

NABU 1990-121 Paul-Alain Beaulieu

Lion-Man : *uridimmu* or *urdimmu* ? – In *AfO* 18 (1957-58) 109-112 W.G. Lambert published and edited « A Part of the Ritual for the Substitute King », which prescribes the fashioning of figurines of mythical creatures and their burial at various locations in the palace. One section (column B 10-11) gives instructions to make « two Raging Dogs of tamarisk wood, holding crescents of cedar in their hands ». The word « Raging Dog » is not written *ur.idim.mu*, however, but phonetically *ur-dím-me* (or *ur-dím^{me}*), and Lambert raised the question if *ur.idim.mu* should not always be read without the /i/. His suggestion is not retained by von Soden (*AHw* s.v. *uridimmu*) who considers the spelling *ur-dím-me* might be a mistake. Borger (*Zeichenliste* p. 196) prudently transcribes the word *ur(i)dimmu*.

The most recent treatment of the question is by F.A.M. Wiggerman, *Babylonian Prophylactic Figures : The Ritual Texts*, Amsterdam, Free University Press, 1986, pp. 299-302. Wiggerman has identified the *ur(i)dimmu* as a human-headed lion-man crowned with a tiara and holding a staff with a lunar crescent on top¹, thus rejecting the earlier interpretation « Raging Dog, Wild Dog », which was based on the lexical equivalence *ur.dim* = *kal-bu še-gu-ú* in *MSL* 8/II (HAR-ra = *hubullu* XIV, 95). Although he uses the form *uridimmu* throughout his book, Wiggerman recognizes that the correct Akkadian form of the word might be *urdimmu* in consideration of the following two additional instances of syllabic spellings without the /i/ :

Cavigneaux, *Texts from Babylon* 1, 105, 4 ^{mu}*ur.idim* = [*u*]*r-dim-mu*
YOS 17 345, 6 ^d*ur-dim-mu*

YOS 17 345 is a text from Uruk dated to the 12th year of Nebuchadnezzar II. Collation of the tablet indicates a reading ^d*ur-dim**^{mes} (contra Dougherty's copy). Some sources inform us that the doors of the cella of Marduk and Zarpanītu in the Esagil were adorned with representation of Lion-Men and other mythical creatures². Since *YOS* 17 345 is a receipt of sacrificial sheep for the temples of Marduk and Nusku and for the ^d*ur-dim**^{mes}, one may presume that these Uruk Lion-Men fulfilled the same iconic and perhaps also cultic function as their counterparts at Babylon (many texts from Uruk mention a temple of Marduk, probably located in the city or its environs).

The spelling of the word in *YOS 17 345* is paralleled in another archival text from Uruk which is being prepared for publication by Professors W.W. Hallo and D.B. Weisberg³. The matter of the text is not entirely clear but we are probably dealing with figurines of Lion-Men fashioned for some kind of ritual. The spelling of the word is ^d*ur-dim-mu*^{mes}.

Lambert's original hypothesis of an Akkadian form *urdimmu* finds more support in yet another text from Uruk, *TCL 13, 67*. The text has long been known but has never been elucidated despite two independent treatments by Ebeling and Moore⁴. I propose the following interpretation :

1. ^Id^{nà}-du-ibila ^ušà.tam é.an.na dumu-šú
2. šá ^Ina-din dumu ^Ida-bi-bi ina ^den ^dnà
3. u a-di-i šá lugal a-na ^Ie-rib-šú dumu-šú
šá ^Ire-he-e-ti
4. ^ušī-rik ^dinnin unug^{ki} ^Iir^l-te-me ki-i ina ká
é ^dur-dim-mu
5. ta-at-ta-ši-iz ù ^{ti}-ru-tu
6. ina lib-bi te-te-ép-šú
7. ^umu-kīn₃ ^Id30-kám dumu-šú šá
8. ^Id^{nà}-mu-si.sá dumu ^Idù-dingir ^Idu-du-a
9. dumu-šú šá ^Idⁱ.kud-šeš.meš-mu dumu
^Iši-gu-ú-a
10. ^Ila-a-ba-ši-^damar.ud dumu-šú šá ^Iir-^den
11. a ^Ie-gì-bi ^uumbisag ^Idu-numun-mu
dumu-šú
12. šá ^Ia-hu-lap-^dinnin dumu ^Ié-kur-za-kir
unug^{ki}
13. itī sig₄ u₄ 24-kám mu 5-kám ^Ikám-bu-zi-
<ia>
14. lugal tin.tir^{ki} lugal kur.kur

« Nabû-mukîn-apli, the *šatammu* of the Eanna, son of Nādin, descendent of Dābibi, has sworn by Bēl, Nabû and the majesty of the king to Eribšû, son of Rehêti, an oblate of Ištar of Uruk, thus : “(Woe on you) if you stand (again) at the temple gate (like a) Lion-Man and cause mayhem.» The witnesses (are) : Sîn-ēreš, son of Nabû-šum-līšir, descendent of Ibni-ili ; Šamaš-mukîn-apli, son

of Madanu-ahhē-iddin, descendent of Šigū'ā, Lābāši-Marduk, son of Arad-Bēl, descendent of Egibi ; (and) the scribe (is) Šamaš-zēr-iddin, son of Ahulap-Ištar, descendent of Ekur-zākir. Uruk : month Simānu – day 24 – year 5 of Cambyses, king of Babylon and all the lands ».

The text belongs to a series of behavioral warnings issued by the temple authorities (compare, for instance, *YOS* 7 56, 77 and 92, and *YOS* 19 110, all related to the oblates of the temple). « At the gate of the temple of Urdimmu » seems a more natural translation of the phrase *ina ká é^dur-dim-mu*, but it is unlikely that an entire sanctuary would have been consecrated to the Lion-Man. The verb *izuzzu* in conjunction with *urdimmu* must probably be understood idiomatically « to stand up like an *urdimmu*, to do the *urdimmu* thing ». The oblate Erībšu was presumably in the habit of disrupting public peace at the gate of the Eanna, behaving literally like a Lion-Man, until he was served a proper warning by the *šatammu*.

The last piece of evidence, also from Uruk, is a personal name attested from the reign of Nabonidus until that of Darius I :

<i>YOS</i> 19 65, 1-2 :	I <i>ina-gissu-d^{ur}.idim a-šú šá</i> I ^d nà-dù-šeš a ^{lu} i.du ₈
<i>TCL</i> 12 117, 13 :	I <i>ina-gissu-d^{ur}.idim a-šú šá</i> I ^d nà-dù-šeš a ^{lu} i.du ₈
<i>AnOr</i> 8 56, 20-21 :	I <i>ina-gissu-d^{ur}.idim dumu-šú šá</i> I ^d nà-dù- šeš dumu ^{lu} i-du ₈
<i>GCCI</i> 2 97, 8-9 :	I <i>ina-gissu-d^{ur-dim} a-šú šá</i> I ^d nà-dù-šeš a ^{lu} i.du ₈
<i>YOS</i> 7 178, 1-2 :	I <i>ina-gissu-d^{ur-dim-mu} dumu-šú šá</i> I ^d nà- dù-šeš a ^{lu} i.du ₈
<i>Dar</i> 77, 3-4 :	I ^{ki-d} a-nù-tin a-šú šá [I ^{ina}]-gissu- <i>ur-dim</i> a ^{lu} i-du ₈
<i>Dar</i> 524, 4-6	I ^{ki-d} 60-tin a-šú šá I <i>ina-gissu-d^{ur}.idim</i> a ^{lu} i.du ₈

Kümmel's interpretation of the name : *d^{ur}.idim* = *d^{taš}-mit*, *d^{ur-dim}* = *d^{taš}-tim* and *d^{ur-dim-mu}* = *d^{taš}-tim-mu*, hence his reading *Ina-šilli-Tašmētu* (« Under the protection of Tašmētu »), doesn't seem convincing⁵. The mutation *tašmētu* > *taštimmu* is most unlikely and the spelling *ur-dim* without the divine

determinative in *Dar 77* suggests that the correct reading of the name is Ina-šilli-urdimmu (« Under the protection of the Lion-Man »).

The archival material from Uruk reflects the vernacular use of the language in contrast to the learned idiom of monumental inscriptions and canonical texts. The data just presented strongly vindicates Lambert's hypothesis of a pronunciation *lurdimmul*. The word appears in two basic forms : the ideographic form ur.idim and the Akkadian syllabic forms *ur-dīm*, *ur-dim* and *ur-dim-mu*. All these forms are also attested with the plural indicators meš or me ⁶. The form ur-IDIM-mu/ma might be interpreted as an ideogram with phonetic complement (ur.idim-*mulma*), or else one may posit a phonetic value *dim_x* for the sign BAD ⁷. Preposition of the divine determinative is optional at other sites but seems to be almost the rule at Uruk.

Finally, one should take note of the recurrent association of the Lion-Man with doors and gates. Wiggerman has stressed the role of the creature as gate-keeper of Marduk and Zarpanītu (op. cit., p. 302). Lion-Men were depicted on the doors of the cella of Marduk in the Esagil. Sennacherib, adopting Babylonian models, adorned the gateways of the temple of Aššur with representations of mythical creatures, including Lion-Men (*OIP* II 145, 21). In the ritual edited by Lambert the figurines of Lion-Men are buried under a gate. The figurines of Lion-Men in the Hallo/Weisberg text are also associated with gates (*ká.gal-ú*) but the context is unclear. In *TCL* 13 167 the oblate Erībšu is ordered not to stand at the temple gate like a Lion-Man. The ancestral name of Ina-šilli-Urdimmu is « Descendent of the Door-Keeper » and we know that his family still held the prebend of door-keeper in the Eanna temple.

The *Enūma eliš* provides the mythological explanation for the stationing of Lion-Men at the gate of the Esagil. The Lion-Men originally belonged, with ten other mythical creatures, to the army of Tiamat. After their capture Marduk turned them into effigies and set them up at the gate of the Apsû as a reminder of his victory (Tablet V 73-76). The Esagil was thought to be the terrestrial *imago* of the Apsû (Tablet VI 62), and it is thus only natural that the effigies depicted at the gate of the mythical sanctuary were borrowed in order to fulfill the same function for its earthly counterpart.

¹See p. 325 no. 5 for iconographic representation of the creature as Lion-Man.

²See A. George in *RA* 82 (1988) pp. 150-51.

³The text belongs to the Cincinnati Art Museum and will be published in a forthcoming issue of *JANES*. It is dated to the 20th year of Nebuchadnezzar II. I wish to thank them for permission to cite it.

⁴See E. Ebeling, « Kriminalfälle aus Uruk, » *AfO* 16 (1952-53) 67-69 ; and E.M. Moore, *Neo-Babylonian Business and Administrative Documents*, Ann Arbor, 1935, no. 167. Both transcribe *taš-tim-mu* and try to explain it as a verb.

⁵See H.M. Kümmel, *Familie, Beruf und Amt in spätbabylonische Uruk* (ADOG 20), Berlin 1979, p. 47.

⁶The plural indicator *me* can also be interpreted as a phoneme like *-ma* and *-mu*.

⁷The sign BAD has a phonetic value *dim₃* in Sumerian (see Ellermeier, *Sumerische Glossar* 1/1, p. 593). However, the gloss *ur-idim^{i-dli-i₃m}* in HAR-ra = *hubullu* XIV 94 suggests an original Sumerian pronunciation with the /i/.

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