

CORRESPONDENCE

To the Editor: - In 1969 J.-P. Olivier had written apropos of MY Ge 603 1 ("En marge d'une nouvelle édition des tablettes de Mycènes," *Kadmos* 8:1, p. 52) as follows: "da-ra[]mi-ta-qe (pl. 3): je crois que le ra est certain, que le mi, bien que tracé "à l'envers" (comme dans un miroir), très possible et que, finalement, seul reste le problème du signe intermédiaire; jo me semble possible, en tout cas infiniment plus qu'un hypothétique ρο (à noter que les traces d'un premier état de la tablette, spécialement d'une ligne de l'ancien réglage (dans l'autre direction), viennent sérieusement compliquer la situation)." This accurate statement of the epigraphical facts was accompanied with an enlarged photograph of the tablet section in question (pl. 3). Recently Anna Sacconi has edited the Mycenae tablets (*Corpus dell'inscrizioni in Lineare B di Micene*, Roma 1974). This new edition, being an *editio maior*, provides us with the photographs and fac-similés of the documents, a fact which may cause or merely justify a re-examination of the locus *desperatus* commented by Olivier. In her edition Miss Sacconi has printed the following text da-ra-[]-mi-ta-qe. It appears clear that only one sign is lacking in the gap. After Olivier, she records a possible reading da-ra-jo-mi-ta-qe, perhaps to be read as da-ra-jo mi-ta-qe. Nevertheless a reading jo seems improbable at least to my eye, since the extant traces in the gap do not fit with the elegant form of syllabogram jo as drawn by scribe 59.

Trying to find such a missing link between da-ra-[] and]-mi-ta-qe, it seems convenient to produce all the evidence available. It is known that MY Ge 603r is a palimpsest. There are traces of a previous ruling at right angles, the distance between rules being ca. 1.7 cms. The section under consideration is included in an area showing clear rests of such erased rules. Traces of ruling are just subsequent to the two horizontal strokes standing for 20. Traces of ruling at left occur just crossing the missing link from the top downwards. Further complication is due to the breaking splits which go down from the top of the tablet, crossing obliquely the area in question and affecting at the middle the unknown sign, reaching finally the rule without touching the subsequent mi. It is likely to assume that the split touches the rule at the very point of the divider; therefore it is tempting to propose a tentative reading da-ra-X, mi-ta-qe.

The question is what sign was written in the chips between ra and the suggested divider. The fac-similé by A. Sacconi, who claims to have checked her drawings upon the originals, represents two parallel vertical strokes with a horizon-

tal minute one at the top; a third crooked stroke is above the horizontal one. At first sight such a drawing suggests a special form of ri, but I have the suspicion that mere splits have been taken by the author as relevant strokes. The photograph by Sacconi permits one only to guess a circular section and one vertical stroke. The enlarged one by Olivier needs to be supplemented by another one with opposite illumination, since one is not able to separate accidental gaps, splits and/or chips from deliberate marks. I am well aware that only autopsy on the very tablet will at last strengthen (or dispose of) the suggestion I am going to put forward on non-epigraphical grounds.

We already know the status of the form da-ra-X. The occurrence of the enclitic particle -qe leads us to consider da-ra-X as the name of a spice. J. Chadwick has already pointed it out in his "Glossary" of Documents². That is to say, such a fragmentary form is contextually restricted. Moreover, the botanical status of such an unidentified spice must be close to that of mi-ta "mint," since a joint entry of both spices is recorded. Therefore, it is tempting to assume that da-ra-X belongs to the generic class of the "mints," whereas mi-ta stands for a specific mint, i.e. *Mentha viridis* L.

On the other hand the search for such a spice through the botanical Greek vocabulary is also restricted, since the initial syllabogram only stands for a voiced dental stop. Nevertheless such a searching must take into account the possibilities (a) that the form of which da-ra-X is the ancestor is not actually preserved in the lexicon, and (b) that this form has suffered certain sound shifts.

To sum up, we may expect that da-ra-X is the name of a spice beginning with /d-/ in Mycenaean times and whose botanical status is close to that of the mint. Before putting forward my suggestion, I think it will be interesting to quote again Olivier's comments (*ibidem*) apropos of Ge 605.6: "la lecture ka-ra-ko ne s'impose pas; comme le nom d'épice ka-ra-ko (ion. γλήχων) était tiré de ce seul passage... je pense qu'il vaut mieux rayer le γλήχων de la liste des épices mycéniennes (my italics)." While suggesting a value for the missing link, I should like to re-include the pennyroyal in the choice of Mycenaean condiments. I am proposing tentatively to see a badly made ko in the gap under examination; therefore, we can obtain a form da-ra-ko, which, on the other hand, is well attested as a place-name in the Knossos tablets.

J. Chadwick some years ago pointed out that Greek γλυκός is to be traced to a previous δλυκός attested in the e-grade in the Mycenaean

de-re-u-ko. Such an alteration of the cluster /dl-/ is to be observed also in γλωσσα, γλάσσα, etc. On the same lines, it is tempting that Mycenaean da-ra-ko is to be interpreted as δλάχων namely as the ancestor of γλάχων, γλήχων, i.e. "pennyroyal." This interpretation may explain a joint entry in Ce 603 of two kinds of mint: *Mentha pulegium* and *Mentha viridis*. On the other hand, a place-name δλάχων resp. Γλάχων is very likely, since the use of phytonyms as place-names is well attested in the Greek toponymy.

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7 October 1975

Yours, &c.
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To the Editor: - A propos des amphores à inscriptions peintes en linéaire B revenues au jour à La Canée:

On regrettera sans doute de ne trouver sur elles que de brefs renseignements dans le *Corpus delle iscrizioni vascolari in lineare B* d'Anna Sacconi, paru aux Edizioni dell'Ateneo en 1974. Mais Erik Hallager, heureusement, vient d'en donner une publication rapide, riche et circonstanciée à son habitude (*Linear A and Linear B from the Excavations at Kastelli, Khandia 1964-1972*, *Op.Ath.*, XI:4, Stockholm 1975, pp. 53-86). Elle comprend, entre autres trouvailles passionnantes, un tesson capital, KH Z 5, dont la ressemblance avec TH Z 869, 870, 871, 872, 876, de la Cadmée, est frappante: au point que les six objets paraissent aujourd'hui à l'auteur issus d'un même atelier, voire d'une même main. Ce fait, ajouté à d'autres, suscite à mon avis un certain nombre de réflexions.

1. On va enfin, pour le type de vases en cause, vers une solution concernant leurs lieux de fabri-

cation. Il faut attendre, certes, les nouvelles analyses d'argiles d'H. W. Catling, mais il est certain dès à présent qu'ils ont voyagé loin.

2. La date de l'exemplaire du Kastelli—fin MR IIIb 1, vers 1275 suivant Hallager—concorde selon moi très bien avec celle à laquelle je crois pour la destruction du 'Kadmeion' de Kéramopoulos, d'où viennent TH Z 869-872, 876. La datation de ce bâtiment par S. Syméonoglou (*Kadmeia I, Mycenaean Finds from Thebes, Greece, Excavation at 14 Oedipus St.*, *SIMA* 35, Göteborg 1973) me semble trop haute; celle de Th. Spyropoulos, dans *The Thebes Tablets II* (*Minos*, Supplément IV, Salamanque 1975), un peu trop basse.

3. La plupart des inscriptions connues en linéaire B s'avèrent une fois de plus, en Crète comme sur le Continent, se ranger chronologiquement dans les limites approximatives de l'HR (ou MR) IIIb. Mais peut-être ne voit-on là que le haut de l'iceberg.

4. Seules les tablettes en linéaire B de Knossos demeurent généralement attribuées à une époque antérieure. On sait que j'aimerais pour ma part les situer vers 1300 avant Jésus-Christ (*Revue de Philologie*, XLVII, 1973, p. 117).

5. Reste évidemment dans cette hypothèse, avec quelques autres difficultés, un hiatus important entre la fin du MR Ib (terme traditionnel de l'histoire du linéaire A) et celle du MR IIIa. Que s'est-il passé, que s'est-il écrit dans cet intervalle? On compte fermement, pour nous instruire, sur les travaux à Knossos de M. Popham, à la Canée de J. Tzedakis, de J. Papapostolou, d'E. Hallager. On notera que ce dernier paraît assez tenté de placer à cette époque, à La Canée tout au moins, du linéaire A. 89 Boulevard Soult
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15 octobre 1975

Yours, &c.
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