-vocalism, in the demonstrative stem *ebe-* "this" (formally matching *apā-* "that" of Hittite, Palaic, and Luvian), and in the interrogative-relative *ti-* < *k^wi-*. The enclitic "reflexive" particle *-ti* also is clearly cognate with Luvian *-ti* and Hittite *-z(a)*, but the function of this morpheme in all these languages requires much further study. Evidence for the rest of the pronominal system is almost entirely lacking.

4.3 Verbal morphology

The very incomplete picture of the Lycian verb provided by the limited data agrees in most respects with that of the other Anatolian languages: the expected three persons, two numbers (singular and plural), two moods (indicative and imperative), two voices (active and mediopassive), and two tenses (present-future and preterite). There is very limited evidence for a *ḫi-conjugation* alongside the *mi-conjugation*, as in Hittite (see Ch. 18, §§4.4.7; 4.4.9). The inflectional endings, to the extent that they are known, are comparable to those of Hittite or Luvian, with the exception of medial endings with a nasal: for example, *sijẽni* "lies" (see Melchert 1992b for the Lycian, but a convincing account of the prehistory is lacking). One unique feature of Lycian is the morphosyntactic alternation between nasalized and non-nasalized finite verbs: for example, *ade/adẽ* "he/she did/made." For a persuasive analysis of

this phenomenon see Garrett 1991. The most important of PIE verbal derivational suffixes are securely attested.

There is an infinitive in *-ne/a* which most likely is cognate with Luvian and Palaic *-una*, as per Laroche 1960:172f., contra Melchert 1992a:47, fn. 15. For the source of the final vowel alternation see Hajnal 1995:98. There is a single synchronic participle, with a past passive value for transitive verbs and a stative one for intransitives, as in the other Indo-European Anatolian languages. The suffix is *-Vime/i-*, matching Luvian *-V(i)mma/i-* < **-(o)mno-*. All examples of the suffix *-āt-/-ēt(i)-* < **-e/ont-* are lexicalized relics: for example, *lāta-* "dead" (a noun).

4.4 Compounds

Attested compounds are not frequent, but they do occur. Neumann (1993:37f.) has convincingly explained *tidere/i-* as "collacteus" < "teat-companion": compare Hittite *tēda-* "teat" and *arā-* "companion."

5. SYNTAX

5.1 Word order and clause structure

Lycian is unique among the Indo-European Anatolian languages in its configurational syntax. There are good reasons to assume an unmarked VSO (Verb–Subject–Object) word order, but two preposing rules which affect the direct object as well as other constituents lead to a surface OVS order. The particular diction of much of the extant corpus happens to make the latter the most frequently attested order. See Garrett 1994 for a discussion of both the synchrony and diachrony of this phenomenon; the same article analyzes in detail the syntax of Lycian relative clauses. Demonstratives and most adjectives typically precede the noun they modify, but the order noun plus adjective is not infrequent and indeed seems to be regular for the relational adjective in *-ahe/i-*. Lycian has several prepositions, but no postpositions. Local adverbs occur both as independent elements and as preverbs.

Lycian is also unique in Anatolian in having true coordinated clauses, marked with *se* "and" (also used to conjoin noun phrases). The conjunction *me* marks prosecutive clauses. There are subordinating temporal and conditional conjunctions, but fronting is also used to mark conditions: *hrppi=ije me tadi*... "On-it conj. puts," in other words, "If one puts thereon" versus *me=ije hrppi=tadi* "conj.-it on-puts," that is "And (then) one puts thereon" (cf. English "Were I," equivalent to "If I were").

5.2 Clitics

Lycian employs enclitic pronouns chiefly in clitic doubling in conjunction with topicalization (see Garrett 1992). Conjunctions in Lycian are proclitic (*se* and *me*), not enclitic as in the related Anatolian languages. Lycian does have a few "local particles" which appear as enclitics to the first word in a clause, corresponding to those of Luvian or Hittite.

5.3 Syntactic miscellanea

Lycian has at least one example of the Anatolian construction with the direct object of an infinitive in the dative: *esedeñnewi epttehi ñtepi=tane* "collateral descendance (dat. sg.)

their in-to put," in other words, "to put in their collateral descendants." Examples with the expected accusative also occur.

6. LEXICON

The peculiar nature of the extant corpus restricts the known lexicon to an extent which makes statistics about core vocabulary meaningless. However, there is no positive reason to think that the inherited portion of the lexicon is significantly less than the 75–80 percent demonstrated for Hittite. The few identifiable loanwords are predictably from Greek and Iranian and mostly in the expected spheres of government and "high culture": for example, *sstala-* "stele," *trijere-* "trireme," and undoubtedly *sttrat[ ]* "general" from Greek; *xssadrapa-* "satrap" and *sixla-* "shekel" from Iranian (the last of these being ultimately a Semitic word). The only exception to this pattern known to me is *stta-* "stand, be placed standing," the phonology of which argues that it is a Greek loanword rather than an inheritance.

7. READING LIST

The standard edition of Lycian texts discovered by the turn of the century is Kalinka 1901, but these are available in more convenient and often more accurate form in Friedrich 1932. More recent texts are found in Neumann 1979, Laroche 1979 – the Létôon Trilingual – and Bousquet 1992. For inscriptions on coins see Mørkholm-Neumann 1978, but many remain unpublished. The most thorough discussion of the alphabet is found in Carruba 1978a. The best description of the synchronic grammar remains that of Neumann 1969, although it is now dated in several respects. For all aspects of Lycian grammar, synchronic and diachronic, global reference should be made to Hajnal 1995. A complete lexicon is available in Melchert 1993. Bryce 1986 offers the best account of the historical and cultural setting.

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