

IGUVINE TABLETS



The Iguvine tablets are a collection of 3rd c. – 1st c. BC Italian bronze tablets upon which are inscribed prescriptions for the religious rites of the Atiedian priests. They are written in Umbrian (an Italic language) and below are translated by Dr James Richardson.

translation of table Ia-Ib: Commence this ceremony by observing the birds, those from in front, and those from behind. Before the Trebulan Gate sacrifice three oxen to Jupiter Grabovius. Present grain-offerings, place the ribs on a tray, sacrifice either with wine or with mead, for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. Pray each (portion) in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain.

Behind the Trebulan Gate sacrifice three pregnant sows to Trebus Jovius for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. Take up the under-parts, present grain-offerings, sacrifice with mead, and pray in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain.

Before the Tesenacan Gate sacrifice three oxen; sacrifice to Mars Grabovius for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. Present grain-offerings, place the ribs on a tray, sacrifice with mead, and pray in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain.

Behind the Tesenacan Gate sacrifice three sucking pigs to Fiskus Sancius for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. Sacrifice with mead, take up the under-parts, present grain-offerings, present a *mefa* cake and a libation. Sacrifice to Fisovius, sacrifice for the Fisian Mount. (Move) the loaned and the consecrated bowls, two loaned, two consecrated, (in the ceremony) for the state of Iguvium. Pray in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain.

Before the Veian Gate sacrifice three oxen with white foreheads to Vofionus Grabovius for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. Place the ribs on a tray, (sacrifice) either with wine or with mead, present grain-offerings, and pray in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain.

Behind the Veian Gate sacrifice three lambs to Tefer Jovius for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. Sacrifice at the rear of the altar, sacrifice seated, sacrifice (the victims) for burial, present grain-offerings, sacrifice with mead, and pray silently with (offerings of) fat and grain. When you have made the presentation of the lambs, offer a pig-*persondro*, and to it add a libation separately. Sacrifice to Tefer Jovius for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. At your right foot make a mound for the bowl. When you have presented this (*persondro*), then offer a pig-*persondro*, to Stabilis Jovius, upon it add a libation, for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium. At your left foot make a mound for the bowl. Sacrifice

with mead. When you have presented the pig-*persondra*, then distribute the *erus* of the lambs. Grind (the grain) sitting and pray sitting, with the ground (grain).

At the Grove of Jupiter, while they are placing on a platter (the remains of) the sheep, sacrifice three bull-calves to Mars Hodiús for the people of the state of Iguvium, for the state of Iguvium. Place the ribs on a tray, sacrifice with mead, present grain-offerings, and pray in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain. At the Grove of Corelius sacrifice three bull-calves to Hondus Serfius for the people of the state of Iguvium, for the state of Iguvium. Place the ribs on a tray, present grain-offerings, add a twisted cake, sacrifice either with wine or with mead, and pray in a murmur with (offerings of) fat and grain. Then the mound will have been purified. If there is any interruption of these rites, they shall be invalid: take an observation of the birds, return to the Trebulan Gate, and perform the rite anew.

When you wish to perform a lustration of the people, go to observe the birds, those from in front and those from behind. When you have returned, take a stole, then place fire in the carrier. When you have placed the fire in the carrier, then demand a *parra* in the west for yourself and for the state of Iguvium. (The augur) shall make his announcement in the direction of the augural seats. Go to the sacrifice by the Augural Way. The *prinuati* shall go (along); they shall hold the wands of a *puniceatus*. When you come to Acedonia, then pronounce banishment on the Tadinatē state, the Tadinatē tribe, the Tuscan, the Narcan name, the Iapudic name: 'If anyone is caught, bring him to that place to which it is the law, do with him that which is the law.' When the *prinuati* shall be standing at the boundary, then (say): 'Arrange yourselves in priestly ranks and military ranks, men of Iguvium.' Then make the circuit around (them) with the victims and the fire. When you have made the circuit, pray. Then (say): 'Go, men of Iguvium.' Make the circuit three times, pray three times, (say): 'Go, men of Iguvium' three times. Then the *prinuati* shall return; by the same road shall the *prinuati* return.

At Fontuli sacrifice three boars, red or black, to Serfus Martius. Place the ribs on a tray, present grain-offerings, sacrifice with mead, and pray silently with (offerings of) fat and grain.

At Rubinia sacrifice three pigs, red or black, to Prestota Serfia of Serfus Martius. Sacrifice (the victims) upon the ground, present grain-offerings, move the consecrated bowls, divide the black and the white vessels, sacrifice with mead, and pray silently with (offerings of) fat and grain.

At Trans Sanctam sacrifice three heifer-calves to Tursa Serfia of Serfus Martius. Sacrifice (the victims) upon the ground, present grain-offerings, sacrifice with mead, and pray silently with (offerings of) fat and grain. When you have made the presentation, the order shall be called to the place where they have sacrificed the boars, to distribute

the *erus*. When the *erus* has been distributed, the instruction shall be passed back to Rubinia to distribute the *erus*. Then the instruction, shall be passed to Trans Sanctam to distribute the *erus*. Then return to Rubinia and pray with the whole and the ground (grain). Then move the consecrated bowls and divide the vessels. Then return to (Trans) Sanctam and pray with the whole and the ground (grain). Then the sacrifice will have been completed.

When he has made the circuit around the people for the third time, the *adfertor* shall chase a heifer fit for sacrifice, above the Comitium, and the *prinuati* shall chase two. Below the Forum of Semonia they shall catch them. These three heifers he shall sacrifice at Acedonia to Tursa Jovia. He shall present grain-offerings and sacrifice with mead. He shall sacrifice (the victims) upon the ground, and pray silently with (offerings of) fat and grain. Lucius Tetteius, son of Titus, approved (the foregoing) in his quaestorship.

The augural ceremony (VIa1-18) prior to the lustration of the city: (The *adfertor*) shall commence this ceremony by observing the birds, the *parra* and crow in the west, the woodpecker and magpie in the east. The one who goes to observe the messengers (i.e. the augur), sitting shall call out from the tent to the *adfertor*: 'Demand that I may observe a *parra* in the west, a crow in the west, a woodpecker in the east, a magpie in the east, in the east birds, in the east divine messengers.' The *adfertor* shall thus demand: 'There observe a *parrain* the west, a crow in the west, a woodpecker in the east, a magpie in the east, in the east birds, in the east divine messengers, for me, for the state of Iguvium, for this established ordinance.' While he who goes to observe the messengers sits in the seat, during that time no one shall make a noise nor shall any other person sit in the way until he who has gone to observe the birds returns. If a noise is made or any other person sits in the way, he will make (the ceremony) invalid.

The *templum* where the *adfertor* remains for the purpose of purifying the Mount, when established, is bounded thus: from the lowest angle, which is next to the *Ara Divina*, to the highest angle, which is next to the augural seats: thence from the highest angle to the augural seats to the city boundary, from the lowest angle to the *Ara Divina* to the city boundary. Then within the city boundaries he shall make observation in either direction.

The city boundaries are: from the augural seats to the Exit, to the observation-post, to the fore-area of Nurpius, to the Vale, to the temple of Smurcia, to the house of the *gens Miletina*, to the third tower of the rampart; and from the augural seats to the avenue of Vesticius, to the garden of Rufer, to the house of the *gens Nonia*, to the house of Salius, to the avenue of Hoius, to the gate of Padella. Below these limits which are described above, watch for a *parra* in the west, a crow in the west. Above these limits watch for a

woodpecker in the east, a magpie in the east. If the messengers sing forth, (the augur) sitting shall thus make announcement from the tent and shall call the *adfertor* by name: '(I have seen) a *parra* in the west, a crow in the west, a woodpecker in the east, a magpie in the east, in the east birds, in the east divine messengers for you, for the state of Iguvium, for this established ordinance.'

The prayer for the purification of the mount (VIa22-57): Before the Trebulan Gate he shall sacrifice three oxen to Jupiter Grabovius. Thus shall he speak after making the libation: 'Thee I invoke as the one invoked, Jupiter Grabovius, for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state. Be thou favourable, be thou propitious to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. In the consecration I invoke thee as the one invoked, Jupiter Grabovius; in trust of the consecration I invoke thee as the one invoked, Jupiter Grabovius. Jupiter Grabovius, thee (I invoke) with this perfect ox as a propitiatory offering for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, by the effect of this (ox) (bring it to pass), if on the Fisian Mount fire hath occurred or in the state of Iguvium the due rites have been omitted, that it be as not intended. Jupiter Grabovius, if in thy sacrifice there hath been any omission, any sin, any transgression, any damage, any delinquency, if in thy sacrifice there be any seen or unseen fault, Jupiter Grabovius, if it be right, with this perfect ox as a propitiatory offering may purification be made. Jupiter Grabovius, purify the Fisian Mount, purify the state of Iguvium. Jupiter Grabovius, purify the name of the Fisian Mount, of the state of Iguvium, purify the magistrates, the priesthoods, the lives of men and of beasts, the fruits. Be favourable and propitious with thy peace to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, keep safe the Fisian Mount, keep safe the state of Iguvium. Jupiter Grabovius, keep safe the name of the Fisian Mount, of the state of Iguvium, keep safe the magistrates, the priesthoods, the lives of men and of beasts, the fruits. Be favourable and propitious with thy peace to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, thee with this perfect ox as a propitiatory offering for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state, Jupiter Grabovius, thee I invoke.

'Jupiter Grabovius, thee with this perfect ox as a second propitiatory offering for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state (I invoke). Jupiter Grabovius, by the effect of this (ox) (bring it to pass), if on the Fisian Mount fire hath occurred or in the state of Iguvium the due rites have been omitted, that it

be as not intended. Jupiter Grabovius, if in thy sacrifice there hath been any omission, any sin, any transgression, any damage, any delinquency, if in thy sacrifice there be any seen or unseen fault, Jupiter Grabovius, if it be right, with this perfect ox as a second propitiatory offering may purification be made. Jupiter Grabovius, purify the Fisian Mount, purify the state of Iguvium. Jupiter Grabovius, purify the name of the Fisian Mount, of the state of Iguvium, purify the magistrates, the priesthoods, the lives of men and of beasts, the fruits. Be favourable and propitious with thy peace to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, keep safe the Fisian Mount, keep safe the state of Iguvium. Jupiter Grabovius, keep safe the name of the Fisian Mount, of the state of Iguvium, keep safe the magistrates, the priesthoods, the lives of men and of beasts, the fruits. Be favourable and propitious with thy peace to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, thee with this perfect ox as a second propitiatory offering for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state, Jupiter Grabovius, thee I invoke.

‘Jupiter Grabovius, thee with this perfect ox as a third propitiatory offering for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state (I invoke). Jupiter Grabovius, by the effect of this (ox) (bring it to pass), if on the Fisian Mount fire hath occurred or in the state of Iguvium the due rites have been omitted, that it be as not intended. Jupiter Grabovius, if in thy sacrifice there hath been any omission, any sin, any transgression, any damage, any delinquency, if in thy sacrifice there be any seen or unseen fault, Jupiter Grabovius, if it be right, with this perfect ox as a third propitiatory offering may purification be made. Jupiter Grabovius, purify the Fisian Mount, purify the state of Iguvium. Jupiter Grabovius, purify the name of the Fisian Mount, of the state of Iguvium, purify the magistrates, the priesthoods, the lives of men and of beasts, the fruits. Be favourable and propitious with thy peace to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, keep safe the Fisian Mount, keep safe the state of Iguvium. Jupiter Grabovius, keep safe the name of the Fisian Mount, of the state of Iguvium, keep safe the magistrates, the priesthoods, the lives of men and of beasts, the fruits. Be favourable and propitious with thy peace to the Fisian Mount, to the state of Iguvium, to the name of the mount, to the name of the state. Jupiter Grabovius, thee with this perfect ox as a third propitiatory offering for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state, (I invoke). Jupiter Grabovius, bringing forward the triad of perfect oxen as propitiatory offerings for the Fisian Mount, for the state of Iguvium, for the name of the mount, for the name of the state, Jupiter Grabovius, thee I invoke.’ He shall pray each (portion) silently. In the same manner he shall make the presentation, make pronouncement upon the parts cut off, add to

the parts cut off a *meḑa speḑa* cake and a *ḑicla* cake, and offer grain. He shall perform this sacrifice either with wine or with mead. He shall place the ribs on a tray.

One of the prayers for the lustration of the people (Vib56-62): Then he shall say: 'Arrange yourselves in priestly ranks and military ranks, men of Iguvium.' Then along with the *prinuati* they shall make the circuit with the unblemished victims. When they have made the circuit and have come to the boundary, at the boundary he and the *prinuati* shall thus pray silently: 'Serfus Martius, Prestota Serfia of Serfus Martius, Tursa Serfia of Serfus Martius: the Tadinatē state, the Tadinatē tribe, the Tuscan, the Narcan, the Iapudic name, the chief citizens in office and not in office, the young men under arms and not under arms, of the Tadinatē state, of the Tadinatē tribe, of the Tuscan, the Narcan, the Iapudic name: terrify them and cause them to tremble, cast them down to Hondus, to Hola, overwhelm them with snow, overwhelm them with water, deafen them with thunder and wound them, trample them under foot and bind them. Serfus Martius, Prestota Serfia of Serfus Martius, Tursa Serfia of Serfus Martius, be favourable and propitious with your peace to the people of the state of Iguvium, to the state of Iguvium, to their chief citizens in office and not in office, to their young men under arms and not under arms, to their name, to the name of the state.'

Some important terms:

adfertor (Latinized form of the Umbrian *arfertur*): the chief priest in the cult of the Atiedian brothers.

erus: a type of offering (?).

parra (Latinized form of *parfa*): a type of bird.

persondro (*persuntru*): a type of offering.

prinuati (Latinized form of *prinuatur*): a type of official.

puniceatus (*ponisiater*, *puniḑate* in Umbrian): a purple-clad official.