

A Kettle-Drum Ritual during Iyar Seleucid Era 85 – The astronomical diary Sachs-Hunger Diaries II -226 records the celebration of a ritual during the second month of the year, *ajarū*, Seleucid era 85 :

20'arhu šuātu(itu.bi)
21'	[.....] x ma bit mu-um-ma la ep-šú
22'	[.....] x pu-ha-du ik-ta-as-su-ú ^{umdu} [i-l]i-
su ¹	
23'	[.... K]A.INIM in-da-nu
	LBAT 288+289 20'-23'
	(= Sachs-Hunger Diaries II p.132 rev. 20'-23', Photo pl. 95).
20' that month
21'	[.....] .. the workshop were not made/done.
22'	[.....] ..lamb(s) they bound, the ket[tle-d]rum
23'	[.... in]cantation(s) he recited.....

This ritual may be compared with the ritual *arāmu ša lilissi siparri* « The Covering of the Bronze Kettle-Drum ». This ritual is known both from four versions of the ritual edited by F. Thureau-Dangin in Racc. 10-33, as well as five additional pieces from the Resh Temple in Uruk published by W. Mayer as Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5-9.² The related text O 175 (F. Thureau-Dangin RA 16 144-156) presents a theological-mystical commentary to the bronze kettle-drum ritual with a diagram of the ceremony.³

The astronomical diary itself opens with a reference to the *bīt mummi* « temple workshop »,⁴ and then notes three elements of the ritual. The sacrifice of *puhādū* « lambs », the presence of the kettle-drum, and the recitation of incantations. Similar elements are present in examples of the ritual *arāmu ša lilissi siparri*. The *bīt mummi*, workshop, where the bull-skin for covering the bronze kettle-drum is prepared and placed on the drum, occurs in TCL 6 44, IVR 23 1, and Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5-7.⁵ Instructions for the actual covering of the bronze kettle-drum itself survive in TCL 6 44 ii 25, KAR 60 rev. 8, and IVR 32 1 i 7,⁶ and both TCL 6 44 i 1 and Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5 : 1 preserve parts of the opening line of the ritual : *enūma lilissi siparru ana arāmi ana pānūka* « When the bronze kettle-drum is before you for covering ». Incantations are recited in all four of the rituals edited by F. Thureau-Dangin in Racc., as well as

in Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5.⁷

The ritual in the astronomical diary may or may not be the standard ritual for « The covering of the Bronze Kettle-Drum » although the ritual in the diary does refer to sheep, the *bīt mummi*, and a kettle-drum. First, *puhādū* « lambs » are sacrificed in line 22' rather than the more general ^{urudu}*niqû* « sacrificial sheep » as in the standard rituals.⁸ Second, Sachs-Hunger Diaries II 132 rev. 21' states that something(s) are not done in the *bīt nummi*, and third, the astronomical diary preserves ^{urudu}*lilissu*, written with the determinative for copper, rather than the usual *lilissu siparri* « bronze kettle-drum ». Thus, Sachs-Hunger Diaries II 132 rev. 20'-23' may preserve an unorthodox kettle-drum ceremony.

In any case, the celebration of a kettle-drum ritual in the astronomical diary for -226 (= SE 85) is not the first attestation of such rituals in astronomical diaries. Both the *nēpešu ša arāmu ša li[lissu siparri]* « The ritual for the covering of the bronze ket[tle-drum] », as well as the ritual for the renovation of temples *enūma iqār bīt ili iqāpu* « When the Wall of a Temple Buckles », including a recitation of the incantation *enūma d^{danu} ibnû šamê* « When Anu Built the Heavens », are performed by exorcists and lamentation priests 44 years earlier in the astronomical diary for -270 (= SE 41) (Hunger-Pingree Diaries I p. 352 rev. 13, 354 rev. 15-17).⁹

¹Sachs-Hunger Diaries II p. 132 rev. 22' reads ^{kuš}*l[i-l]i-su* but both the photograph and Sachs' copy in LBAT support the reading ^{urudu}*lilissu* « kettle-drum » and no examples of *lilissu* with the *kuš* determinative are attested in CAD or AHW. For kettle-drums made of *urudu* = (w)*erû* « copper », as opposed to kettle-drums of *UD.KA.BAR* = *siparru* « bronze », see TCL 5 6055 ii 9, ABL 1092 rev. 13-14 ; MSL 7 153 : 191-192. For other drums written with the *urudu* determinative see CAD N_{II} 215 **niqalaqû* and MSL VII 153 : 193-196 (Urgud). For kettle-drums made of *siparru* see J.A. Brinkman in D. Curtis *Bronze-Working Centres of Western Asia* 140 n. 44. In this article *urudu* = (w)*erû* will be translated in the traditional manner as « copper », and *siparru* likewise will be translated as « bronze », although it cannot be certain that the « copper »-determinative *urudu* in ^{urudu}*lilissu* in Sachs-Hunger Diaries II p.132 rev. 22' indicates that the kettle-drum is made of copper, rather than bronze or another « non-iron » metal (see J.A. Brinkman *Ibid* 137). Furthermore, Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian texts do not always differentiate between the copper and bronze (see J.A. Brinkman *ibid* 136-138 with further bibliography), and no study of this

problem exists for the Hellenistic period.

²Racc. 10-33 No.1 = TCL 6 44 ; No. 2 = KAR 60 ; No. 3 = KAR 50//BBR II 56 ; No. 4 = IVR 23 1 (+K 9421) see HKL II 229. For further bibliography see W. Mayer, Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 p. 16. An edition of Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 6 is published by W. Mayer in Or. 47 432-437. For English and German translations see ANET 334-338, TUAT II/2 234-236.

³For an edition of O 175 and the partial duplicate AO 17626 (F. Thureau-Dangin, RA 41 30-32) see now also A. Livingstone, *Mystical and Mythological Explanatory Works of Assyrian and Babylonian Scholars* (1986), 187-204.

⁴For the *bīt mummi* see W. Mayer, Or 47 (1978) 437 n. 41.

⁵TCL 6 44 i 7-9, 11 ; IVR 23 1 iv 25 ; Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5 : 7, 6 ; 41, 7 rev. 7'.

⁶When complete, Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5 : 28, which duplicates parts of KAR 60 rev. 7-8, almost certainly preserved the instruction for covering the bronze kettle-drum.

⁷TCL 6 44 ii 9-10 ; KAR 60 10, 12 ; KAR 50 obv., rev. 11 ; IVR 23 i 8-25 ; Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5 : 19, 21.

⁸TCL 6 44 ii 3, 5, 33, iii 18 ; IVR 23 1 iii 27 ; Bagd. Mitt. Beih. 2 5 : 13.

⁹For these two rituals see the author's article « Antiochus I, Esagil, and A Celebration of the Ritual for Renovation of Temples » (*RA* 85, 1991, 75-77). Note also rituals in Sachs-Hunger Diaries II p. 14 : 20' ; 68 B' obv. 5' ; 130 -226 4' ; 134 : 18-19 ; 202 : 14-19 ; 330 rev. 4' -332 : 17' ; 404 : 14'.

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