

New Punic Punditry

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With the long awaited *editio princeps* of a portion of the Roman-era neo-Punic texts from Henchir Maktar (Tunisia), this large and fairly homogeneous corpus of primarily dedicatory and funerary inscriptions is finally being made available to the scholarly world in a modern publication with serviceable photographs. Although many of these texts have in the meantime been studied extensively, most recently by Jongeling (2008), this edition is—due to what many have in the past considered the *cacographic* state of these epigraphs—a most welcome and indispensable addition to the toolkit of philologists, epigraphists, historians, and theologians.

The volume under review is the first of an intended total of three. It largely contains texts found during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The envisaged second volume is to present the hitherto unpublished “plusieurs douzaines” of texts found in 1969 reused as a foundation for the city’s Roman triumphal arch. The third will contain the inscriptions from monuments now lost, based on old photographs and casts. While many of the texts here have been previously published in a preliminary fashion (starting with Chabot 1918; now *HNPI*), this volume must be formally considered their long-awaited *editio princeps*. This, as described in the opening chapter (“L’historique de la découverte des inscriptions”), was originally to have been undertaken by J.-B. Chabot; later this task was given to J. Février, and later still to M. Sznycer and M. Fantar. After the death of the former in 2011, it was finally F. Bron who completed the edition for publication.¹

The volume contains some ninety-eight texts arranged by genre: votive texts, largely relating to sacrifices at the Tophet (1–69); epitaphs (69–88); two inscriptions from the “Temple of Apollo” (89–90); fragmentary texts (91–97); and finally a text from Mididi (Hr Medid) (98). The last chapter is a compendious iconographic study of the steles by the late C. Picard. The volume concludes with concordances, glossaries, and quite legible black-and-white photographs. The discussion of the inscriptions includes material data such as the dimensions of each stone, its decoration, letter height, and the dimensions of the *champ épigraphique*. The texts themselves are presented in transcription and translation along with a summary commentary. The majority of the texts can be found in *HNPI* (except 9, 13, 18, 24f., 27, 34f., 48–50, 57, 59, 65, 70–72, 76–79, 81–84, 88, and fragmentary texts 91–97). The major importance of this edition lies in the photographs.

The commentary is somewhat superficial. The first texts receive more discussion than do later ones; ergo this information might have been better placed in a general chapter on palaeographical and grammatical matters. Generally speaking, references to the standard reference grammar (Friedrich-Röllig 1999) and relevant onomastical literature are absent.²

This is a review article of *Stèles à inscriptions néopuniques de Maktar*, vol. 1. By MHAMED HASSINE FANTAR; MAURICE SZNYCER; and FRANÇOIS BRON. Mémoires de l’Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, vol. 51. Paris: ACADÉMIE DES INSCRIPTIONS ET BELLES-LETTRES, 2015. Pp. 152, 30 pls. €30 (paper).

1. These scholars will be referred to collectively in the following as “the editors.”

2. *HNPI* “Onomasticon” 313–80 should be referenced for all names. See further Jongeling 1984, 1994.

Unfortunately, there is no analytical discussion of neo-Punic phonetic orthography.³ In the following we will comment on significant features of the individual texts.

No. 1: The conjunction *kḥ* in l. 1—in the drawing *HNPI* 138 *k'*, although omitted in both Jongeling's transcription and translation—is confirmed by the photo. The discussion of this particle (pp. 22–23) misses the point, an error which could have been avoided by reference to Jongeling 1986.⁴ The PN in l. 2 is read here correctly as *b's'* following Chabot, interpreted as the Latin name *Bassus* vs *HNPI* *b's'* “Basso” (though note discussion pp. 324f.). The note (p. 23) that “la terminaison *-us* étant rendue, comme c'est l'usage, par un *aleph* (')” is only partially correct, since *aleph* here (not a vowel letter, but a vowel indicator) actually renders, as is confirmed by Latino-Punic, the Latin vocative!⁵ The final PN in l. 3, as confirmed by the photograph, is read *m'sgry'n*, as is the drawing in *HNPI* (not the transcription however!).

On p. 22 it is briefly noted that the Maktar texts “utilisent la graphie néopunique habituelle, où les laryngales, qui ne se prononçaient plus, servent de *matres lectionis* pour noter les voyelles” and that, e.g., *b'l ḥmn* (i.e., Baal Hammon) “est écrit de différentes manières,” e.g., *b'l ḥmn*, *bḥl 'mn*, *b'l mn* (the latter spelling is the norm at Guelma), etc. (see list *HNPI* 322 s.v.). However, the remark in the next sentence mentioning “la graphie punique traditionnelle et correcte *b'l ḥmn*” is *de trop*, as the *puniphone* Maktarians were not trying to realize (or probably were not even aware of) traditional PhP orthography. While *Baal* is the recognized French spelling of this deity, it is unclear why in translations it is rendered consistently as if it were a Hebrew lexeme here, scil. *Ba'al*—there was no segholization in PhP and, with the loss of the laryngeal, one is left with /bal/. Similar applies to other transcriptions, such as *brkb'l*, transcribed p. 22 as *Birikba'al*, p. 23 described as “nom punique fréquent” with reference only to Benz 1972. As here, in the collocation *b's' bn brkb'l bn m'sgry'n*, *brkb'l* must be a male. As Jongeling 1988 noted, in PhP the female name is construed on the basis of the D-stem, the male on that of the G, as, e.g., Latin epigraphical attestations show.⁶ Thus this vocalization is gender incongruent; *Barikbal* would have been accurate.

No. 2: Punic spellings with [‘w] and [‘y] for Libyco-Berber names probably render a diphthong (Kerr 2010: 59, 61f.). The French translation of the standard votive formula *l'dn b'l ḥmn kḥ šm' ql' brk' PN₁ bn PN₂ (bn PN₃, etc.)* as two sentences “Au Seigneur Ba'al ḥammon, parce qu'il a entendu sa voix, il l'a béni. PN₁, fils de PN₂ . . .” is ungrammatical, as the final noun phrase belongs to the main clause.

No. 3: The Latinate name *p'sk'/Fuscus*, while attested throughout the Empire, is, unsurprisingly perhaps, particularly common in Africa. The discussion of the name *mtnb'l* (p. 25) as “don de Ba'al,” transcribed *Muttunba'al* with other examples from the Maktar corpus, again misses the point. The question is whether *mtn* here is a noun (i.e., “don”; <√*ntn*) or a passive participle (<√*ytm*), i.e., “donné de Bal” as the spelling *m'tnb'l* (i.e., /mattunbal/) Hr Djebbara N 2 (*HNPI* 82f.) indicates. The vocalization of *mtn* as *muttun* seems based on Latin renditions such as *mutthumbal* (Jongeling 1994: 102f. s.v.) in which the first [u] is due

3. Cf. Kerr 2010: 25–138.

4. For a different interpretation see now Kerr 2016.

5. Cf. Kerr 2010: 68–74.

6. E.g., *Berebal pia* in *CIL* 8,17293, 27507; *Berebal Secundi filia* / *Galli uxor s(e) v(iva) p(osuit) / an(nos) / LXXXV ILAlg* I,1438; *Berebal pia ILAlg* I,1858; *Iulia Berebal ILAlg* II/2,7050; *Memoriae Hammoniae Berebalis ILAlg* I,929, etc. Male: *Baricbal Severi filius CIL* 8,16933; *P[ublius] Iulius Martialis Baricbalis filius p[rius] Mactaris II,99*; *Gududia Barigbalis filia AÉ* 2000,1648 etc. The distinction is nicely displayed in *CIL* 8,16932: *Biricbal Zabullica v[ixit] a[nnos] CI // Baricbal Marchelli fil[ius] / v[ixit] a[nnos] LXVII / h[ic] s[itus] e[st]*. See also Jongeling 1994 sub *berec*, Kerr 2010: 113f.

to vowel harmony (and n>m due to partial regressive assimilation).⁷ Seeing the emphasis laid on “graphie punique traditionnelle” in this work, *Mattunbal* would have been preferable.

No. 4: It is confusing that references to other neo-Punic texts from Maktar, not included in this collection, are to *HNPI*, while some references to others are not, e.g., *IPT* 91 (= Labdah N 23); yet S. Antioco N1. The final name in l. 3 is read here as *mgn*, *pace HNPI* N 112 *mn̄*, in the photograph the corner of the *gimel* can just be seen.

No. 5: The Latinate name *g'y/Gaius* is a vocative! *Rst̄yq'/Rusticus*—note partial regressive assimilation as Latin *lt/* is usually rendered in Punic with [t] (cf., e.g., *qwn̄t'* “Quintus” in no. 6).

No. 6: The name *plkš* “Felix” in *KAI* 142 (= *HNPI* Hr Brighita N1, cf. ad 4) should rather be read *plks*; cf. Kerr 2010: 133.

No. 7: The name in l. 2 *m'rk* given here as the Roman praenomen *Marcus* is problematic, as Latin */c/* is usually rendered by Punic [q]; cf. l. 3 *q'n'ly* “Canuleius” (and, e.g., *qwyn̄t'* “Quintus” in no. 6). *HNPI* 354 s.v. realizes the problem: “the rendition of Latin *c* with *k* instead of *q* is surprising.” The name is probably the variant *Marchus*, especially common in Africa (cf., e.g., *ILTun* 499,27; also Marchianus, Marchellus; fem. Marchia, Marchiana. On this phenomenon see Kerr 2010: 115 n. 305).

No. 8: The reading of the final sequence of graphemes as *y'rqn'* and as a Libyco-Berber name *IRKNH* (*RIL* 291) “Iarkano” is a meritorious proposal (cf. possibly also the fragmentary name *Iarci*[. . .] in a Latin inscription from Carthage, *BCTH* 1928/29,142c).

No. 9: Contains interesting Latinate names: *pbly bn w'lry' nbls* “Publius, son of Valerius Nobilis.”

No. 10: *Hml'* could also render Latinate *Aemilus* (cf. *AÉ* 1999,928 from Hispania citerior).

No. 12: The proposal to read *h'mny* in l. 3 as Latin “Humanus” seems preferable to *HNPI* 132 “the . . .” interpreted as “most probably a nisbe-adjective derived from a tribal name or the name of a clan or a town.” While this name is not common, it is attested several times, for example, once in Africa Proconsularis (*ILAlg* I,1633) and twice in Numidia (*CIL* 8,18996; *RAA* p. 102). The reading of l. 4 as *q'ndd'* “Candidus” is possible—on the photograph the *aleph* following the *quph* is quite clear and the rest seems just visible (the drawing *HNPI* just has the head of the *quph*).

No. 15: Of *bn qw'rt̄yl'* is noted “il est suprenant de trouver ici une ascendance matrilinéaire” (cf. also *HNPI* 131)—possibly a lapsus for *qw'rt̄yl'*?

No. 16: On the photograph, the traces of l. 4 are, although illegible, just visible.

No. 17: The new photograph improves the old reading of ll. 2–3, i.e., *g'y bn p'y* “Gaius, the son of Pius”; the subsequent *wqwt'* is however difficult to discern.

No. 18: For *s'l' . . .* at the end of l. 2, note possibly *Caius Iulius Salasus* (Numidia; *ILAlg* I,3649).

No. 19: While the reading *p'tr'* “Petrus” in l. 2 is possible, the name seems limited to Christians, and would thus be rather out of place here. The grapheme read here as *r* could well be a *b* (cf. comments *HNPI* 142), or possibly *b'tr'* “Botrus” (‘grape’ < βότρυς), infrequently attested as a proper name. *p'r'* in l. 3 as a Greek name *Poros* would be otherwise unattested in the west.

No. 20: On the name *'p'pr'* rendered here as “Epaphra,” cf. possibly also Latino-Punic *ap̄p̄vrvs* (Sirte LP 10; Kerr 2010: 215).

No. 21: *'ynwt'* cannot render Latinate *Inventus*. With *-t'* it seems rather Roman than Libyco-Berber. The first sign is unclear on the photograph, possibly *Aventus*? In the photograph, the final name seems to be spelled *qwn̄t'* rather than *qwyn̄t'* “Quintus.”

7. See discussion *HNPI* 356f. s.v. *mtn* and *mtnb'l*; Kerr 2010: 76ff., 83, 121.

No. 23: In l. 3, the editors read the article in the collocation *b'l hktrm* as *h*, *HNPI* as ' . The stone is damaged here, but both readings are possible and both spellings are common in neo-Punic.

No. 25: On the photograph, the first grapheme in l. 4 is certainly an ' ; there is no need to posit a missing *h* as the definite article (see ad no. 23).

No. 28: At the beginning of l. 3, photograph and editors read . . . 'ps'n, "le dédicant porte un nom libyque terminé en *-san*," supported by the photograph (*HNPI* . . .]n); cf. possibly *Marcus Arapsanius* (*BCTH* 1934/35,99; Mauretania Caesariensis). The last name on this line is *wryls* "Virilis" rather than *wrylš*.

No. 30: On the photograph, the tops of the graphemes *-l hmk-* (i.e., *b'l hmktrm*) are indeed just visible.

No. 31: The final grapheme of l. 1 is to be read as *h*, not as *HNPI* ' .

No. 33: In l. 6, partially in the drawing of *HNPI*, the editors read with the photograph *m'rwz' bn ptywn'n* "Marauzo, the son of Petiwan." Note the name *Marau* in a Latin text from Maktar (*CIL* 8,23442) and *Phethunis* (genitive; *BCTH* 1946/49,180—Ucubi, modern Hr Kaousat Afr. Procon.).

Nos. 34 and 36: It is interesting that in both cases when the dedicants are expressed with the suff. 1 pl. com., the conjunction *k* is missing.

No. 36: The final name in ll. 3–4 is read by the editors *kndyd'r* (*HNPI* suspected *kndy'l*), probably a phonetic variant. On the name *tt'y* "nom propre d'origine inconnue," cf. possibly *Titai*, a name found in two Latin inscriptions from Lusitania (*AE* 1967,179; 1976,278b) and one from Rome (*ICUR* 5,14672).

No. 37: The last word in l. 3 is read by the editors as *hnmzky* (*HNPI* *hnlmky*), i.e., article *h* + nisbe ending *-y*, expressing an ethnicon. Based on the photograph, we would suggest rather reading *hmzky*. The *gens Mazicum* is rather well known; cf. Ammianus Marcellinus, *Rer. Gest.* 29,5.21,27,51; *CIL* 8,2786; *AE* 1973,153/654 (as a PN *Mazix* *CIL* 8,15928; fem. *Mazica* *CIL* 8,8817, 15593, 17748, 18392, 21109, 21737, *ILAlg* II/3,7637). For the spelling of the definite article *h-* /a/ in neo-Punic, cf. *HNPI* Labdah N 14.

No. 38: The photograph and reading at the end of l. 2 are an improvement on that of *HPNI*. The name in the photograph is clearly *'pt't* "Optatus" (i.e., without the vocative ending *-'* [see above sub no. 1]); the lacuna between the second *t* and the alleged *'* at the end of the line is, as read here (*pace* *HNPI* 110f.), actually *bn* "son of." The faint stroke of the *bet* can just be seen; thereafter comes a hooked stroke which is a *nun* (cf. the fourth letter of l. 1), which does not seem to belong to an *aleph* (i.e., the right stroke seems to be missing entirely). In l. 3 after *prym* "Primus," the reading *h* given here is wrong; the photograph confirms *HNPI* in reading an *aleph*, i.e., a phonetic rendering of the definite article *a-* (cf. Hr Maktar N 9, 40, 43, 45, 51, 79, 82, 119, etc.). *Mdyty* here is, as the editors, following Chabot and Jongeling, posit, an adjectival tribal name. For the vocalization cf., e.g., *CIL* 8, 23358 from Mididi . . . *ni Chinanipis filio*] *Miditano*. The original form would seem to have been *Mididit(-)*; cf. the *ordo Mididitanorum hospitium amicitiamque* in a text from Rome (*CIL* 6, 1689); cf. also from Mididi *CIL* 8, 609, 11774, 23426; *myddm* in Hr Meded N 13, 26; *mdm* N21. That is, we have here an assimilated form *dt>tt*.

No. 39: On the term *šdn*, literally "Sidonian," to denote an emancipated slave, see *HNPI* a.l. On *m'kr*' see above ad no. 7.

No. 40: While the spelling *mnt'n*' here may render the Latinate cognomen *Montanus*, the form *mwnt'n*' from Hr Guergour N 4 must render an African byform *Muntanus*. [w] in neo-Punic does not render /o/ (cf. Kerr 2010: 52–54, Latin examples n. 121). The city name *wzp'n*, Latin Uzappa (*CIL* 8,11924, 11929, 11931, 11933, 11935, 23696; *AE* 1969/70,

646), nowadays still the Titular See *Ausafa*. The collocation *b'l wzp'n* “citizen of Uzapa” is somewhat different from the formulation *b'l hmktrm*, *b'l hmyddm*, i.e., construed without the definite article attached to a plural noun.

No. 41: Note in the name *skst'* “Sextus” partial assimilation, *t > t / s_* (see above ad no. 5). Note again that the editors have a tendency to transcribe Punic names in a historical manner, e.g., *hmlkt* “Himilkat,” although the realization of this name in this period was rather closer to *HNPI* “Imilco” (in Latin also *Imilcho*; cf. Jongeling 1994 s.v.). *HNPI* hesitantly reads the traces of l. 4 as *m'ktrm*, which seems to be largely conjecture. In the photograph published here, the first letter might be a *he*, the second is certainly an *mem* followed by an *ain*, but the next letter cannot be a *kaph*. The reading proffered by the editors, *zm'n 'rb'*, and interpreted as “Zama Maior” (vel Regia) seems certain; cf. *Zamae M[aioris]* *CIL* 8,16439, *Zama Maior* 16442, and note from Maktar *Q. Iulius Martialis Zama Sileha coiunx (!) vixit anni LXV. . .*

No. 42: The photograph confirms the reading of Berger 1890 for the end of l. 2; l. 3: 'š *b'm t'yn't* rendered by the editors “qui (est) du peuple de Thyna.” The town is the *colonia Thaenitana* (cf. *CIL* 6,1685, 8,22797; *AE* 1914,207, 1938,47, 1949,38). Note that the Punic spelling of the name with 'y actually renders the Latin diphthong [æ] (classical /ai/) quite closely; see Kerr 2010: 60–62. It is unclear whether 'š here is the relative pronoun as posited by the authors or the noun “man.”

No. 45: Note that “la chute, exceptionnelle, du ' ” in *ldn* has no phonetic implications (see above ad no. 1). *ldn*, *l'dn*, *l'dn*, *lhdn* all render /lādūn/ (cf., e.g., λαδου in El Hofra G 1). The final legible letters in l. 2 are read *p'*, just visible on the photograph (*HNPI* *t*).

No. 54: The editors read after *brk'* the name *y'skt'n* “Iasuctan,” followed seemingly by [*b*]n. Traces of letters are visible on the photograph and on the drawing in *HNPI*. The editors note: “la lecture du nom est assurée par un estampage.”

No. 56: The second grapheme in l. 3 is read by the editors as *l*, *HNPI* *n*. Judging from the photograph, both are equally possible.

No. 59: Traces of the second line are just visible, and only a *lamed* can be read with certainty.

No. 60: In the traces of letters in l. 3, only an *ain* can be read with certainty.

No. 62: The reading of *kaph* is syntactically likely, but cannot really be seen on the photograph.

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No. 69: On the verb *ḥn'* see Kerr 2014: 159–73. Note again that in neo-Punic, variant phonetic spellings are possible, e.g., *'bn*, *hbn*, and *'bn* render /abn/, although in the case of *hbn* this might be a historicizing spelling with the article (Kerr 2014: 174–78). This applies also to the variant spelling of numerals in the Punic calque of the Latinate *vixit annos* formula, (*w*)*ḥw' šnt #*. Note that in this inscription the circumstantial or conjunctive clause is joined asyndetically to the main one, while in others the conjunction *w-* is employed (see, e.g., no. 70). One is reminded here of Arabic, in which an explanatory afterthought may be introduced asyndetically or by *-w* (or *-f*); cf. Fisher 2002: §405. As the demise of the dedicatee necessarily precedes the erection of the epitaph, *ḥwy* here is semantically a pluperfect (cf. Wright 1898: §§2–3), reminiscent of Arabic *قَد(و) + Suffix Conjugation* to indicate a state or condition (حال; e.g., *قَد مات* “he had died,” i.e., “he is dead”), though in older Arabic this “particle of expectation” (حرف التوقع) is not obligatory, e.g., Q26:111 *قَالُوا أَنْؤْمِنُ لَكَ وَأَتَّبِعَكَ الْأَرْدَلُونَ* “They said, ‘Should we believe you, and the lowest have followed you.’”

No. 73: On the name *m'rk'* see above ad no. 7.

No. 74: Whether the apparent lack of an *aleph* in the spelling *tn' bn* “été omis par haplographie” is unclear as both *tn'* and *'bn* can be spelled phonetically in neo-Punic without a vowel indicator (see *HNPI* 381, 390f. svv. for the full palette of attested orthographical options). The photograph confirms the editors' reading of the first name on l. 2 as *y'skt'n* “Iasuctan” (*HNPI* 189 *yskt'n*).

No. 75: Note the spelling of the suffix conjugation G 3 fem. sg. *hwy* as ‘w’, i.e., /ava/ (cf., e.g., Sirte LP 6); though orthographically identical here to the 3ms /avo/, elsewhere the feminine is spelled ‘w’, e.g., no. 82.

No. 76: On the Libyco-Berber name *gzb*, cf. *Gusabius* in a Latin inscription from Zaouia de Sidi (in the proximity of Algiers; *AE* 1991,1698).

No. 77: Again, the historicizing manner of rendering Punic names chosen by the editors is odd, here *b'ls̄m'* “Ba'alshama'.” Note the contemporary Latin transcription *Balsamo* (*CIL* 8, 12331; 13, 10024,358; *ILAlg* I, 1105; note too *σαμω* “he heard,” El Hofra G 1).

No. 78: The second letter of l. 2, a *bet*, is legible according to the editors.

No. 79: *Tlzy* may not be a Libyco-Berber name, but possibly a Libyco-Punic rendition of *T(h)alasius*.

No. 81: The comment ad ‘št “wife” that “la graphie correcte” is ‘št again shows a lack of understanding of neo-Punic phonetic orthography, since both render /ašaʔ/; cf. ‘št in no. 97.

No. 82: In PhP the demonstrative pronoun spelled *z* can be used with both masculine and feminine nouns, probably with a difference in pronunciation; cf., e.g., Hebrew *זֶּ* (m.) – *זָּ* (f.; Hos. 7:16, Ps. 132:12) or dialectal Arabic *ذ* (m.) and *ذی* (f.), i.e., in which only the first grapheme is an authentic consonant. Thus the variant here *'bn st* is worthy of note; the form is < *zt (cf. *ذات*, *ذات*) with partial regressive assimilation.

No. 83: For . . . *ql'* at the end of l. 1 a feminine name is required, which might be *Aquila* (spelled ‘*qyl'* in Hr Brighita N 1).

No. 85: It is interesting that in these texts an *'bn* “stone” is erected (*tn'*), whilst a *mnšbt* is “built” (*bny*).

No. 87: A convincing interpretation of l. 3 is still wanting. *w'w'* is certain, thereafter possibly *lmd' šb'* “for the measure of seven,” i.e., *g'y/Gaius* lived seven years, in which case the title *'pytr* (“the oneirologist”?) belonged to his father *prn'*/Fronto.

No. 89: The reading of Février 1950 does not seem to be supported by the photograph and is discarded by the editors (see already the comments of *HNPI* 125).

No. 97: For the name *tpn*, cf. possibly *Antifan* and *Suartifan*, both found in Corippus (resp. 5.328 and 217).

Besides the excellent discussion of the iconography of the texts in the final chapter, of special interest for epigraphers is the proposed dating of the texts based on art-historical criteria. Mme. Picard (pp. 96f.) assigned the stele to four groups, the first and earliest dating to the last years of Augustus' or the first of Tiberius' reign. The fourth and latest group date to roughly the second quarter of the second century AD. “Les stèles de Maktar présentent ainsi l'image d'une classe de la société de la cité appartenant à la religion carthaginoise, en voie de mutation, durant le premier siècle de notre ère. L'onomastique et l'iconographie se complètent pour montrer qu'il s'agit, la plupart du temps, d'Africains punicisés, qui se tournent vers la civilisation romaine, à laquelle ils empruntent souvent leurs noms” (p. 97).

All in all this is a useful work, and in particular the unpublished texts and the photographs are a welcome addition. It should, however, always be used in conjunction with *HNPI*. We are especially grateful for the efforts of Fr. Bron, who seemingly brought a manuscript long neglected speedily to publication, a truly magnum pietatis opus! We hope that he will quickly do the same with the envisaged second volume.

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