The Phoenician Inscription of Eshmunazar

An Attempt at Vocalization

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Vocalizing a Phoenician text is not a superfluous exercise. Instead of staying on the surface of such a text, it allows an in-depth analysis and interpretation. Of course this vocalization will always be hypothetic. However if a sound method is used, the results can be interesting. The method has already been developed in two previous articles[1]. It may be useful to recall here the major principles.

The method premises a great affinity between Hebrew and Phoenician. In general ancient Phoenician texts are not written with *matres lectionis* which could be a real help for the vocalization. The only way is to take a look at the historical grammar and at the ancient transcriptions. Almost all nouns and adjectives in Phoenician have a corresponding form in Hebrew lexicography. It is therefore relatively easy to find the patterns, the ground-forms

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[1] J.-C. HAELEWYCK, « L'inscription phénicienne du sarcophage d'Ahiram. Un essai de vocalisation », *Res Antiquae* 5 (2008), p. 439-450; ID., « L'inscription phénicienne de Tabnit (*KAI* 13). Essai de vocalisation », *Res Antiquae* 8 (2011), p. 1-12.

(schèmes in French, Stammbildungen in German) on which these words were built. And indeed the historical grammar of Hebrew devotes a large part of its work identifying these primitive patterns. From this point of view two major works are essential: the historical grammar of Hebrew by Bauer and Leander, and the last edition of the Hebrew dictionary by Koehler and Baumgartner[2]. The latter follows in general the observations of Bauer-Leander, but it also includes the results of more recent research. Once the information concerning Hebrew has been collected we then turn to Phoenician. The main work here is the grammar of Friedrich and Röllig updated by Maria Giulia Amadasi Guzzo[3]. By the means of Assyrian, Greek and Latin transcriptions, it is possible to know the evolution of the primitive patterns in Phoenician. For example the word *'lf* « ox » is originally a monosyllabic qatl as attested by the known forms[4]. The Greek transcription λασουν-αλφ for the name of the plant (literally ox-tongue), and also the name of the letter ἄλφα indicate that the word has remained monosyllabic without the anaptyx of a vowel[5]. Are we allowed to extrapolate this conclusion to all the monosyllabic qatl forms? I think so, unless we explicitly find a counter-example. We do know, via the transcriptions, that some words have evolved differently in Phoenician. For example the word *malk* « king » appears as *milk* (*aḥimilk*, Μιλκιατων, Milqart < *milk-qart* « king of the city ») indicating a transition from qatl to qitl[6]. It also happens that the transcriptions give conflicting information. For example the word *zr'* « seed » is attested as *zura* (Pliny, XXIV, 71) and as ζερα (Dioscorides, II, 103). How can we decide in this case on the primitive pattern: qutl or qitl? A second difficulty is that the transcriptions are often very late compared to the dates attributed to the inscriptions. It is therefore necessary to consider the possibility of changes in ancient vocalism. Fortunately the grammar of Friedrich-Röllig provides keys to understanding this evolution. It should also be noted that the transmission itself of the transcriptions may have suffered accidents: the Phoenician extracts in the *Poenulus* were copied by generations of copyists who did not understand a single word.

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[2] H. BAUER – P. LEANDER, *Historische Grammatik der hebräischen Sprache des Alten Testaments*, Hildesheim, 1965 (= Halle, 1922); L. KOEHLER – W. BAUMGARTNER, *Hebräisches und aramäisches Lexikon zum Alten Testament*, dritte Auflage, Leiden, 1995.

[3] J. FRIEDRICH – J.-W. RÖLLIG, *Phönizisch-punische Grammatik.* 3. Aufl., neu bearbeitet von M.G. Amadasi Guzzo unter Mitarbeit von W.R. Mayer (Analecta orientalia 55), Rome, 1999.

[4] KOEHLER-BAUMGARTNER, *sub voce*.

[5] Cf. FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 193-195.

[6] Although it may be the opposite: for A. SPERBER, « Hebrew based upon Greek and Latin Transliterations », *Hebrew Union College Annual* 12/13 (1937-1938), p. 237, the primitive form is qitl. BAUER-LEANDER, p. 457r, think that the primitive form is qatil (as in Arabic, *malik*). In any case these considerations are irrelevant to our research. There is no doubt that the word was vocalized *milk* in Phoenician.

For the verbs we can proceed in the same way using the primitive forms such as grammar can reconstruct them beyond Hebrew. In this area the reconstitution of the Canaanite verbal system proposed by Meyer[7] can complete the analysis made by Bauer-Leander. We will compare these forms with the data from transcriptions. But one must be careful not to project onto Phoenician texts what is problematic in Hebrew, such as the forms with waw-inversive the existence of which is highly challenged today[8]. Our vocalization also assumes that, unlike archaic Phoenician, standard Phoenician (which includes the inscription of Eshmunazar) has lost the final short vowel of the third person perfect: qatal instead of qatala. We also consider with Friedrich-Röllig that for the nouns with suffixes a distinction is still made between nominative/accusative (connecting vowel -*a*-) and genitive (connecting vowel -*i*-).

The sarcophagus was contructed in Egypt in black basalt and transported to Sidon to contain the body of Eshmunazar II (465-451), king of Sidon and son of king Tabnit[9]. It was unearthed in 1855 in a site near Sidon and offered by the Ottoman Sultan to Napoleon III. It is now located in the Louvre Museum in Paris.

The stonecutter began to write just below the head but, due to a serious mistake, he started his work again on the top of the sarcophagus (with a few errors). Originally the sarcophagus contained a hieroglyphic text that was replaced by the Phoenician inscription. The text below comes from the editions of Donner-Röllig (*KAI* 14) and Gibson[10].

1. Text

1. BYRḤ BL BŠNT ʿSR WʾRBʿ 14 LMLKY MLK ʾŠMNʿZR
   MLK ṢDNM
2. BN MLK TBNT MLK ṢDNM DBR MLK ʾŠMNʿZR
   MLK ṢDNM LʾMR NGZLT
3. BL ʿTY BN MSK YMM ʾZRM YTM BN ʾLMT WŠKB
   ʾNK BḤLT Z WBQBR Z

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[7] R. MEYER, *Hebräische Grammatik*, Berlin – New York, 1992 (= 1969-1982).

[8] J. TROPPER, « Althebräisches und semitisches Aspektsystem », *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 11 (1998), p. 153-190; T.D. ANDERSEN, « The Evolution of the Hebrew Verbal System », *Zeitschrift für Althebraistik* 13 (2000), p. 1-66; A. VAN DE SANDE, *Nouvelle perspective sur le système verbal de l'hébreu ancien. Les formes *qatala*, *yaqtul* et *yaqtulu* (Publications de l'Institut Orientaliste de Louvain 57), Louvain-la-Neuve, 2008.

[9] For the chronology of the kings of Sidon, see J. ELAYI, « An Updated Chronology of the Reigns of Phoenician Kings during the Persian Period (539-333 BCE) », *Transeuphratène* 32 (2006), p. 11-43 (with bibliography and references to her preceedings articles).

[10] H. DONNER – W. RÖLLIG, *Kanaanäische und aramäische Inschriften*, I-III, Wiesbaden, 1966-1969, p. 19-23 (= *KAI*); J.C.L. GIBSON, *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions*, vol. 3, Oxford, 1982, p. 105-114 (hereafter cited as GIBSON, *TSSI*).

4. BMQM ʾŠ BNT QNMY ʾT KL MMLKT WKL ʾDM ʾL
   YPTḤ ʾYT MŠKB Z W

5. ʾL YBQŠ BN MNM K ʾY ŠM BN MNM WʾL YŠʾ ʾYT
   ḤLT MŠKBY WʾL YʿM

6. SN BMŠKB Z ʿLT MŠKB ŠNY ʾP ʾM ʾDMM YDBRNK
   ʾL TŠMʿ BDNM KKL MMLKT W

7. KL ʾDM ʾŠ YPTḤ ʿLT MŠKB Z ʾM ʾŠ YŠʾ ʾYT ḤLT
   MŠKBY ʾM ʾŠ YʿMSN BM

8. ŠKB Z ʾL YKN LM MŠKB ʾT RPʾM WʾL YQBR BQBR
   WʾL YKN LM BN WZRʿ

9. TḤTNM WYSGRNM HʾLNM HQDŠM ʾT MMLK<T>
   ʾDR ʾŠ MŠL BNM LQ

10. ṢṬNM ʾYT MMLKT ʾM ʾDM Hʾ ʾŠ YPTḤ ʿLT MŠKB
    Z ʾM ʾŠ YŠʾ ʾYT

11. ḤLT Z WʾYT ZRʿ MML<K>T Hʾ ʾM ʾDMM HMT ʾL
    YKN LM ŠRŠ LMṬ W

12. PR LMʿL WTʾR BḤYM TḤT ŠMŠ K ʾNK NḤN
    NGZLT BL ʿTY BN MS

13. K YMM ʾZRM YTM BN ʾLMT ʾNK K ʾNK ʾŠMNʿZR
    MLK ṢDNM BN

14. MLK TBNT MLK ṢDNM BN BN MLK ʾŠMNʿZR
    MLK ṢDNM WʾMY ʾMʿŠTRT

15. KHNT ʿŠTRT RBTN HMLKT BT MLK ʾŠMNʿZR
    MLK ṢDNM ʾM BNN ʾYT BT

16. ʾLNM ʾYT [BT ʿŠTR]T BṢDN ʾRṢ YM WYŠRʿN ʾYT
    ʿŠTRT ŠMM ʾDRM WʾNḤN

17. ʾŠ BNN BT LʾŠMN [Š]R QDŠ ʿN YDLL BHR
    WYŠBNY ŠMM ʾDRM WʾNḤN ʾŠ BNN BTM

18. LʾLN ṢDNM BṢDN ʾRṢ YM BT LBʿL ṢDN WBT
    LʿŠTRT ŠM BʿL Wʿ D YTN LN ʾDN MLKM

19. ʾYT DʾR WYPY ʾRṢT DGN HʾDRT ʾŠ BŠD ŠRN
    LMDT ʿṢMT ʾŠ PʿLT WYSPNNM

20. ʿLT GBL ʾRṢ LKNNM LṢDNM LʿL[M] QNMY ʾT KL
    MMLKT WKL ʾDM ʾL YPTḤ ʿLTY

21. WʾL Yʿ R ʿLTY WʾL YʿMSN BMŠKB Z WʾL YŠʾ ʾYT
    ḤLT MŠKBY LM YSGRNM

22. ʾLNM HQDŠM ʾL WYQṢN HMMLKT Hʾ WHʾDMM
    HMT WZRʿM LʿLM

2. Translation

   1. In the month of Bul, in the fourteenth year of the reign of
king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, **2**. son of king Tabnit,
king of the Sidonians, king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians,
said as follows: I was carried away **3**. before my time, son of a
limited number of short days (or: son of a limited number of days
I was cut off), an orphan, the son of a widow, and I am lying in
this coffin and in this tomb, **4**. in a place which I have built.
Whoever you are, king or (ordinary) man, may he (*sic*!) not open

this resting-place **5**. and may he not search in it after anything because nothing whatsoever has been placed into it. And may he not move the coffin of my resting-place, nor carry me **6**. away from this resting-place to another resting-place. Also if men talk to you do not listen to their chatter. For every king and **7**. every (ordinary) man, who will open what is above this resting-place, or will lift up the coffin of my resting-place, or will carry me away from **8**. this resting-place, may they not have a resting-place with the Rephaïm, may they not be buried in a tomb, and may they not have a son or offspring **9**. after them. And may the sacred gods deliver them to a mighty king who will rule them in order **10**. to exterminate them, the king or this (ordinary) man who will open what is over this resting-place or will lift up **11**. this coffin, and (also) the offspring of this king or of those (ordinary) men. They shall not have root below or **12**. fruit above or appearance in the life under the sun. For I who deserve mercy, I was carried away before my time, son of a limited **13**. number of short days (or: son of a limited number of days I was cut off), I an orphan, the son of a widow. For I, Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, son of **14**. king Tabnit, king of the Sidonians, grandson of king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, and my mother Amo[t]astart, **15**. priestess of Ashtart, our lady, the queen, daughter of king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, (it is we) who have built the temples **16**. of the gods, [the temple of Ashtar]t in Sidon, the land of the sea. And we have placed Ashtart (in) the mighty heavens (or: in Shamem-Addirim?). And it is we **17**. who have built a temple for Eshmun, the prince of the sanctuary of the source of Ydll in the moutains, and we have placed him (in) the mighty heavens (or: in Shamem-Addirim?). And it is we who have built temples **18**. for the gods of the Sidonians in Sidon, the land of the sea, a temple for Baal of Sidon, and a temple for Ashtart, the Name of Baal. Moreover, the lord of kings gave us **19**. Dor and Joppa, the mighty lands of Dagon, which are in the Plain of Sharon, as a reward for the brilliant action I did. And we have annexed them **20**. to the boundary of the land, so that they would belong to the Sidonians for ever. Whoever you are, king or (ordinary) man, do not open what is above me **21**. and do not uncover what is above me and do not carry me away from this resting-place and do not lift up the coffin of my resting-place. Otherwise, **22**. the sacred gods will deliver them and cut off this king and those (ordinary) men and their offspring for ever.

3. Vocalization[11]

1. *biyarḫ bûl bišanôt 'asr we'arba' lemulkiyû milk 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm* *2*. *bin milk tabnît milk ṣîdônîm dabar milk 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm lî'môr nagzalti* *3*. *bilô 'ittiya bin masok yômîm 'azzîrîm yatum bin 'almat wešôkéb 'anôkî biḫallot zô webiqabr zè* *4*. *bimaqôm 'éš banîtî qenummiya 'atta kul mamlokût wekul 'adom 'al yiptaḫ 'iyat miškob zè* *5*. *we'al yebaqqéš bin(n)û mînumma ka 'iya šômû bin(n)û mînumma we'al yiśśo' 'iyat ḫallot miškobiya we'al* *6*. *ya'musénî bimiškob zè 'alôt miškob šénîy 'ap 'im 'adomîm yedabberûnakâ 'al tišma' baddanôm kakul mamlokût* *7*. *wekul 'adom 'éš yiptaḫ 'alôt miškob zè 'im 'éš yiśśo' 'iyat ḫallot miškobiya 'im 'éš ya'musénî* *8*. *bimiškob zè 'al yakûn lôm miškob 'ét rapa'îm we'al yiqqaberû biqabr we'al yakûnû lôm bin wezar'* *9*. *taḫténôm weyasgirûnôm hâ'alônîm haqqadošîm 'ét mamlokû<t> 'addîr 'éš môšél bin(n)ôm* *10*. *laqiṣṣotinôm / laqaṣṣôtinôm 'iyat mamlokût 'im 'adom hû'a 'éš yiptaḫ 'alôt miškob zè 'im 'éš yiśśo' 'iyat* *11*. *ḫallot zè we'iyat zar' mamlo<kû>t hû'a 'im 'adomîm humatu 'al yakûnû lôm šurš lamaṭṭô* *12*. *we parî lama'lô wetu'r baḫayyîm taḫt šamš ka 'anôkî nâḫân nagzalti bilô 'ittiya bin* *13*. *masok yômîm 'azzîrîm yatum bin 'almat 'anôkî ka 'anôkî 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm bin* *14*. *milk tabnît milk ṣîdônîm bin bin milk 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm we'ammaya 'amot'aštart* *15*. *kôhant 'aštart rabbotanû hammilkot bat milk 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm '[š] banînû 'iyat bîté* *16*. *'alônîm 'iyat <bît 'aštar>t biṣîdôn 'arṣ yim weyôšibnû 'iyat 'aštart šamém 'addîrim we'anaḫnû* *17*. *'éš banînû bît la'èšmûn <ša>r qudš 'in ydll bihar weyôšibnûyû šamém 'addîrim we'anaḫnû 'éš banînû bîtîm* *18*. *la'alôné ṣîdônîm biṣîdôn 'arṣ yim bît laba'l ṣîdôn webît la'aštart šim ba'l we'ôd yatan lanû 'adôn milkîm* *19*. *'iyat du'r weyapay 'arṣôt dagôn hâ'addîrôt 'éš biśadé šarôn lamiddot 'aṣûmot 'éš pa'altî weyasapnûném* *20*. *'alôt gubûl(é) 'arṣ lakûniném laṣṣîdônîm la'ôlo<m> qenummiya 'atta kul mamlokût wekul 'adom 'al yiptaḫ 'alôtiya* *21*. *we'al ya'ar 'alôtiya we'al ya'musénî bimiškob zè we'al yiśśo' 'iyat ḫallot miškobiya lamâ yasgirûnôm* *22*. *'alônîm haqqadošîm 'illè weyeqaṣṣûna hammamlokût hû'a wehâ'adomîm humatu wezar'ôm la'ôlom.*

4. Commentary

1-2. BYRḪ BL BŠNT 'SR W'RB' 14 LMLKY MLK 'ŠMN'ZR MLK ṢDNM BN MLK TBNT MLK ṢDNM DBR MLK 'ŠMN'ZR MLK ṢDNM L'MR (*biyarḫ bûl bišanôt 'asr we'arba' lemulkiyû milk 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm bin milk tabnît milk ṣîdônîm dabar milk 'èšmûn'azar milk ṣîdônîm lî'môr*) « In the month of Bul, in the fourteenth year of the reign of king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, son of king Tabnit, king of

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[11] In this article we have reduced the vocalism to the following vowels: a/â (pataḥ, qameṣ), e (vocalic shewa; nothing for the silent one), è (segol), é (ṣere), i/î (ḥireq), o (ḥolem; exponent for qameṣ ḥaṭuf), u/û (shureq, qibbuṣ). We assume that the complexity of the Hebrew vocalic system (as notated by the Naqdanim of Tiberias) is absent from the Phoenician.

the Sidonians, king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, said as follows ». The word *yrḥ* « month » is a monosyllabic qatl in Hebrew (*yèraḥ*)[12], hence the vocalization *biyarḥ*. We assume that the prepositions have retained their original form *bi-*, *la-*, *ka-*[13]. Bul is the eighth month of the Canaanite calendar (cf. 1 Kings 6:38: *bᵉyèraḥ bûl hû' haḥodèš haššᵉmînî*)[14]. In the indication of the year, the word is a plural here (*bišanôt*), while in Hebrew it is usually singular (construct state) in this construction (e. g. *bišᵉnat 'èšᵉrîm l ᵉyarob'am*, 1 Kings 15:9). In the nouns with nun as third radical, in the singular the nun is assimilated to the feminine ending -t (*šat* « year » [< *šattu* < *šantu*]) but it is maintained in the plural[15]. The vocalization *šat* is confirmed by Punic *sath*. The Latin transcriptions *sanu* (!), *sanuth*, and the Punic forms *š'n't*, *š'nwt*, indicate a pronunciation *šanôt* (the vowel -*a*- is rendered by *'aïn* in the Punic forms!). The cardinal number *'sr* « ten », here written with -*s*- while we would expect -*š*-[16], is a qatl-form, hence the vocalization *'asr*. In the Semitic languages the numeral *'arba'* « four » always appears with a prosthetic alef (Ugaritic, Hebrew, Aramaic, Syriac, Arabic, Epigraphic South-Arabic, Ethiopic; it is not written in Accadian *erbe*, *arba'u*, only because Accadian has no sign to render the phonem). First spelled out in words the number is then rendered in numeric signs: Ⅰ Ⅲ ¬, i.e. 10+3+1. The sequence of the chronological indications is rather unusual: we would first expect the year and then the month[17]. With Donner-Röllig[18], we may interpret *lmlky* as an infinitive construct (*mulk*) followed by a 3m. sg. pronominal suffix (proleptic as for example in Syriac) here vocalized -*yû*[19]. It is more probably the substantive *mulk* « reign » (cf. Num 24:7) already present in the inscription of Ahiram. The theophoric name *'èšmûn'azar* combines two words: the name of the god Ešmûn, god of medecine and maybe also of vegetation, which is identified with Asclepius, and the verb *'azar* « to help »; thus « Ešmûn has helped (me) ». Ešmûn[20] is known in Syria from the third millennium onwards, but little is known about him. Even the etymology of the name is a disputed question. Several explanations have been proposed: reference is made to *tamân*

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[12] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 457 r (originally a disyllabic qatil, cf. Arabic). As said above (p. 78), the monosyllabic qatl remains the same in Phoenician, cf. FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 193-195.

[13] Cf. FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 251.

[14] Thanks to 1 Kings 6:1-3.8 we know the names of four of them: Zîw, Ethanîm, Bûl, respectively the second, seventh and eighth month, to which can be added the sixth month Abîb (more often cited in the Bible).

[15] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 230 2, which give another example: *bat* « daughter », plural *banôt* (cf. *bynuthi* « my daughters » in *Poenulus* 932). On the transcription *sath*, see ID., § 240 18.

[16] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 46b.

[17] There are many examples in the Old Testament, cf. for Jeremiah alone 28:1.17; 36:9; 39:1.2; 52:4.31. The reverse sequence is not unattested, cf. Gn 46:15.

[18] *KAI*, p. 20-21.

[19] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 190 4 β.

[20] Cf. E. LIPIŃSKI (ed.), *Dictionnaire de la civilisation phénicienne et punique*, Turnhout, 1992, p. 158-160.

« eight » (*ṯmn > šmn) with prosthetic alef, or to šém « name », or
to šamn « oil » (šêmèn in Hebrew, qatl[21] as in Accadian, Arabic), the
latter could better suit his status as a god of medecine. The vocal-
ization 'èšmûn (šmûn after a vowel) is based on the following tran-
scriptions: Ia-su-mu-na, Sa-mu-na, Εσμουν-, Εσυμ-, asmun, samun.
The element 'azar also appears in Ασρουβας, Azrubal where 'azar
+ Ba'l « Baal has helped » has become 'azr-Ba'l, pronounced 'azru-
Ba'l[22]. We could also vocalize 'azor[23]. There are indeed forms of
the perfect in -o- and not in -a-: ναδωρ « he made vow », Ba'l-ḫaloṣ,
Ba-al-ḫa-lu-ṣu « Baal released », Baliaton = Ba'l-yaton « Baal gave »[24].
The verb dbr « to talk, to say » appears a few times in Phoenician:
for example in the Poenulus as duber/dobrim (qal active participle sg.
and pl. = dôbér/dôbᵉrîm) and here. It may be either qal (dabar) or
piel (dibbér; the vocalization of the piel is confirmed by the tran-
scription Βαλσιλληχ « Baal sent »). The Canaanite primitive form
of the infinitive construct is qtul (> Hebrew qᵉtol[25]). The expected
form here would be la-'mor. However, two observations should be
made. First the spelling liful (Poenulus 945/935) shows a shift from
la- to li- as in Hebrew. Then the question arises: in the case of a
Pe Alef verb, is the alef quiescent (as in Hebrew[26]) or not? In
many cases there is an elision of the alef in nouns[27]. Presumably
the same phenomenon occurs also with verbs, hence the vocaliza-
tion li'môr (the form liful indicates moreover that the final syllabe
is long).

2-4. NGZLT BL ʿTY BN MSK YMM 'ZRM YTM BN
'LMT WŠKB 'NK BḤLT Z WBQBR Z BMQM 'Š BNT
(nagzalti bilô 'ittiya bin masok yômîm 'azzîrîm yatum bin 'almat wešôkéb
'anôkî biḥallot zô webiqabr zè bimaqôm 'éš banîtî) « I was carried away
before my time, son of a limited number of short days (or: son of
a limited number of days I was cut off), an orphan, the son of a
widow, and I am lying in this coffin and in this tomb, in a place
which I have built ». The major part of these two lines will be
repeated in lines 12-13. The verb ngzlt is a 1st sg. nifal perfect.
The root gzl (attested two times in Phoenician[28]) means « seize by
force, acquire illegitimately » (qal) and « to be snatched (i.e. from
life), to be carried away by a violent death » (nifal). It is also at-
tested in Hebrew, frequently in qal (« tear away, seize, rob »), but
there is only one clear case in the nifal: Prov 4:16: « their sleep is
taken away » (KJV), « they are robbed of sleep » (NAS); the case
of Micah 3:2 (« who pluck off their skin » KJV, « who tear off
their skin » NAS) is not clear. The vocalization nagzalti is con-

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[21] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 456 j.
[22] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 96 bis.
[23] With KAI, p. 21.
[24] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 78 c.
[25] MEYER, § 65.
[26] MEYER, § 77 1 d, § 22 3 a.
[27] See examples in FREDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 14.
[28] J.HOFTIJZER – K. JONGELING, Dictionary of the North-West Semitic Inscrip-
tions (Handbook of Oriental Studies 21), 2 vol., Leiden – New York – Köln,
1995, p. 219 (hereafter cited as DNWSI).

firmed by Tell-el-Amarna (EA 93,5) *na-aq-ṣa-ap-ti = naqṣapti* « I was asked ». In Hebrew there has been a shift from *naqtalti* to *niqtalti*. It is not clear if this shift has also occurred in Phoenician. It is possible but not certain. In the case of doubt we have kept the *na-* form. In the expression *bl 'ty*, *bl* is certainly not the negation *bal*, which is normally used before a verb or to negate a substantive (*bal 'iš* « non-man »). Could it be the preposition *bi-* followed by the negation *lô*? There is a difficulty: this negation is totally unknown in Phoenician and in Punic. However, the expression has an excellent parallel in Eccles 7:17: *lâmmâh tâmût belo' 'ittèkha* « why should you die before your time? ». Ultimately we have chosen *bilô*. The noun *'itt* « time » is originally a qil-type noun with a feminine ending[29] **'idt*, and after total regressive assimilation **'idt* becomes **'itt-*, *'ittiya* with the 1m. sg. suffix. The word *msk* appears only in this inscription (lines 3 and 13). Its meaning is still unknown. Three etymological derivations have been proposed[30]: from *skk*, from *swk/śwk* or from *sky*, roots who evoke the idea of limitation[31]. The context invites us to understand « limited time, limited number ». Could we have a maqtal-type noun (*masok* or *masôk*)? There is great hesitation about the analysis and meaning of *'zrm* (known only by its two occurrences in this inscription)[32]. The word is either an adjective referring to *yômîm* or a verbal form. Traditionally it has been explained as an adjective meaning « short » (*'azirîm* if qatil, *'azzîrîm* if qattîl[33]). The meaning would be « son of a limited number of short days ». Others prefer to interpret it as a verbal form of a root *zrm* unattested in Phoenician but known in Hebrew[34] and Arabic[35]: either a 1m. sg. nifal imperfectif *'azzarém* (**'anqatil > *'aqqatil > 'aqqatél*), *'izzarém* (the two forms in *'a-* and in *'i-* are attested in Hebrew), or qal imperfective 1m. sg *'azrum* (*'aqtul*). The nifal of the verb means « to be cut, cut off », and the qal « to cease ». The meaning would be « son of a limited number of days I was cut off/I stopped (living) ». Following a suggestion made by R.S. Tomback, E. Puech[36] assumes that the word means a kind of sacrifice (*'azorîm* or *'azarîm*, qatal-type), but what is the link with the context? Lipiński divides[37] the text differently: *bnm sk ymm 'zrm* « with the sleep of a deaf (man) I must break off the days (of life) ». He interprets *nûm* as an infinitive. The verb is attested in Hebrew, Arabic, Aramaic,

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[29] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 450 j. The qil-type nouns do not change in Phoenician, see for example *'izz* « strength », FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 192 bis b.

[30] *DNWSI*, p. 664, see already *KAI*, p. 21.

[31] See *skk* I in KOEHLER-BAUMGARTNER, p. 712; Hebrew *śûkh* « to make a hedge » in Job 1:10; 3:23; Syriac *sôkô'* « end, limit, boundary ».

[32] *DNWSI*, p. 26-27.

[33] These are the most attested patterns for the adjectives, cf. FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 196, 199.

[34] Only two occurrences: Ps 90:5 (qal « thou hast swept them away ») and 77:18 (poel « the clouds poured out water »).

[35] KAZIMIRSKI, I, p. 987: « interrupt, stop ».

[36] E. PUECH, recension of R.S. TOMBACK, *A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages*, Revue Biblique 88 (1978), p. 99.

[37] E. LIPIŃSKI, « From Karatepe to Pyrgi: Middle Phoenician miscellanea », *Rivista di Studi fenici* 2 (1974), p. 45-61, in part. p. 56-57.

and Ethiopic; in Akkadian the noun *munattu* « morning-sleep » derives from the same root. The sleep in question here is the sleep of deafness: *sk* must be related to the Akkadian *sakku* and the Arabic *asakk*, both meaning « deaf ». The Hebrew equivalent of *ytm* « orphan » is *yâtôm* (*yatîm* in Arabic), a qatul-type noun[38]. There is no evidence on the vocalization of qatul-type nouns in Phoenician[39]. Hypothetically we assume that they remain qatul in Phoenician, hence *yatum*. The word *'lmt* « widow » (Hebrew *'almânâh*) is attested in Akkadian as *almattu*, the primitive form being likely **'almantu* (*'alman* with feminine ending). We assume for the Phoenician the following evolution: *'almantu* > *'almant* > *'almat(t)*[40]. When 'Ešmunazar presents himself as the son of a widow, he indicates that his father Tabnît was already dead when 'Ešmunazar was born. The word *ḥlt* « sarcophagus, coffin » occurs five time in Phoenician, and all of the occurrences are in this inscription. The meaning is clear. The word could derive from the root *ḥll* « pierce » well attested in the Semitic languages (Arabic *ḥalla*, « pierce », *ḥillat* « stone sarcophagus », *ḥallat* « gap, crack »; Aramaic *ḥalâl* « empty space »)[41]. We could vocalize *ḥallot*. In Hebrew *qèbèr* « tomb » is originally a monosyllabic qatl[42], accordingly we vocalize *qabr*. The word *mqm* « place » comes from a root *qwm*, and is a maqtal-type word[43]: *maqwam*, in Phoenician **maqwom* > *maqôm*; this vocalization is confirmed by the Punic spellings *macom* (Poenulus 940A/930) and *macum* (Poenulus 940B)[44]. The vocalization *banîtî* (< **banáytî*) may find support in the Canaanite form *b[a-n]i-t[i]* (EA 292, 29) despite the uncertainties.

4-5. QNMY 'T KL MMLKT WKL 'DM 'L YPTḤ 'YT MŠKB Z W'L YBQŠ BN MNM K 'Y ŠM BN MNM (*qenummiya 'atta kul mamlokût wekul 'adom 'al yiptaḥ 'iyat miškob zè we'al yebaqqéš bin(n)û mînumma ka 'iya śômû bin(n)û mînumma*) « Whoever you are, king or (ordinary) man, may he (*sic*!) not open this resting-place and may he not search in it after anything because nothing whatsoever has been placed into it ». The first word of the sentence consists of the substantif *qnm* (or *qn'm*) and the interrogative pronoun *my*, the whole being an equivalent of an indefinite pronoun « whoever (you are) ». We vocalize the first word on the basis of the Syriac *qᵉnûm* « person ». In the interrogative pronoun the *-y* is not a *mater lectionis*, but a full consonant. The presence of this *-y* indicates that we have here the non-reduced form *miya*. In the *Poenulus* we find the reduced forms: *mi* (*mî* < **miyu*) et *mu* (< **mô*)[45]. Assuming the assimilation of the two *mem*, we could vocalize *qenummiya*. The vocalization *'atta* « you » makes no diffi-

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[38] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 467 p.

[39] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 196 c.

[40] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 214.

[41] KOEHLER-BAUMGARTNER, *sub voce* ḥll 2 (p. 307).

[42] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 458 s.

[43] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 491 g.

[44] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 201-202.

[45] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 120.

culty[46]. We find an expression similar to *qenummiya 'atta* in the inscription of Tabnît (*KAI* 13) line 13 (*miya 'atta kul 'adom 'éš* ...), and probably also in the inscription of Yeḥawmilk (*KAI* 10) line 11 (*[qenummya 'attâ] kul mamlokût wekul 'adom 'éš* ...), but in the latter the passage is restored on the basis of our inscription. The word *kl* is a qull-type word (> *kol* in Hebrew)[47]. We would expect the vocalization *kul* (as in other Semitic languages), but the attested forms in Punic (*Poenulus* 935, 945) are *cil, cel, chil, chyl*[48]. We will keep the vocalization *kul(l)* assuming a particular development for Punic[49]. In Hebrew *mamlâkâh* and *mamlâkût* « kingdom, reign, dominion » are maqtal-type words[50]; this pattern becomes maqtol in Phoenician[51], hence with the abstract ending *mamlokût*. The abstract form « kingdom » is used here for « king »[52]. The word *'dm* (*'âdâm* in Hebrew) is a qatal-type word that becomes qatol in Phoenician[53], the vocalization is confirmed by the Punic form *adom*[54]. The prohibitive consists of the negation *'al* followed by the jussive form *yiptaḥ* (yaqtul with vowel -a- before the pharyngeal, then shift from *ya-* to *yi-* according to the Barth-Ginzberg law) from *pataḥ* « open ». We observe a change in person: from the second (*'atta*) to the third person (*yiptaḥ*). In Phoenician the *nota accusativi* is attested with two spellings: *'yt* and *'t* (Standard Phoenician and Punic). The first occurrence of the spelling *'yt* is found in the funeral inscription of Cyprus (*KAI* 30, lines 3 et 6) towards the end of the ninth century[55]. In *'yt* the *y* is not a *mater lectionis* but a full consonant. Given the situation in Aramaic where the word is pronounced *yât*, we can propose *'iyat* as primitive vocalization[56]. But how can we explain the later forms: *'t* in Standard Phoenician, and *et, yth* in Punic (*Poenulus* 940B, 945, 940A/930, 932, 935, 936, with variants)? The development is probably similar to what happened to *kul(l)* « all ». We see that there has been a weakening of *kul* to *kèl* or *kil* (*Poenulus* 945/935: *cil, cel, chil, chyl*). In the case of the *nota accusativi* there would have been a shift from *'iyat* to *'ôt*, and thence (similarly to what happened to *kul*) to *'êt* or *'ît* [57]. In Hebrew *miškâb* is a miqtal-type form[58], which becomes miqtol in Phoenician[59]: *miškob* « place of lying, couch ». The verb *bqš*

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[46] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 111; MEYER, § 30.

[47] BAUER-LEANDER, 455f.

[48] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 192bis c.

[49] A particular development is also attested for the *nota accusativi*, see below.

[50] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 490 a.

[51] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 201: see for example *marob* (*Poenulus* 933) = *ma'rob* « guarantee ».

[52] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 200 a.

[53] BAUER-LEANDER, 461 m; FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 196a.

[54] J.M. REYNOLDS – J.B. WARD PERKINS, *The Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania*, Rome – London, 1952, 879, 1.

[55] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 255-256 and 79bis.

[56] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 256; *TSSI*, p. 30 prefers the form *'iyyat*.

[57] This is the explanation given in FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 256. See E. PUECH, « Note sur la particule accusativale en phénicien », *Semitica* 32 (1982), p. 51-55.

[58] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 490 z.

[59] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 200-201.

« search » is used in the piel in Hebrew. We could reasonably as-
sume that it is also used in the intensive form in Phoenician,
hence the vocalization *yebaqqéš* (there is only one occurrence in
Phoenician). The preposition *bi-* is followed by the 3rd m. sg.
suffix *-hû*: **binhû > binû* or *binnû*[60]. The indefinite pronoun *mnm*
(attested five times in Phoenician and Punic[61]) corresponds to the
Ugaritic *mnm* and Akkadian *mînumma* or *minummê* « whatever ». We
may maintain the vocalization *mînumma*. We assume that the
conjuction *ka* has kept the primitive vowel *–a* (in Punic, due to a
particular development, *ka* became *ke* [see *ce* and *chy* in *Poenulus*
935]). The negation *'i* is attested elsewhere in the Semitic lan-
guages: it is frequent in Ethiopic, rare in Biblical Hebrew (*'i-nâqî*
« non-innocent » in Job 22:30 hapax), but common in Mishnaic
and Modern Hebrew (*'i-'ephšâr* « impossible », *'i-sédèr* « disorder »,
etc.). Since the *matres lectionis* are still unknown, we vocalize *'iya*
here. In *śômû* (from *śwm* or *śym*; **śawamû* and **śayamû > śômû*)[62]
« they put », *š* represents *ś* (also in *nš'* four words below). The ex-
pression *'i mînumma* means « nothing ».

5-6. W'L YŠ' 'YT ḤLT MŠKBY W'L Y'MSN BMŠKB Z
'LT MŠKB ŠNY (*we'al yiśśo' 'iyat ḥallot miškobiya we'al ya'musénî
bimiškob zè 'alôt miškob šénîy*) « And may he not move the coffin of
my resting-place, nor carry me away from this resting-place to
another resting-place ». As in Hebrew the first radical nun in *nś'*
« raise, lift », here an imperfect, is assimilated and causes the re-
duplication of *ś*: **yinśa' > *yiśśa'* and finally *yiśśo'*. The final vowel
of lamed-alef verbs is *-ô* as shown by the spellings *nasot* and *corathi*
(= *carothi*) in *Poenulus* (947/937, 940/930)[63]. In Punic we have two
occurrences of the verb *'ms* in the nifal with the meaning « be
carried away »[64]. Here it would be the only occurence for the qal,
more precisely the jussif (yaqtul) followed by the 1st m. sg. suffix
with the connectig vowel *-é-*, hence *ya'musénî*. In the context the
preposition *bi-* does not have its original meaning « in, within », it
means « (far) from », as in Abibaal (*KAI* 5) lin. 2. The ordinal *šénîy*
has the meaning here of « other » and not « second » as we would
expect. We may vocalize it as in Hebrew[65].

6. 'P 'M 'DMM YDBRNK 'L TŠM' BDNM (*'ap 'im 'adomîm
yedabberûnakâ 'al tišma' baddanôm*) « Also if men talk to you do not

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[60] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 254 I a; GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 110. In note 5 Frie-
drich-Röllig say: « The prepositions *b-* and *tḥt* before suffixes are lengthened
with *-n*; see Hebrew *taḥténiy* « beneath me » in 2 Sam 22:37.40.48 and *taḥtènnah*
« in her place » in Gen 2:21. There is still no explanation for this phenome-
non ».

[61] *DNWSI*, p. 661.

[62] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 167 and 46b.

[63] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 170, 172.

[64] *DNWSI*, p. 872. The verb is also attested in Hebrew (nine times: seven in
the qal and two in the hifil) with the meaning « carry a load, load (upon ass) ».
It is not necessary to assume with GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 110, that the verb is used
here in the piel. His hypothesis is based on Ugaritic where we find the piel
participle (*m'ms*), see J. TROPPER, *Ugaritische Grammatik* (Alter Orient und Altes
Testament 273), Münster, 2000, p. 554 and 563.

[65] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 244.

listen to their chatter ». With the words *'ap 'im* a new conditional proposition begins. The conjunction *'ap* is frequent in Hebrew, and also in Phoenician (Archaic, Standard, Punic, and Neo-punic), on the other hand the synonym *gam* (Hebrew, Moabite, Sam'alian) is absent from Phoenician[66]. The verbal form *ydbrnk* (from *dibbér* « to talk » piel as in Hebrew) consists of the 3 pl. long imperfect followed by the 2m. sg. suffix. The long imperfect (with a present-future meaning) is identifiable by the ending *-ûn-*[67]. Assuming that the connecting vowel before a suffix is *-a-* (see the form *ti-mi-tu-na-nu = timîtûnanû* « you have killed us [litteraly « you have made us die »] » in El-Amarna[68]), we could vocalize *yedabberûnakâ* « they (will) talk to you ». The construction *dibbér* with an objective suffix for the person is rare in Hebrew. Usually the verb is used with a preposition (*'él*, *l*ᵉ, *'ét*, *'im* or *b*ᵉ). It seems that Gen 37:4 (« they hated him and could not *speak to him* [*dabbᵉrô*] on friendly terms ») is the only one example of the use of a suffix for the person with this verb[69]. For *'al tišma'*, « do not listen », we can compare *'al yiptaḥ* (line 4, but here in the 2d m. sg.). *bdnm* is generally explained as the substantive *bd* with 3rd m. pl. suffix. The suffix should be read *-nôm*, more precisely here *-anôm* with the connecting vowel *-a-* for the accusative. The vocalization of the suffix is known via the transcription *labunom = la-'abûnôm* « for their father »[70]. The presence of the nun before the suffix *-ôm* (< *Vhum) is still largely unexplained[71]. The word *bad* « idle talk » is known in Hebrew, see Isa 16:6 and Jer 48:30 (« his idle boasts »); Job 11:3 (« boasts »); 41:4 (« his limbs ») (add conjectures for some other passages[72]). It is also attested in Syriac *bᵉdô* (« to contrive, to chatter »), *bedyô* (« nonsense, invention »). We could vocalize *baddanôm*, with reduplication of the second consonant before a suffix as in Hebrew. Others have proposed to correct the text[73], and to read either *dbrnm* (*dabor* « speak ») or *bdbrnm*. This is not necessary, especially as concerns the second proposition since after *tišma'* the preposition *bi-* (that would give the word the meaning « obey », as in Hebrew) is not suitable to the context.

6-9. KKL MMLKT WKL 'DM 'Š YPTḤ 'LT MŠKB Z 'M 'Š YŠ' 'YT ḤLT MŠKBY 'M 'Š Y'MSN BMŠKB Z 'L YKN LM MŠKB 'T RP'M W'L YQBR BQBR W'L YKN LM BN WZR' TḤTNM (*kakul mamlokût wekul 'adom 'éš yiptaḥ 'alôt miškob zè 'im 'éš yiśśo' 'iyat ḥallot miškobiya 'im 'éš ya'musénî bimiškob zè 'al yakûn lôm miškob 'ét rapa'îm we'al yiqqaberû biqabr we'al*

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[66] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 257 b.

[67] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 135 a.

[68] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 188.

[69] KOEHLER-BAUMGARTNER, p. 202, which also refers to our inscription.

[70] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 29 c, § 112 (and note 2), § 234 (p. 156).

[71] J. HUEHNERGARD, « The Development of the Third Person Suffix in Phoenician », *Maarav* 7 (1991), p. 183-194.

[72] KOEHLER-BAUMGARTNER, p. 105.

[73] For example Cook, Donner-Röllig, Segert, Bron, Puech, all the references are in *DNWSI*, s. v. bd 3.

yakûnû lôm bin wezar' taḥténôm) « For every king and every (ordi-
nary) man, who will open what is above this resting-place, or will
lift up the coffin of my resting-place, or will carry me away from
this resting-place, may they not have a resting-place with the
Rephaïm, may they not be buried in a tomb, and may they not
have a son or offspring after them ». Compared to the preceding
lines, only a few words are original here. The particle *'îm*, in *'îm 'éš*
(also line 10), has lost its original meaning « if »; here it means
« or »[74]. We vocalize the preposition with the suffix as *lôm*
(< *lahum*). The common translation for Hebrew *rᵉphaîm* (always
plural) is « shadows, spirits of the dead ». The etymology is never-
theless disputed: either from *rapa'a* « to cure, to heal » or more
probably from *rapaha* « to be weak »[75]. The word is also used in
Ugaritic (either the god *râpi'u* « the healer » ou *rapa'um* [doubtful
vocalization] « spirit of the dead »). We could vocalize here
rapa'îm. At the end of the inscription of Tabnît (*KAI* 13, lin. 7-8)
we find a similar curse: *'al yakûn lakâ zar' baḥayyîm taḥt šamš
wemiškob 'ét rapa'îm* « may there be for you no descendants in the
life under the sun or resting-place with the Raphaïm ». Here the
verb *yiqqaberû* is a 3rd m. pl. nifal imperfective « they will be bur-
ied ». We put the verb *yakûnû* in the plural, although the singular
could be justified since the two following subjects may be consid-
ered as collectives. For the connecting vowel between *taḥt* (qatl-
type as in Hebrew, Arabic) and the suffix *-nôm*, we choose the
vowel of the construct state plural *-é-* as in Hebrew, hence:
taḥténôm « beneath/after them ».

  9-12. WYSGRNM H'LNM HQDŠM 'T MMLK<T> 'DR
'Š MŠL BNM LQSṬNM 'YT MMLKT 'M 'DM H' 'Š
YPTḤ 'LT MŠKB Z 'M 'Š YŠ' 'YT ḤLT Z W'YT ZR'
MML<K>T H' 'M 'DMM HMT 'L YKN LM ŠRŠ LMṬ
WPR LM'L WT'R BḤYM ṬḤT ŠMŠ (*weyasgirûnôm hâ'alônîm
haqqadošîm 'ét mamlokû<t> 'addîr 'éš môšél bin(n)ôm laqiṣṣotinôm/
laqaṣṣôtinôm 'iyat mamlokût 'im 'adom hû'a 'éš yiptaḥ 'alôt miškob zè 'îm
'éš yiššo' 'iyat ḥallot zè we'iyat zar' mamlo<kû>t hû'a 'im 'adomîm humatu
'al yakûnû lôm šurš lamaṭṭô we parî lama'lô wetu'r baḥayyîm taḥt šamš*)
« And may the sacred gods deliver them to a mighty king who will
rule them in order to exterminate them, the king or this (ordinary)
man who will open what is over this resting-place or will lift up
this coffin, and (also) the offspring of this king or of those (ordi-
nary) men. They shall not have root below or fruit above or ap-
pearance in the life under the sun ». We must be careful not to
interpret the form *wysgrnm* as a consecutive imperfect (wayyiqtol
after prohibitive forms as in Hebrew): it is merely a coordinated
jussive with the 3m. pl. suffix, the *waw* having no energic function.
The verb *sagar* is attested twice in Phoenician (here and again in
line 21). We may hesitate between a yifil or a piel. Both are attest-
ed in Hebrew for this verb. However, the hifil is more frequently

used. So we could vocalize *yasgirûnôm* (yifil)[76] or *yesaggerûnôm* (piel).
The meaning is « to deliver (to someone's power) ». The preposition *'ét* therefore means « to »; it is not the *nota accusativi* (always written *'yt* in this inscription). Note that in the expression *hâ'alônîm haqqadošîm* « the sacred gods », the two words carry the article, unlike the second occurrence of the expression in line 21 where only the adjective has the article. The vocalization *'alônîm* is based on the form *alonim* found in *Poenulus* 940/930. For the article we assume a compensatory lengthening (*ha-* > *hâ-*), regular in Hebrew before alef. The adjective *qdš* « sacred, holy » is a qatul-type adjective[77]. We have no example of what this type becomes in Phoenician, but we could consider, by analogy with the qull-type, that it remains identical, hence *haqqadošîm* (with reduplication of the first consonant after the article as in Hebrew). The adjective *'addîr* « powerful » is a qattîl-type adjective, which remains identical in Phoenician as we can see from the following names: *Abaddir* (< *'ab-'addîr*), *Baliddir* (< *ba'l-'addîr*), *Aderbal* (< *'addîr ba'l*) or *Rusad(d)ir* (toponym)[78]. It has here a masculine form because, despite its feminine form, the word *mmlkt* means « king » and not « kingdom ». Gibson[79] thinks that the powerful king here in question could be a euphemism for the « king of the death ». The verb *mšl* II « dominate, rule » (*mšl* I « compare » is not appropriate in the context) is well attested in Hebrew in the qal and in the hifil. But the tense is problematic: we expect to find an imperfect form: « a powerful king who will rule over them ». Instead of that, we find what could be a perfect form *mašal*. Gibson[80] analyzes it as a prophetical perfect (known in Hebrew). This interpretation does not fit the context: we can hardly qualify the context as prophetic. The « prophetic perfect is not a special grammatical perfect, but a rhetorical device », as underlined by Joüon[81]. We could add: a rhetorical device in a prophetic context. It is better to understand the form as a participle with a future meaning, and to vocalize *môšél*[82]. Known in Hebrew the word « end » appears in three forms: *qéṣ*, *qâṣéḥ*, and *qâṣâḥ*. Words of the qill-type[83] remain qill, the feminine form of which is qillot, hence *qiṣṣot*, and with the 3m. pl. suffix *laqiṣṣotinôm* (with the connecting vowel *-i-* of the genitive[84]) « for their end », i.e. « so they die ». It could also be a verb, in this case an infinitive construct of *qṣḥ* with

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[76] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 190 7 a, see also *KAI*, p. 22.

[77] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 467 p.

[78] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 199.

[79] *TSSI*, p. 111.

[80] *TSSI*, p. 111.

[81] P. JOÜON – T. MURAOKA, *A Grammar of Biblical Hebrew*, Roma, 2006, § 112 h.

[82] For *DNWSI*, p. 702, it is also a participle. On the temporal sphere of the participle in Phoenician (present or future, the context always guides the interpretation), see FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 271. « The use of the participle to express the near future and the future in general is an extension of the use of the participle as present », JOÜON-MURAOKA, § 123 e.

[83] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 454 d.

[84] With GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 111, but piel for *KAI*, p. 22, *DNWSI*, p. 1022, and FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 233.

an objective suffix « to kill them »: either qal (*laqaṣôtinôm*[85]) or piel (*laqaṣṣôtinôm*), both forms being used in Hebrew. The independent 3rd m. pl. personal pronoun appears as *humatu*[86]. The substantive *šrš* « root » is a monosyllabic qutl in Hebrew[87], which remains identical in Phoenician, hence *šurš*. We may find a confirmation of this in the Greek spelling συρις/σοιρις (Dioscorides II, 163). The two adverbs *lmṭ* and *lmʿl* correspond to each other: « above » and « below ». The Hebrew cognates are *lemaṭṭah* and *lemaʿlah*, two words of the maqtal form[88]. Maqtal becomes maqtol in Phoenician as has already been seen (see *mamlokût* above). The first form is constructed from the root *nṭḥ* « to stretch out, to spread out, to extend » and the second on the root *ʿlh* « to go up, to ascend ». We could vocalize *lamaṭṭô* and *lamaʿlô* respectively. The substantive *pr* (*pᵉriy* in Hebrew) « fruit » is a monosyllabic noun (in Hebrew there has been an assimilation of the vowel to the *yod*, hence *pary > *piry > *piriy > *pᵉriy*[89]). How can we vocalize the word in Phoenician? Probably *parî*, since qatl-type words remain identical. Neither the etymology nor the formation is clear for the Hebrew word *tô'ar* « appearence, form ». Koehler-Baumgartner proposes, after reference to Bauer-Leander, a qutl formation[90], which could produce *tu'r* in Phoenician. The expression *baḥayyîm taḥt šamš* already occurs in the inscription of Tabnît (*KAI* 13), lines 7-8[91]. We vocalize *ḥym* as in Hebrew, assuming a similar reduplication of the yod: *ḥayyîm* « life »; with the article, *haḥayyîm* (virtual reduplication as in Hebrew), hence here *baḥayyîm*. The expression *tḥt šmš* (*taḥt šamš*, two qatl-type words; it can be observed that there is no article before *šamš*) is frequent in Ecclesiastes (1:9: *'én kol-ḥâdâš taḥat haššâmèš* [pausal form] « there is nothing new under the sun »). What does the expression « appearance in the life under the sun » mean? Probably: « to have fame, good name or dignity »[92]. See *e contrario* Isa 53:2: « For he grew up before him like a tender shoot, and like a root out of parched ground, he has no stately form or majesty that we should look upon him, nor *appearance* that we should be attracted to him »[93].

12-13. K 'NK NḤN NGZLT BL ʿTY BN MSK YMM 'ZRM YTM BN 'LMT 'NK (*ka 'anôkî nâḥân nagzalti bilô ʿittiya bin masok yômîm 'azzîrîm yatum bin 'almat 'anôkî*) « For I who deserve mercy, I was carried away before my time, son of a limited

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[85] In Phoenician the infinitive construct has a feminine ending as in Hebrew, see the Punic transcription *caneth = qanôt* (-ô- becomes -é- in Punic); cf. Friedrich-Röllig, § 178 a.

[86] Friedrich-Röllig, § 111. The form is reconstructed on the basis of the comparative grammar of Semitic languages.

[87] Bauer-Leander, p. 460 h.

[88] See Bauer-Leander, p. 490 b and 492 o. The final -âh in Hebrew is a vestige of an ancient accusative, see Bauer-Leander, p. 527 r.

[89] Bauer-Leander, p. 577 h.

[90] Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 1545 (there are several other propositions), cf. Bauer-Leander, p. 460 h.

[91] See our article cited in note 1.

[92] And not simply « beauty », as in Jer 11:16; Isa 52:14.

[93] Cited by Gibson, *TSSI*, p. 111.

number of short days (or: son of a limited number of days I was cut off), I an orphan, the son of a widow ». There is only one new element compared with lines 2-3: *nḥn*, which comes from the geminate verb *ḥnn* « to shew favour, to be gracious » (qal), « be pitied » (nifal) (attested twice in Phoenician: here and in a Punic text[94]). The only possible form here is the nifal participle the corresponding form of which in Hebrew would be *nâḥân* (unattested as such in the MT) « deserving compassion, mercy ». We propose to follow the Hebrew vocalization.

13-16. K ’NK ’ŠMN‘ZR MLK ṢDNM BN MLK TBNT MLK ṢDNM BN BN MLK ’ŠMN‘ZR MLK ṢDNM W’MY ’M‘ŠTRT KHNT ‘ŠTRT RBTN HMLKT BT MLK ’ŠMN‘ZR MLK ṢDNM ’[Š] BNN ’YT BT ’LNM ’YT [BT ‘ŠTR]T BṢDN ’RṢ YM (*ka ’anôkî ’èšmûn‘azar milk ṣîdônîm bin milk tabnît milk ṣîdônîm bin bin milk ’èšmûn‘azar milk ṣîdônîm we’ammaya ’amo‘aštart kôhant ‘aštart rabbotanû hammilkot bat milk ’èšmûn‘azar milk ṣîdônîm ’[š] banînû ’iyat bîté ’alônîm ’iyat <bît ‘aštar>t biṣîdôn ’arṣ yim*) « For I, Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, son of king Tabnit, king of the Sidonians, grandson of king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, and my mother Amo[t]astart, priestess of Ashtart, our lady, the queen, daughter of king Eshmunazar, king of the Sidonians, (it is we) who have built the temples of the gods, [the temple of Ashtar]t in Sidon, the land of the sea ». We vocalize *’ammaya* « my mother » with the connectig vowel *-a-* for the nominative (subject of *bnn*). The personal name *’m‘štrt* means « my mother is Astart » if we vocalize *ammî‘aštart*, but many believe that the stonecutter has made a mistake here and has forgotten the letter *-t-* after the *mem*. The name should be read *’mt‘štrt = ’amot‘aštart* « maid of Astart ». The word *’amot* « maid » is indeed used to construct several names well attested in Phoenician such as *A-ma-ti-ba-al*, *ᶠAmat*(GEMÉ)-*as-ta-ar-ti*, *Amotbal*, *Amobbal*, *Amotmicar*[95]. But the aphaeresis[96] of the *-t-* is also attested in theophoric names with *’èšmûn* such as *’m’šmn* and *’mšmn*. In conclusion the two explanations are possible. ’Amot‘aštart is said to be a daughter of ’Eshmunazar I; she is therefore half-sister of Tabnît. No doubt she was regent during the childhood of ’Eshmunazar II. This is confirmed by the fact that she was associated with major projects, as stated just below in the inscription. She was like the biblical *gebîrâh* (Athaliah for example). She bears the title of priestess of Astart: *kôhant*. The vocalization *kôhant* (qôtalt for the feminine participle) relies on the spelling *kht* attested in Archaic Phoenician[97]. This form could only be explained as the result of a total regressive assimilation of the nun before the feminine ending *-t-*. This assimilation would not have happened if the nun had carried a vowel, as in a Hebrew qôtèlèt-form.

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[94] *DNWSI*, p. 389. We leave aside all the emendations proposed for our text.

[95] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 240 6 (with references).

[96] In the case of *Amobbal*, it is rather an assimilation (*tb > bb*) than an aphaeresis of the *taw*.

[97] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 198 b.

'Amot'aštart is also presented as *rbtn hmlkt*: *rabbotanû hammilkot* « our lady the queen » (just as the queen-mother, the gebîrâh). We vocalize *rabbotanû* with the connecting vowel -*a*- (a nominative)[98] as suggested by the Greek transcription ουβαθων (*rabbatôn* < *rabbatá-nû*[99]). The vocalization *bat* « daughter » is warranted by the Neo-Punic spelling *b' t* where the 'aïn represents the vowel -*a*-[100]. The word *'m* is obviously an error made by the stonecutter for *'š*, the relative pronoun (*'éš*); all the commentators agree on this[101]. The verb *banînû* (from *bnh*) is a 1st pl. perfect qal « we have (re)built ». The word *bt* « house, temple » must be a plural here since several buildings are mentioned below, hence *bîtê* (but *bâtê* in Hebrew). The vocalization *bît* (or *bêt*) is confirmed by the transcription *Bi-ti-ru-me* (*Bît-rôm*)[102]. What was the size of these buildings? Certainly not large constructions, but more probably little sanctuaries[103]. The city of Sidon is called *'rṣ ym* « land of the sea » (*'arṣ yim*). In Hebrew *'rṣ* is a qatl-type monosyllabic noun, hence *'arṣ*. Since the word *yam* « sea » is a qall-type noun, we would expect a similar vocalization in Phoenician. However the transcriptions[104] lead us in another direction. The names *As-du-di-im-mu* (Ashdod), *In-im-me* « spring of the sea », *Qar-ti-me* « city of the sea », *Da-la-im-me* « gate of the sea », *I-si-ḫi-im-me*, incite us to vocalize *yim*.

16-18. WYŠR'N 'YT 'ŠTRT ŠMM 'DRM W'NḤN 'Š BNN BT L'ŠMN [Š]R QDŠ 'N YDLL BHR WYŠBNY ŠMM 'DRM W'NḤN 'Š BNN BTM L'LN ṢDNM BṢDN 'RṢ YM BT LB'L ṢDN WBT L'ŠTRT ŠM B'L (*weyôšibnû 'iyat 'aštart šamém 'addîrim we'anaḥnû 'éš banînû bît la'ešmûn <ša>r qudš 'în ydll bihar weyôšibnûyû šamém 'addîrim we'anaḥnû 'éš banînû bîtîm la'alôné ṣîdônîm biṣîdôn 'arṣ yim bît laba'l ṣîdôn webît la'aštart šim ba'l*) « And we have placed Ashtart (in) the mighty heavens (or: in Shamem-Addirim?). And it is we who have built a temple for Eshmun, the prince of the sanctuary of the source of Ydll in the moutains, and we have placed him (in) the mighty heavens (or: in Shamem-Addirim?). And it is we who have built temples for the gods of the Sidonians in Sidon, the land of the sea, a temple for Baal of Sidon, and a temple for Ashtart, the Name of Baal ». Everyone agrees in considering that the stonecutter has made an error: he has written *wyšrn* instead of *wyšbn* (there is just a small difference between the two letters), as shown by the repetition of the verb in line 17. The verbal form is a 1st pl. coordinate yifil perfect of *yašab* « to dwell, to sit »: *weyôšibnû* « and we have placed » (*yôšib*

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[98] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 233. On the other hand GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 66, who relies on the Greek transcription, prefers to vocalize *rabbatôn(û)*.

[99] We assume the following development: -**ánu* > -**án* > -*ôn*. For ουβαθων, see FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 93; 97; 233; 237; 240 17b. Despite the spelling *rabbatôn*, we maintain the feminine ending *rabbot*, hence *rabbotanû*.

[100] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 107 3 (many examples are given).

[101] See *KAI*, p. 22, and *DNWSI*, p. 1090 (lin. 6-7).

[102] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 241 11.

[103] GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 112.

[104] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 192 bis.

< *yawšib* < *yahawšib*). We have to supply the preposition *bi-* before *šamèm ’addîrîm* « in the mighty heavens » (unless it is a proper name: Shamem-Addîrîm?). The transcriptions Σαμημ-ϱουμος (= *šamêm-rômîm*) « exalted heavens », *Ba-al-sa-me-me*, *Balsamem* (*Poenulus*, 1027A)[105] indicate that the plural was pronounced *šamêm* < **šamâîm* (after reduction of the diphthong). For *’addîrim*, see above. The restitution *š[r]* is not unanimously accepted[106]. The word *šar* (here written with *š*) means « prince », as in Hebrew. It is a *qall*-type word (see for example *šarru* « king » in Akkadian)[107], and remains identical in Phoenician. Also monosyllabic, but in the *qutl* form, *qdš* « sanctuary » is to be vocalized *qudš*. After reduction of the diphthong -ay-[108], *‘n* « eye », here, « spring » must be read *‘ên* or *‘în*, as shown by *In-im-me* « spring of the sea » (see above). In ordre to vocalize the word *hr* « mountain », we can rely on the transcription *Ḫa-ru-ṣa-pu-nu* (« Mountain of the North »)[109], hence *har*. The spring of Ydll occurs again in the inscription of Baalshillem[110] (but spelled Ydl there). Here it is located in the mountain, i.e. in the highest part of the city far from the shore. According to Gibson[111] the title of ’Ešmûn here « prince of the sanctuary of the spring of Ydll in the mountain » recalls the title borne by senior officials in 1 Chron 24:5 « officers of God ». There is however something odd about saying that a god is prince of a sanctuary as if he was his own officiant and official. Eshmunazar and his mother have installed ’Ešmûn in the mighty heavens (maybe a toponym, see above): *weyôšibnûyû*[112] « and we have placed him ». The primitive form of the word *šm* « name » (here in the construct state) is *šim*[113]. As noted by Donner-Röllig[114], the expression « Ashtart, the Name of Baal » occurs also in Ugaritic: *‘ṯtrt šm b‘l*.

18-20. W‘D YTN LN ’DN MLKM ’YT D’R WYPY ’RṢT DGN H’DRT ’Š BŠD ŠRN LMDT ‘ṢMT ’Š P‘LT WYSPNNM ‘LT GBL ’RṢ LKNNM LṢDNM L‘L[M] (*we‘ôd yatan lanû ’adôn milkîm ’iyat du’r weyapay ’arṣôt dagôn hâ’addîrôt ’êš biśadé šarôn lamiddot ‘aṣûmot ’êš pa‘altî weyasapnûném ‘alôt gubûl(é) ’arṣ lakûniném laṣṣîdônîm la‘olo<m>*) « Moreover, the lord of kings gave us Dor and Joppa, the mighty lands of Dagon, which are in the plain of Sharon, as a reward for the brilliant action I did. And we have annexed them to the boundary of the land, so that they

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[105] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 76; 79; 86 a; 192; 222 b.

[106] *DNWSI*, p. 1190. We shall just mention the interpretation of the word as an active participle of *šwr* « to keep, to guard », hence « the guardian of the sanctuary ».

[107] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 453 w.

[108] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 86 a.

[109] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 192 bis.

[110] GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 114-116 (not in *KAI*).

[111] GIBSON, *TSSI*, p. 113.

[112] For the form of the verbal suffix, see FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 190.

[113] J.-C. HAELEWYCK, *Grammaire comparée des langues sémitiques. Eléments de phonétique, de morphologie et de syntaxe* (Langues et cultures anciennes 7), Bruxelles, 2006, § 215.

[114] *KAI*, p. 23.

would belong to the Sidonians for ever ». The adverb *'d* « still, even, yet » (in Hebrew *'ôd*) is originally a qâl-type substantive[115]; -*â*- becoming -*ô*- in Phoenician[116], we vocalize *'ôd*. In Punic the word *'dn* « lord » appears with the spelling *donni* (= *'adônî* « my lord » *Poenulus*, 998). We therefore vocalize *'adôn*, and this vocalization is confirmed by the development of a qatâl-type[117] word in Phoenician. The lord of the kings can only be the Persian king. In Akkadian, the name of Dor is *du-u'-ru*, which leads us to a vocalization *du'r*. In the cuneiform documents Jaffa/Joppe is known with the following spellings: *yapu*, *yâpu*, *yappû*[118]. How can one vocalize the Phoenician form with a final yod? We could start from *yappû* < **yappayu*, hence *yappay*. According to Gibson[119], the cities of Dor and Jaffa were given to the Phoenician king by Artaxerxes I (465-424) as a reward for his naval help during the wars against the Greeks (the Median wars). The two cities are qualified as *'arṣôt dagôn hâ'addîrôt*. The divine name Dagon (in Babylonian *Dagana* or *Daguna*) is mentioned several times in the Old Testament as *Dagôn*, god of the Philistines, god of Gaza (Judg 16:23) or Ashdod (1 Sam 5:1-7; cf. 1 Chron 10:10). The expression « mighty lands of Dagon » echoes the fertility of the soil in the coastal area. Regarding the etymology of Dagon, two solutions are possible. Either a proximity with the Hebrew *dâgân* « corn, grain »: Dagan would be a vegetation-god (that is precisely what Philo says: ὅς ἐστι Σίτων). Or, less probably, a proximity with the plural of *dâg* « fish »: Dagan would be a fish-god[120]. The word *śd* (written here with š) « plain » is well known from Hebrew (*śâday*, commonly *śâdèh*). It is a qatl-type word: **śady* has become *śadé*, as indicated by the transcription σαδε in Dioscorides (I, 97; III, 96)[121]. The fertile[122] Plain of Sharon spreads out between Jaffa and the Carmel. The gift of the Persian king was so appreciated by Eshmunazar that he considers it worth mentioning in his inscription. In *lmdt* we can recognize the feminine substantive *mdh*[123] « measure » (construct state). The Hebrew cognate is *middâh* « measure », and not *middéy* (< *min* + *day* « sufficient measure ») as suggested by Friedrich-Röllig[124]. It is a qill-type word, which re-

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[115] Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 752 refers to Bauer-Leander, p. 451 n.

[116] Friedrich-Röllig, § 79 a.

[117] Bauer-Leander, p. 469 f.

[118] Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 405.

[119] Gibson, *TSSI*, p. 113. An example is given by Pseudo-Scylax: Tyr would have obtained coastal cities in similar circumstances, cf. M. Avi-Yonah, *The Holy Land from the Persian to the Arab Conquest*, Grand Rapids (Michigan), 1966, p. 27ss.

[120] Cf. Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 205.

[121] Friedrich-Röllig, § 195 e; cf. Bauer-Leander, p. 502 d (« the -ay is certainly part of the root », but there is no certainty, cf. Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 1218-1219).

[122] See Cant 2:1: « I am the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valleys ».

[123] *DNWSI*, p. 595-596 (which mentions the hypothesis of Lipiński followed by others: the word could mean « tribute »).

[124] Friedrich-Röllig, § 252 (the form should have been *mdyt*, since *day* comes from *dayy*).

mains identical in Phoenician, thus with the feminine ending *middot*, and in the context *lamiddot* « in proportion to, as reward for ». Hebrew attests an adjective *'aṣûm* « mighty », which is a qatûl-type adjective[125]. Words of this type remain identical in Phoenician, as we know from the name *Ba-('a)-al-ḫa-nu-nu* (*Ba'l* + *ḫanûn* « Baal is merciful »)[126], hence *'aṣûmot* (feminine singular). In the context it is an adjectival noun: « mighty deed, brilliant action ». In Hebrew the verb *yâsap* is either qal or hifil always with the meaning « to add ». Two vocalizations are therefore possible: *weyasapnûném* (1st pl. qal with the suffix *-ném*), or *weyôsipnûném* (yifil, see *weyôšibnûyû* above). According to the grammar the suffix must be feminine (*-ném*) since the names of cities are feminine, but there are many exceptions (the suffix *-nôm* would have also have been justifiable). Note the change in persons: « I did ... we have annexed ». The vocalization *gubûl* « border, territory » is based on the Punic *gubulim* (*Poenulus* 938). If in Punic the original *û* (*gubûl* is a qutûl-type word) is still attested, the chances are that it remained throughout the development of the Phoenician language[127]. Here we have either a singular (*gubûl*) or a plural (*gubûlê*) construct state. In *lknnm* the verb *kûn* « to be » is an infinitive construct qal with the feminine suffixe *-nêm* « so that they are », hence *lakûninêm* (with the connecting vowel *-i-*)[128]. The word *'lm* « eternity » is a qâtal-type word (as indicated by Hebrew[129]) which became qôtol in Phoenician[130].

20-21. QNMY 'T KL MMLKT WKL 'DM 'L YPTḤ 'LTY W'L Y'R 'LTY W'L Y'MSN BMŠKB Z W'L YŠ' 'YT ḤLT MŠKBY (*qenummiya 'atta kul mamlokût wekul 'adom 'al yiptaḥ 'alôtiya we'al ya'ar 'alôtiya we'al ya'musénî bimiškob zè we'al yiśśo' 'iyat ḥallot miškobiya*) « Whoever you are, king or (ordinary) man, do not open what is above me and do not uncover what is above me and do not carry me away from this resting-place and do not lift up the coffin of my resting-place ». This is mainly a doublet of lines 4-6. Only the verb *'ry* « to denude, to uncover » is new. This verb, here a piel imperfect (jussive) to be vocalized *ya'ar*[131] (*yugalliyu > *yugalliy > *yagalliy > *yagallêh > *yagall* for the apocopated form > *yagal* [since a word does not end with a double consonant]), occurs only here in Phoenician.

21-22. LM YSGRNM 'LNM HQDŠM 'L WYQṢN HMMLKT H' WH'DMM HMT WZR'M L'LM (*lamâ yasgirûnôm 'alônîm haqqadošîm 'illè weyeqaṣṣûna hammamlokût hû'a wehâ'adomîm humatu wezar'ôm la'ôlom*) « Otherwise, the sacred gods will deliver them and cut off this king and those (ordinary) men and their offspring for ever ». The conjunction *lamâ* consisting of

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[125] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 471 u.

[126] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 197 c.

[127] So also *KAI*, p. 23.

[128] FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 190 8, cf. § 233.

[129] BAUER-LEANDER, p. 475 p.

[130] FRIEDRICH- RÖLLIG, § 198.

[131] With FRIEDRICH-RÖLLIG, § 177 a. Cf. BAUER-LEANDER, p. 412 a.

the preposition *la-* and the interrogative pronoun for things *-mâ*, means strictly speaking « why », but here « so that ... not, otherwise ». Compared to line 9, in *'alônîm haqqadošîm 'illè* only the adjective carries the article (the noun is sufficiently determined by the demonstrative pronoun). The vocalization of the demonstrative pronoun plural *'illè* (< *'ilay*) is based on the Punic transcriptions *illii*, *ily* (*Poenulus* 938) showing that it consists of two syllables as in Hebrew[132]. Coordinated to the preceding verb, *yqṣn* is an imperfective piel of *qṣḥ* « to cut off ». Others propose to analyze it as a qal imperfect meaning « to perish ». Hebrew uses the piel of *qṣḥ* (the qal occurs in Hab 2:10, but the meaning is not clear[133]). We choose therefore a piel form: *yeqaṣṣûna* (< **yaqaṣṣûna* < **yaqaṣṣiyûna*)[134]. The ending *-ûna* is characteristic of the long imperfect *yaqtulûna*.

5. Syntactic observations

Throughout the inscription we have noticed changes of persons: from the second to the third (lines 4-5), from the first singular to the first plural (line 19). In the indication of year, the word « year » is a plural while in Hebrew it is usually singular. We can note the indefinite pronouns: *qenummiya* « whoever » and *mînumma* « whatever ». The expression « they placed nothing » equals « nothing is placed » (line 5). We also note the peculiar use of the following words: *bi-* meaning « far from » (line 6), *dibbér* with an objective suffix for the person (line 7), *'ïm* meaning « or » (lines 7 and 10), *lamâ* « why » meaning « so that ... not, otherwise » (line 21). The article is sometimes present sometimes absent in the expression « the sacred gods » (lines 9 and 21). The participle may express the future (*môšél* line 9, [not a prophetic perfect!]).

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[132] Friedrich-Röllig, § 113 and 116.
[133] See Koehler-Baumgartner, p. 1046.
[134] *KAI*, p. 23; Friedrich-Röllig, § 63 b; 135 a; 174; 177 b.