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## THE PROMULGATION OF THE NAME OF THE THIRD YEAR OF RIM-ANUM OF URUK

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The purpose of this short study is to publish a new example of an Old Babylonian year-name promulgation-text.<sup>1</sup> This type of document consists of a full version of a Sumerian language year-formula, sometimes accompanied by an Akkadian translation; it is generally assumed that most of these were sent out by central authorities, providing local scribes with the official version of a new year-name. All preserved examples are inscribed on landscape-oriented cuneiform tablets. Scholars have known this kind of text for a long time; the first published exemplar — one that we will deal with below — was already provided by George Smith in 1875 (IV R 35 no. 8, republished in the second edition of 1891). In 1976 Marten Stol provided a list of all known promulgations (Stol 1976, 49), and Malcolm Horsnell edited all fourteen known First Dynasty ones, with hitherto unpublished additions.<sup>2</sup> There are only four promulgations from other dynasties: *UET* 5 872 = Rim-Sin I 27, possibly *YOS* 5 99 = Rim-Sin I 8,<sup>3</sup> *YOS* 5 226 = Rim-Sin II b, and IV R 35 no. 8 = Rim-Anum c. Until now, none of these promulgations has been attested in more than one exemplar.

While working in the Yale Babylonian Collection, Gary Beckman copied 16 tablets from the war-prisoner (*bīt asīrī*) archive of the Old Babylonian sovereign Rim-Anum, who ruled in Uruk for three years during the time of the Rim-Sin II rebellion against Samsuiluna of Babylon.<sup>4</sup> One of these was a new promulgation-text. He subsequently handed the copies over to Andrea Seri for inclusion in her comprehensive study of the reign of Rim-Anum (Seri 2012). Because the publication and philological analysis of the year name lay outside the analytical framework

<sup>1</sup> We are grateful to Marten Stol for comments on a draft and to Andrea Seri for providing us with a preliminary copy of her forthcoming monograph.

<sup>2</sup> Horsnell 1999, 149–172. For comments and additions, see Hallo 2004, 67–68.

<sup>3</sup> It is not certain that this is promulgation-text; see Hallo 2004, 68 n. 18.

<sup>4</sup> On this archive see, for the present, Rositani 2003, 1–36.

of her book, Andrea graciously asked us to deal with this particular document separately.

The tablet in question, NCBT 848, provides a complete version of the year-formula for Rim-Anum's year "c," undoubtedly the third and last year of his rule, and of his life as well.<sup>5</sup> This is welcome information, but this tablet has more importance: it duplicates, with variants, another promulgation-text for the same year, published long ago as IV R 35 no. 8, and thus this pair provides the first evidence for multiple copies of such documents.

The Yale tablet was purchased together with the other tablets from the *bīt asīrī* archive and therefore most probably originated in Uruk; as is the case with other texts in the Newell collection at Yale, no information is available as to its acquisition. It was therefore an internal document, sent from whoever was in charge of such matters to someone in control of the recording of the affairs of the prisoner of war center, probably Sinšeme. The other exemplar, housed in the British Museum, has the registration number K. 4709, but it is certainly not from Kuyoujnik. There is no evidence, at present, that Rim-Anum's control stretched anywhere beyond Uruk and its environs, and therefore one assumes that both tablets came from that city.

In economic texts Rim-Anum's last year is usually abbreviated simply as mu ri-im-<sup>d</sup>a-nu-(um) lugal-e ma-da e-mu-ut-ba-lum (ugnim eš<sub>3</sub>-nun-na), and therefore the long version can only be reconstructed on the basis of the two promulgation-texts.<sup>6</sup> The matter is complicated by the fact that the two duplicates differ in the sentence order of the second part, and, furthermore, the BM text is only partially preserved, with the lower right hand corner broken off. Older renditions of the year-name, based on the BM text (B below), are inaccurate and out of date.

There are interpretive and philological problems in both versions that will require further analysis and therefore the renditions proposed here must be viewed as preliminary at best. Nevertheless, the differences between the two versions of the same year-name raise serious questions about the function of the texts that have been labeled as "promulgations." If these are indeed matrix versions that were sent out to inform officials about the full official form of a new year-name, why is it that until now

<sup>5</sup> The reconstruction of the year-names of Rim-Anum follows the scheme established by Rositani 2003, 15. According to Seri 2012, chapter 1, his rule at Uruk spanned two years and four months.

<sup>6</sup> Rositani 2003, 15 n. 23 lists eight known documents from year "c."

not a single duplicate of any exemplar has been recovered, and the first such example contains such striking variants?

Our interpretation suggests that the armies of Larsa (Emutbalum), Eshnunna, Isin, and Kazallu approached Uruk, perhaps pretending to be allies (e-ne-bi-da/ta-gin<sub>7</sub>); their march created an enormous dust cloud, but after it subsided, Rim-Anum's forces defeated them and forced them to withdraw. This internal strife among the anti-Babylonian rebels obviously did not serve them well, as documented in Samsu-iluna's tenth year formula, which proclaimed victory over Idamaras, that is the Transstigidian territories that included Eshnunna and Emutbalum as well as Uruk and Isin; the next year was named after the destruction of the walls of Uruk and Ur.<sup>7</sup> Although details remain obscure, the battle described in this year-date is undoubtedly to be connected with the defection of Uruk from the coalition of rebels against Samsuiluna recognized by Seri in her close study of administrative records of Rim-Anum (Seri 2012, chapter 1).

The two tablets are:

#### A. NCBT 848<sup>8</sup>

1. mu ri-im-<sup>d</sup>a-nu-um lugal-e
2. ma-da e-mu-ut-ba-<sup>r</sup>lum ugnim<sup>1</sup> eš<sub>3</sub>-nun-na i<sub>3</sub>-si-in<sup>ki</sup> ka-zal-lu e-ne-bi-ta-gin<sub>7</sub>
3. unug<sup>ki</sup>-šè mè-a in-ši-sug<sub>2</sub>-eš-<sup>r</sup>am<sub>3</sub><sup>1</sup>
4. <sup>r</sup>gar<sub>3</sub>-dar<sup>1</sup> erin<sub>2</sub>-na-<sup>r</sup>bi<sup>1</sup> mi-ni-in-ĝar-ra
5. niĝ<sub>2</sub>-ul-du<sub>3</sub>-a-<sup>r</sup>ta<sup>1</sup> unug<sup>ki</sup> sahar-ra la-ba-<sup>r</sup>dub<sup>2</sup>-ab<sup>2</sup><sup>r</sup>-ba
6. sahar ba-dub<sup>2</sup>-ba-a-ba <sup>r</sup>mi-ni-in-šar<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-šar<sub>2</sub>-re
7. nam-a<sub>2</sub>-ĝal<sub>2</sub>-la-a-ni kalam-ma <sup>r</sup>mi<sup>1</sup>-ni-<sup>r</sup>in-ri<sup>1</sup>-a

“<sup>1</sup>The year in which King Rim-Anum, <sup>2</sup>the (forces of) the land of Emutbalum, the armies of Eshnunna, Isin and Kazallu, as if all together (with him), <sup>3</sup>having presented themselves at Uruk for war, <sup>4</sup>inflicted a defeat upon their troops. <sup>5</sup>Since time immemorial Uruk had never experienced (such) a dust storm (raised by a foreign army), <sup>6</sup>but after the dust storm settled, he slaughtered (all of them) <sup>7</sup>and by his power ejected (them all) from the homeland.”

<sup>7</sup> Stol 1976, 50 and 55. On these events, see now Charpin 2004, 340–342.

<sup>8</sup> Measurements: 52 × 74 × 27. Published with the kind permission of Benjamin Foster, Curator of the Yale Babylonian Collection. We are grateful to Ulla Kasten for arranging the photography.

**B. K. 4709 (IV R 35 no. 8)<sup>9</sup>**

Judging by the original copy, the tablet has deteriorated quite a bit since Rawlinson drew it; indeed the rendition of an Old Babylonian text in Sumerian is impressively accurate for the time. So many signs are now partly preserved that it makes no sense to use half brackets throughout. The transliteration reflects the copy, modified by information from the photograph. There is a clear line at the end of the obverse that is not indicated by the copy. There are traces of final signs on the left side of the reverse, which is otherwise completely destroyed. In general, when promulgation documents have such a line at the end of the obverse, the reverse, if inscribed, carries an Akkadian version of the year-name (Horsnell 1999, 149). It is difficult to ascertain if the Sumerian text ran over to the reverse, as seems more likely, or if a short version in Akkadian was inscribed on the reverse.

1. 'mu<sup>1</sup> ri-im-<sup>d</sup>a-nu-um lugal-e
2. 'ma<sup>1</sup>-da ja-mu-ut-ba-a-lum<sup>ki</sup>
3. 'ugnim<sup>1</sup> eš<sub>3</sub>-nun-na<sup>ki</sup> i<sub>3</sub>-si-in
4. [ka-za]l-lu e-ne-bi-da-gin<sub>7</sub>
5. [unug<sup>ki</sup>-š]e<sub>3</sub> me<sub>3</sub>-a in-ši-su<sub>8</sub>-re-eš-am<sub>3</sub>
6. [unug<sup>ki?</sup>] niĝ<sub>2</sub>-ul-ta sahar-ra la-ba-dub<sup>2</sup>-a-ba
7. [...]-us<sub>2</sub><sup>10</sup>-am<sub>3</sub>
8. [(...) nam-a<sub>2</sub>-ĝa]l-a-ni-ta gar<sub>3</sub>-dar-a-bi i<sub>3</sub>-ni-in-ĝar-ra

Three or four broken lines on the reverse.

“<sup>1</sup>The year in which King Rim-Anum, <sup>2</sup>the (forces of) the land of Emutbalum, <sup>3</sup>the armies of Eshnunna, Isin <sup>4</sup>and [Kazal]lu, as if all together (with him), <sup>5</sup>presented themselves a[t Uruk] for war. <sup>5</sup>[Uruk<sup>?</sup>], since time immemorial, had never experienced (such) a dust storm (raised by a foreign army), <sup>7</sup>... <sup>8</sup>(...?) by his power he inflicted defeat upon them (...)

**Commentary**

While there are many difficulties in the understanding of these two texts, it is obvious that the year-name was composed by someone familiar with the rhetorical and lexical content of such formulae as used by the kings of Babylon, especially by Rim-Anum's contemporary, Samsuiluna.

<sup>9</sup> Collated on photographs kindly provided by Jonathan Taylor; official photos provided by the British Museum are reproduced below. Because of the temporary closure of the Student's Room of the British Museum we could not inspect the original in person.

<sup>10</sup> This according to the copy. Only the end of the sign is now preserved.

Words such as gar<sub>3</sub>-dar(...ĝar), nam-a<sub>2</sub>-ĝal<sub>2</sub>, and perhaps even e-ne-bi-ta/da, are all part of this word hoard.

A2/B4. The final word, e-ne-bi-ta/da-gin<sub>7</sub>, has no exact parallel anywhere, to our knowledge. Without the particle -gin<sub>7</sub>, it occurs only a few times in Sumerian literary and historical texts, and is not attested lexically. The basic meaning seems to be “with him/her”; this is best exemplified by the passage in the myth of Inana and Bilulu 106–116 (Jacobsen and Samuel 1953, 176):

ku<sub>3</sub> <sup>d</sup>inana-ke<sub>4</sub> eš<sub>2</sub>-dam-ma ba-ni-in-ku<sub>4</sub> [...]
   
ki-tuš-a ba-e-gub nam mu-ni-ib-tar-re
   
ĝen-na ba-ug<sub>5</sub>-ge-en na-nam-ma-am<sub>3</sub> mu-zu ga-ba-da-ha-lam-e
   
<sup>kuš</sup>ummu<sub>3</sub> a šed<sub>7</sub> niĝ<sub>2</sub>-edin-na he<sub>2</sub>-me-en
   
dumu-ni ĝir<sub>2</sub>-ĝir<sub>2</sub>-re e-ne-bi-da
   
<sup>d</sup>udug edin-na <sup>d</sup>lama edin-na he<sub>2</sub>-em-ma-da-me-eš-am<sub>3</sub>

“Sacred Inana entered her Tavern (shrine),  
 “She took her place and determined their future:  
 “Now, I will kill you and moreover will erase your name,  
 “So that you will be but a leather pouch with cool water in the desert,  
 “And you and your son Girgire, together  
 “Will be spirit and genie of the desert.”

Important, for our purposes, is the occurrence of this word in the name of Samsuiluna’s sixth year, which begins:

mu sa-am-su-i-lu-na lugal-e <sup>d</sup>utu <sup>d</sup>marduk e-ne-bi-da-ra niĝ<sub>2</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub>-dim<sub>2</sub>-ma-bi al in-na-an-dug<sub>4</sub>-uš-am<sub>3</sub>

“The year that King Samsuiluna, for Shamash and Marduk, who had both together expressed a desire for fashioned objects ...”

Other occurrences include Enlil and Sud 141, Ishme-Dagan Hymn A + V A 160, Hammurabi Hymn D 8, Hammurabi Inscription 10 [E4.3.6.10: 12]). In all other cases it refers to the combination of two entities, and not to any more. Therefore, it is likely that the usage here, in tandem with the equative -gin<sub>7</sub>, is intended to index Rim-Anum and the city coalition as two distinct elements.

A3/B6. The verbal form in B (in-ši-su<sub>8</sub>-re-eš-am<sub>3</sub>) is incorrect. The plural stem of “to stand” ends in /b/. The photograph reveals that the old copy is correct and that the following sign is indeed /ri/.

A4/B8. Although the rare  $gar_3$ -dar is attested already in the inscriptions of Entemena and Urukagina, as well as in one Ishme-Dagan hymn, an inscription of Hammurabi, and in Angin 139,  $gar_3$ -dar... $\hat{g}ar$  is otherwise known only from Hammurabi year-name 30. The only Akkadian equivalent is found in Angin 139, where  $gar_3$ -dar  $me_3$  huš is translated as “smasher in fierce battle” (*sa-kip ta-ḥa-zi ez-zi*, Cooper 1978, 80–81).

A7/B8.  $nam$ - $a_2$ - $\hat{g}al_2$  is rare. It is known from year-names of Samsuiluna (14, 28) and Ammiditana (3=4), as well as from one royal inscription of the former king (Samsuiluna Inscription 8: 40, RIME4 3.7.8). It is at present unattested in the lexical corpus and the only literary attestation is in a fragmentary OB proverb (CBS 14213, reference courtesy G. Rubio):<sup>11</sup>  $a_2$   $a\hat{g}_2$ - $\hat{g}a_2$  diš- $am_3$  mu-e-[...],  $\ša_3$ -zu  $ga$ - $bi_2$ - $ib$ - $du_{10}$   $nam$ - $a_2$ - $\hat{g}al_2$ - $\hat{g}u_{10}$   $ga$ - $e^1$ -[x...].

A5-6/B6. The understanding of sahar dub is based on the lexical equivalence with Akkadian *tarbu'tu*, “dust, dust heap, sand dune, dust cloud”; the idea here is that the marching armies of the coalition raised an enormous, unprecedented dust cloud; after it subsided, Rim-Sin annihilated them.

There is some question concerning the reading of the SAHAR sign in this context. Lines A5 and B6 both have –ra following, suggesting sahar. Proto-Ea 250-251 (*MSL* 14 41) offers, among other possibilities, the readings sa-ha-ar and  $u_2$ -ku-um for SAHAR; in Proto-Izi I 316-317 (*MSL* 13 27) these are rendered in Akkadian as *e-pe-ru* (var. -rum) and *ta-ar-bu-uh<sub>2</sub>-tum*.<sup>12</sup> Another Old Babylonian lexical version of Proto-Aa — a prism from Hammam et-Turkman — distributes the readings differently:<sup>13</sup>

[sahar]	ʿsa <sup>1</sup> -har	SAHAR	<i>e-pe<sub>2</sub>-ru<sup>1</sup></i> (š <sub>u</sub> )	(dust)
[(u)kum]	ku-um	SAHAR	<i>tar-bu-uh<sub>2</sub>-<sup>r</sup>tum<sup>1</sup></i>	(dust, dust heap/cloud)
[(u)kum]			<i>ši-ba-ḥu-um</i>	(settling [dust])
[šen <sub>x</sub> ]	še-ʿen	SAHAR <sup>1</sup>	<i>šu-uh<sub>2</sub>-tum</i>	(patina, rust) <sup>14</sup>

<sup>11</sup> This is a round tablet with the proverb written twice on the obverse (reverse not inscribed), Alster 1997, 304. Photograph available on CDLI (P 231685).

<sup>12</sup> The later version of the syllabary provides two readings for the sign with the meaning *tarbu'tu*, namely  $u_2$ -ku-um and sa-ha-ar-dub (Ea IV 85-86 [*MSL* 14 358]).

<sup>13</sup> II 26-29; van Soldt 1995, 281.

<sup>14</sup> Later written as URUDU.SAHAR(URUDU).

The standard meaning of sahar dub is “to pile up earth/dust”, (see Civil 1985, 36), which can be positive, as in Samsuiluna Inscription 8: 72 (RIME4 3.7.8): sahar-bi im-mi-in-dub, or negative as in LSUr 320 (Michalowski 1989, 56–57): unu<sub>2</sub>-RI-ban<sub>3</sub>-da <sup>d</sup>nanna-ka sahar ba-da-dub-dub, “dust/sand piled up in the UnuRIbanda.” But it can also be used in the sense “to raise up a dust cloud,” as well illustrated in Iddin-Dagan Hymn A 94:<sup>15</sup> udu-bi amaš-bi-a sahar mu-na-an-dub-dub-bu-uš, “Its sheep raise up clouds of dust in their fold.”

B7-8. It is possible that B7 is an indented line. There is room for three or four signs at the beginning of B8, but no feasible restoration comes to mind. It is possible that the verb ended with the copula and that this was on the broken edge.

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<sup>15</sup> This has been translated in various ways; most recently, P. Attinger (“Iddin-Dagan A (2.5.3.1),” [http://www.arch.unibe.ch/content/e8254/e9161/e9679/2\\_5\\_3\\_1\\_ger.pdf](http://www.arch.unibe.ch/content/e8254/e9161/e9679/2_5_3_1_ger.pdf)), p. 16 rendered it as “Devant elle, les moutons là-bas font<sup>1</sup> des tas de poussière dans leur bergerie.”



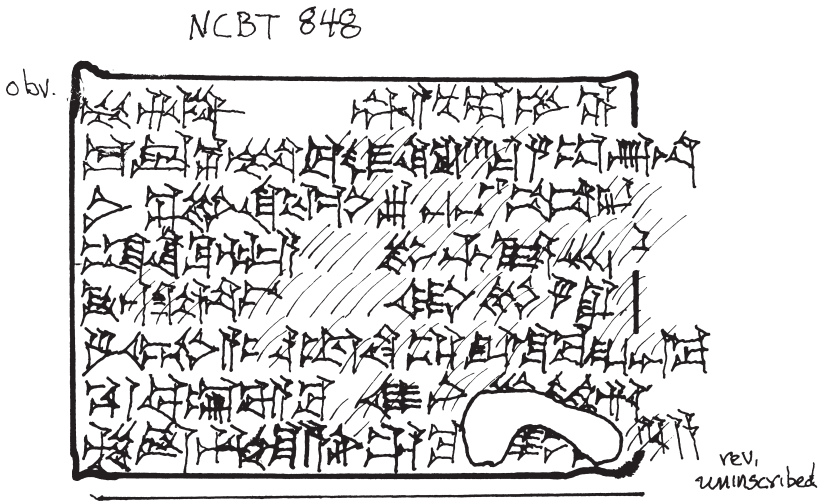


Fig. 1. NCBT 848, obverse (reverse untranscribed).  
Hand copy by Gary Beckman.



Fig. 2. NBCT 848, obverse & right edge.



Fig. 3. K. 4709 (IV R 35 no. 8),  
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