

A *Mār Banūtu* Text from the Town of Ḫubat – The growing discussion about the class of people called *mār banū* (cp. most recently John MacGinnis, « The Manumission of a Royal Slave, » *Acta Sumerologica* 15 [1993], pp. 99-106) has prompted me to publish Oriental Institute text A 32099 (dating to Amēl-Marduk year 2= 560 B.C.) at this time in N.A.B.U. I hope to include it with a more extensive discussion in a forthcoming edition of Neo-Babylonian texts from the Oriental Institute Collection.

I was able to discuss the text and some underlying dynamics of its Neo-Babylonian social setting with Paul-Alain Beaulieu ; I thank him for his help. I gratefully acknowledge permission of the Curator of the Oriental Institute Tablet Collection, J.A. Brinkman, to publish the text here. Scholars whose helpful comments have been utilized are mentioned in the comments below.

A 32099

Obv. 1.	IdUTU.NUMUN.DÙ A-šú šá ¹ <i>ba-la-tu</i> A ¹ <i>IM-ra-bi</i>
2.	<i>ina hu-ud lib-bi-šú</i> IM.DUB LÚ DUMU.DÙ-ú-tu
3.	šá SAL <i>la-qip-tum</i> ù DUMU.MEŠ-e-šú
4.	<i>a-na</i> UD.MEŠ <i>ul-lí-a ik-nu-uk</i>
5.	SAL <i>la-qip-ti u</i> DUMU.MEŠ-e-šú
6.	LÚ DUMU.MEŠ DÙ.MEŠ <i>šú-nu</i> <i>ina il-ki</i>
7.	EN-ú-tu šá <i>ina</i> UGU ¹ <i>IdUTU.NUMUN.DÙ</i>
8.	SAL <i>la-qip-ti u</i> DUMU.MEŠ-e-šú
9.	<i>za-ku-ú a-šar ši-ba-a-ta</i>
10.	SAL <i>la-qip-tum</i> DUMU.MEŠ-e-šú <i>a-na</i>
11.	É LÚ DUMU.DÙ- ¹ <i>il ta-šap-par</i>
12.	šá <i>dib-bi an-nu-tu</i> BAL-ú

13. *d*a-num ^dEN.LÍL u *d*é-a
14. <ar-rat> NÍG.GIG-su li-ir-ru-ru
15. ^dAMAR.UTU u ^dzar-pa-ni-tum
ZÁH-šú
16. liq-bu-ú ^dAG pa-qid kiš-šat
17. AN-e u KI-tim mi-na-a-ta
18. UD.MEŠ-šú GÍD.DA.MEŠ li-kar-ra
- Rev. 19. ^d30 u ^dUTU ina di-in-ni-šú a-a iz-zi-zu
20. ^dDIL.BAT ^dINNIN GAŠAN KUR.KUR
SAHAR.ŠUB.BA-a
21. liš-šá-bis-su niš ^dLÚ.^dAMAR.UTU
LUGAL-šú-nu
22. iz-kur-ru SAL la-qip-tum u
DUMU.MEŠ-e-šú
23. ina ^dGAŠAN šá UNUG.KI u ^dna-na-a
it-tim-mu-u
24. ki-i UD-mu ma-la bal-ṭa-nu
25. <a-na UGU ?> ^dUTU.NUMUN-ib-ni
ni-it-te-e-iq
-
26. ina ka-nak IM.DUB MU.MEŠ
-
27. IGI ^dUTU.MU A-šú šá I¹KAR.^dEN A
I¹ba-bu-tú
28. ^dEN.ŠEŠ.MEŠ.MU A-šú šá I¹ú-bar
LÚ.SIMUG
29. ^da-num-ŠEŠ.MEŠ.URÙ A-šú šá
^dUTU.NUMUN.DÙ
30. DUMU ^dIM-ra-bi
31. LÚ.UMBISAG ^dAG.DÙ.ŠEŠ A-šú šá
I¹e-ri-ši
32. A LÚ.ŠU.KU₆ URU hu-ba-at
33. ITI.BÁRA UD.8.KÁM MU 2.KÁM
34. ^dLÚ.^dAMAR.UTU LUGAL
TIN.TIR.KI

Translation

(1-4) Šamaš-zēr-ibni, son of Balātu, descendant of Adad-rabi, of his own free will, wrote a document granting free-citizenship status to Laqīptum and her sons, irrevocably.

(5-6) Laqīptum and her sons are free citizens.

(7-9) Laqīptum and her sons are clear of responsibility for performing the *ilku*-service that rests upon Šamaš-zēr-ibni.

(9-11) Insofar as she may wish, Laqīptum may send her sons to (join) a family of free citizens.

(12-14) Whoever changes this agreement, may Anu, Enlil and Ea curse him with an evil <malediction.>

(15-16) May Marduk and Šarpanītu pronounce his destruction.

(16-18) May Nabû, in charge of the heavens and the earth, shorten the span of his (allotted) future days.

(19) May Sîn and Šamaš not stand (at his side) during his lawsuit.

(20-21) May Dilbat (and) Innin, Mistress of Lands, shroud him with leprosy.

(21-25) Invoking the life of Amēl-Marduk, their King, they took an oath. Laqīptum and her sons swore by the Lady of Uruk and Nanâ : As long as we live, we shall not perform any harmful action against Šamaš-zēr-ibni.

(26) At the sealing of this tablet

(27) Before Šamaš-iddin, son of Ētir-Bēl, desc. of Babutu.

(28) Bēl-ahhē-iddin, son of Ubar, desc. of the Smith.

(29) Anum-ahhē-ušur, son of Šamaš-zēr-ibni,

(30) descendant of Adad-rabi.

(31) The scribe was Nabû-bāni-ah, son of Eriši,

(32) descendant of the Fisher. City of Hubat,

(33) Month of Nisannu, Day 8, Year 2,

(34) Amēl-Marduk, King of Babylon.

Textual Comments

(9) The use of ašar in the sense of « insofar as » is based upon AHW 83b sub ašru III.

(20-21) In the passage containing the curse relating to leprosy, liš-šá-bis-su is an error for lišalbissu. Note the following errors as well :

(4) ul-lí-a is spelled with the KAK sign instead of NI.

(14) The noun <arrat> is omitted in the curse formula.

(21 and 34) The RN has the determinative for DINGIR in the first position :
^dLÚ.^dAMAR.UTU for LÚ.^dAMAR.UTU

(25) Perhaps emend to <a-na UGU> PN netteq (I owe the suggestion to Erica Reiner).

(25) etēqu is normally used for transgressing a time limit, boundary or the like (See CAD E 384). I know of no other usages relating to people.

(27) The reading of KAR in ^IKAR.^dEN and similar Neo-Babylonian Personal Names is ambiguous. CAD M/2 p. 269 s.v. mušēzibu and E p. 425 s.v. ezēbu read Mušēzib-^dBēl, on the basis of VAS 4 17 : 3 // 13. Whereas CAD E p. 403 s.v. eṭēru reads Eṭir-^dBēl, presumably on the basis of Moldenke II 10 : 9 (= ^IKAR-ir-^dEN).

(29) This witness is the son of the man who grants mār banūtu status to Laqīptum and her sons.

(31) J.A. Brinkman wonders whether the correct rendering of ^IdAG.DÙ.ŠEŠ should not be Nabû-tabni-ušur rather than Nabû-bāni-ah.

For banû in PN's, see CAD B 88, Tallqvist *NBN* pp. 309f. and Stamm *Namengebung* p. 355.

Examples of the name Nabû-tabni-ušur, with the basic stem preterite second person singular tab-ni element spelled syllabically, can be found in Tallqvist *NBN* p. 149. The imperative ušur is spelled with both ŠEŠ and ú-šur. The question is therefore, whether ^dIAG.DÙ.ŠEŠ is a logographic rendering of this same name.

Occurrences of the spelling ^IdAG.DÙ.ŠEŠ (as here) are numerous (see Tallqvist, *NBN* p. 125), but what is the correct reading? Note the rare syllabic

spelling in VAS 4 76 : 4 : ^{Id}AG-ba-ni-ŠEŠ (CAD PN Index, courtesy Research Associate Remko Jas).

In contrast, in the Personal Name Sîn-tabni-ušur (Stamm p. 158), the element tabni is spelled overwhelmingly syllabically. Note in addition that there is no short form Nabû-tabni, corresponding to Sîn-tabni.

None of this is conclusive. However, presumably on the basis of the rare occurrence, recent authors such as Gehlken (*AUWE* 5), Joannès (*TEBR*) and Kessler (*AUWE* 8) [including the present author in *YOS* 17] have continued to read the name as Nabû-bāni-ah.

(32) The spelling of the town Hubat in this line appears to resolve the dispute between Zadok and Joannès on the rendering of this name, in favor of the latter. See Zadok, *RGTC* 8 (1985) p. 166 s.v. Hūmīt.

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