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ASSIGNMENT OF PERSONNEL TO CULTIC HOUSEHOLDS
IN MYCENAEAN GREECE AND THE HITTITE EMPIRE
(PY TN 316 AND KBO XVI.65)

The Pylian tablet Tn 316 is one of the most difficult for interpretation and one of the most discussed documents in the Linear B corpus. Record of human sacrifices,¹ calendar of purification rites,² description of a cultic procession³ have been proposed so far as an overall interpretation of this text. The main difficulty in the interpretation of this text is the phrase *i-je-to-qe* GN (dat.-loc.) *do-ra-qe pe-re po-re-na-qe a-ke* DN (dat.)⁴ repeated four times in the text. None of the three translations proposed so far is entirely satisfactory. The main weakness of the earlier translation of Ventris–Chadwick: “(he) sacrifices at GN and brings gifts and leads victims”,⁵ is the absence of the obvious subject of this sentence.⁶ Palmer’s translation: “a ceremony of consecration was held at GN, gifts were brought and *po-re-na* were purified”⁷ introduces, as interpretation of all Greek verbs, unattested forms.⁸ Nagy’s translation: “a procession is to

¹ J. Chadwick, *The Mycenaean World*, Cambridge, 1976, p. 92; G. Pugliese-Carratelli, *Miceneo porena*, SCO 7, 1958, pp. 27–31; R. J. Buck, *Mycenaean Human Sacrifices*, *Minos* 24, 1989, pp. 131–138.

² L. R. Palmer, *A Mycenaean Calendar of Offerings* (PY Kn 02), *Eranos* 53, 1955, pp. 1–13.

³ A. Sacconi, *La tavoletta di Pilo Tn 316. Una registrazione di carattere eccezionale?*, *Minos* 20–22, 1987, pp. 551–555; G. Nagy, *A Mycenaean Reflex in Homer: ΦΟΡΗΝΑΙ*, *Minos* 29–30, 1994–95, 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, 1994–95, pp. 177–185.

⁴ GN stands for ‘geographical name’ and DN stands for ‘divine name’.

⁵ *Documents*², No. 172, p. 463.

⁶ For the criticism see E. L. Bennett, *PU-RO, vacat* (PY Tn 316.7–10, v. 13–16), *CM*, 1979, pp. 221–234.

⁷ L. R. Palmer, *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts*, Oxford, 1963, p. 262.

⁸ See J. T. Hooker, *Linear B. An Introduction*, Bristol, 1980, pp. 160–161.

take place at PN and he bears gifts and takes along for his bearing to DN”, interprets *po-re-na* as a verbal form, which is difficult to reconcile with the appearance of the dative plural form of this word (*po-re-si*) on TH Of 26.⁹

Whatever the correct interpretation of this sentence may be, there is little doubt that the sole purpose of this text is the registration of a donation of 13 gold vessels, 8 women, and two men to six shrines. The overall structure of Tn 316 may be represented in the following table.

Table 1 (PY Tn 316)

Place	Recipient	Vessels	Personnel
<i>pa-ki-ja-si</i>	<i>po-ti-ni-ja</i> <i>ma-na-sa</i> ¹⁰ <i>po-si-da-e-ja</i> <i>ti-ri-se-ro-e</i> <i>do-po-ta</i>	AUR *215 1 (goblet) AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *216 1 (cup) AUR *215 1 (goblet)	MUL 1 MUL 1 MUL 1
<i>po-si-da-i-jo</i>	?	AUR *215 1 (goblet)	MUL 2
<i>pe-re-*</i> 82- <i>jo</i> <i>i-pe-me-de-ja-</i> <i><jo></i> <i>di-u-ja-jo</i>	<i>pe-re-*</i> 82 <i>i-pe-me-de-ja</i> <i>di-u-ja</i> <i>e-ma-a₂ a-re-ja</i>	AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *216 1 (cup)	MUL 1 MUL 1 VIR 1
<i>di-u-jo</i>	<i>di-we</i> <i>e-ra</i> <i>di-ri-mi-jo di-</i> <i>wo i-je-<re>-</i> <i>we</i>	AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *213 1 (dish) AUR *213 1 (dish)	VIR 1 MUL 1

The second paragraph is exceptional in several respects: the name of the recipient deity is not mentioned, the word *wa-tu* (ἄστυ) ‘town’ appears in the introductory sentence, two women are listed together with only one vessel, and the women are further qualified as *qo-wi-*

⁹ See G. Nagy, A Mycenaean Reflex (note 3), p. 173, n. 10; for criticism of this translation see T. G. Palaima, *PO-RE-NA: A Mycenaean Reflex in Homer? An I-E Figure in Mycenaean?*, *Minos* 31–32, 1996–97, pp. 305–312.

¹⁰ *Ma-te-ne-sa* and *Ma-pa-sa* were proposed as alternative readings of this word. See G. H. Knutzen, PY Tn 316, recto 4, *ma-te-ne-sa*, nicht *ma-na-sa*, *Kadmos* 34, 1995, pp. 53–62; id. Matensa, ‘Suchende’. Der mykenische Name der späteren Demeter, *ZPE* 120, 1998, pp. 39–44; K. T. Witczak, Further on the Mycenaean Goddess *ma-pa-sa* (PY Tn 316.4r), *Kadmos* 35, 1996, pp. 175–176.

ja and *ko-ma-we-te-ja*.¹¹ The other minor inconsistencies are the appearance of a word *a-re-ja* after the name of Hermes (*e-ma-a₂*) at the end of the third paragraph and the qualification of the last recipient *di-ri-mi-jo* as *di-wo i-je-we*. *a-re-ja* could be either some epithet of Hermes or a feminine form of the name Ares, similar to *po-si-da-e-ja* (feminine form of Poseidon) and *di-u-ja* (feminine form of Zeus). However, if the second possibility is correct, it is difficult to explain why two gods receive one vessel and one man. *di-wo i-je-we* can be interpreted as either “to the son of Zeus” or as a misspelling for *di-wo i-je-<re>-we* “to the priest of Zeus”. The first possibility is very problematic,¹² and the second possibility would mean that some recipients could be human.¹³

However, the formal analysis of the text alone, without the proper understanding of the introductory sentence, cannot disclose the true function of the donated men and women. According to proposed alternative interpretations of this sentence they could be either human victims or slaves donated to the gods as offerings, or carriers of gold vessels in a ritual procession. All these interpretations rely heavily upon comparisons with the Homeric verse, which is hardly legitimate, in my view, since Tn 316 is certainly not a piece of poetry, but an economic text. A number of questions of interpretation are hotly debated and are likely to remain open, but attention has not sufficiently concentrated on the wider background, which I would like to address. That is why I propose a radically different approach here by looking for parallels to this document, which can be helpful for the better understanding of its general background.

The closest parallel to Tn 316 is the Hittite cuneiform text KBo XVI.65, which is presented here in transliteration and English translation.¹⁴

¹¹ For possible interpretations of the last word see R. Sucharski, *ko-ma-we-te-ja*, *Eos* 81, 1993, pp. 177–81; M. del Frio, *Osservazioni su miceneo ko-ma-we-te-ja*, *Minos* 31–32, 1996–97, pp. 145–158.

¹² For the Mycenaean word for ‘son’ see V. L. Aravantinos, L. Godart, A. Sacconi, *Thèbes. Fouilles de la Cadmée*, vol. 1, *Les tablettes en Linéaire B de la Odos Pelopidou* (édition et commentaire), Pisa, 2001, p. 297–298 (Gp 227).

¹³ Maybe also *ti-ri-se-ro-e* (Tris-heros) and *do-po-ta* in the first paragraph.

¹⁴ Division into paragraphs in the translation reflects the ruling of the cuneiform tablet by horizontal lines.

KBo XVI 65

Obv. I.	1.1	LÚ 1 MUNUS IT-TI ^m mi-še-ni da-a-u-en
	2.2	LÚ ^{MEŠ} IT-TI ^m iš-ma-a-ta da-a-u-en
	3.1	LÚ 1 MUNUS IT-TI ^m pí-e-li da-a-u-en
	4.1	LÚ 1 MUNUS IT-TI ^m zu-lu-li-ja da-a-u-en
	5.	ki-e LÚ ^{MEŠ} URU ka-ap-pa-at-ta A-NA É ^d I[M I-NA]
	6.	URU ha-aš-ha-ta-at-ta LÚ ^{MEŠ} NU ^{GIŠ} KIRI ₆ GEŠTIN
	7.6	É ^{HIA} LÚ ^{MEŠ} URU ku-lu-up-pa I-NA É ^d I[M]
	8.	I-NA URU ha-aš-ha-ta-at-ta GAL.GUŠKIN GAL.KÙ.B[ABBAR]
	9.	a-ri-im-ma-aš-ša IŠ-TU GUŠKIN Û KÙ.B[ABBAR]
	10.	ha-a-li-iš-ši-ja-an-za na-an a-pí-e-[da-ni]
	11.	uš-ka-an-zi
	12.	1 IKU ^{GIŠ} KIRI ₆ GEŠTIN IT-TI ^m hu-ut-ti-i-li[]
	13.	da-a-u-en 1 IKU ^{GIŠ} KIRI ₆ GEŠTIN IT-TI ^m []
	14.	da-a-u-en
	15.	AN-NU-UT-TI LÚ ^{MEŠ} URU ku-lu-up-pa a-pí-[e-da-ni]
	16.	a-ra-aš a-ri-i da-a-aš-ki-e-[iz-zi]
	17.	[IK]U ^{GIŠ} KIRI ₆ GEŠTIN IT-TI ^m []
	18.	[da-a-u-en]
Rev. IV.	1'.	[]
	2'.	ki-i I-NA []
	3'.	LÚ ^{MEŠ} hi-lam-mi-e-eš []
	4'.	tak-ka-li-eš-kán-zi []
	5'.	ṬUP-PI URU ha-aš-ha-te-it-ta
	6'.	ṬUP-PI URU ki-iš-ta-ma
	7'.	ṬUP-PI URU ka-ap-pa-at-ta
	8'.	ṬUP-PI URU ta-ak-ki-mi-iš
	9'.	DUB 2-KAM QA-TI

- § 1. “We took from Miseni one man (and) one woman,
 “We took from Ismata two men
 “We took from Peli one man (and) one woman,
- § 2. “We took from Zululiya one man (and) one woman.
 “These are the men of Kappatta for the house of the St[orm]-god at Hashatatta, (they are) vine-growers.
- § 3. “Six houses of men of Kuluppa in the house of the St[orm]-god at Hashatatta, gold vessel, s[ilver] vessel, and *arimma*-vessel laid with gold and s[ilver]. They will inspect it the[re].
- § 4. “We took from Huttilli one IKU of vineyard,

- “We took from [PN] one IKU of vineyard.
 § 5. “These are the men of Kuluppa, the[ere ...] one will take for another.
 § 6. “[We took] from [PN x IK]U of vineyard.
 § 7’. “These at [...]
 “Men of the gatehouse [...]
 “They include [...]
 § 8’. “Tablet of Hashatitta,
 “Tablet of Kistama,
 “Tablet of Kappatta,
 “Tablet of Takkimis,
 “The second tablet is ended.”

The surviving text represents about a quarter of the original tablet, which itself is the second tablet in a series. The formulary of this text is unusual, combining several typical features of two different genres of documents: temple inventories and votive donations. The sudden shift from the preterite to the present-future marks the transition from one formulary to another. Paragraphs 3, 5, and 7’ use the formulary of temple inventories, and since paragraph 7 is part of the colophon, the whole text is probably also a temple inventory. However, the use of the first plural *da-a-u-en* (‘we took’) in the combination with the Akkadian preposition *IT-TI* (‘with’) in paragraphs 1, 2, 4, and 6 shows that these sections are quotations from the so-called ‘receipts’ (*lalami*)¹⁵ written originally upon wooden tablets (GIŠ.ḪUR or GIŠ.LE’U)¹⁶, which were probably written in the Luwian hieroglyphic script. Economic documents written in this script regularly use the preposition CUM-*ni* in a sense ‘from’ with the verbs for buying and selling, and the first plural forms are attested there as a standard formula.¹⁷ Such quotations from wooden tablets in Hittite clay tablets are not unusual. The most explicit reference to this practice is found in the inventory text IboT I.31: “An account of the garment is written according to the wooden carving. Thus (said) the queen:

¹⁵ CHD III.1, p. 26.

¹⁶ H. G. Güterbock, *Das Siegel bei den Hethitern*, Symbolae Koschaker, Leiden, 1939, p. 36; R. Payton, *The Ulu Bulun Writing-Board Set*, *Anatolian Studies* 41, 1991, pp. 99–106; C. F. Justus, *The Case of the Missing dusdumi and lalami*, *Minos* 29–30, 1994–95, pp. 213–238.

¹⁷ J. D. Hawkins and A. Morpurgo-Davies, *Buying and Selling in Hieroglyphic Luwian*, *Serta Indogermanica*, Innsbruck, 1982, pp. 96, 104; J. D. Hawkins, *The Kululu Lead Strips: Economic Documents in Hieroglyphic Luwian*, *Anatolian Studies* 37, 1987, pp. 140, 149.

‘when I shall put it in the house of the seal, they will make a clay tablet’” (I.13–15).¹⁸

Thus, the surviving portion of the text deals with an inspection of the temple of the Storm-god at the village of Hashatatta (or Hashatitta). This inspection found that the property of this temple consisted of six households of dependent personnel in the village of Kuluppa, one gold vessel, one silver vessel, and one vessel laid with gold and silver (§ 3). The ‘receipts’ are quoted in order to explain the origin of this property: four private donors donated five men and three women from the village Kappatta to the temple (§§ 1, 2), several other donors in the village Kuluppa donated three vineyards (§§ 4–6). The overall structure of this text can be reconstructed as follows:

Table 2 (Kbo XVI.65)

Location of the recipient	Recipient	Donor	Location of the donated property	Donated property
^{URU} Hashatatta	House of the Storm-god	Miseni Ismata Peli	^{URU} Kappatta ^{URU} Kappatta ^{URU} Kappatta	1 man 1 woman 2 men 1 man 1 woman
^{URU} Hashatatta	House of the Storm-god	Zululija	^{URU} Kappatta	1 man 1 woman
^{URU} Hashatatta	House of the Storm-god		^{URU} Kuluppa ^{URU} Hashatatta ^{URU} Hashatatta ^{URU} Hashatatta	6 households gold vessel silver vessel <i>arimma</i> vessel laid with gold and silver
[^{URU} Hashatatta]	House of the Storm-god	Huttili []	^{URU} Kuluppa ^{URU} Kuluppa	1 IKU of vine-yard 1 IKU of vine-yard
[^{URU} Hashatatta]	[House of the Storm-god]	[]	[^{URU} Kuluppa]	[] IKU of vine-yard

All men and women donated to this temple are vine-growers (NU.^{GI}^ŠKIRI₆.GEŠTIN), and they are further qualified in the colophon (§ 7) as *hi-lam-mi-e-eš* ‘men of the gatehouse’.¹⁹ This word is found in a similar context also in KUB 13.8, which describes donation made by the queen Ashmunikkal to a mortuary temple (É.NA₄ – literally ‘stone

¹⁸ S. Košak, Hittite Inventory Texts (CTH 241–250), Heidelberg, 1982, pp. 4–6.

¹⁹ Derived from the word *hīlammār* ‘gatehouse’. See I. Singer, Hittite *hīlammār* and Hieroglyphic Luwian **hīlana*, ZA 65, 1975, p. 77; F. Pecchioli Daddi, Mestieri, professioni e dignità nell’Anatolia ittita, Roma, 1983, pp. 210–213.

house’)²⁰ of several villages inhabited by craftsmen (*BE-EL QA-TI*), ploughmen (*APIN.LAL*), cow-herds (*SIPA.GUD*), shepherds (*SIPA.UDU*), and *sarikuwa*-soldiers, summarily designated as *hilammies*.

The variant spelling of this word is attested also in the best preserved Hittite list of cultic personnel (*KUB 38.12*) found among numerous temple inventories composed during the great cult reform of the king Tuthaliya IV.²¹ It differs from the rest of the texts of this group as its main concern is to record the cultic personnel of several temples in the city of Karahna.²² According to this text the personnel of a pair of temples (of Kurunta and Tarhunt) were subdivided into two main groups. The first consisted of 19 *hazziwitassis* ‘men of the ritual (*hazziwit-*)’²³, being of three temple stewards, one “mother of the god”, and 15 other women. The second group of 26 *hilammates* ‘men of the gatehouse (*hilammar*)’ consisted of three sub-groups: (1) eight *sarikuwa*, soldiers comprising a spear-man, a porter, a table-man, a lamentation priest, a clacker, a musician, an augur, and a potter; (2) nine *annalles*, ‘former’ or original ones; and (3) nine *kinunas*, ‘additional’ or recently ones added to the staff. The last two groups included an ‘anointed priest’, a scribe, a scribe on wood, a diviner, two singers, three cooks, two cup-bearers, a brewer, two bakers, a water-carrier, two sweepers, and a porridge-maker.

The personnel of another pair of temples (of the Storm-god of Heaven and of the Sun-goddess of Arinna) was also composed of two groups: (1) six *hilammates* (a temple steward, a diviner, a scribe, a singer, a baker, and a brewer), and (2) 32 *NAM.RA* (*arnuwalas* in Hittite) ‘deportees’.²⁴ The latter were in three households, of which two were ‘old’ (*annalles*) with 20 ‘men of Hatti’ and one with 12 men has been ‘recently’ (*kinunas*) donated by the chief scribe on wooden tablets (*GAL L^UDUB.SAR.GIŠ*). According to the colophon there were altogether 775 *hilammates* in nine temples of Karahna.

It can be concluded on the basis of this evidence that the personnel of Hittite temples consisted of three groups: (1) *hazziwitassis*, cultic personnel proper, priests and priestesses; (2) *hilammates*, lower cultic personnel and those who manned various temple services, listed by

²⁰ H. Otten, *Hethitische Totenrituale*, Berlin, 1958, p. 104.

²¹ C. W. Carter, *Hittite Cult Inventories*, Chicago, 1962.

²² M. Darga, *Karahna şehri kült-envanteri*, Istanbul, 1973.

²³ F. Pecchioli Daddi, *Mestieri, professioni e dignità* (note 19), pp. 216–217.

²⁴ S. Alp, *Die soziale Klasse der NAM.RA-Leute und ihre hethitische Bezeichnung*, JKF 1, 1950–51, p. 113.

profession; and (3) *arnuwalas* (NAM.RA), ‘deportees’ who probably cultivated the temple lands, listed by ‘houses’. The subdivision of the latter two groups into ‘former’ (*annalles*) and ‘recent’ (*kinunas*) shows that their members were supplied to the temples through donations by the palace and private persons, since these words appear in the most detailed description of such donations (KBo 12.53+KUB 48.105).²⁵

If we return now to the comparison between Tn 316 and KBo XVI.65, the most striking similarity between them is of course the combination of men, women, and gold vessels as offerings to the gods. In the Hittite text, however, donated men and women are neither human victims, nor slaves, but members of the cultic personnel living in their own households besides the temple (but in another village). Is it possible that the Pylian text reflects the similar situation? Two shrines mentioned in Tn 316 – *pa-ki-ja-si* and *po-si-da-i-jo* – are indeed attested together as cultic ‘households’ in the ration-list Fn 187 (in the allative: *pa-ki-ja-na-de* and *po-si-da-i-jo-de*).²⁶ Heralds (*ka-ru-ke*) are mentioned there in both households, and two named persons (*de-do-wa-re-we* and *ku-re-na-ze-ja*) appear at *pa-ki-ja-na*. The last mentioned place is of course the well-known administrative centre in the Pylian ‘hither’ province, and probably a cultic centre as well. A priest (*i-je-re-u*), a priestess (*i-je-re-ja*), and 54 male and female ‘slaves of god’ (*te-o-jo do-e-ro* and *te-o-jo do-e-ra*) appear in land-surveys of *pa-ki-ja-na* as landholders (Eb, Ed, En, Eo, Ep series). Land of god called *e-to-ni-jo* (Eb 297/Ep 704) is attested there as well. The goddess *di-u-ja* – one of the recipients of Tn 316 – also appears as the ‘owner’ of male and female slaves on An 607 (*di-wi-ja do-e-ra*) and Cn 1287 (*di-u-ja do-e-ro*).

Conclusions. 1. Though problems of our detailed linguistic interpretation still remain, Hittite parallels can at least help to clarify the main purpose of the text. Formulaic sentences repeated several times in Tn 316 were most probably borrowed from economic rather than ritual language. As in the Hittite text, they probably reflect the formulary of ‘receipts’ and other kinds of private records, which circulated outside the palatial administration both in Mycenaean Greece and the Hittite Empire, and had for this reason not survived in both cases.

²⁵ A. Archi, H. Klengel, Ein hethitischer Text über die Reorganisation des Kultes, *Altorientalische Forschungen* 7, 1980, pp. 143–157.

²⁶ For the interpretation of this tablet see M. Lindgren, *The People of Pylos*, Uppsala, 1973, II, p. 108, note 1.

2. The structures of the cultic personnel in Mycenaean Greece and the Hittite Empire shows a high degree of similarity. Priests, priestesses, and other named members of cultic households in Mycenaean Greece probably correspond to the Hittite ‘men of the ritual’ (*hazziwitassis*); those listed by professions correspond to the Hittite ‘men of the gatehouse’ (*hilammates* or *hilammies*); and ‘slaves’ (*do-e-ro* and *do-e-ra*) correspond to the Hittite ‘deportees’ (*arnuwalas* or *NAM.RA*). Members of the latter two groups of personnel were donated to the shrines and other cultic households in both societies. One such transaction is recorded in Tn 316 at Mycenaean Pylos and in KBo XVI.65 at Hittite Hashatatta.

3. Despite the apparent absence of temples there was a sector of the economy, which can conventionally be called ‘temple economy’ in Mycenaean Greece as in contemporary societies.