

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

The draxt asurīg (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.

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(1) 1 draxt-ē rust est
 bun-aš hušk est
 varg-aš nay māned
 šīrēn bār āvared
 hav-am draxt buland
 6 kū: az az tō abardar ham
 (3) u-m ped x^vanirah zamīg
 cē šāh az man x^vared
 (4) makūgān taxt ham
 (6) gyāgrōb az man karend
 (7) 11 javāz-am az man karend
 (8) damēnag az man karend
 (9) mōg ham varzīgarān
 (11) rasan az man karend
 (12) cōb az man karend
 (13) 16 mex az man karend
 (14) ēsm ham ādurān
 (15) tābestān āsāyag ham
 (16) sik ham varzīgarān
 (17) tabangōg az man karend
 21 šahr ō šahr barend
 (18) āšyān ham murvīzagān
 (19) astag bē abganam
 ka hirzend mardōmag
 (20) bašn-am x^bbaved zeryōn
 26 hav-iz mardōmag
 az man bār x^varend
 ka-š hān vāxt būd
 (21) buz-am pesox kared
 kū: tū-iz ō man rāne
 31 ka ēd az man kirdagān
 nang ōy halag
 (22) burz he dēv buland
 x^kka ped sar šēd jim
 x^ddruz dēvān bannag
 36 draxt hušk-iz x^ddār
 (24) tū az ēd kirdagān
 bē bār burden sazed
 (25) x^yyad ō kū baram bār
 (26) agar-at pesox-ē karam
 (27) 41 vāzend-am ped afsān
 kū: vāš he ud vadxrad
 (28) agar tū bār āvare
 gušn-at abar hilend
 (29) x^vad gumānīg ham
 (30) 46 ašnav ē dēv buland
 kū dādār bay varzāvand
 abēzag dēn mazdesnān
 jud az man kē buz ham
 cē jīv az man karend

tar ō šahr asurīg
 sar-aš ast ⁺tarr
 bar-aš māned angūr
 (2) mardōmān ⁺vasnād
 ud buz ō ham nibardīd
 ped vas gōnag xīr
 draxt-am nēst hamtan
 ka nōg āvaram bār
 (5) frasp ham vādbānān
 kē virāzend mēhan ud mān
 kē kōbend jō ud brinz
 ādurān ⁺vasnād
 (10) ⁺bālēn ⁺brahnbāyān
 kē tō pāy bannend
 kē tō ⁺grīv māzend
 kē tō ^xsarnīgūn <ā>gōzend
 kē tō ^xkīrb brēzend
 ped sar šahriyārān
 angubēn āzādmardān
 dārūgdān vasnād
 bizešk ō bizešk
 sāyag kārdāgān
 ped nōg ^xbun-am rōyed
 kū-m bē nē vināhend
 yad ō ⁺rōz jāyēd
 kē-š nēst may ud nān
 yad hamburd avištend
 draxt asurīg
 sar-am frāz šāved
 tū-iz ō man nibarde
 x^ššnūd x^bbaved
 soxan-at pehikārd
⁺bašn-at māned dēv dēv
 ped hō farrox āvām
 būd x^hhend (23) mardōmān
 sar-aš būd zeryōn
 sar-at hēd zeryōn
 dānāg az dušāgāh
 az tō buland abēsūd
 nang-am baved grān
 pārsīg mardōm
 abēsūd x^ddraxt-ā
 mardōmān vasnād
 ped ēvēnag-iz gāvān
 kū rūspīg-zādag he
 yad az pehikāram
 bāmīg x^vābar ohrmezd
 cē cāšt (31) x^vābar ohrmezd
 yaštan nē šāyed kēž
 (32) andar yazišn yazdān

51 gōšurog yazd
 hav-iz hōm tagīg
 (33) ^xhav-iz bār-jāmag
 jud az man kē buz ham
 (34) kamar az man karend
 (35) 56 mōzag ham saxtag
 angustbān husrōgān
 mašk-um karend ābdān
 ped garm rōz ud rabih
 (37) maškīzag az man karend
 61 stabr sūr vazurg
 maškīzag az man karend
^xka ^xvādāyān ud dahyubedān
 ped škōh ud āzarm
 (39) nāmag az man karend
 66 daftar ud pādixšēr
 (40) zīh az man karend
^xvarr ^xaz ^xman karend
 kē āzādān ud vazurgān
 (41) skuz az man karend
 71 ⁺ka rōstahm ud spendyād
 kē ped meh pīl zandpīl
 kē ped vas kārezār
 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 mušk syā
 vas jāmag šāhvār
 81 ped hambān dārend
 kustīg az man karend
 hō taškanag šāhvār
 hav-um ^xvāšām kenīg
^xēg-um hamsardag
 86 tan avend bōyād
 srūg-ē dah videst
 kōf ō kōf ^xšavam
 az kust ī hindūgān
 judsardag mardōmag
 91 videstīg ud varcašm
 sar-aš ō sag mān
 kē dār varg ^xarend
 hav-iz mardōmag
 (45) pēšpārag az man karend
 96 kē ^xvāred šahriyār
^xēg-um bid ^xabardar
 (46) ud az šīr ud panīr
 dōg-am kašk karend
 mazdesnān pādyāb

harvīn cahārbāyān
 nirōg az man est
 cē ped pušt ^xdārend
 kirdan nē šāyed <kēž>
 kē ^xazrāyend ped murvārīd
 āzādān ⁺vasnād
 (36) šāh hamhīrzān
 ped dašt ud vīyābān
 sard āb az man est
 kē sūr abar virāzend
 az man ^xkīrb virāzend
 (38) vasnād šahriyārān
 sar ud rēš virāzend
 andar kanār dārend
 fravardag-dibīran
 abar man nibēsend
 kē bannend ⁺abar ⁺drōn
 naxšag buz-pašmēn
 abar dōš dārend
 kē bannend zēnān
 abar bē nišīyend
 dārend ^xsanvar ud ^xvazr
 andar kār dārend
 az bann zēnān
 hav-am xīrān ēvēn
 kirdan nē šāyed
 vāzārgānān vasnād
^xharvīn rōvn-^xvārdīg
 ud xaz tuxārīg
 peymōzan kenīgān
 (43) frāz ō šahr cē erān
 hav-am spēd pedām
 peymōzan vazurgān
 ped var grīv stāyend
 az amāh peyvann
 cōn gul gētīg (/ guldastag)
 (44) abāz ō pušt dāram
 vazurg kišvar būm
 tar ō varkaš zreh
 kē mānend tar ō būm
 kē ^xcašm ped var ast
 brūg-aš mān mardōmān
 az buz šīr dōšend
 zīvišn az man ast
 ō jō hur ^xmay
 kōfiyār ud āzād
 az tō draxt asurīg
 bid afrušag ud māst
 (47) vasnād šāhīgānān
 ped man pōst dārend

(48) 101 cang ud vin ud kinnār
hamāg zanend
ēg-um bid abardar ham
(49) ka buz ō vāzār barend
harv kē dah drahm nē dāred
106 xurmā ped do pešiz
dān astag tō šaved
(50) ēn-am sūd ud nēkih
kē az man buz bē raved
(51) ēn-am zarrēn soxan
111 cōn kē peš xūg varāz
ayāb cang zaned
(42) az bun abāz-^xrōn
kōfān carag šavam
giyāh tarrōg x^varam
(53) 116 tū kust he ēdar
buz (54) ped perōzī_h šud

^xud barbit ud tambūr
ped man srāyend
az tō draxt asurīg
ud ped vahāg dārend
frāz ō buz nē āsed
kōdakān ^xxrīnend
frāz ō kand (/ kōy) murdān
ēn-am dahišn ud drod
tar im cē pahn būm
kē man ō tō vāxt
murvārīd afšāned
peš uštar mast
kū ped bun-dahišnīh
ō hubōy kōfān
az xānīg sard āb
kū jūlahagān mex
xurmāg andar hō stō_b

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srōd-um ^xkē burd (/ srūd)
darg zīvād ped har_v srōd
kē nihād ud kē nibišt
121 ped gētīg tan-husrō

ēdōn bavād

kē nibišt kē x^vēš
sar dušmen murd vēnād
hav-iz ped ham-ēvēn
ud menōg bōxtag-ruvān

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^vaniraθa 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.
61 The opulent great feast they adorn with my meat.
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
76 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) Gētīg.
A horn of ten spans I bear over my back.
Mountain 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.

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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)