Dispute of a man with his ba

Nederhof - English

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Transliteration and translation for Dialogue of a Man and his Ba, Papyrus Berlin 3024, following the transcription and facsimile in Goedicke (1970). An older transcription can be found in Faulkner (1956) and Barta (1969).

The transliteration throughout follows Hannig (1995).

For published translations, see Barta (1969); Faulkner (1956); Goedicke (1970); Lichtheim (1975), pp. 163-169; Parkinson (1997), pp. 151-165; Simpson (1972), pp. 201-209.

Bibliography


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Transcription of The Debate between a Man and his Soul, using the photographs from Erman (1896), on the basis of transcriptions by Faulkner (1956) and Allen (2011).

Thanks go to Hany Mohamed Ali Rashwan for making an initial MdC encoding available to me.

For contentious readings, we follow Allen, pp. 262-311, with the following exceptions:

• Line 17: Transcribed is \[\text{[sign]}\], the sign that is meant, rather than \[\text{[sign]}\], the sign that appears to be written.

• Line 26: Transcribed is \[\text{[sign]}\] rather than \[\text{[sign]}\], as it concerns the word \[wj\].

• Lines 50, 138: Transcribed is \[\text{[sign]}\] followed by \[\text{[sign]}\] rather than the reversed order.

• Line 53: The fourth sign is transcribed as \[\text{[sign]}\] rather than \[\text{[sign]}\].

• Line 65: The more conventional transcription \[\text{[sign]}\] is used.
• Lines 66, 87, 89, 91, 93, 96, 98, 99, 101: Transcribed is (generic fish determinative) rather than.

• Line 111: Transcribed is rather than the reversed order.

• Line 141: Transcribed is in front of.

As in Allen’s transcription, omitted are all (potential) occurrences of in front of.

**Bibliography**


[...] l=t n r ḍd [...] | n nm c n [s=sn]

[...] l you [...] to say: [...] | their tongues were not partial.

Concerning [their] opposing [a briber], their tongues were not partial.'

I opened my mouth to my soul, that I might answer what he had said:

This is much against me today,

whereas my soul has not quarrelled with me before. It is more than exaggeration,

it is like I am ignored. May my soul not depart, may it attend to me in this!
He will not be guilty

that he [will distance himself] from my body, from a net of cord,

and it will not happen due to him that he flees on the day [of suffering].

Look, my soul is disobeying me, while I do not listen to him,

is dragging me toward death, before I have come to it,

and is throwing me on the fire to burn me up,
[jw]tt mnt=f [jm] [... s3 [...]

[without] him suffering [therein]. [...]

He will stay close to me on the day of suffering.

He should stand on yonder side, like a praise singer does:

"This is one who goes forth, as he has brought himself!"

My soul is ignorant about easing the misery that is due to life,

and restrains me from death before I have come to it.
The west gives me pleasure. Is it suffering?

It is a turning-point of life; trees fall.

Trample on evil, and cast aside my misery!

May Thoth declare concerning me: "The gods are satisfied."

May Khons defend me: "A true scribe."

May Re hear my utterance: "Stop the barque!"
Ne hsf | Jsds hr=j m t dsr[t]
Ne May Isdes defend me in the sacred hall.

Ned

Ne | [hr] ntt s|r=j wdn(.w)
Ne | For my need is heavy
Ne

Ned

Ne [r] | f' nf n=j
Ne [to] | to weigh it on my behalf.

Ned

Ne ndm hsf | ntrw štòw ht=j
Ne It is pleasant that the gods should eliminate the concealment of my body.'

Ned

Ne ddt.n n=j | b=j n ntk js s jw=k tr | cnh.tj
Ne What my soul said to me: 'Are you not a man? You
Ne | are alive!

Ned

Ne ptr km=k | mhy=k hr cnh | mj nb cHc w
Ne What do you achieve if you are concerned about life | like a possessor of wealth?'

Ned
| Ne | dd=j n šm=j | 34 | jr nʃ r tɔ  | 34 |
| Ne | 'I would say to someone who is about to go: | 34 |
| Ned |  | 34 |
| Ne | nḥm.nj ḫw ḫr tftyt | 35 | nn | nwt=k |
| Ne | you are taken away from leaping around. Without | 35 |
| Ned |  | 35 |
| Ne | ḥnr nb ḫr dd | 36 | jw=j r jtt=k jw grt=k mwt(.tj) |
| Ne | every criminal will say: | 36 |
| Ned |  | 36 |
| Ne | rn=k | 37 | ³nh(.w) st nʃ nt ḥnt |
| Ne | but your name | 37 |
| Ned |  | 37 |
| Ne | ³fd | 38 | nt jb | dmj pw jmnt |
| Ne | attractive | 38 |
| Ned |  | 38 |
| Ne | ḥnt n | 39 | s[...] ḫr jr sdm n=j bɔ=j |
| Ne | a voyage [...].” | 39 |
| Ned |  | 39 | If my soul listens to me, |
my [neglectful] [brother], with his heart in accord with mine, he will prosper.

I will make him reach the west, like someone in his pyramid,

to whose burial a survivor has attended.

I will create a breeze [over] your corpse,

and you will make another soul in weariness envious. I will create a breeze,

so that it will not be freezing,
and you will make another soul who is hot envious:

'I will drink water at the watering-place.' I will heap up hay,

and you will make another soul who is hungry envious.

But if you restrain me from a death in this form,

you will not find a place on which you can rest in the west.

Be favourable, my soul, my brother, to what will happen!
Ne jw«w ̣ drp.tj=fj
Ne An heir ̣ who will make offerings

Ne `hö.tj=fj ḥt hrw ̣ qrs ̣ ṣry=f ḥnkyt
Ne and stand at the tomb shaft on the day ̣ of burial will wish a bier

Ne l n ḥrt-ntr ̣ jw wp.n n=j bə;j rì=f
Ne l at the necropolis. ̣ My soul opened his mouth to me

Ne ẉšlb=f ddt.n=j ̣ jr shb=k qrs
Ne that he might answer what I had said: ̣ 'If you would call burial to mind,

Ne nlhöt-jb pw ̣ jnt rmojt pw ̣ m ̣ sj̣nd s
Ne it is heartache, it is bringing of tears, making a man sad,

Ne šdt s pw m pr=f ̣ ḥö(.w) ḥr ̣ q̣n pr.n=k r hrw
Ne it is taking a man from his house, left on ̣ a hill. You cannot come up
Ne mḏ=k

60 Šr

Ne to see

60 ḫm

Ne to see the sun.

Ned

60

Ne qdw m jnr n

61 mš

Ne Those who built in granite,

Ned

61

Ne ḫws qn mr nfrw

62 m kṯ nfrt

Ne who constructed and completed beautiful pyramids, in

62 perfect realization,

Ned

62

Ne ḫpr sqdw m

63 nfrw cḥw jrw ṭš(.w)

Ne when the builders became gods, their altars were bare,

Ned

63

Ne mj nnw

64 mwt.w ḫr mryt

Ne like those of weary ones who are dead on a riverbank

Ned

64

Ne n ḡw ḫrw-tš

65 jtn nwy ph=fj

Ne for lack of a survivor.

Ned

65 After the water has taken its toll,
and sunlight as well,

the fish of the waterside speak to them. Listen to me,

as it is good to listen to people! Have a good time and forget worries!

A commoner cultivates his plot,

he loads his harvest into a boat, as his feast is near

and tows the transport,
and he sees the darkness of a north wind arise. He waits for a boat.

as the sun sets and rises,

and meanwhile his wife and his children

perish in a pond surrounded at night by crocodiles.

At last he sits down, and argues:

"I do not weep for that mother,
Ne nn n=s prt m jmnt  |  r kt ḫr t³
Ne for whom there is no escape from the west  |  k for another term on earth.

Ne mhˁj h ṭ msw=s  |  sd.w m swḥt
Ne But I will grieve for her children,  |  ṭ who were crushed in the egg,

Ne mˁ.w h ṭ n Hntj  |  n cnhḥt=sn
Ne who saw the face of Khenty  |  before they had lived."

Ne jw nds dbḥ=f  |  mšrwt  jw ḫnt=t=d=d s n=f
Ne A commoner asks for  |  dinner. His wife says to him:

Ne jw r msyt  |  jw=f pr=f r¹ ḫntw r ss²
Ne "It will be supper."  |  He goes outside  |  to [???]?


Ne r ǯt  |  cnn=f sw r pr=f
Ne until the moment  |  that he returns to his house.
Ne jw=f mj ky  ḥmt=f  ḥr šš  n=f  n sḏm.n=f n=s
Ne He is like another man. His wife  l pleads with him but he can’t hear her,
Ned
Ne sT=n=f  l wš(.w) jb n wpwjw
Ne after he has [???,  l incapable of communication.’
Ned
1 Unknown verb, likely the simplex of the verb in line 82.
Ne jw wp.n=j  r.b=j n b=i=j  wšb=j  ddt.n=f
Ne I opened  l my mouth to my soul, that I might answer what he had said:
Ned
Ne mk  l b chaining r m-c=k r  sT sw
Ne ‘My name reeks through you more than the smell of bird droppings  l on summer days
Ned
Ne pt tš.tj  mk  l b chaining m-c=k ssp sbnw
Ne when the sky is hot. My name reeks through you, a haul of catfish
Ned
Ne  l m hrw rsf  pt tš.tj
Ne on a fishing day when the sky is hot.
Ned
Ne 91 mk bᶜʰ rn=j m⁻ᵏ r st³
Ne 91 My name reeks through you, more than the smell
Ne 91 of ducks,

Ned 92 ḟpdw¹
¹ Written ḟpsw.

Ne 92 r bwAt nt twr
Ne 93 ḫr msyt
Ne 93 more than a covert of reeds
Ne 93 full of fowl.

Ned 94 ṭ.writeString("不同意于您，超过鸭子的气味，
Ned 94 My name reeks
Ned 94 through you, more than the smell of fishermen,

Ned 95 ṭ.writeString("不同意于您，超过鱼的气味，
Ned 95 more than the creeks they have fished.

Ned 96 ṭ.writeString("不同意于您，超过鳄鱼的气味，
Ned 96 My name reeks through you,

Ned 97 ṭ.writeString("不同意于您，超过鳄鱼的气味，
Ned 97 more than the smell of crocodiles,
My name reeks through you more than sitting on sandbanks\(^2\) of crocodiles.

More than the smell of a wife about whom a lie has been told involving a man.

My name reeks through you more than a diligent child.

About whom is said "He belongs to his rival."\(^1\)

My name reeks through you, more than a diligent child.

City of a sovereign that conspires to rebel when his back is turned.

\(^1\) Uncertain.

\(^2\) Following Faulkner (1956).
Whom can I talk to today? Brothers are evil

and friends of today don't love each other. Whom can I talk to today?

Hearts are greedy and every man is stealing things from his fellow.

Kindness has vanished and rudeness has descended upon everyone.

Whom can I talk to today? One is contented with evil

and goodness is cast on the ground everywhere. Whom can I talk to today?

I see no grammatical justification for the reading ồ.t. of Goedicke (1970), on p. 161. Hence I adopt here the transcription by Faulkner (1956).

Who should enrage a man by his ill deed
Ne ssbt=f bw-nb jw=f dw
Ne makes everyone laugh by his evil wrongdoing.

Ned

Ne dd=j n-m mjn jw h^d^j.tw
Ne Whom can I talk to today? One steals,

Ned

Ne s nb h*r jtt snnw=f dd=j n-m mjn
Ne every man is robbing his fellow. Whom can I talk to today?

Ned

Ne btw m q-jb sn jrr h^n=f
Ne The villain is an intimate friend and the brother with whom one dealt

Ned

Ne hpr(.w) m hft dd=j n-m mjn n sh^j.tw sf
Ne has become an enemy. Whom can I talk to today? Yesterday is not remembered,

Ned

Ne n jr.tw n jr m t^jt dd=j n-m mjn
Ne one does not help now who has given help. Whom can I talk to today?
Brothers are evil and one turns to strangers for honesty.

Whom can I talk to today? Faces are blank,

every man has his face downcast concerning his brothers.

Whom can I talk to today? Hearts have become greedy and there is no man's heart

on which one may rely. Whom can I talk to today? None are righteous

and the land is left to evildoers. Whom can I talk to today?
An intimate friend is lacking and one turns to a stranger

I to complain to. Whom can I talk to today? None is content there,

and he with whom one walked is no more. Whom can I talk to today?

I'm laden with misery for lack of an intimate friend.

Whom can I talk to today? The evil that scourges the earth is without end.

Death is in my sight today, a cure of a sick man, like going outside
After confinement. Death is in my sight today, like the smell of myrrh, like sitting under a sail.

On a windy day. Death is in my sight today, like the smell of lotus flowers, like sitting on the shore of drunkenness.

Death is in my sight today, like a path washed by rain, like a man's coming home from an expedition.
like the sky's clearing, like a man's grasping thereby

Read as.

what he didn't know before. Death is in my sight today,

like a man's longing to see home after he has spent many years

But, who is there is a god who lives,

because of punishing the evil of one who does it.

But, who is there stands in a barque,
hr rdjt dj.tw stpt jm n r\w-prw

because of letting its\(^1\) choice offerings be given to the temples.

\(^1\) It is unclear what this refers back to.

wnn ms ntj jm m rh-hipster n hsf.n.tw=f

But, who is there is a wise man who cannot be turned away,

\(^1\) Sign should represent a brazier.

hr spr n Rc hft mdw=f ddt.n n=j 1\(b\)(=j)

because of appealing to Re following his word.' What my soul said to me:

jm rk nhwt hr h\(^3\)i nj-slw=j pn sn=j

'Put whining on a peg, o my comrade, my brother!

wdn=k hr qh r m\(c\)h\(^3\)=k hr cnh mj dd=k

May you give offerings upon a brazier, in order to reach for a life as you described.

\(^1\) Sign should represent a brazier.

mr wj wjn n=k jmnt

Desire me here and dismiss the west!
But desire to reach the west when your body is buried.

I will alight when you become weary.

and then we'll make harbour together.'