

THE USE OF THE ETHNICS *a-ra-si-jo* AND *ku-pi-ri-jo*  
IN LINEAR B TEXTS\*

Both Mycenologists and Near Eastern scholars have an interest in determining the extent to which the Mycenaeans were in contact with the rest of the greater Aegean area. To this end, the archaeological remains of the region have been used exhaustively. There is, however, another source of evidence for possible contacts which has not yet been studied systematically: the use of ethnics in the Linear B tablets. The ethnic which has drawn the attention of Near Eastern scholars in particular is the term *a-ra-si-jo* «Alasios» or «the man of Alasia». They cite the existence of this word in the tablets as evidence for Mycenaean contact with or knowledge of Alasia, i.e. Cyprus<sup>1</sup>. Yet, such an identification of the ethnic *a-ra-si-jo* does not take into account the much more frequent appearance in the tablets of the ethnic *ku-pi-ri-jo*, traditionally translated as «Cypriote»<sup>2</sup>. In this paper, I will discuss the general context of the two ethnics to determine whether they do indicate foreign contact, and, if so, what the nature of the contact may have been. I will then attempt to determine whether both ethnics

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<sup>1</sup> E. H. Cline, *Orientalia in the Late Bronze Age*, forthcoming, outline, Section II. Literary Evidence, part A: Linear B. A. B. Knapp, «Alashiya, Caphtor/Keftiu, and Eastern Mediterranean Trade: Recent Studies in Cypriote Archaeology and History», *JFA* 12:2, 1985, pp. 231-250, esp. 238. L. Hellbing, *Alasia Problems*, Göteborg 1979, p. 57. V. Bubenik, «Evidence for Alasiya in Linear B Texts», *Phoenix* 28, 1974, pp. 245-250. M. C. Astour, «Ugarit and the Aegean», *Orient and Occident: Essays Presented to Cyrus H. Gordon*, Neukirchen-Vluyn 1973, pp. 17-27, esp. 23. There are numerous others.

<sup>2</sup> I shall not consider here the possibility that *ku-pi-ri-jo* may be \*Gyblōs/Byblōs (as suggested by O. Szemerényi, *CR* 8, 1958, pp. 57-61). Historically speaking, Cyprus is the more probable contact. See also *Docs*<sup>2</sup>, p. 136.

can be said to have the same point of origin. First, I would like to discuss the *a-ra-si-jo* tablets themselves.

To begin, what have Alasia and the ethnic *a-ra-si-jo* to do with Cypriote contact?<sup>3</sup> Near Eastern scholars have tentatively identified the island of Cyprus with the ancient kingdom of Alasia. I say 'tentatively identified' because the exact location of Alasia is not given in any of our ancient sources. However, the Egyptians, Hittites and Syrians all tell us that Alasia's two major industries were the mining of copper and ship-building. This is consistent with what we know of later Cyprus, not only as a major source of copper, but also as a major center in Eastern Mediterranean trade, with several convenient ports. Two additional bits of information further confirm the identification of Alasia as an island: First, Alasia's navy was reputedly quite formidable, and it is interesting to note that the only recorded naval expedition ever organized by the Hittites was against Alasia. Second, Alasia was the traditional destination of Hittite exiles. This implies that Alasia may not have been a landlocked neighbor to the Hittite empire. In fact, the Hittites seem to have considered Alasia to be rather remote. Again, it is primarily for these reasons that Alasia has been identified as Cyprus.

Let us now turn to the *a-ra-si-jo* texts. The ethnic *a-ra-si-jo* only appears in three tablets from Knossos. They are KN Df 1229, a tablet concerning sheep, Fh 369, a tablet concerning oil, and a fragment X 1463:

Df 1229 + 5222 + 5342 + fr. (117) J1

.a OVIS<sup>m</sup> 25 OVIS<sup>f</sup> 50 [  
.b a-ra-si-jo / \*56-ko-we, pe OVIS<sup>m</sup>

Fh 369 (141) E1

zo-a / a-ra-si-jo OLE[

X 1463 (—) J1

a-ra-si-jo / a[

These tablets are all brief, and they do not contain much information. However, judging from their content, all three appear to center upon local Cretan affairs. On the Df tablet, which is a typical tablet within its series, *a-ra-si-jo* is a man's name. The shepherd, Alasios, has 75 sheep at the site \*56-ko-we. D tablets sometimes list

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the arguments equating Alasia with Cyprus, see footnote 1. See in particular, Hellbing, *Alasia Problems*, Göteborg 1979, *passim*.

a name in the genitive on the top line. This name is believed to be the 'owner' or 'collector' of the sheep listed. The absence of such a name is taken to mean that the shepherd himself owns the flock. No 'collector' is listed on Alasios's tablet, hence his flock may belong to him. If this is the case, his status may be higher than that of the average Knossos shepherd, since most of them have a collector listed above their flock totals.

We should note here that the appearance of an exotic ethnic as the name of a shepherd is not unparalleled in the D series. In Db 1105, there is a shepherd named *a<sub>3</sub>-ku-pi-ti-jo*, Aigyptios, 'the Egyptian', an ethnic which seems to refer specifically to Memphis in this period. No collector is listed above the name *a<sub>3</sub>-ku-pi-ti-jo*, which indicates that he may own the flock of 80 sheep at *su-ri-mo*, giving Aigyptios a similar status to that of Alasios.

The next *a-ra-si-jo* tablet, Fh 369, concerns the boiling of oil. It is uncertain whether the *a-ra-si-jo* here is meant to be a personal name, or a description of the oil. If it were a name, the tablet would read «oil for boiling, (given) to Alasios». If it were a description of the oil, the tablet would read «oil for boiling, Alasian oil». This Alasian oil could be Alasian in origin, or destined for Alasian markets. Unfortunately, no other tablet in the Fh series has *zo-a*, 'for boiling' as a heading, hence nothing can be learned through comparison.

The association of the ethnic *a-ra-si-jo* with oil is intriguing, however. Judging from the extensive information in the Linear B tablets, Cretan oil and wool would have been the items most likely to be offered in exchange for Cypriote copper. It would therefore not be unusual to see such products tagged, in accordance with their destination, as «Alasian». Nor would it be surprising, if we were to read the ethnic as a personal name, to find an Alasian involved in the Cretan oil industry. Despite its fragmentary state, then, this tablet could support the identification of *a-ra-si-jo* with direct foreign contact.

The final *a-ra-si-jo* tablet, X 1463, a mere fragment, gives only the ethnic *a-ra-si-jo*. This text has not been assigned to a scribe. However, its find spot is the same as that of our first tablet, Df 1229, in the East-West corridor of the Palace of Minos<sup>4</sup>. This suggests that X 1463 may also have dealt with sheep, making it a can-

<sup>4</sup> See J.-P. Olivier, *Les scribes de Cnossos*, Rome 1967, p. 191.

didate for Hand 117<sup>5</sup>. It is possible that the *a-ra-si-jo* of X 1463 and Df 1229 refer to the same individual.

Again, all three *a-ra-si-jo* tablets were found at Knossos. No reference to *a-ra-si-jo* has been found in any of the tablets on mainland Greece to date<sup>6</sup>. The absence of *a-ra-si-jo* in the mainland tablets could be evidence in support of the identification of *a-ra-si-jo* as Alasian/Cypriote. Because Crete was a stopping point for Near Eastern traders *en route* to Egypt throughout the Middle Bronze age<sup>7</sup>, an Alasian traveller considering a place to settle was more likely to be familiar with Crete than the continent. Then again, the absence of an *a-ra-si-jo* on the mainland could also indicate that the ethnic was derived from a community on Crete itself<sup>8</sup>. There are instances of unidentified ethnics in the KN tablets which could only be local<sup>9</sup>. It is impossible to tell from the extant tablets which of these two alternatives is more likely. The term *a-ra-si-jo*, then, remains somewhat of a mystery. There is simply not enough information available to locate the origins of the ethnic anywhere in the Aegean with certainty. What does remain, however, could suggest an *a-ra-si-jo*/Alasia connection. A final determination cannot be made until more evidence is unearthed.

Let us now turn to the *ku-pi-ri-jo* tablets. The word *ku-pi-ri-jo* is most frequently interpreted as «kuprios», an ethnic derived from «Kupros», the island of Cyprus. It ought to be recognized here that if *ku-pi-ri-jo* does indeed mean «Cypriote», it does not rule out the hypothesis that *a-ra-si-jo* might also refer to Cyprus. There could easily have been two names for the island, or even different names for different communities within the island. Some examples of this

<sup>5</sup> Hand 117 dealt almost exclusively with sheep, *Les scribes*, pp. 60-62.

<sup>6</sup> There is a possible fragment on MY Au 658.1, ]*ra-si-jo* VIR ]|. However, the text is too damaged to firmly identify the *ra*. In addition, a similar text, MY Au 657.6 mentions a *qa-ra-si-jo* VIR|. It is likely that the mutilated texts of Au 658.1 and Au 657.6, both from West House and both by Hand 62, list one and the same individual.

<sup>7</sup> L. Godart, «Quelques aspects de la politique extérieure de la Crète minoenne et mycénienne», *Res Mycenaeae: Akten des VII. Internationalen Mykenologischen Colloquiums in Nürnberg, Göttingen 1983*, pp. 131-139, *passim*.

<sup>8</sup> Chadwick and Ventris believed that *a-ra-si-jo* referred to a place in Southern Crete, \**Alasσα* or *Λασαία*; see *Docs*<sup>2</sup> under *a-ra-si-jo*. The term is not identified as linked to a Cretan toponym by J. McArthur in her «Tentative Lexicon of Mycenaean Place-Names», *Minos* 19, 1985, Anexo.

<sup>9</sup> See *Docs*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 139-150. See especially the list of Knossos place names on pp. 146-147.

phenomenon would be the Roman use of 'Graeci' vs. the Greek 'Hellenes', our modern switch of Britain vs. England, America vs. the United States, etc. We should also keep in mind that we are dealing with at least two different cultures and languages. Who knows whether the Minoans or the Mycenaeans came into contact with Cyprus first, when they did so, and for what reasons? The Knossos and Pylos references may also be chronologically separated by as many as 150 years. The terms in the extant Linear B texts could have gotten there by very circuitous and different routes.

Four Pylos tablets use the word *ku-pi-ri-jo*. They are Cn 131.3, Cn 719.7, Jn 320.3 and Un 443. Three of these tablets, Cn 131.3, Cn 719.7, and Jn 320.3, use *ku-pi-ri-jo* in clear and explicable contexts. In all three, *ku-pi-ri-jo* is an ethnic used as a personal name. On Cn 131.3, *ku-pi-ri-jo* appears in the middle of a list of shepherds and their sheep. Judging by his sheep totals, only 50 rams which is one of the smaller entries on the tablet, his status appears to be a little lower than that of the other shepherds. On Cn 719.7, *ku-pi-ri-jo* again appears in a list of shepherds. At the site *pi-<sup>\*</sup>82*, *ku-pi-ri-jo* is associated with 60 rams 'belonging to' (?) *a-ke-o-jo*<sup>10</sup>. Again, *ku-pi-ri-jo*'s allotment of sheep is modest—the second smallest on the list, of which the greatest flock numbers 230 rams. It is possible that *ku-pi-ri-jo* on Cn 131 and 719 refer to one and the same individual. A reminder that ethnic personal names are not unusual occurrences can also be found on Cn 719. Right above *ku-pi-ri-jo* on line .6, *ra-mi-ni-jo*, 'the Lemnian', has 90 rams at *pi-<sup>\*</sup>82* 'belonging' to *a-ke-o-jo*. It appears that *ku-pi-ri-jo* is not the only individual to take his name from his or his ancestor's place of origin.

The third Pylos tablet to use *ku-pi-ri-jo* as a personal name is Jn 320.3. Here *ku-pi-ri-jo* receives an average size allotment of four units of bronze. The ethnic is embedded in a list which establishes clear parallels for its interpretation as a personal name.

The fourth PY tablet, Un 443, presents us with a choice:

<sup>10</sup> *a-ke-o-jo* is one of four men «responsible for 'collecting' the cattle» (*Docs*<sup>2</sup>, p. 200). Because of their apparent importance in the cattle tablets and elsewhere, these four men have been identified as officials or representatives of the palace at Pylos. See also A. Morpurgo, *MGL*, Rome 1963, s.v.

## Un 443 [ + ] 998

- .1 ku-pi-ri-jo , tu-ru-pte-ri-ja , o-no LANA 10 \*146 10  
 .2 po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja LANA 3  
 .3 ]d̥o-ke , ka-pa-ti-ja , HORD 2 te-ri-ja GRA 1 LANA 5

The *ku-pi-ri-jo* here could be (1) a personal name, which would give us «to Kuprios, a load of alum»; or (2) an adjective modifying *o-no*, which would read «a Cypriote load of alum». Both translations are possible. On the one hand, we have already seen *ku-pi-ri-jo* used as a personal name. However, Cyprus was also a prominent source of alum, a mineral used for building, medicine, painting frescoes, fire-proofing wood, softening wool and preparing fabrics for dying<sup>11</sup>. The tablet could be recording a transaction involving Cypriote alum. In the end, it is impossible to determine whether the scribe intended the *ku-pi-ri-jo* here to be a personal name or a description of the product listed<sup>12</sup>. Let us now turn to the Knossos tablets.

The extant KN *ku-pi-ri-jo* tablets are Fh 347, 371, 372, 5446, 5447, 5476, [5490]; Fp (2) 5472<sup>13</sup>; Ga 517, <676>, 677; Gg 995; K 773; Od 667 + 5898 + 8292 + fr.; X 468. Many of the contexts in which the ethnic *ku-pi-ri-jo* occurs at Knossos are not clear. There are at present four arguments concerning the appearances of *ku-pi-*

<sup>11</sup> L. Baumbach, «Mycenaean *tu-ru-pte-ri-ja* and Herodotus II.180», P. Hr. Ilievski and L. Crepajac eds., *Tractata Mycenaea*, Skopje 1987. For the uses of alum, see pp. 52-54.

<sup>12</sup> Unfortunately the remaining contents of the tablet cannot help our interpretation, since they are also in dispute. The words *po-re-no-zo-te-ri-ja* and *te-ri-ja* are obscure (*MGL, Docs<sup>2</sup>*). L. R. Palmer, in *The Interpretation of Mycenaean Greek Texts*, Oxford 1963, pp. 250 ff., after reconstructing *te-ri-ja* as *mu-te-ri-ja*, disagrees with the identification of *tu-ru-pte-ri-ja* as alum. He finds the presence of so many *-e-ri-ja* endings on one tablet suspicious, and suggests that they are festival endings. However, the mere presences of so many *-e-ri-ja* endings does not require that the words be the names of festivals. As Baumbach points out (pp. 50-51), this ending can also be the derivative of an agent noun. Furthermore, the presence of *o-no* beside a festival name, whether *o-no* is translated as a transaction term (Baumbach) or unit of measurement (W. R. Gallagher, below n. 34), is hard to explain, in spite of Palmer's suggestion of «a ritual 'gift-exchange' machinery», Baumbach, p. 51.

<sup>13</sup> This tablet is a recent join: Fp (2) 5472 + 5476 + *frr.* (5)

.1 ku-pi-ri-jo / su-ko-ne QLE[  
 .2 si-ja-ma[ ] QLE 1 S [  
 .3 ] *vest.* [ ]de QLE 2 [  
 .4 ] *vacat* [ ]

This tablet is not discussed in this paper because its use of *ku-pi-ri-jo* is not in a clear context. It is interesting to note, however, that it is used as a heading.

*ri-jo* in the Knossos tablets. Chadwick first asserted that *ku-pi-ri-jo* is the description of an itinerant Cypriote merchant<sup>14</sup>. This argument is based upon the use of *ku-pi-ri-jo* at Pylos as a personal name. It is dangerous, however, to assume that scribes in different series at one site, let alone at Pylos and Knossos, would always employ the ethnic in precisely the same way, particularly considering the variety of contexts in which *ku-pi-ri-jo* can be found at Knossos.

Palmer gives us our second possible translation of *ku-pi-ri-jo*, identifying it as the name of a spice, «kuprinon», or henna<sup>15</sup>. He presents the three *ku-pi-ri-jo* Ga spice tablets as evidence for this interpretation. On Ga 517, *ku-pi-ri-jo* appears to have been written as a later addition above the word *ku-pa-ro*, cypress<sup>16</sup>. On Ga 676 *ku-pi-ri-jo* seems to have been the original entry, and the word *ko-ri-ja-do-no*, coriander, is written above, suggesting that *ko-ri-ja-do-no* was a later addition<sup>17</sup>. Finally, on Ga 677 *ku-pi-ri-jo* is listed alone before the ideogram AROM. According to Palmer, the proximity of *ku-pi-ri-jo* to identified spice names gives it «apparent aromatic affinities»<sup>18</sup>.

An immediate problem with this line of interpretation, however, is that it does not satisfactorily explain the appearances of *ku-pi-ri-jo* outside of the spice series<sup>19</sup>. Still more problems arise when we specifically examine how *ku-pi-ri-jo* is used within the Ga series. Palmer states that on Ga 517 and 676, *ku-pi-ri-jo* is meant to be recorded as one of two spices —yet there is only one ideogram for a spice on each tablet<sup>20</sup>. In addition, throughout the Ga series, the spices *ko-ri-ja-do-no* (coriander), *ku-pa-ro* (cypress) and *po-ni-ki-jo*

<sup>14</sup> J. Chadwick, «Pylos Tablet Un 1322», *Mycenaean Studies*, Madison 1964, pp. 19-27, esp. 22.

<sup>15</sup> Palmer, *Interpretation*, p. 260. He supports his hypothesis with the help of Theophrastus, *De Odoribus* 25.

<sup>16</sup> The word *ku-pi-ri-jo* is written right along the top of the tablet above the original entry of *ku-pa-ro*.

<sup>17</sup> Although both entries are written with small characters, the *ko-ri-ja-do-no* is written above the original *ku-pi-ri-jo* entry without ruling, and does appear to have been a later addition.

<sup>18</sup> Palmer, p. 260.

<sup>19</sup> L. Godart points out this problem as well in «*Kupirijo* dans les textes mycéniens», *SMEA* 5, 1968, pp. 64-70, esp. p. 64.

<sup>20</sup> See also Bubenik, pp. 246-247.

(*phoinikion*) are all followed by measurements, indicating that they are measurable ingredients. However, *ku-pi-ri-jo* is never followed by a measurement. In fact, *ku-pi-ri-jo* only appears in front of the ideogram for perfume. This suggests two possibilities. The first is that *ku-pi-ri-jo* is a personal name, and the recorded spice is being allotted to him. The second is that the product is being designated as 'Cypriote', either in origin or as an intended market<sup>21</sup>.

The third interpretation of *ku-pi-ri-jo* uses the ethnic as a personal name and identifies him as an unguent boiler. The primary argument in support of this identification is made by Godart<sup>22</sup>. Godart accepts the interpretation of *ku-pi-ri-jo* as a personal name because *ku-pi-ri-jo*'s association with large amounts of oil is reminiscent of the use of *\*wi-ri-ne-u*, an anthroponym involved with bulk amounts of oil in other Fh tablets. In the Pylos tablets, the personal name *e-u-me-de-i* is also associated with great quantities of oil, and in PY Ea 812, 820 we see him listed as an *a-re-po-zo-o*, an unguent boiler. In the PY tablets, unguent boilers work with spices such as cypress and coriander<sup>23</sup>. As we saw above, *ku-pi-ri-jo* is associated with these spices in the Ga tablets. Therefore, the Knossian *ku-pi-ri-jo*'s connection with large quantities of oil and spices indicates that he, too, is an unguent boiler.

This argument is strong. However, Godart's argument hinges on his assumption that *ku-pi-ri-jo* is a personal name. He is also making the assumption that the procedures described on the Knossos tablets, which were written approximately 150 years before those at Pylos, can be compared to those of the mainland. Looking at the Knossos tablets, if we treat *ku-pi-ri-jo* as a personal name in all of the texts involving oil, we begin to run into translation difficulties. For example, using Godart's explanation we can neatly translate the following Fh tablets<sup>24</sup>:

<sup>21</sup> I would like to point out that if someday *ku-pi-ri-jo* is identified as an herb, it would not refute its use as an ethnic elsewhere in the tablets. There is in fact an example of an ethnic used to describe a spice in the Ga series: *po-ni-ki-jo*, identified as *phoinikion*, 'the Phoenician herb'. The herb *phoinikion* is clearly associated with Phoenicia in some way. I see no reason why an herb could not also be associated with Cyprus as the 'Cypriote herb'.

<sup>22</sup> L. Godart (*supra* n. 19). See also C. W. Shelmerdine, «Shining and Fragrant Cloth in Homeric Epic», unpublished paper, p. 6.

<sup>23</sup> See, for example, PY Un 267 and Un 249. See also *Docs*<sup>2</sup>, pp. 223-224.

<sup>24</sup> All of the Fh tablets were written by Hand 141. This includes Fh 369, one of the *a-ra-si-jo* tablets discussed earlier in this paper. Since Hand 141 uses both *a-ra-si-jo* and *ku-pi-*

**Fh 361 + 9069 + 9096 + fr.**

- .a OLE 21 S 2 [ ] *vac.*  
 .b ku-pi-ri-jo / o-no zo-a OLE 3 V 3

**Fh 372 + 5440 + 5474 + frr. (3)**

ku-pi-ri-jo / o-no OLE 150

**Fh 5446**

- .1 ku-pi-ri-jo / u-ne[  
 .2 to-ro-qa / a-nu- [  
 .2 *to-ro* over [ ]. Perhaps *a-nu-we*].

The respective entries would read: «To Kuprios, a load for boiling», «To Kuprios, a load», and «To Kuprios, *u-ne*[??]»<sup>25</sup>. According to this interpretation, the unguent boiler Kuprios receives large oil loads to use in his trade. However, this pattern breaks down with:

**Fh 5246 + 8504 + frr. (4)**

ku-pi-ri-jo / ma-ro-ne OLE 100 [

If we follow the above method of translation, this tablet would say «To Kuprios, to Maron»<sup>26</sup>. Tablets Fh 347, 371 and 5447 also lead us into difficulty if we use Godart's reading:

**Fh 347**

- .1 ma-ro-ne / ku-pi-ri-jo OLE 6 S 2 MU 5  
 .2 we-we-ṛo / o-no OLE 1 a-ri-to-[.]jo OLE V 2

**Fh 371 + 5448**

]o-se-ko-do / ku-pi-ri-jo OLE 13 S 1 MU 10  
 MU 10 written below 13.

**Fh 5447 + 5452 + 5466 + 7787 + frr. (12)**

]ki-ro / ku-pi-ri-jo<sub>1</sub> o-no OLE 9 S [ ] MU 7

Godart's reading would give us the following separate assignments of OIL: «To Maron, to Kuprios»; «To Weweros, a load»; «to

*ri-jo* within the same series, it rules out the possibility that different scribes employed different toponyms for the same place according to their own tastes.

<sup>25</sup> The fragment *u-ne*[ has no parallels, and no guess can be made as to its meaning. The word *to-ro-qa* has no definite translation. It is possibly a verb form, although the noun τροφή has also been suggested as a possibility. The fragment *a-nu*-[ or *a-nu-we*[ is also untranslatable.

<sup>26</sup> *ma-ro-ne* is a dative form. Its most likely identification is as an anthroponym. *Docs*<sup>2</sup>, glossary.

Aristo-?...»; «To ]o-se-ko-do, to Kuprios»<sup>27</sup>; and «To ]-ki-ro, to Kuprios a load».

This leads us to the final possible interpretation of *ku-pi-ri-jo*. According to Melena and Palaima, *ku-pi-ri-jo* consistently makes sense in the Knossos Fh tablets if it is translated as an ethnic adjective describing origin or destination<sup>28</sup>.

Such an interpretation of *ku-pi-ri-jo* is further supported by a recent tablet join<sup>29</sup>:

Od 667 + 5898 + 8292 + fr.:

- .A 'ku-pi-ri-ja' LANA 1 M 2 P 4[  
 .B. ][. ]-ku / ke-[ ]-ja M 2 P 1 [  
*lat. inf.* ] sa-mu[ ] 1 qo-ja-te P 1 [

On this Knossos wool tablet, the ethnics *ku-pi-ri-ja* and *ke-re-si-ja*<sup>30</sup> are used to describe the wool ideogram. It appears, then, that a distinction was being made between 'Cypriote wool', and 'Cretan wool'<sup>31</sup>. In fact, the recorded amount of Cypriote wool is two times that of the Cretan wool, which could be taken to support the thesis that the Cypriote wool is destined to be an export item. We can suggest this because products intended for distribution in foreign markets are usually sent off in larger, bulk quantities. Keeping this in mind, the large amounts of oil dealt with on the Fh tablets above also support the identification of *ku-pi-ri-jo* as a description for trade items.

Two other tablets use *ku-pi-ri-jo* in a possibly descriptive manner. On Gg (2) 995 + 7370 + 7591 + 7764, the word *ku-pi-ri-jo* appears before a set of ideograms denoting an amphora filled with honey<sup>32</sup>:

<sup>27</sup> ]o-se-ko-do is tentatively identified as an anthroponym. *Docs*<sup>2</sup> glossary. The reading ]o-se ko-do proposed by Gallavotti, *Studi Ciprioti*, p. 53, seems to have no epigraphical justification.

<sup>28</sup> J. L. Melena in E. L. Bennett *et al.*, «436 raccords et quasi-raccords de fragments inédits dans KT 5», *Minos* 24, 1989, pp. 202-203; T. G. Palaima, «Maritime Matters in the Linear B Tablets», R. Laffineur and L. Basch eds., *Thalassa* (= *Aegeaeum* 7), Liège 1991, pp. 291-295.

<sup>29</sup> Melena and Palaima (*supra* n. 28).

<sup>30</sup> As reconstructed by Melena (*supra* n. 28).

<sup>31</sup> It is possible that the two ethnics are feminine singular datives indicating that the wool was allotted to a Cypriote woman and a Cretan woman. But, as Palaima, p. 293, n. 88, points out «the second phrase hardly would seem useful in a Cretan context», p. 293, n. 88.

<sup>32</sup> \*209<sup>VAS</sup> + A has been identified as an amphora, most likely made of clay. See F. Vandenaabeele and J.-P. Olivier, *Les Idéogrammes Archéologiques du Linéaire B*, Paris 1979, pp. 259-263.

ma-ki-ro-ne / ku-pi-ri-jo , 'ME + RI' \*209<sup>VAS</sup> + A 6[ (135)  
 \*209<sup>VAS</sup> + A over [ ] . 6[ perhaps over [ ] .

This tablet's content is typical of the Gg tablets, all of which list pots of honey, possibly intended to be religious offerings<sup>33</sup>. However, the rest of the Gg tablets cannot provide an identifiable pattern with which to compare the format of Gg 995<sup>34</sup>. Since the personal name *ma-ki-ro-ne* appears to be in the dative, it seems more likely that the *ku-pi-ri-jo* here is descriptive. Gg 995, then, may record an offering of 6 amphorae of Cypriote honey to *ma-ki-ro-ne*.

The other tablet to use *ku-pi-ri-jo* in a possibly descriptive manner is K(2) 773 + 1809 (224?):

.A ] *ke* \*222<sup>VAS</sup> 7  
 .B ] ku-pi-ri-jo / *ke* \*202<sup>VAS</sup> 1  
 .B Trace of upright at left.

K 773's content is typical within its series, but there are no format parallels to be drawn from the other K tablets<sup>35</sup>. *Ku-pi-ri-jo* here could be a man's name in the dative. However, the vases could hint at export, allowing for another interpretation of *ku-pi-ri-jo* as an ethnic adjective. In fact, the ideogram *ke* \*222<sup>VAS</sup>, denoting a pithoid vessel, occurs nowhere else in all of the Linear B tablets<sup>36</sup>. Given the possibility that the *ku-pi-ri-jo* heading of K 773 might be descriptive, the difference between the vessels on this tablet and the other K tablets could be that K 773 is recording export vessels. Yet another unusual feature of K 773 is the syllabogram *ke* that appears before both vase ideograms. It is unlikely to be an abbreviation for a vase type, since, again, the two ideograms are different<sup>37</sup>. It might, therefore, be a description of the vase contents or even, as on Od 667, designate that the vases are Cretan in manu-

<sup>33</sup> See Vandenabeele and Olivier (*supra* n. 32), pp. 259-263.

<sup>34</sup> The one other full tablet by Hand 135 lists *ma-ri-ne-we* , / *do-e-ra*. The first element is parallel to *ma-ki-ro-ne*, the second to *ku-pi-ri-jo*. The most likely interpretation is that *do-e-ra* specifies that the honey is destined for the *do-e-ra* of \**ma-ri-ke-u*, a probable theonym.

<sup>35</sup> Unfortunately, we do not have enough information on Hand 224 to help interpret the tablet contents. See Olivier, *Les scribes*, p. 96.

<sup>36</sup> Vandenabeele and Olivier (*supra* n. 32), pp. 233-234.

<sup>37</sup> Vandenabeele and Olivier (*supra* n. 32), pp. 233-235; *ke* \*222<sup>VAS</sup> is a pithoid shape, whereas *ke* \*202<sup>VAS</sup> is best described as a «dipa» or δέπας.

facture and not Cypriote recycles. If this is the case, K 773 may be recording a set of export vessels and their contents designated for export to Cyprus.

Of the four different arguments concerning the interpretation of *ku-pi-ri-jo*, two were more plausible: 1) *ku-pi-ri-jo* as an unguent boiler, and 2) *ku-pi-ri-jo* as an ethnic adjective describing the destination or origin of the product listed. In the following section of the paper, I propose to demonstrate that *ku-pi-ri-jo* is more likely to be an ethnic adjective.

For the purposes of my argument, I will assume that the use of *ku-pi-ri-jo* remains constant within a series. Given this, as we saw above, the definition of *ku-pi-ri-jo* as a personal name runs into difficulty in the oil series, and only makes consistent sense if we use it as an adjective.

Examining the oil series, we see that five tablets use *ku-pi-ri-jo* as a heading, whereas three use a personal name as a heading, placing *ku-pi-ri-jo* before the ideogram. What is the distinction? The difference between the two groups of texts is one of specificity. The *ku-pi-ri-jo*, headed texts all list bulk, possibly export-sized—allotments of oil. With the exception of Fh 5246, they are all general descriptions of oil alone. In contrast, the three tablets headed by personal names allot large amounts of oil to specific individuals. The differences do not end here, however. The personal name tablets all list the ideogram *MU* after the oil measurements. This ideogram is only found in the oil series. It has also been tentatively identified as an ideogram for large, leather containers used in the transportation of oil over land<sup>38</sup>. This

<sup>38</sup> L. Palmer, review of *Docs<sup>2</sup>*, *Gnomon* 48, 1976, p. 434, first recognized an s 4: *MU* 1 ratio. Such a neat correspondence leads one to believe that *MU* is a container capable of holding s 4 (c. 38.4 liters), a capacity larger than that of a standard stirrup jar (c. 12-14 liters): Palaima (*supra* n. 28), p. 293; see also J. L. Melena, «Olive Oil and Other Sorts of Oil in the Mycenaean Tablets», *Minos* 18, 1983, pp. 121-122, who suggests that the containers are made of leather. The possibility that *MU* is a container is supported by W. R. Gallagher's identification of *o-no* as «ass-load», in «A Reconsideration of *o-no* in Mycenaean Greek», *Minos* 23, 1988, pp. 85-106, esp. p. 98: «Because of the close association of the *MU*-container with *ku-pi-ri-jo*, *o-no* was also placed in the *ku-pi-ri-jo* texts [Fh 347, 361, 372, 5447] to prevent confusion between the two systems of measurement». A. Sacconi, in «La mirra nella preparazione degli unguenti profumatis a Cnosso», *Athenaeum* 47, 1969, pp. 286-289, argues that *MU* is an abbreviation for the spice myrrh. However, of the extant Fh tablets, not one lists a spice in conjunction with oil. Furthermore, the *MU* ideograms lack units of measurement. This implies that *MU* is not a measurable product such as a spice.

indicates that *ku-pi-ri-jo* may in fact describe the oil's final destination. We can now translate the texts:

Fh 347

«To Maron/Cypriote-bound oil OLE 6 S 2 + containers for transport».

«To Weweros / a load OLE 1, to Arist[] OLE V 2»

Note that of the three men allotted oil on Fh 347, Maron gets a much larger amount, and he is also the only one to receive specialized containers. The other two personal name headed Fh texts translate as follows:

Fh 371 + 5448

«To ]o-se-ko-do / Cypriote-bound oil OLE 13 S 1 + containers for transport»

Fh 5447 + 5452 + 5466 + 7787 + *frr.* (12)

«To ]ki-ro / Cypriote-bound oil OLE 9 S 1 + containers for transport»<sup>39</sup>.

The personal name Maron also appears on the *ku-pi-ri-jo* headed tablet Fh 5246<sup>40</sup>. This text records such a large amount of oil that it has been used as evidence for export. If we translate *ku-pi-ri-jo* here as an adjective of destination, we get: «Cypriote-bound oil/to Maron 100 OLE».

What we appear to have, then, is a general allotment of Cypriote-bound oil going to Maron on Fh 5246. Fh 347 is a more detailed description of a specific amount of Cypriote oil being allotted to probably the same Maron for transport in special containers. This use of *ku-pi-ri-jo* makes consistent and reasonable sense throughout the Fh series. It also sheds light upon the translations of several Knossos tablets in other series.

Where is Maron taking the oil? He could be transporting Cypriote-bound oil to be treated before shipment. He might also be a more direct contact with the shipping industry itself. All we do know about Maron is that he is one step in the process of shipping oil to Cyprus from Knossos.

<sup>39</sup> The s 4 : MU 1 ratio is kept if we restore s [] to s 1 (the only possible restorations could be s 1 or s 2). See Palaima (*supra* n. 28), p. 293.

<sup>40</sup> Gallagher (*supra* n. 38) also notices the importance of the name Maron, p. 98, nn. 51, 52 and p. 106.

In conclusion, the extant *a-ra-si-jo* texts neither prove nor disprove the theory that «Alasios» derived his name from the land of Alasia. As for the use of *ku-pi-ri-jo* at Knossos, it is possible that the word was used as an adjective describing the destination or origin of a given product. We have also determined that a certain Maron may have been involved in the shipment of oil to Cyprus. The only apparent cross-over between the two ethnics occurs in the Fh oil series. However, the *a-ra-si-jo* oil tablet is too fragmentary to read. Any connection between this *a-ra-si-jo* tablet and the *ku-pi-ri-jo* oil tablets must remain a mystery pending further finds or joins.

*Austin, TX 78712-1181 USA*  
*University of Texas at Austin*  
*Program in Aegean Scripts and Prehistory*  
*Department of Classics WAG 123*

LEAH HIMMELHOCH