# Tracking the Phrygians
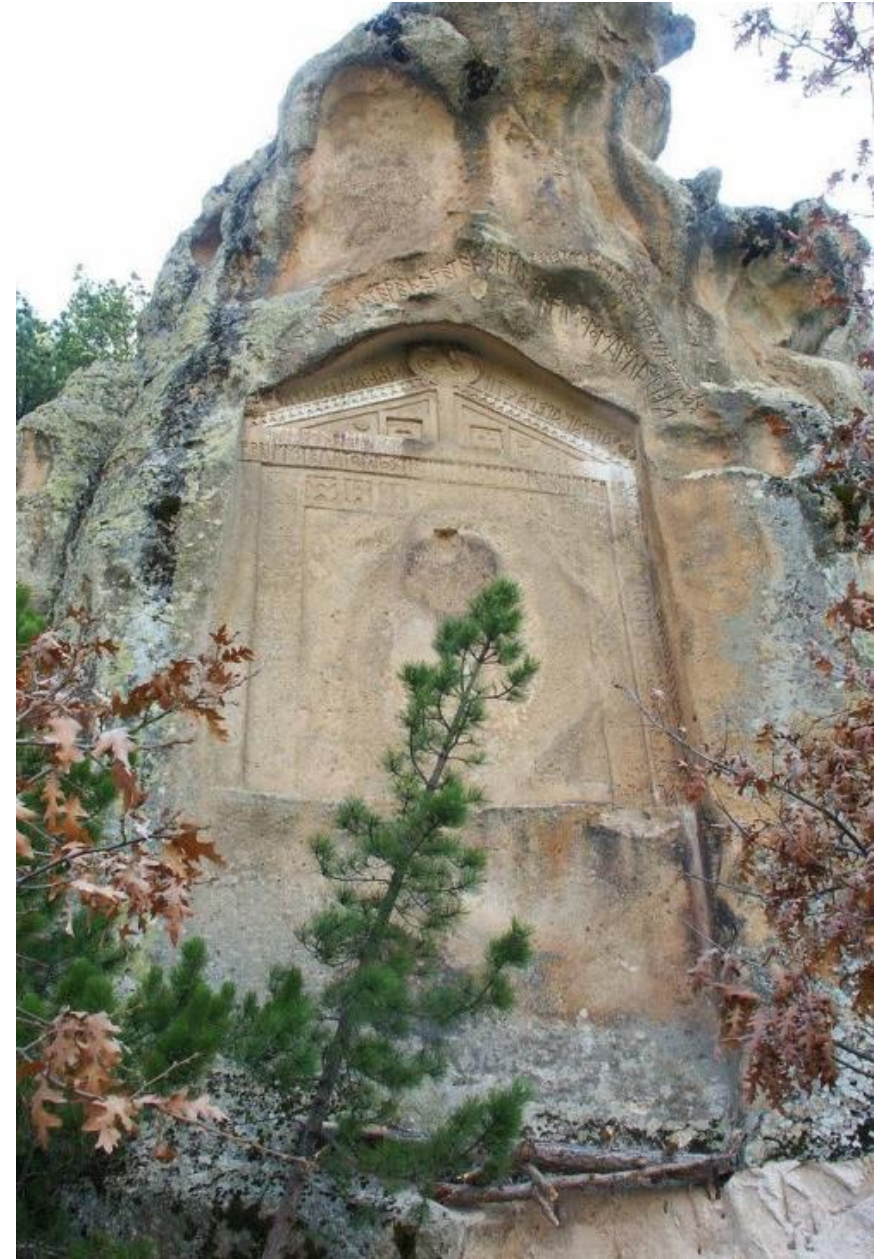
Aljoša Šorgo | 05/09/2022 | Leiden
Arbeitstagung der Indogermanischen Gesellschaft: The Secondary Homelands of the Indo-European Languages
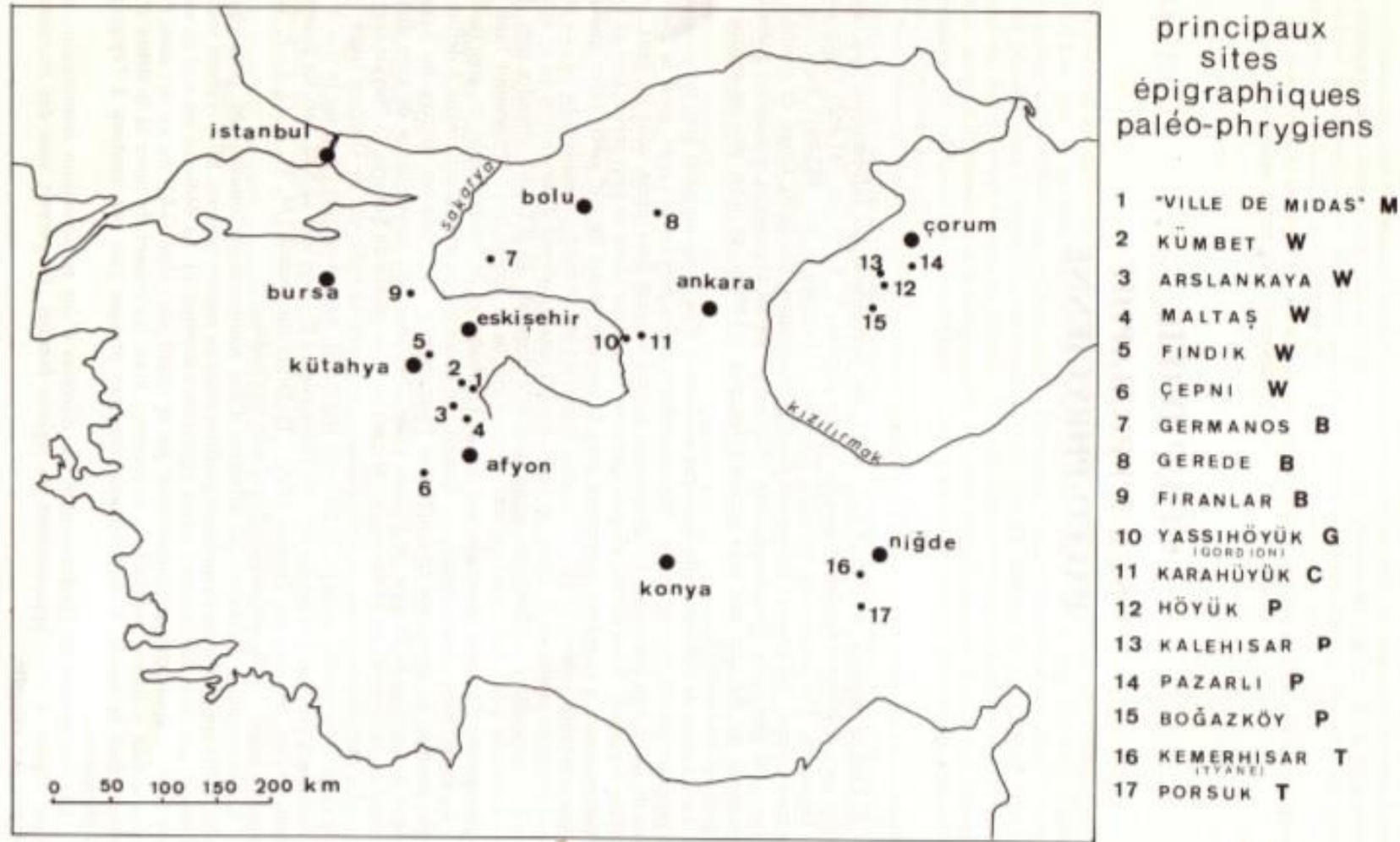
Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

# The Phrygian language

- Attested in two phases: Old Phrygian (8th to 4th century BCE) and New Phrygian (2nd to 3rd century CE).

- Old Phrygian:
  - around 400 inscriptions;
  - written in a native alphabet.

- New Phrygian:
  - around 100 inscriptions, mostly malediction formulae;
  - written in the Greek alphabet.

- An additional 40 glosses.

# Locations of Old Phrygian inscriptions



| | principaux sites épigraphiques paléo-phrygiens | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | "VILLE DE MIDAS" | M |
| 2 | KÜMBET | W |
| 3 | ARSLANKAYA | W |
| 4 | MALTAŞ | W |
| 5 | FINDIK | W |
| 6 | ÇEPNI | W |
| 7 | GERMANOS | B |
| 8 | GEREDE | B |
| 9 | FIRANLAR | B |
| 10 | YASSIHÖYÜK (GORDION) | G |
| 11 | KARAHÜYÜK | C |
| 12 | HÖYÜK | P |
| 13 | KALEHISAR | P |
| 14 | PAZARLI | P |
| 15 | BOĞAZKÖY | P |
| 16 | KEMERHISAR (TYANE) | T |
| 17 | PORSUK | T |

Taken from Brixhe-Lejeune 1984: X

THEY ARE CROSSING
THE HELLESPONT

# Phrygians in ancient sources

- **Homer**: Trojan allies settled by the Sangarios river.

- **Herodotus**

- *As the Macedonians say, these Phrygians were called Briges as long as they dwelt in Europe, where they were neighbors of the Macedonians; but when they changed their home to Asia, they changed their name also and were called Phrygians. The Armenians, who are settlers from Phrygia, were armed like the Phrygians.*

- *While Mardonius was encamped in Macedonia with the land army, the Brygi of Thrace attacked them at night: and the Brygi killed many of them, and wounded Mardonius himself.*

- *Thracians, Paeonians, Eordi, Bottiaei, Chalcidians, Brygi, Pierians, Macedonians, Perrhaebi, Enienes, Dolopes, Magnesians, Achaeans, and all the dwellers on the seaboard of Thrace sent ground troops.*

- **Strabo**

- *And the Phrygians themselves are Briges, a Thracian population […].*

- *Mount Bermion, also, is somewhere in this region [sc. in Macedonia]; in earlier times it was occupied by Briges, a Thracian tribe; some of these crossed over into Asia and their name was changed to Phrygians.*

- *Likewise, Brygi and Bryges and Phryges are the same people.*

- **Pseudo-Scymnus**

- *Beyond them [i.e. the Illyrians] are the Bryges, a barbarian people[.]*

- *And beyond the Bryges, the so-called Encheleians dwell.*

- See: Anfosso (2020), Ligorio & Lubotsky (2018), Obrador-Cursach (2020), Berndt-Ersöz (2012), and many others.

2.0°

Bryges

Briges

Thrace

Mt. Bermion

Daskyleion

Sangarios

0.0°

# Proto-Graeco-Phrygian

- The majority of current Phrygian scholarship accepts the notion that Phrygian is most closely related to Greek.

- Brixhe (1968) lays out argumentation for a close affinity of Phrygian and Greek.

- The Graeco-Phrygian idea was further expanded on by Neumann in *Phrygisch und Griechisch* (1988).

- Recently, Bartomeu Obrador-Cursach has once again affirmed this proposal in *On the place of Phrygian among the Indo-European languages* (2019).

- References for preliminary evidence: Obrador-Cursach 2019, Šorgo *fthc.*

- Image taken from Anthony (2007).

# Preliminary evidence for Graeco-Phrygian I.

**Treatment of laryngeals**

- $*\#h_{1/2/3}C > *e/a/oC$;

- $*-Ch_{1/2/3}\# > *-Ce/a/o$;

- $*Ch_{1/2/3}C > *Ce/a/oC$;

- $*Ch_{1/2/3}RV > *CaRV$;

- $*CRh_{1/2/3}C > *CR\bar{e}/\bar{a}/\bar{o}C$.

# Preliminary evidence for Graeco-Phrygian II.

**Proclitic pronominal** *\*e*

- The pronominal proclitic particle *\*e-* can attach itself to the beginning of a pronominal form;
    - Gr. ἐ-κεῖνος 'this one (masc. nom. sg.)', Phr. *e-sai* 'this one (fem. dat. sg.)'.


**Pronoun** *\*auto-*

- This pronoun is composed of the reflex of the adverbial *\*h₂eu-* 'again' and the pronominal stem *\*to-*;
    - Gr. αὐτο- 'he/she/it(self)', Phr. *avto-*, both < PGPh. *\*h₂eu-to-*.


**Masculine** *a*-**stem paradigm**

- The nominative singular case of this paradigm receives the innovative ending *\*-s*;
    - Gr. μέγας 'great, big (nom. sg.)', Phr. *mekas*.


**Agentive suffix** *\*-ē/eu-*

- Secondarily thematised in Phrygian;
    - Gr. ἱππ-εύ-ς 'horse-rider (nom. sg.)', Phr. *akenanog-av-os* '? (nom. sg.)'.

# Preliminary evidence for Graeco-Phrygian III.

**Locatival adverbial desinence \*-$d^h(e)n$**

- In zero-grade in Greek dialects in Phrygian, full grade in Attic;

- Aeolic Gr. πρόσ-θα 'before', Phr. *upso-dan* 'above', both desinences < \*-$d^h n$.

**3sg middle imperative ending \*-$sd^h\bar{o}(d)$**

- Created analogically on the basis of: \*-*te* (2pl active imperative) : \*-$t\bar{o}(d)$ (3sg active imperative) = \*-$sd^h e$ (2pl middle imperative) : X (3sg middle imperative), X = \*-$sd^h\bar{o}(d)$;

- Gr. ἐχέ-σθω 'to hold (3sg mid. pres. imper.)', Phr. εγε-δου.

**The class of \*-$o$-$je/o$- denominal verbs**

- Late denominal present from thematic nouns, contrasted with early denominal presents from thematic nouns with \*-$e$-$je/o$-;

- Gr. κακ-ο-ε/ο- 'to do bad', Phr. *kak-oj-oi* 'to do bad (3sg pres. opt.)'.

# Preliminary evidence for Graeco-Phrygian IV.

**The addition of a suffix \*-*ik*- to the noun \**gʷenh₂* 'woman'**

- Gr. γυναικ- 'woman', Phr. *knayk*-.

**The lexical item \**kako*-**

- Gr. κακο- 'bad', Phr. κακο-.

**The lexical item \**koru̯o-/koru̯ā*-**

- Gr. κορή 'girl', Phr. κοροα-.

**The lexical item \**mōro*-**

- Gr. μῶρος 'stupidity (nom. sg.)', Phr. μουρον 'id. (acc. sg.)'.

**The verbal root \**sleh₂gʷ*-**

- Gr. λαβ-ε/ο- 'to grasp, seize (aorist stem)', Phr. *lak-e*- 'id. (present stem)?'.

# Non-exclusive preliminary evidence I.

**$*s > *h$ / #_V, V_V**

- Also found in Armenian, Albanian, Old Persian, Lycian, etc.;

- trivial development;

- Gr. ἐχ-ε/ο- 'to hold, have', Phr. εγ-ε/ο-, both < $*seg^h\text{-}e/o\text{-}$;

- Gr. θε-ο- 'god', Phr. de-(v)ο-/δε-ο-, both < $*d^hh_1s\text{-}o\text{-}$.


**$*\text{-}m > *\text{-}n$**

- Also found in Armenian, Anatolian, Germanic, etc.;

- trivial development;

- Gr. θετό-ν (acc. sg.), Phr. detu-n (acc. sg.), both < $*d^hh_1to\text{-}m$ (acc. sg.).

# Non-exclusive preliminary evidence II.

**The use of the augment $*h_1e$ in indicative past verbal forms**

- Also found in Armenian and Indo-Iranian;

- Gr. ἔστη 'stood up (3sg aor. act.)', Phr. _estaes_.


**The formation of perfect middle participles with the addition of the suffix descended from $*-mh_1no-$**

- Also found in Tocharian, Indo-Iranian, and in frozen constructions in other languages;

- Gr. κεχαρισμένο-, Phr. _gegaritmeno-_, both ultimately $< *g^he-g^har-it-mh_1no-$.

# Non-exclusive preliminary evidence III.

The use of *ai* < *$h_1eh_2i$*? as a conditional conjunction 'if'.

- Only dialectal in Greek; also found in Messapic;

- Aeolic Gr. αἰ 'if', Phr. ay/αι.

The meaning of *$d^hh_1s$-o-* as 'god'.

- Also in Armenian (*dikʿ*);

- Gr. θεός 'god', Phr. *devo-*/δεο-.

The form of the noun for 'name' derives directly from *$h_3nh_3mn$*.

- Also in Armenian (*anun*);

- Gr. ὄνομα, Phr. *onoman*, both directly < *$h̥_3nh̥_3mn̥$*.

# The disintegration of Proto-Graeco-Phrygian

- **Greek migration**

- The arrival of Proto-Greeks into Greece likely corresponds to the discontinuity between the Early Helladic II and III cultures (~2200 BCE). (Mallory 1989: 66-71; Anthony 2007: 368-369)

- The Greeks must be established in Greece by 1600 BCE by the latest.

- First Linear B documents: 1450 BCE.

- **Phrygians in the southern Balkans**

- The Greek migrations into central/southern Greece mark the split of Proto-Graeco-Phrygian.

- Balkan Proto-Phrygian (*Brygian*) would have likely remained spoken in Mygdonia and Western Thrace.

# Mycenaean loanwords into Phrygian

- Phrygian inscription M-01: (Brixhe-Lejeune 1984: 6-9)

- *ates [...] midai lavagtaei vanaktei edaes* 'Ates [...] for-Midas, *lavagetas* and *vanak*, placed (this monument)'

- The terms *lavagetas* and *vanakt-* are known from Mycenaean: (Ruppenstein 2015: 91ff.)

- cf. Myc. *ra-wa-ke-ta* and *wa-na-ka,* alphabetic Greek: λαγέτας (rare) and ἄναξ.

- Phrygian *lavagetas* and Proto-Greek *\*lāu̯āgetās* **cannot** both regularly derive from Proto-Graeco-Phrygian, since Phrygian /g/ never corresponds to Greek γ /g/. Thus, the Phrygian term must be a borrowing. (*pace* Ruppenstein 2015)

- As a highly specific term for an official appearing alongside another such term, *vanakt-* is likewise likely to have been borrowed.

- Earliest Mycenaean imports into Macedonia date to Late Helladic IIIA2 (~14th century BCE). (Ruppenstein 2015: 96)

- Could the borrowing be post-Mycenaean? Theoretically yes, but would need to be from a Greek dialect that preserves /w/.

# Mycenaean loanwords into Phrygian

- **kuryaneyon**


- Likely a loan of Greek κοιρανέων = *kori̯anei̯ont-. (Lubotsky 1988: 23-24)

- The cluster *-ry-* dates this loan to before the First Compensatory Lengthening.

- The preservation of yod in the sequence *-eyo-* suggests a borrowing from before the Greek loss of *i̯.

  - Otherwise, the speakers of Phrygian would resolve the hiatus *-e.o- of *korjane.ōn by inserting *v (cf. Phr. *devo- < *de.o- < *dʰh₁so-*).

# Phrygians en route to Anatolia

- Three developments possibly arising from areal influence.

- PPh. $*r̥ > ro, or$ / _# (Šorgo *fthc.,* Obrador-Cursach 2020: 69)
  - MPh. μροτις < $*mr̥tis$ 'death(?)'; OPh. *por* 'for' < $*pr̥$ 'for'
  - A similar development is found in Lesbian, but also the Epic dialect of Greek. (van Beek 2013: 323)

- PPh. $*-Vns > -Vjs$ (Obrador-Cursach 2020: 68)
  - OPh. *-ais* '(fem. acc. pl.)' < $*-ans$
  - Also found in Lesbian and Elean, where the Elean development must be an independent innovation. (Parker 2008: 441-442)

- PPh. $*VsR > *V̄R$; $*VRs# > V̄R$ (Šorgo *fthc.*)
  - OPh. ↑ira- 'hand' < $*↑ē_2rā-$ < PPh. $*gesrā-$ < $*g^hesr-;$
  - NPh. πουρ 'for' < OPh. *pōr* < PPh. $*pors$ < $*pr̥s$.
  - Very similar to the First Compensatory Lengthening of Greek (specifically, the Ionic development). (Parker 2008: 450-455)

# Phrygians in Anatolia

- The migration across the Hellespont presumably took place around 1200 BCE, corresponding to the break in continuity between Troy VIIa and VIIb. (Mallory 1989: 33)

- The Phrygians would pass through Bithynia. (Vassileva 1995: 27ff.)

  - Compare also Strabo's account of the Phrygian attack on Troy as narrated to him by Xanthus. (Blažek 2005: 17)

- Between 1200 – 1100 BCE, the site at Gordion undergoes a notable change, though there is no evidence of hostilities. (Berndt-Ersöz 2012: 23-24)

- Adoption of local proper names: *Kubeleya* 'Cybele', *Artimit-* 'Artemis', *Ata(s)* 'PN', *Manes* 'PN', ... (Šorgo *fthc.*)

- The creation of an innovative *e*-stem declension on the basis of local names ending in *-es* (e.g. *Ates*). (Šorgo *fthc.*)

- The final settlement of Phrygians in central Anatolia was certainly complete by the 8th century BCE, as evidenced by their unambiguous presence in Gordion, which would become the capital of the Phrygian kingdom. (Mallory 1989: 30-33)

  - It is possible that the migration of Phrygians into southwestern central Anatolia eventually displaced the local speakers of (pre-)Lycian, as the two languages share a number of late phonetic developments. (Šorgo 2019; similar suggestion in Macqueen 1986: 158)

Anfosso, Milena. 2020. The Phrygians from Βρίγες to Φρύγες: Herodotus 7.73, or the Linguistic Problems of a Migration. In Goldstein et al. (eds.): Proceedings of the 31st Annual UCLA Indo-European COnference. Bremen: Hempen. Pages 17-35.

Anthony, David W. 2007. The Horse, the Wheel, and Language: How Bronze-Age Riders from the Eurasian Steppes Shaped the Modern World. Princeton University Press: Princeton, N.J.

Berndt-Ersöz, Susanne. 2012. The Phrygian Kingdom: Origins, History and Political Development. In T. T. Sivas and H. Sivas (eds.): Phrygians, In the Land of Midas, In the Shadow of Monuments. Tüpras - Yapi Kredi Culture, Arts and Publishing: Istanbul.

Blažek, Václav. 2005. Paleo-Balkanian Language I: Hellenic Languages. In: Studia minora facultatis philosophicae universitatis Brunensis 10. Pages 15-33.

Brixhe, Claude. 1968. Un ouvrage sur la langue phrygienne. Revue de Philologie 42: 306–319.

Brixhe, Claude & Lejeune, Michel. 1984. Corpus des inscriptions paléo-phrygiennes, Volume I. Editions Recherche sur les civilisations.

Kortlandt, Frederik. 2016. Phrygian between Greek and Armenian. *Linguistique Balkanique 55*. Pages 249-255.

Ligorio, Orsat et Lubotsky, Alexander. 2018. Phrygian. In: J. Klein, J. Brian, M. Fritz (eds.): *Handbook of Comparative and Historical Indo-European Linguistics, Volume 3*. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter. Pages 1826–1831.

Lubotsky, Alexander. 1988. Old Phrygian Areyastis-inscription. In: Kadmos 27/1. Pages 9-25.

Macqueen, J. G. 1986. The Hittites and their contemporaries in Asia Minor. Thames and Hudson Inc.: New York.

Universiteit Leiden
The Netherlands

Mallory, J. P. 1989. In Search of the Indo-Europeans, Language, Archaeology and Myth. Thames and Hudson.

Neumann, Günter. 1988. Griechisch und Phrygisch. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Obrador-Cursach, Bartomeu. 2019. On the Place of Phrygian Among the Indo-European Languages. *Journal of Language Relationship (Вопросы языкового родства) 17/3.* Pages 233-245.

Obrador-Cursach, Bartomeu. 2020. The Phrygian Language. Leiden: Brill.

Parker, Holt N. 2008. The Linguistic Case for the Aiolian Migration Reconsidered. In: Hesperia 77. Pages 431-464.

Ruppenstein, Florian. 2015. Did the terms 'wanax' and 'lawagetas' already exist before the emergence of the Mycenaean palatial polities? In: Göttinger Forum für Altertumswissenschaft 18. Pages 91-107.

Šorgo, Aljoša. 2019. Sound Changes from Old Phrygian to New Phrygian in an Areal Context. In: Linguarum Varietas 8. Pages 119-136.

Šorgo, Aljoša. fthc. A Historical Grammar of Phrygian. PhD dissertation.

van Beek, Lucien. 2013. The development of the Proto-Indo-European syllabic liquids in Greek. PhD dissertation.

Vassileva, Maya. 1995. Thracian-Phrygian cultural zone: The Daskyleion evidence. In: Orpheus 5. Pages 27-34.

Available on: www.aljosasorgo.si

Universiteit
Leiden
The Netherlands