

# The Wanassa and the Damokoro: A New Interpretation of a Linear B Text from Pylos

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**T**HIS PAPER aims to highlight a number of problems involved with current interpretations and identifications of persons in Ta 711, a Linear B tablet from the Mycenaean palace of Pylos, which records a number of objects that were presented on the occasion of the appointment of a *da-mo-ko-ro*. Contrary to current thinking, we argue that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*, the person who appears to have recorded or received the gifts listed in this tablet, was not necessarily a male, and that an argument can be made that this person was attached to the household of the Queen. In addition, we propose that the *da-mo-ko-ro*, the official whose appointment is mentioned in the same text, may be compared to the Hittite <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup> AGRIG, the keeper of royal storerooms.

*o-wi-de pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri o-te wa-na-ka te-ke au-ke-wa da-mo-ko-ro*  
*qe-ra-na wa-na-se-wi-ja qo-u-ka-ra ko-ki-re-ja EWER 1 qe-ra-na*  
*a-mo-te-wi-ja ko-ro-no-we-sa*  
*qe-ra-na wa-na-se-wi-ja ku-na-ja qo-u-ka-ra to-qi-de-we-sa EWER 1*

Thus *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* witnessed (the following) when the wanax appointed *Au-ke-wa* as *da-mo-ko-ro*

1 *qe-ra-na* of the wanasseus(-type?), bull's head design, decorated with sea-shells; *qe-ra-na* with charioteer decoration, with a curved handle

1 *qe-ra-na* of the wanasseus(-type?), a woman's gift, bull's head design, decorated with running spirals.

Thus reads tablet Ta 711 from the palace of Pylos. This text has received considerable scholarly attention, primarily because it represents the sole unambiguous proof for the wanax's

position as head of the state, in the act of appointing an official, rather than (as has been suggested in the past) a figurehead or religious leader. As a result of the focus on the wanax appointing (*te-ke*) Augias (*Au-ke-wa*) as damokoro, other interesting aspects of this unparalleled text have received less attention. In this brief study, we highlight some of Ta 711's peculiarities, and propose that the text may shed an unexpected light on the role of the wanassa and the damokoro in Mycenaean Greece.

In order to do so, it is appropriate to survey the *dramatis personae* of Ta 711. The *wa-na-ka* (wanax) is generally regarded as the head of the Mycenaean state, in this case either the state of Pylos or as a peripatetic King of various Mycenaean palatial realms.<sup>1</sup> In this text, he appoints a new *da-mo-ko-ro*, presumably at Pylos (since the tablet was found in that palace). *Au-ke-wa*, the person appointed, is known from other texts at Pylos. Whilst he clearly was of sufficient importance to leave his trace in the Pylian administration, he does not appear to have been a member of the higher social echelons (in Jo 438 he is taxed only a single gold unit, compared with the four to six units that are demanded from other persons in that list, who thus may be assumed to have been of higher standing, or at least of greater wealth). Nonetheless, his new position as *da-mo-ko-ro* must have been one of considerable importance, not only because he was appointed by the wanax himself, but also in view of the inventory of precious objects involved in the ceremony.

Despite this apparent importance, little can be said with certainty about the precise nature of the *da-mo-ko-ro*. Carlier has suggested that the *da-mo-ko-ro* may have been the “gouverneur de l'une des deux provinces” of the Kingdom of Pylos, although he did not offer evidence to support this idea.<sup>2</sup> Since

<sup>1</sup> Cf. L. Bendall, “Wanax,” *Enc.Anc.Hist.* (2013) 7044–7045; J. M. Kelder, “A Great King at Mycenae. An Argument for the Wanax as Great King and the Lawagetas as Vassal Ruler,” *Palamedes* 3 (2008) 49–74, and “Ahhiyawa and the World of the Great Kings,” *Talanta* 44 (2012) 41–52.

<sup>2</sup> P. Carlier, *Homère* (Paris 1999) 374, and *Le royauté en Grèce avant Alexandre* (Strasbourg 1984) 98.

one would expect a person of significant rank to supervise the various mayors (*ko-re-te-re*) of the Further Province, presumably from the provincial capital of *re-u-ko-to-ro* (Leuktron), and as we do not know of any other title of sufficient rank for such a position, it seems reasonable to accept Carlier's suggestion. However, the title is also attested in the texts from Knossos, despite the fact that there is no evidence for a division of the realm into two or more provinces. *Au-ke-wa*'s new function and indeed his (if we consider Jo 438, seemingly modest) social background may perhaps more plausibly be compared to that of the Hittite <sup>LÚ.MEŠ</sup> AGRIG, the keeper of the royal storerooms.<sup>3</sup> These officials were appointed directly by and directly accountable to the King himself,<sup>4</sup> but did not belong to the upper social strata. They were associated with specific towns within the Hittite Kingdom, where they appear to have been responsible for the supervision of food-storehouses and the distribution of rations, mostly in the context of local religious festivals, but also, on the occasion of the so-called KILAM festival, to (temples in) the Hittite capital Hattusa.<sup>5</sup> Interpreting the function of the *da-mo-ko-ro* along such Hittite lines is tempting, not only because of the similarity in terms of the close relationship to the King, but also because if we see in the *da-mo-ko-ro* a keeper of the royal storeroom, he would nicely supplement the roles of other provincial officials, most notably the *ko-re-te* (whose main function is thought to have been to organize local economic activity for the palaces).<sup>6</sup>

*Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*, the third person in Ta 711, appears to have been responsible for compiling or signing off on an inventory of

<sup>3</sup> N. Postgate, *Bronze Age Bureaucracy* (Cambridge 2013) 412–413, already noted a close parallel between various aspects of Mycenaean administration—especially as documented on the Ma series from Pylos—and contemporary Assyrian and Hittite practices.

<sup>4</sup> T. Bryce, *Life and Society in the Hittite World* (Oxford 2002) 18.

<sup>5</sup> I. Singer, "The AGRIG in the Hittite Texts," *AnatSt* 43 (1984) 105–113.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. D. Nakassis, *The Individual and the Mycenaean State: Agency and Prosopography in the Linear B Texts from Pylos* (diss. Univ. Texas 2006) 75.

precious objects, listed in lines 2 and 3. The name is rare, attested otherwise only on two tablets from Thebes: as the recipient of a quantity of wine (Gp 119) and as an adjective for a quality of wool (Of 27). At both Pylos and Thebes, *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* must have been someone of significant social standing. The fact that this personal name is used as an adjective, mirroring the use of personal names of ‘collectors’ and the titles of the wanax and lawagetas in other texts from Pylos and Knossos<sup>7</sup>—indeed, on Of 27 *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri-ne-ja* is associated with *(a)-ka-i-je-ja*, a feminine adjectival formation from *a-ka-i-jo*, who is one of the ‘collectors’ and also attested on Kn De 1084 as the owner of a large flock of sheep at Knossos—suggests that the name by itself conveyed a clear notion (of quality or status?) to the reader.<sup>8</sup> At Pylos, *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* participated in a ceremony during which the wanax appointed an official, which again suggests an elevated standing and association with the royal court. Although Deger Jalkotzy argued precisely the opposite on the basis of this same text, we fail to see how *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*’s presence at the ceremony surrounding the appointment of *Au-ke-wa* as damokoro would make him/her “leicht als Angehöriger der

<sup>7</sup> Note that E. Kyriakidis argued, persuasively in our view, that the lawagetas at Pylos may have been one the collectors: “‘Collectors’ as Stakeholders in Mycenaean Governance: Property and the Relations between the Ruling Class and the State,” *CCJ* 56 (2010)156–160; see also S. Nikoloudis, *The ra-wa-ke-ta, Ministerial Authority and Mycenaean Cultural Identity* (diss. Univ. Texas 2006) 142.

<sup>8</sup> We should note here that *(a)-ka-i-je-ja* might also be construed as an adjective ‘Achaean’, Greek. Against this notion speaks the absence of digamma, which in Mycenaean times was still present, and is usually thought to have been lost only in the ages following the collapse of the palaces; its ‘ghost’ is still discernible in Homer. We are inclined to follow this line of reasoning, thus rejecting the interpretation *(a)-ka-i-je-ja* → Achaean, but it should be noted that there might be an indication for the (perhaps incidental?) droppint of digamma already in Mycenaean times: see V. Georgiev, “Mycénien et Homérique. Le problème du digamma,” in L. Palmer and J. Chadwick, *Proceedings of the Cambridge Colloquium of Mycenaean Studies* (Cambridge 1966) 104–124.

Beamtenschaft im Palast von Pylos zu identifizieren,”<sup>9</sup> yet distinct from the clearly important *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* in the Theban texts. The event itself, especially because of the personal involvement of the wanax, but also because of the evidently costly objects that were used or presented during the ceremony, presupposes an elevated status of those involved, or (in the case of *Au-ke-wa*) at least of their respective office. This view may find support in Younger’s identification of the first line of Ta 711 as a dactylic hexameter, which may have served to stress the *gravitas* of the occasion—and of those involved.<sup>10</sup> Regardless of whether one is inclined to follow Younger’s suggestion, the fact that it seems reasonable to assume that the person from the Theban texts is the same as the *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* at Pylos.

Who was this *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*? Ventris and Chadwick already suggested that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* was a woman’s name, but this view

<sup>9</sup> S. Deger Jalkotzy, “A-mu-ta-wo, Ku-ru-me-no und Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri: drei ‚mykenische Karrieren’,” in A. Sacconi et al. (eds.), *Colloquium Romanum. Atti del XII Colloquio Internazionale di Micenologia* (Rome 2007) 195. She cites the difference in function/sphere of activity for *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* as an argument to separate the person attested in Ta 711 from the person referred to in the Theban texts. Since *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* in Pylos was clearly involved in activities which required the presence of the wanax (and thus was likely connected to the palace), whereas at Thebes *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* was the recipient of wine, and the name evidently of sufficient status to qualify as a ‘label’ for wool, we fail to see how the clearly elevated status of *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* at both palaces suggests the presence of two distinct persons, each with the same (apparently rare) name.

<sup>10</sup> J. Younger, in S. Morris and R. Laffineur, *EPOS. Reconsidering Greek Epic and Aegean Bronze Age Archaeology* (Liège/Austin 2007) 85. Note that Younger also identifies the heading of PY Un 03, which refers to the initiation(?) of the wanax (again an important event), as a dactylic hexameter. Younger’s suggestion is not without problems, however. Lucien van Beek (pers. comm.) noted that the identification of the first line of Ta 711 as a dactylic hexameter “not only stretches the concept of dactylic hexameter to the utmost (admitting e.g. a general apocope of final vowels, which is not found in Homer), but also allows for linguistic developments otherwise unattested for the Mycenaean period, e.g. neglect of digamma. Finally, it ignores the fact that the Homeric form of Augeias is not a dactyl, but molossus-shaped (three long syllables).”

has been largely abandoned since the discovery of the two Linear B texts in Thebes mentioned above.<sup>11</sup> The occurrence of the adjective *pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri-ne-ja* (on Of 27) and the dative *pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri-ne* (on Gp 119) in the Theban texts indicates that the name had an n-stem, and presumably this has led most scholars to assume that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* was a male name, which could arguably be transliterated as *Phugeg<sup>w</sup>ri(n)s*, ‘he who escapes the heavy’ (spear or stone).<sup>12</sup> Whilst this reconstruction is entirely plausible, it does not prove that the bearer of this name was a man. Indeed, most of the (few) female personal names in Linear B have the suffix *-ja*, but there are exceptions. These include (but are not limited to) *Ka-ra-i* (PY Es 644), *Ke-ki* (PY Jn 692), *Ko-a<sub>2</sub>-ta* (PYPY Jn 706), and *Mu<sup>2</sup>-ti-ri* (PY Ep 02). It is clear that women’s names do not require the suffix *-ja*, and that other suffixes occur too. It is thus quite possible that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* was a woman, in which case we might perhaps think of her name either as a derivative of a similar male name (much like Alexandros/Alexandra)<sup>13</sup> or as translating to something like ‘she who escapes misfortune’.<sup>14</sup> In view of the fact that linguistic considerations appear to be of limited use when establishing the gender of *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*, it seems prudent to further examine the context in which this person appears in Ta 711.

In focusing on context, one is immediately drawn to the adjective *wa-na-se-wi-ja* that accompanies two of the three vessels

<sup>11</sup> See F. Aura Jorro, *Diccionario Micénico II* (Madrid 1993) 177, with references.

<sup>12</sup> J. L. García Ramón, “Mycenaean Onomastics, poetic Phraseology and Indo-European Comparison: The Man's Name pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri,” in K. Yoshida and B. Vine (eds.), *East and West. Papers in Indo-European Studies* (Bremen 2011) 10–23.

<sup>13</sup> Although the fact that there is no *-ja* suffix in *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* would presuppose zero derivation, which may be considered unlikely.

<sup>14</sup> García Ramón, in *East and West* 10–23, already demonstrated that Mycenaean *g<sup>w</sup>ri<sup>n</sup>*, as synonym of βρῖ, βαρύς, ‘heavy’, might be a designation for a myriad of things, including spear, evil, misfortune, or enemy.

(*qe-ra-na*) that are listed in the inventory. The presence of this adjective, which is usually translated as ‘Queenly’ or ‘of the Queen’,<sup>15</sup> in the inventory is remarkable in view of the otherwise overtly masculine setting of the wanax appointing the new damokoro, both male. We are aware of Palmer’s old suggestion that Ta 711 may have been an introduction text to the whole Ta series,<sup>16</sup> and that the three objects listed in this particular text thus may have been only part of a complete inventory (which would include other precious, though not necessarily ‘Queenly’ objects, such as footstools) listed on various (Ta) tablets. Nonetheless, the fact that two of the three objects (Ventris and Chadwick suggested ‘ewers’, but the exact shape and function of the vases is open to debate; see below) listed first in the inventory are specified as *wa-na-se-wi-ja* suggests that the wanassa played an important role in the ceremony surrounding the appointment of *Au-ke-wa*.

The question as to who this wanassa was (and by implication, what the qualification *wa-na-se-wi-ja* means) is difficult to address. It seems likely that ‘wanassa’ was used to designate specific goddesses (whereas other female deities were identified as ‘potnia’). At the same time, it is equally possible that ‘wanassa’ could also have been used to designate a human of godlike status, i.e. the Queen, as is the case with the (male) title *wa-na-ka*/wanax. Strikingly, the word wanassa/\**wa-na-sa* itself is not attested in the extant Linear B texts, but only in derivatives, such as the *wa-na-se-wi-ja* in Ta 711 and *wa-na-se-wi-jo* in Fr 1215, and possibly as *wa-na-so-i* (Fr 1227, 1228, 1222).<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup> But see A. Heubeck, “Zur s- und z-Reihe in Linear B,” *Kadmos* 10 (1971) 117–118, for possible linguistic problems.

<sup>16</sup> Later modified by J. T. Killen, “The Pylos Ta Tablets Revisited,” *BCH* 122 [1998] 421–422, as an inventory for a feast (rather than a funeral).

<sup>17</sup> *wa-na-se-wi-ja/jo* ~ \*wanassewia/-ion: Auro Jorro, *Diccionario Micénico* II 402–403, considers this a derivate from \*wanasseus or \*wanassa and translates it as “(regalo) para o de la reina.” Whilst it is clear that the adjective eventually derives from \*wanassa, the presence of *-wi-* to our mind indicates a direct derivation from \*wanasseus: note that the text reads *wa-na-se-wi-ja*

Unfortunately, the context of wanasseus-related items in the Linear B texts does not provide us with many further insights. Take for example PY Fr 1215, where *wa-na-se-wi-jo* apparently modifies olive oil:

*wa-na-ke-te wa-na-se-wi-jo we-a-re-pe*  
*sa-pe-ra ra*

This text is problematic for a number of reasons,<sup>18</sup> but the gist seems to be that it lists a quantity of (something of) anointment oil, of a wanasseus-‘characteristic/property’, that is to be given to the wanax. The Fr texts were almost exclusively found outside the archive complex, in close association with the store-

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rather than *wa-na-se-ja*. It is not established with certainty that *wa-na-so-i* relates to wanassa: T. G. Palaima, “‘Wanaks’ and Related Power Terms in Mycenaean and Later Greek,” in S. Deger-Jalkotzy and I. S. Lemos (eds.), *Ancient Greece: From the Mycenaean Palaces to the Age of Homer* (Edinburgh 2006) 65, suggested that *wa-na-so-i* can be constructed from the adjective \*wanak(t)-yo- ‘to the servants of the wanax’, similar to Ruijgh’s argument that *wa-na-so-i* must derive from \*wanakya (i.e. without *t*), postulating a phonetic development \*ky > \*ty > tss, and onwards into ss or tt: C. J. Ruijgh, *L’élément achéen dans la langue épique* (Assen 1957) 112. An alternative suggestion of L. Palmer (“The Mycenaean Tablets and Economic History,” *Economic History Review* 11 [1958] 87–96; see also García Ramón, in *East and West* 236) that *wa-na-so-i*, as a dual dative, translates as “to the two Queens” —possibly a reference to the goddesses Demeter and Kore—is now widely accepted, though V. Petrakis (“Localising Pylian Religion: Thoughts on the Geographic References in the Fr Tablets,” *Pasiphae* 4 [2010] 203) argued against this on morphological and contextual grounds. Alternatively, it has been suggested that it may be constructed as *ῥωνασσοῖσι*, “at the Wanassa Festival”: (J. Younger, “Time and Event in Aegean Art. Illustrating a Bronze Age Calendar,” in F. Lang et al. [eds.], *Stephanos Aristeios: Archäologische Forschungen zwischen Nil und Istros. Festschrift für Stefan Hiller* [Vienna 2007] 292), or as a toponym, as a place that will receive a quantity of perfumed oil (Petrakis).

<sup>18</sup> *we-a-re-pe*, alternative spelling *we-ja-re-pe* in PY 1217: an adjective, probably referring to oil used for anointing. *sa-pe-ra* is a hapax, but apparently replaces a designation for a quantity of olive oil; it may be compared to *sa-pi-da* in PY An 656, which is also a hapax and replaces an entry giving the number of men listed in that text.



rooms for olive oil, and it is generally assumed that they were written on the spot, recording the flow of oil out of those rooms. Some of the recipients of oil in the Fr texts are clearly deities (e.g. Poseidon on Fr 1224, or simply *te-o-i*, ‘gods’, on Fr 1226), and it thus is possible, but not necessary, that the wanax in this text is also a deity and not the (human) king. But even if the recipient of wanasseus oil was a deity, there is no overriding reason to assume that the oil itself should have been designated as ‘divine’ or ‘consecrated’; wanasseus could well have identified this particular oil as a gift from the household of the (human) Queen. In Ta 711 there is even less reason to view the wanasseus’ *qe-ra-na* as anything other than a vessel ‘from the household of the Queen’—there is no mention of deities in the Ta series, and consequently, we see no reason to assume a divine wanassa as the owner or donor of the objects listed in the inventory.

In the absence of clear indications that prove or disprove the human nature of the wanassa, it may be good to flag that the Mycenaeans may not have made a distinction between a human and divine wanassa. Indeed, in view of the ambiguous connotation of the title wanax (which appears as we have seen, used in both ‘secular’ and religious contexts), it is likely that the role of the Queen had strong religious overtones. Influence from Minoan Crete, where kingship is thought to have been associated with divinity, may have contributed to a similar concept in Mycenaean Greece, though influence from other contemporary societies, such as Egypt and Hatti, may also have had an impact on Mycenaean concepts of kingship. Especially in royal iconography, starting with the shaft graves but most prominent with palace architecture (such as the Lion Gate), Hittite influence appears to have been strong.<sup>19</sup> It thus

<sup>19</sup> For parallels between the Mycenaean and Hittite world in the construction and use of palatial architecture see U. Thaler, “Ahhiyawa und Hatti: Palatial Perspectives,” in S. Antoniadou and A. Pace (eds.), *Mediterranean Crossroads* (Athens 2007) 291–323. Contacts between Mycenae and Anatolia intensified during the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the use of Hittite tools and

seems reasonable to compare the wanassa to the Hittite *Tawananna*, the Hittite Queen who also served as the Chief Priestess of Hatti (but was, notably, not of divine status herself). The *qe-ra-na wa-na-se-wi-ja* may thus have been a vessel of a specific type that was used by the ‘attendant’ (maybe someone like a majordomo) of the Queen in her capacity as High Priestess, much as the olive oil donated to the wanax in PY Fr 1215 (quoted 579 above) may have been donated by the Queen’s estate.

If this suggestion (and it cannot, with the evidence available at this time, be more than that) is correct, then it seems reasonable to assume that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*, the person who was tasked with reviewing the objects involved in the ceremony surrounding the appointment of the new damokoro, was either the Queen’s representative (the majordomo) or the Queen herself. Given the importance of the ceremony (as demonstrated by the presence of the wanax and the presence of vessels from the Queen’s household in the related inventory), it is not far-fetched to suggest that the Queen—or her representative—may have been present when her husband appointed *Au-ke-wa* as *damo-ko-ro*. That noble women were involved in some aspects of public life, and on occasion appear to have been of considerable standing in the palace hierarchy, is attested in Mycenaean iconography (think, for example, of the famous but heavily reconstructed fresco from Tiryns of two women in a chariot). In the texts, too, there are sporadic references to women in positions of power or importance. This includes the well-known *E-ri-ta*, Eritha, and *Ka-pa-ti-ja*, Karpathia, both priestesses, and apparently of considerable rank in the Kingdom of Pylos.<sup>20</sup> Linear B texts may also show women serving in

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techniques in the creation and repair of the Lion Gate relief at Mycenae during LH IIIB has now been demonstrated by N. Blackwell, “Making the Lion Gate Relief at Mycenae: Tool Marks and Foreign Influence,” *AJA* 118 (2014) 451–488.

<sup>20</sup> B. Olsen, *Women in Mycenaean Greece: The Linear B Tablets from Pylos and Knossos* (New York/London 2014) 140.

the capacity of overseer: *Wo-di-je-ja* in MY V659 might be the name of the overseer, whereas *de-mi-ni-ja* in that same text is now also thought to be a woman's name, which is also attested at Pylos (Vn 851.1).<sup>21</sup> The wide-spread interpretation of *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* as a man thus seems presumptuous, and appears to be based on a hypothetical, masculine reconstruction of the name (whereas the more generic 's/he who escapes misfortune' is equally possible) and the general assumption that women are unlikely to have held significant positions in the Mycenaean palace's social hierarchy.<sup>22</sup> In view of all these uncertainties, it is therefore quite possible that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* was not a man, but instead the name of the Mycenaean Queen (though this must of course remain hypothetical).

What can we now make of Ta 711? It is clear that it is a list of objects, the so-called *qe-ra-na*, which played some part in the ceremony surrounding the appointment of *Au-ke-wa* as the new damokoro, by the wanax. It is also clear that two of the three listed *qe-ra-na* are connected (by proxy: wanasseus) to the household of the wanassa, who in our view most likely was a human Queen—and not a deity. All three *qe-ra-na* are described in considerable detail, although only those with the adjective *wa-na-se-wi-ja* are specified with a number (1) and a logogram. Whilst there is no consensus as to the precise shape of the *qe-ra-*

<sup>21</sup> See Y. Duhoux, "Mycenaean Anthology," in Y. Duhoux and A. Morpurgo Davies, *A Companion to Linear B: Mycenaean Greek Texts and their World I* (Louvain-la-Neuve/Dudley 2008) 289–293, at 293. We thank John Younger for providing us this reference.

<sup>22</sup> See for example Olsen's recent and otherwise excellent book *Women in Mycenaean Greece*, which seems to highlight the underrepresentation of women in the higher echelons of Pylian society, but which ignores or downplays evidence to the contrary—such as references to the clearly important woman *Ke-sa-da-ra*, Kassandra, who is allocated remarkably large quantities of supplies (figs and grain) and who appears to have been a labour supervisor of significant status. In addition, Olsen does not seem to have taken ambiguous names, including *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri*, into account (the name is absent from her inventory of women in the Linear B texts, and does not appear in her discussion of the available evidence).

*na* vessel, most scholars suggest that it was used for pouring. Chadwick and Ventris identified it as “a bronze ewer or ‘oinochoe’ of the type [that] generally show a horizontal ring two-thirds of the way from handle to base, to help in pouring,” whereas Palmer compared it to *πέλανος*, a funerary libation.<sup>23</sup> It is entirely possible that libations were performed in the context of the appointment of a new damokoro, and it has in fact been suggested that several items that are listed in other Ta texts, such as the “stunning axes” in Ta 716, may have been used in the context of accompanying sacrifices.<sup>24</sup> Moreover, the performance of libations in the context of rituals is well attested elsewhere in the eastern Mediterranean, including (perhaps especially) in the Hittite world. It is perhaps no coincidence that the AGRIG, the Hittite keeper of the royal storerooms whom we introduced above as a plausible parallel for the damokoro, is known to have participated in libations when the King approached his respective storeroom.<sup>25</sup>

Whilst much of what we have argued here remains conjecture, we hope that this small contribution may challenge our understanding of the role of women in Mycenaean society, and the way in which we read and establish gender in Linear B texts. We hope to have highlighted some—in our view striking—similarities between the Hittite AGRIG functionary and the Mycenaean damokoro, and have raised the possibility not only that *Pu<sub>2</sub>-ke-qi-ri* was a woman (as had been tentatively proposed by Ventris and Chadwick), but also that she may have been the

<sup>23</sup> J. Chadwick and M. Ventris, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*<sup>2</sup> (Cambridge 1974) 327; L. Palmer, “A Mycenaean Tomb Inventory,” *Minos* 5 (1957) 60.

<sup>24</sup> T. Palaima, “Sacrificial Feasting in the Linear B Documents,” *Hesperia* 73 (2004) 217–246, at 236; S. R. Stocker and J. L. Davis, “Animal Sacrifice, Archives and Feasting at the Palace of Nestor,” *Hesperia* 179–195, at 190.

<sup>25</sup> E.g. texts refer especially to the KILAM festival, and specify that a herald introduced the various assembled AGRIGs to the King with the Hattic name of their respective towns and they paid homage to the King, after which a libation was performed: Singer, *AnatSt* 43 (1984) 107–108.

wanassa herself, participating alongside her husband in the ritual surrounding the appointment of *Au-ke-wa* as damokoro.<sup>26</sup>

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