

# Thoughts on Mycenaean *o-we-to*

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## ABSTRACT

The paper discusses the possible interpretation of the Mycenaean form *o-we-to* (KN Dm 1184.b) as the genitive singular of a personal name derived from the noun *οὔς*, 'ear'. If such an interpretation is possible, then this name is testimony that there existed in the Greek language an adjective in *\*-went-* derived from the sigmatic stem of the noun *οὔς*, besides the one derived from its dental stem, *οὐατόεις*, *ὠτώεις*.

*Keywords:* Mycenaean, *o-we-to*, *οὐατόεις*

The Mycenaean form *o-we-to* occurs in the second row of the tablet KN Dm 1184, cf.:

The a. e-ka-ra-e-we

b. pa-i[ ]to , / o-we-to , o-pa OVIS<sup>m</sup> 15

This form has been discussed several times in the context of the interpretation of the term *o-pa* and the Knossos D tablets. The presence of the term *o-pa*, */hopā/*, suggests that it is a form of a personal name because *o-pa* usually refers to the work of individual men [1], in this case a shepherd [2].

Personal names in the context of *o-pa* can be in nominative, cf. (KN Ce 50 v) (1a) *a-qi-ru* OVIS<sup>m</sup> 190 *qa-ra-wo* OVIS<sup>f</sup> 144 (1b) *o-pa* (2) *a-nu-ko* OVIS<sup>f</sup> 133 [ ] *ro-ru* OVIS<sup>f</sup> 150. But the true relation between the man and his working obligations is actually expressed when the man's name is in genitive, cf. *a-re-ki-si-to-jo o-pa* (KN Sf 4420.a), */Aleksitoygo hopā/*; *e-ta-wo-ne-wo o-pa* (KN L 695.1b), */(H)etāwonēwos hopā/* [3].

Not excluding the possibility that *o-we-to* is after all a nominative, let us explore the other possibility that it is a genitive [4] and see whether it is possible to offer a meaningful interpretation of the name.

A personal name ending in *-we-to* can be easily related to another Mycenaean personal name attested in genitive as *ko-ma-we-to* and to other case forms of personal names and adjectives in *\*-went-*, such as *ko-ma-we* (KN Dv 5278.B), nom. */Komāwens/*, *ko-ma-we-te* (KN C 913.2), dat. */Komāwentei/* and *κομήεις*, 'leafy'; *a-ta-ro-we* (KN Da 1221.B), nom. */Aithalowens/* and *αἰθαλόεις*, 'smoky, sooty, burnt-coloured'; *te-mi-dwe* (KN So 894.1), nom. sg. n. */termidwen/*, *te-mi-dwe-ta* (PY Sa 791), nom. pl. n. */termidwenta/* and *τερμιόεις*, 'fringed'.

A personal name, however, with just one sign *o-* representing the stem to which the suffix *\*-went-* is attached, cannot be so easily related to other known or reconstructed Greek nouns [5]. Nevertheless, one possible interpretation has been offered, based on the assumption that the stem was actually shortened due to a scribal error, cf. *O-we* < *o-pa-we*, */Olbawens/* and *ὀλβήεις*, *ὄλβιος*, 'happy, blessed' or */Olpawens/* and *ὄλπη*, 'leathern oil-flask' [6].

I wonder if it is possible to continue thinking about the possible interpretation of the stem *\*o-* on these grounds, bearing in mind the following questions: Is it not possible for an adjective in *\*-went-* to be derived from a root noun, cf. Myc. *pe-de-we-sa* (PY Ta 709.2.2), */pedwensa/*, 'equipped with feet'? [7] Is it not possible for a stem to be shortened as a result of phonological phenomenon, such as haplology, for example, cf. *a-po-re-we* (PY Tn 996.3; MY Ue 611.1), nom. dual */amphorēwe/*, *a-pi-po-re-we* (KN Uc 160 v.2), nom. pl. */amphiphorēwes/* and ἀμφορεύς, ἀμφιφορεύς, 'large jar, pitcher with two handles'? Is it not possible for an adjective derived from a dental stem noun and an adjective derived from the same noun but without the dental to exist side by side, cf. ἀμφωτος and ἀφμώης 'two-eared, two-handled, jar'? Is it not possible in the case of nouns with a secondary dental inflexion for forms without dental to occur as well, cf. ἄναξ, ἄνακτος, Myc. *wa-na-ka-to* and Dor. *φανάκοι(v)* (IG IV/566, Argos), Boeot. *φανακώνιος* (IG VII 2781, Copa) or Myc. *ka-ra-wi-po-ro*, */klāwi-phoros/* and Post-Myc. *κλειδο-φόρος*, 'key-bearer'?

If it is possible, then perhaps *o-we-to* is a genitive of a personal name, actually an adjective in *\*-went-*, derived from the noun *οὔς*, 'ear'. Such an adjective exists in Greek, cf. *οὔατοεις, ὠτώεις*, but it is related to the dental stem of the noun, *οὔατ-, ὠτω-* (< *\*Hous-nt-*). [8] It is used for vessels, meaning 'with handles', cf. *οὔατόεντα σκύφον* (Simon. 246); *τρίποδ' ὠτώεντα* (Hom. *Il.* 23, 264, 513; Hes. *Op.* 657); *μύρσον ὠτώεντα* (Call. *Fr.* 102), but also for animals, meaning 'long-eared', cf. *θηρὶ οὔατόεντι* (Call. *Aet.* 2070.31), *οὔατόεντα λαγῶν* (*AP* 7.207, Mel.).

As for the Mycenaean, it has been proposed that *o-wo-we* (PY Ta 641.1), an adjective, used in the description of a tripod, can be interpreted as */owwowens/* (< *\*owos-wents* or *\*ownt-wents*). [9] This interpretation was criticized by Szemerényi on the grounds of Mycenaean orthography and the assumption that the noun *οὔς* has a sigmatic stem *\*owes-*, which would have resulted in an adjective *\*owes-went-*, cf. *τελήεις* from *τέλος*, and would appear in Mycenaean as *o-we-w*, or more probably would have been derived from the dental stem *\*ous-nt-* and would appear as *o-wa-tu-we* */o-wa-te-we* or *o-wo-tu-we* */o-wo-te-we*. [10] The possibility that *o-we-to* can conceal a name, derived with haplology from *o-wo-we*, has also been discussed, but dismissed as unlikely. [11]

The noun *οὔς* does not occur in Mycenaean, but a compound adjective *a-no-wo-to* (KN K 875.1-6), */anow(w)otos/* confirms that its dental inflexion had already been created, cf. *ξόανον ... ἀνούατον* (Theoc. *Ep.* 4.3) 'without ears, handles'. If an adjective in *\*-went-* existed in this period, then one would expect to find *οὔατοεις* on the tablets and its genitive would certainly had not been spelt *o-we-to*.

It is well known, however, that in Mycenaean there are also compound adjectives in *-o-we*, */-ow(w)ēs/*, meaning 'with (or without) handles', cf. *ti-ri-jo-we*, */triyow(w)ēs/*, 'with three handles', *qe-to-ro-we*, */k<sup>w</sup>etrow(w)ēs/*, 'with four handles' and *a-no-we*, */anow(w)ēs/*, 'without handles', which testify to a different stem of the noun *οὔς*, not the one ending in dental. The sigmatic adjectives are derived from sigmatic nouns, and forms ending in *-o-we*, */-ow(w)ēs/* should be related to the sigmatic stem *\*ow(w)os* (< *\*Housos*) of the noun 'ear' in Greek, cf. o.c.s. *ἄλλο, ἡμεεε* [12]. If the adjectives *a-no-we* and *a-no-wo-to* existed side by side in Mycenaean, cf. also ἀμφωτος (Hom. *Od.* 22.10) and ἀφμώης (Theoc. *Id.* 1.28), 'two-eared, two-handled, jar', then perhaps an adjective in *\*-went-* derived from the sigmatic and the one derived from the dental stem also existed side by side. If so, *o-we-to* could be genitive of *\*owwens* (< *\*ow(w)e(w)wents* < *\*Houses-went-s*). A haplology of the stem in the case of the adjectives in *\*-went-* is not unknown to Greek, cf. place

name *pe-re-wo-te* (PY Na 513), /*Phleiwontē*/ (< \**Phleiwowont-*) and *Φλειφονταθεν* (SEG 11, 1212, Olympia), *Φλειούς* [13].

Alternatively, \**owwens* could be from \**Hous-n-went-* or just \**Hous-went-*, bearing in mind the different forms of the noun *οὔς* attested to in Post-Mycenaean Greek, which point to an original root noun \**Hōus* on the one hand, and a nasal stem \**Hous-n-* on the other, [14] cf. also *ἐνώδιον*, 'earring' (< \**ἐν-ου(σ)-ιδιον*, according to Wackernagel) and Hesch. *ἐξωβάδια ἐνώτια. Λάκωνες* (< \**ἐξ-ωνh-άδια*) [15].

A personal name based on an adjective in \**-went-* from the noun 'ear' could have been created as a nickname, denoting a particular physical characteristic - in this case the ears, cf. the Mycenaean personal name *o-tu-wo-we*, /*Orthwou(w)es*/, a compound of *ὀρθός* and *οὔς* and names found later, such as *Ἐρίωτος*, *Καλωτώ*.

### Notes:

- [1] The term being interpreted as 'workshop' (Lejeune (1958), 39-40; (1972), 73, 300), but more convincingly 'contribution' (Chadwick (1973), 420, 564), 'work (to be performed)' (Melena (1983), 282, 285–286; Killen (1992), 374, 378) or even more precisely 'work involving refurbishment, finishing vel.sim. of an already existing object' (Killen (1999), 329 ff.) or 'contractual work' as opposed to *ta-ra-si-ja*, /*talansiyā*/, 'hierarchical work' (Sacconi (2008), 691, 699–701).
- [2] Chadwick (1973), 566; Melena (1983), 265; Ilievski (1992), 322, n. 6; Sacconi (2008), 693–695.
- [3] The use of different cases may indicate different relations, but it was not unusual for Mycenaean scribes to list names in nominative and then just add other terms often with smaller signs. Note how *o-pa* on KN Ce 50v. is actually inserted between the first two syllabogrammes of the name *a-qi-ru*.
- [4] Chadwick (1973), 566; Lejeune (1971), 22 n. 45; Aura Jorro, F. - Adrados, F. R. (1993), 57.
- [5] Melena (1983), 265.
- [6] The scribe accidentally omitted the syllable *-pa-* because he had to repeat it three times in the same row, see Ilievski (1992), 334 and n. 47.
- [7] On the adjectives in \**-went-* in Mycenaean and in Post-Mycenaean Greek, see: Lejeune (1971), 13–18, 22-33; Risch (1974), 151–156 and (1987), 284–285.
- [8] *Οὐατόεις* can also be reconstructed for Hom. Hes. *ὠτάεις*, see: Risch (1974), 155; Beekes (2010), 1130. The stems *ὠτ-* and *οὐατ-* of the noun 'ear' have been explained as two different developments of the cluster \**-ws-*, in the first case with a compensatory lengthening and in the second with a geminate. See: Kiparsky, *Lang.* 43 (1967), 619–635 in Beekes (2010), 1130 and also Fischer (1996), 42.
- [9] Palmer (1957), 577 and (1969), 344, 440; < \**ous-o-went-* or \**ous-~~h~~-went-*, Gallavotti, *Documenti* 28, PP 11 (1956), 23 in Aura Jorro - Adrados (1993), 60; Chadwick (1973), 498–9.
- [10] Szemerényi (1967), 58.
- [11] Melena (1983), 265.
- [12] Szemerényi (1967), 56-7, 59; Meisner (2005), 198; Chantraine (1974), 840; Ruijgh (1983), 396; Buzalkovska -Aleksova (1999), 182.
- [13] Lejeune (1997), 18-19; Heubeck (1976), 132; Risch (1983), 383.
- [14] Beekes (2010), 1130–1131; Rix (1992), 148; Fischer (1996), 41–422.
- [15] Beekes (2010), 432; cf. also *ἐνώδιον*, derived from \**ἐνωφειον*, neuter of an adjective \**ἐνωφειος*, Szemerényi (1967), 87–88.

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## Размисли за микенската форма *o-we-to*

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### РЕЗИМЕ

Клучни зборови: микенски, *o-we-to*, *οὐατόεις*

Микенската форма *o-we-to* (KN Dm 1184.b), според контекстот во кој се јавува може да претставува генитив од лично име. Според завршокот би можело да се претпостави дека ова лично име е всушност придавка оформена со суфиксот *\*-went-*. Иако навидум изгледа невозможно да се интерпретира основата од која би била изведена ваквата придавка, со микенското писмо предадена само со една силабограма *o*, сепак споредбата со други форми во микенскиот и помикенскиот покажува дека можеби тоа би можела да биде именката *οὔς*, „уво“. Доколку ваквата интерпретација е прифатлива, тогаш ова микенско име забележано само со една форма во генитив претставува потврда дека во грчкиот постоела придавка оформена со суфиксот *\*-went-* од основата на именката *οὔς* без дентал, покрај соодветната придавка оформена од денталната основа, *οὐατόεις*. Што се однесува до значењето на името, придавката употребена како прекар веројатно се однесувала на конкретна физичка особеност - човек со големи уши, *Ушле*, *Ушко*.