ANCESTORS DIVINE?

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Early into the study of the Mari archives, suggestions were made that a few of the many gods cited in the documents were in fact divinized ancestors, real or imagined. Most often placed in this category were two gods, Ikrub-El (commonly written also as Yakrub-El) and Itūr-Mer (rarely also written Yatur-Mer); but similar notions were (and are still) occasionally expressed about deities that are less well displayed, such as Aštābi-El, Tašqi-Mama, and Tar'am-Mer. Il-aba, especially when linked with Ugaritic ilib and when his name is interpreted to mean “God of the ancestors,” often is treated similarly; as such were deities as Lagamal and Latarak. But I do not include them in this study for reasons that will soon be obvious. Of these five deities—Itūr-Mer, Tar'am-Mer, Ikrub-El, Aštābi-El, and Tašqi-Mama—Itūr-Mer is by far the best displayed in our documentation. In this paper, offered in tribute and respect to Klaas, I review the evidence and draw a conclusion that came to be a major reason why I have added a question mark to my title.

The dingir sign precedes the names of the five gods mentioned above. What makes these names stand out in the onomasticon for the divine is that they were not crafted to sharpen a specific manifestation for one deity (such as Istar-pisra), to attach a deity to a particular region (such as Amun-ša-Tēhrān and Istar-Ninet), or to serve them emblematically (such as Bēlet-ekallim or Mārat-altim or Ninḫursagga). Rather they are verbal-sentence names that emulate human onomastics, with a divinity as the subject of a verbal action, a phenomenon that, as Stol has shown re-

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2 The vocabulary attached to their status may differ, depending on the prevailing expressions. W. Moran speaks of Ikrub-El as possibly “an apotheosized tribal hero or a form of El, so called ('El-blessed') perhaps because the god was represented in a gesture of blessing.” Supplement to ANET 1969, 623-624 note 11. Nakata (1975, 19) comments, “Thus, it makes sense to consider our Ikrub-El and Itūr-Mer to have once been names of heroes who were to be deified after their death.”
3 On Il-aba, see Durand 1995, 152, “En esta serie se han de alinear, a buen seguro, divinidades como Il-aba ... ('Dios-del-Padre', escrito por lo general de manera tradicional il-a-ba4), que es una figura del "dios de los antepasados", encarnación del culto familiar.” See also Lambert 1981, 299-301; Healy 1995.

On the basis of an oath which invokes Dagan and Itūr-Mer, Šamši-Addu and Yasmaḫ-Addu (ARM 2 13 [LAPO 17, 457]:27-28), Fleming (1993b) suggests a balanced equivalence in power in which Dagan is head of the pantheon while Itūr-Mer was the city god of Mari.

Regarding Aštābi-El, to the listing by O. Rouault in ARMT 15 (1979), pp. 255, 267, see Nakata (1975) who gives a full range for the spelling of the god’s name. I could not confirm Durand’s statement that “... tal dios aparece atestiguado ya en los textos de época de Akkad ...” (1995, 202).
cently, is not limited in the Old Babylonian period to Mari. Moreover, these divine names are not, as some have argued, epithetic expansions of the deity cited in the construction (for example, Itiir-Mer as another name for Mer), because the entire verbal-sentence that forms the divine name is treated as a single component when crafting the personal names of mortals. Thus, we have such names as Idin-Itiir-Mer and Yakrub-El-tillati. Moreover, we have a Yakrub-El, very much an earthling, among the Mari onomastica (ARMT 23 236:29).

The divine names we are inspecting include mention of El, Mamma, and Mer (the last also called Wer and ilu-Wer); all of them deities that are discussed in Assyriological literature because they are recalled in a broad spectrum of documents and over an appreciable duration. Itiir-Mer and Tar'am-Mer are paronomastically paired in a “Sakkanakkus” era (but actually an early Yahdun-Lim) period list of gods. Very likely they were deemed a couple, their names meaning, respectively, “Mer has returned” and “Beloved of Mer.” Ikrub-El’s name looks to mean, “El has blessed,” while TaqSi-Mamma may mean something like “Mamma irrigates.” I do not know how to interpret the name AStabi-El, but I would not see the Hurrian deity AStapi as one of its components. Durand first suggested “El is sated,” from šāba2, but more recently has derived it from šāba c, “to take as spoil.” I am not certain about either derivation.

If these five gods were once mortals, a natural question to pose is whether we have any evidence about their earthly career, around Mari or even beyond. There is a Sargonic period record of

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5 For other deities with human (mostly one-word and obviously abbreviated) names during the Old Babylonian period, see Stol 1991, 203-204, with additional names cited in Van der Toorn 1996, 56 note 73. The Mari deity Ikshedum (ARMT 13 111:5-9) has a name that is occasionally taken to be a shortened form of Ikshed+DN, see Edzard 1967, 63 n. 2.

Whether or not the spellings itiir/yatiir and ikrub/yakrub are variations within Akkadian or reflect an Akkadian/Amorite spelling is not of immediate concern to us; see Nakata 1975, 17 (with bibliography).

6 Huffmon 1971, 289.

7 The literature on El is immense and it is hardly necessary to cite it here. For Mamma see respectively M. Krebernik in the RIA 7(1988), 330-331; For Mer, Wer, [Ilu]-Wer and other renderings for the name of this deity, see Lambert 1985, 534-535; Bonechi 1997, 494-497, citing approvingly P. Steinkeller’s theory that the divine name was ultimately derived from an ethnic group known as War(i).

For pronouncing the god’s name Me’ir and thus negating any connection with early spelling of Mari, see Durand 1995, 160.

8 This observation obtains even if we have a Mari personal name that could plausibly be read as Ibal-AStabi, Durand 1997b, 636 n. 483. On AStapi/AStabil in Ebla documents, see Mander 1995, 35-36; in Hittite texts, see Haas 1994, 363 (and index, sv).

9 Durand 1995, 229-230. See also his remarks in 1997c, 131 note 20.

“AStabi est, en effet, une de ces formes du Habour où une initiale a- correspond à une 3e pers. sg; *yasṭabi ne peut dériver de l’équivalent de l’akkadien šēbum/ḥébreu šāba c, car le serait indiqué par un signe AH dans cet état de langue; une dérivation à partir de l’équivalent de l’hébreu šāba b (=*SB) “emmener en butin” serait plus satisfaisante. Dans les deux cas, ce sont des noms commémoratifs, certainement ceux d’ancêtres tribaux. Le lien d’AStabi-El avec le dieu AStabi, longtemps pris pour une divinité purement hourette, tant de conception que de structure morphologique, mais, désormais, attesté par Ebla comme faisant partie du plus ancien stock des divinités syriennes, est étudié dans [ARMT] XXVI/3. AStabi est connu comme la figure par excellence du dieu de la guerre. Rien ne prouve l’existence d’un culte de ces divinités sur le Moyen-Euphrate avant la venue des Bensim’alites puisqu’Itiir-Mer n’est mentionné ni dans les textes d’Ebla (avant 2400 av.) ni dans les textes dits des Šakkanakkus, dynastie de Mari qui correspond aux Empires d’Agadé et d’Ur III d’Irak du sud. On sait que le trop fameux “Panthéon de Mari d’Ur III”, édité par G. Dossin, est en fait de l’époque de Yahdun-Lim.”
expenditure for gold ornaments to votive (?) statues of, among others, an Ikrub-illum. There is an Itur-xx who fathered Tir-Dagan, a Mari šakkanakkum. Slim picking, obviously, and to link such isolated information or to give them coherence would be a colossal conceit on our part, as well as too accommodating in any search for antecedents.

A more absorbing set of questions come to mind next: Were Mari people aware of the earthly origin of these gods? And did their knowledge or ignorance of these origins influence how they worshiped or venerated them?

The Mari evidence on these issues is mixed. On the one hand, Itur-Mer and Ikrub-El were deemed “kings” of respectively Mari and Terqa where they had shrines. According to Durand, Aštabi-El, was linked to Ziniyan, in Saggaratum province. We have records that are especially ample in the case of Itur-Mer, that these gods received sacrifices regularly, and artisans worked on paraphernalia associated with their worship, including weapons, scepters, emblems, and palanquins. [See TABLE.] One text records that three kilos of gold were used in creating for one side of a palanquin a tableau that included Dagan, Yakrub-El, and the king. As did other gods, Itur-Mer could possess all to himself a priest (ARM 26 238:7) and a muḫḫu-ecstatic (ARMT 23 446:19’). In his temple, but often beyond it via symbols —such as a scepter— and emblems —such as a pirikkum, perhaps a lion-pennant—, Itur-Mer could arbitrate the oaths of antagonists and give health to a sickly child. I am presuming that from the perspective of the Mari’s clergy and citizenry, gods were gods no matter what their origins, albeit it was accepted that some gods had a broader appeal or were more locally effective than others and that some gods deserved greater ceremony and regularity of worship than others.

While we have much less evidence on how the other deities functioned among the five gods we are inspecting, we can nevertheless note that the veneration of Itur-mer and Ikrub-El cannot be confused with the kispum accorded to great leaders of time past (for example Sargon and Naram-Sin), to recently deceased rulers (such as Yaḫdu-n-Lim), or to deceased members of the royal family (likely called maliku in the Mari records). In our records, the name of none of those so commemorated is preceded by the dingir sign. In this regard, the Mari testimony differs sharply from what obtains in other Old Babylonian documentation.

On the other hand, certain ceremonies at Mari in which Itur-Mer is invoked do not easily fit the normal cycle of worship accorded the gods. Two of these ceremonies are of particular interest. Etymologically uncertain is the qaš̄at̄um, a prominent occasion that took place at seemingly differing periods of the year. At such times, high administrators gave gifts to the king; but less frequently, they also received them. Meals were taken in which the king often participated. So far, no deity other than Itur-Mer has been associated with this convocation, although one text poten-
tially links the *qila’utim* of Itiir-Mer to the *gerēt*-banquet of Ištar. 14

More intriguing is the evidence of *ARM* 23 436, a tablet with holes for a leather cord but shaped nothing like the tablets used as labels. Under the heading, Itiir-Mer, *bēl b/pudim* are listed “14 members of the *b/pudum*, assembled to venerate Itiir-Mer.” 15 Each man is assigned to one specific month of a fourteen-month series, as if responsible for the ceremony during an entire month. Prosopography shows that a good number of the men mentioned in this document were commoners and they seem mostly to be weavers. 16 In *ARM* 23 462 (lines 12-13) we read about grain dispensed *ana b/pudim ša Itiir-Mer*. In the Mari documentation (but not elsewhere, see CAD, sv), the *b/pudum* (plural: *b/pudātum*) is linked to kings and commoners, but so far to no male deity other than Itiir-Mer. 17 The service can take place in the temple but also in the palace.

14 Charpin derives *qila’utum/qillātu* from *qalu*, “to burn” 1989/90, 104; Fleming 1993a, relates to *kalum*, “to lament.” Here are the references to the ceremonies:

- *ARM* 7 263:6: [malt] *ana qerēt Ištar u qī-la-ū-tim ʾItiir-Mer* [charges against an official]
- *ARM* 11 68:8: [17.xii.ZLA’] grain from Addu- peri’s domain, *inīma qī-la-ū-tim*
- *ARM* 18 42:7: [17.xii.ZLA’] bow from Ḫaya-Sumu; 2 canes from Ḫabdu-Ḥanat, dispatches to Mukanšīnum, *inīma qī-la-ū-tim*
- *ARM* 22 276:i:36-42: [ZL2’] 17 kurs of sesame from Yaggid-Lim’s estate; 2 kurs of sesame, from Addu- peri’s estate, *inīma lugal qī-la-ū-WA ušbu*
- *ARM* 24 191: [17.ZL6’] 1 leather sac to Šabnalu, *inīma qī-la-ū-tim*
- *ARM* 25 89:12: [4.i.ZL3’] precious objects, donated by the *wedūtim* (top administrators including Sammetar and Addu- peri) and artisans, to the coffers of the king, *inīma qī-la-ū-tim*
- *ARM* 25 51:12: [2.xi.ZL12’] silver/gold from officials, donations by top administrators (different from *ARM* 25 89), *inīma qī-la-ū-tim*


16 See the comments of Soubeyran 1984, 385-387. For a possible occurrence of dumu.mes *b/pudim* see also *ARMT* 23, p. 114 note 13.

17 Ninbursagga is the only female deity to be associated with a *b/pudum*, interestingly enough, in connection with the meals of the queen and her young children (see below). We know about the *b/pudum* also from Leilan, see Vincente 1991, #77 (also pp. 283-284): “clothing, to the youth Tabbū, whom the king led to the *budum*” (Vicente, “who led the king back from the ‘budum’” *ša lugal ana b/pudi uterra[m]*). Here are the attestations from Mari:

A.512:7-15 (Durand 1995, 206) Itiir-asdu writes [from Mari], “On the day I conveyed this letter to my lord, the *b/pudum* of my lord was offered in the temple of Annunitum of Sebrum. I have had Dumuzi enter in the temple of Annunitum in Mari. The queen offered a sacrifice in the temple of Annunitum of Sebrum.” See below, sub *ARMT* 24, p. 214a]

- *ARM* 23 462:12-13: [4.xii.ZLA (Kaḥaṭ)] grain, *ana b/pudim ša Ištar-Mer*
- *ARM* 24 65:10-14: [1.i.ZL6’] wine jars *inīma lugal BU-da-a-am ša Išar-baḫli ša u4.30-kam imḫuru*, “when the king received/accepted the *b/pudum* for a month duration of Išar-baḫli”

- *ARM* 25 17: [16.ix.ZL9’] 1 linen coat for Iddiyatum, *inīma b/pudim ša Išar-baḫli*, in the palace’s private quarters (*bit mayyiili*) (see *ARMT* 24, p. 213, sub S.108.165)
- TH 84.50: [27.xii.ZLA’] (Ziegler 1999, 18 note 106) bread for the *b/pudum* of Ninḫursagga, plus queen’s meal.
- M.11270: [13.x.?] (ARMT 24, p. 213) sheep, sacrifice for Išar-bēli, *inīma BU-di*
during which ceremonial clothing was dispensed to important persons. If the root of *b/pudum* proves to be based on a third-weak *pd*? the ceremony may have had something to do with “freeing, releasing, or absolving” an individual, a terminology which, presumably as in Hebrew, had potentially a spiritual connotation. And I would speculate that Itûr-Mer was deemed the patron saint, so to speak, of those for whom these ceremonies were enacted.

But there is more. From ARM 26 458, published years ago, we knew that Itûr-Mer was used to solve crimes. When oxen disappeared, Itûr-Mer takes the round of the city. Within four days of his circumambulation, the remains of two of the bulls belonging to different individuals were recovered from a single house. We have naturally assumed that, as elsewhere, a weapon or another symbol of the god was used in the discovery process. But now thanks to two remarkable letters that Durand has cited but has not yet fully published, we find something different. In A.1890, a merchant claims that (his?) slave is being spirited away by Babylonian messengers. The king orders that Itûr-Mer be made to recline at the city gate and, as the messengers pass through it, the merchant was to state his claims. I won’t pretend to know how the process worked, but Itûr-Mer showed that there was no slave to recover, thus saving the king from a potentially embarrassing confrontation with an allied state.

A.747 is a striking letter, even if it is not specified whether the event it reports took place in or outside the temple. I quote what a governor wrote to the king:

> My lord had given me the following instructions, “Aštubī-El should lie down on his couch and be interrogated so that his “seer” (ha-ia-sû) could speak. Take account of it to keep me informed.”

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18 Yet to be assessed is the evidence of ARM 26 232, on which see my comments in Sasson 1995. Itûr-Mer plays a major role in a report on an apocalypticizing vision (received by a woman) that includes Dagan, Ninbursagga, and an old man.

19 Zimri-Lim received a letter (ARM 26 458) from Abi-mekim:

> [Mari City, the palace, the temples and the workshops are all in good order. Another matter; ever since the sacrifices to Diritum, 5 oxen have been missing in Mari. Itûr-Mer was taken around in the city itself. On the fourth day of the god being taken around, 1 bull belonging to Sin-naṣir, son of Yadratum, and 1 bull belonging to Ili-gamil, son of Zikri-Addu, were found in Sumudīm’s house. Of these two bulls, I seize the meat and their skins.]

20 See Charpin’s comments to this text, ARM 26/2, p. 383, note a). On the use of divine symbols in legal matters, see Harris 1965; Van Lerberghe 1982.


22 A.1890 (Durand 1995, 337) is a letter a governor sent the king:

> The merchant Ur-fulpa’ē’a a while ago went to meet my lord and told him, “A slave is now with messengers from Babylon.” This is what this man told my lord and my lord gave him the following instructions, “When the Babylonian messengers leave, Itûr-Mer should be reclining at the main gate where they will exit. As for you, state then your claims.” This is what my lord told this man.

In accordance with the instruction of my lord, Itûr-Mer reclined at the main gate and this man began to state all his claims with regard a slave of his; but Puzur-Marduk and [...]-tillati, the Babylonian messengers, had not taken him.

With Warad-Sin as their “arbitrator” (ra-b[is-is]si-su-nu), Aššu-El stretched himself out (ir-bi-śu). In accordance with Aššu-El’s determination, the matter turned out false. The slanderers will (therefore) be spared, in accordance with the god’s determination. However, in my own case, so that sooner or later there could not be a false matter, I have rebuked him/them before the elders of the land.

The two cases are exceptional even if not completely understood as yet, as they involve the statue of a deity, and not just one of its symbols, participating in resolving criminal and civil cases. When Klaas heard me present this paper at the Baltimore AOS (1999), he directed my attention to the Deir el-Medina material in which the god’s statue participated in solving civil and criminal problems. Potentially comparable, too, are the teraphim (terāpīm) of biblical lore. Interestingly enough, some scholars regard these teraphim as figurines for dead ancestors because in parallel clauses (2 Kings 23:24 and Deuteronomy 18:11) words for “teraphim” and for “the dead” are interchanged. But in some contexts, for example in Genesis 31:20 (see Judges 18:24), they are also called ṭēōhm, “gods.” In Zechariah 10:2, teraphim are said to speak falsity, thus displaying negatively their power to resolve problems. And in Ezekiel 21:26, reporting a context that is replete with Babylonian divinatory practices, the king of Babylon is said to look for answers through teraphim, “For the king of Babylon has halted at the fork where these two roads diverge, to take the omens: He has shaken the arrows, consulted through teraphim, inspected the liver” (kt ṭam melek-bābel ṭel-ēm hadderek berō’s šēnē hadderākīm līgsom-qāsem qīgal bāḥīḏīm šā’al batterāpīm rā’a bakkāḇēḏ). It might be noted how the construction of šā’al batterāpīm takes us back to the unusual conference among Aššu-El, a “seer,” a rābiṣum (an “arbitrator,” perhaps intentionally punning on the god’s recumbence) and those seeking answers.

Where does all this material leave us? What we have in the Mari archives are interesting fragments of information that set divinities bearing human names, but in particular Itūr-Mer and Ilkūr-El, firmly among the gods of the region. There is no indication that these activities were funerary and I cannot point to any evidence that they had a stake in ancestor worship. Conspicuously absent is any trace in our documentation of apotheosis rituals to initiate or commemorate their transfiguration from a presumed earthly state. Moreover, I miss the archeological evidence from Mari for the protracted rites involving the multiple inhumations and reburials that seem characteristic of treatment in the Euphrates valley accorded those dead that were venerated as

24 Charpin (1986, 167-168) discusses whether YOS 12 354 and 48 involved the rental of the statue of Adad or, as more readily attested in other documents, of his symbol, for a voyage to settle a legal matter.

25 When citizens sought the restoration of stolen property, they appeared before the statue of the deceased Amenhotep I who, by assenting (nodding his head) upon hearing the name of the culprit when read from a roster, solved the crime. See the delightful chapter, “oracle,” in Romer 1984, 100-105. A more rigorous treatment of the topic is given in McDowell 1990.

26 On the biblical teraphim, see T. Lewis, “Teraphim [trpym],” in Van der Toorn (et al.) 1995, 1588-1601. See also Van der Toorn, most recently at 1994 and 1995, 218-225. There is contradictory evidence on whether or not teraphim were anthropomorphic figurines. Van der Toorn has vigorously argued that they had human shape (1995, 220-221). However, the term is always given in the plural (hence not likely to refer to a human figurine) and in the story of Micah (Judges 17-18) terāpīm occurs in sequence with pesel (statue), ṭepōd, and massekā (pedestal). In Gen 31:30, Laban laments the loss of his “gods” when Rachel steals his teraphim and Van der Toorn tries hard to explain away the usage. Lorettz (1992, with rich bibliography of earlier literature) argues that the term is a kakophemism to avoid reference to the repāhā’īm.
ancestors.\footnote{27}{Upon hearing me make this statement at the Baltimore AOS, Anne Porter (NELC, University of Chicago) kindly presented me with an as yet unpublished paper, "Ancestor Traditions in Antiquity," in which she reports extensively (and gives profuse bibliography) on the archeological evidence (especially from Tell Banat) for the ritual transfiguration of the dead into an honored ancestor, with burial in above-ground funerary monuments. Of special interest is her reference (ms. pp. 21-22) to a tall conical mound just outside Mari that may well be a third millennium example of such structures. When the documentation on humāšum is fully published, it would be interesting to research whether they have anything to do with the funerary monuments at stake in Porter’s study. According to Durand such a monument was named after Ayyalum, a deceased king of Abattum, and it was visited twice a year by its then current leader, Dadi-badun; Durand 1995, 270. A humāšum can be treated as a divinity, receiving sacrifices, as suggested by ARMT 23 319:7 (ZL period).}

The same fragments of information that is cited above, however, set these gods apart as participants or sponsors in some solemn, perhaps even ritualistic, activities that do not quite belong to the normal cult. Their closest analogues are certain practices one reads about in “marzēaḥ” texts from the West Semitic world, for example the meetings of people across status and the banqueting and feasting under light sponsorship of the divine. Entirely missing in the documentation are a good number of the steps, such as the initiatory, secretive, and intensively communal phases, centering on deities who allegedly once suffered human fate, that were the feature in the mysteries of the Hellenistic period.\footnote{28}{On the marzēaḥ see the comments of Schmidt 1994, 62-66, 144-147, 245-249 (with bibliography).}

How to categorize such manifestations of the divine is a problem. An oxymoron such as “demigods” will-not do, as it cannot be shown that they received half a worship or delivered half a miracle. Nor can we find in them a consequence of euhemerism or apotheosis, not because we cannot locate an earthly phase for these gods, but because their translation from one world to another does not fully explain the complete cultic service they received as gods.\footnote{29}{Stol 1991, 203, “Here we are confronted with something new in Assyriology: down-to-earth human beings presented as gods. The best solution is to assume that deceased members of a family, as “patriarchs” or “ancestors”, could acquire status under circumstances not known to us.”}

I am intrigued by the possibility that these gods may in fact exemplify the opposite phenomenon, what historians of religions used to describe as a “fading gods” but might now be termed “apanthropoposis,” referring to gods about to be recalled as heroes from the past.\footnote{30}{I owe the term “apanthropoposis” to my colleague Philip Stadter (UNC). "Kenosis" is a term used in Christian theology to speak of the pouring of divine spirit into the human Jesus, derived from Paul’s letter to the Philippians (2:5-9), “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself (alla heauton ekenōsen), taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross” (RSV).}

Such a fate may well have obtained, among others, in the case of Elijah who was set as a prophet during the Omri dynasty but whose activities and epithet hattīšbi suggest an incarnated Tēšub, the Hurrian storm god.\footnote{31}{On Elijah as a humanized avatar of the Hurrian god Tēšub, see Astour 1959 and (briefly) 1965, 215, 297.}
more certainty among the ritualistic, devotional, funerary, and ceremonial in the many celebrations now known to us, sometimes only by name, not just in the extensive Mari archives, but also in other records from the Old Babylonian times.

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ANCESTORS DIVINE?


Matthiae, P. 1979, “Princely Cemetery and Ancestors Cult at Ebla during Middle Bronze II: a Proposal of Interpretation”, *UF* 11, 563-569.


**TABLE A: ATTESTATIONS OF DIVINE NAMES IN THE MARI RECORDS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OB Mari</th>
<th>Aštabi-El</th>
<th>Ikrub-El</th>
<th>Itur-Mer</th>
<th>Tar'am-Mer</th>
<th>Tašqi-Mamma</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Temple?</td>
<td>Terqa(^a)</td>
<td>Mari(^b)</td>
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<td>YA(^l), ZL(^m)</td>
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<td>ZL(^n)</td>
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<td>YLP, YA(^q)</td>
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<td>ZL(^v)</td>
<td>YL, YA, ZL(^w)</td>
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<td>[letters] greeting/wishes</td>
<td>ZL(^x)</td>
<td>ZL(^y)</td>
<td>ZL(^aa)</td>
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<td>body</td>
<td>ZL(^x)</td>
<td>ZL(^z)</td>
<td>ZL(^bb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>in PNs</td>
<td>males(^cc)</td>
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<td>in GNs</td>
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<td>males(^dd)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Periods:</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yag gid/Yañ dun-lim</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yasmah-Addu</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
<td>Zimri-Lim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Non-Mari</td>
<td>OAkk(^ee)</td>
<td>OB, Ugar(^ff)</td>
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Notes to the table


b. ARM 26 236:7 [= ARM 10 5] in a letter to Zimri-Lim (see below)
   ARM 24 19: 2' [6.vi.ZL1'] about the blpudum convocation (see above, note 17)
   A.337
   (Durand 1997a:62-63) see below also sub oaths
   ARM 23 96:10-11 memorandum about matters in the temple of Itiir-Mer

c. On this gate and its attestations (A.174, ARM 13 26), see N. Ziegler 1994: 20-21. Durand (ARMT 26/1, p. 538) cites a passage from a letter of La'um (A.2071) with another reference to this gate, "... At the Itiir-Mer Gate, his attestants will fling dirt on his head and on the spot where this word came out from his mouth, a nail should be driven into his mouth." [NB ARM 8 85]. See note "w", below.


e. Records of grain rations, to a) farmhands (ālik-eqlim) and b) house workers. The gods Addu and Itiir-Mer generally head (sometimes in reverse positions) the b) segment, each receiving a modest outlay of grain. It is not clear at all why these particular gods are recorded in such texts. On these documents, see lastly Joannès in ARM 23, pp 105-118, especially 114-115. In the list below, "ditto" refers to type of document and not to exact listing in it.

   ARM 24 19:2 [6.vi.ZL1'] minus material on farmhands. [For reverse, see sub h/pudum, note 17]
   ARM 24 14:24 [11.vii.ZL1'] ditto
   ARM 23 106:23 [15.ix.ZL1'] ditto
   ARM 23 108:2' [??.ZL1'] ditto, minus material on farmhands
   ARM 24 15:23 [?] ditto
   ARM 23 110:[4'] [?.xi.?] ditto
   ARM 23 109:17' [?ii.?] ditto
   ARM 23 112:1' [2.iiib.ZLS'] ditto, minus farmhands
   ARM 23 113:18' [2.ii.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 24 16:18 [2.iiib.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 23 114:18 [2.iv.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 23 115:19 [?.iv.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 24 17:17 [2.v.ZLS'] ditto (month likely)
   ARM 23 117:17 [2.x.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 24 18:?[?] [?.?ZLS'] ditto (lost in break)
   ARM 23 116:11' [?.ix.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 23 118:14 [?.xi.ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 23 119:17 [?.?ZLS'] ditto
   ARM 23 120:12 [?.?ZLS'] ditto.

f. M.7829+ (cited in Ziegler 1999: 51 n.319) lists personnel attached to the palace, to Itiir-Mer, to
Addu-duri, or to Sammetar’s estate.

8. *ARM* 25 626:3 “6 mana of gold, plating for 1 Dagan figure, 1 king’s figure, 1 Yakrubil figure, 3 figures of mountains and background, in front of the chest (of a palanquin) …” [ZL?]; see Durand 1990: 139; 149-150.

h. Durand 1997a: 60-61, cites (in French only) A.2140, a letter Mašiya sent to Yasmah-Addu. It deals with the difficulty the artisans are having in accomplishing work for the throne and precious platters, perhaps also a statue.

i. For the weapon and sceptre of Itur-Mer as used in oaths, See Durand 1997a: 60-61. *FM* 2 17 is a letter Yasim-Sumu sent the king (Maul 1994: 48-50):

    I am herewith sending the inscriptions for the chariot of Nergal and for the palanquin of Itur-Mer. The inscription for the chariot of Nergal, should it be inscribed on the chariot’s face (“breast”) or the rear (“tail”)? My lord should consider the matter; but this inscription should be inscribed on the rear where the weapon is now to be found, so that reader and reciter (ie. verifier) could read it to each other.

    As to the inscription for the palanquin that God [Itur-mer] will be riding, it should be inscribed on the face (“breast”) and back. My lord should write me what his decision is so that before my lord could make his way here, these inscriptions are inscribed.

ARM 27 116: 4 Zimri-Lim is advised to have adversaries take an oath by Itur-Mer’s emblems that are with him.

ARM 23 198:4 [26.v.ZL4'] glue (šimtum) for a part of Itur-Mer’s palanquin.

j. *ARM* 23 46 refers to šaḫḫu garments that were dispensed to Dagan, Nimbursagga, Tašqi-Mamma (l. 3), Nergal, Admu, and Ištari ša nubtim.


l. M.8142:24’ [= FM 1, p. 30] cadaster--broken
M.8700:2 [= MARI 3 p. 85 no. 9] “oil for Itur-Mer”, 15.tirum.Awiliya

m. See Durand 1985b: 386-387 (references to Itur-Mer sacrifices); *ARM* 21 233:43’, reference to Emaši, a māḫḫām of Itur-Mer.

n. *ARM* 24 305, “sheep, grain that were selected at the banquet of (qerît) Tašqi-Mamma and assigned to PN; vi.ZL7” (collation of Charpin 1989/1990: 104).

o. T.142:22, Dossin 1967: 98-100; see Durand 1980: 175. (Line numbering follows Durand 1995: 167-168.) As Durand has shown (1985a: 160-172), T.142 is datable to the period of Yāḫdun-Lim or just preceding it. So in this table “YL” is equivalent to Yaggid-Lim as well as to Yāḫdun-Lim.

    It is possible that in some lists 4Lugal-Terqa refers to Ikrub-El (e.g. M. Lambert 1970: 249-252, also “šakkanakku” period), while 4Lugal-mātim and 4Lugal-Mari may refer to Dagan and Itur-Mer respectively. In T.142, however, the equation of Ikrub-El and 4Lugal-Terqa is compromised by their mention in the same tablet. That T.142 could be a composite, however, is conceded. See Durand 1985a: 162; Lambert 1985: 530 and note 14.
Šamši-Addu, deputy of Enlil, regent of Assur. When Itūr-Mer, my lord, entrusted to me absolutely control and rule of the land of Mari and of the regions along the Euphrates, I presented to him a throne of medlar … that was embellished with gold and infinite craftsmanship.

[Zamši-Addu, deputy of Enlil, regent of Assur.] When Itūr-Mer, having heard my prayer and petition, entrusted absolutely to me the land of Mari and the “Region by the Euphrates” — (being) his domains —, I presented to him and dedicated for his divine splendor a throne of ebony that was embellished with gold and infinite craftsmanship.

1."Epopee de Zirnri-Lim", cited in Durand ARM 26/1, 393: 138;
Zimri-Lim, being Dagan’s zikru, is heroic
Itūr-Mer, being his protection, is champion

V. Cited by Rouault 1992: 249 from an unpublished Terqa document (TQ8-E21): In the presence of Lagarnal and Yakrub-El, Kibri-Dagan and a dayyān šarrim (see CAD D, 29) deliver a judgment on a case.

W. Yahdun-Lim period

Yasmaš-Addu period
ARM 8:6:9-10 oath by Dagan, Šamši-Addu, and Itūr-Mer

Zimri-Lim period
A.2071 (ARMT 26/1, p. 538), see note “c”, above.
ARM 8:85 (MARI 8(1997): 343-345) oath by Itūr-Mer, Ḫanat, and Zimri-Lim
A.1401:25 [Joannès 1995: 102-103] [1.?.ZL5'] memorandum: “This is what before Itūr-mer Istar-kabbar was made responsible in the workshop” [obscure context]

ARM 26 302:20 Yasim-El accused of despising the oath on Itūr-Mer
ARM 27 116: 46 Zimri-Lim is advised to have adversaries take an oath by Itūr-Mer’s emblems that are with him (ie. not in Mari).

X. A.747 (see above).

Y. Mostly in the greeting formula from the governor of Terqa, Kibri-Dagan: “Dagan and [Ya]krub-
El/Ikrub-El are fine, and so is Terqa”; see ARMT 16, p. 255; add a number of references (some in re-edited documents) in the opening lines of ARM 26 178, 235, 234, 220, 221, 221b and FM 2:121b.

z ARM 26 196:11'; Ikrub-El (as spelled, the name is sandhi for Yakrubil) is involved in judging Tilpak; see Sasson 1993: 290-291; contra Van der Toorn 1998.

aa ARMT 10:63 was written by Dam-hurâšim in Terqa, “May Dagan, the bēl pâgrê, and Itûr-Mer, King of Mari, hand your foes and enemies over to you.”

bb A.4263: 19(?) (= ARM 26/1, p. 407); an official is quoted to say, “I have never been able to see the face of my lord, whom I/he ... (ša ú-ŠA-am-mu-ū), my lord to whom Dagan and Itûr-Mer would give a powerful weapon and an everlasting rule.” In A. 489 (Dossin 1938: 110b; latest updated translation in Durand 1997a: 59), Rip’i-Dagan writes:

... I said, “When my lord won a victory over Isme-Dagan and drove Yasmâl-Addu out of Mari, and when the Benjaminites fought with my lord, my lord wrote to all of you about sending troops, but you did not give them to him. But on order of the gods Dagan and Itûr-Mer my lord did triumph over his enemies, turning their cities into mounds and heaps and annihilating them one after the other .... Yet, you did not show my lord any good-will ...

ARM 26 207: 32 (= ARM 10 4); Šibtu’s oracle: Itûr-Mer is one of the gods guiding ZL.
ARM 26 236: 7 (= ARM 10 10); Kakkalide has a vision in Itûr-Mer’s temple
ARM 26 230: 3, 6 Vision of old man in dialogue with Itûr-Mer
ARM 26 238: 7 (= ARM 10 51); Ïdin-ilî is said to be priest of Itûr-Mer
ARM 26 315: 58 Yamsùm cautions against an ally, even if Zimri-Lim’s god and Itûr-Mer are strong.

cc Yakrub-El-tillati (eg., ARM 7 107:2'; 23 217:7:14).

dd To the personal names collected by Rouault in ARMT 16, p. 264 (Ana-Itûr-Mer-taklâku [see MARI 2(1983): 87 sub ARM 7 197:5; Êanna/Îdin/ipqu-Itûr-Mer]), a number of which now occur in more recently published documents, we now have such names as Itûr-Mer-gamil (ARM 23 436:29) and Itûr-Mer-tillati (ARM 23 85:39). Durand 1995: 163 adds the names Itûr-Mer-ţîstra and Itûr-Mer-înâya.

ee Old Akkadian. No. 22 of Westenholz 1987: 44-45 is an account of gold ornaments for the statues of Šû-Aśdar, Tîgalum, Ikrub-[AN?], and Isar-âji. Westenholz comments:

There is no convincing clue to the identity of the Akkadians whose statues were decorated so richly. However, as Ikrub-Ilim is known to be the name of the local patron deity of Terqa, it could just be that the statues in our text are all such local demi-gods, and that they were all gathered to stand in effigy before Enlil as representatives of the provinces of the Empire that Enlil had given the Akkadian king. Against this hypothesis, it should be noted that Ikrub-Ilim, as well as the other names in this text, is not a very uncommon name, and that Itûr-Mer, the local god of Mari, is not represented even though Mari was surely more important than Terqa. Thus, as an alternative hypothesis, the statues were perhaps simply ordinary votive statues of high-ranking, though otherwise unknown Akkadians.

ff Itûr-Mer is cited in an Old Babylonian greeting formula, Kraus 1964: 24-25 (# 29). He also appears in Êanna contracts, but seemingly exclusively in oath formulae invoking Šamaš, Dagan, Itûr-
Mer, and the reigning king (See lastly Rouault 1992: 250).