A REMARK ON A VOTIVE TEXT FROM CONSTANTINE
KAI 162

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In 1955 Février published two of the texts found in Constantine some years before, most of which were published by Berthier and Charlier in their *Le sanctuaire punique d'el-Hofra à Constantine*.

The title of the publication, *Un sacrifice d'enfant chez les Numides*, shows in which direction his interpretation of these texts went. Apart from a recapitulation of Février's observations by W. Röllig in KAI, no further study of these rather difficult texts seems to have been published, although a reconsideration of at least some of the reading proposals and translations of the first editor may be useful.

Both stelae on which the texts are inscribed are photographically reproduced in Février's edition, and the texts are reproduced again in KAI; the second set of photographs especially is of an excellent quality. The following readings and drawing are based on both sets of photographs (see fig. 1).

In the following we will make some remarks on the first words of the first of these texts, viz. KAI 162.

Line 1 - Février reads the first line in the following way:

\[ l'y?3dnb?...tb? slur?mnb?ld?r?b?sl?b?l(lhe\text{letters followed by }^n\text{ are uncertain}), \text{and he divides and translates: } l'y?3dnb\ldots b'l\ hmn bl\ 'dr b\slr bl, 'for }^n\text{ lord ... Ba'al Hammon, Ba'al Addir, Bissarba'al'}. \]

On the first word Février remarks that it is embarrassing, because the yod has a strange form, the reading, however, seems to be ascertained by the occurrence of \( y? b'l \) in the first line of text B (KAI 163). A fresh look at the photographs shows that the reading \( y \) for the third sign in this line is less probable. As Février has remarked himself, the horizontal stroke at the base of the \( y \)-sign is missing in this case. A reading of the sign as \( b/d/r \) seems more plausible. If this reading is the right one, comparison with \( y? \) in text B cannot be upheld and a look at the other signs of the first part of line 1 becomes imperative.

The first sign has to be read as \( l \). The second one - Février reads \( \) - seems to miss its upper right stroke, at least when it has to be explained as \( \); perhaps it is better to read \( g \). The signs following seem to represent \( b/b/r \) \( b/d/r \ n \); the last three signs have been interpreted by Février as \( dtn \) - "lord" which seems the most
probable solution. This means that the three signs between 1 and 3dn must be interpreted as the name of a deity, or an appellative of a deity, to whom this votive text was dedicated, just as in Février's treatment of the text.

The following possibilities come to mind:

a) read gd, to be connected to gd, "fortune", occurring in a difficult text from Henchir Maktar, in the combination gd hšmm, "fortune of heaven?", and possibly also in a Punic text from Ibiza, preceded by the definite article, hgd; or connect this name with the name element gd occurring several times in Punic and Neo-Punic texts and make a distinction between gd and gd, as one may maintain that 3 at the end of the names brktgd and n'mtg'd cannot easily be explained as the used as a hypochoristic ending in names like bd, brk, and therefore should be considered a part of the name element; cf. however the pair names n'mgd - gdn'm, both attested in Carthage;

b) read the same graphemes, dividing, however, gd, "Fortune, the lord", in which the first alef is the definite article, preceding 3dn; the use of alef in this situation seems less probable, but cf. alef representing the article before c in πρτ;

c) accept the reading of Février, 3 instead of g, and read 3b, "Father, the lord", or combine

d) 3b/d/r 3dn = "3b/d/r 3 the lord", in which 3b/d/r is the name of an otherwise unknown deity; the reading 3b, to be explained as a name related to 3b, "father" should not be rejected too easily, cf. the name 3m in KAI 83, used to indicate a female deity (lrbt l'm).

The signs following 3dn are transcribed b ?..t by Février. From the photograph in KAI one can conclude to the existence of a thin stroke connecting the upper part of the alleged second and third signs in this word. Therefore we suppose that only one sign is meant, a sign that looks like or z. The last sign of this word looks more like n or t (t has the normal Neo-Punic form with the small traverse stroke at the top in this text, see e.g. the 3rd, 4th and 7th signs in line 2, as compared to the n-signs in the first line in the words 3dn and hmn). The word may be read b/d/r + s/z + n, perhaps to be interpreted as rzn, "prince", a divine epithet known from the dedicatory text KAI 145 from Henchir Maktar, where ḫrmyskr is called rzn ymm, "prince of the seas". Following rzn the words b'l hmn are undoubtedly to be read.

The way in which the opening words of this text should be connected is not clear. There are at least two possible solutions:

a) gd (the) lord is to be equated to b'l hmn, or

b) gd (the) is the rzn of b'l hmn:

"To Fortune, the lord, the prince, Ba'l Hammon", or
"To Fortune, the lord, prince of Ba'l Hammon".
The following sign is interpreted as a b by Février. If this interpretation is correct, one must assume that two types of b-signs occur in this text, namely the short stroke and the longer one completed with a downstroke to the left; the small stroke to the left at the top of this sign must be explained in this case as the representation of the normally closed head of the b. Although perhaps not of frequent occurrence, the use of two types of b in one text is attested elsewhere and cannot be excluded. The form of the sign, however, strongly suggests the reading p instead of b. Février's objection that p in this text misses the small stroke at the top is valid only when a p with another form is attested elsewhere in this text without any doubt, and below we will see that this is not the case. The next sign is undoubtedly l, followed by what may be an c open to the right and the small stroke representing b/d/r. Then follows a sign looking like the p/b just mentioned, and the last four signs of this line may be read $/z b/d/r b/d/r l.

Février read the words following b'l hmn as bl 'dr, and he explained them as a variant orthography of b'l 'dr, an indication of a deity attested elsewhere (cf. KAI 138 from Bir Tlelsa: lb'l 'dr... ; Punica IX, 9 from Henchir Guergour: nd'r $'s ndr lb'l 'dr; EH 10,11: l'dn lb'l 'dr ndr... ; and ibid. 241: ndr $'s ndr... lb'l 'dr)14.

Although a very attractive solution at first sight, two objections have to be made. In the first place it should be noted that in the other instances where b'l 'dr occurs, b'l is used as a divine name, followed by the attributive adjective 'dr, whereas in the present text bl 'dr has to be interpreted as an apposition to the name of the deity b'l hmn. This need not be a decisive objection, however. The other, and in our opinion more weighty objection against Février's interpretation results from the spelling. Presumably bl 'dr should be pronounced /bal addir/, or something like this. The loss of c is normal and need not be commented upon; the spelling of *'dr with c instead of * points to the pronunciation /a-/, which was not to be expected in view of Latin representations of this combination: baliddir, baldir15. One may argue, of course, that baliddir with /i/ in the first syllable of the adjective only occurs in this combination, when it is used as an epithet16. In that case, however, we are still left with the question why b'l occurring twice in almost the same breath is spelled with c the first time and without c in the second instance. Perhaps the reading of p for the first sign after hmn should be preferred therefore. This results in a possible pl, a 3rd p.s. perfect qal of the root p'l, showing the loss of /l/ in pronunciation. In the same spelling the word occurs in a small text from Ibiza: pl mgn 17; cf also the FEL in several Latino-Punic inscriptions, e.g. MINSYST[H M]V FEL BARICBAL..., "stele which Baricbal made"18. An objection against this interpretation may be found in the use of the verb p'l in a text on a stele of the type
under discussion. In most instances steles of this type contain formulae with the verb *ndr*, whereas *pl* is almost exclusively used in connection with tangible objects. The only comparable text is KAI 83: *lrbt l'm 3 wrbt lb'lt hhdrt 23 pl *hmlr bn b'lh,n*, "to the lady, to *m*, and to the lady, to the mistress of the *hdrt*, what *hmlr* the son of *b'lh,n* made"19.

When the above reasoning is correct the signs following *pl* must contain the name of the dedicant. We agree with Février on the possibility of reading 'c for the first sign of this name. An open form of 'c is attested elsewhere in Neo-Punic texts, and in the texts from Constantine 'c may even be written as a small vertical stroke20. The last sign of the line is undoubtedly l. The two preceding signs are interpreted by Février as examples of the short stroke representing *b/d/r*, but it may be possible to explain the last sign but one as another example of the open 'c. The preceding sign may be explained as *b/d/r*, giving us the opportunity to read either *bl* or *b'l* at the end of the line 1. As there are five signs between *pl* and this *b(5)l* we suppose that *b'l* is not the second part of a compound personal name, and another occurrence of the indication of a deity *b'l* is also not to be expected. The only plausible explanation that remains is to interpret *b'l* as citizen, member of the assembly of the people. If correct, one must assume that the expression *b'l* + *nomen loci* is preceded by one name only. Although in most instances known to the present writer members of the assembly were of such a descent that they could name their father21, we may at least point to two texts in which a female dedicant is mentioned together with her father's name, followed by *b'l* + *nomen loci*: *tn 3 bn z l'htmylkt bt ymlk b'l mkd't* 'st s'lkny bn ..., "this stone was erected for Ahotmilkt the daughter of ymlk, member of the popular assembly of mkd't, wife of s'lkny, the son of ..."22, and *bn* *b[t] z [q]wr'tlh bt npthn b'l g'l [28]t qlr bn ..., "Quarta, the daughter of Nyptan, member of the popular assembly of g'l, wife of Celer the son of ... built this temple"23. In the difficult text NP 1024 the name preceding *b'l* in the second line seems to be a Berber one (ending in */-an/?) that is not preceded by *bn*; cf. also *hrn* 'b'lt bznty - Ἐρήνη βυζαντία25.

The five signs between *pl* and *b'l* must contain the name of the dedicant. The first part of it seems clear. Février reads the first signs of this words as 'dr, which means that the reading 'b/d/r b/d/r is possible. As 'bd is very common as first element of personal names we suppose that this is the correct reading. The following signs must contain the name or epithet of a deity. The first one is explained by Février as another example of the longer form of *b*, but again we are not convinced that this reading is correct. The form of the sign rather suggests either *p* or *k*. The next sign must be explained as s, like Février did, or as z. Because no clear and assured reading of the complete name suggests itself we

As the reading š or z for the sign next to p/k is probable, it seems most attractive to read a name to be connected to ‘bdksš (the name ‘bdksyšr is an orthographical variant of ‘bdksš, ‘bdks’c is probably a misspelling of the same27, whereas the reported ‘bdks – which would fit exactly in our text – does not exist)28. This compels us to the reading ‘bdksšr for the name following pl. When the sign following š is explained as r, which is, of course, possible, the complete name ‘bdksšr emerges. This leaves us with only two signs at the end of the line. Although our first impression was that the last sign but one could be read as ‘, it is also possible to accept Février’s reading, b/d/r, and to explain the signs in question as bl, orthographical variant of b’l.

The first line of KAI 162 may therefore be read and translated: lgd3 ‘dn rzn b’l ḥmн pl ‘bdksšr bl, “For gd’ the lord, prince of Ba’l Hammon, has made ‘bdksšr, member of the popular assembly of...”.

It follows from our remarks on the first line that the first word of the second line must contain the name of a place, and because the blank space after the seventh sign of this line seems to be intentional, we suppose that these first seven signs contain this name. We read the following signs: b/d/r ‘t t ‘m t. An important problem is posed by the third, fourth and seventh signs. In many Neo-Punic inscriptions no difference is to be found between the grapheme indicating n, and the one indicating t. When difference is made this is indicated by a small traverse stroke at the top of the sign indicating t. The reading of three t’s seems imperative therefore. In some inscriptions, however, this distinction is made in the form of the signs, without a corresponding relation to the function of resp. t and n. When the signs at the beginning of this line form one geographical designation, one doesn’t expect the repetition of t in the middle of the name. Should we read b/d/r ‘t/n n/t ‘mt therefore? This seems less probable in view of the quality of the script. Another possibility is to assume that the name is a compound one, consisting of an element b/d/r t followed by t’mt. The second element may be explained as a geographical indication of Berber origin, as many Berber names are feminine, characterized by the morpheme t---t, cf. e.g. tnsmt, t’ynnt, tsk’t and probably also t’skmsmt and tmd’t 29. It is difficult to connect the first element in its possible reading b’t with the common Semitic *byt, because ‘ points to a vowel /a/. In some instances, however, ‘ is used to indicate /a/30, and perhaps one might suppose a development /bet/>/bat/ in unstressed position. Other readings are
possible, and a more or less certain reading will only emerge when someone finds a suitable identification of this place name\textsuperscript{31}.

(To be continued)

\begin{enumerate}
\item Paris, 1952-1955.
\item AIPHOS, 13 (1953) (= Mélanges I. Lévy), 161-71.
\item KAI II, 152-53.
\item \textit{Ibid.}, III, Taf. XXIX.
\item KAI 147.
\item See KAI a. 1.
\item KAI 72B.
\item Cf. Benz, \textit{cit.}, 232ff.
\item CIS I 717, 1520.
\item CIS I 383, 2155, 4657, 4659, 4661, 5638; gdn\textsuperscript{c}m, \textit{ibid.}, 4656; gdnm, \textit{ibid.}, 759, 902, 1949, 4658, 5779.
\item It is also possible to explain the epithet as "prince of the days", cf. e.g. KAI a.1.
\item \textit{Punica} = J.-B. Chabot, \textit{Punica} separately, and in JA; \textit{Punica} is to be found in JA XI/XII, (1916); EH = A. Berthier-R. Charlier, \textit{Le sanctuaire punique d'el-Hofra}, Paris 1952-1955.
\item CIS VIII 5297, 19121-19123.
\item Cf. on this name also K. Jongeling, \textit{Vowel Assimilation in Punic}: \textit{JEOL}, 29 (1985-86) [1987], 124-32, see 129f.
\item ICO, Spagna Npu 2.
\item IRT, 828, cf. 873, etc.
\item For b\textsuperscript{ct} hhdrt cf. e.g. KAI a.1.
\item Cf. e.g. EH 30 (plate IV D).
\item Cf. e.g. the following texts from Henchir Maktar: NP 66 (- M. Lidzbarski, \textit{Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik}, Weimar 1898 [= Hb], p. 436 C 8 + Chabot, \textit{Punica} IV A 6), NP 67 (\textit{Punica} IV A 7), NP 69 (KAI 152), \textit{Punica} IV B 7, etc.
\item NP 68 (\textit{Punica} IV A 8): on this text cf. also K. Jongeling, \textit{op.cit.} (note 8), 6ff.
\item Text from Djebel Mansour, KAI 140.
\item Cf. most recently K. Jongeling, \textit{op.cit.} (note 8), 13.
\item KAI 56.
\item Based on the monographs mentioned in note 8.
\item What has been interpreted as c may be the head of the r, the tail of which was not extant any more when Chabot had the chance
\end{enumerate}
to study this text; for this text, NP 99, cf. Chabot, *Punica* XVIII, 1, 18; a drawing of the text was published by Judas: *Annuaire de la Société archéologique de Constantine*, 1860-1861, pl. 6 n° XIV, where the name seems to be spelled as 'bd'smn, however.

28 For the reading 'bdks, cf. e.g. RÉS 779, cf. however Chabot, *Punica* XI, 10: read 'bdksr.


31 It is perhaps also possible to read tzmt instead of t'mt, for another example of a small z, cf. e.g. EH, plate IV b.
Fig. 1
Drawing based on photograph in AIPHOS 13, opposite p. 162 (pl. I), and KAI III, taf. XXIX.