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DEPARTMENT OF ENTOMOLOGY  
Dear Miss Hober

I am so piled up with letters to answer that I acknowledge yours immediately before it gets buried;-- then back to the insects.

We agree as to the one-man tablet,- the only thing that worried me was the appearance of a single word cited by you, with the same ending (doubtless a coincidence). I had not intended to go on and think the great mass of tablets to include place-names, only this one and perhaps one or another that coincided with it in part of the names, if there were such. I don't imagine that with this restriction the list would approach five hundred, but you have seen the tablets and may know how many there are of this type,- Obviously there are no more yet published. Big factors in making me think this was the actual list of the towns of Crete (or perhaps one particular class of them) were the tripartite division, the roughly correct number and most of all the coincidence of two out of the three common endings in their supposed values with the two commonest endings of Cretan non-hellenic place names. This last seemed to carry things beyond the point of coincidence. If we take F to as certain (stroke for stroke the Cyprian sign) it leaves only lo and na as values for τ; and I had already considered na as its most probable value. As to other place names. I had raised in mind the question whether some of those censuses of farm animals might not have place-names, but in that case most probably farm-~~er~~ rather than town names, so I should not expect too much coincidence of actual names. On the whole I think we agree on those "declensions",- I had merely expressed myself awkwardly. I still think that declension must have been the exception, not the rule, or we should have had more batches of similar endings. But again so few of the tablets have been published I am not really in position to judge. I had noted the apparent mixing of syllabic and ideographic signs, and felt that many that Evans considered ideograms were more probably syllables (notably the throne, B i) As to M lu my impression was that the ideogram took a different form from the syllable, and that at least in the table in P of M Evans totally omitted the syllable-sign,- that his no. 90 was the somewhat similar ideogram. I also strongly suspect that there was more variation between different local writings that one would guess from merely what Evans published. E.g. P is several times repeated on the Pylos tablets, and I don't find it on the Evans list; also I judge l ro is mainly a mainland-Cyprian character,- at least I don't remember seeing it on the published nosos tablets.

Really I am not so sure that Minoan is IE, rather I am

sure it includes a large mass of IE words, and am inclined to believe it is IE. I judge that the na suffix (as shown in so many local names) whether or not it is the same as the equally common 5-ending on the 'one-man' tablet, is the Asianic rather than IE plural-ending. The interesting point is its recurrence frequently though not universally in Polynesian, which also has so many IE words in a non-IE matrix. By the way in Po it seems often to be not a true dual, but a step past the dual, meaning "two or three" or "several". I wonder if in prehellenic also it might have had the same coloring; - Mykenai "the two glens" Athenai, "the three fates"; amenena karena "here and there a strengthless head". (Polynesian dual was -ia)

I suspect that you have one more declension in your list, - the case where the stem-syllable was not changed (≠ te)

I believe that the socalled woman tablet is a list of men, to whom women are assigned, or from whom they are taken (??) - in any case male names. On the other hand I think the seated humans, whom Evans calls men are actual ladies, - their lower strokes do not cross. If true this snarls up the published comparative lists of supposed male and female names. It is a pity we have no plausible PH words for "boy" and "girl" surviving in Greek, since that would give phonetic values for the 'boy' and 'girl' groups, which could be tested elsewhere. (How about para's = Italian ragazzo = Port. rapaz, rapariga?)

This language question is a great one, - even in entomology one has to read a surprising list of languages. When I was abstracting for "Biological Abstracts" I was expected to read French, German, Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, Italian and even Rumanian. But I drew the line at the Slavic! and Scandinavian. One of our best reference works at the present is in Portuguese (published in Brazil). I shall await Ktistopoulos with great interest. As to the Cyprian-Minoan coincidences, they are as you say rare (about ten exact), but there are many more so reasonable that one always hopes for confirmation. And counting more less plausible guesses, which may or may not be confirmed, but are worth watching, there are toward half the syllabary. We already have a good reading for foal (τ+ polo, associated with a horse-ideogram) and I recall, though I cannot trace, τττ metu for a wine-jug (which is what I take the false-necked vases to be); also frequently τ me alone on sketches of false-necked jugs. These two words alone give a confirmation on four characters. So many others have popped up, that fit the pattern, though they do not prove it, that I expect when the Pylos and Knossos tablets are published we will probably get enough to lauch us. Note F+τ tolosi (Soulos) against one exceptional name on a Pylos tablet. F+palo ('lot', perhaps allotment) against all the other names on the same tablet; melo- as the beginning of a long word on a tablet concerning sheep; the to, na suffixes on the tablet discussed above; so in one of your paradigms the alternation of F to and τ ti fits perfectly. It is a pity you did not get a second case for any of the words in + lo.

*Nor back to the zoogeography of the Othoniinae!*

*Yours sincerely  
W. H. Dales*