

## THE Ea SERIES: IT TAKES A VILLAGE

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### **Introduction**

Detailed analyses of the Ea series have been presented by Michel Lejeune, Sigrid Deger-Jalkotzy, Maurizio Del Freo, and Stavroula Nikoloudis, and my work of course depends in great part upon theirs.<sup>1</sup> What I would like to do here, though, is to look at the Ea series with the aim of trying to understand the nature of the individuals they record and the community that those people constituted, particularly in comparison with the community of *pa-ki-ja-ne*, whose character is distinguished by its concentration of religious personnel.<sup>2</sup> I also want to discuss the Ea series against the background of some of the current developments in our thinking on Mycenaean society.

Nikoloudis has already considered the Ea series in terms similar to those that I am proposing to take up; she, too, was interested in what kind of community the tablets represent. Nikoloudis has proposed that the Ea tablets formed a cohesive group whose organizing principle was based on the idea that all of the landholdings and their owners could be linked to a leather-tanning industry. I think she and I have both been inspired in our interpretations by a similar quality of the Ea tablets – that there is a real practical feel to them; her work has informed mine a great deal. But while I think it is possible that one of the industrial activities that the Ea landholders were engaged in was leather tanning, I will nonetheless depart from her specific theory in order to investigate a somewhat broader interpretation.

### **The Land Tenure Tablets of the Ea *Damos* and *Pa-ki-ja-ne***

There are some very clear differences between the *pa-ki-ja-ne* land tenure tablets and those of the Ea series, but there are also some basic similarities,

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<sup>1</sup> Lejeune 1974; Deger-Jalkotzy 1988; Del Freo 2005; Nikoloudis 2012.

<sup>2</sup> Lupack 2008, 44-85.

which I think speak to a general consistency in the way that landholdings were dealt with in the Mycenaean world. The landholding types and the way they are leased are the same in the two series: individuals hold *ko-to-na* or *ke-ke-me-na* or *ki-ti-me-na* land, and *o-na-ta* can be leased from the *damos* (*pa-ro da-mo*) or from individuals. The special type of land called *ka-ma* that carries with it an obligation to *wo-ze*, or work, also appears in the Ea series (**Ea 28**, cf. **Ea 309**), as well as land that is qualified as *a-no-no* (**Ea 801, 922**), which perhaps refers to its being unrented, or available to let, at the moment.<sup>3</sup> For the most part, the basic formulas and categories of landholdings are the same for the two different *damosi*.<sup>4</sup> In the Ea series, there is no mention of the *ko-to-no-o-ko*, the landholders who in the *pa-ki-ja-ne* series are thought to have been members of a board that oversaw the management of the *damos* land,<sup>5</sup> but, as Nikoloudis says, “the formulaic *pa-ro-da-mo* points to a land-administering body similar to that of the *pa-ki-ja-ni-ja* records,”<sup>6</sup> and I think that the Ea *damos* must also have had its board of *ko-to-no-o-ko*.

The first notable difference between the two series that needs to be mentioned is that the 62 Ea tablets are all brief preliminary documents with only one entry each (except for **Ea 59**, which has seven entries, and **Ea 481**, which has two). The Ea series is made up of the sort of records that we see in the Eo and Eb documents – the leaf-shaped, single-entry tablets that were used by Hand 1 to put together his final versions of the *pa-ki-ja-ne* land: the En and Ep series. Thus, the Ea entries have not been sorted and grouped onto nicely organized page-shaped tablets in the way that Hand 1 did for the Eo and Eb series. Presumably, the Ea entries were meant to be organized at some point in the future, but the destruction of the palace must have occurred before the scribe in charge (possibly Hand 1) had the chance to carry out this particular task.<sup>7</sup> Thus, the clear paragraphs devoted to specific types of land are entirely absent in the Ea series. Rather, it falls to us to do our own organizing.

The lack of the final documents also means that we do not have the opportunity to compare two sets to see what pieces of information were

<sup>3</sup> For discussions of *ka-ma* land see Bennett 1956, 128; Lejeune 1975, 65; *Aspects*, 30–40; Foster 1981, 80; Deger-Jalkotzy 1983, 97–98; Chadwick 1987, 81. For *a-no-no* land, see *Docs*<sup>2</sup>, 448; *Aspects*, 45.

<sup>4</sup> The special type of landholding called *e-to-ni-jo* is not recorded in the Ea landholdings, but that is not surprising since there are only three instances of such land recorded in the Pylos tablets.

<sup>5</sup> In the *pa-ki-ja-ne* series, these landholders are found on Ep 301. See Lejeune 1972, 144; Deger-Jalkotzy 1983, 90–91.

<sup>6</sup> Nikoloudis 2012, 289. Also see Del Frio 2005, 80–81 for a table of the different landholding formulas found in the Ea series.

<sup>7</sup> The scribes may have begun to organize the Ea tablets as 26 were found in Room 8 while the rest were found in Room 7; see Pluta 1996–1997 [1998], 249. Del Frio (2005, 72–75) discusses the possibility that there were two sets, but he also says that if there were, the organizing principle behind them is not clear to us.

omitted from one record but included with another. Having the two sets of information concerning the landholders of *pa-ki-ja-ne* has proved extremely valuable because in several instances it provides further information about an individual that we would not otherwise have known. For instance, *a-tu-ko* the *ka-na-pe-u* is designated as *wa-na-ka-te-ro* on **Ep 609.5**, but this information is not included on **Eo 211.2** (or on **Ep 301.5**). If we had only one of these tablets we would never know that *a-tu-ko* had this special affiliation. It is unfortunate that we do not have this type of corollary information for the individuals on the Ea tablets, but knowing that such omissions are made justifies reconstructing information in some instances where it seems logical to do so.

Despite these difficulties, we can be fairly sure that the Ea series deals with the land of a district or *damos* that was different from *pa-ki-ja-ne* since the overlap of landholders between the En/Ep series and the Ea is minimal: there is only one individual who is definitely recorded in both sets – *o-pe-te-re-u* who holds land on **Ea 805** on account of manslaughter (*e-ne-ka a-no-qa-si-ja*) and on **Eb 294/Ep 704.1**, where he is described as *qe-ja-me-no*, having been paid/compensated, possibly as part of a religious fine/penalty.<sup>8</sup> Another indication that the land recorded in the Ea series is in a different location from that on the En/Ep series is that the scribe who compiled the Ea tablets (Hand 43) is different from the person who wrote up the preliminary Eo/Eb documents for the En/Ep series (Hand 41). Therefore, the land recorded in the Ea series represents a *damos* separate from that of *pa-ki-ja-ne*. Leonard Palmer proposed that the Ea *damos* could be identified with the place *ti-no* because two Ea landholders can be associated with this place name: the landholder named *ke-re-te-u* (who is recorded 10 times in the Ea series and actually holds its largest amount of land—GRA 15 T 4) may be identified with *ke-re-te-u-ti-no* on **Na 565**, and *du-ni-jo* of **Ea 59.7** and **811** may be the *du-ni-jo* described as *ti-ni-ja-ta* (an adjective based on the name *ti-no*) recorded on **Fn 79.3**.<sup>9</sup> I would like to add that on An 18.9, another prominent individual of the Ea tablets, *qo-u-ko-ro*, is recorded with the place name *ti-no*. Nakassis rightly advises caution in making this identification,<sup>10</sup> but I think it is one that is reasonable given that we can now associate three individuals of the Ea series with the name *ti-no*. Also, identifying the Ea land with *ti-no* makes sense because it is listed in the line above *pa-ki-ja-ne* on **An 18.9-11** (a line is left blank between them), which

<sup>8</sup> For *o-pe-te-re-u*, see Killen 1992, 379-380. The only other possible overlap between the Eb/Ep series and the Ea series is *du-ni-jo*, a name found on Ea 59.7 and Ea 811, and Eb 169.A/Ep 705.3. Nakassis (2013, 128), however, does not think that this individual is necessarily the same person, although he does classify it as possible.

<sup>9</sup> *Interpretation*, 220.

<sup>10</sup> Nakassis 2013, 133.

would imply that the land of the Ea tablets is close not only to *pa-ki-ja-ne* but also to Pylos. This close physical proximity of the two would explain the interest of the Pylian administration in recording this land. Nonetheless, I will not use *ti-no* as the name of the Ea *damos* in the rest of this article because I do not want to communicate too much assuredness in this identification.

Perhaps the most immediately striking way in which the Ea and the *pa-ki-ja-ne* records differ is that the Ea series does not have the abundance of religious functionaries that are found in the *pa-ki-ja-ne* documents, and which characterizes the Ep set in particular. For instance, there are no *te-o-jo do-e-ro/ra* in the Ea series at all, whereas the Ep series records 60 plots of land that were held by individuals with this designation. And there is only one man, named *sa-ke-re-u*, who was given the title of *i-je-re-u*, or priest, in the Ea series. Clearly the *damos* of the Ea series did not have a major sanctuary within it, as *pa-ki-ja-ne* did. This difference may be obvious, and it could easily be passed over because it is so obvious, but it is worth considering its significance and the impact it would have had on the people of the community. As much as the large number of religious landholders indicates the special nature of the district of *pa-ki-ja-ne*, so the lack of them in the Ea landholding documents can indicate the opposite about the Ea *damos*: that the Ea tablets represent a *damos* that was not so outstanding, that it was actually a more typical Mycenaean community. I think it is worthwhile then to examine the Ea tablets with this idea in mind to see what we can glean from them about the character of more usual Mycenaean *damoi*.

Another point of difference between the *pa-ki-ja-ne* tablets and the Ea series is that none of the Ea tablets make any mention of the officials called *te-re-ta*, who were so prominent in the En series. To review briefly, the En and Ep series were organized according to land types: the Ep tablets record the land described as *ke-ke-me-na*, which is generally associated with the *damos*, while the En series records *ki-ti-me-na* land, which is primarily held by the men who bear the title *te-re-ta*. This seeming difference, though, may not indicate a substantive difference in the way that the landholdings were managed in the two districts, but rather it may only be the result of the way that Hand 43, the scribe responsible for writing the Ea tablets, recorded his information: although there are no landholders recorded as *te-re-ta*, there are, however, plots of *ki-ti-me-na* land. Lejeune thought that Hand 43 would have organized his files according to the same principle that was used by Hand 41 to organize the preliminary files of the *pa-ki-ja-ne* series. Because there are preliminary tablets in the Eo series that do not contain the word *te-re-ta*, although it is included on the final Eb tablet, Lejeune proposed that in order to keep everything straight, there would have been one basket for the *ki-ti-me-na* tablets and another for the *ke-ke-me-*

*na* tablets.<sup>11</sup> Thus the association between the *ki-ti-me-na* land and the *te-re-ta* would have been implicit and understood. Lejeune applies this principle to the Ea series, which would mean that the individuals who hold plots of *ki-ti-me-na* land in the Ea series should also be interpreted as *te-re-ta*.<sup>12</sup>

I find this idea compelling. As I mentioned above, information is very often not included on a tablet if the scribe thinks that its intended reader would be able to infer the information from what was provided, and in this case, it seems reasonable to see the use of the term *ki-ti-me-na* as indicating that the landholder attached to it was a *te-re-ta*. Also, presuming the existence of *te-re-ta* among the Ea landholders makes sense because they seem to have been individuals who were an integral part of the social hierarchy of Mycenaean *damosi*. Precisely what their position was, however, has been debated.

Because the root of the word *te-re-ta*, or τελεστάς, is related to the word τέλος, it is reasonable to suppose that the *te-re-ta* have some sort of purpose to fulfill or job to perform. Palmer proposed, on analogy with the Hittite term LÚ *ILKI*, which refers to a person who was granted land by the king and is translated as “Man of the Service,” that the *te-re-ta* were men who performed a service for the palace, and that their land was granted to them by the *wanax* in return for that service.<sup>13</sup> This line of thinking was accepted for a long time in Linear B literature, and, moreover, the idea that the palace owned much of the land recorded on the land tenure series (as well as the resources associated with industrial activities on other series) still affects how many scholars approach and interpret the land tenure tablets.<sup>14</sup> But de Fidio and Killen have shown, in their analysis of the interrelated tablets **Un 718**, **Er 312**, and **Er 880**, that the *ki-ti-me-na* land held by the *te-re-ta* and the *te-re-ta* themselves were actually associated with the *damos* rather than the palace.<sup>15</sup> This means that all of the land on both the *pa-ki-ja-ne* series and the Ea series is primarily associated with the *damos*.

Carlier came to the same conclusion through a different line of inquiry.<sup>16</sup> Carlier noted that the term *te-re-ta* is explicitly associated with the *wanax* in

<sup>11</sup> Lejeune 1974, 83–84.

<sup>12</sup> Lejeune 1974, 84.

<sup>13</sup> *Interpretation*, 190–196.

<sup>14</sup> See e.g., Foster 1981, 79–82, 91; Deger-Jalkotzy 1983, p. 90; 1988, 117, 122. Nikoloudis (2012, 297) uses the possibility that “the land of the Ea series was allocated to individuals [by the palace] and therefore, as seems to be usual for land recorded in the palace’s archives, incurred a levy” as one of her working hypotheses.

<sup>15</sup> *Dosmoi*, 114–118; Killen 1998, 23; 1999, 352. Also see Lupack 2008, 67–70 for a detailed discussion of the different proposals having to do with the equivalencies of the landholdings on Un 718, Er 312, and Er 880.

<sup>16</sup> *Royauté*, 65–73.

only one case: on **En 467.5/Eo 371**, where the *te-re-ta* named *pi-ri-ta-wo* is described as *wa-na-ka-te-ro*. But, Carlier pointed out that this association is more likely to be due to the fact that this man was also a *ke-ra-me-u*, or potter, since the word *wa-na-ka-te-ro* is otherwise only associated with craftsmen, and not because of his position as a *te-re-ta*. In contrast, the *te-re-ta* are predominantly found on land tenure documents; at Pylos, they are not found on any other type of document.<sup>17</sup> Thus, Carlier reasoned that the *te-re-ta* were associated primarily with land rather than the *wanax*, and that the *te-re-ta* were men who performed some sort of service for the *damos*.<sup>18</sup> I think they may have performed a service that was military in nature.<sup>19</sup> Such a position that carried with it an obligation to defend the community could have been institutionalized before the *wanax* had gained his power over the region, at a time when each of the *damos* centers had to defend themselves from external enemies as well as potentially hostile neighboring forces. Even in the time period of the tablets, when the *wanax* was organizing at least part of the defense of the region, I think the need to defend one's own local territory would probably still have been a real consideration. And given that the *ko-to-no-o-ko* have already been proposed as the group that managed the land of the *damos*, it seems logical to propose the *te-re-ta* as fulfilling their service in its defense.

If we can consider, then, the Ea landholders of *ki-ti-me-na* land to have been *te-re-ta*, we can recognize five such officials on the extant tablets of the series, and each of them have substantial landholdings: *ko-do* on **Ea 71** with GRA 1 T 4 V 3, *qo-u-ko-ro* on **Ea 781** with GRA 2 T 4, *mo-ro-qo-ro* on **Ea 817** with GRA 3 T 1 V 6, *ta-ra-ma-ta* on **Ea 821** with GRA 5 T 7 V 3, and *sa-ke-re-u* the priest on **Ea 756** with at least GRA 6. The latter three of these men are among the largest landholders of the Ea series, and *ko-do*, *ta-ra-ma-ta*, and *sa-ke-re-u* hold *ke-ke-me-na* land in addition to their *ki-ti-me-na* land. Both of these factors may indicate that the *ki-ti-me-na* landholders held prominent positions within the Ea *damos*. In the *pa-ki-ja-ne* series, many of the *te-re-ta* were also *ko-to-no-o-ko*, meaning that they had a part in managing the land of *pa-ki-ja-ne*, and the five Ea *te-re-ta* may have done so in the Ea *damos* as well. That the priest *sa-ke-re-u* should be counted among the *te-re-ta* is not surprising since one of the priests of *pa-ki-ja-ne* (*pe-re-qo-ta*) also held the position of *te-re-ta* (**En 659.1**). It seems then that in the Ea *damos*, as well as at *pa-ki-ja-ne*, individuals who

<sup>17</sup> The term *te-re-ta* appears on PY Ep 613.4/Eb 149.1, En 609.15/Eo 224.5, Ed 411.1, En 609.2, Eq 146, Er 312.6, and Er 312.5. At Knossos the term *te-re-ta* appears on three land tenure documents (Uf 839.a, Uf 970.a, and Uf 990), on four lists of people (Am 826.1, B 7036, probably B 779.1 and V 159.1), and on a fragment (X 1018); see *Dic. Mic. s.v. te-re-ta*.

<sup>18</sup> *Royauté*, 65–73.

<sup>19</sup> See Lupack 2008, 71.

were highly placed in the religious sphere could also hold prestigious positions in the secular realm.<sup>20</sup>

As in the Ep/En series, the Ea *te-re-ta* were also able to lease out their land,<sup>21</sup> but while this was a relatively unique characteristic that pertained only to the *te-re-ta* in the Ep/En series, in the Ea series a variety of individuals are seen to lease out their land. In fact, it is actually more common in the Ea series for land to be leased from another individual than from the *damos*. Of the 43 plots for which the leaser is named, only 13 are leased directly from the *damos* (with the phrase *pa-ro da-mo* or the term *da-mi-jo*), while more than twice that number, 30, are leased from individual landholders (that is, from or of a personal name or a person's title). At first glance the Ea tablets give the impression that everyone is leasing land from everyone else within the community. Just to give some examples: *a-pi-a<sub>2</sub>-ro* leases land from the swineherd and the oxherd, the unguent boiler leases land from *ku-ru<me>no* the honey man (or beekeeper), the tailor *e-ro<sub>2</sub>-qo* leases land from *i-ma-di-jo*, one *te-re-ta*, *ta-ra-ma-ta*, leases land from another named *ko-do*, and the largest landowner of the Ea series, *ke-re-te-u*, leases plots from no fewer than six individuals – the unnamed swineherd, *sa-ke-re-u* the priest, the oxherd, the honey man, the shepherd named *mo-ro-qo-ro*, and the wheelwright – as well as the *damos*. These multiple personal leasing arrangements speak for a community that must have been very intertwined and interdependent. On the *pa-ki-ja-ne* documents, land is leased either from the *damos* or from one of the *te-re-ta*. There are a couple of interesting alternate types of holdings, for instance, on **Ep 704.2**, *u-wa-mi-ja*, a *te-o-jo do-e-ra*, holds an *o-na-to* as a gift (*ke-ra*) from the priestess (*i-je-re-ja*), that is, presumably from *e-ri-ta*. But there is nothing like the leasing from individuals that goes on in the Ea series. This seems to indicate that the ways in which the individuals within the two communities interacted may have been different. Perhaps having the sanctuary in the midst of the district imposed a structure and formality on the landholdings and the people's interactions that did not exist in the Ea *damos*, where, perhaps, the bonds between people held greater sway and were in general, more fluid.

It could also be attributed to not having a major sanctuary that, as Lejeune has pointed out, the landholdings of the Ea tablets were generally larger and less

<sup>20</sup> See Lupack 2008, 77 for a discussion of the individuals who were active in both the religious and secular spheres. Three examples of such men are *a-pi-me-de* (Ep 539.10, 11, 12, 14 and Cn 655.5; perhaps also referred to on Ed 317 as the *e-qe-ta*), *qe/pe-re-qo-ta* (Ep 613.10, En 659.1 and An 192.12), and *ko-tu-ro<sub>2</sub>* (Ep 301.13, 613.13, Cn 436.6, and Jn 431.2). See also Nakassis 2013, 131.

<sup>21</sup> Actually, three of the five possible *te-re-ta* lease out their land: *ko-do* the shepherd on Ea 754, 825; *mo-ro-qo-ro*, also a shepherd, on Ea 439, 782, 800; and *sa-ke-re-u* on Ea 56, 304.

fragmented than those of *pa-ki-ja-ne*.<sup>22</sup> For example, as Nikoloudis points out, in the En records, *ki-ti-me-na* lands usually range between GRA 1–3, whereas in the Ea series, they range between GRA 1–6.<sup>23</sup> We can look at this in another way. Lejeune suggests that we can estimate that the total land held on the extant Ea tablets (he’s included estimated amounts for those tablets that do not preserve the figures) is GRA 100,<sup>24</sup> and the number of individuals holding that land is around 36.<sup>25</sup> In contrast, in the En/Ep series around 85 individuals<sup>26</sup> hold a very similar amount of land (my calculations come to just under GRA 100). That means there were about 50 more individuals in *pa-ki-ja-ne* whose need for land was being accommodated with approximately the same amount of land.

Nikoloudis proposes one reason for the larger landholdings – that the Ea *damos* was further “removed from a densely inhabited center” than *pa-ki-ja-ne* was, and therefore it was “free from the accompanying pressures of land availability.”<sup>27</sup> The location of the Ea *damos* may very well have played a role, but I think also, if you take out the demands placed on the land in *pa-ki-ja-ne* by the religious hierarchy, you would have a situation that was more beneficial for the inhabitants in terms of their landholdings. That is, people living in more typical *damoi* wouldn’t have had to accede to the pressures of a privileged and perhaps demanding group of people to parcel out the land.

The landholdings also seem to have been more equitably sized than at *pa-ki-ja-ne*, that is, a greater proportion of individuals seem to have been in the middle range in the Ea *damos*. Of the 35 individuals preserved in the Ea tablets, we only have information concerning the size of the landholdings for 30. And of those, the size of the primary landholding, that is, the land that they held on their own, not including the lands they leased out, is extant for 27 individuals. Of those there is one standout, *ke-re-te-u*, who holds over 15 GRA (a landholding that is actually of a greater magnitude than any recorded at *pa-ki-ja-ne*). Two others, *ta-ra-ma-ta* and *sa-ke-re-u* the *i-je-re-u*, both hold over 6 GRA. After these three, 16 individuals hold between 1 and 4 GRA (three of whom fall between 3 and 4, nine between 2 and 3, and four between 1 and 2). Then there are eight who hold less than GRA 1, but only one of these falls below T 1. These numbers indicate that a hierarchy did exist for the Ea landholders, but it does not seem to have been as bottom-heavy as it was for

<sup>22</sup> Lejeune 1974, 88–89, 111.

<sup>23</sup> Nikoloudis 2012, 290.

<sup>24</sup> Lejeune 1974, 88.

<sup>25</sup> Lejeune 1974, 91–92, 110; see also Del Frio 2005, 77.

<sup>26</sup> Lejeune 1974, p. 94. Cf. Del Frio 2005, pp. 106, 113, 137–139.

<sup>27</sup> Nikoloudis 2012, 290.



the landholders of *pa-ki-ja-ne*, where landholdings of less than GRA 1 make up 75% of the plots.<sup>28</sup>

It is also the case that there are several other individuals who can be counted among the upper level of landholders in the Ea *damos* when their leased land is added to their primary holdings. Up until this point I have only considered the individuals' primary landholdings in my calculations, but when the land that an individual leases out is added to their primary holding, that is, the land that the individual is the landlord of, that individual's total land can be significantly elevated. For instance, *mo-ro-qo-ro* the shepherd leases out three plots totaling over 2 GRA, which, when added to his own GRA 3(+), gives him over 5 GRA. The combined landholdings of the armorer named *ka-ra-pi*, the shepherd named *ko-do*, and *ku-ru-me-no* the honey man all amount to over GRA 3. Of those three whose primary landholdings are not preserved, two lease out substantial amounts of land: the unnamed swineherd leases out seven plots that amount to a total of GRA 5 T 2 and the oxherd *pe-re-qo-no* rents out four plots that total GRA 3. If the primary landholdings of these two had been preserved, it is possible that they too could have been counted among the top landholders of the Ea *damos*. Thus, the group of individuals in the Ea *damos* who held significant amounts of land could easily be expanded.

The interesting thing to note though is that while 18 of those 30 landholders leased land from other individuals (and not just *pa-ro-da-mo*), only 11 actually leased out their land. Thus, roughly two-thirds of the Ea landholders did not lease out their land at all, and I find it interesting that the eight who held less than GRA 1 are all in that group of non-leasers. Of course, it is also true that the two individuals with the largest landholdings, *ke-re-te-u* and *ta-ra-ma-ta*, did not lease out any of their land, so it is not necessarily indicative of low status if you did not act as a landlord, but it does seem as though those who held the least land must have needed to keep it for themselves and their families.

All in all, the Ea series indicates that the connections between the people of the Ea community must have been diverse, and the spread of land-wealth seems to have been relatively even, with a handful of individuals at the top, a fairly strong middle group, and of course, several on the bottom, but even those were generally not as land-poor as those at the bottom of the *pa-ki-ja-ne* hierarchy. A hierarchy certainly did exist in the Ea community, but it seems to have been less exaggerated than the one that existed at *pa-ki-ja-ne*.

<sup>28</sup> Of the 101 plots recorded in the En/Ep series, 76 are T 9 or less, with 17 of those being less than T 1. In comparison, 35 of the 62 plots are T 9 or less, or 56% of the total, with only one of those being less than T 1, which means that 44% of the landholdings are GRA 1 or over – a more equitable splitting of the land wealth.

### The Individuals of the Ea *Damos*

Let's look more closely now at the nature of the Ea series' landholders. About half of the names of the Ea series are accompanied by a professional title or an affiliation. Among the individuals who are recorded with their occupational terms are three *ra-pte-re*, "sewers" or "leather-stitchers," an *e-pi-we-ti-ri-jo* or "garment worker," an *a-re-po-zo-o* or "unguent boiler," an *a-ke-ro* or "messenger," an *e-te-do-mo* or "armorer," an *a-mo-te-u* or "wheelwright," a *me-ri-te-u* or "beekeeper" or "honey man," a *di-<pte->ra-po-ro* or "skinbearer," and, last but not least, we have *sa-ke-re-u* the *i-je-re-u* or priest. Several other men are recorded with occupational terms that are associated with animal husbandry: *su-go-ta* or "swineherd," *go-go-ta* or "oxherd," and two men, named *mo-ro-go-ro* and *ko-do*, were *po-me-ne* or "shepherds." This abundance of craftsmen and shepherds is entirely lacking in the *pa-ki-ja-ne* series. But the individuals who were employed in such practical occupations held sizeable portions of land, as for instance *mo-ro-go-ro* the shepherd (who was also one of the likely *te-re-ta*), who holds *ki-ti-me-na* land of over GRA 3. In this *damos*, if we can take landholdings as a measure of status, it was men with such practical professions who must have been among the most influential members of the community.

Dimitri Nakassis's work on the individuals in the Pylian tablets sheds some helpful light onto how we can interpret the nature of the people who hold land in the Ea series.<sup>29</sup> Many of these people are also found on other Pylos tablets, and although Lejeune has cautioned that the fact that the same name occurs in different series does not necessarily indicate that the two should be interpreted as the same person,<sup>30</sup> Nakassis has shown that if we look at the other connections of the names on the tablets, or at the groups of associations, there is actually a high probability that many of these names can be taken to represent the same person.

There are at least nine Ea landowners whose names can be identified with a fair amount of certitude with individuals holding the same name in other series.<sup>31</sup> The most certain of these is the only individual who represents an overlap of names between the Ea series and the Eb/Ep series: *o-pe-te-re-u/o-pe-to-re-u* (**Ea 805**, **Eb 284.1/Ep704.1**), the now well-known Opheltreus who was paid in land as a bloodprice for the death of a relative.<sup>32</sup> The other name in the Ea series that is certainly found in another series is *e-u-me-de*, who is identified on two of his three Ea tablets (**Ea 812** and **820**; he is also found on **Ea 773**) as an unguent boiler. This same man receives oil on **Fr 1184.2**, which was

<sup>29</sup> Nakassis 2013, 132–134.

<sup>30</sup> Lejeune 1974, 93.

<sup>31</sup> Nakassis 2013, 132.

<sup>32</sup> See above, n. 8.

most likely meant for the production of unguent or perfumed oil. *E-u-me-de* was clearly involved in the palace's perfumed oil industry. Another individual whose identification with other instances of the same name is fairly certain is *a-pi-a<sub>2</sub>-ro* (**Ea 109, 270, 922**), who appears on **An 192.1**, **On 300.2**, and **Qa 1297**, all of which associate this man with palatial activities. The connections continue when we consider that *a-pi-a<sub>2</sub>-ro* leases one of his plots of land (on **Ea 270**) from the oxherder named *pe-re-qo-no*, who is recorded as the father of *a-re-i-jo* on the *o-ka* tablet **An 656.6**. These connections prompted Nakassis to consider the identifications of these individuals as quite probable.<sup>33</sup> One of the largest landowners of the Ea series, *ta-ra-ma-ta* (**Ea 336, 778, 821, 825**), also appears in the Ae series (**Ae 108, 134, 489**), on **Vn 851.3**, and is perhaps recorded on **On 300** as well. Another such individual who appears to have been very active in the palatial administration is *du-ni-jo*, who is recorded on **Ae 8, 72, 264, An 192.3, .5, Fn 79.3, Un 138.1, and On 300.6**.<sup>34</sup>

In addition to these well-connected individuals, there are four within the Ea series who were active in the bronze-working industry: *e-u-me-ne* (**Ea 757, 822**), who is seen on **Jn 725.15**; *i-ma-di-jo* (**Ea 29**), who appears on **Jn 310.15** as well as **Cn 436.5**; *pe-re-qo-no*, who was mentioned above as one of *a-pi-a<sub>2</sub>-ro*'s landlords (**Ea 270**), is recorded on both **Jn 605.10** and **725.3**; and the priest *sa-ke-re-u* (**Ea 56, 304, 756, 776**), who is found in the Jn series among the Potnian bronzesmiths on **Jn 431.17**. This religious link serves to strengthen the case for their having been the same person.

The interesting point that pertains to these individuals is that since they were recorded among the bronzesmiths in the Jn series, they should be considered as akin to the people called “collectors” – men who managed their own resources and who must have played prominent roles both within their own communities and among the palatial elite.<sup>35</sup> Indeed, the associations of many of the landholders of the Ea *damos* show that they were involved in activities that were going on at the palace in Pylos, as well as in other areas of Messenia. And as Lejeune and Deger-Jalkotzy have said, and Nakassis has demonstrated, these craftsmen and shepherds were not simply low-ranking individuals who were solely occupied with the management of their workshops or farms, although I do not doubt that they knew very well the details of their respective trades. Rather, they must have constituted the elite of the Ea community, an elite whose

<sup>33</sup> Nakassis 2013, 132.

<sup>34</sup> As mentioned above in n. 29, the name *du-ni-jo* is also seen in the Eb/Ep series, although it may not be the same person.

<sup>35</sup> See Lupack 2006, 101–103; 2008, 114–118 for discussions of the role that the bronzesmiths played within their communities. See also Nakassis 2006, 558–559; 2013, 132–134, who includes the bronzesmiths in the “entrepreneurial elite” of Pylos.

connections clearly extended beyond the Ea *damos* to neighboring communities and, of course, to the palace.

Another connection to the palatial elite is found in the fact that among the Ea landholders there are also a few men who are described as *ra-wa-ke-si-jo* or *lawagesian*, meaning that they were associated with the *lawagetas* in some way. Two of them are craftsmen – *a-mo-te-u* the wheelwright and *e-te-do-mo* the armorer – while three others are recorded simply with their personal names. Palmer, noting that the *pa-ki-ja-ne* tablets had three craftsmen who were identified as *wa-na-ka-te-ro*, proposed that the land on the *pa-ki-ja-ne* tablets could be associated with the *wanax* while the Ea land belonged to the *lawagetas*.<sup>36</sup> In contrast, Nikoloudis proposed that the reason the individuals were associated with the *lawagetas* is because he was organizing work crews, which could have been involved in the process of leather working.<sup>37</sup> I would like to propose an idea that takes a bit from each of these theories: perhaps the *lawagetas* actually had strong familial ties to the *damos* of the Ea tablets, and because of his strong connections to the people living there, he recruited his own workmen, his armorer for instance, from there. A tablet that has been reclassified as Ea from the Mb series, **1406**, lends support to this idea. If we can restore Ea 1406 to read *ra-wa-]ke-ta e-ke*, as Del Freo has proposed,<sup>38</sup> then the *lawagetas* himself would hold land in this village. It is interesting to note, though, that the title of *lawagesian* did not necessarily carry with it the likelihood that the individual would hold large amounts of land. The only *lawagesian* individual who has a significant amount of land is the *su-go-ta*, who leases out GRA 5 T 2 (his primary holding is not preserved). Hence the affiliation with the *lawagetas* did not actually serve to bring these men into the upper levels of the Ea community – at least as far as we can tell in terms of their landholdings.

What can be said concerning the religious sphere of the Ea community? As I mentioned above, the Ea series has only one individual, named *sa-ke-re-u*, who is designated as a *i-je-re-u*. As one might expect for a person who held such a key position, *sa-ke-re-u* does seem to have been a very prominent and well-connected person within the Ea community. In addition to holding his rather sizeable plot of *ki-ti-me-na* land (GRA 6 T[]), which is recorded on **Ea 756**, he both leases land and acts as a landlord himself. As I mentioned, it is the *ki-ti-me-na* land that indicates that he was likely to have been a *te-re-ta*. Melena has also linked *sa-ke-re-u* to the religious site mentioned in the Ea tablets: the ἔσχαρα, or fire altar, of Dionysos,

<sup>36</sup> *Interpretation*, 220.

<sup>37</sup> Nikoloudis 2012, 293.

<sup>38</sup> Del Freo 2005, 80.

which is recorded with GRA 2.<sup>39</sup> It seems strange, though, that there should have been only one religious functionary in the community. Actually, I think it is possible to see two others as having served as religious officials on the Ea tablets. First, the title of *di-<pte->ra-po-ro* appears on two tablets, **Ea 259** and **814**, which record the two small plots of land that this person named *o-ke-u* held. The title has been thought to mean either a “hide-wearer” or a “hide-bearer.” The latter is the more likely, given the parallel *ka-ra-wi-po-ro*, or keybearer, but in either case, the title was most likely a religious one, considering its appearance on **Un 219** and **Fn 50** in religious contexts.<sup>40</sup> It seems probable that this official was somehow involved in the handling or management of the hides of sacrificed animals.

I would also like to propose that it is possible, indeed I think likely, that a priestess was also recorded among the landholders of the Ea series. There is one sure feminine form on the Ea tablets: *i-ma-di-ja*, a woman who holds GRA 2 on **Ea 816**. It has been proposed that this form should be interpreted as a scribal error for the masculine form of the name, *i-ma-di-jo*, which also appears in the Ea series on **Ea 29**.<sup>41</sup> But I think we should take *i-ma-di-ja* at face value and consider her to have been a woman. Weilhartner points out that the sign for *-ja* is rather different from the one for *-jo*, and therefore it is not likely that Hand 43 simply made a mistake here.<sup>42</sup> In the Ep/En series, all of the female landholders, such as *e-ri-ta* the priestess of *pa-ki-ja-ne* and *ka-pa-ti-ja* the keybearer (**Ep 539.7–9**), held positions within the religious hierarchy. Other women too, such as *mi-jo-qa*, *a-pi-e-ra*, and *me-ta-ka-wa*, who appear on **An 1281** working at the “seat” or shrine of Potnia, were also closely associated with the religious sphere and may have held their positions because of that association.<sup>43</sup> With this in mind, I propose that *i-ma-di-ja* was the priestess of the Ea community. Of course, we cannot be sure of this because Hand 43 did not include *i-ma-di-ja*’s title, but since it was not unusual for him to omit an individual’s title,<sup>44</sup> the fact that he did so here cannot be adduced to argue against the possibility.

Thus, with *i-ma-di-ja*, the *di-pte-ra-po-ro*, and *sa-ke-re-u*, we may actually be able to identify three individuals who acted as religious functionaries for

<sup>39</sup> Melena 200–2001, 357–360.

<sup>40</sup> Olivier 1959; *Desservants*, 123; Killen 2006, 79. Nikoloudis (2012, 291, n. 34) provides a good summary of the thinking on the *di-<pte->ra-po-ro*.

<sup>41</sup> Lejeune 1974, 92.

<sup>42</sup> Weilhartner 2013, 3.

<sup>43</sup> Lupack 2006, 473. Slaves belonging to *mi-jo-qa* and *a-pi-e-ra* appear on Fn 50 in another religious context; see Killen (2001) for a discussion of the religious nature of the Fn tablets. But see Shelmerdine, this volume, for a discussion of women who held prominent positions but may not have been associated with the religious sphere.

<sup>44</sup> For instance, on Ea 56 *sa-ke-re-u* is recorded without his title of priest. For other examples, see Lejeune 1974, 97.

the Ea community. This is still a rather modest number, but perhaps it is more representative of the reality of the Ea *damos* than just the one. There may of course have been more such individuals whose landholdings were not preserved, or whose connection to the religious sphere was not indicated on the ones that are extant. But what is remarkable is that there are so few in comparison with the *pa-ki-ja-ne* tablets, and that there is no mention of any *te-o-jo do-e-ro/a* whatsoever. It makes one think that the religious needs of communities like the one represented by the Ea series, although no smaller in terms of land than *pa-ki-ja-ne*, were satisfied with a much more modest sanctuary. Really, to my mind, this comparison between the two emphasizes the singular character of the sanctuary at *pa-ki-ja-ne*.<sup>45</sup> But what can also be said here is that the religious functionaries of the Ea *damos* were, like their counterparts at *pa-ki-ja-ne*, part of the community's elite as well as active participants in its economic life.

### The Character of Mycenaean Communities

The Ea tablets seem to indicate that the landholders of the Ea *damos* had ties among themselves that were strong and diverse, and it seems that their hierarchy was more even than that of *pa-ki-ja-ne*'s. The individual landholders are predominantly craftsmen and individuals who were involved in animal husbandry – and yet these are the people, particularly the herdsman, along with the *i-je-re-u*, who held positions of the highest status within the Ea community. The interconnections between the Ea tablets and other series, such as the Jn, Cn, Fn, and the A tablets, show that these individuals also interacted with the elite of the palace and with those of other areas in the Hither Province. I am sure that if we had tablets recording transactions from the point of view of those living in the Ea community, rather than just from the palatial point of view, we would see more interconnections between the different villages. It is interesting then to carry this line of thinking forward and to conjecture that the qualities that differentiate the Ea *damos* from *pa-ki-ja-ne* may also be taken as characteristic of other Mycenaean communities. This seemingly mundane set of landholders may not have been as special as those of *pa-ki-ja-ne*, but it is in this contrast that we may begin to understand the constitution and functioning of more typical Mycenaean communities of the Late Bronze Age.

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<sup>45</sup> A long discussion about why the sanctuary of *pa-ki-ja-ne* is so outstanding could easily be brought in here, but so as not to divert attention from the Ea *damos*, I will leave that for a future article.

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