



Pylos Tablet Vn 130 and the Pylos Perfume Industry

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There is no foolproof method for interpreting Linear B texts.* In the early days of Mycenaean studies, of course, there was the famous split between what Leonard Palmer claimed was his “combinatory” or “structural” method and the “lexical” method of John Chadwick, a lexicographer by training and temperament. Palmer claimed that he took special care to understand the significance of the position in which a particular lexical item occurs within the layout of a text before proposing any interpretation of it, while those who adhered to the “lexical” method relied too much on the etymology of a specific term in proceeding to interpret it and the text or texts in which it occurred (Palmer 1963, 27–36). In point of fact, however, like all but the simplest dichotomies, this contrast of methods of interpretation in Mycenology is false, or at least misleading.

When we study the texts of the Linear B tablets, some things are close to “givens.” Take, for

example, a phrase like *wa-na-ka-te-ro te-me-no* (*wanakteron temenos*) on Pylos tablet Er 312. It

*Cynthia Shelmerdine has, throughout her long and fruitful career, been masterful at making uncommonly good sense of Mycenaean texts by using combinatory interpretive methods that rely on her understanding of the archaeological contexts of tablets and the tablet-writing systems in which they were produced; the work of individual tablet writers and their relationships to one another; specific economic, religious, political, or administrative spheres; the historical and archaeological environments of particular sites and regions and their populations; and the conditions that were generally prevailing in the Mycenaean world when particular tablet records were written and in use.

I thank Dimitri Nakassis for discussing Vn 130 with me at the start of my studying it. I thank José Melena for his characteristically exemplary generosity in sharing his forthcoming chapter on Mycenaean writing with me, as it has moved through different stages of development. I thank the editors of this volume for their kind patience.

has prominence as the initial entry in the opening section of the tablet. It is intentionally paired in the textual layout with an entry for the *ra-wa-ke-si-jo te-me-no* (*lāwāgesion temenos*). The interpretation of the *wa-na-ka-* root of *wa-na-ka-te-ro* is uncontested. Its binary contrastive adjectival suffix *-te-ro* is also clear. And the contrast with the other major power figure of the palatial territory in Messenia, the *lāwāgetās*, who here also is recorded as having a *temenos*, is likewise clear. The term *temenos* survives, and has a clear meaning, in the historical Greek lexicon.

In “reading” Er 312, then, etymology, morphology, context, the study of another text that belongs together with it, and grasp of scribal intention within the text of Er 312 all work in harmony. Still, modern scholars might be hard pressed to figure out, even in this simple example, how “lexical” and “structural-contextual” interpretations interact, which one goes first, and which one has the most important role in establishing a sound reading of the text. The interpretation of Mycenaean Greek texts is an art, not a science. But since science is also an art, we should not be too troubled.

We have to make a real effort, almost 60 years after the decipherment of Linear B, to see where our methods of interpretation have yielded less than certain results and where they have failed us. We are also at a disadvantage because the Linear B texts depended at the time they were written on the intimate understanding of their contexts that the Mycenaean tablet writers themselves possessed.

It is clear in studying the tablets within their archaeological contexts and record-keeping and record-producing environments that the individuals who would later be consulting the texts would have been the authors of the texts themselves and other tablet writers working in the same or related fields of information and administration (Palaima 2003, 2011). Thus the texts can be, and often are, frustratingly minimalist from our points of view, leaving us to rely on our wits and to use what have come to be accepted as standard operating procedures.

I offer here some observations on the text of Pylos tablet Vn 130 (Fig. 7.1) with the aim of explicating the relationship between the palatial center at Pylos and the places and individuals who are recorded in its text.

Vn 130

.1	o-ze-to , ke-sa-do-ro , ai-to-pi ,	
.a	pa-ro	
.2	a-ke-a ₂ , me-ta-pa , pe-ri-te	1
.3	a-pi-no-e-wi-jo , pa-ro , e-ru-si-jo	1
.4	a-pi-no-e-wi-jo , pa-ro , a ₃ -ki-e-we	4
.5	e-na-po-ro , pa-ro , wa-do-me-no	9
.6	sa-ri-no-te , pa-ro , o-wo-to	5
.7	pa-ki-ja-si , pa-ro , a-ta-no-re	4
.8	ka-ra-do-ro , pa-ro , to-ro-wo	1
.9	pa-ki-ja-si , pa-ro , e-ri-we-ro	3
.10	e-wi-te-wi-jo , pa-ro , wi-sa-to	1
.11]me-te-to , pa-ro , ko-do	3
.12	ro-]u-so	24
.13]me-te-to , pa-ro , e-u-qo-ne	3

That PY Vn 130 is a tablet that merits and is in need of further study is proved by the following considerations:

1. Vn 130 is among the tablets discovered at Pylos in the first season of excavation;
2. it is a complete 13-line text with no problematically doubtful readings—the place name *ro-]u-so* is an incontestable restoration in line 12, and the toponym *me-te-to* is read without any forced conjecture and with sufficient attestation in other suitable contexts;
3. it is written by the main or “master scribe” at the site of Pylos, Hand 1;
4. it contains in its entries four of the nine major districts into which the Hither Province of Pylos is divided (*me-ta-pa*, *pa-ki-ja-ne*, *ka-ra-do-ro*, and *ro-u-so*, the last two reversed in terms of canonical order) alongside other place names that occur in other tablets;
5. it lists seven personal names that recur on other Pylos tablets;
6. it has a heading with the formulaic syntactical structure: *o-* | VERB | PERSONAL or OCCUPATIONAL NAME comparable to other important texts introduced by *o-* or *jo-* (PY Eq 213, Pn 30, Ta 711, Un 267, Vn 10, Wa 917);
7. it has a clear connection, both in scribal hand and in a verbal form in the heading, with

Pylos tablet Un 267 (the future participle *ze-so-me-no* Un 267.4 and the finite verb form *o-ze-to* Vn 130.1; both tablets are by “master tablet writer” Hand 1); and

8. it is in the small class of tablets that do not use ideograms (except, of course, numerical ideograms).

Still, the tablet is not treated in either edition of *Documents in Mycenaean Greek* (Ventris and Chadwick 1956, 1973) or in recent handbook-style collections (Bernabé and Luján 2006; Duhoux and Morpurgo Davies, eds., 2008). Nor are the text and its contents treated in comprehensive studies of Mycenaean forms and texts (Ruijgh 1967; Hiller and Panagl 1976). Moreover, despite the rather clear potential correlation between its introductory verbal form *ze-to* and the forms *ze-so-me-no* and *a-re-pa-zo-o* used in the text Un 267, which provides the most explicit evidence for the practice of perfume manufacture (Shelmerdine 1985, 17), Vn 130 is not taken up in Shelmerdine (1985) or in the latest comprehensive study of textual documentation for perfumed oils, their manufacture, distribution, and use in Mycenaean and other contemporary Anatolian and Near Eastern cultures (Fappas 2010).

Where Vn 130 does appear in discussions, it is treated only in part and for the specific point(s) these discussions are making. This way of working with the Linear B texts has many hazards. When following selective chains of reasoning, there is a danger of projecting onto a “supporting text” the very fact(s) that we need to argue for our points of view. Also a conjecture about part of a text may seem plausible only so long as we focus on a small part of it and do not look at all the interconnections with other documents that the rest of the text has. The partial interpretations of Vn 130 also make clear the danger of wishing a sign group to mean something that it must mean in order to arrive at an attractive interpretation.

The fullest discussion of Vn 130, other than its spare treatment in Palmer (1963, 369–370), is found in Galaty’s work on pots and the Mycenaean palaces (Galaty 1999, 51). There, following Morris (1986, 102), Galaty (1999, 51) interprets the opening of Vn 130 selectively as follows:

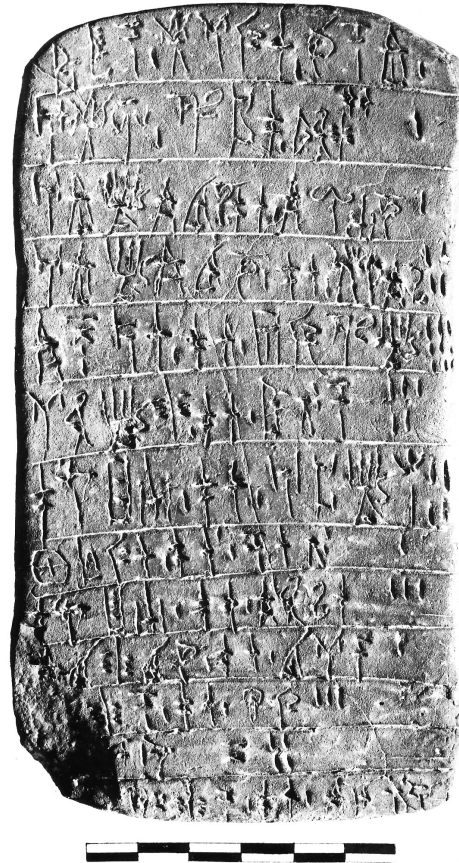


Figure 7.1. Photograph of Pylos tablet Vn 130 *recto*. Archives of the Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory at the University of Texas at Austin. Courtesy Department of Classics, University of Cincinnati.

- .1 o-ze-to , ke-sa-do-ro , *34-to-pi ,
- .2a pa-ro
- .2b a-ke-a [*sic*]

Galaty (1999, 51) also states “[A]s with most Linear B inscriptions, it is far from clear exactly what lines 1 and 2 mean, but the most plausible translation is, ‘And so Kessandros took (or received) containers with strainers.’”

First, it is not true that the meanings of the first two lines of most Linear B inscriptions are unclear. This is a rhetorical comment designed to predispose us to accept whatever interpretation is being advanced. It implies that, if interpretation is so difficult that demonstrable proof is far beyond our grasp, we should be grateful for what we can figure out and one line of reasoning may be as

good as another. We are also not told on what basis we should be willing to accept this translation as “most plausible.” The supralinear word *pa-ro* in line 2a is here detached from the personal name that it governs, thus giving a false impression that it is part of the introductory heading formula.

I should stress that we who are Linear B specialists are responsible for the shortcomings here. We have left a fine scholar of material culture like Galaty to chart his own course on forbidding Mycenaean seas without a compass or sextant. Given the state of our and his understanding of Vn 130, Galaty considers what kinds of containers the plural *aggeha* (*a-ke-a₂*) in line 2 are likely to be and how they are to be used in connection with the term for which one early interpretation was “strainers”: **34-to-pi*.

Galaty posits that the *aggeha* are ceramic cooking pots that could have been used with strainers in perfume manufacture (cf. Chadwick and Bachmann 1963, 166; Palmer 1963, 370; Ventris and Chadwick 1973, 529; Chantraine 2009, 8). Following Morris (1986, 102), he interprets the individuals listed in the *pa-ro* formula in lines 2–13 of the tablet as “regional heads of potting workshops” from whom *Kessandros*, using an inefficient system (at least in so far as assembling a requisite number of pots is concerned), collected the pots either as a kind of tithe or as fulfillment of contracts.

Before commenting on this interpretation, we should keep in mind that, when we examine what looks like inefficient operations within the Mycenaean administrative systems attested in our tablets, “efficiency” per se was not the only motive for organizing production, delivery, and distribution. Historical relationships among communities and social groups, politically sensitive interconnections among people holding economic, political, and social power, efforts at building social and political harmony, the dictates of ritual and religious practice, and exigencies of the moment all came into play.

Galaty’s line of interpretation, however, depends on two hypotheses that have now been rejected: first, that sign **34* might have the value *ru₂*, and second, that *o-ze-to* could be interpreted as a “verbal form, probably meaning ‘received’ or similar” (Ventris and Chadwick 1973, 593). Palmer (1963, 370) suggested that *ze-to* meant “got” (γέντο) or “lies in store” (κεῖτοι), but both interpretations are unacceptable because the Mycenaean *z*-series

of phonograms does not represent a simple palatal stop (see also Chantraine 2009, 206–207). Still, delinked from the proposed forms, Palmer’s hypothesis gave rise to the notion that whatever the Linear B sign group *o-ze-to* represented, it had to mean something like “received.” In retrospect, there is no basis for making this claim.

The first theory was posited so that the form **34-to-pi*, taken in isolation, might be an instrumental or comitative plural from a nominative singular λύτωρ (“loosener, sifter, strainer”) and mean something like “by means of strainers” or simply “with strainers.” A look at the entire dossier of occurrences now indicates that this *ad hoc* conjecture is impossible. Sign **34* most likely represents *ai* (Melena 2001, 15; Bernabé and Luján 2006, 30–31). Yet even taken at face value, it is hard to see in what sense the instrumental could function here if one were interpreting *o-ze-to*, *ke-sa-do-ro*, **34-to-pi*, *a-ke-a₂* with *o-ze-to* concealing an unknown verb meaning “received” *vel sim*. The comitative function of **34-to-pi* makes better sense: “together with **34-to* (plural).” The second theory (Palmer 1963, 370), as we have mentioned, has had its original basis (the identification of the verbal form *ze-to* in Vn 130.1 as γέντο “got” or κεῖτοι “lies in store”) removed. The argument now runs, “We do not know what the verb here is or what its meaning is. But if it means something like ‘received,’ as was once proposed, we can construct an interpretation of the text.” This approach eschews any attempt at arguing for an “etymological” meaning—in fact it relies on the afterlife of discarded etymologies—and claims plausibility because heading phrases structured like the heading phrase in Vn 130 contain basic transactional vocabulary for the actions of “giving” (Jn 829, Un 267, Vn 10), “seeing/inspecting” (Ta 711, Eq 213), “distributing” (Vn 20, Wa 917), “sending” (Cn 3), and “receiving” (Pn 30). We should note that in one text, the heading verb refers to activities undertaken and thus acknowledged as a service performance for the palatial administration: Cn 608 (*jo-a-se-so-si* meaning “thus they will fatten” *vel sim*). I propose here that Vn 130 (*o-ze-to*) provides another example (for heading formulae, see Hooker 1968; Babič 1997, 246–248; Palaima 2000).

As José Melena (forthcoming) argues, it is impossible to understand what **34-to-pi* might mean without understanding what the most important word in the heading phrase is, namely, the main

verb *ze-to*. Indeed, it is a basic rule of interpreting lexical items within the texts of Linear B tablets, and indeed in other kinds of inscriptions, to look to see whether there are any related forms in other texts of the same kind. We should always first seek a *comparandum*. This was not done, as we have seen, in the case of Vn 130. Aura Jorro (1993, 458) cites a number of conjectures and the fact that Chadwick and Baumbach (1963) and Hooker (1968) can be consulted “para su consideración como forma verbal simplemente.” Those two sources were displaying admirable caution. But the meanings behind Palmer’s untenable forms (γέντο and κείτοι) have problematically taken hold in virtually all treatments of Vn 130 as defining the semantic field for the verb and thereby determining the kind of record Vn 130 is.

The surprising fact is that for *ze-to* on Vn 130.1 there is a clear *comparandum* that has lots of secondary support. On PY Un 267, we find the term *ze-so-me-no*, the future participle form from the verb whose later form is ζέω “seethe, boil.” (There is also a compound noun with an *o*-grade form of this root in its second element: *a-re-pa-zo-o*.) On Vn 130.1, then, we should attempt to reason first from what is known. The verb form *ze-to*, in Melena’s (forthcoming) view, is either (1) aorist $\bar{o}(s)$ *dzesto* (for the type of aorist, compare εὔκτο, δέκτο, and γέντο) “thus he boiled, seethed,” or (2) athematic present $\bar{o}(s)$ *dzestoi* “thus he is boiling, seething.”

The secondary support for this identification is strong. What we are positing as a related form *ze-so-me-no* occurs on Pylos tablet Un 267 (the famous text where a person named *a-ko-so-ta* “gave” incense materials to Thyestes the unguent boiler so that they might be “boiled”). It is a tablet of the same dimensions and shape as Vn 130. Most significantly, both Vn 130 and Un 267 are written by the same tablet writer, Hand 1, the so-called master scribe at Pylos. Both of these page-shaped tablets even have, rather uncannily, erasures and resettings of the final lines of their texts.

The other line of interpretation proposed for Vn 130 has been advanced by Bendall (2007, 243–244) based on observations of Killen (1999, 89). Killen accepts that the individuals on Vn 130 are “apparently supplying *a-ke-a₂*.” This, however, is far from apparent. In fact, in cases of contributions being made in the interests of and recorded by the palatial center, the names of the parties who are giving

goods or materials are usually in the nominative (e.g., Jn 829, Vn 10), as are the place names (whether as true nominatives or rubric nominatives). Here, however, the responsible individuals are listed in the dative after *pa-ro*, and the place names that are unambiguous in form (*pa-ki-ja-si* and *sari-no-te*) are in the dative/locative. We should infer that the other place names are also in the same case and that the tablet is recording activities taking place *in* these localities, not accepting contributions *from* them.

The main reason to posit that the individuals here listed in the *pa-ro* formula are supplying *aggeha* is because Killen follows the work of Ventris and Chadwick (1973), which follows Palmer’s (1963) now insupportable assumption that the opening heading phrase must have to do with collection. The tenuous logic does not stop there. Because the name of one (*a₃-ki-e-u*) of the 11 individuals on Vn 130 is also recorded on Pylos tablet Jn 605 (a text having to do with the allotment of bronze and reckoning of bronze workers) as an owner of two *do-e-ro* (“slaves”) at the same site (*a-pi-no-e-wi-jo*) as on Vn 130, Killen proposes that the *aggeha* on Vn 130 are made of bronze (see, too, Palmer 1963, 370).

Indeed, there is no indication in Vn 130 as to what material the vases are made of. Yet to single out one individual in the text and use an entry in another text recording the part-time involvement of this individual’s slaves in bronze working as a determining factor is problematic. Many of the names of Vn 130 are *hapax*. But those that are not *hapax* are found in other texts dealing with a wide variety of activities. They occur in tablets An 261 (as a member of a “council of elders” or *ke-ro-si-ja*), Fn 50.3 (as head of a “council of *qa-si-re-we* or headed by a *qa-si-re-u*” or *qa-si-re-wi-ja*), Cn 328 (in a herding context), and in the Ea series (as a *poimēn* “shepherd” who holds different plots of land in the district dominated by interests of the *lāwāgetās*).

Killen (2006, 81–83) later gives a fuller discussion of Vn 130. He once more asserts that Vn 130 “lists the collection (?) of perhaps *angeha* ‘jars, pails’, from various places and individuals.” A second interconnection links *a-ta-no-re* (dative after *pa-ro* on Vn 130.7) with an entry of the same name on tablet Fn 50, where *a-ta-no-ro* (genitive) is the head of a *qa-si-we-ri-ja*. Killen argues from textual occurrences that the *qa-si-re-we* in the texts are attested in the subject areas of “bronze” and “furniture.” The

association with bronze induces him to interpret all the *aggeha* here as made of bronze.

The *qa-si-re-we* are local “big men” who function at the village level and get drawn into economic and other activities in the palatial records rather unsystematically, when a particular *qa-si-re-u* can assist the palace and undoubtedly derive some benefit from what looks like almost ad hoc service (Palaima 2006, 68–69). Insofar as the connection with bronze working and bronze workers is concerned, the late Pierre Carlier, the specialist who devoted his career to understanding terms for kingship in Greek prehistory and history, established that “[I]a rareté relative des *qa-si-re-we* dans la série Jn incite à penser que leur lien avec les forgerons est *occasionnel*” (Carlier 1995, 356). The same reasoning applies to their connections with furniture manufacture. There is no need to limit the spheres, duties, and activities in which the *qa-si-re-we* are involved to the two that are haphazardly attested. This would be to revert to the thinking in the early years of Mycenaean studies when the *qa-si-re-u* was viewed as a “local guild leader” for bronzesmiths, no more, no less. We now know better.

Let us then interpret Vn 130 keeping the contents of tablet Un 267 in mind. We follow Melena (forthcoming) in interpreting *ai-to-pi* as an instrumental or comitative plural form in *-phi* from a noun αἶθος or an agent noun in *-tēr* or *-tōr* from the same stem, in this instance and at this period meaning something like “fire log” (Beekes 2010, 36–37: *s.* αἶθῆρ and αἶθω - αἶθος, compares Sanskrit *édha-* “firewood”; the Indo-European root *h₂eid^h*- means “kindle”). Our reading would be as follows:

Vn 130.1 Thus Kessandros has boiled/is boiling with fire logs

.a	<i>uco</i>	
.2 vessels at <i>me-ta-pa</i> ^{MD-HP} , <i>Perins</i> ^{hap}	1	
.3 at <i>a-pi-no-e-wi-jo</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Erussios</i> ^{hap}	1	
.4 at <i>a-pi-no-e-wi-jo</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Aigiheus</i>	4	
.5 at <i>e-na-po-ro</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Wādomenos</i> ^{hap}	9	
.6 at <i>Salinwons</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>*Owotos</i>	5	
.7 at <i>Sphagiānes</i> ^{MD-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Antānōr</i>	4	
.8 at <i>Kharadros</i> ^{MD-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Throwos</i>	1	
.9 at <i>Sphagiānes</i> ^{MD-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Eriwēros</i>	3	
.10 at <i>e-wi-te-wi-jo</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>Wisanthos</i>	1	
.11 at <i>me-te-to</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>*Koldos</i>	3	
.12 at <i>[Lo]usos</i> ^{MD-HP}	24	
.13 at <i>me-te-to</i> ^{ml-HP} , <i>uco</i> , <i>*Eug^whonis</i> ^{hap}	3	

hap in superscript = *hapax graphomenon* in the Linear B texts from Pylos

MD-HP in superscript = main district, among the nine principal districts in the Hither Province

ml-HP in superscript = a minor locality, located, insofar as we can tell, in the Hither Province

uco = under control, care or authority of; this is the meaning that the locational preverb *paro* has in the Pylos Linear B texts relating to livestock management (e.g., Cn 40, 45, 418, 599), banqueting provisions (e.g., Un 138), and landholding (e.g., Ep 212, Ep 539, Ea and Eb series passim)

All the personal names here given are possible but not secure reconstructions (cf. Nakassis 2013).

My proposed interpretation takes into account the assignment of both tablets Un 267 and Vn 130 to Hand 1 and their similar forms and even their similar formatting adjustments. On Un 267 Hand 1 monitors the “giving” by *a-ko-so-ta* of aromatics, wool, wine, and honey to a perfume boiler. Tablet Un 267 attests to Hand 1’s involvement in recording practical details connected with perfume “boiling.” The same verb for “boiling” occurs in the heading of tablet Vn 130. The practical concerns of Vn 130 are with the localities where the boiling is (or has) taken place, which individuals are in charge at each location, and what quantities of containers are being used in conjunction with the “fire logs” that are also stipulated in the heading. The provision of vessels and fire logs together is similar to the provision of sacrificial animals and fodder in the Thebes Wu sealings (Wu 46, 56, and 76, translated and discussed in Palaima 2004, 227, 237–238). In both cases, a secondary item is necessary to support the use of the primary items. Tablet Vn 10 and the culling records Va 1323, Va 1324, and Vn 1339 (Palaima 2003, 182–187) indicate that the palatial center at Pylos is concerned with raw wood resources and that the district of *ro-u-so*, which has such a large entry number in Vn 130.12, is a major supplier of raw wood materials (cf. Vn 10 where the *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro* supplies 100 *a-ko-so-ne* and 100 *e-pi-*i9-ta* to the joining workshop).

The decentralization of perfume-boiling operations should come as no surprise, and for the same reasons that one finds bronze working scattered in small places throughout the palatial territory. It is a way of “sharing the wealth” and the responsibilities (and eventual concomitant rewards) of what are technical operations that rely on rare resources

(respectively aromatics and imported bronze) and are most efficiently placed out near the raw wood supplies.

It should also be noted that Vn 130, in my proposed interpretation, deals exclusively with localities in the Hither Province. Four of these are among the nine principal centers: *me-ta-pa*, *Sphagiānes*, *Kharadros*, and *Lousos*. The first three of these principal centers are listed in canonical order in lines 1–8. The next portion of the tablet has been erased and redrawn by the tablet writer using more narrowly ruled lines in final lines 8–13. We get first in lines 9–13 a repetition of perfume boiling going on in the main district of *Sphagiānes* (see the entry for *pa-ki-ja-si* in line 7). The main district of *Lousos* is then also registered (in line 12) as a center of major production and without any indication of the individuals who are overseeing operations there. This, too, should come as no surprise, if we consider the special status of the *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro* and how it functions in tablet Vn 10 and other texts. We might imagine that this entity is a collective controlled by a body of high-status individuals, just as three *telestai* represent the *dāmos* in Pylos Un 718 and Er 312.

On Vn 130, besides the four principal districts, there are five other localities mentioned. It is difficult to resist suggesting that these five are specific places within the five other main districts into which the Hither Province is organized. This would then make Vn 130 a record of the status of unguent-boiling operations under the control of *Kessandros* throughout the Hither Province at the time the text was written. Unlike Un 267, the palatial administration was here on Vn 130 concerned

not with the aromatics and other materials that go into perfume boiling (Un 267) but with the containers and the wood supplies that were used to do the actual perfume making.

Tablet Vn 130 can then be seen as a complementary or companion text to Un 267, demonstrating further the concern of the principal tablet writer at the site of Pylos, Hand 1, with the important industry of perfume manufacture. It also suggests a division of areas of interest: *a-ko-so-ta* with perfume ingredients (Un 267) and *ke-sa-do-ro* with vessels and fuel (Vn 130). I do not mean to suggest that these two individuals organized the entire perfume industry according to such a separation of duties. But they are in these two tablets captured, now for over three millennia, as engaged in these operations. Finally, that two individuals identifiable from other tablets as *qa-si-re-we* are mentioned in Vn 130 as involved in seeing to the practical details of perfume making in specific localities is further proof of Carlier's (1995) observation that the central palace called upon local "big men" in an irregular way, when they could assist in particular activities. We may now add "perfume making" to bronze working and furniture making as among these tasks.

This is my scholarly gift to Cynthia Shelmerdine: another text to work into her ideas about the organization of the Mycenaean perfume industry at Pylos, a topic that has engaged her as long as we have known each other. She is, of course, entirely free to reject the interpretations I advance here. But even that should occupy her mind and bring her intellectual pleasure.

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