is poor as regards beasts or birds, the priests shall not receive anything [at all].

Offerings Made by a Group (lines 16-17) Any citizens' association, any clan, any drinking club (devoted to) a god, any (other group of) men who sacrifice [...], these men [must] pay a fee in addition to each sacrifice in accordance with what is set down in the writings [...].

Cases Not Covered in this Document (lines 18-19) Any fee that is not set down in (the text on) this plaque shall be tendered according to the writing that [were written by] the thirty men who are in charge of the revenues, in the time when Hillešba' was head, (he being) the son of Bodtinnit, and (by) Hillešba' the son of Bodtešmim, and (by) their colleagues.

The Oppressive Priest (line 20) Any priest who requires a fee deviating from what is set down in (the text on) this plaque shall be fined [...].

The Recæktant Offerer (line 21) Any offerer who does not tender with [whatever he brings] the fee that [is set down in (the text on) this plaque] [...].

REFERENCES

THE ARAMAIC TEXT IN DEMOTIC SCRIPT (1.99)

Richard C. Steiner

The Aramaic Text in Demotic Script1 is a text written on both sides of a twelve-foot-long papyrus in the Pierpont Morgan Library (Amherst Egyptian 63), originally joined by a few fragments which are now at the University of Michigan (Michigan-Amherst 43b). It was acquired by Lord Amherst of Hackney at the end of the nineteenth century.

The decipherment of the text has been a long and painful process of trial and error, which began in the early decades of this century and will no doubt continue well into the next millennium. The translation given here should be viewed

1 I would like to thank the Texts Program of the National Endowment for the Humanities (an independent federal agency of the United States Government), the Littauer Foundation, and Yeshiva University for their generous support of my work on this text.
as an interim progress report, building on the work of many scholars but with many uncertain and controversial elements. Steiner and Moshavi (1995) can be used as a guide to what the author considers reasonably reliable in the translation; however, considerable progress has been made since that selective glossary was completed, and it will need to be expanded.

This largely poetic text is the liturgy of the New Year’s festival of an Aramaic-speaking community in Upper Egypt, perhaps in Syene. It seems to have been dictated by a priest of the community, possibly at the beginning of the third century BCE, to an Egyptian scribe trained in the fourth century BCE.

The original homeland of these people, called *raš* and *rašš* in the papyrus, is the subject of controversy. The present writer has suggested that it is the land between Babylonia and Elam which the Assyrians called Rashu and Arashu and that Assurbanipal, who captured Rashu in his campaign against Elam, deported its inhabitants to the Assyrian province of Samaria, like the Elamites from Susa mentioned in Ezra 4:9-10. There is reason to believe that most or all of them wound up in Bethel, joining the foreign colonists settled there by earlier Assyrian kings. Their subsequent migration to Egypt may be recorded in the text’s account of the arrival of soldiers from Judah and Samaria (XVI.1-6).

The text shows how the groups deported by the Assyrians to Samaria “would venerate the Lord but serve their own gods according to the practices of the nations from which they had been exiled” (2 Kgs 17:17).

Veneration of the Lord is represented by prayers in cols. XI-XII that contain Hebrew words and Israelite divine names (Adonai, 7 times, Yahweh, once). Among these prayers is one which parallels Ps 20 (XI.11-19). Phrases like “Yahweh, our bull” (XI.17; cf. “let them kiss [your] bull[s], [let them deicide your calves” in V.12), “lord of Bethel” (XI.18, cf. VIII.13), and “a city full of ivory houses” (XI.9, immediately before the prayer), if correctly deciphered, suggest that this prayer is a descendant of one used in Jeroboam’s temple in Bethel. There may even be echoes of this prayer (XI.17) in Abijah’s battlefield condemnation of Jeroboam and his calf-cult (2 Chr 13:8, 10, 12).

Service of other gods is the main thrust of the text, which allows us to follow the progress of a pagan New Year’s festival from morning until night. The rituals have counterparts at Babylon, Emar, and Sumer. The wait in the courtyard (III.9-11) and the declaration of innocence (VI.3, 9) followed by a *Heilsorakel* (VI.12-18) are paralleled in the ritual for the fifth day of the New Year’s festival at Babylon. The selection by the god of a maiden from among the “daughters of Arashu” to be “elevated” to the status of priestess (VIII.13-16) resembles the rite in which “the daughter of any son of Emar” was chosen by the god and “elevated” to the status of *enut-priestess* (text 1.122 below). The laying of the priestess on a bed of perfumed rushes (V.9, XVI.7) covered with an embroidered bedspread (XVI.13-14) made of flax (XV.15-16) has parallels in Sumerian sacred marriage rites.

The chief gods of the community are referred to as *mr* “lord” (a back-formation from *mry < mryy* “my lord” attested already in Old Aramaic) and *mrb* “lady.” These epithets are rendered below as Mar and Marah, because their usage in the text (e.g., IVB.3 *lmary mrb* “to my lady, Marah”) suggests that they have taken on the status of names, much like their Canaanite counterpart *b’l* “lord,” the epithet of Hadad.

Marah appears to be identified with Nanai in the text (except in VIII.2-6, where they are listed separately). She is depicted as a cow (II.19; XIII.5, 7, 18, 19; XVI.16) that suckles (exceptional) human infants (I.19; II.7-8, 16-17; III.5. 16, IV.A.5). Each year, after feasting, she falls asleep in the pit, in the waters of fertility (bšwhh bmy pryh), where she brings forth sweet fruit for Mar, her consort (II.8-11).

Nanai’s consort, Nebo, appears frequently in the text, as does the god Bethel. The latter is called Resident of Hamath in VIII.6, 10 and Ashim-Bethel in XV.1, 14, 15. This takes us back once again to the Assyrian province of Samaria, where “the men of Hamath made Ashima” (2 Kgs 17:30).

The text concludes with a story about Assurbanipal, the king who destroyed Rashu, and his brother, Shamash-shumu-ukin (XVII.5-XXII.9). This story is, in all likelihood, an ancestor of the Sardanapalus legend known from Greek and Latin sources. The original kernel of the story is a piece of pro-Assurbanipal propaganda, similar to the editions of Assurbanipal’s Annals which postdate the civil war, intended presumably to win the hearts and minds of the defeated Babylonians (648-c.620 BCE) or to counter claims by the resurgent Babylonians that the Assyrians had committed aggression against them and deserved to be punished (627-612 BCE). However, there are indications that it was revised at a later date and reused, possibly as a weapon in the propaganda war waged against Nabonidus by Cyrus’ priestly backers (third quarter of the sixth century BCE).

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**Introduction (I.1-15)**

Mar dwells
... mighty
... your *šîn* intimates
... on papyrus
... *šîn* the gate

| ... you shall write
| ... the king, Mar, with
| ... *šîr* and lyre
| ... Rash
| ... *šîr* us *šîn* al [f]
A Plea to Marah to Accept the Morning Sacrifice (I.16-17)
Your nourishment [we have] sacrificed, Marah, and may your eyes [glance at] our sacrifice.

Marah's Contemptuous Rebuff (I.17-19)
Man! ... outside, [and hear me!]
I am exalted.
I reared you, you sucked my breast, the sap of Marah nourished you.
She strengthens, she empowers with her power.

A Prayer to Marah Who Sustains Mankind from her Grave (II.1-11)
Come out and make your grave ... we will make your grave ...
Your wise one carries you / for you;
She carries your burden and your load,
creating at your decree.
She builds and uproots its; her breast
[sticks] you.
My Princess eats and is sated and sleeps.
And she lies in the pit, in the waters of fertility, bringing forth fruit for Mar, and it is sweet like you.

Another Plea to Accept the Offering (II.11-13)
Marah, [in] heaven [you] reside; you dwell on high, Mar\(^1\) (ah).
Your nourishment we have sacrificed, Marah, and may your eyes [glance at] our sacrifice.

The King Denied Entrance (III.6-12)
Our judge comes / came to the gate and stands / stood still. "Mar is blessed seven times all that which my mouth says."
And he (=Mar) cried out: "You may certainly not enter, king.
[Wait] outside. Stay at your station."
He washes / washed his hands inside the courtyard.
"Mar, bring our lord near to you; Nebo ..."

More Rebuffs (II.14-III.6)
Man!
... outside [and] hear me!
I am exalted.
[I] reared [you], you sucked my [breast], the sap of Marah nourished [you].
She strengthens, she empowers with her power.

To ...

... outside, and hear me!
I am exalted.
I reared you, you sucked my breast, the sap of Marah nourished you.
She strengthens, she empowers with her power.

Col. III
Man!
... outside, and hear me!
I am exalted.
I reared you, you sucked my breast, the sap of Marah nourished you.
She strengthens, she empowers with her power.

More Rebuffs (III.14-IVA.6)
Man!
... outside, [and] hear me!
I am exalted.
I rear you.
You sucked my breast, the sap of Marah nourished you.
She strengthens, she empowers with her power.

Col. IVA

Man!
... [outside,] and hear me!
I am exalted.
[I] rear you, you sucked my breast, the sap of Marah nourished you.
She strengthens, she empowers with her power.

The Enthronement of Marah-Nanai (IVA.6-21)

Kings saw you and they were afraid, Nanai; you frighten them in front of their officials ...
... exalted.
But we saw/see the [queen], the queen of Rash brought in, Marah, among the gods.
And they rise from their thrones:
"Let Marah be enthroned among the gods;
let her throne be glorious;
in Rash let her footstool be glorious."
... that Mar[ah] was enthroned / of the enthronement of Mar[ah] ...
allow our king to come up, Mar[ah]
... may he bless Marah, [b]less[ss] ... may he bless you [b]less(,) Shamash ... ble[ss] ...

Col. IVB

New Year's Delights (IVB.1-9)
to Marah ... [ca[ll]
... to my lady, Marah

the heaven's ...
... on the earth.
... come, walk before me on every ... those who call upon you, mighty one, we put[ ] in your country from the vineyards [we bring] out on New Years ...
... which delight my heart and your heart, my Fire ...
in El's heart

Col. V

The Destruction of Rash (V.1-11)
You, Mar, put terror in the land; Terror filled the country ...
... They [de]stroyed for you all your cities; in the land trembling dwells. ...
... belittles you, your entire assembly of princes.
He reviled your sons and your mothers; with shackles he clothed their hands. He hunted the chiefs; he treated them all with contempt.
He stoned your baker who used to present bread and make all your loaves; your butcher who used to present a ram — he would strike like the neck, he would strike the windpipe, he would make all the cios of your ...; your priest(s) who used to present the devotee — / meal offering — he would lay down for you fragrances and rushes;
your music

he would carry the harp,
he would carry the lyre.

they pour

[dliri]nk of his belly.

Kissing the Calves of Bethel (V.12-22)

let them kiss [your] bull[s],
let them desire your calves,
Exalted One,
the calves of your . . . s
... and shake
... will find
... Resident of Rash
... B[e]l

Col. VI
A Lament to Mar (VI.1-12)
... ...[Mar].
Mar, good god —
my god, what
should I do / have you done?
let me know ... my god.
No evil is in my hands,
our god;
no duplicity / slander in my mouth.
(But) you have made me
a date in their mouths,
sweets
under their tongues.

Lord, god of Rash, Mar —
Make my body
be nom in their mouths,
poison under their tongues.

A Reassuring Reply (VI.12-18)

Mar speaks up
and says to me:

[Be] strong,
my servant, fear not. I will save...
To Marah,
if you will ...
from your shrine and Rash,
[I shall destroy]
[your] ene my in your days
and during your year's
[your] adversary
will be smitten.

[Your foes]
I shall destroy
in front of you;
your foot on their necks [you will place].
[I shall support] your right (hand)
I shall cro wn you
with prosperity;
your house
... 
...[u]p[o]n you
your cup ...
...
...

Col. VII
The Blessings of the Gods (VII.1-7)
your blessings
... may they bless you.
May Mar from Rash
bless you;
Marah from Shur —
[she] should bless you.
May Baal from Zepbon bless you;
Pidal[i] from Raphia —
she should bless you.
May Bel from Babylon
bless you;
Belit from Esangila —
she should bless you.
May Nebo from Borsippa bless you;  
Nanai from Ayakkū — she should bless you.  
May the Throne of Horus and Osiris from the Negeb bless you.

Offerings to the Gods (VII.7-19)
Give the fire-offerings and offer (them) up in fire.  
Pick up, send a lamb, a young sheep; send a lamb.  
Make abundant holocaust-aroma for Mar; may he bless you abundantly.  
Bow down to Anat and Mami; to Nebo send the consecrated animals.  
Let there be remembered as a remembrance, Mar, sixty singers. Let them lift their voices, Mar; Mar, let them bless you. Let there be remembered as a remembrance, Mar, sixty temple servants — their (lit., his) handfuls of myrrh (and) frankincense for the nostrils of Bethel. Let there be remembered as a remembrance, Mar, sixty sheep. Favor your loved ones, Mar, favor your loved ones and Rash. Favor your loved ones (and) Rash. The blood of the dead sheep is a sea. The sheep floats to you, lord of heaven; wheat

q 2 Kgs 17:30  
(of) barley comes near to you. ... the dust ... lord, may you se[v] a hand, snatch them.

A Hymn to Mar (VII.20-VIII.3)
Your going out, Mar ... your coming in ... on ... on the path ... the [ reserve ... [your] window[s] ... [your] palace, Mar ...  
Col. VIII  
[Al]l the blessings until eternity. your sons, and with your daughters he dealt kindly ... [was brought low] and the god of Rash was victorious over all of them.

An Enticing Invitation (VIII.3-8)
I have taken out your box, my god — open (it), and your mouth ...  
Your table will be covered with the fat of stags. Butchers will wait on it. All of them, with skillful hands, will tremble. Every bull you will snatch, Resident of Hamath. Your krater you will pour out and it will be filled; and butlers will wait on it, each of them standing and speaking up: “You are at a banquet. Look, see! Drink it!”
A Hymn to Mar (VIII.8-10)
Mar, from your snorts
all the <ea> rh perishes;
like smoke, lord,
from your breaths.
You fly
to your followers;
you spread the wing
like an eagle,
and they arise.
The beams of your house,
Bethel,
are from Lebanon;
from Lebanon,
{and} your garden,
are they.
And Resident of Hamath
...

The Selection of Mar's Bride (VIII.10-11)
Elevate a lass.
Who is the lass?
All of your manifestations
are concealed.

A Hymn to Mar (VIII.11-13)
Mar is/set>s like the sun
and rises like the moon,
like the moon
along the length of his heavens.
Oh, let them build,
in heaven,
your house,
concealed, with stars;
let your bed
be brought down in Epiph.
In your temples
let them build,
lord of Bethel,
a thousand new altars.

The Selection of Mar's Bride (VIII.13-16)
A beautiful priestess
elevate,
and the burnt offering's of the city
let her offer;
in Rash
...
"This one here
is 'beautiful';
in the shape of her face
she is lovely."
Elevate a lass.
Who is the lass?
All of your manifestations
are concealed.

The Diadem of Prosperity for Mar's Bride (VII.16-22)
Our Prince has 'been good' to

Ps 18:16;
Job 4:9
1 Esd 1:22
the daughters of Arash:
Mar has given
the diadem of prosperity;
the god of <Ra>sh
has crowned her
in his house,
and he makes her rule in his palaces.
He raises her up
like the sea
in his house,
in...
'his' hor'ns
...
like the river.
[And] our Prince,
the god of <Ra>[sh],
has done good with his water;
the god of <Ra>sh,
with the sea.
...
'Your' shrine, Mar,
is perfect;
...
who has improved?
All of it, Mar, my god
...

Col. IX
A Prayer for Rain (IX.1-13)
'Answer me!
...
from Rash;
'to' my ...
....
The river is disappearing,
it is worn out.
and my lord —
the river
is not rising.
Your mind
is sealed, Mar.
Send to me
your cloud.
Exalted One,
awake for me, awake.
Marah,
lift up the bucket for me; inspect the canals for me, Marah.
Inspect,
your god <0>d, my queen, the pool; lift up, the bucket.
In every generation you rule in your palaces; make it rain, Mar; all the clouds of moisture are hidden away for you
Make it rain, Mar; baths of rain send down.
Our silver is yours and our gold; our possessions are yours, our mature cattle are yours, like our heifers (and) yearling calves.
Chorus (IX.13-17)
He will help us.
We shall be raised up in safety.
He will guard our rear.
The god of Rash will help us.
Let us ponder his mysteries.
Mar is my father and my bull/shepherd.
He will raise me up.
Let me vaunt his mighty deeds.
... ...
... ...
... ...
let the throng say Amen, Amen.

A hymn to Mar (IX.17-20)
Mar, my god — father of the orphan, champion of the widow.
She who has lifted up her hands to you,
... 
... 
... 
let the throng say 
Amen, Amen.

A Dream about Rash (X.8-13)
In my dream,
I was in my youth;
I was in the land of Rash.
I was building a city,
in Rash
I was erecting it;
its name was
Ellipi Pait.
Rash was supported;
my lord
watched over
Ellipi Pait:
He would beat
her troublemakers
in her stocks;
he would break (them)
in corporal punishment.
The righteous man
he would help,
escorting him
in the face of his troubles,
him whom the oppression
of the creditor
has filled/embittered.

Chorus (X.13-16)
And he will help me;
I shall be raised up in safety.
He will guard our rear.
The god of Rash will help me.
Let us ponder his mysteries.
Mar is my father
and my bull/shepherd.
He will raise us up.
Let me vaunt
his mighty deeds.
...
...
...
... 
... 
... 
... 
let the throng say 
Amen, Amen.

A Prayer for the Destruction of Rash’s Enemies
(X.16-20)
Mar who goes out
from Rash,
who is like you,
who is more for bearing than you?
[That] the Kassites and
Ela’mites not destroy us.
May you heal,
Mar,
your intimate,
[that] they not perish,
and save
their enemies
with all that
with which
your oppressed ones
[were sated.]

Col. XI
The Bridal Chamber for the Sacred Marriage
(XI.1-3)
A ...
in ...
erec;
on a height
construct it.
Erect it
under lofty cedars;
there, my powerful one,
may you construct it,
may you ... it.

Father not Old, Brothers not Frail (XI.3-6)
Saturate, invigorate (lit., oil)
your father.
Your father
is a disabled old man,
your brothers
are frail.
My father
is not a disabled old man,
my brothers
are not frail,
for my father
is like a stable (full) of steeds;
my brothers,
like eagles
and wild asses.

Drought in Bethel (XI.6-11)
“You are poor,
my brother.
Why has the flow of the spring
dis appeared?”
“It flowed
and was lost,
and its flow disappeared.
The well flowed,
its water was lost;
our faces
wasted away / dried out.
Stricken is a city
full of ivory houses
[and] with linen

ae 1 Kgs 
14:23; 
2 Kgs 17:10; 
Jer 2:20; 
Ezek 6:13; 
20:28 
bb Ps 23:5 
cc Amos 
3:14-15
and lapis lazuli on her windows;
her insides/windows
a mountain of marble,
his walls iron and bronze.

A Psalm from Bethel (XI.11-19)
May Horus answer us in our troubles;
may Adonai answer us in our troubles.
O crescent (lit., bow) / Bowman in heaven,
Sahar shine forth;
send your emissary from the temple of Arash,
and from Zephon may Horus help us.
May Horus grant us what is in our hearts;
may Mar grant us what is in our hearts.
All <our> plans may Horus fulfill.
May Horus fulfill every request of our hearts.
Some with the bow, some with the spear;
but (lit., behold) as for us — Mar is our god;
Horus-Yaho, our bull, is with us!
May the lord of Bethel answer us on the morrow.
May Baal of Heaven Mar grant a blessing;
to your pious ones, your blessings.

Col. XII
Lambs for Adonai (XII.1-3)
Hear me, my gold, my king.
Choice lambs, we sacrifice to you (alone)
from the gods;
our banquet is for you (alone)
out of all the supreme beings
from the shepherds/chiefs of the people,
Adonai, for you (alone)
out of all the supreme beings
from the shepherds/chiefs of the people.

Wine and music for Adonai (XII.4-10)
Adonai, the people bless you;
accept your yearly liturgy.
From the pitcher
saturate yourself, my god;
I will fill (it) with the juice of the winepress.
Tower,
merciful father,
Horus benefactor of the lowly —
they have mixed wine in goblets,
in goblets at our wedding.
Drink, Horus,
from the bounty of a thousand basins;
saturate yourself, Adonai,
from the bounty of men.
Musicians stand in attendance upon Mar:
a player of the harp,
a player of the lyre.
Here is the music of the harp,
the music of a Sidonian lyre
and sweet things in his ear
at the banquets of men.

A prayer to Adonai (XII.11-17)
Who among gods,
among men, Horus?
Who among gods,
among royalty,
(among) among non-royalty.
Who is like you, Horus, among gods?

Come from Shur;
take vengeance for those who call upon you,
a people dwelling among the crooked.
And make us strong again,
beneath you, Horus;
beneath you, Adonai,
Resident of Heaven;
like the phoenix,
Horus,
Resident of Heaven.
Call out to us your words
among the crooked;
and make us strong again,
Baal from Zephirion.
May Horus grant a blessing.
Arise, Horus,
to our aid / help us.
May Adonai give heed to my prayer.
Mar, ari[f]se!
Horus, may you grant protection,
just as you protect your eyef from degeneration.
A Hymn to Marah-Nanai (XIII.1-9)

[B][el]essed are you, O Marah,
more than all blessed ones.
You are my commander...
You are my queen
and you are a hawk;
Marah from Rash are you,
queen over all.
Raise the crowns...

You had mercy on
him who did not finish
the crowns
of your house.
Merciful one, / Beloved,
the summit of your sanctuary
who can build?
Who can build,
merciful one, / beloved,
the tower
by its side?
Nana, Cow,
the niche for your statue
may you build;
may you carve,
my goddess,
the pedestal
of your testimony.
The sun of
blinding light
shines through your windows,
your windows, divine Cow,
over the gate of men.
The men, Dove,
I shall watch for you,
the watch of the portal for you
so that I may satiate myself
from your abundance,
saturate myself,
my sister, from your baths
in the sea.

Nanai’s Statue Trampled in the Sack of Rash
(XIII.9-17)
The one who rebels (lit., raises a hand)
against Marah-Mar<ah> —
on Nana’s hands
he trampled
and went (away).
He stretched forth his hand
against the merciful one / beloved,
against the one who nourishes.

He threw down
the one who proclaimed to us
and taught.
He threw down, trampled
the proclaimer
who proclaimed
(and) taught.
He came,
threw down, trampled.
He threw down
the Dove,
threw down my treasure.
For Na‘nnai
take up the harp,
(for) Baalat
loosen the tongue...
Your metal is shattered;
on my floor
you lie.
Quickly we entered.
We shake it.
Get up...

that we may exalt you.
Our strength has fallen,
our holy one has fallen,
the teacher of wisdom.
I ran to you...

Get up,
watch over the orphan;
over me,
Foster-mother!
The merciful one / beloved was cast;
it was from metal plates.

Its feet he smashed,
its hand he smashed.
Against the merciful one / beloved
he came;
its feet he smashed.
Appoint an idol-maker
from Tyre.

A Prayer to Nanai (XIII.17-XIV.4)

Who are you?
You are
my powerful goddess.
From our desolation
grant me rest.

....
Over the king’s [s]eat,
[C]low-head —
appoint lookouts
over the throne;
over the throne,
Cow of Babylon(ia),
guards.
Col. XIV
Who are you?
You are
our mighty goddess.
Your mercy
for my people —
for my people,
like the gods,
establish, Na'nanai.
Let them become intoxicated
with casks of wine;
may you intoxicate
with its intoxication,
Nanai.
Who are you?
You are my power ful goddess.
From our desolation
grant me rest.
....

The Tramplers Stricken by Nanai's Venom (XIV.4-6)
On my back horses have walked;
I am the viper at their heel.
Horses have walked
on my belly;
from my poison they grew old,
they were sickened
by my venom,
their hide rotted
from my venomous bite.
Drink an antidote,
....
pick up a remedy,
fill the vessels
with drugs,
load the antidote
with balm.
....
....
....
fashion it.
....
Nebo
....

Col. XV
Blessings and Prayers (XV.1-9)
....
....
Ashim-Bethel
'Nebo'
....
....
(you) entered;
(with goats?)
you came before
your man,
....

who grants
peace everlasting.
In the month
of Epiphani,
may Nebo remember you;
may he put you in mind
on earth and on high."
Blessed are you, Hadad;
Had, with a blessing
fit for El.
Blessed are you,
Baal of Heaven.
The holder of your fort
is the Bull,
Nebo is your 'guard,
'Pit'rai is
your sturdy beam.
Great Baal!
Tip a pitcher of must
and drink with me.
Spend the night in my house;
come to the threshold,
enter.
I have placed
on your tray/crown
....
Bull,
in your memory
whom do you leave?
(Whom) do you regard
in your mind,
Nebo?
A nest among golden stars he sets (for) you."
Into gold,
divine Sheep,
'tell' the goldbeaters
'beat lapis lazuli.
My god, much plunder
I have carried off:
I shall give you
the silver;
the gold will be added to yours.
....
....
....
with the foster-fathers
of the orphan,
speak (saying):
"Exalt Mar El,
may you ascribe to him
supremacy."
They exalt <t> me (saying):
"To whom would you liken El,
among foster-fathers
of the orphan?"
Spoon-Stuffed Ducks Brought to the Table (XV.9-12)
(you/she) spoke (saying):
"Come up to me.
Bring near to me
and my dovecote(s)
a dovelet grain.
Bring near to me
and my dovecote(s)
a vessel of cha'rum,
a vessel of beauty,
[On] an ivory tray
bring to the table
of Bel, the king /
of the King's son (= Nebo son of Bel)
the ducks,
the ducks
placed on ivory.
Stuff the ducks
with a spoon;
make the wine abundant,
increase the fat tenfold."

Jackal and Hare (XV.12-13)
Jackal, jackal!
Here, in front of you
is a hare!
Moon-howler,
jackal!
Rove,
go out and look!
Rove
away from my wilds!
Hare!
Here, a hunter is hunting you
assiduously,
with skillful hands.

A Prayer to Ashim-Bethel (XV.13-17)
The force of
the divine bull
is your force,
Horus.
Ashim-Bethel,
the force of
the divine bulls
is your force;
your venom is like that of serpents.
Your bow in heaven
you, Mar, shot;
draw it, Ashim-Bethel,
at your enemies.
My mighty one,
may your hammer be good;
my brother, for me
against Elam
may you raise it.
My mighty one,
may my linen be good,
my linen
which will touch your couch.
Why does your enemy carry off
...
...

He fills his hand
with ... and vessel
taking out
from your shrine and Rash
... that I you did not see.

Jackal and Hare (XV.17-19)
Jackal, jackal!
Here, in front of you
is a hare!
Moon-howler,
jackal!
Rove,
go out and look!
Rove
away from my wilds!
Hare!

Col. XVI
Soldiers from Judah and Samaria (XVI.1-6)
[With] my (own) two eyes
I watched a tree [p]
...
[and] of
Samaria's
sounded out
my lord, the king.
"Who / From where
are you, lad?
Who / From where
is your...?"
"I come from Judah,
my brother
has been brought from Samaria
and now
a man bring up
my sister
from Jerusalem."
"Enter, lad;
we will give you lodging.
A kab of what
pick up
on your shoulder,
boy;
...
...
On your table
will be placed
lapis lazuli —
from every
dovelet grain,
lapis lazuli;
and from every mina
a vessel of beauty."
The Sacred Marriage Ceremony (XVI.7-19)
Nana, y'olu are my wife.
The bed of rushes
they have laid down,
perfumed fragrances
for your nostril. 3
Our goddess,
may you be carried,
escorted to your dear one;
let them bear you
to the dear one.
In your bridal chamber
a priest sings.
Nana,
bring near to me
your lips.
We dwelled (here)
in the morning;
we shall dwell (here)
in the evening.
I have stayed with you until evening.
The chosen lad too has come.
A sound keeps you awake in the evening;
to our shrine,
who is coming?
A sound of harps
keeps you awake in the evening;
in the grave
of my ancestor,
a dirge.
A sound of lyres from
the grave keeps you awake in the evening. 2
My beloved,
enter the door into our house.
With my mouth,
consort of our lord,
let me kiss you.
O my goddess,
I lamented,
I wailed.
Niveh is (nothing but) swamps;
There are swamps in Niveh;
it has turned into mud.
To (lit., down) the ground
it has been razed (lit., thrown down).

A Tale of Two Brothers in Two Cities (XVII.5-XXII.9)
O Had,
with a blessing
fit for El.
Blessed are you,
Baal of Heaven. 2
"Rebuild, man, Ellipi.
A cursed land rebuild,
a city of ruins rebuilt;
by the side
of the Hamannites.
... the poor [m]an.

Col. XVII
A Lament for Nineveh After the Wedding (XVII.1-5)
O my goddess, / "Woe," I lamented
... the king
... you/I have come
here; indeed
you were / I was brought up
to my garden. 1
You/I have perfumed
my scent
among cedars;
you/I have played music
on a lyre;
you/I have put down
perfume.
Baal of Heaven
has come up,
ascended to my/your bower.
O my goddess, / "Woe," I lamented,
... O my goddess, / "Woe," I lamented,
I waited.
Niveh is (nothing but) swamps;
There are swamps in Niveh;
it has turned into mud.
To (lit., down) the ground
it has been razed (lit., thrown down).

A Tale of Two Brothers in Two Cities (XVII.5-XXII.9)
Omens When the Princes Were Born (XVII.5-XVII.13)
The year in which was born
our lord, King Sar-[ba]nabal,
the land was prosperous
the thin, the split
grew thick.
A man would find
its gatekeepers
in good health
(and be told):
"You, my brother,
enter this gate.
From our house
let us fetch (lit., take) for you a morsel (of bread) and let me roast a goat on... onions.

(Then came) days which had not been, years which had not passed / been spent / been turned.
The year in which was born our lord, our brother, Sarmuge, the earth was bronze, the heavens, of iron, the soil, in a bad/rid state, the heavens, in poor/droughty condition, A man would find its gatekeepers very greatly in distress / in need of food (and be told): “Get away from this gate.”

Sarmuge went to Babylonia. He(!) fasted its bread (as good) as the finest imported liquor. He devoted himself to its payment of tribute to Assyria.

Sarmuge Sent to Babylonia as Governor to Collect Tribute (XVII.14-18)

The king spoke up and said, addressing Sar[mu]ge: "Go to (!) the land of Babylonia. Eat its lamb bread (as good) as the finest imported wine. Devote yourself to its payment of tribute to [Assyria]."

Col. XVIII

A Defiant Message Instead of Tribute from Sarmuge's Emissaries (XVIII.1-4)

(Then came) days which had not passed / been spent / been turned.
The emissaries went out from <Babylon> until they were ushered into Nineveh.

They longed to (lit., for) rest and to satiate themselves, (lit., and satiation) dressed in their tunics.

"From Sarmuge to Sarbanabal. I am the king of (!) Babylon, and you are the governor of/in Nineveh. Pay tribute to me! Why should I show you respect?"

The Emissaries Imprisoned and Released (XVIII.5-15)
The king became angry at the emissaries.

"Let them be brought down from the dining hall; to (!) the dungeon, allotted bread and water."

The general sent up his servants to (!) the palace from his palace.

"The word of our lord to the king: 'O lord of kings, hear! From the days of your father, from the days of your father's fathers, emissaries have not been imprisoned, allotted bread and water. Take out the emissaries from the dungeon. Let them be brought to the bathhouse. Dress them in embroidered garments. Go to the prince; be gracious to him. Count their sin against me."

The advice was pleasing to the king. The king spoke up and said: "I will take out the emissaries..."
from the dungeon.
Let them be brought to the ba[l]th house.
I will dress them in embroidered garments.
I shall go to the prince; I shall be gracious to him.
Go out, emissaries, <from> the dungeon.
Be brought to the ba[l]th house.
Put[r] on embroidered garments.
I shall go to [the prince]; I shall be gracious to him.

Saritrah Sent to Reason With an Ungrateful Brother
(XVIII.15-XIX.8)
The king [spoke up and said]:
"Let them call Saritrah, my sister.
Let her be caused to stand in the gate of the palace of the king...."

Saritrah's Journey to Babylon (XIX.8-12)
Sarit(ah) went out from the palace.
They seated her in the chariot.
She set her face toward Babylon.
The lookouts went up on the wall of Babylon.
The lookouts spoke up (and) said:
"The troop which is coming / has come is too large to consist of emissaries,
too small to consist of warriors."

Saritrah beckoned from the city gate.
"Who here is this / are you?"
"I am Saritrah, sister of the twins / the equal brothers."

An Attempt to Persuade Sarmuge to Return to Nineveh
(XIX.12-XX.2)
Sarmuge spoke up and said:
"Nikkal is now between me and Sarit(ah):
She (=Nikkal) will not let her (=Saritrah) see my face."

Saritrah spoke up (and) said:
"Who made us/me like stub[ble]
Sarmuge, my brother!
Fortune has con< fou >nded you and smiled upon (lit., been good to) your brother.
Do listen to my words, and may you give heed to my remarks.
Act like (lit., make yourself) a governor / Put your hands (in) fetters.
Lift up your feet from here.
Come to the king, your brother.
He is for[be]ring.
[He] will not delay in receiving you."

Sarmuge spoke up and said:
"Have [you] rubbed down and rested your horse?"
"Your hor[se]?
Why so swift your riding?"
A Second Unsuccessful Attempt at Persuasion (XX.2-6)
Saritrah spoke up (and) said:
"Listen / hear me, lord, listen / hear me!
Truly, truly —
two kings
are being overturned
on account of
one of (!) them;
a man (lit., a brother)
and his brother
are quarreling
on account of
one of (!) them.
If my advice may be heard — /
If my king will listen to me —
disregard the tribute
<which> they did not pay you.
Act like (lit., make yourself) a governor/
Put your hands (in) fetters.
Lift up your feet from here.
Come to the king ,
your brother."
Sarmuge did not listen to her,
and did not give <heed>
to her remarks.
Saritrah's Parting Advice (XX.6-11)
Sarit(ah) spoke up (and) said:
"If you will not listen
<to> my words,
and if you will not give heed
<to> my remarks,
go from the house of Bel,
away from the house of Marduk."
Let there be built for you
a bower (lit., a house of boughs);
a booth (lit., a house of sticks)
do constr < uct >.
Throw down tar and pitch
and sweet-smelling/Arabian perfumes.
Bring in your sons
and your daughters
and your doctors
who have made you act brashly.
When you see
how (low) they have sunk
on you (= to your detriment),
let fire burn you
together with your sons
and your daughters
and your doctors
who have made you act "bra[t]shly."
Saritrah's Return and Report to the King (XX.11-15)
Sarit(ah) went out
from Babylon.
to be the army of the king."

The general spoke up and said, addressing Sarmuge:

"Listen / hear me, lord, listen / hear me!
Truly — two kings are being overturned on account of (!) one of them.
If my advice may be heard — / If my king will listen to me — disregard the tribute which they did not pay you
Act like (lit., make yourself) a governor/ / Put your hand (in) fetters.
Lift up your feet from here. Come to the king, your brother. He is forbearing. He will not delay in receiving you."

Sarmuge spoke up and said:

"So he (= the king) decreed upon his governor, your servant, and so it is decreed."

"Then if so, listen to your words and may you give <heed> to your remarks. Begone, for the wall of Babylon in three days / after a day we shall capture; for the wall I shall breach af<er> a day."

*Sarmuge’s Suicidal Response (XXI.7-11)*

Sarmuge went from the house of Bel, away from the house of Marduk.
He {will have} built for himself a bower (lit., a house of boughs); a booth (lit., house of sticks) he did construct.

*He threw down* tar and pitch [and] sweet-smelling / Aramaic
[pe]rfumes.
He brought in his sons and [his] daughters [and] {his} doctors
[who] had made him act brashly.
Wh[e]n he [saw] [how] (low) they had sunk on him (= to his detriment),...
burned him ...

*The Context of Scripture, 1*

with [his] sons [and his daughters] and his doctors who had made him act brashly.

*A Desperate Attempt to Bring Sarmuge Back Alive (XXI.11-15)*

The general keeps alive ... y(ou)ng <and> old. He {we}nt {out} from the palace.
They seated him in the chariot.

He (!) set his foot [tam] toward <Babylon>. (sic!?) Sarmuge [he took] in [him].
Away they hurried, and they [came]
men...

*Reactions to Sarmuge’s Death (XXII.1-9)*

The daughters of Assyria ... mourned and wept.

Col. XXII my [ha]nds in / with his blood."

... to...
to which of (lit., to whom out of all of) one ... bring near.
To my sister let him be sent...


d and let him say: ... the one who overturned him I shall banish. They rebelled against me (lit., their hand they lifted up against me), Saritrah urged the king. She sent (and) urged the king to write his word: "Let them take away ... haughtiness from my presence. I shall break..." To the right of his temple I shall ascend, [I shall] go."

**REFERENCES**


**A UGARITIC INCANTATION AGAINST SERPENTS AND SORCERERS (1.100)**

**1992.2014**

**Dennis Pardee**

A new Ugaritic incantation text, similar in many respects to RII 78/20 (text 1.96), was discovered in 1992 in the archive that has since been identified as belonging to Urien (Bordreuil and Pardee 1995), a high official in the city shortly before its demise (Arnaud 1982:106). The incantation was prepared especially for Urien (see lines 14-15) and shows a concern for venomous reptiles reminiscent of that visible in the "para-mythological" text RII 24.244 (text 1.94). We learn from this text that especially to be feared was the joining of forces between sorcerers and serpents.

The text is expressed in the first person, the incantation priest speaking to the individual who fears attack.

**Incantation Against Serpents (lines 1-8)**

(When) the unknown one* calls you and begins foaming,1 I, for my part, will call you. I will shake* bits of sacred wood, So that the serpent* not come up

1 The Ugar. formula is dy dyd, "the one not known." Because neither this text nor RII 78/20, where the term d'tm designates a category of sorcerer, deals with necromancy, one may conclude that the "knowledge" in question was not linked in any particular way with necromancy. The same conclusion is probably applicable to the yidd-stin of the Hebrew Bible. Necromancy would, therefore, have been one form of divination among others practiced by sorcerers. The formulation of this text, in spite of the fact that the d'tm are not mentioned in it, may indicate that the name of this group arose from their ability to deal with the unknown.

2 The vocabulary of line 1 is non-problematic except for the last phrase, "uzh, taken here as cognate to Arabic qabba, which can mean "to foam." If this analysis is correct, it seems to indicate that the "unknown one" earlier in the line is the serpent, for the motif of serpent venom as foam or spittle is well known from Mesopotamian literature (see CAD I-I 139-141), while the ability of the serpent to speak is known from biblical sources (Gen 3) and its general running from various Mesopotamian sources (Lipinski 1983:40-43).

3 The form is "amrn, a reduplicated verbal form either from the root meaning "pass on" (i.e., "make pass back and forth") or from the one meaning "to bless" (Pardee 1978b). Though either solution is plausible, the former is chosen here because moving the bits of wood back and forth shows more similarity to the acts described in more detail in RII 24.244-64-67 (text 1.94).

4 The word for "serpent" here is b'n, which appears only near the end of the Ugar. liturgy against serpent venom, RII 24.244 (see note 28 to