

The Kuttamuwa Inscription: Image, Text and Translation

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What fun! A new 8th cent BCE inscription from the fantastic site of Zincirli (for details, go [here](#)). [Here](#) is a high-resolution image (HT [Chip Hardy](#)). [Jim Getz](#) provides a copy of Dennis Pardee's transcription based on the latter's SBL presentation.

Alas, Jim does not provide a translation. After all, he implies, he blogs for those who will be able to translate it on their own. That is no way to keep your stats high. Caution is the true explanation for his non-translation. [Ed Cook](#), [Duane Smith](#), and everyone else also choose caution and deference to Pardee over a translation attempt of their own. However, if I were Pardee, I would welcome alternative translation attempts.

Below, I throw caution to the wind, and provide the text of the entire inscription in transliteration and in sense-unit by sense-unit format. I also include a translation of all thirteen lines. Note that *d* and *r* are virtually indistinguishable in the script; I transliterate with one rather than the other based on lexical and semantic, not paleographical considerations.

1. `nk.ktmw.ʿbd[.]pnmw.[zy].qnt.l[y].nšb.b
2. ḥyy.wšmt.wth.bsyr.ʿlmy.wḥggt.s
3. yr.zn.šwr.lhdd.qrpd.l.wybl.lng
4. d.šwrn.wybl.lšmš.wybl.lhdd.krmn
5. wybl.lkbbw.wybl.lnbšy.zy.bnšb.zn.
6. wʿt.mn.mn.bny.ʿw.
7. mn bny.š.wyhy.lh.
8. nsyr.znn.wlw.yqḥ.mn
9. ḥyl.krm.znn.šʿ.
10. ywmn.lywmn.wyh
11. rg.bnbšy
12. wyšwy
13. ly.šq

אנך כתמו
עבד פנמו
זי קנת לי
נצב בחיי

ושמת ותה
בסיר עלמי
וחגגת סיר זן

שור להדד קרפדל

ויבל לנגד צורן
ויבל לשמש

ויבל להדד כרמן
ויבל לכבבו

ויבל לנבשי
זי בנצב זן

ועת מן מן בני
או מן בני אש

ויהי לה
נסיר זנן

ולו יקח
מן חיל כרמ זנן
שא יומן ליומן

ויהרג בנבשי
וישווי לי שק

I am Kuttamuwa,
servant of Panamuwa,

I who acquired for myself
the stele while I was living.

I placed it
in my permanent chamber
and feted this chamber:

a bull for Hadad of QRPDL;

produce for opposite the depictions,
produce for Shamash;

produce for Hadad of the vineyards,
produce for his vessel;

produce for my life-breath
that is in this stele.

Now, whosoever of my sons
or whoever of the sons of another,

and the selfsame chamber
belong to him indeed,

would that he take
from the richness of the selfsame vineyard
an offering year by year,

and slaughter on behalf of my life-breath
and lay out for me a thigh.

I understand נ in נסיר to represent נא. I would have expected it to be conjoined to the preceding לה.

As previously noted, the translation is no more than a first stab. I imagine that (ashes of?) the named foods would have been placed before the appropriate objects in the permanent funerary chamber in which the stele was displayed.

Thanks to Jim Getz, I was able to compare my tentative translation with that of Pardee's from his SBL presentation. However, it does not seem right to divulge Pardee's translation online without permission. I differ with Pardee regarding the precise sense of a number of vocables in context, but not, so far as I can see, on the general sense of the inscription. In response to questions, I would be happy to expand on my interpretation and translation choices.