# Miszellen

## The Root *tmk* in Ammonite, Phoenician and Hebrew[*]

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The root *tmk* appears frequently as an element of Ammonite personal names. The Ammonite lexical material is until now very limited. Therefore we have to limit ourselves to the prosopographic material.

We have the following names, mostly from seal-inscriptions:

1.  l *tmkʾ*l/ʿbd mlkm (Aufrecht No. 1)[1] ca. 600 B.C.E.
2.  l *tmkʾ*[l]/bn/mqnmlk (Aufrecht No. 3) ca. 650 B.C.E.
3.  l *tmkʾ*l/bn ḥgt (Aufrecht No. 14) VII cent. B.C.E.
4.  l bydʾl bn/*tmkʾ*l (Aufrecht No. 26) late VII cent. B.C.E.
5.  ʾltmk kbs (Aufrecht No. 47, 14) mid VII cent. B.C.E.[2]
6.  l ʾltmk b/n ʿmsʾl (Aufrecht No. 62) mid VII B.C.E.[3]
7.  *tmkʾ*l [...] (Aufrecht No. 76) ca. 500 B.C.E.[3]
8.  l *tmkʾ*l (Aufrecht No. 84) mid VII cent. B.C.E.
9.  l ndbʾl/bn *tmkʾ* (Aufrecht No 85) VII cent. B.C.E.
10. l *tmkʾ*l/bn plṭy (Aufrecht No. 86) II half of the VII cent. B.C.E.
11. l *tmkʾ*l/bn yšʾ (Aufrecht No. 113) ca. 650 B.C.E.
12. lʾyʾ/bn/*tmkʾ*l (Aufrecht No. 132) late VII cent. B.C.E.

What is the real meaning of the root *tmk*?
All the lexicographic works, including the glossary of the "Corpus of Ammonite Inscriptions" by W.E. Aufrecht, give us the meaning "to support".[4] The same meaning for *tmk* is given for other West-Semitic languages.[5] But we see also that

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[1] But possibly *br mlkm* as in CIS II, 94 in Aramaic script.
[2] Ostracon from Nimrud.
[3] Ostracon No. 2 from Heshbon.
[4] Aufrecht, pp. 375-376.
[5] R.S. Tomback, A Comparative Semitic Lexicon of the Phoenician and Punic Languages, Missoula, 1974, p. 342 "to support"; M.J. Fuentes-Estañol, Vocabulario Fenicio, Barcelona, 1980, p. 248 "coger", "sostener", "coger" = "to catch, to grasp"; KAI, III, p. 26, "festhalten, stützen"; DISO, p. 330 "saisir, prendre" – this is all concerning Phoenician. Concerning Aramaic of prehellenistic times: I. Vinnikov, Slovar arameiskich nadpisey (Dictionary of Aramean Inscriptions) "Paletinskij Slornik", 8, 1962, p. 260 "to support" (Russian). R. Zadok, On West Semites in Babylonia during the Chaldean and Achaemenian Periods, An Onomastic

sometimes the lexicographic works give the meaning "to grasp" or "to hold fast".

The clue to the question about the meaning of the root and verb *tmk* we find in the Carthagian inscription CIS, 1, 5510, 9-11. As it was shown by Krahmalkov,[6] the expression in line 10 of this inscription *wtmk hmt ᵓyt ᵓgrgnt wšt [ᵓ]t šlm* has to be translated by "and they seized (captured) Agrigentum and made (the) peace".[7] This happened at 406 B.C.E.[8]

There rose a discussion about *ᵓgrgnt*. Could it be Akragas – the Sicilian city or not. Schmitz proved the question positively comparing all the spellings of the name of the city.[9] It has to be pointed out that the Punic insctiption gives us also the names of the Carthagian leaders (functionaires), who coincide with these given by Diodorus in his XIII book.

So we can say without any doubt that the verb *tmk* has here the meaning "to seize", "to capture" and we have here the grammatical form of Perf. 3 pers. plural.

This gives us also the opportunity to reconsider the root *tmk* in other texts. First of all comes the Kilamuwa inscription in Phoenician[10] from the end of the IX century B.C.E. Line 13: *w ᵓnk tmkt mškbm lyd* "and I seized the *mškbm*-people by their hand." Such translation receives now a better foundation.

As Schmitz points out we have the same thing also in the Bible, where sometimes the verb *tāmak* usually having the meaning "to support" has the meaning "to seize, conquer, to grasp".[11] He brings us the example of Prov. 5,22. Really we see here:

*ᶜawōnōtāw yilkᵉdunō ᵓet-hārāšaᶜ*
*ūbᵉḥablē ḥaṭṭāᵓtō yittāmēk*
"The iniquities of the wicked *capture*[12] (seize) him.
And he is *seized* by the strings of his sin."

Possibly we have the same sense of *tmk* in Am. 1,5:

*wᵉšābartī bᵉrīaḥ Dammeśeq*
*wᵉhikrattī yōšēb mibBiqᶜat-ᵓāwen*
*wᵉtōmēk šēbeṭ mibbēyt ᶜeden*
*wᵉgālū ᶜam-ᵓarām qīrāh ...*
"I will break the bar of Damascus,
and cut off the inhabitants from the Valley of Aven.

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Study, Jerusalem, 1977, pp. 81 and 97 "to support, hold fast" – claiming that it is common to Aramaic, Hebrew, Phoenician and Akkadian. In AHw there is no *tamāku* and CAD did not yet reach the letter *t*.

[6] A. Krahmalkov, A Carthaginian Report of the Battle of Agrigentum, 406 B.C. (CIS I, 55120, 9-11), RSF, II, 1974, pp. 171-177; A. Krahmalkov, Notes on the Rule of the *šōfṭīm* in Carthage, RSF IV, 1976, pp. 153-157.

[7] Krahmalkov, RSF II, p. 173.

[8] Diod, XIII, 79-81; W. Huss, Geschichte der Karthager, München, 1985, pp. 116-118 related to the seizure of Akragas by the Carthagians, but rejects the epigraphic evidence given by Krahmalkov.

[9] Ph.Ch. Schmitz, Epigraphic Contributions to a History of Carthage in the Fifth Century B.C.E., U.M.I. Dissertation Information Service, Ann Arbor, 1990, pp. 60-65.

[10] Schmitz, p. 53; KAI 24.

[11] Schmitz, p. 53.

[12] The root *lkd* is often used in the OT for designation the capture of a city – Jos. 8,21; 10,1,42; II Chr. 15,8, etc.

> And who seizes the sceptre[13] from Beth-Eden
> and the people of Aram shall be exiled to Qir ...".

Again we have here to do with breaches of fortifications and seizure of cities from where the population has to be exiled.[14]

It seems that we have the meaning "to seize" also in Gen. 48,17:

> wayyar $^{\jmath}$ Yōsēf kī-yāšīt $^{\jmath}$ābīw yad-y$^e$mīnō $^c$al-ro$^{\jmath}$š $^{\jmath}$Efrayim wayyēra$^c$
> b$^{ec}$ēnāw wayyitmok yad-$^{\jmath}$ābīw l$^e$hāsīr $^{\jmath}$otāh mē$^c$al ro$^{\jmath}$š $^{\jmath}$Efrayim $^c$al-ro$^{\jmath}$š
> M$^e$naššе.

> "And Joseph saw that his father laid his right hand upon the head of Ephraim, it displeased him; and he *seized* his father's hand, to remove it from Ephraim's head to Menasseh's head."

So we see also from the Biblical passages given here, that the meaning "to seize" is sometimes given also by the root *tmk* in its verbal form. Otherwise we do not find the root *tmk* as an element of Hebrew personal names.

We can add that in Hebrew the expression of the meaning "to seize", "to capture" is mostly transmitted by the roots *lkd*, $^{\jmath}$*ḥz*, *kbš*. The same is to be said about Moabite, where, according to the *Meša$^c$* inscription, the king expresses his military success by the verb $^{\jmath}$*ḥz*:[15]

> 11) ...w $^{\jmath}$lthm bqr w $^{\jmath}$hzh
> "And I fought against (the city) Qīr and I seized it."
> 14) wy $^{\jmath}$mr by Kmš lk $^{\jmath}$hz $^{\jmath}$t Nbh
> "And (the God) Kemosh said to me: Go and capture (the city) Nebo!"
> ... w $^{\jmath}$h 16) zh ...
> "and I captured it."
> 20) w $^{\jmath}$š $^{\jmath}$h byhs w $^{\jmath}$hzh ...
> "And I brought them (his troops) to Yahas an I captured it."

So, as we see, the Moabite (language or dialect) uses the root $^{\jmath}$*ḥz*, where Phoenician and Punic use *tmk*.

We would also remember here the Hebrew personal names $^{\jmath}$*Āḥāz*, $^{\jmath}$*Ahzay*,[16] $^{\jmath}$*Aḥazyā*, $^{\jmath}$*Aḥazyāhū*, *Y$^e$hō$^{\jmath}$āḥaz*, *Yō$^{\jmath}$āḥāz*[17] appearing in the OT books and frequently on seals and other epigraphic monuments. Their meaning is "The Lord took (seized) me" ( $^{\jmath}$*ḥzyhw* and *Yhw* $^{\jmath}$*ḥz*).

It seems that the Ammonite personal names: *Tmk* $^{\jmath}$*l*, $^{\jmath}$*ltmk*, and the hypocoristicon *Tmk* $^{\jmath}$ have the same meaning: "The god (Il) took (seized) me."

Possibly we can see here another interesting feature. Ammonite has sometimes common features with Phoenician, instead of Hebrew. It appears in the case of the root *tmk*. Possibly it appears also in the use of the relative pronoun $^{\jmath}$*š*[18], instead of the Hebrew $^{\jmath}$*ašer*. Naturally that here the extremely limited lexical material does

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[13] Or possibly "tribe" (*šebet*); cf. also N. Rozal, $^c$*mws*, 1990, p. 35 (Hebrew).
[14] Cf. also the very similar meaning of *tmk* in Am. 1,8.
[15] KAI 181.
[16] Neh. 11, 13; the other names with the root $^{\jmath}$*ḥz* which appear frequently in the OT are given without noting the verses where they appear.
[17] II Chr. 34,8.
[18] Heshbon Ostracon IV, 6 (= Aufrecht, No. 80).

not give the opportunity to reach definitive conclusions, but we have to take meanwhile the existing information.

*Abstract:*

The root *tmk*, appearing often in Ammonite personal names, has the meaning "to grasp", "to hold fast" as also "to seize". The last meaning becomes clear from Punic (ca. 400 B.C.E.). This gives the opportunity of a new interpretation of several OT passages.

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