LAU-Louis Cardahi Foundation

The invention of the alphabet

Dr. Marc Abou Abdallah

The invention of the alphabet

Introduction

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

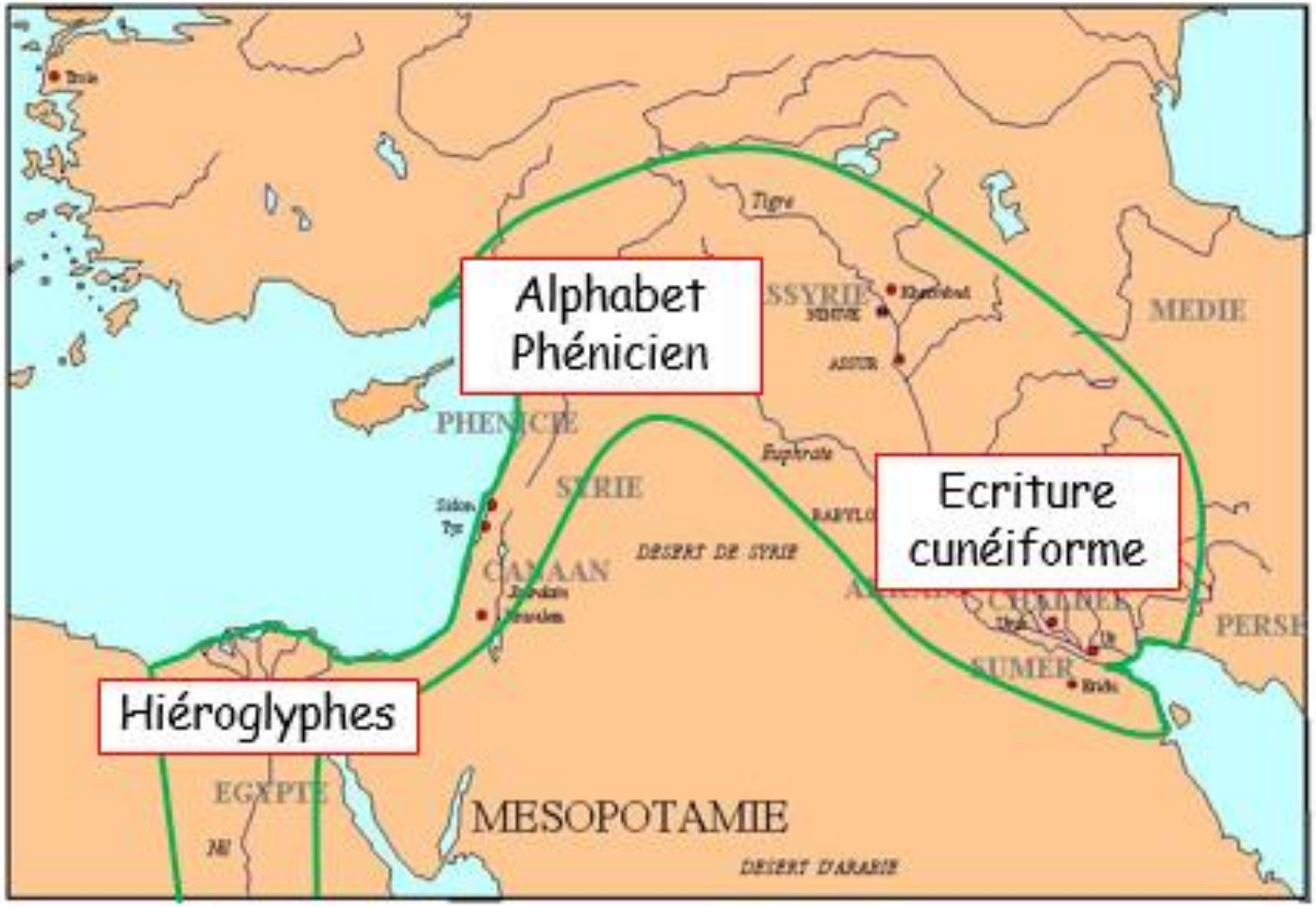
II. The geopolitical context

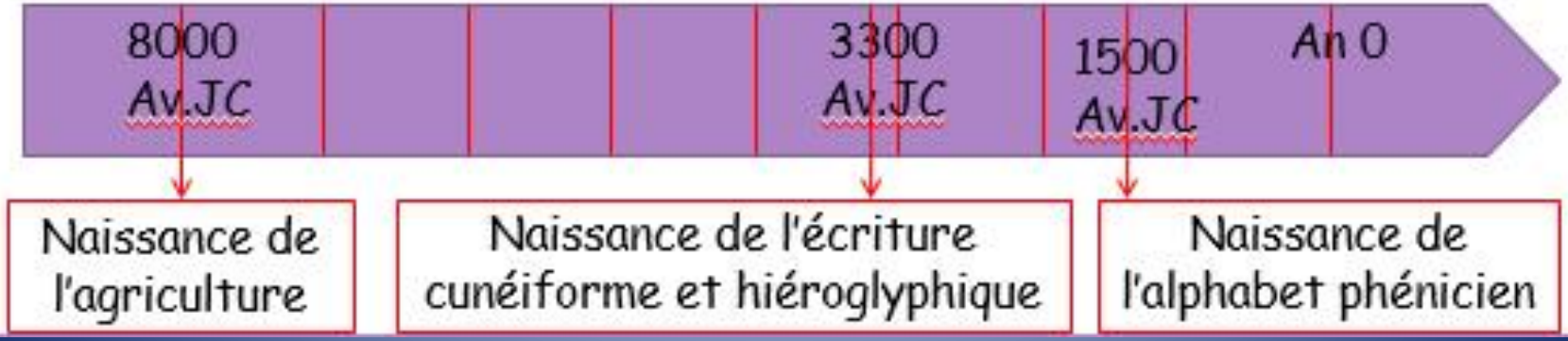
III. The invention of the alphabet

The invention of the alphabet

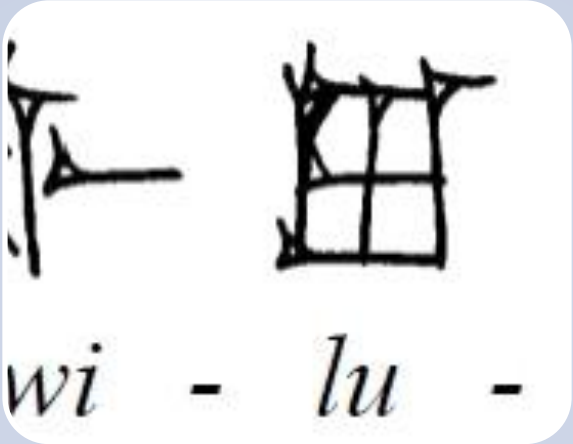
Introduction

Le croissant fertile





Introduction



Possible correspondences between Proto-Sinaitic and Phoenician

eroglyph	Proto-Sinaitic	IPA value	reconstructed name	Phoenician	Paleo-Hebrew	Aramaic	Greek/Itali
		/ʔ/	*ʾalp* "ox"				A AAA
		/b/	bet "house"				B BBB
		/h/	*hll* "jubilation" > *he* "window"				E E E
		/k/	kaf "palm of hand"				K K K K
		/m/	mem "water"				M M M M
		/n/	*naḥš* "snake" > *nun* "fish"				N N N N
		/ʕ/	*ʿen* "eye"				O O O O
		/r/	*roʾš* "head"				P P P P
		/ʃ/	*šimš* "sun" > *šin* "tooth"				Σ Σ Σ Σ
		/t/	*taw* "mark"				T T T T

Egyptian
Louvite
Etc.

Assyrian
Hittite
Elamite
Etc.

Phoenician
Hebrew
Aramean
Greek
Arabic
Etc.

The invention of the alphabet

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

Period	Scripture	Language
IInd millennium	Cuneiform	Akkadian
C 14th – 13th century	Pseudo-hieroglyph	Semitic
11th century	Hieroglyph	Egyptian
Starting from 11th century	Alphabet	Phoenician

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

IInd millennium

- Akkadian was the diplomatic language used throughout the Near East

Tell Amarna letters

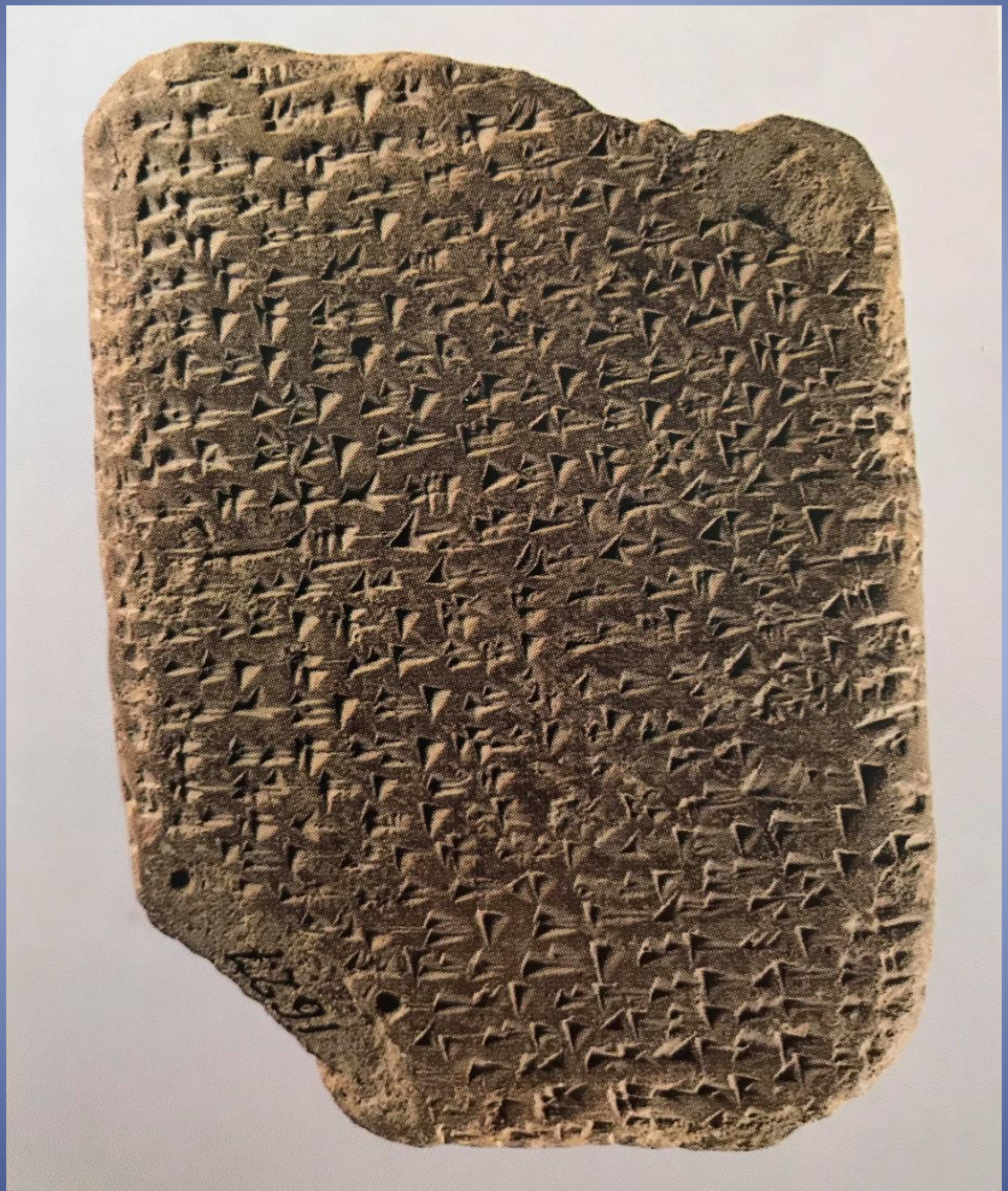
The Ugarit archives

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

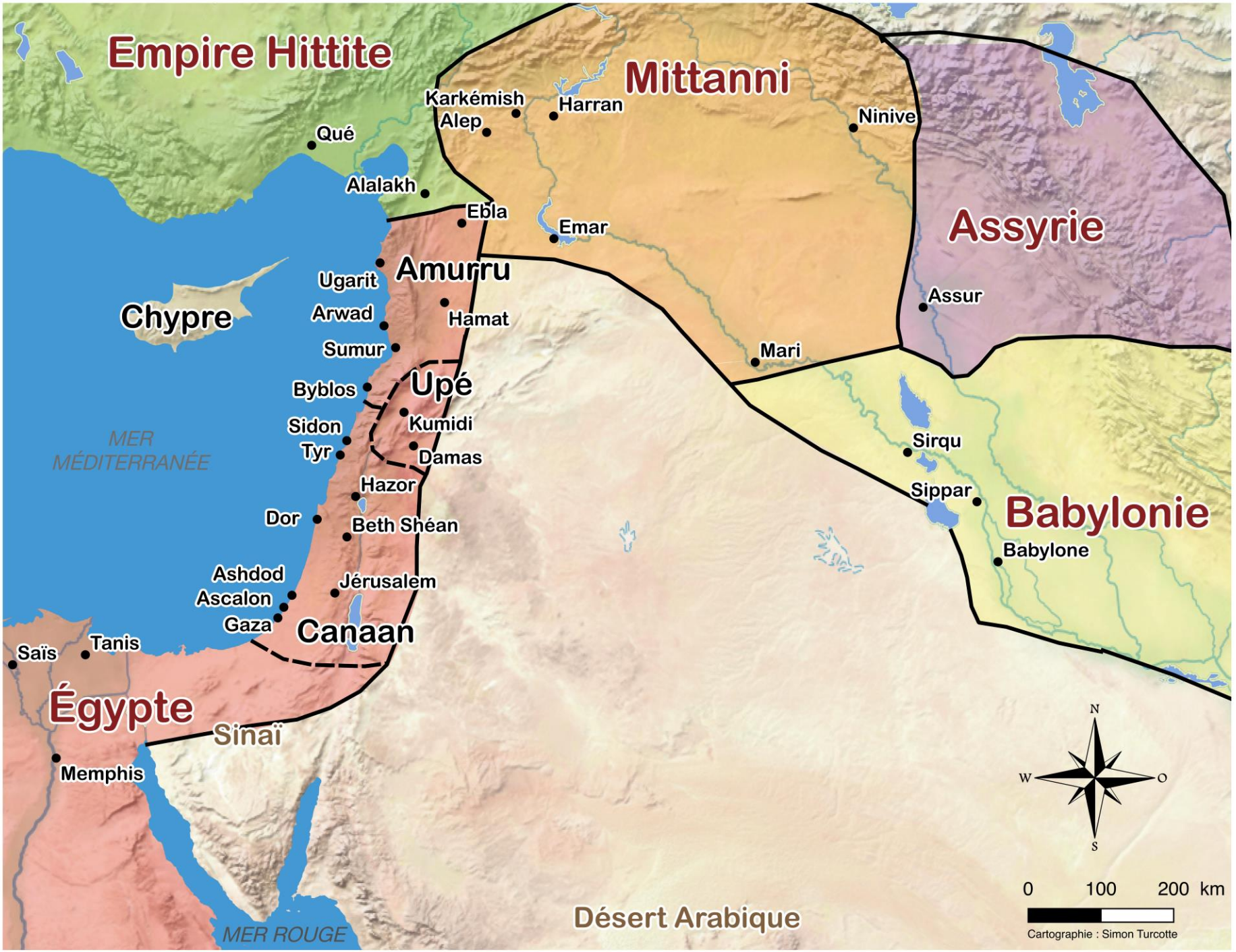
Tell Amarna letters:

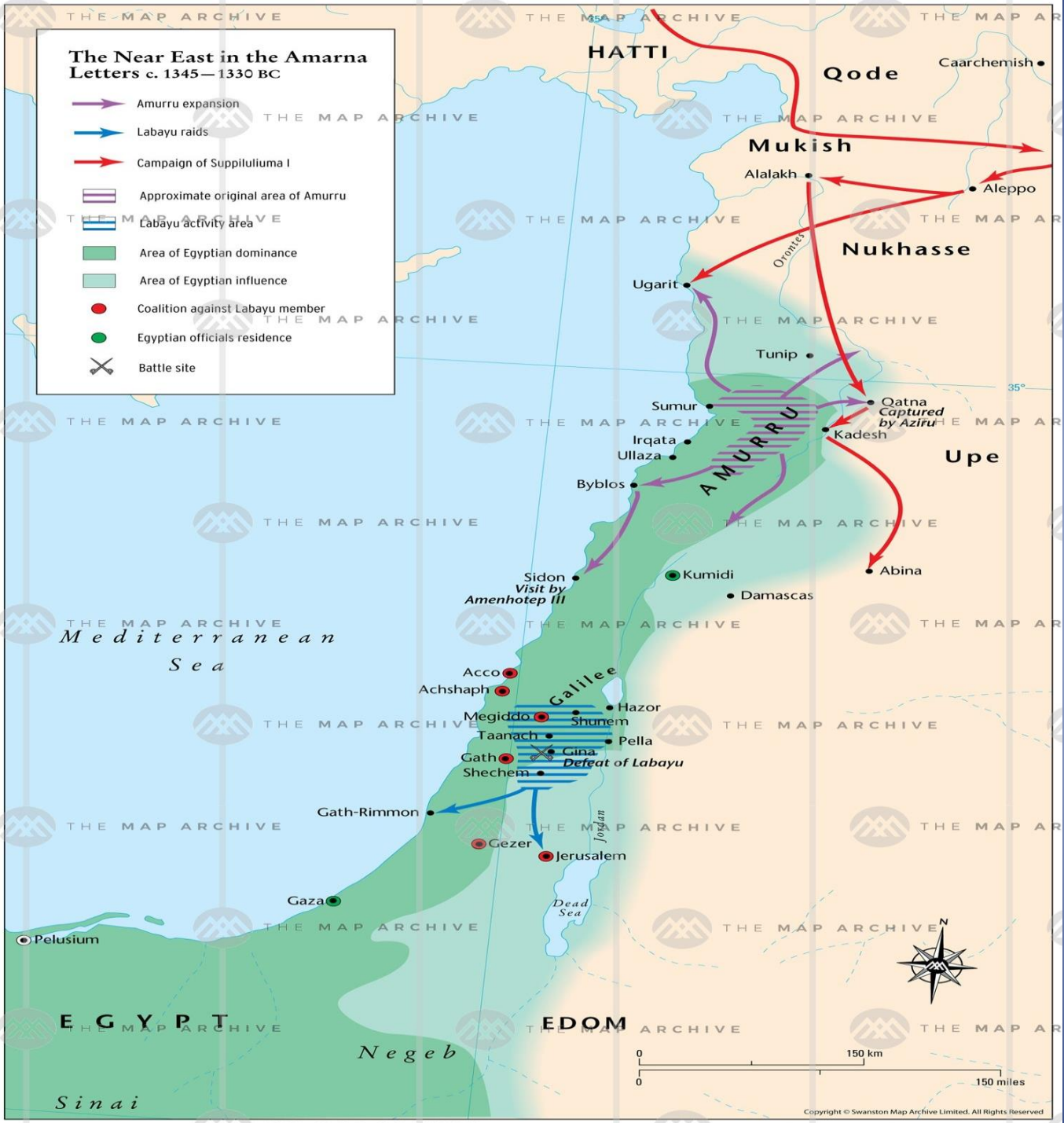
The king of Byblos sent 65 letters to the pharaoh of Egypt

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age



I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age


Empire Hittite
Mittanni
Assyrie
Babylonie
Égypte
Chypre
Amurru
Upé
Canaan
Sinaï
Désert Arabique
MER MÉDITERRANÉE
MER ROUGE
Karkémish
Alep
Harran
Ninive
Qué
Alalakh
Ebla
Emar
Ugarit
Arwad
Hamat
Sumur
Assur
Mari
Byblos
Kumidi
Sidon
Tyr
Damas
Sirqu
Hazor
Sippar
Dor
Beth Shéan
Babylone
Ashdod
Ascalon
Jérusalem
Gaza
Saïs
Tanis
Memphis
N
W
O
S
0
100
200 km
Cartographie : Simon Turcotte

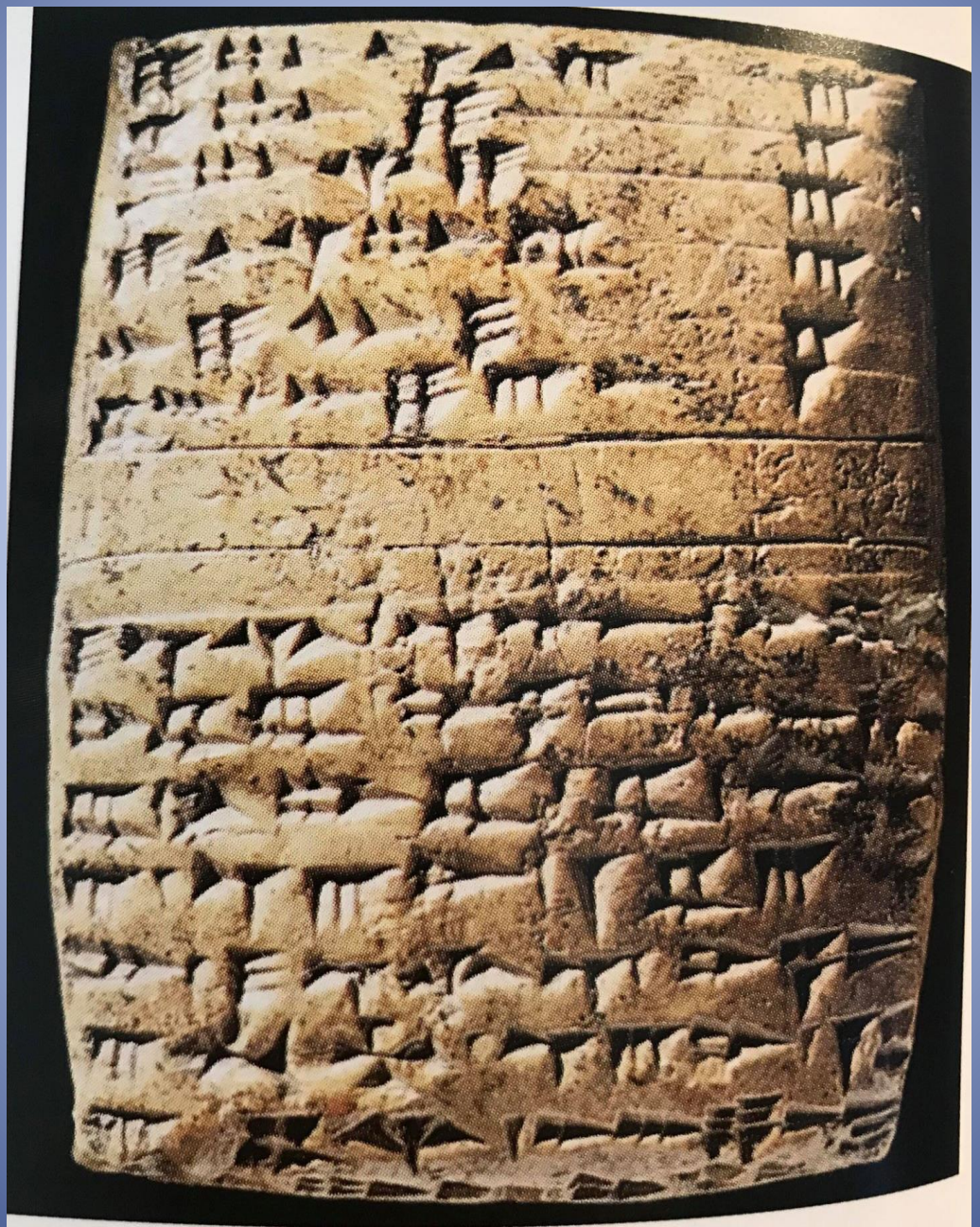

The Near East in the Amarna Letters c. 1345—1330 BC
Amurru expansion
Labayu raids
Campaign of Suppiluliuma I
Approximate original area of Amurru
Labayu activity area
Area of Egyptian dominance
Area of Egyptian influence
Coalition against Labayu member
Egyptian officials residence
Battle site
HATTI
Qode
Caarchemish
Mukish
Alalakh
Aleppo
Nukhasse
Orontes
Ugarit
Tunip
35°
Sumur
Qatna
Captured by Aziru
Kadesh
Irqata
Ullaza
AMURRU
Upe
Byblos
Abina
Sidon
Visit by Amenhotep III
Kumidi
Damascas
Mediterranean Sea
Acco
Achshaph
Galilee
Hazor
Megiddo
Shunem
Taanach
Pella
Gath
Gina
Defeat of Labayu
Shechem
Gath-Rimmon
Jordan
Gezer
Jerusalem
Gaza
Dead Sea
Pelusium
EGYPT
EDOM
Negeb
Sinai
N
0
150 km
0
150 miles
Copyright © Swanston Map Archive Limited. All Rights Reserved

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

The Ugarit archives

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age



I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

This tablet includes the terms of a lease of a boat by the King of Byblos to the king of Ugarit

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

C 14th – 13th century

Pseudo-hieroglyph

Semitic

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

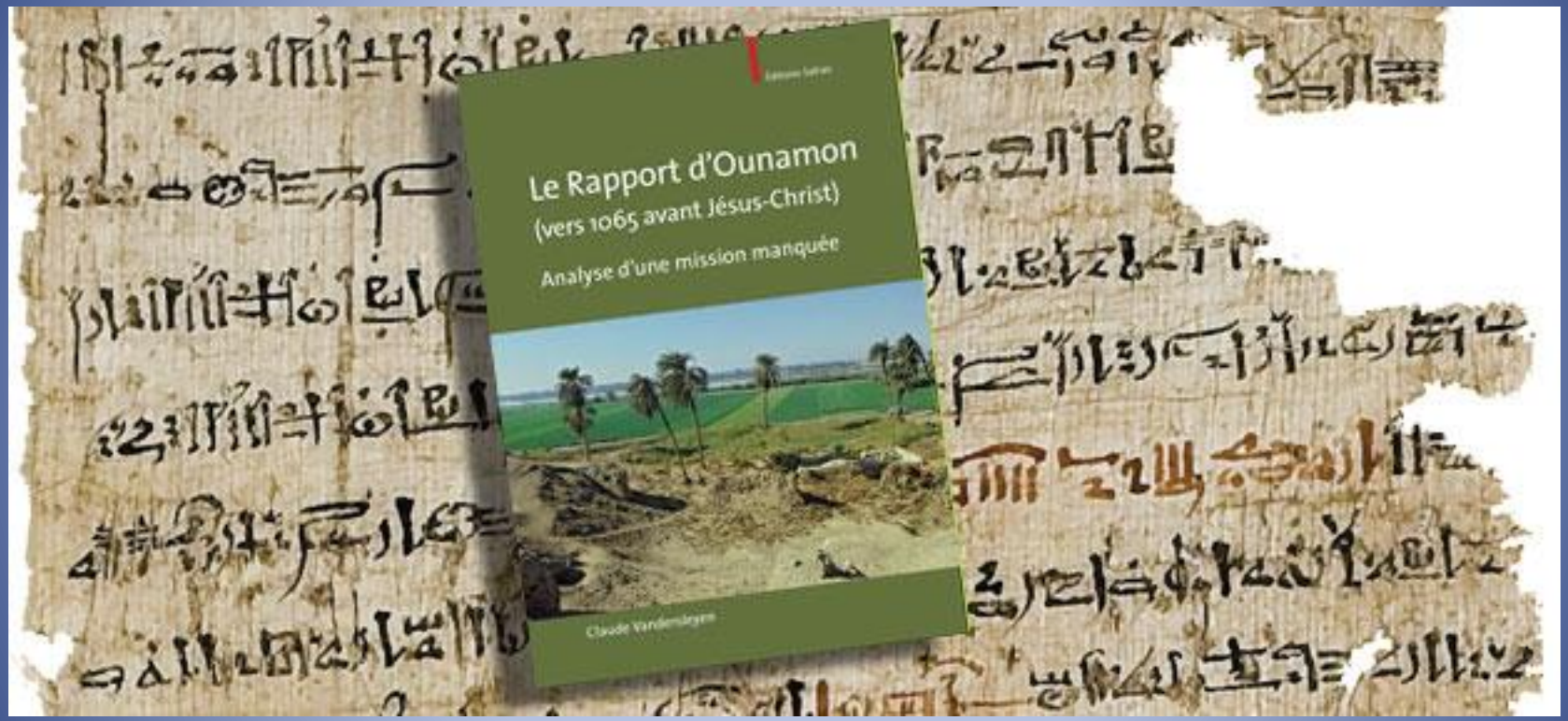
I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

11th century

Hieroglyph

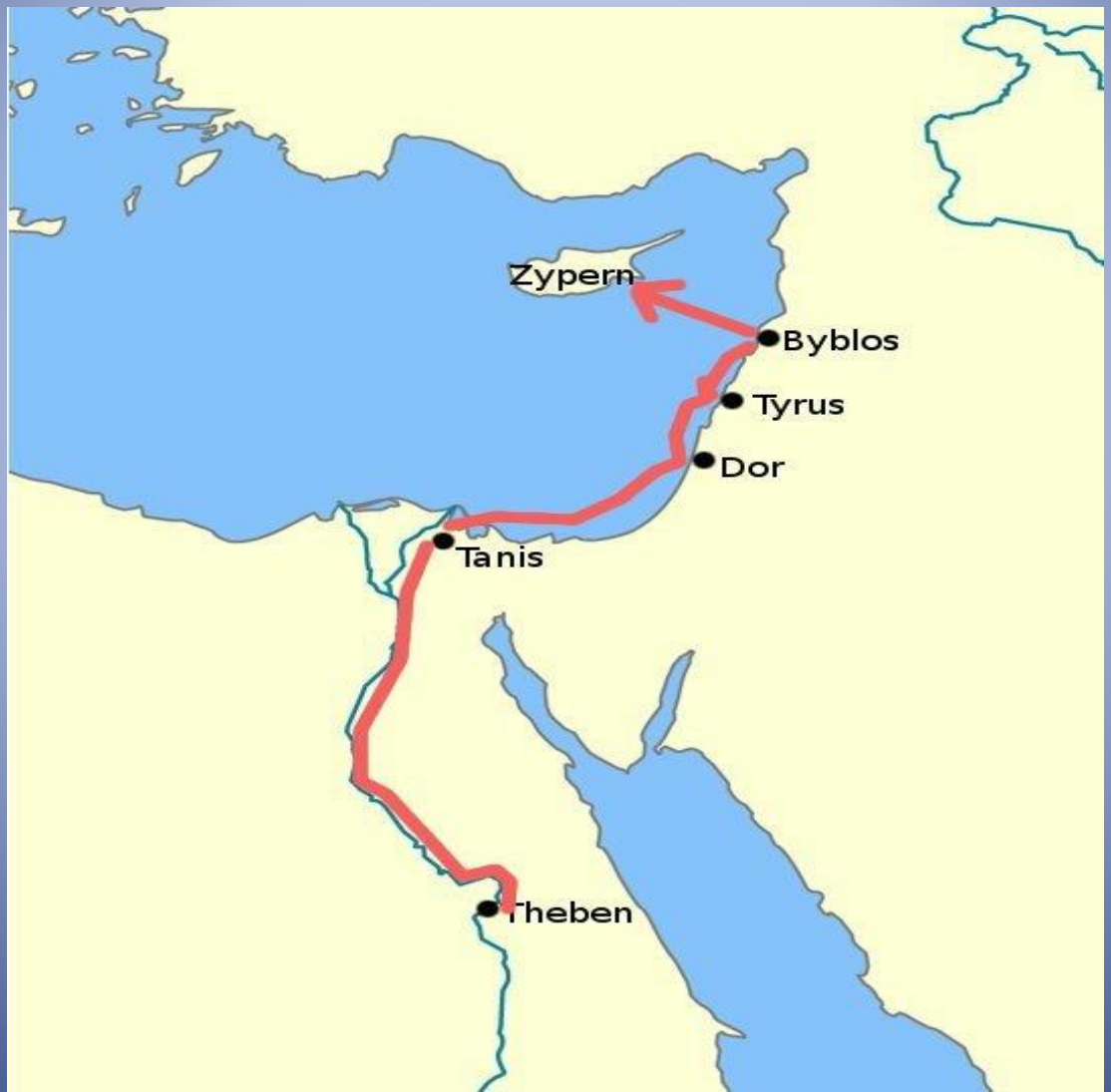
Egyptian

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

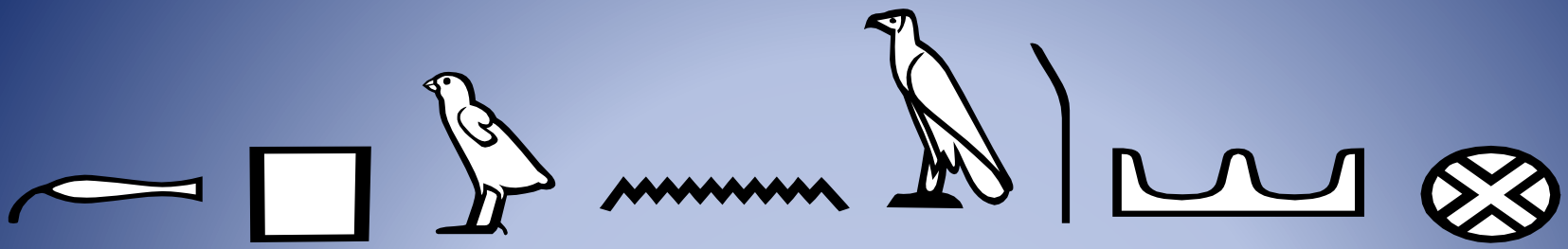


I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

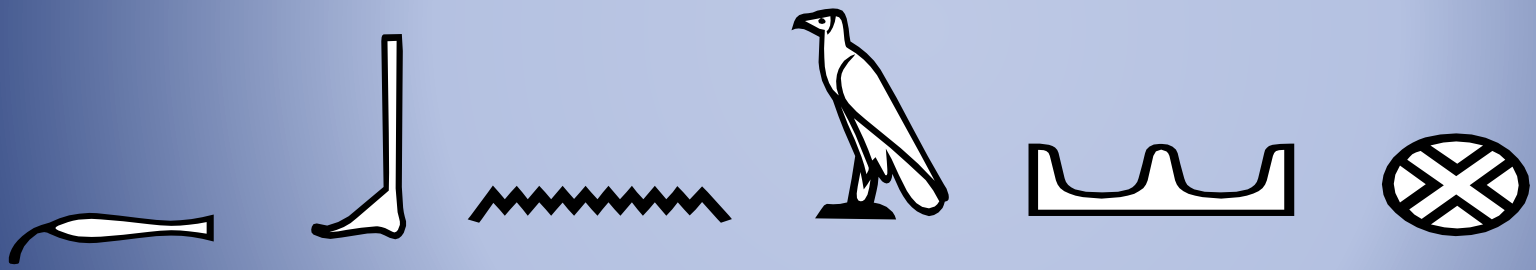
May 25, 1075



I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age

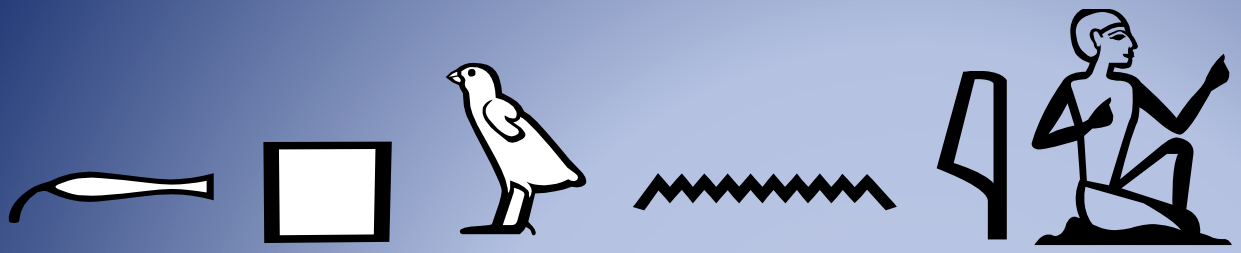


K p–p w–n 3

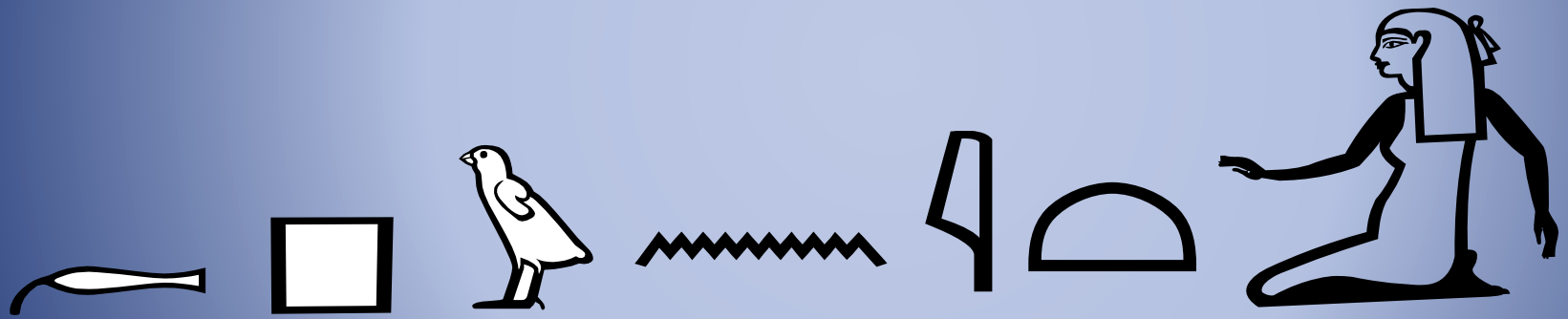


K b–b w –n 3

I. The scripture in Byblos during the Bronze Age



K p–p w–ni



K p–p w–nit

The invention of the alphabet

II. The geopolitical context

II. The geopolitical context

The invasion of the Sea Peoples in 1204

Empire Hittite
Les Peuples de la Mer
Karkémish
Alep
Harran
Ninive
Alalakh
Ebla
Emar
Assyrie
Ugarit
Chypre
Arwad
Hamat
Assur
Sumur
Byblos
Kumidi
Sidon
Damas
MER MÉDITERRANÉE
Tyr
Dan
Sirqu
Hazor
Sippar
Babylonie
Dor
Beth Shéan
Babylone
Ashdod
Jérusalem
Ascalon
Mari
Gaza
Canaan
Pi-Ramsès
Égypte
Désert Arabique
MER ROUGE
N
W
O
S
0 100 200 km
Cartographie : Simon Turcotte

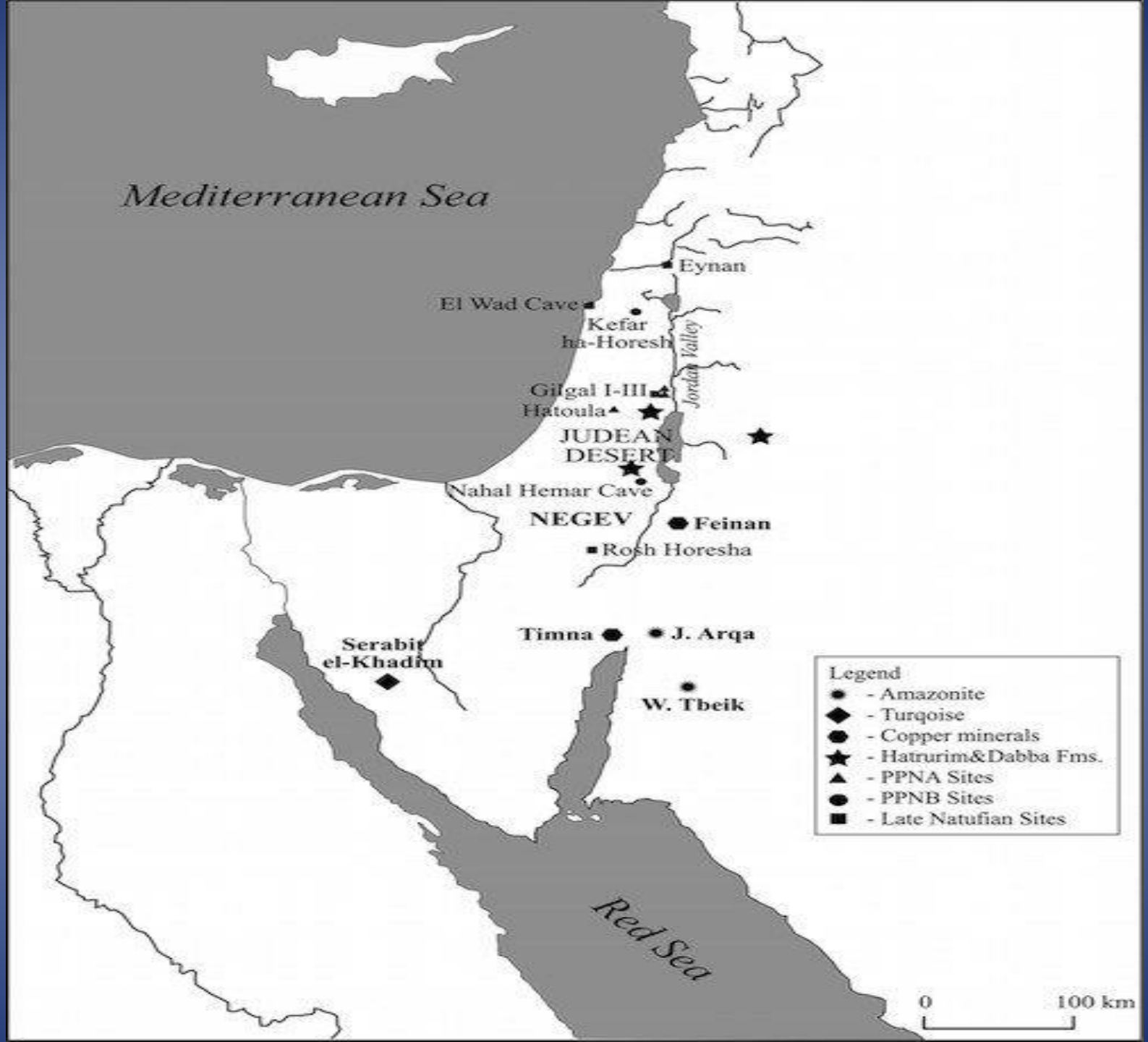
II. The geopolitical context

The invasion of the Sea Peoples of the south of Levant in 1180

Karkémish
Alep
Harran
Qué
Arpad
Arsuz
Ninive
Assyrie
Palistin
Emar
Chypre
Assur
Arwad
Hamat
Sumur
Araméens
Byblos
Kumidi
Sidon
Damas
Tyr
Dan
Sirqu
MER
MÉDITERRANÉE
Acre
Hazor
Sippar
Babylonie
Ammon
Babylone
Ashdod
Jérusalem
Ascalon
Moab
Mari
Gaza
Gath
Tanis
Égypte
Édom
Memphis
MER ROUGE
Désert Arabique
N
W
O
S
0
100
200 km
Cartographie : Simon Turcotte

Karkémish
Harran
Alep
Arpad
Qué
Arsuz
Emar
Palistin
Hamat
Chypre
Arwad
Assyrie
Arqua
Phénicie
Byblos
Araméens
Sidon
Damas
Tyr
MER MÉDITERRANÉE
Acre
Israël
Ammon
Ashdod
Jérusalem
Ascalon
Moab
Gaza
Philistins
Égypte
Sinaï
Édom
Memphis
Arabes
MER ROUGE
Désert Arabique
0
100
200 km
Cartographie : Simon Turcotte

III. The invention of the alphabet


Mediterranean Sea
Eynan
El Wad Cave
Kefar
ha-Horesh
Jordan Valley
Gilgal I-III
Hatoula
JUDEAN
DESERT
Nahal Hemar Cave
NEGEV
Feinan
Rosh Horesha
Timna
J. Arqa
Serabit
el-Khadim
W. Tbeik
Red Sea
Legend
- Amazonite
- Turqoise
- Copper minerals
- Hatrurim&Dabba Fms.
- PPNA Sites
- PPNB Sites
- Late Natufian Sites
0
100 km

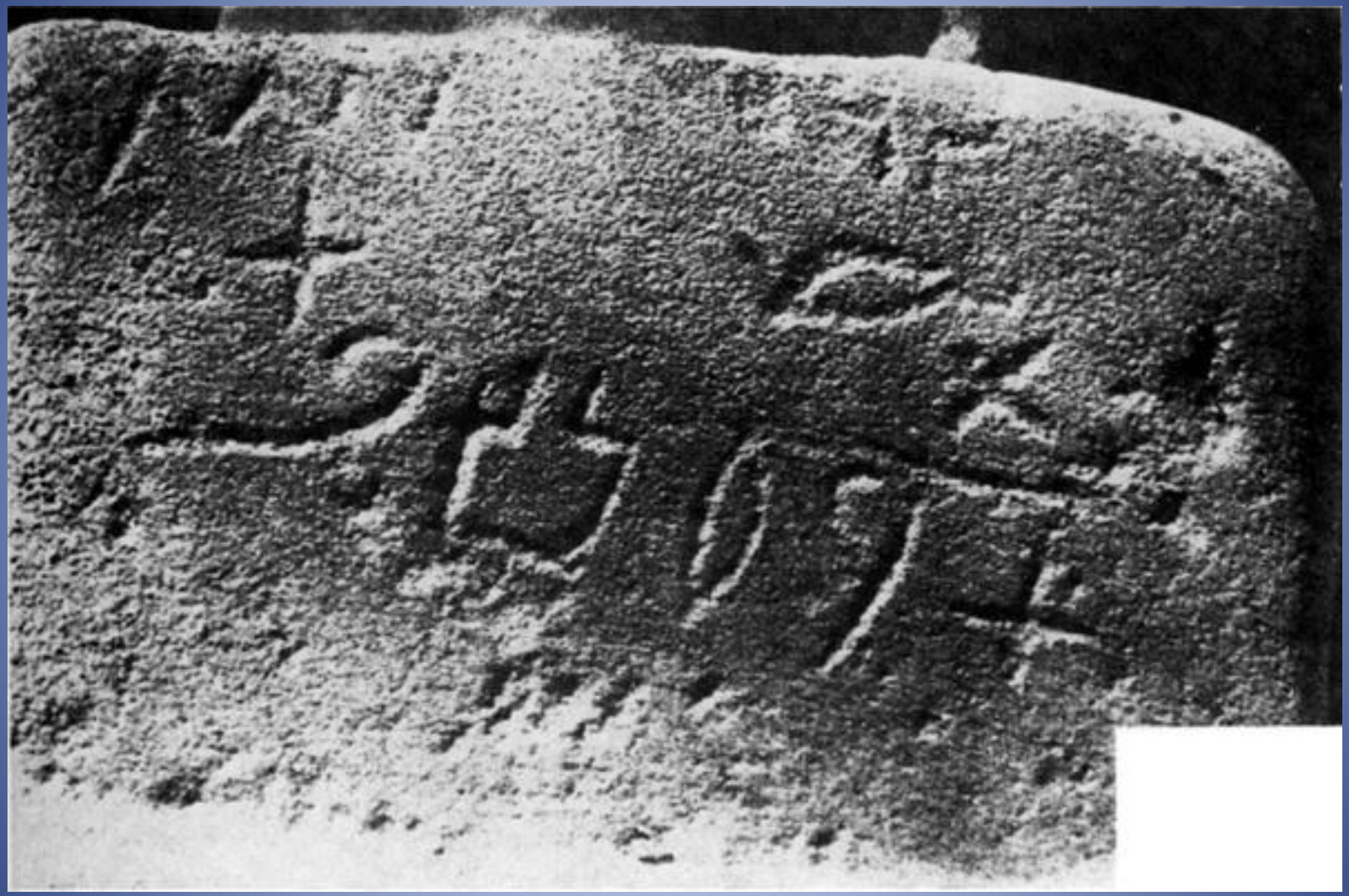
III. The invention of the alphabet

III. The invention of the alphabet

III. The invention of the alphabet

III. The invention of the alphabet

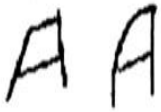
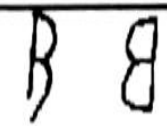
III. The invention of the alphabet



III. The invention of the alphabet

Egyptian	Proto-Semitic ox's head	Phoenician *aleph*	Greek *Alpha*	Etruscan A	Roman/Cyrillic A
			Αα		

III. The invention of the alphabet

Égypte Chypre	Phénicien	Grec	Étrusque	Latin
	Aleph (bœuf)			A
	Beth (maison)			B

III. The invention of the alphabet

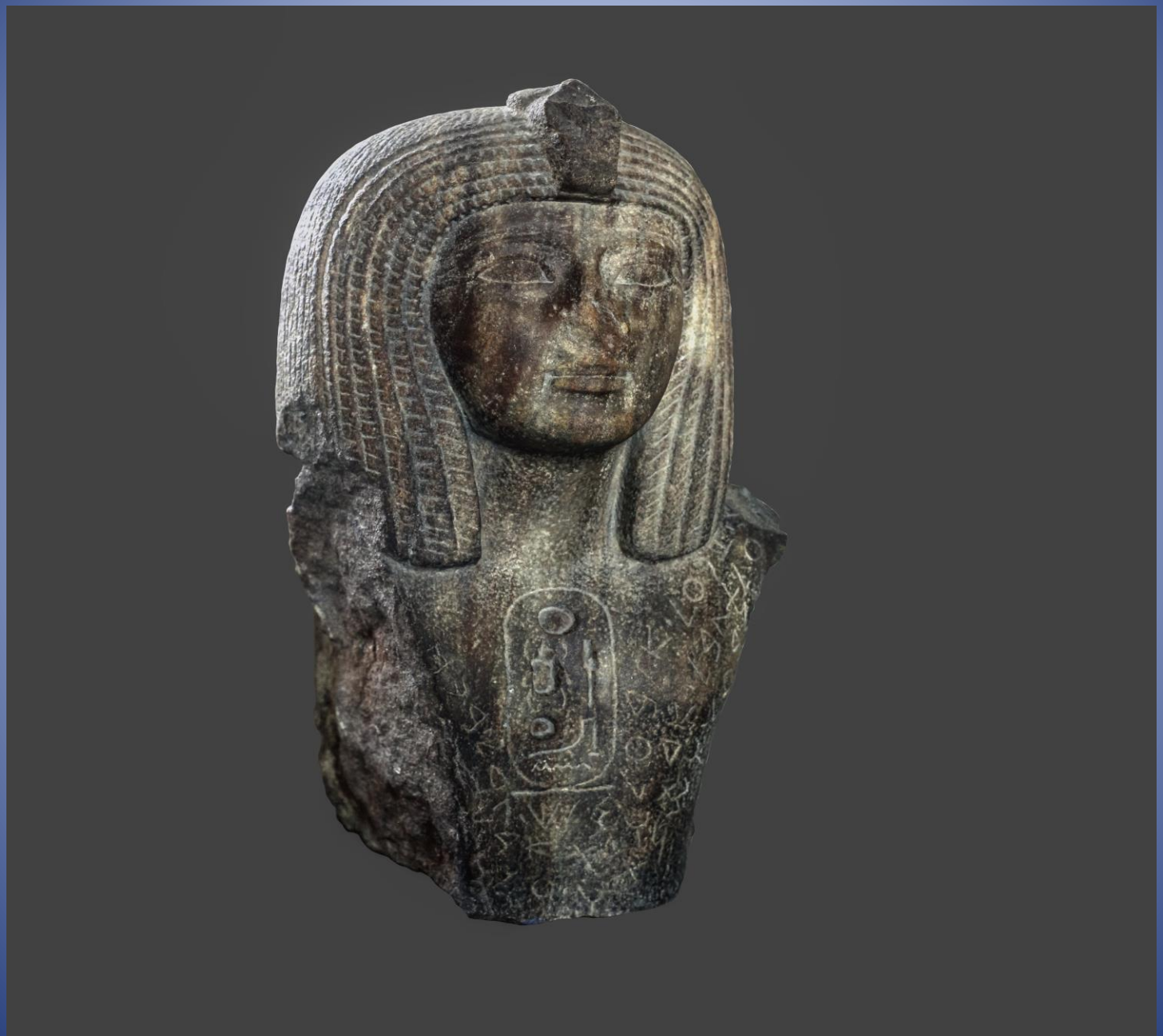
The alphabet scripture in Byblos

III. The invention of the alphabet

III. The invention of the alphabet

fig. 2.

III. The invention of the alphabet

III. The invention of the alphabet

III. The invention of the alphabet