

PO-RE-NA: A MYCENAEAN REFLEX IN HOMER? AN I-E FIGURE IN MYCENAEAN?

In *Minos* 29-30, 1994-95, Gregory Nagy and Andreas Willi independently address a central interpretive problem of Pylos tablet Tn 316 with cautious ingenuity¹. Relying respectively on Homeric parallels (Nagy) and broader Indo-European ritual and poetic formulaic comparanda (Willi), they argue that the word-unit *po-re-na* in the formula which closes the lexical introduction in each of the four sections of recorded entries (*do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke*²) on the tablet could be interpreted as an athematic infinitive in *-vai*: φορῆναι³. Such an interpretation has consequences not only, as Nagy points out, for the dialectal affinities of Mycenaean Greek, but also for the longstanding debate over how to interpret the 10 ideographic entries of MUL or VIR recorded on the tablet along with 13 golden bowls, goblets or chalices (*213^{VAS}, *215^{VAS} or *216^{VAS})⁴. Willi concludes:

- ¹ G. Nagy, «A Mycenaean Reflex in Homer: ΦΟΡΗΝΑΙ,» *Minos* 29-30, 1994-1995, pp. 171-175; A. Willi, «*do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke*: An Indo-European Figure in Mycenaean?», *Minos* 29-30, 1994-1995, pp. 177-185 (hereafter referred to by authors' names, Nagy and Willi respectively). I use the following standard abbreviations:
DMic: F. Aura Jorro, *Diccionario Micénico* vols. 1 and 2, Madrid 1985 and 1993;
*Docs*²: M. Ventris and J. Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* 2nd ed., Cambridge 1973;
Scribes of Pylos: T. G. Palaima, *The Scribes of Pylos*, Rome 1988.
- ² Tn 316 *recto* .2-.3 and Tn 316 *verso* .2, .5, .8 with variations in the use or non-use of word division and word-dividers, and haplography in v.5.
- ³ Nagy, *op. cit.*, p. 172 and n. 7, attributes this idea to an original tentative suggestion of M. Ventris and J. Chadwick in the first edition of *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, Cambridge 1956, p. 285, which Chadwick abandoned in the second edition in deference to Palmer's view of *po-re-na* as a noun: *Docs*², p. 461: "Ventris and Chadwick had suggested the possibility that φορῆναι is attested in the component *po-re-na-* of the Linear B expression *do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke* in Pylos tablet Tn 316, to be interpreted as *dōrā-k^{we} phērei phorēnaik^{we} ágei*." This would appear to add the authority of Ventris and Chadwick to Nagy's idea by making *po-re-na* = φορῆναι their preferred interpretation in the original reading of the tablet. However, Ventris and Chadwick actually interpret *po-re-na* with a question mark as meaning the 'men and women' who are the object of the verb form *a-ke* and simply suggest the possibility that *po-re-na* might be the infinitival form φορῆναι as an alternative to what they call the logical expectation that *po-re-na* "be an unattested noun meaning something like 'cup-bearer'." Thus the second edition did not abandon an earlier held view, but further clarified and supported the original proposal that *po-re-na* was the animate noun-object of *a-ke* and parallel to *do-ra* the inanimate object of *pe-re*.
- ⁴ For a full discussion of the interpretive history of Tn 316 from the period before the decipherment of Linear B to the present, cf. T. G. Palaima, «Kn02 - Tn 316,» in S. Jalkotzy *et al.* eds., *Floreat Studia Mycenaea. Acts of the 10th International*

It is certainly difficult to reach absolute certainty in these matters. But the fact that the interpretation of *do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke* in the Pylos tablet Tn 316 as a fixed formula of ritual offering is supported by the occurrence of the two roots **bher-* and **ag-* as a semantical unit, even precisely in the religious sphere, and by the structural shape of the expression should at least make us reconsider the tempting and easy identification of the obscure Mycenaean lexical item *po-re-na* as a harmless Greek infinitive.

What follows is in the way of a Mycenological reconsideration of these new arguments for the identification of *po-re-na*⁵.

What we might call the prevailing interpretation⁶ takes *po-re-na* as a noun form and direct object of the verb *a-ke*. If interpreted as from the root **bher-*, it is sensibly reconstructed as an accusative plural of a nominative singular such as **φορήν*. It is then debated whether the human beings thus identified are “sacerdote e sacerdotesse addetti al culto particolare di singole divinità”⁷ who in the ritual procession that lies behind PY Tn 316 ‘bring’ (the verbal root **bher-* in *po-re-na* taken actively) the ritual gold vessels (some of which are clearly heirlooms) from a palatial ‘treasury’ *vel sim.* to the sanctuaries specified on Tn 316 or whether they are human victims ‘being brought’ (the verbal root **bher-* in *po-re-na* taken passively) to sacrifice along with offerings (‘gifts’: *do-ra-qe pe-re*) of precious vessels (listed ideographically). The second interpretation supports the assumption of a dire state of emergency and the view that PY Tn 316 records aspects of an extraordinary ritual designed to avert the disaster that in fact destroyed the Palace of Nestor within days, weeks or months of its being written⁸. The balance and contrast in this administrative formula between inanimate gifts *do-ra* as the direct object of the verb *pe-re* and animate religious functionaries or ‘victims’ *po-re-na* as the direct object of the verb *a-ke* conform to the “classical distinction of sense between the verbs *φέρω* and *ἄγω*.”⁹ The syntax of *Iliad* 23.512-513 is cited as a clear example of this distinction:

δῶκε δ' ἄγειν ἑτάροισι γυνᾶϊκα καὶ τρίποδα φέρειν.

Mycenological Colloquium Held at the University of Salzburg, 30.4-6.5.1995 (forthcoming). On interpretations of *po-re-na* in particular, cf. also Willi, *op. cit.*, pp. 177-179 and nn. 4-13.

⁵ I discussed many of the points in this paper with Gregory Nagy in e-mail exchanges in January and February 1996. It seems worthwhile to comment on them with fuller documentation here.

⁶ It is the preferred interpretation in *DMic*, s.v. where one can find a thorough survey of the history of interpretation of this term.

⁷ A. Sacconi, «La tavoletta di Pilo Tn 316: una registrazione di carattere eccezionale,» *Minos* 20-22, 1987, p. 554.

⁸ Cf. Palaima, *op. cit.* (*supra* n. 4). On the chronology of the tablets from the Archives Complex at Pylos cf. T. G. Palaima, «The Last Days of the Pylos Polity,» in R. Laffineur and W.-D. Niemeier eds., *Politeia: Society and State in the Aegean Bronze Age, Aegaeum* 12, Liège 1995, pp. 623-633, plate LXXIV, and K. Pluta, «A Reconstruction of the Archives Complex at Pylos: A Preliminary Report,» in this volume.

⁹ *Docs*², p. 285.

It is important for me to stress here my impression, derived from close work with the scribal practices involved in the production of Linear B accounting documents and most recently with details of the complex compositional history of Tn 316 (*supra* n. 4), that the use of a standard and repeated succinct formula in Tn 316 is paralleled in other long tablets and series of tablets (series PY En and Ep, the An *o-ka* set, the *o-da-a₂*-formula of the Ma series) and is a characteristic method used adeptly by scribes to communicate efficiently and with space-saving minimalism the information necessary to understand the purpose of the numerical, ideographic and lexical information that they then enter in specific ‘slots’ in the developed formats of their tablets. I shall return to this point at the end of this paper when discussing whether or not, as proposed by Willi, we are dealing with a traditional *religious* formula on Tn 316.

For now we can go further than Willi and declare that absolute certainty in these matters is not merely difficult. Without further textual attestation of the key term **po-re-na* or fuller textual evidence pertaining to similar ritual events, absolute certainty will be impossible. This makes it all the more important to weigh carefully the evidence that does exist in the Linear B tablets.

Both Willi and Nagy accordingly begin with brief discussions of the Linear B evidence for *po-re-na*. Willi argues¹⁰:

J. Chadwick cautiously advocates the idea that *po-re-na* designates “people...committed to divine service by being sacrificed.” This implies an interpretation of *po-re-na* as masculine accusative plural, perhaps of an unattested noun which may be related to the root **bher-* by its original meaning ‘cup-bearer’. The same noun might be seen in *po-re-si* of TH Of 26, as well as in the first element of *po-re-no-tu-tə* in PY Ua 1413 and *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* in PY Un 443. Yet, as long as these parallels are not quite clear either, one may still be tempted by the simple explanation of *po-re-na* as *φορῆναι*, which is now supported by the arguments of Gregory Nagy.

This line of reasoning raises several crucial questions. How *unclear* are the posited Mycenaean parallels for *po-re-na* as a masculine accusative plural of a proposed noun form **φορῆν;* and how unclear do the Mycenaean parallels have to be before one is justified in seeking or preferring an alternative explanation for *po-re-na* in PY Tn 316? How *simple* is the explanation of *po-re-na* as *φορῆναι* on PY Tn 316? Does it offer an interpretation of the repeated formulaic phrase in which it occurs that is syntactically paralleled in other Linear B documents or at least syntactically acceptable and that better suits the context of Tn 316?

Willi simply declares that the Linear B parallels “are not quite clear.” Nagy acknowledges only PY Un 443 and TH Of 26 as comparanda¹¹ and dismisses *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* in PY Un 443 on the grounds that “the element *po-re-no-* may also be unrelated to *po-re-na-*.” Before we turn to TH Of 26 and Nagy’s interpretation of it, let us consider what reasons there are for thinking that the terms on PY Ua 1413 and PY Un 443 are related or unrelated to *po-re-na* on PY

¹⁰ Willi, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-78.

¹¹ Nagy, *op. cit.*, p. 173 n. 10, making no mention of PY Ua 1413.

Tn 316. The near unanimity among scholars that the term *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* on PY Un 443 and the term almost universally restored as *po-re-no-tu-te[-ri-ja]* on PY Ua 1413 are compounds of *po-re-no* and to be reconstructed either as festival names or as terms referring to cultic paraphernalia (respectively *φορενο-θυ(σ)τήρια = ‘sacrifices of victims’ or ‘festival of sacrifice’ or ‘objects pertaining to victims’ *vel sim.* and *φορενο-ζωστήρια = ‘festival of the girding of the victims’ or ‘festival of the clothing of the **po-re-ne*’ or ‘bandlets for the victims’ *vel sim.*)¹² might be attributable to the influence of the noun interpretation of *po-re-na* on PY Tn 316 and thus given less weight as evidence for the identification of *po-re-na*. But the possible ‘circular’ contamination of the lexical items on Un 443 and Ua 1413 as independent evidence is counterbalanced by the length of the two words (each seven phonograms)¹³ and their clearly parallel morphology as compounds (first element *po-re-no* + second element with -τήρια or -τήριον suffixation of a verbal root) which virtually assures that the terms would have been interpreted as they have been without the evidence of *po-re-na* on Tn 316.

More important still is the nature of the texts in which they occur. Tablet Un 443 is attributed to scribal Hand 6 Stylus group 6 which includes two other tablets: Un 6 and Un 853. The writing style, physical characteristics of the tablets proper, and formatting of all three texts provide unmistakable support for their assignment to the same scribe¹⁴. Un 6 and Un 853 both record contributions of mixed items including cloth, wool, oil, wine and animals in quantities that suggest that they were to be used as sacrificial victims for ceremonial commensal banquets as attested clearly on such tablets as PY Un 2 and PY Un 718¹⁵. The *recto* of Un 6 designates *po-se-da[-o-ne]* and the female deity *pe-re-**82 as recipients of carefully numbered animals: BOS^f 1, OVIS^f 1, SUS+KA 1 and SUS^f 2. The *verso* lists quantities of TELA+TE associated with two high-ranking religious officials: the *i-je-re-ja* and the *ka-]ra-wi-po-ro*. Un 853.2-.6 likewise concerns *po-se-da-o-ne*, a similar assortment and similar numbers of animals, and mixed commodities including *146 (cloth), LANA, AREPA (anointing oil), the grain spelt, a large quantity of wine (143 liters), and manufactured cloth.

Un 443 contains a text of a different sort: 4 entries on three lines dealing with LANA, *146, HORD, and GRA, but the LANA entries in line .2 and the second entry in line .3 are similar in quantity to those on Un 6.6 and Un 853.3 (LANA 3 and LANA 5 vs. LANA 5 and LANA 2 M 2 respectively). Moreover, LANA is recorded after *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja*, and wool is a material suitable for the range of

¹² DMic, s.v.

¹³ It is an axiom, albeit not exceptionless, in Mycenaean studies that the longer the lexical unit, the less the chance of a false identification. Short items like *pa-te* and *pa-si* offer greater ambiguities than *a-re-pa-zo-o*, *a-mo-te-jo-na-de*, *a-re-ku-tu-ru-wo-no*, or *e-ne-wo-pe-za*.

¹⁴ *Scribes of Pylos*, pp. 72-73, 235-236.

¹⁵ Cf. J.T. Killen, «Thebes Sealings, Knossos Tablets and Mycenaean State Banquets», *BICS* 39, 1994, pp. 67-84.

standard interpretations of the term *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* as relating ultimately to the activity of binding or girding or wrapping. The following entry on Un 443.3 concerns the individual known as *ka-pa-ti-ja* who figures prominently as *ka-ra-wi-po-ro* in the religious district of *pa-ki-ja-ne* (Eb 338, Ep 704). This provides a further link with Un 6v.2 which explicitly records the *ka-ra-wi-po-ro*. In sum then Un 443 is closely connected by scribal hand and tablet content to texts dealing with offerings to religious deities and officials, one of whom is entered in the short text of Un 443. This makes plausible the interpretation of *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* as a religious term with a first element related to a religious term attested in the most famous of all Mycenaean religious documents PY Tn 316.

The short and fragmentary tablet Ua 1413 can only be attributed to general class of writing style: Ci. It most resembles in its physical features (clay texture, size and textual layout) Mb tablets of scribal Hand 14 (especially Mb 1434) and the Fr tablets of Hand 2 Stylus group 1202¹⁶. Its text reads as follows:

Ua 1413 .a *146 7 *166+WE 1 [
ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro , po-re-no-tu-ṭe[

With the fragmentary tablets of the Mb series, Ua 1413 shares reference to the cloth ideogram *146. With the Fr tablets of Hand 2, Ua 1413 shares reference to the *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro* (Fr 1220 and Fr 1226). The Pylos Fr tablets in general and specifically the Stylus group S1202 are concerned primarily with allocations of processed/perfumed oil to deities and sanctuaries (including some of those which occur on Tn 316¹⁷) and contain explicit references to festivals and to month names (including the month *po-ro-wi-to*¹⁸ which occurs on and dates the activities recorded in Tn 316). The Fr tablets concerning the *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro* list allocations to the *wanaks* and to ‘the gods’ (*te-o-i*). Further linking Ua 1413 with the religious sphere is the fact that the commodity represented by ideogram *166+WE is of rare occurrence in the Linear B tablets. On Ua 1413 it is listed after the cloth indicated by *146. Likewise on line .6 of tablet Un 6, *166+WE is listed immediately after *146, there in a clearly religious context among the commodities and sacrificial animals for a commensal ceremony being registered on lines .6-.8¹⁹. Moreover, a similar ‘commensal banqueting’ tablet Un 47 is

¹⁶ *Scribes of Pylos*, p. 118.

¹⁷ Theonyms and sacred locales which occur on Tn 316 and on Fr tablets by Hand 2 are: *pa-ki-ja-ne* and related forms (Fr 1216, Fr 1224, Fr 1233, Fr 1236), *po-se-da-o-ne* and related forms (Fr 1224; on Tn 316 the sanctuary of Poseidon *po-si-da-i-jo* is recorded) and *po-ti-ni-ja* (Fr 1231, Fr 1235). In addition Fr 1206 and Fr 1236 refer to allocations to specific manifestations of *po-ti-ni-ja*: *po-ti-ni-ja a-si-wi-ja* and *u-po-jo po-ti-ni-ja*.

¹⁸ On Fr 1221 and Fr 1232, neither by Hand 2.

¹⁹ In fact it appears that tablet Ua 1413 was the kind of ‘single entry’ tablet the information from which would have been used to compile the full page-shaped version of all the items assembled for important religious ceremonies (e.g., PY Un 2, Un 47, Un 718 and Un 853: Un 138 represents perhaps an intermediate stage in this recording process). Cf. the relationship among the Eb, En, Eo and Ep texts and the process of compiling the simpler KN Fp tablets into a longer summary such as Fp 1.

devoted entirely to such a ceremony at the site of *ro-u-so* and in connection with the *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro*. The identification of the *po-re-no* element on Ua 1413 with *po-re-na* on Tn 316 and with the *po-re-no* element on Un 443 and the reconstruction of *po-re-no-tu-tē*[as a term morphologically and semantically parallel to *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* on Un 443 then find ample support in tablet contents and contexts, in cross-references with related tablets, and in the palaeographical and administrative classification of the tablets.

With regard to the third comparandum, the form *po-re-si* which occurs on TH Of 26.3, Nagy develops the following argument²⁰:

This form may be unrelated to *po-re-na*. If it were related, however, I would raise the possibility, albeit remote, that it stands for *phórensi*, 3rd pl. of *phórēmi*. Such an interpretation of *po-re-si* in the Theban tablet Of 26 as *phórensi* 'they carry' might help explain the collocation with *do-de*, occurring at lines 2 and 3, which Chadwick²¹, p. 104 (cf. p. 88), interprets as 'to the house of'. There remain major obstacles, though. For one thing the word *po-re-si* occurs immediately before the entry *ku* LANA 1, and we might expect a dative. Chadwick, p. 105, interprets *po-re-si* as a dative plural meaning 'victims'. Still I would point out that the expression *do-de*, which is not dative either, preceded *ku* LANA at both lines 2 and 3.

The Thebes Of series contains 16 tablets dealing with the allocation of LANA or *ku* LANA to individuals or to groups in the dative or to places designated by allatives such as *a-ma-ru-to-de*, *do-de* and *wo-ko-de* (the last two further specified by a preceding name in the genitive case). 12 of these tablets are definitely ascribed to Hand 303 and 3 others are tentatively so ascribed. The mixing of allative or locative forms of place names with anthroponyms, theonyms or occupational designations in the dative is a common feature of such allocation texts, especially those with religious associations where the pinpointing of a particular sanctuary within a locale may easily merge in the mind of the scribe receiving and recording information with the deity worshipped at a particular locale or workers or officials located there. Thus in the PY Fr records of oil allocations to deities and sacred locales we find allative forms for the shipment of oil *pa-ki-ja-na-de* (Fr 1209 [+] 1211, Fr 1217 and Fr 1233), *di-wi-jo-de* (Fr 1230), and *ti-no-de* (Fr 1223) alongside dative recipients such as *po-se-da-o-ne* (Fr 1224), *wa-na-ka-te* (Fr 1220 and Fr 1227), *te-o-i* (Fr 1226) and *po-ti-ni-ja* in various aspects (Fr 1225, 1231 and 1235). The locale can also be indicated indirectly by adjectival forms: *pa-ki-ja-ni-jo-jo me-no* (Fr 1224), *pa-ki-ja-ni-jo-i* (Fr 1216), *pa-ki-ja-ni-jo a-ko-ro* (Fr 1236), *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro* (Fr 1226). See also the variation between locatives like *a-mi-ni-so*, allatives like *di-ka-ta-de* or *a-mi-ni-so-de* and dative recipients with toponymic adjectival modifiers like *di-ka-ta-jo di-we* on the Knossos 'religious' oil allocation tablets

²⁰ Nagy, *op. cit.*, p. 173 n. 10.

²¹ J. Chadwick, *The Thebes Tablets II*, Salamanca 1975.

of the Fp series (e.g., Fp 1 and Fp 7). While each type of expression might have a particular nuance²², there is no cause to find the collocation of an allative and a dative on Of 26.3 anything but standard scribal practice. It is in no need of an exceptional explanation.

In fact, as I mentioned above, the individual entries within a formulaically minimal series of tablets like the TH Of series are like ‘slots’ in an accounting book or nowadays fields in an electronic data base program. The slots here in the Of series are filled, when the forms are unambiguous, by dative plural forms like *ma-ri-ne-we-ja-i* in Of 25.1 and Of 35.2 (recording allocations of LANA and *ku* LANA respectively) or by clear allative forms like *a-ma-ru-to-de* in Of 25.2 and *ra-mo-de* in Of 38.1, *do-de* preceded by unambiguous or likely genitive forms of nouns in Of 26.2 and .3 and Of 33.1²³, and *wo-ko-de* preceded by the ambiguous genitive *po-ti-ni-ja* in Of 36.2. These unambiguous cases indicate that the slots are to be filled by noun forms that specify ‘destination’ or ‘recipient’. This increases the likelihood that ambiguous forms like *a-ra-ka-te-ja* and *a-ke-ti-ra₂* in Of 34.2 and Of 36.2 should be taken as dative singulars.

None of the 30 substantially preserved entries in the Of tablets definitely attributed to Hand 303 can possibly be interpreted as a verbal form other than *po-re-si* on Of 26.3. If *po-re-si* is interpreted as a verbal form, as Nagy suggests, the entry would be without any specification of recipient or destination, i.e., it would lack the crucial economic information contained in and expected from the other 29 entries. Moreover, even if this anomaly were judged tolerable, the verbal form would also lack a subject and so lack even a specification of information about source or contributor for the *ku* LANA entered. As economic documents the Linear B tablets serve to monitor the movement and location of goods and materials and to record the individuals and institutions who are concerned with, responsible for, or benefit from such items. The proposal that *po-re-si* = *phórensi* (3rd pl. of *phórēmi*) ‘they bring’ would yield an entry that is not even remotely satisfactory in this context.

- ²² For example, the genitive temporal phrase *pa-ki-ja-ni-jo-jo me-no* certainly specifies the month in which an allocation was made as well as implying that the shipment to Poseidon on the tablet was to his sanctuary located in the region of *Sphagianes*, while the allative expression *di-ka-ta-de* indicates that the scribe had the destination of the shipment chiefly in mind as contrasted with the phrase *di-ka-ta-jo di-we* which does locate the allocation, but also ‘kills two birds with one stone’ by chiefly specifying the recipient. On the compilation tablet Fp 1, the scribe easily moves from specification of localized recipient (*di-ka-ta-jo di-we* in line .2) to allative form (*da-da-re-jo-de* in line .3) to locative form (*a-mi-ni-so* in line .7) depending on whether he was concentrating upon recipient or locale and influenced no doubt also by the preliminary records or oral information source from which he was working (cf. *a-mi-ni-so-de* on Fp 14.2 and Fp 48.3).
- ²³ *do-de* also occurs in Of 31.1 and .2 on lines the beginnings of which are fragmentary. Nagy’s notion that these particular allative forms on Of 26.2 and .3 might require a verbal form like *phórensi* to explain them does recognize the presence of independent allative forms in other entries in the Thebes Of series, or in other similar series: PY Fr, KN Fp and even the TH Wu sealings (*te-qa-de* on Wu 65 and Wu 96).

Economy of hypothesis would seem to dictate that all four Linear B forms that can be explained as ultimately related to a noun form such as *φορήν should be so explained. Nonetheless given the interesting parallels adduced by Nagy and Willi for Homeric formulae and Indo-European ritual formulae that employ infinitives of purpose, it is worthwhile to consider briefly the case for *po-re-na* = φορήναι on Tn 316. Given the poor documentation for infinitive forms and hence infinitive constructions in Linear B²⁴, we are left to consider the infinitive interpretation of *po-re-na* in Tn 316 on its own merits.

Nagy²⁵ cites *Il.* 23.509-513 as evidence for the use of such infinitives of purpose in Homer and then argues that it is appropriate to interpret the formula of Tn 316 as follows:

do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke = δῶρα τε φέρει φορήναι τε ἄγει

where the δῶρα refers to both the inanimate gold vessels and the animate men and women listed ideographically at the end of each section. The phrase then is translated: “and [person X] bears gifts and takes along [person Y] for bearing [the gifts]...” There might be no difficulty *per se* and in principle in having *do-ra* refer to both animate and inanimate objects and to having it function as a single object for the verbs *a-ke* and *pe-re*. However, the citation by Willi of *Il.* 9.121-130²⁶ as evidence that Homer uses δῶρα to refer to both animate and inanimate objects overlooks the fact that in this passage δῶρα is used when Agamemnon is enumerating the inanimate gifts of tripods, while when later in the passage Agamemnon makes reference to the women he will offer Achilles he uses the verbal form δῶσω and sets off that section by the particle δέ. The complicated phraseology proposed by Nagy and Willi for Tn 316 requires that δῶρα serve as the direct object of *pe-re* and *a-ke* (the gold vessels and the ‘persons Y’ listed ideographically)²⁷ and then be split and serve as both the animate subject of φορήναι (insofar as it refers to the VIR and MUL) and the inanimate object of φορήναι (insofar as it refers to the vessel ideograms *213^{VAS}, *215^{VAS} and *216^{VAS}). I am at a loss to find a parallel for such tortuously complex syntax in the minimalistic Linear B records.

²⁴ A representative sense of this situation can still be derived from a look at the list of Mycenaean verb forms in E. Vilborg, *A Tentative Grammar of Mycenaean Greek*, Göteborg 1960, pp. 103-119, which does not even devote a separate section to the sparsely attested infinitive forms and declares (p. 104): “For the athematic infinitive there is no certain evidence.” This paucity of infinitive forms is confirmed by *Docs*², pp. 88-89, 402-403. It should be noted that Vilborg, p. 113, entertains the idea in *Docs*², p. 285, that *po-re-na* = *phorēnai* an aorist passive infinitive form while remarking that “[t]he form is not certainly verbal.”

²⁵ Nagy, *op. cit.*, pp. 173-175

²⁶ Willi, *op. cit.*, p. 179.

²⁷ The arguments and parallels offered by Willi, *op. cit.*, pp. 181-184, for the use, in ritual contexts, of two semantically cognate verbs φέρειν and ἄγειν in a formulaically pleonastic way with a single object are persuasive.

The purple Homeric passage usually cited to set up the dichotomy between φέρειν taking inanimate objects and ἄγειν animate objects and thus to support the standard interpretation of Tn 316 is used cleverly by Nagy²⁸ to illustrate the use of the infinitive of purpose in Homer and the collocation of the verbal ideas of giving, leading and carrying.

δῶκε δ' ἄγειν ἑτάροισιν ὑπερθύμοισι γυναῖκα
καὶ τρίποδ' ὠτώωντα φέρειν· ὃ δ' ἔλυεν ὑφ' ἵππους.

(Il. 23.512-513)

Nagy compares the underlined elements to *do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke*. What this passage exemplifies also is the use in Homer of explicit objects for each of the infinitives of purpose, i.e., γυναῖκα for ἄγειν and τρίποδ' for φέρειν. If we admit that it is too tortuous to have *do-ra* as the object of both *pe-re* and *a-ke*, then the alternative is to have the object of *a-ke* be unexpressed. While Linear B does permit lexically objectless verbal phrases, e.g., *o-u-di-do-si* in the Ma series and *do-se* in Un 718, in these instances the items listed ideographically on the tablets must be at least loosely in the scribes' minds as objects of the verbs. However, in such cases a single verb and a concrete and unified set of ideograms are in use, not the kind of complicated sequence of verbal forms and differentiated ideograms we have in Tn 316.

From a Mycenological standpoint then the Linear B evidence still supports the interpretation of *po-re-na* as an accusative plural of a nominative singular such as *φορήν. In closing, I wish to return to an important underlying assumption of Nagy and Willi in approaching the problem of the formula of Tn 316, namely that scribal diction and phrasing might be influenced on occasion by the nature of the subject matter with which scribes are dealing. Pinacologically it is certainly demonstrable that scribes will put extra care and elegance into their textual presentation and writing styles if the nature of a particular document or of a particular category of information within a set of documents seems especially important²⁹. As I have discussed elsewhere (*supra* n. 4) notions that the appearance of a tablet should match its importance play an important role in the history of interpretation of Tn 316 as a source document for reconstructing events at the end of the palatial period in Mycenaean Messenia. The insistence of the major scribes (Hands 1, 41 and 43) of the Pylos Ea, Eb, En, Eo and Ep series to adhere tablet by tablet and line by line to a full presentation of the complex formulae for terms of landholding, when a more streamlined version of presentation by heading and listing of groups of individuals of related status and their quantities could have been devised, must, I think, be connected with the quasi-legalistic nature of this information, which shows through clearly in the anomalies about the status of landholding and the fulfillment of obligations attached thereto recorded for the priestess *e-ri-ta* and the key-bearer *ka-pa-ti-ja*

²⁸ Nagy, *op. cit.*, p. 173.

²⁹ Cf. discussion of the work of Hand 2 (Ma and Ta series) and Hand 43 (Ea series) and the general discussion in *Scribes of Pylos*, pp. 21-27.

on PY Ep 704.5-.8. That technical vocabulary and phrasing patterns from the spheres of the diplomatics of gift exchange or of prayer and offering rituals should influence the diction and syntax of scribes who are recording the economic aspects of transactions in these spheres is in my opinion *a priori* probable. I do not believe that the Mycenaean textual evidence supports such a view of the formula on Tn 316. However, my discussion here of the intricate Mycenological evidence relating to the term *po-re-na* should not be misinterpreted as a dismissal of the interesting and useful methods used by Gregory Nagy and Andreas Willi to illuminate this phenomenon.

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