Recenzje / Reviews

Hélène Le Meaux and Françoise Briquel Chatonnet, *Le sarcophage d'Eshmunazor* (Collection SOLO 72), Éditions El-Viso, Paris 2019, 56 pp.

The anthropoid sarcophagus of Eshmunazor II, son of Tabnit I, kings of Sidon, was discovered in 1855 in the necropolis Magharat Ablūn, south-east of Saida (Sidon), and it is now in the Marengo crypt of the Louvre Museum. The booklet under review offers photographs and a study of the sarcophagus with its perfectly preserved Phoenician inscription. Its copy is presented according to the *Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum* I, pl. III; it is followed by a transliteration and a translation of this historically important text. The discovery of the anthropoid sarcophagus of Tabnit I in 1887 increased scholarly attention to Eshmunasor's sarcophagus and its inscription, for it became clear that the death of the young king was unexpected and sudden. This explains why Tabnit was buried in a sarcophagus prepared for the Egyptian general Penptah, as indicated by the hieroglyphic epitaph, while his first and unique son Eshmunazor was born after Tabnit's death. The most likely explanation is that Tabnit was killed or deadly wounded at the battle of Salamis in 480 B.C., where he commanded the Sidonian war ships belonging to Xerxes' fleet. At first Xerxes was victorious everywhere, but his attack of the Greek fleet under unfavourable conditions at Salamis ended on September 28 in a disastrous defeat of the Persian fleet, composed largely of Phoenician war ships, the Sidonian fleet being the most important one.

The Authors of the booklet under review do not accept such an explanation of Tabnit's death, because Herodotus' *History* VII, 98 gives the name Tetramnestos to the chief of the Sidonian fleet at the battle of Salamis in 480 B.C. (pp. 25–26). Now, the name Tetramnestos results from a corruption of the passage and its erroneous correction in a Greek fashion. This should be undone. Separating the Greek conjunction τε from Τραμνηστ(ος) one can easily recognize that the original name was Tabnit: Τ(ρ)αμνης or Τ(ρ)αμνητ. The Greek transcription Θαμνι of the name *Tbny*, borne by a king of Israel (I Kings 16, 21–22), shows the same partial assimilation of *b* > *m* to the following *n*,

while στ results from the juxtaposition of two variants: σ shows the Greek tendency to end names in -ς, while τ is the original ending of the name. The initial Τρ simply adds ρ in conformity with many Greek words beginning by τρ-. The name is followed in VII, 98 by the misspelled patronymic "Eshmunazor": -ος ανύσου < 'š(m)n'z(r). The final ου shows the Greek genitive ending at the patronymic following the personal name. This confirms the assumption that the first Greek transcription was based on the name and patronymic written in Phoenician, thus without providing their correct vocalization. There is no similar list of most important navy persons with Tetramnestos in Herodotus' *History* VII, 67–68, as was wrongly stated in a recent publication.

Summing up, king Tabnit, killed or deadly wounded at the battle of Salamis in 480 B.C., was brought to Sidon, where he was buried in the sarcophagus prepared for the Egyptian general Penptah.

Eshmunazor succeeded to the throne of Sidon at birth, a few months after his father's death. And he himself died at the early age of fourteen, thus *ca*. 466 B.C. His mother Immi'ashtart, a daughter of Eshmunazor I, acted as regent during his infancy and has still obviously been the power behind the throne at Eshmunazor II's death. He was succeeded by his first cousin Bodashtart (*KAI* 15), as shown here below. Readers of the booklet should still be warned against dating the reign of Eshmunazor II in 539–525 B.C., a hypothesis unfortunately proposed in the *Encyclopaedic Dictionary of Phoenician History I, Historical Characters* (Leuven 2018, pp. 77–78).

Eshmunazor I

Tabnit I   Immi'ashtart   unknown name

Bodashtart

Eshmunazor II

Yatonmilk
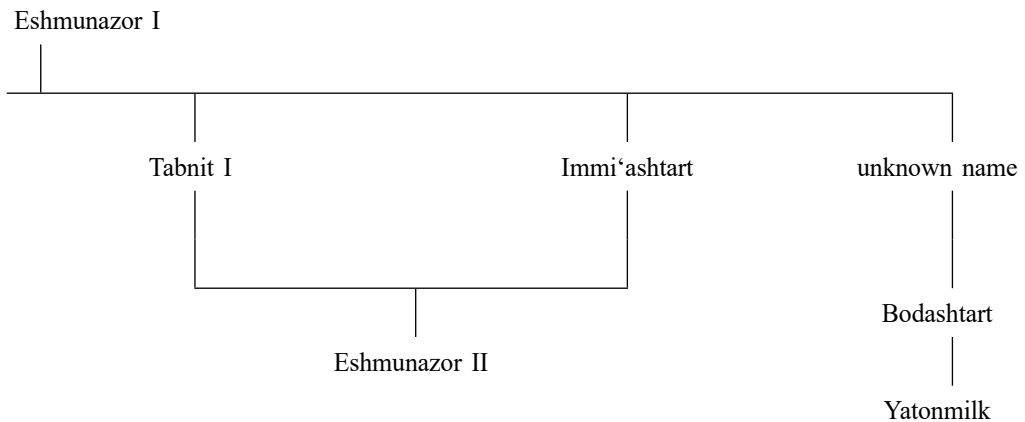
The readers of the booklet should also notice that the Authors mention king Tabnit, but they never call him Tabnit I. They obviously follow the theory denying the identification of Tabnit II with Τέννης, mentioned several times as king of Sidon by Diodorus of Sicily in his *History* XVI, 42, 2; 43, 1–4; 45, 1–6. The abbreviation *T'* of Tabnit's name on coins from the 4th century B.C. confirms the existence of Tabnit II, showing at the same time that Tabnit is an abridged form of his name, meaning literally "Build-up", while his full name was "Built up by Astarte". The royal title of Tabnit I was even preceded in

his inscription by "priest of Astarte". The abbreviation *T'* on coins should thus be read *Tabnīt-'Aštart*. The form Τέννης of the name quoted by Diodorus implies the assimilation *b > n* in *Tabnīt > Tennī*(*t*) and the replacement of final τ by ς.

The excellent presentation of the sarcophagus of Eshmunazor II is followed unfortunately by an inaccurate dating of the events forming the background of the young king's and his father's short lives. An English translation of the epitaphs of Tabnit I and Eshmunazor II can be found in J.C.L. Gibson's *Textbook of Syrian Semitic Inscriptions III. Phoenician Inscriptions* (Oxford 1982), nᵒˢ 27 and 28. The author correctly places both inscriptions in the earlier part of the 5ᵗʰ century B.C., but he does not relate Tabnit's death to the battle of Salamis. His *Phoenician Inscriptions* are not recorded in the bibliography of the booklet under review (pp. 54–56).

Edward Lipiński
Katholieke Universiteit Leuven