

*65 = *FAR?* or *ju?* and other interpretative conundra in the new Thebes tablets

The new Thebes tablets present many challenges to interpretation. Some of these challenges are of the sort that we normally encounter when we attempt to interpret Linear B tablets. We are limited by: (1) the ambiguities inherent in the way we have to transliterate and then translate the Linear B texts; (2) our incomplete understanding of the record-keeping contexts and the specific purposes the tablet-writers had for producing these records; (3) the system-internal, self-mnemonic brevity of the information deemed necessary by the tablet-writers; and (4) our incomplete knowledge of the bureaucratic *lexica* for the individual spheres of the Mycenaean economy that were subject to record-keeping oversight. None of this is new.

A further and original problem is what I will call interpretive noise. Given the choice by the editors of the new Thebes tablets to put forward particular theories of interpretation in advance of a full, sound publication of the basic texts,¹ and to do so while providing only a small part of the relevant *data* and while citing and engaging very little of the prior scholarship on specific topics, we now have to clear a path through an accumulation of ideas before being able to judge the *data* without distorting presuppositions.

I have dealt with these matters at greater length than is appropriate here in three publications and a so-far unpublished paper.² Some of the problems still persist even after the official publication of the tablets has appeared. *TOP* did not go through a normal process of 'peer review' within an established monograph series. Consequently it has a number of serious editorial flaws, including, for example, whole signs accidentally omitted from the palaeographical tables, as well as deficiencies in bibliographical citation and scholarly interpretation, that would have been corrected, or at least improved, if the editors had solicited feedback from a wider range of scholars, either informally (according to the principle that had prevailed in Mycenology from the time of Michael Ventris) or through formal editorial review.

The topics I address here are just a few of many we could have addressed to illustrate these opening comments. What is important now, I believe, is that we move forward without preconceptions about the meaning or nature of these documents. That is, I believe we must reject many of the interpretations put forward in *TOP* and start at ground-zero.

I also present many of these observations in the spirit of Gif. I have not reached definitive solutions about the questions raised by my remarks. Anyone who has worked with the Linear B tablets for a suitable length of time knows that this would be naive and foolish. Rather I hope to take advantage of the opportunity afforded by this excellently conceived meeting to ask that Mycenological experts seriously examine the evidence for *ma-ka* = Mâ Γâ and other such interpretations advanced in *TOP* that are dependent on the initial identification of *ma-ka* = Mâ Γâ.

I shall eventually here deal with the problem of how to evaluate and transcribe sign *65 in the Thebes tablets. Since it occurs frequently in the **Fq** series, I shall begin with some observations on the **Fq** set.

¹ In the manner of *TT* I and II, or *MT* I, II, and III, or the yearly publications of Pylos tablets in *AJA* in the 1950's.

² See my reviews of *TOP* = V. L. Aravantinos, L. Godart and A. Sacconi eds., *Les Tablettes en linéaire B de la Odos Pelopidou, Édition et Commentaire (Thèbes Fouilles de la Cadmée)* (Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, Pisa and Rome 2001) in *AJA* 107 (2003), pp. 113–115, and *Minos* 35–36 (2000–2001 [2002]), pp. 475–486. See also my "Reviewing the New Linear B tablets from Thebes," *Kadmos* 42:1 (2003), pp. 31–38. In addition a translation with notes of Thebes tablet **Fq 254** appears in my paper "The Significance of the Discovery of Linear B at Thebes: The Pioneering Years," 100 years of Archaeology at Thebes: The Pioneers and Their Successors, Archaeological Museum of Thebes, November 16–17, 2002.

Given the controversial nature of the equation $ma-ka = M\hat{a} \Gamma\hat{a}$ and of all the proposed ‘religious’ interpretations in *TOP* dependent on this equation (*si-to, a-ko-ro-da-mo / a-ko-da-mo, to-pa-po-ro-i, o-po-re-i, ka-ne-jo, ko-wa, a-pu-wa, ku-su-to-ro-qa, a-ke-ne-u-si, de-ko-no*), it seems a good idea to attempt a reading of this series without the presupposition of $ma-ka = M\hat{a} \Gamma\hat{a}$. What I have done with students in my graduate seminar at UT Austin is to read the texts as a proof-reader would in order to prevent errors arising from assumptions about the identification of individual lexical items or about the overall purpose of the texts at hand. Proof-readers read texts backwards so that they will not be fooled by any contextual assumptions.

We worked from the smallest fragments up to the fullest texts and eventually even interpreted the fullest texts—I use here **Fq 254[+]255** as the prime example—in reverse. As an added, and I think reasonable, principle of interpretation we everywhere preferred interpretations that did the least violence to what was known about the etymology of individual lexical items and about the function of Mycenaean lexical items or elements of the lexical items within the overall Mycenaean corpus and within the context of fifty years of scholarship on the Linear B writing system, Mycenaean language, and Mycenaean culture. Our method of interpretation then can be summed up in a simple phrase: “avoid the sensational and unusual and prefer the simple and usual.”

On this basis, there would seem to be very good grounds to reject, or at least seriously question, the interpretations put forward in *TOP* of the following lexical items:

1. *si-to* = Σιτώ (TOP, p.167) where plain *σῖτος* will do.
2. *a-ko-ro-da-mo* / *a-ko-da-mo* = a compound of *ἄγορος* and *δῆμος* meaning the assembler of the people in a mystic *ἀγυρμός* (TOP, pp. 170–171). This requires interpreting *da-mo* as ‘people’ a meaning that, as Lejeune long ago showed, it has not yet acquired in Mycenaean, and it also requires interpreting the first element of the compound in a way that is linguistically unacceptable.³ The late C. J. Ruijgh suggested to me (*per litteras*) *Argodamos* / *Argrodamos*.⁴
3. *to-pa-po-ro-i* as a compound (TOP, p. 172) with first element identified through the Hesychian gloss *στροπά ἀστραπή*. *Πάφιοι* as “les porteurs de lumière” = *δαδοῦχοι* in a kind of Eleusinian mystery. This requires an unparalleled metaphorical interpretation of *to-pa-*. Instead *to-pa-po-ro-i* is readily explicated by reference to tablet PY Ub 1318 (Documents², 491, 587: ‘a large basket or hamper’) as ‘bearers of *to-pa*’ whether animal or human (cf. the preceding line entry in PY Ub 1318: *ka-ne-ja wo-ro-ma-ta* with its clear reference to some form of containers made of reed (*ka-ne-ja*) work—on Theban *ka-ne-jo* cf. §5 below).
4. *o-po-re-i* as a reference to Zeus. The editors interpret the Mycenaean term as an epithet of Zeus (TOP, p. 191) and relate it to a *hapax* epithet of Zeus in a historical Boeotian inscription from Akraiphia. The Akraiphia inscription reads ΤΟΙΔΙΤΟΠΟΡΕΙ, and it is

³ First, a compound name with such a meaning as ‘le fonctionnaire [ayant] l’obligation de «rassembler le peuple»’ would have to have *e*-grade of the verbal root and an *-e*-bridge vowel, i.e., *a-ke-re-da-mo* (cf. *e-ke-da-mo* as cited in *TOP*, p. 170). Second, as M. Lejeune long ago demonstrated, “Le damos dans la société mycénienne,” *Mémoires III* (Rome 1972) (also cited in *TOP*, p. 170 n. 19), *da-mo* in the Mycenaean texts makes specific reference to parcelled and distributed land and then narrowly to the collective body of representatives (*ko-to-no-o-ko*) who handle matters dealing with local land. It does not have the later Attic meaning of ‘people’. Thus names like *e-ke-da-mo*, *e-u-ru-da-mo* and *e-u-da-mo* in Mycenaean mean something like Landholder, Broadland, and Fineland. And the name given in *TOP*, p. 170, as *[da]-mo-ke-re-we-i* is now restored as *[a]-mo-ke-re-we-i*, dative singular of *Harmoklewēs*.

⁴ Furthermore, there is really no reason to support the idea that *a-ko-ro-da-mo* and *a-ko-da-mo* are the same name. *a-ko-ro-da-mo* appears twice in the Gp series. *a-ko-da-mo* appears eleven times in the Fq series and nine times in the Ft series. The restoration of *a-ko-lda-mo* on Gp 144.2 is completely conjectural. It would make more sense to restore the name attested within that series: *a-ko-ro-lda-mo*.

reconstructed in its first and later editions and later discussions as related to Zeus ‘who has to do with the fall-harvested fruits’ (a later-derived meaning from *όπωρα*, *η* = ‘the latter part of summer’). This strikes me as problematical: (1) in terms of the reconstruction of the Akraiphia inscription and the meaning of *όπωρα* in historical Greek; (2) in terms of the Mycenaean form supposedly derived from *όπωρα*; and (3) in terms of the standard etymology of *όπωρα* the second element of which is usually taken to be from **o[σ]aρα*. We should expect here a masculine *a*-stem form, and a spelling conforming to the etymology, such as **o-po-a₂-ra* or **o-po-a-ra*.

It would seem preferable to take the historical inscription as a reference to *Zeus Eporēs*. This is consistent with the geography of Akraiphia and with the many mountain-cult epithets of sky-god Zeus as catalogued in A.B. Cook, *Zeus. A Study in Ancient Religion* (New York: Biblo and Tannen repr. 1965), pp. 868–987. By far the most frequent and extensive cult-epithets and cultic notions relating to the sky-god Zeus have to do with his location on mountain peaks, e.g., he who is worshipped as *Oreios* ‘of the mountain’, *Koryphaios* ‘of the peak’, *Aktaios* ‘of the point’, and *Akraios* ‘of the summit’. It is also consistent with worship of sky-god Zeus located upon innumerable peaks throughout Greece.⁵

So much for the single historical parallel used by the editors of *TOP*. With regard to the Mycenaean evidence, there is no compelling reason to interpret *o-po-re-i* as a theonym in the *Fq* tablets, given the overwhelming predominance of personal names and occupational terms occurring as recipients of the grain recorded in the texts. It is simpler and more contextually compelling to interpret it, too, as a man’s name, e.g., *Oporēs*, an *-es* stem formation from **ores*. Cf. historical Greek *Orestēs* and Mycenaean *o-re-ta* (PY An 657.3).

Another problem, of course, with interpreting *o-po-re-i* as a theonym is that it would actually be a descriptive epithet rather than an independently developing divine name later syncretized with Zeus. In such cases, we would expect in Mycenaean for the god’s name, i.e., here *di-we*, to be expressed along with the adjectival form. For example, see the normal Mycenaean practice in *di-ka-ta-jo di-we* (not just *di-ka-ta-jo*) and *e-ma-a₂ a-re-ja* (not just *a-re-ja*) and *i-qe-ja po-ti-ni-ja* (not just *i-qe-ja*).

5. *ka-ne-jo* as a reference (*TOP*, p. 226) to a personal designation “celui qui s’occupe des oies,” and related to the references to geese in the *Ft* series. But elsewhere in Mycenaean this adjective formation would seem to have to do with the loan-word root for ‘reed’ (see above §3). An alternative interpretation that the term here refers to a ‘wicker basket’ or container is likewise suspect, given the predominance in the *Fq* series of personal names or occupational designations. It seems least problematical to take it as a descriptive name: Mr. Reed.

6. *ko-wa* as a reference to *Kore* = Persephone. Again this interpretation seems motivated by the editors’ wish, once they made the assumption that *ma-ka* = *Mâ Γâ*, to find a divine triad of ‘Mother Earth’, Zeus and Persephone in these texts. It should be noted that on none of the texts does this hypothetical triad appear grouped as a triad, as, for example, the divine triad Zeus, Hera and Drimios in the sanctuary of Zeus on Pylos tablet **Tn 316** verso lines .8–.10.⁶

Moreover, Maurizio del Freo has opened up another possibility. In the *Festschrift Bartoněk* he has argued, I think convincingly, that when the expression *ko-wo* is used in the PY Ad series, it does not mean ‘son’, but rather ‘apprentice’, i.e., *ko-wa* and *ko-wo* do not have the meaning in these texts of ‘offspring’ (for which the Mycenaean lexemes are amply attested, for ‘son’: *i-*65*, *i-ju*, *i-je-we*, *u-jo*, and perhaps *i-jo*, as well as for ‘daughter’: *tu-ka-*

⁵ In fairness it should be noted that Cook, p. 1074, links the inscription from Akraiphia *CIG* VII no. 2733 – Roehl, *IGA* no. 151 – Collitz-Bechtel, *Gr. Dial.-Inschr.* 1, 213, 396 no. 567 to Zeus *Τροφώνιος* and Max. Tyr. 41.2 *τὸν Δία... τὸν καρπῶν τροφέα*, interpreting it as *Κοίτων καὶ Θεούσθοτος τοῦ Ι Δι τώπωρεῖ*.

⁶ The seeming triads of *ma-ka*, *o-po-re-i* and *ko-wa* on **Fq 126** and **Fq 130** are probably illusions. In both cases ca. 3–4 cm. of tablet is missing in line .1 where the entry *a-ko-da-mo* following *ma-ka* is regularly found.

te and abbrev. *tu*).⁷ Del Freo does not point out what looks like a clear contrast between *tu* and *ko-wa* and *ko-wo* listings in KN Ap 639. This would strengthen his argument further.

It should be noted again that *ko-wa* on the Fq tablets appears after *o-po-re-i* 3 times, after *a-pu-wa* 2 times, after *ma-di-je* 3 times, after *ka-ne-jo* 1 time, and after an entry other than *o-po-re-i*, *ma-ka*, or *a-pu-wa* on Fq 257. It never appears after *ma-ka*. There are also plain non-theonymic alternatives for interpreting *ko-wa*.⁸ Its random pattern of appearance would argue against it being interpreted as a theonymic associate of an already questionable Earth Mother and Sky God.

7. *a-pu-wa* also interpreted as a theonym in the dative "Αρπνια (TOP, pp. 389, 214), but even TOP, p. 214 mentions that we would expect a different form—TOP posits **a-pu-ja*. In historical Greek we get "Αρπνια and on an Aeginetan vase Αρεπνια. In the view of Szemerényi, *Syncope*, pp. 203–213, the latter is the original form of a loan word.⁹ In any case, then, the absence of *-e-* and *-j-* in the spelling of the Mycenaean form are problematical enough to need explanation. The trouble is removed if we do not require this lexical item to be a theonym.

8. *ku-su-to-ro-qa* is interpreted, again against prevailing etymology (i.e., *contra* Chantraine, *Dictionnaire IV*, s. *στρέφω*, *τρέπω*; and Frisk, *GEW*, s. *τρέπω*) as deriving from *τρέφω*: **ξυντροφή* "total global de nourriture" (TOP, pp. 393, 171–172) arguing that the term always appears in the contexts of "denrées alimentaires" which "fatally reduces the semantic field" and citing in particular Knossos text B 817, i.e., a series in which other tablets record *po-niki-jo a-pu-do-si* measured by weight and along with men. But in KT⁵, the text cited by the editors of TOP is now reclassified as Bg 817 of h. 137; and it clearly refers to a total of VIR and *ko-wo*, as is shown by the fact that the *-to-ro-* of *ku-su-to-ro-qa* is written over [[-*pə-te*]]. This proves that the original impulse was to write *ξύμπαντες* 'all together', a proper synonym for the Mycenaean form of **συστροφή* 'cumulative total'.

KN Bg 817 + 7858 + 7876 + fr.

to-so / *ku-su-to-ro-qa* VIR 32 / *ko-wo* , *di* [

9. *a-ke-ne-u-si* is interpreted (TOP, p. 180) as from **ἀγνεύω* and as meaning 'celui qui est purifié'. This would be the only appearance of the term *hagnos* in the entire Linear B corpus. While this is not an absolute impediment to the proposed interpretation—we would expect some new words to be found in new tablets—it does require explanation. The editors of TOP work the term into a scenario involving purificatory rites (TOP, p. 271) of the form found in the Eleusinian mysteries. It is worth remarking that Hand 305 (Fq 138, 229) uses *a₂* in his repertory and does not use it to represent the initial aspiration required by the editors' interpretation. But again this in itself is not an insurmountable obstacle.

A 'secular' alternative, very appropriate to the context of grain distribution, would be **akhneusi* 'winnowers' (or less likely **akneusi*).¹⁰ I received an objection to my proposal from the late C. J. Ruijgh (*per litteras*) who counter-proposed that the aspiration of the

⁷ M. del Freo, "Les rameurs d'*a-po-ne-we*," *Studia Minora Facultatis Philosophicae Universitatis Brunensis* 6–7 (2001–2002), pp. 83–90 and 86.

⁸ Cf. *Kόρη* as a Euboean (Eretrian) personal name in the second century B.C.E.: SEG XXVII 602. It could possibly be a name derived from a descriptive term *Khowās* = 'streaming, pouring, libating'. Cf. in historical Greek: *δρούμας*, *-άδος* 'wildly running' or 'roaming' of women; *θοάς*, *-άδος* 'fleet, swift', a feminine adjective in Pindar.

⁹ O. Szemerényi, *Syncope in Greek and Indo-European and the Nature of Indo-European Accent* (Naples 1964).

¹⁰ Positing the existence of suffixes *-*s-nā* and *-*nā*. Cf. the attested alternation: *δράγμα* and *δραχμή*.

unvoiced guttural /k/ in later Greek *ἄχνη* comes from the *-snā* suffix and the root **ak*, and that on the analogy of *a₃-ka-sa-ma* we should expect *a-ke-se-ne-u-si* for my proposal of ‘winnowers’. But Chantraine (*s. ἄχνη*) posits an original root **akh-* for *ἄχνη* in order to explain the forms *ἄχυρον* and *ἄχωρον*.

10. *de-ko-no* is interpreted (*TOP*, pp. 390, 225) as an unattested and problematical form **δειπνός* ‘banquetier’. The editors of *TOP* also then view *po-ro-de-ko-no* on **KN F 51** as *προδειπνός* ‘vice-banquetier’. In both instances the rejected and existent *δεῖπνον* ‘meal’ and *πρόδειπνον* ‘preliminary meal’ make sense and are unproblematic in formation.

My proposal then for a ‘bottoms-up’ reading of **Fq 254[+]255** is as follows. It will be clear that I accept something like the late John Chadwick’s suggestion for the reading of the *o-te* clause in lls. 1–2.¹¹ I doubt whether all elements of my reading are correct, but I do think that in general it is better to posit non-religious interpretations that are less problematical, more linguistically and etymologically sound, less metaphorical and less strained.

We should note that the **Fq** texts contain *none* of the religious vocabulary (e.g., standard or rare theonyms, sanctuary locales, sanctuary structures or institutions, various kinds of cult functionaries, the regular terms for ‘holy’ and for ‘he or she who has to do with holy things’, or vocabulary of religious donation or payment) known from texts at other sites and from Thebes itself.

Moreover, we should consider the general features of this set of tablets and what function the texts must have had within the economic administration of the site of Thebes.

There are ca. 120 parts of tablets or pieced-together tablets now assigned to the **Fq** series. Many of these are very small bits of tablets, preserving only a few fragmentary lexical units on a few lines of writing. Some of these are probably parts of the same tablet, e.g., **Fq 130** and **Fq 187** probably go together, as might **Fq 132** and **Fq 171**. The great majority of the pieces are assigned to scribal hand 305. **Fq 205** and **Fq 207** seem to have been written by scribal hand 307; and **Fq 236**, **Fq 238** and **Fq 244** are assigned to scribal hand 310. So 110–115 fragments are assigned to scribal hand 305.

It is vital to know how many actual full tablets these fragments belong to in order to get a good understanding of their purpose, and why they were found together. Most of our Mycenaean religious texts dealing with allocations of edible materials (honey, wine, oil, and banqueting foods) specify that such allocations were made within a particular month or on the occasion of a particular ceremonial event.¹² Because the **Fq** tablets are repetitive and rather formulaic, with minor variations, we can roughly calculate how many times individuals are referred to. We can also set up a kind of exemplar template and examine the tablet fragments to determine how many pieces come from the opening sections of the tablets and how many from the closing sections.

By doing this, I have estimated that these ca. 120 **Fq** ‘tablets’ probably come from 15–18 original whole tablets.

Why is this significant? It means that the tablets do not conform to records of allocation to religious sanctuaries and deities specified as taking place *within* a given month (series **PY** **Fr**, **KN Fp** and **KN Gg**) or for a specific ceremonial event—reinforcing a supposition already made on the basis of the small quantities of grain allocated to individuals (see below).

We might then ask what circumstances would lead to a grouping of 15–18 tablets, all apparently with the same kinds of structure. The **Fq** tablets begin as follows. In twelve preserved or restorable instances there is a first entry of *ma-ka* (**Fq 126**, **Fq 130**, **Fq 131?**, **Fq 213?**, **Fq 214**, **Fq 229**, **Fq 254**, **Fq 258**, **Fq 263**, **Fq 285?**, **Fq 304**, **Fq 357**). Twice (**Fq 126** and **Fq 130**) the *ma-ka* entry is preceded by *o-te* clause qualifiers. And once (**Fq 254**) it is preceded by an *o-te* clause and a first entry of *de-ko-no*. After such opening entries, our most fully preserved texts contain lists of approximately 28 more entries. These are mostly

¹¹ J. Chadwick, ‘Three Temporal Clauses,’ *Minos* 31–32 (1996–97), pp. 293–301.

¹² See T. G. Palaima, ‘Sacrificial Feasting in the Linear B tablets,’ *Hesperia* 73.2 (2004) 217–246.

human personal names, a few occupational terms (*none* of which, as we have mentioned, has any of the cult associations we find in **PY Fn** or **En** series or the **KN Fp** series), and in a few cases even animals (we assume this is shorthand for grain allocated to the human agents who care for the animals).

The tablets end as follows. There are twelve attested or restorable instances of the totaling entry (*ku-su-to-ro-qa* and *to-so-ku[-su-pa* on **Fq 187, 214, 229, 236, 252, 254[+]255, 269, 276, 306, 359, 362, 394]).¹³**

The personal names, occupational terms and animals appear in a roughly 'standard' order with some variation and substitutions. To me the entire collection of 15–18 tablets looks like a set of records of simple daily allotments of grain in return for service. We have a half month's worth (operating on a 30-day or 36-day month) of records here collected.

In my view, bulk items are listed at the start of each tablet for collective use: once *de-
qo-no* 'for dinner' (whose we do not know) and twelve times *ma-ka* 'for kneading' (with quantities of the same magnitude as *de-
qo-no*). I stress again that there may be alternative ways of interpreting these lexical items, but they should be interpreted consistently with the evidence from the full Mycenaean corpus and with the demonstrable fact that the overwhelming majority of entries on these tablets (ca. 67 in number) have no 'religious' associations.

On three days (and tablets) special circumstances are designated by *o-te* clauses. But the entry structure still remains the same. And of the three problematical *o-te* clauses, at least the 'assembling of the elders' does not look to be in any way connected with a ritual or sanctuary. The absence of *o-te* phrases from the majority of tablets would argue that in those instances routine activities are taking place.

By my reckoning, there are about 67 names or occupational titles (or in a few cases animals) that appear as recipients of grain on the **Fq** tablets. For the overwhelming majority of these, ritual, cultic or religious significance has not even tentatively been proposed. They are here listed with their approximate numbers of attestations in **Fq** tablets: *a-ke-ne-u-si* (11), *a-ko-da-mo* (11), *a-mo-ta-ro-ko?* (1), *a-ka-de-i* (3), *a-me-ro* (14), *a-nu-to* (8), *a-pu-wa* (7), *a-ra-o* (2), *a-ta-o* (1), *da-u-ti-jo* (1), *de-u-ke-we* (7), *do-ra-a₂-ja* (8), *do-re-ja* (5), *do-ro-jo* (5), *e-pi-do-ro-mo* (8), *e-pi-ni-ja* (1), *e-pi-
qo-i* (3), *e-
q₂-do?* (1), *i-
qo-po-
qo-i* (or *i-
qo-po-
qo*) (11), *ja-so-ro* (5), *ka-ra-wi-ja* (3), *ka-ne-jo* (1), *ka-si* (1?), *ka-ti-jo* (4?), *ka-wi-jo* (6), *ke-re-na-i* (2), *ko-du-*22-je* (10), *ko-ru-we* (9), *ko-wa* (13), *ku-ro₂* (3), *ku-si* (and *ku-no* and *ku-ne*) (5), *ma-di-je* (9), *ma-ka* (12), *me-to-re-i* (6), *mi-ra-ti-jo* (7), *mo-ne-we* (3), *o-ko-we-i* (3), *o-
ni-si* (3), *o-po-re-i* (11), *lo-ro-wa-ta* (1), *o-ti-ri-ja-i* (6), *o-to-ro-no-*65* (1), *o-u-ko-we-i* (6), *o-u-wa-ja-wo-ni* (2), *pe-ra-ko* (1), *pi-ra-ko-ro* (8), *pi-ra-me-no* (1), *po-[* (3), *qe-re-ma-o* (10), *ra-ke-da-mi-ni-jo* (7), *ra-
qe-te[* (1), *ra-wi-to* (1), *re-wa-ko* (3), *sa-[-]jo* (1), *te-de-ne-o* (3), *te-
ka-ta-si* (1), *to-jo* (11), *to-pa-po-ro-i* (1), *]to-po-wo[* (1), *to-tu-no* (7), *u-[* (1), *wa-do-ta* (6), *we-re-na-ko* (4), *we-ro-te* (1), *zo-wa* (8), **56-ru-we* (1), **63-u-ro* (3).

The attestations range from 1 time to 14 times.¹⁴ Given the fragmentary nature of the tablets and also reckoning the positioning of fragments by contents and form on an idealized full-tablet template, the total estimate of 15–18 full tablets is reasonably secure.

Most of these entries would seem to relate to regular and relatively small distributions (so regular that they do not require any explanatory heading). These distributions serve, I would think, as payments for work or service rendered to some form of central authority. The exceptions, of course, are *de-
qo-no* and *ma-ka*, which are much larger allocations. I have argued that this is because the grain in these two cases is for communal use: for a 'banquet' and for 'kneading' into cakes of the sort that are distributed in collective work contexts.

¹³ There might be another total on **Fq 278.3**. What is read as *ku-su-a₂[* might be the normal entry *ku-su-
tq[-ro-qa*. Signs to and *a₂* are structurally similar.

¹⁴ It is likely that *a-me-ro* occurs a 15th time on **Fq 115**. There are only three entries in the **Fq** series that end in *-ro*. They are: *a-me-ro*, *ja-so-ro*, and *pi-ra-ko-ro*. Of these, only *a-me-ro* elsewhere occurs in the immediate environment of *a-ke-ne-u-si* (as it would if restored on **Fq 115**): **Fq 130** and **Fq 214**.

So far as we can tell, the recipients here are not dependent on the central authority in the way that the totally dependent working women in the Pylos A-series are. If this is true, they would have other resources at their disposal and these allocations would be added to their other foodstuffs. So these allocations would not be daily rations *per se*.

Now if we consider the late John Chadwick's article in the *Festschrift Bennett*, pp. 68–71,¹⁵ we see that each dependent woman gets T 2 of grain per month, i.e., 48 Z per month, or Z 1.6 per day for a 30-day month or Z 1.33 per day for a 36-day month respectively. Their children get Z 0.8 or Z 0.66 respectively. If we then examine the more complete Fq tablets (see Fq 229, 214, 241, 254), we see that they have a relative hierarchy of allocations with many recipients of Z 1 being at or near the bottom of the list.¹⁶ Most entries though get more. See, for example, Fq 254[+]255 here below. Some examples are: *a-ko-da-mo* V 2 = Z 8; *ma-di* V 3 Z 2 = Z 14; *ka-ne-jo* V 3 = Z 12; *qe-re-ma-o* V 1 Z 2 = Z 6; *ra-ke-da-mi-ni-jo-**65 V 2 = Z 8; and so on. There are also a good number of Z 2 entries, which is still more than the dependent working women at Pylos get. All these are reasonable daily pay outs for service to those who do some form of work for whatever the distributing agent behind these tablets is. The aggregate allocations for *de-qo-no* and *ma-ka* are much greater. On Fq 254[+]255 they are Z 35 and Z 34 respectively.

Our analysis so far then shows that there is little in the contents or likely administrative function of the Fq records to suggest any religious associations. This is further demonstrated by translating the fullest text (Fq 254[+]255) from the bottom up, without any idea that we have to try to find religious significance in the entries. Here is the text in transliteration and translation.

Transliteration TH Fq(2) 254 [+] 255 Scribal Hand 305

.1 de-qo-no HORD T 1 V 2 z 3 o-te , a-pi-e-qe ke-ro-ṭa
 .2 pa-ta , ma-ka HORD T 1 V 2 z 2 a-ko-da-mo V 2
 .3 o-po-re-i[] ḡa-dī-je V 1 []1 ḡa-ne-jo V 3
 .4] ḡo-wa Z 2 a-pu-wa Z 2 ko-ru Z 2
 .5 qe-re-ma-o V 1 Z 2 zo-wa V 1 a-me-ṛo V 1
 .6 ka-wi-jo-*65 V 1 *63-[]kā [] i-qo-po-qo-i V 1 Z 1
 .7 a-ṛa-o-*65 V 1[]v 1 me-to-ṛe-i z 2
 .8 deest
 .9] vest.[
 .10]a-nu-to z 1[]to-ṭu [-no]z 1 mi-ra-ti-jo [
 .11]e-pi-do-ro-mo z 1 pi-ra-ko-ro z 1 de-u-ke-ṣe-we z 1
 .12 ko-ḍu-*22-je z 1 do-ra-aṛ-ja z 1
 .13 ra-ke<-da>-mi-ni-jo-*65 V 2 a-ke-ne-u-si V 2
 .14 ḡo-wa-ja-wo-ni z 2 mo-ne-we V 3
 .15 ku-su-to-ro-qa HORD[T]3 y 3 z 2

Translation TH Fq(2) 254 [+] 255 Scribal Hand 305

- .1 for the *dinner* BARLEY 14 liters when were brought into attendance all
- .2 the elders for *kneading* BARLEY 13.6 liters to *Brightland* 3.2 liters
- .3 to *Surmount* [] to *ṛa-ḍi* 1.6 liters[] to *Reedy* 4.8 liters

¹⁵ J. Chadwick, "The Women of Pylos," in J.-P. Olivier and T. G. Palaima eds., *Texts, Tablets and Scribes. Studies in Mycenaean Epigraphy and Economy Offered to Emmett L. Bennett, Jr.* (Suplementos a Minos 10: 1988), pp. 43–95.

¹⁶ On Fq 254[+]255 the Z 1 entries cluster in lines .10–12 of the 15-line text; on Fq 214, the Z 1 entries occur on lines .9–12 of the 14-line text; on Fq 229 on lines .8–12 of the 14-line text; and on Fq 241 on line .9, the last line of the tablet, which is broken away at that point.

.4] to *Younggirl* **0.8** liters to *a-pu-wa* **0.8** liters to *Quiff*¹⁷ **0.8** liters
 .5 to *Τηλέμαος*¹⁸ **2.4** liters to *ζο-ώᾳ* **1.6** liters to *Civil*¹⁹ **1.6** liters
 .6 to *Son of Beau, Jr.*²⁰ **1.6** liters *63-[]κα[] to the *horse-feeders* **2.0** liters
 .7 to *α-ρα-ρ*²¹ Jr. **1.6** liters []**1.6** liters to *Μετ-ώλης* **0.8** liters
 .8 *deest*
 .9] *vestigia* [
 .10] to *Accomplish*²² **0.4** liters] to *το-τῳ* [-no] **0.4** liters to *Milesian* [
 .11 to *Enroute*²³ **0.4** liters to *Lovefield*²⁴ **0.4** liters to *Deukseus*²⁵ **0.4** liters
 .12 to *κο-δῳ*-*22 **0.4** liters to *do-ra-ha-ja* **0.4** liters
 .13 to *Lakedaimnios, Jr.* **0.8** liters to the *winnowers* **0.8** liters
 .14 to *ρ-υ-ω-ja-wo* **0.8** liters to *Moneus*²⁶ **1.2** liters
 .15 all totaled **BARLEY 34.4** liters

Note on Translation: All 29 preserved ‘recipient’ entries are in italics. Some of the names are conjectural, as specified in the footnotes here.

It will immediately be noticed that my transcription, taken from J. L. Melena’s *TITHEMY* in progress, differs from that in *TOP*, pp. 224–227, primarily in reading on lines .6, .7 and .13 sign *65 as part of the lexical expression, instead of reading it as an ideogram FAR = ‘spelt’ or ‘flour’ *vel sim.*, i.e., as a grain other than wheat (**PY Un 718**) and barley (**KN Fs** series) (*Documents*², pp. 284, 458) or as a processed variety of grain.²⁷ *TOP* translates this sign everywhere as ‘farine’, i.e., ‘flour’ or ‘meal’.

The primary reason for my reading of these texts is the pattern of occurrence of the sign read as FAR in *TOP*. First notice the contrast that exists between the **Fq** series (Hand 305) and the **Gp** series (Hand 306?) if we follow the readings given in *TOP*.

ra-ke-da-mi-ni-jo FAR (5 times: **Fq 229, 254[+]255, 258, 275, 284**)

vs. **Gp 227.2** (Hand 306?) *ra-]ke-da-mo-ni-jo-u-jo*.

But, if we read the sign in question in the **Fq** texts not as FAR, but as *65 and assign to *65 the normal posited value from the alternation cluster cited above by del Freo: *i-*65, i-ju, i-je-we, u-jo*, we would have here an exact matching reference between *Lakedaimoniōi huiōi* dative (**Gp 227.2**) and *Lakedaimniōi ju(i)* (**Fq** series). This would suggest that both series are referring to the same individual here as *Lakedaim(o)niost SON*.

Notice, too, that in the Linear B corpus *i-*65* appears with patronymic adjectives like *wi-do-wo-i-jo* on **PY Ae 344** or with genitives as on **PY Aq 64.7** and **Aq 218.16** or independently as in **PY Jn 431.6** and **Jn 725.8** (but in both these cases with the enclitic

¹⁷ Cf. *σκόλλως, -νος, ὁ* ‘fringe of hair’ or ‘quiff’.

¹⁸ Cf. *Documents*², s.v. The name occurs on **KN V 7513.2** and on **PY Qa 1295**. Ventris and Chadwick in *Documents*² compare, for the second element of the name: *Oino-maos*.

¹⁹ Cf. *ἡμερος* found as the basis for a personal name in Pape–Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen*³ (1884) both as “*Ημερος* and ‘*Ημέρων*.

²⁰ I.e., *Kalwios, Jr.* Or ‘for the son of Beau, i.e., *Kalwos*’, taking *Kalwios* as a patronymic adj. of *Kalwos*.

²¹ Perhaps related to *ἀλαός, -όν* ‘unseeing, blind’ a word of uncertain etymology.

²² “*Αντος*. Cf. **KN X 658, X 697.2, As 1516.12, TH Z 863, 864, 961, TI Z 8+26.**

²³ *Epi-dromos*. ‘*Επιδρόμος* is attested in historical Athens.

²⁴ *Phil-agros*.

²⁵ Elsewhere *Deukeus*. Cf. later *Πολυδεύκης*.

²⁶ Historical names compounded in *μενε-* are frequent. For *o*-grade historical nouns and personal names in *-eus* cf. J. L. Perpillou, *Les substantifs grecs en -εύς* (1973) index, pp. 401–407, e.g., *δρομεύς, δροπεύς, νομεύς, τομεύς, τοκεύς, Δοκεύς, Μολπεύς*.

²⁷ The reading in the *TITHEMY* in progress resulted from my correspondence with J. L. Melena on this matter. He agreed with my observations. The readings are not, therefore, independent support for my interpretations.

conjunction *-qe* marking the linking of the *i-*65* entry with the preceding entry in an expression: 'So-and-So AND son').

It is then suggestive that in the **Fq** set, the sign we choose to read as *65 occurs four other times with the adjectival or patronymic form *ka-wi-jo* (**Fq 123, 130, 254[+]255, 258**). Thus 9 of the 25 instances where FAR is read are immediately susceptible to an interpretation that does not require rare entries of a different form of the grain—or a different type of grain—than that which is summarized in the total on tablets like **Fq 214** and **Fq 254[+]255**.

If we look outside the **Fq** texts we find other difficulties in the *TOP* reading of the sign as FAR. Notice, for example, that on **Gp 110**, the posited reading of FAR would make this ideogram the only one in the series in which the scribe places a word divider between an ideogram and a following metrical-numerical entry. If we read the sign as *65, however, and as part of the preceding lexical phrase, we have plenty of parallels in **Gp 110, 112, 122, 127, 168** for the scribe (Hand 306) placing a word divider at the end of a lexical unit preceding an ideogram or metric-numerical entry.

On **Gp 124**, the sequence of two ideograms **Jko FAR**, VIN V 2[is unparalleled in Linear B. *TOP*, p. 283, explains it as a reference to a sacred blend of wine and barley flour (citing *Iliad* 11.624–641). Even if we were to opt for such an unparalleled explanation of the two ideograms, there is no need for this to be a sacred mixture. In Thucydides 3.49.3 the rowers sent from Athens to reverse the initial decision of the Athenian assembly regarding Mytilene consume a mixture of wine and barley as they row. Secondly, however, the explanation of taking two ideograms that are not even juxtaposed, but separated spatially on the tablet and also by a word divider, as a 'composite ideogram' is very difficult.

Note also that everywhere in the **Gp** series of Hand 306 the commodity in question (and where it is identifiable it is VIN) is measured by units that pertain to or are capable of pertaining to liquid commodities (S, V, Z). The only exceptions are within two texts of an unidentified scribe: **Gp 153**, which lists the quantity **] 1 T 8 V 4** and **Gp 303** which has a very tentative text and where the dotted T unit is virtually non-existent and dependent on the reading FAR.

On **Gp 303**, I think again it is better to read the sequence as an adjectival form followed by *65 = *ju*. We should note—although as Jean-Pierre Olivier has pointed out to me in e-mail discussion, this observation is not entirely probative—that the signs of the tentative *i-je-re-wi-jo* *65 run together. **Gp 153** seems to be of an entirely different 'set' of tablets. **Gp 215** is also by an unidentified scribe, and its text is read in *TOP* as a **Gp** text with FAR preceding metric-numerical entries. But here again the sign spacing would permit a reading as the phonetic sign *65. The preceding entries *qe-da-do-ro* and *a-]ko-ro-da-mo* each occur on one other **Gp** text.

As regards the spatial orientation of the signs, notice that for Hand 310 on **Fq 236.5** *TOP*, pp. 94–95, reads *ku-no FAR*, but all the Z entries are lined up far to the right and the supposed FAR is in place with the spacing for another phonetic element of the lexical entry as on other lines. This all but forces us to read the sign phonetically as *65.

Likewise on **Fq 132** the supposed FAR is shoved up against the preceding **[.]to-qo**, a fact which the spacing in the *TOP* transcription (p. 46) distorts.

The reading FAR then is highly suspect virtually everywhere for reasons listed above: (1) its location on the tablets with regard to the preceding lexical units and following metric signs or numbers; (2) its being followed by a word-divider where none would be expected following an ideogram, including a case where another ideogram follows the word-divider; (3) its occurrence within series (**Fq, Gp**) that otherwise deal exclusively with HORD or VIN and that have many other entries with metrical signs and numbers following a word-unit; (4) its restriction in the **Fq** series mainly to two ethnic adjectives that parallel *i-ju* with a preceding adjective on **PY Ae 344**.

How this sequence is to be explained precisely is difficult. Where the preceding word is an adjective or noun in the dative, I supposed originally that one might read these as a string in which the implicit *iota* ending of the dative noun-form made the explicit representation of the initial *i*- of *i-ju* graphically unnecessary (hereafter I give *65 the value *ju* vel sim.). E.g., *ka-wi-jo*-*65 = *Kalwījōi(j)i* and where the second element of the dative ending of *ju* is suppressed just as in most *i*-diphthongs (see Vilborg, §38 re *e-ri-nu* on KN Fp 1.8).

But J. L. Melena, came up with a better proposal (*per litteras*):

A possible solution for the dilemma is prompted by the history itself of the word. IE **suyus* > Proto-Greek **huyus* > Thebes /*huyos*/. Try to write this word in Mycenaean and you will front the decision for marking or not the initial aspiration. If not, you will use *u*-, but if you wish to render the aspiration (or to keep a conservative spelling) you will use *65 *ju* for /*hu*/. So, the transcription should be *ka-wi-jo* JU and *ra-ke-da-mi-ni-jo* JU. If you look for parallels, you will notice that the ‘sons’ of the animals are noted by logogrammatic syllables: KO (for *khoiros*), WE (for *wetalon*), PO (for *po:los*), E (for *eriphos*). Why not JU for *huyus* or *hujos*?

I think that it is a good convention belonging to the scholastics of the Mycenaean scribes, and is the best choice for solving the question. I should like to know your opinion.

My opinion is that it is a good operating principle and it can explain the use of the phonetic abbreviation *65 = *hu* for ‘son’, just as we have elsewhere the abbreviation *tu* for ‘daughter’: KN Ap 629.1–2; 637.2; 639.4; 5748.1. In Ap 639 and 5748 the *tu* is clearly functioning logographically as suggested here. So it would seem that the sign in question should be read as *65 in the Thebes tablets and mainly interpreted as a logogram as in Emmett L. Bennett, Jr. or John E. Cardin, II.

I hope to have presented here a clear case for a non-religious interpretation of the Thebes Fq tablets and of the few terms that the editors of *TOP* have attempted to interpret as having religious or ritual significance. The overall Fq set, in my view, is best seen as a grouping of a half-month of daily distribution records for grain allocations. The recipients are primarily personal names, some occupational names, a few ‘animals’, and in two cases (*de-qo-no* and *ma-ka*) collective allocations for communal eating.