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Biblische Exegese und hebräische Lexikographie

Das „Hebräisch-deutsche Handwörterbuch“ von
Wilhelm Gesenius als Spiegel und Quelle
alttestamentlicher und hebräischer Forschung,
200 Jahre nach seiner ersten Auflage

Herausgegeben von
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Eran Wolkowski (Tel Aviv): Wilhelm Gesenius

ערן וולקובסקי (תל אביב): וילהלם גזניוס

Wilhelm Gesenius and the Rise of Phoenician Philology

Reinhard G. Lehmann

Pauca sunt litteratæ antiquitatis monumenta [...] Phoeniciæ Punicæque linguæ reliquiæ. (Wilhelm Gesenius 1837)

Nearly two hundred years later the repertory of Phoenician-Punic epigraphy counts about 10.000 inscriptions from throughout the Mediterranean and its environs.¹ Nevertheless, almost 150 years after Gesenius, Wolfgang Röllig bewailed once more that

notwithstanding the welcome increase of textual material in the past decades, Phoenician probably remains the worst transmitted and least known of all Semitic languages.²

Since the Phoenicians have long vanished from history, it was as far as we know only much later in the 17th century that a certain Maltese *canonicus* named Ignazio di Costanzo was the first to report an inscription that he considered to be Phoenician, and to wonder what it might record.

In the meantime Phoenician, or what people deemed to have been Phoenician in antiquity, had not ceased to attract interest, rather, it had gained a certain arcane mysterious notoriety. In the year 1657, and still at the threshold of what could be labelled the rebirth of Phoenician (or the birth of Phoenician studies at all) in the 17th century, the Darmstadt pietist Wilhelm Christoph Kriegsmann (1633–1679) claimed that the famous, allegedly Hermetic *Tabula Smaragdina* had been primarily written in Phoenician letters and in the Phoenician language instead of being of Greek or Egyptian origin.³ As a proof, Kriegsmann produced a Phoenician retrover-

* Many thanks to Robert M. Kerr (Wilfrid Laurier University, Waterloo) for discussing with me several aspects of my paper; to him I owe invaluable information. Likewise, I am indebted to Kwang Cheol Park for numerous references to remote and rare literature.

1 XELLA / ZAMORA, *The Phoenician Data Bank*, 773.

2 RÖLLIG, *The Phoenician language*, 375.

3 KRIEGSMANN, *Hermetis Trismegisti Phoenicum Ægyptiorum*; without the 'Phoenician' and Hebrew plates reprinted in: MANGET, *Bibliotheca Chemica Curiosa*, vol. 1, 380–389. It goes without saying that Kriegsmann's fanciful effort had no further impact, except for

sion from the well-known Latin text of Nürnberg 1541. To be sure, nothing was known about Phoenician at that time other than the predominantly enigmatic Punic parts of Plautus' *Poenulus*, and several memos of church fathers, namely Augustin and Jerome, who reported that Phoenician was most contiguous to Hebrew – all of which was, of course, already exploited by humanist scholars such as Joseph Justus Scaliger (1540–1609), Samuel Bochart (1599–1667), and others, yet with poor results only in terms of philology. And still not a single Phoenician inscription was known. Accordingly, Kriegsmann provided an exceedingly inventive reconstruction of what he deemed to have been the Phoenician urtext of the *Tabula*, based on Hebrew and oddly mixing it up with Syriac, a few newly fashioned words, and adding decorative, meticulously painted plates of the *Tabula* in Hebrew and in what he imagined to have been Phoenician characters. These roughly resembled the Samaritan script that Kriegsmann seems to have adapted (and fancifully embellished) from the works of Renaissance authors like Guillaume Postel (1510–1581) or possibly authentic coins of the Maccabean revolt. However, from a calligrapher's point of view alone, Kriegsmann's Phoenician *Tabula* must be acknowledged as display of an albeit imaginary and historically inconsistent, if not farcical, but typographically imposing lapidary script type.

Soon thereafter, at the end of the 17th century, the abovementioned Ignazio di Costanzo was the first to report a Phoenician inscription and to consciously recognize Phoenician characters proper. Costanzo spotted this inscription, which is part of two almost identical bilingual marble plates (or, to say it exactly, votive *cippus* stelae), some time in the year 1694 at the Casino entrance of the Maltese Villa Abela.⁴ Since 1853 it has been repeatedly presumed⁵ that both plates had been discovered together not far away, probably in the antique harbour of Marsa Scirocco (Mar-saxlokk) in the southeast of Malta. Although the circumstances of the finding as yet remain undocumented, it is not unlikely that the famous Maltese antiquarian Giovanni Francesco Abela (1582–1655) himself discovered

certain esoteric circles (which, for instance, were fascinated by Kriegsmann's "Phoenician" retranslation of the title *verba secretorum Hermetis Trismegisti* as דברי רזי הרם חלה מוזות, now surprisingly embracing Hiram). For the following story of the *Tabula*, see RUSKA, *Tabula Smaragdina*.

- 4 Today, these inscription(s), well-known as *Melitensis prima CIS I, 122/122^{bis}* or *KAI 47*, are in the National Museum of Archaeology, La Valetta, Malta, and the Louvre Museum, Paris, respectively.
- 5 E.g. 1853 in the *Corpus Inscriptionum Græcarum* vol. 3, no. 5733, 680–681 (BONANNO, *Quintinius*, 201), and later for instance in the introductory commentary to *CIS I, 122* (*ibid.*, 150): "*Ambo simul monumenta sunt reperta inter rudera, etiam nunc exstantia, portus hodie Marsa Scirocco, olim Ἡρακλέους λιμῆν, appellati.*"

them.⁶ While Ignazio di Costanzo immediately recognized the bottom part of the inscriptions as Greek, he considered the other part to be Phoenician (“due iscrizioni scolpite con caratteri Greci, e Fenici a mio credere”). Drawings of these inscriptions, which were made already by Giovanni Uvit the younger in 1687, were sent to Verona to the learned art historian, poet and Maltese commander Bartolomeo dal Pozzo (1637–1722), who gave notice of them also to another Veronese nobleman and art collector, Francesco Sparaviero. The latter omitted the assumed Phoenician part of the inscription(s), but sent back a first translation of the Greek section, which was quite accurate.⁷

6 However, because Abela did not mention these inscriptions in his *Malta Illustrata* (first published 1647 as *Della descrizione di Malta*), it must be assumed that he discovered them in the years before his death in 1655. Costanzo himself mentions this lack of completeness in Abela’s work with a certain notion of surprise (“da lui non posti nella celebre sua opera della Malta Illustrata, per esserli forse capitati doppo la stampa fatta d’essa”). BONANNO, *Quintinius*, 201–204, refers to some more serious discrepancies and contradictions between the early accounts, which should not be disregarded. For Bonanno, it seems that “an undocumented provenance from Marsaxlokk has been inferred for them merely from the fact that the inscriptions on them refer to a votive offering to Hercules” of whom, though not undoubtedly antique, a statue has been found at this location. Indeed, there also are 18th century claims that the *Cippus* had been found on Gozo and not at Marsaxlokk (BONANNO, *Quintinius*, 201 n. 62). Furthermore, Costanzo’s first reference to the inscription(s) as to “tavole,” i.e. plates or slabs (“E fin al presente nel Casino di Villa del predetto Comm. Abela [...] fi scorgono affisse nel suo primo ingresso due tavole di marmo, con due iscrizioni scolpite con caratteri Greci, e Fenici a mio credere”) makes it difficult to identify clearly the inscription he meant; on the other hand, his translation of the Greek part of the bilinguals closely matches to what in fact is the *Melitensis Prima CIS* I, 122. Thus, BONANNO, *Quintinius*, 203 ends up with a *non liquet*: “Whatever the solution to this quandary, it is beyond our reach and we still cannot tell where and when the inscriptions were discovered for the first time: not necessarily before Abela’s death in 1655 [...], but before 1687 when Giovanni Uvit Junior had them transcribed.” – For Giovanni Francesco Abela (1582–1655), the “Father of Maltese Historiography,” see the collected essays in (Malta Historical Society,) *Gian Francesco Abela*. Further LUTTRELL, *Girolamo Manduca and Gian Francesco Abela*, 105–132. – I am also indebted to Mr. James Abela and to Mr. Charles Said-Vassallo for providing me with material and useful information.

7 “[...] che tralasciatane la discifrazione di quei caratteri stimati Fenici, per essere forse a lui ignoti, mit trasmise la seguente spiegazione delli Greci in esse tavole scolpiti. *Dionysius, & Sarapion Sarapionis Tirii, Herculi Ducii*” – which, according to Costanzo, attests to the high estimation of Hercules both by Greeks of Tyre and by Phoenicians of Malta (“Il Canonico D. Ignazio di Costanzo al Sig. Antonio Bulifon discorrendo – gli d’una lamina d’oro ritrovata in un’antico sepolcro vicino all’antica Città di Malta,” in: BULIFON, *Lettere memorabilia*, 130).

Plag. 24.



Fig. 1: Inscription Melitensis prima according to Guyot de Marne 1735

The whole story is reported in a long letter that Ignazio di Costanzo sent on December 18th of the same year to the French-Neapolitan annalist and publisher Antonius Bulifon (1649–1707), who published it some years later, in 1698, in his *Lettere memorabilia*.⁸ These two identical bilinguals, which finally became known as *Melitensis prima*, would later become the key for the decipherment of Phoenician.⁹ However, it took almost 50 more years before the inscription was reproduced for the first time: In 1753, Abbé Guyot de Marne, Commander of the Maltese Order, published it in a 10-page *dissertazio* in an Italian learned journal, the *Saggi di dissertazioni accademiche* of the Etruscan Academy of Cortona (fig. 1).¹⁰ Unfortunately, Guyot de Marne himself only made careful assumptions about the nature of the Phoenician-Punic language, but did not venture a translation. This was first attempted some years later, in 1741, by French clergyman and philologist Michel Fourmont (1690–1745) who published in the same journal a tentative character chart; however, as Fourmont still confused most of the letters, this did not lead to any useful translation.¹¹

Little, if anything, was known about the Phoenician language at that time and on into the eighteenth century, mostly distilled from Greek and Latin sources¹² and a few coins. Only in the middle of the eighteenth century new resources for the study of Phoenician were to become available with more inscriptions coming to light or being reported by travellers (R. Pococke 1743–1745, J. Swinton 1750, and others¹³). Alas, all these were either late or Punic, and came from Cyprus, from the ruins of Kition, from Malta, Sardinia, Athens, and Carthage, but not yet from the Phoenician homeland. The first Phoenician text as such was found as late as 1855, the Eshmunazor sarcophagus inscription from Sidon.

8 BULIFON, *Lettere memorabilia*, 129f. A dependent short version is also found in BARTHÉLEMY, *Réflexions sur quelques monuments Phéniciens*, 406. – However, CIS I,1, 150 and LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 6 mention the year 1697, which seems to be an error.

9 Specimens of the early strange attempts to translate this and some other inscriptions are found in LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 93–94, footnotes.

10 MARNE, *Dissertazione II*, 24–34.

11 FOURMONT, *Dissertazione III*, 88–110. His still seriously flawed translation, along with those of his academic opponents, is reported in LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 93f. The story of the *Melitensis prima* is also reported in KOPP, *Bilder und Schriften*, 249.

12 Cf. KERR, *Miscellanea Punica Leidensia*.

13 For a brief overview of the history of research at this time, see DELCOR, *L'alphabet phénicien*, and already LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 92–95.

INSCRIPTIONS PHENICIENNES TROUVÉES A MALTHE.

N° 1.

9954 492 509 599 545 559 45
954974777 479749907990
 0547 974990599 47974990 5954
 77997459

N° 2.

59909954492 509 599 545 559 45
 595494777 47974990
 459 0547 974990 599 47974990
 77997

N° 3.

LA MÊME INSCRIPTION EN CARACTERES HEBREUX.

לאדון למלקרת בעל צרא הנרד
 עבר. עבראסר ואחי אסרחמר
 חובן אסרחמר בן עבראסר כהמע
 קלם יברכם

E. J. Charpentier. Sc.

Fig. 2: Inscription Melitensis prima according to Barthélemy 1764

Mém. de l'Acad. des B.L. t. XXX, p. 427.

Planche IV.

ALPHABETS PHENICIENS			
d'après les Inscriptions & les Medailles			
N° 1	N° 2	N° 3	N° 4
𐤀 𐤁 𐤂	𐤀 𐤁	𐤀 𐤁	Aleph
𐤃 𐤄 𐤅	𐤃	𐤃 𐤄 𐤅	Beth
		𐤆	Ghimel
𐤇 𐤈	𐤇	𐤇 𐤈 𐤉	Daleth
𐤊	𐤊 𐤋*	𐤊*	He
𐤌		𐤌*	Vau
		𐤍*	Zain
𐤎 𐤏	𐤎	𐤎	Heth
			Teth
𐤐		𐤐 𐤑	Jod
𐤒 𐤓		𐤒	Caph
𐤔 𐤕 𐤖		𐤔 𐤕*	Lamed
𐤘 𐤙	𐤘	𐤘	Mem
𐤚 𐤛	𐤚	𐤚	Nun
𐤜		𐤜 𐤝	Samech
𐤞	𐤞	𐤞 𐤟	Ain
			Pe
𐤠 𐤡 𐤢 𐤣		𐤠	Tzade
𐤤	𐤤		Coph
𐤦 𐤧 𐤨 𐤩	𐤦	𐤦 𐤧 𐤨	Resch
𐤫	𐤫	𐤫	Sin ou Schin
𐤬	𐤬	𐤬	Thau

P.L. Charpentier Sc.

Fig. 3: Character chart Barthélemy 1764

It is thus not surprising that the shorter Phoenician text, which only summarized the Greek version of the *Melitensis prima* bilinguis, was passably transliterated and translated only more than 20 years later by the Abbé Jean Jacques Barthélemy (1716–1795). In a paper read on April 12th 1758, Barthélemy already correctly identified 16 of the 17 different letters represented in the text, but still mistook *Shin* and *He*. Barthélemy, who had already proven himself in the decipherment of Palmyrene, published this new achievement in 1764 together with a new drawing (fig. 2) and a new character chart (fig. 3).¹⁴

There did not yet exist any systematic knowledge of what could be properly labelled the Phoenician language, Phoenician script, or Phoenician literature and scribal culture at all. Nor was there yet a generally accepted Phoenician character chart giving the correct phonemic values. Hence, it is not surprising that as late as 1835, Gesenius could still call the *Melitensis prima* “ein Muster regelrechter phönizischer Kalligraphie,” which no modern-day scholar would claim any longer.¹⁵ By this time only some sixty of those peculiar, rather late or Punic inscriptions mentioned above had been published, often in crude copies, together with sometimes rude translations, in various journals and monographs from all parts of Europe, in French, Italian, English, German, and Latin. Mark Lidzbarski in his survey at the end of the nineteenth century summarizes this time as follows:

Dennoch wurde die phönizische Epigraphik nicht bedeutend gefördert. Der Hauptgrund lag darin, dass von den meisten Inschriften nur sehr entstellte Abbildungen vorlagen, die der Entzifferung um so mehr Schwierigkeiten boten, als die Werte des phönizischen Alphabetes damals noch keineswegs feststanden.¹⁶

Gesenius phoenicum peritus I

To the best of my knowledge, Wilhelm Gesenius successfully tackled Phoenico-Punic for the first time in 1810, while writing his seventy-eight-page

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- 14 BARTHÉLEMY, *Réflexions sur quelques monuments Phéniciens*, 405–427 (*sic!*); the text was later also exhaustingly discussed in BAYER, *Über Schrift und Sprache der Phönizier*, 17–31, with a detailed overview of the early research history on the *Melitensis prima*. See also LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 9, n. 44, and DELCOR, *L'alphabet phénicien*, 26 (though with erroneous reference to an earlier work of Barthélemy).
 - 15 GESENIUS, *Paläographische Studien*, 61 in his notes to BAYER, *Über Schrift und Sprache der Phönizier*. However, on standards of Phoenician calligraphy today see LEHMANN, *Calligraphy and Craftsmanship*.
 - 16 LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 95.

Versuch über die maltesische Sprache zur Beurtheilung der neulich wiederholten Behauptung, dass sie ein Ueberrest der altpunischen sey, und als Beitrag zur arabischen Dialektologie. Begun while Gesenius was still at Heiligenstadt, this was a broad refutation of Johann Joachim Bellermann's (1754–1842) recent but by no means new claim that the Maltese language was a distant descendant of Punic.¹⁷ Here, Gesenius already displayed the nucleus of his later scholarly method, combining a grammar ("Kurze Uebersicht der maltesischen Sprachlehre nach Agius und eigenen Zusammenstellungen, mit durchgehender Vergleichung der arabischen Vulgärsprache," pp. 1–26), a chrestomathy ("Proben zusammenhängender Rede im Maltesischen," pp. 27–42), and a glossary ("Wörterverzeichnis," pp. 43–72).

The quintessence of his *Versuch über die maltesische Sprache* was the proof that Maltese was, as asserted before by Abela, only a "durch gewisse Provinzialismen ausgezeichnete Branche der arabischen Vulgärsprache,"¹⁸ i.e. a corrupt dialect of Arabic. Thus, Gesenius took his first step into the study of Phoenician by way of negation. In so doing, he nevertheless admitted:

Wie interessant wäre es nicht, zu den uns bekannten fünf Hauptdialekten des semitischen Sprachstammes noch einen sechsten zu gewinnen, ehrwürdiger fast durch sein Alterthum, und durch den Glanz seines Volkes, als alle übrigen, und diesen Dialekt als die lebende Sprache eines vergessenen, in einen Erdenwinkel hingedrängten Landvölkchens? Wieviel sicherer könnte man nun bey der Lösung des plautinischen Räthsels einherschreiten, wenn man wenigstens an einer Anzahl sicher gedeuteter Wörter das Verhältnis dieses Dialekts zum Hebräischen und Syrischen erlernt, mehrere seiner Eigenthümlichkeiten beobachtet hätte u.s.f., und wenn man endlich die Hoffnung hätte, sich durch vollkommnere Kunde der maltesischen Sprache zugleich eines grossen Theils des altpunischen Sprachschatzes zu bemächtigen?¹⁹

Hereafter, Gesenius attended to Phoenician in his *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache und Schrift* of 1815 (finished in November, 1814). Originally he had intended these pages as a historical introductory chapter to his

17 BELLERMANN, *Phoeniciæ linguæ*. However, Bellermann was not the first to claim that Maltese had a certain closeness to Phoenician-Punic, which goes back at least as far as to Jean Quintin d'Autun in D'AUTUN, *Insulæ Melitæ Descriptio*, who already likened the Maltese language to Punic because the Maltese supposedly understood some Punic words in Plautus' *Poenulus* play (LUTTRELL, *Girolamo Manduca and Gian Francesco Abela*, 111). However, Gesenius either was not the first to debunk the Punic theory for the origin of Maltese in favour of strong advocacy of its Arabic origin, a position also already taken by Giovanni Francesco Abela (cf. note 6), see PULLICINO, *G. F. Abela*, 31–37.

18 GESENIUS, *Versuch über die maltesische Sprache*, xiii.

19 GESENIUS, *Versuch über die maltesische Sprache*, vii.

Hebrew Grammar (“Ausführliche hebräische Sprachlehre”), but finally, when it had grown into an opus of 230 pages, he decided to publish it separately. In the prolegomenon he explicitly expressed his willingness to accept the opinion of unbiased scholars (“Urtheil unpartheyischer Kenner”) on certain aspects he seemingly still felt unsure about.²⁰ However, no such reservation is expressed regarding Phoenician. By then, Gesenius seems to have felt confident of his achievements in that new field and of the future importance and the coming demand of Phoenician studies.

On two-and-a-half pages in paragraph 7, he briefly discussed the relationship of Hebrew and Phoenician. Basically, he claims that כנעני, כנעני was “unstreitig der einheimische Name des unter dem Namen der Phönizier bekannten Volkes.”²¹ He argues that Phoenician personal names and toponyms in both form and meaning either coincide perfectly with their Hebrew counterparts or at least are closer related to each other than to any other (known) cognate dialect.²² Furthermore, the sources always indicate that these two languages (or dialects) were mutually understandable – unlike e.g. Egyptian (Ps 81:6, 114:1), Aramaic (Isa 36:11), Assyrian or Chaldean (Jer 5:15 – which of course is actually related to Assyrian, a language Gesenius could not yet have known).

Here Gesenius’ basic assumption with regard to Phoenician, namely its far-reaching overlap with Hebrew, clearly becomes discernible, something to which from now he adhered to, and in subsequent years almost obstinately insisted on it even *en passant*.²³ He had already expressed this belief most clearly even in his elementary textbook grammar of 1813. Here his basic interest in this interconnection comes to light, where he uttered about the early Hebrew language:

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- 20 GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*, iii: “Besonders über einige Gegenstände, welche hier fast zuerst zusammengestellt und zur Sprache gebracht worden, z. B. §. 12. 14. 24. 50. 54ff. wünschte ich das Urtheil unpartheyischer Kenner zu vernehmen.” The mentioned paragraphs deal with exegetical (§ 12), Talmudic (§ 14), Samaritan (§ 24), Septuagint and Josephus (§ 50), and Tiberian masoretic (§ 54–56) matters only!
- 21 GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*, 16, n. 14. Here, he explicitly refers to the testimony of Augustin (cf. KERR, *Miscellanea Punica Leidensia*, 115, n. 303), who on several occasions affirms the close relationship, if not identity, of Hebrew(-Canaanite) with Carthaginian Punic.
- 22 GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*, 17: “[...] erhaltenen phönizischen Wörtern, welche, so weit sie sich wiedererkennen lassen, nach Form und Bedeutung mit dem Hebräischen coincidiren, oder doch sich ihm mehr, als irgend einem andern verwandten Dialekte, selbst dem Syrischen, nähern.” Compare also his appendix *ibid.*, 229.
- 23 For instance GESENIUS, *Vermischte Schriften*, 305 (“so kann über dessen Identität mit dem hebräischen wohl kaum mehr Streit entstehen”), and much more explicitly GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 445f (see the quotation on p. 233).

Gleich in den ältesten Schriften treffen wir die Sprache auf derjenigen Stufe der Ausbildung und Vollendung, welche sie überhaupt erreicht hat, und es fehlt uns gänzlich an geschichtlichen Thatsachen über ihre frühere Entstehungs- und Bildungsgeschichte. Doch scheint soviel gewiß, daß sie sich im Lande Canaan gebildet hat, und mit wenigen Veränderungen schon die Sprache der canaanitischen oder phönizischen Völkerstämme war, welche Palästina vor der Einwanderung der Abrahamiden bewohnten, daß sie von diesen angenommen, nach Ägypten verpflanzt und wieder nach Canaan mitgebracht wurde.²⁴

It is obvious how firmly his interest in Phoenician is linked to his quest for the early history of Hebrew, which he apparently felt unable to access with other scholarly sources. It was not Phoenician as such, at least not in those years, which attracted him, but the promise to gain a comprehensive monumental grasp of some proto-Hebrew, which might have been the language of Abraham and his descendants.²⁵

In paragraph 40, Gesenius dealt with “von der Schrift der Semiten überhaupt,” which comprises the first short but nonetheless comprehensive history of the Semitic scripts. Namely, he was the first to state clearly:

So sehr der erste Ursprung der Buchstabenschrift überhaupt sich im Dunkel des Alterthums verliert und dadurch jeder genaueren Untersuchung entzieht, so ist doch soviel unbezweifelt, dass das Alphabet eines semitischen (oder wenigstens semitisch-redenden) Volkes, der Phönizier, die Mutter vieler morgenländischen, und ausserdem durch das Griechische aller abendländischen Alphabete geworden ist. Aus den semitischen Buchstabennamen und der Natur dieses Alphabetes erhellt es ferner deutlich, dass dieses auch von einem semitischen Volke *erfunden* sey, und schon hierdurch erhalten die beyden Sagen des Alterthums, welche diese Erfindung den Phöniziern selbst oder den Aramäern zuschreiben, ein entschiedenes Uebergewicht über eine andere,

24 GESENIUS, *Hebräisches Elementarbuch*, 2. – Quite similar still in the later 10th edition of 1831, 7: “Soweit wir die Geschichte übersehn, war Canaan ihr Vaterland und war sie der Hauptsache nach schon die Sprache der canaanitischen oder phönizischen Völkerstämme, welche Palästina vor der Einwanderung der Abrahamiden bewohnten [...]”

25 To be sure, a scholarly-based objection to such radical commingling position was not possible before the second half of the 19th century only, when scholars also gained access to sources from the Phoenician motherland proper (STADE, *Erneute Prüfung*). This happened not earlier than 1855, when treasure hunters discovered the inscribed Eshmunazor sarcophagus KAI 14 in Sidon (Şaydā) (DIETRICH, *Zwei sidonische Inschriften*; SCHLOTTMANN, *Die Inschrift Eshmunazars*). Subsequently, other inscriptions from Lebanon came to light like the so-called “zweite Sidonische Königsinschrift” (which is VOGÜE, *Mémoire*; SCHRÖDER, *Die phönizische Sprache*, 225f + plate II = CIS I,4), discovered in 1858, but later often disregarded, and, in the course of Ernest Renan’s *Mission de Phénicie*, 1861/62 those of Umm el-Amed (ʿAwāmīd) CIS I,7.8. See also LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 97–100.

aber auch weit minder verbreitete, welche diese Ehre den Aegyptern zueignen will.²⁶

However, in a footnote he contents himself in terms of deciphering the Phoenician alphabet, but acknowledging his predecessors:

Noch ist Manches zu verbessern und zu ergänzen übrig. Einige Versuche dieser Art, welche Anfangs hier mitgetheilt werden sollten, hat der Vf. zurückgehalten, um ihnen noch mehr Reife zu geben, da sie ohnehin hier nicht hinlänglich an ihrer Stelle gewesen wären. Um nicht schon nachgestochene Copien nochmals, ohne dass etwas Bedeutendes dafür geleistet werde, zu wiederholen, ist auch die Anfangs für dieses Buch bestimmte Tafel semitischer Alphabete weggeblieben.²⁷

Finally, in an appendix to the book, Gesenius listed the sources for a philological assessment of the Phoenician language in an eight-page excursus to paragraph 7, apparently written as an afterthought. Facing the total loss of any Phoenician-Punic literature as such, he gives them as follows: 1) scattered words and passages in classical authors, in the first place, of course, the *Poenulus* of Plautus (which he had labelled already in 1810 as “das unseelige Kreuz der Ausleger”²⁸), 2) the inscriptions and coins mostly found in the Phoenician colonies, and 3) the *nomina propria* of persons and places. To each of these categories he added arguments and comments, and a lemma list of identifiable Phoenician-Punic words – being a small but possibly the first Phoenician vocabulary that used also original Phoenician-Punic inscriptions as source (fig. 4 and 5). Of course, these lists were still tentative and incomplete. It took another 22 years until they were expanded into lexical entries of more than 50 pages, or 100 columns respectively.²⁹

26 GESENIUS, *Hebräisches Elementarbuch* (1813), 137–138.

27 GESENIUS, *Hebräisches Elementarbuch* (1813), 139 n. 8.

28 GESENIUS, *Versuch über die maltesische Sprache*, vii.

29 In GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, II,2, these lists are 346–357 (“Phoeniciæ linguæ reliquiæ ex inscriptionibus et numis”), 382–395 (“Vocabula Phoenicia, quæ apud scriptores græcos et romanos reperiuntur”), 399–415 (“Nomina propria hominum et deorum explicata”), 419–430 (“Nomina propria urbium et locorum explicata”), then providing an at that time almost comprehensive Phoenician lexicon. – The first savant ever who made an effort to reconstruct the Phoenician-Punic vocabulary was Samuel Bochart in his *Geographia Sacra* of 1646. However, although Bochart wrote 88 pages in the “Liber secundus De lingua Phoenicia & Punica” (776–864) and used every kind of available classical sources, he had of course not yet a single original Phoenician text at hand, nor did he perform the output of his enormous erudition in any kind of lexical list.

Excurs zu §. 7.

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- Ἄδ α**, ιεα *Hesych.* (𐤀𐤃𐤁 tal-mud).
Ἀδωνίς (𐤀𐤃𐤁) δεσποτης. *Hesych.*
Alma (𐤀𐤋𐤌) *virgo.* Hieron, in *Jes.* VII.
***Alon** (𐤀𐤋𐤍) *deus.* Plur. *Alonim*, Fem. *Alonuth.* *Plaut. Poen.* V, 1, 1. Cf. *Sisenna ad h. l.*
Ἄλφα (𐤀𐤋𐤍) βους. *Plut. quæst. sympos.* 9. §. 2.
Αυδονίς, **Avo donni.* (𐤀𐤅𐤃𐤁), der punische Grufs, *Meleagri Epigr.* III, 25, no. 70. *Plaut.* V, 2. 34. 38.
Ἀταδίου (𐤀𐤃𐤁) ραμνος, *Dioscorid.*
***Baal, dominus.** *Baal-Samin, dominus coeli,* *Augustin. ad Jud.* 16. Vgl. *Plaut.* V, 2, 67, und *Βελεσαμην, κυριος ουρανου.* *Philo Bybl. ap. Euseb. praep. evang.* 1, 10. Vgl. *Assemani bibl. orient.* T. III. pag. 327.
Βακχος (𐤁𐤁𐤕), κλαυθμος. *Hesych.*
***Chanani** (𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤍), *Phoenix.* *Augustin.* (S. oben S. 16).
***Cussimezara** (𐤀𐤃𐤁𐤌𐤁𐤓) *cucumis sylvaticus,* *Apulej. de herbar. virtutibus,* 113.
***Edom** (𐤀𐤃𐤁, rabb. 𐤀𐤃𐤁) sanguis, *August. ad Ps.* 136.
Ελιουβ (𐤀𐤋𐤍) ὑψιστος. *Philo Bybl.* a. a. O.
Ελωειμ (𐤀𐤋𐤍) Κρονιος, ebeidas.
Hol, Hal, Ἴλ (𐤀𐤋) *Deus, Serv. und Damascius ap. Photium.*
Ισοδ (𐤀𐤃𐤁 = 𐤀𐤃𐤁) *μονογενης,* *Philo Bybl. ap. Euseb. praep. evang.* 4, 16.
Κινναμωμον (𐤀𐤋𐤍𐤁𐤌) Zimmt, *Herodot* 3, 111. Die Endung ist gräcisirt, nach ἀμωμον, *amomum.*
Μαλχος (𐤀𐤋𐤍) βασιλευς. *Eunap (vita Pythagorae) ap. Photium.*
Mammōn (𐤀𐤋𐤍) *lucrum.* *Augustin. de sermone domini in monte* II, 22.
Μεμερουμος (𐤀𐤋𐤍) ὑψουρανιος. *Philo Bybl.*
***Messias** (𐤀𐤋𐤍) unctus. *August. contra Petil.* II, 104.
Μουβ (𐤀𐤋𐤍) θανατος, Πλουτων, *Philo Bybl. l. c.*
Νεσιβίς (𐤀𐤋𐤍) λιθοι συγκαμμενοι. *Steph. Byz.*
***Rufon** (𐤀𐤋𐤍) *medici.* *Plaut. Poen.* V, 2, 46.
Σαλωμ (𐤀𐤋𐤍), als Grufs, *Meleager Anthol. gr.* III, 25, 70.
***Salus** (𐤀𐤋𐤍) tres. *Augustin. ad epist. ad Rom.* 7, 3.
***Suffes, otis** (𐤀𐤋𐤍) consul, *Liv. Paul. ap. Festum, Inscr. Grut.*
Συδουκ (𐤀𐤋𐤍) δικαιος. *Philo Bybl. l. c.*
Σουσα (𐤀𐤋𐤍) λαιρια, *Etym. M.*
Ζωφασσαμην (𐤀𐤋𐤍) ουρανου καταπται. *Philo Bybl.*
Θωρ (𐤀𐤋𐤍, syr. 𐤀𐤋𐤍) βους. *Plut. Sylla.*

Fig. 4: Gesenius 1815: Full list of Phoenician-Punic glosses in Latin and Greek, inter alia referring to Plautus and Augustin

mehr Text, aber, da sie größtentheils Grabschriften sind, darunter sehr viele *Nomina propria*, wodurch sie unfruchtbarer werden, als sie ohne dieses seyn würden. Wie viel ist aber noch bey ihrer Entzifferung zu thun übrig? Folgendes ist eine kleine Sammlung sicher entzifferter *Appellativa* und *Nomina propria* von Inschriften und Münzen.

אגדר	Münzen (Ekhel S. 408) = גדר =	גדר	Andenken. <i>Inscr. Athen.</i>
Γαδερα, Gades.		גדר	Gemach. <i>Melit. III.</i>
אדון = אדון Herr.		חיי	Leben. בחיי in meinem
אדון = אדון unserm Herrn. <i>Inscr. Melit.</i>		חיי	Leben. Cit. II.
אח Bruder. ואחי und mein		חנבעל	Hannibal (<i>gratia Baalis</i> , cf. hebraicum חַנְבִּיאֵל). <i>Inscr. Melit. III.</i>
Bruder. Ebend.		מלקרת	<i>Melicertes</i> i. e. מלך קרת
אם Mutter, Mutterstadt. אם		מלקרת	<i>rex urbis. Inscr. Melit. I.</i>
בכנען Mutterstadt in Canaan.		מלכה	Im Griechischen steht dafür
אם צדנם Tyro, matri Sidoniorum. Ekhel S. 408.		מלכה	Ἡρακλῆς. Vgl. Bocharti <i>Geogr. s. p. 709.</i>
אנכי = אנכי ich. <i>Inscr. Cit. II.</i>		מצבה	Säule, s. Grabstein. Cit. II. XXIII. <i>Athen.</i>
אמר N. propr. griech. Ἐρασιων. <i>Inscr. Athen.</i>		מרהע	<i>Marathus</i> , Stadt in Syrien. <i>Num. ap. Ekhel p. 404.</i>
אשה Weib. <i>Inscr. Cit. II. XXX.</i>		משכב	Lager. Cit. II.
אשמו N. propr. Cit. V, vgl. Ἐσμουσος, Name des Aesculap bey den Phöniziern. <i>Damasc. ap. Phot. p. 1074, ed. Schott.</i>		נדר	Gelübde. <i>Inscr. Melit. I.</i>
בן Sohn. Cit. II. XXIII.		עבר אמר	<i>N. propr. Inscr. Cit. II. Melit. I.</i> In dem Griech. der
בעל Herr, Schutzgott.		מלקרת בעל צר	Letzteren steht dafür Διουσιος. אמר, welches auch in
מלקרת בעל צר <i>Melicertus, deus Tyri. Inscr. Melit.</i>		מלקרת בעל צר	den assyrischen Namen חסר
יברכם od. יברכה seegnen. כרך ibid.		מלקרת בעל צר	אדון, חלבה-פלאמר, שלמנאמר
אמר N. propr. <i>filius regis. Melit. III.</i>		מלקרת בעל צר	vorkommt, scheint ein Göttername, welchen man dem Διουσιος gleichachtete.
		עבר אמר	<i>N. propr. (Diener des</i>

Iermann de Phoenicum et Poenorum inscriptionibus. Berolini 1810. 8. Einige eigene Entzifferungsversuche des Vf. mögen für eine andere Gelegenheit aufgespart seyn.

Fig. 5: Gesenius 1815: Partial list of Phoenician words found in inscriptions and on coins, i.a. from the Melitensis prima (s.v. מלקרת בעל צר bottom left, and אמר עבר bottom right)

Oddly enough, Gesenius for example still failed to link עבדאסר of אסר in the *Melitensis prima* and the *Citiensis secunda* to Osiris, although Herodotus had hinted at by the equation of Osiris with Διούσιος (who appears in the Greek part of the *Melitensis*). And though U. F. Kopp as early as 1819 had correctly explained the name as “wörtlich *Coluit* oder *colit Osiridem*,” Gesenius in his 1820 review of Kopp’s *opus* kept insisting on a dissentient explanation, namely as אסר עבד, confusing אסר as a divine name with “*Esar-Haddon, Salman-esser, Tiglat-pil-esser*.”³⁰ Only much later on though in 1835, in a footnote referring to Åkerblad,³¹ Gesenius acknowledged the correct interpretation³² and discussed in his 1837 *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* the name עבדאסר in *extenso*³³ interpreting it as “(עבדאסר servus Osiridis) n. pr. viri Melit. 1, 2. Cit. 15, 2.”³⁴

Although he claims the inscriptions to be the purest and most reliable source available for the study of Phoenician, the corresponding glossary is still remarkably short, and the following justification almost reads like an excuse:

Eine reinere und sicherere Quelle liegt uns allerdings in den *Inschriften* auf Steinen und Münzen vor. Wir erhalten hier zugleich die richtige Orthographie, allein es treten auch neue Schwierigkeiten anderer Art ein. Diese liegen theils in einer noch immer nicht befriedigenden Kenntniss der oft sehr verschiedenen, auch wohl zuweilen unvollkommen gezeichneten Schriftzüge, theils in der Beschaffenheit der Denkmäler selbst.³⁵

Given the list of sources, the relationship of Hebrew and Phoenician results from the following three main points: 1) the majority of deciphered Phoenician words coincides perfectly with Hebrew even in the case of exclusively Hebrew words, especially if Aramaic employs a different word, 2) deviations or differences are rare, often provincial, and mostly affect only the vocalisation, as it is given in transcriptions of classical sources, and 3) inexplicable words are mostly also inexplicable not alone in Hebrew, but even in other (Semitic) dialects.³⁶

30 KOPP, *Bilder und Schriften*, 258–259; GESENIUS, *Vermischte Schriften*, 307.

31 ÅKERBLAD, *Lettre*, 11.

32 GESENIUS, *Die punisch-numidische Schrift*, 63.

33 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, I:2, 98f.

34 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, II:2, 354.

35 GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*, 226.

36 “[...] die meisten sicher entzifferten phönizischen Wörter coincidiren genau mit dem Althebräischen selbst in Wörtern und Formen, die dem Hebräischen ganz eigenthümlich sind, und namentlich im Aramäischen anders lauten. Z.B. ארון, אלהים, אשת, בן, עולם, die Pluralendung ם. [...] Die nicht kenntlichen Wörter sind es in der Regel in den übrigen

However, in terms of Phoenician epigraphy, all this still appears rather theoretical, and one cannot help suspecting that Gesenius had not yet exhaustively dealt with Phoenician inscriptions proper. Almost hidden in a footnote, a sentence is found which is actually a kick-off for his later Phoenician *opus magnum*. He announced:

Einige eigene Entzifferungsversuche des Vfs. mögen für eine andere Gelegenheit aufgespart seyn.³⁷

Anyway, as a matter of fact, Gesenius' high appreciation of Phoenician, despite its desolate state of research and preservation, finds its first definite expression in 1823 in the second edition of his *Hebräisches und chaldäisches Handwörterbuch*.³⁸ The foreword lists the sources of Hebrew lexicography under the title "*Von den Quellen der hebräischen Wortforschung nebst einigen Regeln und Beobachtungen über den Gebrauch derselben.*" These are:

1. "Der Sprachgebrauch des Alten Testamentes selbst" (*The usage of the Old Testament itself*),

2. The traditional knowledge of the Hebrew language, as it "sich bey den Juden erhalten hat, und theils in den alten Übersetzungen, theils in den jüdischen Commentarien und Wörterbüchern niedergelegt ist" (*as preserved by the Jewish tradition and as documented partly in the old translations, partly in commentaries and lexicons*), and, last but not least,

3. "Vergleichung der stammverwandten Sprachen, welche zwar alle in den uns vorliegenden Denkmälern jünger sind, als das A. T., aber zum Theil reicher, als das biblische Hebräisch, und entweder lebende durch einheimische Grammatiker lexicalisch bearbeitete Sprachen, oder wenigstens in mehreren Schriftstellern erhalten sind, so dass über die Bedeutungen der Wörter verhältnismässig seltener als im Hebräischen Zweifel obwalten können." (*Comparison of the related languages which, in their available documents, all are younger than the O.T., but partly richer than Biblical Hebrew, and which either are living languages with a lexicon by native grammarians, or, at any rate, are preserved by several authors with the effect that there is less doubt about the meaning of a word*).³⁹

Dialekten eben so wenig, als im Hebräischen." (GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*, 229–230).

37 GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*, 226.

38 GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (21823), vii–xlv; an enhanced, though modified and slightly moderated version of this introduction is found as a separate first chapter of 41 pages in GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (41834), iii–xlvii.

39 English translations in brackets are by R. G. L.

Needless to say, in the early 19th century the *Phoenician* language was by no means a more comprehensive lexical source than Classical Hebrew. Nonetheless, Gesenius graded it under the label “Canaanitisch” (Canaanite) closely together with Hebrew as its most contiguous language, unlike and differing from other Semitic languages such as Aramaic-Syrian, Arabic and Ethiopic. It also goes without saying that most of the Phoenician inscriptions known at that time are not very old and date to the last centuries BC. Nonetheless, as Gesenius points out, sometimes an enigmatic Hebrew word happens to occur in a Phoenician epigraphic context that might shed some light back on the Bible⁴⁰, an example of which will be given later.

And yet, Gesenius faced the general problem of method, which still seems to be an issue nowadays as much as it was 200 years ago. His comments first published in 1823, summarise the methodological problem quite well:

Sehr begreiflich bedürfen diese Dokumente, die in paläographischer Hinsicht so grosse Schwierigkeiten darbieten, ohne allen Vergleich mehr der Hülfe des hebräischen Sprachgebrauchs der Bibel, als dass sie geeignet wären, den biblischen Sprachgebrauch aufzuklären, und fast möchte es scheinen, als ob sie hier keinen Platz verdienten.⁴¹

At this point, it should not be forgotten that even one century later, in 1927, Mark Lidzbarski when dealing with an unknown expression in the Ahirom inscription, confessed with resignation:

[...] wo die Kenntnis des Hebräischen aufhört, hört für uns auch die Kenntnis des Phönizischen auf.⁴²

Gesenius phoenicum peritus II

Yet it seems as if Gesenius himself faltered to work on Phoenician texts proper or even to publish some just like his Leiden colleague and sometime competitor Hendrik Arent Hamaker (1789–1835) had already done.

40 “[...] ein in der Bibel dunkles Wort auf einer Inschrift in einem Zusammenhange vorkomme, welcher auf jene Stelle ein Licht zurückwerfe.” GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (21823), xxx, 31828, xxvi, 41834, xxiii.

41 “As a matter of course these documents, which from a palaeographic point of view raise enormous difficulties, require more assistance by the Hebrew idiom of the Bible, far from being able to enlighten Biblical usage, and it seems as if they do not merit any place here.” – GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (21823), xxx, 31828, xxvi, 41834, xxiii (English translation by R. G. L.).

42 LIDZBARSKI, *Zu den phönizischen Inschriften von Byblos*, 455.

On this topic and at this time, he restricted himself to occasional critical remarks in reviews.⁴³ Nevertheless, he had already begun to collect and to lithograph Phoenician inscriptions for his own use and, from not later than 1825 onward, shared them with the audience of his palaeographic lectures.⁴⁴ He also already supplied corrected copies of previously known bilingual inscriptions, e.g. to the *Corpus Inscriptionum Græcorum*, and commented on their Phoenician part.⁴⁵ By all accounts though, he was busy with preliminary studies for his later *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, a body of work which he again and again held off to improve his readings and interpretations, because oftentimes only inaccurate copies were obtainable.

It was presumably on such an occasion, in the course of looking for copies of Phoenician inscriptions, that he became acquainted with what involved into his first occupation with a formerly unknown, allegedly Phoenician inscription proper, and ultimately into his first *editio princeps*. While holding the office of the vice chancellor of the University of Halle, he dedicated a lecture to this field of study on the occasion of the academic Christmas celebration of the year 1824, entitled *De inscriptione Phoenico-Græca in Cyrenaica nuper reperta ad Carpocratianorum hearesin pertinente commentatio [...] cum tabula lapidi inscripta*.⁴⁶

This thirty-page treatise dealt with an assumed Greek-pseudo-Phoenician bilingual that reportedly had come to light some years before somewhere in the Cyrenaica and which Gesenius believed had belonged to the Carpocratian Gnostic sect. The text pretends to be an intricate stone inscription, written in strangely looking letters with triangularly shaped three-dot dividers, peculiar illustrations of snakes (or dragons) carrying a winged coach with torches, dotted triangular symbols, and an Ouroboros. Only a facsimile (fig. 6) of the inscription⁴⁷ was privately issued by the

43 GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1825); *idem*, *Alterthumskunde* (1826).

44 GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1825), 525; *idem*, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 443.

45 *CIG* I, 1828, 523f on no. 859, the *Atheniensis bilinguis secunda* (Gesenius, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, no. 6, 118–120 = *CIS* I, 177 = *KAI* 55), and 527f on no. 894, the *Atheniensis prima* (*Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, no. 5, 113–118 = *CIS* I, 116 = *KAI* 53).

46 LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch der Nordsemitischen Epigraphik*, 14 (N95) lists the title as: "Jesu Christi sacra natalitia pie celebranda academia Fridericianæ Halensis cum Vitebergensi consociatæ civibus indicit prorektor [...] Præmissa est Guil. Gesenii [...]" However, the printed version at my disposal does not mention the occasion.

47 Depicted as foldout facsimile in the Gesenius edition of 1825 (fig. 6), in HAMAKER, *Lettre à M. Raoul-Rochette*; and in KOPP, *Ulrici Friderici Kopp epistola critica*, 336. Quite obviously these three drawings, or lithos, are not identical in detail.

French archaeologist Desiré-Raoul Rochette (called Raoul Rochette, 1789–1854), who reported that the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* had received it early in 1824 from a certain French architect of Malta.⁴⁸ Raoul-Rochette sent copies to several scholars in Europe, namely to the classicists Georg Friedrich Creuzer (1771–1858), August Boeckh (1785–1867), Friedrich Christof Münter (1761–1830), and Ulrich Friedrich Kopp (1762–1834⁴⁹), and to the Leiden oriental scholar Hendrik Arent Hamaker (1789–1835) for comment, especially on its allegedly Phoenician part, which was to be published as an appendix to Raoul-Rochette’s projected study of the whole text (which, of course, never saw the light of day).⁵⁰

Gesenius had obtained access to a copy of this inscription maybe by strange or dubious circumstances. In September of the same year he requested a copy of this inscription from the papers of the late Friedrich August Wilhelm Spohn⁵¹, and unhesitatingly began to study it. His publication at the end of the year on occasion of the Academic Christmas celebration at Halle University bypassed both Hamaker’s and Raoul-Rochette’s own publication intents.

48 Shortly after it is believed that the inscription was excavated in May 1826 by a certain Maltese cleric named Joseph Felix Galea, who bestowed it upon the French-Maltese architect (or engineer) Grognet, who in turn made a lithographic copy which he dedicated to the Marquis Fortia d’Urban from Avignon (BOECKH, *Universitatis*, 362, and GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 462). All three persons were acquainted with each other already beforehand.

49 For Kopp, see the interesting remarks in GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 442, who attests him “Einseitigkeit und Sonderbarkeit,” but also the merit to have drawn attention to the palaeography (“auf das Graphische”), “ohne welche die Lesung alter Schriften ein loses Spiel der Willkür seyn musste,” and to have sought for reliable rules to distinguish similar letters – “aber freilich war er auch nur Schrift-, fast gar nicht Sprach-Kenner.” In a similar vein already GESENIUS, *Vermischte Schriften*, 305f, and later GESENIUS, *Paläographie*, 288.

50 See for details KOPP, *Ulrici Friderici Kopp epistola critica, passim*.

51 F. A. W. Spohn, Leipzig classicist (1792–1824), who died January 17th. Contrarily, HAMAKER, *Lettre à M. Raoul-Rochette* (foreword, unnumbered) suspected that Gesenius had received the copy from August Boeckh (1785–1867) of Berlin, whom he possibly got to know during his Halle years 1807–1810; this is denied by BOECKH in *Universitatis*, 4 n. 1. Gesenius himself, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 41, claimed St. Michael’s day (29. September) being the date when he received the copy from the Spohn papers. However, there are some inconsistencies considering the reported calendar dates: Raoul-Rochette reports that the *Académie* received a copy around February (“reçu ces jours-ci” – in a letter to Kopp, dated March 7th, 1824, see KOPP, *Ulrici Friderici Kopp epistola critica*, 336), while Hamaker relates that he received his copy from Raoul-Rochette in April 1824 (which is confirmed indirectly also by Kopp). Gesenius, according to his own account, obtained his copy from the papers of the late Spohn, who died already in January 1824. Thus, if all three claims were true, a copy must have found its way to Germany already earlier in 1823.

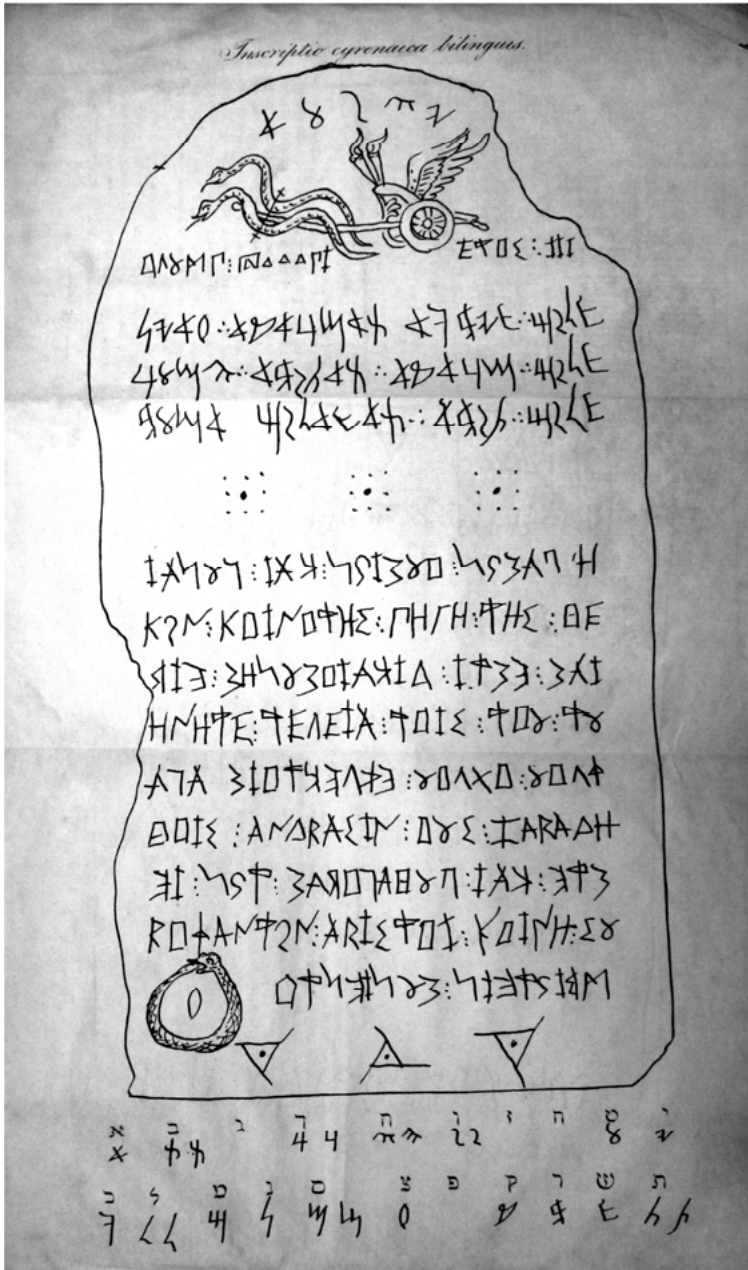


Fig. 6: The pseudo-Carpocratian fraud, foldout of Gesenius 1825

At least this was how Gesenius himself reports the story.⁵² However, reading his long-winded explanation of May 1826 in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung*, where he also repeated some of his main arguments against his opponent Hamaker, one cannot help but suspect that the whole story was more delicate and did not go without diverse personal conflicts.⁵³ Anyway, Gesenius' rush to publish and to comment on this inscription did no credit to him, and in the end the whole matter turned into a tale of ambition, conceitedness, and sham.

The academic classicists though immediately determined that because of the Greek language and lettering, the inscription could not be as old as it claimed to be. At first, Gesenius admittedly had no serious doubts about its old age and its fundamental authenticity, though he suspected it being considerably later than the archaic-looking Greek counterpart and its date pretends. However, unimpressed by the widespread enthusiasm for another 'Phoenician' inscription, both Creuzer and Kopp already early in 1824 suspected that it was a modern fabrication. While they uttered their suspicion in private letters only,⁵⁴ for obscure reasons Raoul-Rochette for the time being obstinately insisted on its authenticity.

52 GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 41: "Die Herausgabe aber verzögerte sich, und so traf es sich, daß Rec. [Gesenius], der sich dieses Monument zum Behuf einer längst angelegten vollständigen Sammlung der phöniciſchen Denkmäler um Michaelis aus den Papieren des verst. *Spohn* erbat, und mit dessen Studien es sich gerade von mehreren Stellen berührte, es zum Gegenstand einer ihm eben obliegenden akademischen Gelegenheitsschrift machte, und so den beiden erwähnten Gelehrten mit der Bekanntmachung und Erklärung zuvorkam. Er hat sich darüber mit Hn. *Raoul-Rochette*, so bald er von dessen Vorhaben erfuhr, sofort schriftlich verständigt, derselbe hat ihm [*sic!*] seiner Übereinstimmung mit allen Hauptsachen versichert, und versprochen, einige abweichende Bemerkungen im *Journal des Savans* darzulegen."

53 Almost immediately after Gesenius' publication, Hamaker responded in 1825 with a long open *Lettre à M. Raul-Rochette [...] sur une inscription en caractères phéniciens et grecs, récemment découverte à Cyrene*, claiming that his own hitherto unpublished thoughts had been written already in June 1824, thus prior to Gesenius. He offered his own, in some respect differing interpretation of the Semitic text that he falsely insisted to be Phoenician. In a six-page foreword Hamaker expressed his annoyance about Gesenius' publication anticipating his own interpretation and edition, and did not shy away from insinuations about how and by whom his rival obtained a copy of the inscription. Unfortunately, Hamaker's objection had no lasting merit. It comes not without irony that Hamaker did the philologically 'better' job in commenting on an alleged Semitic inscription that was none. – Friedrich Ulrich Kopp later published his earlier thoughts about the fraud as well: KOPP, *Ulrici Friderici Kopp epistola critica*, 334–355.

54 KOPP, *Ulrici Friderici Kopp epistola critica*, 338. 340. Compare also already OSANN, *Midas*, 73, who had seriously doubted the authenticity of the inscription, as it "auf eine in der That possierliche Weise die Eigenheiten der ältesten Griechischen Schrift nachzuäffen sucht."

Undoubtedly Gesenius' *De inscriptione Phoenico-Græca in Cyrenaica [...]*, a thirty-page Latin historical, philological, and palaeographical commentary on the inscription, was a masterpiece of philological craftsmanship. Just as his very first philological approach to the Phoenician language, namely his previously mentioned occupation with the Maltese language in 1810, this first step into Phoenician epigraphy proper was also a mere refutation, albeit of a more special kind. Gesenius demonstrated that the Semitic upper lines of the text, though written in predominantly old but vulgar Phoenician letters, were not Phoenician at all, but rather a special gnostic-Syrian Aramaic dialect of African heretics. And most remarkably, he already argued that the whole inscription was a forgery, albeit not necessarily a modern fabrication as was commonly accepted thereafter. Instead, he claimed the inscription was a *pia fraus* of a 5th or 6th century CE neoplatonic-gnostic *impostor* following the vulgar customs of certain Alexandrian Carpocratian Gnostics in propagating goods-and-wife sharing by the authority of Pythagoras and Zoroaster – who indeed all appear in its Greek part.

Seen from a modern epigrapher's point of view, the inscription was a state-of-the-art forgery of the early nineteenth century, done by someone who was clearly more acquainted with archaic Greek than he was with Semitic, whether Phoenician, Hebrew, or Aramaic. Backdated to the 86th Olympiad, i.e. to the year 434 BC, its 9-line Greek part is written in boustrophedon manner with peculiar archaizing letter-forms. The alleged 'Phoenician,' or rather 'pseudo-Semitic' part obviously uses the character-tables of Barthélemy, Kopp, and others, but invents one more fancy Greco-Phoenician bastard character to write the word YEHOVA (𐤃𐤅𐤁𐤅) on the very top of it all, and commingles an imaginary Semitic 'dialect' which, in terms of sound philology, must remain untranslatable.⁵⁵ Neither Gesenius

55 Yet it would be interesting to reconstruct the fabrication of the 'Semitic' lines to uncover more precisely the forger's thoughts and intent to defraud. According to БОЕСКН, *Univertatis*, the inscription belongs to a group of other Cyrenaean fakes intended to provide sources for the weak Malta-Atlantis-theory that Agricol Joseph François de Fortia d'Urban (1756–1843) put up in his monumental *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire ancienne du globe*, 1805–1809. However, this very fake does not so perfectly match this scenario as do the other allegedly Cyrenaean forgeries. Hence, a different background for its fabrication is also conceivable. The forgery can also be regarded in connection with one of the arcane, occult, or esoteric communities of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, which basically came from France (like the inscription's copy, too). The mentioning of Pythagoras and Zarathustra (ΖΑΡΑΔΗΣ) in its Greek part, as well as the symbolic framework, i. e. the symbols decorating the inscription, all point to this direction. The snake-drawn *biga* chariot and the pair of torches belong to the antique iconography of Demeter-Ceres, as depicted on Roman coins for instance. But a *winged* chariot more often belongs to the iconography of Triptolemos. However, neither Ceres nor Triptolemos

nor Hamaker could become at first glance aware of these inconsistencies with the yet limited knowledge of Semitic epigraphy in their time.

This is not the place to trace the full story of the sham. In the end, it was the famous classicist August Boeckh of Berlin, who early in 1832 (written January 8th, published April 30th) blew the whistle on the inscription and its impostor, who had most probably been the Marquis Agricola Joseph François de Fortia d'Urban from Avignon himself.⁵⁶

Maybe because Gesenius couldn't escape being belittled for having been the first to fall for the cheat due to his rush being the first to publish it, he seconded Boeckh only late, but elaborately, in the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung* of August 1835.⁵⁷ Two years later, in 1837, Gesenius focused on this inscription one more time in his *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* in the 'Fakes and Bastards' (*pseudophoenicia et spuria*) chapter, citing it as a prominent specimen of fraud.⁵⁸ To my knowledge, the inscription has never been mentioned anywhere in scholarly literature since – rather, it seems as if scholars have fallen into an embarrassed silence about what happened and who might have done it.

themselves are depicted here, rather there is an driverless but torch-ridden, snake-drawn and winged *biga*, which taken together is most probably a modern syncretism that combines various antique coin and vase motifs into what was popular with the 19th century reception of Hermetism and Eleusinian mysteries in Freemasonic, Rosicrucian, occult or other confraternities (PAULUS, *Review*, 162 directly suspects the Saint-Simoniists). The triangularly shaped three-dot dividers in the "Semitic" part, the Ouroboros, and the triangular symbols also point to a similar direction.

56 BOECKH, *Universitatis*, 3–11. August Boeckh regularly wrote the prooemium of the Berlin university calendar, which was a Latin study on some topic of classical philology. See also GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 462–468. – However, the Mannheim private scholar Ulrich Friedrich Kopp was eager to keep records proving he was the first to raise serious doubts in the authenticity of that inscription in general. Thus he published his early 1824 correspondence with Raoul-Rochette in a most prominent place, the *Theologische Studien und Kritiken*, where it appeared in the first issue of 1833: *Ulrici Friderici Kopp epistola critica, qua viro præclaro Raoul-Rochette, Parisiensi, respondetur de inscriptione bilingui Cyrenaica, cuius fides impugnatur tam artis palæographice ope, quam ob dialectos orientales monstrore mixtas, ac sententias denique ipsas ætati parum consentaneas.*

57 GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 462–468. A curious repercussion is reported by GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 190: "Der Besitzer dieser durch plumphen Betrug fabrizirten Denkmäler, Hr. Marquis Fortia d'Urban [...], hat jetzt, gewiss nicht ohne Nachricht von dem über seine Machwerke ausgebrochenen Wetter, an einen deutschen Gelehrten (welcher dieses dem Rec. hat mittheilen lassen) geschrieben, dass, wenn er dieses merkwürdige Denkmal noch selbst zu sehen und zu untersuchen wünsche, er damit eilen möge, da der Jahrtausende im Schooss der Erde vergraben gewesene (Atlantische) Stein durch den Einfluss der atmosphärischen Luft sich täglich mehr zersetze, und im Kurzen zerfallen seyn werde. Sapiienti sat!"

58 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 247–249.

* * *

In 1835 Gesenius edited a 120-page volume entitled *Paläographische Studien über phönizische und punische Schrift*, containing the German translation of the originally Spanish written study on *Schrift und Sprache der Phönizier und ihrer Colonien* by Franz Perez Bayer, and *Die punisch-numidische Schrift, und die damit geschriebenen grösstentheils unerklärten Inschriften und Münzlegenden*, which was his own work. Curiously enough, Gesenius himself ‘reviewed’ this book in the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* of 1836.⁵⁹ Bayer’s 59-page part, which had been translated by the Halle schoolteacher Hermann Hollmann, was mainly a discussion and commentary on the *Melitensis prima* and some coins. As for the famous *Melitensis prima*, Bayer provides an in-depth overview of its research history, which is still of interest to track the serpentine ways by which the first usable character table of Phoenician was compiled in the late 18th century. Not without a certain notion of condescension, Gesenius added six and a half additional pages of his own remarks to Bayer’s study.

Gesenius’ own contribution to the *Paläographische Studien* was 40 pages *ueber die punisch-numidische Schrift*, which became “the first overall study of the Punic and Neo-Punic texts, as they are now known.”⁶⁰ Following a certain notion of deteriorationism, he tried to distinguish two script types, which he called *scriptura urbana* for the more classical looking inscriptions “aus dem bessern Zeitalter,” and a later degenerated (“entarteter”) *scriptura Poenorum rustica* or *scriptura numidica*, alongside with the formation of a certain Numidic-Punic *lingua rustica* or patois,⁶¹ which was nothing else than the Neo-Punic script as it is known today. As Jongeling recently pointed out, Gesenius’ *Studien ueber die punisch-numidische Schrift* remained a specimen of the enormous difficulties still facing the study of Neo-Punic, which even Gesenius was unable to solve two years later in the *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*.⁶² Anyway, this publication was but a teaser for his very own *opus magnum* on Phoenico-Punic in general, which came out just two years later.

In those years Gesenius also repeatedly stated what he had claimed already in 1815 and adhered to throughout his whole life’s work on Phoenician: the close kinship of Phoenician and Hebrew. Whereas Hamaker

59 GESENIUS *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 162–168, from p. 164 onward devoted to his own work.

60 JONGELING, *Handbook*, 1.

61 GESENIUS, *Paläographische Studien*, 70f.

62 JONGELING, *Handbook*, 1–3.

thought Phoenician to be a somewhat mixed dialect of Hebrew, Chaldaean (Syriac) and Arabic elements, Gesenius emphasized:

das Phönizische, und nicht minder das Punische, sey im Wortbau, Wortvorrath und Wortbedeutung mit ganz geringen Ausnahmen Eine Sprache mit dem Hebräischen, und eine solche aus allen Formen zusammengewürfelte Sprache habe nie existiert; dazu müsse der Stil einer Inschrift einfach, leicht verständlich und fließend seyn, und man dürfe nicht glauben, sie richtig gelesen zu haben, bis sich ein solcher Sinn gefunden hat [...], und den entschiedenen Beweis geben die mit Sicherheit entzifferten größeren Inschriften (die maltesischen, atheniensischen, cyprischen), auf welchen auch nicht eine einzige unhebräische Form sich zeigt [...].⁶³

Consequentially, he now felt free not only to use, but also to reproduce two Phoenician inscriptions in his *Thesaurus Linguæ Hebrææ et Chaldææ*, the first volume of which was published in subsequent instalments from 1929 to 1835. Both inscriptions had been already published and discussed before by Hamaker and others.⁶⁴ With these two inscriptions, Gesenius presented the at that time sole two extra-biblical records of the Hebrew word **הַקִּיָּן**, here being part of the Name Baal-Hammon (fig. 7).⁶⁵ He renders it somewhat longwindedly in Latin as *simulacrorum vel statuarum genus, ab idolatrix cultum, quod copulatur cum אֱשֵׁרִים [...], aliisque idololatriæ instrumentis [...], et in altaribus Baalis stetisse dicitur [...]*, which is nearly the same as can be said today: **הַקִּיָּן** seems to signify something like *incense stand* or another small cultic installation. One was the stele *KAI 61* from Malta, which was discovered in 1820 and thereafter lost again. The other one was a dedication to the goddess Tinnit,⁶⁶ a type of inscription, which nowadays is known very well from Carthage and its vicinity. Simultaneously, he re-edited and discussed this same inscription in the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*, where he took the opportunity to continue his feud with Hamaker, who had published the inscription earlier but incor-

63 GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 445f.

64 HAMAKER, *Diatribe philologico-critica monumentorum aliquot punicorum*. For critics of Hamaker's edition see first and foremost the relentless but methodologically important and in terms of palaeography pathbreaking review by KOPP, *Review of Hamaker*, 433–445. Although Kopp *ibid.*, 436 correctly bewails the mix-up of **א** and **ל** (which was not unusual in those days), even he did not get the point that it was a goddess named Tinnit (on this, see further note 68).

65 GESENIUS; *Thesaurus philologicus*, 490 s. v. **הַקִּיָּן**, see also LEHMANN, *Who needs Phoenician*, 1–3.

66 The so-called *Carthaginensis tertia* = EUTING, *Sammlung der Carthagischen Inschriften*, no. 3 = *CIS I*, 240, discovered in 1817.

rectly, as Gesenius claimed.⁶⁷ Anyway, like Hamaker and others who still confused the letters ל and נ, even Gesenius read its first line as

לרבתן חלה [...] – “*Dominæ nostræ Tholath [...]*,”

and did not yet realize that the goddess Tinnit (תנת) was mentioned in the inscription.⁶⁸

However, still in his *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* he occasionally continued to confuse ל and נ as well as ו and פ, as becomes clear for example in his misreading of the *Carthaginensis quinta* (*Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, no. 50 = CIS I, 199). Though now in the first line he correctly read לרבת תנת, he still continued with ולבעלן, which should, in accordance with many other inscriptions, be read as פן בעלן.

67 GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 444–447.

68 The very first to recognize the goddess Tinnit (or Tanath, as he rendered it) was the Danish scholar Jacob Christian Lindberg (1797–1857) who contributed the commentary on several Punic Cippi to Christian Tuxen Falbe’s (1791–1849) *Recherches sur l’emplacement de Carthage*, 83–108. Arguing chiefly with Hamaker’s former readings of some Cippi, with almost clear palaeographic arguments, Lindberg vividly stood up for תנת as the divine name to be read. In particular, he wrote *ibid.*, 86: “THANATH, nom d’une divinité que les savants ont voulu lire חלה (Tholath), déesse sur le compte de laquelle M. Hamaker a parlé longuement, croyant qu’il l’avait rencontrée avec son époux Tholad dans plusieurs inscriptions puniques. La nôtre [sc. the *carthaginensis quinta* in Gesenius’ *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, no. 50 = CIS I, 199] porte positivement תנת (Tanath) que détermine aussi la première inscription athénienne publiée par le savant Akerblad [sc. CIS I, 116 = KAI 53]. Les inscriptions Humbert (de Leyde) [sc. CIS I, 240 etc.], sur lesquelles se fonde Hamaker, n’ont aucun mot qui puisse se prêter à être lu Tholad, et rien absolument qui autorise à lire Tholath.” In what follows, he argued, inter alia, that in the Greek bilingual [CIS I, 116] the Punic name עברתנת is rendered ΑΡΤΕΜΙΔΩΡΟΣ, which clearly points to תנת having been the Carthaginian name of the Cabirean goddess Astarte. – The Danish anti-rationalistic theological and oriental scholar Jacob Christian Lindberg (see KLÖDEN, *Lindberg*) apparently for a certain period of time was Gesenius’ most dreaded competitor in preparation of an encyclopaedic edition of Phoenician inscriptions in those days. Anyway, it seems as if Gesenius wanted to silence or to hush him. In a short 1835 review of Falbe’s book (GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 467f) he neither acknowledged nor even mentioned the important step forward made by Lindberg’s reading תנת. Nevertheless, he took the new reading of the goddess for granted on other occasions and *en passant* notes such without acknowledging Lindberg, GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 188. Only later in his *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* of 1837 he did correct the older reading into תנת, and mentioned Lindberg with meagre words only (GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 168. 176).

Another interesting Phoenician entry in Gesenius' *Thesaurus*, though only in his later posthumous 1853 third volume edited by his disciple Emil Rödiger, is a reference to an unidentified inscription,⁶⁹ which he claims was discovered in 1839, stored in the Paris library, and which reads quite similar to the *Carthaginensis quinta*. He simply cites it in a footnote s.v. -ֿ⁷⁰ with Hebrew square letters only to circumstantiate the confident claim that the Hebrew proclitic relative particle -ֿ was nothing but a shortened apheretic assimilation deriving from classical אֲשֶׁר.⁷¹ Interesting enough though, Gesenius had discarded this notion already during his lifetime, nor did he ever draw any link between -ֿ and Phoenician ʾš, but had rather vividly rejected any correlation between the two. Namely for *Carthaginensis tertia, quarta, quinta* and *Melitensis prima*, Gesenius persistently rejected any interpretation of the now familiar formula ʾš ndr (*which he vowed*) as a relative clause. Rather, still in 1837 in *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, he translated the formula ʾš ndr as *vir vovens*, rendering ʾš like Hebrew אִישׁ.⁷² According to Gesenius, the reason for an alleged singular אִישׁ, even in a possibly double-subject plural context such as *Melitensis prima*,

lag theils in der stehenden Formel dieser Monumente, die man nicht gern änderte, theils darin, dass der ältere Bruder sich als die Hauptperson bey diesem Weihgeschenk und als Verfasser der Inschrift hervorhebt,⁷³

and still in *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* he had discarded the possibility suggested by Tychsen and others to interpret ʾš as a relative. The neat but nonetheless false argument *re Melitensis* may be cited here:

(אש נדר) i. e. אִישׁ נִדְרַי *vir vovens* sc. est. In his verbis explicandis a vero aberrarunt interpretes, quos novi, omnes. [...] Alii enim 1) in litteris אש vel ש pronomen relativum latere existimarunt, ut Tychsenius, qui verba ita dispescit בעל צבא בעל צבא דרשנא domino exercitus est id quod voverunt; Fabricynus, qui ita legit: בעל צבא דרשנא deo Tyri, quod votum (posuerimus), et nuper Wihlius, qui Quatremerii vestigia legens (Journal Asiatique 1828 no. 1) ita iungit: דרשנא עבדנאשנא hoc quod voverunt servi eius. Sed neque א ad vocabulum צר trahi potest, quod ubique צר

69 Even EUTING, *Sammlung der Carthagischen Inschriften*, pl. 6 no. 13 has only Gesenius' transcription.

70 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, III, 1345.

71 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, III, 1345: "[...] nil fere dubitandum est quin ex pleniore אֲשֶׁר orta sit, א per aphæresin abiecto [...], et ר modo proximæ litteræ inserto modo prorsus abiecto [...]." See already GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (²1823), 730; *idem*, *Lexicon Manuale*, 972; *idem*, *Handwörterbuch* (¹1834), 639.

72 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 168. 174. 175. 177.

73 GESENIUS, *Paläographische Studien*, 63 in his annotations to Bayer, *ibid.*

scribitur, nunquam צרא; neque אש potest relativum esse pro אשר . Quis enim credat, Resch consona dura et aspera abiecta א mollissimam litteram adeoque vocali carentem servatam esse? Rectius igitur alii, ut ipse Bayerus, Koppius, Lindbergius 2) אש pro אש scriptum esse agnoverunt [...].⁷⁴

Quandoque bonus dormitat Gesenius. In any case, posthumously he somehow became convinced by the unedited inscription, which bears a female subject, that ʕ must mean something different. Thus only in his posthumous, 1853 third volume of the *Thesaurus* (edited by his disciple Emil Rödiger) did he opt for ʕ ndr' as “*id quod vovit.*”⁷⁵

Gesenius phoenicum peritus III

One can readily see how Phoenician gained a growing interest in the realm of Gesenius' scholarship. Also, it seems that, facing its philologically and epigraphically dissatisfying and frustrating state of affairs, Gesenius got down to business in the same exhaustive, in-depth manner as he did in several other areas of research. With the year 1837, he came to publish the gist of his lifework concerning Phoenician.

He only needed a few more years of research, of correspondence and letters of patronage,⁷⁶ of collecting squeezes and casts, and finally, in au-

74 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 97.

75 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, III, 1345b.

76 In the acknowledgements at the end of the *præfatio* of GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, xxiv–xxv, the author mentions not only an abundance of colleagues to whom he felt indebted, as for instance August Boeckh, Eduard Gerhard, and E. H. Tölken of Berlin, Fr. Ritschl of Breslau, C. O. Müller of Göttingen, Georg Friedrich Grotefend of Hannover, Gustav Seyffarth and E. F. Ferdinand Beer of Leipzig, August Bähr of Heidelberg and more scholars (which often were also German legates) from England (Friedrich August Rosen, Thomas Yates), France (Raoul-Rochette, E. G. Schultz), Italy (Christian Karl Josias von Bunsen), Denmark (Hagen Hohlenberg), and the Netherlands (Conrad Leemans), but also assistance and patronage by the *Royal Asiatic Society* of London, whose secretary wrote a circular to all British consuls in North Africa asking them to forward any Punic material found in their jurisdiction to Gesenius (cited verbatim in GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, xxiv n. 37). – It was, for instance, by the medium of the London Sanskrit scholar Friedrich August Rosen that Gesenius received last minute copies of four Carthaginian and Numidian inscriptions which had been sent to London early in 1837 by the British consul general in Tunis, Sir Thomas Reade: GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 449 (*Appendix altera*, which contains discussion of the *Carthaginensis undecima to tertia decima*, 449–452, and *Numidia octava*, 452–455). For Gesenius' numerous personal relations that benefited him in his pursuit of exact copies see EIBFELDT, *Von den Anfängen der Phönizischen Epigraphik*, esp. 8–14, and *infra* note 99.

tumn 1835,⁷⁷ he travelled to London and to Leyden for autopsy and in order to copy inscriptions himself,

um nicht länger dem peinlichen Gefühle, seine Zeit und Kräfte an Vermuthungen über unvollkommene Zeichnungen zu verschwenden, preis gegeben zu seyn, und um ein für allemal dem oft unnützen Hin- und Herreden gleich wenig vom Thatbestand unterrichteter Personen über diese oder jene Lesart, soviel an mir sey, ein Ende zu machen.

The astonishing result was, as Gesenius noted,

dass allerdings äusserst wenige der bekannten Abschriften vollkommen fehlerlos und genau, viele, namentlich die mit gerühmter Sorgfalt von Humbert gefertigten und andere von Hamaker herausgegebene, in sehr entscheidenden Punkten ungenau seyen, theils zu falschen Erklärungen verleiteten, theils die Erklärung unmöglich machten, und dass sehr häufig die nach den bisherigen Abschriften unmögliche oder nothwendig unrichtig und unvollkommen ausfallende Erklärung bei genauerer Ansicht und Prüfung des Originals [...] dem in Lesung dieser Denkmale Geübten sofort möglich werde und sich als evident darstelle. [...] Als Grund so zahlreicher Unrichtigkeiten stellte sich namentlich der Umstand heraus, dass die meisten Copien von Personen gefertigt sind, die zwar fertige Zeichner, aber keine Kenner dieser Schrift waren, die daher die feinem Unterschiede ähnlicher Buchstaben [...] übersahen [...].⁷⁸

All these efforts and his methodologically innovative initiative eventually culminated in two important works of 1837 – his *Ersch-Gruber* article on “Paläographie,” which became a remarkable public landmark on the history of the alphabet in general, and his *opus magnum*, the *Scripturæ Linguaeque Phoeniciæ Monumenta Quotquot Supersunt*, which was to become a historical milestone of Phoenician epigraphy.

What is the *Phoeniciæ Monumenta*?

As Mark Lidzbarski reported,⁷⁹ already in 1812 the Berlin schoolmaster Johann Joachim Bellermann (1754–1842) envisioned the formation of a *Thesaurus Phoenicio-Punicus* by a learned Academy – which, to be sure, could not happen before the establishment of the *Corpus inscriptionum semiticarum* by the Paris *Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres* under the auspices of Charles Clermont-Ganneau, starting in 1881. It was none-

77 Miller 1927 reports the year 1836, but 1835 is correct, cf. GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde*, 161.

78 GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 161f.

79 LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch*, 12, sub N76, 1812. Most probably, the bibliographical data of the publication, which is not at my disposal, are: BELLERMANN, *Bemerkungen*.

theless the opus of the individual scholar Wilhelm Gesenius, only 25 years after Bellermann's suggestion, that was the first modern all-embracing, comprehensive and encyclopaedic monument of everything that could be said about Phoenician in those days.

To all appearances, it was originally intended to be a more modest elaboration, as is suggested by several different announcements. Its intricate history, which can be traced back at least to 1823, bears witness to the dramatically increasing knowledge of Phoenician epigraphy and philology during these years, which Gesenius was most anxious to keep abreast of: In his 1815 *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache und Schrift*, for instance, he listed only one-and-a-half pages of epigraphically attested Phoenician words (see above, and pl. 4), but only thirteen years later he noted that this number had nearly tripled.⁸⁰ In the 1823 edition of his *Handwörterbuch*, he merely announced an up-to-date and almost ready-for-press article:

Ein Aufsatz, welcher eine Revision der wichtigsten phönizischen Monumente in paläographischer und philologischer Hinsicht, nebst einigen eigenen Entzifferungen und einem daraus gezogenen kritischen Alphabeten- und Wörterverzeichnis, enthalten, auch einige noch unbekannte Denkmäler mittheilen wird, liegt grösstentheils zum Abdruck fertig.⁸¹

Yet by the 1828 and 1835 editions, the introductions announced a forthcoming monograph:

Eine Schrift, welche [...see above...] mittheilen wird, ist von mir schon vor mehreren Jahren ausgearbeitet, und soll, sobald mir die Muse [*sic*] zu nochmaliger Durchforschung des Gegenstandes wird, im Drucke erscheinen.⁸²

80 GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (1828), xxvi = 1834, xxiii.

81 Introduction ("Von den Quellen der hebräischen Wortforschung") to the 2nd edition of GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (1823), xxx n. 60.

82 Introduction ("Von den Quellen der heräischen Wortforschung") to the 3rd / 4th edition of GESENIUS, *Handwörterbuch* (1828), xxvi and 1834, xxiii respectively. The same follows clearly from an *en passant* remark in GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1825), 525. However, ten years later, in 1835, he referred back to 1825, and then he wrote: "An der sofortigen Ausführung hinderte ihn zunächst die Entdeckung, dass die von mehreren wichtigen Inschriften, z. B. den maltesischen, atheniensischen, in Umlauf befindlichen und auch auf jenen Tafeln dargestellten Abschriften nicht vollkommen treu seyen, und gegen neue indessen (zum Theil durch die Güte des Herrn Prof. *Hohlenberg* in Kopenhagen) erhaltene verwechselt werden mussten, wozu der Umstand kam, daß mehrere bis dahin unedirten

The reported preliminary title was *Corpus inscriptionum nummorumque phoeniciorum*⁸³ or *Marmora Phoenicia et Punica, quotquot supersunt, edidit, et præmissæ commentatione de litteris et linguæ Phoenicum et Poenicum explicuit G. Gesenius*,⁸⁴ and soon became considerably more than was promised, namely the huge, 500+ page Latin *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta quotquot supersunt edita et inedita ad autographorum optimorumque exemplorum fidem edidit additisque de scriptura et lingua phoenicum commentariis illustravit Guil. Gesenius*. As is reported by Yates, the book came out at the latest in early April 1837.

Basically, its core consists of the comprehensive edition, or re-edition of 70 Phoenician⁸⁵ and some more non-Phoenician inscriptions, ungrudgingly acknowledging the merits of his predecessors, namely Swinton and Barthélemy, but *en passant* also including the *editio princeps* of nine inscriptions that had not been known before. In addition, he also discussed and rejected some already published *pseudophoenicia et spuria*, i. e. fakes and bastards, which became again important for the abovementioned *Cyrenaica* fraud. However, just to note the advances made in the nineteenth century, it is noteworthy that Gesenius' precursor Hamaker, in his *Miscellanea Phoenicia* of 1828, had only 13 inscriptions at his disposal. On the other hand only 30 years later the amount of Phoenician inscribed monuments had grown so enormously that Schröder in his compendium *Die phönizische Sprache. Entwurf einer Grammatik nebst Sprach- und Schrift-*

[sic] auch in Herrn Prof. Hamaker's Werke [...] erschienen [...], und erst jetzt, nachdem es dem Verf. gelungen, sehr Vieles richtiger als früher zu erklären, und namentlich den Schlüssel zu den in der letzten Zeit aufgefundenen karthagischen Monumenten zu finden [i.e. FALBE, *Recherches*], ist der frühere Faden wieder aufgenommen worden [...]" (GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 443–444) On this occasion, he also for the first time specified the full programme of his *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, which he declared to appear in the same year but finally was postponed another two years.

83 GESENIUS, *Schriften über phönizische Paläographie*, 443.

84 GESENIUS, *Paläographische Studien*, vi.

85 This is, in fact, the number of his Phoenician entries. Due to the fact that some 'double' inscriptions like the *Melitensis prima* (no. 1) have only one entry number, and that some illegible inscriptions like the *Citiensis nona* (no. 16, which is not listed any longer even in GUZZO AMADASI / KARAGEORGHIS, *Fouilles de Kition*) are an entry of their own, the exact number of Phoenician inscriptions of GESENIUS' *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* is not fixed in the literature. BENARY, *Review of Gesenius*, 539 for example reports a "Zusammenstellung von 77 ächt phönizischen Inschriften" – which is obviously too many.

proben of 1869 could state that Gesenius knew only a quarter of the material Schröder had at hand himself.⁸⁶

Nonetheless, Gesenius' *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* became a compendium of everything that could be said about Phoenician language and Phoenician inscriptions known up to that time, i.e. 1837. And as Mark Lidzbarski termed it sixty years later, it eventually became a landmark in the history of Phoenician epigraphy ("Markstein in der Geschichte der phönizischen Epigraphik") and (here Lidzbarski citing Horace) a *Monumentum ære perennius* for his author.⁸⁷

Instead of investigating the enormous amount of details given in this work, which are all too often either outdated today, or self-evident, it seems to be of more interest to have a closer look at some conspicuous framework details of the *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*. There are three *partes* in, depending on the bookbinder's work, five volumes, of altogether, including the Roman numerals, 510 printed pages plus 46 partially foldout *tabulæ*, i.e. copper plate reproductions. All of this is already reported in the sophisticated full title:

Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta quotquot supersunt edita et inedita ad autographorum optimorumque exemplorum fidem edidit additisque de scriptura et lingua phoenicum commentariis illustravit

GUIL. GESENIUS, Lipsiæ 1837

Pars prima

Duos priores de litteris et inscriptionibus phoeniciis libros continens [p. i–xxviii, 1–260], therein:

Liber primus. Palæographiam Phoeniciam continens [p. 1–89]

Liber secundus. Inscriptiones Phoenicias illustrans [p. 90–260]

Pars secunda

Duos posteriores de numis et de lingua phoenicum libros continens [p. 261–482], therein:

Liber tertius. De numis Phoeniciis [p. 261–328]

Liber quartus. Linguam Phoeniciam illustrans [p. 329–482]

Pars tertia

Quadraginta sex tabulas lapidi inscriptas continens [Tab. 1–48 (sic)]⁸⁸

86 SCHRÖDER, *Die phönizische Sprache*, 45. As a matter of fact, Schröders *Entwurf einer Grammatik* already 1869 replaced GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*. Schröder could already use 331 inscriptions and, what is of particular importance, a certain number of inscriptions from Phoenician homeland proper, i.e. from Lebanon; *vide infra* note 25.

87 LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch*, 96; Horaz, *Carminum* III.

88 In some copies of the *Pars tertia* in public libraries, a docket is found which reports that there has been a mistake in the numeration of the tables, which are indeed 46 only, counting from 1–44 (45 and 46 missing) and 47–48. Note that pl. 47 and 48 are the re-

Each of the three main parts bears an appropriate (classic) citation on its front page. Each of them hints at the role which Phoenician plays within the scope of Gesenius' scholarship and his being primarily an Old Testament scholar and theologian. The *pars prima*, dealing with letters and inscriptions (*De litteris et inscriptionibus*), is devoted to a word of the Roman poet Lucan:

Phoenices primi, famæ si creditur, ausi mansuram rudibus vocem signare figuris.

Most conspicuous, however, is the context of the whole citation, which most probably was easily understood by an educated scholar of the early 19th century. The Latin text continues:

*nondum flumineas Memphis contexere biblos nouerat, et saxis tantum uolucresque feræque sculptaque seruabant magicas animalia linguas.*⁸⁹

It was merely half a century before Gesenius published his *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* that Johann Gottfried Herder had declared that the Egyptians could only have learned the "letters of the mummies" ("die Buchstabenschrift der Mumien") from the Phoenicians, whereas the hieroglyphic script was nothing more than a 'first rough childish trials of human intellect.'⁹⁰ Just a few years before the appearance of the *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, Jean-François Champollion (1790–1832) presented his first decipherment of Egyptian hieroglyphs. Never-

production plates that correspond to the later (early 1837-written) appendices GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 445–461.

- 89 Marcus Annaeus Lucanus (39–65), *Pharsalia III*, 220.221: "The Phoenicians first, if belief is given to report, ventured to represent in rude characters the voice destined to endure" and: "Not yet had Memphis learned to unite the rushes of the stream; and only animals engraved upon stones, both birds and wild beasts, kept in existence the magic tongues" (transl. by H. T. Riley).
- 90 "Überhaupt läßt sich aus Hieroglyphen so wenig auf eine tiefe Weisheit der Ägypter schließen, daß sie vielmehr gerade das Gegenteil davon beweisen. Hieroglyphen sind der erste rohe Kindesversuch des menschlichen Verstandes, der Zeichen sucht, um seine Gedanken zu erklären; die rohesten Wilden in Amerika hatten Hieroglyphen, soviel als sie bedurften; denn konnten nicht jene Mexikaner sogar die ihnen unerhörteste Sache, die Ankunft der Spanier, in Hieroglyphen melden? Daß aber die Ägypter so lange bei dieser unvollkommenen Schrift blieben und sie Jahrhunderte hin mit ungeheurer Mühe auf Felsen und Wände malten: welche Armut von Ideen, welch einen Stillstand des Verstandes zeigt dieses! Wie enge mußte der Kreis von Kenntnissen einer Nation und ihres weitläufigen gelehrten Ordens sein, der sich Jahrtausende durch an diesen Vögeln und Strichen begnügte! Denn ihr zweiter Hermes, der die Buchstaben erfand, kam sehr spät; auch war er kein Ägypter. Die Buchstabenschrift der Mumien ist nichts als die fremde phöniciische Schriftart, vermischt mit hieroglyphischen Zeichen, die man also auch aller Wahrscheinlichkeit nach von handelnden Phöniciern lernte." (HERDER [1744–1803], *Ideen zur Philosophie*, vol. 2, 84–85 [orig. 1784–1791].)

theless, his achievement was not yet fully accepted nor generally perceived as successful.⁹¹ Hence, it seems as if Gesenius, who had acquainted himself with hieroglyphic writing immediately after their decipherment and had already used hieroglyphic citations in his *Thesaurus*,⁹² in 1837 still could assume that dealing with Phoenician script would mean to deal with the primordial origins of human writing, at least alphabetic, as such. Hence decorating his first volume of the *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* with the said quote by Lucanus was therefore programmatic. And indeed this notion is also expressed more directly in Gesenius' *Monumenta, Liber primus Cap. V: De variis litteraturæ generibus ex Phoenicia ortis*,⁹³ which deals with ancient Greek, Italian, Hebrew, Samaritan, Palmyrene, Sassanid, Aethiopic, and other then known, or assumed to be known alphabets, and especially in § 45: *Litteraturarum ex phoenicia ortarum stemma*, the family tree of the then known alphabet scripts⁹⁴ – but falsely also including Old Persian.⁹⁵

Pars prima has a *præfatio* of 21 pages⁹⁶ where Gesenius, *inter alia*, asserts four methodological conditions for understanding Phoenician-Punic inscriptions. First, there is need for reliable transcriptions or, preferably, illustrations of the inscriptions. Secondly, it is necessary to have a sound palaeography, i.e. the exact knowledge of the possible shapes of every sign and the phonemic values thereof. Thirdly, an overall and in-depth knowledge of the language itself and its place among Semitic languages in general is required. Finally, one has to account for the particular character, scope, and proposition of an inscription including the place where and material on which it was written. Especially in this last point, Gesenius anticipates what later became commonplace under the label of “Gattungsforschung,” but nevertheless is still often disdained with regard to Semitic

91 In 1824 Champollion's *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens Égyptiens*, enlarged version 1828: *Précis du système hiéroglyphique des anciens Égyptiens ou Recherches sur les élémens premiers de cette écriture sacrée, sur leurs diverses combinaisons, et sur les rapports de ce système avec les autres méthodes graphiques égyptiennes* appeared, and only in 1836, just one year before Gesenius' *opus magnum* about Phoenician, Champollion's *Grammaire égyptienne ou principes généraux de l'écriture sacrée égyptienne appliquée a la représentation de la langue parlée* was published, and finally, in 1841 his *Dictionnaire égyptien en écriture hiéroglyphique* appeared.

92 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, 812 s.v. מַרְי, 858 s.v. נְהַר, 885 s.v. נְבַה, 1094 s.v. פּוּטִי פֶרַע, 1128 s.v. פֶּרַס, 1519 s.v. תְּרִיקָה, 1399 s.v. שִׁישֶׁק, and passim.

93 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, 62–84.

94 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, 64.

95 See *infra* note 140 on inscription no. 77.

96 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, v–xxv.

epigraphy.⁹⁷ These are the prerequisites for a proper interpretation of any inscription, which has to be controlled by correct reading, philologically fitting to what is known as Phoenician-Punic grammar, and plausibility with regard to the character of the document.⁹⁸

Gesenius himself had already proven his skill in using the last three of these controlling devices in his first Phoenician epigraphic study, *De inscriptione Phoenico-Græca [...] Carpoctatianorum* of 1825, in order to unmask it as a fake, albeit antique. Accordingly, in *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* he discussed on pages 15–59 *De litteris Phoeniciis et Numidicis* every single letter of the Phoenician alphabet and, in comparison, other alphabets, in order to finally establish a well-defined palaeography and script charts, which are given as copper-plates in *Pars tertia*.

The second book of the *Pars prima*, containing 170 pages, then presents a discussion and – if possible – a translation (into Latin, naturally) of all hitherto known Phoenician inscriptions, including the “fakes and bastards” (*pseudophoenicia et spuria*). The first and most prominent authentic inscription was the *Melitensis prima*, the first inscription ever to be published and already mentioned above. Otto Eißfeldt, who had discovered a letter by Gesenius related to this matter, has described in detail the meticulousness, which the author devoted to a proper reading and to obtain a clear copy of this inscription; we must assume that Gesenius did so with almost every inscription he discussed in his *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*.⁹⁹ By simply comparing Gesenius’ facsimile plate (fig. 8) of the *Melitensis prima* with the earlier publications of 1753 and 1764 (figs. 1 and 2) – though impressive, hardly paleographically accurate – the progress becomes evident which his methodology brought into the discipline.

97 Compare also LEHMANN, *Who needs Phoenician*, 18 n. 84.

98 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus*, xix.

99 EISFELDT, *The beginnings of Phoenician epigraphy*, *idem*, *Von den Anfängen der Phönizischen Epigraphik*. Also, see the numerous citations of private letters to Gesenius in GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, e.g. Schultz p. 94 (*re Melitensis*), Hohlenberg p. 202 (*re Numidica secunda*), Grotefend p. 75, and more (see note 76).

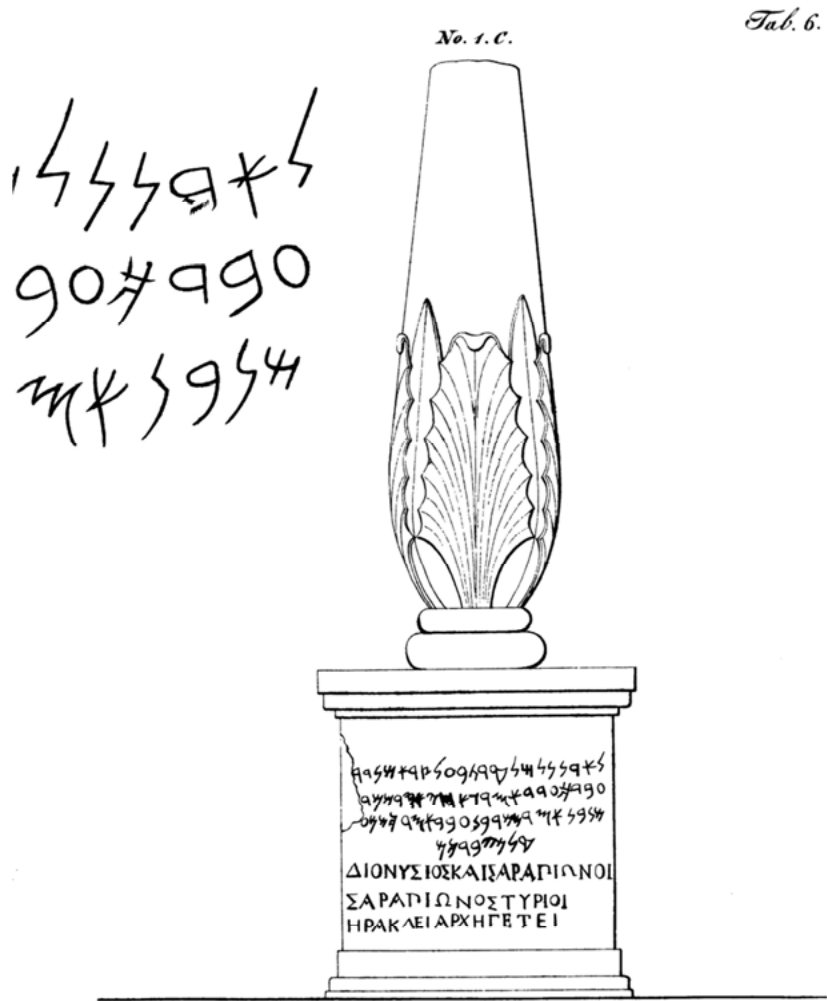


Fig. 8: Gesenius' drawing of the Melitensis prima in *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* IV, pl. 6 (right-hand part of foldout)

The second main part, *Pars secunda*, is adorned with a slightly altered quotation taken from St. Augustine, to which Gesenius had already referred in his *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache*:¹⁰⁰

*Christum Hebræi dicunt Messiam, quod verbum linguæ Punicæ consonum est, sicut alia permulta et pæne omnia.*¹⁰¹

Gesenius was by no means suggesting here that Phoenician along with Hebrew should be seen as a kind of *lingua sacra*. Had he wished to do so, the prominent *tria-salus*-pun in Augustin's *Ep. ad Romanos exp. inchoata* 13 would have made a more fitting opening line. However, considering the harsh assault by Hengstenberg in the *Kirchenzeitung* some years earlier in 1830, Gesenius' choice resembles a kind of proud apologia for devoting an elaborate study to the Phoenician-Punic language, something abhorred by both Hebrew-Israelites and by conservative clergymen, but yet was a theologically accepted language even to St. Augustine: Theology follows Philology!

He resumes the Augustine dictum thereafter in the *Liber quartus*, which obviously is the core of the *Pars secunda*. It embraces the Phoenician language as a whole – *Linguam Phoeniciam Illustrans*. Its first chapter is devoted to the character and history of the Phoenician language (*Linguæ indoles et historia*), especially the 6 pages that underline the character of Phoenician vis-à-vis Hebrew (*Linguæ Phoeniciæ indoles et cum hebræa necessitudo*).¹⁰² Gesenius commences this paragraph with a collation of Church Fathers' sayings relating to the Phoenician-Punic language in comparison with Hebrew, all of which are – needless to say – by Augustine and Jerome, and continues with the problem of the relationship of Phoenician proper and Punic, and the methodological considerations originating from these problems.

As a result, in the *Liber quartus* he wrote more than 150 pages about the grammar and lexicon of a language of which, in the early 19th century,

100 GESENIUS, *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache und Schrift*, 16 n. 16.

101 The full, non-adapted citation is: *Nam et ipse Christus a chrismate appellatur, id est, ab unctione. Hunc Hebræi dicunt Messiam, quod verbum punicæ linguæ consonum est, sicut alia hebræa permulta et pæne omnia* – “For indeed Christ Himself derives His name from chrism, that is, from anointing. Him the Hebrews call the Messiah, which word is closely akin to the Phoenician language, as is the case with very many other Hebrew words, if not with almost all” (AUGUSTIN, *Writings*; transl. Schaff) Gesenius refers to the passage as to “Augustinus, *Opp. T. IX col 198*,” which is *c. litt. Petiliani II*, 104, 239. Compare also *Tract. xv. 27 in Joannem*: “Messiah was anointed. The Greek for ‘anointed’ is ‘Christ,’ the Hebrew Messiah; whence also in Phoenician we have ‘Messe’ for ‘anoint.’ For these languages, the Hebrew, Phoenician and Syrian, are closely cognate, as well as geographically bordering on each other.”

102 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 331–335.

only little was known. For comparison: The *Grammar of the Phoenician Language* by Zellig Harris, published in 1936 and including a glossary counts 150 pages *octavo*, the recent 1999 Grammar by Friedrich / Röllig / Amadasi Guzzo has 260 pages *quarto* which, considering the typesetting technique, is not really more than Gesenius wrote nearly 200 years earlier. Thus, *what* did Gesenius write at that time? There were hardly enough known sources available in Gesenius' lifetime to write 150 pages on Phoenician grammar. The size of the *Liber Quartus* is explained by the fact that Gesenius also deliberated on the differences between Phoenician and Punic as well as the philological consequences deriving from these differences, and offered an analysis of Plautus' *Poenulus*:

[...] *nihil sane credibilius est, quam fuisse aliquam sermonis differentiam in regionibus a patria tam longe dissitis.*¹⁰³

A very important observation, in my opinion, is reflected in the wording *sermonis differentiam in regionibus*. Based on this presupposition, in studied deductions he tried to re-establish the *Poenulus* as plain Phoenician. And what else Gesenius should have done? It is not the place here to demonstrate this in extenso. I will only mention that few years later no other than Heinrich Ewald (1803–1875) in the *Zeitschrift für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (which he himself had founded together with Christian Lassen in 1837) outpoured his well-known sarcasm over what Gesenius had done:

Das zu Leipzig im Jahre 1837 erschienen dreibändige Werk des Hrn. Gesenius hat zwar das Verdienst die bisher bekannten Phönikischen Reste, zum Theil nach genauern Darstellungen, über sichtlich zusammen zu stellen, [...] allein die meisten der darin gegebenen Erklärungen der Inschriften leiden an grossen Willkührlichkeiten und enthalten oft den reinsten Unsinn, das Punische aber im Plautus ist nicht gründlicher und vorsichtiger verstanden als es schon vor 200 Jahren Buchart versuchte.¹⁰⁴

Without doubt, first and foremost this is just another example of the rivalry between Ewald and Gesenius, or to say more precisely: it is another bout of Ewald's jealous attitude toward Gesenius, whom he feared as an alleged rival applicant at least for the Göttingen chair of the late Eichhorn,¹⁰⁵ and which dates back to the time when Ewald's grammar came out in 1827. While seemingly throughout his lifetime Gesenius nobly refrained from attacking Ewald in all explicitness,¹⁰⁶ it seems as if the latter

103 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 337.

104 EWALD, *Ueber das Phönikische*, 400–418 [“Geschrieben im Anfange August's 1841”].

105 MILLER, *The Influence of Gesenius*, 20f.; SMEND, *Wilhelm Gesenius*, 67f.

106 WEX, *Herr Professor Ewald*, 13f.

felt all the more disdained, and thus intensified his invectives.¹⁰⁷ Accordingly it is not surprising that he did not change his attitude in this case as well.

Ewald's critical attack, which was written in August 1841, appeared in print in 1842, the year of Gesenius' death. He announced it as fragment of a major opus ("Bruchstück eines grössern Werks").¹⁰⁸ Gesenius however wrote a detailed and still sober-minded defence. It was his last publication at all before his untimely death on October 23rd 1842, and appeared as a fragment only posthumously in December 1842 in the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*, accompanied by an acrimonious editorial to unmask Ewald's inapprehensible animosity.¹⁰⁹ The Schwerin classicist and schoolmaster Friedrich Carl Wex (1801–1865), Gesenius' friend and disciple, immediately continued the feud in November 1842 by writing his famous lampoon *Herr Professor Ewald in Tübingen als Punier gewürdigt* (Schwerin 1843).¹¹⁰

It is true that Gesenius was not so ground-breaking in matters of Plautus' Punic *Poenulus* passages, as some would have expected him to be regarding his expertise in palaeography, grammar, and semantics. However, neither Ewald nor anyone else in the early 19th century was really

107 The interim culmination of Ewald's invectives was a "Nachschrift" from 12th June 1842 to the foreword of his Hebrew beginner's textbook, where he wrote: "Da D. Gesenius in Halle noch immer nicht aufhört mein Wirken auf diesem Gebiete heimlich zu verläumdern, obwohl ohne alle Ursache von meiner Seite: so hat er es sich selbst zuzuschreiben, wenn ich jetzt erkläre 1) dass seine Grammatik noch immer völlig unwissenschaftlich und unbrauchbar, oberflächlich ungenügend und irreführend ist, während was darin etwa Wahres zu lesen, grösstentheils erst aus meinen Schriften entlehnt ward; und — 2) dass ich, sollte er dies kurze offene Wort nicht verstehen, weiter und offener mit ihm reden werde." (EWALD, *Hebräische Sprachlehre*, vi). This passage, among others, is also cited after Gesenius' death in the editorial Nachschrift of the *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* 3, no. 222, December 1842, col. 560, and in WEX, *Herr Professor Ewald*, 11 to illustrate Ewald's harsh tone in comparison to Gesenius'.

108 There is no major cohesive description of Phoenician-Punic by Heinrich Ewald, but there are continuations of this first paper in *Ueber das Punische im Plautus* (1845) and *Ueber eine neue Erklärung des Punischen im Plautus* (1846), and also his later *Abhandlung über die Phönikischen Ansichten von der Welterschöpfung und den geschichtlichen Werth Sanchuniathon's* (1851), and *Entzifferung der neupunischen Inschriften* (1852).

109 *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* 3, no. 220–221, Dezember 1842, col. 545–551. 545–551 [sic!], and the editorial "Nachschrift" in no. 222, col. 558–560. A further specimen of Ewald's animosity toward Gesenius is found for instance in his introduction "*Ueber den gegenwärtigen Zustand des alttestamentlichen Wissenschaft*" (EWALD, *Beiträge*, xiv, xvi, xviii, and esp. p. xxi–xxiii), and even after Gesenius' death without any clemency, in his *Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, 1843, p. xii–xv.

110 Later M. A. Levy wrote another pamphlet with similar title "*Herr Professor Ewald in Göttingen nochmals als Punier gewürdigt*" (1857).

ready to meet the challenges of the Punic *Poenulus*, let alone to solve the whole riddle.¹¹¹ The last noteworthy studies of the Punic *Poenulus* had been made by Johann Joachim Bellermann (1754–1842) at the beginning of the century, and even these, as Movers summarized in 1845, did not eminently exceed the work of his forerunners. Gesenius, too, in his *Geschichte der hebräischen Sprache* of 1815, did not step off the beaten track, rather had referred in most instances to Bellermann's and other older interpretations.¹¹² Even in *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, he was mostly dependent on these older positions, hence did not appear very innovative. However, in the very last years of his life, he had obviously devoted himself increasingly to the study of the *Poenulus*. This may have been triggered by Eduard Lindemann's *De Punicis Plautinis* from 1837 (which he could not use for the *Monumenta*), and by a 24-page open letter in Latin on the same topic by his fierce but amicable disciple F.C. Wex from Schwerin, who had dedicated it to him on the occasion of the Mecklenburg Grand Duke Paul Frederick's birthday celebration.¹¹³ By a new collation of manuscripts and editions Wex provided a new sound and critical textual basis for the alleged Punic parts of the *Poenulus*. For this reason perhaps, Gesenius' own critical collation never became available at bookstores.¹¹⁴

Both *opuscula* Gesenius reviewed immediately in the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung* in 1839. While he argued curtly only on three columns with Lindemann, whom he concedes only meagre scholarly benefit, he thankfully and amicably dealt in extenso with Wex' work. However, his word contra Lindemann reveals more of his method:

Was aber die Erklärung des Einzelnen betrifft, so gesteht Rec. offen, indem, was dem Vf. eigen ist, nur wenig gefunden zu haben, was er, wenn es ihm früher bekannt geworden wäre, sich angeeignet haben würde, und zwar vorzüg-

111 A substantial step forward in knowledge and method was first done by SCHRÖDER, *Die phönizische Sprache*. For a concise description of the actual state of the art *re Poenulus*, see KERR, *Latino-Punic Epigraphy*, 5.

112 MOVERS, *Phönizische Texte erklärt*, 10.

113 WEX, *De Punicæ linguæ*. In the following year, Wex delivered an enlarged issue of the same study that bears the title WEX, *De Punicis Plautinis* [44 pages].

114 This rare 13-page printed collation, which is found in some libraries, bears the title *Punica Plautina ad fidem codicum manuscriptorum quotquot extant edita*, but mentions neither author nor year. The attribution to Gesenius is clear by remarks of several authors who witness its existence in his literary estate when it was put up for auction: "in Gesenius' Bücher-Versteigerung war eine nicht in den Buchhandel gekommene Schrift 'Punica Plautina, ad fidem cdd. Mss. Quotquot extant edita' zu vielen Exemplaren ausgeboten [...]. Sie enthält aber nur eine ansich recht verdienstliche Uebersicht der bisherigen Vergleichungen." (EWALD, *Ueber das Punische*, 228). Moreover, it seems as if Gesenius himself had handed his material over to Wex (GESENIUS, *Orientalische Literatur*, 114).

lich aus dem Grunde, weil es diesen Erklärungen an der erforderlichen Rücksicht auf den Charakter und die Analogie des Hebräischen (und Phönizischen) Sprachgebrauchs fehlt. Wir würden sagen: weil sie dem Geist der hebräischen Sprache nicht hinlänglich angemessen sind, wenn dieser Ausdruck nicht neuerlich öfter zur Beschönigung willkürlicher philologischer Machtsprüche gemissbraucht worden wäre.¹¹⁵ Alle diejenigen Verse des Plautus nämlich, über deren Erklärung man sicher zu seyn glauben darf, als V.1.4.9.10, ebenso wie alle epigraphischen Monumete, über deren Erklärung wir sicher sind, enthalten einen fließenden, sich vom biblischen Sprachgebrauche und nur nach gewissen Analogien, namentlich in der Richtung zum hebräischen und aramaisierenden Style entfernenden Sprachtext: und so lange man einen solchen nicht erreicht hat, so lange man Härten, Anomalien und Conjecturen häufen muß, darf man nicht glauben, das Rechte gefunden zu haben.¹¹⁶

The grammar part is by no means the strongest part of *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, which is not Gesenius' fault, but due to the sparse and problematic source material. Hence, while Gesenius wanted to illustrate Hebrew lexemes and *Sprachgebrauch* with Phoenician (see above), he was forced at the same time to explain Phoenician with the help of Hebrew *Sprachgebrauch*. In order to escape awkward circular reasoning, he had to increase the Phoenician source material by means of a risky and perhaps all too optimistic recourse to the Punic *Poenulus* episodes. In this respect, Ewald's critique is not entirely unfounded. However, from a methodological point of view Gesenius already here carefully demonstrates under what presuppositions a sound access to the *Restsprache* (residual language)¹¹⁷ of Plautus' Punic was possible: *regionibus a patria tam longe dissentis* (see above). Hence, his recourse to the *Poenulus* "*regionibus a patria tam longe dissentis*" was neither helpless arbitrariness nor conservative stubbornness, but a methodological attempt to get a grasp of a language that almost wasn't there anymore.¹¹⁸ In contrast, Ewald fell victim to a *petitio principii*, when he insisted on his basic assumption of an original and axiomatic difference between Hebrew and Phoenician, which he thought could be proven with material still to be found.¹¹⁹

115 This last sentence clearly seems to be intended for Ewald.

116 GESENIUS, *Orientalische Literatur*, 111f.

117 UNTERMANN, *Zu den Begriffen*; LEHMANN, *Who needs Phoenician*, 6f.

118 It may be not without interest to see how more than 150 years later an access to the (spoken) Phoenician-Punic language is sought anew from the *Poenulus* and few other Latino-Punic sources, see KRAHMALKOV, *Grammar*, and *idem*, *Dictionary*.

119 For Ewald's claim, see for instance the circular reasoning in EWALD, *Geschichte*, 434ff ("Die Anfänge des Volkes"), esp. 436–437. Again, to buoy Gesenius' method in comparison to Ewald's, a passage from his last published piece, the rejoinder to Ewald, may be cited here: "Längst sind von dem Rec. [=Gesenius] gewisse Abweichungen beobachtet

The third part of Gesenius' seminal work, *Pars tertia*, which contains the 46 copper plates with letter charts and facsimile drawings, bears a shiver from Isa 23:1 on its titel page:

Ululate naves maris quia vastata est (Tyrus).

In his commentary on Isaiah, under the header "Weissagung der Zerstörung von Tyrus," Gesenius had rendered the original verse as follows:¹²⁰

Ausspruch über Tyrus.	מְשֹׂא צֹר
Heulet, ihr Tarsisschiffe,	הִילְלוּ אֲנִיּוֹת תַּרְשִׁישׁ
denn es ist zerstört,	כִּי־שָׁדָד
kein Haus ist mehr, in das man gehe.	מִבַּיִת מְבוּא
Aus der Chittäer Lande ward es ihnen kund.	מֵאֶרֶץ כְּתִים נִגְלָה לָמוֹ:

Gesenius had written his own translation and commentary on the book of Isaiah, his sole exegetical work, already in 1820 / ²1829. Nevertheless, he cited the Isaiah verse as motto for the *Pars tertia* of *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* in the Latin Vulgate version. Was it only in Latin because the mottos of *Pars prima* and *Pars secunda* were also in Latin? This is not entirely plausible at first glance. Or should Gesenius have had a notion about the Latin verb *ululo* / *ululare*, connecting it etymologically with a Phoenician-Punic isogloss of Hebrew ילל, which is also the first verb of the Hebrew version? Though this is mentioned neither in his commentary on Isaiah nor in his *Thesaurus* or his *Handwörterbuch*, the similarity in sound of *ululo* (*ululate*) to ילל (הִילְלוּ) is conspicuous and surely would not have escaped anyone's notice. Generally, Latin *ululo* and Hebrew ילל are claimed to be onomatopoeic verbs, as already noted in the *Thesaurus*, and there seems not to be any hint in Gesenius' work that he

worden, die sich gleichmäßig in den Inschriften wie im Plautus finden, als א für den Artikel; ath als Femininalendung im st. Absol.; der gebrauch des ץ für ô; si, ys (ש, ש) für das Relativum und die Genitivbezeichnung; bod = עבד, Knecht [...]. Aber solche Erscheinungen müssen nun auch sicher beobachtet und wirklich gleichartig seyn, und sich gleichmäßig in den Sprachresten zeigen. Es macht einen fast komischen Eindruck, dass der Verf. [= Ewald] für die Bestätigung seiner Inventa auf neue Entdeckungen hoffend verweist, während die gemachten schon hinlänglich beweisen, daß der Dialekt der Inschriften von solchen Abnormitäten frei sey. Die Differenz zwischen dem Verf. [sc. Ewald] und mir besteht also darin, daß ich, in das Verständniß punischer Texte immer tiefer eindringend und sie sämtlich zusammenfassend, die Ueberzeugung von der stetigen und gleichartigen Farbe des Dialects, welche wenig vom Hebräischen abweicht, gewonnen und durch Gründe festzustellen gesucht habe, während der Verf. [Ewald], nur einen kleinen Theil der erhaltenen Monumente flüchtig berührend und die Bedingung jedes Gelingens solcher Untersuchungen, nämlich eine erschöpfende Vergleichung alles Vorhandenen fast ganz versäumend, Regeln und Gesetze aufgestellt hat, die nur auf einzelnen Beispielen beruhen und daher aller weiteren Begründung entbehren." (GESENIUS, *Orientalische Literatur*, 549).

120 GESENIUS, *Der Prophet Jesaia*, 52.

etymologically connected *ululo* to לל. But at least in the *Thesaurus*, he translates Hebrew לל with *ululo* and adds to the mention of Isa 23:1 two further references to Latin classics.¹²¹

Anyway, the motto of the *pars tertia* is appropriate as it points to the poor state of what is left over of Phoenician literature, and is thus a fitting confirmation and continuation of the motto at the beginning of *Pars prima*:

Pauca sunt litteratæ antiquitatis monumenta [...] Phoeniciæ Punicæque linguæ reliquiæ.

Gesenius' illustrative plates are the best one could get in his time, and still they can be counted as excellent and painstakingly detailed copies. Although the plates, from a technical point of view, no longer match the state of the art, they reflect the utmost accuracy so long as Gesenius made the copies himself from the originals, from squeezes or from cast replicas.

I will now present a list of what were the Phoenician *antiquitatis monumenta*, which Gesenius worked with until the last minute before *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* left the press:

Gesenius' <i>Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta</i>				CIS I	Other ¹²²
no.	p.	tab	Latin name		
1	92–102	6	<i>Melitensis prima</i> ¹²³	122 ^{bis}	<i>KAI</i> 47
2	102–107	7	<i>altera</i>	124	
3	107–109	8	<i>tertia</i>	123 ^{bis}	
4	109–111	8	<i>quarta</i>	123 ^{bis}	
5	113–118	9	<i>Atheniensis prima</i>	116	<i>KAI</i> 53
6	118–120	10	<i>secunda</i>	117	<i>KAI</i> 55
7	120–122	10	<i>tertia</i>	120	
8	125	11	<i>Citiensis prima</i> ¹²⁴	11	<i>KAI</i> 33 / <i>FK</i> A1

121 GESENIUS, *Thesaurus* (1840), 596a. In Phoenician, however, לל is seldom found, if ever. To the best of my knowledge, there is only the passive Participle *hmyll* "the bewailed" in the Neopunic text *KAI* 161:2, the so-called Micipsa-inscription from Algeria (Cherchel N2: JONGELING, *Handbook*, 195), which was first published in 1888 and which Gesenius could not yet have known.

122 *KAI* = DONNER / RÖLLIG, *Inschriften*, 21968 / 52002; *FK* = GUZZO AMADASI / KARAGEORGHIS, *Fouilles de Kition*; *SCI* = EUTING, *Sammlung*; *HNPI* = JONGELING, *Handbook*. – The aim of these references is only to trace the inscriptions in more recent publications.

123 In his *Ersch-Gruber* article on Palaeography given as "Probe der echtphönikischen Schrift" (GESENIUS, *Paläographie*, 291 and plate 2 no. 1).

124 Of course the inscriptions GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, no. 8 and 10–40 from Citium are by no means newly collated. These are but the same crude copies as still later in *CIS* 11.57–85 and also in GUZZO AMADASI / KARAGEORGHIS, *Fouilles de Kition*, which stem from POCOCCO, *Description*, Vol. II, 1, XXXIII, and are also published

Gesenius' <i>Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta</i>			CIS I	Other	
9	126–133	11	<i>Citiensis secunda seu oxoniensis</i>	46	<i>KAI 35 / FK B1</i>
10	133–134	12	<i>Citiensis tertia</i>	57	<i>FK B2</i>
11	134–135	12	<i>quarta</i>	64	<i>FK B9</i>
12	135–137	12	<i>quinta</i>	73	<i>FK B18</i>
13	137	12	<i>sexta</i>	82	<i>FK 27</i>
14	137–138	12	<i>septima</i>	74	<i>FK B19</i>
15	138–139	12	<i>octava</i>	60	<i>FK B5</i>
16			<i>nona</i> ¹²⁵		
17	139–141	12	<i>decima</i>	81	<i>FK B26</i>
18	141–142	12	<i>undecima</i>	79	<i>FK B 24</i>
19	142	12	<i>duodecima</i>	68	<i>FK B13</i>
20	142–143	12	<i>tertia decima</i>	80	<i>FK B25</i>
21	143	12	<i>quarta decima</i>	78	<i>FK B23</i>
22	143–144	12	<i>quinta decima</i>	67	<i>FK B12</i>
23	144–145	12	<i>sexta decima</i>	76	<i>FK B21</i>
24	145	12	<i>septima decima</i>	70	<i>FK B15</i>
25	145–146	12	<i>duodevicesima</i>	66	<i>FK B11</i>
26	146	12	<i>undevicesima</i> ¹²⁶		
27	146–147	12	<i>vicesima</i>	59	<i>FK B4</i>
28	147	12	<i>vicesima prima</i>	71	<i>FK B16</i>
29	147–148	12	<i>vicesima secunda</i>	62	<i>FK B7</i>
30	148–149	12	<i>vicesima tertia</i>	58	<i>FK B3</i>
31	149–150	12	<i>quarta et vicesima</i>	65	<i>FK B10</i>
32	150		<i>vicesima quinta</i>	77	<i>FK B22</i>
33	150	12	<i>vicesima sexta</i>	69	<i>FK B14</i>
34	150	12	<i>vicesima septima</i>	83	<i>FK B28</i>
35	151	12	<i>vicesima octava</i>	85	
36	151	12	<i>undetricesima</i>	61	<i>FK B6</i>
37	151	12	<i>tricesima</i>	72	<i>FK B17</i>
38	152	12	<i>tricesima prima</i>	75	<i>FK B20</i>
39	152	12	<i>tricesima secunda</i>	84	<i>FK B29</i>
40	152–153	12	<i>tricesima tertia</i>	63	<i>FK B7</i>
40 ^{bis}	153	11	<i>Gemma Citiensis</i>	–	<i>FK D1</i>
41	154–157		<i>Inscriptio Sardica</i>	144	<i>KAI 46 (Nora)</i> ¹²⁷
42	158–160	13	<i>Erycina</i>	135	
43	160f	14	<i>Vas Panormitanum</i>	133	
44	161	14	<i>Marsalensis</i>	137	
45	161	14	<i>Gemma Sardica</i>		
46	162–175	14	<i>Carthaginensis prima</i>		<i>SCI 1 no. 1</i>

in SWINTON, *Inscriptiones*. These inscriptions were later destroyed and only the copies made by Pococke are preserved.

125 "De Citiensi nona legenda est omnes despararunt et ego despero."

126 "De Citiensi undevicesima idem deicendum est atque de nona."

127 On the Nora stone, Gesenius commented already in detail in a review article of the *Allgemeine Literaturzeitung*, GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 174–176. 177–178.

Gesenius' <i>Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta</i>				CISI	Other
47	162–175	15	<i>secunda</i>		SCI 2 no. 2
48	162–175	16	<i>tertia</i>	240	SCI 3 no. 3
49	162–175	17	<i>quarta</i>		SCI 4 no. 4
50	176f	17	<i>quinta</i>	199	SCI 4 no. 5
51	177f	19	<i>sexta</i> ¹²⁸		SCI 4 no. 6
52	178	19	<i>septima</i>		SCI 5 no. 7
53	178–180	18	<i>octava</i> ¹²⁹		SCI 5 no. 8
54	180–182	18	<i>nona</i>		SCI 5 no. 9
55	182	19	<i>decima</i> ¹³⁰		
56	183–196, 19, 20, 456–461 ¹³¹	48	<i>Thuggensis bilinguis punico-libyca</i> (Dougga)		KAI 100; Chabot ¹³²

128 On pl. 19 erroneously labeled no. 53.

129 LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch*, 432, no. 16 and pl. XIV,2 – also rendering Gesenius' facsimile. Another (poorer) facsimile by LINDBERG, *Om en nyelig blandt Ruinere*, plate after 96; SCHRÖDER, *Die phönizische Sprache*, 259 and pl. XI,2 (facsimile after Gesenius). It is most interesting that despite Lindberg's obvious attention to detail, it is Gesenius' drawing, which in accordance with the later drawing by Julius Euting gave a realistic impression of the scribal *ductus* of the inscription.

130 Not identified. Gesenius describes this inscription as "turpiter habitam et vix legendam" (*Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 182) and did not venture a translation or even a transliteration. Only a copy of the long and, as it seems, Libyco-Punic bilingual inscription existed among the papers of (Adriaan?) Beverland (1650–1716) in the Bodleian Library, Oxford; the inscription itself is reported to have been found in the amphitheatre of Carthage. It is not known when and by whom the inscription was found and where the original stone currently is.

131 The famous mausoleum (Pfeilergrab) of Dougga (Thugga) with its Libyco-Punic bilingual inscription on the east face was reported already in 1631, but was later forgotten again. The whole monument is described anew by TEMPLE, *Excursions*, vol. ii, 68ff; apparently Gesenius studied the inscription immediately in 1836 in a 18-page paper on occasion of an academic Pentecostal celebration (LIDZBARSKI, *Handbuch*, 17 N130, which was not accessible to me). In the same year he qualified it in a cumulative review as "die ihrem Umfang nach bedeutendste *punische* Inschrift, die wir überhaupt besitzen, einzig in ihrer Art zugleich dadurch, dass sie bilinguis ist und zwar ausser dem Punischen in einer Schriftart verfasst ist, wovon es keine andere Probe gibt" – GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 181. This Libyan counterpart eventually became the base for the decipherment of the Libyan script at all. On GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, pl. 19. 20 he provided the earlier drawings by Camillus Borgia and the more recent one by Temple, which materially differ from each other, together with another drawing which shows his own conjectural restitution of some letters. On these, he commented *ibid.*, 183–196. But together with some Carthaginian inscriptions mentioned earlier (see above note 76), again at the last minute Gesenius had received improved copies made by a certain German named Honegger (M'CHAREK, *Maghrāwa*, 734f) of the entourage of the British consul general of Tunis, Thomas Reade (it was him who unfortunately later, in 1842, tore down the upper part of the monument to get into possession of the inscription). He reproduced these new drawings, which again differ from the former, in GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* iii, on an additional pl. 48 (see above note 88) and commented on them anew in the *Appendix tertia* of *Scripturæ lin-*

Gesenius' <i>Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta</i>			CIS I	Other
57	196–201	21	<i>Numidica prima</i>	HNPI Maktar N39
58	202–204	22	<i>secunda</i> ¹³³	HNPI Tunisia OU N1
59	204–206	23	<i>tertia</i> ¹³⁴	HNPI Tunisia OU N2
60	206–210	23	<i>quarta</i>	HNPI Maktar N40
61	210–212	24	<i>quinta</i> ¹³⁵	HNPI Tunisia OU N3
62	445–449	25	<i>sexta</i> ¹³⁶	HNPI Sidi Khalifat N1
63	445–449	26	<i>septima</i> ¹³⁷	HNPI Bedja N1
64	213–217	27	<i>Tripolitana</i> <i>prima bilinguis</i> <i>altera (secunda)</i>	HNPI Labdah N1
65	217–219	27		HNPI Labdah N2
66	219–220	27	<i>Gerbitana</i>	HNPI Drombi N1
67	221–223	28	<i>Gemmæ et sigilla in variis incertisque regionibus reperta</i>	II-81
68	224	31		II-79
69	224	31		II-79
70	224–25	31		??

Additional inscriptions: non-Phoenician:

71	226–232	28. 29	<i>Monumentum Carpentoractense</i>	II-141	KAI 269
72	232–233	29		II-143	
73	233–236	30	<i>Papyrus Turinensis</i>		
74	236–245	313	<i>Papyrus Blacassiani</i> ¹³⁸		AP 71, TAD C1.2
75		233			

guæque phoeniciæ monumenta II.2, 456–461, together with some tentative notes to decipher and understand the Libyan part; see already also GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 182–184. However, because Gesenius still did not recognize the Punic *Teth*, which he quite regularly interpretes as *ʿAyin*, and also often confounds *Šin* and *Mem*, he did not really succeed in a satisfactory rendering of the *Tuggensis*.

132 CHABOT, *Punica*, 260–267; CHABOT, *Recueil des Inscriptions*, 2–3 (no. 1).

133 First published by FALBE, *Recherches*. Also already discussed and published by GESENIUS, *Paläographische Studien*, 76ff and pl. vi. In his *Ersch-Gruber* article on palaeography this inscription is given as “Probe des punisch-numidischen Schriftcharakters” (GESENIUS, *Paläographie*, 291 and plate 2 no. 2).

134 First published by HAMAKER, *Miscellanea Phoenicia*. Also already discussed and published by GESENIUS, *Paläographische Studien*, 77.

135 First Publication. Still read absolutely falsely by Gesenius, see JONGELING, *Handbook*, 184.

136 First Publication. Still read absolutely falsely by Gesenius, see JONGELING, *Handbook*, 160.

137 First Publication. Still read absolutely falsely by Gesenius, see JONGELING, *Handbook*, 64f.

138 Aramaic. First published in a book by LANCI, *La Sacra Scrittura*, which, as Gesenius reports, existed only in few copies because of Roman papal censorship, see GESENIUS, *Alterthumskunde* (1836), 169f.

Additional inscriptions: *pseudophoenicia et spuria*:

Gesenius' <i>Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta</i>		CIS I	Other
76	246		
77	247	32	<i>Persia scripturam</i> ¹³⁹ II-54
78–79	247–260		<i>Cyrenaica et Atlantica</i>
80	260	19	<i>Attica Fourmontii</i>

Additional inscriptions: most recently received copies:¹⁴⁰

81	449–451	47	<i>Carthaginensis undecima</i>	<i>SCI</i> 6 no. 10
82	451–452	47	<i>duodecima</i>	<i>SCI</i> 6 no. 11
83	452	47	<i>tertia decima</i>	<i>SCI</i> 6 no. 12
84	452–455	47	<i>Numidica octava</i> ¹⁴¹	<i>HNPI</i> Khallik N1

Notwithstanding the many still incorrect renderings of mainly Punic and Neo-Punic inscriptions (see above note for the *Tuggensis*) – which, to be sure, were the bulk of Phoenico-Punic inscriptions known at that time – Gesenius had found the correct interpretations and readings more often than his predecessors, although, as we have seen in certain instances, he failed every so often to acknowledge the merits of his coeval competitors. But nevertheless, and notwithstanding the later increase of Phoenician epigraphic data only later, Gesenius' *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta* became, as Mark Lidzbarski termed it sixty years later, a landmark in the history of Phoenician epigraphic scholarship and remain a *monumentum ære perennius* for the author.

* * *

In the same year, 1837, shortly after the *Monumenta*, Gesenius published his long palaeography article in the *Ersch-Gruber* Encyclopedia.¹⁴² The

139 Allegedly old Persian-Sassanid bilinguals. In fact, Babylonian, and not relevant for the study of Phoenician. See also GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 247ff.

140 "Inscriptiones Readianæ nuperrime advectæ" – inscriptions received by the medium of Friedrich August Rosen from London and which were shortly before sent to London by the British consul general in Tunis, Sir Thomas Reade, see note 76.

141 First Publication. See also M'CHAREK, *Maghrāwa*, 735.

142 GESENIUS, *Paläographie*, 287–316 + Tafel 1–3.

main content was that of *Monumenta pars prima, liber primus*,¹⁴³ there hidden within his exuberant Latin eruditeness, now emphasized for a broader academic public – the overall historical prerogative of the Phoenician in alphabet history:

Wir beschränken uns [...] auf die Beschaffenheit und Geschichte der Buchstabenschrift, wie sie von den Phönikiern aus mit mannichfaltigen Modificationen, aber im Grunde als dieselbe sich über ganz Europa und den größten Theil von Asien erstreckt hat, so daß wir nicht allein die Bilder- und Zeichenschrift der Ägypter und Chinesen, sondern auch diejenigen Schriftarten, deren Semitische Abkunft nicht mehr zur Überzeugung nachgewiesen werden kann, für jetzt übergehen. Die Geschichte und Beschaffenheit der alten Buchstabenschrift werden wir aber so behandeln, daß wir A) die Erfindung und Beschaffenheit derselben bei den Phönikiern selbst betrachten, B) die verschiedenen daraus hervorgegangenen Schriftarten historisch und beschreibend durchgehen und eine Genealogie derselben versuchen.¹⁴⁴

And just as the *Melitensis prima* inscription played a prominent part as the first-ever published Phoenician inscription (see above), and remained the number-one-inscription in the *Monumenta* (fig. 8), it now became the specimen of authentic Phoenician script par excellence (“Probe der echtphönikischen Schrift”) as opposed to the Punic-Numidic script character (“Probe des punisch-numidischen Schriftcharakters”), which Gesenius exemplified with the *Numidica secunda*.¹⁴⁵

The *Melitensis prima* inscription of Marsa Scirocco (Marsaxlokk) had its lasting prominence as the palaeographic benchmark for the assumed, or rather deduced “classical” Phoenician (“echtphönikische”) script. However, the first “echtphönikische” inscription from the Phoenician homeland was unearthed only later, in 1855. Wilhelm Gesenius, had he prior to his death in 1842 been able to see the Eshmunazor sarcophagus inscription from Sidon (*KAI* 14), would have rejoiced in the similarity of its letters with those of the *Melitensis prima*.

143 GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, I:1, 1–89.

144 GESENIUS, *Paläographie*, 287. The genealogical tree of the alphabet scripts given there on p. 295, almost identical with that in GESENIUS, *Scripturæ linguæque phoeniciæ monumenta*, 64, but now also with two additional illustrative stem trees for individual letters (𐤀 and 𐤁) on pp. 310 and 311.

145 GESENIUS, *Paläographie*, 291 and plate 2 no. 1. 2.

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