

**SOME SUMERIAN-
BABYLONIAN HYMNS OF
THE BERLIN COLLECTION.
A DISSERTATION**

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Some Sumerian-Babylonian Hymns of the Berlin Collection. A dissertation by Mary Inda Hussey

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TRANSCRIBED AND INTERPRETED, WITH COLLATION
OF THE ORIGINAL TABLETS, FROM THE TEXT
PUBLISHED BY GEORGE REISNER

A DISSERTATION

PRESENTED TO THE FACULTY OF BRYN MAWR COLLEGE IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

BY
MARY INDA HUSSEY

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SOME SUMERIAN-BABYLONIAN HYMNS OF THE BERLIN COLLECTION

[TRANSCRIBED AND INTERPRETED, WITH COLLATION OF THE ORIGINAL TABLETS,
FROM THE TEXT PUBLISHED BY GEORGE REISNER¹]

INTRODUCTION

The hymns which are transcribed and interpreted in the following pages, are taken from tablets now in the Royal Museum in Berlin. They were acquired by that Museum in 1886, and were published ten years later by George Reisner, as Vol. X of the "Mittheilungen aus den Orientalischen Sammlung" under the title, *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen nach Thontafeln griechischer Zeit*. The dates of the tablets which are here discussed are preserved in only two cases, No. 2 (Reisner, No. 51) and No. 4 (Reisner, No. 55), written respectively in the years 91 B. C. and 85-86 B. C.² That they are copies of older tablets is stated in the colophon.

No. 1 (Reisner, No. 56) is the twenty-first tablet of the series URU A-AN-BA-[]. How many tablets the series may have originally included is not known, this being the only one yet discovered. The hymn was continued on the following tablet with the line, "Ištaritum šūpūtu ina butuqtuma."³ In the ninety-five lines of this hymn (the number of lines in the colophon gives the number of Sumerian lines), the goddess Ishtar herself speaks. Her primitive character as goddess of vegetation and fertility is alluded to only in passing. It is Ishtar of the evening and morning star, Ishtar of battle, who lays low the mountains, shakes the earth and makes the heavens tremble, who speaks.

¹Other works on this collection are: Leopold Messerschmidt, *Tabula babylonica V.A.Th.* 246 *Musei Berolinensis primum editur commentarioque instruitur*, Berlin, 1896 (Reisner, No. 1); Edgar James Banks, *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen der von George Reisner herausgegebenen Berliner Sammlung*, Leipzig, 1897 (Reisner, No. 4, 6-10, 53 rev.); Max Dienemann, *Sumerisch-babylonische Hymnen der von George Reisner herausgegebenen Berliner Sammlung*, Breslau, 1898 (Reisner, No. 41, 42, IV).

²For the double method of reckoning time, see Banks, *Einl.*, 4-6.

³A comparison with the beginning line of No. 4 (Reisner, No. 55) makes it probable that *ina* is a scribal error for *ia*.

The series URU GUL-A-GE originally consisted of six hymns, four of which have been preserved. The first one is addressed to the goddess Gula, the second probably to Bel, while the fifth and sixth are in honor of Ishtar. The hymns are lamentations, as the name of the series indicates (*ša ālu ša šulputu*), over the destruction of the temples and cities of Nippur, Sippar, Babylon, Borsippa, and Isin.

The hymns are written in the EME-SAL dialect of Sumerian, usually with its corresponding equivalent in Semitic-Babylonian. In face of the large number of pure Sumerian texts (see *CT.*, XV), and the frequent occurrence of Babylonian variants for the same group of Sumerian signs, the theory that the hymns were originally composed in Semitic-Babylonian, can scarcely be maintained; but the Babylonian version is rather to be regarded as a translation of the Sumerian, written at a time when Sumerian had begun to die out. The orthography of the Babylonian translation may give some indication of the time when that translation was made. The interchange in the use of 𐎶 with 𐎶 and 𐎶 does not occur. However, the use of 𐎶 and 𐎶 instead of 𐎶 in *ga-bal* for *qa-bal* (No. 1, obv. 26), *e-mu-gan* for *e-mu-qan* (*ibid.*, obv. 28); uncontracted forms such as *te-bi-a-at* (*ibid.*, obv. 32), *ra-im-tum* (*ibid.*, obv. 53), *ša-qa-a-á-ma* (*ibid.*, obv. 23): the use of the sign 𐎶 with the syllabic values *wá* and *we*, as in *a-wá-tum* (*ibid.*, obv. 53), *a-we-lim* (No. 5, rev. 10), points to a period before the linguistic characteristics of the documents of the first dynasty of Babylon had passed away.

Concerning the time of the origin of these texts nothing can be said with certainty. The occasion of their composition was doubtless the commemoration of an historical event. In the one case it was a victory to which Ishtar's cry of "Up! Forward!" had led her troops. In the other, it was a crushing defeat in which cities and temples were laid waste.

My collation of the tablets reveals the excellence of Reisner's editorial work. Should I make a criticism, it would be that the tablets are often not as well-preserved as Reisner's copy would indicate. It is also to be regretted that the exact position on the tablet of the Babylonian translation is not followed. As a rule the Semitic-Babylonian does not occupy a line by itself, but is written in smaller characters and slightly below the line, at the end of the Sumerian half-verse. Reisner has inserted in brackets

lines 59, 61, and 63 of rev. No. 5 (Reisner, No. 53) from the duplicate of this text in the British Museum (Sm. 954). In this case he seems to have taken a greater liberty than his rights as editor allow. He should at least have indicated in some way the source from which the lines are taken. The few cases in which I differ from his reading are noted in the text.

In the following pages brackets are used to indicate that the tablet is broken; dots, that the signs are too indistinct to be read. The metrical form and division into stanzas is indicated in the translation by the spacing.

I desire gratefully to acknowledge my indebtedness to Professor Heinrich Zimmern in calling my attention to these series of hymns, and for invaluable aid and advice in many particulars during the preparation of this thesis; and to Professor George A. Barton for helpful suggestions and criticisms.

Thanks are also due the officers of the Royal Museum in Berlin for their courtesy.

THE TEXTS

No. 1

Series: URU A-AN-BA []

VA.Th. 276 + 277 + 429 + 556 + Fragn. (Reisner, No. 56, pp. 105-9, 155, 156).

Upper Edge.

man-nu i-šar-an-na-na-an-ni [ia-]lā
ina a-mat ū Bel u ū Nabū līs-lim

Obverse.

- | | | | | |
|-----------|--|---|-----------------------------------|---------|
| A-BA | MU-UN-DA-AB-SA-A | { | E-M]A- | [GIN?] |
| A-BA | MU-UN-DA-AB-SIG-GI | { | E-M]A- | [GIN?] |
| | man-nu ū inaš-ša-la-[an-ni] | | ia-ti | |
| MU-GI-BI | ME-E-GIN | | [GAŠA]N ME(?)E- | [GIN?] |
| 5 | iš-ta-ri-tum uru-ku: | | [GAŠAN] AN-NA ana-ku be-li-ku [] | |
| MU-GI-BI | AL-MA-MA-AN | | AL(?)MA-MA | [-AN?] |
| | ši-ih-rim u ra-ba-a a-na-as-sa-ah | | a-ša-ak-kād | |
| AN | AN-USAN-NA-KA | | GUB-BA-MU- | [NE] |
| | ina ša-me-e ina ši-mi-ta-an | | ina ū-zu-uz-zī-ja | |
| 10 | SI AN-NA IL-LA | | ME-E ŠI-IN-GA-GIN [] | |
| | nu-ūr ša-me-e | | | |
| | ša ša-ru-[ru]-ša ina ša-me-e ša[-ku]-ū-um(?)ma ana-ku[-ma] | | | |
| AN | UD-ZAL-LI-DA-KA | | ZAL GUB-A-MU-[NE] | |
| | ina šamē(-e) ina na-ma-ra-ti | | ina šu | |
| AN-UD | UD-DU-TA AN-UD ŠU-A-KU | { | [] GUB [] | |
| 15 | iš-tu-ū ši-it ū Šamsī(-ši) ana erēb(-ib) [Šamsī | |] | |
| A | KA ME-KA | | [] | |
| | ina pi-e ta-ḫa-zi: ina pa-an ta-ḫa-zi [] | | | |
| AN-UD-SAG | KUB-KUR-BA | | [ME-E]ŠI-IN-GA-[GIN] | |
| | a-ša-ri-it-ti ina-ta-a-ti | | [ana-ku-ma] | |
| 20 | U I-DE ME-KA | | GUB-BA-MU- | [NE] |
| | ina pu-ru ta-ḫa-zi | | ina ū-zu[-uz-zī-ja] | |
| MAR-TE | ŠU-ŠU IL-LA | | ME-E ŠI-IN-GA-GIN [] | |
| | a-bu-bu šu e-mu-qa-a-šu ša-qa-a-ū(?)ma | | [ana-ku-ma] | |
| | iš-pa-tum te-bi-tum | | | |
| 25 | A DE ME-KA | | GUB-BA-MU- | [NE] |
| | ina ga-bal ta-ḫa-zi | | ina ū-zu-uz-zī-ja [] | |
| LIPIT | MĒ AM Ā NAM-UR-SAG-GA Ā | | | |
| | NAM-UR-SAG-GA | | ME-[E]ŠI-IN-GA-GIN [] | |
| | šur-ri ta-ḫa-zi i-di qar-ra-du-ti e-mu-gan [qar]-ra-du-ti ana- | | | [ku-ma] |
| A | RIG ME-KA | | [GIN-NA]-MU- | [NE] |
| 30 | ina ar-kat ta-ḫa-zi | | ina a-[I]a-ki-i[a |] |

- DU(?)AM BUL-BI ZIG-GA ME-E-SI-IN-GA-GIN []
na-as-pa-an-tum ša lim-niš te-bi-a-at ana-ku[ma]
EGIR ME-KA UŠ-SA-MU- [NE]
ina ar-ki ta-ħa-zi ina ri-di-[ja]
- 35 NU-NUNUZ RA-A TE-A ME-E-ŠI-IN-GA-GIN []
_{TE}
sin-niš-tum ša a-lik u te-ħi ana-ku[ma]
[λ(?) KAŠ-A-KA TUŠ-A-MU [NE]
_{KA} [TU]
a-ħi ši-ka-ri ina a-ša-bi-ja
- [NU - NUN]UZ-GIN DUN KA-ZAL ME-E-SI-IN-GA-GIN []
40 si-in-ni-ša-ku id-lum mu-dal-lum ana-ku[ma]
[λ(?) GÜL- NE-DA-KA GUB-BA-MU- [NE]
_{DU}
a-ħi ša-el-ti ina ú-zu-uz-zi-[ja]
[NU-NUN]UZ MU-LU IN-ZU [ME]-E-SI-IN-GA-GIN []
sin-niš-tum mu-da-a-tum pil-ġum ana-ku-ma []
- 45 [λ(?) DI-DA-KA [GUB-E]A-MU- [NE]
a-ħi di-nim ina ú-zu-uz-zi-[ja]
[NU-NUN]UZ MU-LU E-NE-EM ZU [ME-E-SI-IN-GA-GIN []
sin-niš-tum mu-di-a-at a-wā[ti]m ana-ku[ma]
[KA É]Š-DAM-MA-KA [TUŠ-A-MU- [NE]
[] A-KA K-Š-DA
- 50 ina ba-ab na-mi-[] ina a-ša-bi-ja
[KA-B]GE MU-LU MU ZU M[E-E-SI-IN-GA-GIN []
_{KA-AR IM ZU}
šar(?)ra-ki-tum
[] ħa-ri-im-tum ra-im-tum ana-ku[ma]
[] [] NU [. . . .] GA []
- 55 [. ul []]
[SA]-A TUR-BA []
_{TU}
še-tu šer(?)ra a-at(?) [. . .] . []
[BUR] SASIN-GE ME-RI KIN-A A []
bur š[a-si-i]n-nu paṭ-ri zaq-tē [] ša ina su-nu šak-nu
[ana-ku-ma]
- 60 [AN AN-U]SAN-NA-KA [GUB-BA]-MU- [NE]
ina ša-me[ē] ina ši-]mi-ta-an ina ú-zu-uz-zi-i-ia
[GASAN]-GIN BULUG-BULUG-GA AN[-NA] SIG-GA []
_{BU}
be-el-tum ša pu-[u-uk] ša-me-e ma-[la-at]
[BU]G-MU AN-TA IM GUR-RU[A . .]
_{MU-GI}
- 65 zi-mu-ú-a ina ša-me-e pu-lu[h-tum na-ša-at]
ME-LAM-MU ENSUR-BA KU MU-NI-IB-BIL []
me-lam-mu-ú-a ina ap-si-im nu-ni [dal-ħu-ni]
ME-E-E-NE-EM AZAG-MU SA-PAR GAL ZUG LIL-LÁ ta-šr(?)-ša []
ja-u a-wā-tim el-li-tum sa-pa-tu ra-bu-ú ša ana ši-ir [ri-ta]
- 70 SA-PAR MAŠ ZUG LIL-LÁ-KU []
sa-pa-tu ši-tu ša ana [ši-ir tar-ša]
I-NE-TE-EN TUR-BA HU NU [UD-UC-NE]