The verbal contest between a goat and a Babylonian date-palm

The draxt asūrig (DA) is a versified animal fable, originally composed in Parthian. The postscript to DA refers to it as a srōd ‘song, poem’ among the poems composed by an (unknown) poet; it was transmitted both orally and in writing.

Bibliography


امحمد تفضيلي، دو وازه، پارتي از درخت آسوري و برای آنها در فارسی، مجله، دانشگاه ادبیات (دانشگاه تهران، 1425/1345، 1346، 1347، 1348)، ماهیار نوایی، منظومه، درخت آسوريک، تهران، 1346 (چاپ دوم: 1346)، عربان، متون پهلوی، تهران، 1371، 1464-1465، 151-156، 373-377.
(1) 1 draxt-ē rust est
tar ō šahr asūrīg
bun-aš hušk est
sar-aš ast *tarr
varg-aš nay mâned
bar-aš mâned angūr
šīrēn bār āvared
(2) mardōmān *vansād
hav-am draxt buland
ud buz ō ham nibardid
6 kū: az az tō abardar ham
ped vas gōnag xīr
(3) u-m ped xānirāh zamīg
draxt-am nēst hamtan
cē šāh az man x'āred
ka nōg āvaram bār
(4) makāgān taxt ham
(5) frasp ham vādbānān
(6) ġyāğrōb az man karend
kē virāzend mēhan ud mān
(7) 11 javāz-am az man karend
kē kōbend jō ud brinz
(8) damēnāz az man karend
ādurān *vansād
(9) mōg ham varzīgarān
(10) *bālēn *brahnbāyān
(11) rasan az man karend
kē tō pāy bannend
(12) cōb az man karend
kē tō *grīv māzēnd
(13) 16 mex az man karend
kē tō *sārnīgūn <ā>gōzend
(14) ēṃ ham ādurān
kē tō *kīrb brēzēnd
(15) tābestān āsāyag ham
ped sar šāhriyārān
(16) sik ham varzīgarān
angubēn āzādmardān
dārūgdān vāsnād
(17) tabangōg az man karend
(18) šāhr ō šahr bārend
bīzešk ō bīzešk
(19) ṣāyān ham murvīzagān
sāyāg kārdāgān
ka hirzānd mardōmāg
ped nōg *bun-am rōyed
(20) bašn-am *baved zeryōn
kū-m bē nē vināhēnd
26 hav-iz mardōmāg
yad ō *rōz jāyēd
az man bār x'ārend
yad hamburd avištēnd
ka-š hān vāxt būd
draxt asūrīg
(21) buz-am pesox kared
sar-am frāz šāved
kū: tū-iz ō man rāne
tū-iz ō man nibarde
*šnūd *baved
31 ka ēd az man kirdāgān
soxān-at pehikārd
nang ēy hālag
*bašn-at mâned dēv dēv
(22) burz he dēv buland
ped ḫō farrox āvām
*ka ped sar šēd jim
būd *hend (23) mardōmān
*druz dēvān bannag
36 draxt hušk-īz *dār
sar-aš būd zeryōn
(24) tū az ēd kirdāgān
sar-at hēd zeryōn
bē bār burden sazed
dānāg az dušāgāh
(25) *yad ō kū baram bār
az tō buland abēsūd
(26) agar-at pesox-ē karam
nang-am baved grān
parśīg mardōm
(27) 41 væzend-am ped afsān
abēsūd *draxt-ā
kū: vāš he ud vadxrād
mardōmān vāsnād
(28) agar tū bār āvare
ped āvēnag-īz gāvān
gušn-at abar hilend
kū rūspīg-zādag he
(29) x'ad gumānīg ham
yad az pehikārām
(30) 46 āshnav ē dēv buland
bāmīg x'ābar ohrmezd
kū:dārā bay varzāvānd
cē cāsīt (31) x'ābar ohrmezd
abēzag dēn mazdesnān
yaṣṭan nē šāyed kēž
jud az man kē buz ham
(32) andar yazišn yazdān
cē jīv az man karend
51 گوش‌روگ یازد
hav-iz hóm tagíg
(33) ۳hav-iz bár-jamag
jud az man kё buz ham
(34) kamar az man karend
(35) ۵۶ mōzag ham saxtag
angustbān husrōgān
māsk-um karend ābdān
ped garm ṭoz ud rabiḥ
(37) māskızag az man karend
61 stabr sūr vazurg
māskızag az man karend
*۷ka x‘ādāyān ud dahyubedān
ped šḵōh ud āzarm
(39) nāmag az man karend
66 daftar ud pādixšēr
(40) zīh az man karend
*۸varr ‘az ū man karend
kē āzādān ud vazurgān
(41) skuz az man karend
71 *ka rōstahm ud spendyād
kē ped meh pīl zandpīl
kē ped vas kāreẓār
hambun<–z–> nē *višed
pilaxān ud kaškancīr
76 jud az man kē buz ham
(42) hambān az man karend
kē nān ud pust ud panīr
kāpūr ud muš syā
vas jāmāg šāhvār
81 ped hambān dārend
kūstīg az man karend
hō taškanag šāhvār
hav-um *vāšām kēnīg
*۹eg-um hamsardag
86 tān avend bōyād
srūg-e dhāh videst
kōf ō kōf *šāvam
az kūst i hindūgān
judsardag mardōmag
91 videstīg ud vārčasm
sar-ās ō sag mān
kē dār vārg x‘ārend
hav-iz mardōmag
(45) pēšpārag az man karend
96 kē x‘āred šāhriyār
*۹eg-um bid *abardar
(46) ud az ūr ud panīr
dōg-am kaḵ karend
mazdesnān pādyāb
harvīn cahārbāyān
nīrōg az man est
cē ped puşt ūdārend
kīrdan nē šāyed <کژ>
kē *azrāyēd ped murvārīd
āzādān *evasnād
(36) šāh hamḥirzān
ped dašt ud viyābān
sard āb az man est
kē sūr abar virāzend
az man *kīrb virāzend
(38) vansnād šāhriyārān
sar ud rēś virāzend
andar kanār dārend
fravardag-dibiran
abar man nibēsēnd
kē bennand *abar *dron
naxšag buz-pašmēn
abar dōš dārend
kē bennand zēnān
abar bē ništēynd
dārend ṣanvar ud *vazr
andar kār dārend
az bān zēnān
hav-am xirān āvēn
kīrdan nē šāyēd
vāzargānān vansnād
*harvīn rōvn- *x‘ardīg
ud xaz tuxārīg
peymōzan kēnīgān
(43) frāz ō šahr cē erān
hav-am spēd pedām
peymōzan vazurgān
ped var grīv stāyēnd
az amāh peyvān
cōn gul gēftīg (/ gul dastag)
(44) abāz ō puşt dāram
vazurg kīšvar būm
tar ō varkaš zreh
kē mānēnd tar ō būm
kē *čaşm ped var ast
brūg-āş mān mardōmān
az buz šīr dōšēnd
zīvišn az man ast
ō jō hur *may
kōfiyār ud āzād
az tō draxt asurīg
bid afruʃag ud māst
(47) vansnād šāhīgānān
ped man pōst dārend
(48) 101 cang ud vin ud kinnār  
hamāg zanend  
ēg-um bid abardar ham  
(49) ka buz ā vazār barend  
harv kē dah drahm nē dāred  
106 xurmā ped do peşīz  
dān astag tō šaved  
(50) ēn-am sūd ud nēkīh  
kē az man buz bē raved  
(51) ēn-am zarrēn soxan  
111 cōn kē pēş xūg varāz  
ayāb cang zaned  
(42) az bun ābāz-ūrōn  
kōfān carag šavam  
giyāh tarrōg xāram  
(53) 116 tū kust he ēdar  
buz (54) ped perōzīh šud  

srōd-um ē-kē burd (/ srūd)  
darg zīvād ped harī, srōd  
kē nihād ud kē nibišt  
121 ped gētīg tan-husrō  

*ēdōn bavād

ud barbit ud tambūr  
ped man srāyend  
az tō draxt asurīg  
ud ped vahāg dāred  
frāz ē buz nē āsed  
kōdakān xrinend  
frāz ē kand (/ kōy) murdān  
ēn-am dahišn ud drod  
tar im cē pahn būm  
kē man ē tō vāxt  
murvārid afšāned  
pēş uštār māst  
kū ped bun-dahišnīh  
ō hubōy kōfān  
az xānīg sārd āb  
kū jūlāhagān mex  
xurmāg andar hō stōb
1 A tree has grown over in the land of Assur (or, Assyria)
   Its trunk is dry; its top is moist.
   Its leaves resemble canes; its fruits resemble grapes.
   It bears sweet fruits for a people.
   That lofty tree and a goat contested together:
   6 "I am superior to thee as many regards.
   In X'anirāba land there is no tree of my stature.
   Because the kings eat of me when I bear first fruits.
   I am the plank for boats; I am the mast for sails.
   They make brooms of me which sweep house and home
   11 They make presses of me which pound barley and rice.
   They make fans of me for the fires.
   I am shoes for farmers; I am cushions for the barefoot.
   They make ropes of me which bind thy legs.
   They make clubs of me which break thy neck.
   16 They make pegs of me which hang thee head downwards.
   I am fuel for fires which they roast thy flesh.
   In summer I am shade over the head of rulers
   I am vinegar for farmers, honey for noblemen.
   They make boxes of me for medicines.
   21 They carry (these) realm to realm, physician to physician.
   I am a nest for little birds shade for travellers.
   (If) I cast down a stone, my trunk will grow up anew.
   If people allow, that is, they don’t damage me,
   my height will be green until the day eternal.
   26 Even those persons who have neither wine nor bread
eat fruit from me until they become full.”
   When that was said by the Assuric (/ Assyrian) tree,
   the goat replied shaking the head:
   “Thou fightest with me, thou disputest with me.
   31 When these deeds of mine will be heard,
   shame [will be to thee who] with stupid word disputed [with me].
   Tall art thou, O lofty demon; thy height resembles demons.
   When at the beginning of Yima Xšaēta -in that happy period-
the devils and demons were the servants of the people,
   36 even the tree with dry wood its top was green.
   From these deeds let thy head be green!
   But it is right that the wise bears ignorant.
   How long shall I bear thee, O tall and useless!
   If I make thee a reply great shame will be to thee.
   41 They tell about thee in a fable the Persic people:
   Thou art straw and foolish O useless tree!
   If thou bearest fruit for people,
   they (maybe) loose the male on thee in the same way as with cows.
   I indeed suspect that thou art a courtesan’s offspring.
   46 Listen, O lofty demon, till I dispute.
   The creator, the dignified Lord, the radiant one, beneficent Ahura Mazdā
the pure Daēnā Māzdayasni which beneficent Ahura Mazdā taught,
except through me who am the goat one can not perform the Yasna ceremony.
For they make from me Jīvyām (= consecrated milk) in the Yasna ceremony of the Yazata.

51 Gauš Urvan, Yazata (/god) of all quadrupeds, and even the valiant Haoma, their strength is from me. Even the saddle-bags which they have over the back, without me, who am the goat, one can not make. They make belts of me which they adorn with pearls.

56 I am boots of leather for the nobles, finger-stalls for the illustrious ones and the companions of the kings. They make my skin into water-bags; in the plain and desert, on a hot day and at noon, cold water is from me. They make table-cloths of me, on which they arrange meal. They make table-cloths of me for rulers. When kings and lords dress head and beard, with glory and honour, they keep (me) alongside. They make epistles of me, the epistlers.

66 Registers and documents they write upon me. They make strings of me which they bind upon bows. They make mantles of me, splendid, of fine wool, which nobles and great ones wear over the shoulder. They make straps of me which they fasten saddles.

71 When Rustam and Spendyād mount up, who on huge elephants, furious elephants hold bows and maces, who in many battles hold in action. Nothing (may) be opened from the strap of the saddles. Slings and ballistae and things of that sort without me, who am the goat, one cannot make. They make packs of me for merchants; bread and (roasted) floor and cheese, all the sweetmeats, camphor and black musk and Tukharian marten furs, many princely garments, dresses for maidens, 81 they keep in packs on to the Aryan Land (= Persia). They make (sacred) girdles of me, white (sacred) maks, princely shirts, cloths for the great, the scarves (which) maidens praise on breast and neck. Then, let my fellow-creatures, out of our lineage, 86 their body smell as fragrant as the flower (called) Gēṭīg. A horn of ten spans I bear over my back. Montain to mountain I go big continents (and) lands, from the region of the Indians over to the Vourukarta sea. Humans of different species who dwell beyond (those) lands, 91 the span-sized, the eye-chested [i.e.] whose eyes are on their chest-, those whose heads resemble a dog’s, whose eyebrows resemble men’s, who eat the leaves of trees, (and) milk the milk from the goat, even these humans their livelihood is from me. They make trimmings from me -for beer, koumiss and wine- 96 which kings eat, mountain rulers and nobles. Then once more I am superior to thee, the Assuric tree. I am milk and cheese, further, pastries and curds.
They dry my buttermilk for palaces.
The Mazdayasnians perform ceremonial ablutions on my skin.
101 Harp and vina and lyre and lute and cither
   every (instrument) they play, they play on me.
Then once more I am superior to thee, the Assuric tree.
When they bring a goat to market and offer it for sale,
   whoever does not have (at least) ten drahm does not come near the goat.
106 Dates, for two coppers, the children buy.
Thy seeds and stones proceed to the valley of the dead.
This is my use and goodness, this my gift and welfare,
   which issues from me, the goat, across this wide earth.
This is my golden word which I have told you
111 like one who, before a wild boar, scatters pearls,
   or who plays a harp before a must camel.
Since the beginning - that is, the primeval creation-
I go pasturing on the mountains, the sweet-smelling mountains;
I eat fresh grass, and [drink] cool water from springs.
116 Thou art nailed here like a weaver’s peg.”
The goat departed in victory; the date-palm went down in defeat.

* 
Whoever sings my songs whoever writes them, whoever keeps them for himself,
   may he live long for each song, may he see his enemy’s head dead.
May he who bequeaths it and he who copies it, be, in the same way too,
   renowned of person in the world of life and saved of soul in the world of thought.

(Raham Asha)