

Krzysztof Tomasz Witczak Łódź)

**THE LINEAR B SIGN \*76:  
A PROPOSAL FOR NEW VALUE ( $RI_2$ )**

*Dedicated to the Memory of Professor Jan Safarewicz,  
a Pioneer of Mycenaean Linguistics in Poland*

1. Introductory remarks.

It is a well-known fact that the archives of Linear B tablets contain many examples of alternative spellings of what appears to be the same word. Some of these variations have been seen as evidence for the existence of the secondary ‘doublet-signs’ containing the liquids plus vowels, namely  $ra_2$ ,  $ra_3$  and  $ro_2$ . For instance, there are frequent cases where the feminine agent suffix  $-ti-ri-ja$  (i.e.,  $\acute{\tau}ρια$ ) is ‘substituted’ by  $-ti-*$ 76. The observed ‘alternation’ caused that the transcription  $ra_2$  for the sign \*76 has been accepted by most mycenologists. The exact phonetic value of \*76 is not known, but the theory that all Linear B signs are essentially monosyllabic led to identify  $ra_2$  as [rya] or [rra]. However, the phonetic value  $ra_2$  of the syllabic sign \*76 is, though generally accepted,<sup>1</sup> but by no means certain; it appears to be problematic for phonetic, morphological and orthographic reasons.

First of all, the reading ( $\acute{\tau}ρια$ ) for  $-ti-ri-ja$  implies the presence of a ‘died’ vowel  $-i-$  in the first syllable. The idea that the same determination must be postulated for the ‘alternative’ spelling  $-ti-*$ 76 prevents us from accepting the traditional view. Moreover, it leads us to suggest the  $i$ -vocalism of the syllabogram in question. Thus we should transcribe the sign \*76 as  $ri_2$  rather than  $ra_2$ . Secondly, I cannot agree with most scholars, who treat both writings  $-ti-ri-ja$  and  $-ti-*$ 76 among the female occupational designations as ‘interchangeable,’<sup>2</sup> since the Mycenaean feminine agent-nouns in  $-ti-*$ 76 might be identified with the Classical Greek ones ending with  $-τρις$  ( $\acute{\iota}\delta$ -stem, but originally  $\acute{\epsilon}$ -stem). Thirdly, after accepting the suggested value ‘quasi  $ri$ ’ for \*76, there are some possibilities for new readings and interpretations, which cannot be ignored, for example,  $ka-pa-*$ 76- $de$  (pl.) = Greek Attic  $\kappa\alpha\pi\eta\lambda\acute{\iota}\delta\epsilon\varsigma$  (nom. pl. fem. of  $\kappa\acute{\alpha}\pi\eta\lambda\omicron\varsigma$ ) and  $mi-*$ 76 = Gk.  $\sigma\mu\iota\rho\acute{\iota}\varsigma$ .

Now if \*76 =  $ri_2$  we have to explain the ‘alternation’ of  $a-ke-ti-*$ 76 with  $a-ke-ti-ri-ja$  and similar spellings in other words. It is evident the  $-ti-ri-ja$  stands for Classical  $\acute{\tau}ρια$  (pl.  $\acute{\tau}ρια\iota$ ). By analogy, the spelling  $-ti-ri_2$  is likely to represent an actual pronunciation of  $-τρις$  (pl.  $**-τρι\acute{\iota}$ , later  $-τρι\acute{\iota}\delta\epsilon\varsigma$ ). In this situation, it is not impossible to assume that the sign \*76 was really a ‘homophonic’ variant of \*53 ( $ri$ ). For reasons of convenience, I will henceforth use a tentative transcription  $RI_2$ , written in the large character. In the following pages I shall try to discuss all Mycenaean words containing \*76 and to give their more precise explanations, though I do not think I can expect a general agreement in every detail.

2. The Mycenaean group of female occupational names marked by the suffix  $-ti-RI_2$  and its origin.

The problems connected with the feminine agent-nouns in Greek and its Mycenaean dialect have not been yet fully discussed. The investigations of Michel Lejeune, written some years before the

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<sup>1</sup> M. VENTRIS, J. CHADWICK, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*, 2nd rev. ed., Cambridge 1973, pp. 385-386.

<sup>2</sup> So A. HEUBECK, *Remarks on the Sign-doublets  $ro_2$ ,  $ra_2$ ,  $ta_2$  /in:/ Colloquium Mycenaeanum. Actes du sixième colloque international sur les textes mycéniens et égéens tenu à Chaumont sur Neuchâtel du 7 au 13 septembre 1975*, ed. E. Risch, H. Mühlestein, Neuchâtel 1979, pp. 239-257, esp. 242-243, and others before him.

decipherment of Linear B<sup>3</sup> and those compiled after the decipherment<sup>4</sup> are of fundamental importance. Unfortunately, none of these works gives a wholly acceptable interpretation of the Mycenaean feminine agent-nouns with the suffix *-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*.

How are we to explain the supposed ‘interchangeability’ of *-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* and *-ti-ri-ja* in the female occupational names of the Mycenaean period? With regard to our previous considerations we can propose the following explanation:

The coexistence of two different Mycenaean forms reminds us of a similar situation in the later times: in Homer we find not only the usual epic formations in *-τειρα* (e.g., *δρήστειρα*, *δημήτειρα*, *καύστειρα*, etc.), but also two isolated forms: the place name (PN) *Εἰρέτειρα* (< *Ἐρέτειρα* with metrical lengthening) and *ἀλετρις* (gen. sg. *-ίδος*, but originally *-ίος*).<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the dialects (including Ionic-Attic) exclusively use the forms in *-τρια* and *-τρις*, except the Aeolic one which has exclusively use the forms in *-τερρα* (= Hom. *-τειρα*).

The explanation of this situation is obvious. Two different forms of these feminines existed in Mycenaean times: *-τρια* (= *-ti-ri-ja*) and *\*-τρις* (= *-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*). Both these forms are to be taken as feminine variants of the masculine agent-nouns marked by the suffix *-τωρ* and *-τήρ*, respectively.<sup>6</sup> In Sanskrit we can demonstrate an analogous opposition between agent-nouns in *-tar-*, fem. *-trī-* (= Gk. *-τωρ*, fem. *-τρια*) and those in *-tār-*, fem. *-trī-* (= Gk. *-τήρ*, fem. *-τρις*), e.g.

- 1) Skt. *jānitā*(fem. *jānitṛī-*) vs. *janitār-* (fem. *jātrī-* ‘Erzeugerin’);
- 2) Skt. *bhārtar-* ‘Gatte; Erhalter’ (fem. *\*bhārtṛī-*) vs. *bhartār-* ‘Träger’ (fem. *bartrī-* ‘Erhalterin, Mutter’).<sup>7</sup>

The Homeric formations in *-τειρα* (= Aeolic *-τερρα*) probably appeared in post-Mycenaean times as a result of a secondary development of *-τερ-* by means of *-iā*, cf. the analogical secondary formations in *-tārī-* in the Indo-Aryan languages:<sup>8</sup> Skt. RV *etārī-* f. ‘woman who goes or approaches’, *kartārī-* f. ‘scissor, a knife, or any instrument for cutting’. This phenomenon is easily explained as a conflation of two types of agent-nouns: *-τωρ* (fem. *-τρια*) and *-τήρ* (fem. *-τρις*). Also the opposite process can be considered: namely in Ionic there occurs another secondary development of *-τωρ-* by means of the suffix *-ιδ-*.<sup>9</sup>

Now I would like to stress the accentual mutability of the Greek feminine agent nouns ending both in *-τρις* and *-τρια*. Moreover, it follows that the different continuation of *-iH<sub>2</sub>* in Greek has caused an Indo-European distribution of the accent, namely the suffix *-iH<sub>2</sub>*- yields monosyllabic form *-i/ς/* (= Skt. *-ī-*) in the stress position, and disyllabic form *-iα* (= Skt. *-ī-*) elsewhere. The forms ending with *\*-ī-* went out of use in the pre-Homeric epoch, being pushed out by *ιδ*-stems and by related formations ending with *-iα*.

Their original declension may be reconstructed as follows:

nom. sg. <i>ίς</i>	-		< <i>*-iH<sub>2</sub></i> -(s)
nom. pl. <i>-ī</i>		< <i>- it</i>	< <i>*-iH<sub>2</sub></i> -i

<sup>3</sup> M. LEJEUNE, *Les noms d'agent féminins au grec*, RPh 25, 1950, pp. 9-28. See also E. FRAENKEL, *Die Feminina auf -τειρα, -τρια, -τρις(-τορίς) usw.*, IGF 32, 1913, pp. 395-413.

<sup>4</sup> M. LEJEUNE, *Essays de philologie mycénienne. VI: Les dérives en -ter-*, RPh 34, 1960, pp. 9-30 (reprinted /in:/ ID., *Mémoires de philologies mycénienne*, 2e série, Rome 1971, pp. 199-224; ID., *Phonétique historique du mycénien et du grec ancien*, Paris 1978, p. 156. See also P. CHANTRAINE, *Sur les noms d'agent féminines en mycéniens. Études mycéniennes*, Paris 1957, pp. 99-104.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. E. RISCH, *Les traits non homériques chez Homère /in:/ Mélanges de linguistique et de philologie grecques offerts à Pierre Chantraine*, Paris 1972, pp. 191-198, esp. 192, note 4.

<sup>6</sup> Cf. especially É. BENVENISTE, *Noms d'agent et noms d'action en indo-européen*, Paris 1948, pp. 9-62.

<sup>7</sup> For further examples, see J. WACKERNAGEL, A. DEBRUNNER, *Altindische Grammatik*, vol. 2,2: *Die Nominal-suffixe*, Göttingen 1954, pp. 673-676.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 673.

<sup>9</sup> On the Ionic creation of the feminine agent-nouns in *-τορίς*, see BENVENISTE, *op. cit.*, p. 34.

gen. pl. -ίων < \*-iH<sub>2</sub>-ōm  
 dat. pl. -ία < -□αι<sup>h</sup>i < \*-iH<sub>2</sub>-isu.

As it is well known, the *nomina* in both -τήρ and -τωρ are widely represented in the Linear B documents.<sup>10</sup> The distribution of both types is, however, completely different. While the names in -τήρ are apparently occupational designations (e.g., *i-ja-te* = Hom. *ιητήρ* ‘physician’, the type in -τωρ belongs to the class of personal names (e.g. man’s name *e-ko-to* = Hom. *Ἔκτωρ* or *ka-to* = Hom. *Κάστωρ*). Because the suffix -τήρ is connected formally and accentually with the female ending -πίς (í-stem), it is obvious to expect in the first place the female occupational designations in -ti-RI<sub>2</sub> (= -πίς), rather than those in -ti-ri-ja (= -τρια).

Alfred Heubeck discusses the distribution of the variant spellings, concluding that the use of -ti-ri-ja and -ti-RI<sub>2</sub> „does not allow us to recognize a clear distribution“.<sup>11</sup> However, adopting Heubeck’s observations,<sup>12</sup> we may settle the following facts:

- in the gen. pl. we only find -ti-RI<sub>2</sub>-o (= -πίων);
- in the dat. pl. forms we only find -ti-ri-ja-i (= -πρία<sup>h</sup>i);
- as nom. pl. forms we find both -ti-ri-ja (= -τρια) and -ti-RI<sub>2</sub> (= -πι).

Thus the supposed ‘interchangeability’ occurs above all in the nom. pl. forms. It can be explained in three ways:

- a) the alternative plural forms in -τρια were sometimes adopted from the related formations ending with -ία;
- b) the plural -τρια appeared with regards to Wheeler’s law (\*-triH<sub>2</sub>i > \*-triH<sub>2</sub>i > -τρια) as early as in the Mycenaean times;
- c) both feminine agent-nouns ending with -τρια and -πίς were treated as a semantical and functional doublets in Mycenaean Greek and therefore Greek scribes did not distinguish them exactly.

All these alternatives are, in a smaller or bigger degree, possible to accept. At any rate, we can easily imagine that in the time of the Linear B tablets both formations under discussion coexisted as equivalents, so that for instance one and the same scribe (PY, hand 1) could as well write *a-ke-ti-ri-ja* (PY Aa 717) or *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY Aa 815). The reason for this is that both the forms (\**asketrís*) and (\**asketria*) were likewise current in the spoken language in his time. The same phenomenon can be observed in Classical times, compare, e.g., *ἀκεστορίδες* ‘midwives’ beside *ἀκεστριαί* ‘sempstresses’ (and even *ἀκεστορίδες* ‘id’) and so on.

### 3. Evidence from the feminine agent-nouns ending with -ti-RI<sub>2</sub>.

We can now reconsider the evidence from the Linear B tablets. There are seven words ending in -ti-RI<sub>2</sub>. All are taken in *Docs.*<sup>1</sup> as feminine agent-nouns.

(3.1) *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* = Gk. *ἀσκητρις* pl. \*-πι.

A class of female workers, nom. pl. *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY Aa 815; Ab 564+); gen. pl. *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>-o* (PY Aa 666, Ad 290). The relation of *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* with four other male and female occupational designations is, however, to be explained.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Cf. J. T. HOOKER, *Linear B: An introduction*, Bristol 1980, pp. 64, 68.

<sup>11</sup> HEUBECK, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

<sup>12</sup> The distribution, proposed by HEUBECK, *op. cit.*, s. 251, seems to be sometimes enough arbitrary. For instance, he thinks that *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* at Thebes (*Of* 36,1,2) is a form of dative singular. On the other hand, HOOKER, *op. cit.*, p. 155, comments on the Theban tablet as follows: „The other two words in line 1 presumably refer to the women responsible for working the wool: *a-ke-ti-ra<sub>2</sub>* *wa-na-ka-[te-ra]*. A double ambiguity resides in these words: first, it is uncertain whether they are nominative singular, nominative plural, or dative singular; second, there is no way to telling whether *wanax* with whom the women are connected is the king or a god. The same ambiguity attends *a-ke-ti-ra<sub>2</sub>* in line 2“.

<sup>13</sup> See M. LINDGREN, *The people of Pylos. Prosopographical and methodological studies in the archives*, vol. 1-2, Uppsala 1973, pp. 17-18.

*a-ke-te-re* (PY Jn 332), nom. pl., a class of bronzesmiths distinguished from *a-ta-ra-si-jo* ‘these who not having an issue (of bronze)’. Probable reading: *askētēres* (nom. pl.) ‘decorators’ (so Killen), cf. Class. Gk. *ἀσκητήρ* m. ‘one who practises any art or trade’, later usually ‘hermit’ or ‘monk’.

*a<sub>2</sub>-ke-te-re* (KN V 118) and *ja-ke-te-re* (PY Mn 11.2) must be taken as another class of men. Possible reading: *hakestēres* (nom. pl.) ‘healers’,<sup>14</sup> cf. Class. Gk. *ἄκεστήρ* m. ‘healer, saviour’.

Here belong also *ἀκέστωρ* m. ‘id.’ and three female counterparts: *ἀκεστρίς* ‘midwife’, *ἀκέστρια* ‘sempstress’ and *ἀκεστορίς* ‘id.’. All Classical agent-nouns occur with a secondary psilosis against West Greek *ἐφακέισθων*.<sup>15</sup> As regards the spelling *ja-* beside *a<sub>2</sub>-*, I agree with Lejeune and Heubeck<sup>16</sup> in so far as the transition from *j-* > *h-* took place in the Mycenaean period of Greek, and thus *ja-ke-te-re* may represent the obsolete, *a<sub>2</sub>-ke-te-re* the contemporary form.<sup>17</sup> It is clear that both these forms are to be separated from *a-ke-te-re* (see above) as showing initial *ha-* or *ja-* (not *a-*).

*a-ke-ti-ri-ja* (KN Ai 739.1, Ak 7001.1; PY Aa 85, Aa 717, Fn 187.15, Un 219.4; MY Fo 101.10, Oe 119), a class of women. Possible readings: *askētriai* ‘women who finish or decorate goods made by others’ (cf. Class. Gk. *ἀσκήτρια* f.) and alternatively *akēstriai* f. ‘needle-women’, cf. two Hesychian glosses: *ἀκέστρια. ἠπήτρια* and *ἀπήτρια. ἀκέστρια*.

*a-ze-ti-ri-ja* (KN Ap 694.3, E 777r, Ln 1568 edge, M 683.1, X 657.1), a woman’s trade. Possible reading: *agētriai* ‘midwives, nurses, foster-mothers’, cf. the Tarentian gloss *ἀγέτρια. μαῖα. Ταραντῖνοι* (Hesychius). The above word could be identical with *a-ke-te-ri-ja*, but the alternation *ke/ze* would suggest an original /ge/, not /ske/.

As regards the feminines in question, Leonard Robert Palmer points out the following:<sup>18</sup>

„At Pylos they appear as a body with religious connexions in Fn 187 and 219. In the A series the other occupational groups show a bias towards textiles. At Mycenae they again appear as a group receiving OIL and [WOOL]. At Knossos the sole example has no commodity context though other women and children texts have textile connexions“.

It is obvious that there is no reason to connect three different occupational names: *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*, *a-ke-ti-ri-ja* and *a-ze-ti-ri-ja*. The derivation of two first names from the same verb *ἀσκέω* ‘I work new materials’ (Il. 23,743) is possible, though not demonstrable, yet both formations cannot be treated as the same, as *a-ke-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* (i.e., *askētrís*) can be taken as a female counterpart of Classical *ἀσκητήρ* (see above, sub *a-ke-te-re*), whereas *a-ke-ti-ri-ja* (if identical with Class. *ἀσκήτρια*) represents merely a feminine variant of *ἀσκήτωρ*. Finally, *a-ze-ti-ri-ja* is to be separated for orthographical, linguistic and etymological reasons.

(3.2) *a-pe-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* (KN V 280.11). The context is obscure, but the name belongs apparently to the *-τρίς* type. It is possible to accept that *a-pe-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* represents a *nomen instrumenti* coordinated with *to-pe-za* ‘table’, but the readings proposed so far<sup>19</sup> are etymologically weak. As regards the shape of this term, it can be noticed that in both Sanskrit and Greek there are *nomina instrumenti* in *\*-tér* (fem. *\*-trís*), compare, e.g., Gk. *ἀφυτρίς* f. ‘hand spoon’ and also Skt. *pātrīḥ* f. ‘a vessel, plate, dish, pot’ (coordinated semantically, morphologically and accentually with Gk. *ποτήρ* m. ‘a drinking-cup, wine-cup’).

The name can be alternatively explained as a female occupational designation (so *Docs.<sup>1</sup>*), apparently (*\*ἄπῆtrís*), and compared with Class. *ἠπήτρια* ‘needle-woman’, cf. Hesychian *ἀπήτρια*.

<sup>14</sup> Note, however, that *a<sub>2</sub>-ke-te-re* can be alternatively read as *\*hāgētēres* ‘the chief priests’, cf. Cypriote *ἀγήτωρ* m., the title of the chief priests of Aphrodite.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. LEJEUNE, *Mémoires, op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 209.

<sup>16</sup> LEJEUNE, *Phonétique, op. cit.*, p. 168; HEUBECK, *op. cit.*, pp. 242 n.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 243.

<sup>18</sup> L. R. PALMER, *The interpretation of Mycenaean Greek texts*, Oxford 1968, p. 405, sub *a-ke-ti-ri-ja*.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. M. LEJEUNE, *Mémoires, op. cit.*, vol. 2, p. 212 (*\*ἀμφέστρια* ‘table dont la forme est telle qu’on s’assied des deux côtés, ou tout autour’); L. R. PALMER in his letter to Nestor 1981, p. 1501 (*\*ἀφήτρια*); D. LEROY, *La manière forte au palais mycénien de Cnossos d’après la tablette V 280, Kadmos 27, 1988*, pp. 1-8, esp. 6 (*\*ἀπέστρια* ‘désolissant récalcitrant, réfractaire’).

ἀκέστρια (see above, sub *a-ke-ti-ri-ja*). The view is, in my opinion, less likely, though not impossible.

(3.3) *me-re-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*, a class of women, PY Ab 789. *me-re-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>-[o]*, gen. pl., PY Ad 308. Probable readings: \*μελετριῖ ‘women who grind corn’ (gen. pl. -τριῶν).

*me-re-ti-ri-ja* (PY Aa 62), perhaps \*μελέτριαι (nom. pl.).

On the basis of the correspondence between Myc. *me-re-u-ro* ‘flour’ and Class. ἄλευρον (only once μάλευρον) ‘id.’ it can be suggested that *me-re-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* represents a Mycenaean form coordinated with Homeric ἀλετρις (-ίδος) f. ‘a female slave who grinds corn’. In this case, the suffix *-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* is to be compared with -τρις (ῥ-stem, secondarily ἰd-stem). On the other hand, it is unsure whether *me-re-ti-ri-ja* is a cognate word (e.g., \*μελῖ τριαῖ ‘flour-women, milers, corn-grinders’) or a declension form of *me-re-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* or a different item altogether (cf. e.g. Gk. μελέτωρ m. or perhaps Lat. meretrīx f.).<sup>20</sup>

(3.4) *o-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY Ab 417). Woman’s trade. *o-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>-o* (PY Ad 663), gen. pl.; also *o-ti-ri-ja* (PY Aa 313), nom. pl. Possible readings: \*ὄρτριῖ and \*ὄρτριαι (both in pl.) ‘washerwomen, clothes-cleaners’, cf. ὑρτήρ. πλυνεύς (Hesychius).

The reading is still too far to be certain,<sup>21</sup> but *o-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* belongs evidently to the -τρις type, *o-ti-ri-ja* to the feminine agent-nouns ending with ὠτρια.

(3.5) *pe-ki-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*, a female occupational designation, PY Ab 555. Possible reading: \*πεκτριῖ (pl.) ‘carders’.

The above explanation is motivated by the masculine counterpart *pektér/poktér*, cf. πεκτήρες. οἱ τὸ δέρμα τίλλοντες (Suidas) and its doublet ποκτήρ (pl. -ήρες). The different reconstruction (\*πέκτρια<sup>22</sup>) seems less probable for both orthographical and morphological reasons.

(3.6) *ra-pi-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*, a class of female workers, PY Ab 555 (nom. pl. or sg.). Probable reading: \*rhaptriῖ ‘sewing-women’, cf. Classical ῥάπτρια f. pl. ‘id.’.

At both Pylos and Knossos there occurs a male occupational designation: *ra-pte* (PY An 172, Ea 28, Ea 29+) and, in the plural, *ra-pte-re* (KN Fh 1056, V 159; PY 207+) and [*ra*]-*pte-si* (KN Fn 5432), i.e. \*ῥαπτήρ, \*ῥαπτήρες (nom. pl.) and \*ῥαπτήρσι (dat. pl.), respectively. The female equivalent of \**rhaptrér* m. ‘sewing-man’ (cf. Class. ῥάπττης), perhaps ‘saddler’, is to be expected in the form *rhaptrís* (ῥ-stem), not *rháptria*. Thus the formation *ra-pi-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* agrees with *ra-pte*, proving that both the reading and the comparison of *-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>* = -τρις (ῥ-stem) are accurate.

(3.7) *ra-qi-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*, a group of women, PY Ab 356; *ra-qi-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>-o*, gen. pl., PY Ab 667. Possible reading: \*ῥῥῥ<sup>w</sup>τριῖ, gen. pl. -ῖδ > \*ληπτρίς, perhaps ‘repairing-woman’.

Though the relationship of this name with the verbs λάζομαι and λαμβάνω ‘to take’ (cf. e.g. ἀνα-ληπτρίς f. ‘suspensory bandage’) is acceptable, the semantic problems are still to be solved. The above word can hardly be identical with *ra-pi-ti-RI<sub>2</sub>*.

#### 4. Evidence from other vocabulary words.

(4.1) *a-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-te* (PY Vn 493). The formation is of obscure nature and its meaning seems ambiguous. It occurs in the heading of the tablet *a-ke-ro e-po a-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-te*, which is still an unsolved problem. The *a-ke-ro* is probably an occupational designation to be connected with Classical ἄγγελος ‘messenger’ or less likely with \*ἄγερος ‘collector’.<sup>23</sup> The second word *e-po* is now convincingly explained as \*ἔρφοι ‘goats’ (cf. Class. ἔριφος).<sup>24</sup> But we cannot be sure that *a-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-te* actually de-

<sup>20</sup> See especially LINDGREN, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 95-96.

<sup>21</sup> See recently J. CHADWICK, *The women of Pylos /in:/ Texts, tablets and scribes /in:/ Studies in Mycenaean epigraphy and economy offered to Emmett L. Bennett, Jr.*, ed. J.-P. Olivier, Th. G. Palaima, Supplementos a Minos. Num. 10, Salamanca 1988, pp. 43-95, esp. 82.

<sup>22</sup> P. CHANTRAINE, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque* vol. 3, Paris 1972, s.v. πέκτω.

<sup>23</sup> See LINDGREN, *op. cit.*, vol. 2, pp. 16-17.

<sup>24</sup> E. SCAFA, *Annotazione in margine al lessico miceneo: epo*, *Kadmos* 16, 1977, p. 175; F. A. JORRO, *Diccionario micénico*, vol. 1 (= *Diccionario griego-español*, Anejo 1), Madrid 1985, pp. 227-228.

scribes the occupational action of the *a-ke-ro*, as it may be a noun with the suffix *-θεν* and so on.<sup>25</sup> In any rate, the traditional interpretation *a-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-te* as *ἀγέρραντες* is wholly excluded for etymological and paleographical reasons (the participle Aor. act. in question comes from *\*ager-sa-ntes* and it should be spelled as *\*a-ke-sa-te* in Mycenaean Greek).

(4.2) *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>-de* = Gk. *καπηλίδες*.

An occupational designation: nom. pl. *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>-de* (PY Aa 788, An 292.2); gen. pl. *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>-do* (PY Ad 679). Probable reading: fem. sg. *kapālis*, pl. *kapālides*, *-idōn*, cf. Classical Greek *καπηλῖς*, *-ίδος*, fem. equivalent of *κάπηλος* m. ‘retail-dealer, huckster, hawker, peddler, higgler, tavern-keeper, publican’.

For *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>-de* Erich Risch and others<sup>26</sup> suppose a reading *-ιάδες*, and thus they see in it the earliest example of the formation type in *-ιάς* (gen. sg. *-ιάδος*), well known from latter times (e.g. *Τρωϊάδες*). Otherwise Heubeck,<sup>27</sup> who connects *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>-de* with the closely related formations in *-άς* (gen. sg. *-άδος*). But both the formations (not certified credibly in Mycenaean Greek) seem to be relatively recent and perhaps belong to the artificial language of the epic poets. We should rather expect forms with the suffix *-ιδ-*, well attested in the Mycenaean Greek texts (cf. *ne-ki-ri-de* KN L 1568).<sup>28</sup> This observation, supported by the comparison *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>-de* = *καπηλίδες*, allows us to suppose the *i*-vocalism of *\*76*.

(4.3) *mi-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY Ta 715.3), instr. sg. (cf. *ku-te-so* PY Ta 707.3 interpreted usually as *κυτόσω*, cf. *DMic*. I 414).

This word designates a kind of material for table and reflects exactly the instrumental sg. form of Gk. *σμιρίς* ‘a kind of tree’ (Hesychius). Proposed reading: *smirí*. The word *mi-RI<sub>2</sub>* can be alternatively combined with Classical Greek *(σ)μίλος/(σ)μίλαξ* ‘yew’<sup>29</sup> and also with *μίλιον* ‘a conifer’ (cf. Hesychian gloss: *μίλιον. δένδρον ὁμοιον ἐλάτῃ* [...]).

The Classical Greek words for ‘yew’ are to be compared with Slovenic *smol’je* ‘juniper’ (from Slavic *\*smilje* and IE. *\*smilyom*) and Gaulo-Latin *melix*, *-icis* ‘larch’. The lexical data, mentioned here, suggest a primitive *i*-stem protoform, thus it is possible that the Mycenaean appellative for ‘yew’ belonged to the *i*-stem nouns.

## 5. Evidence from place names.

(5.1) *e-pi-qo-RI<sub>2</sub>*, PN in abl. (PY Mn 456.10).

The ‘etymological’ connexion of the Messenian PN *e-pi-qo-RI<sub>2</sub>* with Class. *Ἐπιπολαί* is not impossible, but a different Mycenaean form is to be supposed, because „plur. *\*Epiq<sup>u</sup>olai* would have an abl. in *-a-pi* (*-āphi*)“.<sup>30</sup> In this situation, we suggest a different reading: *\*Epiq<sup>u</sup>olis* (cf. Class. *Ἐπίπολις*).

The proposed reconstruction is based on a possible assumption of a latter adaptation of the Pre-Greek place names. For other reformations of non-Greek toponyms, cf. Messenian PN *a-pu<sub>2</sub>* or *a-pu<sub>2</sub>-ja* (*\*Abus* or *\*Abuja* f.) beside *Ἀβία* f., Messenian PN *ku-pa-ri-so* (*\*kupasissos*) next to *Κυπαρισσία* / *Κυπαρισσεῖς* and many others.

(5.2) PN *\*pu<sub>2</sub>-RI<sub>2</sub>-a-ko-ro*.

This place-name is attested only in two different adjectival derivations in *-eus* and in *-ijos*: *pu<sub>2</sub>-RI<sub>2</sub>-a-ke-re-u* (PY Nn 228.3) and *pu<sub>2</sub>-RI<sub>2</sub>-a-ki-ri-jo* (PY Na 425). The second element of the com-

<sup>25</sup> Cf. A. MORPURGO, *Mycenaeae Grecitatis Lexicon*, Roma 1963 (IncGr 3), s.v. *akera<sub>2</sub>te*: „Fieri etiam potest ut subst. sit in *-θεν* (an Dat. in *-tei?*) *exiens*“.

<sup>26</sup> E. RISCH, *Wortbildung der homerischen Sprache*, Berlin-New York 1974, p. 147; M. MEYER, *-ιδ-*. *Zur Geschichte eines griechischen Nominalsuffixes*, 1975, p. 73.

<sup>27</sup> HEUBECK, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

<sup>28</sup> MEYER, *op. cit.*, pp. 69-79.

<sup>29</sup> As proposed by M. VENTRIS, *Mycenaean furniture of the Pylos tablets*, *Eranos* 53, 1955, pp. 109-124, esp. 119.

<sup>30</sup> HEUBECK, *op. cit.*, p. 248.

pound (-a-ko-ro) may be read as either *ἀγρός* or *ἀκρόν*,<sup>31</sup> cf. PN *ro-u-si-jo a-ko-ro* (PY Fr 1220+) = *Λούσιος ἀγρός* ‘the region of Lousos’.<sup>32</sup>

The word *pu<sub>2</sub>-RI<sub>2</sub>* (evidently \**huri*) connects, in my opinion, with the Hesychian gloss: *βουρί. κυπάρισσος ἢ ἄμπελος. Περγαῖοι*, where Pamphylian *ou* stands for Attic *u*. In this case, I am inclined to suggest that the Messenian PN *ku-pa-ri-so* (= *Κυπάρισσος*, literally ‘cypress’) was merely a linguistic calque of Pre-Greek *pu<sub>2</sub>-RI<sub>2</sub>*. In other words, PN \**pu<sub>2</sub>-RI<sub>2</sub>-a-ko-ro* means perhaps ‘the region of Kuparissos’.

(5.3) PN *wi-ja-we-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY Cn 643.2; 719.11,12; Jn 478.1; Mn 1410). According to Heubeck,<sup>33</sup> the name is evidently non-Greek and „obscure“.

## 6. Evidence from personal names.

(6.1) WN *a-de-RI<sub>2</sub>* (KN Ap 639.11): „obscure“.

(6.2) MN *e-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo* (PY Un 718.2), nom. sg.; *e-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo-no* (PY An 610.13), gen. sg.; *e-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo-ne* (PY An 724.5), dat. sg.; [*e-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo...*] (PY Un 880.1). In all these passages the same man is probable named. There are no acceptable readings. We lead aside another man’s name [*e-ke-ri-ja-wo*] (PY Un 219.1), nom. sg., and MN *e-ke-ra-ne* (PY Un 219.1, dat. sg.; it is possible, but not necessary, that two these personal names are to be connected with *e-ke-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo* in some way.

(6.3) MN *ka-pa-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY Jn 706).

(6.4) MN *ki-RI<sub>2</sub>-i-jo* (KN Sc 103). Possible reading: \**Krihios*. The form is mostly considered a variant spelling of the personal name *ki-ri-ja-i-jo* (PY An 519.3). This identification is by no means certain and must be excluded for orthographic and formal reasons.

(6.5) MN *pe-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo* (KN Xd 98), also *pe-RI<sub>2</sub>-[* (PY Va 1191.7). Probable reading: *Períwōn*, Classical *Περίων*.<sup>34</sup>

(6.6) MN *qa-RI<sub>2</sub>* (PY An 192.16), nom. sg.; *qa-RI<sub>2</sub>-te* (PY An 7.7, 39v.3; TH Of 38.1), dat. sg.; *qa-RI<sub>2</sub>-to(-de)*, gen. sg. (TH Of 37.1): obscure.

(6.7) MN *qa-RI<sub>2</sub>-ro* (KN DI 932): „obscure“.

(6.8) MN *qa-RI<sub>2</sub>-ti-jo* (KN Dg 1235). Possible reading: \**g<sup>u</sup>alintios*, cf. Class. *Προβαλίσιος*.

(6.9) MN *qa-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo* (KN Ce 50.1). Cf. Class. *Φαλλίων* or *Φαρίων*.

(6.10) WN ? *ja-RI<sub>2</sub>* (KN Ai 632): „obscure“.

(6.11) MN *ta-RI<sub>2</sub>-to* (PY En 74.15; 659.6; Eo 351.2; 444.5; 471.2). Probable reading: *Tarrístōn*, Class. *Ταρρίστων*.<sup>35</sup> The man’s name *ta-ra-to* = *Στράτων* (PY An 192; Eo 247.6), as well as *ta-ra-to-no* (KN De 1130), is to be kept separate.

(6.12) MN *wi-RI<sub>2</sub>-wo* (KN Ws 1701). Obscure.

## 7. Uncertain cases.

*jke-RI<sub>2</sub>-u-na* (PY Un 853.1). Obscure. The word occurs in a mutilated context.

*pe-RI<sub>2</sub>* (KN X 999): „obscure“.

*lpi-RI<sub>2</sub>-ta-je[* (KN X 8293.b): „obscure“.

*lpi-RI<sub>2</sub>-mo[* (KN X 7860.1): „obscure“.

*J-RI<sub>2</sub> TELA<sup>2</sup> 1* (KN L 647.B): „obscure“.

*te-RI<sub>2</sub>[* (KN X 7585): „obscure“.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. M. LEJEUNE, *Mémoires*, op. cit., vol. 2, pp. 367-373; C. J. RUIJGH, *Études sur la grammaire et le vocabulaire du grec mycénien*, Amsterdam 1967, p. 174; HEUBECK, op. cit., p. 249.

<sup>32</sup> See HOOKER, op. cit., p. 154; I. K. PROBONAS, *Lexiko tēs mykēnaikēs ellenikēs*, vol. 1, Athenai 1978, pp. 51-52 (with literature).

<sup>33</sup> HEUBECK, op. cit., p. 249.

<sup>34</sup> See F. DORNSEIFF, B. HANSEN, *Reverse-lexicon of Greek proper names*, Chicago 1978, p. 112.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 119.

8. Summary and conclusions.

A. The examination of the examples containing \*76 provides no cogent argument for attributing the value  $ra_2$  or  $rja$  to the sign. On the contrary, there is significant evidence for the possible value  $ri_2$ .

B. The female agent-nouns in  $-ti-RI_2$  and those in  $-ti-ri-ja$  should be separated and treated as straightforward ancestor forms of the Classical Greek feminines in  $-τρις$  (pl.  $-τρι$ , later  $-τριδες$ ) and  $-τρια$  (pl.  $-τριαι$ ), respectively.

C. For the following vocabulary items new or more precise interpretations have been proposed:

$a-ke-ti-RI_2$  = Gk. *ἀσκητρις*, fem. pl.  $-τρι$ ; cf. Myc.  $a-ke-te$  = Gk. *ἀσκητήρ* (m.);

$a-ke-ti-ri-ja$  = Gk. *ἀσκήτριαι* or *ἀκέστριαι* (f. pl.);

$a-ze-ti-ri-ja$  = [?] Gk. *ἀγέτρια* (f.);

$ka-pa-RI_2-de$  (\**kapālides*) = Gk. *καπηλίδες* (f. pl.);

$me-re-ti-RI_2$  (\**meletrī*), cf. Gk. Hom. *ἀλετρις* (f.);

$mi-RI_2$  (\**smiris*), cf. Gk. *σμιρίς*;

$o-ti-RI_2$  (\**hortrī*), cf. Gk. *ὄρτήρ* (m.);

$pe-ki-ti-RI_2$  (\**pektrī*), cf. Gk. *πεκτήρ* (m.);

$ra-pi-ti-RI_2$  (\**rhaptrī*), cf. Gk. *ράπτρια* (f.), but Myc.  $ra-pte$  (\**rhaptrē* m.);

$ra-qi-ti-RI_2$  (\**aq<sup>u</sup>trī*), cf. [?] Gk. *ἀνα-ληπτρίς* (f.).

D. Most (non-Greek) place-names and personal names cannot be interpreted with certainty, and therefore they give us no significant evidence for the value of the Linear B sign \*76.

E. Our examples (C and D) permit us to recognize the following principle for the use of  $RI_2$ :

(1) stressed /*rī*/: cf.  $a-ke-ti-RI_2$ ,  $me-re-ti-RI_2$ ,  $mi-RI_2$ ,  $o-ti-RI_2$ ,  $pe-ki-ti-RI_2$ ,  $ra-pi-ti-RI_2$ , perhaps also  $pe-RI_2-wo$  and  $ta-RI_2-to$ , etc.

(2) stressed /*lī*/: cf.  $ka-pa-RI_2-de$ , perhaps  $qa-RI_2-wo$ ,  $qa-RI_2-ti-jo_2$ , etc.

In all cases the use of  $ri$  instead of  $RI_2$  seems possible:

ad 1: cf.  $ri-jo$  = *ῥιον*;  $wi-ri-za$  = (*F*)*ρίζα*;  $ti-ri-po-de$  = *τρίποδε* (dual), etc.

ad 2: cf.  $ri-no$  = *λίνον*;  $ri-ta$  = *λίτα*; etc.

On the other hand, the use of  $RI_2$  in a non-stressed position seems to be impossible, so that we may summarize our results in figure 1:

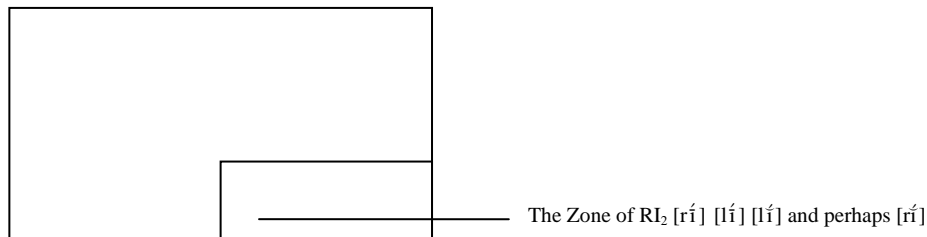


Figure 1. The domain of  $ri$  [rī] [lī]

F. The above considerations have led to the following conclusions: In the Mycenaean period, the inherited feminine agent nouns ending with  $-τρις$  (pl.  $**-τρι$ ) still existed in the spoken language; later they disappeared step by step, identifying themselves with the feminine agent nouns ending with  $-τρια$  (pl.  $-τριαι$ ) and those ending with  $-τρις$  (pl.  $-τριδες$ ). Finally, in Homer's times, the old agent nouns in question as an independent formation are wholly eliminated. Their former existence is only to be recognized from certain traces they have left.