A REMARK ON A VOTIVE TEXT FROM CONSTANTINE
KAI 162

Karel Jongeling

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* [1]. The title of the publication, *Un sacrifice d'enfant chez les Numides* [2], shows in which direction his interpretation of these texts went. Apart from a recapitulation of Février's observations by W. Röllig in KAI [3], 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 [4]; 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? ''dnb?..tb?'lḥ mnb?l'd?r?b?šr?b?l (the letters followed by "?" are uncertain), and he divides and translates: *l'y' 'dn b..t b'l ḥmn bl 'dr bšrbl*, "for *'y'* 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 *'dn* = "lord" which seems the most

probable solution. This means that the three signs between *l* and *'dn* 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[5], in the combination *gd hšmm*, "fortune of heaven?"[6], and possibly also in a Punic text from Ibiza, preceded by the definite article, *hgd* [7]; 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'* [8], as one may maintain that *'* at the end of the names *brktgd'* and *n'mtgd'* cannot easily be explained as the *'* used as a hypochoristic ending in names like *bd'*, *brk'* [9], and therefore should be considered a part of the name element; cf. however the pair names *n'mgd'* [10]- *gdn'm* [11], both attested in Carthage;

b) read the same graphemes, dividing, however, *gd '*'dn, "Fortune, the lord", in which the first alef is the definite article, preceding *'dn*; the use of alef in this situation seems less probable, but cf. alef representing the article before *'* in *ˣprt* [12];

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

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

The signs following *'dn* 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 *š* 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 *'dn* and *ḥmn*). The word may be read *b/d/r* + *š/z* + *n*, perhaps to be interpreted as *rzn*, "prince", a divine epithet known from the dedicatory text KAI 145 from Henchir Maktar, where *ḥtr myskr* is called *rzn ymm*, "prince of the seas"[13]. Following *rzn* the words *b'l ḥmn* 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 ḥmn*, or

b) *gd* (*'*) is the *rzn* of *b'l ḥmn* :

    "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 *š/z b/d/r b/d/r l*.

Février read the words following *bᶜl ḥmn* as *bl ᶜdr*, and he explained them as a variant orthography of *bᶜl ʾdr*, an indication of a deity attested elsewhere (cf. KAI 138 from Bir Tlelsa: *lbᶜl ʾdr...* ; *Punica* IX, 9 from Henchir Guergour: *ndᶜr š'š ndr lbᶜl ʾdr*; EH 10,11: *l'dn lbᶜl ʾdr ndr...* ; and *ibid.* 241: *ndr 'š ndr... lbᶜl ʾdr*)[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 *bᶜl ʾdr* occurs, *bᶜl* is used as a divine name, followed by the attributive adjective *ʾdr*, whereas in the present text *bl ᶜdr* has to be interpreted as an apposition to the name of the deity *bᶜl ḥmn*. 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. Presumable *bl ᶜdr* should be pronounced */bal addir/*, or something like this. The loss of ᶜ is normal and need not be commented upon; the spelling of **ʾdr* with ᶜ instead of ʾ points to the pronounciation */a-/*, which was not to be expected in view of Latin representations of this combination: baliddir, baldir[15]. 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 epithet[16]. In that case, however, we are still left with the question why *bᶜl* 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 *ḥmn* should be preferred therefore. This results in a possible *pl*, a 3rd p.s. perfect qal of the root *pᶜl*, showing the loss of */ᶜ/* 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 *pᶜl* 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 *pʿl* is almost exclusively used
in connection with tangible objects. The only comparable text is KAI
83: *lrbt lʾmʾ wlrbt lbʿlt hḥdrt ʾš pʿl ḥmlr bn bʿlḥnʾ*, "to the lady, to
ʾmʾ, and to the lady, to the mistress of the *ḥdrt*, what *ḥmlr* the son
of *bʿlḥnʾ* 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 *ʿ* for the first sign of this name. An open form
of *ʿ* is attested elsewhere in Neo-Punic texts, and in the texts from
Constantine *ʿ* may even be written as a small vertical stroke[20]. 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 *ʿ*. The preceding sign may be
explained as *b/d/r*, giving us the opportunity to read either *bl* or *bʿl*
at the end of the line 1. As there are five signs between *pl* and this
b(ʿ)l we suppose that *bʿl* is not the second part of a compound
personal name, and another occurrence of the indication of a deity
bʿl is also not to be expected. The only plausible explanation that
remains is to interpret *bʿl* as citizen, member of the assembly of the
people. If correct, one must assume that the expression *bʿl* + *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 father[21], we may at least point
to two texts in which a female dedicant is mentioned together with
her father's name, followed by *bʿl* + *nomen loci* : *ṭnʾ ʾbn z lʾḥtmylkt
bt ymlk bʿl mkdʿ ʾšt sʿlkny bn ...*, "this stone was erected for
Ahotmilkot the daughter of *ymlk*, member of the popular assembly
of *mkdʿ*, wife of *sʿlkny*, the son of ..."[22], and *bnʾ b[t] z [q]wʿr[t]h bt
npṭḥn bʿl gʿl [ʾš]t qlr bn ...*, "Quarta, the daughter of Nyptan, member
of the popular assembly of *gʿl*, wife of Celer the son of... built this
temple"[23]. In the difficult text NP 10[24] the name preceding *bʿl* in the
second line seems to be a Berber one (ending in /-an/) that is not
preceded by *bn*; cf. also *hrnʾ bʿlt bznty* - Ἐρήνη βυζαντία[25].

The five signs between *pl* and *bʿl* must contain the name of the
dedicant. The first part of it seems clear. Février reads the first
signs of this words as *ʿdr*, which means that the reading *ʿ b/d/r
b/d/r* is possible. As *ʿbd* 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 *š*, like Février did, or as *z*. Because no
clear and assured reading of the complete name suggests itself we

list all the names from Phoenician, Punic and Neo-Punic texts in which the name element *ʿbd* is followed by either *p* or *k* [26]: *ʿbdkyšr*, *ʿbdks᾿*, *ʿbdksʿ*, *ʿbdkʿ*, *ʿbdkʿl*, *ʿbdkrr*, *ʿbdkšʿ*, *ʿbdkšr*, *ʿbdpmy*, *ʿbdpʿm*, *ʿbdpth*.

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 *ʿbdkšr* (the name *ʿbdkyšr* is an orthographical variant of *ʿbdkšr*, *ʿbdkšʿ* is probably a misspelling of the same[27], whereas the reported *ʿbdkš* - which would fit exactly in our text - does not exist)[28]. This compels us to the reading *ʿbdkšr* for the name following *pl*. When the sign following *š* is explained as *r*, which is, of course, possible, the complete name *ʿbdkšr* 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 *ʿ*, it is also possible to accept Février's reading, *b/d/r*, and to explain the signs in question as *bl*, orthographical variant of *bʿl*.

The first line of KAI 162 may therefore be read and translated:

lgd᾿ ᾿dn rzn bʿl ḥmn pl ʿbdkšr bl, "For *gd᾿* the lord, prince of Baʿl Hammon, has made *ʿbdkšr*, 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 ʿ t t ʿ 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 ʿ t/n n/t ʿmt* 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 *tʿmt*. 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*, *tʿynt*, *tskʿt* and probably also *t᾿skmst* and *tmdʿt* [29]. It is difficult to connect the first element in its possible reading *bʿt* with the common Semitic **byt*, because *ʿ* points to a vowel /a/. In some instances, however, *ʿ* is used to indicate /ə/[30], and perhaps one might suppose a development /bet/>/bət/ 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[31].

---

1   Paris, 1952-1955.
2   AIPHOS, 13 (1953) (= Mélanges I. Lévy), 161-71.
3   KAI II, 152-53.
4   *Ibid.*, III, Taf. XXIX.
5   KAI 147.
6   See KAI a. 1.
7   KAI 72B.
8   Cf. e.g. F.L. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions*, Roma 1972, 294f.; K. Jongeling, *Names in Neo-Punic Inscriptions*, Diss. Groningen 1984, 45f.
9   Cf. Benz, *cit.*, 232ff.
10 CIS I 717, 1520.
11 CIS I 383, 2155, 4657, 4659, 4661, 5638; *gdnᶜm, ibid.*, 4656; *gdnm, ibid.*, 759, 902, 1949, 4658, 5779.
12 Cf. J. Friedrich-W. Röllig, *Phönizisch-Punische Grammatik*, Roma 1970 (= FR), 53.
13 It is also possible to explain the epithet as "prince of the days", cf. e.g. KAI a.1.
14 *Punica* = J.-B. Chabot, *Punica* separately, and in JA; *Punica* is to be found in JA XI/VII, (1916); EH = A. Berthier-R. Charlier, *Le sanctuaire punique d'el-Hofra*, Paris 1952-1955.
15 CIL VIII 5297, 19121-19123.
16 Cf. on this name also K. Jongeling, *Vowel Assimilation in Punic*: JEOL, 29 (1985-86) [1987], 124-32, see 129f.
17 ICO, Spagna Npu 2.
18 IRT, 828, cf. 873, etc.
19 For *bᶜlt hhdrt* cf. e.g. KAI a.1.
20 Cf. e.g. EH 30 (plate IV D).
21 Cf. e.g. the following texts from Henchir Maktar: NP 66 (= M. Lidzbarski, *Handbuch der nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, Weimar 1898 [= Hb], p. 436 C 8 + Chabot, *Punica* IV A 6), NP 67 (*Punica* IV A 7), NP 69 (KAI 152), *Punica* IV B 7, etc.
22 NP 68 (*Punica* IV A 8): on this text cf. also K. Jongeling, *op.cit.* (note 8), 6f.
23 Text from Djebel Mansour, KAI 140.
24 Cf. most recently K. Jongeling, *op.cit.* (note 8), 13.
25 KAI 56.
26 Based on the monographs mentioned in note 8.
27 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

to study this text; for this text, NP 99, cf. Chabot, *Punica* XVIII, I, 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 *ʿbdʾšmn*, however.

28 For the reading *ʿbdkš*, cf. e.g. RÉS 779, cf. however Chabot, *Punica* XI, 10: read *ʿbdkšr* .

29 These names are attested in resp. KAI 137 (*tnsmt*), L. Müller, *Numismatique de l'ancienne Afrique*, I-III, Copenhague 1860-1868, cf. II, 40, n° 1-4; G. MacDonald, *Catalogue of Greek Coins in the Hunterian Collection*, III, 1905, 583 (*tʿnyt*); KAI 141 (*tskʿt*, cf. also M. Sznycer: *Annuaire de l'École Pratique des Hautes Études*, IVème sect., 1975-1976, 178ff.); KAI 153 (*tʾskmst*, cf. however Février: JA, 237 [1949], 85-91); L. Müller, *op.cit.*, III, 161, n°242 (1. *tmb/d/rʿt*); on this type of name cf. also e.g. K. Jongeling, *op.cit.*(note 8), 83.

30 Cf. e.g. K. Jongeling, *K and Variants in Punic* : *Scripta Signa Vocis - Studies pres. to J.H. Hospers*, Groningen 1986, 101-109.

31 It is perhaps also possible to read *tzmt* instead of *tʿmt*, 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.