

THE VOCALIZATION OF THE PHOENICIAN-PUNIC WORD *DL*

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The Phoenician-Punic word *DL* is a preposition generally glossed “with”¹. This description can be made to account for all of its occurrences, although the word (or a set of homographs) may be polyvalent². The etymology and vocalization of Phoenician-Punic *DL* are unclear. In this brief note I offer a possible answer to the question of vocalization.

Among the royal names cited by Josephus from the Phoenician history of Dius (*Ag. Ap.* 1.112-25) is Δελαιαστάρτος (*Ag. Ap.* 1.122). The name puzzled editors as gifted as Niese, who emended to Λεαστάρτος³. Emendation of the name is unnecessary, however. The name falls in the class of Phoenician personal names whose first element is a preposition and whose second element is a divine name⁴. A well-known example of this class of names is ʾTBʿL, represented in Gk. Ἰθωβαλος, Ἰθωβαλος⁵. The name means “Baal is with him”.

In the case of Δελαιαστάρτος, the unattested Phoenician spelling would be *DL(Y)ʿŠTRT. The name’s theophoric element is clearly the divine name ʿŠTRT, Astarte. The first element is the preposition DL, “with.”

The vocalization is difficult to analyze morphologically. Greek Δελαι could represent either /delay/ or /delē/. The name Πτολεμαῖος, spelled in Phoenician PTLMYS/Š, indicates a Phoenician interpretation of Gk. αι as a diphthong. Note, however, ʾLYYT = Ελειται (KAI 41.4), where the Phoenician spelling leaves the final ‘diphthong’ αι unrepresented. This implies an interpretation of αι as ē. Neither example is conclusive, and each involves a Phoenician representation of a Greek name rather than the opposite case.

¹ PPG³, 179 (§250). The occurrences are: KAI 10.14; 26 A II 6; 80.1; 81.2; 119.2; 161.3; 165.6-7; CIS I 112 a-b; 5510.5-6, 11; 6000 bis 4; NP 61.3 (see KAI, vol. 3, 74-77).

² C.R. Krahmalkov, *Phoenician-Punic Dictionary* (OLA 90 = StPhoen 15), Leuven 2000, for example, distinguishes DL II, prep. “without” (KAI 10.14; 26 A II 6), from DL III, conj. “and, also, as well as, together with” (147-148; see also D-L-Y, 148-149). The entry DLḤMS (CIS 112 a-b) can be reinterpreted as DL ḤMS “with Amasis”.

³ B. Niese, *Flavii Iosephi Opera*, Berlin 1889, 5.ix-xxiv; F. Jacoby, *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*, 1923-1958 (2d ed., Leiden 1957-1964), no. 783.

⁴ F.L. Benz, *Personal Names in the Phoenician and Punic Inscriptions*, Roma 1972, 223. I find no citation or discussion of the name Δελαιαστάρτος in this study, or in C. Bonnet, *Astarté: Dossier documentaire et perspectives historiques*, Roma 1996, 38-39. Both works are principally concerned with epigraphic texts not Greek texts.

⁵ Benz, *op. cit.*, 73.

In the case of the name Δελαιαστάρτος, the αι probably represents the Phoenician first-person pronominal suffix⁶. The name can be glossed “Astarte is with me”.

The etymology of the word must yet be discovered. Like the preposition ‘L, the preposition DL is likely to derive from a III-y root⁷. The etymon is thereby D-L-Y, but further identification is not yet possible.

⁶ On the morphology, see PPG³, 182-183 (§254 iii). C.R. Krahmalkov, *A Phoenician-Punic Grammar*, Leiden 2001, 51 (Form D), 56.

⁷ On the pattern, see PPG³, *ibid.*; cf. Krahmalkov, *ibid.*, 240 (◁ *dall*).