

LLUÍS FELIU

## A New Fragment of Nisaba A<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

The present paper presents the publication of a new fragment of the Sumerian Hymn Nisaba A, a text used in XVIII<sup>th</sup> century scribal schools for teaching Sumerian.

Keywords: Nisaba, Sumerian, Literature

In 1910, F. Thureau-Dangin<sup>2</sup> published a small stone tablet from Lagaš now kept in the Istanbul Museum. The text is a short hymn to the goddess Nisaba. Later, in 1963, C. J. Gadd and S. N. Kramer published a copy of two fragments of a Hymn to Nisaba. The beginning of the texts (UET 6/1 71) coincides largely with the text published by Thureau-Dangin fifty-three years earlier. Three years later, Gadd and Kramer published new fragments of the same composition (UET 6/2 388). In 1970, W. W. Hallo<sup>3</sup> provided an edition of all the duplicates available at that time, including the important Yale manuscript, which preserves almost the entire composition and the Ur material that had not yet been published in 1970 but is available now in A. Shaffer UET 6/3 nr. 6 and 250.<sup>4</sup> After Hallo's edition, some additional manuscripts appeared.<sup>5</sup>

The tablet published here was purchased from an antiquarian dealer in 2007 and now is in a private collection in Barcelona. There are four fragments from the same tablet, all showing signs of damage. The process of flaking is well advanced and the tablet requires urgent restoration. Fragments 1, 2 and 4 preserve writing.

Fragment 1 (K<sub>1</sub>) is the largest and best preserved; it measures 77 × 82 × 33 mm and preserves the last eleven lines on the obverse and approximately eleven lines on the reverse.

<sup>1</sup> The abbreviations follow those in the Reallexikon der Assyriologie XI would like to express my gratitude to Dr W. G. E. Watson who was kind enough to correct my English. I should stress that any faults or errors are my own responsibility.

<sup>2</sup> F. Thureau-Dangin (1910), 107–111.

<sup>3</sup> W. W. Hallo (1970), 116–134.

<sup>4</sup> Manuscripts D<sub>1</sub> and F of Hallo's edition.

<sup>5</sup> See the list of manuscripts in S. Tinney (1999), 172.

Fragment 2 (K<sub>2</sub>) measures 33 × 38 mm and preserves the beginning of the last lines of the reverse.

Fragment 3 measures 48 × 25 × 36 mm, but the flaking process has erased almost all the signs and only a couple of wedges are distinguishable.

Fragment 4 is a small fragment measuring 32 × 13 mm, which preserves a few signs that are difficult to place.

The tablet is longer than it is wide and is plano-convex with one column on each side. The text is undoubtedly Old Babylonian.<sup>6</sup> The tablet is of the *imgida* type or *Type S* according to the classification of S. Tinney.<sup>7</sup>

Below we offer the transliteration of the lines attested in this tablet and the duplicates published up to now. The tablet does not present significant variants. The line numbering follows the editions by Hallo and ETCSL.<sup>8</sup> The translation mainly follows W. W. Hallo (1997), 531–532.

#### Manuscripts

A = YBC 13523 (Hallo, CRRAI XVII 126–7)

D = UET 6/2 388 + UET 6/3 579

E = UET 6/2 389

F = UET 6/3 583

G = AUWE 23 222 (lenticular tablet)

H = Ni 9942 (ISET 1 140)

I = UET 6/3 581 (lines 35–37)

J = UET 6/3 584 rev. (lines 41–48)

K = Private collection (fragments K<sub>1</sub> and K<sub>2</sub>)

The Hymn starts with an invocation to Nisaba, listing her epithets as attributes. Later she prepares the ritual of Enlil and prepares her body and garments in order to make grain and vegetables grow.

23. diĝir nam<sub>2</sub>-[nir-ra] <sup>d</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub> ĥun-e-de<sub>3</sub>

A III 13–15: diĝir nam<sub>2</sub>-[...] / <sup>d</sup>en-l[il<sub>2</sub>] / ĥun-e-[d]e<sub>3</sub>

K<sub>1</sub> 1': <sup>d</sup>[e]n-[l]il<sub>2</sub> [ĥ]un-[e-de<sub>3</sub>]

So as to appease Enlil, the god of supremacy,<sup>9</sup>

<sup>6</sup> It is difficult to determine the precise origin of the tablet. Neither format nor writing offers enough information.

<sup>7</sup> S. Tinney (1999), 160. According to him, the Hymn Nisaba A is part of the so called “Tetrad” (Nisaba A, Lipit-Ištar B, Iddin-Dagan B, Enlil-bani A), the four texts that were used as initiation for teaching Sumerian prior to the ten texts of the curricular catalogues, see S. Tinney (1999), 159; H. L. J. Vanstiphout (1979), 118–126; H. L. J. Vanstiphout (2003), 15; J. Black et al. (2004), 292 and 299–300 (henceforth LAS).

<sup>8</sup> ETCSL c.4.16.1. See also J. Black et al. (2004), 292–294.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. W. W. Hallo’s translation (1997), 531: “So as to appease X, to appease End[agara]”. See also his transliteration of manuscript A: <sup>d</sup>ē<sub>3</sub>-[x] / <sup>d</sup>En-<sup>l</sup>x<sup>l</sup> / ĥun-e-de<sub>3</sub>, (1970), 124 and B. B. Sullivan (1979), 98. See also G. R. Castellino (1997), 85 (“per placare An e placare Enlil”)

24.  ${}^d\text{ku}_3\text{-su}_3 \text{ ar}\check{\text{h}}\text{u}\check{\text{s}} \text{ sud } {}^d\text{ezina}_2 \text{ }\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e-de}_3$   
 A III 16–18:  ${}^d\text{ku}_3\text{-su}_3 \text{ }^{\text{r}}\text{ar}\check{\text{h}}\text{u}\check{\text{s}} \text{ }^{\text{l}}\text{sud} / {}^d\text{ezina}_2 / \check{\text{h}}\text{un-e-de}_3$   
 K<sub>1</sub> 2'–3':  ${}^d\text{[ku}_3\text{]-su}_3 \text{ ar}\check{\text{h}}\text{u}\check{\text{s}} [\text{sud}] / \text{ }^{\text{r}}\text{ }^{\text{d}}\text{[ezi]na}_2 \text{ }\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e-[d]e}_3$   
 To appease merciful Kusu and Ezina,<sup>10</sup>
25.  $\text{en gal mu-un-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e ezen mu-un-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e}$   
 A III 19–21:  $\text{en gal} / \text{mu-un-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e} / \text{ezen mu-un-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e}$   
 K<sub>1</sub> 4'–5':  $\text{en [ga]l mu-un-}[\check{\text{h}}\text{u}] \text{n-}^{\text{r}}\text{e}^{\text{l}} / \text{e[zen m]u-[u]n-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e}$   
 She will appoint a great high-priest, will appoint a festival,
26.  $\text{en gal kalam-ma im-ma-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e}$   
 A III 22–24:  $\text{en gal} / \text{kalam-ma} / \text{im-ma-}\check{\text{h}}\text{un-e}$   
 K<sub>1</sub> 6':  $[\text{en ga}] \text{l kalam-m[a] i[m}^{\text{?}}\text{-m]a}^{\text{?}}\text{-}[\check{\text{h}}\text{u}] \text{n-e}$   
 Will appoint a great high-priest of the nation.<sup>11</sup>
27.  $\text{ki-sikil } {}^d\text{nisaba } \check{\text{s}}\text{ud}_3\text{-de}_3 \text{ mu-un-ra}_2$   
 A III 25–26:  $\text{ki-sikil } {}^d\text{nisaba} / \check{\text{s}}\text{ud}_3\text{-de}_3 \text{ mu-un-ra}_2$   
 K<sub>1</sub> 7':  $\text{ki-[s]ikil } {}^d\text{nisa[ba] } \check{\text{s}}[\text{ud}_3\text{-d}] \text{e}_3 \text{ m[u]-un-ra}_2$   
 Oh virgin Nisaba, he blesses you in prayer.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>10</sup> Kusu was the goddess of purification and patroness of the cultic censer. The list *An=Anum* records two manifestations of this deity; a Kusu identified with Nisaba (*An=Anum* 1 298) and a Kusu described as the great priestess of Enlil (*sanga*<sub>2</sub>-maḥ diġir <sup>e</sup>en-lil<sub>2</sub>, *An=Anum* 1 324). She is also described in similar terms (*ib-ni* <sup>d</sup>ku<sub>3</sub>-su<sub>3</sub> *sanga*<sub>2</sub>-maḥ diġir-meš gal-meš) in the so-called “Cosmology of *kalû*-priests”; see F. H. Weissbach (1903), 103 pl. 12 line 35; F. Thureau-Dangin (1910), 46; M. Dietrich (2000), 39; M. J. H. Linssen (2004), 302. On the earliest references to this epithet and a complete study of this goddess see P. Michalowski (1993), 158–159, see also G. J. Selz (1995), 157; M. Such-Gutiérrez (2003), 335–337; T. Richter (2004), 98–99. Ezina or Ašnan is a goddess of cereals and is well attested from the period of Fara and Abū Šalābīḥ; for her cult and references to her in the third millennium see G. J. Selz (1995), 25–26; M. Such-Gutiérrez (2003), 230–231. In the literary texts, Ašnan appears simply as a hypostasis of grain (M. Civil (1983), 45). She appears in the OB Nippur god-lists after Nisaba/Nanibgal and before Haia (SLT 124 iv 26: <sup>d</sup>še-...]; see also J. Peterson (2009), 35); she is also attested in Proto-*An=Anum* before Haia and Nisaba (TCL 15 10 320). The list *An=Anum* has <sup>r</sup>[...].TIR: MIN / <sup>d</sup>e-zi-nu-u<sub>2</sub> MIN (CT 24 pl. 23 ii 12; see also R. L. Litke (1998), 53–54 lines 287–288).

<sup>11</sup> In manuscript K<sub>1</sub> this line is difficult to read. It may be possible to read m[u-u]n-<sup>h</sup>un-e. The use of the prefix *imma-* in manuscript A is surprising because in the preceding lines the prefix *mu-* is used to describe exactly the same action with the same verb. In this context, a middle voice situation seems to be excluded, in contrast to lines 28–30 of our text and similar lines in Gudea Cyl. A iv 25 and v 3. See also C. Woods (2008), 174 n. 6.

<sup>12</sup> ETCL transliterates *ki-sikil* <sup>d</sup>nisaba *šudu*<sub>3</sub>-de<sub>3</sub> *mu-un-gub* and translates “He (Enki (?)) approaches the maiden Nisaba in prayer.”, see also J. Black et al. (2004), 294 n. 27–35. According to this transliteration, it would be possible to translate “He approaches the maiden Nisaba in order to pray”, interpreting *šud=e=d=e* as a present-future participle. See also G. R. Castellino (1997), 85 (“La vergine Nisaba si presenta a dare il saluto.”)

28. nidba sikil-la si nam-mi-in-sa<sub>2</sub>

A iv 1–3: nidb[a] / sikil-la / si nam-mi-in-sa<sub>2</sub>  
 D iii 1'–3': x x [.....] / ni-i[n-.....] / el-[la-.....]  
 K<sub>1</sub> 8': nidba sikil-l[a] s[i] n[am-m]i-[i]n-[sa<sub>2</sub>]

He has verily prepared the pure oblation,

29. e<sub>2</sub>-ĜEŠTU<sub>2</sub>.<sup>d</sup>NISABA-ke<sub>4</sub> ĝal<sub>2</sub> nam-mi-in-tag<sub>4</sub>

A iv 4–6: e<sub>2</sub>-ĜEŠTU<sub>2</sub>. / <sup>d</sup>NISABA-ke<sub>4</sub> / ĝal<sub>2</sub> nam-mi-in-tag<sub>4</sub>  
 D iii 4'–6': e<sub>2</sub>-[.....] / DA<sup>2</sup> [.....] / bi-[it .....]  
 K<sub>1</sub> 9'–10': <sup>l</sup>e<sub>2</sub>- Ĝ[EST]U<sub>2</sub>.<sup>d</sup> NIS[AB]A-[ke<sub>4</sub>] / [ĝ]al<sub>2</sub> n[a]m-mi-in-[tag<sub>4</sub>]

Has verily opened the House of Learning of Nisaba,<sup>13</sup>

30. dub za-gin<sub>3</sub> dub<sub>3</sub>-ba nam-mi-in-ĝar

A iv 7–9: dub za-gin<sub>3</sub> / dub<sub>3</sub>-ba / nam-mi-in-ĝar  
 H 1': [.....]-mi-in-[...]  
 K<sub>1</sub> 11': du[b] za-g[in<sub>3</sub>] d[ub<sub>3</sub>-b]a nam-mi-in-ĝ[ar]

Has verily placed the lapis lazuli tablet on (her) knee.

31. dub mul-an ku<sub>3</sub>-ta ša<sub>3</sub> im-ma-da-kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>

A iv 10–11: dub mul-an ku<sub>3</sub>-ta / ša<sub>3</sub> im-ma-da-kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>  
 H 2'–3': [.....]-an ku<sub>3</sub>-da / [...] -da-kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>  
 K<sub>1</sub> rev. 1–2: [dub mul-an ku<sub>3</sub>-ta] / ša<sub>3</sub> [.....]

Taking counsel with the holy tablet of the heavenly stars,

32. aratta<sup>ki</sup> e<sub>2</sub>-za-gin<sub>3</sub>-na šu-ni-še<sub>3</sub> mu-un-ĝar

A iv 12–14: aratta<sup>ki</sup> / e<sub>2</sub>-za-gin<sub>3</sub>-na / šu-ni-še<sub>3</sub> mu-un-ĝar  
 D iv 2'–5': š[u]-n[i-.....] / i-na [.....] / bi-tim [i-na] qa<sub>2</sub>-ti-i-ša<sup>l</sup> i<sup>2</sup>[-...]  
 H 4'–5': [...]<sup>k</sup>i e<sub>2</sub>-za-gin<sub>3</sub>-na / [...-š]e<sub>3</sub> mu-un-ĝar  
 K<sub>1</sub> rev. 3–4: ar[atta<sup>ki</sup>] / e<sub>2</sub>-z[a-.....]

(As) in Aratta he has placed Ezagin at her disposal,<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> On e<sub>2</sub>-ĜEŠTU<sub>2</sub>.<sup>d</sup>NISABA see A. Falkenstein (1949), 143–144 (“Haus des Wissens”); W. W. Hallo (1970), 131; B. Alster (1976), 119–120 (“Nisaba’s House of Wisdom”); M. W. Green (1978), 151–153 (“The EGEŠTU-NISABA”); A. George, HMH, 91; W. W. Hallo (1997), 531 n. 7.

<sup>14</sup> Ezagin, “House of Lapis Lazuli”, was the traditional name of the temples of Nisaba in Aratta, Ereš and Nippur (See A. George, HMH 158 nr. 1220–1222).

33. ereš<sub>2</sub><sup>ki</sup> ħe-nun-na mu-un-du<sub>3</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-namA iv 15–17: ereš<sub>2</sub><sup>ki</sup> / ħe-nun-na / mu-du<sub>3</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-namD iv 6'–8': ereš<sub>2</sub><sup>ki</sup> ħe-nun-[na] / mu-un-du<sub>3</sub>-[.....] / *e-re-eš i-na ṭ[u<sub>3</sub>-uḫ-di-im] i-pe-e[š<sub>15</sub>]*H 6'–7': [.....] ħe-nun-na / [...-u]n-du<sub>3</sub>-naK<sub>1</sub> rev. 5–6: ereš<sub>2</sub><sup>ki</sup> ħe-nu]n-n[a] / m[u-u]n-du<sub>3</sub>-a[m<sub>3</sub>']Eresh he has constructed in abundance.<sup>15</sup>34. sig<sub>4</sub> naġa di<sub>4</sub>-di<sub>4</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> ki ġar-raA iv 18–20: sig<sub>4</sub> naġa / di<sub>4</sub>-di<sub>4</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> / ki ġar-raD iv 9'–13': sig<sub>4</sub> naġa / di<sub>4</sub>-d[i<sub>4</sub>-la<sub>2</sub>] / ki ġar-r[a] / *i-na li-bi-it-ṭ[im] el-le-tim a-na a[š-ri] ta-ša-ak-ka-a[n]*H 8': [..... na]ġa di<sub>4</sub>-di<sub>4</sub>K<sub>1</sub> rev. 7–8: s[ig<sub>4</sub> naġ]a d[i<sub>4</sub>-d]i<sub>4</sub>-la<sub>2</sub> / ki ġ[ar-r]a

She is created out of pure little bricks,

35. ġeštu<sub>2</sub> nam-galam-ma saġ-e-eš rig<sub>7</sub>-gaA iv 21–24: ġeštu<sub>2</sub> / nam-galam-ma / saġ-e-e[š] / rig<sub>7</sub>-g[a]D iv 14'–16': ġeštu<sub>2</sub> nun-galam-m[a] / sa[ġ]-[e<sup>l</sup>-eš ri[g<sub>7</sub>-ga] /x-[...] -x *ru-bu* [...]I 1'–4': [ġe]štu<sub>2</sub> nun-galam-[...] / [..]-[e<sup>l</sup>-eš rig<sub>7</sub>-...] / *[u]z-nu-um ru-bu-tum na-x[...]* / *še-ri-ik-tim ša-ar-k[a-at]*K<sub>1</sub> rev. 8–9: ġešt[u<sub>2</sub> nam-gala]m-ma / [saġ-e-eš] r[i]g<sub>7</sub> (PA-Ḫ[UB<sub>2</sub>-D]U)-[g]a

She is granted wisdom in the highest degree.

36. abzu men gal eridu<sup>ki</sup> eš<sub>3</sub> ḫal-ḫa-laA iv 25–27: abzu men gal / eridu<sup>ki</sup> / eš<sub>3</sub> ḫal-ḫa-la

I 5'–6: [abz]u men gal eridu[...]/ [... ḫa]l-ḫal-[...]

K<sub>1</sub> rev. 10: [abzu men gal]l [eri]du<sup>k</sup>[i] x x

In the Abzu, the great crown(?) of Eridu, (where) sanctuaries are apportioned,

<sup>15</sup> See the alternative translation: “You have built up Ereš in abundance” (J. Black et al. (2004), 293; ETCSL 4.16.1). mu=n=du=en seems to confirm the second person, but the Akkadian version (manuscript J) is different. See also G. R. Castellino (1997), 85 (“Ereš le produce beni in abbondanza.”).

37. n[un] [...] nun ḥal-ḥa-la

A v 1–2: n[un ...] / nun ḥal-ḥa-[l]a

I 7': [...] x x [...]

[In...], (where) offices(?) are apportioned,

38. engar gal nam-nun-na e<sub>2</sub> ni<sub>2</sub> gur<sub>3</sub>-ru nagar eridu<sup>ki</sup>-ga

A v 3–5: eng[ar g]al nam-nun-na / e<sub>2</sub> ni<sub>2</sub> gur<sub>3</sub>-ru / nagar eridu<sup>ki</sup>-ga

The great princely ploughman of the resplendent temple, the craftsman of Eridu,

39. lugal šu luḥ-luḥ-ḥa-ke<sub>4</sub> en muš<sub>3</sub> en gal-la <sup>d</sup>en-ki-ke<sub>4</sub>

A v 6–8: lugal šu luḥ-luḥ-ḥa-ke<sub>4</sub> / en muš<sub>3</sub> en gal-la / <sup>d</sup>en-ki-ke<sub>4</sub>

The king of lustrations, the lord of the mask<sup>16</sup> of the great high-priest, Enki –

40. e<sub>2</sub>-engur-ra ki-tuš-a-ni

A v 9–10: e<sub>2</sub>-engur-ra / ki-tuš-a-ni

D v 1': [a<sup>l</sup>-gu-ur i-na w[a-š]a-bi-šu

The Engur-house when he occupies it,

41. abzu eridu<sup>ki</sup>-ga du<sub>3</sub>-du<sub>3</sub>-a-ni

A v 11–12: abzu eridu<sup>ki</sup>-ga / du<sub>3</sub>-du<sub>3</sub>-a-ni

D v 2'–4': abzu eridu<sup>ki</sup> du<sub>3</sub>-du<sub>3</sub>-a-ni / a[p]-sa<sub>3</sub>-am e-ri-du / [i<sup>l</sup>-na e-pe-ši-i-šu

E n 1'–2': [.....] du<sub>3</sub>-du<sub>3</sub> [.....] / [ap-s]u-um eridu<sup>ki</sup> i-na <e>-pe-[.....]

J rev. 1': abzu eridu<sup>ki</sup> du<sub>3</sub>-[...]

The Abzu of Eridu when he builds it,

42. ḥal-an-ku<sub>3</sub> ša<sub>3</sub> kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-da-ni

A v 13–14: ḥal-la-ku<sub>3</sub> / ša<sub>3</sub> kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-da-ni

D v 5'–7': ḥal-an-ku<sub>3</sub> ša<sub>3</sub> kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-da-ni / i-na ḥa-al-la-an-ku / i-na mi-it-lu-ki-šu

E n 3'–4': [ḥal]-an-ku<sub>3</sub> ša<sub>3</sub> kuš<sub>2</sub>-u<sub>3</sub>-[da-ni] / i-na ḥa-la-an-ku i-na mi-i[t-...]

<sup>16</sup> On the translation of muš<sub>3</sub> as “mask” see W. W. Hallo (1970), 131–132 with previous bibliography. In contrast, cf. the translation “the lord of the great *en* priest’s precinct” (J. Black et al. (2004), 293; ETCSL 4.16.1), where muš<sub>3</sub> is interpreted as “space, flat space; a holy area”; see e-PSD s.v. muš<sub>3</sub> and the texts cited there.

F rev. 1': [...] x x [...]  
 J rev. 2': ḫal-an-ku<sub>3</sub> ša<sub>3</sub> [...]

The Halanku<sup>17</sup> when he takes counsel in it,

43. e<sub>2</sub><sup>ḡis</sup> taškarin tun<sub>3</sub>-bar-ra-ni

A v 15–16: e<sub>2</sub><sup>ḡis</sup> taškarin / tun<sub>3</sub>-bar-ra-ni  
 D v 8'–10': e<sub>2</sub><sup>ḡis</sup> taškarin tun<sub>3</sub>-bar-ra-ni / *bi-it ti-is-ka-ri-in-ni-im / i-na [šu-pe-e]l-ti-i-šu*  
 E II 5'–7': e<sub>2</sub><sup>ḡis</sup> taškarin tun<sub>3</sub>-bar-ra-[ni] / *bi-it di-is-ka<sub>3</sub>-ri-[.....] / i-na šu-pe-e[l-....]*  
 F rev. 2': e<sub>2</sub><sup>ḡis</sup> taškarin tu[n<sub>3</sub> ...]  
 J rev. 3': e<sub>2</sub><sup>ḡis</sup> taškarin [...]

The house of the box-tree when he fells it,<sup>18</sup>

44. abgal siki bar-ra du<sub>8</sub>-a-ni

A v 17–18: abgal / siki bar-ra du<sub>8</sub>-a-ni  
 D v 11'–14': abgal / siki bar-ra du<sub>8</sub>-a-ni / *ab-gal-lum pe-re-et-su<sub>2</sub> / a-na wa-ar-ki-i-šu / i-na wu-uš-šu-ri-im*  
 E II 8'–10': abgal / siki ba[.....] / *ab-gal-lum ša [.....] / u<sub>2</sub>-š[u<sup>2</sup>-.....]*  
 F rev. 3': abgal siki bar-r[a ...]  
 J rev. 4': abgal siki bar-r[a ...]  
 K<sub>2</sub> 1': [.....]

The sage when his hair is loosened behind him,<sup>19</sup>

<sup>17</sup> ḫal-la-ku<sub>3</sub> is the name of a shrine in the Apsu, the domain of Enki (see W. Horowitz (1998), 316).

<sup>18</sup> See the alternative translations of J. Black et al. (2004), 293 (ETCSL 4.16.1): “when he splits with an axe the house of boxwood”. Here tun<sub>3</sub> is interpreted as “axe” (see also e-PSD s.v. with texts), in contrast to the Akkadian version. See also CAD T s.v. *taskarinnu*: “his house of boxwood which he himself cuts”. For tun<sub>3</sub>-bar, “to split with an axe” see D. A. Foxvog (2008), 55. See also G. R. Castellino (1997), 86 (“La Casa di (legno di) bosso che egli ha tagliato.”).

<sup>19</sup> Traditionally, the “sage” (Sum. abgal; Akk. *apkallu*) has been connected with the court of Enki since the OB period. There is also a tradition rooted in the third millennium which relates the term *apkallu* to the seven sages who existed before the flood. These seven sages were used as clay figurines in different rituals for healing a sick person, for purification and in exorcisms. These figurines were placed in the house of the patient; there were seven *ūmu-apkallū*, seven bird-*apkallū* and the seven fish-*apkallū*. It seems that the group of fish-*apkallū* has an ancient tradition but the other two groups are modern traditions adopted by the Assyrians. See F. A. M. Wiggermann (1992), 73–79 (especially 76–77); F. A. M. Wiggermann, RIA VIII, 224–225; J. C. Greenfield, *Apkallu*, DDD<sup>2</sup> 72–74.

45. e<sub>2</sub> ġeštu<sub>2</sub>-ga-ke<sub>4</sub> ġal<sub>2</sub> tag<sub>4</sub>-a-ni

A v 19–20: e<sub>2</sub> ġeštu<sub>2</sub>-ga / ġal<sub>2</sub> tag<sub>4</sub>-a-ni  
 D v 19'–21' [e<sub>2</sub>] [.....] / bi-it u[z-n]i-i[m] / i-na pe-te-e-š[a]  
 F rev. 5': e<sub>2</sub> ġeštu<sub>2</sub>-ka-ke<sub>4</sub> ġal<sub>2</sub> tag<sub>4</sub>-a-n[i]  
 J rev. 6': e<sub>2</sub> ġeštu<sub>2</sub>-k[a ...]  
 K<sub>2</sub> 2'–3': [e<sub>2</sub>] ġe[štu<sub>2</sub>....] / ġ[a]l<sub>2</sub> tag<sub>4</sub>[a]-[ni]

The House of Learning when he opens it,

46. ġis ig ġeštu<sub>2</sub>-ga sila-ba gub-ba-ni

A v 21–22: [ġi]s ig ġeštu<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-ga / [sila]-ba gub-ba-ni  
 D v 22'–24' [ġi]s ig ġešt[u<sub>2</sub>...] / [si]la-ba gub-ba-a-[...] / [da-l]a-at uz-ni-[...]  
 F rev. 6': ġis ig ġeštu<sub>2</sub><sup>1</sup>-k[a] / sila-ba gub-a-ni  
 G: [ġi]s ig ġeštu<sub>2</sub> / sila-ba gub-[b]a-ni  
 J rev. 7': [ġi]s ig ġeštu<sub>2</sub> [...]  
 K<sub>2</sub> 3'–4': [.....] / si[la]-b[a-gu]b-b[a-ni]

The door of learning when he stands in its street,

47. [un]u<sub>2</sub> gal ġis erin-a til<sub>3</sub>-la-ni

A v 23–24: [un]u<sub>2</sub> gal / [ġi]s e[ri]n-a til<sub>3</sub>-la-ni  
 D v 15'–18': [x] gal ġis erin-a / [ti]l<sub>3</sub>-la-a-ni / [x]-l[i-i]š ra-bi-iš [...] x-li  
 E n 11': [x] gal [.....]  
 F rev. 4': [un]u (TE) gal ġis er[in]-a [...]  
 J rev. 5': unu<sub>x</sub> (TE) gal ġis erin-[a] [...]  
 K<sub>2</sub> 5': x [.....]

The great dining hall of cedar when he finishes(?) it,<sup>20</sup>

The hymn ends with Enki's blessing on Nisaba as a good woman, as fat in the stall, as milk in the cattle-pen, as the keeper of the seal in the treasury, as a steward in the palace and as heaping up grain.

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<sup>20</sup> W. W. Hallo reads [lilis]?-gal “The great kettle-drum” but manuscript J seems to confirm the reading unu<sub>2</sub>/unu<sub>x</sub>. See the translation “when he finishes (?) the great dining hall of cedar” (J. Black et al. (2004), 293; ETCSL 4.16.1). For unu<sub>2</sub> as ‘dining hall’ see e-PSD s.v. and the texts cited there.

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Lluís Feliu  
 Institut del Pròxim Orient Antic  
 Universitat de Barcelona  
 Gran Via de les Corts Catalanes 585  
 08007 Barcelona



